

# THE “BARBARIAN/HUT” CENTENIONALIS AND VERGILIAN ICONOGRAPHY

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For decades scholars have debated the significance of the Imperial bronze reverse type popularly known as the “barbarian and hut” centenionalis—so called because the reverse depicts a large figure in military attire striding right, holding a spear in his left hand while grasping the right hand of a smaller figure often interpreted as a barbarian youth; the soldier’s head is turned toward the smaller figure as he leads him away from an architectural feature often identified as a hut, which stands beneath an overhanging tree (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. A “barbarian and hut” centenionalis from Antioch, A.D. 348. Photo courtesy Bill Welch.

Beginning in 348 AD, Constans and Constantius II minted this bronze issue weighing approximately 4.5 grams and measuring 19-23 millimeters in diameter. The obverse of the *Constans centenionalis* depicts the diademed, draped, and cuirassed bust of the emperor facing left, holding a globe in his right hand, with the legend DN CONSTANS PF AVG; the Constantius II version differs only in the emperor’s name. The reverse legend for both reads FEL TEMP REPARATIO, which is customarily glossed as “The Restoration of Happy Times” (*Felicitium Temporum Reparatio*).<sup>1</sup> These coins were minted in huge numbers and

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<sup>1</sup> See Kent, 1981. RIC. These coins were struck from 348—350 AD at most mints, with only Heraclea, Constantinople, and Nicomedia continuing the issue to AD 351. Regarding the reverse legend, Harold Mattingly suggests an alternate expansion: *Felix Temporum Reparatio*, a “happy renewal of times,” which may focus more attention on the fortunate renewal, or may simply be a hypallage for the “renewal of happy times”; see Mattingly 1933: 182-201.

were struck at every operative mint in the empire, from Trier to Alexandria. The die engravers of each mint city wrought slight variations on this theme; the mint workers at Aquileia engraved angular images in less detail, whereas the die engravers of Antioch carved exquisite features such as the drapery folds of the military cloak worn by the Roman soldier. On some coins the smaller figure appears to be a youth stooping over (e.g., the issues at Thessalonica), while at other mints (e.g., Alexandria and Antioch) the soldier towers above the smaller figure to such an extent that the latter seems to be a small child.

A number of questions still surface regarding this reverse. Is the smaller figure a barbarian child whose youth makes him a suitable candidate for Romanization, or is the size disparity simply a metaphor for the cultural differences between Roman and barbarian? Is the smaller figure a barbarian at all? Is the soldier dragging him in an act of subjugation and humiliation, or is he leading him into *Romanitas* in a charitable act of cultural assimilation? Is the soldier to be identified with the Emperor himself? Is the architectural feature on the left a hut or some other structure? Does the tree possess a specific symbolism, or does it merely signify a rustic setting? What is this scene's relationship to the legend FEL TEMP REPARATIO? And why is this reverse type disproportionately associated with Constans rather than Constantius II? Major scholarly views concerning these questions are detailed below, but in brief, Harold Mattingly argued that the smaller figure is the child mentioned in Vergil's Fourth *Eclogue* who will usher in a new Golden Age for Rome, while Annalina Caló Levi and Konrad Kraft maintained that the reverse type depicts barbarian settlements, especially those associated with the reign of Constans.<sup>2</sup>

In this essay I also offer a Vergilian reading of this reverse type, but one that does not draw on Vergil's Fourth *Eclogue*. Rather, I argue that the reverse type alludes to the familiar iconography of Aeneas leading Ascanius from a burning Troy as detailed in Book 2 of the *Aeneid*—a motif widely popular in early Imperial art, and one featured on coinage designed to coincide with the 900th anniversary of Rome's foundation. The occasion for such an allusion in the fourth century may be both the 1100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome, as well as the assimilation of the Franks and other barbarian tribes into the empire as detailed by Kraft. Read in this

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<sup>2</sup> Mattingly 1977: 13-14; Caló Levi, 1952: 47-8; Kraft 1958: 173-5.

context, the “barbarian and hut” *centenionalis* simultaneously looks back at the origins of Rome while looking to its present and future through a restoration of happy, or blessed, times.

### I. THE MAJOR ARGUMENTS

Serious scholarship on the “barbarian and hut” reverse begins with Harold Mattingly’s 1933 essay “Fel. Temp. Reparatio.” Its significance was demonstrated by its reprinting some forty years later. Mattingly’s interpretation of the “barbarian and hut” *centenionalis* is part of a larger Vergilian reading of the entire FEL TEMP REPARATIO series.<sup>3</sup> In his Fourth *Eclogue*, Vergil prophesies that a new Golden Age will arise, heralded by the birth of a child whose lifetime will witness unparalleled abundance, and who will “consort with the gods” (4.15) and “rule a world his father’s virtues have brought to peace” (4.17).<sup>4</sup> No one has convincingly identified this child, assuming he can be identified at all. Late antique and medieval writers asserted that the Fourth *Eclogue* reflected a kind of Christian prescience granted to the pagan Vergil, and that the Golden Child was Vergil’s own prediction of Jesus Christ.<sup>5</sup> Modern scholars have posited figures such as the son of Vergil’s patron, C. Asinius Pollio, or “the expected son of Antony and Octavia.”<sup>6</sup> For Mattingly’s purposes such specific identification was unnecessary; he

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<sup>3</sup> The complete FEL TEMP REPARATIO coinage series of 348 AD-51 included four reverse types, commonly referred to as the “barbarian and hut,” “emperor on a galley,” “soldier spearing a fallen horseman” and “phoenix on a pyre” types. Since these reverse types were instituted simultaneously, some scholars (e.g., Mattingly) have wished to see thematically or iconographically unified readings for the entire series. I disagree with the view that the series must possess a unity of this kind, and my Vergilian reading of the “barbarian and hut” *centenionalis* does not extend beyond this single reverse type. Even if the series is designed to reflect contemporary events, as Konrad Kraft argues, the iconography of the reverse type may still allude to the Flight from Troy as the *centenionalis* may simultaneously dramatize barbarian settlement.

<sup>4</sup> *ille deum uitam accipiet diuisque uidebit / permixtos heroas et ipse uidebitur illis / pacatumque reget patriis uirtutibus orbem*, (Ec. 4.15-17); trans. B. Fowler.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Dante, *Purg* 22.64-72, where the crypto-Christian Statius credits this *Eclogue* with helping lead him to Christianity.

<sup>6</sup> Clausen 1994: 122. Clausen notes that the “Messianic” interpretation of the Fourth *Eclogue* was known to Jerome and Augustine, but not fully accepted by them (127).

simply suggested that the child represents the promise promulgated by the coin's reverse legend:

Is it possible to trace ... the thought of the *Eclogue* and to see in the type a soldier leading the growing boy of the *Eclogue* to learn his "*tirocinium*" [first military service] in war, half reluctantly leaving behind his cradle--the cradle which had flowered for him--"*ipsa tibi blandos fundent cunabula flores*" (Ec. 4.23)?

Mattingly continued by offering a second symbolism drawn from Rome's foundation:

Or, if we risk a more pagan solution, can we say that Mars is leading his son Romulus from the "*casa Romuli*" beside the *ficus ruminalis* to enter on his military career? The small figure is not, as a rule at least, marked out by dress or feature as a barbarian, and the soldier leads rather than drags him. It is advisable to be cautious in accepting such interesting, but unproved suggestions as these. Perhaps it is not too much to claim that we have shown that the author of our type may have been familiar with the thought and imagery of Virgil's poem.<sup>7</sup>

Mattingly believed the entire FEL TEMP REPARATIO series was struck to commemorate Rome's eleventh centenary. 348 AD was an especially propitious time for such a commemoration since the 1100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome furnished a unique intersection of regular centennial observation and the Etruscan 110-year *saeculum* so important in the Roman reckoning of time: "With the eleventh centenary we come to 348 AD, the year of our issue. It may be observed that as 1,100 is not only 11 times 100, but also 10 times 110, the 1,100<sup>th</sup> year of Rome could be regarded, if you so pleased, as the point where the two series of *saecula* of 100 and 110 years met and were reconciled."<sup>8</sup> Although Mattingly's observations about the year 348 are compelling, less convincing are his suggestions that the centenionalis reverse depicts the child of the Fourth *Eclogue*, or Romulus, judging by continued reference to this reverse type as the "barbarian and hut" centenionalis, and Kent's

<sup>7</sup> Mattingly 1977: 14.

<sup>8</sup> Mattingly 1977: 8 also suggests that the denominational term *centenionalis* is related to this centennial chronology.

description of the “Small Æ 2” in *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. VIII.<sup>9</sup>

In her study of barbarians in Roman art published in 1952, Annalina Caló Levi accepted the possibility that the saecular anniversary was a likely stimulus for the FEL TEMP coinage, but she did not affirm Mattingly’s Vergilian reading. She asserted that the “barbarian and hut” coin (identified as Type B in her monograph) depicts precisely that, and commented specifically on the iconographic attributes of the small “barbarian”:

As for type B, the motif of a Roman leading a barbarian by the hand is not new, but the addition of the hut and the tree is. The figure is certainly a barbarian because on several specimens the traditional barbaric features such as beard and trousers are clearly visible. Therefore, the scene could be interpreted as the symbolic representation of one of the consequences of victory, frequently mentioned by later writers. Barbarians were often forced to settle within the boundaries of the empire in order to cultivate the soil. The “Panegyricus” of Constantius is very illuminating in this respect. That the coin type under consideration is related to those forced migrations, is shown by the hut and the tree. They are an abbreviation of a whole landscape and indicate the woods and the huts where the barbarians lived. The Roman warrior is leading the barbarian out of his home to his new place in the Roman empire. Perhaps, the whole group of these coins with the legend FEL TEMP REPARATIO could be connected with some monument erected for the eleventh centenary of Rome.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, the discussions found in popular guides such as David Van Meter 1991: 297; and Failmezger, 2002: 12, 41. Kent 1981: 35 designates the issue as “Hut” and writes, “There is no certainty about the interpretation of this type, though it is specifically associated with Constans. The warrior who leads the small bare-headed figure from a hut beneath a tree is no doubt the emperor; perhaps Constans’ ‘pacification’ of the Franks in 342 involved the acceptance—enforcement in propaganda terms—of some settlement within the Empire—that in Toxandria, for example. The allusion might however be to some event in Britain during Constans’ visit”.

<sup>10</sup> Caló Levi 1952: 47-8.

Caló Levi's description here is generally accurate, although the "barbarian and hut" centenionalis does not depict the smaller figure with a beard. She may be confusing this figure with the bearded barbarians in the "fallen horseman" FEL TEMP coinage, or possibly mistaking the figure's raised hand (which sometimes holds an object) for a beard. On some, but not all, versions of this centenionalis the smaller figure does seem to wear leggings or trousers as indicated by a series of horizontal or diagonal marks; e.g., in the emissions of the fourth *officina* at Antioch; the fifth *officina* at Constantinople; the fourth *officina* at Heraclea, and the second *officina* at Nicomedia, to name a few.

Six years after Caló Levi's study, Konrad Kraft more pointedly rejected Mattingly's hypothesis and argued in very specific terms that the "barbarian and hut" reverse represents Constans' peaceful settlement of the Franks in Toxandria (present-day Belgium). Constantius II also minted the "barbarian and hut" type, but Kraft asserted that the "Typ Hütte" is to be principally associated with Constans because of the overwhelming number of "barbarian and hut" reverses struck for that emperor, especially by Eastern mints, even though Constans was Emperor in the West. Constans' pacification of the bellicose Franks in the 340s was indeed a major achievement; in his *Oratio 40*, the fourth century *rhetor* Libanius details how Constans checked their advances without bloodshed:

131. But even the waves of these *Fracti* [Franks] had to cease sometime and to halt their movement for certain. For an emperor appeared who turned their insatiable love of warfare into a desire for peace by no other means than by demonstrating that his own enthusiasm for battles was greater than theirs. Accordingly they no longer dared to join in a trial of combat, but fear sufficed to accomplish the results of the trial. They did not lift their right hands to discharge their spears but held them forth to request a treaty. 132. The proof is as follows. They received officers from us as overseers of their behaviour and, discarding their bestial frenzy, they welcomed human reason. They abandoned their arrogance and honoured the keeping of their oaths. In any case even if the obligation resulting from oaths had not been present they would have

loved peace. Thus the inferior is generally brought under control by the superior.<sup>11</sup>

While Libanius' panegyric may tend to hyperbole, Kraft argued that Constans' relatively peaceful barbarian subjugation, in contrast to Eastern problems with the Persians, accounts for the comparatively gentle treatment of the smaller figure on the centenionalis reverse. As Mattingly noted, this figure seems to be led rather than dragged, unlike less fortunate barbarian counterparts on fourth-century coinage.

The humiliation of barbarians was a favorite Roman motif, as evidenced by the defeated Dacians on Trajan's Column and the Parthians on the Arch of Septimius Severus. Late Imperial coins and medallions routinely featured diminutive, bound captives in postures of supplication, and one widespread FEL TEMP REPARATIO reverse depicted a Roman soldier spearing a barbarian as his horse tumbles beneath him. Later reverse types of Valentinian I, Valens, Gratian, Valentinian II, Theodosius I, and Arcadius featured the Emperor carrying a Chi-Rho labarum in his left hand while dragging a bound captive by the hair with his right in a vigorous assertion of Imperial power and the *ecclesia militans*.<sup>12</sup> Violent numismatic propaganda celebrating Roman triumph over barbarians reflected a palpable anxiety over barbarian incursion in the fourth century. Slaughtered or captured barbarians, as well as Roman campgates—strongholds of Roman protection in the provinces—dominate the reverses of late Imperial bronze coinage. Indeed, one might argue that the depiction of barbarian slaughter grows more graphic as the empire deteriorates, at least in the West. In artistically constructing the defeat of barbarians, it is fair to say that much late Imperial coinage reflects a kind of denial, or perhaps desire, among the heirs of Constantine and Valentinian. Yet the coinage squares well with general Imperial attitudes towards those who would not be assimilated. Constantine the Great was particularly concerned to demonstrate that he was not soft on the barbarian issue, publicizing the execution of Frankish Kings<sup>13</sup> and marking his *decennalia* with a triumph featuring the “ghastly

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<sup>11</sup> Lieu and Montserrat 1996:195.

<sup>12</sup> This is only one prominent example of the many violent depictions of captives on Roman coinage. For a more general discussion of triumphal imagery in the later empire, see works by Caló Levi, as well as Richard Brilliant's (1963) ch. 17: “Submission”, as well as Ellen Schwartz 1972-1973: 29-34.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Heather 2002: 235.

spectacle of wild beasts tearing barbarian captives to shreds.”<sup>14</sup> In “The Barbarian in Late Antiquity: Image, Reality, and Transformation,” Peter Heather notes that posters celebrating Imperial victories over the barbarians were hung in arenas: “As the fate of the Sarmatians or ambushed Saxons makes clear, such pictorial *topoi* were far from empty images. A whole host of means were used to create, reinforce and fulfil the expectation, among the Roman population at large, that the imperial ship of state would cut a triumphant and bloody swathe through the waves of barbarians which broke against it.”<sup>15</sup>

Thus, in its kinder, gentler depiction of Roman and barbarian, the “barbarian and hut” centenionalis seems to be a curious exception, and Konrad Kraft’s argument that it signifies the Romanization of the Franks is thorough and convincing. Ultimately, however, the suggestion that the centenionalis reverse type alludes to the Flight from Troy does not preclude a concomitant reference to barbarian settlement. I maintain that the coin, Janus-like, simultaneously looks backward and forward.

## II. LOOKING BACKWARD

Exploring the possible influence of Vergilian iconography upon the “barbarian and hut” centenionalis begins at a point long before the composition of Vergil’s *Aeneid*. By Vergil’s time the image of Aeneas carrying his father Anchises from a burning Troy was an ancient one, even as a numismatic motif. In his study of the mint at Ilium, Alfred R. Bellinger noted that “the device of Aeneas carrying Anchises appeared first on a sixth century [B.C.] tetradrachm of Aenea in Macedonia and is said to be ‘often portrayed on archaic Greek monuments....’”<sup>16</sup> Closer to the time of Vergil, a silver denarius dated ca. 47 B.C. and struck at Julius Caesar’s traveling military mint depicts the bust of Venus on its obverse, alluding to Caesar’s claim that the Julian *gens* descended from that goddess via Ascanius, also called Iūlus. On the reverse we see Aeneas

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<sup>14</sup> McCormick 1990: 37.

<sup>15</sup> Heather 235.

<sup>16</sup> Bellinger 1961 (repr.) 1979: 41. Some of these coins are illustrated and briefly discussed by Boyce 1954: 9-14. As a further testament to this motif’s antiquity, Erich Gruen (1995: 16-17) records that about seventy vase paintings from Etruria and statuettes from Veii dating ca. 6<sup>th</sup> c. B.C. depict Aeneas carrying Anchises, manifesting an early artistic interest in Aeneas on the Italian peninsula, if not yet a fully formed “foundation myth.”



striding left, holding the Palladium with his right hand while hoisting his aged father Anchises upon his left shoulder. A prominent CAESAR appears vertically in the right field.<sup>17</sup> The coin is designed as a piece of propaganda, circulated while Caesar was waging civil war in North Africa. The obverse and reverse images combine to offer a clear message: Caesar is the divinely-destined heir to Aeneas' legacy of piety, sacrifice, and rule. Some two decades later, Vergil would depict salient elements of the coin reverse as he detailed Aeneas' flight from a burning Troy. In *Aeneid* Book 2, Aeneas speaks to Anchises:

ergo age, care pater, ceruici imponere nostrae;  
 ipse subibo umeris nec me labor iste grauabit;  
 quo res cumque cadent, unum et commune periculum,  
 una salus ambobus erit. mihi paruus Iulus  
 sit comes, et longe seruet uestigia coniunx.  
 uos, famuli, quae dicam animis aduertite uestris.  
 est urbe egressis tumulus templumque uetustum  
 desertae Cereris, iuxtaque antiqua cupressus  
 religione patrum multos seruata per annos;  
 hanc ex diuerso sedem ueniamus in unam.  
 tu, genitor, cape sacra manu patriosque penatis;  
 me bello e tanto digressum et caede recenti  
 attrectare nefas, donec me flumine uiuo  
 abluero. (Aen. 2.707-20)

*(Come then, dear father, mount upon my neck;  
 I'll bear you on my shoulders. That is not  
 too much for me. Whatever waits for us,  
 we both shall share one danger, one salvation.  
 Let young Iulus come with me, and let  
 my wife Creusa follow at a distance.  
 And servants, listen well to what I say:  
 along the way, just past the city walls,  
 in an abandoned spot there is a mound,  
 an ancient shrine of Ceres; and nearby  
 an ancient cypress stands, one that our fathers'*

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<sup>17</sup> Sydenham 1952: 168, #1013; Crawford 1974: 471, #458.

*devotion kept alive for many years.  
 From different directions, we shall meet  
 at this one point. My father, you will carry  
 the holy vessels and our homeland's gods.  
 Filthy with war, just come from slaughter, I  
 must never touch these sacred things until  
 I bathe myself within a running stream.)*<sup>18</sup>

The Aeneas *denarius* circulated well into Augustus' reign, and it is tempting to imagine Vergil, with Julius Caesar's *denarii* jingling in his purse, composing these lines with this specific coin in mind. However, there are significant differences between the Caesar *denarius* and the passage above. The Palladium on the *denarius*, for example, is replaced by the Penates in Vergil's text, providing a spurious Trojan etiology for the Roman domestic gods. Also Ascanius, who does not appear on the coin, is given pride of place alongside Aeneas in the narrative. In the *Aeneid*, Anchises, Aeneas, and Ascanius—emblematic of Troy's past, present, and future—set out to claim the *imperium* promised to them and to their descendants.

Although the Aeneas *denarius* of Julius Caesar does not furnish a significant iconographical analogue to the later “barbarian and hut” image, it is the first in a long line of Roman coins to feature this foundation narrative, including an *aureus* issued by Octavian/Augustus while triumvir, and a “restoration” of the Julius Caesar *denarius* by Trajan.<sup>19</sup> Vergil's description of Aeneas's flight from Troy, with its emphasis on Ascanius in addition to Anchises, would offer a near-epiphany of a widespread Imperial motif which provides more plausible sources for the centenionalis reverse type. Paul Zanker comments extensively on the centrality of the Aeneas/Ascanius/Anchises group to the program of Augustan propaganda:

In the Forum of Augustus, in the central niches of the two large *exedrae*, Aeneas and Romulus stood as counterparts of Mars and Venus....The statues themselves do not survive, but statuettes, reliefs,

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<sup>18</sup> All translations of the *Aeneid* are by A. Mandelbaum.

<sup>19</sup> See Weigel, 1984: 189. The *aureus* can be found in Sydenham 182, #1104, and Crawford 502, #494/3a. The Trajan restoration *denarius* featuring Aeneas is *RIC* II, 309, #801.

and wall paintings give us a good idea of their appearance. Aeneas carries his aged father Anchises and leads his little son Ascanius by the hand.... He also rescues the precious household gods, or Penates, held by the old Anchises. These were worshipped, along with the Palladium, in the Temple of Vesta, as guarantors of Rome's safety... Within the context of the new official mythology, Aeneas is presented as a paradigm of *pietas* toward the gods and his own father in time of need.<sup>20</sup>

A well-known wall painting from Pompeii likely preserves the representation of the Forum statue group. Ascanius strides to the left of Aeneas and both look anxiously to their right, presumably toward the burning Troy they are so desperate to escape.<sup>21</sup> Augustus promoted this visual symbol of *pietas* throughout the Roman world, as evidenced by its presence even on private items such as rings, lamps, and tombstone reliefs. But perhaps the greatest testament to the extent to which this image was impressed upon the consciousness of Imperial Romans is the parodic wall painting from Pompeii's more libertine sister-city Stabiae, in which Aeneas, Ascanius, and Anchises are represented as "apes with dogs' heads and huge *phalloi*" by an artist operating in a spirit more Ovidian than Vergilian.<sup>22</sup> Only a well known (and likely clichéd) image would be ripe for such a parody, and the wall painter could assume that everyone would get the joke. Despite the bestial caricature, the Stabiae painting offers a closer analogue to the "barbarian and hut" reverse iconography than the more official Pompeii image, with the canine Aeneas turning his head toward the smaller dog (in Phrygian cap no less!) as he leads him toward the right—the same arrangement and movement as the figures on the centenionalis reverse. But by far the closest analogue to the reverse is a first-century altar relief found on the Byrsa Hill in Carthage (fig. 2).<sup>23</sup> Again, Aeneas is depicted striding right, holding Anchises and grasping Ascanius with his right hand. The agonistic nature of the image is intensified by Ascanius' billowing cloak. The tree which helps to frame the left side of the stone relief hangs over Anchises much in the way that the centenionalis tree follows the circular space of the coin. This tree may be the cypress tree (*antiqua cupressus*)

<sup>20</sup> Zanker: 201-202.

<sup>21</sup> Zanker, fig. 156a on 202.

<sup>22</sup> Zanker, fig. 162 on 209.

<sup>23</sup> Fig. 8 in Aïcha Ben Abed Ben Khader and David Soren 1987: 25.

mentioned by Vergil in *Aeneid* 2.714, also relevant to this scene's emphasis upon *pietas* since Aeneas tells us that it was "kept alive for many years by our fathers' devotion" (*religione patrum multos servata per annos, Aen. 2.715*). Such an identification is problematized by the fact that Vergil describes the Trojan refugees as moving *toward* this tree, not away from it, as on the altar relief. However, in an Antonine copy of

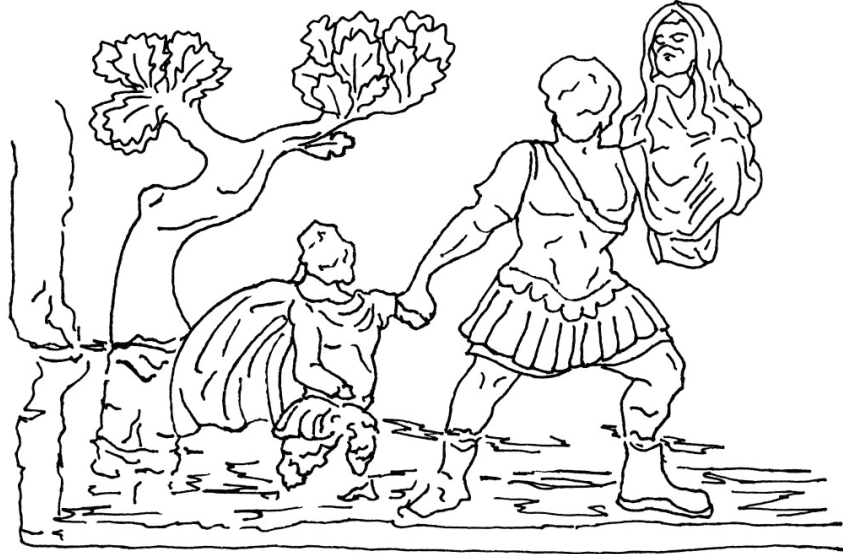


Fig. 2. Altar relief, Byrsa Hill, Carthage; 1st c. A.D. Drawing by Benjamin Watson after Aicha Ben Abed Ben Khader and David Soren 1987: Fig. 8.

a Hadrianic medallion, Aeneas is similarly depicted as carrying Anchises away from a tree which Michael Jenkins suggests is the "ancient cypress" mentioned in the *Aeneid*:

This passage of the *Aeneid* explains fully the upper zone of the design; the Temple of Ceres, shown with an altar before it, and the old cypress enclosed in its protective wall frame the figure of Aeneas carrying Anchises who arrive at the appointed place. The strong similarities between the scene depicted on the upper register of the medallion and the lines from Vergil suggest that the register is, in fact, an illustration of this passage of the *Aeneid*.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Jenkins 1988: 150-1.

Indeed, with Antonine coinage we find multiple reverse types which allow us to more confidently reinterpret the “barbarian and hut” centennialis within a numismatic tradition of Vergilian iconography, especially for issues struck during Roman centenary observances in A.D. 147/48. Antoninus Pius prepared for the 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome’s founding with a series of coins celebrating Rome’s origins, and three of these coins feature Aeneas carrying Anchises and leading Ascanius.<sup>25</sup> Mattingly describes the reverse of one commemorative *aureus* (BMC #237) as follows:

Aeneas, in military dress with cloak, advancing r., carrying Anchises on his l. shoulder with this l. arm and with r. hand leading Ascanius, who advances r. with him: Anchises, veiled, draped, holds a *cista* in l. hand, Ascanius wears short tunic, cloak and Phrygian cap and holds *pedum* upright in r. hand.

Two bronze coins from this series feature similar reverses. In these commemorative issues Aeneas holds neither Penates nor Palladium, though he does grasp the hand of his young son Ascanius. In addition to these regular commemorative issues, the Roman province of Ilium struck a similar-themed coinage, including a large, *sestertius*-sized bronze minted during the reign of Lucius Verus (fig. 3).<sup>26</sup> The reverse of this coin is nearly identical with those of the Antoninus Pius coins, with the



Fig. 3. Bronze 35 mm Roman provincial coin of Ilium minted during the reign of Lucius Verus, 161-69 A.D. Photo courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

<sup>25</sup> See Weigel as well as Mattingly 1968, numbers 237, 1264, and 1292. See also *RIC* III, 37, #91; 109, #615; and 111, #627.

<sup>26</sup> For a similar coin minted for Marcus Aurelius, see Bellinger T148. An early coin (19 B.C.-AD 14) from Ilium depicts Aeneas carrying Anchises, T115. Ascanius joins the group during the Flavian period and would appear throughout the provincial coinage of Ilium during the period of the Antonines: T129, T134, T140, T148, T154, T208, T210.

exception of the city name ΙΑΙΕΩΝ in the exergue—the lower section of the coin reverse usually containing mint identification. Ilium, of course, was patronized by Roman emperors and honored with these mythological reverse types due to its legendary associations with Troy and thus with the foundation of Rome itself. The Antonine commemorative and provincial coins testify to an “Aeneas leading Ascanius” numismatic motif prominent by the mid-second century.

In A.D. 248 Philip I (“The Arab”) would similarly observe the 1000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome’s founding with the *Ludi Saeculares*. Unlike Antoninus Pius, however, he did not issue coins featuring Aeneas, opting instead to depict sacred temples and exotic animals used in the games, with reverse legends such as SAECVLARES AVGG and SAECVLVM NOVVM.<sup>27</sup> One may legitimately wonder, then, whether the Aeneas motif employed by the Antonines could have influenced coin issues some two centuries later in the age of Constans and Constantius II. The influence is plausible for several reasons. First, Michael Jenkins has demonstrated that motifs on coins and contorniates (a type of late imperial medallion) can recur even after long periods of disuse, offering the Aeneas, Anchises, and Ascanius iconography as a prime example:

An “Aeneas, Anchises and Ascanius” medallion-type of Antoninus Pius appears to have been copied on a now worn medallion of Constantine I, which was similarly borrowed by contorniate-engravers during the “*First*” and “*Second Great Striking*”—a period of borrowing from the issuing of the original medallion to the latter contorniate-type of some 310 year[s]! ... Such periods of survival strongly support the views of Toynbee and Vermeule for the existence of an “archive” or “reference collection” of proofs or dies within the Imperial Mint, an “archive” which it would appear, contorniate-engravers were able to access.<sup>28</sup>

And, presumably, coin die engravers as well. But even if this hypothesis of an Imperial archive is rejected, the ubiquity of the

<sup>27</sup> See Körner 2002: 114. On Philip’s observation of the millennial anniversary of Rome, see Körner’s chapter 11: “Die Tausendjarfeier.”

<sup>28</sup> Jenkins 1992: 342. Jenkins follows Alföldi in determining this chronology: “Alföldi’s relative chronology ... suggests that contorniates were created in two major periods, the ‘*First Great Striking*’ between the reigns of Constantius II and Theodosius I, the ‘*Second*’ between c. 410 - 467/72” (341).

Aeneas/Ascanius/Anchises image argues for its long-term survival. Zanker observes that Augustan propaganda became part of the everyday fabric of Roman life: “In general the new mythological imagery was widely spread through Roman cities, and not only in the public sphere. It played an important part in private commissions as well and penetrated into the consciousness of a wide spectrum of the population.”<sup>29</sup> Zanker singles out the Aeneas/Ascanius/Anchises group as a fundamental motif that became fixed in Roman consciousness. Such iconic images have cultural staying power, especially in a society as tradition-oriented as Rome, and Roman numismatic history is marked by the periodic exploitation of effective artistic motifs through “restoration” coinages such as those of Titus, Trajan, and Marcus Aurelius. Finally, provincial coinages kept the Aeneas/Ascanius/Anchises reverse in circulation well into the Severan era, as coins minted for Elagabalus and Julia Mamaea demonstrate.<sup>30</sup> Considering provincial issues, the gap between the Antonine coinage and the coinage of Constans and Constantius II is not as great as it may first appear.

Thus the “barbarian and hut” reverse type may be seen as a numismatic restoration of a common artistic motif. Just as Antoninus Pius issued Aeneas-themed coinage in preparation for Rome’s 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary in A.D. 148, so too might Constans and Constantius II have instituted a reverse type alluding to Rome’s foundation coinciding with Rome’s 1100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Aeneas explanation offers solutions to a number of recurring questions best articulated by Mattingly himself in the 1930s: “The small figure—is he a barbarian or some one else? Is he being led by gentle constraint or roughly dragged? The hut—is it such indeed, or something quite different? And is the tree, behind him, a symbol of barbarian forests or not?”<sup>31</sup> The Vergilian reading obviously addresses the first two questions: the smaller figure resembles the boy Ascanius being led from a burning city by his father still in military attire after fending off the Greeks during the Fall of Troy. In some mint issues, such as Heraclea and Rome, the smaller figure holds an elongated object in his left hand.<sup>32</sup> If we interpret the smaller figure as a type of Ascanius,

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<sup>29</sup> Zanker 209-10.

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Head 1906, #s 213-5.

<sup>31</sup> Mattingly 1977: 13.

<sup>32</sup> I owe this detail to a discussion by Bill Welch on his website, “Analysis of the Hut Coins of Constans and Constantius II.” The object is quite clear on plate 21 of *RIC* VIII, a cast of Heraclea #71 found in the Sydenham hoard. Kent

the object might be the die engraver's attempt to reproduce the *pedum* (hunting stick) that was a familiar attribute of Ascanius, as noted by Zanker in his commentary on the Pompeii wall painting of the Flight from Troy, itself inspired by a sculptural group which once stood in the Forum Augustum:

[Aeneas], barely out of Troy, is depicted as a future Roman, wearing not only Roman armor, but, as ancestor of the Julian clan, even patrician footwear. By contrast, the little Ascanius is represented like a Phrygian shepherd, in long-sleeved garment and pointed cap, and curiously, he carries a stick of the sort used in hunting rabbit. This is evidently an allusion to the tradition that the Trojan youth were shepherds on Mount Ida....<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, these costume features correlate well with the cultural alterity represented by Ascanius in early depictions of the Flight from Troy—as an Oriental child wearing trousers and Phrygian cap. The leggings or trousers of the smaller figure on the centenionalis, thought by Caló Levi to be clear indicators of barbarian status, are worn by Ascanius in the Vatican Vergil, folios 17 and 22 recto (ca. A.D. 400).<sup>34</sup> Even the bizarre hairstyle of the smaller figure—also thought to be a designator of barbarian status—may have been inspired by Ascanius' Phrygian cap.<sup>35</sup>

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comments, “[T]he small figure appears to hold a bow in r. hand” (435 note). This “bow” looks very much like the *pedum* held by Ascanius in the Vatican Vergil, as discussed below. It must be noted, however, that the centenionalis reverse most commonly depicts the smaller figure holding an open hand to his face without an object of any sort.

<sup>33</sup> Zanker 202.

<sup>34</sup> Wright 1993: 27, 126. Properly speaking, the folio depicts Cupid in the guise of Ascanius, as Venus sends him as a kind of proxy wooer to inflame Dido with love for Aeneas; see *Aeneid* 1.657-94. The *pedum* in his hand looks very much like a bow, perhaps reminding readers of his dual nature as Cupid/Ascanius at this point in the narrative. On the coin, the series of horizontal marks sometimes visible on the smaller figure's legs may signify woolen stockings, similar to the leggings worn by a shepherd on the West Front of Chartres Cathedral (lower right portal, “Annunciation to the Shepherds”); see Burckhardt 1996: 68. I owe this latter observation to a suggestion by Patricia Lawrence.

<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, on some mint issues (e.g., Alexandria, Antioch, Heraclea, Nicomedia) a star appears on the centenionalis reverse above the head of the smaller figure. It is tempting to relate this star to the one mentioned in *Aeneid*



Mattingly's last two questions about the hut and tree are also plausibly answered by the Vergilian imagery. As on the Antonine medallion discussed above, the tree may allude to the "ancient cypress" mentioned in Book 2 of the *Aeneid*. The altar relief of Aeneas, Anchises, and Ascanius on the Byrsa Hill in Carthage, with its overhanging tree, offers an even closer artistic analogue to the mysterious tree on the centenionalis reverse. It is tempting to argue that the "hut" is a representation of the protective wall around the sacred tree as found on the *Aeneid* medallion, but the clear artistic affinities between the centenionalis hut and a similar rustic structure on a relief dated to A.D. 270 caution against pushing the Vergilian imagery too far.<sup>36</sup>

Indeed, this Vergilian reading of the "barbarian and hut" reverse type raises certain questions as it answers others. Perhaps the most prominent obstacle to a Vergilian reading of the centenionalis reverse is that the coin features two figures on the reverse, whereas the Aeneas group almost always includes the aged Anchises. Richard Weigel notes that it was Ascanius, not Anchises, who was likely to be omitted from the group in early numismatic representations of the Flight from Troy. Ascanius first appears in provincial coinage during the Flavian era and on regular Imperial issues during the reign of Antoninus Pius, suggesting, for Weigel, that Imperial die engravers were influenced by the *Aeneid*.<sup>37</sup> If the centenionalis reverse indeed alludes to the Flight from Troy, the erasure of Anchises is not easily explained. If we are to seek a thematic explanation for the absence of Anchises from the centenionalis reverse, we might consider Vergil's view that founding a new empire is largely an enterprise for the young. Anchises dies at Drepanum, in Sicily, and during his funereal games the war-weary Trojan women fire the ships to prevent further wandering. The aged seer Nautes then tells Aeneas to leave the old and infirm there to form a

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2.692-694, which courses across the sky and confirms the omen of fire over Ascanius' head, prompting Anchises to recognize the will of Jupiter and depart a burning Troy. However, the star is most likely a "field mark" common on late imperial coinage, perhaps relating to some unknown aspect of mint control.

<sup>36</sup> As Kent observes in *RIC* VIII, the "hut" as a rustic symbol gains credence through comparison to a relief from AD 270 depicting a goatherd milking a goat beneath a wicker construction that closely resembles the centenionalis structure (35 note 8). For images, see van der Meer and Mohrmann 1958: 45, fig. 65; and Hadas 1965: 149.

<sup>37</sup> See Bellinger T129 and Weigel 189.

mock-Troy in “Acesta,” and to take the young, strong, and courageous to Italy. That night the shade of Anchises appears to Aeneas and confirms Nautes’ wise words. These events imply that, for Vergil, the aged do not have an active role to play in the process of ethnogenesis.<sup>38</sup> If the die engraver was adapting Vergilian iconography to comment upon fourth-century events, perhaps he shared a similar view, finding no place (or space) to represent Anchises.

Recent theoretical discussions about identification in classical art emphasizing cultural reception over strict identification may also be brought to bear on the Anchises question. In *Looking at Greek Vases* Mary Beard describes this reception-centered approach, one which values iconology as much as iconography: “First, our attention has to shift away from the artist-producer towards the viewer, towards those in Athenian society who looked at, made sense of and thought about (or thought *with*) the images on the pots.”<sup>39</sup> Such an approach underlies Beard’s argument that mythological scenes depicted on Athenian vases have simultaneous reference to contemporary life:

It would be a crude oversimplification to try to determine in each case what precisely is represented, to try to invent a single, unproblematic title for each scene. The meanings of these images depend on the subtle interplay of both registers: myth and “real life.” We are not just dealing with a figure who is either Hector or an Athenian hoplite; we are dealing with a figure who can be and is both.<sup>40</sup>

Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne have called for similar methodological revisions to art history and criticism, stressing how “‘identification’ and ‘recognition’ are inevitably interwoven with a range

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<sup>38</sup> *Aeneid* 5.709-18 (Mandelbaum 5.934-47).

<sup>39</sup> Beard 1991: 17.

<sup>40</sup> Beard 1991: 21. Beard’s comments on the social functions and polyvalence of Greek art are echoed by Roman art historian Tonio Hölscher (2004:1-2): “Among the fundamental themes for social history raised by the communicative aspects of the history of images are the following: how a society may coin a means of visual communication, how this language then reacts upon the society as it uses and develops it, what the overall visual system is able to achieve as a result, which structures of meaning are implied in its syntax and repertoire of motifs. All these are of real importance for social and cultural history.”

of ideological presuppositions and interpretative issues.”<sup>41</sup> Goldhill and Osborne discuss artists’ invitations to “narrativise,” to supply a story or many stories implied in a scene. They describe the Exekias vase painting of Ajax and Achilles playing dice, noting that the image can elicit a host of responses from the reader:

The fragmentary text in the image, which encourages the reader to narrativise the dice throw as part of an uncompleted game, stands as an emblem of the fragmentary texts invoked by the image, which encourage the reader to narrativise the image—the uncompleted game of reading.... Naming, describing, narrating are overlapping and mutually implicative processes.<sup>42</sup>

It seems implausible that on the 1100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome—an event with a history of Vergilian numismatic iconography—the centenionalis die engravers would unwittingly depict a scene so similar to the Flight from Troy, unaware of the iconography’s strong resemblance to Aeneas leading Ascanius. And what would this gesture mean to a fourth-century Imperial viewer? The hermeneutic approach which Beard, Goldhill, and Osborne describe above raises the possibility that even if Vergilian associations were not intended by the die engravers, these associations would likely be part of the cultural reception of the coin in circulation. So pervasive was the Flight from Troy motif that even an incomplete figuring of it would likely trigger Vergilian narratives in Roman minds.

Other obstacles to a Vergilian reading of the centenionalis reverse are less problematic. For example, the soldier on the centenionalis is always helmeted, whereas in the Flight from Troy motif Aeneas is almost always bareheaded. An exception is provided by an image from the Vatican Vergil, folio 22 *recto*, ca. 400 AD.<sup>43</sup> Here a helmeted Aeneas turns to grasp the hand of a kneeling, ill-fated Creusa. Although the Vatican Vergil’s Aeneas holds a shield, his dress, posture, and spear position are quite similar to those of the centenionalis soldier, further arguing for a connection between the iconography of Aeneas and the centenionalis soldier. Similarly, the image of Ascanius on folio 17 *recto*, with his outstretched right hand and *pedum* in the left, offers a striking

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<sup>41</sup> Goldhill and Osborne 1994: 4.

<sup>42</sup> Goldhill and Osborne 6.

<sup>43</sup> Wright 27.

resemblance to the smaller figure on the centenionalis. The similarities may be due to a common exemplar now lost, or the codex may actually show the influence of the centenionalis.

A more philosophical objection to a Vergilian reading of the centenionalis reverse type can be found in Konrad Kraft's criticism of Mattingly's 1933 argument. Mattingly maintained that the reverse type was struck in commemoration of the 1100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rome, but Kraft asserted that celebrating the secular anniversary would not be in keeping with the new Christian nature of the empire (*Der heidnische Charakter der Saecularfeier verträgt sich überdies nicht mit dem christlichen Kaisertum.*)<sup>44</sup> However, more recent studies of Constantine and his age demonstrate that the Imperial family, while promoting Christianity, did value important Roman customs regardless of their pagan associations. Of Constantine himself Michael Grant writes:

Constantine understood that, despite the spread of Christianity, paganism was still the religion of the great majority of his subjects, including nearly all the members of the Senate and the dominant class at Rome, not to speak of the general public: so that he had to go carefully—paying ample tribute to the senators, for example, on his coins and medallions. That is the keynote of his entire reign: he did push Christianity, but, recalling, perhaps, that the Christians had always operated with secrecy, he pushed it by careful, ambivalent stages and periphrases. These included references to the past, such as moves to see himself as a re-born Augustus. And the inscription on his Arch in Rome, designed either by Constantine himself, and his advisers, or by the Senate, offers very deliberate and definite echoes of the great pagan emperors of the past. Indeed, some of the reliefs on the Arch were actually *taken* from monuments of Trajan, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius—so that the structure was called “Aesop's jay,” because of its borrowed plumage.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Kraft 146.

<sup>45</sup> Grant 1994: 152. It should be noted, however, that other scholars such as Timothy D. Barnes argue for a Constantine far less tolerant of paganism. But even Barnes (1981:211) observes, “In many matters, Constantine showed a caution which has often seemed to imply a policy of religious toleration. He would not risk rebellion or civil disobedience, and in Italy and the West, where he had been emperor long before 324, he made no serious attempt to enforce the prohibition of sacrifice which Eusebius attests for the East. More generally, he

Specifically concerning the reign of Constans, Kent writes,

Constans' aggressive Christianity led to measures early in his reign against Jews, Pagans, and violators of morality. There is however no indication in his surviving legislation that this zeal continued after 342, and many distinguished pagans held office under him.<sup>46</sup>

After the dedication of Constantinople in May 330, Constantine consciously sought to fold Rome's pagan past into its Christian present. He and his sons issued coinage celebrating Rome and Constantinople as equally important cities, with the Roma reverse featuring the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus.<sup>47</sup> Later writers asserted that the base of the porphyry column at the center of Constantinople's forum not only contained artifacts from Moses and Noah, but the Palladium itself.<sup>48</sup> And David Wright's discussion of the patron and audience of the Vatican Vergil, with its conscious attempt to "maintain old traditions," should demonstrate that affection for Rome's founding narrative was never stronger than in the 4<sup>th</sup> century—a time when "Vergilian scholarship particularly flourished."<sup>49</sup> On the extent to which late antiquity sought such connections, Averil Cameron has commented:

This is no romanticizing of the past, but rather its practical adaptation to the needs of the present. If the men and women of late antiquity did not romanticize the past, nor were they conscious of a sense of modernity. Rather, they wished devoutly to connect with a past which they still saw as part of their own experience and their own world. This could easily lead to incongruity in modern eyes; but

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could not disappoint the expectations of subsidy or support which loyal subjects, whatever their creed, entertained of their ruler, for to do so would flout the etiquette of centuries. Constantine subsidized the travels of a priest of the Eleusinian mysteries who visited the tombs of the kings in Egyptian Thebes, welcomed a pagan philosopher at court, and honored a priest of Apollo at Delphi for conspicuous devotion to the imperial house."

<sup>46</sup> *RIC* VIII, 9.

<sup>47</sup> See any number of CONSTANTINOPOLIS or VRBS ROMA issues in *RIC* VII; e.g., 138, #s 241-42.

<sup>48</sup> See Kelly 2001: 170-71.

<sup>49</sup> Wright 101-2.

it puzzles us far more than it did contemporaries to find, for example, fragments of classical masonry or sculpture built in to new constructions which we tend to find inferior. The past was very real to the men and women of late antiquity: as they saw it, it had not so much to be remade as to be reasserted.<sup>50</sup>

### III. LOOKING FORWARD

Thus, with the “barbarian and hut” centenionalis we may be witnessing the kind of reassertion Cameron describes, no matter the potential incongruities. But Kraft’s objections, as well as his compelling arguments concerning Constans’ program of romanizing the Franks, caution us against over-determining the image on the centenionalis reverse. Perhaps an intentional ambiguity in the die engraver’s art allows for both possibilities. It is true that explicit pagan numismatic imagery declines sharply after the death of Constantine. Whereas the coinage of Constantine himself had featured *Sol Invictus* and “Jove the Preserver,” the coinage of his successors largely employed generic personifications of Roman values, such as *Victoria* and *Virtus*. An explicit resurrection of the Flight from Troy group might have been deemed inappropriate in a post-Constantine empire, yet an allusion to the iconography might have seemed a skillful blend of old and new. In offering this Vergilian reading, I am not arguing that the larger and smaller figures *are* Aeneas and Ascanius; rather, I argue that the centenionalis reverse alludes to this familiar iconography without strictly imposing the identification, much in the same way that Mary Beard’s Greek viewer could see in a single figure both Hector and an Athenian hoplite. The “barbarian and hut” centenionalis simultaneously celebrates the virtues of *Romanitas* for those border tribes willing to embrace it, just as Aeneas and Ascanius embraced their Roman destiny when leaving their homeland. This Romanization can be viewed as a late antique reflex of the very ethnogenesis celebrated in Vergil’s *Aeneid*. Even the father of Rome itself, *pater Aeneas*, was not Roman but Trojan, and while much attention is paid to Aeneas’ Trojan identity and Rome’s Trojan origins, Vergil goes to great pains to establish the idea that *Romanitas* was not a racial prerogative but a socially constructed one. In *Aeneid* Book 12, as

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<sup>50</sup> Cameron 2001: 1-2.

Aeneas fights Turnus and his hostile allies, Jupiter finally convinces Juno of the futility of it all. Aeneas is destined to found the Roman people, to whom Jupiter has given *imperium sine fine*, “empire without end.” Juno agrees to set aside her fruitless enmity toward the Trojans on the condition that the Trojan name be obliterated, and that Trojan and Italian be assimilated into a new, unified people. Jupiter consents, detailing how the assimilation will occur:

sermonem Ausonii patrium moresque tenebunt,  
 utque est nomen erit; commixti corpore tantum  
 subsident Teucri. morem ritusque sacrorum  
 adiciam faciamque omnis uno ore Latinos.  
 hinc genus Ausonio mixtum quod sanguine surget,  
 supra homines, supra ire deos pietate uidebis.

(*Aen.*12.834-9)

*For the Ausonians will keep  
 their homeland's words and ways; their name will stay;  
 the body of the Teucrians will merge  
 with Latins, and their name will fall away.  
 But I shall add their rituals and customs  
 to the Ausonians', and make them all—  
 and with one language—Latins. You will see  
 a race arise from this that, mingled with  
 the blood of the Ausonians, will be  
 past men, even past gods, in piety.*<sup>51</sup>

Here Vergil provides an *aetion* for the Roman practice of assimilating conquered peoples into the empire. Vergil's fiction is a helpful metaphor for the truth, as Romans indeed established their hegemony in Italy following the Latin and Samnite wars in the 4th century BC through the judicious extension of Roman citizenship in varied degrees. It was a practice that Rome would exercise throughout its history, with the result that *Romanitas* would be theoretically open to the friends and allies of Rome. The artistic representation of Aeneas leading Ascanius represents both fleeing and founding, and in a single tableau collapses the protracted process by which Trojan and Italian become one. Such a

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<sup>51</sup> Mandelbaum 12.1107-1116.

model of ethnogenesis would not apply precisely to the 4th-century treatment of barbarians (e.g., Rome would not lose its name as Troy did), but the Vergilian model does posit an underlying principle for assimilating peoples such as the Franks, Alemanni, and Sarmatians into the empire, as long as they are willing to share in Rome's destiny.<sup>52</sup>

The images on the "barbarian and hut" reverse, then, are polyvalent: the hut and overhanging tree are, in the words of Caló Levi, "an abbreviation of a whole landscape and indicate the woods and the huts where the barbarians lived," as well as an allusion to the ancient cypress in *Aeneid* 2 and possibly to a protective wall. The leggings/trousers of the smaller figure, as well as his shepherd's crook or hunting stick, may denote the figure's pastoral/barbarian status, but they also place him in the iconographical tradition of Ascanius, as witnessed by the roughly contemporary Vatican Vergil. Though Ascanius' costume suggests the distant Roman past, Alessandro Barchiesi notes that in art and literature Ascanius/Iulus represented the future: "As in the Forum Augustum, in the *Aeneid* Iulus is the individual on whom history depends."<sup>53</sup> The same might be said of barbarian youth in the fourth century. In short, the Aeneas/Ascanius interpretation and the barbarian/hut interpretation are not mutually exclusive. An attractive possibility is that Constans and his propagandists skillfully employed traditional Roman iconography in order to celebrate present triumphs and future possibilities—nothing could be more appropriate to the reverse legend FEL TEMP REPARATIO, a concept embodied by the soldier himself who looks backward while striding forward toward future glory. By placing the youthful barbarian in the traditional position of Ascanius on the

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<sup>52</sup> The "barbarian and hut" centenionalis may not be the first coin to appropriate the Flight from Troy motif to commemorate a shift in population. Concerning a third-century coin from Otrus in Phrygia, Ramsay (1895: 688) comments, "A coin type representing Aeneas carrying Anchises and leading his little son Askanios by the hand may be interpreted as symbolizing an emigration from the Askanian shore. The type previously described implies an emigration beyond the sea; and we thus arrive at the conclusion that the mercenaries settled in Otrous came partly from Europe and partly from the Bithynian lake Askania." Of course, it is unlikely that Roman die-engravers of the 4<sup>th</sup> century could have been aware of these associations, but Ramsay's speculations, if correct, would establish a numismatic precedent for using this artistic motif to comment on a contemporary emigration.

<sup>53</sup> Barchiesi 2005: 302.



centenionalis reverse, the sons of Constantine and their die engravers imply that, like Ascanius, barbarians too have a destiny vital to the interests of the empire.<sup>54</sup>

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