

Temple Monuments and Literary Memory in Silius' *Punica*
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1. Silius haec magni celebrat monimenta Maronis,
iugera facundi qui Ciceronis habet.
heredem dominumque sui tumulive larisve
non alium mallet nec Maro nec Cicero.

Silius frequents great Vergil's tomb and possesses the acreage of eloquent Cicero. Neither Vergil nor Cicero would prefer another heir or owner of his tomb or home. (Martial, *Epigr.* 11.48)

2. Nouissime ita suadentibus annis ab urbe secessit, seque in Campania tenuit, ac ne aduentu quidem noui principis inde commutus est ... Plures isdem in locis uillas possidebat, adamatisque nouis priores neglegebat. Multum ubique librorum, multum statuarum, multum imaginum, quas non habebat modo, uerum etiam uenerebatur, Vergili ante omnes, cuius natalem religiosius quam suum celebrabat, Neapoli maxime, ubi monumentum eius adire ut templum solebat. (Pliny, *Epistles* 3.7.6-8)

Most recently at the urging of old age he left the city for retirement in Campania, and he couldn't be brought to return even on the occasion of the new prince's arrival... He possessed more villas in this part of Italy, and neglected his earlier places, so much had he come to love the new ones. There he had many books, statues and portraits, which he not only owned but even revered, above all those of Vergil, whose birthday he marked more scrupulously than his own, especially at Naples, where he used to approach his tomb as though it were a place of worship.

3. Vrbe fuit media sacrum genetricis Elissae
manibus et patria Tyriis formidine cultum,
quod taxi circum et piceae squalentibus umbris
abdiderant caelique arcebant lumine, templum.
hoc sese, ut perhibent, curis mortalibus olim 85
exuerat regina loco. stant marmore maesto
effigies, Belusque parens omnisque nepotum
a Belo series, stat Gloria gentis Agenor
et qui longa dedit terries cognomina Phoenix.
ipsa sedet tandem aeternum coniuncta Sychaeo. 90
ante pedes ensis Phrygius iacet. ordine centum
stant arae caelique deis Ereboque potenti.
(Silius, *Punica* 1.81-92)

In the middle of the city there was a shrine to the ghost of their foremother Elissa, cultivated by the Tyrians with ancestral reverence; yews and pines planted round about concealed it with dark shadows and kept heaven's light from the temple. The queen, as they say, had stripped herself of mortal cares in this place. Images in mournful marble stand there – father Belus and the whole sequence of descendants from Belus – and Agenor stands there, the glory of the line, and Phoenix who has long given his name to their land, Phoenicia. Last in line, she herself sits there, next to Sychaeus for eternity. Before her feet lie the Phrygian sword. There stand a hundred altars in order, to the gods of heaven and the master of Erebus.

4. Exin clauigeri ueneratus numinis aras
captiuis onerat donis, quae nuper ab arce 15
uictor fumantis rapuit semusta Sagunti.
uulgatum, nec casa fides, ab origine fani
impositas durare trabes solasque per aeuum
condentum nouisse manus. hinc credere gaudent
consedisse deum seniumque repellere templis.
(Silius, *Punica* 3.14-20)

From there Hannibal worshipped at the altars of the divine club-bearer, burdening them with the captured gifts that, victorious, he had recently seized from the half-burnt citadel of smoking Saguntum. It is widely circulated (nor is the report untrustworthy) that the beams established from the outset of the shrine endured and knew only the hands of its founders through the ages. Hence they take joy in believing that the god the god has settled in his temple and repels senescence.

5. Ennium sicut sacros vetustate lucos adoremus, in quibus grandia et antiqua robora iam non tantam habent speciem quantam religionem. (Quint. *Inst. Or.* 1.10.88)

We must reverence Ennius just as groves sacred for their antiquity, in which the trees, grand and ancient, have not as much beauty as sanctity.

6. In foribus labor Alcidae: Lernaea recisis
anguibus hydra iacet, nexuque elisa leonis
ora Cleonaei patulo caelantur hiatu. 35
at Stygius saeuus terrens latratibus umbras
ianitor aeterno tum primum tractus ab antro
uincla indignatur, metuitque Megaera catenas.
iuxta Thraces equi pestisque Erymanthia et altos

On the doors were depicted Hercules' labours: the Lernaean hydra lies dead with its snake-heads lopped off, and the face of the Nemean lion, throttled by his grip, is engraved with gaping jaw. But the Stygian doorkeeper, terrifying the shades with his savage barking, then for the first time dragged from his eternal cave disdains his chains and Megaera too feared bonds. Next came the Thracian horses, the Erymanthian boar-plague,

aeripedis ramos superantia cornua cerui.
nec leuior uinci Libycae telluris alumnus
matre super stratique, genus deforme, bimembres
Centauri frontemque minor nunc amnis Acaranan.
inter quae fulget sacratis ignibus Oete,
ingentemque animam rapiunt ad sidera flammae.
(Silius, *Punica* 3.32-44)

and the bronze-footed Cerynthian stag's horns which topped tall tree-branches. Nor was the offspring of the Libyan earth easier to conquer when he stood on his mother, and the ugly race of biform Centaurs, and the Achamanian stream now stripped of a horn. Among the figures Oeta gleams with sacrosanct fires and the flames snatch his huge soul to the stars.

7. ergo ego foedantem peregrine temple cruore
Busirin domui saeuoque alimenta parentis
Antaeo eripui nec me pastoris Hiberi 184
forma triplex nec forma triplex tua, Cerbere, mouit.
uosne, manus, ualidi pressistis cornua tauri?
uestrum opus Elis habet, uestrum Stymphalides undae
Partheniumque nemus, uestra uirtute relates
Thermodontiaco caelatus balteus auro
pomaque ab insomnia concustodita dracone. 190
nec mihi Centauri potuere resistere nec mi
Arcadiae uastator aper, nec profuit hydrae
crescere per damnum geminasque resumere uires.
quid, cum Thracis equos humano sanguine pingues
plenaque corporibus laceris praesepia uidi 195
uisaque deieci dominumque ipsosque peremi?
his elisa iacet moles Nemeaea lacertis,
hac caelum ceruice tuli... (Ovid, *Met.* 9.182-98)

Was it for this that I subdued Busiris, who defiled his temples with strangers' blood? that I deprived the dread Antaeus of his mother's strength? that I did not fear the Spanish shepherd's triple form, nor yours, Cerberus? Was it for this, My hands, that you broke the strong bull's horns? that Elis knows your toil, the waves of Stymphalus, the the Parthenian woods? that by your prowess the gold-worked girdle of Thermodon was secured, and that fruit guarded by dragon's sleepless eyes? Was it for this that the centaurs could not prevail against me, nor the boar that devastated Arcadia? that it did not avail the hydra to grow by loss and gain redoubled strength? What, when I saw the Thracian's horses fat with human blood and those mangers full of mangled corpses and, seeing, threw them down and killed the master and the horses themselves? By these arms the monster of Nemea lies crushed; upon this neck I upheld the sky!

8. Hic dum stagnosi spectat templumque domosque
Literni ductor, uaria splendentia cernit
pictura belli patribus monumenta prioris 655
exhausti; nam porticibus signata manebant,
quis inerat longus rerum et spectabilis ordo.
(Silius, *Punica* 6.653-7)

Here, while the Carthaginian general admires marshy Liternum's temple and buildings, he observes a gleaming memorial of the earlier war fought by their forefathers, with a cycle of paintings. For the images remained on the temple porticoes, on which the long and spectacular series of events was depicted.

9. *monumentum est ... quicquid ob memoriam alicuius factum est* (Paulus Festus 139); 'a monument is whatever has been made for the memory of someone'

10. *historiae ... ideo monumenta dicuntur eo quod memoriam tribuant rerum gestarum.* (Isidore, *Origines* 1.41.2); For this reason histories are called 'monuments', because they grant a remembrance of deeds that have been done.

11. atque hic perlustrans aditus, fulgentia cernit
arcis templa iugo ... (Silius, *Punica* 12.85-6)

and here, while studying the approaches, he discerned a shining temple on the summit of the citadel

12. non est hoc, inquit, nostri, quod suspicis, aui;
maiores fecere manus ... (Silius, *Punica* 12.88-9)

'This building which you see above us,' he said, 'is not a work of our age: ancestral hands constructed it'.

13. ... cum regna timeret
Dictaei regis, sic fama est, linquere terras 90
Daedalus inuenit nec toto signa sequenti
orbe dare, **aetherias** aliena **tollere in auras**
ausus **se penna** atque homini monstrare uolatus.
suspensum hic **librans** media inter nubila **corpus**
enauit **superosque nouus conterruit ales.** 95
natum etiam docuit **falsae sub imagine** plumae
attendare uias uolucrum; lapsumque **solutis**
pennarum remis et non felicibus alis
turbida plaudentem **uidit** freta; dumque dolori

When Daedalus, as the story goes, feared the rule of the Cretan king, he discovered how to escape from earth and leave no trace for Minos following him over the whole world. He dared to raise himself into the breezes of the air on wings not his own and to show mankind the skill of flight. Balancing his body, poised in the midst of the clouds, he floated, and the strange winged creature terrified the gods. He taught his son too, beneath semblance of false wings, to attempt the paths of birds; but when the feathered oars melted, he saw him fall and splash the surging sea with his unlucky wings. Yielding to his sudden grief, Daedalus beat his breast, and all unknowing he steered his

- indulget subito, **motis** ad pectora palmis, 100 flight through the modulation of his breast-beating.
nescius heu planctu duxit moderante uolatus. (Silius, *Punica* 12.89-101)
14. bis conatus erat casus effingere in auro, twice he had tried to fashion your fall in gold,
bis patriae cecidere manus ... (Vergil, *Aen.* 6.32-3) and twice his father's hands fell
15. ...postquam manus ultima coepto 200 After the finishing touches had been set to the undertaking,
imposita est, geminas opifex **librauit in alas** the master workman himself balanced his body on two wings
ipse **suum corpus motaque pependit in aura**... and hung poised on the beaten air... Now some fisherman sees
hos aliquis tremula dum captat harundine pisces, them, angling for fish with his flexible rod, or a shepherd leaning
aut pastor baculo stiuauae innixus arator on his staff, or a plowman on his plow-handles, and stands
uidit et obstipuit, quique **aethera** carpere possent, stupefied, and believes them to be gods that they could fly
credidit esse deos.... 220 through the air...
tabuerant cerae: nudos **quatit ille lacertos**, The wax melted; his arms were bare as he beat them up and
remigioque carens non ullas percipit **auras**, down, but, lacking wings, they took no hold on the air. His mouth,
oraque caerulea patrium clamantia nomen calling to the last his father's name, was drowned in the dark
excipiuntur aqua, quae nomen traxit ab illo. 230 blue sea, which took its name from him.
(Ovid, *Met.* 8.201-2, 217-20, 227-30)

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