

Temple Monuments and Literary Memory in Silius' *Punica*

Martial and the younger Pliny attest to Silius' devotion to the foremost authors of classical Latin literature, Vergil and Cicero (Mart. 7.63, Plin. *Epist.* 3.7), which extended to his purchase of a villa that had belonged to Cicero, as well as of the site of Vergil's tomb, at which he worshipped as if at a temple (Plin. *Epist.* 3.7.8). While we cannot evaluate the influence of Ciceronian rhetoric on Silius' public speeches, which are no longer extant, we are in the fortunate position of being able to assess the impact of Vergil's poetry on every page of his *Punica*, including on several temple ecphrases in the epics: the shrine of Elissa (Dido) at Carthage in Book 1, the temple at Liternum in Book 6, and the temple of Apollo at Cumae in Book 12. Scholars have traced the inspiration of Vergil in all three passages, though the influence of Livy on the temple at Liternum and of Ovid on the temple at Cumae have also received some attention (Bruère 1959; Spaltenstein 1986, 1990; Wilson 2004).

My study builds on this scholarship to investigate Silius' use of the lexicon of literary memory (Conte 1986, Miller 1993, Hinds 1998) in the passages from the perspectives of allusion and intertextuality. I argue that Silius' temples are monuments commemorating the writings of Vergil, Livy, Ovid and other Latin authors. In figuratively erecting temples that memorialize his literary exemplars, Silius extends the imagery of his esteemed Augustan predecessors Vergil and Horace, who drew on the contemporary practice of victorious Roman generals vowing and building temples for the commemoration of imperial conquests, in their programmatic statements of literary achievement (*Geo.* 3.1-42, *C.* 3.30). Unlike his poetic forbears, however, Silius celebrates the Latin literary tradition rather than the military conquests of contemporary generals and the architectural projects of the Flavian emperors.