

Amyot and North. Plot devices such as mirror scenes and other dramatic correspondences, motifs such as the language of sacrifice used to describe Caesar's murder, reintroduction of "pagan" elements such as the *daimon* linking Brutus and Caesar (played down in the translations of Amyot and North), and the skill shown in weaving together strands from several Plutarchan *Lives*, all show a close affinity to the sensibilities of Plutarch, and especially his vision of the tragic.

This volume was written by scholars for scholars. Many Greek phrases are left untranslated, and footnotes do not, for the most part, attempt to provide the overview of the scholarly terrain that an undergraduate would need. It contains, however, a number of important contributions to the scholarly study of Greek tragedy and of its tradition, and will no doubt generate further discussion and frequent citation. It also does valuable service by pausing to take stock of the trajectory of scholarship. Although there is little here that is radically pioneering, the reader comes away from these essays with an appreciation for the wide variety of approaches to the study of Greek tragedy that exists in the early years of the twenty-first century.

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Antony AUGOUSTAKIS, ed., *Brill's Companion to Silius Italicus*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010. Pp. xxiii + 512. ISBN 978-90-04-16570-0. €152.00/\$225.00.

Scholars inured to the monotonous deluge of negative superlatives heaped on Silius Italicus in twentieth-century surveys of Latin literature will welcome the new critical insights contained in this most recent *Brill Companion*, which offers a timely affirmation of flourishing interest in his *Punica*. The opening essay, by the *Companion's* editor, Antony Augoustakis, sets the poem in its Flavian context with a survey of the poet's life and literary career and *Punica's* much debated *Makrostruktur*, before outlining 18 contributed articles with reference to their

function within the volume's three broad divisions: Context and Intertext, Themes and Images, Reception and Criticism.

The first of these covers Silius' close relationship with historiography, Virgil, Lucan and Statius. Scholars familiar with the literary nuances evoked by Silius' compound intertextuality will be stimulated by Arthur Pomeroy's convincing demonstration how Thucydides' narrative of the Peloponnesian War shines through Silius' adaptations of Livy's account of the Second Punic War: should we detect, for instance, Nicias' and Alcibiades' arguments over the Sicilian expedition in Fabius' and Scipio's debate whether to carry the war to Africa? A complementary essay by Bruce Gibson examines Silius' methodology, showing that the poet's military speeches and ethnographic and geographic digressions show the influence of Cicero as well as of the historiographers. Although assessment of Silius' literary debt to Virgil tends to splinter into episodic analyses, both contributions here successfully focus on the broader topics of the literary origins and Romanization of epic heroes. Randall Ganiban shows how Hannibal's literary origins in Dido's Carthage determine his tragic heroism through both his own fanatical family loyalty and Juno's partisan manipulation, leading him inexorably to ultimate defeat. Elizabeth Kennedy Klaasen uses an in-depth analysis of Scipio's katabasis in *Punica* 13 to demonstrate how Silius' characters are drawn from multiple epic models derived from Virgil and Homer. Raymond Marks argues convincingly that, by deploying Lucan's powerful imagery of division, Silius represents the strong leadership of the Flavians as an antidote to civil strife; when Rome unites behind a single leader, Scipio, Hannibal's earlier resemblance to Lucan's unstoppable Caesar gives way, symbolically, to the dismembered Pompey. In the final contribution to this section, Helen Lovatt suggests poetic interplay and rivalry between Silius and Statius in their presentation of the epic set piece, funeral games. Her timely challenge to scholars working in this area, that further analyses of the interaction between the three Flavian epicists 'must be a major priority of research', prompts the suggestion that her essay would have been enhanced by a matching contribution on Silius' literary engagement with Valerius Flaccus.

Part C, Themes and Images, opens with a subsection of four essays on Silius and the Tradition of Exemplary Heroism. In an epic where Hannibal's champion, Juno, rallies to his cause ambivalent female deities such as Anna Perenna and the Fury Tisiphone, Hercules provides a literary counterfoil and heroic paradigm for the Roman leaders, most notably Fabius and Scipio. In his essay, "Hercules as a paradigm of Roman heroism," Paolo Asso highlights Silius' allusive imagery

which undermines Hannibal's perception of his victorious progress from Gades westwards as conquest in the steps of Hercules. Resolving his own contention that *Punica* is "a poem at war with itself" (203), Ben Tipping offers an illuminating analysis of Scipio Africanus' role as a proto-Flavian hero of *Punica* which Silius signals by his hero's response to the Heldenschau, when he longs to equal the pinnacle of glory achieved by Alexander the Great (*P.* 13. 269–71), by Scipio's choice of Virtue over Voluptas (15. 18–128) and by glimpses of Domitian within the poet's description of Scipio's triumph (17. 625–54). Marco Fucecchi, in contrast, focuses on recurrent imagery which supports Silius' carefully constructed portrait of "the noblest figures of Roman republican aristocracy" (238): Fabius, Rome's "shield," and Marcellus, Rome's "sword" (Plut. *Fab.* 19.2, *Marc.* 1. 2), to whose *aristeia* the poet devotes separate books, *Punica* 7 and 14. Fucecchi picks up Tipping's viewpoint in his conclusion that, by juxtaposing Fabius and Marcellus in their final acts of "old Roman" heroism (*P.* 15. 320–33, 334–98), Silius accentuates the emergent Scipio's "modern individualism, almost proto-imperial model of charismatic power" (239). In emphasizing internal division as one of Rome's greatest weaknesses before the catastrophe at Cannae, Silius highlights the damage caused by unscrupulous demagogy to the conduct of the war. Astutely (as it would appear from his title: "*fons cuncti Varro mali*: the Demagogue Varro in *Punica* 8–10"), Enrico Ariemma singles out Silius' denigratory portrayal of Rome's most divisive general, C. Terentius Varro. His essay tends to be diffuse, however, and readers may regret being side-tracked from the central issue by, for instance, a digression on Hannibal's divine protectresses.

Connoisseurs of Silius' subtly teleological ekphraseis and his thoughtfully apt similes will not be disappointed by subsection b of Part C: Ekphrasis and Imagery. This opens dynamically with Stephen Harrison's argument for the prophetic character of three pictorial ekphraseis: Hannibal's shield (2. 406–25), Hasdrubal's cloak (15. 421–32) and the paintings in the temple at Liternum (6. 700–16). Eleni Manolaraki takes this a step further when she interprets Silius' recurrent waterscapes as prophetic intimations of Hannibal's ultimate downfall. Preoccupied with his own conquests, Hannibal is not awed, as he should be, by *lunae labores* governing the tides at Gades (3. 61). His disregard for cosmic forces mirrors his inability to anticipate the ebb and flow of the tides of war. Manolaraki's perceptive and nuanced study invites further research into the literary significance underlying Silius' predilection for waterscape. This stimulating and provocative section of the *Companion* concludes resoundingly with Robert Cowan's exploration how proliferating counterfactuals in Silius' *Punica* create

tensions with the teleological determinism of ancient epic. The poetics of contingency are accentuated in the course of a hard-fought struggle in which anticipated outcomes are foiled by pestilence, nightfall, a weapon hitting the wrong target (*alienum vulnus*) or a synecdochic hero's death (Marcellus, Hasdrubal) or intervention (Regulus, Fabius).

Part C concludes with related analyses by Alison Keith and Neil Bernstein, juxtaposed in subsections c, Gender, and d, Epic and Society. Keith shows how Hannibal's Virgilian roots in the female-dominated Orientalism of Dido's Carthage are set in a literary collision course with the Roman masculine West. Bernstein contrasts Hannibal, doomed to destruction by his inheritance of eastern *Furor*, with Silius' Roman heroes who are stabilized by paternal authority and grounded in a republican aristocracy which mirrors the successful Flavian model of imperial paternalism. Widening the circle, Bernstein suggests that in his narration of Rome's dealings with Saguntum and Capua Silius appears to acknowledge the strain on epic *syngeneia* of the impact of Rome's Social and civil wars.

The *Companion* closes with two disparate essays, by Frances Muecke and William Dominik, covering Reception and Criticism. Muecke brings a wide knowledge of humanist circles in Italy and France to her lively and informative essay on *Punica*'s warm reception, from Poggio's first discovery of a manuscript in 1417, through the lecture halls and editions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Dominik, meanwhile, ably confronts the harder brief of charting the steep decline in Silius' popularity through the Romantic Movement to its nadir in the twentieth century, winding up with punchy criticism of "the worst excesses of the rhetorical demolition of Silius" (437) before offering a constructive survey of recent directions in Silian scholarship and suggestions for new lines of research.

A copious bibliography, general index and two lists of inter- and intra-textual references complete a volume barely marred by typographical errors (Fröhlich for Fröhlich in the Bibliography). *Brill's Companion to Silius Italicus* is an essential acquisition for the growing number of scholars now working on Flavian epic. Its success in highlighting the essential aspects of Silian poetics owes much to the judicious and imaginative arrangement of 18 wide-ranging contributions within a cohesive structure by Antony Augoustakis.

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