

Olivia Standish

Professor Randolph Ford

CL 310 – Latin Poetry: Virgil

04/24/2023

The Role of Femininity in Virgil's *Aeneid*

Annotated Bibliography

- Desmond, Marilynn. *Reading Dido: Gender, Textuality, and the Medieval Aeneid*. NED-New edition, vol. 8, University of Minnesota Press, 1994. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctttt8rg>. Accessed 27 Apr. 2023.

Desmond focuses solely on Dido in this book. The introduction of this character into the *Aeneid* leaves much for discussion on Virgil's views on women and their role in society. On the one hand, he portrays Dido as a very capable and powerful monarch who does the best for her people. However, Virgil steals her power when she falls in love with Aeneas and abandons her people by committing suicide. Desmond also brings in the demographic of the readers of the *Aeneid* historically, and the impact this has had on the interpretations of Dido's character as a hysterical woman not fit for the position of monarch.

- Giusti, Elena, and Victoria Rimell. "Vergil and the Feminine: Introduction." *Vergilius (1959-)*, vol. 67, 2021, pp. 3–24. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27078490>. Accessed 24 Apr. 2023.

This source is stated as a feminist reading of the *Aeneid*, looking at the epic through a gender studies lens. The misogyny surrounding Virgilian context, and the numerous commentaries and translations done by men is called into question. The authors question whether the character of Camilla (and to some extent Dido) encourage or discourage the non-conformity to traditional gender roles. Additionally, how authors of different genders and cultures interpreted the roles of the different type of women involved in the creation of Rome. I can gather some of this article's sources as my own secondary sources to evaluate the past views of femininity in the *Aeneid* as well as using this source to discuss the traditional or untraditional roles of women in the *Aeneid*.

- Nugent, S. Georgia. "Vergil's 'Voice of the Women' in 'Aeneid' V." *Arethusa*, vol. 25, no. 2, 1992, pp. 255–92. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26308612>. Accessed 24 Apr. 2023.

This source looks at "recovering women's voices" which admittedly is difficult in a poem written by a man to hold up the patriarchal society of Rome and its standard cultural and societal norms. Nugent looks specifically at Book V of the *Aeneid*, which includes the storyline of Juno infecting the Trojan women with hysteria to the point where they burn all their ships. Interestingly, Nugent notes that no woman ever speaks in this book, only the goddesses Iris and Juno. The voice of women is noticeably absent when the women are 'hysterical'. This view of emotional women as crazy and irrational carries forward into today's society. I will use this source to link the Virgilian illustration of women to the perception of women today.

- Ramsby, Teresea. "Juxtaposing Dido and Camilla in the 'Aeneid.'" *The Classical Outlook*, vol. 88, no. 1, 2010, pp. 13–17. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43940040>. Accessed 24 Apr. 2023.

Ramsby's article looks at the main differences Virgil portrays between the two most described women in the *Aeneid* – Camilla and Dido. She explains the differences in their femininity, the nature of their origins, and the legacy they leave behind for their people. She discusses the role of Camilla and Dido in Aeneas's destiny, and the different methods Virgil uses for them to attempt to foil the foundation of Rome. Ramsby questions why Virgil, of a very patriarchal society, and would put two very powerful women standing in the way of Virgil's male hero. He eventually redeems the patriarchy by killing off both of these characters in a very demeaning manner. I will use this source in discussing the important roles of Camilla and Dido and the impact they have on Aeneas and his story.

- Sharrock, Alison. "Intersectional Femininity in Vergil's *Aeneid*: Juno to Barce." *Vergilius (1959-)*, vol. 67, 2021, pp. 97–116. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27078494>. Accessed 24 Apr. 2023.

In contrast to the article above, this essay by Sharrock focuses on the lesser-known female characters of the *Aeneid* and how they contribute to the view of female gender roles in the epic. She specifically looks at the intersection of gender and social status and what Virgil is intending by introducing all these women, and the impact they have on the men around them. Sharrock makes the point that Virgil's epic shows that race, ethnicity, gender and class were just as complicated in Rome as in today's society. I will use this source to bring in other societal factors and how they interact with gender in the *Aeneid*.

- Wilhelm, Michelle Pach. “Venus, Diana, Dido and Camilla in the ‘Aeneid.’” *Vergilius* (1959-), vol. 33, 1987, pp. 43–48. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41592400>. Accessed 24 Apr. 2023.

This source focuses closely on analyzing the Latin Virgil uses to describe the four women mentioned in the title. There is a lot to evaluate in the specific Latin words Virgil uses to describe women and the different connotations that arise from them. Wilhelm also sheds light on the different backstories that Virgil mentions, especially Camilla’s origins and her relation to Diana. All four of these women have various different links to each other that Wilhelm deliberates on. I will use this source to assist in my own analyzation of Virgil’s word choice and the different interpretations on Venus, Diana, Dido and Camilla it implies.