

ALISON KEITH : *Sexus muliebris* in Flavian Epic

This article investigates the lexicon of sexual difference in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Papinius Statius' *Thebaid*, and Silius Italicus' *Punica* in order to explore the dynamics of gender in these long epics. The Flavian epic poets test the conventions and contradictions of normative Roman femininity (and masculinity) in scenes that rehearse different models of epic femininity: lamenting mother, sacrificial maiden, terrifying witch, faithful wife, and Amazonian warrior. Their narratives repeatedly measure the female sex against the standards of masculinity, and are acutely sensitive to contemporary contestations of the territorial assignments of gender in Flavian Rome.

**Mots-clés :**

Alcimedede – Aeson – Jason – Helle – Hesione – Medea – Argia – Antigone – Hippolyte – Amazons – Asbyte – Theron – Boudicca