

Wild Animals in Roman Epic

Submitted by Laura Joy Hawtree to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Classics in September 2011.

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Abstract

Roman epic authors extended, reinvented and created new wild animal representations that stood apart from traditional Greek epic renderings. The treatment of wild animals in seven Roman epics (Virgil's *Aeneid*, Lucan's *Civil War*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Statius' *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*, Valerius' *Argonautica* and Silius' *Punica*) forms the basis of this thesis, but the extensive study of other relevant works such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Apollonius' *Argonautica* allows greater insight into traditional Greek renderings and throws Roman developments into starker contrast.

Initial stages of research involved collection and detailed examination of almost 900 epic references to wild animals. The findings from this preliminary research were analysed in the context of Pliny's *Natural History*, Aristotle's *Historia Animalium*, and other ancient works that reveal the Greeks' and Romans' views of wild animals. The accumulation of such a range of evidence made it possible for patterns of development to become evident. This thesis focuses on the epic representation of animals and considers a number of questions: 1) How Roman epic authors represented animals' emotions and employed creatures' thought processes. 2) How Roman epic authors examined the difference between wild and tame animals and manipulated the differences and similarities between humans and animals and culture and nature. 3) How wild animals were aligned with scientific and cultural beliefs that were particular to Roman society. 4) How animals were employed to signify foreign countries and how some epic animals came to be symbolic of nations. 5) How Roman epic authors represented particular aspects of animal behaviours with fresh insight, sometimes ignoring traditional representations and historiographic sources.

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Abbreviations of Ancient Authors and Works

In the great majority of cases abbreviations of ancient texts in **Latin** follow the conventions found in the *OLD*:

Glare, P.G.W. (1984) *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

In the great majority of cases abbreviations of ancient texts in **Greek** follow the conventions found in Liddell and Scott:

Jones, H.S. and Mckenzie, R. (1940) *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th Edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Exceptions are to be found in the following list:

Athen.	Athenaeus
<i>Deip.</i>	<i>Deipnosophists</i>
Aug.	Augustus
<i>R.G.</i>	<i>Res Gestae</i>
Hist. Aug.	Historia Augusta
Isoc.	Isocrates
<i>Ant.</i>	<i>Antidosis</i>