Images of Liminality in Book VI of The Aeneid

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Abstract

In her paper "Images of Liminality in Book VI of The Aeneid" Pouneh Saeedi discusses the concept of "liminality" in Virgil's The Aeneid and its potential in defying designated boundaries. The concept of liminality undercuts binaries such as those separating winners and losers as well as heroes and monsters. In addition, an investigation of liminality as a zone of constant becoming continues to shed light on a vast array of new transitions. Aeneas's future success in the construction of a new empire and the rebuilding of a Roman nation, to a large extent, is indebted to his having ventured onto the thresholds and fought the monstra. Being the embodiment of the earthly and the divine, hence liminal, he is naturally predisposed to grand possibilities. His encounter with liminal entities such as the Sibyl and Charon, along with his appreciation for the function of the "golden bough" and all the monsters emerging from the interstices of between-ness, in the end, empower Aeneas in conquering the hurdles placed against him in Latium, the destined terrain of the Roman race. Such are the potentialities offered by liminality and Book VI of The Aeneid is just one of many examples thereof.

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