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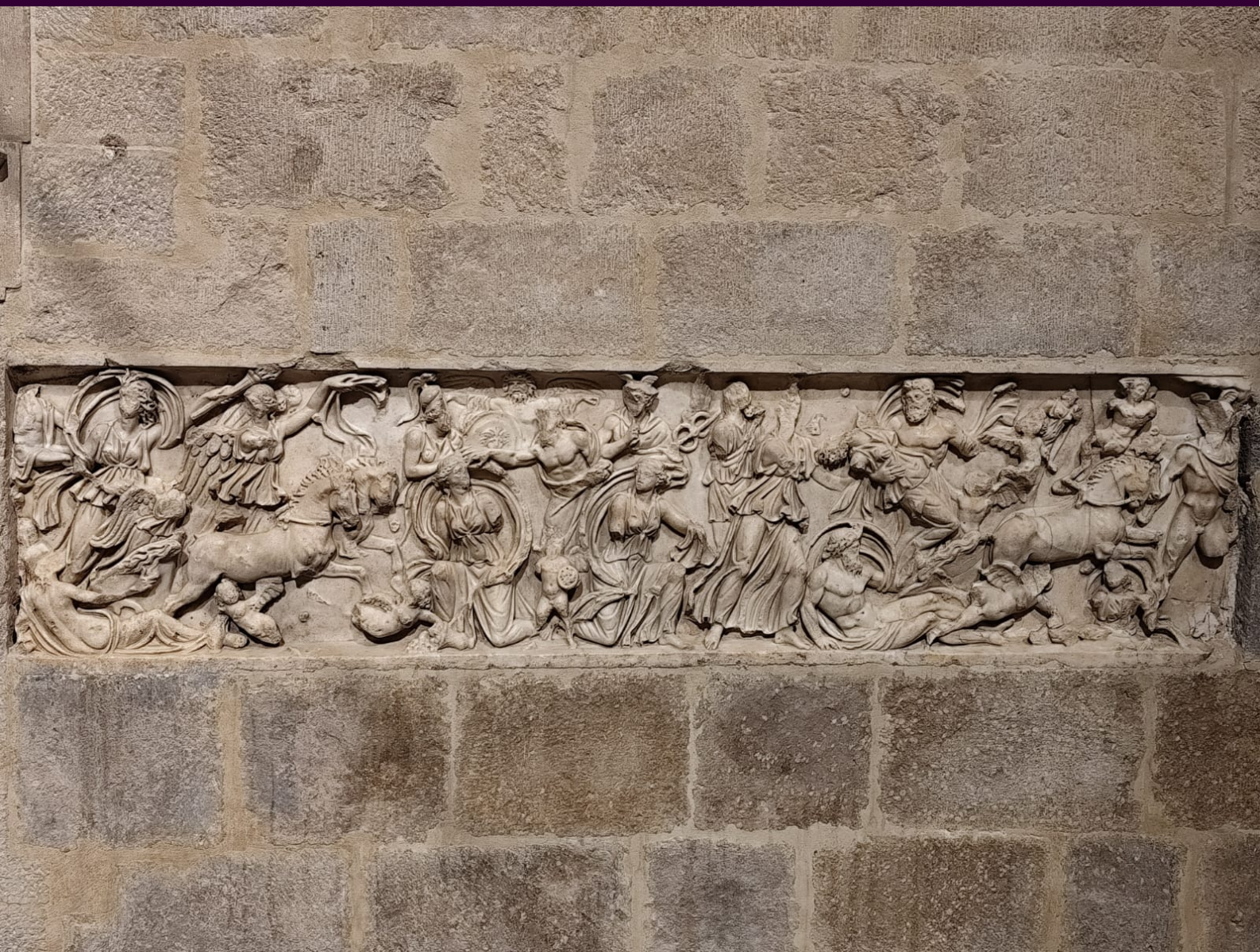

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Sarcófago. Estrigilado com orante masculino sobre o tema do rapto de Prosérpina, séc. III (Basílica de Sant Feliu, Girona). Foto: Rainer Guggenberger.

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What could a feminist perspective on Proba look like?

Cathrine Connors

ABSTRACT

Proba's cento reusing Virgilian verses to retell Biblical narratives has met with both appreciation and disdain in the centuries since it was composed. This paper considers recent scholarly analyses of Proba's work alongside feminist approaches to Virgil, especially those set out in the 2021 special issue of the journal *Vergilius* on "Vergil and the Feminine," edited by Elena Giusti and Victoria Rimell, and asks what feminist criticism, with its emphasis on understanding gender and power as represented in texts, could bring to the study of Proba's work and its larger context.

KEYWORDS

Proba; Sibyl; Eve; Mary; Cento; Feminism; Virgil.

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WHAT COULD A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE ON PROBA LOOK LIKE?

This paper considers recent scholarly analyses of Proba's work alongside feminist approaches to Virgil. I aim to ask what feminist criticism, with its emphasis on understanding gender and power as represented in texts, could bring to the study of Proba's work and its larger context.

WHAT IS A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE?

As a political movement, feminism works for justice by describing, analyzing, and aiming to dismantle the systems, ideologies, and large- and small-scale practices that result in inequities based on gender and sex. Developed from Black and Indigenous feminist perspectives, intersectional feminism calls attention to the interactions of multiple factors on which discrimination and injustice can be based: ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, ability, geographical location. Over centuries, most interactions with the ancient Greek and Roman world and its legacies upheld patriarchal systems and ideologies. Looking back to Greece and Rome also was part of justifying white supremacist ideas and the horrors of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. But, just as W.E.B. DuBois and others sometimes used classical texts to frame their arguments against racist laws and practices,[1] some people have used analysis of and reaction to classical Greek and Roman ideas, texts, and artifacts as part of feminist work. Feminist perspectives on literary texts can acknowledge how representing women as weak, dangerous, or inherently different from men, can reflect and reinforce oppressive practices. Feminist perspectives on literary texts can also acknowledge narratives of women's agency and resistance to oppression. Feminist critics often ask, implicitly or explicitly, "what if ...?" or "what would we see differently in texts if we thought differently about women, labor, reproduction, agency, voice?".[2]

1 First I will consider some recent feminist approaches to Virgil and how Proba represents herself as a reader of Virgil and biblical narrative, and as a poet.
2 Next I consider what Proba preserves from Virgil, and what she transforms about biblical narrative.
3 Finally I ask some "what if ...?" questions of my own about Proba.

1) FEMINIST APPROACHES AND SIBYLLINE POETICS IN VIRGIL AND PROBA

The 2021 special issue of the journal *Vergilius* contains papers from a conference on "Virgil and the Feminine" held at Cumae in 2019. As conference organizers and guest editors, Elena Giusti and Victoria Rimell invited presenters to take stock of, and extend and complicate, how feminism's questions provoke us to think differently about Virgil. The resulting papers point to ways that Virgil's representations of women reflect and endorse patriarchal norms, and also consider strategies for reading against the grain to counteract oppression.[3] The volume as a whole, and several papers in particular, offer feminist perspectives that are useful for reading Proba's transformations of Virgil and biblical narrative.

Tom Geue's paper urges its readers to think differently about the 6th Eclogue, a poem that is generally approached as Virgil's most refined statement of Callimachean poetics, explaining why he retreats to allusive literary poems about shepherds rather than tell the big stories of kings and war. Taking the feminist /marxist materialist approach of Silvia Federici and others as a starting point, Geue asks the "what if" question what if we pay attention to the work female figures are ordered to do in the poem? If we do that, we see that the poet relates to the Muses as a head of household relates to enslaved women in that household: he tells them what to produce. The poem doesn't stop being about Callimachean poetics, but it becomes something else too. This focus on who tells whom what to do will be useful for Proba.

Building on her earlier work about the representation of mothers and children in tragedy, Mairead McAuley in her paper explores the sensory world of Virgil's epic, here exploring the gendered aspects of how the poem represents touch and asking her readers: "Does rereading the *Aeneid* for sensual and affective intimacy preclude coolly detached critique of its power structures?".[4] So, for example, she writes, "touch operates here as a technology of gender" when Aeneas holds his father, his son as he escapes Troy, and leaves Creusa behind ("*pone*"*; Aeneis*, II, v. 725), untouched, unheld, unrescued.[5] But, she argues, the very emphasis on not touching Creusa emphasizes

> that genealogy is fundamentally a matter of tactility, a sequence of sensual touches extending through time, involving the sexual contact of two bodies and the emergence of a child's body from the mother's.[6]

McAuley argues that her approach "does enrich our sense of the compelling and peculiar paradoxes in Vergil's way of representing and marginalizing the feminine".[7] This balancing of allowing oneself to be touched by representations of women and still critiquing power structures such representations reinforce will be useful for Proba.

Proba is an interesting case for feminist criticism. On the one hand, she is one of the very earliest women authors whose work has survived. She has been an important exemplar for those who want to argue for women's access to education. Christine de Pisan included Proba in her 1405 *Book of the City of Ladies* (1.27, drawing substantially on, and responding to, Boccaccio's account of Proba in *de mulieribus claris*, written in 1361-1362)[8].

Isotta Nogarola (c. 1436) and Laura Cereta (c. 1469-1499) praise Proba as a wise precedent for their own literary pursuits.[9] On the other hand, as a member of a very elite ruling family in Rome, Proba worked at the center of networks of power and influence, and her poem uses one patriarchal and imperial set of texts (Virgil) to produce a narrative of the origins of Christianity, a cultural system with its own legacies of women's subordination to men. Perhaps this is why I have found it hard (actually, impossible) to find a text written about Proba that uses the word "feminist".

Proba has sometimes been thought of as a mere arranger of Virgilian material rather than an author in her own right. But what if we think of Proba as an author rather than arranger? Some have celebrated Proba's craftsmanship and emphasized her authorial choices.[10] Anders Cullhed emphasizes Proba's boldness, daring, and difference from other authors' Christianizing approaches to Virgil.[11] Scott McGill (2007), Martin Bažil (2009), Stephen Hinds (2014) and Sigrid Schottenius Cullhed (2015) each in different ways see a controlling creative intelligence at work in the *Cento*.

Proba's own presentation of her compositional power is in part framed in terms of Sibylline prophecy. In her prefatory verses

introducing the *Cento* and explaining how she came to compose it, Proba describes herself as a *vatis* and presents herself as a figure analogous to the ancient Sibyls:

> *nunc, deus omnipotens, sacrum, precor, accipe carmen*
> *aeternique tui septemplicis ora resolve*
> *spiritus atque mei resera penetralia cordis,*
> *arcana ut possim vatis Proba cuncta referre*.
> (*Cento*, v. 9-12).
>
> Now God Almighty, I pray: receive this sacred song
> loosen the mouth of your eternal sevenfolded Spirit
> and open up my heart's inner chambers,
> in order that I, Proba, may disclose all the mysteries of the poet/
> in order that I, Proba the prophet, may disclose all mysteries. [12]

Responding to Proba's whole description of inspiration and its effect on her mind and body, Anders Cullhed writes,

> what seems particularly striking in this context is Proba's way of singling herself out by using her own name as well as her physical involvement in the writing process, both indicative of her commitment to the sibylline project. This enterprise demands strong nerves and limbs.[13]

Sigrid Schottenius Cullhed in her 2015 book and Emily Hauser in her 2016 article on what words are used to describe female Latin authors each carefully consider the case of Proba's decision to call herself a *vatis*. As Proba has constructed the line, *vatis* can be taken as a nominative referring to Proba or as a genitive referring to Virgil. They note too that the word Proba itself can float among different meanings: between a capitalized proper name and a lowercase adjective modifying either *vatis* (nominative) or *arcana* (neuter acc. pl.).[14] What emerges from these readings, especially in a manuscript written in capital letters as would be the case in Proba's lifetime, is a kind of plausible deniability: you can read the author as hidden, the line as *vatis* referring to Virgil and *proba* referring to *arcana*, and you can also read her as proclaiming her place, as Proba, as a *vatis*, in producing

an authoritative narrative of Christian faith. As Hauser puts it, Proba "both calls upon traditional models of deference to Virgil, identifies herself with the poet, and presents a subversive self-definition, all within a single word".[15]

Now in presenting herself as a *vatis*, Proba positions herself both like the poet Virgil but also like the prophetic Sibyls, inspired to speak divine truths to those who can interpret them. Virgil refers to the Cumaean Sibyl as *vates* at Aeneid 6.64 and 211. By the time Proba was writing in the mid 300s, Sibyls, particularly the Cumaean Sibyl, have been reinterpreted by Lactantius (250 – c. 325; *Divine Institutions* 7.24) and Constantine (Constantine *apud* Eusebius, *Oratio ad coetum sanctorum* 19–21) as having prophesied the coming of Jesus. The song of the Cumaean sibyl (*Cumaei* [...] *carminis*, v. 4) in Virgil's 4th eclogue and its predictions of the birth of a child who will bring about a new golden age are the main focus of this line of thought. Sibyls have thus become exemplary for their having spoken Christian truth in the pagan past. All of this lends an atmosphere of authority to what Proba is doing with the text of Virgil.[16]

Kenneth Draper, in a thought-provoking paper presented at the CAMWS conference in 2020[17] looks at the language of inspiration that Proba uses in describing her poetic process. As a female *vatis* inspired by a *deus*, Proba presents herself as a Sibyl figure, but the interaction between the Sibyl and the god, Draper points out, is completely different from how such a scene is described by Virgil when Aeneas consults the Sibyl at Cumae. As Geue did in his paper cited above on the sixth eclogue, Draper pays attention to the gendered dynamics of *who tells whom what to do*. Proba invites the divine voice into her body in a way that is quite different from the violent overpowering by the god Apollo that the Sibyl experiences and resists in *Aeneid*, VI, v. 77-80.

Thus, for Draper, as a Sibylline *vatis*, Proba has agency, for it is she who tells the god to open his mouth and inspire her. A 2023 paper by Laurie Wilson titled "Mediator of the Divine: The Sibyl's Embodied and Authoritative Female Voice," offers important additional context here. Wilson argues for also seeing

female authority and agency in the way that Virgil's sibyl moves through the *Aeneid*. Wilson also traces the reception by women authors during the Romantic period (Madame de Staël, Mary Shelley, George Sand, Elizabeth Barrett Browning) of the Sibyl as an authoritative presence: "[T]he Virgilian Sibyl provided the essential archetype for female authority and creative inspiration".[18] Wilson does not discuss Proba, but I think it would be fair to understand Proba's Sibylline voice, especially as interpreted by Draper, as part of a long reception tradition among women authors that interpreted the Sibyl as having agency and authority.

2) WHAT DOES PROBA PRESERVE FROM VIRGIL AND TRANSFORM IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVE?

Proba is often understood to have worked to preserve Virgil for a Christian future.[19]

It has been argued that Proba composed the *Cento* in response to Julian's law that prohibited Christians from teaching pagan texts.[20] From this fundamentally conservative perspective, by expecting her audience to bring their memory and understanding of Virgil to her Christian narrative, Proba attempts to keep Virgil relevant and available for a Christian future.

Yet, when you read Proba's *Cento* alongside biblical narrative and Virgil, you can see how Proba uses Virgil to transform biblical narrative in striking ways that go beyond this conservatizing project. Descriptions of landscape and the cosmos, including the underworld, are expansive. Proba reorganizes the days of creation to make the narrative more lucid.[21] God and the tempting snake speak at length. The biblical epics of other Christian poets (Juvencus, writing before Proba, and Sedulius writing after), stay closer to their sources.[22] In addition, as critics have carefully noted, the contexts of the Virgilian phrases and lines that Proba stitches together add additional dimensions to her narrative. In an 18-line speech God promises Adam and Eve *imperium sine fine* just as Jove tells Venus that the Romans will have (*Cento*, v. 143; *Aeneis*, I, v. 279). Using lines about Dido to

describe Eve brings a foreboding quality to a narrative that at the beginning has nothing negative on its surface.[23] Words spoken by Anchises about the soul of the world (*Aeneis*, VI, v. 724-732) are transformed into Proba's account of her own divine inspiration (*Cento*, v. 25-28), the opening of the Creation narrative (*Cento*, v. 56-58), and Proba's own conversion (*Cento*, v. 420-421 with *Aeneis*, VI, V. 746-747).[24]

The interaction between the Virgilian context and the *Cento* narrative can at times be very striking, as when God's desire to behold what he has created (*Cento*, v. 110) is described with a Virgilian line about Dido's desires for Aeneas (*Aeneis*, I, v. 713)[25] Mary is described with language used to describe Venus (*Cento*, v. 341; *Aeneis*, I, v. 315)[26]. Descriptions of Jesus are drawn from descriptions of Camilla (*Cento*, v. 384-387 with *Aeneis*, VII, v. 812-14; *Cento* v. 372-376 with *Aeneis*, XI, v. 544, 541, 572). Overall, what Proba brings into the *Cento* from Virgil strikes me as a kind of narrative boldness and extravagance that goes beyond merely rescuing Virgil for future Christian readers.

Proba's authorial choices are also manifest in the biblical narrative she produces, and her transformations are at times clearest in things she chooses not to say. Naturally enough, she cannot find the names of her biblical protagonists in Virgil. Beyond this mechanical issue, though, Proba does leave out - or change- some major things, and these things are significant, I think, for feminist perspectives.

Some of these issues emerge in the treatment of Eve. Before Eve is created, Proba does not say, as *Genesis* does, that Adam was in need of a helper (*adiutor*, *Genesis* 2:20). Rather, in Proba's text, what Adam lacks is a *sociusque in regna* (*Cento*, v. 123), a companion in rule. What if this idea of companionship in rule reflects Proba's own life experience in elite Rome? She says in her preface that she had written a poem on civil war (*Cento*, v. 1-8). John Matthews has argued that there are good reasons to think that this could refer to a work written about strife at Rome in 351, when Proba's husband Clodius Adelphius was Rome's urban prefect and on the wrong side with the usurper Magnentius;

Proba's aim would have been to restore her husband's reputation with Constantius after the defeat of Magnentius.[27]

When Proba's Eve is created, her beauty is described in a way that is striking and has no parallel in the *Genesis* narrative:[28]

> *subitoque oritur mirabile donum*
> *argumentum ingens – claraque in luce refulsit*
> *insignis facie et pulchro pectore virgo,*
> *iam matura viro, iam plenis nubilibus annis*
>
> And suddenly a wonderful gift arose –
> an immense subject matter! – and she shone forth in a bright light,
> a maiden with illustrious features and a beautiful breast,
> already mature enough for a man, already of marriageable age.
> (*Cento,* v. 129-132).

The negative associations of the Virgilian contexts here are striking: the *mirabile donum* is the gift of Helen's cloak that Aeneas gives to Dido (*Aeneis*, I, v. 652) and the *argumentum ingens* is the image of Io on the shield that Turnus carries into battle (*Aeneis*, VII, v. 791).

Another narrative element that has no parallel in *Genesis* is the fact Adam at first sight of Eve "calls it marriage" (my translation) (*coniugium vocat*, *Cento*, v. 134, just as Dido called what she did in the cave with Aeneas marriage, *Aeneis*, IV, v. 172). The way that Adam reaches for Eve's right hand (*Cento*, v. 135) frames their bond in terms recognizable as Roman marriage.[29]

In *Genesis* 3:16, Eve is punished in two ways for succumbing to temptation: suffering in childbirth and being subject to her husband. Proba's Eve is punished only in parallel with Adam, with mortality.[30] Overall in the poem, motherhood is presented as generative and powerful, not the punishment inflicted on women for Eve's transgression. In narrating the life of Jesus, Proba describes only Mary and leaves out any mention of Joseph. Proba includes no praises of celibacy or asceticism.[31]

3) WHAT IF GENDER DOES MATTER?

Proba is willing to cross gender boundaries as she chooses Virgilian lines for her biblical narrative. Venus' words to Cupid become God's words to Jesus (*Cento*, v. 403; *Aeneis*, I, v. 664); Venus' words to Juno become God's words condemning Eve (*Cento*, v. 267; *Aeneis*, IV, v. 100) As we have seen, descriptions of Camilla can be used for Jesus. Virgil's description of gleaming Aeneas is applied to Eve at her creation (*Cento*, v. 130; *Aeneis*, I, v . 588). For some critics, such crossing of gender boundaries means Proba thought beyond or without gender in composing the *Cento*.[32]

In their 1981 translation, Clark and Hatch seem as if they want gender to matter, and hope to understand Proba as a proto-feminist. Considering how Proba represents women they ask:

> Are there evidences in her Cento that she believed women to be superior to the estimation given by her male counterparts? Our answer must be 'no,' although it is a 'no' qualified in a few quite significant respects.[33]

In their analysis, traditional patriarchal ideas in the *Cento* include: the creation of Adam before Eve, and saying that he resembles God but not saying that Eve does; the blaming of Eve for the temptation to eat the fruit of the tree; the many uses of Virgilian material associated with female madness to describe Eve in a foreboding way. Proba, as they note, departs from tradition in the positive way that Eve is described as a "marvellous gift" ("*mirabile donum*", *Cento*, v. 129; *Aeneis*, I, v. 652), in the fact that she is punished with death, just as Adam is, but is not given the further punishment of being subordinate to men, and is not cursed with hard childbirth. In Proba's retelling of the life of Jesus, Mary takes an active role in protecting Jesus from Herod, and there is no mention of Joseph at all. Yet these non-traditional innovations are, for Clark and Hatch, not enough to make Proba a proto-feminist: "We are thus drawn to conclude that the fact of Proba's own femaleness had little ostensible effect upon her evaluation of her own sex".[34] But the question remains open. Kate

Cooper in a podcast on women's voices in early Christianity remarks of the representation of Mary and other women in Proba's *Cento*: "[Y]ou keep seeing these women coming in worrying about their children," which Cooper sees as part of a pattern of connecting Christian stories to women as listeners/readers.[35]

In an excellent 2024 paper, Cristalle Watson extends the study of the *Cento*'s use of typology (the idea that elements of the Hebrew Bible prefigure events in the gospels) to consider the representation of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in the *Cento*'s description of the baptism of Jesus. In Watson's view, when the *Cento* associates Jesus with Camilla, the holy spirit with columba (a female dove), and God the father with Venus, gender does matter: "Proba carefully and systematically uses female types from Virgil to enfigure all three members of the Trinity ..." allowing them to be seen

> in feminine terms, balancing out the predominantly male types traditionally used to enfigure the persons of the Trinity and granting the reader a richer and fuller understanding of the nature of its three divine persons.[36]

She concludes:

> [I]t is not hard to see why Proba - a rare female author in a time when both literature and biblical exegesis were male dominated - might have wished to make sense of the Trinity in feminine terms for herself and her readers, female as well as male.[37]

Sigrid Cullhed cautions against reading Proba as straightforwardly endorsing traditional and conservative views on gender and the family. Instead, Cullhed argues, the *Cento* is

> a text that in many ways undermines traditional binary oppositions such as male-female, divine-human, pagan-Christian, since Christ, Mary and God are constructed with verses that describe both male and female heroes and divinities. [...] But these elements are generally overlooked since they cannot be integrated into the pre-existing

> dominating biographical constructions of Proba. She is a mother, teacher and wife rather than intellectual and poetic virtuosa. [This emphasis] tends to blur what we do know about the Cento: it was a literary work by a woman poet who inserted it into the male-dominated epic tradition, and a poem that rewrites what was considered the most important work in this canon.[38]

Watson's case study clearly demonstrates the kinds of polyphony Cullhed argues for hearing in the *Cento*.

Even though these positive aspects of representing women are embedded in and cannot fully counteract the negative and patriarchal outlook of their sources, they are still present, and they are different from their biblical sources. Extending Cullhed's polyphonic approach a step further, I want to ask: what if Proba all along wanted to describe the first woman as a marvellous gift, and Mary as a resourceful single parent? Would a poem that told biblical stories this way have seemed authoritative enough to preserve if it had not used Virgil's words? What if Proba wanted the plausible deniability that would come with cloaking it all in Virgil's words? What if Proba used Virgil's words to protect a (Taylor Swift-ish?) empowering renarration of Eve and Mary, to cloak it in authoritatively traditional language that would disguise and protect it from men's contempt?

RESUMO

O *Cento* de Proba, que reutiliza versos vergilianos para recontar narrativas bíblicas, tem sido recebido tanto com apreço quanto com desdém nos séculos que se seguiram à sua composição. Este artigo considera as análises acadêmicas recentes sobre a obra de Proba, juntamente com abordagens feministas sobre Virgílio, especialmente aquelas apresentadas na edição especial de 2021 da revista *Vergilius* sobre "Vergílio e o Feminino", editada por Elena Giusti e Victoria Rimell, e questiona o que a crítica feminista, com sua ênfase em entender gênero e poder representados nos textos, poderia trazer para o estudo da obra de Proba e seu contexto mais amplo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Proba; Sibila; Eva; Maria; *Cento*; Feminismo; Virgílio.

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[1] Fertik; Hanses, 2019.
[2] See further Morales, 2019.
[3] Giusti; Rimell, 2021.
[4] McAuley, 2021, p. 11.
[5] Idem, ibidem, p. 250.
[6] Idem, ibidem, p. 251.
[7] Idem, ibidem, p. 254-255.
[8] On Christine's responses to Boccaccio's account of Proba see Chance (2015, p. 284-6).
[9] See further Cullhed, 2015, p. 101-108.
[10] Kyriakidis (1992, p. 123) writes "Every choice [Proba makes about reusing Virgilian lines] should thus be viewed not as inevitable and obligatory, but as one among many, and should be evaluated in this light. Every choice presupposes thought, judgement". Though I disagree with Kyriakidis' larger argument that Proba's authorial choices reveal an overriding negative view of women in general, I do agree with the principle he articulates here.
[11] Cullhed, 2015, p. 509; cf. Pavlovskis, 1989, p. 83.
[12] Text and translation here and elsewhere cited from Cullhed (2015).
[13] A. Cullhed (2015, p. 507).
[14] Hauser (2016, par. 34-37), Cullhed (2015, p. 18, 120); also Hinds (2014, p. 195; n. 51).
[15] Hauser, 2016; par. 34. Hauser also suggests that *vatis* could also be read as newly coined specifically feminine form of the masculine *vates*, signaling both its similarity to and difference from the traditional male poetic vocabulary: Hauser (2016; par. 36).
[16] On the subsequent association of Proba with Sibyls see Cullhed (2015, p. 24-25).
[17] Draper, 2020.
[18] Wilson 2023, p. 120.
[19] So, for example, Pollmann (2017, p. 112): "The cento has two aims: first it conserves Vergil's verse and language for the Christian reader by using him to paraphrase the Bible (and we may remember that Christianity at her time had not produced much poetry of its own), and second it provides an exegesis of Vergil's *Aeneis* acceptable to a Christian reader".
[20] Amatucci, 1955, p. 131; Clark; Hatch, 1981, p. 99-100; Green, 1995, p. 555.
[21] Cullhed, 2015, p. 139-40.
[22] Flatt (2016, in discussing *furor*, p. 231: "[T]he *Cento* illustrates by contrast how little the classical material in Juvencus' *Evangeliorum Libri* is allowed to modify the biblical message of the gospels," and (p. 241; n. 776): "To my mind the strangeness of Proba's work derives not so much from her repurposing of Vergil or any perceived affront to the authority of the canon – the basis of the literary-critical animus attacked by Cullhed (2015, p. 79) – but from the seismic shifts in tone and emphasis it imposes on its biblical hypotext".
[23] Kyriakidis, 1992, p. 124-34; Cullhed, 2015, p. 143: "Proba transmits the calamitous love between Dido and Aeneas to the misery of Adam, Eve, and the human race".
[24] Cullhed, 2015, p. 126-131: "Through these repeated appropriations of the voice of Anchises' ghost, Proba endows her poetic persona with prophetic power as well as authority".
[25] Idem, ibidem, p. 509: "Proba's both pius and erudite readers must surely have raised their eyebrows at this scenario: right through the one God's contentment with His Creation vibrates the African queen's desire for the Trojan hero".
[26] Starnone, 2020, p. 156-157.
[27] Matthews, 1992, p. 291-297.

[28] Witke (1971, p. 198) notes: "Eve's beauty, not mentioned as such by other poets of this scene". Laato, 2017, p. 105: "[...] we can read Proba's picture of Eve's appearance also as a way of stressing the positive value of corporeality," in contrast to discourses of asceticism.
[29] Witke, 1971, p. 198: "[T]he only romantic treatment I know of the confrontation between Adam and Eve in this corpus of poetry".
[30] Cullhed, 2015, p. 146: "As pointed out by Michael Margoni-Kögler, Proba significantly modifies the punishment that God imposes on Eve. In *Genesis* (3:16), her punishment is twofold: She will have to suffer through childbirth and be subjected to her husband. This etiology for women's secondary status is not repeated by Proba and God's sentence on Eve is not very different from that imposed on Adam".
[31] Clark, 1986, p. 139-141.
[32] Laato, 2017, p. 97: "The gender or character of the original subject does not limit Proba's use of Vergil's verses – either these were not problematic for her, or she did not think that the original meaning of every sentence mattered"; citing also n. 51. Jensen, 1998, p. 33-53; esp. 47: "[W]ho interprets it so that for Proba, deity could not be connected to gender". Cf. Laato, 2017, p. 105.
[33] Clark; Hatch, 1981, p. 151.
[34] Idem, ibidem, p. 159.
[35] Haigh; Chesley, 2023.
[36] Watson, 2024, p. 5.
[37] Idem, ibidem, p. 9.
[38] Cullhed, 2015, p. 52; cf. 163.