

## LEWIS WEBB : Gendering the Roman *imago*

This article provides a gender perspective on the Roman *imago*, the male ancestor mask, by arguing that *imagines* were deeply entangled in elite women's lives in the Republic and Empire. When an elite woman was a *filia*, they were a vivid and didactic presence in the *atrium* of her natal home. When she was a *nupta* and *uxor*, copies of her patrilineal and matrilineal *imagines* were transferred from her natal home to her marital home. When she was a *matrona* and *mater*, her marital home could accrue more *imagines* when her male relatives attained the aedileship (or the higher curule magistracies) and she herself could use them didactically with her children. If an elite woman's marriage was dissolved by death or divorce, any surviving children might inherit copies of her bridal *imagines*. When an elite woman died, a *pompa imaginum* could be part of her *funus*. Finally, a female *maior* and her patrilineal and matrilineal *imagines* could constitute and signify elite identities. I argue that these *imagines* and accompanying *tituli* could function as an inheritance and *dos* for an elite woman, and as a deposit of symbolic capital, embodying her social position and status. The *imagines* were an important mechanism for transferring elite female social position and status between families, and an elite woman's own *commendatio maiorum*.

### Mots-clés :

*Imago* – *Imagines* – Ancestor mask – Elite women – Rome – Republic – Empire – *Filia* – Daughter – *Atrium* – Entrance hall – *Nupta* – Bride – *Uxor* – Wife – Remarriage – Divorce – *Matrona* – Married woman – *Mater* – Mother – *Pompa imaginum* – Ancestor masks procession – *Funus* – Funeral – *Maiores* – Ancestors – *Titulus* – Descriptive inscription – Inheritance – *Dos* – Dowry – Social position – Status – Symbolic capital – Family – *Gens* – Clan – *Commendatio maiorum* – Commendation of the ancestors