

ELENA GIUSTI : *Casta Diva: Juno's "Unexpected Pain" in Statius' Thebaid.*

The innovative character of Juno in Statius' *Thebaid* seems to challenge and correct the previous portrayals of the goddess in Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The present article argues that Statius goes further in this challenge than has so far been recognised, by making both Juno's ineffective speech and her speechlessness and inaction indicative of the gender imbalance that has long caused her suffering, and her vindictive features, in the epic literary tradition. Statius' *Thebaid* casts Juno as a woman wounded from the very start of her existence, and suggests that it is precisely out of this feminine wound that both the goddess and the poem can achieve a productive reconciliation in the epic's closure.

Mots-clés :

Statius – *Thebaid* – Juno – Jupiter – Bacchus – Virgil – Metapoetics – Gender inequality – Gender imbalance – Characterisation