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**Queen, slave, nurse, mother: literary genre and the metamorphoses of Hypsipyle**

When we first meet Hypsipyle at the end of the fourth book of Statius' *Thebaid*, she is a destitute old woman who gives succor to weary heroes: thus her epyllion begins with an echo of Callimachus' *Hecale*. Then something changes: she begins to tell her story and we hear how she was once a queen and a loyal daughter who saved her father from their fallen city. In this passage of narrative self-fashioning she becomes an epic heroine modeled upon Aeneas. Finally, the death of her infant charge and the appearance of her long-lost sons transform her, in a Euripidean melodramatic denouement, from a slave and nurse to a queen and mother once more. Hypsipyle's changing roles as a woman are reflection of the shifting generic models at play here. Statius' virtuoso handling of this mini-*Argonautica* narrative is perhaps a response to the more conservative approach of Valerius Flaccus.