

Essay on myth in the ancient world

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



1. Aeneas is admired for his heroic qualities and nobility of his race because of his deeds, words, lineage and appearance (Ross, 2007). He came from a powerful lineage because he was the son of Anchises, a mortal father and Aphrodite, a divine mother (Powell, 2008). His deeds, manners and conduct are superior over the others because he is considered a demi-god, who is born partly human and partly god. He had the same qualities as Achilles. He can be considered as a very brave and ambitious warrior of his time because he had hopes of succeeding Priam as king (Powell, 2008). Aeneas was free of guilt and most worthy to be presented publicly with great commendation because he was a good leader to his people and pious to the gods (Farrell and Putnam, 2010).

As a son of a divine mother, Aphrodite, who is the goddess of beauty and love, Aeneas is privileged to benefit from a divine protection from his mother. Having born out of a mother who is a goddess of beauty, he grew up to be a handsome warrior during his time. Aeneas became a remarkable leader to his people because they were able to survive the Trojan War. Together with his great men, they founded Italy which led them to later on build what is famously known as the Roman Empire (Powell, 2008). This makes him genuinely admirable because of his nobility, grace and strength of character, which are the qualities of a true epic hero.

2. Dido fell hopelessly in love with Aeneas because of Cupid's arrow. Dido grew more in love with Aeneas because of his son. Dido, a queen became fascinated of Aeneas and his mission and not just for his heroic qualities. She was first enamored by the son and such ardor was later on shifted to the father. Aeneas and Dido fell in love with each other for several reasons, but

Virgil deemed it fit that divine intervention is also necessary. Based on the Virgilian truth, nothing can be pre-determined by destiny in human lives so the god, Venus and Cupid intervene in their love story (Lee, 1979).

One day while they were out hiking, a thunderstorm occurred so they had to find for a place to stay. Inside the cave, Dido and Aeneas fell into each other's arms (Powell, 2008). Soon, the rumor about their romance reached a nearby kingdom of the king whom Dido declined to marry because of her vow to her deceased husband. This angered the king so he prayed to Jupiter that the two lovers be separated. Jupiter sent Mercury to tell him that he must leave Africa and abandon Dido. He was informed that his destiny is to build and find the Roman race and should not waste his life in the arms of Queen Dido (Powell, 2008). When Dido learned about Aeneas plans to leave, she felt betrayed and lashed out on him. However, he remained unmoved and did not show a trace of emotion and moved on with his mission to find the Roman race.

3. Jupiter was first to prophesize about the rise of the Roman race. He predicted the Aeneas will wage the war in Italy and combat all ruthless people. He had a vision that Aeneas will establish customs and traditions which will be known as the Roman Empire (Powell, 2008). He was very firm and insistent with his goals and he was determined to make them happen. He has the power to manipulate people just like Aeneas who turned his back away from the woman he loved. He was influenced by Jupiter as he was reminded of his mission. Aeneas sacrificed his own happiness so he can follow the orders of Jupiter. One of Aeneas characteristic that made him a great leader during his time is that he is pious to the gods. This is evident

when he dutifully obeyed Jupiter even if it broke his heart to leave the woman that he loved.

4. In the last scene of Aeneid was the battle of Aeneas and Turnus. Prior to this incident, Turnus went to the Trojan camp and he singlehandedly killed several Trojans as he dived to the river and fled. Aeneas returns to the Trojan camp together with Pallas. Turnus lied in the wait and murdered Pallas. Finally, it was only Aeneas and Turnus in the combat. Both of them agreed that whoever wins the combat will wed Lavinia and rule over the kingdom of Latium. Aeneas was successful in inflicting a fatal wound on Turnus who begged for his mercy. As Turnus fell on the ground, a part of Aeneas pitied him. However, when Aeneas saw that the sword-belt which belonged to Pallas that was tied to the chest of Turnus as a sign of trophy, this ignited Aeneas and pierced him on the chest (Powell, 2008). The anger of Aeneas was shown in the last part of the poem which says: “ Shall you be snatched from my grasp, wearing the spoils of one who was my own? Pallas, Pallas it is, who sacrifices you with this stroke, and exacts retribution from you guilty blood”.

The act of Aeneas in killing Turnus was the right decision. Here, it was shown that Turnus deserved no mercy or clemency because when Pallas was in the same position who begged for his life, he never had second thoughts of killing him. Aeneas was reminded that of the importance of knowing how to forgive and be merciful because it has negative effects once denied. Since Turnus deprived Pallas of mercy, he is bound to receive the same treatment and will be left without mercy. This is in accordance with the Roman tradition concept of “ clementia” or clemency shall be given to those who have sinned

but learn to repent and those he did not deny mercy to others (Dowling, 2006).

1. According to Ovid, the “Ages of Mankind” refers to the progressive deterioration of human race or “man”, which did not change drastically to wicked, but disintegrated little by little. The disgrace of mankind is evident by the depreciation of the essential metals. Ovid records the success of races which is marked by the Golden Age, which transgressed to the Silver Age and Bronze Age up to the final point of decline in the Age of Iron (Green, 2009).

During the beginning of time, human race lived abundantly and in harmony with nature as man was supplied with the gifts from the natural world. As man learned to commit wrongdoings, there were changes from one season to season until man felt there was scarcity in nature.

Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* provides that there is an association which exists between the metallic ages. While Hesiod’s version of different races did not speak of complete degradation, he explains that the decline did not follow a regular course. His five races comprised of one perfect race and the four are inferior versions of the Golden Age that have distinct features and characteristics (Evans, 2008).

2. Apollo, an Olympian God fell in love with Daphne, a beautiful nymph when Eros or Cupid’s arrow hit him. Apollo chased Daphne and he wanted her for himself. Daphne refused Apollo because she wanted to remain a virgin. Apollo chased Daphne and begged her to love him, but Daphne turned him down. As the chase went on and Apollo was about to get hold of her, she

prayed for help to her divine father. The story did not have a happy ending because Daphne was transformed to a laurel tree. Apollo embraced the tree as he spoke “ if you cannot be my bride, you can at least be my tree (Littleton, 2005).

Ovid’s version myth suggests that the relationship between humans and gods can never be possible because one is immortal and the other is not. A god will leave for eternity while a human being or a mortal will die as he or she grows old.

3. One of the opinions of *Metamorphoses* is Ovid’s view of the role of Augustus as the rock which built the Roman Empire. Augustus will “ find many praises in his name”, a passage which can be seen in his poems. Ovid believed that Augustus can be a wise ruler and can lead his people to a promise land. These Augustus passages are evident throughout Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Here, Ovid provided important reactions and formulations of the significant role that Augustus will portray as the first citizen of the Roman Empire.

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