



# **In the Image of the Ancestors: Narratives of Kinship in Flavian Epic (Phoenix Supplementary Volumes)**

*Neil Bernstein*

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Only four Roman epic poems survive from the Flavian period (69-96 AD): Valerius Flaccus's *Argonautica*, Statius's *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*, and Silius Italicus's *Punica*. Neil W. Bernstein argues that these poems contain depictions of kinship that are significantly different from earlier epic and examines these representations in the context of the social, political, and aesthetic changes of the early Imperial period.

The author analyses various kinds of kinship, including biological relationships, elective relationships such as marriage and adoption, and the symbolic bonds of social and political allegiances, to illuminate the complex ways in which the Roman upper class asserted their status with or without noble lineage. A fresh and fascinating look at not only Roman poetry, but the epic tradition itself, *In the Image of the Ancestors* is essential reading for classicists and literary historians.

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