



Ritual and Religion in Flavian Epic

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This edited collection addresses the role of ritual representations and religion in the epic poems of the Flavian period (69-96 CE): Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, Silius Italicus' *Punica*, Statius' *Thebaid*, and the unfinished *Achilleid*. Drawing on various modern studies on religion and ritual, and the relationship between literature and religion in the Greco-Roman world, it explores how we can interpret the poets' use of the relationship between gods and humans, cults and rituals, religious activities, and the role of the seer / prophet and his identification with poetry.

Divided into three major sections, the volume includes essays on the most important religious activities (prophecy or augury, prayers and hymns) and the relationship between religion and political power under the Flavian emperors. It also addresses specific episodes in Flavian epic which focus on religious activities associated with the dead and the Underworld, such as purification, necromancy, katabasis, suicide, and burial. It finally explores the role of gender in ritual and religion.

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