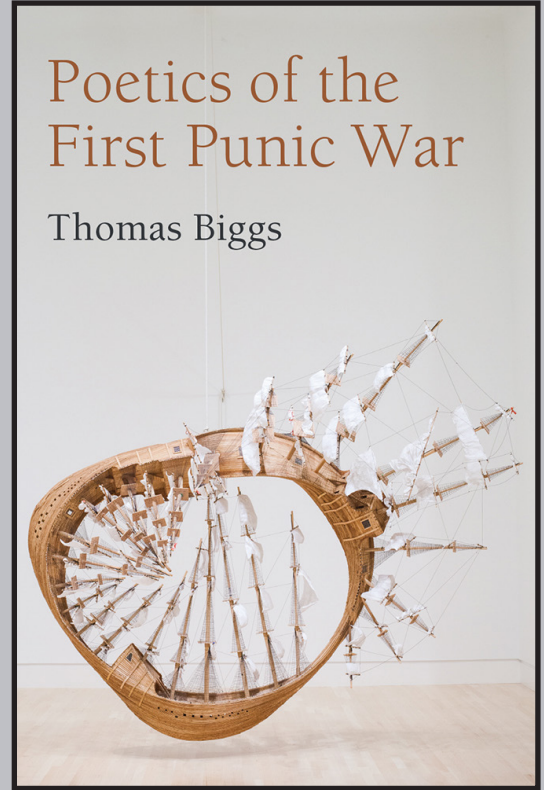


# Poetics of the First Punic War

*Poetics of the First Punic War* is concerned with the transmission and transformation of memory in Ancient Rome. It tracks Latin poetry's place in the ever-changing landscape of Roman historical representation with a focus on the narrative of the First Punic War as it was filtered through new texts and objects, ideas, and ideologies. Rome's complex relationship with Carthage has received renewed attention in recent years, but the First Punic War still remains largely unexplored from literary angles. This scholarly oversight persists, despite the fact that the genre of Latin epic emerged in the immediate wake of the conflict, and the city's first poets depicted the recent past in verse shaped by its unique cultural context. Biggs fills this gap in the scholarship. As Latin literature's primary Roman topic, the war is forever bound to these first texts, which played a decisive role in providing readers for centuries to come access to a generically filtered view of history. The war stands as the main subject of Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* alongside the first Latin poetic treatment of Aeneas. This book contains the most sustained treatment in Anglophone scholarship of Naevius' fragmentary poem, along with its predecessor, Livius Andronicus' *Oduvia*. The initial encoding of the war in Roman cultural memory was thus a disruptive force with a powerful legacy. It made the war forever "epic" in ways that complicate the politics of memory at Rome, especially for the recording of armed conflict.

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