

Statius, Thebaid 8: Edited with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary



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Composed at the end of the first century CE, Statius' *Thebaid* recounts the civil war in Thebes between the two sons of Oedipus, Polynices and Eteocles, and the horrific events that take place on the battlefield. Its author, the Roman poet Statius, employed a wide variety of Greco-Roman sources in order to narrate the Argive expedition against Thebes and the fratricidal war. Book 8 opens with the descent of the Argive seer Amphiaraus to the Underworld through a chasm of the earth; the soldiers mourn their seer's loss and elect a successor, Thiodamas, who placates Earth (Tellus) through a prayer, before the opening of the second day of hostilities. The book reaches its climax when fierce Tydeus is mortally wounded and dies having committed an act of cannibalism by eating his opponent's brains; Minerva leaves the battlefield in disgust, taking away from her protege the intended gift of immortality.

In this volume, Augoustakis presents the first full-length edition of *Thebaid* 8, with text and *apparatus criticus*, and an English translation. A detailed introduction discusses the Argive/Theban myth in the Greek and Roman literary tradition and art, as well as the reception of the book in subsequent centuries, especially in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The accompanying commentary provides useful notes which explore questions of interpretation and Statius' language and literary craft, with particular emphasis on the exploitation of various Greek and Latin intertexts in Statius' poetry.

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