

Roman Social Imaginaries: Language and Thought in the Context of Empire (Robson Classical Lectures)

Clifford Ando



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In an expansion of his 2012 Robson Classical Lectures, Clifford Ando examines the connection between the nature of the Latin language and Roman thinking about law, society, and empire. Drawing on innovative work in cognitive linguistics and anthropology, *Roman Social Imaginaries* considers how metaphor, metonymy, analogy, and ideation helped create the structures of thought that shaped the Roman Empire as a political construct.

Beginning in early Roman history, Ando shows how the expansion of the empire into new territories led the Romans to develop and exploit Latin's extraordinary capacity for abstraction. In this way, laws and institutions invented for use in a single Mediterranean city-state could be deployed across a remarkably heterogeneous empire.

Lucid, insightful, and innovative, the essays in *Roman Social Imaginaries* constitute some of today's most original thinking about the power of language in the ancient world.



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