



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

By 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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Review

‘This is a fascinating book – perceptive, effective, and reasoned... This is not only a singularly important contribution, but also a most welcome one.’

(Matt Gibbs *Journal Mnemosyne* vol 69:2016)

Review

“*Roman Social Imaginaries* will be widely welcomed for its fresh approach to Roman political and legal thought from the last century of the oligarchic *res publica* to the Christian late empire.” (Stephane Benoist, Professor of Roman History, Universite Charles-de-Gaulle - Lille 3)

“This is an important and thought-provoking book that will be of great interest in Roman studies, especially Roman history and Roman law, and in the study of empire more generally.” (John Richardson, Emeritus Professor of Classics, School of History, Classics, and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh)

About the Author

Clifford Ando is the David B. and Clara E. Stern Professor of Humanities in the Department of Classics at the University of Chicago and a research fellow in the Department of Classics and World Languages at the University of South Africa.

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