

Classical Antiquity and its Heritage

Research Seminars

Spring 2018



CAH Summer Lecture

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The Reign of Janus: Towards a Semiotics of Mid-Republican Rome

Standard narratives of Rome's transformation from city-state to imperial Republic justifiably make much of military exploits (and the constitutional and political innovations that either fueled the war engine or followed quickly in its wake). In the spirit of Tzvetan Todorov's attention to signs and signification as allies in empire formation (*The conquest of America* [1984]), this paper will posit the existence of a semiotic battlefield in 3rd-century BCE Italy, one whose rules the Romans increasingly applied themselves to manipulate and master. This battlefield was defined by and populated with religious practices and concepts, among them the cult of Janus. Reflected in some of Rome's earliest coinages, this cult's rising importance will be approached in my paper as an invitation to plot a cultural history of the middle Republican state in which the war over religious signs takes center stage.

<https://scholar.princeton.edu/dpadilla>

Discussant: Carsten Hjort Lange, Aalborg University

Wednesday 6 June 14.15-16.00

Location: Nobelparken 1461-516

Organisers:

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