

Rethinking Roman Alliance: A Study in Poetics and Society

Bill Gladhill

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In this book, Bill Gladhill studies one of the most versatile concepts in Roman society, the ritual event that concluded an alliance, a foedus (ritual alliance). Foedus signifies the bonds between nations, men, men and women, friends, humans and gods, gods and goddesses, and the mass of matter that gives shape to the universe. From private and civic life to cosmology, Roman authors, time and time again, utilized the idea of ritual alliance to construct their narratives about Rome. To put it succinctly, Roman civilization in its broadest terms was conditioned on ritual alliance. Yet, lurking behind every Roman relationship, in the shadows of Roman social and international relations, in the dark recesses of cosmic law, were the breakdown and violation of ritual alliance and the release of social pollution. Rethinking Roman Alliance investigates Roman culture and society through the lens of foedus and its consequences.



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