

Colour and Meaning in Ancient Rome (Cambridge Classical Studies)

By Mark Bradley

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The study of colour has become familiar territory in anthropology, linguistics, art history and archaeology. Classicists, however, have traditionally subordinated the study of colour to form. By drawing together evidence from contemporary philosophers, elegists, epic writers, historians and satirists, Mark Bradley reinstates colour as an essential informative unit for the classification and evaluation of the Roman world. He also demonstrates that the questions of what colour was and how it functioned - as well as how it could be misused and misunderstood - were topics of intellectual debate in early imperial Rome. Suggesting strategies for interpreting Roman expressions of colour in Latin texts, Dr Bradley offers alternative approaches to understanding the relationship between perception and knowledge in Roman elite thought. In doing so, he highlights the fundamental role that colour performed in the realms of communication and information, and its intellectual contribution to contemporary discussions of society, politics and morality.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Mark Bradley is Lecturer in Ancient History at the University of Nottingham. He is the author of a number of articles in the field of Roman visual culture, and has also worked on aspects of ancient approaches to pollution and cleanliness, as well as the reception of classical antiquity during the British Empire.

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