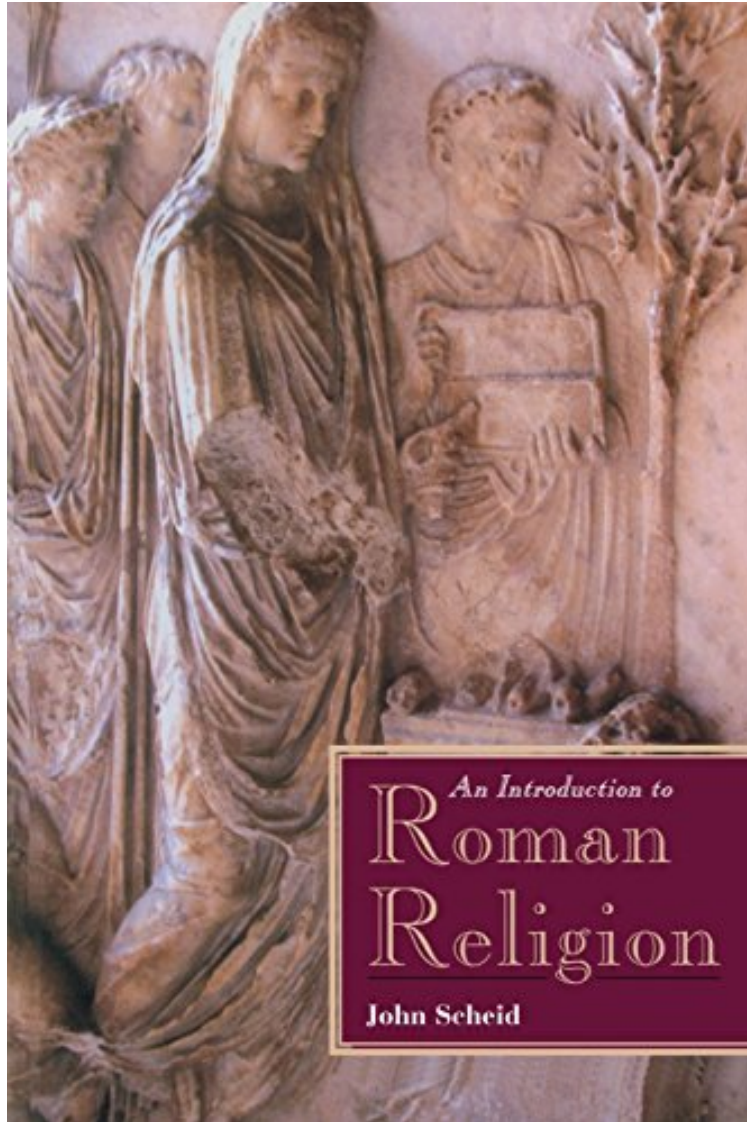


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An Introduction to Roman Religion

John Scheid

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4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Great Introduction to the SubjectBy chuckbutlerScheid presents his own conclusions while contrasting (relatively) recent scholarship to more traditional views. I should note that this is not the place to learn about the characteristics of the traditional Roman gods, etc., but is rather an overview of what traditional Roman religion consisted it, how it was practiced, and how it was integrated in public and private life.

Concise and clearly written. If you're only going to read one book on the subject, this is it.² of 2 people found the following review helpful. A very good introductory text
By Ingela
An excellent book for beginners. Focuses on the State cult a bit overmuch, but still very good. If you are interested in this topic you should by no means confine yourself to this book, but regard it as an excellent starter text.³ of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Good Introduction to the Religion of the Romans
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I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the religion of the Romans from the Republic to the Empire. It is not a speculative work, but deals with rituals and civic duties. The relationship between the Gods and the citizen's of Rome was a mutually beneficial one. This book does not contain any of the Roman's theology.

Written by one of the worlds leading scholars of the Roman world, *An Introduction to Roman Religion* offers students a complete portrait of religion in Rome during the late republic and early empire. It draws on the latest findings in archaeology and history to explain the meanings of rituals, rites, auspices, and oracles, to describe the uses of temples and sacred ground, and to evoke the daily patterns of religious life and observance within the city of Rome and its environs. The text is usefully organized around major themes, such as the origins of Roman religion, the importance of the religious calendar, the structure of religious space, the forms of religious services and rituals, and the gods, priests, and core theologies that shaped religious observance. In addition to its clear and accessible presentation, *Roman Religion* includes quotations from primary sources, a chronology of religious and historical events from 750 B.C. to A.D. 494, a full glossary, and an annotated guide to further reading.

Lacking (apparently) a native mythology or images of its gods, Roman religion has always seemed barren to scholars. Without anything much to interpret, interpretation has regularly fallen into minutely descriptive lists of gods and rituals. Among recent efforts, Beard, North, and Price's *Religions of Rome* (CH, Feb'99) offers both sources and interpretations, but is essentially a reference book. Robert Turcan's *The Gods of Ancient Rome* (2000) offers an innovative and historically grounded interpretation (without the lists), while Valerie Warrior's *Roman Religion* (2002) sticks to sources without the history. Scheid (ancient history, cole (Ecole) *Pratiques des Hautes tudes (Etudes)* , Paris), one of the most distinguished scholars of Roman religion, now offers a brilliant, historically grounded interpretation that will interest scholars as well as the students (French, originally) for whom it was written. The theme of each chapter methodology, structure, rituals, actors, interpretations of Roman religion is carefully developed. A chronology and bibliography support the whole. Lists of facts, questions (with concise, informative answers), and original sources are inset at appropriate places in the main text. Scheid is insightful, concise, and original. This is an indispensable text for the study of Roman religion and all fields that intersect with it. *Summing Up: Essential*. All libraries. April 2004 (C. M. C. Green University of Iowa)
About the Author
John Scheid is Director of Studies in Ancient History at the cole *pratiques des hautes tudes* in Paris.