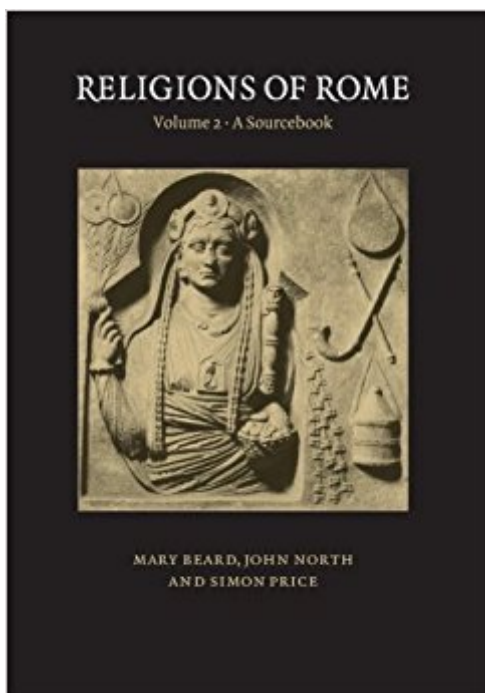


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# Religions Of Rome: Volume 2: A Sourcebook



## Synopsis

This book, the second of the two volumes that make up *Religions of Rome*, presents a wide range of documents illustrating religious life in the Roman world from the early Republic to the late Empire (both visual evidence and texts in translation). More than just a "sourcebook," it explores some of the major themes and problems of Roman religion (such as sacrifice, the religious calendar, divination and prediction). Each document has an introduction, explanatory notes and bibliography, and is used as the starting point for further discussion.

## Book Information

Paperback: 428 pages

Publisher: Cambridge University Press (June 28, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0521456460

ISBN-13: 978-0521456463

Product Dimensions: 6.8 x 0.8 x 9.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #96,958 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Religious Studies > Religious History](#) #143 in [Books > History > Ancient Civilizations > Rome](#) #178 in [Books > History > World > Religious > General](#)

## Customer Reviews

'This is an excellent book that answers any reader's questions on the religious life of the Romans.' *The Australian National Review* '... the best one-volume study in publication ... a well written book that should have a place of the shelf of every student of early European history, and on that of every theologian as well'. *Theology* 'These books are the result of years of patient scholarship and intellectual questioning. No other volume has covered such a time span so effectively and made such clear use of maps, illustrations and archaeological evidence.' Robin Lane-Fox, *British Museum Magazine*

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and prediction). Each document has an introduction, explanatory notes and bibliography, and is used as the starting point for further discussion.

This book (volume 2 of a 2 volume work) is an excellent selection of passages written by Romans and their contemporaries about Romans and their religions. Each translation is preceded by a short description of the context of the passage, and references. Included are paragraphs from books, quotes from lost works, inscriptions from monuments, publicly posted legal announcements, and graffiti. It was a breath of fresh air for me, since the contemporary source material in this subject is so sparse that most books on ancient religion are a doubtful parade of their authors' opinions. And although the passages from ancient writers are laden with their opinions, with the help of the editors of 'Religions of Rome, vol II' it's obvious and once exposed, revealing.

An invaluable resource and a must for anyone with a genuine interest in ancient Roman religion.

Mary Beard does everything well in connection with her obvious passion for Roman History and this book is no exception. She and her colleagues have produced a book full of learning and insights into the beliefs and practices of so long ago

Bought it for a Bday present for my daughter-was exactly what she needed for her course study

Fascinating, scholarly and accessible to lay person.

thank you

Well researched. Would have been better if volume 1 & 2 had been intergrated into 1 volume.

"Religions of Rome, Volume 2: A Sourcebook" is the companion volume to "Volume 1: A History", also written by Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price. This volume contains translations of many source documents referenced in Volume 1, though it does not attempt to include every piece of evidence for the history of Roman religion by any means. Most of the material is from the 1st century BC to the 2nd century AD, as literature and archeological evidence related to religion are most abundant from that period. The authors have chosen to focus primarily on Rome and Italy. In choosing which sources to include, their "guiding principle has been to use the texts we cite

argumentatively, and to show that Roman religion was not a static body of doctrine, but a subject of debate, negotiation, definition and re-definition."In contrast to Volume 1, this Sourcebook is organized thematically, not chronologically. This allows readers to compare religious ideas and practice over time on the same theme. Each of 13 chapters addresses a different topic: Earliest Rome, The deities of Rome, The calendar, Religious places, Festivals and ceremonies, Sacrifices, Divination and diviners, Priests and priestesses, Individuals and gods. Rome outside Rome, Threats to the Roman order, Religious groups, and Perspectives. Each chapter is divided into sub-sections, each with its own introduction and recommendations for further reading. The source materials are displayed in larger font with explanatory introductions and their own footnotes, so there is a lot more information than just the source material itself. Most sources are literary, but there are also a fair number of inscriptions, paintings, sculpture, coins, bronze items and buildings cited. I was pleasantly surprised by the number of illustrations. My one frustration with this book is that some literary sources are not dated, neither for the period they refer to nor the date they were written, and it was puzzling to me that some were dated and some not. Perhaps readers are expected to be able to place the Roman and Greek authors in time as if it were second nature. At the end of the book, there is a glossary, list of deities and their epithets, bibliography, index of texts cited, and a general index. This Sourcebook is generally a well-conceived volume and, in conjunction with Volume 1, an excellent overview or starting point for serious study of Roman religion.

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