



The Religion of the Etruscans

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Devotion to religion was the distinguishing characteristic of the Etruscan people, the most powerful civilization of Italy in the Archaic period. From a very early date, Etruscan religion spread its influence into Roman society, especially with the practice of divination. The Etruscan priest Spurinna, to give a well-known example, warned Caesar to beware the Ides of March. Yet despite the importance of religion in Etruscan life, there are relatively few modern comprehensive studies of Etruscan religion, and none in English. This volume seeks to fill that deficiency by bringing together essays by leading scholars that collectively provide a state-of-the-art overview of religion in ancient Etruria.

The eight essays in this book cover all of the most important topics in Etruscan religion, including the Etruscan pantheon and the roles of the gods, the roles of priests and divinatory practices, votive rituals, liturgical literature, sacred spaces and temples, and burial and the afterlife. In addition to the essays, the book contains valuable supporting materials, including the first English translation of an Etruscan Brontoscopic Calendar (which guided priests in making divinations), Greek and Latin sources about Etruscan religion (in the original language and English translation), and a glossary. Nearly 150 black and white photographs and drawings illustrate surviving Etruscan artifacts and inscriptions, as well as temple floor plans and reconstructions.

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