

# Roman Imperial Cult

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The Imperial Cult honored Roman emperors during lifetime and after death, both in Rome and in the provinces. The first emperor to receive an official deification was Augustus in 14 CE, although the deification of Julius Caesar, and the establishment of his cult after his assassination in 44 BCE, can be seen as a precursor. Although involving the traditional material and ritual culture of Roman religions—temples, altars, sacrifices, festivals, priesthoods—the cult was not strictly defined, and substantial variations existed across geographic regions and time periods. The spread of the cult throughout newly acquired territories was an important vehicle for the establishment of Roman imperial authority. For the local elites in provincial cities, the imperial cult offered opportunities to simultaneously express affiliation to Roman values, while promoting individual power agendas. Because the Imperial Cult functioned within the boundaries of traditional Roman religious practice, the answers to many of the questions in this entry broadly apply and make reference to Roman religions as a system.



Date Range: 42 BCE - 518 CE

Region: Roman Empire (Greatest Extent)

Region tags: Europe, Western Europe

Most of Western Europe and the Mediterranean, but tagged only as "Western Europe".

## Status of Participants:

✓ Elite    ✓ Religious Specialists    ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

## Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Beard, Mary, John North, and S R. F. Price. *Religions of Rome*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Source 2: Price, Simon, "From Noble Funerals to Divine Cult: the Consecration of Roman Emperors," in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*. Edited by Cannadine, David, and Simon Price, 56-105. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999.
- Source 3: Fishwick, Duncan. *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1987.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: <http://digitalaugustanrome.org>
- Source 1 Description: Good source for understanding the architecture associated with early cult in Rome. Restricted to the Augustan period.

Relevant online primary textual corpora (original languages and/or translations):

– Source 1 URL: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:2008.01.0593>

– Source 1 Description: For the Imperial Cult see primarily Cass. Dio. 51.20.7-8

– Source 2 URL: [http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius\\_Dio/home.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/home.html)

– Source 2 Description: English translation by Loeb Classical Library

## General Variables

### Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: As a general rule, the cult of the emperor existed alongside the traditional Greco-Roman and other indigenous cults. The cult was often conflated with the worship of local divinities by simply adding a cult statue of the emperor to the place of worship. In Gaul, for instance, Augustus seem to have identified with the local deity Lug, who was also connected to Mercury (Fishwick 1987). This integration of the cult of the emperor and local cults seems particularly clear in Asia Minor, where there was a long tradition of worshipping individuals even while alive (Price, S. R. F., *Rituals and Power: the Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*, Cambridge, 1984).



Is the cultural contact competitive:

– Yes

Notes: At least in what pertains to the material aspects of the cult—dedications in the form of altars, temples, statues, inscriptions, votive offerings—there was competition among participants.



Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:

– Yes

Notes: All members of society were more or less expected to participate.



Is the cultural contact neutral:

– No

Notes: No cultural contact is entirely neutral. The imperial cult allowed the establishment of Roman power in conquered territories, while simultaneously allowing local elites to show their affiliation with the Roman state.



Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– Yes

Notes: The Imperial Cult appears primarily in provincial contexts, that is territories annexed to the Roman Empire primarily through conquest.



Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Yes

Notes: The borders of the empire were constantly being redefined and expanded through warfare.

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The Romans do not seem to have been generally concerned with a process/system for religious affiliation. There is no evidence for requirements of this type.

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– No

Does the religion have official political support

– Yes

Notes: At least the deification of Julius Caesar in Rome came from a senatorial decree granting him honors reserved for the gods. As Suetonius reports, "He [Caesar] was numbered among the gods, not only by a formal decree, but also in the conviction of the common people. For at the first of the games which his heir Augustus gave in honour of his apotheosis, a comet shone for seven successive days, rising about the eleventh hour, and was believed to be the soul of Caesar, who had been taken to heaven; and this is why a star is set upon the crown of his head in his statue. It was voted that the hall in which he was slain [Pompey's Theater] be walled up, that the Ides of March be called the Day of Parricide, and that a meeting of the senate should never be called on that day." Suet. Iul. 88.

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

– Yes

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

– Yes

Notes: This could come from both the state and private individuals such as magistrates. The dedication of altars, shrines, temples, sanctuaries, cult statues, etc. was an important form of euergetism (public munificence).

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– Yes

Notes: Starting with Augustus, all Roman emperors adopted the title of pontifex maximus. As such, they functioned as head of the state religion.

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– No

Notes: These were separate offices, although a single individual could hold both.

↳ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:

– No

Notes: There is no evidence for strict enforcement, although performance of the worship seems to have been expected. The emperor Gaius (Caligula) strongly reprimanded the Jewish community of Alexandria for failing to sacrifice to him (Philo Leg. 349-67). Other Julio-Claudian emperors, including Tiberius and Claudius, prohibited sacrifices to themselves or to other living person (Cass. Dio. 58.8.4; 59.4.4; 60.5.4).

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Polity provides preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax, exemption)

– Field doesn't know

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– No

## Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Estimates of the population of Rome during the Augustan period, based primarily on records of food distributions, are around 1 million. Estimates for the whole empire are between 60-100 million. For an analysis see Zissos, Andrew, "A Companion to the Flavian Age of Imperial Rome," 2016 (Appendix 2). We do not know how many within those estimates were actually adherents to the imperial cult, but arguably, the majority of the population participated in the cult in some way.

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Field doesn't know

Nature of religious group [please select one]:

– Large official religious group with smaller religious groups also openly allowed

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Is there a hierarchy among these leaders:

– Yes

- ↳ Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:
  - Field doesn't know
  
- ↳ Are religious leaders chosen:
  - Yes
  
- ↳ A leader chooses his/her own replacement:
  - No

## Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also “oral scriptures” (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– No

Notes: There were no scriptures in the strict definition of the word (see question prompt). However, one could consider certain texts as a type of scripture, including the Sibylline Books (divination texts) or senatorial decrees for deification of Roman emperors.

## Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

- ↳ In the average settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:
  - Field doesn't know

Notes: Many provincial cities included at least one temple and altar(s) dedicated to the Imperial Cult but this is difficult to quantify.

- ↳ Size of largest single religious monument, square meters:
  - Field doesn't know

Notes: There is plenty of variation in this regard, as temples were built according to the availability of funds, space, materials, and skilled labor.

- ↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:
  - Field doesn't know

↳ Size of average monument, square meters:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There was great variation in the size of Imperial Cult temples and altars, depending on the time period, region, materials and resources available, etc.

↳ Height of average monument, meters:

– Field doesn't know

↳ In the largest settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:

– Field doesn't know

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes

↳ Tombs:

– Yes

↳ Cemeteries:

– No

Notes: No as we define cemeteries, although burials tended to be clustered in some way.

↳ Temples:

– Yes

Notes: This is the principal type of structure connected to the Imperial Cult. They tended to be located in highly visible spots in the city centers and were generally connected to other structures such as public fora.

↳ Altars:

– Yes

↳ Devotional markers:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Mass gathering point [plazas, courtyard, square. Places permanently demarcated using visible objects or structures]:

– Yes

Notes: Most Roman temples had a space in front for public sacrifices. People would not normally enter the temple space. Many temples dedicated to the Imperial Cult were

associated with a forum area, also a space for public gatherings, markets, etc.

- ↳ Other type of religious monumental architecture:
  - Field doesn't know

Is iconography present:

– Yes

- ↳ Where is iconography present [select all that apply]:
  - On persons
  - At home
  - Only religious public space
  - Some public spaces
  - All public spaces

Notes: Imagery was one of the principal means of communication in ancient Rome, and images associated with the Imperial cult are ubiquitous.

- ↳ Are there distinct features in the religious group's iconography:
  - Yes

- ↳ Eyes (stylized or not):
  - Yes

- ↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic):
  - Yes

- ↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic):
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic):
  - Yes

- ↳ Supernatural beings (abstract symbol):
  - Yes

- ↳ Portrayals of afterlife:

– No

↳ Aspects of doctrine (e.g. cross, trinity, Mithraic symbols):

– Yes

↳ Humans:

– Yes

↳ Other features of iconography:

– Yes

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

↳ Are sacred site oriented to ecological features:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: For the Imperial Cult this is rare, but generally Roman temples could have connections with specific ecological features.

Are pilgrimages present:

– Field doesn't know

## Beliefs

### Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer “no” only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

– Yes

↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

– Field doesn't know



↳ Other spirit-body relationship:

– Field doesn't know

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

– Yes

↳ Afterlife in specified realm of space beyond this world:

– Yes

Notes: The Romans believed in the underworld realm of the Greek god Hades, although with some variations.

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined "above" space:

– Yes

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined "below" space:

– Yes

↳ Afterlife in vaguely defined horizontal space:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Afterlife located in "other" space:

– Field doesn't know

Reincarnation in this world:

– No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: The principal method of burial in Rome was cremation until about the mid second century CE, when, for reasons not entirely clear, there was a shift towards inhumation. See Bodel, J. "From Columbaria to Catacombs: Communities of the Dead in Pagan and Christian Rome," in *Commemorating the Dead: Texts and Artifacts in Context*, de Gruyter 2008: 177-242.

↳ Cremation:

– Yes

Notes: Cremation was the norm in early Rome until the mid-second century CE, when it is replaced by inhumation. It continued to be the preferred treatment for the body for Roman emperors.

↳ Mummification:

– Yes

Notes: Practiced primarily in Egypt under Roman rule.

↳ Interment:

– Yes

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– Yes

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– Yes

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):

– No

↳ Corpse is interred some other way:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

↳ Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):

– No

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

↳ Secondary burial:

– Yes

Notes: Cenotaph monuments sometimes replaced actual burials.

↳ Re-treatment of corpse:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Other intensive (in terms of time or resources expended) treatment of corpse :

– Field doesn't know

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

– Yes

↳ Human sacrifices present:

– No

↳ Animal co-sacrifices present:

– Yes

Notes: Animal sacrifices were a common part of Roman religious rituals. The species varied from small birds to larger animals such as pigs and bulls. The 'suovetaurilia'--the triple sacrifice of a pig, a sheep, and a bull--was traditionally part of Imperial religious ceremonies and appears in numerous visual representations.

Are grave goods present:

– Yes

↳ Personal effects:

– Yes

↳ Valuable items:

– Yes

↳ Significant wealth (e.g. gold, jade, intensely worked objects):

– Yes

↳ Some wealth (some valuable or useful objects interred):

– Yes

↳ Other valuable/precious items interred:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Other grave goods:

– Yes

Notes: Multiple grave goods including personal objects, weapons, armor, furniture, etc.

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

↳ As cenotaphs:

– Yes

↳ In cemetery:

– Yes

Notes: Not exactly cemeteries, but enclosed collective tombs, yes.

↳ Family tomb-crypt:

– Yes

↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

– No

Notes: Romans considered dead bodies polluting agents, and toms were, by law, placed outside city boundaries.

↳ Other formal burial type:

– Yes [specify]: In Rome, imperial tombs were a highly important monuments. These include the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Column of Trajan (actual burial for the emperor), the mausoleum of Hadrian, among others (See, Davies, P. "Death and the Emperor: Imperial Funerary Monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius, Cambridge 2000).

## Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– Yes

↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic:

– Yes

Notes: Jupiter was the supreme high god and creator for the Romans.

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity:

– Yes

Notes: In a way, since he resides in the heavens.

↳ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld):

– No

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god):

– No

Notes: Not exactly, although sometimes there were such implications.

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The connections between the two is not entirely clear. For an example, see the image of the apotheosis of Titus on the Arch of Titus in Rome, where an eagle, symbol of Jupiter, carries the deceased emperor (Titus) to heaven after his death. (See entry The Arch of Titus on this database).

↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites:

– No

Notes: Although Jupiter was not directly connected to any member of the elite, other deities were claimed by members of the aristocracy as ancestors. This was the case of Julius Caesar and Augustus, who claimed descent from Venus.

↳ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites:

– Yes [specify]: In some parts of the empire, especially in the eastern provinces, the figure of the deified emperor might merge with a high god.

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Other feature(s) of supreme high god:

– Field doesn't know

↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world:

– Yes

- ↳ The supreme god's knowledge is restricted to particular domain of human affairs:
  - No
- ↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:
  - No
- ↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ The supreme high god knows your basic character (personal essence):
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ The supreme high god knows what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god has other knowledge of this world:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:
  - Yes

- ↳ The supreme high god can reward:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god can punish:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god has indirect causal efficacy in the world:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god exhibits positive emotion:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god exhibits negative emotion:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god possesses hunger:
  - Yes
- ↳ Is it permissible to worship supernatural beings other than the high god:
  - Yes
- ↳ The supreme high god possesses/exhibits some other feature:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living:
  - Yes
  - ↳ In waking, everyday life:
    - Yes
  - ↳ In dreams:
    - Yes
  - ↳ In trance possession:
    - Yes

- ↳ Through divination practices:
  - Yes
- ↳ Only through religious specialists:
  - No
- ↳ Only through monarch
  - No
- ↳ Other form of communication with living:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Previously human spirits are present:
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits can be seen:
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits can be physically felt:
  - Yes
- ↳ Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits' knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits' knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits' knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits' knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:
  - Field doesn't know



- ↳ Human spirits can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirit's can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits know your basic character (personal essence):
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits have other form(s) of knowledge regarding this world:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits can reward:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits can punish:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits have memory of life:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Human spirits exhibit positive emotion:
  - Yes

- ↳ Human spirits exhibit negative emotion:
  - Yes
- ↳ Human spirits communicate with the living:
  - Yes
  - ↳ In waking, everyday life:
    - Field doesn't know
  - ↳ In dreams:
    - Yes
  - ↳ In trance possession:
    - Field doesn't know
  - ↳ Through divination processes:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Only through specialists:
    - No
  - ↳ Only through monarch:
    - No
  - ↳ Communicate with living through other means:
    - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:
  - Yes
  - ↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:
    - Yes
  - ↳ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:
    - Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings knows your basic character (personal essence):

– Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

– Yes

- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings have other knowledge of this world:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:
  - Yes
- ↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:
  - Yes
  - Notes: Many offerings at altars and temples, including those to the lares or spirits of the home, consisted of food and drink items.
- ↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Does the religious group possess a pantheon of supernatural beings:
  - Yes
- ↳ Organized by kinship based on a family model:
  - Yes
- ↳ Organized hierarchically:
  - Yes
- ↳ Power of beings is domain specific:
  - Yes
- ↳ Other organization for pantheon:
  - No

## Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Yes

↳ There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:

Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously “moral” or “ethical” norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Yes

↳ Food:

– Yes

↳ Sacred space(s):

– Yes

↳ Sacred object(s):

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about other:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of coreligionists:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other religions:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other polities:

– Yes

- ↳ Supernatural beings care about sex:
  - Yes
    - ↳ Adultery:
      - Yes
    - ↳ Incest:
      - Yes
    - ↳ Other sexual practices:
      - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about lying:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about honouring oaths:
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about laziness:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about sorcery:
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about non-lethal fighting:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about shirking risk:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about disrespecting elders:
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about gossiping:
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Supernatural beings care about property crimes:
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about performance of rituals:
  - No
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about conversion of non-religionists:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about economic fairness:
  - No
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about personal hygiene:
  - Yes
- ↳ Supernatural beings care about other:
  - Field doesn't know

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

- ↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:
  - Yes
    - ↳ Done only by high god:
      - Yes
    - ↳ Done by many supernatural beings:
      - Yes
    - ↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:
      - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Done by other entities or through other means [specify]
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:
  - Yes

- ↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:
  - Yes

- ↳ Done to enforce group norms:
  - Yes

- ↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:
  - No

- ↳ Done randomly:
  - Yes

- ↳ Other [specify]
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:
  - Yes

- ↳ Supernatural punishments in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:
  - No

- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure:
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory displeasure:
  - Yes

- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as an inferior life form:
  - Yes



- ↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in an inferior realm:
  - Yes
- ↳ Other [specify]
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:
  - Yes
  - ↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:
    - No
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of bad luck:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of political failure:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of defeat in battle:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of crop failure or bad weather:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of disaster on journeys.
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of mild sensory displeasure:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of extreme sensory displeasure:
    - Yes
  - ↳ Punishment in this life consists of sickness or illness:
    - Yes

↳ Punishment in this life consists of impaired reproduction:

– Yes

↳ Punishment in this life consists of bad luck visited on descendants:

– Yes

↳ Other [specify]

– Field doesn't know

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– Yes

↳ Is the cause/purpose of supernatural rewards known:

– No

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in the afterlife:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural rewards in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of mild sensory pleasure:

– Yes

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory pleasure:

– Yes

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of eternal happiness:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as a superior life form:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in a superior realm:

– Yes

- ↳ Other [specify]
  - Field doesn't know

- ↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in this lifetime:
  - Yes

- ↳ Supernatural rewards in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of good luck:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of political success or power:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of success in battle:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of peace or social stability:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of healthy crops or good weather:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of success on journeys:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of mild sensory pleasure:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of extreme sensory pleasure:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of enhanced health:
  - Yes

- ↳ Reward in this life consists of enhanced reproductive success:
  - Yes
- ↳ Reward in this life consists of fortune visited on descendants:
  - Yes
- ↳ Other [specify]
  - Field doesn't know

## Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– Yes

Notes: Possibly, if the deified emperor could be considered as such.

- ↳ Is the messiah's whereabouts or time of coming known?
  - Yes

- ↳ Is the messiah's purpose known:
  - No

Is an eschatology present:

– No

## Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– Yes

- ↳ What is the nature of this distinction:
  - Present (but not emphasized)
- ↳ Are specifically moral norms prescribed by the religious group:
  - Yes

- ↳ Specifically moral norms are implicitly linked to vague metaphysical concepts:
  - Yes
- ↳ Specifically moral norms are explicitly linked to vague metaphysical entities:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Specifically moral norms are linked to impersonal cosmic order (e.g. karma):
  - Yes
- ↳ Specifically moral norms are linked in some way to an anthropomorphic being:
  - Yes
- ↳ Specifically moral norms are linked explicitly to commands of anthropomorphic being:
  - Yes
- ↳ Specifically moral norms are have no special connection to metaphysical:
  - Field doesn't know
- ↳ Moral norms apply to:
  - All individuals within society

## Practices

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### Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

– No

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

– No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

– Yes

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

– No

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

– Yes

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”

– Yes

↳ On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:

– Field doesn't know

↳ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to small-scale rituals.

– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there orthodoxy checks:

Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.

– Yes

Notes: Roman rituals were generally highly regulated and consisted of strict steps. If one step did not go according to tradition, the ritual would have to be performed again from the start.

↳ Are there orthopraxy checks:

Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.

– Yes

Notes: Part of the same process described above.

↳ Does participation entail synchronic practices:  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Is there use of intoxicants:  
– Yes

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– No

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

– Yes

Notes: At least during the Augustan period, members of the Julio-Claudia dynasty claimed descent from the goddess Venus. In later periods, other rulers suggested similar associations with deities.

↳ Fictive kinship terminology universal:  
– No

↳ Fictive kinship terminology widespread:  
– Yes

↳ Fictive kinship terminology employed but uncommon:  
– Yes

## Society and Institutions

### Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

– An empire

### Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

– Yes



Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

– Yes

Notes: At various points, the Imperial government put in practice 'alimenta' schemes, a system of loans whose accrued interests were destined to feed poor children of the empire. The alimenta was institutionalized by Trajan and continued by Hadrian in the early second century, although it might have been initially conceived by Trajan's predecessor, Nerva. See, Duncan-Jones, R. "The Purpose and Organization of the Alimenta." *Papers of the British School at Rome* 32 (1964): 123-146.

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

– No

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

## Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– No

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– Yes



Is extra-religious education open to both males and females:

– No

## Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

– Yes

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

– Yes

## Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– Yes

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Both private individuals and the state could provide this service.

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– Yes

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Especially in the Republican period, private wealthy individuals could provide these services.

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– Yes

Notes: In the form of roads

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

– Yes

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– Yes

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include corporal punishments:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– Yes

↳ Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– Yes

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– Yes

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

## Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– Yes

↳ Does the religious group in question have the power to conscript:

– Yes

↳ Does the religious group in question maintain a full-time military corps (e.g. Swiss Guard):

– Yes

↳ Does the religious group in question maintain a standing army:

– Yes

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: The Senate and the People of Rome, and in the Republican period individual magistrates could also maintain military forces.

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– Yes

↳ Is use of this distinct written language confined to religious professionals:

– No

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– Yes

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

## Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

– Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes



Please characterize the forms/levels of food production [choose all that apply]:

– Hunting (including marine animals)

– Fishing

– Pastoralism

– Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards

– Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)