



Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo

By A.D. NOCK

The Johns Hopkins University Press February 1998, 1998. Paper Back. Condition: New. First published in 1933, this model of comparative cultural analysis has thankfully been reprinted. A.D. Nock was for years one of the world's leading authorities on the religions of later antiquity, and along with William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*, this book is one of the "two most cited books in the field of conversion studies." After examining the idea of conversion in religion in general, through the mixing and dissemination of primitive and prophetic modes, Nock focuses on Greek religion before Alexander the Great contrasted with the success of Buddhism further east. With the rise of the Roman Empire and the migration of Eastern cults and mystery religions to the West, Nock describes the complex religious and philosophical background of the world into which Christianity was born, and the various ways it succeeded, both philosophically and socially, amidst the "widespread pessimism" of that world. An informed reading and synthesis of original sources that profoundly advances our sense of what it meant to be religious in the world of late antiquity.



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