

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-11030-4 — Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome  
Edited by Michele Renee Salzman, Marianne Sághy, Rita Lizzi Testa  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

## PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS IN LATE ANTIQUE ROME

This book sheds new light on the religious and consequently social changes taking place in late antique Rome. The essays in this volume argue that the once-dominant notion of pagan-Christian religious conflict cannot fully explain the texts and artifacts, as well as the social, religious, and political realities of late antique Rome. Together, the chapters demonstrate that the fourth-century city was a more fluid, vibrant, and complex place than was previously thought. Competition between diverse groups in Roman society – be it pagans with Christians, Christians with Christians, or pagans with pagans – did create tensions and hostility, but it also allowed for coexistence and reduced the likelihood of overt violent, physical conflict. Competition and coexistence, along with conflict, emerge as still central paradigms for those who seek to understand the transformations of Rome from the age of Constantine through the early fifth century.

Michele Renee Salzman is Professor of Ancient History at the University of California, Riverside. She is the author of numerous articles and books on late antiquity and recently published *The Letters of Symmachus: Book 1* (including a translation with Michael Roberts, 2011).

Marianne Sághy is Associate Professor in the Medieval Studies Department at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. She has published several books and articles in Hungarian, English and French on Damasus of Rome and on late antique hagiography.

Rita Lizzi Testa is Professor of Roman History at the Università di Perugia (Italy), a member of the International Advisory Board of “CUA Studies in Early Christianity,” and of the Advisory Board for the NAPS-Christianity in Late Antiquity Series. She is author of several books, numerous articles, and editor of many volumes.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-11030-4 — Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome  
Edited by Michele Renee Salzman , Marianne Sághy , Rita Lizzi Testa  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS  
IN LATE ANTIQUE ROME

*Conflict, Competition, and Coexistence  
in the Fourth Century*



Edited by

**MICHELE RENEE SALZMAN**

University of California, Riverside

**MARIANNE SÁGHY**

Central European University, Budapest

**RITA LIZZI TESTA**

Università di Perugia



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-107-11030-4 — Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome  
 Edited by Michele Renee Salzman, Marianne Sághy, Rita Lizzi Testa  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
 79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107110304](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107110304)

© Cambridge University Press 2016

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2016

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data*

Pagans and Christians in late antique Rome : conflict, competition, and coexistence in the fourth century / edited by Michele Renee Salzman, University of California, Riverside, Marianne Sághy, Central European University, Rita Lizzi Testa, Università di Perugia.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-11030-4 (hardback) — ISBN 978-1-107-52703-4 (pbk.)

I. Rome — Religion. I. Salzman, Michele Renee, editor.

BL803.P34 2015

200.9'015—dc23 2015021999

ISBN 978-1-107-11030-4 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-52703-4 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	<i>page</i> ix
Biographies of Authors	xi
Acknowledgments	xv
<b>Introduction</b>	I
<i>Rita Lizzi Testa, Michele Renee Salzman, and Marianne Sághy</i>	
PART I SENATORIAL POLITICS AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICT	
1 Constantine and the Roman Senate: Conflict, Cooperation, and Concealed Resistance	II
<i>Michele Renee Salzman</i>	
2 Beyond Pagans and Christians: Politics and Intra-Christian Conflict in the Controversy over the altar of Victory	46
<i>Robert R. Chenault</i>	
3 Were Pagans Afraid to Speak Their Minds in a Christian World? The Correspondence of Symmachus	64
<i>Alan Cameron</i>	
PART II THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES	
4 Christians and the Invention of Paganism in the Late Roman Empire	115
<i>Thomas Jürgasch</i>	
5 Late Antique <i>Divi</i> and Imperial Priests of the Late Fourth and Early Fifth Centuries	139
<i>Douglas Boin</i>	

- 6 *Artis heu magicis*: The Label of Magic in Fourth-Century  
 Conflicts and Disputes 162  
*Maijastina Kahlos*
- 7 Crowd Behavior in Late Antique Rome 178  
*Daniëlle Sloopjes*
- PART III PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS:  
 COEXISTENCE AND COMPETITION
- Section A. Pagans and Religious Practices in  
 Christian Rome
- 8 Reinterpreting the Cult of Mithras 197  
*Jonas Bjørnebye*
- 9 Napkin Art: *Carmina contra paganos* and the Difference  
 Satire Made in Fourth-Century Rome 213  
*Dennis E. Trout*
- 10 Poetry and Pagans in Late Antique Rome: The Case of  
 the Senator “Converted from the Christian Religion to  
 Servitude to the Idols” 232  
*Neil McLynn*
- 11 *Professiones Gentiliciae*: The *Collegia* of Rome between  
 Paganism and Christianity 251  
*Francesca Diosono*
- Section B. Death and the Afterlife
- 12 Reinterpreting “Pagans” and “Christians” from Rome’s  
 Late Antique Mortuary Evidence 273  
*Nicola Denzey Lewis*
- 13 On the Form and Function of Constantine’s  
 Circiform Funerary Basilicas in Rome 291  
*Monica Hellström*
- 14 *Romanae gloria plebis*: Bishop Damasus and  
 the Traditions of Rome 314  
*Marianne Sághy*
- 15 Storytelling and Cultural Memory in the Making:  
 Celebrating Pagan and Christian Founders of Rome 330  
*Gitte Lønstrup Dal Santo*
- Section C. Reading Religious Iconography as Evidence for  
 Pagan–Christian Relations
- 16 Rome and Imagery in Late Antiquity: Perception  
 and Use of Statues 345  
*Caroline Michel d’Annoville*

## CONTENTS

vii

17	What to Do with <i>Sacra Antiqua</i> ? A Reinterpretation of the Sculptures from S. Martino ai Monti in Rome <i>Silviu Anghel</i>	360
18	Myth and Salvation in the Fourth Century: Representations of Hercules in Christian Contexts <i>Levente Nagy</i>	379
	Concluding Remarks: Vrbs Roma between Pagans and Christians <i>Rita Lizzi Testa</i>	401
	Index	411

## ILLUSTRATIONS

## Figures

5.1	“Divo Caro Pio,” RIC 4.135, an <i>aureus</i> of Emperor Carus (r. ca. 282–3 CE)	page 148
5.2	“Deus et Dominus,” RIC 5.145, an <i>aureus</i> of Emperor Carus (r. ca. 282–3 CE)	148
5.3	“Deo Augusto,” Tarragona. Copper alloy <i>sestertius</i> , struck 15–37 CE, <i>RPC</i> 1.222/6	149
5.4	Locations of imperial cult priests in North Africa, fourth through sixth century CE	152
11.1	The position on the Basilica Hilariana in the Caelian Hill	265
11.2	General view of the excavated area of the Basilica Hilariana	266
11.3	Map of the Basilica Hilariana in the fourth century	267
13.1	Map of Rome with the locations of funerary basilicas	292
13.2	Schematic plans of the earliest building phases of the basilicas	293
15.1	Emperor Marcus Aurelius standing right, clasping hands with Lucius Verus standing left	334
15.2	Portrait busts of Marcus Aurelius (to the right) and Lucius Verus (to the left)	335
15.3	A likeness. Portrait busts of St. Peter and St. Paul side by side, facing each other	336
15.4	The “Sariguzel sarcophagus”	340
17.1	The plan of the area superimposed on the Forma Urbis	364
17.2	The plan of the fourth-century villa	366
17.3	Section of the <i>nymphaeum</i>	367
17.4	Water spout of the <i>nymphaeum</i>	367
17.5	The <i>aedicula</i> and the <i>mithraeum</i>	368
17.6	The <i>aedicula</i>	369
17.7	The <i>mithraeum</i> . Section	372
17.8	Tomis, the statuary group in situ	373

18.1	Via Latina catacomb, <i>cubiculum</i> N: Hercules, Alcestis, and Cerberus	380
18.2	Funerary relief with Alcestis from Intercisa (Dunaújváros, Hungary)	383
18.3	Via Latina catacomb, the vault of <i>cubiculum</i> O	384
18.4	Early Christian casket mounts from Ulcisia Castra (Szentendre, Hungary)	386
18.5	The auxiliary fortress and late Roman cemetery of Ulcisia Castra (Szentendre, Hungary)	387
18.6	Hercules medallion of the casket mount of Ulcisia Castra (Szentendre, Hungary)	388
18.7	Medallion with ships on the casket mount of Ulcisia Castra (Szentendre, Hungary)	389
18.8	Jupiter medallion of the casket mount of Ulcisia Castra (Szentendre, Hungary)	390
18.9	Vota publica medallion of Diocletianus with ships	391
18.10	Casket mount of uncertain findspot with the representation of Hercules killing the Hydra of Lerna	394



## BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

**Silviu Anghel** is a researcher at the Bildung und Religion – Courant Forschung Zentrum of the University of Göttingen. He is the author of *Burying the Gods: Statue Depositions in Late Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2015) and is preparing a book tentatively titled *The Last Hellenes: The Athenian Pagan Sacred Landscape in Late Antiquity*. His main interests are Greek and Roman Egypt, and late antique history and religion, in particular late antique paganism.

**Jonas Bjørnebye** is the author of several articles and is preparing a book. His most recent publication is “Mithraic Movement: Negotiating Topography and Space in Late Antique Rome,” in I. Östenberg, S. Malmberg, and J. Bjørnebye, eds., *The Moving City: Processions, Passages and Promenades in Ancient Rome* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015).

**Douglas Boin** is an assistant professor of ancient and late antique Mediterranean history at Saint Louis University. He is the author of *Coming Out Christian in the Roman World* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015) and *Ostia in Late Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

**Alan Cameron** is Charles Anthon Professor of the Latin Language and Literature, Emeritus, at Columbia University. He is the author of several books, including *The Last Pagans of Rome* (New York: Oxford Press, 2011). He is the winner of the 2013 Kenyon Medal for Classical Studies and Archaeology from the British Academy.

**Robert R. Chenault** is an associate professor of history and classics at Willamette University. He is the author of several articles, and is preparing a book, *Rome without Emperors: The Revival of a Senatorial City in the Fourth Century A.D.*

**Caroline Michel d'Annville**, former member of the École française de Rome, is an archaeologist and is currently Professeur d'archéologie, Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV, 2015-). Her publications include “Fidélité à la tradition et détournements dans la controverse de Dracontius (Romulea 5): un poème à double sens,” in *Mélanges B. Beaujard* (Rennes: Presses de l'Université de Rennes, 2008).

**Francesca Diosono** is Alexander von Humboldt Advanced Research Fellow at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität of Munich. Her published works include a monograph on professional *collegia* in the Roman world.

**Monica Hellström** is a Junior Research Fellow in the Department of Classics and Ancient History at Durham University, UK. She has written on aspects on the topography and sociology of imperial Rome, most recently published in *The Moving City: Processions, Passages and Promenades in Ancient Rome*, edited by I. Östenberg, S. Malmberg and J. Bjørnebye (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015).

**Andra Jugănar** (indexer) is a second-year PhD student at the Medieval Studies Department, Central European University (Budapest, Hungary). She is interested in the history of Early Christianity, particularly in the early monasticism, within its social, economic, political, and cultural context.

**Thomas Jürgasch** is a scientific assistant at the Faculty of Theology, University of Freiburg. He is the author of *Theoria vs. Praxis. Zur Entwicklung eines Prinzipienwissens im Bereich der Praxis in Antike und Spätantike* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013) and *Boethius as a Paradigm of Late Ancient Thought* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014).

**Maijastina Kahlos** is at the University of Helsinki and has published several books, including most recently *Forbearance and Compulsion: Rhetoric of Tolerance and Intolerance in Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth, 2009).

**Nicola Denzey Lewis** is a visiting associate professor at Brown University and works on the intellectual and social history of late antique Rome. She is the author of *Cosmology and Fate in Gnosticism and the Graeco-Roman World: Under a Pitiless Sky* (Leiden: Brill, 2013) and of *The Bone Gatherers: The Lost Worlds of Early Christian Women* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2007).

**Neil McLynn** is a university lecturer in later Roman history at Oxford University, and a fellow of Corpus Christi College. His publications include *Ambrose of Milan: Church and Court in a Christian Capital* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994) and *Christian Politics and Religious Culture in Late Antiquity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009).

**Levente Nagy** is an associate professor at the University of Pécs and an archaeological advisor of the Gyula Forster National Centre for Cultural Heritage Management, as well as co-director of research in the Frühes Christentum in Ungarn project in collaboration with the University of Vienna. His works focus on pagan and Christian archaeology and have included *A Fine and Private Place: The Late Antique Cemetery of Sopiana/Pécs*: (Pécs: Örökség Ház, 2008); and, on the cult of Mithras, “The Short History of Time in the Mysteries of Mithras: The Order of Chaos, the City of Darkness and Iconography of Beginnings.” *Pantheon: The Journal for the Study of Religions* 7:1 (2012), 37–58.

**Marianne Sághy** is an associate professor at the Central European University in Budapest, and a former academic director of the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Paris. She has published on late antique bishops and hagiography (“Martyr Bishops and the Bishop’s Martyrs in Fourth-Century Rome,” in John Ott and Trpimir Vedriš, eds., *Saintly Bishops and Bishops’ Saints* (Zagreb: Hagiotheca, 2012), 31–45), with a special focus on Damasus of Rome (*Fido recubans sub tegmine Christi: Rewriting as Orthodoxy in the Epigrammata Damasiana*,” in Jörg Ulric, Anders-Christian Jacobsen, and David Brakke, eds., *Invention, Rewriting, Usurpation: Discursive Fights over Religious Traditions in Antiquity* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), 41–55). Her monograph on Saint Martin of Tours: Asceticism and Power in Late Antiquity is forthcoming.

**Michele Renee Salzman** is a professor of history at the University of California, Riverside. She is the author of numerous articles and books, including *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 1990), *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), and *The Letters of Symmachus: Book 1*. Translation with Michael Roberts. General Introduction and Commentary by Michele Renee Salzman (Leiden: Brill, 2011). She is the senior editor of *The Cambridge History of Religions in the Ancient World* and coeditor of Volume I with M. Sweeney (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013). She is the author of a forthcoming book, *The ‘Falls’ of Rome: The Transformations of Rome in Late Antiquity, 270–603 CE*.

**Gitte Lønstrup Dal Santo** was formerly the assistant director at the Danish Institute at Rome (2011–14), and is currently an advisor and a consultant in Copenhagen. Her PhD thesis, *Concordia Augustorum – Concordia Apostolorum. The Making of Shared Memory between Rome and Constantinople* (Aarhus University, 2010), is partially published in Stine Birk and Birte Poulsen, eds., *Patron and Viewers in Late Antiquity* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2012), 237–57, and available for loan at [www.bibliotek.dk](http://www.bibliotek.dk).

**Daniëlle Slootjes** is in the Department of History, Radboud University Nijmegen. Among her publications is “Late Antique Administrative Structures: On the Meaning of Dioceses and Their Borders in the Fourth Century AD,” in L. Brice and D. Slootjes, eds., *Aspects of Ancient Institutions and Geography: Studies in Honor of Richard J. A. Talbert* (Leiden, 2014), 177–95. She is the author of *The Governor and His Subjects in the Later Roman Empire* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

**Rita Lizzi Testa** is a professor of Roman history at the Università degli Studi di Perugia. She is the author of numerous works, including *Senatori, popolo, papi. Il governo di Roma al tempo dei Valentiniani* (Bari: Edipuglia 2004). She edited with Peter Brown *Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire: The Breaking of a Dialogue (IVth–VIth Century A.D.)* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011) and *The Strange Death of Pagan Rome: Reflections on a Historiographical Controversy* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). <http://www.brepols.net/Pages/ShowAuthor.aspx?lid=107947>

**Dennis E. Trout** is a professor of classical studies at the University of Missouri and the author of *Paulinus of Nola: Life, Letters, and Poems* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) and of *Damasus of Rome: The Epigraphic Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editors appreciate the generous support they have received for this project from the Thyssen Foundation, Cologne, and from the Balassi Institute of Hungary to host the conference and all participants in the amiable ambience of the historic Palazzo Falconieri, the seat of the Hungarian Academy in Rome. We want to extend our special thanks for their good cheer and hospitality to director Antal Molnár; András Fejérdy, head of the Fraknói Historical Institute; to cultural advisor Sebestyén Terdik; and to the coordinators of the conference, Mariana Bodnaruk (CEU Budapest) and Johanna Rákos-Zichy (ELTE Budapest). We want to thank Ingrid de Haas as well for her assistance in preparing the manuscript. Finally, the editors wish to thank Andra Jugănaru for the index.