

THE EARLY MODERN INVENTION OF LATE ANTIQUE ROME

In *The Early Modern Invention of Late Antique Rome*, Nicola Denzey Lewis challenges the common understanding of late antique Christianity as dominated by the Cult of the Saints. Popularized by historian Peter Brown, the Cult of the Saints presupposes that a “corporeal turn” in the fourth century CE initiated a new sense of the body (even the corpse or bone) as holy. Denzey Lewis argues that although present elsewhere in the late Roman Empire, no such “corporeal turn” happened in Rome until the early modern period. The prevailing assumption that it did was fostered by the apologetic concerns of early modern Catholic scholars, as well as contemporary attitudes toward death, antiquity, and the survival of the Church against secularism. Denzey Lewis delves deeply into the world of Roman late antique Christianity, exploring how and why it differed from the set of practices and beliefs we have come to think flourished in this crucial age of Christianization.

Nicola Denzey Lewis holds the Margo L. Goldsmith Chair in Women’s Studies in Religion at Claremont Graduate University. She is the recipient of research fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Academy of Religion, and the International Catacomb Society. Denzey Lewis serves on the editorial boards of *Gnosis* and the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*. A social historian of imperial and late antique Rome and the processes that enabled the Christianization of the Roman Empire, Denzey Lewis has published extensively. This is her fifth book and her second specifically on late antique Rome, after her highly acclaimed examination of ancient Roman women’s lives, *The Bone Gatherers* (2007).

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INVENTION OF LATE
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*For Denise, with gratitude for forty-five
years of delightful friendship*

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations and Maps</i>	page ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 The <i>Reinventio</i> of the Hidden City	24
2 Rewiring the Sacred Circuit (<i>Roma Sancta Renovata</i>)	71
3 Remains to Be Seen (or, On the Holy Corpse)	127
4 Peter's Bones	165
5 De Rossi's Deception: Crafting the Crypt of the Popes	211
6 Raising Late Antique Jews from the Valley of Dry Bones	251
7 Disposing of <i>Depositio (Ad Sanctos)</i>	297
8 Inventing Christian Rome	343
<i>Bibliography</i>	375
<i>Index</i>	419

Illustrations and Maps

Illustrations and maps follow page 6.

Illustrations

- 1 The Virgin Martyr Faustina, 2016.
- 2 M. A. Boldetti, *Osservazioni sopra i cimiterj de' santi martiri, ed antichi cristiani di Roma. Aggiuntavi la serie di tutti quelli, che sino al presente si sono scoperti, e di altri simili, che in varie parti del mondo si trovano: con alcune riflessioni pratiche sopra il culto delle sagre reliquie*, lib. II, cap. III, p. 339, 1720. In the public domain.
- 3 Charles Louis de Frédy, *The Kiss of Peace in the Catacombs*, late nineteenth century.
- 4 Jan Styka, *Saint Peter Preaching in the Catacombs*, 1902.
- 5 Jules Eugène Lenepveu, *The Martyrs in the Catacombs*, 1855.
- 6 Alejandro Ferrant y Fischermans, *The Burial of Saint Sebastian*, 1877.
- 7 Antonio Circignani, *Martyrdom of Pope Anicetus*, 1560–1620.
- 8 Gaetano Giulio Zumbo, *A Damned Soul*, 1700.
- 9 Caterina de Julianis, *Time and Death*, ca. 1727.
- 10 Pola Casket, ca. 400 CE.
- 11 Giovanni Battista De Rossi, *Roma Sotterranea Cristiana*, Book I, Tav. II, III, 1893.
- 12 Papal inscriptions, 2019.
- 13 Gold glass featuring Jewish motifs, ca. 400 CE.
- 14 Grave of Karl Marx, 2015.
- 15 Floorplan of funerary basilica at Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, 2012.

Maps

- 1 Map of martyr burials according to the *Calendar of 354*.
- 2 Map of martyr sites promoted by Damasus.

Acknowledgments

Writing a book is always a paradoxical expression of a desire to be caught in the most fascinating conversations with learned friends and the solitary pursuit of reading and thinking. Let me begin by acknowledging the role of my learned friends for fascinating conversations. In Rome, I have many people to thank: Greg Snyder for gamely exploring cemeteries, catacombs, private and access-prohibited fields (his idea), and for thinking with me on the Palazzo Altemps chapel; the amazing Chiara Messineo for exerting pressure at just the right places; Sarah Madole Lewis and Linda Nolan for catacombs, cats, and company; Michele Salzman at the American Academy in Rome and in Claremont, California; and Sander Evers at the Loyola Rome Center. A conference on “Pagans and Christians in the Fourth Century” at the Hungarian Academy in 2012 put me in splendid dialogue with Marianne Sághy, Dennis Trout, Gitte Lønstrup Dal Santo and Matthew Dal Santo, Jonas Bjørnebye, and Leonard Rutgers. I would also like to formally thank the Pontifical Commission for Sacred Archaeology (especially Raffaella Giuliani and Vincenzo Fiocchi Nicolai for arranging a visit to his excavations of the Via Ardeatina funerary basilica) and Alberto Marcocci at the Catacombs of Vigna Randanini. Special thanks to Alex Dwiar, who was not in Rome but ought to have been and whose hard work and special pleading got me valuable time at the *Memoria Apostolorum*. Although I can be tough in this book on catacomb guides, it must be said that many of the young Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology (PIAC) student guides I have had over the years have been truly wonderful and inspiring and in no way reflect some of the intransigent attitudes toward Christian antiquity in Rome that characterized the PIAC of the

nineteenth century. Thanks, then, go to Giovanni at the Ad Decimum catacombs (and Andreina del Pozzo); Anthony Vella, Rosie Bianco, Valentina at the Vatican Necropolis; and the student guides at the Catacombs of St. Thecla. Thank you, too, to Nicola DeGuglielmo and the Comitato Catacombe di Generosa for time spent at the Catacombs of Generosa (and to Dan Curley for tagging along that day).

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Abbreviations

I have used standard abbreviations for authors and titles of ancient works cited in the body of the text: e.g., Eusebius, *HE* = Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Below are abbreviations for book series and journals cited more than once in this book.

Book Series

- AA. SS.* *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*. Anvers, 1643–
- ANF* Ante-Nicene Fathers. Editors A. Roberts, J. Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886
- BAC* *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques*
- CBCR* *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*. Editor R. Krautheimer. 4 vols. Vatican City, 1937–1980
- CIJ* *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum I: Europe*. Editor J. B. Frey. Vatican City, 1936
- CIL* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* 6.2–4: *Tituli Sepulcrales*. Editors E. Bormann, G. Henzen and Chr. Huelsen. Berlin, 1882–1894
- Cod. Theod.* *Codex Theodosianus*
- CRAI* Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres
- CSEL* *Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum latinorum*
- DACL* *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*. Editors F. Cabrol, H. Leclercq, and J. Marrou. Paris, 1907–

<i>GCS</i>	<i>Die griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller</i>
<i>ICL</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Christianae Latinae</i> . Editor Ernst Diehl. Berlin: Apud Weidmannos, 1925
<i>ICUR</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores</i> . Editor G. B. de Rossi. Nova series, editor A. Silvagni. Romae: Ex Officina Libraria Pontificia, 1857–
<i>JIWE</i> 2	<i>Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe</i> . Editor David Noy. Vol. 2: <i>The City of Rome</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA, and London
<i>LP</i>	<i>Le Liber Pontificalis. Texte, introduction et commentaire</i> . Editor Louis Duchesne. Vol. 1. Paris, 1886
<i>LTUR</i>	<i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> . Editor Eva Margareta Steinby. Rome: Quasar, 1993–1999
<i>LTUS</i>	Suburbium = <i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae. Suburbium</i> , 1–8, editors V. Flocchi Nicolai, M. G. Granino Cecere, and Z. Mari, Rome, 2001–2008
<i>MGH SRM</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae historica Scriptores rerum merovingicarum</i> (Berlin, Hannover, and Leipzig)
<i>NPNF</i>	<i>A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church</i> , 2nd series (reprinted Grand Rapids)
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> (Paris)
<i>SC</i>	Sources Chrétiennes

Journals

<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischer Welt</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJAH</i>	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>

List of Abbreviations

xvii

<i>J ECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>J EH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>J LA</i>	<i>Journal of Late Antiquity</i>
<i>J RS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>J TS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>LASBF</i>	<i>Liber Annuus. Studium Biblicum Franciscanum,</i> Jerusalem
<i>MAAR</i>	<i>Memoires of the American Academy in Rome</i>
<i>MDAI</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>MEFRA</i>	<i>Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome, Antiquité</i>
<i>PBSR</i>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<i>RAC</i>	<i>Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana</i>
<i>ZKG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i>