Christianizing The Roman Empire A D 100 400 | a55f02746b8514fdc7165b65d6d95fcf


The ḫmarvelous (Reza Aslan, bestselling author of Zealot), New York Times bestselling story of how Christianity became the dominant religion in the West. How did a religion whose first believers were twenty or so illiterate day laborers in a remote part of the empire became the official religion of Rome, converting some thirty million people in just four centuries? In The Triumph of Christianity, early Christian historian Bart D. Ehrman weaves the rigorously-researched answer to this question into a vivid, nuanced, and enormously readable narrative (Elaine Pagels, National Book Award-winning author of The Gnostic Gospels), showing how a handful of charismatic characters used a brilliant social strategy and an irresistible message to win over hearts and minds one at a time. This ḫumane, thoughtful and intelligent book (The New York Times Book Review) upends the way we think about the single most important cultural transformation our world has ever seen—one that revolutionized art, music, literature, philosophy, ethics, economics, and law.

An exotic and instructive tale, told with life, learning and just the right measure of laughter on every page. O'Donell combines a historian's mastery of substance with a born storyteller's sense of style to create a magnificent work of art. — Madeleine K. Albright, former U.S. Secretary of State The dream Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar shared of uniting Europe, the Medi-terranean, and the Middle East in a single community shuddered and then collapsed in the wars and disasters of the sixth century. Historian and classicist James J. O'Donell, who last brought readers his masterful, disturbing, and revelatory biography of Saint Augustine, revisits this old story in a fresh way, bringing home its sometimes painful relevance to today's issues. With unexpected detail and in his hauntingly vivid style, O'Donell begins at a time of apparent Roman revival and brings readers to the moment of imminent collapse that just preceded the rise of Islam. Illegal migrations of peoples, religious wars, global pandemics, and the temptations of empire: Rome's end foreshadows today's crises and offers hints how to navigate them—if present leaders will heed this story.

A comprehensive and radical new survey of religious life in Rome over the course of a millennium.

The rise of Christianity during the first four centuries of the common era was the pivotal development in Western history and profoundly influenced the later direction of all world history. Yet, for all that has been written on early Christian history, the primary sources for this history are widely scattered, difficult to find, and generally unknown to lay persons and to historians not specially trained in the field. In Christianity and the Roman Empire Ralph Novak interweaves these primary sources with a narrative text and constructs a single continuous account of these crucial centuries. The primary sources are selected to emphasize the manner in which the government and the people of the Roman Empire perceived Christians socially and politically; the ways in which these perceptions influenced the treatment of Christians within the Roman Empire; and the manner in which Christians established their political and religious dominance of the Roman Empire after Constantine the Great came to power in the early fourth century CE. Ralph Martin Novak holds a Masters Degree in Roman History from the University of Chicago. For: Undergraduates; seminarians; general audiences

Offers a secular perspective on the growth of the Christian Church in ancient Rome, identifies nonreligious factors in conversion, and examines the influence of Constantine

This volume offers a comprehensive survey of Roman villas in Italy and the Mediterranean provinces of the Roman Empire, from their origins to the collapse of the Empire. The architecture of villas could be humble or grand, and sometimes luxurious. Villas were most often farms where wine, olive oil, cereals, and manufactured goods, among other products, were produced. They were also venues for hospitality, conversation, and thinking on pagan, and ultimately Christian, themes. Villas spread as the Empire grew. Like towns and cities, they became the means of power and assimilation, just as
infrastructure, such as aqueducts and bridges, was transforming the Mediterranean into a Roman sea. The distinctive Roman/Italian villa type was transferred to the provinces, resulting in Mediterranean-wide culture of rural dwelling and work that further unified the Empire.

Written by one of the foremost historians of the Roman Empire, this collection of both new and previously published essays forms a colorful picture of daily life in the Mediterranean world between A.D. 50 and 450. Here, for example, the author applies statistical analysis to broad groups of people on matters ranging from justice through medicine to language. In so doing he is able to substantiate general statements about routines in ordinary people’s behavior and to detect within these routines the very changes that constitute history. Such analysis also shows how this era benefits from the same historiographical approaches that have so successfully elucidated sociocultural phenomena in other periods. Drawing from statistical analysis and many other historical approaches, these essays on popular mores in the Roman Empire cover such topics as language and art, acculturation, thought and religion, sex and gender, cruelty and slavery, and aspects of class and power relations. The author introduces the collection with several essays on historical method, as it pertains to the richness of documentation and variety to be found in the region and period chosen. Ramsay MacMullen is Dunham Professor of History and Classics at Yale University. The most recent of his many books include Corruption and the Decline of Rome and Christianizing the Roman Empire: A.D. 100–400, both published by Yale. Originally published in 1990. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

His illuminating analysis of religious change as the art of the possible has a wide relevance for other periods and regions.

First edition published 1998 by Oxford University Press with the title: Imperial Rome and Christian triumph: the art of the Roman Empire AD 100–450.

How does a culture become Christian, especially one that is heir to such ancient traditions and spectacular monuments as Egypt? This book offers a new model for envisioning the process of Christianization by looking at the construction of Christianity in the various social and creative worlds active in Egyptian culture during late antiquity. As David Frankfurter shows, members of these different social and creative worlds came to create different forms of Christianity according to their specific interests, their traditional idioms, and their sense of what the religion could offer. Reintroducing the term „syncretism” for the inevitable and continuous process by which a religion is acculturated, the book addresses the various formations of Egyptian Christianity that developed in the domestic sphere, the worlds of holy men and saints’ shrines, the work of craftsmen and artisans, the culture of monastic scribes, and the reimagining of the landscape itself, through processions, architecture, and the potent remains of the past. Drawing on sermons and magical texts, saints’ lives and figurines, letters and amulets, and comparisons with Christianization elsewhere in the Roman empire and beyond, Christianizing Egypt reconceives religious change from the „conversion” of hearts and minds to the selective incorporation and application of strategies for protection, authority, and efficacy, and for imagining the environment.

A New York Times Notable Book of 2018 „Searingly passionate…Nixey writes up a storm. Each sentence is rich, textured, evocative, felt[t] A ballista-bolt of a book…“ New York Times Book Review In Harran, the locals refused to convert. They were dismembered, their limbs hung along the town’s main street. In Alexandria, zealots pulled the elderly philosopher-mathematician Hypatia from her chariot and flayed her to death with shards of broken pottery. Not long before, their fellow Christians had invaded the city’s greatest temple and razed it, smashing its world-famous statues and destroying all that was left of Alexandria’s Great Library. Today, we refer to Christianity’s conquest of the West as a triumph. But this victory entailed an orgy of destruction in which Jesus’s followers attacked and suppressed classical culture, helping to pitch Western civilization into a thousand-year-long decline. Just one percent of Latin literature would survive the purge; countless antiquities, artworks, and ancient traditions were lost forever. As Catherine Nixey reveals, evidence of early Christians’ campaign of terror has been hiding in plain sight: in the palimpsests and shattered statues proudly displayed in churches and museums the world over. In The Darkening Age, Nixey resurrects this lost history, offering a wrenching account of the rise of Christianity and its terrible cost.

What did it take to cause the Roman aristocracy to turn to Christianity, changing centuries-old beliefs and religious traditions? Michele Salzman takes a fresh approach to this much-debated question. Focusing on a sampling of individual aristocratic men and women as well as on writings and archeological evidence, she brings new understanding to the process by which pagan aristocrats became Christian, and Christianity became aristocratic. Roman aristocrats would seem to be unlikely candidates for conversion to Christianity. Pagan and civic traditions were deeply entrenched among the educated and politically well-connected. Indeed, men who held state offices often were also esteemed priests in the pagan state cults: these
priesthoods were traditionally sought as a way to reinforce one's social position. Moreover, a religion whose texts taught love for one's neighbor and humility, with strictures on wealth and notions of equality, would not have obvious appeal for those at the top of a hierarchical society. Yet somehow in the course of the fourth and early fifth centuries Christianity and the Roman aristocracy met and merged. Examining the world of the ruling class--its institutions and resources, its values and style of life--Salzman paints a fascinating picture, especially of aristocratic women. Her study yields new insight into the religious revolution that transformed the late Roman Empire.

Marked by a power shift from Rome to Constantinople and the Christianization of the Empire, this era requires a narrative and interpretative history of its own. Cameron, an authority on later Roman and early Byzantine history and culture, captures the pivotal fourth century, doing justice to the enormous explosion of recent scholarship.

Traces the early history of the Christian church from Jewish Palestine prior to Christ's birth to the sixth century monastic movement, and explains how Christianity survived under a variety of cultures

Argues that bureaucrats and military leaders acting for their own gain caused Rome to lose control of its government and decline

Focusing on the 4th and 5th centuries, Michael Gaddis explores how various groups employed the language of religious violence to construct their own identities, to undermine the legitimacy of their rivals, & to advance themselves in the competitive & high stakes process of Christianizing the Roman Empire.

In recent years, art historians such as Johannes Deckers (Picturing the Bible, 2009) have argued for a significant transition in fourth- and fifth-century images of Jesus following the conversion of Constantine. Broadly speaking, they perceive the image of a peaceful, benevolent shepherd transformed into a powerful, enthroned Jesus, mimicking and mirroring the dominance and authority of the emperor. The powers of church and state are thus conveniently synthesized in such a potent image. This deeply rooted position assumes that ante-pacem images of Jesus were uniformly humble while post-Constantinian images exuded the grandeur of power and glory. The Art of Empire contends that the art and imagery of Late Antiquity merits a more nuanced understanding of the context of the imperial period before and after Constantine. The chapters in this collection each treat an aspect of the relationship between early Christian art and the rituals, practices, or imagery of the Empire, and offer a new and fresh perspective on the development of Christian art in its imperial background.

Offers a secular perspective on the growth of the Christian Church in ancient Rome, identifies nonreligious factors in conversion, and examines the influence of Constantine

This volume revisits issues of empire from the perspective of Jews, Christians, and other Romans in the third to sixth centuries. Through case studies, the contributors bring Jewish perspectives to bear on longstanding debates concerning Romanization, Christianization, and late antiquity.

The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity takes as its subject the beliefs, practices, and institutions of the Christian Church between 400 and 1500AD. It addresses topics ranging from early medieval monasticism to late medieval mysticism, from the material wealth of the Church to the spiritual exercises through which certain believers might attempt to improve their souls. Each chapter tells a story, but seeks also to ask how and why 'Christianity' took particular forms at particular moments in history, paying attention to both the spiritual and otherworldly aspects of religion, and the material and political contexts in which they were often embedded. This Handbook is a landmark academic collection that presents cutting-edge interpretive perspectives on medieval religion for a wide academic audience, drawing together thirty key scholars in the field from the United States, the UK, and Europe. Notably, the Handbook is arranged thematically, and focusses on an analytical, rather than narrative, approach, seeking to demonstrate the variety, change, and complexity of religion throughout this long period, and the numerous different ways in which modern scholarship can approach it. While providing a very wide-ranging view of the subject, it also offers an important agenda for further study in the field.

Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City studies the phenomenon of the Christianization of the Roman Empire within the context of the transformations and eventual decline of the Greco-Roman city

"MacMullenhas published several books in recent years which establish him, rightfully, as a leading social historian of the Roman Empire. The current volume exhibits many of the characteristics of its predecessors: the presentation of novel, revisionist points of view; discrete set pieces of trenchant argument which do not necessarily conform to the boundaries of traditional history; and an impressive, authoritative, and up-to-date documentation, especially rich in primary sources.A stimulating and provocative discourse on Roman paganism as a phenomenon worthy of synthetic investigation in its own right and as the fundamental context for the rise of Christianity."--Richard Brilliant, History "MacMullen's latest work
represents many features of paganism in its social context more vividly and clearly than ever before. Fergus Millar, American Historical Review "The major cults are examined from a social and cultural perspective and with the aid of many recently published specialized studies. Students of the Roman Empire should read this book." Robert J. Penella, Classical World "A distinguished book with much exact observation. An indispensable mine of erudition on a grand theme."

Henry Chadwick, Times Literary Supplement Ramsay MacMullen is Dunham Professor of History and Classics at Yale University and the author of Roman Government's Response to Crisis, A.D. 235-337 and Roman Social Relations, 50 B.C. to A.D. 284

How did ordinary people and Church authorities communicate with each other in late antiquity and how did this interaction affect the processes of Christianization in the Roman Empire? By studying the relationship between the preacher and his congregation within the context of classical, urban traditions of public speaking, this book explains some of the reasons for the popularity of Christian sermons during the period. Its focus on John Chrysostom's sermons allows us to see how an educated church leader responded to and was influenced by a congregation of ordinary Christians. As a preacher in Antioch, Chrysostom took great care to convey his lessons to his congregation, which included a broad cross-section of society. Because of this, his sermons provide a fascinating view into the variety of beliefs held by the laity, demonstrating that many people could be actively engaged in their religion while disagreeing with their preacher.

Using literary, epigraphic, numismatic and iconographic sources this book investigates the safety devices that were in place for the protection of the emperor and the city of Rome in the imperial age. In the aftermath of the civil wars Augustus continued to provide for his physical safety in the same way as in the old Republic while, at the same time, overturning the taboo of armed men in the city. During the Augustan age, the division of the city into 14 regions and 265 vici was designed to establish control over the urban space. Augustus's successors consolidated his policy but the specific roles of the various military or paramilitary forces remain a matter for debate. Drawing on the testimony of ancient authors such as Tacitus and Suetonius and on material evidence, the volume examines both the circumstances in which these forces intervened and the strategies that they adopted. It also examines the pre-Augustan, Augustan and post-Augustan sense of 'securitas', both as a philosophical and a political concept. The final section expands the focus from the city of Rome to the Italian peninsula where the security of the emperor as he travelled to his country residences required advance planning and implementation.

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The passage from Imperial Rome to the era of late antiquity, when the Roman Empire underwent a religious conversion to Christianity, saw some of the most significant and innovative developments in Western culture. This stimulating book investigates the role of the visual arts, the great diversity of paintings, statues, luxury arts, and masonry, as both reflections and agents of those changes. Jas' Elsner's ground-breaking account discusses both Roman and early Christian art in relation to such issues as power, death, society, acculturation, and religion. By examining questions of reception, viewing, and the culture of spectacle alongside the more traditional art-historical themes of imperial patronage and stylistic change, he presents a fresh and challenging interpretation of an extraordinarily rich cultural crucible in which many fundamental developments of later European art had their origins. This second edition includes a new discussion of the Eurasian context of Roman art, an updated bibliography, and new, full colour illustrations.

This "fresh, blunt, and highly persuasive account of how the West was won! for Jesus" (Newsweek) is now available in paperback. Stark's provocative report challenges conventional wisdom and finds that Christianity's astounding dominance of the Western world arose from its offer of a better, more secure way of life. "Compelling reading" (Library Journal) that is sure to "generate spirited argument" (Publishers Weekly), this account of Christianity's remarkable growth within the Roman Empire is the subject of much fanfare. "Anyone who has puzzled over Christianity's rise to dominancemust read it." says Yale University's Wayne A. Meeks, for The Rise of Christianity makes a compelling case for startling conclusions. Combining his expertise in social science with historical evidence, and his insight into contemporary religion's appeal, Stark finds that early Christianity attracted the privileged rather than the poor, that most early converts were women or marginalized Jews—and ultimately "that Christianity was a success because it proved those who joined it with a more appealing, more assuring, happier, and perhaps longer life" (Andrew M. Greeley, University of Chicago).

Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity reconsiders the religious history of the late Roman Empire, focusing on the shifting position of dissenting religious groups - conventionally called 'pagans' and 'heretics'. The period from the mid-fourth century until the mid-fifth century CE witnessed a significant transformation of late Roman society and a gradual shift from the world of polytheistic religions into the Christian Empire. This book challenges the many straightforward melodramatic narratives of the Christianisation of the Roman Empire, still prevalent both in academic research and in popular non-fiction works. Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity demonstrates that the narrative is much more nuanced than the simple Christian triumph over the classical world. It looks at everyday life, economic aspects, day-to-day practices, and conflicts of interest in the
relations of religious groups. Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity addresses two aspects: rhetoric and realities, and consequently, delves into the interplay between the manifest ideologies and daily life found in late antique sources. It is a detailed analysis of selected themes and a close reading of selected texts, tracing key elements and developments in the treatment of dissident religious groups. The book focuses on specific themes, such as the limits of imperial legislation and ecclesiastical control, the end of sacrifices, and the label of magic. Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity examines the ways in which dissident religious groups were construed as religious outsiders, but also explores local rituals and beliefs in late Roman society as creative applications and expressions of the infinite range of human inventiveness.

Explores the growth of Christianity in inland Roman Asia, as cities and rural communities moved away from polytheistic Greco-Roman religion.

The idea that Christianity started as a clandestine movement among the poor is a widely accepted notion. Yet it is one of many myths that must be discarded if we are to understand just how a tiny messianic movement on the edge of the Roman Empire became the dominant faith of Western civilization. In a fast-paced, highly readable book that addresses beliefs as well as historical facts, Rodney Stark brings a sociologist's perspective to bear on the puzzle behind the success of early Christianity. He comes equipped not only with the logic and methods of social science but also with insights gathered firsthand into why people convert and how new religious groups recruit members. He digs deep into the historical evidence on many issues--such as the social background of converts, the mission to the Jews, the status of women in the church, the role of martyrdom--to provide a vivid and unconventional account of early Christianity. The author plots the most plausible curve of Christian growth from the year 40 to 300. By the time of Constantine, Christianity had become a considerable force, with growth patterns very similar to those of modern-day successful religious movements. An unusual number of Christian converts, for example, came from the educated, cosmopolitan classes. Because it offered a new perspective on familiar concepts and was not linked to ethnicity, Christianity had a large following among persons seeking to assimilate into the dominant culture, mainly Hellenized Jews. The oversupply of women in Christian communities--due partly to the respect and protection they received--led to intermarriages with pagans, hence more conversions, and to a high fertility rate. Stark points out, too, the role played by selflessness and faith. Amidst the epidemics, fires, and other disasters that beleaguered Greco-Roman cities, Christian communities were a stronghold of mutual aid, which resulted in a survival rate far greater than that of the pagans. In the meantime, voluntary martyrdom, especially a generation after the death of Christ, reinforced the commitment of the Christian rank and file. What Stark ultimately offers is a multifaceted portrait of early Christianity, one that appeals to practical reasoning, historical curiosity, and personal reflection.

This work treats the decline of Greek religion and the christianization of town and countryside in the eastern Roman Empire between the death of Julian the Apostate and the laws of Justinian the Great against paganism, c. 370-529. It examines such questions as the effect of the laws against sacrifice and sorcery, temple conversions, the degradation of pagan gods into daimones, the christianization of rite, and the social, political and economic background of conversion to Christianity. Several local contexts are examined in great detail: Gaza, Athens, Alexandria, Aphrodisias, central Asia Minor, northern Syria, the Nile basin, and the province of Arabia. It lays particular emphasis on the criticism of epigraphy, legal evidence, and hagiographic texts, and traces the demographic growth of Christianity and the chronology of this process in selected local contexts. It also seeks to understand the behavioral patterns of conversion.

The supposed collapse of Roman civilization is still lamented more than 1,500 years later-and intertwined with this idea is the notion that a fledgling religion, Christianity, went from a persecuted fringe movement to an irresistible force that toppled the empire. The intolerant zeal of Christians, wrote Edward Gibbon, swept Rome's old gods away, and with them the structures that sustained Roman society. Not so, argues Douglas Boin. Such tales are simply untrue to history, and ignore the most important fact of all: life in Rome never came to a dramatic stop. Instead, as Boin shows, a small minority movement rose to transform society-politically, religiously, and culturally-but it was a gradual process, one that happened in fits and starts over centuries. Drawing upon a decade of recent studies in history and archaeology, and on his own research, Boin opens up a wholly new window onto a period we thought we knew. His work is the first to describe how Christians navigated the complex world of social identity in terms of passing and coming out. Many Christians lived in a dynamic middle ground. Their quiet success, as much as the clamor of martyrdom, was a powerful agent for change. With this insightful approach to the story of Christians in the Roman world, Douglas Boin rewrites, and rediscovers, the fascinating early history of a world faith.

This book discusses the role of Christians in the Roman military. Constantine's conversion to Christianity led to the accelerated Christianization of the Roman army. The result was the creation of a Christian fighting force that was used to suppress paganism and Christian heresy.

"An investigation of the process by which large parts of Europe accepted the Christian faith between the fourth and the fourteenth centuries and of some of the cultural consequences that flowed therefrom." In a work of splendid scholarship that reflects both a firm mastery of difficult sources and a keen intuition, one of Britain's foremost medievalists tells the story of
the Christianization of Europe. It is a very large story, for conversion encompassed much more than religious belief. With it came enormous cultural change: Latin literacy and books, Roman notions of law and property, and the concept of town life, as well as new tastes in food, drink, and dress. Whether from faith or by force, from self-interest or by revelation, conversion had an immense impact that is with us even today.

--Book Jacket.

In this study, Ramsay MacMullen steps aside from the well-worn path that previous scholars have trod to explore exactly how early Christian doctrines became official. Drawing on extensive verbatim stenographic records, he analyzes the ecumenical councils from A.D. 325 to 553, in which participants gave authority to doctrinal choices by majority vote. The author investigates the sometimes astonishing bloodshed and violence that marked the background to church council proceedings, and from there goes on to describe the planning and staging of councils, the emperors' role, the routines of debate, the participants' understanding of the issues, and their views on God's intervention in their activities. He concludes with a look at the significance of the councils and their doctrinal decisions within the history of Christendom.

Offers students a comprehensive one-volume survey of this pivotal emperor and his times.

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