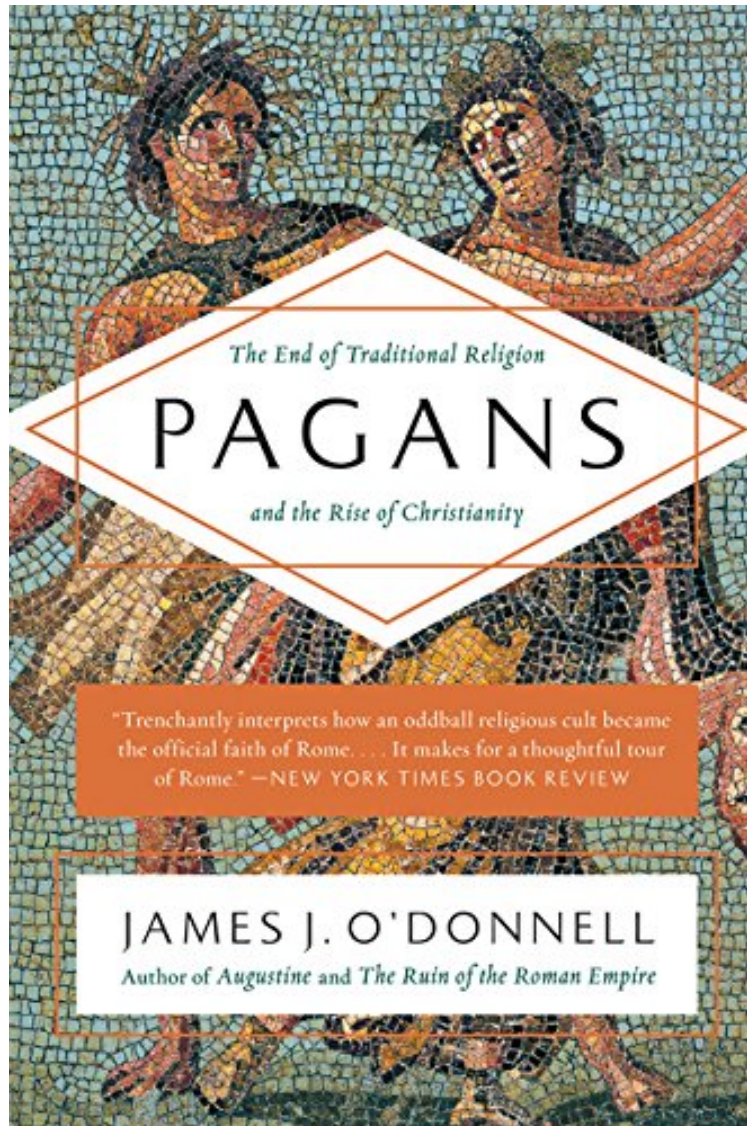


[Download free pdf] Pagans: The End of Traditional Religion and the Rise of Christianity

Pagans: The End of Traditional Religion and the Rise of Christianity

James J. O'Donnell

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#189120 in Books O'Donnell James Joseph 2016-03-01 2016-03-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .65 x 5.311, 1.11 #File Name: 0061845396288 pages Pagans The End of Traditional Religion and the Rise of Christianity | File size: 39.Mb

James J. O'Donnell : Pagans: The End of Traditional Religion and the Rise of Christianity before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pagans: The End of Traditional Religion and the Rise of Christianity:

48 of 49 people found the following review helpful. The Dividing Line Between Pagans and Christians By R.H. It is a

curious book. The first two chapters held marginal interest and I almost put the book down. Somewhere in the third chapter (An Eloquent Man), it suddenly picked up and became a fascinating read. So, what this historical piece covers is this transformation of Rome from a wide-open field of religion to one that is dominated by Christianity, and eventually dissolves the empire. It lays out the habits and rituals of old Rome, and how it slowly became a different atmosphere. For those trying to conceive how the Roman Empire came to an end....I would suggest to start with this book. As for the read? Well...you need to have some interest in the period (Roman era), the track of the Christian religion, and history. I might also suggest a brief read over the leadership of Rome prior to taking on this book because various names get mentioned and you need some insight. Overall, I think the book probably needed a better edit of chapter one/two, but it does hold your interest as you get deeper into the book. I also think that chapter ten (Constantine) probably deserves an entire book by itself, with O'Donnell opening up a lot of insight to the Constantine era (more than I ever knew). A great read for the Roman era. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Informative but tedious By Johnnb13 There was a great deal of information and obviously extensive research but it didn't make for interesting reading. I skimmed through a good part of the book. There were too many anecdotal stories to the point that it was difficult for me to follow the subject of each chapter. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Some good and some dull By MEC If you are interested in learning about the pagan religions this book will provide you with some interesting information. There's also a lot of speculation that was unconvincing to me (could it be because I am a Christian and biased?). There is evidence of research and documentation but the writing was often dull and uninteresting. It took some discipline on my part to read on and not quit.

A provocative and contrarian religious history that charts the rise of Christianity from the point of view of traditional religion from the religious scholar and critically acclaimed author of Augustine. *Pagans* explores the rise of Christianity from a surprising and unique viewpoint: that of the people who witnessed their ways of life destroyed by what seemed then a powerful religious cult. These pagans were actually pious Greeks, Romans, Syrians, and Gauls who observed the traditions of their ancestors. To these devout polytheists, Christians who worshipped only one deity were immoral atheists who believed that a splash of water on the deathbed could erase a lifetime of sin. Religious scholar James J. O'Donnell takes us on a lively tour of the Ancient Roman world through the fourth century CE, when Romans of every nationality, social class, and religious preference found their world suddenly constrained by rulers who preferred a strange new god. Some joined this new cult, while others denied its power, erroneously believing it was little more than a passing fad. In *Pagans*, O'Donnell brings to life various pagan rites and essential features of Roman religion and life, offers fresh portraits of iconic historical figures, including Constantine, Julian, and Augustine, and explores important themes: Rome versus the east, civilization versus barbarism, plurality versus unity, rich versus poor, and tradition versus innovation in this startling account.

Trenchantly interprets how an oddball religious cult became the official faith of Rome. . . . It makes for a thoughtful tour of Rome. (New York Times Book Review) Mr. O'Donnell tells the familiar story of Christianity's heroic age of expansion, from Constantine to Theodosius, with verve and wit. (Wall Street Journal) James J. O'Donnell's fine new book . . . is short but multilayered, erudite and dense. (Cleveland Plain-Dealer) [A] fascinating and insightful study of the pluralistic pagan gods. This book is a must read for everyone who is interested in either general history or the history of Christianity in particular. (Washington Book Review) Although [*Pagans*] is serious scholarship, it does not take itself too seriously. The result is an engaging view of antiquity few of us have seen. (Booklist) From the Back Cover Mr. O'Donnell tells the familiar story of Christianity's heroic age of expansion, from Constantine to Theodosius, with verve and wit. Wall Street Journal For hundreds of years, religious and spiritual pluralism thrived in the Roman Empire. In the fourth century, however, as Christianity became the state religion, Christians developed the concept of the pagan to stigmatize and ostracize those who refused to devote themselves to the Christian god. These pagans were Greeks, Romans, Gauls, and Syrians who chose to piously observe the traditions of their ancestors. *Pagans* uncovers how the ancient and deeply rooted religious traditions of these polytheistic Romans were undermined and suppressed by the rise of Christianity in little more than a hundred years. James J. O'Donnell explores the foundational features of Roman religion and culture, paints fresh portraits of iconic historical figures including Constantine, Julian, and Augustine and breathes new life into the defining tensions of the era: Rome versus the East, civilization versus barbarism, plurality versus unity, rich versus poor, and tradition versus innovation. In this nuanced account of religious repression, O'Donnell offers an iconoclastic history of religion that tells an exciting new story that is deeply relevant to the way we think about religion in our own time. About the Author James J. O'Donnell is a classicist who served for ten years as Provost of Georgetown University and is now University Librarian at Arizona State University. He is the author of several books including *Augustine*, *The Ruin of the Roman Empire*, and *Avatars of the Word*. He is the former president of the American Philological Association, a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America, and the chair of the Board of Directors of the American Council of Learned Societies. He is seen here at an ancient monastery on the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire, in Syria.