

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE DEAD WITHIN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

AND ITS DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT LATE ANTIQUITY



example of 1st century Roman funerary monument, placed outside of Rome by a major road, the figures identified as freed slaves.



Catacomb of Commodilla, 6th/7th century, one of the first examples of bearded Christ

Our first example of a Catacomb in Rome is the Catacomb of Priscilla. Despite the change in funerary art, the catacombs were not restricted to only christian burials.

Rome also began to see a change in how they viewed the dead. Certain Christian figures became Saints or Martyrs.

'The bone gatherers' discusses a pagan woman named proba in the 4th century and her experience of commemorating her deceased Christian daughter. Within the tomb, she chose both pagan and christian symbolism to honour both of their beliefs. Denzey, N. 2007. The bone gatherers: the lost worlds of early Christian women, ch. 2



4th century depiction of St Paul



Catacomb of Priscilla, earliest example of Christian catacomb and earliest depiction of Virgin Mary with child (2nd century)