

## Samuel Cohen Sabbatical Report

Sonoma State University granted me a sabbatical for the 2020-2021 academic year. Unfortunately, this period coincided with the Covid-19 global pandemic. As a result, I was unable to travel to Germany, the UK, and Italy to conduct research for my book project as I had initially intended. Library access was also difficult, especially because the resources I need are not available at SSU and must be obtained via ILL, which can be a slow process. Despite these obstacles, I was able to write and/or complete six journal articles and two book chapters. In addition, I wrote three book reviews, two introductory *status quaestionis* essays, edited volumes of two academic journals, organized several panels and presented a paper at the International Medieval Congress (University of Leeds, held virtually), and made substantial progress on my book project.

### Publications: Journal Articles and Book Chapters

During my sabbatical, I completed final revisions for two previously accepted articles, “Topography and Ideology: Contested Episcopal Elections and Suburban Cemeteries in Late Antique Rome,” and “Gregory the Great, Saint Severinus, and Reconciliation of an *ecclesia arianorum*.” These will appear shortly in *Late Antique Archaeology* 13 and *Hagiotheca* 6 respectively. I also wrote and had accepted four entirely new articles: “*O Tempora! O mores!*: Gregory I, Constantinople and the Rhetoric of Suffering in the Aftermath of the Lombard Sieges of Rome, 592-593,” which has been accepted for publication in *Studies in Late Antiquity*; “*Eutychianorum furor!* Heresiological Polemic and the Invention of ‘Eutychians,’” appearing shortly in *Entangled Religions* 11.4 (2021); “Jurisdiction and Religious Community in late Fifth-Century Italy,” forthcoming in *Early Medieval Europe* 30.1 (2022); “*Aliarum regionum perturbatio*: Migration and the Construction of Community in Fifth-Century Rome,” which will be published later this year in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*. I also wrote two new book chapters. As part of an international research project dedicated to the creation of new resources for research and teaching late antique and early medieval Rome under the direction of Julia Hillner (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn) and Caroline Goodson (Cambridge University), I wrote a chapter entitled “Social Conflict in Late Antique Rome.” This will be published in the upcoming *Brill Companion to Early Medieval Rome (400-1000)*. The second chapter, “Violence and Episcopal Elections in Late Antique Italy, 300-500,” will appear in *Late Roman Italy - Imperium to Regnum (c. 250 – 500 CE)*, edited by Jeroen Wijnendaele (Universiteit Gent). Each of these articles and chapters was subject to rigorous peer review.

I am particularly proud of my contributions to *Early Medieval Europe* and *Entangled Religions*. The former examines Gelasius, bishop of Rome from 492-496, and his relationship with the Ostrogothic state. It was very positively received. One reviewer described the paper as “an excellent essay that tackles questions both large and small... the first truly incisive study of Gelasius’ local interactions with regional competitors.” This was all the more gratifying considering that *Early Medieval Europe* is one of the most prestigious and selective journals in my field. The second article reconstructs the rhetorical creation of the new heresy of ‘Eutychianism’ by Leo I, bishop of Rome from 440-461. It was likewise positively reviewed, with one reviewer

stating, “this is a superb article, written in excellent academic style. It presents historical facts with accuracy and clarity, and it represents a truly first-rate contribution to the understanding of the links between Leo the Great and Eutyches and of the double making of a late-antique “heretic” (Eutyches) and of a heresiological category (Eutychianism).”

### **Publications: Book Reviews**

In addition to these articles, I wrote book reviews for *The Merovingian Kingdoms and the Mediterranean World* (Mediterranean Studies 28.2, 2020), *Inclusion and Exclusion in Mediterranean Christianities, 400-800* (The Medieval Review) and *Bischof Gaudiosus, die heilige Restituta und die ecclesia Neapolitana. Zu den Zeugnissen vandalenzeitlicher Exilanten und dem kulturellen nordafrikanischen Einfluss in Neapel sowie zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der örtlichen Bischofskirche zwischen dem 4. und 9. Jahrhundert* (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum).

### **Editorial Duties**

I also edited special volumes of two academic journals. The first, in *Studies in Late Antiquity*, will contain five essays on episcopal responses to disaster in Late Antiquity. The volume is scheduled to appear later this year. In addition, in collaboration with Dr. András Handl (KU Leuven), I edited a volume of *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, which contains five essays examining the question of migration and its relationship to the formation and definition of community in the late antique world. As part of my editorial duties, I also wrote introductory *status quaestionis* essays for each volume (the latter coauthored with Dr. Handl), which reviewed scholarly trends in the study of disaster and migration, especially the connections between Africa and Italy in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages.

### **Conference Organization and Presentation**

Finally, together with Adrastos Omissi (University of Glasgow), Rebecca Usherwood (Trinity College Dublin), Jonathan J. Arnold (University of Tulsa), I organized seven panels dedicated to late antique frontiers, borders, and migration, which were held (virtually) at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds University, in July 2021. I served as the moderator on two of these panels. I also presented a paper on a panel dedicated to social conflict and the topography of ancient Rome. This paper is part of my second book project, which is dedicated to understanding social conflict in late antique Rome. As part of this project, I have been invited to participate in a conference at the British School at Rome (BSR), which will (pandemic-permitting) take place in late 2021.

### **Book Project**

During my sabbatical, part of my time was spent working on my book project entitled *Heresy, Authority, and the Bishops of Rome in Late Antiquity*, which offers the first book-length examination of the role heresy played in the development of the authority of the papacy in the late ancient period. By stressing the contested character of heresy and the variety of papal responses to it, which ranged from opposition and condemnation to accommodation, this study argues that late

antique popes mobilized the rhetoric of heresiology – the ‘science’ of heresy detection – to reimagine a historical and religious foundation for their position and to justify the authority of the Roman church in an uncertain world.

Of the book’s seven book chapters, I was able to complete chapters 3, 4, and 5, which examine the use of the rhetoric of heresy by Roman bishops from the 440s to the end of the fifth into the early sixth century. Chapter 3 examined the use of heresiological rhetoric by Leo I and his fifth-century successors as part of the Christological Controversy. This chapter also considered how popes modulated their Christological rhetoric depending on their audience, radicalizing their heresiological language especially for their local (Latin and western) audience. Chapter 4 examined the question of ‘Arianism’ in the East and West. Interestingly, ‘Arian’ is applied to the East Romans as part of the rhetoric associated with the Acacian Schism and not to the Ostrogoths, who ruled in the West. This is perhaps the most controversial topic in the book, as ‘Arianism’ has long been understood as a marker of ‘barbarian’ or ‘Germanic’ identity. Chapter 5 examined heresiological rhetoric in the early sixth century.

### **Conclusions**

There is an important link between historical research and effective university teaching. My previous research on exile and migration, as well as on religious and social violence in Late Antiquity, led directly to the development of new courses I have taught at Sonoma State and/or the modification of older courses. Thanks to some of the insights gained during my sabbatical, for example, I completely revamped HIST 403, *Late Antiquity*, which I am teaching this semester, and HIST 408, *The Early Middle Ages*. The former now more squarely focuses on the Mediterranean world up to ~500 CE, while the latter takes as its topic the barbarian successor states, the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire, the spread of Christianity beyond the Roman world, and the rise of Islam.

I would like to thank Sonoma State for giving me the opportunity to focus on my research. The work I was able to accomplish both resulted in scholarly publications and laid the foundation for future research.