Contents

List of Plates xi

Introduction: Sources and Methodology 1

1 Historical Background 13
First Contacts 13
Under the Julio-Claudian Caesars 20
The Flavian Period 31
The Nervan-Antonine Dynasty 43
The Severi and the Last Pagan Emperors to Constantine 53
The Christian Empire until the Division 59
The Divided Empire and the Decline of the West 69

2 Jewish Settlements and Their Demography 78
Rome 78
The Islands: Sicily, Lipari, Malta and Sardinia 85
Southern Mainland Italy 94
The Mainland North of Rome 102
Demography 107
Excursus 113
Proselytism 113

3 The Jews and the Law 118
Civil Status 118
Roman Jewry Law, Privileges, Charters and Decrees 125
The Christian Empire 131
Civil Service 136
Slaves and Circumcision 141
Other Roman Civil Laws on Jews 145
Jewish Law and Jurisdiction 154

4 The Socio-Economic Setting 157
The Economy of Italian Jewry under Roman Rule (1) 157
The Economy of Italian Jewry under Roman Rule (2) 164
Taxes and Imposts 172

5 **Jews and Judaism as the Roman Pagans Saw Them** 177
The Significance of the Texts and Their Impact 177
The Beginnings 181
From Pompey's Conquest to the Principate 188
The Age of Augustus 196
The Flavians and the Severi 204
Tacitus, Juvenal and Sueton 208
In Rome and in the Provinces 214
Cassius Dio and the Last Pagan Authors 220

6 **Rome and Romans as the Jews Saw Them** 231
First Contacts 231
The Pagan Emperors 236
Rome and Romans 245
More on Rome and Romans and Some Dire Predictions 252

7 **Judaism and Christianity** 263
The Birth of Christianity and Its Diffusion 263
The Early Fathers of the Church and Judaism 270
The Fathers of the Church after the Victory of Christianity 281
Augustine and His Age 289
Jews on Jesus and Christianity 293
Min, Minim, Minuth 298
The Church Fathers and Rabbinic Views on Christianity 301

8 **The Culture of Italian Jewry** 307
Hellenism 307
The *'Am-Ha'Arez* 311
Assimilation and Acculturation 314
Links of the Judaean Centre with Italy 322
Scholars and Their Writings: From Caecilius of Calacte to Josephus 330
The *Collatio Legum Mosaicarum et Romanarum* and Beyond 340

9 **The Jewish Community** 350
The Roots 350
The Ritual in the Synagogue 359
Some Archaeological Evidence: Inscriptions 362
The Officers 367
Instruction and Schools 376
Other Communal Institutions 380

Conclusion 385

Bibliography 393
Index of Persons 452
Geographical Index 460
Subject Index 464
Plates 471