**Servant Leadership in Christian, Jewish, and Secular Worldviews: A Comparative Study in the Context of the Ancient Roman Empire (1st–4th Centuries CE)**

Sarah Kimball Grunblatt, ThM, MPH, MS, MS, MEd, MEd, MA, BS

School of Divinity, Liberty University

Biblical & Theological Foundations of Education: CLED-720

Dr. John Cartwright

August 10, 2025

**Author Note**

Sarah Kimball Grunblatt, ThM, MPH, MS, MS, MEd, MEd, MA, BS

I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

Correspondence concerning this paper should be addressed to Sarah Kimball Grunblatt.

Email: SKGrunblatt@liberty.edu

CONTENTS

[Abstract 3](#_Toc204848035)

[Introduction 3](#_Toc204848036)

[Part 1: Servant Leadership in the Christian Worldview 5](#_Toc204848037)

[Part 2: Servant Leadership in the Jewish Worldview 11](#_Toc204848038)

[Part 3: Servant Leadership in the Secular Roman Worldview 15](#_Toc204848039)

[Part 4: Comparative Analyses and Interactions 19](#_Toc204848040)

[Conclusion 23](#_Toc204848041)

[Annotated Bibliography 25](#_Toc204848042)

# **Abstract**

This research paper examines servant leadership within Christian, Jewish, and secular Roman worldviews during the ancient Roman Empire (1st–4th centuries CE), a period of significant cultural and religious transformation. Drawing on historical texts, biblical analyses, and interdisciplinary scholarship, the study compares how each worldview conceptualized and practiced leadership emphasizing humility, service, and communal responsibility. The Christian model, rooted in Jesus' teachings of sacrifice, contrasted with Jewish covenantal approaches focused on divine law and community welfare, and the secular Roman patronage system tempered by Stoic benevolence. Interactions among these worldviews, including conflicts like persecutions and revolts, fostered ethical redefinitions that challenged imperial norms. Insights reveal that monotheistic ethics influenced Roman hierarchies, promoting greater communal orientation. This comparative analysis highlights implications for modern ethical leadership in diverse societies, filling scholarly gaps by integrating servant leadership theory with historical contexts. The paper argues that these ancient models offer timeless principles for interfaith dialogue and leadership training worldwide.

# **Introduction**

The ancient Roman Empire (1st–4th centuries CE) was a crucible of religious, cultural, and political transformation, where emerging Christianity, resilient Judaism, and dominant secular Roman ideologies intersected. Christianity, stemming from Jewish roots, spread amid persecution, culminating in its adoption as the state religion under Constantine in 313 CE. Judaism adapted post the Second Temple's destruction in 70 CE through rabbinic leadership and Diaspora communities, while the secular Roman worldview prioritized pragmatic pluralism, imperial patronage, and hierarchical authority for societal order. Servant leadership, a modern concept coined by Robert Greenleaf in 1970, finds ancient echoes: in Christianity via Jesus' foot-washing (John 13:1–17); in Judaism through humble figures like Moses (Numbers 12:3); and in Roman secularism via Stoic duty, albeit top-down. This historical context is significant for understanding how monotheistic ethics reshaped imperial norms, informing contemporary leadership in diverse settings. The period's multicultural nature amplified these interactions, as the empire's vast territory brought diverse peoples into contact, forcing leadership models to evolve or clash in ways that left lasting legacies on Western thought. Historical events, such as the Jewish revolts and Christian martyrdoms, not only highlighted differences but also created opportunities for cross-cultural influence, where ideas of service and humility began to permeate even secular structures.

The general topic is the Christian worldview, encompassing beliefs in love, humility, and service derived from Christ's teachings. The specific research topic compares servant leadership—prioritizing humility, empathy, and ethical responsibility—across Christian, Jewish, and secular worldviews in the Roman Empire, a multicultural hub of persecutions, revolts, and exchanges. The research question is: How did these worldviews conceptualize and practice servant leadership, and how did their approaches influence interactions and imperial society? This inquiry examines theological foundations, practices via key figures, and outcomes like the Bar Kokhba Revolt or Christian martyrdoms. By delving into these elements, the study reveals not only the distinct philosophical underpinnings but also the practical applications that allowed these worldviews to survive and thrive under Roman rule.

The thesis is: In the ancient Roman Empire, the Christian worldview’s emphasis on servant leadership, rooted in Jesus’ teachings of humility and sacrifice, contrasted with the Jewish worldview’s covenantal leadership model, which prioritized communal responsibility and adherence to divine law, and the secular Roman worldview’s hierarchical, patronage-based leadership, yet their interactions fostered a redefinition of leadership that challenged imperial norms and influenced the empire’s social and ethical landscape. This paper argues for contrasts leading to tensions (e.g., Nero's persecutions) and convergences promoting communal welfare. Insights suggest Christian universalism softened Roman hierarchies, while Jewish resilience influenced ethical adaptations. The methodology involves qualitative comparative historical analysis, using primary texts (e.g., New Testament, Josephus, Pliny's letters) and secondary sources, structured thematically around conceptualization, practice, and influence. Expected outcomes include insights for modern leadership. Furthermore, this approach allows for a nuanced exploration of how leadership was not static but evolved through dialogue and conflict, providing a model for analyzing similar dynamics in today's globalized world. The comparative framework underscores the transformative power of ethical leadership principles across cultures.

# **Part 1: Servant Leadership in the Christian Worldview**

**1.1 Core Principles and Biblical Foundations**

The Christian worldview, rooted in the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, posits servant leadership as a radical inversion of conventional power structures. Jesus' model—exemplified in acts like washing his disciples' feet (John 13:1–17) and statements such as "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:43)—emphasizes humility, sacrifice, and service to others as the essence of authority. As recorded in John 13:1-17:

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?' Jesus answered him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, 'Not all of you are clean.' When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, 'Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

In the context of the Roman Empire, this approach contrasted sharply with imperial hierarchies, fostering a community-oriented ethic that enabled Christianity's rapid spread despite persecution. This inversion is not merely rhetorical but practical, as seen in Jesus' interactions with the marginalized, which set a precedent for inclusive leadership. Furthermore, the emphasis on love and empathy in Christian teachings reinforced the servant model, making it a cornerstone of ethical behavior in early communities. One can infer that this foundation challenged Roman norms by redefining power as selflessness, influencing broader societal ethics. The biblical narrative further illustrates how servant leadership was intended as a countercultural force, promoting equality in a stratified society and laying the groundwork for communal bonds that transcended ethnic and social barriers.

**1.2 Evolution of Early Church Leadership**

Scholarly analyses of early Christian leadership highlight its evolution from charismatic, Spirit-led beginnings to more structured forms, all underpinned by servant principles. Johnston (2006) categorizes early church leadership into three types: charismatic (e.g., apostles like Paul, driven by spiritual gifts), familial (e.g., James in Jerusalem, based on kinship to Jesus), and appointive (e.g., elders and deacons for stability). By the second century, appointive roles dominated to counter false prophets and maintain order amid Roman persecution. Biblical terms like "diakonos" (servant) in Acts 6 reflect Jesus' humility model, where leaders serve rather than dominate. As Acts 6 states:

"Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking. Then they secretly instigated men who said, 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.' And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and they set up false witnesses who said, 'This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us.' And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel."

Johnston's biblical analysis and historical progression, drawing on Eusebius and modern scholars, underscore the adaptive nature of Christian leadership, though it focuses more on internal dynamics than external Roman contrasts. This evolution suggests that servant leadership provided resilience against oppression, allowing the church to thrive through decentralized authority. The shift to appointive roles also indicates a practical response to growth, ensuring that servant principles were institutionalized for sustainability.

**1.3 Key Figures and Their Contributions**

Building on this, Leahy (2010) analyzes Peter's evolution as a servant leader through socio-rhetorical exegesis of John 21, Acts, and 1 Peter 5. Peter's shift from impulsiveness to humility embodies charismatic, transformational, and servant leadership, prioritizing community care and inclusivity. In Acts 10:9–16, Peter accepts Gentiles without Jewish laws, exemplifying service over organizational norms. Amid Nero's persecution, Peter's "co-elder" approach in 1 Peter encourages humility and resistance, contrasting Roman hierarchical norms. Leahy's integration of modern theories enhances applicability, though potential modern biases limit historical specificity. Peter's transformation exemplifies how personal growth in humility can amplify communal impact, offering a model for leaders navigating persecution.

Thomas (2018) employs socio-rhetorical analysis and GLOBE Study data to interpret Luke 22:24–30, where Jesus promotes servant leadership against Greco-Roman patron-client hierarchies. As Luke 22:24-30 records:

"A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves. You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"

In high power-distance cultures like Rome, Jesus inverts norms by serving, modeling humility for Christian communities under imperial dominance. Strengths include blending ancient texts with modern theory, though the cross-cultural focus may dilute historical depth. This analysis highlights how servant leadership served as a tool for cultural resistance. It also demonstrates the universality of the model across diverse societal contexts. Insights indicate that such inversion empowered marginalized groups, reshaping community dynamics. The GLOBE Study integration further reveals how cultural dimensions affected the reception of Jesus' teachings, providing a lens for understanding cross-cultural leadership challenges.

Leontaris (n.d.) evaluates Philippians 2:5–11 socio-rhetorically, arguing Paul urged early Christians in stratified Roman society to adopt Jesus' kenosis (self-emptying) for humble, obedient leadership. Philippians 2:5-11 states:

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Paul's Philippi work around 50 CE, engaging Gentile women and enduring imprisonment, contrasts with emperor worship (e.g., Julius Caesar, Caligula). The hymn's structure—purity, pollution, resolution—symbolizes status reversal, fostering mutual acceptance. Paul's forgoing Roman citizenship benefits inverted priorities, aligning with servant posture. The paper integrates exegesis, theories, and context, though theological bias may overlook Roman nuances. This reveals Paul's leadership as a practical embodiment of kenosis, influencing ethical shifts in imperial interactions. The kenotic model also underscores voluntary self-lowering as a strategy for unity in divided societies.

**1.4 Divine Empowerment and Community Dynamics**

Becerra (2017) narrates Luke-Acts, positing Holy Spirit empowerment as the driver of church growth, using socio-rhetorical criticism on chapters like Acts 1, 2, 4, 6, 15. Principles include Spirit-enabled evangelization (Acts 1:8), communal boldness (Acts 4:31), and decentralized leadership, embodying Jesus' servant teachings (Mark 10, John 13:4–5). Examples: Pentecost conversions (Acts 2:41), Philip's Ethiopian guidance (Acts 8:29), Peter's Gentile inclusion (Acts 10:19–20), deacon appointments (Acts 6:1–7). Under Roman pressures, this facilitated marginalized inclusion, rapid expansion by 350 CE, though later bureaucratization adopted hierarchies, diminishing zeal. Strengths: exegesis-sociology integration; weaknesses: limited worldview comparisons. The Spirit's role underscores divine enablement for servant acts, suggesting a supernatural dimension absent in secular models. This empowerment model also illustrates how spiritual resources sustained leadership in adversarial environments, offering lessons for contemporary faith-based organizations.

**1.5 Subversion and Martyrdom**

Reynolds (2015) reinterprets Mark 10:42–45, examining "diakonia" (service) as subversive masculinity linked to martyrdom. Mark 10:42-45 reads:

"And Jesus called them to him and said to them, 'You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'"

Jesus' self-sacrifice challenges patriarchal hierarchies, redefining power through vulnerability. Amid Nero's persecutions (64–68 CE), Christian refusal of emperor worship led to executions, subverting Roman masculine conquest norms. Feminist perspectives note service's non-gendered nature, though leadership remains masculine. Interdisciplinary approach blends theology, gender, history; weakness: narrow text focus. The subversion extended to gender roles, challenging Roman patriarchal structures and promoting inclusive service.

Huntsman (2017) explores Greco-Roman polytheism's influence on the New Testament, where Christians rejected idolatry as demonic (1 Thessalonians 1:9–10). Leaders like Peter and Paul deferred worship to God (Acts 10:25–26, 14:15), embodying servant models versus Roman veneration. Subversions include Paul's idolatry condemnation causing riots (Acts 19:23–27). Strengths: primary text references; weakness: potential exceptionalism bias. This rejection underscores the transformative power of servant leadership in religious conflicts. Martyrdom as ultimate service amplified Christian influence, challenging Roman authority ethically. The rejection of idolatry also positioned Christianity as a moral alternative, attracting converts seeking ethical depth.

**1.6 Synthesis and Implications**

Collectively, these sources illustrate Christian servant leadership's universalism, rooted in humility and Spirit empowerment, which subverted Roman authority and influenced societal ethics, though more comparative depth with Jewish models is needed. The model's adaptability allowed Christianity to thrive in hostile environments. It also provided a framework for ethical decision-making in leadership. Modern applications can draw from this resilience in diverse settings. Overall, the Christian approach redefined power as service, impacting historical and contemporary discourses. This synthesis affirms the thesis by showing how Christian humility contrasted yet converged with other worldviews, fostering imperial ethical evolution. Implications extend to current leadership theories, where biblical servant principles can inform inclusive practices in multicultural organizations.

# **Part 2: Servant Leadership in the Jewish Worldview**

**2.1 Covenant and Communal Responsibility**

Jewish leadership in the Roman Empire, particularly post-70 CE, was covenantal, prioritizing communal responsibility, adherence to divine law, and adaptation to oppression. Drawing from figures like Moses—described as humble (Numbers 12:3)—it emphasized service to God and community over personal power, manifesting in rabbinic authority and Diaspora negotiations. Numbers 12:3 states: "Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth." This covenantal framework fostered a sense of collective identity amid external threats. Humility was seen as a divine mandate, guiding leaders in ethical governance. The focus on law adherence ensured long-term communal welfare. Insights suggest this model provided moral stability, contrasting Roman pragmatism. The covenantal emphasis also promoted solidarity, enabling Jewish communities to maintain coherence despite dispersion and persecution.

**2.2 Historical Reconstructions and Adaptations**

Goodblatt (2012) reconstructs Jewish socio-political leadership in Roman Palestine (70–135 CE), arguing biblical and non-biblical models coexisted before rabbinic dominance. Ideals persisted amid Roman oversight, with adaptive communal structures. Chapters analyze local control and Roman Judaea, using textual, archaeological evidence. Post-Temple, leaders balanced theocratic traditions with pragmatic negotiations, emphasizing collective survival. Strengths: robust evidence; weakness: narrow timeframe. Details Jewish communal focus, contrasting Christian universalism and Roman patronage. This reconstruction reveals how post-Temple shifts prioritized scholarly authority, influencing long-term Jewish identity.

Berthelot (2023), reviewed by Drew, analyzes 600-year Jewish-Roman rivalry as divinely elected peoples clashing. Rome sought to eradicate Jewish religion (e.g., Fiscus Iudaicus, Aelia Capitolina). Rabbis framed as Jacob vs. Esau, with cultural borrowings: Jews adopted Roman legal concepts for converts. Post-70 CE, Torah as portable sanctuary shifted leadership to merit-based Torah study. Revolts (66–73, 115–117, 132–135 CE) highlight tensions. Leadership emphasized self-restraint over military valor, paralleling servant ideals in serving community/God. Strengths: meticulous analysis; weakness: assumed knowledge. Contrasts Jewish covenantalism with Roman oppression, influencing Christianity. This adaptation reveals resilience, suggesting covenantal service as a counter to imperial dominance. The rivalry's framing as sibling conflict adds a theological layer to leadership negotiations.

**2.3 Leadership in Revolts and Fragmentation**

Noam (2024) challenges Bar Koseba as sole Second Revolt leader (132–135 CE), arguing multiple initial leaders (possibly Roman veterans) before centralization, causing fragmentation. Evidence from Dio Cassius, archaeology, scrolls shows guerrilla to centralized shift, with Bar Koseba eliminating rivals. Implications: adaptive yet divisive covenantalism vs. military strategies. Strengths: new evidence; weakness: hypothetical timing. Depicts transition from collaborative to autocratic, contrasting Christian servant models. Fragmentation highlights the challenges of unified communal leadership under pressure. This shift illustrates the tension between messianic aspirations and practical service.

**2.4 Diaspora Dynamics and Acculturation**

Bilde (1993) explores Diaspora Jews' tense dialectic with non-Jews, emphasizing acculturation via Hellenization and mutual influences. Identity maintained through exchange, literature (Rabbinic), revolts. Leadership navigated Roman authority via communication, adapting structures. Strengths: primary evidence; weakness: limited specifics. Provides context for adaptive leadership under rule. This dialectic highlights the flexibility of Jewish leadership in preserving core values. Acculturation processes indicate subtle influences on Roman ethics. Diaspora dynamics also fostered innovative leadership forms that balanced assimilation with fidelity to covenantal principles.

**2.5 Legal Status and Revolt Analysis**

Linder and Katz (2006) examine Bar Kokhba Revolt as lens for Jewish status, using fragmented sources. Causes: administrative changes, military presence, economic shifts, Hadrian's circumcision ban. Bar Kokhba's administration inferred from papyri, showing communal observance. Roman responses: settlement destruction. Strengths: multidisciplinary; weakness: unresolved debates. Illustrates communal focus under oppression, contrasting Roman patronage. The revolt's legal implications reveal how status affected leadership efficacy.

Oppenheimer (2012) reviews Goodblatt, critiquing archetypes (seven Jewish, five Roman), co-existing models under influence. Rabbinic testimony reliable for adaptations. Strengths: source evaluation; weakness: dependency on original. Supports communal responsibility analysis. The review underscores the diversity in Jewish leadership approaches. Archetypes reveal hybrid influences from Roman contexts. This diversity suggests a dynamic response to imperial challenges, enriching the understanding of covenantal service.

**2.6 Primary Sources and Eyewitness Accounts**

Josephus (1987), a primary source, offers eyewitness accounts in *Jewish Antiquities* and *The Jewish War*, portraying leaders negotiating covenantal identity amid Roman dominance. Examples: Temple destruction, Yochanan ben Zakkai's Yavneh negotiations. Bias: pro-Roman. Essential for authenticity, analyzing communal service. Josephus' works provide invaluable insights despite their biases. Negotiations exemplify pragmatic servant leadership. The accounts also highlight how bias shaped historical narratives of Jewish-Roman relations.

**2.7 Overall Resilience and Contrasts**

These sources reveal Jewish leadership's resilience through covenantal service, adapting to Roman challenges while maintaining divine law focus, providing contrasts with Christian universalism and Roman hierarchies. The adaptability ensured survival in diaspora communities. It also influenced subsequent religious traditions. Modern leadership can learn from this communal emphasis. Ultimately, Jewish servant leadership embodied ethical persistence. This resilience supports the thesis by demonstrating how covenantal models interacted with and challenged secular norms, contributing to ethical redefinitions. The contrasts underscore the unique role of divine law in sustaining community-oriented leadership.

# **Part 3: Servant Leadership in the Secular Roman Worldview**

**3.1 Hierarchical Patronage and Pragmatic Pluralism**

The secular Roman worldview emphasized pragmatic pluralism, imperial patronage, and hierarchical authority to sustain a vast empire. Leadership was top-down, with patrons providing protection for client loyalty, contrasting monotheistic servant models' humility and communal empowerment. However, Stoic philosophy introduced elements of duty, benevolence, and self-control, offering parallels to servant leadership within a structured framework. This pluralism allowed for diverse cultural integrations. Pragmatism ensured efficient governance across territories. Insights indicate Stoicism mitigated patronage's asymmetry, influencing ethical evolutions. The system's design promoted stability but often at the cost of equality, highlighting tensions with emerging ethical paradigms.

**3.2 Evolution of Patronage Systems**

Wallace-Hadrill (1989) traces patronage evolution from republican reciprocity to imperial hierarchy. Emperors as ultimate patrons enforced loyalty via benefactions. Functions: social coherence in disparate societies. Strengths: anthropological overview; weakness: pre-empire emphasis. The evolution reflects societal changes over centuries. Patronage's adaptability made it a cornerstone of Roman social fabric.

Verboven (2018), in the Oxford Bibliographies entry on Roman patronage, defines it as a voluntary, asymmetrical reciprocal exchange essential for social coherence. Drawing on anthropological perspectives, it portrays patronage as a personal, enduring relationship involving material or immaterial goods. Key scholarly works include Fustel de Coulanges (1890), linking patronage to feudalism and its archaic roots; Gelzer (1912), viewing it as an aristocratic phenomenon in the Republic; and Saller (1982), emphasizing continuity into the Empire where emperors monopolized relationships but aristocrats served as brokers. Syme (1939) analyzes Octavian's centralization of patronage for political control. Ganter (2015) examines transformations up to the 3rd century CE, noting the rise of Christian values questioning traditional practices. During the 1st-4th centuries, patronage integrated diverse strata, with emperors like Augustus reshaping it for imperial stability. Ethical elements emerge in Ganter's discussion of Christian influences, suggesting shifts toward more communal considerations, though not fully servant-like. The entry's strength lies in its annotated guidance; weakness in lacking original analysis. This system highlights Roman leadership's practical focus, contrasting monotheistic humility. The bibliography's comprehensiveness aids in tracing patronage's ethical nuances.

**3.3 Mythical and Historical Parallels**

Wallace (2019) parallels the Romulus-Remus myth with Antony-Octavian leadership, analyzing hierarchical transitions from Republic to Empire, emphasizing political capacities in secular contexts. Arguments focus on power dynamics shaping Roman history. Strengths: accessibility for introductory insights; weaknesses: limited depth in religious or comparative elements. It offers supplementary background on Roman patronage-based leadership, contrasting with monotheistic servant models. The myth symbolizes foundational leadership principles. Parallels suggest mythological roots for hierarchical norms. Mythical narratives reinforced patronage as a cultural norm.

**3.4 Governance Challenges and Ethical Dimensions**

Noreña (2025) reviews *The Oxford World History of Empire*, critiquing governance challenges like central-local tensions, territorial control, and hierarchical structures. Parallels to other empires highlight Roman patronage's role in maintaining order amid diversity, with discussions of women's roles in authority. The review praises the volume's analytical depth in comparative synthesis, noting pragmatic pluralism in Roman leadership. Ethical dimensions appear in explorations of how imperial structures influenced societal welfare, though not explicitly servant-oriented. Weaknesses include the review format's brevity, offering no original research. It provides context for secular Roman worldview's hierarchical norms, valuable for contrasting with monotheistic servant leadership. Challenges reveal the limits of patronage in ethical governance. The comparative lens underscores Roman innovation in managing diversity.

**3.5 Religious and Polytheistic Influences**

Huntsman (2017) notes Greco-Roman polytheism's hierarchical veneration, with emperor worship deifying rulers. Christians subverted this, rejecting human deification. Polytheism supported imperial unity. It also influenced daily ethical practices. The deification reinforced hierarchical power. This veneration contrasts sharply with monotheistic servant ideals. Polytheistic elements shaped Roman moral frameworks, intersecting with Stoic thought.

**3.6 Primary Insights into Administrative Practices**

Pliny (1969), a primary source, details Christian trials in Bithynia (Epistulae X.96–97), reflecting pragmatic leadership prioritizing loyalty. Trajan's reply: punish but don't hunt. Exemplifies secular contrast with Christian ethics. The letters reveal administrative decision-making. They highlight tolerance limits in Roman governance. Insights suggest pragmatic flexibility in dealing with emerging threats. Administrative practices reflect patronage's role in maintaining order.

**3.7 Broader Historical Context and Stoic Influences**

Expanding on patronage, historical analyses reveal its roots in archaic Rome, evolving into a system where patrons (patronus) protected clients (cliens) in exchange for loyalty and services, such as voting or military support. By the Empire, it structured society hierarchically, with emperors at the apex, as seen in Augustus's reforms. Social classes intertwined with patronage, where plebeians relied on equestrians and senators for advancement. In the late Empire (4th century), patronage shifted, with powerful landowners (patrocinium) challenging state authority by sheltering peasants from taxes, eroding central power. This mutual obligation had ethical undertones, as patrons were expected to act benevolently, though asymmetrically. The shift in late antiquity indicates evolving responses to economic pressures.

Stoic influences added depth, paralleling servant leadership through emphasis on duty and benevolence. Marcus Aurelius, emperor (161–180 CE), embodied Stoicism in leadership, viewing rule as responsibility rather than privilege, guided by rationality, self-control, and inner peace. His *Meditations* reflect servant-like virtues: serving the common good, humility, and ethical decision-making. Stoicism shaped Roman leaders like Seneca and Epictetus, promoting virtue over power, influencing emperors to prioritize welfare. Parallels to servant leadership include focusing on others' needs and moral wisdom, though within hierarchical structures. Stoicism's impact on daily habits fostered resilient, ethical governance, softening patronage's asymmetry. This philosophical layer suggests potential for ethical convergence with monotheistic models. Stoic texts provided a moral compass for rulers facing empire-wide challenges.

**3.8 Synthesis of Roman Leadership Traits**

These sources portray Roman leadership as patronage-based and pragmatic, yet Stoicism introduced benevolent elements, creating tensions with emerging monotheistic worldviews. The system's flexibility allowed empire-wide cohesion. Ethical evolutions occurred through philosophical integrations. Contrasts with other worldviews highlight Roman uniqueness. Overall, it balanced power with duty. Synthesis affirms the thesis by showing how secular hierarchies interacted with and were influenced by servant ethics. The traits reveal a complex blend of authority and morality, informing modern hierarchical systems.

# **Part 4: Comparative Analyses and Interactions**

**4.1 Power Dynamics and Cultural Intersections**

Comparative studies reveal how Christian, Jewish, and Roman worldviews interacted, with monotheistic servant ethics challenging imperial norms, leading to tensions and ethical shifts. Conflicts like Jewish revolts and Christian persecutions highlight contrasts, while synergies in cultural exchanges fostered redefinitions of leadership. These interactions shaped social evolution in the empire. Power dynamics often led to mutual adaptations. Cultural intersections promoted ethical dialogues. One concludes that such dynamics were pivotal in redefining authority. The intersections also created spaces for hybrid ethical practices to emerge.

Dohrmann and Reed (2013) explore power poetics in late antiquity, examining Romanization, Christianization, and Jewish responses through essays on cultural, religious, political intersections. Themes include identity formation and worldview tensions, with rabbinic adaptations to imperial authority and Christian subversions of Roman norms. The volume integrates Jewish perspectives into broader debates, highlighting clashes like ideological rivalries and mutual influences in law and theology. Its interdisciplinary approach combines history, theology, and cultural studies. Strengths: diverse voices and contextual depth; weakness: later antiquity emphasis. It aids understanding of interactions reshaping leadership worldviews, supporting comparisons of servant models. The poetics framework reveals how power was negotiated through narrative and rhetoric.

**4.2 Rivalries and Mutual Influences**

Berthelot (2023) details rivalry, with Jews adapting Roman concepts while influencing perceptions via resistance. Rabbis codified law amid Constitutio Antoniniana (212 CE). Contrasts covenantal with Roman universalism, supporting thesis on redefinitions. The rivalry fostered cultural borrowings. It also led to long-term ethical changes. Insights suggest Jewish resilience impacted Christian models. Mutual influences extended to legal and social realms.

Josephus contrasts Jewish theocratic with Roman hierarchies, e.g., revolts from clashing expectations. His accounts illustrate worldview conflicts. They provide historical authenticity. Biases affect interpretations. Nonetheless, they enrich comparative analyses. Josephus' narratives reveal negotiation as a servant act. Theocratic elements clashed with Roman pragmatism, highlighting ethical divergences.

Pliny's letters show Roman-Christian clashes, with Christian oaths/hymns vs. civic duties. The correspondence reveals administrative tensions. It exemplifies secular responses to monotheism. Pragmatism guided Roman policies. These interactions influenced legal frameworks. This clash highlights servant ethics' subversive power. Letters also reflect Roman tolerance's limits, shaping Christian adaptive strategies.

**4.3 Community Separation and Responses to Power**

Expanding comparisons, scholarly works emphasize emergence of distinct communities amid Roman dominance. The Christian community's separation from Judaism in Rome involved shared yet diverging responses to imperial power, with Christians adopting Jewish ethical foundations but universalizing servant leadership. Tensions escalated in revolts (66–70 CE, 132–135 CE), deepening Jewish-Christian rifts as Christians distanced from Jewish nationalism. Separation processes highlight adaptive strategies. They also underscore shared roots in servant ethics. This separation facilitated unique worldview developments. It also created opportunities for independent ethical evolutions.

Labahn and Lehtipuu (2015) present varied Jewish and Christian responses to Roman power, from resistance to accommodation. Jewish leaders like rabbis emphasized communal service and law adherence as survival strategies, while Christians highlighted martyrdom as ultimate service. Comparative essays reveal how both challenged Roman patronage through ethical alternatives, influencing imperial society. Responses varied by context. They contributed to societal transformations. The volume underscores power's role in shaping servant models. Essays illustrate how responses were context-specific, enriching comparative depth.

**4.4 Negotiations and Critiques**

Fredriksen (2013) argues Jews tested Roman limits, utilizing power for ends, paralleling Christian negotiations. Both worldviews critiqued Roman hierarchies, with Jewish covenantalism and Christian humility fostering interfaith dialogues amid conflict. Negotiations often involved pragmatic compromises. Critiques targeted imperial excesses. This parallelism enriches understanding of monotheistic impacts. It suggests negotiations as a form of servant diplomacy. Critiques also laid groundwork for ethical reforms.

Schwartz (2010) examines post-Roman West, noting Jewish and Christian adaptations of Roman structures, with leadership evolving from patronage to ecclesiastical or rabbinic models emphasizing service. Adaptations ensured continuity. They integrated Roman elements into new frameworks. Evolution reflected ethical shifts. The study illuminates long-term influences. Adaptations reveal hybrid leadership forms. This evolution highlights reciprocity's role in solidarity.

**4.5 Growth and Legal Evolutions**

Christianity's growth intertwined with Roman culture, shaped by Jewish traditions but adopting imperial frameworks post-Constantine. Jewish conversions in Rome indicate cultural exchanges, where Roman pragmatism met monotheistic ethics. Growth patterns reveal diffusion mechanisms. Legal evolutions constrained minorities. Yet, exchanges promoted tolerance in periods. This growth amplified servant leadership's reach. Conversions reflect ethical appeal across boundaries.

Legal status evolved, with Christian emperors constraining Jews, yet earlier periods saw mutual influences on leadership ethics. Historiography notes Christianity's rise via conflict with paganism, but also Jewish roots. Status changes affected community dynamics. Mutual influences shaped ethical norms. Historiography provides critical perspectives. Legal shifts highlight power's role in worldview interactions. Status evolutions also influenced interfaith relations long-term.

**4.6 Convergence and Ethical Legacies**

These interactions fostered convergence, e.g., communal welfare emphasis in late Rome, despite persecutions (Nero, Trajan), leading to ethical legacies in Western thought. Convergence softened rigid hierarchies. Ethical legacies persist in modern systems. Despite conflicts, positive synergies emerged. Overall, they redefined leadership paradigms. This convergence supports the thesis by demonstrating mutual influences. Legacies inform contemporary ethical debates.

# **Conclusion**

**Key Findings from the Review**

This review synthesizes robust scholarship on individual worldviews but identifies gaps in integrated servant leadership comparisons. Christian sources emphasize humility's subversion; Jewish, covenantal resilience; Roman, hierarchical pragmatism tempered by Stoic benevolence. Interactions reveal ethical legacies, informing modern interfaith and leadership dialogues. Key findings highlight contrasts and convergences. They underscore the historical significance of these models. The thesis is affirmed through evidence of redefinitions. Findings also reveal the transformative potential of ethical leadership in pluralistic settings.

**Identified Gaps and Challenges**

Gaps include limited interdisciplinary integration of archaeology with leadership theory, and biases in primary sources like Josephus. Future research should explore underrepresented aspects, such as women's roles in these leadership models or quantitative analyses of patronage networks via inscriptions. Challenges involve source scarcity for early periods. Biases require critical evaluation. Addressing gaps can enhance scholarly depth. Overcoming challenges will refine historical understandings. Future studies could incorporate digital humanities for better analysis.

**Implications for Contemporary Studies**

Implications extend to contemporary contexts: understanding ancient contrasts aids ethical leadership in globalized societies, promoting humility amid power disparities. By bridging historical and modern, this study enriches worldview scholarship. Contemporary applications include business and politics. It fosters interfaith understanding. Ultimately, it contributes to ethical evolution.

The review demonstrates the enduring relevance of ancient models. It encourages further comparative studies. Implications also touch on education and training. Scholarly contributions are multifaceted. In summary, this analysis illuminates timeless leadership principles. These principles challenge modern leaders to prioritize service. The study calls for applying these insights to address current power imbalances worldwide.

# **Annotated Bibliography**

This annotated bibliography compiles 26 scholarly sources relevant to the research topic of servant leadership within Christian, Jewish, and secular worldviews during the ancient Roman Empire (1st–4th centuries CE). The entries include a mix of primary sources (e.g., ancient texts like Josephus and Pliny the Younger), secondary books and edited volumes, book chapters, journal articles, book reviews, and reference entries, selected for their focus on leadership models, worldview interactions, and historical contexts. Sources were chosen based on academic rigor, relevance to the research question—how these worldviews conceptualized and practiced servant leadership and influenced imperial society—and their ability to support the thesis that Christian humility-based leadership contrasted with Jewish covenantal and Roman hierarchical models, fostering redefinitions amid tensions. Annotations summarize each source's content, evaluate its strengths and weaknesses, and highlight its contribution to the comparative analysis, excluding textbooks and the Bible as per assignment guidelines. The annotated bibliography is also organized by source type.

**2.1 Primary Sources**

**Josephus, F. (1987). *The works of Josephus* (W. Whiston, Trans.). Hendrickson Publishers. (Original work published ca. 93–94 CE)**

Josephus' comprehensive works, including Jewish Antiquities and The Jewish War, serve as primary eyewitness accounts of Jewish history, leadership, and Roman interactions from the Hellenistic period through the first century CE, with The Jewish War detailing the 66–70 CE revolt against Rome and Antiquities covering broader Jewish history up to the revolt (Josephus, 1987). Key arguments portray Jewish leaders like Herod and rabbinic figures negotiating covenantal identity amid Roman dominance, often through mediation or resistance, as Josephus, a former rebel who defected to Rome, aimed to explain Jewish customs to Romans while defending his people. Examples include descriptions of the Temple's destruction, messianic expectations clashing with imperial authority, and post-70 CE adaptations like Yochanan ben Zakkai's negotiations for Yavneh, illustrating communal responsibility over personal power. In the Roman context, Josephus contrasts Jewish theocratic leadership with Roman patronage and military hierarchies, highlighting tensions in governance and ethics. Strengths as a primary source include detailed, firsthand narratives and insights into worldview clashes, making it indispensable for historical authenticity. Weaknesses stem from Josephus' pro-Roman bias and apologetic tone, which may downplay Jewish resistance or exaggerate accommodations. For the research paper, its scholarly value is immense for analyzing Jewish covenantal leadership as a form of service to community and God, providing contrasts with Christian universalism and Roman secular pragmatism, though critical evaluation for bias is essential.

**Pliny the Younger. (1969). *Letters* (B. Radice, Trans.). Harvard University Press. (Original work published ca. 112 CE)**

Pliny's letters to Trajan (Epistulae X.96–97) detail his administrative trials of Christians in Bithynia, describing them as a "superstition" and seeking guidance on procedures, reflecting Roman pragmatic leadership prioritizing imperial loyalty over religious tolerance (Pliny the Younger, 1969). Key examples include anonymous accusations, executions for refusal to curse Christ, and reports of Christian practices like oaths and hymns, contrasting with Roman civic duties. Trajan's reply advises against hunting Christians but punishing proven cases, illustrating hierarchical patronage. Strengths as a primary source lie in firsthand insights into Roman-Christian clashes. Weaknesses include limited provincial scope and potential bias. Value for the paper is in exemplifying secular Roman authority's contrast with Christian servant ethics, aiding worldview comparisons.

**Aurelius, M. (1964). *Meditations* (M. Staniforth, Trans.). Penguin Books. (Original work published ca. 170 CE)**

Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* is a series of personal reflections written as a Roman emperor (161–180 CE), serving as a Stoic philosophical journal rather than a structured treatise, with themes centered on self-examination, virtue, rationality, and acceptance of fate. Key arguments emphasize living in accordance with nature, practicing humility and self-control, and viewing leadership as a duty to serve the common good, exemplified by passages on enduring hardships without complaint (e.g., Book 4: "Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one") and prioritizing ethical actions over external success. In the Roman context, Aurelius contrasts imperial power with Stoic ideals, advocating benevolence toward others and inner peace amid governance challenges like wars and plagues. Strengths as a primary source include authentic insights from a practicing leader, offering raw, introspective wisdom on Stoicism's application to daily life. Weaknesses stem from its fragmented, repetitive structure and lack of systematic exposition, which can obscure deeper philosophical connections. For the research paper, this source provides essential value by illustrating secular Roman leadership's Stoic dimension—focusing on duty and moral wisdom as proto-servant elements—contrasting with Christian humility and Jewish covenantalism, and supporting analysis of ethical influences in imperial society.

**Epictetus. (1940). The complete extant writings of Epictetus. In W. J. Oates (Ed.), *The Stoic and Epicurean philosophers: The complete extant writings of Epicurus, Epictetus, Lucretius, and Marcus Aurelius* (pp. 221–535). Modern Library. (Original work published ca. 135 CE)**

Epictetus' writings, compiled by his student Arrian, consist primarily of the *Discourses* (four books) and the *Enchiridion* (Handbook), focusing on Stoic ethics through dialogues and practical advice on achieving freedom through reason and virtue. Core arguments distinguish between what is in our control (opinions, desires) and what is not (external events), urging duty-bound living with themes of resilience, moral integrity, and service to humanity, as in the *Enchiridion*'s emphasis on bearing hardships nobly ("Don't demand that things happen as you wish, but wish that they happen as they do"). Leadership is portrayed as self-mastery and ethical example-setting, with Epictetus—a former slave—critiquing tyrannical power while promoting inner sovereignty. In the Roman imperial era, these texts address societal hierarchies, advocating indifference to status while fulfilling roles dutifully. Strengths lie in their accessible, conversational style and emphasis on practical philosophy, making Stoicism applicable to everyday challenges. Weaknesses include occasional repetition and a focus on individual ethics over systemic analysis, potentially limiting broader social critiques. Scholarly value for the paper is high, as it exemplifies Stoic influences on Roman secular leadership's sense of duty and benevolence, providing parallels to servant leadership's empathy and community focus, and aiding contrasts with monotheistic models.

**Seneca, L. A. (1969). *Letters from a Stoic: Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*. Penguin. (Original work published ca. 65 CE)**

Seneca's *Letters from a Stoic* comprises 124 epistles to his friend Lucilius, serving as a guide to Stoic philosophy with discussions on ethics, virtue, and living wisely amid life's uncertainties. Key arguments promote self-discipline, contempt for fortune, and ethical leadership through reason, exemplified by letters on enduring adversity (e.g., Letter 9: friendship as mutual support) and criticizing excess while advocating moderation and benevolence. As Nero's advisor, Seneca addresses power's corrupting potential, urging leaders to prioritize moral integrity and service over ambition. In the Roman context, the letters contrast imperial extravagance with Stoic simplicity, emphasizing duty to society and inner tranquility. Strengths include vivid, engaging prose and practical advice blending philosophy with real-world examples. Weaknesses involve inconsistencies between Seneca's teachings and his wealthy life, plus a sometimes elitist tone. For the paper, this primary source offers key insights into Roman secular worldview's ethical underpinnings, highlighting Stoic benevolence as a bridge to servant leadership's humility, contrasting with Christian sacrifice and Jewish communal responsibility, and enriching analysis of worldview interactions.

**2.2 Books**

**Goodblatt, D. (2012). *Jewish leadership in Roman Palestine from 70 C.E. to 135 C.E.* Brill.** [**https://brill.com/display/title/14217**](https://brill.com/display/title/14217)

Goodblatt's book reconstructs Jewish socio-political leadership in Roman Palestine between the two major revolts (70-135 CE), arguing that biblical-modeled and non-biblical leadership forms co-existed as viable options before the full emergence of rabbinic dominance, with a focus on pre-70 CE ideas persisting amid Roman oversight. Chapters analyze ideals and realizations of leadership, models of local control in the Roman world, and specific Roman control of Judaea, drawing on textual, archaeological, and historical evidence to show adaptive communal structures (Goodblatt, 2012). For instance, post-Temple destruction, Jewish leaders balanced theocratic traditions with pragmatic negotiations, emphasizing communal responsibility through figures like sages who prioritized collective survival over individual power. The book highlights interactions such as revolts triggered by Roman policies, illustrating covenantal leadership's resilience. Strengths include a robust evidential base from diverse sources, offering nuanced historical reconstruction. Weaknesses encompass a narrow timeframe, limiting coverage of later centuries. Scholarly value for the paper is substantial, as it details Jewish covenantal leadership's communal focus, providing contrasts with Christian humility-based servant models and Roman hierarchical patronage in empire-wide interactions.

**Berthelot, K. (2023). *Jews and their Roman rivals: Pagan Rome's challenge to Israel*. Princeton University Press. (Reviewed in *Comparative Civilizations Review, 89*, 89–92).** [**https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2268&context=ccr**](https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2268&context=ccr)

Berthelot's book analyzes the unique 600-year rivalry between Jews and Romans as a clash of divinely elected peoples, with Rome seeking to eradicate Jewish religion through policies like the Fiscus Iudaicus and refounding Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina, framed rabbinically as Jacob versus Esau. Cultural borrowings are central, with Jews subtly absorbing Roman legal concepts like citizenship and adoption for integrating converts, while influencing Roman perceptions through resistance; post-70 CE, rabbis codified law as a portable sanctuary, evolving leadership toward merit-based Torah study amid the 212 CE Constitutio Antoniniana (Berthelot, 2023). Leadership challenges involved ambivalence toward Roman military power, critiqued as oppressive yet sometimes admired, shifting Jewish authority from lineage to learning. The reviewer praises its "magisterial" scope, meticulous document analysis, and extensive bibliography, highlighting strengths in comparative rigor and worldview impacts on Western civilization. Weaknesses may include assumed prior knowledge. For the paper, this source provides excellent value by detailing Jewish leadership adaptations under Roman secular challenge, contrasting with Christian servant humility and supporting thesis on ethical redefinitions.

**Labahn, M., & Lehtipuu, O. (Eds.). (2015). *People under power: Early Jewish and Christian responses to the Roman Empire*. Amsterdam University Press.** [**https://www.aup.nl/en/book/9789089645890/people-under-power**](https://www.aup.nl/en/book/9789089645890/people-under-power)

This edited volume collects essays examining Roman imperial power's impact on Jewish and Christian communities, using historical, rhetorical, postcolonial, and social-historical methods to analyze textual and contextual responses. Key themes include hybridity in Dead Sea Scrolls, expulsions from Roman communities, politics in Paul's writings, the Gospel of Mark as empire-critical, and pagan views of Christian martyrdom. Arguments highlight varied responses—from resistance to accommodation—showing how monotheistic groups navigated imperial ideology through ideology critique and adaptation. Divided into three parts (Jewish communities, New Testament contexts, imperial ideology in Christian texts), it focuses on power dynamics without explicit leadership emphasis but implies communal strategies under oppression. Strengths include diverse methodologies and fresh perspectives, making it valuable for scholars of early Judaism and Christianity. Weaknesses are not explicitly noted but may include uneven essay depth due to its collection format. For the paper, this source contributes significantly by detailing Jewish and Christian worldview responses to Roman secular authority, supporting comparative analysis of servant leadership through themes of service, exclusion, and ethical critique in imperial society.

**Schwartz, S. (2010). *Were the Jews a Mediterranean society? Reciprocity and solidarity in ancient Judaism*. Princeton University Press.**

Schwartz's book investigates whether ancient Jewish society conformed to Mediterranean norms of reciprocity and honor or adhered to Torah-based solidarity, arguing for a core tension where Jews navigated between biblical ideals of communal support and Greco-Roman exchange-based relations. Chapters analyze reciprocity in Torah, Ben Sira, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, and rabbinic texts, with examples like honor in Qumran communities and Josephus' portrayal of elite patronage, concluding that Jews increasingly integrated Mediterranean reciprocity post-70 CE while retaining solidarity elements. In the Roman context, it explores how imperial hierarchies influenced Jewish social relations, shifting from isolation to hybridity. Strengths encompass rigorous textual analysis and innovative cultural comparison, challenging assumptions about Jewish exceptionalism. Weaknesses may include a narrow focus on Palestine, limiting Diaspora insights, and dense prose requiring prior knowledge. Scholarly value for the paper is substantial, as it illuminates Jewish worldview's covenantal leadership amid Roman secular influences, contrasting communal solidarity with patronage hierarchies and Christian universalism, and aiding thesis on ethical redefinitions through interactions.

**2.3 Edited Books**

**Dohrmann, N. B., & Reed, A. Y. (Eds.). (2013). *Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire: The poetics of power in late antiquity*. University of Pennsylvania Press.** [**https://www.pennpress.org/9780812245332/jews-christians-and-the-roman-empire/**](https://www.pennpress.org/9780812245332/jews-christians-and-the-roman-empire/)

This edited volume explores power dynamics among Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire in late antiquity, examining cultural, religious, and political intersections through essays that address Romanization, Christianization, and Jewish responses, with themes of identity formation and worldview tensions. While specific chapters are not detailed, the focus on poetics of power implies analyses of leadership roles, such as rabbinic adaptations to imperial authority and Christian subversions of Roman norms (Dohrmann & Reed, 2013). The book integrates Jewish perspectives into broader debates, highlighting clashes like ideological rivalries and mutual influences in law and theology. Its interdisciplinary approach, part of the "Jewish Culture and Contexts" series, combines history, theology, and cultural studies for comprehensive insights. Strengths lie in fostering diverse scholarly voices and contextual depth. Weaknesses include a later antiquity emphasis, potentially extending beyond the 1st-4th centuries. Scholarly value for the paper is high, as it aids understanding of interactions reshaping leadership worldviews, supporting comparisons of servant models across the three groups.

**2.4 Book Chapters**

**Linder, A., & Katz, S. T. (2006). The legal status of the Jews in the Roman Empire. In W. D. Davies, L. Finkelstein, W. Horbury, J. Sturdy, & S. T. Katz (Eds.), *The Cambridge history of Judaism: Volume 4, The late Roman-Rabbinic period* (pp. 128–167). Cambridge University Press.** [**https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521772488.006**](https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521772488.006)

This chapter examines the Bar Kochba Revolt (132–135 CE) as a lens for Jewish legal status under Rome, arguing that fragmented sources—literary, epigraphic, numismatic, and archaeological—reveal an ambiguous position balancing integration and isolation, with revolts triggered by administrative changes, economic shifts, and policies like Hadrian's circumcision ban (Linder & Katz, 2006). Leadership negotiations are inferred from papyri showing Bar Kochba's administration and communal observance, while Roman policies emphasized military presence and pragmatic order, leading to strong responses like settlement destruction. Strengths include multidisciplinary synthesis of evidence, providing nuanced insights into Jewish-Roman dynamics post-70 CE. Weaknesses lie in unresolved debates due to source scarcity, with limited detail on negotiations. For the paper, its value is in illustrating Jewish leadership's communal focus under oppression, contrasting with Christian and Roman models, aiding comparative analysis of servant leadership.

**Wallace-Hadrill, A. (1989). Patronage in Roman society: From Republic to Empire. In A. Wallace-Hadrill (Ed.), *Patronage in ancient society* (pp. 63–87). Routledge.**

Wallace-Hadrill traces the evolution of Roman patronage from republican reciprocity, where it involved voluntary exchanges tying social strata for stability, to imperial hierarchy, with emperors as ultimate patrons enforcing loyalty through benefactions and client networks, as exemplified by Octavian's monopolization of control. The chapter argues that patronage was central to Roman ideology, ensuring social coherence in disparate societies, differing from feudal models and persisting through transformations (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989). Key functions in leadership included aristocrats mediating favors, as in the Republic's power politics, and its demoralization in the Late Republic via material incentives. In society, it reinforced hierarchical dynamics, with patrons in superior positions offering protection for loyalty. Strengths feature a paradigmatic overview drawing on anthropological definitions, providing foundational analysis. Weaknesses include emphasis on pre-empire periods, requiring later integrations. For the paper, this source holds key value by elucidating secular Roman patronage-based leadership's asymmetry, contrasting sharply with Christian and Jewish servant-oriented worldviews, and supporting thesis arguments on redefining norms through interactions.

**Huntsman, E. D. (2017). Greco-Roman religion and the New Testament. In R. C. Bohn & J. K. Holzapfel (Eds.), *The New Testament: History, culture, and society* (pp. 123–140). Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University.** [**https://rsc.byu.edu/new-testament-history-culture-society/greco-roman-religion-new-testament**](https://rsc.byu.edu/new-testament-history-culture-society/greco-roman-religion-new-testament)

Huntsman's chapter examines Greco-Roman polytheism's influence on the New Testament, where early Christians defined themselves against Gentile idolatry, viewing idols as demonic and urging conversion (e.g., 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10), while subverting practices like emperor worship. Contrasts in leadership include Christian rejection of human deification, as Peter and Paul deferred worship to God (Acts 10:25–26, 14:15), embodying servant models versus Greco-Roman authoritative veneration of rulers (Huntsman, 2017). Examples of subversion encompass Paul's condemnation of idolatry causing riots (Acts 19:23–27) and expelling spirits (Acts 16:16–24), prioritizing service over gain. Relevance to servant leadership is evident in leaders like Barnabas rejecting veneration, focusing on communal salvation. Strengths include clear references to primary texts and cultural context. Weaknesses involve a potential Christian exceptionalism bias. Scholarly value lies in highlighting worldview distinctions, aiding comparisons of Christian servant ethics with Roman hierarchical authority.

**Fredriksen, P. (2013). Roman Christianity and the Post-Roman West: The social correlates of the contra Iudaeos tradition. In N. B. Dohrmann & A. Y. Reed (Eds.), *Jews, Christians, and the Roman Empire: The poetics of power in late antiquity* (pp. 249–264). University of Pennsylvania Press.** [**https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812208573.249**](https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812208573.249)

Fredriksen's chapter examines the contra Iudaeos (against the Jews) tradition in Roman Christianity and its evolution into the post-Roman West, arguing that anti-Jewish rhetoric served social and theological functions amid shifting power dynamics, correlating with Christian identity formation under empire. Key examples include patristic writings framing Jews as "other" to unify Christians, influenced by Roman legal and cultural norms, and how this persisted in Western societies. It highlights leadership roles in enforcing boundaries, with bishops using rhetoric to navigate imperial patronage and communal solidarity. Strengths lie in its social-historical approach, linking theology to power structures with clear examples. Weaknesses include limited access to full text in some databases, potentially restricting broader analysis. For the paper, this source adds value by exploring Christian-Jewish-Roman interactions, illustrating how worldview clashes reshaped leadership ethics—contrasting Christian servant universalism with Jewish covenantalism and Roman hierarchies—and supporting examination of influence on imperial society.

**2.5 Journal Articles**

**Bilde, P. (1993). The Jews in the Diaspora of the Roman Empire. *Nordisk judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies, 14*(2), 103–124.** [**https://doi.org/10.30752/nj.69502**](https://doi.org/10.30752/nj.69502)

In this article, Bilde explores the historical and cultural interactions between Diaspora Jews and their non-Jewish surroundings during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, emphasizing a "tense and strained dialectic relationship" that influenced Jewish identity across social, political, ethnic, religious, and cultural dimensions. Key arguments include the process of acculturation, where Jews both resisted and engaged with non-Jewish influences, leading to significant events like revolts and the production of Rabbinic literature that reflected isolation and conflict. Historical examples provided involve Hellenization, Jewish apologetics, and mutual influences, such as Jewish impact on surrounding cultures, supported by limited but crucial literary and archaeological sources. Regarding leadership, the article implies that Jewish leaders navigated Roman authority through communication and exchange, adapting communal structures to maintain identity amid tensions (Bilde, 1993). This dialectic framework highlights how Jewish worldview prioritized covenantal responsibility, contrasting with Roman pragmatic governance. The source's strengths lie in its use of primary evidence like inscriptions and literary works to frame acculturation, offering a balanced view of conflict and exchange. However, its 1993 publication may overlook recent archaeological advancements, and the limited focus on specific leadership interactions reduces depth for direct comparisons. Overall, for a research paper on servant leadership in comparative worldviews, this article provides valuable context on Jewish adaptive leadership under Roman rule, though it requires integration with more leadership-focused texts to address Christian and secular parallels fully.

**Johnston, R. M. (2006). Leadership in the early church during its first hundred years. *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society, 17*(2), 95–110.** [**https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jats/vol17/iss2/7**](https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jats/vol17/iss2/7)

Johnston's article categorizes early Christian leadership into three types—charismatic (e.g., apostles like Paul, driven by spiritual gifts), familial (e.g., James in Jerusalem, based on kinship to Jesus), and appointive (e.g., elders and deacons, formalized for stability)—with appointive roles dominating by the second century to counter false prophets and ensure order amid Roman persecution (Johnston, 2006). Biblical references to servant leadership are tied to terms like "diakonos" in Acts 6, reflecting Jesus' model of humility and service in John 13:16, where leaders are called to serve rather than lord over others. In the Roman context, the article discusses how Christianity evolved from Spirit-led, decentralized structures to more organized forms to withstand external pressures, such as imperial demands for loyalty, fostering community cohesion through shared service. Strengths include its thorough biblical analysis and historical progression, drawing on sources like Eusebius and modern scholars (e.g., Giles, 1995), providing a clear framework for understanding Christian leadership's adaptive nature. Weaknesses involve a heavier emphasis on internal church dynamics over explicit interactions with Jewish or Roman leadership, limiting comparative breadth. Scholarly value for the paper is high, as it directly illustrates Christian servant leadership's roots in humility and communal empowerment, contrasting with Roman hierarchical patronage, though supplementation with Jewish sources is needed for full worldview comparison.

**Leahy, K. (2010). A study of Peter as a model for servant leadership. *Inner Resources for Leaders*. Regent University School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship.** [**https://www.regent.edu/journal/inner-resources-for-leaders/peter-as-model-for-servant-leadership/**](https://www.regent.edu/journal/inner-resources-for-leaders/peter-as-model-for-servant-leadership/)

Leahy's article analyzes Peter's evolution as a servant leader through socio-rhetorical analysis of biblical texts like John 21:17, Acts, and 1 Peter 5, portraying his shift from impulsiveness to humility, embodying charismatic, transformational, and servant leadership by prioritizing community care and inclusivity (Leahy, 2010). Key examples include Peter's role in shepherding God's flock, accepting Gentiles without Jewish laws (Acts 10:9-16), and addressing persecution under Nero in 1 Peter, where he encourages humility and resistance to evil amid Roman societal pressures. In the Roman context, Peter's "co-elder" approach contrasts with hierarchical norms, promoting self-sacrifice and long-term communal benefits. Strengths include detailed exegesis and integration of modern leadership theories, enhancing applicability to ancient settings. Weaknesses involve potential modern bias in applying contemporary models to historical figures, with limited direct comparisons to Jewish or Roman leadership. Scholarly value for the paper is strong, as it exemplifies Christian servant leadership's emphasis on humility and service, offering points for comparison with Jewish covenantal models and Roman patronage, though broader historical sources are needed for depth.

**Noam, V. (2024). The identity of the leaders of the Second Jewish Revolt and Bar Koseba's true role in the insurrection. *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament, 38*(2), 212–229.** [**https://doi.org/10.1080/00310328.2024.2435788**](https://doi.org/10.1080/00310328.2024.2435788)

Noam's article challenges the view of Bar Koseba as the sole leader of the Second Jewish Revolt (132–135 CE), arguing it began with multiple leaders, possibly Roman army veterans, before Bar Koseba centralized power as a messianic figure, causing fragmentation as evidenced by limited coin distribution and regional withdrawals (Noam, 2024). Key evidence from Dio Cassius, archaeology, and scrolls supports a guerrilla phase shifting to centralized control, with Bar Koseba potentially eliminating rivals like Elazar the priest. Implications for Jewish leadership under Rome highlight adaptive yet divisive covenantalism versus pragmatic military strategies. Strengths include innovative use of new evidence to explain discrepancies. Weaknesses involve narrow focus on one revolt and hypothetical timing. Scholarly value is high for depicting Jewish leadership's transition from collaborative to autocratic, contrasting with Christian servant models and Roman hierarchies in worldview comparisons.

**Thomas, D. (2018). Jesus' cross-cultural model of 'leader as servant' in Luke 22:24-30. *GFU Digital Commons*. George Fox University.** [**https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/gfsb/vol5/iss1/4**](https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/gfsb/vol5/iss1/4)

Thomas uses socio-rhetorical analysis and GLOBE Study data to interpret Luke 22:24-30 as Jesus promoting servant leadership against Greco-Roman patron-client hierarchies, emphasizing humility in high power-distance cultures (Thomas, 2018). Arguments highlight Jesus' inversion of norms, serving as a model for Christian communities amid Roman dominance. Strengths include methodological rigor blending ancient texts with modern theory. Weaknesses involve modern cross-cultural focus diluting historical specificity. Scholarly value lies in direct relevance to Christian servant leadership contrasting Roman secular models, useful for the paper's comparisons.

**Wallace, J. (2019). Roman leadership patterns in antiquity. *The Journal of Student Leadership, 3*(1), 35–49.** [**https://journals.uvu.edu/index.php/jsl/article/view/308**](https://journals.uvu.edu/index.php/jsl/article/view/308)

Wallace parallels the Romulus-Remus myth with Antony-Octavian leadership, analyzing hierarchical transitions from Republic to Empire, emphasizing political capacities in secular contexts (Wallace, 2019). Arguments focus on power dynamics shaping Roman history. Strengths include accessibility for introductory insights. Weaknesses encompass limited depth in religious or comparative elements. For the paper, it offers supplementary background on Roman patronage-based leadership, contrasting with monotheistic servant models, but requires deeper sources.

**Leontaris, J. (n.d.). Philippians 2:5-11: Christian identity of moral wisdom, paradoxical leadership, and servant leadership in the ancient church. *Biblical Theology Bulletin*. Retrieved from** [**https://www.biblicaltheology.com/Research/LeontarisJ01.pdf**](https://www.biblicaltheology.com/Research/LeontarisJ01.pdf)

In this paper, Leontaris evaluates Philippians 2:5-11 through a socio-rhetorical perspective, arguing that Paul called early Christians in the stratified Roman society to adopt humble, obedient leadership modeled by Jesus' kenosis (self-emptying), which aimed to unify communities, promote justice, and expand salvation through sacrificial death. Key examples include Paul's evangelistic work in Philippi around 50 CE, where he engaged Gentile women in leadership and endured imprisonment to share teachings, contrasting with Roman emperor worship initiated by figures like Julius Caesar and Caligula (Leontaris, n.d.). The hymn's social drama structure, with stages of purity, pollution, and resolution, symbolizes status reversal, transforming Christianity globally. Paradoxical leadership is highlighted through components like undertaking kenosis and exhibiting a servant posture, fostering mutual acceptance. Biblical references such as Philippians 2:5-6 ("Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped") and Philippians 2:7-8 underscore humility and obedience, even to crucifixion. Historically, Paul's forgoing of Roman citizenship benefits inverted social priorities, aligning with Jesus' servant model amid emperor worship. Strengths of the source include its integration of biblical exegesis, leadership theories, and historical context, providing a multidisciplinary view. Weaknesses may involve a theological bias that overlooks some nuances in Roman interactions. For the research paper, this source holds high scholarly value by illustrating Christian paradoxical servant leadership's subversion of Roman autocratic norms, enhancing comparisons with Jewish covenantal and Roman hierarchical worldviews.

**Becerra, M. (2017). Divine empowerment of the early church movement: A narrative analysis of Luke-Acts. *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership, 7*(1), 49–65.** [**https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jbpl/vol7no1/4\_Becerra.pdf**](https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jbpl/vol7no1/4_Becerra.pdf)

Becerra's narrative analysis of Luke-Acts posits divine empowerment through the Holy Spirit as the primary driver of early church growth, using exegetical socio-rhetorical criticism on chapters like Acts 1, 2, 4, 6, and 15 to propose a non-institutional model based on community teamwork, contrasting with modern hierarchical empowerment theories. Key principles include the Spirit's role in enabling evangelization (Acts 1:8), communal boldness (Acts 4:31), and decentralized leadership, embodying servant leadership from Jesus' teachings (e.g., Mark 10, John 13:4-5) where serving precedes leading (Becerra, 2017). Biblical examples encompass Pentecost conversions (Acts 2:41), Philip's guidance to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:29), Peter's inclusion of Gentiles (Acts 10:19-20), and deacon appointments (Acts 6:1-7) for distributed authority. In the Roman context, this empowerment facilitated societal impact by including marginalized groups like slaves and women, leading to rapid expansion by 350 CE, though bureaucratization later adopted Roman hierarchies, diminishing initial zeal. Strengths lie in integrating exegesis with sociological theories, offering comprehensive insights into values like charity and mutual support. Weaknesses include limited direct worldview comparisons beyond Christianity. Scholarly value for the paper is significant, as it supports the Christian worldview's emphasis on divine, servant-oriented empowerment contrasting Roman patronage, aiding analysis of interactions in the empire.

**Reynolds, K. (2015). Servant-leadership revisited: διακονία, masculinity and martyrdom in Mark 10:42-45. *Ecclesiology, 11*(3), 320–343.** [**https://research.vu.nl/files/105030741/17455316\_Ecclesiology\_Servant\_Leadership\_Revisited\_Masculinity\_and\_Martyrdom\_in\_Mark10.pdf**](https://research.vu.nl/files/105030741/17455316_Ecclesiology_Servant_Leadership_Revisited_Masculinity_and_Martyrdom_in_Mark10.pdf)

Reynolds reinterprets Mark 10:42-45 by examining διακονία (service) as a subversive model of masculinity in early Christianity, linking servant leadership to martyrdom and contrasting Roman imperial dominance with Jesus' self-sacrifice, where true leadership involves serving and giving life as a ransom. The article integrates feminist perspectives, arguing that Jesus' call to "become slave of all" challenges patriarchal hierarchies and redefines power through vulnerability, with martyrdom as the ultimate expression of διακονία in the face of Roman persecution (Reynolds, 2015). Historical context includes Mark's composition amid Nero's persecutions (c. 64-68 CE), where Christian refusal of emperor worship led to executions, subverting Roman notions of masculine authority tied to conquest. Key biblical insights portray Jesus inverting gentile ruler norms ("those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them"), promoting a leadership of humility. Strengths encompass an interdisciplinary approach blending theology, gender studies, and history, providing fresh insights into worldview clashes. Weaknesses may involve a narrow focus on one text, potentially overlooking broader New Testament themes. For the paper, this source offers strong scholarly value by highlighting how Christian servant leadership subverted Roman masculine hierarchies, facilitating comparisons with Jewish covenantal models and secular Roman patronage.

**2.6 Book Reviews**

**Noreña, C. F. (2025). The problem(s) of empire [Review of the book *The Oxford world history of empire*, by P. F. Bang, C. A. Bayly, & W. Scheidel (Eds.)]. *Journal of Roman Studies*. Advance online publication.** [**https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075435824000465**](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075435824000465)

Noreña's review critiques the book's approach to imperial governance, highlighting Roman leadership's challenges in central-local tensions, territorial control, and hierarchical structures, with parallels to other empires and discussions of women's roles in authority (Noreña, 2025). Arguments emphasize pragmatic pluralism in Roman patronage-based leadership, fostering social order amid diversity. Strengths include analytical depth in comparative synthesis. Weaknesses stem from the review format, offering no original research. For the paper, it provides context on secular Roman worldview's hierarchical norms, valuable for contrasting with monotheistic servant leadership, though limited by brevity.

**Oppenheimer, A. (2012). Leadership in Roman Palestine from 70 C.E. to 135 C.E. [Review of the book *Jewish leadership in Roman Palestine from 70 C.E. to 135 C.E.*, by D. Goodblatt]. *Journal of Jewish Studies, 63*(1), 174–177.** [**https://www.jstor.org/stable/26346947**](https://www.jstor.org/stable/26346947)

Oppenheimer's review critiques Goodblatt's reconstruction of Jewish leadership post-70 CE, noting seven Jewish and five Roman archetypes (e.g., rabbinic vs. revolutionary), with co-existing biblical and non-biblical models under Roman influence, emphasizing rabbinic testimony's reliability for communal adaptations. Arguments highlight transitions from aristocratic to sage-based authority, balancing theocratic ideals with pragmatic Roman responsibilities during revolts (Oppenheimer, 2012). Strengths include critical evaluation of sources and models, enhancing understanding of leadership dynamics. Weaknesses stem from dependency on the original book, lacking independent data. Scholarly value supports Jewish worldview analysis, contrasting communal responsibility with Christian and Roman models in the paper's comparative framework.

**2.7 Reference Entries**

**Verboven, K. (2018). Roman patronage. In *Oxford bibliographies in classics*. Oxford University Press.** [**https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195389661/obo-9780195389661-0103.xml**](https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195389661/obo-9780195389661-0103.xml)

Verboven's annotated bibliography defines Roman patronage as a voluntary, asymmetrical reciprocal exchange essential for social coherence, citing works like Fustel de Coulanges (1890) linking it to feudalism and Gelzer (1912) viewing it as aristocratic social phenomenon. Key functions in leadership include evolving from republican power politics (Syme, 1939) to imperial mediation (Saller, 1982), with debates on its demoralization (Benner, 1987) and persistence into Late Antiquity (Ganter, 2015) amid Christian influences (Verboven, 2018). In society, it reinforced hierarchical structures through client loyalty for protection. Strengths as a meta-source include guiding further research with key annotations. Weaknesses encompass lack of original analysis. Value for the paper is in providing resources on Roman secular hierarchy, facilitating contrasts with monotheistic servant leadership.