Nobody doubts the necessity of historical periodizations nor the usefulness of the well-established categories like late antiquity, the early Middle Ages, Byzantium, and early Islam. Although an outdated, isolationist approach to Late Antiquity primarily focusing on late Roman culture and society still dominates some quarters of the academy, many scholars have worked towards a more integrated and comparative approach to the period. The shifts have been gradual and partial but it is now clear that the various cultures and literatures of Late Antiquity cannot be viewed in isolation, but rather must be approached in the wider context of the dynamic exchanges between various communities in the period, the imperial competition between the Romans and the Sasanians, and the spread and consolidation of the monotheistic or “Abrahamic” traditions.