Dealing with Difference

Herausgegeben von
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Dealing with Difference

Christian Patterns of Response to Religious Rivalry in Late Antiquity and Beyond

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Preface

During the 17th International Conference on Patristic Studies, held at Oxford University between 10–14 August, 2015, over the course of three workshop sessions organised by Wendy Mayer, various essays were presented on the theme of religious conflict in late antiquity. From them a number were selected to be revised for publication and other scholars approached to offer their contribution for the proposed volume to ensure sufficient breadth of coverage. One of our contributors died before an essay could be submitted and a couple had to withdraw due to other commitments, and replacements were found. Revising and editing those essays in the light of anonymous peer review and situating them within the wider framework of research on the topic of Christian religious rivalry in terms of competition and conflict in late antiquity has taken quite some time, much longer than the editors would have liked. However, we believe that these essays, individually and collectively, add something original to what we know of religious rivalry within Christianity in late antiquity and beyond and between Christians and others, whether in the religious or political spheres.

As editors we are grateful to the enthusiasm and drive of many people. We are most grateful to Wendy Mayer for organising the original forum in which some of this research was presented and to those who participated in that Oxford Patristics conference. We are also very grateful to the patience and tireless efforts of our contributors.

Brisbane, Australia
Knoxville, United States of America
1 June, 2021

Geoffrey D. Dunn
Christine Shepardson

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Part Two: Strategies of Escalation

List of Abbreviations

AASS	*Acta Sanctorum*
ACO	*Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*
ACT	Ancient Christian Texts
ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
AHC	*Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum*
AKG	Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte
ANES	*Ancient Near East Studies*
AnBoll	*Analecta Bollandiana*
AnTard	*Antiquité Tardive*
Aug	*Augustinianum*
BCAW	Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World
BCH	*Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*
BHL	*Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester*
BL	British Library
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
Byz	*Byzantion*
ByzF	*Byzantinische Forschungen*
ByzZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CB	*Classical Bulletin*
CCG	Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca
CCOGD	Corpus Christianorum Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta
CCT	Corpus Christianorum in Translation
CEFR	Collection de l'École française de Rome
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CH	*Church History*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*
CP	*Classical Philology*
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CH	*Church History*
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
CWS	The Classics of Western Spirituality
DHGE	*Dictionaire d'historie et de géographie ecclésiastiques*
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
ECS	Early Christian Studies
FOTC	Fathers of the Church
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte
GRBS	*Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*
HCMR	The History of Christian-Muslim Relations
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*

HvTSt	*HTS Teologiese Studies*
IEph	*Die Inschriften von Ephesos*
IGR	*Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*
ITralles	*Die Inschriften von Tralleis und Nysa*
JAJS	Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JbAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*
JCP	Jewish and Christian Perspectives Series
JECH	*Journal of Early Christian History*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JLARC	*Journal for Late Antique Religion and Culture*
JOB	*Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*
JRH	*Journal of Religious History*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones, and R. McKenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon* 9th edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925).
MEFRA	*Mélanges de l'École française de Rome*
MGH.AA	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctores Antiquissimi
MGH.Epp	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Epistulae
MGH.Hilf	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Hilfsmittel
MGH.SRM	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptorum Rerum Merovingicarum
MGM	Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
OCM	Oxford Classical Monographs
OCP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLP	*Orientalia Lovanensia Periodica*
OSB	Oxford Studies in Byzantium
OSLA	Oxford Studies in Late Antiquity
OTRM	Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs
PBE	*Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire*
PBSR	*Papers of the British School at Rome*
PCBE	*Prosopographie chrétienne du Bas-Empire*
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PGL	G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961)
PL	Patrologia Latina
PLRE	*Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*
PLS	Patrologia Latina Supplement
PMLA	*Transactions and Proceedings of the Modern Language Association of America*
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
RCM	Routledge Classical Monographs

REB	*Revue des Études Byzantines*
RechAug	*Recherches Augustiniennes*
RH	*Revue Historique*
RHE	*Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastiques*
RhM	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*
RHR	*Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*
SAA	Studia Antique Australiensis
SAC	Studi di Antichità Cristiana
SBLTT	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SCJ	Studies in Christianity and Judaism
SE	*Sacris Erudiri*
SEAug	Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica
SMSR	*Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni*
SVC	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
TAPA	*Transactions of the American Philological Association*
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
TCH	The Transformation of the Classical Heritage
ThH	Théologie Historique
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VCSup	Vigiliae Christianae Supplements
WGRW	Writings from the Greco-Roman World
ZKG	*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*
ZKT	*Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZRG.KA	*Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte Kanonistische Abteilung*

Introduction

Geoffrey D. Dunn and *Christine Shepardson*

Dichotomy seems to be an inbuilt part of existence and reality. Identifying and creating mutual exclusivity and binary oppositions seem embedded in human perceptions: black and white, left and right, up and down, rich and poor, in and out, big and small, right and wrong, good and evil, love and hate, yin and yang, night and day, here and there, this and that, haves and have nots, male and female, us and them. It seems that the human quest for self-identity rests as much upon knowing who we are not as upon who we are. In creating who we are we need to create the other as other, i. e., as distinct and separate. Being able to spot the difference (or perhaps more accurately, make a difference) between oneself and others helps create bonds and barriers in social relationships. Dealing with that difference, whether to reinforce it or to seek to overcome it, helps a community form and preserve itself. Differentiating the other is ingrained into the human consciousness.

Religion has been a potent tool in this process of human self-identity through differentiating the other. People feel a connection with those who share their values and outlook on the ultimate questions of life while they tend to feel disquiet or unease with those who do not. It seems part of human nature to measure and compare ourselves against others so as to reaffirm a sense of superiority, to want to be like them, to want to eliminate them, or whatever it may be that we seek. Although Enlightenment views of the industrial age downplayed the importance of religion in the make-up of who we are, this western rationalist perspective only helps illuminate the puzzlement of those who see the enduring strength, vigour, and impact of the spiritual and religious values of many people in the world today. Religion remains a key component in the creation of the self and other. The essays in a volume edited by Kahlos explored this theme in terms of hierarchies and power relations in both religious and ethnic groups in late antiquity.[1] This built upon earlier work, like the essays in Neusner and Frerichs, Miles, Mitchell and Greatrex, Lieu, Smith, Iricinschi and Zellentin, and Dunning, to name a few.[2]

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[1] M. Kahlos, ed., *The Faces of the Other: Religious Rivalry and Ethnic Foundations in the Later Roman World*, Cursor Mundi, vol. 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

[2] J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs, eds, *'To See Ourselves as Others See Us': Christians, Jews, 'Others' in Late Antiquity* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985); R. Miles, ed., *Constructing Identities*

The other is an outsider, the other is different, and the other is a rival. But who the insider is and who the outsider is is all a matter of perspective. To cast the other as the outsider is to strip them of legitimate identity. One person's heretic or schismatic is orthodox to another, and whether one was Arian or Nicene, pro- or anti-Chalcedonian mattered little to a non-Christian, just as much as calling non-Christians 'pagans' was an effort to undermine their religious authenticity, as an even more recent volume by Kahlos explores.[3]

The question then is about how one deals with the other once they have been constructed. What is one's interaction with the other? Do we include them or exclude them from our group? Firstly, one could embrace and celebrate the difference where one's feeling for the other may be one of admiration, as modern multiculturalism seeks to do. Secondly, one could tolerate (in the sense of disagreeing with the other but doing nothing about it), ignore, or even flee from that difference, where one's feeling for the other may be one of pity or aloofness or indifference or apprehension. Monasticism, at least from a certain perspective, in the religious context, can be seen as a distancing of the self from the other in terms of a renunciation of the world. Thirdly, one could seek to remove the difference through a variety of means of negotiating with, delegitimising, or even supressing the other, based upon a belief that only one identity can be legitimate, where one's feeling for the other may be envy or even contempt. The first option is inclusive, the second and third are exclusive. The second and third options, in their most extreme forms, present us something akin to the standard flight-or-fight stress response, so beloved in physiological and psychological studies. Flight and fight may be the two reactions, but as the studies in this volume reveal, they are only extreme points along a spectrum of responses. There is a wide range of ways of reacting to rivalry. Further, the first option reveals that the dichotomies we fashion and construct are often false, and that reality is more complex and varied as barriers can be overcome and there is often more that unites us than divides us. The presumption expressed here is that the first option of welcoming difference is rare, the second option of fleeing from or enduring/tolerating difference is often not noteworthy (except in its most extreme ascetical forms), while the third is the more common. In the third scenario the other is a kind of rival.

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in Late Antiquity, RCM (London: Routledge, 1999); S. Mitchell and G. Greatrex, eds, *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth, 2000); J. Lieu, *Christian Identity in the Jewish and Greco-Roman World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); J. Z. Smith, ed., *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); E. Iricinschi and H. M. Zellentin, eds, *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity*, Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism, vol. 119 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); and B. H. Dunning, *Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in Early Christianity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

[3] M. Kahlos, *Religious Dissent in Late Antiquity, 350–450*, OSLA (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

Related to this third option of actively responding to difference and rivalry is the question about the means taken to address such difference. Unlike the sociologist and psychologist, the historian's primary focus is not upon why some individuals lash out while others retreat at the first sign of disagreement in order to formulate general principles. Instead, the interest is with cause and effect in a particular situation. We mentioned this third option in terms of fight, but there are different ways of engaging in rivalry with one who is different. We can see further along the spectrum rather than concentrate only on its terminal point of fighting or violence (or the opposite: complete disregard). Does one seek to persuade, compel assimilation, or destroy the other? One can employ a variety of options from dialogue, negotiation, and diplomacy to coercion, condemnation, and violence to deal with one who is different. For example, the work of Schott, Kahlos, Dossey, Watts, Schor, Booth, Lopez, Ward, Watts, Salzman, Sághy, Lizzi Testa, Payne, Shepardson, Fox, and Buchberger, as well as the research project led by Dr F. L. Schuddeboom at the University of Utrecht, entitled 'Religious Conflict in Late Antiquity: A Multi-disciplinary Study' (to say nothing of the ever-burgeoning literature on relationships between Jews and Christians in late antiquity), all centre on one or other aspect of this interaction at the religious level in various parts of the Roman world at various times and among various groups.[4] Among that spectrum of options, however, it is generally the violent one that captures most of the attention from commentators and is the most noteworthy, then as now. The above references reflect the reality that

[4] J. M. Schott, *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); M. Kahlos, *Forbearance and Compulsion: The Rhetoric of Religious Tolerance and Intolerance in Late Antiquity* (London: Duckworth, 2009); L. Dossey, *Peasant and Empire in Christian North Africa*, TCH, vol. 47 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010); E. J. Watts, *Riot in Alexandria: Tradition and Group Dynamics in Late Antique Pagan and Christian Communities*, TCH, vol. 46 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010); A. M. Schor, *Theodoret's People: Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria*, TCH, vol. 48 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2011); P. Booth, *Crisis of Empire: Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 52 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013); A. G. Lopez, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Use of Poverty: Rural Patronage, Religious Conflict, and Monasticism in Late Antique Egypt*, TCH, vol. 50 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013); W. D. Ward, *Mirage of the Saracen: Christians and Nomads in the Sinai Peninsula in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 54 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2014); C. Shepardson, *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2014); E. J. Watts, *The Final Pagan Generation*, TCH, vol. 53 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2015); M. Salzman, M. Sághy, and R. Lizzi Testa, eds, *Pagans and Christians in Late Antique Rome: Conflict, Competition, and Coexistence in the Fourth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); R. E. Payne, *A State of Mixture: Christians, Zoroastrians, and Iranian Political Culture in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 56 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2016); and Y. Fox and E. Buchberger, eds, *Inclusion and Exclusion in Mediterranean Christianities, 400–800*, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, vol. 25 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019).

recent research into Christian religious rivalry in late antiquity emerges from the particular concern in the current world climate about religious extremism in an effort to place it in a broader historical context. This is not a book about religious violence, although that topic will appear from time to time; it is about something broader: religious rivalry and the many ways to respond to it.

Perhaps stimulated by events in the past two decades, scholars in various fields have turned to what is conveniently called 'religious conflict' as a topic of interest and relevance. Historians and theologians of early Christianity are no exception. They have turned to sociology to provide a framework in which to analyse events in the first Christian centuries or have constructed their own. Not only was there conflict between Christians and Jews (and even a process of development within that clash) and between Christians and 'pagans', but any number of conflicts within Christianity itself, some associated with heresy and schism but some not so associated. This is not a book about religious conflict, although that will feature prominently, but about religious rivalry, which, as we shall investigate, is also broader than conflict.

This volume adds to that research in a unique way by examining across the wide geographical and chronological spectrum of late antiquity and beyond the full array of ways in which Christianity has dealt with difference both internally and externally in the post-Constantinian world. The authors in this volume explore not so much the phenomenon of religious difference as the experience of addressing that difference. There is a focus in the essays in this volume on the processes by which religious differences and rivalries both evolved and were addressed, if not resolved, beyond the simple resorting to violence. In particular, we can witness compromise, negotiation, persuasion, and debate on the one hand and invective, denunciation, stigmatisation, and sectarianism on the other. Both may be aimed at resolution, but one could imagine that one would promote de-escalation while the other would tend toward an escalation of the issues. This provides the division of this volume into its two parts. Yet, such results would not flow necessarily, depending upon whether or not both parties involved in rivalry approached its resolution in the same spirit. Hence, the essays presented here reject the polarisation of religious rivalry into religious conflict, without, of course, ever denying the existence and significance of the latter.

As the most extreme means of overcoming differences between religious groups, religious violence is a particularly popular topic for research in the light of world events in the past decade in which the religious dimension of this brutality has been highlighted. One need only mention, in the late antique period, the work of Gaddis, Drake, Sizgorich, Shaw, Geljon and Roukema, Buc, and Smith.[5] These volumes have their genesis in the religious extremism and

[5] M. Gaddis, *There Is No Crime for Those Who Have Christ: Religious Violence in the Christian Roman Empire*, TCH, vol. 39 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press,

violence of recent decades and seek to shed light on that phenomenon from historical and theological perspectives. Our volume differs in that its interest is broader than mere violence, in that it seeks also to consider other patterns of how to deal with difference and engage with rivalry besides the violent reaction. However, like the others we hope that this volume will be of some help in understanding what has and has not worked in the past in order to inform responses to religious differences that exist today.

Indeed, an appreciation that religious rivalry has existed within Christianity (and has resulted in some horrific acts of violence – one need only think of the Thirty Years' War that ended in 1648) may help world leaders today to put the internal religious rivalries that exist now into perspective. Further, to appreciate that inter-religious rivalry existed between Christianity and Islam, for example, in other times and places and was used as an excuse by Christians to target Muslims in the medieval crusades, will also help us appreciate the place of what is too often today seen too simplistically and too inaccurately as Muslim antagonism towards Christianity. Of course, in an earlier generation we would have been talking about intra-religious rivalry in the West (whether in its most extreme, violent, form or not) in terms of Catholics and Protestants. It would also help place attitudes in the West (whether about Judaism, Islam, or differing forms of Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox Christianity) within their broader historical contexts to reveal that what has been happening in the last few decades is part of a cyclical pattern. Violence generally fails to resolve difference.

One particular focus, in the context of current events, particularly at the populist level, is the extent to which religious rivalry (including its more extreme form – religious conflict – and its most extreme form – religious violence) was primarily a feature of the very nature of religion. Several volumes, including those edited by Mayer and Neil, and Mayer and de Wet, have challenged the Enlightenment presumption that monotheism is in and of itself intolerant and the cause of violence.[6] The contributions in this volume will continue to address that question.

2005); H.A. Drake, ed., *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices* (Aldershot and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); T. Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam*, Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); B.D. Shaw, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); A.C. Geljon and R. Roukema, eds, *Violence in Ancient Christianity: Victims and Perpetrators*, SVC, vol. 125 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014); P. Buc, *Holy War, Martyrdom and Terror: Christianity, Violence and the West*, Haney Foundation Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); and K. Smith, *Constantine and the Captive Christians of Persia: Martyrdom and Religious Identity in Late Antiquity*, TCH, vol. 57 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2016).

[6] W. Mayer and B. Neil, eds, *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, AKG, Bd 121 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013); and W. Mayer and C.L. de Wet, eds, *Reconceiving*

Mayer's introduction to the first of those two volumes has set some of the theoretical framework. She notes that conflict is broader than violence, that violence encompasses more than just the physical (such as discursive violence), that religious conflicts are rarely only religious in nature, that what is contested in religious conflict is not only belief but power and personality as well, that the framing of religious conflict may differ from its reality, and that the amount of religion needed to make a conflict be interpreted as religious varied considerably.[7] It is always a good question to ask about what makes a religious conflict 'religious'? If we accept that the religious dimension of one's self-identity is not always discrete, then this is not an easy question to answer.

The volumes that came out of the series of seminars of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies[8] examined the question of religious interaction with the other, for which they employed the broad heading of rivalry, and, in selected urban contexts, studied differing patterns of interaction under their '4Cs': coexistence (corresponding to point 2 above), cooperation (corresponding to point 1 above), competition, and conflict (both corresponding to point 3 above, with the distinction that competition was rivalry between two groups for a particular goal external to both, while conflict was simply rivalry between two groups head-to-head, part of which may be violent conflict, where victory comes through the subjugation of the other; or, to use the metaphor employed in the seminars, the difference between an athletic encounter and a military one).[9] They found that there was more coexistence and cooperation than might have been expected. As understood by members of the seminar, rivalry could thus embrace both positive and negative aspects of interacting with the other.

These 4Cs have not been without criticism. The idea of the religious marketplace has been criticised by Engels and Van Nuffelen, and Mayer in terms of its foundation on rational choice theory and secular liberal ideologies.[10] The 4Cs are not mutually exclusive, since it is possible that in some areas there might have been cooperation between two groups, while in other areas there might have

Religious Conflict: New Views from the Formative Centuries of Christianity (London and New York: Routledge, 2018).

[7] W. Mayer, "Introduction," in Mayer and Neil, *Religious Conflict*, 1–14.

[8] T. L. Donaldson, ed., *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Caesarea Maritima*, SCJ, vol. 8 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000); R. S. Ascough, ed., *Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Sardis and Smyrna*, SCJ, vol. 14 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005); and L. E. Vaage, ed., *Religious Rivalries in the Early Roman Empire and the Rise of Christianity*, SCJ, vol. 18 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006).

[9] T. L. Donaldson, "Introduction," in Donaldson, *Religious Rivalries*, 5.

[10] D. Engels and P. Van Nuffelen, "Religion and Competition in Antiquity, An Introduction," in *Religion and Competition in Antiquity*, ed. D. Engels and P. Van Nuffelen, Collection Latomus, vol. 343 (Brussels: Éditions Latomus, 2014), 9–44; and W. Mayer, "Re-theorizing Religious Conflict: Early Christianity to Late Antiquity and Beyond," in Mayer and de Wet, *Reconceiving Religious Conflict*, 7–9.

been conflict between those same two groups. Mayer is also somewhat critical of this model being applied within or between religious groups,[11] yet it must be remembered that in antiquity, late antiquity, and the medieval period, the state was not simply secular authority but was a religious entity or was engaged in legislating and mediating religious practices and beliefs as well. Yet, even if we reject the idea of religions competing for adherents as being too economic or too rationalist, the truth remains that, at least at the rhetorical level, there was rivalry for legitimacy, authority, power, and many other things. Further, the difference between competition and conflict is somewhat fuzzy. Indeed, Donaldson originally had proposed a fifth C: confrontation,[12] but it disappeared in later publications from the seminar, and competition was initially divided into implicit and explicit.[13] Criteria for deciding if an incident was competition or conflict was not provided.

Of course, sociologists like Georg Simmel have long known that conflict between individuals and groups, manifested as antagonism, hostility, or jealousy, can be an important constitutive and integrative element in self-identity.[14] Simmel recognised that competition was a more indirect form of conflict, along the lines later followed by the Canadian seminar.[15] If the prize being sought was external to both contestants it was competition, but if the prize was in the possession of one of them then it was conflict. As Bartos and Wehr describe it:

> In general, people who are in competition do not engage in conflict interaction and, in fact, may not even be aware that they are in competition; they are always seeking the same end; and they usually seek what belongs to a third party rather than what belongs to the opponent … If, on the other hand, they *do* direct conflict behavior at each other, they are in conflict.[16]

However, Simmel's exclusion of religious communities as being in any way engaged in competition is deficient because he considered religious communities as striving only for one goal, one that all could attain.[17] As the essays of this

[11] Mayer, "Introduction," in Mayer and Neil, *Religious Conflict*, 4.

[12] T. L. Donaldson, "Concluding Reflections," in Donaldson, *Religious Rivalries*, 336–37.

[13] Donaldson, "Introduction," 6.

[14] G. Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliation*, trans. K. H. Wolff and R. Bendix, Eng. edn. (New York: The Free Press, 1955), 13–55.

[15] Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliation*, 57–58: "In many other kinds of conflict, victory over the adversary not only automatically secures, but itself is, the prize of victory. In competition, instead, there are two other combinations. (1) … The lover who eliminates or shames his rival is not a step ahead if the lady does not bestow her favors on him either … (2)… Here the struggle consists only in the fact that each competitor by himself aims at the goal, without using his strength on the adversary … from a superficial standpoint, it [competition] proceeds as if there existed no adversary but only the aim."

[16] O. J. Bartos and P. Wehr, *Using Conflict Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13–14.

[17] Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliation*, 69.

volume will demonstrate, on the contrary, members of a religious community could be in competition or conflict with their co-religionists or with others over a wide range of things in which envy and fear, insecurity and greed reveal that Christians often had feet of clay and were no different from the rest of humanity.

There is not yet an agreed use of terminology or conceptual framework among scholars of the late antique world about this entire phenomenon, especially in relation to these terms used in other disciplines like sociology. A term like conflict, for example, is often loaded with ideas of struggle, hostility, and generally violence, when it may be used in a more neutral fashion in other disciplines. Max Weber, for example, used terms like conflict and competition, but defined them differently than would the Canadian seminar.[18] The collections of essays edited by Rosenblum, Vuong, and DesRosiers, and by DesRosiers and Vuong, which came out of panels at SBL looking at a variety of religious expressions in the classical and late antique periods, utilised the concept of competition.[19] Yet, it is a concept not clearly defined. In the opening essay of the first volume, Daniel Ullucci, echoing Harvey Whitehouse, says that religious competition:

> … is not simply a competition to get more people to 'believe' (whatever we mean by this) a specific version of truth over and against some other version. It is a competition to get people to remember the specific version and to be able to pass it on with some degree of fidelity. Religions compete for room in the memory spaces of their devotees.[20]

While Steven Larson does consider the notion and appropriateness of the concept of religious tolerance and intolerance,[21] the contributors to those volumes seem to have taken the idea of what competition is as a given. It appears to align with the understanding of competition as provided in the Canadian seminar as a contest between individuals or groups over a third party (whether a person or an idea or a goal), but without considering explicitly the theoretical framework in which their evidence is situated, these essays are a little unfocused. In our volume we shall follow the lead of the Canadian seminar and take their model

[18] M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich, trans. E. Fischoff et al., Eng. edn. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968), 38: "A social relationship will be referred to as conflict (*Kampf*) insofar as action is oriented intentionally to carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of the other party or parties. The term 'peaceful' conflict will be applied to cases in which actual physical violence is not employed. A peaceful conflict is 'competition' insofar as it consists in formally peaceful attempt to attain control over opportunities and advantages which are also desired by others."

[19] J. D. Rosenblum, L. C. Vuong, and N. P. DesRosiers, eds, *Religious Competition in the Third Century CE: Jews, Christians, and the Greco-Roman World*, JAJS, vol. 15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2014); and N. P. DesRosiers and L. C. Vuong, eds, *Religious Competition in the Greco-Roman World*, WGRW Supplements, vol. 10 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016).

[20] D. C. Ullucci, "What Did He Say? The Ideas of Religious Experts and the 99 %," in Rosenblum, Vuong, and DesRosiers, *Religious Competition in the Third Century CE*, 22.

[21] S. J. Larson, "The Trouble with Religious Tolerance in Roman Antiquity," in Rosenblum, Vuong, and DesRosiers, *Religious Competition in the Third Century CE*, 50–59.

as a conceptual starting point in examining the full range of ways in which difference was created and dealt with using the general term rivalry, and the 4Cs as subdivisions, even though each contributor would, if given free reign, construct the theoretical framework somewhat differently.

Sitting behind the Canadian approach (which explored interaction between religions in the period in the first three centuries before the Constantinian revolution) is the influence of John North's thesis about the religious marketplace in the age of religious pluralism. This concept underwrites the view that religious competition dominated the Roman world in the period before Constantine, and the idea has continued to be explored and upheld in volumes such as that of Engels and Van Nuffelen, even while critiqued for its foundations in rational choice theory and secular liberal ideology as noted above. The flipside of this view is the notion that as Christianity became the dominant religion and state-aligned, othering (in the construction of 'orthodoxies' and 'heresies'), coercion, and violence increasingly became the norm. That the rhetoric from within Christianity does not match the reality, however, is increasingly becoming the prevailing view. In other words, monotheism is, of its very nature, not necessarily intolerant, just as polytheism is not necessarily tolerant.[22]

What we have demonstrated in this volume is that rivalry exists not only between religions (understood broadly) but within religions, which are never monolithic entities, and that they have been addressed in a multitude of ways. What we can learn from the past is that there have been successful and unsuccessful ways to resolve rivalry, there have been peaceful and violent paths followed in seeking resolution, and that the same path followed does not always lead to the same outcomes. Sometimes negotiation is fruitful and sometimes it is not, sometimes violence works and sometimes it does not. Of course, to say that something works is merely to say that a desired outcome has been achieved, at least as far as some of the participants are concerned, even though not all the issues have been resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Other participants might simply have had to capitulate and thereafter live with resentment and bitterness, a situation that could see new rounds of conflict erupting later as lingering indignation boils over.

As is becoming increasingly clear as a result of the other studies mentioned in this introduction, religion is one area of life in which various responses to othering has and continues to occur with pressing consequences. The essays in this volume are concerned with Christianity in its earliest centuries, particularly in late antiquity, a fertile period of ferment in which, contrary to earlier paradigms, religious pluralism (both external and internal to Christianity) still existed. The

[22] Mayer, "Re-theorizing Religious Conflict," 6–7; and É. Fournier and W. Mayer, eds, *Heirs of Roman Persecution: Studies on a Christian and Para-Christian Discourse in Late Antiquity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020).

creation of the identity of the other stems from Christian beliefs (such as debate over the nature of the Trinity, the person of Jesus, or issues of theological anthropology like sin and salvation) or from Christian practices (such as disagreement over episcopal elections, membership and structure of the church, the relationship between church and state, church and other religions, or groups within the church, and the celebration of the liturgy). Discussions about violence and conflict tend to stress what is often regarded as the negative dimensions of religious difference, particularly when assessed from a Christian ideal of love and forgiveness. In all the previous studies mentioned there has not been an explicit focus on the dynamics of difference as a whole, by which is meant the patterns and spectrum of response, both successful and unsuccessful, to difference within and between religious groups that either escalated or de-escalated that rivalry in order to deal with it.

Much of the scholarly interest to this point has been on religious violence, the physical result of extremist attitudes. Yet, this is only one form of conflict, which itself is only one form of religious rivalry. In essence, in the process of self-identity there are insiders and outsiders and the process of inclusion or exclusion comes about through labelling differences and similarities and dealing with difference. The essays collected here look across the fuller range of reactions and interactions and thus we prefer the term 'religious rivalry' rather than the narrower 'religious conflict' or the even more narrow 'religious violence'. In addition to contributing new case studies to the field, which of themselves are worth bringing to the attention of our readership, our concern with the variety of reactions to rivalry and their impact on resolution is thus one of the original features of this collection, one that provides a framework in which to evaluate the different ways in which early Christians dealt with difference.

This volume brings together contributions from leading international scholars currently working on these questions (many of whom have been mentioned already in the above survey) with a view towards arriving at a more nuanced understanding of religious rivalry and the factors behind the escalation and de-escalation, or the generation, exacerbation, and resolution of religious rivalry involving Christianity. Thus, we are interested not only in the presence of difference or radical extremism, but in the process of radicalisation (and de-radicalisation): how and why it happened, how it could be avoided, and the means by which it could be addressed. Of particular interest in bringing together these essays is charting the spectrum and movement from difference to disagreement to competition or conflict to resolution, whether that last was achieved by diplomatic or violent means. As we know, sometimes diplomatic mechanisms such as letter-writing or synods resolved differences and sometimes they did not, leading to further, more intense rounds of disagreement. These essays seek to provide more of a balanced perspective on how religious rivalry could be avoided or negotiated as much as it could be settled by belligerent collision. The essays

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