

struggles in a time of extreme cruelty and emotional and physical hardship—a true *document humain*. Her resistance to the horrors that both surrounded and finally engulfed her was, rather, of an intellectual and spiritual nature. Although the right to exist was denied her, in the end, Etty's was to become one of those very few voices left to us from among six million senselessly destroyed Jewish lives.

Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity

Jeremy M. Schott. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

ISBN: 978-0-8122-4092-4. Pp. 254.

Review by Daniel G. Opperwall, McMaster University

Jeremy M. Schott has made an excellent contribution to the study of Early Christianity, the late Roman Empire, and religion in general. Schott's project is to analyze the birth of the category of 'religion' in the ancient world, and he seeks to do so by first challenging traditional discussions of 'Christian' and 'pagan' identity which accept such categories as fixed and static, and instead proposes that ancient discourse must be framed in terms of the 'politics of ethnic and cultural identity.'⁽⁴⁾ Schott examines the works of several key apologetic and philosophical authors of the first three centuries who argue from both the 'pagan' and 'Christian' point of view, focusing on the similarities between their arguments rather than their differences. Schott draws much of the unique flavor of his approach from modern postcolonial theory, though he acknowledges the problems of using this approach to study the ancient world. In the first two chapters, Schott sets up a general outline of the relationship between philosophy, ethnic discourse, and imperial politics in non-Christian Rome and examines the pagan philosopher Porphyry in detail. Schott focuses on the keen interest of Roman philosophers in discovering wisdom in the texts and traditions of provincial (non-Roman) ethnic groups. These ethnological philosophers almost universally valued earlier traditions over later, and consensus over diversity in the texts which they studied. Their central goal was to find that truly ancient truth on which all peoples agreed; such a truth, in their minds, would constitute a foundational, universal philosophy. In this process, Roman philosophers placed provincial cultures in subjugation to their own normative traditions. Much like a governor making his fortune by draining his assigned province, philosophers sought to tear provincial wisdom out of its native context for use in their project of defining universal truth. But by comparing a multitude of traditions from throughout the Empire, ethnological research, Schott argues, paradoxically created psychological and political space in which well-accepted cultural categories became

destabilized. This situation threatened to collapse the cultural hegemony upon which philosophers like Porphyry relied.

Schott thus proceeds to dissect the ways in which Christian thinkers took advantage of this pagan philosophical space. Christian authors, he argues, accepted the philosophical project of their pagan predecessors, essentially promoting the Christian faith as that one, universal, most ancient truth (*vera religio*) which could both form the essence of philosophy, and appropriately rebuild the now shaky political and intellectual structures of the Empire. Schott uses his post-colonialist framework to paint this process in terms of an Imperial map, on which Christian authors place their ideas at the intellectual capital, and all other philosophies at varying distances from the frontier.

In chapter 4 Schott discusses the works of Lactantius, who, he argues, embraces the logic of Roman Imperial dominance over ancient provincial wisdom by promoting Christianity as untouched by ethnic and provincial particularity, and as universal in scope - only a subtle spin on the project of the philosophers. Chapter 5 focuses on the figure of Constantine who, like Lactantius, argues for a universal Christianity and models his discourse on the workings of imperial hegemony against provincial particularity. But where most apologists stopped here, Constantine's position gave him the unique ability to put these ideas into action for his own political advantage by linking the apologists' image of a central, universal Christianity to an image of himself as a chosen imperial leader. Through Schott's postcolonial lens, Constantine's policies become a form of apologetic in action, a new observation which opens numerous avenues for exploring Constantine's political life and writings.

Schott's best work, however, comes in his discussion of Eusebius which occupies chapter 6 of the book. The work of an apologist whose life stretched from a period of persecution to the conversion of the Emperor offers an ideal opportunity for testing Schott's thesis in the fire. Schott is able to trace movement in Eusebius' own discourse from early, defensive apologetic to late imperialist boosterism. Schott shows that just as Christianity had stood as a unified truth in contrast to the traditions of provincial ethnicities in Eusebius' apologetic writings, so did the (now) Christian Empire maintain a justified political dominance over these same groups in his late work. These are two sides to one coin for Eusebius, and his discourse of a Christianity victorious over all other philosophies and cultures, Schott shows, is the natural outgrowth of a Christian apologetic built on previous pagan hermeneutics, and crafted in the context of imperial politics. The process which Schott argues to be at work in developing new notions of truth and religion in the period is nowhere more clearly evident than in the thinking of Eusebius.

Schott's hermeneutical approach and his conclusions serve as a major step forward. Though working explicitly within a postcolonial framework, Schott is able without exception to let ancient texts and authors speak for themselves. As

such, he demonstrates that his tools are well suited to his task. Indeed, his project ultimately generates remarkable new evidence regarding the question of where, how, and why the category of ‘religion’ began its journey to the present day. Schott has created a picture in which the category of religion is born from the nexus of pagan philosophical discourse, Christian apologetic, and the politics of Imperial domination, and has shown that this nexus thrived in the thoughts and actions of the ancients. The utility of his models and thesis should serve to prompt future studies which can incorporate more of the literature and history of the Roman Empire and beyond to further defend and expand upon his conclusions.

From Quaker to Upper Canadian: Faith and Community among Yonge Street Friends, 1801-1850.

Robynne Rogers Healey. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2006.

ISBN: 0-7735-3136-X. Pp. 292.

Reviewed by Aaron Ricker, McGill University

Robynne Rogers Healey is assistant professor of history at Trinity Western. *From Quaker to Upper Canadian* comes out of her own doctoral work—a solid third of the book’s 292 pages are devoted to notes and documentation. There is an extensive bibliography, an index, a sprinkling of black-and-white grid charts – even a glossary. This familiar phenomenon of book as thesis-binding has its ups and downs, both of which will be discussed below.

The process of expanding thesis sections into full chapters took a characteristic toll on this book. First are the typos and hasty word choices that creep in during any such inflation project, such as the use of “aspersion of” instead of “aversion to” (30), or phrases like “a vastly democratic approach to religion” (23). On page 145, the reader is informed that “1834 was the main speaker at the first Reform convention”! This thesis inflation process results in a very repetitive product. Reading this book straight through – as opposed to, say, browsing with the aid of the excellent index – leaves one from time to time with a strange sense of *déjà lu*. For instance, on page 45, Healey tells us: “Even though the Yonge Street Quakers remained neutral in the conflict, they could not remain aloof. Their farms were situated on a major military road.” Page 120 seems to offer another reworking of the same cut-and-pasted material: “Although they remained neutral in the conflict, the Quakers could hardly remain aloof, situated where they were.” Sometimes the tendency to repetition and the rushed malapropisms come together, as when Healey tells us over and over again that Quakers value “peace, equality and simplicity” (3, 185, 189) but also that they value “peace, quality and simplicity” (19). On the other hand, doctoral