

Redefining Christian Identity  
Christian Cultural Strategies Since the Coming of Islam  
April 7–11, 1999

**HELEEN L. MURRE-VAN DEN BERG, UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN**

- [1] Next year, April 7 to 11, 1999, a symposium will take place at Groningen University (Groningen, The Netherlands), which is jointly organized by scholars of Groningen and Leiden University. Its main theme concerns the ways in which the various Christian communities of the Middle East over the ages defined their identity in an overwhelmingly Muslim environment.
- [2] This overall theme will be dealt with from four different perspectives:
- Christian apologetic literature vis-a-vis Islam.
  - Christian perception of history.
  - Common motifs in Christian and Islamic Literature.
  - Language, Literature, and Identity.
- [3] These four themes will cover the period from the earliest encounters between Christians and Muslims in the seventh century till the growing influence of the Christian West on Muslim-Christian relations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Due attention will be given to the specific characteristics of the different Christian communities in the region, that is, to the Arabic-speaking, Armenian-speaking and Aramaic-speaking groups. Scholars working in these various fields will contribute to the symposium.
- [4] The organizers invite those who would like to stay informed about this symposium to contact dr Jan van Ginkel (J.J.van.Ginkel@let.rug.nl) or dr Heleen Murre-van den Berg (hlmurre@rullet.leidenuniv).
- [5] The organizing committee of the conference consists of: Prof dr H.W.J. Drijvers, prof dr L. Van Rompay, prof dr J.J.S. Weitenberg, dr G.J. Reinink, dr J. van Ginkel, dr T.M. van Lint, drs B. Roggema, dott. A. Mengozzi, and dr H.L. Murre-van den Berg.