



CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS IN LATE ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

Classical civilization (and hence contemporary Western culture) had deep roots in Afro-Asiatic cultures, but these influences have been systematically overlooked. This series of monographs and collections of articles addresses the social, religious, and cultural interactions between East and West, particularly the alienation between East and West as the two parts of the Roman Empire grew apart from the fourth century onwards. To treat the cultures of Western Europe, Byzantium, and the Muslim East separately, as if too fundamentally disparate for substantive borrowings or syncretism to take place, is a drastic simplification of the cultural and religious encounters between East and West throughout Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

BETWEEN PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION SELF, DOCTRINE, AND PRACTICE IN LATE ANTIQUE EASTERN CHRISTIANITY

This book addresses change and continuity in late antique Eastern Christianity, as perceived through the lens of the categories of institutional religion and personal religion. The interaction between personal devotion and public identity reveals the creative aspects of a vibrant religious culture that altered the experience of Christians on both a spiritual and an institutional level. A close look at the interrelations between the personal and the institutional expressions of religion in this period attests to an ongoing revision of both the patristic literature and the monastic tradition. By approaching the period in terms of 'revision', the contributors discuss the mechanism of transformation in Eastern Christianity from a new perspective, discerning social and religious changes while navigating between the dynamics of personal and institutional religion.

Recognizing the creative aspects inherent to the process of 'revision', this volume re-examines several aspects of personal and institutional religion, revealing dogmatic, ascetic, liturgical, and historiographical transformations. Attention is paid to the expression of the self, the role of history and memory in the construction of identity, and the modification of the theological discourse in late antique culture. The book also explores several avenues of Jewish-Christian interaction in the institutional and public sphere.