



## 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.

## CONFLICT AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION IN LATIN CHRISTENDOM

### STUDIES IN HONOUR OF ORA LIMOR

The literature against the Jews (*contra Iudeos*) was crucially influential in the shaping of Christianity during the centuries following the crucifixion, particularly during the period when Christianity remained outside official Roman toleration. And yet, this phenomenon did not decline in the Middle Ages when Christianity emerged as the supreme power in the western world and Judaism could no longer threaten it in any way. The Jewish response to this literary practice did not arise for some time, yet from the twelfth century onwards the effort to counter Christian ideological attacks became a central intellectual activity and a pressing concern on the part of Jewish scholars in the West. Although both Latin and Hebrew polemics were often intended, first and foremost, for local audiences in order to satisfy local needs and intellectual demands, they also engaged each other, and raised urgent theological and cultural questions in doing so. This cultural discourse did not just find expression in polemical literature (*Nizahon* and *Adversus Iudaeos*) but also in a variety of other representations and daily practices. This collection of studies is devoted to an examination of the significance of this phenomenon as a *longue durée* process, and pursues its concerns from a variety of innovative perspectives that join together authoritative scholars from the field of Jewish–Christian relations.