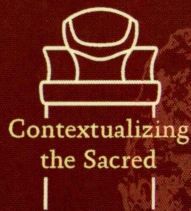


This volume addresses questions of continuity and change in the religious life of the Levant between Alexander's conquest of the Middle East until the end of the Umayyad period, a topic which has received growing attention over the last decade within the fields of ancient history, archaeology, philology, and religious studies. The volume pulls together the efforts of scholars from all of these fields, and its central concerns include the representations and expressions of religious identity in sacred architecture, iconography, and texts. These representations and expressions are explored through literature, inscriptions, and iconography, and though the architectural as well as the functional development of sanctuaries, churches, and mosques. The volume includes papers on themes such as definition, creation, dissolution, and interconnection between sacred sites, as well as access and audience. These developments are examined through the lenses of aspects of continuity and change in material and literary culture.

With a point of departure in the development of urban, sub-urban, and extra-urban sanctuaries, churches, and early mosques, as well as their associated cults and religions, the contributions in this volume explore the shaping and development of the religious identities of individuals, groups, and societies, and assess how these categories of religious identity were interrelated and shaped by a variety of circumstances. The volume aims at underlining the importance of interdisciplinary studies to the comprehensive understanding of this complex field and at opening up discussions of methodological and theoretical approaches which can be used across these disciplines.

Cover image: 'The temple of Artemis at Gerasa/Jerash'. Second century AD. Photo by M. Benecke.



CONTEXTUALIZING THE SACRED:  
SACRED SPACE AND ITS MATERIAL CULTURE  
IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST AND EGYPT,  
1000 BC – AD 600

Sacred space – its use, development and meaning – is a major theme in archaeology and ancient history, and productive of research questions relating to religious identity, performance and practice, change, innovation, and dissolution. This series seeks to integrate the study of archaeology, texts, architecture, and religion, creating a forum for interdisciplinary and comparative studies of landscapes and domains of evidence that are normally treated separately. The series is open to thematic, cross-regional, and diachronic studies, as well as specific works within ancient history, classical archaeology, Egyptology, Assyriology, archaeology, and philology that treat sacred space and its material culture in regions encompassed by the designation 'Ancient Near East'. Studies that seek to make issues and questions from one area accessible and thought-provoking to scholars in another are welcome.