

Where Heaven and Earth Meet: Jerusalem's Sacred Esplanade (Jamal and Rania Daniel Series in Contemporary History, Polit)

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One of the most extraordinary spaces on earth, Jerusalem's Esplanade has been regarded as sacred for about three millennia. For Judaism, it is the holiest space, where the Solomonic and Herodian Temples once stood and where, in the messianic age, the Temple is to be rebuilt at God's behest. For Christendom, it is the site of the Herodian Temple, which Jesus repeatedly visited, foretelling its destruction and announcing the advent of a new, spiritual worship of God. For Islam, it is the holy space to which the Prophet Muhammad traveled on his mystical Night-Journey and Ascension, and which holds the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque.

Where Heaven and Earth Meet is an unprecedented endeavor. For the first time, an Israeli, a Palestinian, and a Dominican institute of higher learning, all located in Jerusalem, have jointly sponsored a volume dealing with Jerusalem's sacred Esplanade—not only with its monuments, but also with the conflicting emotions they have aroused over the ages and with the passions they ignite today. The book contains eleven articles written by leading experts on the various periods, which add up to an authoritative, up-to-date account of the site's history; as well as five thematic essays, ranging from the site considered as a work of art to its roles in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim thought; a photographic dossier; and three personal views by the presidents of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Al-Quds University, as well as by Carlo Maria Cardinal Martini.

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Editorial Review

From Booklist
What this book calls Jerusalem’s sacred esplanade is also known as the Temple Mount (by Jews and Christians) and the Noble Sanctuary (by Muslims.) It has been a sacred site for more than 3,000 years and the source of bloodshed and tears as it was won and lost. Often, its history is told from the point of view of one side or the other, but here, rather remarkably, the three voices come together in one volume. Scholars from all three religions, under the auspices of an Israeli, a Palestinian, and a Dominican institution, write about the history and archaeology of the esplanade in 11 articles and 5 thematic essays that consider the artistic history of the site as well as offering three more personal views on its significance. Executed with care and respect, this volume will be of great interest to the lay audience. The many black-and-white and color photographs (along with maps) will immediately draw in readers, who will come away with an understanding of both the passions that this sacred space arouses and its importance to the Holy Land—and the world—today. --Ilene Cooper

About the Author
OLEG GRABAR is Professor Emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Grabar’s books include Epic Images and Contemporary History: The Illustrations of the Great Mongol Shahnama; The Mediation of Ornament; The Shape of the Holy: Early Islamic Jerusalem; Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post-Classical World; The Art and Architecture of Islam 650–1250; Mostly Miniatures; and eighty-three articles gathered in four volumes under the title Constructing the Study of Islamic Art.

BENJAMIN Z. KEDAR is Professor Emeritus at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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