

In Search for Aram and Israel

Politics, Culture, and Identity

Ed. by Omer Sergi, Manfred Oeming, and Izaak J. de Hulster

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Throughout its history, the Kingdom of Israel had strong connections with the Aramaean world. Constantly changing relations, from rivalry and military conflicts to alliances and military cooperation, affected the history of the whole Levant and left their marks on both Biblical and extra-Biblical sources. New studies demonstrate that Israelite state formation was contemporaneous with the formation of the Aramaean polities (11th-9th centuries BCE). Consequently, the Jordan Valley (and especially its northern parts and its extension to the valley of Lebanon) was a constantly changing border zone between different Iron Age polities. In light of that, there is a need to study the history of Ancient Israel not only from the »Canaanite« point of view but also within the political and cultural context of the Aramaean world. This volume brings together experts working in different fields to address the relations and interactions between Aram and Israel during the Early Iron Age (12th to 8th centuries BCE) through three main aspects: the first aspect, relates to the archaeology and the material culture of Aram and Israel, with a special focus on the Jordan valley as a political and cultural border zone. The material culture of the region is examined in its spatial as well as chronological context in order to discuss cultural traits as against political affiliation. The second aspect relates to the history of the Aramaean kingdoms highlighting the formation of territorial kingdoms in the Levant and the history of Israel in its Aramaean context. The third aspect relates to the question of historical memory especially as it was preserved in the biblical traditions. The place of the Aramaeans in the Biblical literature is discussed as a mean to clarify the construction of Israelite and Aramaic identity in a fluid cultural region.

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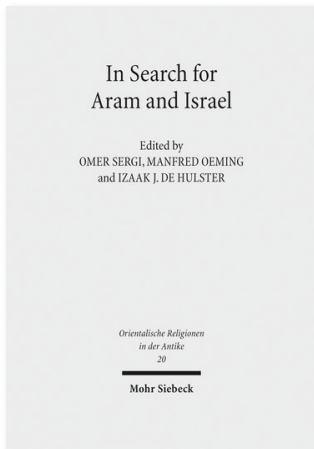
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