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THE *TEMENOS*, THE EXTRA-TEMENAL, AND THE FESTIVAL. SPATIAL ORGANISATION AT RURAL SANCTUARIES IN ANCIENT GREECE

ABSTRACT

Researchers concerned with Greek religion often use *temenos*, sacred area, and sanctuary interchangeably when describing cult places, but do these actually denote the same space or are there distinctions to be made between them? In this talk I will take a closer look at the spatial organisation of ancient Greek rural sanctuaries, contrasting the *temenos* with the extra-temenal, and looking at how this relates to sacred space and the use of sanctuary in the modern research discourse. For small cult places like road shrines or individual altars, the *temenos*, the sacred area, and the sanctuary could be argued to be the same, but for larger cult places with reoccurring festivals drawing in considerable crowds, the situation is more complex. The festival necessitated a support structure that spatially and administratively expanded beyond the *temenos*, producing an extra-temenal area which was connected with the activities at the sanctuary, not part of the *temenos*, but possibly still understood as sacred space. We have only a partial understanding of these complexities, so the aim of this talk is to raise questions on the situation, as well as raise awareness of how we as researchers discuss cult places.