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Preface

From Aleppo to Ataroth – this volume is dedicated to city temples in the Levant and their associated cults. It covers the entire Levant from the North to the South, from the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age to the end of the Iron Age. To symbolize this comprehensive approach and the wide geographical and chronological spectrum of the contributions, the storm god from the temple at Aleppo and the bull from the temple at Ataroth appear on the cover of this volume.

We are delighted to present here the results of a conference which took place from 28th – 30th of May, 2010 in Tübingen, Germany on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Institute of Biblical Archaeology. Fortunately, all speakers submitted their lectures in expanded versions. Furthermore, four additional contributions on the temples at Emar, *Tell Āfīs* and *Hirbet Aṭārūs* (Ataroth) as well as on the cultic paraphernalia from *Tell Qassīs/Tēl Qašīš* enhance the collection of essays.

One objective of the conference was to establish a basis for further research on temple building and temple cult in the Levant. First of all, we would like to thank the authors for helping to achieve this goal and for their delightful and invaluable cooperation. The variety of the subjects and the competence of the authors compose the core of the volume. Arranged in four chapters (Northern Levant, Southern Levant, Jerusalem and Mount Gerizim, Paraphernalia) the contributions are followed by an article outlining comparative aspects and by comprehensive indices including a systematic index of subjects relating to temple building and temple cult.

Special thanks go to the *Gerda Henkel Stiftung*, which generously sponsored the conference and the publication. Furthermore, we are indebted to the *Bund der Freunde der Universität Tübingen* and the *Kreissparkasse Tübingen* for supporting the conference and the publication with valuable grants. We would also like to thank the editors of the *Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, Herbert Niehr and Hermann Michael Niemann for accepting this volume and for their cooperation.

Cory Crawford, Herbert Niehr and Hélène Sader have acted in the capacity of expert advisers and have substantially contributed to the compilation of the volume. We would like to express our deep gratitude to them as well as to all who assisted in the final editing of the book: Norbert Rabe (typesetting and layout), Marlen Bleiholder, Jakob Kempendorf, Carolin Meier and Evi Stanger (indices), Heinz-Dieter Neef and Luke Neubert (final text editing), Günther Müller (drawings) as well as the *Memminger MedienCentrum* and the *Otto Harrassowitz Verlag*.

We are especially grateful to all colleagues and friends who were involved in the preparation and realization of the conference: Vera Barthel, Julia Bertsch, Sim Belik, Hanswulf Bloedhorn, Hubertus Brell, Olof Cannon, Erhard Cyranka, Uwe Finkbeiner, Agnes Henning, Ulrike Koy-Seemann, Margit Kühner-Degenhardt, Elisabeth Fuhrer, Brigitte Laschinger, Gisa Lischka, Luise Loges, Julia Lutz, Philipp Maier, Carolin Meier, Siegfried Mittmann, Rebecca Ruggaber, Sabine Rumpel, Tobias Schneider, Sigrid Schumacher, Evi Stanger and Kathrin Wanner. They were all conducive to the success of the conference which produced this volume of essays and which will remain a memorable event in the history of the Institute of Biblical Archaeology at the University of Tübingen.