Conflicts over Sacred Lands

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Civic Fusion (2012)

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Common Ground on Hostile Turf (2013)
What makes land sacred?

- Creation
  - Foundation stone
  - Center of the world
  - Sacred being
- Burial grounds – any, particular graves
- Houses of Worship (land or built environment?)
- Unique location for Rituals or Ceremonies
- Location of Historic or Natural Events
- Sacredness as natural resource
- Human construct
Examples of Conflicts over Sacred Lands
Mughrabi Ramp
Sacred Esplanade of Jerusalem
Mediator Challenges in Sacred Land Disputes

- Awareness
- Respect
- Radically different world views: Translation between secular and religious
- Explore symbolic attributes with parties
- Confidentiality of sacred space
- Indivisibility
- Inability to monetize
- Potential for violence
- Tangible issues mixed with intangible issues
- Religious leaders as political leaders
- Potential for political exploitation of “sacred land”
Thank you.