



By Dr. Telly Kamelia

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What this book actually teaches

The Oxford Handbook of Palmyra is not a survey text built for quick consumption. It is a multi-author scholarly reference designed to bring together archaeology, history, art, religion, trade, politics, and historiography around Palmyra and its wider regional context. The real value of a handbook like this is that it gives the reader multiple scholarly entry points into the same site and period instead of forcing one single interpretive line.

That matters because Palmyra is not just an isolated ancient city to memorize. It sits at

the intersection of Roman imperial history, Near Eastern exchange, material culture, epigraphy, urbanism, and the politics of cultural heritage. A serious reader returns to different chapters for different reasons: one month for archaeology, another for religion, another for trade, another for historiographical debate. That is the exact pattern of use that makes hardback ownership more meaningful than temporary consultation.

Who should buy hardback and who should not

Buy the hardback if you are doing graduate work, sustained reading, or research in archaeology, classics, ancient history, art history, or Near Eastern studies. This is the sort of book that earns its shelf space.

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Sources checked

- Merybook product listing for ISBN 9780190858117
- VitalSource pricing snapshots for 180-day and lifetime eBook access
- Barnes & Noble hardback market snapshot
- Pricing reviewed on April 19, 2026