

Medieval Empires And The Culture Of Competition

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Explore the fascinating dynamic between medieval empires and their inherent culture of competition. This historical analysis delves into the intense power struggles, territorial rivalries, and the constant drive for dominance that profoundly shaped governance, innovation, and the eventual rise and fall of these great historical entities.

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Medieval Empires and the Culture of Competition

The first book to look critically at digital technologies and the role they play within queer lives in contemporary India

The Mamluk Sultanate

An engaging and accessible survey of the Mamluk Sultanate which positions the realm within the development of comparative political systems from a global perspective.

Friends of the Emir

Reveals how early Muslims devised and elaborated normative views concerning non-Muslim state officials at moments of intense competition.

An Afterlife for the Khan

In the Mongol Empire, the interfaith court provided a contested arena for a performance of the Mongol ruler's sacred kingship, and the debate was fiercely ideological and religious. At the court of the newly established Ilkhanate, Muslim administrators, Buddhist monks, and Christian clergy all attempted to sway their imperial overlords, arguing fiercely over the proper role of the king and his government, with momentous and far-reaching consequences. Focusing on the famous but understudied figure of the grand vizier Rashid al-Din, a Persian Jew who converted to Islam, Jonathan Z. Brack explores the myriad ways Rashid al-Din and his fellow courtiers investigated, reformulated, and transformed long-standing ideas of authority and power. Out of this intellectual ferment of accommodation, resistance, and experimentation, they developed a completely new understanding of sacred kingship. This new ideal, and the political theology it subtends, would go on to become a central justification in imperial

projects across Eurasia in the centuries that followed. *An Afterlife for the Khan* offers a powerful cultural and intellectual history of this pivotal moment for Islam and empire in the Middle East and Asia.

The Crusader States and Their Neighbours

The Crusader States and their Neighbours explores the military history of the Medieval Near East, piecing together the fault-lines of conflict which entangled this much-contested region. This was an area where ethnic, religious, dynastic, and commercial interests collided and the causes of war could be numerous. Conflicts persisted for decades and were fought out between many groups including Kurds, Turks, Armenians, Arabs, and the crusaders themselves. Nicholas Morton recreates this world, exploring how each faction sought to advance its own interests by any means possible, adapting its warcraft to better respond to the threats posed by their rivals. Strategies and tactics employed by the pastoral societies of the Central Asian Steppe were pitted against the armies of the agricultural societies of Western Christendom, Byzantium, and the Islamic World, galvanising commanders to adapt their practices in response to their foes. Today, we are generally encouraged to think of this era as a time of religious conflict, and yet this vastly over-simplifies a complex region where violence could take place for many reasons and peoples of different faiths could easily find themselves fighting side-by-side.

Unwatchable

"We all have images that we find unwatchable, whether for ethical, political, or sensory-affective reasons. From news coverage of terror attacks to viral videos of police brutality, and from graphic horror films to incendiary artworks that provoke mass boycotts, many of the images in our media culture strike as beyond the pale of consumption. Yet what does it mean to proclaim a media object "unwatchable": disturbing, revolting, poor, tedious, or literally inaccessible? Appealing to a broad academic and general readership, *Unwatchable* offers multidisciplinary approaches to the vast array of troubling images that circulate in our global visual culture, from cinema, television, and video games through museums and classrooms to laptops, smart phones, and social media platforms. This anthology assembles 60 original essays by scholars, theorists, critics, archivists, curators, artists, and filmmakers who offer their own responses to the broadly suggestive question: What do you find unwatchable? The diverse answers include iconoclastic artworks that have been hidden from view, dystopian images from the political sphere, horror movies, TV advertisements, classic films, and recent award-winners"--

The Apple of His Eye

The thirteenth century brought new urgency to Catholic efforts to convert non-Christians, and no Catholic ruler was more dedicated to this undertaking than King Louis IX of France. His military expeditions against Islam are well documented, but there was also a peaceful side to his encounter with the Muslim world, one that has received little attention until now. This splendid book shines new light on the king's program to induce Muslims—the "apple of his eye"—to voluntarily convert to Christianity and resettle in France. It recovers a forgotten but important episode in the history of the Crusades while providing a rare window into the fraught experiences of the converts themselves. William Chester Jordan transforms our understanding of medieval Christian-Muslim relations by telling the stories of the Muslims who came to France to live as Christians. Under what circumstances did they willingly convert? How successfully did they assimilate into French society? What forms of resistance did they employ? In examining questions like these, Jordan weaves a richly detailed portrait of a dazzling yet violent age whose lessons still resonate today. Until now, scholars have dismissed historical accounts of the king's peaceful conversion of Muslims as hagiographical and therefore untrustworthy. Jordan takes these narratives seriously—and uncovers archival evidence to back them up. He brings his findings marvelously to life in this succinct and compelling book, setting them in the context of the Seventh Crusade and the universalizing Catholic impulse to convert the world.

Tales of a Minstrel of Reims in the Thirteenth Century

An anonymous minstrel in thirteenth-century France composed this gripping account of historical events in his time. Crusaders and Muslim forces battle for control of the Holy Land, while power struggles rage between and among religious authorities and their conflicting secular counterparts, pope and German emperor, the kings of England and the kings of France. Meanwhile, the kings cannot count on their independent-minded barons to support or even tolerate the royal ambitions. Although politics (and the collapse of a royal marriage) frame the narrative, the logistics of war are also in play: competing military machinery and the challenges of transporting troops and matariel. Inevitably, the civilian

population suffers. The minstrel was a professional story-teller, and his livelihood likely depended on his ability to captivate an audience. Beyond would-be objective reporting, the minstrel dramatizes events through dialogue, while he delves into the motives and intentions of important figures, and imparts traditional moral guidance. We follow the deeds of many prominent women and witness striking episodes in the lives of Eleanor of Aquitaine, Richard the Lionhearted, Blanche of Castile, Frederick the Great, Saladin, and others. These tales survive in several manuscripts, suggesting that they enjoyed significant success and popularity in their day. Samuel N. Rosenberg produced this first scholarly translation of the Old French tales into English. References that might have been obvious to the minstrel's original audience are explained for the modern reader in the indispensable annotations of medieval historian Randall Todd Pippenger. The introduction by eminent medievalist William Chester Jordan places the minstrel's work in historical context and discusses the surviving manuscript sources.

Impostures

One of the Wall Street Journal's Top 10 Books of the Year Winner, 2020 Sheikh Zayed Book Award, Translation Category Shortlist, 2021 National Translation Award Finalist, 2021 PROSE Award, Literature Category Fifty rogue's tales translated fifty ways An itinerant con man. A gullible eyewitness narrator. Voices spanning continents and centuries. These elements come together in *Impostures*, a groundbreaking new translation of a celebrated work of Arabic literature. *Impostures* follows the roguish Abk Zayd al-Sarkj+ in his adventures around the medieval Middle East—we encounter him impersonating a preacher, pretending to be blind, and lying to a judge. In every escapade he shows himself to be a brilliant and persuasive wordsmith, composing poetry, palindromes, and riddles on the spot. Award-winning translator Michael Cooperson transforms Arabic wordplay into English wordplay of his own, using fifty different registers of English, from the distinctive literary styles of authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Mark Twain, and Virginia Woolf, to global varieties of English including Cockney rhyming slang, Nigerian English, and Singaporean English. Featuring picaresque adventures and linguistic acrobatics, *Impostures* brings the spirit of this masterpiece of Arabic literature into English in a dazzling display of translation. An English-only edition.

Maq m t Ab+ Zayd al-Sarkj+

Maq m t Ab+ Zayd al-Sarkj+ is a scholarly, Arabic-only edition of the celebrated work by al-\$ar+r+, which is available in English translation from the Library of Arabic Literature as *Impostures*. Al-\$ar+r+'s text consists of fifty stories about the adventures of the itinerant con man and master of persuasion Abk Zayd al-Sarkj+, as told by the equally itinerant and often gullible narrator al-\$ rith ibn H mmam. Al-\$ar+r+ was a virtuoso writer of the rhymed prose narrative genre known as the maq mah, which would continue as a popular literary form into the twentieth century. An Arabic edition with an Arabic foreword and English scholarly apparatus.

Ebbs and Flows of Medieval Empires, AD 900?1400

Ebbs and Flows of Medieval Empires, AD 900-1400 provides a flow of history throughout the medieval world from 900 to 1400 AD, describing the ebbs and flows of empires as the western world recovered from the dark ages. As a point of reference, author Will Slatyer presents the empires in Asia in the same timeframes as European empires, illustrating patterns of similarity among these empires. War remained important to leaders of the emerging nation and states as a primary method of gaining territory and expanding their influence. Meanwhile, the Church of Rome endeavoured to gain control of Europe secularly and spiritually, often using the spread of Islam as an excuse for its widening span of control. Islam was advanced spectacularly by the Arabs, but lost much impetus when leaders of other ethnicities took control; even so, it continued to spread throughout the world. Coinage again came into use during this period after the lapse of the usage of precious metals as compensation during the dark ages. Trade grew particularly when spices from the Orient were introduced in Europe, because they were so attractive in an age without refrigeration. As city-states became more civilised, textiles for clothing came into strong demand. International trade encouraged banking based upon models introduced by the Knights Templar. *Ebbs and Flows of Medieval Empires, AD 900-1400* shows that human fear and greed demonstrated in ancient times, continued with medieval leaders, including popes, leading the way to the more capitalist enterprise of the Renaissance after 1400 AD.

Cultures of Empire: Rethinking Venetian Rule, 1400–1700

This book investigates perceptions, modes, and techniques of Venetian rule in the early modern Eastern Mediterranean (1400–1700) between colonial empire, negotiated and pragmatic rule; between soft touch and exploitation; in contexts of former and continuous imperial belongings; and with a focus on representations and modes of rule as well as on colonial daily realities and connectivities.

Mass Market Medieval

"The 14 essays in this book encompass diverse theoretical perspectives and are grouped loosely around distinct functions of medievalism, including the exposure of recent social concerns; the use of medieval images in modern political contexts; and the medieval's influence on products of today's popular culture"--Provided by publisher.

Margins and Metropolis

This volume explores the political, cultural, and ecclesiastical forces that linked the metropolis of Byzantium to the margins of its far-flung empire. Focusing on the provincial region of Hellas and Peloponnesos in central and southern Greece, Judith Herrin shows how the prestige of Constantinople was reflected in the military, civilian, and ecclesiastical officials sent out to govern the provinces. She evokes the ideology and culture of the center by examining different aspects of the imperial court, including diplomacy, ceremony, intellectual life, and relations with the church. Particular topics treat the transmission of mathematical manuscripts, the burning of offensive material, and the church's role in distributing philanthropy. Herrin contrasts life in the capital with provincial life, tracing the adaptation of a largely rural population to rule by Constantinople from the early medieval period onward. The letters of Michael Choniates, archbishop of Athens from 1182 to 1205, offer a detailed account of how this highly educated cleric coped with life in an imperial backwater, and demonstrate a synthesis of ancient Greek culture and medieval Christianity that was characteristic of the Byzantine elite. This collection of essays spans the entirety of Herrin's influential career and draws together a significant body of scholarship on problems of empire. It features a general introduction, two previously unpublished essays, and a concise introduction to each essay that describes how it came to be written and how it fits into her broader analysis of the unusual brilliance and longevity of Byzantium.

Medieval People

Every schoolboy knows that the Middle Ages arose on the ruins of the Roman Empire. The decline of Rome preceded and in some ways prepared the rise of the kingdoms and cultures which composed the medieval system. Yet in spite of the self-evident truth of this historical preposition we know little about life and thought in the watershed years when Europe was ceasing to be Roman but was not yet medieval. We do not know how it felt to watch the decline of Rome; we do not even know whether the men who watched it knew what they saw, though we can be quite certain that none of them foretold, indeed could have foreseen, the shape which the world was to take in later centuries. Yet the tragic story, its main themes and protagonists were for all to see. No observer should have failed to notice that the Roman Empire of the fourth and fifth centuries was no longer the Roman Empire of the great Antonine and Augustan age; that it had lost its hold over its territories and its economic cohesion and was menaced by the barbarians who were in the end to overwhelm it. The territory of the Roman Empire had at its height stretched from the lands bordering the North Sea to the lands on the northern fringes of the Sahara, and from the Atlantic coast of Europe to the central Asiatic Steppes; it comprised most of the regions of the former Hellenic, Iranian, and Phoenician empires, and it either ruled or kept in check great clusters of peoples and principalities beyond its Gallic and north African frontiers. From these farthest frontiers Rome of the fourth century had retreated and was still retreating.

Competition in the Ancient World

Ancient peoples, like modern, spent much of their lives engaged in and thinking about competitions: both organised competitions with rules, audiences and winners, such as Olympic and gladiatorial games, and informal, indefinite, often violent, competition for fundamental goals such as power, wealth and honour. The varied papers in this book form a case for viewing competition for superiority as a major force in ancient history, including the earliest human societies and the Assyrian and Aztec empires. Papers on Greek history explore the idea of competitiveness as peculiarly Greek, the intense and complex quarrel at the heart of Homer's Iliad, and the importance of formal competitions in the creation of new political and social identities in archaic Sicyon and classical Athens. Papers on the Roman world shed fresh light on Republican elections, through a telling parallel from Renaissance Venice, on modes

of competitive display of wealth and power evident in elite villas in Italy in the imperial period, and on the ambiguities in the competitive self-representations of athletes, sophists and emperors.

Money, Morality, and Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe

One of the first volumes to explore the intersection of economics, morality, and culture, this collection analyzes the role of the developing monetary economy in Western Europe from the twelfth to the seventeenth century. The contributors--scholars from the fields of history, literature, art history and musicology--explore how money infiltrated every aspect of everyday life, modified notions of social identity, and encouraged debates about ethical uses of wealth.

Medieval People

Medieval People by Eileen Power A Complete Guide Every schoolboy knows that the Middle Ages arose on the ruins of the Roman Empire. The decline of Rome preceded and in some ways prepared the rise of the kingdoms and cultures which composed the medieval system. Yet in spite of the self-evident truth of this historical preposition we know little about life and thought in the watershed years when Europe was ceasing to be Roman but was not yet medieval. We do not know how it felt to watch the decline of Rome; we do not even know whether the men who watched it knew what they saw, though we can be quite certain that none of them foretold, indeed could have foreseen, the shape which the world was to take in later centuries. Yet the tragic story, its main themes and protagonists were for all to see. No observer should have failed to notice that the Roman Empire of the fourth and fifth centuries was no longer the Roman Empire of the great Antonine and Augustan age; that it had lost its hold over its territories and its economic cohesion and was menaced by the barbarians who were in the end to overwhelm it. The territory of the Roman Empire had at its height stretched from the lands bordering the North Sea to the lands on the northern fringes of the Sahara, and from the Atlantic coast of Europe to the central Asiatic Steppes; it comprised most of the regions of the former Hellenic, Iranian, and Phoenician empires, and it either ruled or kept in check great clusters of peoples and principalities beyond its Gallic and north African frontiers. From these farthest frontiers Rome of the fourth century had retreated and was still retreating.

The Life and Legend of the Sultan Saladin

'Superbly researched and enormously entertaining... One of the outstanding books of the year' The Times An epic story of empire-building and bloody conflict, this ground-breaking biography of one of history's most venerated military and religious heroes opens a window on the Islamic and Christian worlds' complex relationship. WINNER OF THE SLIGHTLY FOXED BEST FIRST BIOGRAPHY PRIZE When Saladin recaptured Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187, returning the Holy City to Islamic rule, he sent shockwaves throughout Christian Europe and the Muslim Near East that reverberate today. It was the culmination of a supremely exciting life. Born into a significant Kurdish family in northern Iraq, this warrior and diplomat fought under the banner of jihad, but at the same time worked tirelessly to build an empire that stretched from North Africa to Western Iraq. Gathering together a turbulent coalition, he was able to capture Jerusalem, only to trigger the Third Crusade and face his greatest adversary, King Richard the Lionheart. Drawing on a rich blend of Arabic and European sources, this is a comprehensive account of both the man and the legend to which he gave birth, describing vividly the relentless action of his life and tracing its aftermath through culture and politics all the way to the present day. 'An authoritative and brilliantly told account of the life of one of the world's greatest – and most famous – military leaders' Peter Frankopan

Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change

Since the first millennium BCE, nomads of the Eurasian steppe have played a key role in world history and the development of adjacent sedentary regions, especially China, India, the Middle East, and Eastern and Central Europe. Although their more settled neighbors often saw them as an ongoing threat and imminent danger—"barbarians," in fact—their impact on sedentary cultures was far more complex than the raiding, pillaging, and devastation with which they have long been associated in the popular imagination. The nomads were also facilitators and catalysts of social, demographic, economic, and cultural change, and nomadic culture had a significant influence on that of sedentary Eurasian civilizations, especially in cases when the nomads conquered and ruled over them. Not simply passive conveyors of ideas, beliefs, technologies, and physical artifacts, nomads were frequently active contributors to the process of cultural exchange and change. Their active choices and initiatives

helped set the cultural and intellectual agenda of the lands they ruled and beyond. This volume brings together a distinguished group of scholars from different disciplines and cultural specializations to explore how nomads played the role of “agents of cultural change.” The beginning chapters examine this phenomenon in both east and west Asia in ancient and early medieval times, while the bulk of the book is devoted to the far flung Mongol empire of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. This comparative approach, encompassing both a lengthy time span and a vast region, enables a clearer understanding of the key role that Eurasian pastoral nomads played in the history of the Old World. It conveys a sense of the complex and engaging cultural dynamic that existed between nomads and their agricultural and urban neighbors, and highlights the non-military impact of nomadic culture on Eurasian history. *Nomads as Agents of Cultural Change* illuminates and complicates nomadic roles as active promoters of cultural exchange within a vast and varied region. It makes available important original scholarship on the new turn in the study of the Mongol empire and on relations between the nomadic and sedentary worlds.

Musket, Map and Money:

Waves of military technological changes have swept through the Eurasian land mass since the dawn of civilization. Military technological changes decisively shaped geopolitics and the fortunes of states, empires and civilizations. In his book Jimmy Teng claims that to understand the impacts of these military technological changes is in fact to understand the causes behind the following major historical puzzles or important facts: the leading position of the Near East during the dawn of civilization; the splendid achievements of Greece, India and China during the axial era; the classical golden age of India under the Gupta Empire; the Abbasid Golden Age of the Islamic world and the Sung Puzzle of China during the medieval era; and the rise of the West during the early modern and modern era.

Kingship, Rebellion and Political Culture

Taking as its starting point two uprisings in England and Germany (Richard Marshal in 1233-4 and Henry (VII) in 1234-5), this book offers a new take on the political culture of high medieval Europe. Themes include: the role of violence; the norms of political behaviour; the public nature of politics; and the social history of political exchange.

Politics and culture in international history

An exploration of life in the early medieval West, using pigs as a lens to investigate agriculture, ecology, economy, and philosophy. From North Africa to the British Isles, pigs were a crucial part of agriculture and culture in the early medieval period. Jamie Kreiner examines how this ubiquitous species was integrated into early medieval ecologies and transformed the way that people thought about the world around them. In this world, even the smallest things could have far reaching consequences. Kreiner tracks the interlocking relationships between pigs and humans by drawing on textual and visual evidence, bioarchaeology and settlement archaeology, and mammal biology. She shows how early medieval communities bent their own lives in order to accommodate these tricky animals—and how in the process they reconfigured their agrarian regimes, their fiscal policies, and their very identities. In the end, even the pig's own identity was transformed: by the close of the early Middle Ages, it had become a riveting metaphor for Christianity itself.

Legions of Pigs in the Early Medieval West

Throughout Europe, the collapse of Roman authority from the fifth century fractured existing networks of commerce and trade including shopping. The infrastructure of trade was slowly rebuilt over the centuries that followed with the growth of beach markets, emporia, seasonal fairs and periodic markets until, in the late Middle Ages, the permanent shop re-emerged as an established part of market spaces, both in towns and larger urban centres. Medieval society was a 'display culture' and by the fourteenth century there was a marked increase in the consumption of manufactured and imported goods among the lower classes as well as the elite. This volume surveys our understanding of medieval retail markets, shops and shopping from a range of perspectives - spatial, material culture, literary, archaeological and economic. *A Cultural History of Shopping in the Middle Ages* presents an overview of the period with themes addressing practices and processes; spaces and places; shoppers and identities; luxury and everyday; home and family; visual and literary representations; reputation, trust and credit; and governance, regulation and the state. Book jacket.

A Cultural History of Shopping

This volume presents the proceedings of the international conference “Theatre Cultures within Globalising Empires: Looking at Early Modern England and Spain”, held in 2012 as part of the ERC Advanced Grant Project Early Modern European Drama and the Cultural Net (DramaNet). Implementing the concept of culture as a virtual network, it investigates Early modern European drama and its global dissemination. The 12 articles of the volume – all written by experts in the field teaching in the United Kingdom, the USA, Russia, Switzerland, India and Germany – focus on a selection of English and Spanish dramas from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Analysing and comparing motifs, formal parameters as well as plot structures, they discuss the commonalities and differences of Early modern drama in England and Spain.

Theatre Cultures within Globalising Empires

This edited collection demonstrates how economic history can be analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods, connecting statistical research with the social, cultural and psychological aspects of history. With their focus on the time between the end of the commercial revolution and the Black Death (c. 1300), and the Thirty Years' War (c. 1600), Kypta et al. redress a significant lack of published work regarding economic history methodology in the premodern period. Case studies stem from the Holy Roman Empire, one of the most important economic regions in premodern times, and reconnect the German premodern economic history approach with the grand narratives that have been developed mainly for Western European regions. Methodological approaches stemming from economics as well as from sociology and cultural studies show how multifaceted research in economic history can be, and how it might accordingly offer us new insights into premodern economies. Chapters 9 and 10 are available open access under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License via link.springer.com.

Methods in Premodern Economic History

While scholars have long documented the migration of people in ancient and medieval times, they have paid less attention to those who traveled across borders with some regularity. This study of early transnational relations explores the routine interaction of people across the boundaries of empires, tribal confederacies, kingdoms, and city-states, paying particular attention to the role of long-distance trade along the Silk Road and maritime trade routes. It examines the obstacles voyagers faced, including limited travel and communication capabilities, relatively poor geographical knowledge, and the dangers of a fragmented and shifting political landscape, and offers profiles of better-known transnational elites such as the Hellenic scholar Herodotus and the Venetian merchant Marco Polo, as well lesser known servants, merchants, and sailors. By revealing the important political, economic, and cultural role cross-border trade and travel played in ancient society, this work demonstrates that transnationalism is not unique to modern times. Instructors considering this book for use in a course may request an examination copy [here](#).

Transnationalism in Ancient and Medieval Societies

A study of the chief personalities and forces that brought Western Europe to pre-eminence as a centre for political experimentation, economic expansion, and intellectual discovery.

The Making of the Middle Ages

Until 1948, Hebrew literature was created mostly under the rule of empires, notably those of ancient Mesopotamia, Rome, medieval Islam, and Tsarist Russia. Aberbach argues in this controversial book that several of the most original periods in the history of Hebrew coincided with - and resulted partly from - imperial crisis, involving violence against the Jews and radical shifts in Jewish demography and in the global balance of power. Jewish assimilation in the cultures of the empires was arrested, causing a psychological turn inward and the creation of revolutionary Hebrew literature.

Revolutionary Hebrew, Empire and Crisis

A cutting-edge analysis of 2,500 years of Persian visual, architectural, and material cultures of power and their role in connecting the world. With the rise of the Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BCE), Persian institutions of kingship became the model for legitimacy, authority, and prestige across three continents. Despite enormous upheavals, Iranian visual and political cultures connected an ever-wider swath

of Afro-Eurasia over the next two millennia, exerting influence at key historical junctures. This book provides the first critical exploration of the role Persian cultures played in articulating the myriad ways power was expressed across Afro-Eurasia between the sixth century BCE and the nineteenth century CE. Exploring topics such as royal cosmologies, fashion, banqueting, manuscript cultures, sacred landscapes, and inscriptions, the volume's essays analyze the intellectual and political exchanges of art, architecture, ritual, and luxury material within and beyond the Persian world. They show how Perso-Iranian cultures offered neighbors and competitors raw material with which to formulate their own imperial aspirations. Unique among studies of Persia and Iran, this volume explores issues of change, renovation, and interconnectivity in these cultures over the *longue durée*.

Persian Cultures of Power and the Entanglement of the AfroEurasian World

In this groundbreaking book, Tehseen Thaver offers a fundamental reevaluation of how one should think about the relationship between the Qur'an, Shi'ism, and religious identity. *Beyond Sectarianism* focuses on the literary Arabic Qur'an exegesis of the highly influential yet less studied poet, historian, and exegete al-Sharif al-Radi (d. 1015). Al-Radi's fascinating interpretations sought to resolve Qur'anic ambiguities or *mutashabihat*. Through a philologically layered and historically attuned analysis, Thaver argues that al-Radi's efforts at resolving Qur'anic ambiguities were interlocked with the project of the canonization of the Arabic language. Although he was marked as a Shi'i scholar, the interpretive and political horizons that informed al-Radi's scholarly endeavors could not be reduced to predetermined templates of sectarian identity. Rather, Thaver argues, al-Radi was an active participant and beneficiary of critical intellectual currents and debates that animated the wider Muslim humanities during his life, especially on questions of language, poetry, and theology. Thaver thus leads her readers to reconsider their assumptions about the interaction of sectarian identity and scriptural interpretation in the study of Islam and religion. Though centered on the context of late tenth- and eleventh-century Baghdad under the Buyid dynasty, *Beyond Sectarianism* raises and addresses crucial questions of religious thought and identity with major ramifications for how we imagine the narrative of Islam and the place of sectarianism in it today.

Beyond Sectarianism

Kaya ^ahin's book offers a revisionist reading of Ottoman history during the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–66). By examining the life and works of a bureaucrat, Celalzade Mustafa, ^ahin argues that the empire was built as part of the Eurasian momentum of empire building and demonstrates the imperial vision of sixteenth-century Ottomans. This unique study shows that, in contrast with many Eurocentric views, the Ottomans were active players in European politics, with an imperial culture in direct competition with that of the Habsburgs and the Safavids. Indeed, this book explains Ottoman empire building with reference to the larger Eurasian context, from Tudor England to Mughal India, contextualizing such issues as state formation, imperial policy and empire building in the period more generally. ^ahin's work also devotes significant attention to the often-ignored religious dimension of the Ottoman-Safavid struggle, showing how the rivalry redefined Sunni and Shiite Islam, laying the foundations for today's religious tensions.

Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman

The Chivalric Turn examines the medieval obsession with defining and practising superior conduct, and the social consequences that followed from it. Historians since the seventeenth century have tended to understand medieval conduct through the eyes of the writers of the Enlightenment, viewing superior conduct as 'knightly' behaviour, and categorising it as chivalry. Using, for the first time, the full range of the considerable twelfth- and thirteenth-century literature on conduct in the European vernaculars and in Latin, *The Chivalric Turn* describes and defines what superior lay conduct was in European society before chivalry, and maps how and why chivalry emerged and redefined superior conduct in the last generation of the twelfth century. The emergence of chivalry was only one part of a major social change, because it changed how people understood the concept of nobility, which had consequences for the medieval understanding of gender, social class, violence, and the limits of law.

The Chivalric Turn

"In this book, Walter Scheidel provides a unique take on the perennial debates about the rise of the west. His main argument is straightforward and provocative: the fact that nothing like the Roman Empire ever again emerged in Europe was a crucial precondition for modern economic growth, the Industrial

Revolution and worldwide conquest much later on. Contra Ken Pomeranz's classic thesis about the "Great Divergence" of the 18th/19th centuries when northwestern Europe pulled away from China and the rest of world in terms of economic performance and overall power, Scheidel argues there was a much more significant "first great divergence" in late antiquity which set the stage. Scheidel argues that it wasn't until the West "escaped" from the dominance of the Roman empire did it flourish economically (unlike China, comparison which will be explored in this book, which despite transformations and setbacks remained a "universal empire" for much of its 2,200 year history). Scheidel approaches this "first great divergence" via a new take on some central question concerning the life and fate of the Roman Empire: How did the Roman Empire come into existence - did its rise depend on unique conditions that were never repeated later on? Was its fall inevitable? Why was nothing like the Roman Empire ever rebuilt? And did this matter for (much) later developments? He concludes by arguing that the fall and lasting disappearance of the Roman Empire was an indispensable precondition for later European exceptionalism and therefore for the creation of the modern world we now live in. From this perspective, the absence of the Roman Empire had a much greater impact than its previous existence and its subsequent influence on European culture, which is of course well documented in many domains and often accorded great significance. Scheidel does concede that a monopolistic empire like Rome's which first created a degree of shared culture and institutions but subsequently went away for good was perhaps more favorable to later European development than a scenario in which no such empire had ever existed in the first place. But, in answer to the question, ""What have the Romans ever done for us?" Scheidel replies: "fall and go away." --

Escape from Rome

A comparative history that reconsiders China's relations with the rest of Eurasia, Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors challenges the notion that inhabitants of medieval China and Mongolia were irreconcilably different from each other.

Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors

Empires of the Sea brings together studies of maritime empires from the Bronze Age to the Eighteenth Century. The volume aims to establish maritime empires as a category for the (comparative) study of premodern empires, and from a partly 'non-western' perspective. The book includes contributions on Mycenaean sea power, Classical Athens, the ancient Thebans, Ptolemaic Egypt, The Genoese Empire, power networks of the Vikings, the medieval Danish Empire, the Baltic empire of Ancien Régime Sweden, the early modern Indian Ocean, the Melaka Empire, the (non-European aspects of the) Portuguese Empire and Dutch East India Company, and the Pirates of Caribbean.

Empires of the Sea

"This volume is dedicated to eliciting the interactions between localities across late antique and early medieval Europe and the wider Mediterranean. Significant research has been done in recent years to explore how late "Roman" and post-"Roman" cities, towns and other localities communicated vis-à-vis larger structural phenomena, such as provinces, empires, kingdoms, institutions and so on. This research has contributed considerably to our understanding of the place of the city in its context, but tends to portray the city as a necessarily subordinate conduit within larger structures, rather than an entity in itself, or as a hermeneutical object of enquiry. Consequently, not enough research has been committed to examining how local people and communities thought about, engaged with, and struggled against nearby or distant urban neighbors. Urban Interactions addresses this lacuna in urban history by presenting articles that apply a diverse spectrum of approaches, from archaeological investigation to critical analyses of historiographical and historical biases and developmental consideration of antagonisms between ecclesiastical centers. Through these avenues of investigation, this volume elucidates the relationship between the urban centers and their immediate hinterlands and neighboring cities with which they might vie or collaborate. This entanglement and competition, whether subterranean or explicit across overarching political, religious or other macro categories, is evaluated through a broad geographical range of late "Roman" provinces and post-"Roman" states to maintain an expansive perspective of developmental trends within and about the city."

Urban Interactions: Communication and Competition in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages

Focusing on forms of interaction and methods of negotiation in multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual contexts during Antiquity and the Middle Ages, this volume examines questions of social and

cultural interaction within and between diverse ethnic communities. Toleration and coexistence were essential in all late antique and medieval societies and their communities. However, power struggles and prejudices could give rise to suspicion, conflict and violence. All of these had a central influence on social dynamics, negotiations of collective or individual identity, definitions of ethnicity and the shaping of legal rules. What was the function of multicultural and multilingual interaction: did it create and increase conflicts, or was it rather a prerequisite for survival and prosperity? The focus of this book is society and the history of everyday life, examining gender, status and ethnicity and the various forms of interaction and negotiation.

Negotiation, Collaboration and Conflict in Ancient and Medieval Communities