



Money and the Middle Ages

Jacques Le Goff

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Jacques Le Goff sets out in this book to explain the role of money, or rather of the various types of money, in the economy, life and mentalities of the Middle Ages. He seeks also to explain how, in a society dominated by religion, the Church viewed money, and how it taught Christians what attitudes they should adopt towards it and towards the uses to which it could be put. He shows that, although money played an important role in the rise of towns and trade and in state formation, there was no capitalism but only a pre-capitalism in the Middle Ages, even by their end, in the absence of a truly global market. This is why economic development remained slow and limited, in spite of some remarkable success stories. It was a period in which it was as important to give money as it was to earn it. True wealth was not yet the wealth of this world, even though money played an increasingly large role in reality and in mentalities.

No similar discussion of this subject, aimed at a wide readership, has previously been published. Written by one of the greatest medievalists, this book will be recognized as a standard work on the topic.

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