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Powers of Non-Knowledge between West and East (Greek Church, Samaritans, Phoenicians); English Chaplains versus French State Catholicism: Conditions and Functions of Non-Knowledge Communication; Comparison and Conclusion; 3 History: How to Cope with Unconscious Ignorance; The Forgotten Arabic Middle Ages; Growing Awareness; Structure Replaces Content; Standardization and Spatialization; Conclusion; 4 Science: Mediterranean Empires and Scientific Unknowns; From Avicenna to the Queries of the Royal Society (1692)

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Sommario/riassunto

In this major new study, the history of the French and British trading empires in the early modern Mediterranean is used as a setting to test a new approach to the history of ignorance: how can we understand the very act of ignoring - in political, economic, religious, cultural and scientific communication - as a fundamental trigger that sets knowledge in motion? Zwiwerlein explores whether the Scientific Revolution between 1650 and 1750 can be understood as just one of what were in fact many simultaneous epistemic movements and considers the role of the European empires in this phenomenon. Deconstructing central categories like the mercantilist 'national', the exchange of 'confessions' between Western and Eastern Christians and the bridging of cultural gaps between European and Ottoman subjects, Zwiwerlein argues that understanding what was not known by historical agents can be just as important as the history of knowledge itself.
