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Sommario/riassunto

The Worlds of Medieval Europe updates and revises traditional textbook representations of the Middle Ages by balancing the conventional focus on political affairs, especially those of northern Europe, with equally detailed attention to medieval society as it developed in the Mediterranean. The result is a nuanced portrayal of a multifarious western world that was sharply divided between its northern and southern aspects. By also integrating the histories of the Islamic and Byzantine world into the main narrative, the text brings new life to the continuum of interaction--social, cultural, and intellectual, as well as commercial--that existed among all three societies. In addition, it describes ways in which the medieval Latin West attempted to understand the unified and rational structure of the human cosmos, which they believed existed beneath the observable diversity and disorder of the world. This effort to re-create a human ordering of "unity through diversity" provides an essential key to understanding medieval Europe and the ways in which it regarded and reacted to the worlds around it. The Worlds of Medieval Europe is an ideal text for undergraduate courses in medieval history, Western civilization, the history of Christianity, and Muslim-Christian relations. It also serves as an excellent supplement for courses on the history of a specific country in the medieval period, the history of medieval art, or the history of the European economy..

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