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Sommario/riassunto	In 1780 Richard Sheridan noted that merchants worked 'merely for money'. However, rather than being a criticism, this was recognition of the important commercial role that merchants played in the British empire at this time. Of course, merchants desired and often made profits, but they were strictly bound by commonly-understood socio-cultural norms which formed a private-order institution of a robust business culture. In order to elucidate this business culture, this book examines the themes of risk, trust, reputation, obligation, networks and crises to demonstrate how contemporary merchants p