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Sommario/riassunto

This book reveals the social logic of the medieval rituals of reconciliation as showcased by the most potent rite, the kiss of peace. Ritual is presented as a contested ground on which individuals, groups, and political and moral authorities competed for and appropriated political sovereignty. The thesis of the study is that by employing ritual and bodily mnemonics as strategic tools, the forces of order and official morality strove to organize personality structures around a hegemonic value system. Researching three analytical fields-the legal bonds of peace, the emotional economy of ritual, and the building of identity-the book highlights the contents and evolution of ritual reconciliation in diverse cultural contexts in the period between the eleventh and the sixteenth centuries.
