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978-0-521-88036-7 - An Economic and Social History of Later Medieval Europe, 1000-1500

Steven A. Epstein

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## **AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF LATER MEDIEVAL EUROPE, 1000–1500**

This book examines the most important themes in European social and economic history from the beginning of growth around the year 1000 to the first wave of global exchange in the 1490s. These five hundred years witnessed the rise of economic systems, such as capitalism, and the social theories that would have a profound influence on the rest of the world over the next five centuries. The basic story, the human search for food, clothing, and shelter in a world of violence and scarcity, is a familiar one, and the work and daily routines of ordinary women and men are the focus of this volume.

Surveying the full extent of Europe, from east to west and north to south, Steven A. Epstein illuminates family life, economic and social thought, war, technologies, and other major themes while giving equal attention to developments in trade, crafts, and agriculture. The great waves of famine and then plague in the fourteenth century provide the centerpiece of a book that seeks to explain the causes of Europe's uneven prosperity and its response to catastrophic levels of death. Epstein also sets social and economic developments within the context of the Christian culture and values that were common across Europe and that were the cause of constant tension with Muslims, Jews, and dissidents within its boundaries and the great Islamic and Tartar states on its frontier.

Steven A. Epstein is Ahmanson-Murphy Distinguished Professor of Medieval History at the University of Kansas. He is the author of numerous articles and five books on aspects of medieval social and economic history, including *Genoa and the Genoese, 958–1528* and *Purity Lost: Transgressing Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1000–1400*.

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