



The Serf, the Knight, and the Historian (Paperback)

By Dominique Barthelemy

Cornell University Press, United States, 2009. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. The term feudal society is a caricature. It was invented by nineteenth-century historians to capture a particular period in French history, that of the retreat of monarchy (and thus of state authority) and the supposed tyranny of fiefdoms. It had its uses. As caricatures go, it was no worse than many others. But it was both reductionist and unbalanced. Among other things, it reduced society to bonds of dependency that were ritualized and personalized, and it imagined a scenario of quasi-independent castles, each with its own knights, existing in a state of continuous warfare with one another. It largely ignored other links and networks, and it overlooked the fact that warfare between neighbors was intermittent and limited. Meanwhile, in the real world, apart from such conflict-though sometimes through it-social construction was going on. -Dominique Barthelemy In a collection of combative essays, updated for this new translation, Dominique Barthelemy presents a sharply revisionist account of the history of France around the year 1000. He challenges the view, developed in the enormously influential writings of Georges Duby and others, that France underwent...

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