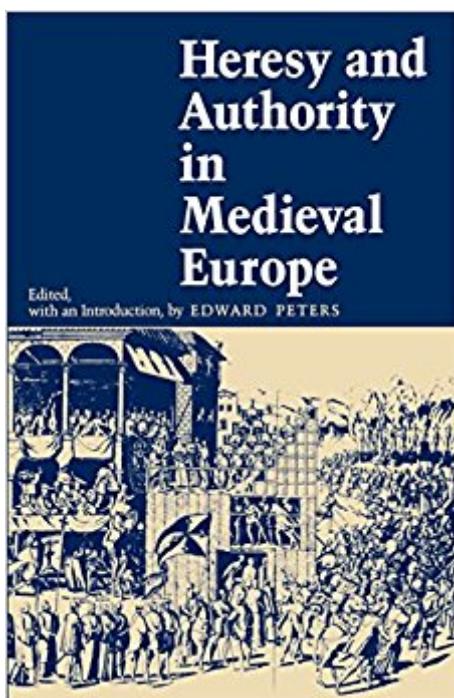


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Heresy And Authority In Medieval Europe (The Middle Ages Series)



Synopsis

Throughout the Middle Ages and early modern Europe theological uniformity was synonymous with social cohesion in societies that regarded themselves as bound together at their most fundamental levels by a religion. To maintain a belief in opposition to the orthodoxy was to set oneself in opposition not merely to church and state but to a whole culture in all of its manifestations. From the eleventh century to the fifteenth, however, dissenting movements appeared with greater frequency, attracted more followers, acquired philosophical as well as theological dimensions, and occupied more and more the time and the minds of religious and civil authorities. In the perception of dissent and in the steps taken to deal with it lies the history of medieval heresy and the force it exerted on religious, social, and political communities long after the Middle Ages. In this volume, Edward Peters makes available the most compact and wide-ranging collection of source materials in translation on medieval orthodoxy and heterodoxy in social context.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Here is an excellent collection of texts illustrative of the struggle between medieval sects and ecclesiastical authorities in medieval Europe. . . . Excellent bibliographical essays complement chapter introductions, making this volume unusually valuable for classroom use." "Review and Expositor" The book constitutes a history of Christianity and the Church focused on heterodox ideas and movements and on the vigorous, sometimes desperate, counterforce exerted by ecclesiastical authorities. "Journal of Church and State

Edward Peters is Henry Charles Lea Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. His publications include *The Magician, the Witch, and the Law*, *Torture*, *The First Crusade*, and, with Alan C. Kors, *Witchcraft in Europe, 400-1700: A Documentary History*, all available from the University of Pennsylvania Press.

There is nothing else available like this collection of original sources from the Middle Ages on the theory and reality of heresy and its persecution. Peters presents foundational texts, well-chosen and diverse in character: not just theoretical tracts and official pronouncements, but also court records, popular stories about saints, and other material. The commentary that Peters provides is very limited. For an area of knowledge where there's an awful lot of myth and rumor and gossip -- Templars, witches, underground cults, the like -- this collection is sober and solid. We need to understand the idea of heresy and what it meant (and means): this book is an important resource for doing that.

This book is most certainly good for what it is meant to be. It provides primary texts with a minimal amount of analysis. I am reading this for a college course on Heresy and Dissent in Medieval Europe and it provides the basis for the entire class.

This book is really hard to read. It is comprised of documents written in medieval times and the language is difficult to understand.

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