



The Mirror of the Medieval: An Anthropology of the Western Historical Imagination (Making Sense of History)

K. Patrick Fazioli

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Since its invention by Renaissance humanists, the myth of the "Middle Ages" has held a uniquely important place in the Western imagination. Whether envisioned as an era of lost simplicity or a barbaric nightmare, the medieval past has always served as a mirror for modernity. This book gives an eye-opening account of the ways various political and intellectual projects—from nationalism to the discipline of anthropology—have appropriated the Middle Ages for their own ends. Deploying an interdisciplinary toolkit, author K. Patrick Fazioli grounds his analysis in contemporary struggles over power and identity in the Eastern Alps, while also considering the broader implications for scholarly research and public memory.

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