The Life-cycle in Western Europe, C. 1300-c. 1500



THE LIFE-CYCLE IN WESTERN EUROPE, c.1300-c.1500

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This is the first study to examine the entire life cycle in the Middle Ages. Drawing on a wide range of secondary and primary material, the book explores the timing and experiences of infancy, childhood, adolescence and youth, adulthood, old age and, finally, death. It discusses attitudes towards ageing, rites of passage, age stereotypes in operation, and the means by which age was used as a form of social control, compelling individuals to work, govern, marry and pay taxes. The wide scope of the study allows contrasts and comparisons to be made across gender, social status and geographical location. It considers whether men and women experienced the ageing process in the same way, and examines the differences that can be discerned between northern and southern Europe. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries suffered famine, warfare, plague and population collapse. This fascinating consideration of the life cycle adds a new dimension to the debate over continuity and change in a period of social and demographic upheaval

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