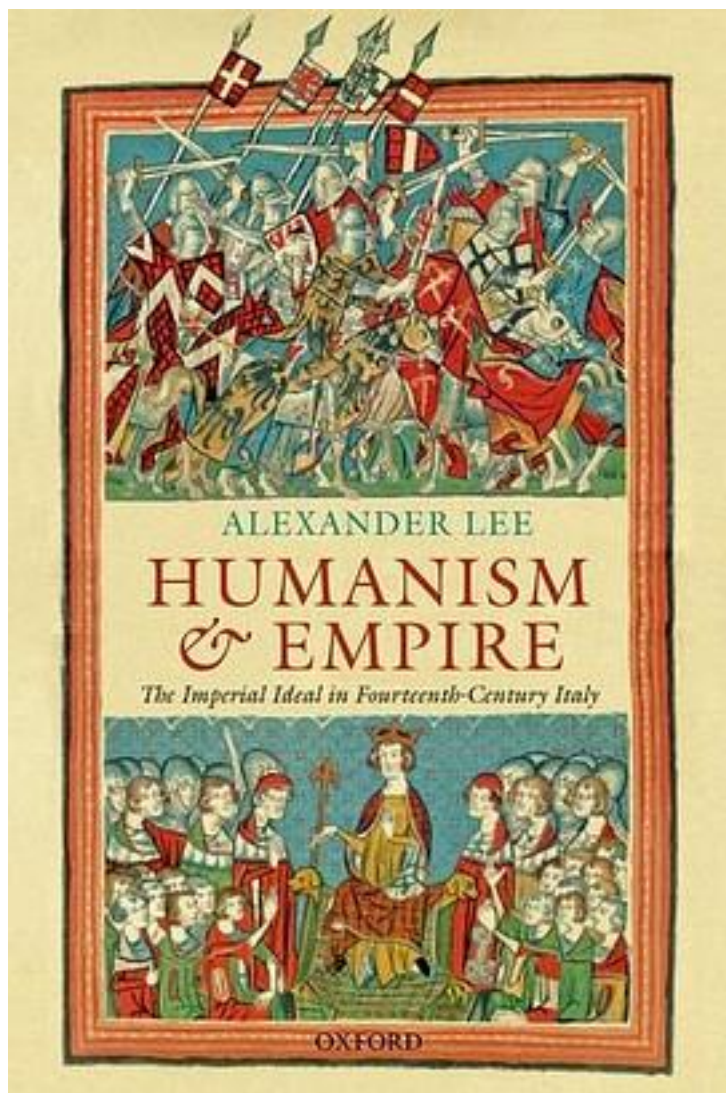


Humanism and Empire



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For more than a century, scholars have believed that Italian humanism was predominantly civic in outlook. Often serving in communal government, fourteenth-century humanists like Albertino Mussato and Coluccio Salutati are said to have derived from their reading of the Latin classics a rhetoric of republican liberty that was opposed to the "tyranny" of neighbouring signori and of the German emperors.

In this ground-breaking study, Alexander Lee challenges this long-held belief. From the death of Frederick II in 1250 to the failure of Rupert of the Palatinate's ill-fated expedition in 1402, Lee argues, the humanists nurtured a consistent and powerful affection for the Holy Roman Empire. Though this was articulated in a variety of different ways, it was nevertheless driven more by political conviction than by cultural concerns. Surrounded by endless conflict--both within and between city-states--the humanists eagerly embraced the Empire as the surest guarantee of peace and liberty, and lost no opportunity to invoke its protection. Indeed, as Lee shows, the most ardent appeals to imperial authority were made not by "signorial" humanists, but by humanists in the service of communal regimes.

The first comprehensive, synoptic study of humanistic ideas of Empire in the period c.1250-1402, this volume offers a radically new interpretation of fourteenth-century political thought, and raises wide-ranging questions about the foundations of modern constitutional ideas. As such, it is essential reading not just for students of Renaissance Italy and the history of political thought, but for all those interested in understanding the origins of liberty.

作者介绍:

Alexander Lee is a fellow in the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance at the University of Warwick. Educated at the universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh, he has previously held positions at the University of Oxford, the Universite du Luxembourg, and the Universita degli studi di Bergamo. His recent publications include *Petrarch and St. Augustine: Classical Scholarship, Christian Theology, and the Origins of the Renaissance in Italy* (2012) and *The Ugly Renaissance* (2013). He is currently completing a biography of Niccolo Machiavelli.

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