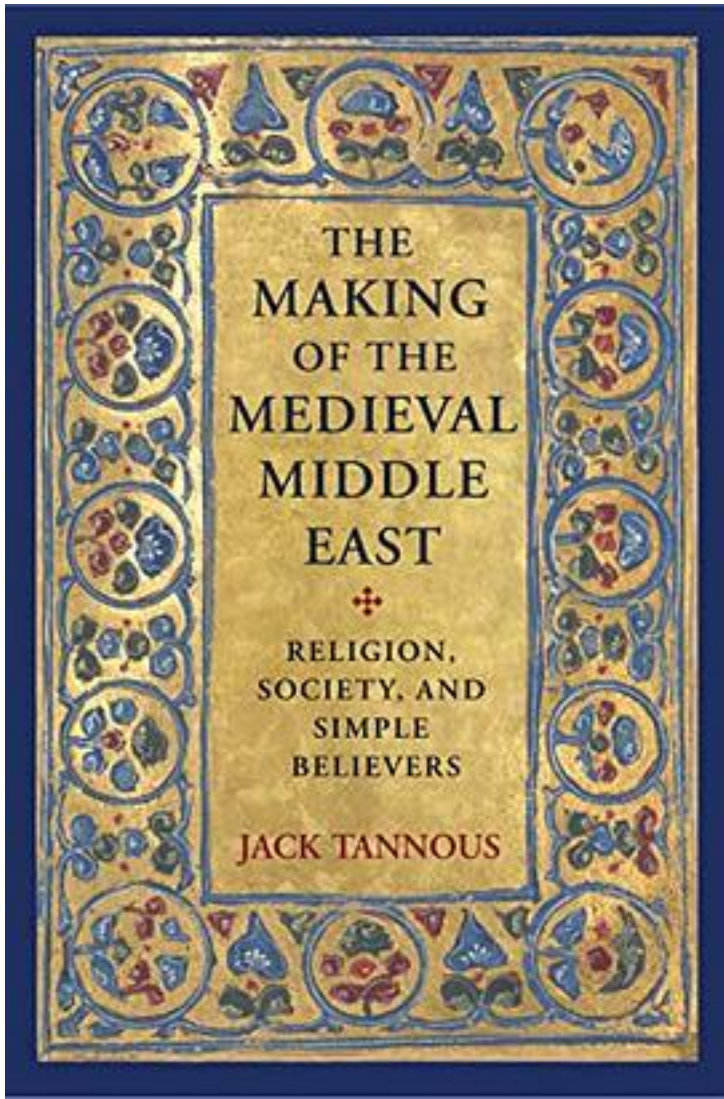


# The Making of the Medieval Middle East



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著者:Jack Tannous

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A bold new religious history of the late antique and medieval Middle East that places ordinary Christians at the center of the story

In the second half of the first millennium CE, the Christian Middle East fractured irreparably into competing churches and Arabs conquered the region, setting in motion a process that would lead to its eventual conversion to Islam. Jack Tannous argues that key to understanding these dramatic religious transformations are ordinary religious believers, often called “the simple” in late antique and medieval sources. Largely agrarian and illiterate, these Christians outnumbered Muslims well into the era of the Crusades, and yet they have typically been invisible in our understanding of the Middle East’s history.

What did it mean for Christian communities to break apart over theological disagreements that most people could not understand? How does our view of the rise of Islam change if we take seriously the fact that Muslims remained a demographic minority for much of the Middle Ages? In addressing these and other questions, Tannous provides a sweeping reinterpretation of the religious history of the medieval Middle East.

This provocative book draws on a wealth of Greek, Syriac, and Arabic sources to recast these conquered lands as largely Christian ones whose growing Muslim populations are properly understood as converting away from and in competition with the non-Muslim communities around them.

#### 【Review】

"Its greatest contribution is that it opens up many new lines of research."---R. Stephen Humphreys, *Journal of Medieval Worlds*

"A tour de force."---Ramez Mikhail, *Journal of Orthodox Christian Studies*

"This is a large, wide-ranging and important book. . . . The Making of the Medieval Middle East is, in sum, an impressive tome that will undoubtedly help us to rethink how this region became Muslim and make us reconsider the many blind spots and assumptions our traditional paradigms have included."---Aaron W. Hughes, *Reading Religion*

"This is an excellent book that undergraduates, graduate students and established scholars could all engage with at different levels, and all read with great profit."---Philip Wood, *Medieval Encounters*

"A remarkable achievement that energetically articulates a little-studied research field: the fate of the Christian population in the era of Muslim conquests and the beginning of the formation of Muslim civilization in the Middle East."---Rustam M. Shukurov, *Journal of Church and State*

"Honorable Mention for the Albert Hourani Book Award, Middle East Studies Association"

"Winner of the James Henry Breasted Prize, American Historical Association"

“The Making of the Medieval Middle East is no less than a marvelous achievement—there isn’t a stone Tannous has left unturned in his path of inquiry. Future scholars will have to reconsider their methods and theses in light of this bold

and exceptional book.” —Uriel I. Simonsohn, author of *A Common Justice: The Legal Allegiances of Christians and Jews under Early Islam*

“This book is a must-read for anyone who wishes to understand the world the Arabs found in the seventh century and how they interacted with the Christian majority. Tannous brilliantly weaves complex religious and social questions to shed an entirely new light on a period that is still pivotal for us today.” —Muriel Debié, *École Pratique des Hautes Études, PSL*

“Tannous draws on a rich and fascinating selection of primary source material to paint a fresh picture of the early medieval Middle East.” —Robert G. Hoyland, author of *In God’s Path: The Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire*

“This is a marvelous book, dizzying in its detail, dazzling in its discipline. Tannous sees through the eyes not of intellectuals and professional theologians but of the vast mass of believers, whether Christian or Muslim. Meticulous, generous, evocative, and persuasive, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East* paints a neglected world in full color.” —Margaret Mullett, professor emerita, *Queen’s University Belfast*

“In this strikingly original book, Jack Tannous has delivered a frontal assault on traditional assumptions about early Islam. His absorbing and persuasive exercise in microhistory focuses on the lived experience of ordinary people and presents us with a continuing Christian Middle East until at least the eleventh century.” —Averil Cameron, *University of Oxford*

“This is undoubtedly a work of major importance. By shifting the focus from intellectual elites to everyday Christian believers, Tannous provides a more illuminating understanding of the gradual transition to the majority Islamic world of the medieval Middle East.” —Sebastian Brock, author of *An Introduction to Syriac Studies*

作者介绍:

Jack Tannous is assistant professor of history at Princeton University.

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标签

黎凡特

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中世纪

Islam

HisChristianity

## 评论

Tannous功力深厚没得说，cumulative method不是一般人用得了的（虽则，没有空间详细分析每个具体案例也可能导致一些细节问题）。通过社会史的视角，让一贯被精英叙事所边缘化、却实际上构成了历史主要书写者的大多数简单信仰者发出他们自己的声音，也无疑是值得尊重的努力。但他对精英-简单信仰者的二分时有流于简化之嫌，对“正统”的描绘有时或许也扁平了些，总体精神往往就是“大家都是普通人，不懂也没兴趣懂那么多”，很多事情都是一小撮精英的智识建构和自上而下的规范。这么一来，简单信仰者往往被描绘成诸如“非精英”、“违正统”、“不虔敬”、“少教育”、“non-doctrinal”这样的否定式形象，让人想问的是：他们在塑造自身传统过程中的肯定性的historical agency在哪里呢？

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