



Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity

Patricia Crone

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Slave soldiers are a distinctively Muslim phenomenon. Though virtually unknown in the non-Muslim world, they have been a constant and pervasive feature of the Muslim Middle East from the ninth century AD into modern times. Why did Muslim rulers choose to place military and political power in the hands of imported slaves? It is this question which Dr Crone seeks to answer. Concentrating on the period from the rise of the Umayyads to the dissolution of the 'Abbasid empire (roughly AD 650-850), she documents the consequences of the fusion between religion and politics in Islam, which she sees as an essential forging characteristic of the Muslim social structure and state. Primarily addressed to specialists and advanced students of Arabic and Islamic history, the book will also appeal to comparative historians and social anthropologists.

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