One of the most difficult and complex ethical and cultural codes to define, chivalry has proved a flexible, ever-changing phenomenon, constantly adapted in the hands of medieval knights, Renaissance princes, early modern antiquarians, Enlightenment scholars, modern civic authorities, authors, historians and re-enactors. This book explores the rich variations in how the Middle Ages were conceptualised and historicised to illuminate the plurality of uses of the past. Using chivalry as a lens through which to examine concepts and uses of the medieval, it provides a critical assessment of the ways in which medieval chivalry became a shorthand to express contemporary ideals, powerfully demonstrating the ways in which history could be appropriated. The chapters combine attention to documentary evidence with what material culture can tell us, in particular using the built environment and the landscape as sources to understand how the medieval past was renegotiated. With contributions spanning diverse geographic regions and periods, it redraws current chronological boundaries by considering medievalism from the late Middle Ages to the present.

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