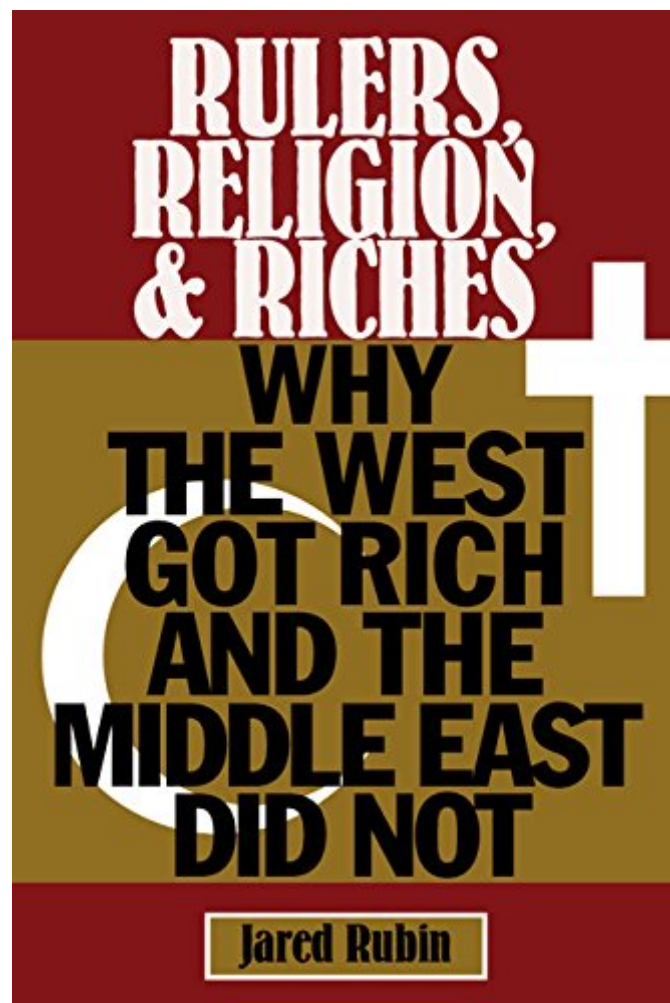




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Rulers, Religion, And Riches: Why The West Got Rich And The Middle East Did Not (Cambridge Studies In Economics, Choice, And Society)



Synopsis

For centuries following the spread of Islam, the Middle East was far ahead of Europe. Yet, the modern economy was born in Europe. Why was it not born in the Middle East? In this book Jared Rubin examines the role that Islam played in this reversal of fortunes. It argues that the religion itself is not to blame; the importance of religious legitimacy in Middle Eastern politics was the primary culprit. Muslim religious authorities were given an important seat at the political bargaining table, which they used to block important advancements such as the printing press and lending at interest. In Europe, however, the Church played a weaker role in legitimizing rule, especially where Protestantism spread (indeed, the Reformation was successful due to the spread of printing, which was blocked in the Middle East). It was precisely in those Protestant nations, especially England and the Dutch Republic, where the modern economy was born.

Book Information

File Size: 2232 KB

Print Length: 287 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 110703681X

Simultaneous Device Usage: Up to 4 simultaneous devices, per publisher limits

Publisher: Cambridge University Press (February 7, 2017)

Publication Date: February 7, 2017

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01N0Y8DGK

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #243,783 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #62

inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Religion > Islam #78 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle

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