

Jean Claude Schmitt

Jean-Claude Schmitt (born March 4, 1946 in Colmar) is a prominent French medievalist, the former student of Jacques Le Goff. He studies the socio-cultural aspects of medieval history in Western Europe and has made important contributions in his use of anthropological and art historical methods to interpret history. His most significant work has dealt with the relationships among elites and laymen in medieval life, particularly in the realm of religious culture, where he has focused on ideas and topics such as superstition, the occult and heresy in order to flesh out the differing world-views of the lay peasantry and the clerical elites who attempted to define religious practice. He has contributed numerous books, articles and encyclopedia entries on these and related topics. He has also written widely on the cult of saints, the idea of adolescence, visions and dreams, and preaching.