



The Concise History of the Crusades (Critical Issues in World and International History)

By Thomas F. Madden

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What is the relationship between the medieval crusades and the problems of the modern Middle East? Were the crusades the Christian equivalent of Muslim *jihad*? In this sweeping yet crisp history, Thomas F. Madden offers a brilliant and compelling narrative of the crusades and their contemporary relevance. Placing all of the major crusades within their medieval social, economic, religious, and intellectual environments, Madden explores the uniquely medieval world that led untold thousands to leave their homes, families, and friends to march in Christ's name to distant lands. From Palestine and Europe's farthest reaches, each crusade is recounted in a clear, concise narrative. The author gives special attention as well to the crusades' effects on the Islamic world and the Christian Byzantine East.

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Editorial Review

Review

Madden's clear text invites readers at all levels of knowledge into this commentary on how the crusades shaped our modern world. [He] convincingly shows how the crusades prove useful in understanding the political, cultural, and religious wars waged in today's society. True to the book's title, Madden manages to deftly discuss his research while maintaining a clear, approachable style that makes this text accessible to all levels of readers. . . . His ability to set the scene breathes life into the history. . . . The extent of Thomas Madden's research is evident, and his ability to describe history in an interesting and clear manner will appeal to all readers who enjoy reading about the past, especially where it is examined within a modern context. (*Foreword Reviews*)

Madden writes that the term and concept of the Crusades had been protean and exploited from the inception of the modern era. . . .For him, the historical understanding and popular perception of these campaigns have led to their condemnation. Yet he still defends them as an act of piety (i.e., bravery coupled with faith) and rejects the dominant perception that they are in any way responsible for modern tensions between the Middle East and the West. (*American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*)

It is well written and well organized...[and is] designed primarily as a textbook. . . .This is a good book. It is very clear and also both interesting and enjoyable to read. (*Speculum*)

About the Author

Thomas F. Madden is professor of history and director of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies at Saint Louis University. A widely recognized expert on the Crusades and Christian-Muslim relations, he is the author of numerous books, including *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople*, *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice*, and *Venice: A New History*. Awards for his scholarship include the Haskins Medal (Medieval Academy of America) and the Otto Gründler Prize (Medieval Institute). He resides in St. Louis, Missouri.

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