



History's Great Defeats - The Crusades: Failed Holy Wars

By Cherese Cartlidge

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 8-Up Cartlidge presents the history of the Crusades from 1096 to the defeat at Acre in 1291, discussing why they were fought, the loss of popular support, the problems with organization, and the ultimate defeat of the Europeans by the Ottomans. A final chapter discusses how contact with the East affected Europe, and how the Crusades are connected to the Renaissance and the conquest of the New World. While the author presents her clear and well-organized facts without partiality, there is overarching evidence that the European crusaders were unnecessarily cruel and violent, that they ended up fighting for riches rather than for religious reasons, and that they were doomed to failure from the start. The chapters are arranged more thematically than chronologically and the writing is a bit dry, with a large number of quotes from primary and secondary sources. The multiple points of view represented, including quotes from Byzantines, Muslims, Jews, as well as Europeans, provide a more well-rounded history than those books that only focus on the experience of the crusaders or the Muslims. The black-and-white reproductions tend to be small and grainy and add little to the text. Overall, though, this is a worthwhile addition. -Lynda S. Poling, Long Beach Public Library, CA

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Review

"Balanced and eloquent. Subtitles in boldface and short highlighted sections on special topics result in an attractive format."

-- *School Library Journal* (December 2000) (*School Library Journal* 20001201)

"This is a worthwhile addition."

-- *School Library Journal* (July 2002) (*School Library Journal* 20020701)

"The author relates tales of shifting...allegiances, pockets of resistance and internal strife; and of an invading army that was technologically advanced, more disciplined...Using both secondary and primary sources, Barchusen presents convincing arguments. Chapter notes, annotated suggestions for further reading, and a bibliography provide students with other sources of information. Black-and-white reproductions appear throughout."

-- *School Library Journal* (December 2000) (*School Library Journal* 20001201)

"While the author presents her clear and well-organized facts without partiality there is overarching evidence that the European crusaders were unnecessarily cruel and violent, that they ended up fighting for riches rather than for religious reasons, and that they were doomed to failure from the start. The chapters are arranged more thematically than chronologically and the writing is a bit dry with multiple points of view represented, including quotes from Byzantine, Muslims, Jews, as well as Europeans, provide a more well-rounded history than those books that only focus on the experience of the crusaders or the Muslims...Overall...this is a worthwhile addition."

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