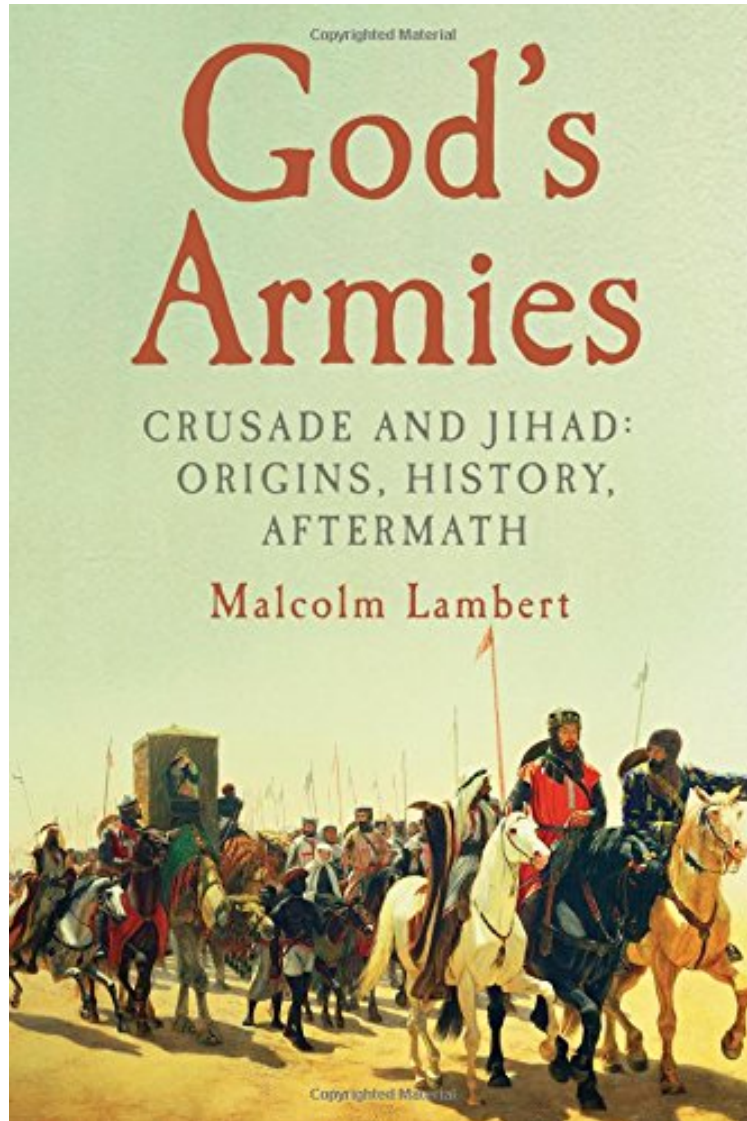


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God's Armies: Crusade and Jihad: Origins, History, Aftermath

Malcolm Lambert

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Malcolm Lambert : God's Armies: Crusade and Jihad: Origins, History, Aftermath before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised God's Armies: Crusade and Jihad: Origins, History, Aftermath:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. The Christian Crusades versus Muslim Jihad By William Garrison Jr. "God's Armies: Crusade and Jihad" by Malcolm Lambert (Oct. 2016). The author wrote this book to reveal how a 1960s French Islam-scholar, Emmanuel Sivan, helped the author (Lambert) understand the importance of how Muslim Nur al-Din (c. 1150 CE) influenced the Muslim general Saladin to recapture Jerusalem from the Crusaders, as well as

how Nur al-Din "also spoke for jihad to recover purity of [Islamic] faith, to establish Sunni orthodoxy against what he saw as the heresy of Shiism" (p. xviii). Lambert presents a broad, but a fine detailed look at the overall Crusader history: Europe's Christian leaders wanting both a military campaign to repulse to encroaching Muslim invaders and a recapture of Jerusalem from its Muslim conquerors. Usually the author seldom dwells on recounting the number of how many were killed during some battle, nor does he explain how many people were conquered by some Muslim military campaign -- just that some province or country was captured. Lambert doesn't use footnotes or endnotes (okay, a couple; but usually they refer to an entire book!) -- he provides a bibliography for his sources. Lambert provides the barest of explanations in trying to reveal the wide schism between the Sunna and Shia (the "partisans of Ali" -- Mohammad's nephew) [p.10]. Lambert doesn't convey how Hussain's martyrdom at the Battle of Karbala led to the deadly animosity between the Sunni and Shiites [p. 29]. Sadly, Lambert provides the briefest of thought in explaining differences with Shiism itself [p.47]. The author meekly accepts the concept that "in keeping with the notion that Christians and Muslims worship the same God, I have substituted God for Allah" -- his "same god" acceptance is disputed by many who would argue otherwise -- that there is indeed significant theological differences between the Christian "God" and the Muslim "Allah" [p. xix]. Not that this really matters in this book as this book is about Crusade military campaigns rather than theological issues, although the author does note how some warlord was stimulated by some religious fervor. Lambert doesn't analyze any more Christian-Muslim theological disputes. Outside of this statement, Lambert doesn't provide any (well, maybe a couple) instances of some Muslim warlord musing about how Allah inspired him to undertake some battle or campaign. Repeatedly, Lambert makes it very clear that Islam spread out of Arabia and into other lands by the force of sword (military campaigns) rather than by peaceful proselytization. Because the author does describe the various battles, after a while, it seems like they begin to blend together as some column-A of soldiers moves north along some trail then encounters some column-B that they battle for awhile, then retreats and bumps into one another again along some hillside: Although a little mind-numbing in separating the various battles, the author did explain the relevance of some battle. A few more battle maps would have provided some better perspective as how the various armies moved about the countryside. (Of course, there are many other books that do so.) What I did find particularly engaging about this book is that I believe that the author clearly explained the motives of both the Muslim and Christian warlords during their campaigns throughout Palestine. The author notes many actions of betrayal by both sides as they attempt to forge ever-shifting alliances against one another. At times, both sides entertained temporary alliances with one another when they feared that their own religious cohorts might attack them for temporary financial or strategic gain. The book has a bare handful of photographs of various forts and early 20th Century British officials -- but a couple of timelines of the various Crusades and more battlefield maps would have been more helpful in quickly visualizing the various events; more so than most of the photographs. After analyzing the Crusades, the author in a "Modern Times" chapter makes some comments about the French invasion of Egypt, some light commentary about the Balkan Wars, the breakup of the Ottoman Empire following WWII, and just a bare acknowledgement of the jihad-group ISIL/ISIS. In his "Reflections" chapter, Lambert stated that moderate-Muslim spokesmen, if they speak out -- and if they are listened to, may be able to reason with militant jihadists from committing their anti-social terrorist activities. Strangely, the British author decided to do a little gratis Israel-bashing as a cause de jour. The author noted that in July 1947: "Zionist terrorists kidnapped [2] British sergeants, hanged them and left their bodies on display" but didn't reveal that this was after the British had hung several Zionist terrorists (anti-colonial freedom fighters?), and the Zionists were complaining that the British were keeping post-WWII Jewish Holocaust survivors from immigrating to Palestine/Israel [p.251]. The author wrote: "Arabs fled and the state of Israel was born in 1948" [p.252] -- but totally ignored the fact that Muslim military units from surrounding Arab states had invaded Israel -- but failed to destroy it. The author expressed opprobrium that: "Christians within Israel...appear as second-class citizens" [p.252], but doesn't note that Christian churches cannot be built in Saudi Arabia, and Christians are killed almost weekly in Egypt. The author ignores that Israel hasn't executed any homosexuals, while surrounding Muslim states have executed hundreds of gays during the past decade -- most notably in Shiite-Muslim Iran. The author doesn't explain the Muslim hostility to a Jewish state of Israel. Regarding the massacre of the Jewish Banu Quraiza tribe, the author wrote: "Muhammad accepted the decision of an intermediary that the clan should be eliminated, the [400-800] men being beheaded and the women and children sent into slavery" [p.6]; the author took no moral umbrage here. "Al-Insan al-Kamil" could have stopped the killings, but didn't (one can't but help to ponder: "What would Jesus have done?"). Lambert concluded: "Crusade mounted by Christians in order to recover and reoccupy Jerusalem was an episode in Western European history ... but now dead. By contrast, jihad understood as holy war in the defence of Islam still lives. It arouses many passions and is open to fierce disputes and has been used as a reason for warfare...."[p.262]. Overall, a worthy read. Lambert quotes a couple of sentences/ayats from the Quran that Islamists use to justify their "use of the sword" in spreading Islam, but he doesn't investigate the ahadith in buttressing the militant Islamists war jihad theology. Lambert doesn't go very deeply in explaining the militancy of Mohammad. To understand this better, I would recommend: "The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)" by Robert Spencer. Lambert doesn't devote much space to the impact of the Muslim invaders upon the conquered peoples, for more perspective on this I suggest "Islamic Jihad" by M.A.

Khan. Despite similar titles, "God's Armies: Crusade and Jihad" by Malcolm Lambert (Pegasus Books, Oct. 2016) should not be confused with "God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades" by Rodney Stark (HarperOne Books, Nov. 2010), nor "God's War: A New History of the Crusades" by C.J. Tyerman (1998). 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Religion of peace began with the sword By Shrink Washington I found this work very hard to engage in for two reasons; it rambles and it doesn't seem objective. Up to the time of 1098 and the first crusades, the author rambles on about Islam's militaristic conquest of the Middle East. He describes jihad as though it was a perfectly legitimate exercise in conversion. The author describes the conquest of Islam from the year 610 up to 1098 outside the context of the evolution of Christianity during the same period. While Christianity spread through evangelicals, Islam spread by the sword. To me, those are very critical differences. We don't really take up the Christian cause until Urban II calls on the Christian world to take back Jerusalem from the jihadists. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. High Level Look By Theodore F. Schaaf This is a high level look at conflicts arising from the Crusades and the Islamic counter attacks. The author tries to look at the motivations and context of the players from the eleventh century to modern times. The earlier periods are covered more successfully. The more modern times give a much more sketchy view. However, the book is interesting and pretty easy to read. There are quite a bit of Arabic nomenclature; but, there is a useful glossary. The book appears to depend on secondary sources and there are no citations

With ramifications on geopolitics today, a vivid chronicle of the Christian and Islamic struggle to control the sacred places of Palestine and the Middle East between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. Crusade and jihad are often reckoned to have represented two sides of the same coin: each resonated on the opposing sides in the holy wars of the Middle Ages and each has been invoked during the war on terror. A chronicle of the Christian and Islamic struggle to control the sacred places of Palestine and the Middle East between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, this dynamic new history demonstrates that this simple opposition ignores crucial differences. Placing an equal emphasis on the inner histories of Christianity and Islam, the book traces the origins and development of crusade and jihad, showing for example that jihad reflected internal tensions in Islam from its beginnings. The narrative also reveals the ways in which crusade and jihad were used to disguise ambitions for power and to justify atrocity and yet also inspired acts of great chivalry and heroic achievement. The story brims with larger than life characters, among them Richard the Lionheart, Nur al-Din, Saladin, Baybars, and Ghengiz Khan. Lambert concludes by considering the long after-effects of jihad and crusade, including the role of the latter in French imperialism and of the former in the wars now afflicting the Middle East and parts of Africa. This vivid, balanced account will interest all readers who wish to understand the complexities of the medieval world and how it relates our own. 16 pages of color and BW illustrations and maps

Lambert does a workmanlike job of clearly summarizing a vast sweep of history. Sturdy prose and thinking. - New York Times Book Review Recognizing that the Christian crusades unfolded in a world shaped by Islamic jihads, Lambert scrutinizes both militant forms of religion simultaneously. In a world where memories of crusader atrocities sustain virulent new forms of jihad, such balanced scholarship offers hope of interfaith understanding. - Booklist (starred) An all-encompassing introduction to the Christian-Islamic struggle for the armchair history buff. - Kirkus sEnthusiastically embracing intricacy and eschewing oversimplification, Lambert boldly plunges into the struggle between Christianity and Islam to control the Middle East between the seventh and 13th centuries. Recommended not only for history buffs but for anyone seeking a better understanding of the deep roots of today's news stories. - Library Journal About the Author Malcolm Lambert was formerly a professor of theology and medieval history at the University of Bristol. His previous books for the academic market include Christians and Pagans, Franciscan Poverty, Medieval Heresy, and The Cathars. God's Armies is his first book for a general audience. He lives in England.