



# The Crusades: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

By Christopher Tyerman

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Crusading fervour gripped Europe for over 200 years, creating one of the most extraordinary, vivid episodes in world history. Whether the Crusades are regarded as the most romantic of Christian expeditions, or the last of the barbarian invasions, they have fascinated generations ever since, and their legacy of ideas and imagery has resonated through the centuries, inspiring Hollywood movies and great works of literature. Even today, to invoke the Crusades is to stir deep cultural myths, assumptions and prejudices.

Yet despite their powerful hold on our imaginations, our knowledge of them remains obscured and distorted by time. Were the Crusaders motivated by spiritual rewards, or by greed? Were the Crusades an experiment in European colonialism, or a manifestation of religious love? How were they organized and founded?

With customary flair and originality, Christopher Tyerman picks his way through the many debates to present a clear and lively discussion of the Crusades; bringing together issues of colonialism, cultural exchange, economic exploitation, and the relationship between past and present.

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