



## Muslim and Christian Contact in the Middle Ages: A Reader (Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures)

*From University of Toronto Press, Higher Education Division*

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To study the interactions between Muslims and Christians in the medieval period is to observe a history of conflict and co-existence encompassing warfare, piracy, and raiding as well as commerce, intellectual exchanges, and personal relationships that transcended religious differences. With particular focus on the Mediterranean world, this collection of more than 80 readings includes sources from Byzantine, Jewish, Muslim, and Latin Christian authors that explore the conflicts and contacts between Muslims and Christians from the seventh to the fifteenth century. Jarbel Rodriguez has selected geographically diverse readings and multiple sources on the same event or topic so that readers gain a better understanding of the relationship that existed between Muslims and Christians in the Middle Ages.

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

Particularly modern events have sharpened our interest in this large topic, and hence the present anthology specifically geared toward university students comes as a most welcome enrichment of our teaching material. But this collection of relevant texts will also serve scholarship at large, allowing researchers from outside this specialized field to gain immediate access to many of the crucial documents. (*Mediaevistik*)

Jarbel Rodriguez has accomplished something truly special in this volume. Not only has he collected a number of older translations of key sources, but he is the translator of many of the sources in the collection, bringing previously unknown sources (primarily from the Iberian corpus) into the mainstream of medieval studies. The volume is useful in dispelling notions about the simplicity of the medieval period, demonstrating instead the true diversity and complexity of the lives of medieval Christians and Muslims. The final characteristic which recommends this book is Rodriguez' editorial hand. In selecting, arranging, and cropping his sources, Rodriguez has allowed the documents to speak for themselves but still serve as starting places for discussions among students of medieval history. The didactic opportunities which Rodriguez has cultivated through his editorial hand are invaluable. When discussing Christians opting for martyrdom at the hands of Muslims, for example, a teacher could naturally move a discussion from martyrs to crusading knights, making the whole medieval world fit together in all its messiness and confusion. Most useful as a classroom text or for the novice medievalist, this excellent assembly of chronicles, law codes, literature, poetry, correspondence, and moral instruction, commands a strong recommendation. (*The Medieval Review*)

### **Review**

In this elegantly edited and comprehensive compilation of primary sources, Jarbel Rodriguez has provided the perfect and much-needed companion to any course on pre-modern Muslim-Christian relations. This book will help to ground and shape discussion and debate for a new generation that urgently needs and wants to understand this past. (Hussein Fancy, University of Michigan)

*Muslim and Christian Contact in the Middle Ages* is an unparalleled collection of primary sources, many newly translated, that invites readers to consider the full range of Muslim-Christian encounters from the rise of Islam through the fifteenth century. Rodriguez brings the multi-religious medieval Mediterranean to life with an impressive variety of texts: from fiery calls to crusade and jihad to merchants' and travelers' accounts of everyday economic and social relationships; from captivity narratives to inter-religious romances; and from religious polemics to a common thirst for the Muslim world's scientific, medical, and philosophical knowledge. Jarbel Rodriguez's carefully curated and thoughtfully introduced reader will be indispensable for students and thoroughly enjoyable for non-specialists and specialists alike. (Jocelyn Hendrickson, University of Alberta)

Carefully selected, balanced, first-rate translations from both Muslim and Christian sources. It includes not only the key documents one would expect to find in a history of this period, but also lesser-known works that round out the common picture of war and conflict with insights into the daily life of elites and commoners alike. An invaluable resource for anyone interested in the history of Muslim-Christian encounters in the medieval Mediterranean world. (David Blanks, American University in Cairo)

### **About the Author**

**Jarbel Rodriguez** is Professor of Medieval History at San Francisco State University. He is a co-author of *Exchanges: A Global History Reader, Volume I* (2008) with Trevor R. Getz and Richard J. Hoffman and the author of *Captives and Their Saviors in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (2007).

## **Users Review**

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