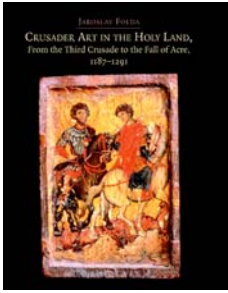


Crusader Art in the Holy Land. From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187-1291 / Jaroslav Folda.—New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, September 2005.—782 p.: ill. + 1 CD-ROM.—ISBN 0-521-83583-6: \$150.00.



Jaroslav Folda, the leading national scholar on Crusader art, has authored numerous publications dealing with varied manifestations of Crusader art and architecture. The present tome is the companion volume to his earlier work, *The Art of the Crusaders in the Holy Land, 1098-1187* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995); the chapters of both books frequently correspond to the reigns of successive kings and queens, and thus the date of 1187, representing as it does the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and the establishment of the new settlement in Acre, is an appropriate point to end volume one and begin volume two.

In the present volume, Folda introduces his topic through an exhaustive historiography beginning with Napoleon's campaigns to the Near East in the late eighteenth century, setting the stage for the early French academicians who focused initially on Crusader history and eventually moved into architecture and art. Folda acknowledges the role of previous generations of art historians in identifying Crusader art as an entity and creating a paradigm which established a feasible methodology for discussion and analysis. As early as 1911, C. J. M de Vogüé set forth the unique characteristics of crusader artistic enterprises, noting that the existing Romanesque style had to be modified due to climate, material, local artisans, and the aesthetic sensibilities of the indigenous Christians of the Near East. Folda's contribution in this study is to examine, comprehensively and critically, all aspects of Crusader art in the Holy Land including architecture, sculpture, metalwork, coins, textiles, ivory carvings, panel and monumental painting and manuscript illumination.

The impediments to a systematic study of any area of medieval art are numerous but the nature of these impediments are multiplied in the Crusader context, given the multicultural society in which they were created and used, the political and military turmoil present in this unstable environment, and the massive destruction of artifacts and sites. Manuscript painting is an area in which much has been destroyed and its production disrupted with the move of the scriptorium from Jerusalem to Acre. One extant inventory provides a prototype of a typical crusader library which would have contained gospels, New Testament texts, treatises and commentaries, classical authors and other secular works. A few leaves of an exemplar from an artist's sketch book known as the "Freiburg leaf" serve as evidence for the "pattern book theory," a source for book illumination as well as panel and monumental painting.

Crusader Art in the Holy Land analyzes the art of the period through a variety of approaches: analysis of materials and techniques; description of form and content; investigation of style and iconography; function and patronage. The text is enhanced throughout with numerous illustrations, maps, ground plans, drawings and a CD containing illustrations from the twenty-seven extant thirteenth-century illuminated manuscripts produced in the Crusader cities of Syria-Palestine and illustrations of some works by the Paris-Acre master. Folda presents and assesses, with fair-minded treatment, a vast amount of material through a critical examination of the extant visual and textual documentation, thus compelling the reader to contemplate these issues. He extends, in this heuristic methodology, an invitation to the reader to pursue further study of the numerous unresolved issues related to Crusader art. The conclusion of the text considers once again the question, "what is Crusader art?" This volume, along with its earlier companion, does more to answer this provocative and compelling query than any other book on the subject. Together, these volumes represent an exhaustive original contribution to the study of Crusader art and an essential art historical tool to any scholarly library. They will retain their value as an unrivalled resource for many years to come, providing as they do substantive information vital to our knowledge of medieval art in both East and West.

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