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The Crusade

The first thought that comes to mind when I think about the Crusades of the 12th and 13th centuries is violence. Image 1 represents some actions that characterized the religious war during the Crusade. The discussion will highlight what such images convey about the historical happening, including the underlying values.



Image 1: Crusaders. Adapted from “The Crusades Illustrations, Royalty-Free Vector Graphics & Clip Art - IStock.” www.istockphoto.com, www.istockphoto.com/search/2/image?mediatype=illustration&phrase=the%20crusades.

What Messages do the Images Convey about the Crusades?

Between 1096 and 1270 C.E., the Christians led military expeditions against their Muslim counterparts. The Holy Lands were at the center of the conflict, with each religious group staking a claim to Jerusalem (Morillo 377). The first message that the images convey

about the Crusade is the aspect of identity. As illustrated in the image above, crusaders wore clothes with a cross symbol to self-identify with Christ (Madden 441). Another powerful message conveyed in the pictures is the conflict involved. Christians fought vehemently in the war to protect and reclaim the Holy Lands from the Muslims. In addition, the Pope had promised forgiveness for anyone who participated in the expeditions (History.com Editors, par. 4). As a result; the Crusade witnessed conflict of unimaginable proportions. The third message conveyed by the images is the sanctity of the land. Christians believed Jerusalem was holy ground because it was where Jesus was crucified and resurrected from the dead. The photo illustration above presents it as a high-stake territory with immense religious significance. Therefore, the images enable people to acknowledge the complex interaction between conflict, faith, and identity that characterized the interaction between the different religious factions.

What Values Seem to Lie Around Such Messages?

The messages conveyed by these images signify the values held by the Crusaders. The ability to fight to retain the Holy Land demonstrates loyalty and honor to Christianity. As the video illustrates, the Crusaders were engaging in an armed war for the sole purpose of protecting Christ and his kingdom (“The Crusades - Pilgrimage or Holy War? Crash Course World History #15” 4:31). The Crusaders spent a lot of money to outfit themselves, including their horses. As a result, this communicates values such as devotion and allegiance to the institution of Christianity. Courage is another value apparent in the messages emanating from the images. Holding arms and showing the desire to attack another person to safeguard religious interests requires courageous individuals. The pictures elaborate on how the Crusaders were ready to lose their lives to regain Jerusalem under Muslim influence. Lastly, the Crusaders exhibited love

through their unity and desire to accomplish their goals. Without affection for one another, the Christians could not converge to fight for their religion and beliefs.

What about Images of Contracts and Contractual Relationships?

The Crusades were about fulfilling the contractual relationships developed by the Christians. The author states, “The history of the Fourth Crusade is governed by vows and contracts, and the lengths men went to fulfill them” (Madden 441). For instance, the image of the cross on the outfits of the Crusaders elaborated a spiritual contract that the Christians would travel to the Holy Land and emancipate it for the sake of Christ. Some images also display secular contractual relationships through agreements such as the Treaty of Venice negotiated between the authorities in Venice and the Crusaders. Therefore, during the Crusade, both spiritual and non-spiritual contracts existed.

In conclusion, the Crusade was a battle between Christians and Muslims for the Holy Land. The images used to depict the event display numerous messages about the nature of the conflict, including faith, war, and identity. It further communicates values such as courage, loyalty, and devotion. Some pictures elaborate on spiritual and secular contracts developed during this period.

Works Cited

- “The Crusades - Pilgrimage or Holy War? Crash Course World History #15.” YouTube, uploaded by CrashCourse, 4 May 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0zudTQelzI>.
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