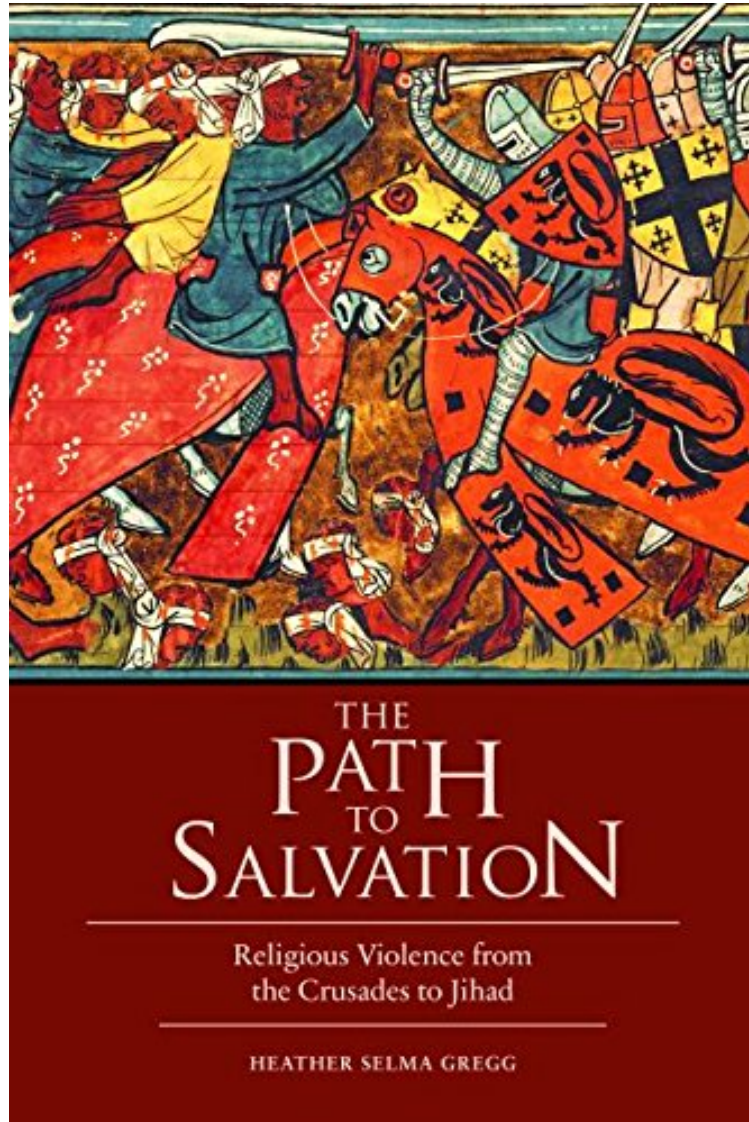


The Path to Salvation: Religious Violence from the Crusades to Jihad

Heather Selma Gregg

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Heather Selma Gregg : The Path to Salvation: Religious Violence from the Crusades to Jihad before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Path to Salvation: Religious Violence from the Crusades to Jihad:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Hope for our world By Cynthia This book has made me ponder and examine my beliefs in new ways. Dr. Gregg writes clearly. Her logical premise explains not only why we have had so

much religious violence in the world, but what can be done to shift and change it. Reading this book brought me new hope for the possibility of world peace in my lifetime. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's not just militant Muslims. By lyndonbrecht This is a well-done and generally very good book on an important topic, highly relevant in an era traumatized by militant Islamic terrorism. The book looks at histories that provide parallels and some differences. There are sections on the Crusades, Sinhalese Buddhist fundamentalism (in Sri Lanka), Hindu-Muslim violence, several jihadi movements from the past, and Jewish violence in 20th century Palestine. Gregg argues that religious violence comes when people feel threatened. It's a provocative point. The various sections are interesting to compare and make a crucial point that religious violence is not and has never been just a matter of Islamic jihadis. Her point brings up the obvious about why people in several religions today feel threatened and by what. The obvious examples are Boko Haram, ISIL and so on, but there remains potent Hindu violence not quite at the point of release, and Buddhists in Myanmar appear to be getting violent against the Muslim minority there. I'm not entirely convinced about the Crusades, though. Her examples could have been more extensive. It might have been appropriate for her to include something on the violence in the disintegration of Yugoslavia--were the massacres religious in nature, such as that of Bosnian Muslims (the victims)? She might have included the famed and long jihad of Shamil (against Russians, in the Caucasus) or the Madhi in the British Sudan. I think she goes a little out of her way to avoid characterizing Islam as more prone to violence than other religions. Still her point is valid; there are a lot of Muslims who feel deeply threatened, by the intrusion of competing values on the roles of women, by economic changes brought by globalization, and simply by what might be called secularism triumphant in global culture. I don't agree with everything in the book, but her examples are enlightening.

In the wake of 9/11, policy analysts, journalists, and academics have tried to make sense of the rise of militant Islam, particularly its role as a motivating and legitimating force for violence against the United States. The general perception is that Islam is more violence-prone than other religions and that scripture and beliefs within the faith, such as the doctrines of jihad and martyrdom, demonstrate the inherently violent nature of Islam.

Professor Gregg has produced a highly accessible contribution to an important and contentious area of study. Highlighting the interpretive enterprise, she explores the complex variables at play in the relationship between religion and violence on a global scale, while giving special attention to notions of salvation (both otherworldly and worldly) in five major religious traditions. Her nuanced and even-handed approach to this charged topic must be commended. Jeffrey R. Halverson, author of *Searching for a King: Muslim Nonviolence and the Future of Islam*