This collection of thirteen studies by Giles Constable is very welcome. Many, such as ‘The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries’ (first pub. 1952), for example, have been widely read since their first publication and have deeply influenced crusade studies. Most of the essays have been revised and the documentation enhanced without any suggestion that the articles were written at a later date, as Constable explains in the introduction. New sections, however, have been added, among them two appendices on the names and numbering of the crusades. Further sources have been brought into the discussion and translated for the volume. Two essays are published here for the first time. The volume therefore represents the sum of Constable’s studies on the twelfth-century crusades.

The essays are arranged in a partly systematic, partly chronological order. The collection opens with two general essays on historiography and symbols (‘Historiography of the Crusades’; ‘The Cross of the Crusaders’). These are followed by essays which focus on social history (‘The Financing of the Crusades’; ‘Medieval Charters as a Source for the History of the Crusades’; ‘The Place of the Crusader in Medieval Society’; ‘The Military Orders’). The remaining seven essays are devoted to specific events, individuals, or topics concerning the twelfth-century crusades, starting with three studies of the First Crusade and early crusading (‘Cluny and the First Crusade’; ‘Early Crusading in Eastern Germany: The Magdeburg Charter of 1107/08’; ‘The Three Lives of Odo Arpinus: Viscount of Bourges, Crusader, Monk of Cluny’), followed by three on the Second Crusade and crusading in the middle of the twelfth century (‘The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries’; ‘Two Notes on the Anglo-Flemish Crusaders of 1147–8’; ‘The Crusading Project of 1150’). An essay on the Fourth Crusade concludes the volume. The two appendices on the names and the numbering of the crusades serve as summaries and present Constable’s current position on the phenomenon of the crusades in general. Constable does not, however, provide a general conclusion summing up his methodological experiences and their results. The essays presented here therefore stand for themselves and are to be read as separate contributions. Some common features and general results concerning the history of the crusades...
and the history of the twelfth century will nonetheless be highlighted here.

Constable’s opening essays on historiography and symbols define his position in the complicated field of crusade studies, which is structured by schools and various conflicting crusade definitions (traditionalists, pluralists, popularists, generalists, among other denominations). The role of the popes, their ideology of war, their privileges, the populace, the motives of the different participants, the strategic aims, the position of Jerusalem in the ideology of the crusades, their geographical direction, and their duration have all long been disputed.

Carefully balancing the benefits and shortcomings of the various perspectives on the crusades, Constable makes use of the different approaches on offer. He is equally interested in papal and canonical concepts, the spiritual expectations of lay people, and economic and psychological occurrences. But Constable’s position in this debate is clear-cut. He emphasizes that there was no coherent crusade concept, just as there was no standard term or even a uniform symbol. Ideas, concepts, and institutions of crusading changed over time. Moreover, different modes of action, degrees of institutionalization, motives, and interpretations of symbols existed simultaneously and were not infrequently contested. Constable explicitly stresses this position in the two appendices. This is why he prefers to speak of ‘crusading’ and ‘crusade’ instead of ‘the Crusade’ with a capital letter, and also suggests that campaigns should be identified by dates and place rather than by numbers. In his essays he translates this position into historical analysis.

Two aspects in particular can be highlighted as general findings of the essays on social history. First, charters and methods of financing show that people from all levels of society and members of both sexes responded to the appeal of the crusades. The spiritual expectations of the people were high, as the donations made in support of the crusades show. Secondly, the flexibility and creativity of twelfth-century societies can be seen in the emergence of new forms of social and spiritual life in the growing cities and the countryside. One of these was ‘the crusader’ or, more specifically, the knight of a military order. Constable holds the opinion that they were neither pilgrims nor monks or warriors in the traditional sense, yet that they shared with them some or all of their ideals, privileges, and characteristics.
In the context of scholarly debates current at the time when the essay was first published (1989), Constable maintained that crusaders in general and knights of the military orders in particular transcended the social order and combined different elements to create essentially new social forms *sui generis*. Even in the light of more recent debates on the military orders as *fraternitates*, this position still holds firm.

The three essays on early crusading put into practice Constable’s multi-layered approach, encompassing social, economic, cultural, and mental history. Intimate knowledge of the monastery of Cluny informs his detailed analysis of its influence on the First Crusade. Constable probes communication links and family relations, spiritual and economic involvement in the Reconquista, and Cluny’s contribution to the idea of holy warfare and to the movement of the peace and truce of God. Even if Cluny’s direct participation in the First Crusade was limited, Constable argues, its role in the development of crusading should not be underestimated. His ‘Life of Odo Arpinus’ adds to this picture and at the same time sheds light on social orders and their flexibility in this period, when Odo changed from Viscount to crusader to monk of Cluny and prior of La Charité-sur-Loire. In his essay on the long contested Magdeburg Charters, Constable experiments with the flexible term ‘crusading’ as exemplified in the first chapter. Since the originators of the charter appealed for military assistance by declaring the territory held by the Slavs ‘our Jerusalem’, Constable argues, the charter itself should be seen as evidence for an early transfer of crusading ideas.

The three essays on crusading in the middle of the twelfth century are valuable for their meticulous analysis of the sources and the image of these controversial campaigns in the minds of contemporaries. Some enthusiasm prevailed in France despite the catastrophes of the Second Crusade and the criticism they provoked. The historical accounts make it possible to link a campaign to the Second Crusade, even if it was not directed to the East and resulted in the conquest of Lisbon. The analysis of the Fourth Crusade also goes back to crusading in general as seen by contemporaries and by the generations of historians—medieval, early modern, enlightened, and modern—who tried to make sense of the crusades after the event. The Fourth Crusade has long been criticized from different perspectives. Constable suggests an interpretation that shows the relations
between Constantinople and Jerusalem as holy cities, and even Constantinople as Jerusalem, in the minds of the crusaders. He thus demonstrates again how crusade ideas were transferred to new geographical goals and how, at the same time, the idea of liberating Jerusalem persisted in the minds of the participants. He upholds the importance of these ideas even against the greed, ambition, and vengeance which are said to have driven this crusade.

Whether this reading of the sequence of studies was the intention of the author will not be discussed here. A different ordering of the essays would have been possible. Topics and details of recent debates which are not addressed could be named. The collection presents, however, a coherent and highly convincing approach to the analysis of the crusades. One of the topics which Constable constantly pursues in his works is the motives, concepts, and images of the participants. Some of those who are seeking orientation in this field of research today could perhaps wish for more explicit statements. Constable could have flagged up parts of his argument with buzzwords like ‘discourse analysis’, ‘network analysis’, or even ‘spatial turn’. But this has never been his style. As usual, Constable moves elegantly and seemingly effortlessly between different genres of sources and methods of interpretation and transcends methodological trends.

DOROTHEA WELTECKE has been Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Constance since 2007. Her most recent publications include ‘Der Narr spricht: Es ist kein Gott’ . Atheismus, Unglauben und Glaubenszweifel vom 12. Jahrhundert bis zur Neuzeit (2010), and Jenseits des ‘Christlichen Abendlandes’: Grenzgänge in der Geschichte der Religionen des Mittelalters (2010).