

[PDF] The Last Apocalypse: Europe At The Year 1000 A.D.

James Reston Jr. - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: The Last Apocalypse: Europe a

Author: James Reston Jr.

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Description:

With the turn of the century approaching, talk of the apocalypse runs rampant. In *The Last Apocalypse*, James Reston reminds us that such talk is nothing new. At the previous turn of the millennium, Vikings, Moors, and Hungarian Magyars beseiged Europe with wanton cruelty and violence, spreading fear and destruction wherever they went and leading many to believe that the end of the world was near. Such colorful characters as Sigrid the Haughty, Svein Forkbeard, Ethelred the Unready, and Al-Mansor the Illustrious Victor were the heroes and villains of the era.

Reston, author of previous works that include *Galileo: A Life* and *Sherman's March*, evokes the historical essence of the time using limited legal and church documents, archaeological artifacts,

and rare contemporary literary accounts. Reston's history reads like an engrossing novel, carefully crafted without getting bogged down in dry details. He skillfully interweaves the complex story of how each European country dealt with these changes, bringing the period back to life.

Reston portrays A.D. 999 as a profound turning point for mankind, mapping out the fate of each country as the Christian kingdoms, unified in belief, brutally conquered and imposed the will of Christianity upon heathen Europe. In the space of 60 years, the established ruling elite were slaughtered or forced to succumb to the turning religious tide. By A.D. 1050, the sign of the cross fell like an ominous shadow across Europe, paradoxically signifying the dawn of peace under Christian unity. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

From Publishers Weekly Reston theorizes that the year A.D. 999?the focus of this highly colorful narrative?was a turning point in history, marking the Christian West's joining of forces against the triple heathen threat of Vikings, Hungarian Magyar tribes and the Moors in Spain. His popular history actually shuttles back and forth from the early eighth century to the death of Hungary's Christianizing King Stephen in 1038. Biographer (Galileo), television writer and journalist, Reston draws liberally from period poems, folktales, sagas, myths, legends and holy chronicles to stitch together an entertaining tapestry replete with revenge, murder, treachery, carnal lusts, rape, geopolitical royal matchmaking and snatches from Norse lyrics. Most memorable are the odd, outsize characters such as Swedish pagan queen Sigrid the Strong-Minded, who burned her spurned suitors to death in a beer hall. Reston also evokes a Byzantine court rife with conspiracy, a corrupt papacy, the end-of-the-millennium broodings of Christians and heathens alike and the cosmopolitan culture of Moorish Spain.

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