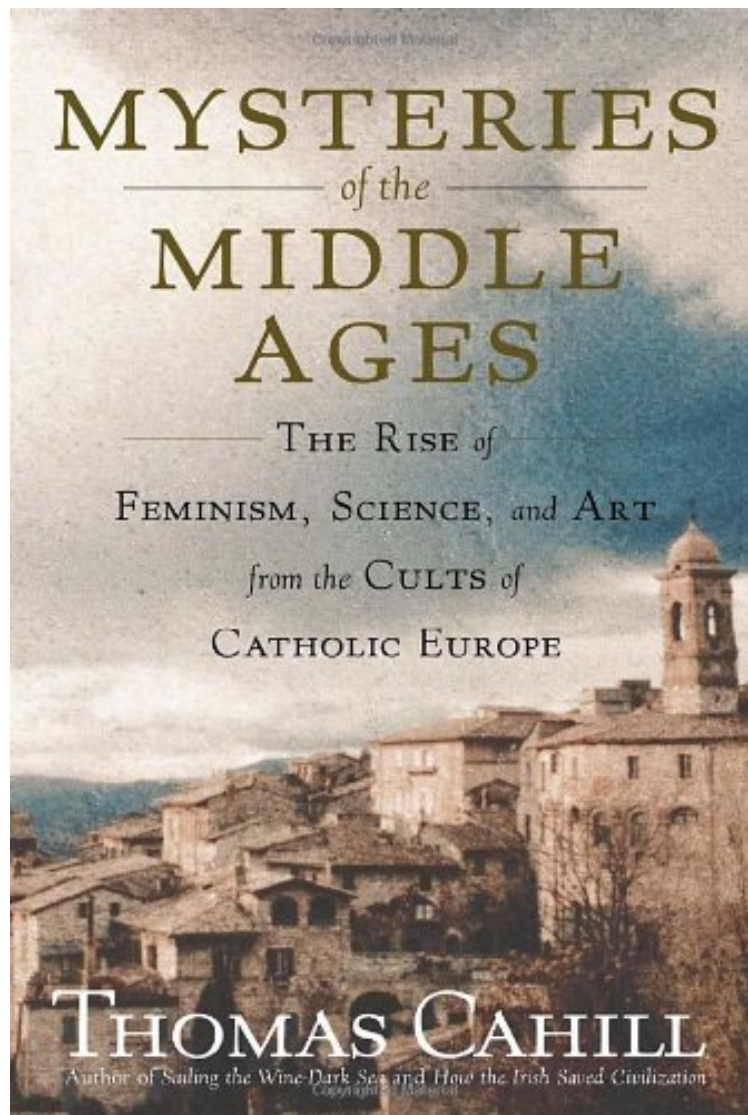


(Mobile pdf) *Mysteries of the Middle Ages: The Rise of Feminism, Science, and Art from the Cults of Catholic Europe (Hinges of History)*

Mysteries of the Middle Ages: The Rise of Feminism, Science, and Art from the Cults of Catholic Europe (Hinges of History)

Thomas Cahill

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Thomas Cahill : Mysteries of the Middle Ages: The Rise of Feminism, Science, and Art from the Cults of Catholic Europe (Hinges of History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Mysteries of the Middle Ages: The Rise of Feminism, Science, and Art from the Cults of Catholic Europe (Hinges of History)*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. 'Hinges of History' series is a must have series for the history buff's home library. By Rowan Thomas Cahill does history superbly. His 'Hinges of History' series is a must have series for the history buff's home library. I bought 'Mysteries of the Middle Ages: The Rise of Feminism, Science, and Art from the Cults of Catholic Europe (Hinges of History' from Chestnut Hill Books on . Very pleased with the book and the service. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. What's up with the Jesuits vs Dominicans? By Mike McMahon Another excellent book by Thomas Cahill. It traces how religion influences art, particularly during the Middle Ages, and also how that art reflected society during the period. However, as usual Thomas Cahill allows his bias towards one sect of Catholicism over another get in the way. This is why I decline to give it 5 stars for this otherwise excellent study. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not the best of Cahill By Thomas E. Ruddick I've resolved to listen to all of Cahill's "Hinges of History" series after being enormously impressed by his combination of historical detail and literary insight as demonstrated in "Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea" (about the Golden Age of Athens) and "How the Irish Saved Civilization" (primarily about St. Patrick and how his monasteries preserved much of the literature of classical antiquity). Alas that this volume doesn't approach those levels. It's entertaining if you like hearing detailed history read by a good British interpreter, but his main thesis--that the high middle ages provided Europe with the inspiration for feminism, liberty, equality, and reason--just doesn't live up to standards of critical thinking. His evidence is the anecdotal exception rather than the bloody, filthy, ignorant rule of the time--and the bloody, filthy and ignorant does come through despite his focus on the niceties. An additional irritant; the written text contains literary passages in Latin or Italian, which the narrator reads first in the original and then in the English translation, as the original paper text carried it. This turns into a disaster, as those who know little Latin and less Italian must listen to many minutes of unintelligible romance language before hearing the quote in a comprehensible language, while anyone who does understand the Latin or Italian won't need the subsequent English version. Sorry that this historian has descended so far that he doesn't reign in his own bias despite excoriating other historians for theirs. Summary: entertaining and enlightening for its details, but far from the best history I've listened to this year.

After the long period of cultural decline known as the Dark Ages, Europe experienced a rebirth of scholarship, art, literature, philosophy, and science and began to develop a vision of Western society that remains at the heart of Western civilization today. By placing the image of the Virgin Mary at the center of their churches and their lives, medieval people exalted womanhood to a level unknown in any previous society. For the first time, men began to treat women with dignity and women took up professions that had always been closed to them. The communion bread, believed to be the body of Jesus, encouraged the formulation of new questions in philosophy: Could reality be so fluid that one substance could be transformed into another? Could ordinary bread become a holy reality? Could mud become gold, as the alchemists believed? These new questions pushed the minds of medieval thinkers toward what would become modern science. Artists began to ask themselves similar questions. How can we depict human anatomy so that it looks real to the viewer? How can we depict motion in a composition that never moves? How can two dimensions appear to be three? Medieval artists (and writers, too) invented the Western tradition of realism. On visits to the great cities of Europe: monumental Rome; the intellectually explosive Paris of Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas; the hotbed of scientific study that was Oxford; and the incomparable Florence of Dante and Giotto Cahill brilliantly captures the spirit of experimentation, the colorful pageantry, and the passionate pursuit of knowledge that built the foundations for the modern world. Bursting with stunning four-color art, MYSTERIES OF THE MIDDLE AGES is the ultimate Christmas gift book.

From Publishers Weekly Cahill's latest engaging romp through pop intellectual history (after *Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea*) focuses, despite the subtitle, not on fringe cults, but on the mainstream of medieval Roman Catholic thought. Instead of obscurantist dogma, he finds a ferment of implicitly progressive ideas that laid the groundwork for modernity. The veneration of the Virgin Mary, he contends, prompted a boost in women's status, exemplified by the mystic nun Hildegard of Bingen, who gained public status and power as a spiritual figure. The papacy's claim of spiritual authority independent from temporal power contained the seeds of modern notions about the separation of church and state, democracy and the legitimacy of political dissent. And the perennial head scratching over the doctrine of transubstantiation, he argues, stimulated the beginnings of both empirical science and artistic realism. Cahill's treatment is more impressionistic than systematic, and built around lively profiles of iconic medievals like Abelard and Hlose, Francis of Assisi and Giotto, whose paintings get a long, lavishly illustrated exegesis. The author wears his erudition lightly and leavens his writing with reader-friendly anachronisms, likening Hildegard to blues chanteuse Bessie Smith and calling the Franciscans "the world's first hippies." The result is a fresh, provocative look at an epoch that's both strange and tantalizingly familiar. Photos. Color illus. throughout. (Oct. 24) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Like a favorite college professor who could make any subject fascinating and understandable, Thomas Cahill takes us on an intoxicating journey through medieval Europe in *Mysteries of the Middle Ages*. Throughout it all, you are keenly aware that the author wants you to fall in love with this pivotal period in Western civilization every bit as much as he did....Cahill spans centuries of

history beautifully and seamlessly, giving readers a lovingly painted picture of the high Middle Ages and how its sensibilities evolved to shape ours today."--The Los Angeles Times"A prodigiously gifted popularizer of Western philosophical and religious thought spotlights exemplary Christians in the High Middle Ages...Cahill serves as an irresistible guide: never dull, sometimes provocative, often luminous."Kirkus's Praise for *Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea*FascinatingCommendableCahill has an impressive knowledge of the Greek world.His admirable skill at summing up movements of enormous complexity surfaces throughout the book.Seattle TimesAstonishingIf anybody can get us reading about Homer, Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Thucydides, Xenophon and more, Cahill will.Chicago TribunePraise for *Desire of the Everlasting Hills*Each of [Cahill's] books offers moments of genuine insight into the workings of culture, literature, and the human heart.CommonwealWith grace, skill, and erudition, he summarizes obtuse semantic and historical arguments, highlights the findings most relevant to lay readers, and draws disparate material together in his portraits of Jesus, his mother, Mary, and the apostle Paul.Washington Post Book WorldPraise for *The Gifts of the Jews*CaptivatingPersuasive as well as entertainingMr. Cahill's book is a gift.New York TimesCahill's clearly voiced, jubilant song of praise to the gifts of the Jews is itself a giftA splendid story, well told.Boston GlobePraise for *How the Irish Saved Civilization*Charming and poetican entirely engaging, delectable voyage into the distant past, a small treasure.New York TimesCahill's lively prose breathes life into a 1,600-year-old history.Boston GlobeAbout the AuthorTHOMAS CAHILL is the author of four previous volumes in the Hinges of History series: *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, *The Gifts of the Jews*, *Desire of the Everlasting Hills*, and *Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea*. They have been bestsellers not only in the United States but also in countries ranging from Italy to Brazil. He and his wife, Susan, also a writer, divide their time between New York City and Rome.