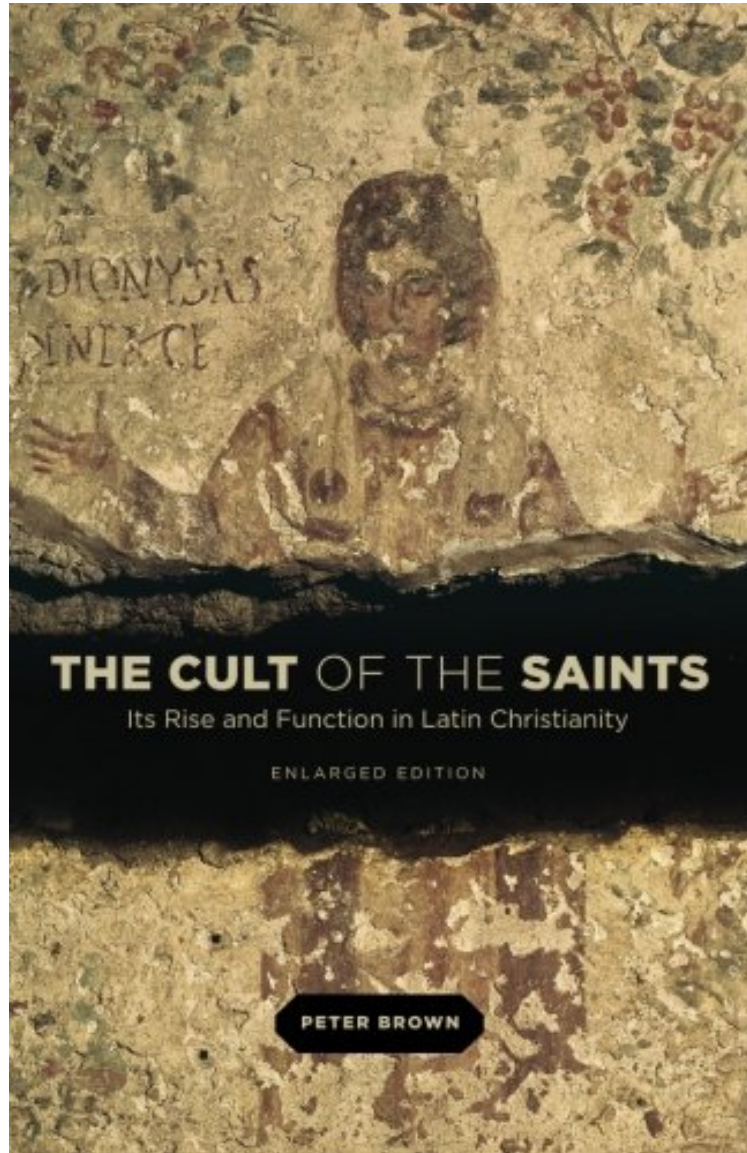


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The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity, Enlarged Edition

Peter Brown

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Peter Brown : The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity, Enlarged Edition before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity, Enlarged Edition:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Bellicose ClassicistBy proptiusThis might be considered a a great primer for those who wish to introduce themselves to the world of historical theory as pertains to the classical world. While Mr. Brown does feel that it is better to approach this world before submersing oneself in the traditional mode of learning through Greek and Latin, he does manage to be a scamp in his unique approach to this field. Begone Gibbons.Of course some may find that while his approach in unconventional, many of his theories have been advanced by Christian apologists throughout the past century. They have come to many of his conclusions be different.That said there is little to quibble about and the the notes alone are worth the price of the book.The style of writing is at times pedestrian and may feel daunting to those readers who have not attuned their ear to the sounds of academia. SInce this book was written for the general, or thereabouts, public, it is a drawback. The reader must truly want to delve into this period. Let us be thankful that there are still scholars who find merit in studying the world of "dead white males" or females.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Freedom and Reconciliation, with AuthorityBy Fr. DougPeter Brown's style is exquisite. He has imbibed the ethos of the late-antique nobility he writes about. There are (from our perspective) gains and losses as the invisible patrons (the saints) supplant visible ones. And while the loss of "horizontal" power in paganism is replaced with vertical authority, we ought to be broad-minded enough to see the gains as well as the losses there. Reconciliation between eternally warring strata of society is a real accomplishment, and is somewhat achieved through the cult of the saints. Not to be missed is Brown's description of demon-possession. Again, we carry our prejudices with us if we think that one labelled as possessed is thereby ostracized or oppressed. The very opposite is the case.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent ReferenceBy KC ResidentI read this on an on-line subscription library (ScribD), then decided to keep a copy in my own e-library for reference. The author provided a focus by having a hypothesis of his own, and this means neglect of some alternative explanations, but the historical account seems pretty complete. Also, supporting a hypothesis makes the data more interesting and easier to evaluate than an allegedly impartial story-telling.

In this groundbreaking work, Peter Brown explores how the worship of saints and their corporeal remains became central to religious life in Western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. During this period, earthly remnants served as a heavenly connection, and their veneration is a fascinating window into the cultural mood of a region in transition. Brown challenges the long-held two-tier idea of religion that separated the religious practices of the sophisticated elites from those of the superstitious masses, instead arguing that the cult of the saints crossed boundaries and played a dynamic part in both the Christian faith and the larger world of late antiquity. He shows how men and women living in harsh and sometimes barbaric times relied upon the holy dead to obtain justice, forgiveness, and power, and how a single sainted hair could inspire great thinkers and great artists. An essential text by one of the foremost scholars of European history, this expanded edition includes a new preface from Brown, which presents new ideas based on subsequent scholarship.

Brilliantly original and highly sophisticated.