



The Late Medieval Age of Crisis and Renewal, 1300-1500: A Biographical Dictionary (The Great Cultural Eras of the Western World)

Clayton J. Drees

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As part of a unique series covering the grand sweep of Western civilization from ancient to present times, this biographical dictionary provides introductory information on 315 leading cultural figures of late medieval and early modern Europe. Taking a cultural approach not typically found in general biographical dictionaries, the work includes literary, philosophical, artistic, military, religious, humanistic, musical, economic, and exploratory figures. Political figures are included only if they patronized the arts, and coverage focuses on their cultural impact. Figures from western European countries, such as Italy, France, England, Iberia, the Low Countries, and the Holy Roman Empire predominate, but outlying areas such as Scotland, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe are also represented.

Late medieval Europe was an age of crisis. With the Papacy removed to Avignon, the schism in the Catholic Church shook the very core of medieval belief. The Hundred Years' War devastated France. The Black Death decimated the population. Yet out of this crisis grew an age of renewal, leading to the Renaissance. The great Italian city-states developed. Humanism reawakened interest in the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. Dante and Boccaccio began writing in their Tuscan vernacular. Italian artists became humanists and flourished. As the genius of Italy began spreading to northern and western Europe at the end of the 15th century, the age of renewal was completed. This book provides thorough basic information on the major cultural figures of this tumultuous era of crisis and renewal.

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