

# [PDF] The Cube And The Cathedral: Europe, America, And Politics Without God

George Weigel - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

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Author: George Weigel

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## Description:

**From Publishers Weekly** Paris's modernist La Grande Arche de la Défense and the Gothic Cathedral of Notre-Dame serve as metaphors for papal biographer Weigel's (*Witness to Hope*) examination of what has happened to Europe in the last several decades and its significance to Americans. Weigel, an American Catholic theologian who has lived and worked on the continent, defines the "Europe problem" as the sharp divergence of European views on democracy, the world and politics from those held by Americans like himself. For him, La Grande Arche ("The Cube") symbolizes the new Europe, retreating from democracy, en route to depoliticization, enamored of international organizations and intellectually Christophobic. Notre-Dame, which guidebooks claim would fit inside the Cube, embodies Europe's Christian history, now strangely absent from the constitution of the European Union. Weigel traces the "Europe problem" to the 19th-century rise of

"atheistic humanism" and "the related triumph of secularization, or de-Christianization, in western Europe." He urges Americans to pay attention to what has happened there because it has implications for the future of democracy in the United States and throughout the world. In developing his thesis, Weigel draws on diverse sources, including the Polish-born Pope John Paul II, who has been keenly interested in Europe's democracies. Readers given to pondering European affairs will find much to pique thoughtful discussion. *(Apr.)*

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**From** Catholic neoconservative Weigel maintains that the weighty preamble to the European Union's proposed constitution demonstrates what is wrong with Europe. The document doesn't mention Christianity as a factor in the formation of Europe, instead touting the nonreligious influences of the pre-Christian ancients and the Enlightenment. The omission produced heated debate but little rewriting, indicating, Weigel says, elite Europeans' hostility to Christianity and reflecting the union's bureaucratic orientation against politics, especially the democracy that Christianity, with its concern for individual human dignity, fosters uniquely among the great world religions. Weigel raises many questions about contemporary European actions, attitudes, and developments--in particular, the precipitate decline of the overall nonimmigrant European birth rate--on the way to concluding that Europe's leadership is bored with life. Those questions and a host of incidental observations are very intriguing and provocative, but Weigel's championing of Catholicism, Poland, and especially the Christ-centered humanism of the present pope as restoratives for a sick Europe may strike many as banking on very long shots. *Ray Olson*  
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