



In the Land of Temple Caves: From St. Emilion to Paris's St Sulpice

Frederick W. Turner

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A cri de coeur from one of America's most eloquent and respected naturalists on why Art does matter. In September 2001, following moments when civilization seemed to have unraveled, Frederick Turner undertook a quest for confirmation that Art does matter, that it is the preeminent human expression of the Life Force; that it is as undeniably necessary as air. In the Land of Temple Caves goes back to the very beginning of Art to assess anew its meanings in the long human story. Turner makes a personal investigation of sanctuaries in France and Spain that the great mythographer Joseph Campbell called the "temple caves," the earliest known of which contains paintings more than 32,000 years old. In the caves are works of art more advanced than the hunting implements by which their creators lived. Turner starts his journey in St. Emilion at the gateway to the country of the caves, and ends it in Paris's St. Sulpice. And in the caves and prehistoric shelters, along the valleys tracing the mighty rivers of the Ice Age, in a war-ravaged village, and in a city church far removed from the country of the caves, Turner finds resonant meaning in what he has always believed to be true. In this beautiful, multifaceted travelogue that puts France's land of temple caves and the inviting life above them on a timeless map, it becomes increasingly, movingly clear: Art does matter.

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