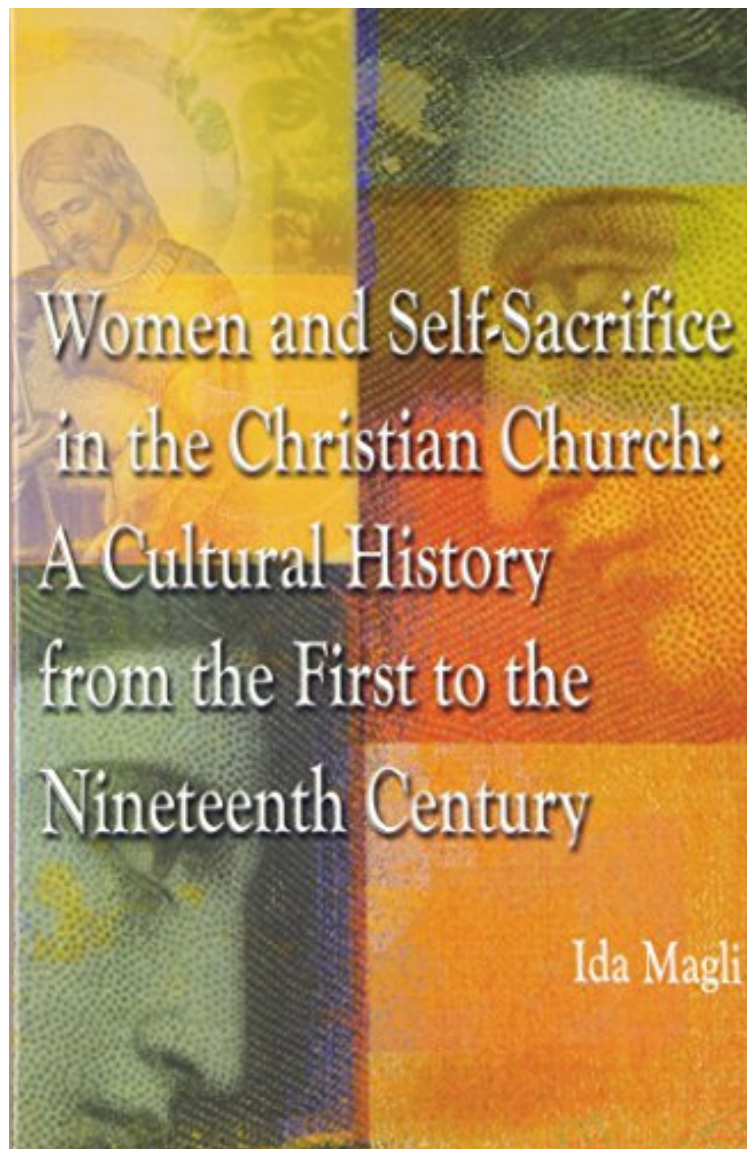


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Women and Self-Sacrifice in the Christian Church: A Cultural History from the First to the Nineteenth Century

Ida Magli

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Women and Self-Sacrifice in the Christian Church: A Cultural History from the First to the Nineteenth Century:

By speaking and teaching to women, Jesus Christ scandalously violated the religious codes of his time and people. Later, by emphasizing virginity and martyrdom, Christianity gave women their first viable option to marriage. Furthermore, in their relationship with God, women like Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, and Joan of Arc also found an opportunity for significant creative activity. Even so, church leaders succeeded in keeping women in the role of victim, a role to which Christianity added religious significance. Unresolved to this day is the problem of developing a truly feminist theology in a religion that depends upon the symbolism of sacrifice. This translation of the Italian work *Storia Iatica delle donne religiose* examines such topics as sexuality, virginity, martyrdom, mysticism, and women's involvement in education and aid societies, from the earliest days of the Christian church through Florence Nightingale's work in the nineteenth century. The author then considers whether the role of sacrificial victim is necessary to society, and the possible implications if the role is universally rejected.

"Radical and challenging analysis...Magli provides a very important new voice...impressive scholarship...recommended." --ChoiceLanguage NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: ItalianAbout the AuthorIda Magli is professor emeritus of cultural anthropology at the University of Rome and also the author of *Cultural Anthropology: An Introduction* (2001). She lives in Rome, Italy.