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Theological Interpretation of Culture in Post-Communist Context

Central and East European Search for Roots

Ivana Noble, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

'Ivana Noble has written a sensitive and powerful book, courageous in its honest pathos for humanity and inspiring with its humble confidence. In these pages the soul of Central-Eastern Europe comes to life as this talented theologian graces us with knowledge of how religious symbols and meaning cultivate the human search for meaning under the ambivalent surfaces of life, in once aggressive but now post-secular societies. Noble offers us in the West an encounter with the Other that cannot but give much food for thought about religion in our own increasingly post-institutional religious situations. Original not only in content but also methodology, her text promises numerous insights for political theology, liturgical studies, theological aesthetics, indeed, for all seeking to construct theologies at once fundamental and practical in this postmodern age.' – Bruce T. Morrill, SJ, Boston College, USA

Twenty years after the fall of communism in Central and East Europe is an occasion to reevaluate the cultural and theological contribution from that region to the secularisation - post-secularisation debate. Czech theologian Ivana Noble develops a Trinitarian theology through a close dialogue with literature, music and film, which formed not only alternatives to totalitarian ideologies, but also followed the loss and reappearance of belief in God. Noble explains that, by listening to the artists, the churches and theologians can deal with questions about the nature of the world, memory and ultimate fulfilment in a more nuanced way. Then, as partakers in the search undertaken by their secular and post-secular contemporaries, theologians can penetrate a new depth of meaning, sending out shoots from the stump of Christian symbolism. Drawing on the rich cultures of Central and East Europe and both Western and Eastern theological traditions, this book presents a theological reading of contemporary culture which is important not just for post-Communist countries but for all who are engaged in the debate on the boundaries between theology, politics and arts.

Contents: Preface; Introduction: culture as a theological theme; PART I THE WORLD: Images of the world in Karel Capek and Isaac Bashevis Singer; Theologies of the world. PART II MEMORY: Heritage of totalitarian cultures in folk music; Redemptive memory on theology. PART III THE ULTIMATE FULFILMENT: Figuring the ultimate fulfilment in Central European cinema; Love as the ultimate fulfilment in theology; Conclusion; Bibliography; Index.

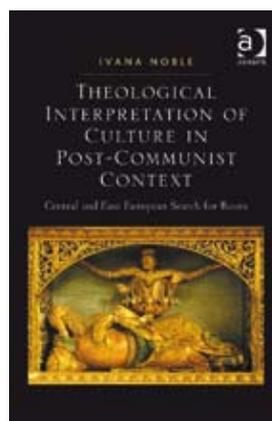
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