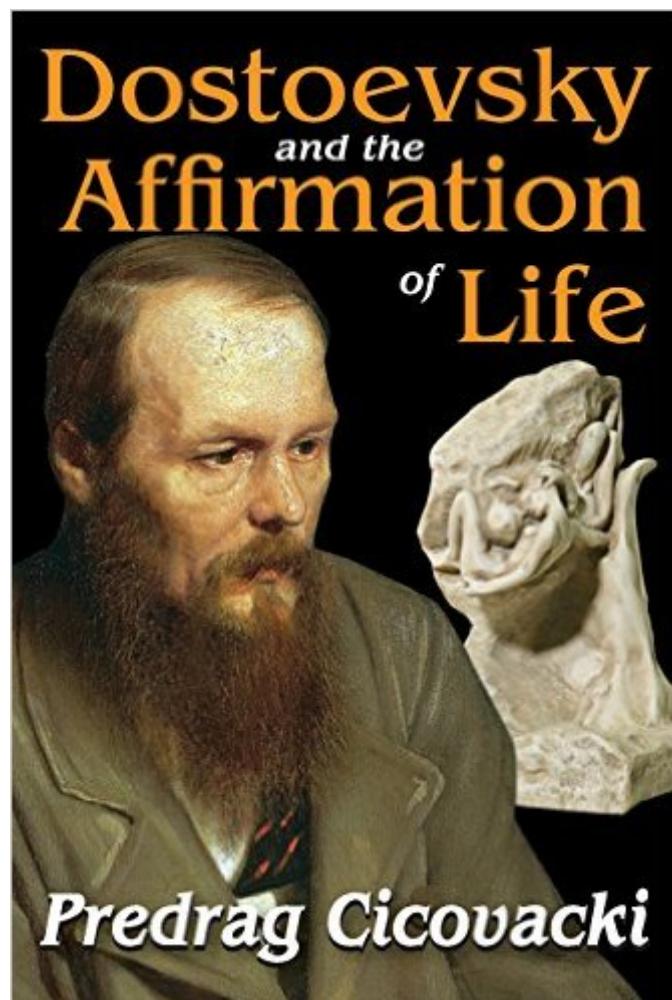


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Dostoevsky And The Affirmation Of Life



Predrag Cicovacki



Synopsis

Dostoevsky's philosophy of life is unfolded in this searching analysis of his five greatest works: Notes from the Underground, Crime and Punishment, The Idiot, The Possessed, and The Brothers Karamazov. Predrag Cicovacki deals with a fundamental issue in Dostoevsky's opus neglected by all of his commentators: How can we affirm life and preserve a healthy optimism in the face of an increasingly troublesome reality? This work displays the vital significance of Dostoevsky's philosophy for understanding the human condition in the twenty-first century. The main task of this insightful effort is to reconstruct and examine Dostoevsky's "aesthetically" motivated affirmation of life, based on cycles of transgression and restoration. If life has no meaning, as his central figures claim, it is absurd to affirm life and pointless to live. Since Dostoevsky's doubts concerning the meaning of life resonate so deeply in our own age of pessimism and relativism, the central question of this book, whether Dostoevsky can overcome the skepticism of his most brilliant creation, is innately relevant. This volume includes a thorough literary analysis of Dostoevsky's texts, yet even those who have not read all of these novels will find Cicovacki's analysis interesting and enthralling. The reader will easily extrapolate Cicovacki's own philosophical interpretation of Dostoevsky's literary heritage.

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Customer Reviews

Reading this excellent book has resulted in a demonstration of the Law of Unintended Consequences. Like many people I have read Dostoevsky over the years, but very rarely return to

the novels in their entirety, largely because they require extraordinary time and concentration for a general reader (such as myself). So when this book came to my attention it seemed like an effective and efficient way to revisit Dostoevsky. That was a mistake (more about that later). Cicovacki focuses upon five major works (Notes From the Underground, Crime and Punishment, The Possessed, The Idiot, and The Brothers Karamazov) to reveal insight for Dostoevsky's philosophy of life and his spirituality, which features a clear-eyed realism regarding the sorrows of life and yet optimism for redemption by sustaining one's humanity throughout the inevitable trials. Dostoevsky's Christianity draws upon the God of the Book of Job and the Christ of the Gospels, sacrificed for mankind and a model of sacrifice for mankind. Good and evil co-exist in Dostoevsky's world, and Cicovacki vividly demonstrates how that tension is portrayed in the novels and why there is good reason to consider Dostoevsky an optimist (on balance). For some, this book will be of little value but for others you will find great insight and comfort. The difference may be decided by what one considers the "affirmation of life." If materialism and "progress" is your sole metric, maybe take a pass. If, however, our humanity (how we interact with others, how we empathize, and how we retain an appreciation for certain mysteries in life) is your primary denominator, then dive in.

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