
METAMORPHOSES OF CULTURE

Tonči MATULIĆ, *Metamorphoses of Culture. A Theological Discernment of the Signs of the Times against the Backdrop of Scientific-Technical Civilization*, Lit Verlag GmbH&Co. KG Wien, 2018.

The book has been originally published by *Glas Koncila* in Zagreb in 2008 and it has reprinted three times by the same publisher in less than a year. It has been now translated in English and published in November 2018 by *Lit Verlag GmbH&Co. KG Wien*, as a part of the project *Theology East – West European Perspectives*, which is edited by Prof. Janez Juhant (University of Ljubljana) and Prof. Albert Franz (University of Dresden).

In the opening pages of the book the reader will find the table of contents with titles of parts and chapters, the foreword of the author, and the introduction. The book has been divided into seven (7) parts and thirty (30) chapters. At the end of the book there is the conclusion, the index of names, and the notes on texts in the book. The book contains 677 pages.

Undoubtedly, this capital theological work demands concentrated reading of extremely complex topics that the author discusses, starting from a theological discernment and reading of the signs of the times. The theological perspective that the author assumes is built on the documents of the Second Vatican Council and guided by post-conciliar theology, read in the key of complex metamorphoses of theology, the Church, culture, consciousness, scientific-technical consciousness, bio-ethical challenges as a sign of the times, and spiritual consciousness as a sign of the times. The key thesis from which the author starts is certainly the term signs of the times. Its source is to be found in the heart of the Gospel and the proclamation of the Kingdom of God as the proof that God is present in the history and time. Furthermore, he demands conversion and the awareness of the eschatological dimension that is irrevocably related to contingency and the incarnation of Jesus Christ

in whom the work of salvation of the human being and the world begins. The author demonstrates that the Council follows the footsteps of reading and recognising the signs of the times, which demands new consciousness, mentality, and culture. In this way, Christians can respond to challenges of today's world and recognise signs of God's activity in the world.

Thus, in an original and systematic theological reflection on key topics, the author offers a diagnosis of consciousness of the contemporary human being and of the spiritual situation of the times, which are indispensable for theologians and for the proclamation of the Gospel. This amounts to a profound understanding of complex contemporary phenomena and metamorphoses that are influenced by the instrumental reason and, in turn, exert their influence (today more than ever before) on consciousness, mentality, culture, and spirituality of the human being. In the last few centuries, Christian anthropology has been found wanting, not entirely adequate, and struggling with an attempt to provide an integral image of the human being and the world. In that regard, T. Matulić's efforts in this book can be classified as a profound contribution to constructing a new synthesis of the human being, inspired by the Second Vatican Council. Thus, the author grapples with those deeper and more complex metamorphoses of the human being that are taking place in the very heart of „being human“ and in his/her power of knowledge and moral activity.

ANTE BEKAVAC
antebekavac@gmail.com