



Nobility of Spirit: A Forgotten Ideal

By Rob Riemen

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Already translated into ten languages, this brief testament to the transformative power of ideas is resonating with readers?especially the rising generation?throughout the world.

Nobility of Spirit is a spiritual journey to the source of those values?especially truth, freedom and dignity?that must be sustained in order for civilization to flourish. Riemen explores the tradition from Socrates and Spinoza, to Goethe, Whitman, and Thomas Mann?singular individuals who courageously refused to compromise their ideals, and he engages with them with great insight, intimacy and invention. It is the anti-fascist Mann with whom Riemen feels a particular affinity, and who serves as a beacon to a world free of barbarism. Mann's 1945 volume, *Nobility of Spirit: Sixteen Essays on the Problem of Humanity*, inspires the form of Riemen's inquiry. Indeed, Riemen's eloquent meditation on "nobility of spirit" begins with an extraordinary encounter with Elisabeth Mann Borghese, guardian of the oceans, and the last surviving daughter of the great author of *The Magic Mountain* and other masterworks. Riemen's slim, powerful volume ends with an essay on Leone Ginsberg, an Italian Jewish intellectual murdered by the Nazis, who implores his wife?the novelist Natalia Ginsburg?to "be brave" as he is taken to his death. Ultimately, Riemen calls for all of us to "be brave" as we battle those forces?terror, hate and ignorance?that are conspiring against humanity.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Rob Riemen has written a rare and much needed book, one which we appreciate not because we necessarily agree with its views, but for its commitment to ideas and its passion for imagination. It is a timely reminder of how imaginative knowledge can become a way of questioning, connecting to and changing the world as well as ourselves."?Azar Nafisi

(Azar Nafisi)

"The author's vast cultural knowledge, his firm commitment to liberal ideals and the agility of his pen make these essays an invaluable guide to orient us amid the great political and cultural problems?and the ideological confusions?of the world in which we live."?Mario Vargas Llosa

(Mario Vargas Llosa)

"Rob Riemen's essays spring from a deep and firm conviction?they are like water from artesian wells and this is, I think, the main reason why they are so important and refreshing."?Adam Zagajewski

(Adam Zagajewski)

"Written with such elegance, erudition and skill, a singular reflection of fundamental problems, virtues and vices, of our time."?Ivan Klima

(Ivan Klima)

"Mr. Riemen's *Nobility of Spirit* is intended as a meditation on the forces that threaten civilization and, no less important, on the forces that are desperately needed to sustain it."?Darrin M. McMahon, *Wall Street Journal*

(Darrin M. McMahon *Wall Street Journal* 2008-06-10)

"Agree or disagree with Riemen's profound, ambitious and high-minded plea, you will be thinking about his words for a long time. It's been ages since a work of non-fiction moved us this way. Read it."?The Elegant Variation (Blog)

(*The Elegant Variation (Blog)* 2008-10-22)

"Riemen's study is beautifully crafted and luminously intelligent."?Richard Wolin, *Dissent*

(Richard Wolin *Dissent* 2008-09-01)

"With beautiful clarity, Rob Riemen renders complex ideas simple and accessible to every earnest reader. His work is the embodiment of civilization: what it has sometimes briefly been, and what it can be again."?Cynthia Ozick

(Cynthia Ozick)

About the Author

Rob Riemen, an essayist and cultural philosopher, is founder of the Nexus Institute, an international center devoted to intellectual reflection and to inspiring Western cultural and philosophical debate. He lives in the Netherlands.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lisa Hegland:

Book is to be different for every grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. As it is known to us that book is very important for all of us. The book Nobility of Spirit: A Forgotten Ideal ended up being making you to know about other information and of course you can take more information. It is rather advantages for you. The guide Nobility of Spirit: A Forgotten Ideal is not only giving you a lot more new information but also being your friend when you really feel bored. You can spend your spend time to read your publication. Try to make relationship with all the book Nobility of Spirit: A Forgotten Ideal. You never truly feel lose out for everything should you read some books.

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