Aesthetic Themes in Pagan and Christian Neoplatonism: From Plotinus to Gregory of Nyssa

Daniele Iozzia

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Whilst aesthetics as a discipline did not exist before the modern age, ancient philosophers give many insights about beauty and art. In Late Antiquity Plotinus confronted the problem of beauty and the value of the arts. Plotinus' reflections have an important role in the development of the concept of the value of artistic imagination during the Renaissance and the Romantic era, but he also influenced the artistic taste of his time.

Aesthetic Themes in Pagan and Christian Neoplatonism reconstructs the aesthetic philosophical views of Late Antiquity, and their relation to artistic production of the time. By examining the resonance of Plotinus' thought with contemporary artists and with Christian thinkers, including Gregory of Nyssa, the book demonstrates the importance of Plotinus' treatise *On Beauty* for the development of late ancient aesthetics. The Cappadocian fathers' interest in Plotinus is explored, as well as the consequent legacy of the pagan thinker's philosophy within Christian thought, such as the concept of beauty and the narration of the contemplative experience.

Uniquely utilising philological and philosophical insight, as well as exploring both pagan and Christian philosophy, *Aesthetic Themes in Pagan and Christian Neoplatonism* represents the first comprehensive synthesis of aesthetic thought of Late Antiquity.

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