



Plotinus on Self: The Philosophy of the 'We'

Pauliina Remes

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Plotinus, the founder of the Neoplatonic school of philosophy, conceptualises two different notions of self (or 'us'): the corporeal and the rational. Personality and imperfection mark the former, while goodness and a striving for understanding mark the latter. In this text, Dr Remes grounds the two selfhoods in deep-seated Platonic ontological commitments, following their manifestations, interrelations and sometimes uneasy coexistence in philosophical psychology, emotional therapy and ethics. Plotinus' interest lies in what it means for a human being to be a temporal and a corporeal thing, yet capable of abstract and impartial reasoning, of self-government and perhaps even invulnerability. The book argues that this involves a philosophically problematic rupture within humanity which is, however, alleviated by the psychological similarities and points of contact between the two aspects of the self. The purpose of life is the cultivation of the latter aspect, the true self.

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