

Abstract

The thesis investigates Plotinus' concept of beauty. Chapter 1 focuses on two methodological issues: development in Plotinus' thought and topics of the concerned *Enneads*. Since Plotinus wrote two *Enneads* directly devoted to this topic which were numbered and named by Porphyry I.6 *On beauty* and V.8 *On intellectual beauty*, these two treatises are addressed first in the context of other relevant *Enneads* (chapters 2 and 3). The outcome of these chapters is that beauty is primarily to be found in Intellect and that it is closely linked with unity in multiplicity, so this topic is further investigated in more detail. Five mutually interconnected perspectives Plotinus assumes to describe the unity in multiplicity specific to the Intellect, are outlined. Two of them that are related to the nature of intellection and intelligible objects are discussed in chapters 2 and 3. The one related to Intellect's genesis is analysed throughout the thesis. Therefore, most of chapter 4 focuses on the remaining two perspectives which are connected with Intellect's hierarchical (*Ennead* VI.2) and structural (*Ennead* VI.6) unity in multiplicity. In chapter 5, *Ennead* VI.7 is analysed in order to deepen the concept of beauty and refine its relation to the Good, life and other predicates. The last chapter presents a systematic summary of the use of the predicate beauty on various ontological levels. Beauty is in the end understood as illuminated unity in multiplicity of the Intellect, i.e. primarily a characteristic of Intellect as a whole. The beauty of Intellect has its source in the Good and both the soul and the sensible participate in it, although each in its unique way. Since the Good is manifest in beauty of the Intellect and derivatively in that of soul and the sensible, it enables the soul to ascend to the Good, but may simultaneously seduce it and cause it to erroneously understand beauty as the ultimate object of its desire.

Key words:

Plotinus, beauty, unity in multiplicity, ancient aesthetics, ancient philosophy