

The present work is an attempt to provide a complex exposition of the philosophy of George Gemistos Plethon, a XVth century Byzantine Platonist who influenced also contemporary Renaissance thinkers in Italy. The first part of this study treats Gemistos' "public philosophy", that is, his practical proposals for political reforms in the despotate of Morea (in the Peloponnese) on the basis of Platonic principles as well as the funeral orations, which he composed and in which the immortality of the human soul is demonstrated by rational argumentation. The second part is dedicated to the overall reconstruction of Plethon's own version of Platonism or philosophia perennis, the perennial rational philosophy, which is common to all the people throughout different ages and the best expression of which is to be found in the works of Plato and Zoroaster (the Chaldaean Oracles, according to Plethon). Finally, the third part discusses the religious beliefs of Gemistos – examines the testimonies of the contemporaries, his stand at the Council of Florence, and his treatise on the procession of the Holy Spirit as well as the neo-pagan Laws which is a kind of his self-stylisation to Plethon, "the second Plato", – with the result that it is rather improbable that Gemistos was a Platonic polytheist as it is often claimed.