



A Philosophical History of Love: 0

Wayne Cristaudo

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A Philosophical History of Love explores the importance and development of love in the Western world. Wayne Cristaudo argues that love is a materializing force, a force consisting of various distinctive qualities or spirits. He argues that we cannot understand Western civilization unless we realize that, within its philosophical and religious heritage, there is a deep and profound recognition of love's creative and redemptive power.

Cristaudo explores philosophical love (the love of wisdom) and the love of God and neighbor. The history of the West is equally a history of phantasmic versions of love and the thwarting of love. Thus, the history of our hells may be seen as the history of love's distortions and the repeated pseudo-victories of our preferences for the phantasms of love. Cristaudo argues that the catastrophes from our phantasmic loves threaten to extinguish us, forcing us repeatedly to open ourselves to new possibilities of love, to new spirits.

Fusing philosophy, literature, theology, psychology, and anthropology, the volume reviews major thinkers in the field, from Plato and Freud, to Pierce, Shakespeare, and Flaubert. Cristaudo explores the major themes of love of the Church, romantic love and the return of the feminine, the conflict between familial and romantic love, love in a meaningless world and the love of evil, and the evolutionary idea of love. With Cristaudo, the reader embarks on a journey not just through time, but also through the different kinds, origins, and spirits of love.

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