



Plato's Four Muses: The Phaedrus and the Poetics of Philosophy

By Andrea Capra

Harvard University, Center for Hellenic Studies, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 226 x 150 mm. Language: English. Brand New Book. Plato's Four Muses reconstructs Plato's authorial self-portrait through a fresh reading of the Phaedrus, with an Introduction and Conclusion that contextualize the construction more broadly. The Phaedrus, it is argued, is Plato's most self-referential dialogue, and Plato's reference to four Muses in Phaedrus 259c d is read as a hint at the ingredients of philosophical discourse, which turns out to be a form of provocatively old-fashioned mousike. Andrea Capra maintains that Socrates's conversion to demotic as opposed to metaphorical music in the Phaedo closely parallels the Phaedrus and is apologetic in character, since Socrates was held responsible for dismissing traditional mousike. This parallelism reveals three surprising features that define Plato's works: first, a measure of anti-intellectualism (Plato counters the rationalistic excesses of other forms of discourse, thus distinguishing it from both prose and poetry); second, a new beginning for philosophy (Plato conceptualizes the birth of Socratic dialogue in, and against, the Pythagorean tradition, with an emphasis on the new role of writing); and finally, a self-consciously ambivalent attitude with respect to...



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