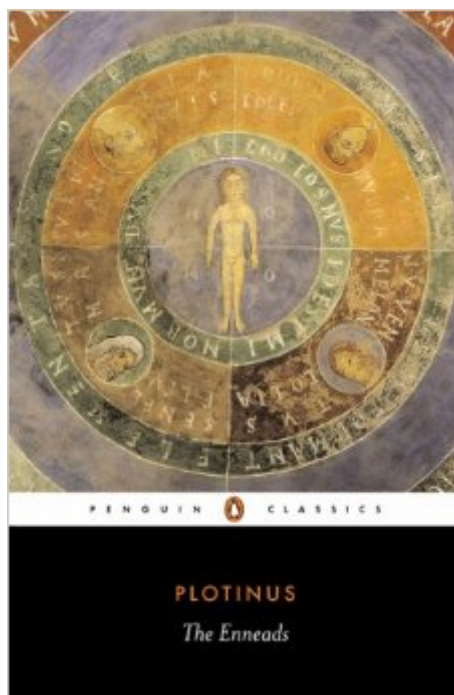


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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Enneads (the Nines) is/are the greatest surviving work of spiritual philosophy of late antiquity. Here we have expounded Plotinus' interpretation of the perennial philosophy. We are shown that the material world has a spiritual origin, for all of creation emanates down from the divine Source, through the various levels of manifestation, to our own world. Moreover, we are shown that mankind's ultimate goal is to turn away from the distractions of this lower material creation and seek union with this divine Source (God, the One, the Good.) While Plotinus criticised the Gnostic sects of his day, it is obvious that his own idea of intuitive intellectual knowledge, where subject and object unite in perfect understanding, is pure gnosis. The main disagreement seems to have been on the

nature of the material world: The Gnostics held it to be inherently evil, while Plotinus saw it as simply lower and inferior, yet basically good. This Penguin edition has a large and informative introductory section. It includes an excellent biography of Stephen Mackenna, the translator, who gave his life and health to this work. There is also a good brief historical sketch of late historical times to help the reader to understand the period in which Plotinus wrote. Plus, the brief, condensed, well-structured, outline of Plotinus' system of Philosophy is invaluable in getting an initial grip on the concepts that are expanded upon in the main work. Finally, Porphyry's brief contemporary biographical sketch of Plotinus is included. There is great wisdom in this book for those who can penetrate the traditional intuitive mindset. This only to be expected since Plotinus studied the perennial philosophy at the great library of Alexandria for over a decade.

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