



# Ancient Philosophy of the Self: 64 (The New Synthese Historical Library)

*Pauliina Remes, Juha Sihvola*

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This collection studies the various ways and conceptual frameworks with which the ancients approached selfhood. What am I, fundamentally, as a reasoning, acting and affected subject, interpreting the world around me, being distinct from others like and unlike me? The volume starts from the question whether and with which qualifications something like the concept 'self' may be attributed to ancient philosophers. Another methodological challenge is whether there is one single question of the self, and if not, what the questions into which it breaks are, and how they might be connected. The contributions combine systematic and historical approaches to ancient sources, and range from Socrates to Plotinus and to the Christian thinkers Paul and Augustine. The volume also explores the influence of ancient philosophy on Western and Islamic philosophy of the medieval era. In antiquity, selfhood may be traced in the junctures of metaphysics, philosophical psychology and ethics. Self is primarily understood as constituent part of an objective world rather than its outside spectator. Discussions on selfhood are located within the overall teleological framework typical of ancient philosophy. This gives rise to the prominence of the idea of ideal selfhood. Another background assumption is the natural sociability of human beings. Some of the authors of the collection emphasise ethical underpinnings, other study themes that are, rather, ontological, epistemological or psychological in nature.

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