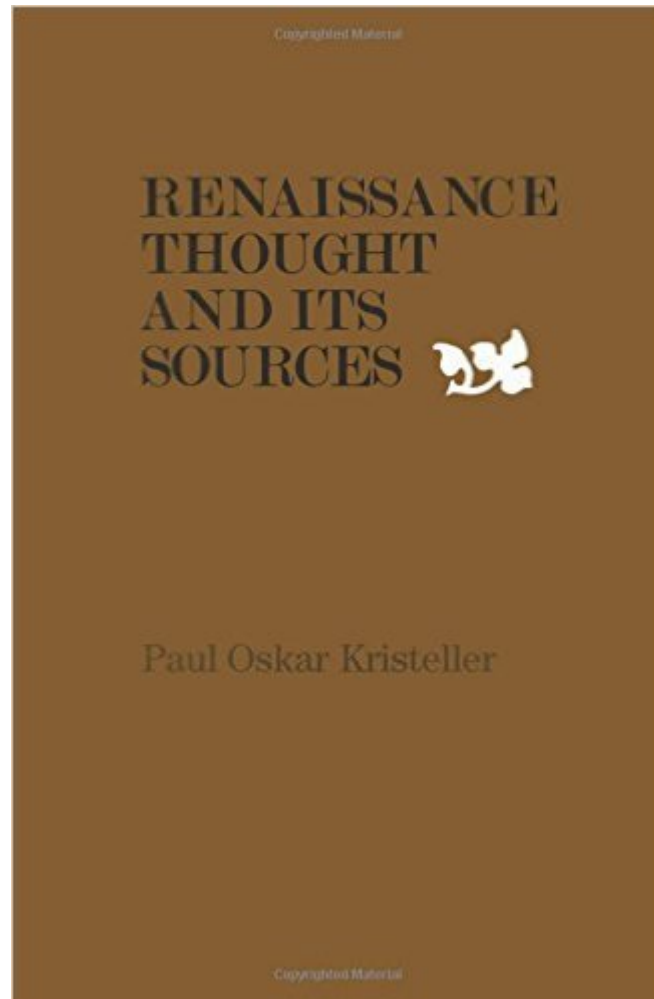


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Renaissance Thought And Its Sources



Synopsis

Renaissance Thought and Its Sources presents the fruits of an extraordinary lifetime of scholarship: a systematic account of major themes in Renaissance philosophy, theology, science, and literature, shown in their several settings. Here, in some of Paul Oskar Kristeller's most comprehensive and ambitious writings, is an exploration of the distinctive trends and concepts of the Renaissance, grounded in detailed historical investigation. All of these fourteen essays were originally delivered as lectures. Part One identifies the classical sources of Renaissance thought and exposes its essential physiognomy, indicating its humanist, Aristotelian, and Platonist traditions. The next two parts present Renaissance thought in the historical context of the Latin and Greek Middle Ages. Part Four offers a thematic study of Renaissance thought, examining its characteristic conceptions of man's dignity, destiny, and grasp of truth. Part Five forms a summary from the perspective of a central theme of Renaissance intellectual life and of the entire Western tradition: the relation of language to thought and the seemingly insoluble contest between our literary and philosophical traditions. The reader of "Renaissance Thought and its Sources" enjoys the results of meticulous study in a concise yet comprehensive format. Throughout, Kristeller achieves a graceful blending of severe historical scholarship and adherence to humane values that the editor calls "nearly a lost art in our times."

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the most important books in the study of Italian Renaissance (14th-16th century). For those who would like a readable but scholarly introduction to the Renaissance, this is it. The book is

intended to explain the intellectual origin, spiritual inspiration and mental struggles of the great Renaissance scholars and artists. My professor once said to my class " this book is worth its weight in gold!" Though that might be a slight exaggeration, the book is certainly a worthwhile read. This book is one of the rare academic but mind racing, heart pounding books that one cannot put down until finish. Don't let the scholarliness intimidate you, push yourself to read it and you will see what I mean.

Kristeller is a heavy hitter on Renaissance thought. This is no broad overview or half thesis. Kristeller offers plenty of footnotes and covers the ideas of key thinkers and how they shaped Renaissance thought from Neo-Platonism to Humanism, and even Aristotelean influences. It's obvious why Professor Steven Greenblatt cites Kristeller. However, what I appreciated is how Kristeller offers a balanced voice in the conversation about Humanism instead of proposing one key element of historical causality like Greenblatt in "The Swerve". Also Kristeller doesn't seek opportunistic moments to bash the Catholic Church. He makes a clear distinction on the definition of Humanism, and he later clarifies in what narrow sense one could apply the term Christian Humanism. If you're looking for a good analysis of Renaissance thought, I highly recommend this work.

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