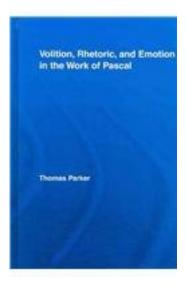
Volition, Rhetoric, and Emotion in the Work of Pascal



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This study identifies and analyzes a compelling theory and practice of persuasion that integrates the complexity of human desire. It demonstrates how the philosophical component in Pascal's description of the will makes a seamless integration into a vehicle of persuasion and poetics, providing a privileged viewpoint for understanding the author's complete works, arguing that the notion of will is of fundamental importance in Pascal's anthropology as well as in his rhetoric. This avenue of interpretation is both fruitful and difficult, because the word "volonte" means very different things in Pascal and in modern French. Beginning by contextualizing the notion of 'volonte' and explaining its expanded use in the seventeenth-century lexicon, the author then endeavors to show that Pascal borrows an essentially Augustinian paradigm of desire to create a depiction of the will divided against itself, surreptitiously yearning for what its bearer does not want.

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