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Sommario/riassunto

Il decimo volume delle Metamorfosi dei Lumi è dedicato a indagare il complesso fenomeno dell’emergenza del sentimento negli anni del Tournant des Lumières (1780-1820). Nonostante il Settecento sia sempre ricordato come il secolo della ragione, esso avvertì al contempo dolorosamente i limiti della razionalità stessa, intavolando un’inedita discussione sulla dimensione passionale. Precedentemente condannato come un fattore di turbamento della ragione, un malcelato residuo di animalità, il sentimento diventa la chiave di volta non solo della riflessione etica tardo settecentesca (caratterizzata dal fiorire della morale sentimentalista in opposizione al razionalismo cartesiano), ma anche il cuore di una nuova retorica incentrata sul patetico e di una riflessione politica che individua nella natura passionale dell’essere umano uno dei tratti dirimenti della sua socievolezza.