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Nota di contenuto	List of Illustrations -- Preface -- Acknowledgments -- Abbreviations -- Introduction: Writing the Image -- PART I. Image Theory as Metaphysics and Theology: The Emergence of a Tradition -- 1 A Brief Metaphysics of the Image: Plato-Plotinus -- 2 Theology and Phenomenology of the Byzantine Icon -- 3 The Eschatological Image: Augustine-Bonaventure-Julian of Norwich -- 4 The Mystical Image: Platonism and Communal Vision in Nicholas of Cusa -- PART II. The Image in the Era of Naturalism and the Persistence of Metaphysics -- 5 The Symbolic Image: Visualizing the Metamorphosis of Being in Goethe -- 6 The Forensic Image: Paradoxes of Realism in Lyell, Darwin, and Ruskin -- 7 The Sacramental Image: G. M. Hopkins -- 8 The Epiphanic Image: Husserl-Cezanne-Rilke -- Works Cited -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	"Thomas Pfau's study of images and visual experience is a tour de force linking Platonic metaphysics to modern phenomenology and probing literary, philosophical, and theological accounts of visual experience from Plato to Rilke. Incomprehensible Certainty presents a sustained reflection on the nature of images and the phenomenology of visual experience. Taking the "image" (eikon) as the essential medium of art and literature and as foundational for the intuitive ways in which we

make contact with our "lifeworld," Thomas Pfau draws in equal measure on Platonic metaphysics and modern phenomenology to advance a series of interlocking claims. First, Pfau shows that, beginning with Plato's later dialogues, being and appearance came to be understood as ontologically distinct from (but no longer opposed to) one another. Second, in contrast to the idol that is typically gazed at and visually consumed as an object of desire, this study positions the image (eikon) as a medium whose intrinsic abundance and excess reveal to us its metaphysical function, namely, as the visible analogue of an invisible, numinous reality. Finally, the interpretations unfolded in this book (from Plato, Plotinus, Pseudo-Dionysius, John Damascene via Bernard of Clairvaux, Bonaventure, Julian of Norwich, and Nicholas of Cusa to modern writers and artists such as Goethe, Ruskin, Turner, Hopkins, Cezanne, and Rilke) affirm the essential complementarity of image and word, visual intuition and hermeneutic practice, in theology, philosophy, and literature. Like Pfau's previous book, *Minding the Modern*, *Incomprehensible Certainty* is a major work. With over fifty illustrations, the book will interest students and scholars of philosophy, theology, literature, and art history"--

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