

## THE DOCTRINE OF LOVE IN LATIN PATRISTICS OF THE IV-V CENTURIES: A LITERATURE REVIEW OF RUSSIAN APPROACH\*

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**Abstract:** The paper consists of brief literature review of fundamentals and ways of the Russian approach to the studying of the doctrine of love in Latin Patristics of the IV-V centuries. This topic is peripheral theme for the Russian science; however, it has some development. The literature review describes the most popular ideas and the reasons for their choice.

**Keywords:** Latin Patristics. The doctrine of love. Russian approach

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## Introduction

One of the eternal themes of theological knowledge is the theme of love, its divine origin and implementation in man. Despite the fact that love was the subject of study from the earliest ages to the present time, the origin of love in the person and its clear definition is not set. In this sense, the relevance of the New Testament's words "this is a great mystery" (Eph 5: 31-32) remains unchanged. Love is a mystery, the mystery of God. The genesis of Love in the person is a secret action of divine grace. The comprehension of this mystery requires the reverential attitude that a person can get closer to the feeling of its genesis. The mystery of love in some way accessible to the human mind, enlightened by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Holy Fathers help us acquire the love as the highest Christian virtue and say about the mystery of human language's words by using of allegories, similes, epithets, and other techniques that contribute to the reader's dive into the meaning and spirit of the text.

The relevance of the research in Russia can be traced from the two standpoints.

1. From the standpoint of the spiritual and moral crisis of modern Russian society in which Love became more primitive;
2. From the standpoint of logic, theology, personality development and theology of love.

### *1. From the standpoint of spiritual and moral crisis of the modern Russian society*

Modern Russian society, which is driven by individualistic values, is experiencing a spiritual and moral crisis and the understanding of love became more primitive.<sup>1</sup> Therefore,

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Pavenkov, O. V.& Rubtcova, M. P. (2016) Value orientations to the inclusive education teachers in Russia: results of a pilot study. *Dilemas Contemporaneos-Educacion Politica y Valores* Volume: 4 Issue: 1 Pages: 13; Rubtcova, Mariia & Vasilieva, Elena (2015). *Managing Human Capital: How Public Servants Support the Governance's Performance Conception in Russia*. Proceedings of 2015 International Conference on Public Administration, pp. 237-247; Pavenkov, O., Pavenkov, V.& Rubtcova, M. (2014). The altruistic behavior: characteristic of future teachers of inclusive education in Russia. *International Conference Psiworld 2014 - 5th Edition* 187: 10-15 DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.03.003; Pavenkov O., Shmelev I., Rubtcova M. *Coping behavior of orthodox religious students in Russia*. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*. 2016. V. 15. Issue 44. P. 205-224.

there is a need for the development of a rich spiritual experience, presented in the IV-V centuries' patristics. It is possible to go out of this crisis, associated with the loss of the original meaning of love, on the basis of the nomination of the ideal of the supreme value of love and its implementation in the life of the individual. A man ceases to be a human being and becomes "nothing" without love.

## *2. From the standpoint of logic, theology, personality development and theology of love*

Along with the general cultural necessity, relevance to the treatment of the theme of love is caused by the failure of the theoretical analysis of its theological and anthropological side. The logic of personality theology gives rise to the urgent need for an anthropological study of humanity. Therefore the theoretical and practical study of the need for a Christian place of love in the human being is enhanced.

A promising area of this research is to study the papers of the Fathers, where love is discussed in the anthropological sense as the timeless and fundamental essential human quality that is Patristics of the IV-V centuries. It has developed a system of theological categories than substantially affected not only the culture of the church but also on the entire course of the development of European culture. Appeal to this topic is relevant for both the history of theology and the development of modern moral knowledge.

Designed by the holy Latin Fathers of the IV-V centuries approach to the anthropological aspects of Love lets to find new qualities, come closer to understanding the meaning of Love and outline the prospects for its further philosophical and anthropological research. The value of the theoretical heritage of the holy Latin Fathers remains relevant to Russia today, as the experience of previous periods can help to better understanding of the modern man and to identify ways of cultural development.

Thus, the study of the teachings of Love in the Latin patristics of the IV-V c. is essential for the decision of spiritual and moral problems of the modern Russian society and for the development of the theology of personality.

## **Study Periods**



that the immortal soul, driven by Eros, is a mystical contemplation of the Absolute, "beautiful in itself, clear, clean, unalloyed, not burdened with human flesh, colors and every other mortal nonsense ... divinely beautiful ... in all its uniformity."<sup>3</sup> In his article "Platonism in the Russian culture", R.V. Svetlov underlines the importance of Plato in the Russian cultural context. "In a sense, his teachings for the first time shows the cultural horizons of those who seem to us habitual and habitable. "Platonic love", "Philosophy of the Eternal," etc. -. It all sounds the first time in Plato's texts ... Platonism - is the world that can be presented as a model and as a problem for our understanding of existence. However, - R.V.Svetlov notes - in some of its fundamental units, he can not be reduced to the Christian view of the world (or to the fact that domestic philosophers understood by the Christian worldview). The perception (space) at home ... extremely consistent and profound understanding transcendentalism beginnings, the ability to accept and justify almost any tradition - that some of these settings. "<sup>4</sup> However, this Platonic influence of the Holy Fathers is merely semantic, but not semantic in nature. In general, the separation of love in the form of being inherited from ancient philosophy acquired in the Latin patristic conditional. Platonic Eros, as, for example, Aristotle's friendship has nothing to do with the Christian sacrificial love.

As a rule, the Russian authors do not analyse the antique and philosophical doctrine of love in their connection with Latin patristics, because it looks like not compatible with the patristic tradition. A deep thinker and a specialist in ancient philosophy Orthodox monk Andronikos (A.F. Losev) in the work "Essays on Ancient Symbolism and Mythology," proves that "reconcile them (these two traditions) is impossible without the suicide, and they have to kill each other, each other anathematize."<sup>5</sup> Then he explains his idea: "All these cultural types completely individual, original, completed internally and with each other are

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<sup>3</sup> Plato.Symposium, ed. J. Burnet, *Platonis opera*, vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901 (repr. 1967): St III. P. 137.

<sup>4</sup> Светлов Р. В. «Русский Платон». Платонизм в русской культуре// Платон: pro et contra Платоническая традиция в оценке русских мыслителей и исследователей. СПб: издательство РХГА, 2001. – С. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Лосев А.Ф. Очерки античного символизма и мифологии. - М., 1993. - С.865.

completely incompatible. They can be grouped logically, dialectically. However, as types of the dispensation of life as a social unit, they can only anathematize and shoot each other. "<sup>6</sup>

Ancient philosophy, from the standpoint of orthodox morality preaches adherence to sinful passions associated with erotic love, which is necessary to carry carnal passion, lust in its diverse varieties: fornication, sexual attraction to members of the same sex (homosexuality), etc. In Aristophanes' speech in Plato's "Symposium" these sins are described in the myth of the androgyne Ramkahen: "Men, representing one of the parts before being bisexual ... .. hungry for women, and fornicators mostly belong to this breed, and women are susceptible to the origin of such men and slutty." <sup>7</sup> Living in sin and passion leads to the fact that the line between the extremes of "love" and "not-love" is erased. Thus, the doctrine of love in ancient philosophy can not be treated as if it acted as the foundation of the patristic teachings about love.

Love is a subject of interest of many Western and Russian scholars XX-XXI centuries. The author of the fundamental work "The definition of love: the philosophical, theological and scientific cooperation" Thomas Oord provides an explanation as to why he includes in its definition of God's love<sup>8</sup>. The source of love can only be God. Christianity is the religion of love. Love is the fullness, the totality of spiritual perfection. It reveals the love in the man himself, in the depths of his heart, which is the depth of the inner world. This idea was developed in the modern researchers of love, believing that one of the main achievements of religion consists in the fact that love dwells in the heart as the ultimate reality<sup>9</sup>.

In addition to Western science "agape," <sup>10</sup> concepts use a variety of synonymous terms, "compassionate love", "unconditional love," "mercy," "love without boundaries."

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<sup>6</sup> Лосев А.Ф. Очерки античного символизма и мифологии. - М., 1993. - С.893-894.

<sup>7</sup> Plato. Symposium, ed. J. Burnet, Platonis opera, vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901 (repr. 1967): St III. P. 118.

<sup>8</sup> См.: Oord, T. J. Defining Love: A Philosophical, Scientific, and Theological Engagement. Michigan: Brazos Press, 2010, - p.175

<sup>9</sup> См.: Jacob Neusner, Bruce Chilton. Altruism in world religions. Washington DC: Georgetown in University Press, 2005; Thomas Jay Oord. Science of Love: the wisdom of well-being. West Conshohocn, PA: Templeton Foundation press, 2004, - p.453.

<sup>10</sup> «The names for the concept varied and overlapped with other concepts and names. "Agape," "altruistic love," "compassionate love," "unconditional love," "compassion," and "unlimited love" have all been used.», - Lynn G. Underwood noticed. [Underwood, Lynn G. Perspectives from researches//The love that does justice.

Lynn Underwood gives the following definition of altruistic love: "altruistic love - a love that focuses on the good of others, selfless, sacrificial love." <sup>11</sup>

There are many areas, positions and views on love. This is a common theological, historical, theological, historical and philosophical works, which along with other issues considered and the doctrine of love in the patristic era, or certain aspects of it. These are works of Samuylov V<sup>12</sup>, Skurat K.E.<sup>13</sup>, prot. John (Meyendorff) <sup>14</sup> arhim.Kiprian (Kern) <sup>15</sup>, Popov I.V<sup>16</sup>, Fokin<sup>17</sup> A.R, Pelikan J.<sup>18</sup>, Lossky V.<sup>19</sup>

The Russians prefer to show that the Western tradition has provided us with a sample of rationalistic understanding of love. For instance, this idea sounds too rationalistic for the Russian readers: "Love helps us to understand when and how to save and use rationality, even in the most severe circumstances, by increasing self-understanding of our predilections, prejudices and" white spots "and to establish an objective view of our strengths and weaknesses." <sup>20</sup> Tapped modern Western science, the social meaning of love "demonstrate as political, economic, organisational development, social and international relations can be

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Spiritual activism in dialogue with social science, edited by Michael A. Edwards & Stephen G. Post. Cleveland: Unlimited love press, 2008, p.126] CM.: also: Underwood, Lynn G., The Human Experience of Compassionate Love: Conceptual Mapping and Data from Selected Studies//Altruism and Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue, Oxford University Press, 2002; Underwood, Lynn G., "Interviews with Trappist Monks as a Contribution to Research Methodology in the Investigation of Compassionate Love. Forthcoming, Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior. 35:3 (September, 2005)

<sup>11</sup> Underwood, Lynn G. Perspectives from researches//The love that does justice. Spiritual activism in dialogue with social science, edited by Michael A. Edwards & Stephen G. Post. Cleveland: Unlimited love press, 2008, p.126

<sup>12</sup> Samuylov V. *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (353–430). Moscow, 1890.

<sup>13</sup> Skurat K.E. *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> John (Meyendorff). *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 2006. 2001 – 336 p.

<sup>15</sup> Kiprian (Kern). *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 1996

<sup>16</sup> Popov I.V. *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 2004.

<sup>17</sup> Fokin A.R. *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Pelikan J. *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Vol. 1. Chicago, London, 1971

<sup>19</sup> Lossky V. *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 2000. -628 p; Lossky V. *Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, and Religion in Dialogue*. (I – V Moscow). Moscow, 1991

<sup>20</sup> The love that does justice. Spiritual activism in dialogue with social science, edited by Michael A. Edwards & Stephen G. Post. Cleveland: Unlimited love press, 2008, - p.8

transformed into radical excellent form of rationality"<sup>21</sup>, motivating the case of sacrificial love. Rationality of love to be implemented in the social structures and subsystems, the operation of which is essential for the existence of all successful societies.<sup>22</sup> This examination of love through the prism of rationality<sup>23</sup> is a distinctive feature of the Western doctrine of love. The Russians have deliberately distanced themselves from the Western view of love due to its dry rationalistic and speculative and prefer to be based on the patristic heritage, which addressed domestic theologians and philosophers.

In the fundamental work by Losev "History of ancient aesthetics" a little attention is given to the doctrine of Augustine of love, which establishes a link between caritative and triadological doctrine<sup>24</sup>. A similar paucity in this respect, there is a large paper by G.G. Mayorov "Formation of Medieval Philosophy: Latin patristic"<sup>25</sup>, in which only a few pages devoted to the Augustinian doctrine of love. Theology Augustine can be seen by work of domestic researchers I.V Popov<sup>26</sup>, K. Skvortsov<sup>27</sup>, A.P. Vereschatsky<sup>28</sup>, Placidus (Desaix)<sup>29</sup>, G. Zyablitsev<sup>30</sup> and others.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid

<sup>22</sup> [X]: op sit. «This, I think, is what Martin Luther King meant when he wrote about the "love that does justice," signifying the deliberate -cultivation of mutually-reinforcing cycles of personal and systemic change.», -think Michael A. Edwards. [The love that does justice. Spiritual activism in dialogue with social science, edited by Michael A. Edwards & Stephen G. Post. Cleveland: Unlimited love press, 2008, - p.167]

<sup>23</sup> Шестов, Л. На весах Иова (Странствия по душам) / Л. Шестов // Сочинения: в 2 т. - М., 1993. - Т. 2.; Шестов, Л. Киркегард и экзистенциальная философия. Глас вопиющего в пустыне / Л. Шестов. — М., 1992.; Шестов Л. Религиозная философия Вл. Соловьева // Умозрение и откровение. Париж, 1964.;

<sup>24</sup> Лосев А. Ф. История античной эстетики: Итоги тысячелетнего развития. М., 1992. Кн. 1. Лосев А.Ф., Личность и Абсолют. М.: Мысль, 1999. - 719 с. Лосев А.Ф., Эрос у Платона / Философия. Мифология. Культура. М.: Политиздат, 1991. С. 188-208.

<sup>25</sup> Майоров Г. Г. Формирование средневековой философии: Латинская патристика. М., 1979. Майоров Г. Г. Августин и греческая философия // Майоров Г. Г. Формирование средневековой философии. М., 1979. С. 192–210

<sup>26</sup> Попов И. В. Личность и учение блаженного Августина. Ч. 1–2. СПос., 2005

<sup>27</sup> Скворцов К. Блаженный Августин как психолог // Труды Киевской Духовной Академии. 1870. № 4. С. 154–200; № 5. С. 324–354; № 6. 681–713; № 8. С. 328–372; № 9. С. 641–696.

<sup>28</sup> Верещатский П. Плотин и Августин в их отношении к тринитарной проблеме // Православный собеседник, 7–8 (1911). С. 171–197; 9 (1911). С. 305–328 (переизд.: Августин: pro et contra. СПб., 2002. С. 193–231)

<sup>29</sup> Плакид (Дезей), архим. Блаженный Августин и «Филиокве» // ВРЗЕПЭ. 1982. № 109–112. С. 206–223.

<sup>30</sup> Зяблицев Г., диак. Богословие блаженного Августина и античная философия // Церковь и время. 1991. № 1. С. 65–76.





Theological Academy dissertation on the theme "The Church in the social life of Antioch and Constantinople from the works of St. Chrysostom svt. Ioanna" which opened ecclesiology svt. Ioanna Chrysostom.

However, special studies directly devoted to the disclosure of the love of the Latin patristic teachings in IV - V centuries. In Russia, it has not yet been carried out. This is a task for future research.

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