The guests of Agathon, after they had dined and had poured a libation to Dionysus, discussed whether or not they should drink and listen to the music of a flute-girl and decided instead to speak, one after the other, in praise of love. The course of action which Plato describes in the Symposium would have little plausibility as a modern narrative. It would have scant ground in modern habits, expectations, or institutions—aPart from changes in the conventions of dining, drinking, and conversing and in the relations of classes in society, the communication and concourse of friends, and the status of poetry and poetic competitions in the state, the subject matter discussed by Socrates and his companions has undergone profound alterations. The argument by which Eryximachus supported the topic, that no poet had yet written a song in praise of Eros, has long ceased to be true; and few philosophers would welcome the topic enthusiastically today for the reason given by Socrates, that he professed to understand nothing except love matters—ἐρωτικόν. Those modern philosophers who do profess to understand love prefer to talk about it by treating one of its contraries. Dr. Menninger, thus, hesitated before naming his recent book Love against Hate, because there is a general tendency to shrink from the use of the word “love” as being sentimental, romantic, or weak. Titles using the words “hate,” “war,” “conflict,” and the like (Dr. Menninger for some reason does not include “fear” and “tension” explicitly in his list) are considered more acceptable because they sound strong, scientific, and dignified and at the same time somewhat deterrent. This attitude toward “love” epitomizes for Dr. Menninger the chief message of his book and its commentary on our civilization. Love has continued to be a theme for poets and psychiatrists, and recollection of the Platonic Symposium suggests today, not a philosophy of love, as it has at various times in the past, but reflections on the ways in which men have talked about love—the different arts and techniques by which it has been developed in application to the relations of men to women, friends, and societies, to mankind, the universe, and God—and the different circumstances in which the discussions have occurred—the methods, manners, and persistent yet altering subject matters of discussion of symposia.

In antiquity the symposium was recognized both as a literary form and as a social institution. Hermogenes of Tarsus, the rhetorician, writing in the second century A.D., treats the symposium as one of five literary forms—Socratic symposium, oration, dialogue, comedy, and tragedy—defining each according to the double method which it employs. Popular oratory combines reprehension with consolation; comedy conjoins the bitter and the ridiculous; tragedy links pity and wonder; the Socratic symposium joins the serious and the ridiculous in persons and in things; the dialogue employs arguments which exhibit character and arguments designed for investigation and dispute. Athenaeus of Naucratis, writing in the third century A.D., examines the banquet exhaustively as a social institution, seeking evidence and data from all sources: the messes at Sparta and Crete and the dinners of heroes celebrated by Homer and the poets as well as the conversations of philosophers. Hermogenes finds the models of his literary form in the symposia of Plato and Xenophon; Athenaeus, on the contrary, finds the customs, actions, characters, sentiments, and manners portrayed by Homer preferable to those set forth by the philosophers—by Plato, Xenophon, and Epicurus. Much that is irrelevant to the treatment of the style of the symposium, considered as a literary form, becomes important in accounts of symposia, treated as a social institution. Athenaeus' Deipnosophistae touches on almost every conceivable subject, including recipes and table etiquette. Other writers, like Plutarch, collect the topics discussed at symposia and
argue that the philosophic queries and discourses recorded by Plato and Xenophon have a lasting quality that renders inappropriate accounts of the costly dishes, sauces, and wines served at the houses of Agathon and Callias. The form of the symposium may be examined as a literary genre; the institution of the symposium may be studied for insight into a culture and for inspiration to pursue like values; the subject matters discussed may be preserved for utility and erudition; but if the symposium is to be examined for a structure of philosophical argument, the Symposium of Plato stands apart, not only from the symposia of poets, satirists, and scholars, but also from those of other philosophers, for the Platonic argument binds together and transforms the method, the circumstances, and the subject matter of discussion and lights upon the literary criticism of the symposium as art form, the sociological traits of dining and drinking together, and the erudite collections of table talk.

The method of dialectic, as Plato conceived it, does more than construct a formal statement or adapt an argument to data and principles: it is adjusted to the character of the disputants no less than to the peculiarities of their subjects; and the solution of the problem, the clarification of the understanding, and the development of the argument are inseparable parts of one process. The speeches in the Symposium are composed in distinctive styles, each appropriate to the speaker who uses it precisely because it is adapted to the position he wishes to express concerning the common subject, love. The truth about love, in so far as it is attained, is found in no one speech but rather in the development and context in which the variety of meanings of love is explored. In a significant sense it is Alcibiades, not Socrates, who has the last word, while the violent piety and traditionalism to which Aristophanes gives comic expression contain a threat which is not lessened by the argument of Socrates.

All the chief participants in the Symposium, except Aristophanes, were present in the Protagoras as silent observers during the discussion of whether or not virtue can be taught. Phaedrus, whose enthusiasm for Lysias’ discourse on the advantages of the nonlover as lover is described in the dialogue that bears Phaedrus’ name, echoes Lysias’ style. He quotes the poets to support a conception of love as the cause of the greatest good to man in life and in death; by it lovers are led to deaths celebrated and interpreted by poets—the death of Alectis, the lover who died for love; the death of Orpheus, the lover who did not dare to die; the death of Achilles, beloved but not a lover, who sacrificed his life for Patroclus the lover. Pausanias, the friend and lover of Agathon and his companion in exile at the court of Archelaus, employs the rhetoric of Prodicus in his speech. He touches on the paradox of the love which Phaedrus described by criticizing him for failing to state what kind of love he praised. Pausanias differentiates two kinds: a heavenly and an earthly love whose differences are apparent in their objects and in the associations and societies of men. The political institutions of Elis, Boeotia, and Ionia and of tyrannies in general reflect the earthly love as contrasted with the path of the heavenly love practiced in Athens. The speech of Eryximachus, a physician, recalls the rhetoric of Hippias. He approves the distinction of Pausanias but criticizes the narrow restriction of love to men, and his speech extends it, on the evidence of the sciences—of medicine, music, astronomy, and the mantic art—to the attraction of all things to a variety of things, which works in the bodies of all animals and all growths upon the earth. His is a cosmic love, but he does not neglect the motions of love in its sexual or political applications. Aristophanes had satirized the philosophy of Socrates in his Clouds, and his speech in the Symposium imitates the method of his comic art, setting forth a myth of separation, search, and return, which accords with the love encountered in poetry, politics, and nature.

The discourses after Aristophanes’ natural history of love place a new emphasis on the need to define its essence before examining its processes and operations. Agathon, the tragic poet whose victory was the occasion of the symposium, uses a figurative style in his speech in which Socrates humorously finds borrowings from the rhetoric of Gorgias. Agathon’s criticism of all the speeches is that they have not praised the god or stated his nature. He therefore presents the nature of love, with generous quotations from the
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poets, as most beautiful and most virtuous and for that reason the source of all good things. Socrates confesses that the preceding speeches convinced him that he was ignorant of the method of praising love, although he had thought himself expert on love matters and had been prepared to give a fine speech because he knew the truth, and he therefore secures permission to use his customary method, the cross-questioning elenchus. His dialogue with Agathon demonstrates that love is not beautiful, and his speech recounts a dialogue with Diotima, who was expert in matters of love and who had helped the Athenians delay the coming of the plague. In that dialogue love is shown to be neither beautiful nor ugly, neither good nor bad, neither god nor man. Many kinds of love and many kinds of poetry are distinguished, since the whole cause of whatever passes from not being into being is poetry, so that the productions of all arts are kinds of poetry and their craftsmen are all poets. A ladder of such loves is constructed from beautiful bodies, to beautiful habits, to beautiful learning, and at last to the study of beauty itself, which makes possible the reinterpretation of the insights of the poets, the practices of the politicians, and the knowledge of the scientists. Alcibiades was known for beauty, talents, and dissipation and, to the reader of the dialogue, for the disaster his ambitions brought on Athens. His speech is a myth which sets forth the uniqueness of Socrates as a lover to balance the myth constructed by Aristophanes to show the common urge implanted by love in all men. All five of the literary forms distinguished by Hermogenes are here: there are rhetorical speeches, not deliberative orations, to be sure, but encomia, combining praise and blame; there are dialogues in which the arguments are moral and investigatory, since they both show forth the characters of the speakers and advance inquiry and dispute; the work itself is a symposium combining the serious and the ridiculous in men and in things; and it closes with the argument of Socrates to demonstrate to Agathon and Aristophanes that the knowledge required to write comedy and tragedy is the same, recalling briefly in that episode the identity for dialectic of oration, dialogue, symposium, comedy, and tragedy.

Love and Philosophical Analysis

When one turns from the form to the circumstances of the discussion of love, the prominent part played by drinking and drunkenness is obtrusive. The speakers complain, at the beginning of the dialogue, of the effects of excessive drinking the night before, and some of them slip away to escape the drinking that is resumed after the entrance of Alcibiades. Drink is of particular importance in characterizing three of the speakers. Aristophanes acknowledges that he was among those who went to extremes on the previous day; he is prevented from taking his proper turn as speaker by an attack of hiccoughs; and he is one of those still drinking at the end of the dialogue until he drops off to sleep. Alcibiades bursts into the party drunk and in love, protests that the company looks sober, persuades them to drink, and chooses his subject, the praise of Socrates rather than the praise of love, after remarking the injustice of pitting a drunken man against sober tongues. In the preliminary discussion of whether the company should drink or talk Socrates is left out of consideration, since drinking or not drinking is a matter of indifference to him, and at the end he leaves to go about his business after the hardest drinkers have fallen asleep.

One is tempted, so prominent is the place of drinking in the discussion, to find a difference of literary genre in the difference between drinking together and eating together, between symposia and banquets, but that temptation encounters the philological impediment that the word “ouptr6otot” does not occur in Plato’s Symposium except as its title; Agathon’s party is called a dinner (6eirvov), a dining-together (otz6e r,trvov), and a being-together (cuvovoLa), but never a symposium. Indeed, the temptation probably reflects a memory of the orderliness of Hellenistic pedantries or the simplicities of Roman common sense which we usually fall back on in our contact with Hellenic wisdom. Cicero invented the word “compotatio” to distinguish the symposium from the “concenatio” or banquet and to make clear the superiority of the Roman over the Greek tradition:

For our fathers did well in calling the reclining of friends at feasts a convivium, because it implies a communion of life, which is a better desig-
nation than that of the Greeks, who call it sometimes a “drinking together” (comptatio) and sometimes an “eating together” (concenatio), thereby apparently exalting what is of least value in these associations above that which gives them their greatest charm.5

For Plato the relations among drink, love, virtue, poetry, and philosophy are more subtle and more deeply laid. In the Phaedrus Socrates differentiates two kinds of madness, one arising from human diseases, the other from a divine release from customary habits; and of the divine madness he finds four kinds: prophecy inspired by Apollo, the mystic madness by Dionysus, the poetic by the Muses, and the madness of love, inspired by Aphrodite and Eros.6 One of the great problems which Socrates pursued throughout his life was whether virtue can be taught. It can be taught, under the perfect conditions of the ideal state, by dialectic and philosophy. But Socrates also learned from Diotima that love is engendering and begetting in beauty;7 that true love or even true pederasty is the ascent from beautiful things, to beautiful souls, to beauty; and that love teaches virtue;8 and he argued that to hate what ought to be hated and to love what ought to be loved is the mark of true education.9 Wine, too, assists in teaching virtue, for it serves a function for the old in inculcating virtue or its use, similar to that of music for the young;10 and in the actual or second best state described in the Laws the good legislator will lay down the laws of drinking and of music,11 and the state itself is ruled not by dialecticians but by a Nocturnal Council of older men.

Love, the subject, displays all the complexities discovered in the method and circumstances of the discussion. Plato’s starting point is the partial truths of poets and sophists: the dark, mysterious love celebrated by poets which is the source of good and of destruction, the self-centered love which finds its end in the satisfaction of desires and impedes true goods in the pursuit of its pleasures, the bonds of association which practical politicians and sophists would reduce to the operation of power, and the impulsions and motions of things which scientists would reduce to congeries of bodies. Love is a madness comparable to the madness or inspiration of poetry, of

wine, or of prophecy. Those madnesses have a bearing on the analyses of practical and of theoretic knowledge. Callicles undertakes, in the Gorgias, to defend his doctrine that luxury and licentiousness and liberty, if they have the support of force, are virtue and happiness, by the fact that the stronger are able to benefit their friends out of their accumulations,12 while Socrates argues, in the course of his refutation of that doctrine, that such a man cannot be the friend of man or God, “since he cannot commune with any, and where there is no communion, there can be no friendship (φιλία). And wise men tell us, Callicles, that heaven and earth and gods and men are held together by communion and friendship, by orderliness, and temperance, and justice; and that is the reason, my friend, why they call the whole of this world by the name of order (ορθοσύνη, not of disorder or dissoluteness.”13 In the Republic Plato seeks to unify the state by binding the ruling class together by the love that characterizes members of a family14 and by assimilating all their loves to philosophy, the love of wisdom.15 Even in the second best state of the Laws one of the necessary ingredients of a state is found to be friendship.16 The knowledge which is the basis for practical action is identical with science and wisdom. Sexual love, pleasure in the satisfaction of desires, affection or friendship are all given their grounds, their rectification, and their completion in the love of eternal forms and beauty.

There is an order of loves that runs from the divine love inspired by the highest values, dimly discerned and rarely approximated, to the lowest degradation and perversion that man can suffer in lust and madness. In that order there are contradictions and antagonisms, not only among desires on the same plane, but also among the levels by which man mounts to wisdom or falls to folly. Each of the four madnesses runs this range from wisdom to folly, confusion, and degradation. Poets may teach virtue, but unguided by dialectic they may teach vice and so merit banishment from states that benefit by the rule of philosopher-kings or prudent legislators; wine may assist in teaching virtue, but drunkenness brutalizes man; mystic possession may be religious inspiration or lunacy; and love, finally,
may be directed to beauty and the good, or it may be directed to the objects of the various passions. After Plato has set forth the characteristics of the perfect state and of the corresponding "philosophic man" in the Republic, he traces the line of progressive degradation that may come to states and to men as they fall in the scale of loves or desires or pleasures. The principle governing the process in individual men is that each of the three parts of the soul—the rational, the spirited, and the appetitive—has its own form of pleasure and its peculiar desire, and any one of the three may govern the whole of man. There are, therefore, three classes of men: the knowledge-loving or philosophic, the honor-loving or ambitious, and the men who satisfy appetites so multifarious that the class can be designated best as money-loving, since money is the principal means of satisfying desires of this kind. The perfect state corresponds to philosophic natures, the timocratic state to ambitious natures, and three kinds of appetites serve to distinguish three kinds of men and states: the necessary appetites corresponding to the oligarchical state, the unnecessary appetites corresponding to the democratic state, and the lawless appetites corresponding to the despotic state. It is at that lowest level—the man ruled by lawless desires and the despotic state—that the four madnesses make their reappearance in completely perverted forms: the tragedians are banished because they praise despotism, and the master-passion that rules the lawless soul combines the traits of drunkenness (μηθυστικός), lust (ερωτικός), and lunacy (μεθαγχυσιάτικος).

The history of symposia, considered as philosophic arguments, may be traced by following the development of methods of discourse adjusted, under the constant circumstances of the dinner table, to a variety of objects of love. The Symposium of Xenophon centers about Socrates, but the loves that inspire it are not those revealed by Diotima. Xenophon gives as his purpose in writing the dialogue the intention to relate not only the serious acts of great and good men but also what they do in their lighter moods. The dinner is held, not in the house of a tragic poet to celebrate the victory of one of his tragedies, but in the house of Callias, the patron of Sophists, and was assembled on the spur of the moment to celebrate the victory in the pancratium of the boy Autolycus of whom Callias was enamored. The dancing girl is not sent away, but on the contrary her dexterity is one of the subjects of conversation, and wine is praised, in "Gorgian" rhetorical figures, for bringing us by gentle persuasion to a more sportive mood. Love is discussed on a level which does not stray far from application to the love of Callias, even when the earthly is distinguished from the divine love, or when the influence of love on political and military virtues is remarked. There is evidence that the love which inspired other philosophic dinners was the love of technical erudition or of philosophical discussion: Aristotle's Symposium seems, on the testimony of the ancients, to have been a treatise on drunkenness, while the philosophers talk shop in many of the surviving fragments of Epicurus' Symposium.

A different direction is taken in pursuit of different loves in the symposia of Menippus, the Cynic satirist, and of his imitators—Meleager, Lucilius, Varro, Horace, Petronius, Lucian, and Julian. Many of these exist in more than disjointed fragments: they are dinners in which the objects of love are luxury, wine, woman, and song, and in which excesses are tempered only by comedy and satire. Horace recounts, in the eighth satire of Book ii of his Satires, the fiasco of a symposium in which the love of food (described in detail) vies with the love of ostentation and of affected erudition in the discourse and behavior of wealthy epicures. In Petronius' Feast of Trimalchio the ostentation is even greater and the gluttony and lechery without curb. Lucian's Symposium or the Laphites varies the pattern by assembling philosophers of all schools at dinner and exhibiting the quarrels that arise from the antagonisms of their baser loves.

Still another direction is taken in the erudite collections of table talk of Plutarch, Athenaeus, and Macrobius, which reflect, not a love of wisdom or of knowledge, but a love of information, of the records of the past, and of odd facts observed or alleged. Plutarch justifies his zeal in assembling the varieties of topics discussed at
symposia in the vast compilation of the nine books of his *Symposia Problems* on the grounds that, although it is wise to forget absurdities, as Euripides says, nevertheless to deliver to oblivion all that is said under the influence of wine is not only repugnant to the conciliating influence attributed to entertainment but also contrary to the known practice of the greatest philosophers—Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Speusippus, Epicurus, Pyrrhus, Hieronymus, Dion the Academic—who thought it worth while to record the discourses they had at table. In his *Symposium of the Seven Wise Men* Plutarch takes advantage of the tradition that the seven sages met and dined at Delphi to assemble them at table where they discourse in the extant fragments of their wisdom. In *Men Learned about Dinner*, the *Deipnosophistae*, Athenaeus organizes a sprawling encyclopedic body of information in a dinner conversation about themes appropriate to cookbooks and to the etiquette of the table and of table talk. The *Saturnalia* of Macrobius records a vast amount of antiquarian knowledge: analyses of Virgil, the arts of rhetoric, literature, and linguistics, religious observances and practices of the augural art, items from the philosophic and the astronomic sciences; and, when the question is raised at the beginning of the seventh book concerning whether or not it is appropriate to philosophize at table, one of the interlocutors, the philosopher Eustathius, advances the principle that it is inappropriate to disturb the gaiety of convivia with discord, and therefore, although no word was pronounced at the symposia of Plato, Xenophon, and Plutarch which did not savor of philosophy, philosophic considerations would have spoiled the charm of the symposia of the Phaeacians and the Carthaginians recorded by Homer and Virgil. The history of symposia, and of the kinds of love they celebrate, comes to an appropriate end with the *Banquet of the Ten Virgins* of St. Methodius. There are echoes of Plato in both the doctrine and the manner of this chaste feast: the account of the dinner is given by a wise woman who resembles Diotima, in some respects, and the gathering occurs in the garden of Arete, the daughter of Philosophy, but the ten discourses of the virgins and the eleventh discourse of Arete are in praise of chastity, which the first speaker characterizes as the best and noblest manner of life, the only root of immortality, and the specifically Christian virtue, since Christ was the first to teach virginity. At the beginning of the discourse, Arete, the hostess, remarks that they have had all kinds of food and a variety of festivities. But there is no mention of wine.

In antiquity the symposium was a literary form based on a social institution. During the Middle Ages the supper became a sacrament based on the celebration of a religious holiday. The Synoptic Gospels recount the consecration of bread and wine by Christ on the Passover, while the Fourth Gospel sets forth the discourse in which Christ instituted a new commandment: "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another," and set forth a new ladder of love: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." The word used to express this love is not ἠγάπη, or στήναι, which carry the association of sexual passion, nor στοργή, which connotes parental affection, nor φιλία, which is the affection which binds friends or social groups together, but ἠγάπη, which is the attachment which members of a family feel for each other, although in tragedy it seems to have been used only of affection for the dead. It was translated by caritas and charity, and the gatherings in which the early Christians celebrated the memory of Christ's injunctions were called ἁγάπαι. In the latter use, the term went through a development and reversal familiar in the dialectic of love: early apologists, like Tertullian and Minucius Felix, complained that the critics of the Christians think of their gatherings as orgies, such as were common among the pagans, heightened by illicit and perverted practices: incest, the adoration of the genital organs of the priest, and the sacrifice of children; a century or two later St. Gregory Nazianzen admonishes the innocent, in his *Precepts to Virgins*, to avoid ἠγάπαι, and Augustine condemns drunken convivia in honor of the martyrs and in memory of the dead.

The two traditions of love whose beginnings were sensed in the *Symposium of Plato*—the tradition of the dark and mysterious love
of the mystic and the poet by which the lover is carried to his perfection and to his destruction and the practical self-centered love of the man of affairs and the scientist directed to the attainment of what is desired—influenced the development of the Christian conception of love. They were held in check, moreover, both in the construction of the community of the church and in the formation of the doctrine of the faith, by devices that show the influence of the Platonic dialectic and doctrine. But although there was place in Christianity for the insights of the Eastern mystery religions and for the clarities of Greek philosophy, there was no place for symposia. The new conception of charity gave new force to the conception of the brotherhood of man by relating the fatherhood of God to a free gift of divine love. The unity of the organization of the church was, like that which Plato advocated in the Republic, the unity of one family, but it was a mystic marriage, in which the virtues of the human bridegroom or bride included chastity and virginity, temperance and abstinence, and in which faith excluded the trifles of vain philosophy. The tradition of dining did not encourage random conversation among the clergy, and, when the religious orders were formed, silence was frequently enjoined at meals. The doctrine of love, as it was elaborated by St. Augustine, fresh from his reading of Plotinus, found philosophic grounds for the distinction between two loves: concupiscence and charity. St. Augustine analogized the motions of bodies and souls and defined love as the weight by which the soul is borne wherever it is borne. Many objects of love attract men, and they are united in polities—in terrestrial cities and in the City of God—which differ according to the objects of love by which they are ordered. Charity, however, is the love by which one loves that which should be loved.

The prescription of the Christian life is, "Love and do what you will," for all loves are mediated by the love of God, and God is charity.

The great antagonists in the development of this doctrine during the early centuries of Christianity were the Gnostics and the Manicheans, who built their doctrines on dualisms rather than on the single principle of love. Christian opponents record that the first principle of the Gnostic, Simon Magus, was fire, which has a double aspect, one evident, the other secret, one visible, the other invisible. It was this distinction, according to Simon, that Plato had in mind when he distinguished the sensible from the intelligible, and Aristotle formulated it in the distinction between potentiality and actuality. Divine fire manifests itself in six eons, which proceed in pairs, one male, the other female. The first pair are ωος and ἐπινοια, Mind and Thought. Epinoia had been taken prisoner by the angels and had been incarnated by them, after many sufferings, in a human body destined to pass through the centuries from woman to woman. It was Epinoia who was Helen of Troy, and in the time of Simon she was a prostitute, whom Simon delivered in the person of Helen and made his companion. Salvation depends wholly on belief in Simon and Helen, and human works, good or bad, are indifferent; indeed, promiscuity constitutes the perfect ἀγάμη, the reciprocal sanctification. The dualism of the Manicheans consisted in two eternal, opposed principles, Good and Evil, Light and Darkness. Man, like the world, is moved by two principles, for he possesses two souls, one incapable of evil, the other subject to all the impulses of concupiscence. Jesus alone can impart the knowledge by which man can separate the luminous from the dark elements in himself and so escape the consequences of the deeds of the seductress Eve. Marriage and all propagation are prohibited to Manicheans, since birth encases the luminous in the darkness of body, and the practice of virginity is therefore a duty imposed on all.

Philosophers during the Middle Ages turned their attention and their inquiries both to the sacrament of the Holy Supper and to the doctrine of charity. When John Scotus Eriugena went to Paris in the ninth century, he accepted the invitation of canon lawyers to resolve the controversy raging concerning the Eucharist. His book has not survived, and his doctrine—that we eat the body of Christ intellectually with mind, not physically with teeth—was condemned. In the eleventh century Berengar of Tours wrote a treatise De Coena Sacra to answer Lanfranc's charge that he had destroyed the sacrament by analyzing the changes undergone by the bread and
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wine in terms of matter and form, substance, subject, and accident and by applying the principle of contradiction. The interchange between Lanfranc and Berengar was a stage in the development of the dispute concerning universals in the twelfth century. The scholastic method, by which arguments are presented on either side of a question and their oppositions are balanced and resolved, was developed by canon lawyers, theologians, and philosophers to treat such controversies; and the nature of the Eucharist was treated in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries in Decreta, Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, and in Summae theologicae.

Philosophers developed philosophic analyses of the doctrines of charity to extend and apply, in varying ways, Augustine's insight that charity excludes concupiscence and cupidity but is consistent with many kinds of love and that love does not cause one to cease desiring one's own good when one loves the good of another or when one loves the source of love without thought of recompense. Mystical philosophies mount gradations of love to the love of God, often with imagery appropriate to the psychology of sexual love, and the ruses of Ovid are transmuted in allegory to mystical strategies. Other philosophic analyses distinguish varieties of love: Thomas Aquinas places love between delectation, which is merely one form taken by love, and charity, which is its perfection; Duns Scotus differentiates three loves on the authority of Augustine: a love of the useful, a love of the delectable, and a love of the honorable; loves are also differentiated by their objects—beauty, order, and goodness—and by the relations they establish among men in their associations, friendships, and cities. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, moreover, dualistic doctrines were revived in the Catharist and Albigensian heresies, in which many scholars see extensions of Gnosticism and Manichaeanism, and poets sang in the language and the mood of those doctrines of a courtly love in which the lover is victim of a destiny, imposed by love, which leads him to humiliation and destruction. The conflict of the two traditions is brought together vividly in the legend of a dinner given by Louis IX: one of his guests, Thomas Aquinas, who had not spoken

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throughout the meal, disclosed the direction of his thoughts when at last he interrupted his silent preoccupation and exclaimed: "That disposes finally of the Manichaeans."

As the Middle Ages came to their close, symposia were revived in a fashion characteristic of the changing conception of love. The Convivio of Dante affords a transition between his Vita nuova and his Divina commedia. In the Vita nuova the poet's passion for a living woman, Beatrice, is given an allegorical interpretation. In the Convivio the thought of Beatrice has been superseded in the poet's mind by a love of philosophy, but, although the meat and the bread of the feast he prepares are symbolic, the lady who affords him consolation for his loss of Beatrice emerges as somewhat more than an allegorical figure symbolizing the truths of philosophy in their application to life and somewhat more than a symbol of the second Person of the Trinity. In the Divina commedia his early love is finally restored to him, transformed into the object of his spiritual devotion, and she leaves her place in heaven to be his monitress and guide. Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on the Symposium of Plato on the Subject of Love is itself a symposium, organized by Lorenzo de' Medici in the villa of Careggi about 1470 to celebrate Plato's birthday, at which the guests deliver speeches interpreting the speeches of the original symposium. What Agathon's guests said is placed by Lorenzo's guests in a context of Neoplatonic erudition which makes their statements consistent parts of a cosmology, stated in terms of Mind, Soul, Nature, and Matter ruled by Love. Pico della Mirandola's Platonick Discourse upon Love is not a symposium but a commentary on a poem—the Canzone dello amore secondo la mente e opinione de'Platonici, in which Girolamo Benivieni tries to reproduce in poetic summary what Marsilio Ficino had set forth in his commentary on the Symposium. During the Renaissance the erudition and philosophy of love were expounded in accounts of allusive and learned conversations and in parabolic and cryptic interpretations of poetry, myth, and history (and indeed Bacon listed the insufficient development of the parabolical interpretation of poetry among the deficiencies of learning); but, although the quest for learning
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and analogies which characterized one tradition of symposia con-
tinued from the Renaissance to the modern period, the symposium
did not survive as a widely cultivated literary form.

Sacrificial elements were present in the ancient symposium—the libations and the chant to the god between the close of the dinner and the beginning of the drinking—which provide at least a tenuous link with the celebration of the Passover and the sacrifice of the Mass. The heritage which survived in the modern period has equally tenuous links with the ancient symposium, yet the history of that heritage throws some light on the larger problems of love in the modern world. If the heritage is sought in literary genres, the modern form of the symposium is the “Table Talk,” that is, the collections of unpublished sayings of men thought wise in religion, politics, or literature, such as Luther, Selden, Coleridge, or Holmes, or the similar collections in the vast literature of “Ana,” such as Baconiana, Scaligeriana, Valesiana, which culminates significantly in the Omniana, published usually together with Coleridge’s Table Talk. These miscellanies merge easily with the diaries, like Pepys’s, and the biographies, like Boswell’s Johnson, which bring together the supplementary thoughts and casual statements of great or interesting men. The phase of the ancient tradition of symposia that has survived and grown strong in this tradition is found in the Saturnalia, with its love of private and otherwise unavailable data, useful in interpreting what is apparent and available to all. The information recorded in such collections is only occasionally and accidentally about love, usually in odd, paradoxical, or fearful forms, as when Luther interprets the Ten Commandments as reiterated injunctions to fear and love God, expresses his horror at the consequences of the contempt and persecution by men of God’s grace and word, and his urgent conviction of the need to be reconciled to God.33 If the heritage of symposia is sought, not in the literary form, but in the history of the term, “symposium” today means the discussion of any subject, particularly one concerning which there are urgent doubts and active apprehensions, preferably by experts but at least by representatives of divergent views; and we organize, as a conse-

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quence, symposia on cancer, the dangers threatening democracy, the predicament of poetry or the humanities, and the present status of the mind-body problem. Table talk and symposia, however, have no close connection with the dinner table, and, if the heritage of the ancient form is sought in the institutions surrounding dining, it is found in the after-dinner speech, in which serious topics are treated lightly or, following the formula of Hermogenes, the serious and the ridiculous are conjoined.

Each of these tenuous connections of present practices with a great tradition is a sign and symptom of the transformation of the subject matter which is relevant in the discussion of love. The widespread acceptance of a religious revelation during the Middle Ages transformed the ancient vocabulary and dialectic of love to the service and elucidation of a divine charity; the widespread applications of science in the modern period have transformed the analysis of love and the precepts of charity to the service of the communities of men. We preserve the notebooks as well as the published treatises of men of science and of wisdom lest any useful or suggestive item of information escape us; we institute discussions because we see expert solutions of problems, although we also enjoy stump ing and badgering the experts; and we cultivate the art of explaining lofty truths in common language and unforbidding contexts because we are convinced that knowledge should be popularized. But the new problems of love that have been created by science can be stated only in the transformed meanings attached to the old terms. Freud gives eloquent expression to one formulation of these problems in the final paragraph of his Civilization and Its Discontents:

The fateful question of the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent the cultural process developed in it will succeed in mastering the derangements of communal life caused by the human instinct of aggression and self-destruction. In this connection, perhaps the phase through which we are at this moment passing deserves special interest. Men have brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that by using them they could now very easily exterminate one another to the last man. They know this—hence arises a great part of their current unrest, their dejection, their mood of apprehension. And now it may be
expected that the other of the two "heavenly forces," eternal Eros, will put forth his strength so as to maintain himself alongside of his equally immortal adversary.\textsuperscript{3a}

These eternal powers—death and love—have been opposed in other accounts that men have constructed to explain the career of man and of human society, but the struggle of those powers has taken on a new scope for destruction or for realization as a result of the advance of science.

All the analyses of our present frustrations and discontents express or apply theories of love, and all the past constructions of love have been adapted to the problems of a society transformed by science and technology. Two loves are sometimes contrasted, and in recent statements of that opposition they have been called again eros and agape. Denis de Rougemont, in \textit{L'Amour et l'occident}, which appeared in England as \textit{Passion and Society} and in the United States as \textit{Love in the Western World}, distinguishes eros, a lawless passion, engaged in the pursuit of endless becoming, from Christian love, which returns to life from beyond death, obeys God, and brings forth our neighbor. Anders Nygren, in his \textit{Agape and Eros}, contrasts egocentric eros to theocentric agape which Luther first established with the formula "Fellowship with God on the basis of sin, not of holiness."\textsuperscript{35} M. C. D'Arcy, in \textit{The Mind and Heart of Love: Lion and Unicorn, a Study in Eros and Agape} finds a new law of love which joins the self-centered and the disinterested love—the love of taking and the love of giving—in the relations of persons.\textsuperscript{36} Much of modern theology and much of the new mysticism are stated in terms of two loves or more, and the solution to contemporary problems is then found in the transformation of one love by another or the abandonment of one for another in mysticisms such as Aldous Huxley preaches. On the other hand, love is sometimes sought beneath the appearances presented in conscious, or rational, or expressed intentions, and love is then pitted against an antagonist: idea overlays will, Apollonian is opposed by Dionysiac, love instincts run counter to death instincts, personalities are compounded of conscious egos and of the unconscious. The Romantic poetry and philosophy of the nineteenth century has been adapted to new uses in the twentieth century which concentrate attention almost exclusively on the term contrary to love: phenomenologists and existentialists study anxiety, historians study the deaths of civilizations, psychologists study guilt and fear, and sociologists study social tensions. In the third place, love is sometimes defined in minimum terms on which almost all philosophers and all the rest of mankind have agreed from Plato to the numerous schools of the present: "Now everyone sees that love is a desire," Socrates says at the beginning of his first speech about love in the \textit{Phaedrus}, and Spinoza gives piquant mathematical precision to this common notion in his definition of love as "pleasure accompanied by the idea of an external cause." This common definition, which poets share with politicians, has been given a new extension in a technological civilization that has built the instruments by which most of the basic needs of men might be satisfied as well as the instruments by which men might be annihilated: most programs of international co-operation are expressions of this love—the Point IV program of the United States, the technical assistance program of the United Nations, the fundamental education program of UNESCO—and it is written into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as "the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts, and to share in the scientific advancement and its benefits." But politicians encounter opposition to these programs, not only in other politicians who are corrupted by some narrower loyalty or by love of power or of money, but also in recipients who fear cultural imperialism; and poets are determined in the selection of themes of love by political decision in dictatorships and by force of economic circumstance and social preference in democracies. Love, finally, is sought sometimes, in a fourth way, in the bonds of communities and in the values which determine the patterns of cultures: this is perhaps the form of love which we have adapted to the most characteristic modern uses in our programs of international
understanding, our area and language courses, and our investigations of cultures and civilizations, for we have made the discussion of the love which binds men in communities, which the Greeks called φίλεν, a battleground in which φίλεν contends with passionate ἔρως, divine ἀγάπη, and scientific φιλόσοφος.

This modern symposium, like many ancient symposia, might lead to a brawl, even without benefit of wine, if our problem required the resolution of the differences of these conceptions of loves. The question is not which is fundamental—subconscious drive, individual desire, community bond, or transcendent attraction—for they can all be explained on theories of sexual love or religious inspiration, of fundamental urges or social influences. Our experience with the intricacies of the earlier treatments of love suggests, therefore, that this discourse on love might best be brought to a useful or at least intelligible conclusion by abandoning the subject matter to consider the method and the circumstances of the discussion of love.

The methods which men have employed in the discussion of love through the ages have been carefully adapted to the subject matter. The dialectic method, as it was practiced in antiquity, whether by Plato in the whole of his philosophy or by Aristotle in the preliminaries to his scientific inquiries, was a method of resolving the differences of philosophers to discover a common truth which they all sensed or approximated. It was a method oriented to the requirements of the problem and to the nature of things, and its success depended, as Plato put it, on cutting at the joints. The scholastic method was likewise a method of resolving differences in the doctrines of philosophers and of the doctors of the church and in the decisions of popes and of councils. It, too, was adapted to the solution of problems and to the nature of things; but it was also adapted to treat the effects of a love first revealed in a scripture, and the interpretation of statements was therefore placed on a new level of importance in the interpretation of things. The scientific method, to which philosophers have been adjusting their inquiries for more than three hundred years, is also directed to resolving differences of doctrines that purport to state and explain what is the case. Great importance is still attached to the interpretation of symbols as well as to the interpretation of facts in the use of that method, but the new importance given to the consensus of scientists in the resolution of differences serves as a touchstone in interpreting the significance of the place assumed by φίλεν in the modern period at the side of ἔρως and ἀγάπη.

It is a commonplace that philosophy, and indeed the whole of culture, has been a long dialogue in which old insights and old errors have been forgotten and revived, reinterpreted and refuted, and in which new insights and new errors have been supported by old and by new proofs. The scientific method, however, has made possible a new, more precise, and more practical form of the dialogue. When the implications of group thinking or team thinking in science are examined philosophically, however, they arrange themselves in a sequence that bears some analogies to the ladder of love which Diotima described to Socrates. We engage in group thinking, on its lowest level, whenever we use someone else's information or ideas; the group need not be assembled for such thinking—a book, a conversation, or a telephone call may provide the needed information. Group thinking assumes a second form when a problem requires for its solution many kinds of competence and many kinds of information: each member of the group then makes his contribution to the common task and the solution is the composite result. There is a third kind of group thinking in which men of different backgrounds and different disciplines discuss a common problem, and the statement of a difficulty or a conjecture by an expert in one field, who is unaware of the implications of his statement and unable to develop them by the techniques he has mastered, may start in the mind of another expert a train of thought significant in his experience and adapted to the methods of his discipline which might not otherwise have occurred to him. Strictly speaking, none of these processes is group thinking, since in each an individual thinks in the varying contexts and influences of the group. There is a fourth stage
of group thinking, however, in which the result exceeds, not only what any member of the group has thought, but also what emerges as the sum of their individual thoughts. There are not many clear examples of such thinking, but its nature may be seen in the contrast between philosophical dialogues in which one of the interlocutors is called “Master,” or “Wisdom,” or “Intelligence,” and in which the truth is found exclusively in what he says, and philosophic dialogues, like Plato’s and Hume’s, in which the truth is expressed by no one speaker but is found in the total development of the discussion. This is a form of thinking that promises new achievements in two dimensions which are traditional paths of love: in the advancement of knowledge by common thinking in the service of the love of wisdom, and in the advancement of the community of men by common action based on the understanding rather than on the abandonment and destruction of the principles, ideals, and values which bind men by love in other or smaller groups.

We have only gradually become aware of the new philosophic problems presented by the possibility of this method and the complexity of its subject matter, and the discussion is still surrounded by circumstances over which the philosopher has no more control than Socrates had over the social tensions which Aristophanes symbolizes or the drunken frenzies embodied in Alcibiades. Plato enumerated four forms of divine madness—prophecy, poetry, love, and the mystic madness inspired by the god of wine—and his exploration of these madnesses shows that he was fully and subtly aware of the demoniac perversions to which each is susceptible. He could have had no inkling of the forms of power created by modern science which might remove the chief sources of man’s insecurities and frustrations—disease, hunger, lack of shelter, and mutual fears—and he could not therefore have suspected the oppositions of power which hinder the use of those powers. These oppositions of divine and demoniac madness and these oppositions of disinterested and interested power are at the center of the philosophic problems to which the method of common or group thinking is adapted. If philosophers could construct some such method to explore the interrelations of the many loves which divide them, as well as all other men, and which make them mutually unintelligible and mutually indifferent, our discussions, and those of the world, might return to circumstances in which the inspirations of poetry, wine, love, and religion inspire, confirm, and strengthen what reason is able to discover and establish, and in which the satisfaction of desires and the defense of traditional ideals does not automatically take the form of opposition to action for the common good.
NOTES TO CHAPTER I


3. Athenaeus Deipnosophistae v. 182: "But in the symposium of Epicurus there is an assemblage of flatterers praising one another, while the symposium of Plato is full of men who turn their noses up in jeers at one another; for I pass over in silence what is said about Alcibiades. In Homer, on the other hand, only sober symposia are organized." Cf. *ibid.* 187–88: "Again, Epicurus in his symposium puts questions about indigestion in order to get omens from it; following that he speaks about fevers. What need is there even to speak of the lack of proportion which pervades his style? As for Plato—I pass over the man who was bothered by the hiccup and cured by gargles of water and still more by the insertion of a straw to tickle his nose and make him sneeze; for he wanted to introduce fun and mockery—Plato, I say, ridicules Agathon's balanced clauses and antitheses, and also brings on the scene Alcibiades, who avows that he is consumed with lust. Nevertheless, while writing that kind of stuff, they banish Homer from their state. . . . Nevertheless, even the symposium described by Xenophon, although it is praised, admits occasions for censure not fewer than these. Callias, for example, gets the symposium together when his favorite Autolycus had been crowned victor in the pancratium at the Panathenaea. And immediately the guests on the couches give their attention to the lad, even though his father is seated beside him. . . . Homer, on the other hand, has not undertaken to tell us anything of the sort even though he has Helen before him."

4. Plutarch *Quaestiones convivialis* vi. prooemium 686B–C.

5. Cicero *De senectute* xiii. 45.

6. Plato *Phaedrus* 265A–B.

7. Plato *Symposium* 206E.


9. Plato *Laws* iii. 613B–C.

10. *Ibid.* 666A–667A; cf. 672D.

defines justice as “benefiting friends and harming enemies,” and ibid. ii. 362C, where Glaucn makes the same action the prerogative and property of the unjust man.

13. Plato Gorgias, 507E–508A.


15. ibid. 475C–477E.

16. Plato Laws iii. 691B–C.

17. Plato Republic ix. 580D–581C.

18. ibid. viii. 558D.

19. ibid. 568A–C.

20. ibid. ix. 572D–573C.

21. Plutarch Questions conjectivas i. prooemium 612D–E.


23. John 13:34.


25. The history begins properly in the time of the Apostles: cf. I Cor. ii. 20–29; II Pet. 2:13; Jude, chap. 12. For the apologetic defense of Christian μηθη, cf. Terrallian Apeologicus adversus gentes pro Christianis 39 (Patrologia Latina, I, 531–41); Minucius Felix Octavius vii–ix, xxxii (PL, III, 266–73, 349–53); Cyprian Ad Quirinum testimoniam contra Judaeos iii. 3 (PL, IV, 733–34). Clement of Alexandria distinguishes between the love of God and of neighbor, which is the celestial banquet in heaven, and the terrestrial banquet: the latter dinner (δεινοτω) is a consequence of charity (δικια), but it is not itself charity (Pædagogus ii. 1 [PG, VIII, 388A]), and Clement sets forth the rules that should govern the conduct of Christians in symposia (ibid. 4 [PG, VIII, 440–45]). After the establishment of the church the excesses are again subject of criticism; cf. Gregory Nazianzen Præcepta ad virgines 17–24 (PG, XXXVII, 587–88); Augustine Epistola 22. i. 1–6 (PL, XXXIII, 90–92). The anonymous Commentary on Job, attributed to Origen, urges the importance of fasting and abstinence from excessive food and drink (Book iii [PG, XVIII, 506]): “Nisi enim tua misericordia conservaverit, quonodum possimus effugere tanta pericula ciborum sanc ac potuum, quae frequenter plus reputum ac scrumpum, quam malignae ac venenosae bestiae?”

26. I John 2:15–17: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love (δικια) of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust (κατημνησις) of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

27. Augustine Confessions xiiii. 9. 10. Cf. Epistola 55. x. 18 (PL, XXXIII, 212–13); ibid. 157. ii. 9 (PL, XXXIII, 677).


30. Augustine Contra epistolam Manichaei xiiii. 16 (PL, XLII, 182–83); Contra Faustum ii. 4 (PL, XLII, 210); De mortuis Manichaeorum xviii. 65–66 (PL, XXXII, 1372–73).

31. Marsilio Ficino’s Commentary on Plato’s “Symposium”: The Text and a Translation, with an Introduction by S. R. Jayne (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri, 1944). A triple love is distinguished according to their respective objects and the natural inclinations of men; cf. Commentary vi. 9 (p. 193): “Hence, as we said, a triple Love arises, for we are born or reared with an inclination to the contemplative, the practical, or the voluptuous life. If to the contemplative, we are lifted immediately from the sight of bodily form to the contemplation of the spiritual and divine. If to the voluptuous, we descend immediately from the sight to the desire to touch. If to the practical and moral, we remain in the pleasures only of seeing and the social relations. People of the first type are of such strength of character that they are exerted most highly; those of the last type are so weak that they are pressed to the depths; but those of the middle type remain in the middle region. And so all love begins with sight. But the love of the contemplative man ascends from sight into the mind; that of the voluptuous man descends from sight into touch; and that of the practical man remains in the form of sight. Love of the first is attracted to the highest demon rather than to the lowest; that of the second is drawn to the lowest rather than to the highest, and that of the last remains an equal distance from both. These three loves have three names: love of the contemplative man is called divine; that of the practical man, human; and that of the voluptuous, animal.” The ladder of love takes on both Neoplatonic and Christian characteristics; cf. ibid. vi. 6 (p. 175): “Beauty is a certain vital and spiritual charm (gratia) first infused in the Angelic Mind by the illuminating light of God, thence in the souls of men, the shapes of bodies, and sounds; through reason, sight, and hearing, it moves our souls and delights them; in delighting them, it carries them away, and in so doing, inflames them with burning love.” The ascent from body, to soul, to Angelic Mind, to God, is a progressive emancipation from limitations; cf. ibid. vi. 17 (p. 211): “The same comparison which exists among these four exists among their respective beauties. Certainly, the beauty of the Body consists
in the composition of its many parts; it is bound by space and moves along in time. The beauty of the Soul suffers the changes of time, of course, and contains a multitude of parts, but is free from the limits of space. The beauty of the Angelic Mind, on the other hand, has number alone; it is immune to the other two [space and time]. But the beauty of God suffers none of these limitations. You see the beauty of the Body. Do you wish to see also the beauty of the Soul? Subtract the weight of the matter itself from the bodily form and the limits of space; leave the rest; now you have the beauty of the Soul. Do you wish to see the beauty of the Angelic Mind? Take away now, please, not only the spacial limit of place, but also the sequence of time; keep the multiple composition, and you will find there the beauty of the Angelic Mind. Do you wish still to see the beauty of God? Take away, in addition to those above, that multiple composition of forms, leave the simple form, and there you will have found the beauty of God.

32. The translation of A Platonick Discourse upon Love by Pico della Mirandola by Thomas Stanley, author of one of the first histories of philosophy in English (1656), has been edited by E. G. Gardner (Boston: Merrymount Press, 1914). In his Introduction (pp. ix-x) the editor translates the opening section of the fourteenth-century commentary on the canzone of Guido Cavalcanti attributed to Egidius Colonna. "Being in a dark wood, and travelling along a hard and rough path, I rested from my labour, and slept. In my slumber I had this vision. Methought that I ascended a very high mountain, from which was seen almost all the world, and above this mountain there was another even higher, from which things yet more distant were beheld. On the first mountain stood a most beauteous Lady, and before her there was a fire so great that it gave warmth to all the world; on the other mountain, which was higher, stood two Ladies, and between them there was a most fair fountain, to which I was wont to go oftentimes to drink. Wherefore, wishing to go thither to drink, as was my usage, it behoved me to pass in front of the first Lady, and, as I passed, I saw a Squire kneeling before her, to whom the Lady was saying these words: 'Thou knowest me by my face and by my bearing right well, that I am Love.' And he answered her: 'My Lady, it is very sooth.' And the Lady said to him: 'Now hearken to me, and listen well to what I would tell thee. I have sent to the world two messengers of mine, to wit, Solomon and Ovidius Naso; the one led me into the world with music and song, and the other wrought the art wherewith I should be brought. From then until now I have sent no messenger, but those that have spoken of me have done so either for their own desire of knowledge or because they were heated by this fire. I have chosen thee for my third messenger, and this has been done with reason; for as the first was divine in his sweetness, and the second was a most perfect poet, so art thou a philosopher full of wisdom; and because thou art not a slave of Love, but a friend, I command thee not, but I pray thee to renew my memory in the world, and to tell of my nature and secret conditions, upon which the other speakers have not touched.' Having heard this, that noble Squire answered the Lady, and said: 'My Lady, what you pray of me shall be done, but, because the world is full of divers fashions, tell me the fashion that you would have me adopt in my speech.' And the Lady made reply: 'I will tell thee one condition of mine, which is that I can verily give the desire of speaking, but cannot give the wisdom and the fashion; but hire thee to those Ladies on the mountain, who are the two Philosophies, Moral and Natural, and they will teach thee the fashion of speaking.' Pico continues the Neoplatonic Christian transformation of the ladder of love to cosmological and theological terms; cf. A Platonick Discourse ii. 20 (pp. 43-44): "As when the Ideas descend into the Minde, there ariseth a desire of enjoying that from whence this Ideal Beauty comes; so when the species of sensible Beauty flow into the Eye, there springs a twofold Appetite of Union with that whence this Beauty is deriv'd, one sensual, the other rational; the Principles of Bestial and Humane Love. If we follow the Sense, we judge the Body, wherein we behold this Beauty, to be its Fountain; whence proceeds a desire of Coition, the most intimate union with it. This is the Love of irrational Creatures. But Reason knows that the Body is so far from being its Original, that it is destructive to it, and the more it is sever'd from the Body, the more it enjoys its own Nature and Dignity: we must not fix with the species of Sense, in the Body; but refine that species from all relics of corporeal infection. And because Man may be understood by the Rational Soul, either considered apart, or in its union to the Body; in the first sense, Humane Love is the Image of the Celestial; in the second, Desire of sensible Beauty; this being by the Soul abstracted from matter, and (as much as its nature will allow) made intellectual. The greater part of Men reach no higher than this; others more perfect, remembering that more perfect Beauty which the Soul (before immerst in the Body) beheld, are inflam'd with an incredible desire of reviewing it, in pursuit whereof they separate themselves as much as possible from the Body, of which the Soul (returning to its first Dignity) becomes absolute Mistress. This is the Image of Celestial Love, by which Man ariseth from one perfection to another, till his Soul (wholly united to the Intellecct) is made an Angel. Purged from Material dross and transformed into spiritual flame by this Divine Power, he mounts up to the Intelligible Heaven, and happily rests in his Father's bosome." The discourse placed in the mouth of Pietro Bembo in the Cortegiano of Baldassare Castiglione

“What mortal tongue, then, O most holy Love, can praise thee worthily? Most fair, most good, most wise, thou springest from the union of beauty and goodness and divine wisdom, and abidest in that union, and by that union returnest to that union as in a circle. Sweetest bond of the universe, joining things celestial to things terrestrial, thou with benignant sway inclinest the supernal powers to rule the lower powers, and turning the minds of mortals to their origin, joinest them thereto. Thou unitest the elements in concord, movest nature to produce—and that which is born, to the perpetuation of life. Thou unitest things that are separate, givest perfection to the imperfect, likeness to the unlike, friendship to the unfriendly, fruit to the earth, tranquility to the sea, vital light to the heavens . . . . Deign, then, O Lord, to hear our prayers, pour thyself upon our hearts, and with the splendour of thy most holy fire illumine our darkness and, like a trusted guide, in this blind labyrinth show us the true path . . . . Accept our souls, which are offered thee in sacrifice; burn them in that living flame which consumes all mortal dross, to the end that, being wholly separated from the body, they may unite with divine beauty by a perpetual and very sweet bond, and that we, being severed from ourselves, may, like true lovers, be able to transform ourselves into the beloved, and rising above the earth may be admitted to the angels’ feast, where, fed on ambrosia and immortal nectar, we may at last die a most happy and living death, as did of old those ancient fathers whose souls thou, by the most glowing power of contemplation, didst ravish from the body and unite with God.” In the *Dialoghi d’amore* of Leone Abarbanel or Leone Ebreo, the Platonizing Renaissance conception of Love is harmonized with Judaism; cf. Leone Ebreo, *Dialoghi d’amore: Hebraische Gedichte*, ed. C. Gebhardt (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1929); *The Philosophy of Love (Dialoghi d’amore)* by Leone Ebreo, trans. F. Friedberg-Seeley and J. H. Barnes (London: Soncino, 1937).


