

## Call for papers

# The Theory and Phenomenology of Love

Deadline April 15, 2016

*Onde si move, e donde nasce Amore?  
Qual è 'l su' propio, e là 've dimora?  
È e' sustanzia o accidente, o memora?  
È cagion d'occhi, o è voler di core? [...]*

[‘Where does Love move from, and whence does it originate? What is its appointed place, and where does it reside? Is it substance or accident, or memory? Is it caused by the (sight of the) eyes, or is it heart’s will?’]

The 13<sup>th</sup>-century Florentine poet Guido Orlandi addressed these lines to his fellow citizen Guido Cavalcanti (Dante’s ‘first friend’, as we read in Dante’s *Vita nova*). His sonnet is organized around several specific questions on the nature of Love, the place where it is located and activated, the way it originates, grows, manifests itself, and wanes. Cavalcanti would answer with his great canzone *Donna me prega*, which is not only one of the most complex and difficult poems of all Romance literature, both in terms of metrics framing and content, but also a veritable treatise on Love in verse – with multiple references to the philosophical and medical tradition and the Aristotelian debate on the relation between sensitive and intellectual soul.

Such a text is good example of the kind of subjects we would like to explore in the second issue of [Interfaces](#), that will be centred on a specific theme: “The Theory and Phenomenology of Love”. *Interfaces* [invites papers](#) dealing not with love *tout court* (a significant part of the entire medieval literature, at least in the vernacular, is about love!), but with reflections and speculations on the **nature of Love** and the **ways it manifests itself**.

Authors will be free to address any medieval European literature, language, genre, text, or to work across these categories, provided they give a strong **theoretical framing** to their argument. The aim of Issue No. 2 of *Interfaces* is not to collect a series of contributions on Love, but rather to provide readers with a sort of ‘encyclopaedia’ of the different conceptions, definitions, and representations of Love in the medieval traditions. Contributors are encouraged to highlight contacts, similarities, or differences between cultures and through places and times, and to survey the origin, permanence, alteration, or overlap of the paradigms of explanation to the phenomenon.

Interdisciplinary, comparative, and diachronic studies will be welcome, as well as more specific and circumscribed analysis of single texts or small groups of texts. Among the possible genres to explore are lyric poetry, narrative or doctrinal poems, verse or prose romances, letters, narrative texts, chronicles, historical accounts, as well as historical documents, medical, philosophical, or theological literature, translations (both medieval and modern), iconographic representations, etc. Some possible approaches and theoretical frameworks include the study of gender and sexuality, the history of emotions, the history of medicine, and neuroscience.

Authors are invited to reflect also on the nature of the Object of Love, be it visible or unseen, concrete or phantasmatic, a creature or the Creator; in this regard, contributions addressing the themes of Love of God and mysticism and the relation between earthly love and spiritual love will be welcome too.

As it is stated in the [Journal's Scope](#) and the [opening essay](#) of Issue No. 1, *Interfaces* considers European literatures as the products of the interconnected textual cultures which flourished between Late Antiquity and the Renaissance in a region extending from the North Atlantic to the Eastern Mediterranean: therefore contributions on the shared Greco-Roman heritage of the Latin West and on Arabic and Hebrew as languages of Europe are welcome, as well as comparative studies on Persian, Indian and Chinese, given the role of the Silk Route in the exchange of stories and learning in the continuous Afro-Eurasian space.

*Interfaces* invites papers in English, French, German, Italian, or Spanish.

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This will be the cover image of the second issue of *Interfaces*:



Mark Rothko, *Untitled (Violet, Black, Orange, Yellow on White and Red)*, 1949: oil on canvas, 81 ½ x 66 inches (207 x 167.6 cm)

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Gift, Elaine and Werner Dannheisser and The Dannheisser Foundation, 1978 - 78.246