

**Survey of the Gods of Love**  
**For**  
**Brisbane Prometheus Society**  
**On**  
**Love: the Divine Spirit of Man, by Julian Ahonen**  
**Wednesday, April 14, 2021**

**WIKIPEDIA ENTRY**

A general summary considering these [Ancient Greek](#) concepts are as follows:

- [Agápe](#) (ἀγάπη *agápē*<sup>[1]</sup>) means "love: esp. brotherly love, charity; the love of God for man and of man for God".<sup>[2]</sup> *Agape* is used in ancient texts to denote feelings for one's children and the feelings for a spouse, and it was also used to refer to a [love feast](#).<sup>[3]</sup> *Agape* is used by Christians to express the unconditional love of God for his children.<sup>[4]</sup> This type of love was further explained by [Thomas Aquinas](#) as "to will the good of another".<sup>[5]</sup>
- [Éros](#) (ἔρως *érōs*) means "love, mostly of the sexual passion".<sup>[6]</sup> The Modern Greek word "*erotas*" means "intimate love". [Plato](#) refined his own definition: Although *eros* is initially felt for a person, with contemplation it becomes an appreciation of the beauty within that person, or even becomes appreciation of beauty itself. Plato does not talk of physical attraction as a necessary part of love, hence the use of the word [platonic](#) to mean, "without physical attraction". In the [Symposium](#), the most famous ancient work on the subject, Plato has [Socrates](#) argue that *eros* helps the [soul](#) recall knowledge of beauty, and contributes to an understanding of spiritual truth, the ideal Form of youthful beauty that leads us humans to feel erotic desire – thus suggesting that even that sensually based love aspires to the non-corporeal, spiritual plane of existence; that is, finding its truth, just like finding any truth, leads to transcendence.<sup>[7]</sup> Lovers and philosophers are all inspired to seek truth through the means of *eros*.
- [Philia](#) (φιλία *phília*) means "affectionate regard, friendship", usually "between equals".<sup>[8]</sup> It is a dispassionate virtuous love, a concept developed by [Aristotle](#).<sup>[9]</sup> In his best-known work on ethics, [Nicomachean Ethics](#), *philia* is expressed variously as loyalty to friends (specifically, "brotherly love"), family, and community, and requires virtue, equality, and familiarity. Furthermore, in the same text *philos* is also the root of [philautia](#) denoting self-love and arising from it, a general type of love, used for love between family, between friends, a desire or enjoyment of an activity, as well as between lovers.

- [Storge](#) (στοργή *storgē*) means "love, affection" and "especially of parents and children".<sup>[10]</sup> It is the common or natural empathy, like that felt by parents for offspring.<sup>[11]</sup> Rarely used in ancient works, and then almost exclusively as a descriptor of relationships within the family. It is also known to express mere acceptance or putting up with situations, as in "loving" the tyrant. This is also used when referencing the love for one's country or a favorite sports team.
- [Philautia](#) (Greek: [φιλαυτία](#), [romanized: philautía](#)) means "self-love". To love oneself or "regard for one's own happiness or advantage"<sup>[12]</sup> has been conceptualized both as a basic human necessity<sup>[13]</sup> and as a [moral flaw](#), akin to [vanity](#) and [selfishness](#),<sup>[14]</sup> synonymous with [amour-propre](#) or [egotism](#). The Greeks further divided this love into positive and negative: one, the unhealthy version, is the self-obsessed love, and the other is the concept of self-compassion.
- [Xenia](#) (Greek: [ξενία](#)) is an [ancient Greek](#) concept of [hospitality](#). It is sometimes translated as 'guest-friendship' or 'ritualized friendship'. It is an institutionalized relationship rooted in generosity, gift exchange, and reciprocity.<sup>[15]</sup> Historically, hospitality towards foreigners and guests (Hellenes not of your polis) was understood as a moral obligation. Hospitality towards foreign Hellenes honored Zeus *Xenios* (and Athene *Xenia*) patrons of foreigners.

## IMPORTANT QUOTATIONS

**Agápe (ἀγάπη agápē) means "love: esp. brotherly love, charity; the love of God for man and of man for God".**

THOMAS AQUINAS

Question 26. The passions of the soul in particular: and first, of love

1. [Is love in the concupiscible power?](#)
2. [Is love a passion?](#)
3. [Is love the same as dilection?](#)
4. [Is love properly divided into love of friendship, and love of concupiscence?](#)

Article 1. Whether love is in the concupiscible power?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that love is not in the [concupiscible](#) power. For it is written ([Wisdom 8:2](#)): "Her," namely wisdom, "have I loved, and have sought her out from my youth." But the [concupiscible](#) power, being a part of the sensitive [appetite](#), cannot tend to wisdom, which is not apprehended by the senses. Therefore love is not in the [concupiscible](#) power.

**Objection 2.** Further, love seems to be identified with every [passion](#): for [Augustine](#) says (De Civ. Dei xiv, 7): "Love, yearning for the object beloved, is desire; having and enjoying it, is [joy](#); fleeing what is contrary to it, is fear; and feeling what is contrary to it, is sadness." But not every [passion](#) is in the [concupiscible](#) power; indeed, fear, which is mentioned in this passage, is in the irascible power. Therefore we must not say absolutely that love is in the [concupiscible](#) power.

**Objection 3.** Further, [Dionysius](#) (Div. Nom. iv) mentions a "[natural](#) love." But [natural](#) love seems to pertain rather to the [natural](#) powers, which belong to the vegetal [soul](#). Therefore love is not simply in the [concupiscible](#) power.

**On the contrary,** The [Philosopher](#) says (Topic. ii, 7) that "love is in the [concupiscible](#) power."

**I answer that,** Love is something pertaining to the [appetite](#); since [good](#) is the object of both. Wherefore love differs according to the difference of appetites. For there is an [appetite](#) which arises from an apprehension [existing](#), not in the subject of the [appetite](#), but in some other: and this is called the "[natural appetite](#)." Because [natural](#) things seek what is suitable to them according to their [nature](#), by reason of an apprehension which is not in them, but in the Author of their [nature](#), as stated in [I:6:1 \(Reply to Objection 2\)](#) and [I:103:1 \(Reply to Objections 1 and 3\)](#). And there is another [appetite](#) arising from an apprehension in the subject of the [appetite](#), but from [necessity](#) and not from [free-will](#). Such is, in irrational animals, the "sensitive [appetite](#)," which, however, in [man](#), has a certain share of liberty, in so far as it obeys reason. Again, there is another [appetite](#) following freely from an apprehension in the subject of the [appetite](#). And this is the rational or [intellectual appetite](#), which is called the "will."

Now in each of these appetites, the name "love" is given to the principle movement towards the end loved. In the [natural appetite](#) the principle of this movement is the [appetitive](#) subject's connaturalness with the thing to which it tends, and may be called "[natural](#) love": thus the connaturalness of a heavy body for the centre, is by reason of its weight and may be called "[natural](#) love." In like manner the aptitude of the sensitive [appetite](#) or of the [will](#) to some [good](#), that is to say, its very complacency in [good](#) is called "sensitive love," or "[intellectual](#)" or "rational love." So that sensitive love is in the sensitive [appetite](#), just as [intellectual](#) love is in the [intellectual appetite](#). And it belongs to the [concupiscible](#) power, because it regards [good](#) absolutely, and not under the aspect of difficulty, which is the object of the irascible faculty.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The words quoted refer to [intellectual](#) or rational love.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Love is spoken of as being fear, [joy](#), desire and sadness, not [essentially](#) but [causally](#).

**Reply to Objection 3.** Natural love is not only in the powers of the vegetal [soul](#), but in all the [soul's](#) powers, and also in all the parts of the body, and universally in all things: because, as [Dionysius](#) says (Div. Nom. iv), "Beauty and [goodness](#) are beloved by all things"; since each single thing has a connaturalness with that which is [naturally](#) suitable to it.

Article 2. Whether love is a passion?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that love is not a [passion](#). For no power is a [passion](#). But every love is a power, as [Dionysius](#) says (Div. Nom. iv). Therefore love is not a [passion](#).

**Objection 2.** Further, love is a kind of union or bond, as [Augustine](#) says (De Trin. viii, 10). But a union or bond is not a [passion](#), but rather a relation. Therefore love is not a [passion](#).

**Objection 3.** Further, [Damascene](#) says (De Fide Orth. ii, 22) that passion is a movement. But love does not imply the movement of the [appetite](#); for this is desire, of which movement love is the principle. Therefore love is not a [passion](#).

**On the contrary,** The [Philosopher](#) says (Ethic. viii, 5) that "love is a [passion](#)."

**I answer that,** [Passion](#) is the effect of the agent on the patient. Now a [natural](#) agent produces a twofold effect on the patient: for in the first place it gives it the form; and secondly it gives it the movement that results from the [form](#). Thus the generator gives the generated body both weight and the movement resulting from weight: so that weight, from being the principle of movement to the place, which is connatural to that body by reason of its weight, can, in a way, be called "[natural](#) love." In the same way the appetible object gives the [appetite](#), first, a certain adaptation to itself, which consists in complacency in that object; and from this follows movement towards the appetible object. For "the [appetitive](#) movement is circular," as stated in De Anima iii, 10; because the appetible object moves the [appetite](#), introducing itself, as it were, into its [intention](#); while the [appetite](#) moves towards the realization of the appetible object, so that the movement ends where it began. Accordingly, the first change wrought in the [appetite](#) by the appetible object is called "love," and is nothing else than complacency in that object; and from this

complacency results a movement towards that same object, and this movement is "desire"; and lastly, there is rest which is "joy." Since, therefore, love consists in a change wrought in the [appetite](#) by the appetible object, it is evident that love is a [passion](#): properly so called, according as it is in the [concupiscible](#) faculty; in a wider and extended sense, according as it is in the [will](#).

**Reply to Objection 1.** Since power denotes a principle of movement or action, [Dionysius](#) calls love a power, in so far as it is a principle of movement in the [appetite](#).

**Reply to Objection 2.** Union belongs to love in so far as by reason of the complacency of the [appetite](#), the lover stands in relation to that which he loves, as though it were himself or part of himself. Hence it is clear that love is not the very relation of union, but that union is a result of love. Hence, too, [Dionysius](#) says that "love is a unitive force" (Div. Nom. iv), and the [Philosopher](#) says (Polit. ii, 1) that union is the work of love.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Although love does not denote the movement of the [appetite](#) in tending towards the appetible object, yet it denotes that movement whereby the [appetite](#) is changed by the appetible object, so as to have complacency therein.

Article 3. Whether love is the same as dilection?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that love is the same as dilection. For [Dionysius](#) says (Div. Nom. iv) that love is to dilection, "as four is to twice two, and as a rectilinear figure is to one composed of straight lines." But these have the same meaning. Therefore love and dilection denote the same thing.

**Objection 2.** Further, the movements of the [appetite](#) differ by reason of their objects. But the objects of dilection and love are the same. Therefore these are the same.

**Objection 3.** Further, if dilection and love differ, it seems that it is chiefly in the fact that "dilection refers to [good](#) things, love to [evil](#) things, as some have maintained," according to [Augustine](#) (De Civ. Dei xiv, 7). But they do not differ thus; because as [Augustine](#) says (De Civ. Dei xiv, 7) the [holy Scripture](#) uses both words in reference to either [good](#) or bad things. Therefore love and dilection do not differ: thus indeed [Augustine](#) concludes (De Civ. Dei xiv, 7) that "it is not one thing to speak of love, and another to speak of dilection."

**On the contrary,** [Dionysius](#) says (Div. Nom. iv) that "some [holy](#) men have held that love means something more Godlike than dilection does."

**I answer that,** We find four words referring in a way, to the same thing: viz. love, dilection, [charity](#) and friendship. They differ, however, in this, that "friendship," according to the [Philosopher](#) (Ethic. viii, 5), "is like a [habit](#)," whereas "love" and "dilection" are expressed by way of act or passion; and "[charity](#)" can be taken either way.

Moreover these three express act in different ways. For love has a wider signification than the others, since every dilection or [charity](#) is love, but not vice versa. Because dilection implies, in addition to love, a choice [electionem] made beforehand, as the very word denotes: and therefore dilection is not in the [concupiscible](#) power, but only in the [will](#), and only in the rational [nature](#). [Charity](#) denotes, in addition to love, a certain perfection of love,

in so far as that which is loved is held to be of great price, as the word itself implies [Referring to the Latin "carus" (dear)].

**Reply to Objection 1.** [Dionysius](#) is speaking of love and dilection, in so far as they are in the [intellectual appetite](#); for thus love is the same as dilection.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The object of love is more general than the object of dilection: because love extends to more than dilection does, as stated above.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Love and dilection differ, not in respect of [good](#) and [evil](#), but as stated. Yet in the [intellectual](#) faculty love is the same as dilection. And it is in this sense that [Augustine](#) speaks of love in the passage quoted: hence a little further on he adds that "a right [will](#) is well-directed love, and a wrong [will](#) is ill-directed love." However, the fact that love, which is [concupiscible](#) passion, inclines many to [evil](#), is the reason why some assigned the difference spoken of.

**Reply to Objection 4.** The reason why some held that, even when applied to the [will](#) itself, the word "love" signifies something more Godlike than "dilection," was because love denotes a [passion](#), especially in so far as it is in the sensitive [appetite](#); whereas dilection presupposes the judgment of reason. But it is possible for [man](#) to tend to [God](#) by love, being as it were passively drawn by Him, more than he can possibly be drawn thereto by his [reason](#), which pertains to the [nature](#) of dilection, as stated above. And consequently love is more Godlike than dilection.

Article 4. Whether love is properly divided into love of friendship and love of concupiscence?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that love is not properly divided into love of friendship and love of [concupiscence](#). For "love is a [passion](#), while friendship is a [habit](#)," according to the [Philosopher](#) (Ethic. viii, 5). But [habit](#) cannot be the member of a division of [passions](#). Therefore love is not properly divided into love of [concupiscence](#) and love of friendship.

**Objection 2.** Further, a thing cannot be divided by another member of the same division; for [man](#) is not a member of the same division as "animal." But [concupiscence](#) is a member of the same division as love, as a [passion](#) distinct from love. Therefore [concupiscence](#) is not a division of love.

**Objection 3.** Further, according to the [Philosopher](#) (Ethic. viii, 3) friendship is threefold, that which is founded on "usefulness," that which is founded on "pleasure," and that which is founded on "[goodness](#)." But useful and pleasant friendship are not without [concupiscence](#). Therefore [concupiscence](#) should not be contrasted with friendship.

**On the contrary,** We are said to love certain things, because we desire them: thus "a man is said to love wine, on account of its sweetness which he desires"; as stated in Topic. ii, 3. But we have no friendship for wine and suchlike things, as stated in Ethic. viii, 2. Therefore love of [concupiscence](#) is distinct from love of friendship.

**I answer that,** As the [Philosopher](#) says (Rhet. ii, 4), "to love is to wish [good](#) to someone." Hence the movement of love has a twofold tendency: towards the [good](#) which a man wishes

to someone (to himself or to another) and towards that to which he wishes some [good](#). Accordingly, [man](#) has love of [concupiscence](#) towards the [good](#) that he wishes to another, and love of friendship towards him to whom he wishes [good](#).

Now the members of this division are related as primary and secondary: since that which is loved with the love of friendship is loved simply and for itself; whereas that which is loved with the love of [concupiscence](#), is loved, not simply and for itself, but for something else. For just as that which has [existence](#), is a being simply, while that which [exists](#) in another is a relative being; so, because [good](#) is convertible with being, the [good](#), which itself has [goodness](#), is [good](#) simply; but that which is another's [good](#), is a relative [good](#). Consequently the love with which a thing is loved, that it may have some [good](#), is love simply; while the love, with which a thing is loved, that it may be another's [good](#), is relative love.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Love is not divided into friendship and [concupiscence](#), but into love of friendship, and love of [concupiscence](#). For a friend is, properly speaking, one to whom we wish [good](#): while we are said to desire, what we wish for ourselves.

Hence the Reply to the Second Objection.

**Reply to Objection 3.** When friendship is based on usefulness or pleasure, a man does indeed wish his friend some [good](#): and in this respect the character of friendship is preserved. But since he refers this [good](#) further to his own pleasure or use, the result is that friendship of the useful or pleasant, in so far as it is connected with love of [concupiscence](#), loses the character to [true](#) friendship.

**Éros (ἔρως érōs) means "love, mostly of the sexual passion".**

ANDERS NYGREN

"God does not love that which is already in itself worthy of love, but on the contrary, that which in itself has no worth acquires worth just by becoming the object of God's love. Agape has nothing to do with the kind of love that depends on the recognition of a valuable quality in its object. Agape does not recognize value, but creates it. Agape loves, and imparts value by loving. The man who is loved by God has no value in himself; what gives him value is precisely the fact that God loves him. Agape is a value-creating principle. " (Nygren: 78)

"God's Agape is a love that makes a mockery of all attempts at rational motivation. But if the rationalising tendency will not allow even God's love to retain spontaneity, but insists on finding a motive for it in the value of its object, then it is only to be expected that it should insist even more strongly on treating the Christian's love for his neighbour in a similar way. For Jesus, on the other hand, it is beyond question that God's love is unmotivated and spontaneous; and therefore it also also beyond question for Him that a man's love for his neighbour should be spontaneous and unmotivated. There is no occasion to look behind our neighbor's actual condition for any hidden valuable quality that will explain and justify our love for him. God's love is explanation and sanction enough. " (Nygren: 99)

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

"When Jesus bids us to love our enemies, he is speaking neither of *eros* nor *philia*, he is speaking of *agape*, understanding and creative, redemptive goodwill for all men. Only by following this way and responding with this type of love are we able to be children of our Father who is in heaven." (King: 37)



**Philia (φιλία philía) means "affectionate regard, friendship", usually "between equals".**

APOSTLE PAUL (Agape-Philia Combination)

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres." (1 Cor. 13:4–7, NIV)

APOSTLE JOHN (Agape-Philia Combination)

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16–17, NIV)

"Dear friends, let us love one another for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." (1 John 4:7–8, NIV)

TERTULLIAN (Agape-Philia Combination)

"Our individual, extraordinary, and perfect goodness consists in loving our enemies. To love one's friends is common practice, to love one's enemies only among Christians." (Swartley)

SAINT AUGUSTINE (Agape-Philia Combination)

...to love God is "to attain the peace which is yours." (Saint Augustine's Confessions)

**Storge (στοργή storgē) means "love, affection" and "especially of parents and children".**

C.S. LEWIS

“To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable.” (C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*)

**Philautia (Greek: φιλαυτία, romanized: philautía) means "self-love".**

HENRY SIDGWICK ON *egoism* (“promoting one's own well-being”)

“The good of any one individual is of no more importance, from the point of view (if I may so say) of the Universe, than the good of any other; unless, that is, there are special grounds for believing that more good is likely to be realized in the one case than in the other.”

(Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*)

“One has to kill a few of one’s natural selves to let the rest grow — a very painful slaughter of innocents.”

**Xenia (Greek: ξενία) is an ancient Greek concept of hospitality.**

GABRIEL HERMAN

He lays out the use of *xenia* in political alliances in the Near East.

“In my view it is implicit in Thucydides' thinking that in both cases, that of his own and Phormio's, the inter-state treaties sprang out of private alliances between themselves and some unnamed Thracian and Acarnian potentates. And in both cases it is mainly the naming habit which suggest that these alliances were pacts of *xenia*.

Thucydides' patronymic can be related to the Thracian prince Oloros. The events can be reconstructed as follows: Thucydides' grandfather concluded a pact of *xenia* with Oloros of Thrace, and, in conformity with the custom of naming, called his son Oloros after his partner. This can account for the Athenian Thucydides' patronymic, for his rights of working the Thracian gold-mines, and for his influence among the 'first men of Thrace – presumably his third-generation ancestral *xenoi*.

Two details pertinent to Phormio and Acarnianians similarly accord well with the mechanism of *xenia* : the Acarnian request of 428/7 BC. ‘that the commander sent out to them should be, either a son or a relation of Phormio, and an Athenian decree from the year 337/7 BC, re-affirming a grant of Athenian citizenship to two Acarnianians, Phormio and Karphinas. The Acarnian request carries the assumption that the tie was heritable, that the obligations assumed by Phormio, who had in the meanwhile disappeared from the scene, would be fulfilled by his son Asopius. The name of one of the honorands on the fourth-century decree conforms to the custom of naming which was widespread within the framework of *xenia* : a man would sometimes call a son after his partner, and this name would pass on to later generations. What most probably happened in our case was that the Acarnian Phormio from the decree had been so named after his grandfather, who had in turn received this name from his

father -the Athenian Phormio's anonymous Acarnanian ally.

Thus, in addition to the treaty between Athens and 'the districts on the coast of Thrace', and between Athens and Acarnania, we can also detect the operation of two personal alliances - and extremely powerful ones - between Thucydides and some Thracian potentates on the one hand and between Phormio and his descendants and some Acarnanian potentates and their descendants on the other. In raising the foreign forces both Thucydides and Asopius availed themselves of these personal connections rather than the inter-state treaties." (Herman)

**Sources:**

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