

## Mysticism and/as Love Theory

edited by M. De Kesel and A. Poiters

### DESCRIPTION:

Mysticism is all about love. Mystics love God and want to get in touch with Him. To this end, they follow a tortuous path through the intimacy of their own souls, driven by desire. The Lord may not be the easiest of lovers, but this does not prevent them from longing for Him. In fact, his perceived absence, physical and even mental, makes their love burn all the fiercer. And this burning love is far from thoughtless. The difficulty of loving God is precisely one of the main reasons why mystics have always felt the need to reflect profoundly upon their relationship with Him. The mystical canon testifies in various ways to its authors' extensive and diversified thinking on their intense spiritual love lives. And these reflections all have their elaborate, subtle theories of love.

It is from this perspective that the contributions to this volume approach several important works in the Christian mystical tradition, from the Seven Ways of Minne by Beatrice of Nazareth, via Novalis's Hymns to the Night, to the Prologue by Simone Weil. These writings are examined for their specific theoretical schemes and backgrounds. At the same time, the question is also dealt with how the theory and the experience of love relate to one another in these texts. Investigations of the reflections on this topic by modern thinkers like Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Foucault round off this exploration of mysticism and its love theories.

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