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CONNOTATIONS OF "SELF-LOVE" IN THE EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE ON THE PASSIONS

Keywords: *Augustinian, cultura animi, contaminations of discourses and traditions, discipline of judgment, Du Moulin, passions, self-love, Stoic, virtue, Wright.*

Abstract: *While the more frequent historiographic tendency is to associate the early modern occurrences of "self-love" in English texts with the Augustinian template (the "infected love" of a postlapsarian "wicked will"), this paper aims to highlight several instances of a different usage. The seventeenth-century writings on the passions it will investigate work with a notion of "self-love" which only formally carries Augustinian echoes but whose content is rather in tune with notions belonging to a Stoic-inspired scenario of a cure of the soul (resistance to cure, failure of self-examination, narrowness of self – to be gradually shed off by means of a discipline of judgment, self and emotions). As such, they are interesting cases of a typical early modern phenomenon of eclectic discourse formation and mutual contamination of traditions of thought, and testify to a generally neglected early modern concern with a doctrine and a practice of the "cure of the soul" which typically aims to graft Christian theology onto ancient philosophy.*