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**Andreas Capellanus: *De amore* – Interpretation and Reception of  
a 12th-Century Treatise on Love in Medieval and Humanist  
Literature**

*Theses of the doctoral dissertation*

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This doctoral dissertation examines the interpretation and reception history of *De amore*, the twelfth-century treatise on love by Andreas Capellanus, with particular emphasis on the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Central European manuscript tradition and the work's role in late medieval and humanist literature. The primary aim of the study is to investigate the readership of the treatise, the contexts in which it was read, and the purposes it served, as well as to trace how its interpretation changed from the time of its composition to the period of humanism.

The dissertation is based on the detailed descriptive codicological analysis of twenty-six surviving Central European manuscripts, an approach that represents a novel contribution to the study of the Capellanian tradition. The manuscripts rarely survive as independent volumes; instead, they are most often preserved in composite codices alongside moral-theological, philosophical, legal, and humanist texts. This transmission context suggests that in the late Middle Ages *De amore* circulated primarily within clerical and university milieus, rather than functioning solely as a handbook of courtly love.

The first chapter focuses on the circumstances of the work's composition, addressing questions of authorship and dating. Through an analysis of the French courtly milieu and the patronage of Marie de Champagne, the study narrows the date of composition to the period between 1182 and 1186 and reconstructs the social and literary characteristics of the twelfth-century audience. A significant contribution of this chapter is the identification of the influence of Byzantine romance literature, which opens a new interpretive perspective on the ideological and poetic background of the treatise. The second chapter examines the sources of *De amore* and argues that Andreas Capellanus was not merely an epigone of Ovid but a conscious author who synthesized classical, Christian, and secular traditions. The third chapter highlights the fragmented nature and interpretive diversity of the manuscript tradition. The final chapter analyses the Italian humanist reception of the treatise, with particular attention to the works of Giovanni Boccaccio and Enea Silvio Piccolomini.

The dissertation concludes that *De amore* is a multilayered cultural construct that played a significant role in shaping European concepts of love from the Middle Ages to humanism.

## Abstract

This doctoral dissertation examines the interpretation and reception history of *De amore*, the twelfth-century treatise on love by Andreas Capellanus, with particular emphasis on its fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Central European manuscript tradition and its impact on Italian humanist literature. The study seeks to reconstruct the work's original context of composition, to analyze the transformation of its reception in the later Middle Ages, and to identify the codicological and interpretive frameworks through which the text was transmitted. Drawing on a detailed descriptive codicological analysis of twenty-six manuscripts, the dissertation demonstrates that *De amore* circulated primarily within clerical and university settings during the late Middle Ages, most often as part of composite codices. It argues that the treatise is not merely an imitation of Ovid but a multilayered cultural construct that synthesizes classical, Christian, and secular traditions, and that it played a significant role in shaping European discourses on love from the Middle Ages to the humanist period.