

Abstract:

This work deals with the personality of the English Cistercian monk and abbot of the 12th century Aelred of Rievaulx and his work "On Spiritual Friendship" (*De spirituali amicitia*). It aims to analyze Aelred's work in the broader context of Aelred's life, his other works and contemporary theological-philosophical concepts and ideals. It further intends to place him in the tradition of late ancient and medieval reflections on friendship and love with an emphasis on the monastic environment. The author made a translation and analysis of *De spirituali amicitia*'s most important passages and compared them with Aelred's sources and originals. These include among others the work of Marc Tullio Cicero *Laelius de amicitia*, the writings of St. Ambrose and Augustine and the Bible. The thesis is concluded with an analysis of Aelred's "individuality", which is spread throughout his work and which is interpreted using the current discourse on individuality in the Middle Ages. Therefore, the author tries to define Aelred's place "between tradition and individualism".