AFFECTING CHANGE:

ASPECTS OF RHETORIC, POETICS AND LOGIC IN THE MINOR POEMS OF GUIDO CAVALCANTI

by

ANDREA SAUNDERSON

The Department of Italian Studies,
McGill University, Montreal

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ABSTRACT:

This thesis studies the use of rhetoric, poetics and logic in thirteenth-century Italian poetry, specifically that of Guido Cavalcanti. The poetic production of Cavalcanti is examined as an example of the synthesis of science and poetry, and secondly as an example of the use of persuasive techniques.

In particular, I examine his so-called minor poems as examples of the theory of love expressed in "Donna me prega". My work hinges on two aspects: the fact that the central metaphor in the poetry of Cavalcanti represents the phenomenology of love as a passion of the body using medical terminology from Avicenna, and that the radical Aristotelianism (marginalised by the ecclesiastical condemnations) defines Cavalcanti's philosophical and scientific discourse. Cavalcanti combats the opposition of his readership to his radical Aristotelianism with persuasive techniques, rhetorical and poetic, and with logic found in Aristotle, his commentators Gundisalvus, al-Fārābī, Avicenna, Averroes, and Roger Bacon.

RÉSUMÉ :

Cette thèse porte sur l'usage de la rhétorique, de la poésie et de la logique dans la poésie italienne du 13^{e} siècle, plus particulièrement celle de Guido Cavalcanti. L'œuvre poétique de Cavalcanti est d'abord analysée comme un exemple de la synthèse entre science et poésie, et dans un second temps pour son usage des techniques de persuasion.

J'étudie en particulier ce que l'on appelle ses poèmes mineurs comme des exemples de la théorie de l'amour exprimée dans "Donna me prega". Mon travail s'attache à deux éléments : le premier étant que la métaphore centrale dans la poésie de Cavalcanti représente la phénoménologie de l'amour comme une passion du corps en ayant recours à la terminologie médicale d'Avicenne, et le second que l'Aristotélisme radical (marginalisé par les condamnations ecclésiastiques) définit le discours philosophique et scientifique de Cavalcanti. Celui-ci combat l'opposition de son lectorat à son Aristotélisme radical à l'aide de techniques de persuasion - rhétoriques et poétiques - et de la logique empruntée à Aristote et à ses commentateurs Gundisalvus, al-Fārābī, Avicenne, Averroès et Roger Bacon.

RIASSUNTO

Questa tesi studia l'uso della retorica, della poetica e della logica nella poesia italiana del Duecento, in particolare quella di Guido Cavalcanti. La produzione poetica di Cavalcanti viene esaminata come esempio di sintesi tra la scienza e la poesia, e in secondo luogo, come esempio di utilizzo di tecniche della persuasione.

Si guarda in particolare alle cosiddette rime minori come esempi della teoria d'amore espressa in "Donna me prega". Due sono i cardini del mio lavoro: il fatto che la metafora centrale nella poesia di Cavalcanti rappresenta la fenomenologia d'amore come una passione del corpo che utilizza termini medici derivanti da Avicenna, e che l'Aristotelismo radicale (marginalizzato dalle condanne ecclesiatische) definisce il discorso filosofico e scientifico di Cavalcanti. Cavalcanti combatte l'opposizione dei suoi lettori al suo l'Aristotelismo radicale con le tecniche della persuasione, retoriche e poetiche, e con la logica derivante da Aristotele, e dai suoi commentatori Gundisalvus, al-Fārābī, Avicenna, Averroè, e Roger Bacon.

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Introduction

What little is known of the historical person of Guido Cavalcanti is known through the Florentine chronicles by Dino Compagni and Giovanni and Filippo Villani.[1] Guido came from a prominent and noble family who, through his marriage, aligned themselves with the even more prominent Farinata degli Uberti. He was, like his friend Dante Alighieri, very much involved in the politics of Florence. Both were "Guelfi Bianchi" and wanted to govern the Republic of Florence for which they were exiled, first Guido then Dante. On the portrait of his character chronicles and commentary concur – he was considered solitary, somewhat disagreeable, but above all of acute intellect. He was referred to posthumously by Boccaccio as "un ottimo loico" (an excellent logician) and as "[un] uomo scienziato" (a man of science). His poetry travelled in limited, if not elite, circles and in his lifetime enjoyed rare fame.[2]

The fate of Cavalcanti's poetry is similar to his own in that the fame he enjoyed while alive was eclipsed by a period of obscurity after.[3] His poems resurfaced in the age of Humanism as a collection in the codex complied by Antonio di Tuccio Manetti, complete with Dino del Garbo's commentary on "Donna me prega". However, it was only in 1476 when Lorenzo the Magnifico together with Agnolo Poliziano produced the Raccolta Aragonese, a collection of Guido's poems, in which his unique talent as a poet was forefront and lauded.

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[1]Domenico De Robertis, ed, "Introduzione," Rime: con le rime di Iacopo Cavalcanti, (Torino: Einaudi, 1986) XI-XXIV.
[2] De Robertis, Rime. XII.
[3] Maria Luisa Ardizzone, "Introduction," Guido Cavalcanti: The Other Middle Ages. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 3-16.

Regarding the corpus of his poetry, his major canzone "Donna me prega" – particularly once accompanied by Dino del Garbo's commentary – was given the most attention by commentators/critics for its complexity, and particularly for its scientific discourse. However, as Maria Luisa Ardizzone asserts, his minor poems (all those excluding "Donna me prega") are an essential part of understanding the major canzone; "The conceptual unity that his poetry involves is a premise for any serious reading of the canzone."[4] Therefore, his minor poems are also part of the scientific tradition that "Donna me prega" has been attributed to. It is in this key, and that of persuasion, that I read his minor poems.[5]

The first chapter, "The Logic of Rhetoric and Poetics Applied to Society" is a general overview of Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics as part of logic – within the scheme of the context theory as it was presented by al-Fārābī and Avicenna and one of their western proponents, the scientist Roger Bacon.

I give an account of logic as a tool for knowledge based on al-Fārābī's Enumeration of the Sciences as explained in the translation/adaptation by Dominicus

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[4] Ardizzone, 6.

[5] It must be said that part of the inspiration to examine persuasion in the poetry of Cavalcanti is a reference to a manual of rhetoric written by Guido himself of which there is no longer any trace. This piqued my curiosity to investigate further: "L'ornatissimo e dottissimo Sig. Jacopo Morelli Bibliotecario della Marcia in Venezia mi avvisa trovarsi in questa Biblioteca un rarissimo Libro che ha per titolo Introduzione alla lingua volgare di Domenico Tulio Fausto. Quest'opera è citata dal Crescimbeni nell'Istoria della Poesia Volgare T.2 a pag. 301. In questo libro dunque il Fausto in un capitolo intitolato "Dell'ordinare la Prosa" dice: 'Delle parole bisillabe e trisillabe alcune sono aspirate come *honore* alcune hanno geminate le liquide come *novella, fiamma, anno, carro, lasso,* consonate dopo muta doppia, *fabbro,* ovvero muto in mezzo liquide, *sepolcro,* e cotali Dante chiamò nella sua Volgar Eloquenza, e Guido Cavalcanti nella Seconda Parte della sua Grammatica, *irsute*: e chi facesse combinazione di queste sensa dubbio seria dura e roggia orazione.' Convien dunque dire che realmente Guido abbia composto quest'opera...riguardare esso si deve come uno dei primi cooperatori all'avanzamento del bello ed ameno nostro volgare linguaggio, dando ad esso forma (XXXI)." Antonio Cicciaporci, "Memorie della vita e dell'opere di Guido Cavalcanti." "Rime" di Guido Cavalcanti edite e inedited aggiuntovi un volgarizzamento antico non mai pubblicato del commento di Dino del Garbo sulla canzone "Donna me prega". Firenze: presso Nicolò Carli, 1813. V-XXXIII.VI. This citation is found in Federica Anichini, La poesia del corpo in Guido Cavalcanti, diss., New York U, 2002 (New York: UMI, 2002) 18.

Gundisalvus, De Scientiis. The five syllogistic instruments of knowing are those of Aristotle's Demonstration, Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric and Poetics, each of which attains its own degree of certitude, the latter two being of concern here. I focus on the rational aspects of argumentation, and the role that emotions play in incurring belief in oratory and poetic representation as these are the conditions upon which intellectual assent depends. To do so, I make use of Aristotle's recourse to conventional ideas as the basis for persuasion and the creation of a favourable disposition from Rhetoric, and the criteria for credibility in tragedy as well as the evocation of pity and fear, "tragic effect", from Poetics.

I then examine the use of oratory and specifically poetry for civic purposes as set out by Aristotle, that is, moral education with the goal of creating a virtuous society. Poetry in particular is an efficacious tool for instruction because it is pleasurable to listen to/read and recite. Through delight it can engender an openness to learning about the object represented. In this way, poetic representation bypasses the deliberative process and achieves imaginative assent. This leads to a discussion of how the five syllogistic methods of knowing help the philosopher/scientist guard against error, mistaking falsehood for truth, as described by al-Fārābī and Gundisalvus. Imaginative assent is significant as the conviction it incurs can be more powerful as a motivating force than truth itself (here I refer to al-Fārābī and Avicenna). It is the aspect of persuasion that Roger Bacon explores most in his "Moralis philosophia", a treatise in which Bacon also expounds on the utility of poetry in creating a moral society, overcoming reticence or unwillingness, but in particular on its utility in converting people from one belief system

to another, non-Christians to Christianity. For him, the practical application of rhetoric and poetic representation is indispensable in the directing of human actions.

In the second and third chapters I examine the minor poems of Guido Cavalcanti, those being his poetic corpus excluding his major canzone "Donna me prega", and the persuasive techniques employed by him.

Chapter Two is entitled "An Appeal to Experience". In this chapter I concentrate on Cavalcanti's theory of knowledge, as explained by Maria Luisa Ardizzone as analogous to his theory of love as a passion of the body. I also apply Deborah Black's analysis of logic as a tool for knowing to Cavalcanti's minor poems. One of the ways in which Cavalcanti employs logic in his poetry is to persuade the reader of the validity of his theory. With regard to logic, I refer again to the texts of al-Fārābī and Gundisalvus mentioned above.

The premise for persuasion that Cavalcanti uses is the pathology of erotic love, an acknowledged ailment in the medical, clerical and poetic tradition. Because the theories of knowledge and love as a passion are analogous, it is possible for Cavalcanti to demonstrate his Averroistic (radical Aristotelian) theory of knowledge using the metaphor of erotic love. He represents the symptoms of the ailment as they are described in Avicenna's Liber Canonis, the predominant medical text at the time. Through the employment of an anonymous third party, Cavalcanti draws the attention of the reader to the visibility of the symptoms, thus giving the reader his own experience of observation/witnessing which in turn verifies his theory. He is faithful to the principles of the scientific method of investigation (observation and testimony) and particularly to verification – a major proponent of which was Roger Bacon. In his poetry Cavalcanti

fuses the most efficacious modes of achieving intellectual assent, demonstration and rhetoric.

The third and final chapter, "An Appeal to Emotion", examines Cavalcanti's attempts at persuasion through emotion instead of reason. The opposition of his readership to his radical Aristotelianism is expressed through the theme of disdain/lack of compassion for the lover – opposition coming primarily from Dante and Christian theologians. In an effort to create space for his theories in the intellectual imaginary of his readership Cavalcanti appeals to emotion either directly, using the rhetorical technique of lamentation, or indirectly, using poetic techniques to circumvent deliberation all together. The primary texts of reference are Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*, and al-Fārābī's preface to his own commentary on Aristotle's Rhetoric.

The correct deliberative process is an integral aspect of the virtue of intelligence as it pertains to human concerns. According to Nichomachean Ethics, deliberation is an act of reason and desire for the "good". However, it can be misused if the rational conclusion does not concur with desire; the rational conclusion can be used to suit *personal* desire. The implications of the radical Aristotelianism that Cavalcanti espouses are threatening at best to his readership; they present an alternate version of the universe, one that denies the fundamental notions of creation, free will and the immortality of the soul. The theory of matter subjects human life and will to the laws of necessity and biology. An "ideological" change of such magnitude can be greeted with an unwillingness to explore it. It is for this reason that Cavalcanti runs recourse to the ability of poetry to overcome reticence.

Chapter One

The Logic of Rhetoric and Poetics Applied to Society

In thirteenth-century Europe the arrival of the expanded *Organon* of Aristotle, or the context theory, added another dimension to logic – the discernment of truth from degrees of belief. Rhetoric and Poetics, the books appended to the *Organon*, furnished the methods for constructing and deconstructing belief systems, a subject particularly relevant to philosophers/scientists and theologians alike. Scientific investigation was demystifying the natural world and contemporaneously whittling away at the notion of miracle. Both philosophers and theologians were engaged in protecting and combining natural science and religion. Roger Bacon was one such philosopher/scientist.[1]

What Bacon recognized in the context theory and remarks on time and again throughout his "Moralis philosophia", is the power of discourse in forming ideas and producing the corresponding actions in people. The source of this art is Aristotle's investigation of the persuasive capacities of oratory and poetic representation contained in Rhetoric and Poetics respectively. By applying reason to human behavior and emotions, Aristotle makes a science of human actions and the manipulation of them – of which ethics and politics are its obvious channels. The managing of society, in Aristotelian terms, constitutes directing human action to the good, the highest good being that of society. In a religious paradigm, however, this constitutes going beyond the good of society, to recognizing the omnipotence of the divine. In the thirteenth century, social

[1] For a general bibliography on the diffusion of Aristotelian texts in the West in the Middle Ages and on logic in particular see the following: C.H. Haskins, Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924); R. de Vaux, "La première entrée d'Averroes chez les Latins," Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques, 22-ii (1933): 193-245.; and F. van Steenberghen, Aristotle in the West (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1970).

discourse was articulated in Christian religious terms with philosophy "firmly set in a theological context."[2]

Discourse as a social tool, poetic and otherwise, was elaborated on by the Islamic philosophers – specifically al-Fārābī, Avicenna, and Averroes,[3] whom Bacon refers to in his works. They inherited the context theory from the Alexandrian commentators of Aristotle and their commentaries were transmitted to the Latin world via translations from the Arabic and Greek.[4] Oratory and specifically poetry played an essential role not only in the moral and civil education of society but also in the religious. Despite the recognition of the importance of ethics and politics ("moral philosophy" in baconian terms), in the ideological framework of religion theology was always the superior science. Bacon positions moral philosophy as the "queen" of all the sciences and explains its subjugation to Christian theology in the following way:

> Besides this science alone [moral philosophy] or for the most part is concerned with the same matters as theology since theology considers only the five above-mentioned [sciences] albeit in a different manner, namely in the faith of Christ ... But theology is the noblest of the sciences, therefore that science which is most clearly related to it is nobler than the others.[5]

Philosophy, in a religious universe, serves religion. Moreover, it is precisely because philosophy cuts across religious boundaries that it is useful in conversion: it is a common reference point. Bacon discusses the use of philosophy in preaching to infidels in his Opus tertium, a work containing "addenda and corrigenda" to the Opus maius, the work

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[2] Jeremiah M. G. Hackett, "Moral Philosophy and Rhetoric in Roger Bacon," Philosophy and Rhetoric. 20.1 (1987): 19.
[3] Averroes' commentary on Aristotle's Poetics will be addressed in Chapter Three.
[4] Alfonso Maierù, "Influenze arabe e disscussioni sulla natura della logica presso i Latini fra XII e XIV secolo," La diffusione delle scienze islamiche nel Medio Evo europeo. Convegno internazionale, Roma, 2-4 ottobre, 1984 (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1987) 251.
[5] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 19.

in which "Moralis philosophia" is found.[6] However, conversion is not only aided by philosophy, but also by "sweet words", "appropriate gestures" and "music".[7] His explicit application of persuasive techniques to religious discourse is telling of the historical era in which Bacon and his contemporaries found themselves as well as their understanding of the nature and power of belief.

Logic, Credibility and Argumentation

The unifying aspect of the context theory is Aristotle's theory of the syllogism as the tool for producing belief:[8] "For every belief comes either through syllogism or from induction (Prior Analytics II, 23)."[9] The syllogism and its use in logic were explored extensively by Aristotle's Islamic commentators, especially al-Fārābī and Avicenna. A succinct summary of al-Fārābī's exposition of the syllogism is given in De Scientiis,[10] Dominicus Gundisalvus' translation and adaptation of al-Fārābī's Enumeration of the Sciences. Gundisalvus restates what the Alexandrian commentators had already recognized and lists the eight books of the context theory under one heading, "logic": "There are eight parts to logic: Categories, Interpretation, Prior Analytics, Posterior Analytics, Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric, and Poetics."[11] Gundisalvus follows al-Fārābī and expounds on the role of the syllogism in "all human cognitive activities"[12] and how it

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[6] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 31.
[7] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 31.
[8] Alfonso Maierù, "La logica nell'età di Cavalcanti," Guido Cavalcanti fra i suoi lettori. Proceedings of the International Symposium for the Seventh Centennial of his Death. November 10-11, 2000, ed., Maria Luisa Ardizzone. (Florence: Cadmo, 2003) 43.
[9] Deborah L. Black, "The 'Imaginative Syllogism' in Arabic Philosophy: A Medieval Contribution to the Philosophical Study of Metaphor," Mediaeval Studies 51 (1989): 242.
[10] Al-Fārābī's Kitab Ihsa' al-'ulum (Book of the Enumeration of the Sciences) came into Latin circulation in the thirteenth century through Dominicus Gundisalvus' De Scientiis.
[11] All English citations of De Scientiis are from Michael Chester Weber's translation in his dissertation, The Translating and Adapting of Al-Farabi's *Kitab Ihsa' al-'Ulum* in Spain, diss., Boston U, 1996. (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1996) 214.
[12] Black, "The Imaginative Syllogism," 243.

functions to rectify belief, from its elements to its applications, its types and the degrees of belief that each type evokes:

> These methods by which knowledge is verified are five: namely, Demonstration, Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric and Poetics.
> [...]
> These, therefore, are the types of syllogism and the syllogistic arts and the types of proof which humans use to certify something in all matters. But these five can also be called by these names: the Certain, the Probable, the Erroneous, the Sufficient, and the Imaginative. Every one of these has elements particular to it and common elements which each shares with the others.[13]

In both Rhetoric and Poetics Aristotle emphasizes the importance of credibility, without which no speech or poetic representation can achieve the desired effect on its audience. Credibility is the element of creative discourse that connects it to logic. That is, reasoned argumentation is present in the persuasive premises of the orator as well as in the imaginative premises of the poet. Because the aim of oratory and poetic representation is to "persuade", it is not necessary that the premises upon which the respective syllogisms rest be demonstrably true as they must be in science. In fact, they can't be. They must, however, be credible.

As rhetoric and poetics are directed to a general audience, the limitations of the audience must be taken into account by the orator and the poet. With regard to rhetoric, Aristotle writes: "The function of Rhetoric, then is to deal with things about which we deliberate, but for which we have no systematic rules; and in the presence of such hearers as are unable to take a general view of many stages, or to follow a lengthy chain of argument."[14] The orator must be able to identify the appropriate means with which to

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[13] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 212-213.
[14] Rh. I.II.12. Though not standard, this is the most accurate system of notation for the version of Rhetoric that I referred to; John Henry Freese, trans., Aristotle, The 'Art' of Rhetoric, eds., T. E. Page, E. Capps, and W. H. D. Rouse (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1939).

persuade that audience and therefore must discover an appropriate belief or generally held opinion from which to begin his argument:

> ... our proofs and arguments must rest on generally accepted principles ["things generally admitted by all, or by most men, or by the wise, and by all or most of these, or by the most notable and esteemed" *Topics*, i.1], as we said in the *Topics*, when speaking of converse with the multitude.[15]

However, on the subject of the "multitude" a brief detour into the poetry of Guido Cavalcanti is necessary.

Cavalcanti's poetry was read in limited, "elite" circles.[16] His major canzone "Donna me prega" is a philosophical and scientific theorem on the dual nature of love that requires the corresponding knowledge in order to decipher its argument and the technical terminology used. To this end, Cavalcanti declares at the beginning that "for the present purpose", "Ed a presente", he needs a knowledgeable audience – more so than usual: "Ed a presente – conoscente – chero".[17] For this poem, as opposed to his other poems, an "expert" is required, in other words, someone with more specialized knowledge than that of his usual audience. In his minor poems, however, the metaphor of departure is grounded in the pathology of erotic love, a malady well documented in the clerical and medical traditions and not unfamiliar to his rather elite readership. Therefore the premises of rhetorical and poetic persuasion are applicable to his specific readership, though not to the "multitude" as cited above.

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[15] Rh. I.I.12

[16] "Non c'è forse esempio, nella storia delle nostre lettere, tanto più ai loro inizi, di fortuna pari a quella di cui ha goduto Guido Cavalcanti già da vivo; [...]. Se è da tener conto dell'eminenza del personaggio, di famiglia cospicua nella sua città, e imparentato col grande Farinata degli Uberti, è anche vero che è sul valore e sul significato della sua opera poetica, per giunta esigua [...] e di non largo consume, per non dire elitaria, è su quella che sin d'allora apparve una sublime esclusività e insomma sul 'nome che più dura e più onora' che è fondata la presenza e la memoria di lui nei secoli ed è cresciuta la sua stessa leggenda." De Robertis, Rime, XI-XII.

[17] "And for the present purpose I want someone who is an expert (v.5)." English translation by Maria Luisa Ardizzone, The Other Middle Ages, 165-168.

Returning to the precondition of credibility in persuasion, the premises of the syllogism in rhetoric and poetics are different. In rhetoric they start with what the audience already accepts, "conventional ideas", which lead to "new" knowledge or belief: "it [argumentation] transfers the agreement granted to premises onto conclusions."[18] However, credibility in poetic representation depends on the resemblance of two situations or objects.

Aristotle refers to credibility in poetic representation most clearly when he lists the five "faults" of tragedy, the most noble form of poetry, that can be found by critics, three out of the five of which, numbers one, two and four, are related to "flaws in argument": "(1) impossibilities, (2) illogicalities, (3) things morally harmful, (4) contradictions, and (5) technical errors [...]."[19] For a poetic representation to be successful, it must also be probable, in Aristotelian terms "a thing that usually happens."[20] In direct relation to poetry and drama, conviction relies on the ability of the poet to avoid "incongruities" of plot and of the poet (and actor) in representing emotion accurately:

> As far, as may be, too, the poet should even act his story with the very gestures of his personages. Given the same natural qualifications, he who feels the emotions to be described will be the most convincing; distress and anger, for instance, are portrayed most truthfully by one who is feeling them at the moment.[21]

If the poetic representation is believable, then the audience will identify with the situation enacted, transfer the emotion represented to themselves and then act upon it.[22] In each

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[18] Paul Ricoeur, "Rhetoric-Poetics-Hermeneutics," trans. Robert Harvey, Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in Our Time: A Reader, eds. Walter Jost and Michael J. Hyde (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997) 62.
[19] Charles Kauffman, "Poetic as Argument," Quarterly Journal of Speech. 67 (1981): 407.
[20] Kauffman, "Poetic as Argument," 410.
[21] Po 1455a 30. Aristotle: The Complete Works. The Revised Oxford Translation of The Complete Works of Aristotle. Ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.) 24 October 2006 <http://library.nlx.com/>
[22] Black, "The Imaginative Syllogism," 257-59.

case, rhetorical and poetic, solid argumentation is a necessary condition in manipulating emotions, the ultimate success of which, for both the orator and poet is gauged by the reaction of the audience – the emotion affected.

Emotion, Belief and Action

In Book II of Rhetoric Aristotle explains the types of emotions, their efficient causes and their practical and non-practical implications (the final cause). He brings emotion into the realm of the rational, and thus that of demonstrative science by applying the same syllogistic reasoning of the scientific method: that "questions of essence and questions of cause are one in the same."[23] He distinguishes individual emotions from each other by explaining cognition as their efficient cause. In other words, the cause of each emotion is related to a particular belief.

One emotion that Aristotle examines extensively is anger, the efficient cause of which is apparent insult that affects either oneself or one's friend(s).[24] He differentiates anger from a similar emotion, hatred, by identifying a different efficient cause: the thought of a certain type of person.[25] Because emotional response originates in a belief, emotions can be manipulated by undermining or fortifying that particular belief. In identifying the efficient cause, the orator and poet can then decide on the appropriate line of argumentation with which to persuade the audience. Reiterated in contemporary language:

> When men are angered, they are not victims of some totally irrational force. Rather they are responding in accordance with the thought of unjust insult. Their belief may be erroneous and their anger unreasonable, but their behavior is intelligent and

[23] An.Post. 90a14-15, 31-2, 93a3-4. For the reference in William W. Fortenbaugh see Aristotle on Emotion, (London: Duckworth, 2002) 13.
[24] Rh.II.II.2
[25] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 15.

> cognitive in the sense that it is grounded upon a belief which may be criticized and even altered by argumentation.[26]

However, identifying the efficient cause does not constitute the entire definition of an emotion. Defining emotions includes identifying their material and final causes as well. Though the material causes are beyond the scope of this chapter, they are, briefly, the physiological manifestations of an emotion (examined in Chapter Two).[27] The final cause is the end of each emotion, for which there are two categories, practical (resulting in action) and non-practical (resulting in feelings).

Two such practical emotions are fear and anger, fear being caused by "the impression of imminent evil that causes destruction or pain."[28] The goal of a fearful man is safety and his behavior will be directed to achieving that end. Likewise, the goal of anger is revenge.[29] The goals of both require action. On the contrary shame, indignation, and pity are feelings, non-practical emotions. While shame can serve as a restraint against committing certain acts or about having committed certain acts in the past, and indignation can serve as instigation to rectification, in and of themselves neither are necessarily conducive to action.[30] Interestingly, Aristotle explores pity only insofar as it enables one to identify with those who suffer, feel compassion. He does not explore the possible actions that the feeling of pity could lead to as he does with shame and indignation, despite the fact that he attributes it to good character (along with

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[26] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 17.
[27] The physiological phenomena of emotions are key to Cavalcanti's poetry. The body is Cavalcanti's point of departure for the theory he expresses and the lexicon he uses to do so; he uses the medical terminology of Avicenna's Liber Canonis. See Federica Anichini's dissertation La poesia del corpo and her article "Retorica del corpo nelle *Rime* di Guido Cavalcanti: il tema del pianto," Guido Cavalcanti fra i suoi lettori, ed., Maria Luisa Ardizzone (Florence: Cadmo, 2003) 103-118.
[28] Rh. II.V.1
[29] Rh. II.II.2
[30] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 80-81.

indignation).[31] This missing element in particular is taken up by one of his Islamic commentators, Avicenna. In his commentary on the Poetics, which in many aspects follows that of his predecessor al-Fārābī, Avicenna adds kindliness to the emotions that should be affected by tragedy (fear and pity). Per force kindliness involves action as it is manifested in one's conduct. In referring to the emotions of tragic effect Avicenna uses "mercy/kindliness" interchangeably for pity, and occasionally "sadness", "piety" for fear, or he groups the three adjectives together, "kindliness, sadness or piety (VI.4)."[32] In all cases, he pointedly addresses the issue of an action stemming from pity.

According to Aristotle, the emotions that concern the orator and the poet most are the practical emotions. Both the orator and the poet aim at affecting certain beliefs and actions in the audience by evoking the emotion that corresponds to the action they want the audience to enact. In the Rhetoric "enactment" is expressed in terms of a judgment passed by the audience on legal matters: "The orator persuades by means of his hearers, when they are roused to emotion by his speech; for the judgments we deliver are not the same when we are influenced by joy or sorrow, love or hate."[33] Though expressed in different terms, "catharsis" or "tragic effect" (the evocation of pity and fear), in relation to tragedy, poetic representation also aims at a kind of judgment. As mentioned earlier, it must also pass the test of reasoned argumentation or credibility to justify affecting each emotion. In discussing the aesthetic success of tragedy Gerald Else writes: "They [the audience] will and do pass judgment, though not a legal one. *The tragic elements* – like

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[31] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 83.
[32] "Tragedy is an imitation of an action, complete and noble, and elevated in rank; [...] affecting the particulars not with respect to quality but with respect to action – an imitation which moves the soul to mercy ["pity"] and piety ["fear"]." Avicenna. VI.6 from Ismail M. Dahiyat's critical study Avicenna's Commentary on the *Poetics* of Aristotle: A Critical study with an Annotated Translation of the Text (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974). For the interchangeable adjectives see footnote 4, page 89.
[33] Rh. I.II.5

all emotions, for that matter – *comport of an element of judgment.*"[34] Because the audience is the point of comparison, the audience must believe that what has been enacted is probable, that it relates to themselves in some way.

Moral Education, Practical Wisdom and Didactic Poetry

The practical emotions are of more importance to the orator and poet than the non-practical. Aristotle states that action is a conscious choice made by the individual and hence is an expression of one's moral character. Voluntary action is either the result of virtue or vice, worthy of praise or blame respectively:

> Now the virtues, as we say, are voluntary, since in fact we ourselves are jointly responsible for our states of character, and by having the sort of character we have we lay down the sort of end we do. Hence the vices will also be voluntary, since the same is true of them.[35]

With the same line of reasoning, Aristotle asserts that in and of itself, rhetoric is amoral:

> If it is argued that one who makes unfair use of such faculty of speech may do a great deal of harm, this objection applies equally to all good things except virtue, and above all to those things which are most useful, such as strength, health, wealth, generalship; for as these, rightly used, may be of the greatest benefit, so, wrongly used, they may do an equal amount of harm.[36]

He also reiterates the assertion in Poetics with regard to the poet and the type of actions, noble or base, he chooses to represent:

> Poetry, however, soon broke up into two kinds according to the differences of character in the individual poets; for the graver among them would represent noble actions, and those of noble personages; and the meaner sort the actions of the ignoble.[37]

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[34] Kauffman, "Poetic as Argument," 413.
[35] EN 1114b20-25
[36] Rh.I.I.13
[37] Po 1449a7

Consequently, the moral use of rhetoric and that of poetic representation depends on the moral character of the orator and the poet. Moral education, then, is the logical outgrowth of the rationalization of emotions and the desire to direct human action toward the good.

Fortenbaugh's study Aristotle on Emotion provides a clear and concise summary of Aristotle's theory of education. Because emotion is cognitive it is possible to cultivate principles of correct behavior. In Politics Aristotle discusses the division of the soul into logical and alogical halves. The alogical half (emotions) is the first in generation and in education.[38] Youth act according to emotion and not "reasoned reflection": "In their [young people's] actions, they prefer the noble to the useful; their life is guided by their character rather than by calculation, for the latter aims at the useful, virtue at the noble."[39] Though Aristotle believes that humans are naturally inclined to virtue, a moral education ensures a virtuous disposition.[40] He defines virtue as being:

> Virtue, it would seem, is a faculty providing and preserving good things, a faculty productive of many and great benefits, in fact of all things in all cases [to all men in all cases]. The components of virtue are justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, generosity, intelligence, wisdom.[41]

A man whose moral character has been cultivated early on will act virtuously; he will choose to do something for its own sake,[42] with or without reflection. The courageous man will choose to confront danger because he has been taught that endurance is noble, and the coward, not having had the same instruction in moral character, will flee.[43] However, while moral character is a prerequisite to perfecting the logical half of the soul, it alone is not enough for a man to be considered intellectually mature. Intellectual

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[38] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 45.
[39] Rh. II.XII.13
[40] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 50.
[41] Rh. I.IX.4-6
[42] EN 1105a 30-32
[43] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 72.

maturity is achieved through the perfection of deliberation, educating the logical half, and together with moral character constitutes practical wisdom, "means-end deliberation."[44] Whereas moral character ensures the correct choice of goal, practical wisdom is the ability to decide on the ethical course of action, the means to achieve the noble end.[45] For a man who is practically wise the principles of action are based on the principles of moral character and cannot be otherwise. [46]

Furthermore, moral character alone does not give men the capacity to argue and defend moral principles whereas practical wisdom does:[47] "It is practical wisdom that *actualizes* the rhetorical potency for good ends."[48] Both of these attributes/capacities are necessary for the legislator, one who determines and implements a system of moral education for society. According to Aristotle, the highest good belongs to the realm of political science, of directing society toward the good. The cultivation of the moral character of the individual is noble, but it is "finer and more divine to acquire and preserve it for a people and for cities." [49] The didactic tools for achieving this end are rhetoric, for the legislator/orator, and poetic representation, for the poet.

In Poetics, the didactic function of poetry is a fusion of the actions it represents with the effect that representation has on the audience, "the arousal of pity and fear."[50] Aristotle classifies the types of poetry according to the types of actions represented:

> The objects the imitator represents are actions, with agents who are necessarily either good men or bad – the diversities of human character being nearly always derivative from this primary distinction, since it is by badness and excellence men

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[44] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 76.
[45] EN 1144a7-9
[46] EN 1144a15-20
[47] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 52.
[48] Robert C. Rowland and Deanna F. Womack, "Aristotle's View of Ethical Rhetoric," Rhetoric Society Quarterly 15:1-2 (1985) 20.
[49] EN 1094b5-10
[50] Kauffman, "Poetic as Argument," 413.

> differ in character. It follows, therefore that the agents represented must be either above our own level of goodness, or beneath it, or just such as we are; [...]. This difference it is that distinguishes Tragedy and Comedy also; the one would make its personages worse, and the other better, than the men of the present day.[51]

Tragedy, therefore, is the type of poetic representation that has civil purposes as its aim. The success of the representation is measured by the emotions affected in the audience. Both pity and fear are emotions that result from the audience successfully identifying with the *dramatis personae*. Charles Kauffman offers a clear summary of Aristotle's arguments on the subject:

> Aristotle argues that before one can experience fear, one must perceive danger which has happened to people similar to oneself, whose arrival is imminent and unpredictable [Rh.1381a10]. Further he argues that, "What we fear for ourselves excites our pity when it happens to others [Rh.1386a16]." Hence before the audience can fear (and before they can pity), they must be persuaded that the events which arouse fear are applicable to themselves. Similarly, in his discussion of pity, Aristotle notes that, "we pity those who are like us in age, character, description, social standing, or birth.[52]

Because tragedy is the representation of solely noble actions, it is therefore an instrument for the promotion and cultivation of moral character. Instilling pity and fear in the audience on the basis of affinity to virtuous behavior means that in future, the audience will be receptive to men in situations similar to the one enacted and will act on the basis of moral character.

Aristotle also discusses the didactic function of poetry and music as efficacious methods of teaching moral character. With regard to music, he states that children act according to their alogical half (emotions) and therefore are drawn to pleasure; music is pleasurable.[53] Through song, children can be taught the correct response:

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[51] Po 1448a19-1448a23
[52] Kauffman, "Poetic as Argument," 413.
[53] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 48.

> Children begin by delighting in the natural or common pleasures of music, but soon transfer this delight to the noble characters and actions that are depicted in song and dances. And once they have been habituated to delight in representations of noble character, they have all but acquired a delight in actual noble character.[54]

The combination of words and music habituates children to virtuous actions without them having to understand or be given the reasoning behind it.[55] In both cases, those of education through tragedy and music, Aristotle acknowledges that a direct appeal to deliberation and intellect is not necessary to affect moral action. Bypassing intellectual assent through poetic representation is further expanded on by both al-Fārābī and Avicenna in relation to human will.

Discerning Particulars and Imaginative Assent

In the preface to his commentary on Aristotle's Rhetoric, Didascalia in Rethoricam Aristotelis ex Glosa Alpharabi, al-Fārābī distinguishes between the practical and the speculative sciences and the types of argumentation appropriate to them. The practical sciences are specifically politics and ethics, those that apply to society, and their method of argumentation is supplied by both Rhetoric and Poetics.[56] Moreover, though rhetoric and poetics are considered logic in their "doctrinal aspects", in their application and use, they are not "logic" as they have as their object the particular and not the universal and therefore cannot be applied to other sciences.[57] However, in De Scientiis Gundisalvus echoes al-Fārābī in asserting that it is precisely the particular that keeps the logician from mistaking something of a lesser degree of certitude for the truth; it helps

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[54] Pol.1340a23-5 from Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 48.
[55] Fortenbaugh, Aristotle on Emotion, 50.
[56] "Inter Rethoricam at Poetriam oportet ut procedat que communioris est utilitatis et pluris profectus et qua magis indigetur. Oratoria vero vel rethorica communioris est utilitatis pluribus quam poetria et necessitas ipsorum ad ipsam maior[em] quam ad poetriam. Ideoque oportet ut precedat Liber (e) Rethorice Librum Poetrie." Al-Fārābī, "Didascalia in Rhetoricam Aristotelis ex Glosa Alfarabi," Deux ouvrages inédits sur la Réthorique, ed., J. Langhade and M. Grignaschi. Recherches de l'Institut de Lettres Orientales de Beyrouth, vol. 48. (Beruit: Dar El-Machreq, 1971) §37, 212. Also in Maierù, "Influenze arabe," 256.
[57] Maierù, "Influenze arabe", 256.

the logician to discern truth, belief, opinion and falsehood. Deborah Black explains and expands on this notion: "Their [the non-demonstrative arts] primary task is that of ensuring that the logician does not, through ignorance, conflate the lesser modes of cognition with demonstration itself, and thereby delude himself to a false sense of epistemological security, mistaking opinion or persuasion for science."[58] For this reason the logician must be equally as familiar with the non-demonstrative arts as the demonstrative. In addition to possessing a universal understanding, the logician must also be able to identify the particulars and then to distinguish among them in order to avoid errors in knowledge.[59] This occurs through familiarity with the other four parts of logic and their method of argumentation, Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric and Poetics.

Regarding the function of poetry itself, al-Fārābī and Gundisalvus address the issue of assent in relation to action, but with a pragmatic view to human will and action. They recognize the power of imagination as a motivating force that can replace or outweigh reason or opinion:

> For sometimes imagination is more effective in humans than knowledge or thought. Often human knowledge or thought are opposite to the imagination; at that point, a person is affected by what he imagines rather than by what he knows or thinks.[60]

Avicenna investigates al-Fārābī's notion more extensively and terms this act "imaginative assent". Imaginative assent is described as the degree of conviction affected by the "imitation" or "imaginative representation": "[...] the effect of imaginative representation is psychological and not intellectual in assent, resulting from the pleasure inherent in the form more than the content of poetry."[61] Poetic representation bypasses deliberation on

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[58] Black, "The Imaginative Syllogism," 263.
[59] Black, "The Imaginative Syllogism," 264.
[60] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 212-213.
[61] Dahiyat, Avicenna's Commentary, 18.

moral action. In this case, imaginative assent and not intellectual acceptance results in the corresponding moral action, which is the measure of success:

> The imaginative is the speech to which the soul yields, accepting and rejecting matters without pondering, reasoning or choice. In brief, it responds psychologically rather than ratiocinatively, whether the utterance is demonstrative or not.[62]

While Avicenna crystallizes the process of imaginative assent, al-Fārābī focuses on the reasons for its use: when logical reasoning is not efficacious in providing the impetus to moral action in an audience. This is either due to the fact that an audience does not "possess the capacity for reasoning in a given matter" and consequently cannot "determine whether to choose an action" or it is due to the fact that the type of issue presented is difficult to convince the audience of, despite the audience's ability to reason logically:[63]

> Poetic utterances are only used in addressing someone [so as to] incite him to do something, by instigating him to it and gradually enticing him towards it [...], either when the person seduced [...] is without deliberation to guide him, so that he is aroused towards the deed sought from him by the evoking of imagination, the imagination taking the place of deliberation; or where he is a person who has [the capacity for] deliberating about what is sought from him, but there is no assurance that he would abstain from it upon deliberating about it. So [in the latter case] he is hastened by the poetic utterances, so that his deliberation will be overtaken by the imagination, so that he will embark upon the deed, and it will be elicited from him quickly, before he is able to apprehend by his deliberation what would be the consequence of the act. Whereas originally either he would have refrained from [the act], or he would have pursued it, but thinking that he should not be too hasty, he would have put it off for another time.[64]

Poetic appeal compels one to action where other discourses wouldn't have.[65] This also testifies to why Roger Bacon in "Moralis philosophia" asserts many times that the study

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[62] Avicenna. I.2 in Dahiyat, Avicenna's Commentary, 62.
[63] Dahiyat, Avicenna's Commentary, 19.
[64] Black's translation of Ihsā' al-Ulūm,84.7- 85.6 in "The Imaginative Syllogism," 263.
[65] Black, "The Imaginative Syllogism," 255.

of rhetoric and poetics was essential to the study of human action.[66] Human action, or *operabilia*, as Bacon calls it, is the most difficult aspect of human will; persuasion, direct and indirect, can overcome reticence.

Poetics, Morality and Religion

As has already been stated, Roger Bacon positions theology above moral philosophy, for him the culmination of all the sciences. The object of moral philosophy is human action in relation to the practical intellect.[67] The issues that moral philosophy addresses are what Bacon calls "the highest truths" and those which pertain to "God and divine worship, eternal life, the laws of justice, and the glory of peace and the sublimeness of virtues."[68] Regarding these issues Hackett summarizes Bacon best: human will can be corrupted and thus inhibit moral action; as a result, people are "in great need of rational persuasion."[69] However, strong emotions and beliefs such as "motivation, desire, inclination, hope and will" are involved, and therefore methods of persuasion cannot rely on reasoned argumentation alone.[70] A "forceful and inductive"[71] approach to belief is needed:

> Yet it is necessary that we be swayed to what is good; in fact, it is far more necessary that we be so swayed than that we be moved to the speculation of the bare truth, since virtue and happiness are better and more necessary than bare science. Therefore, it is necessary that we have stronger inducements (*inductiva*) [in practical matters]. Further, the practical intellect is more noble than the speculative.

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[66] "Che la retorica e la poetica appartenessero alla logica e ne costituissero gli 'argomenta optima' per le discipline umanistiche, è una dottrina non occasionale negli scritti di Ruggero." Translation mine. Massa, 143

[67] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 23.

[68] English translations of Roger Bacon's Opus maius and the "Moralis philosophia" within it are by Hackett. This reference is in, "Moral Philosophy," 24.

[69] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 24.

[70] Jeremiah M. G. Hackett, "Roger Bacon on Rhetoric and Poetics," Roger Bacon and the Sciences (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 143.

[71] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 24.

> [...] Further, the practical intellect is related to what is good in a more difficult and less delightful way than the speculative intellect is related to truth [...].[72]

Rhetoric and poetics, then, are necessary to philosophy, especially moral discourse. Similar to al-Fārābī and Avicenna, Bacon recognizes the need to bypass deliberation in order to affect the correct moral action or to "communicate a moral or religious truth."[73] Bacon's subdivision of rhetoric into three types reflects this view and particularly the preeminence of poetic representation in matters of faith and moral action; two of the three types are concerned with religious truths and morality.

Jeremiah Hackett, once again, lists the three types as follows. The first type of rhetoric is about levels of assent in religious truths and proof of them. Proof constitutes "the testimony of the Church, sacred Scripture, the witness of the saints, the abundance of miracles, the power of reasons, and the consensus of all the Catholic teachers."[74] For the second type, forensic argument, Bacon refers the reader to Cicero's treatise on rhetoric. The third type is poetics which is used to persuade on the subject of *operabilia*, human actions. Though Bacon advocates that a variety of rhetorical "styles" be used in persuasive arguments, the "grand style" is the one that must predominate: "the grand style, since it always speaks of great and magnificent things and therefore requires highsounding language, especially when the mind is swayed to action."[75] In other words, the most important function of rhetoric and poetics for Bacon is preaching. As Eugenio

[72] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 25.
[73] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 30.
[74] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 26.
[75] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 28.

Massa puts it, Bacon's vision of a morality is conceived as preaching, *sermo potens*, the culmination of an affective logic, "logica effetuale."[76]

The *sermo potens*, however, is not only aimed at persuasion in moral actions, it also has rhetorical designs on persuasion of belief, specifically religious conversion of the infidel.[77] Following al-Fārābī's division of society into sects, Bacon distinguishes between the Christian and non-Christian religions. He states that miracles are not effective as proof of religious truth in conversion of the non-believer because miracles are "beyond reason and cannot be tested or verified."[78] On the other hand, philosophy is useful in conversion. It appeals to reason which is common to all people, and philosophy is "familiar" to non-believers as it was received from them: "a method familiar to them and to us, which lies within our power and which they [non-believers] cannot deny, because the approach is along the paths of human reason and along those of philosophy."[79] In this respect, conversion starts with philosophers who can then educate and convert non-believers: "For in every nation there are some industrious people who are fitted for [revealed] wisdom, who can be persuaded by the force of reason so that when these men become enlightened [convert] the persuasion through them of society in general becomes easier."[80] It is interesting to note that while Bacon states that the wise infidel can be converted through an appeal to reason, in all moral and religious matters the preacher must forgo reason. Ultimately, affecting action and belief happens through a movement of the soul that preempts deliberation:

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[76] Eugenio Massa, Ruggero Bacone: Etica e poetica nella storia dell'*Opus Maius* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1955) 129.
[77] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 31.
[78] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 23.
[79] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 23.
[80] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 23. Additions mine.

> For the purpose of logic is the composition of arguments that stir the active intellect to faith and to a love of virtue and future happiness, as we have already shown, which arguments are handed down in the books of Aristotle on these arguments, as has been stated. But these arguments must have a maximum amount of beauty, so that the mind of man may be drawn to the truths of salvation suddenly and without previous consideration, as we are taught in those books. And al-Fārābī especially teaches this in regard to poetic argument, the statements of which should be sublime and beautiful, and therefore accompanied with notable adornment in prose, meter and rhythm, as benefits place, time, personages, and subject for which the plea is made.[81]

This is in keeping with his placement of experimental science, the science of verification through objective observation, testimony and experiment, as subordinate to moral philosophy.[82] In short, the preacher needs poetics.

Roger Bacon played a significant role in the dissemination of the arguments of Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics and their respective commentaries by al-Fārābī, Avicenna and Averroes in Latin Europe – filtered through the universities of Paris and Bologna.[83] He and his intellectual predecessors, al-Fārābī and Avicenna, were acutely aware that individual beliefs and belief systems compete on many levels and are fundamental to determining human actions. Depending on the strength of belief and the audience different types of persuasion were effective. The orator can afford to appeal to reason as long as it starts in the conventional ideas of the audience and the audience is amenable. The poet, on the other hand, bypasses the process of reasoning in the audience to affect the desired change. Ultimately, then, rhetoric and poetic representation are the instruments of change.

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[81] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 36.
[82] Hackett, "Moral Philosophy," 18.
[83] "Se i Latini pervengono, come già appare chiaro in Bacone, a una diversa considerazione della retorica (e della poetica), ciò si deve certo in primo luogo all'aquisizione dei testi di Aristotele auspicate da Bacone (il che è vero soprattutto della *Retorica* tradotta da Guiglielmo di Moerbeke prima del 1270, mentre la traduzione moerbekana della Poetica, del 1278, non ebbe altrettanto successo), ma anche alla mediazione dei testi arabi,e innanzi tutto delle Glosse di al-Fārābī alla *Retorica.*" Maierù, "Influenze arabe," 255.

Chapter Two

An Appeal to Experience

Maria Luisa Ardizzone has demonstrated that love is a precise yet versatile metaphor in the poetry of Guido Cavalcanti. In his minor poems, Cavalcanti represents his theory of love as a passion of the body. At the same time it also is a theory of knowledge, the Averroistic notion of *coniunctio* with the separated possible intellect, at the center of which is the connection of the mind to the body.[1] However, this theory runs contrary to the Christian theological notion of knowledge as conferred by God, the view argued by Cavalcanti's greatest friend and opponent, Dante Alighieri. This constitutes one aspect of the discourse on knowledge in Cavalcanti's minor poems, the second being that of logic.

Deborah Black has shown how Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics were considered part of logic and its "modes of knowing" by his medieval Islamic commentators. A recurring theme in Cavalcanti's minor poems is his use of an anonymous third party as observer and witness to the sense-perceptible, the visible symptoms of erotic love as an illness. Most frequently referred to as "chiunque" (whomever), per force the all-encompassing designation by default includes the reader. By fusing the reader with the anonymous third party observer/witness, Cavalcanti takes the reader through the processes of cognition and intellectual assent related to what the reader has "seen" – the negative physiological and emotional effects of erotic love. To this end Cavalcanti employs logic as an instrument of knowledge itself, as defined by al-Fārābī and those who adopted/adapted his theory, Dominicus Gundisalvus and Roger Bacon. In this way

[1] Ardizzone, The Other Middle Ages, 37.

the theory of knowledge and the instrument proper to it converge, at times, in Cavalcanti's poetry.

In his commentary on Aristotle's Poetics, Averroes connects poetry and rhetoric. He asserts that there is another type of poetry that is less about poetic representation and more about persuading and convincing.[2] True to the rules of argumentation and persuasion in Aristotle's Rhetoric (and in the preface of al-Fārābi's commentary on Aristotle's Rhetoric, the Didascalia in Rethoricam Aristotelis ex Glosa Alpharabi) Cavalcanti bases his argument in the beliefs common to a non-specialised audience. By focussing the reader's attention on the lover/poet's weakened physical and mental state, Cavalcanti grounds his argument in a long-standing medical tradition undisputed by the church, that of "melancholy" – the ailment derived from erotic love.[3] This is the juncture of Averroes' theory of knowledge and love as a passion of the body. Knowledge, passion and sensation are analogous processes. They are a series of physiological reactions – beginning with the system of spirits in the body – to being acted upon by an external object; in the case of love, it is the vision of the beloved. When the body functions properly the result is rational knowledge. Sensation ultimately leads to the activity of

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[2] "dixit: et sunt hic species alie poematis que magis pertinent ad persuadendum vel ad faciendum fidem quam ad faciendum imaginationem vel representationem poematicam, et sunt propinquiores exemples rethoricis quam methaphoris et representationibus poeticis. [...]." All Latin citation are from William Franklin Boggess, Averroes: Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium Medium in Aristotelis Poetriam, trans. Hermannus Alemannus, diss., U North Carolina, 1965 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1965) 51.

[3] In his book, La 'Malattia d'Amore' dall'Antichità al Medioevo (Roma: Bulzoni, 1976) Massimo Ciavolella traces not only the history of love as an illness in the medical tradition from Hippocrates on, but also in that of the Church fathers and on into Medieval culture and literature. Relative to a description of "melancholy", an ailment well documented by the Church he writes: "I sintomi della malinconia sono descritti con precisione clinica, con un linguaggio realistico e simbolico al medesimo tempo, in una maniera tipica di molti mistici medievali. Ma le conseguenze di questa visione tragica della vita sono fatali: la malinconia, e con essa le passioni dei sensi, è una malattia del corpo e dello spirito comune a tutti gli uomini, è un male ereditato da Adamo che colpisce ineluttabilmente tutto il genere umano fin dalla nascita, è un male incurabile che può solo venire alleviato dal medico-apostolo cristiano. [...] Non dobbiamo pertanto dimenticare che questa concezione religiosa della passione d'amore ha ormai profondamente impregnato la cultura del Medio Evo e ha influenzato profondamente tutti gli scrittori vicini alla Chiesa (39)".

imagination and the formation of an image. However, erotic love is an ailment the prognosis of which is marked by its visible symptoms. According to medical science at the time, erotic love demonstrates the process of sensation itself.[4] It is for these reasons that Cavalcanti employs it as his point of departure. Moreover, because demonstrating *coniunctio* is as impossible as demonstrating miracle, in order to represent the Averroistic theory of *coniunctio* and the separate possible intellect, Cavalcanti, instead, represents the effects of its malfunctioning – erotic love.

The unmitigated ability of the scientific method in producing and correcting human knowledge was unanimous amongst the philosophers/scientists. The capacity of scientific investigation for the rectification of knowledge is expounded on by Dominicus Gundisalvus in De Scientiis, a text in circulation at the universities of Bologna and Paris at the time.[5] In scientific investigation, verification of "a fact" was done through the senses, observation, and testimony to that experience. Verification was further explored as "experiment" by Roger Bacon in the Opus maius.[6] The most effective means to remedy the marginalization of scientific views was demonstrative science itself. Cavalcanti's recourse to it then comes as no surprise.

In having the reader observe the symptoms of erotic love Cavalcanti takes his cue from Roger Bacon's theory of *scientia experimentalis* as integral to the scientific method of investigation. Bacon supplements the scientific method given in Aristotle's Posterior

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[4] Rossend Arqués on the visible and verifiable pathology described by Cavalcanti: "Ma sarà sopratutto Cavalcanti a descriverne [gli effetti ineriori dell'amore] analiticamente il processo in un racconto eziologico della fine della persona che abbonda di particolari circa il percorso letale della malattia, come qualcosa di perfettamente visibile e verificabile." Ed., "La doppia morte di Guido Cavalcanti: Il dualismo poetico tra pneumatologia e arabismo." Guido Cavalcanti laico e le origine della poesia europea, nel settimo centenario della morte. Poesia, filosofia,scienza e ricezione. Atti del Convegno internazionale, Barcelona, 16-20 ottobre, 2001 (Alessandria: Edizioni dell' Orso, 2004) 183.

[5] Maierù, "La logica," 39.

[6] Hackett, ed., "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," Roger Bacon and the Sciences (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 290.

Analytics with his modification of the concept of empirical knowledge.[7] By adding personal experience of "a fact" to the scientific method he introduces the notion of verification. If conditions can be reproduced and the fact re-enacted, the fact is valid and thus doubt is removed. For Bacon, for there to be certitude and truth in philosophical/scientific knowledge,[8] theoretical knowledge must be accompanied by practical knowledge – experience of "a fact". Cavalcanti employs Bacon's premises of scientific investigation, personal experience through observation and testimony, and applies them to the reader in order to lead his readership to an indubitable conclusion, at the least on the dependency of the cognitive faculties of the mind (imagination) on the body.

The Theory of Knowledge as per Cavalcanti and Dante

Ardizzone crystallizes the crux of the argument between the two poets. Dante's Vita Nuova was a direct response to the radical Aristotelian theories expressed in Cavalcanti's poetry as well as an appropriation of his method of writing poetry.[9] It is the Averroistic theory of knowledge as analogous to that of sensation (passion), and all the premises upon which it rests that is the point of contention.

In his minor poems Cavalcanti has human beings participate in "the knowledge of knowledge" [10] of the separate possible intellect, *coniunctio*, through an image of human production. The activity that produces the image, imagination, depends on the proper

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[7] In fact, Bacon owes this notion of experience in particular to the Islamic philosopher Ibn al-Haytham and his treatise Optics. For other sources of influence in his account of scientific knowledge see the preceding passages to this citation in Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 290.

[8] Bacon's definition of experimental science clearly delineates between the inspired knowledge of the "holy patriarchs and prophets" and the acquired knowledge of the philosophers. Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 293.

[9] Unlike many scholars who believe that "Donna me prega" was a response to Dante's Vita Nuova, Ardizzone asserts the opposite, which I follow, that Dante's Vita Nuova was composed in opposition to Cavalcanti's "Donna me prega". Ardizzone, 42-46.

[10] Ardizzone cites Domenico De Robertis. See her reference 36.

physiological conditions and functions occurring in the body of the individual.[11] Dante, however, unifies the human being with the divine intellect, through the woman-angel, Beatrice – a divine medium not an earthly one.[12] Knowledge, as he defines it, stems from God and depends on "miracle" not "natural philosophy."[13] Not only is Dante asserting the superiority of the divine over the earthly, he is also eliminating all ties to the laws of necessity, biology[14]/the corporeal.

Being rooted as it is in natural philosophy and physics, Cavalcanti's theory of knowledge begs a corresponding lexicon, which he finds in that of medical science.[15] Knowledge begins with sensation (passion), a passive process. The "seen" object acts upon the sensory faculty, the spirit of vision, which transmits the image of the object to the vital spirit, the spirit of the brain that is located in the heart. From this the internal senses are activated; the image of the object is transmitted to the spirit of the common sense, then on to the imagination. *Coniunctio* can then occur; the abstracted image is "offered" to and joined with the separate possible intellect which is part of the sphere of intelligences, the stars.[16] In short, *coniunctio* depends on the successful activity of the brain (the production of an image) which in turn depends on the successful functioning of the body.

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[11] Ardizzone, 29.
[12] Ardizzone, 43.
[13] Ardizzone, 44.
[14] Ardizzone, 42.
[15] Summarizing Ardizzone, the following definitions are: vision: "... by and large, [Cavalcanti] depicts vision as a power of intromission which *enters* the eye ... (19-20)" [Emphasis mine.]; passion/sensation: "Passion, according to Aristotelian, theory is nothing other than sensibility that lives according to its own perfection, a perfection that consists in being acted upon (21)"; spirit/*pneuma*: "According to [the theory of internal senses], spirit is not only the vehicle between the heart and mind but also the seat of the sensitive faculty (21)"; internal senses: "According to the science of Cavalcanti's time, the brain is the place of the internal senses and therefore the seat of the imaginative power, which is one of the internal senses (27)"; vital spirit: "For Avicenna, the activity of the internal senses cannot take place without the intervention of a corporeal instrument. This is the vital *pneuma*, an instrument utilized by the internal senses that is located in the heart and fills the ventricles of the brain (30)."
[16] Ardizzone, 36.

One common malady that throws the body into turmoil is erotic love. An excess of sensation or emotion, as what happens with the vision of the beloved, sets off a chain reaction in the system of spirits that connects the eyes, heart and brain. Once the spirit of vision is weakened, so is the vital spirit and all physiological and mental functions dependant on it. This is the "battle" Cavalcanti refers to: "**Per li occhi** venne **la battaglia** in pria, / che **ruppe ogni valore** immantenente, / sì che **del colpo fu strutta la mente**."[17] If the process of sensation is not complete, then neither is that of imagination and the image cannot be formed. The mind is blocked: "The name 'Love' in fact is given here to a series of events that culminate in a kind of impossibility: love is an excess of emotion that blocks the activity of the imagination."[18] This is the pathology of the illness incurred by erotic love.

At the core of the debate is the dependency or not of knowledge on the human. While it is possible to represent both miracle, the woman-angel, and *coniunctio*, the intellection through the image, it is not possible to *prove* either. The existence of both theories depends on belief. Scientific investigation through observation, testimony and experiment are not possible. Their "truth" cannot be verified. However, because *coniunctio* depends on the activity of the brain, it is possible to demonstrate, using medical knowledge, when and how the brain does not function and thus how it does by charting the visible symptoms of its malfunctioning.

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[17] "Through the eyes came the first battering / That at once routed all valor, / So that the mind was killed by the blow." VII, 9-11. All English translations of Cavalcanti's minor poems are by Lowry Nelson, trans. and ed., The Poetry of Guido Cavalcanti, (New York: Garland, 1986) 11.
[18] Ardizzone, 25.

Common Beliefs: The Pathology of Erotic Love

Cavalcanti's unique theory of love built on themes already found in provençal poetry and that of the *Scuola siciliana*: various theories of vision,[19] traces of natural philosophy (in particular in the poetry of Giacomo da Lentini[20]), and the well documented pathology of love in medicine since antiquity.[21] In addition, he follows the rules of persuasive argumentation as stated in Aristotle's Rhetoric in discoursing with his readership: the means of persuasion in argumentation must be based in what is already known, that is in "commonly" held beliefs. However, it must be pointed out that this is true of his minor poems only. His major canzone and theorum "Donna me prega" specifically calls for a knowledgeable reader, "Ed a presente – conoscente – chero",[22] one well versed in philosophical discourse, beyond that found in his minor poems. For the purposes of rhetoric, specialized scientific discourse is not appropriate as it would have no effect on an audience not already versed in it:

> Further, in dealing with certain persons, even if we possessed the most accurate scientific knowledge, we should not find it easy to persuade them by the employment of such knowledge. For scientific discourse is concerned with instruction, but in the case of such persons instruction is impossible; **our proofs and arguments must rest on generally accepted principles,** as we said in *Topics*, **when speaking of converse with the multitude.**[23]

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[19] See Dana E. Stewart's book The Arrow of Love: Optics, Gender, and Subjectivity in Medieval Love Poetry, (London: Associated University Press, 2003).

[20] See Elena Lombardi's article "Traduzione e riscrittura: da Folchetto al Notaio," The Italianist 24.1 (2004): 5-19.

[21] See footnote 3 above.

[22] "And for the present purpose I want someone who is an expert (v.5)." English translation by Maria Luisa Ardizzone, accompanied by the Italian text, 165-168.

[23] Rh. I.I.12. Emphasis mine. In addition, one of the topics that Aristotle deemed appropriate for deliberative oratory (Rh. I.VI.1-9) is happiness; Ardizzone's investigation of "Donna me prega" has brought to light Cavalcanti's position in the debate on happiness. "Donna me prega" is a response to Giacomo da Pistoia's Quaestio de felicitate, a treatise dedicated to Cavalcanti. Beginning with the theory of love as a passion of the body, Cavalcanti articulates his theory of *diletto*, 'pleasure' in opposition to that of intellectual/philosophical happiness. Because matter and the separate possible intellect are not of the same genus, human beings do not participate in its transcendental intellectual activity (intellectual/philosophical happiness); happiness is not a goal for human beings, however, pleasure is. All of which is to say that, Cavalcanti's subject matter in both his minor poems and "Donna me prega" is in fact one of the topics

Cavalcanti represents theories taken from natural science, particularly medicine and physics, through the metaphor of love – for the most part love as an illness – as a phenomenological event of the sensitive soul, the body.[24] Because his theory of love is completely contained within the sphere of the body, Cavalcanti introduces a new rhetoric in poetry, the rhetoric of the body.[25] He takes medical terminology[26] from the primary medical text in use in universities in Europe from the middle of the thirteenth century on, Avicenna's Liber Canonis[27], and transplants it in his poetry.[28]

In his article "L'amore e la medicina medievale" Massimo Ciavolella gives a translation, taken from an Italian text, of Avicenna's definition of *illisci*, the Arabic name for erotic love in his Canon: "*Illiscii* is a melancholic disturbance as a result of which there is a strong and intense love, one desires to obtain something that he lusts for too greedily, and according to many it is an *accidens*, an accident of the soul."[29] In relation to

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prescribed by Aristotle as appropriate for rhetorical argumentation. For Cavalcanti's theory of pleasure and happiness, see Ardizzone, 103-133.

[24] Anichini, "Retorica del corpo," 103.

[25] Anichini, 104.

[26] Anichini writes; " ... La ricerca condotta sulle pagine del Canon per la ricostruzione delle *auctoritates* delle Rime non mira ad una compilazione di voci che rimarrebbero numericamente sufficienti, ma all'individuazione di alcuni termini comuni ai due testi che trasferiscono in sede poetico il loro significato scientifico." La poesia del corpo, 62.

[27] "Tradotto in latino da Gerardo da Cremona, il Canon diventa oggetto privilegiato dei commentari del circolo di Taddeo Alderotti attivo nella Facoltà di medicina dello Studio bolognese, in cui eccelleva Dino del Garbo, uno tra i primi a dedicarsi al commento in latino sistematico del manuale avicenniano... ." Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 56.

[28] Anichini, "Retorica del corpo," 105. See also Anichini's dissertation, La poesia del corpo, for an explanation of the "sovrapposizioni del sapere (61)" in Cavalcanti's minor poems; "l'impiego nella poesia di Cavalcanti di un contenuto tecnico e specialistico richiamato dalle sinapsi con il manuale di medicina avicenniano acquista dunque il significato di un poetare singolare: i materiali che lo compongono, provenienti dall'ambito della filosofia naturale e della medicina costituiscono il legame, la prova di un cammino 'altro'... un sapere alternativo, che viene sigillato e preservato entro la forme retorica dei suoi versi. ... [che] apre così il linguaggio a nuove potenzialità espressive (61-62)".

[29] "Illisci è un turbamento maliconico a causa del quale per forte e intenso amore uno desidera ottenere qualcosa che concupisce con troppa avidità, e secondo molti è un "accidens", un accidente dell'animo... ." Translation mine. Massimo Ciavolella, "L'amore e la medicina medievale," Guido Cavalcanti fra i suoi lettori. Proceedings of the International Symposium for the Seventh Centennial of his Death. November 10-11, 2000, ed., Maria Luisa Ardizzone (Florence: Cadmo, 2003) 94.

the Church fathers, Ciavolella writes that it was with an eye to controlling the body and therefore the devil that they studied erotic passion, its symptoms, how it begins and progresses, its effects on the body and the soul, and everything related to it: the human body, medicine – especially the passions – and also natural philosophy.[30] According to the medical treatises of the time, the lover was considered cured if the image of the beloved was eradicated from the imagination. If the lover wasn't or couldn't be cured he would continue to weaken, his complexion would go from being pale to green, and he would eventually go mad and die.[31]

As mentioned earlier, Cavalcanti represents the visible symptoms of the malady of erotic love. Given that his theory of knowledge rests on the connection of the mind with the body, the symptom that predominates is that of tears, the medical evidence of a blocked imagination: "Vedete ch'i' son un che **vo piangendo / e dimostrando** – il giudicio d'Amore."[32] This is a condition that in Avicenna's Canon is referred to as *oppilatio*.[33] Tears blur the vision making the perception of the beloved incomplete. However, the tears are the immediate result of the excess of sensation caused by the

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[30] Ciavolella, "L'amore e la medicina article," 96.
[31] Ciavolella, "L'amore e la medicina article," 102.
[32] "You see that I am one who goes weeping / And showing outwardly Love's judgment." X. 1-2. Nelson, 17.
[33] "I segni che pronosticano l'acqua sono le predette immaginazioini, che non provengono da altre cause. E già ne abbiamo parlato nel capitolo delle immaginazioni, dove abbiamo esposto il fatto che con quelle si verifica una alterazione della percezione, e precisamente cosa succeed in uno degli occhi; e il fatto che per effetto di quella alterazione vengono immaginati oggeti luminosi, come due fiamme di candela. C'è una differenza, a dire il vero, tra l'acqua e il fenomeno della ostruzioine interna, dal momento che quando uno die due occhi viene compresso, l'altro si dilata in contenuto di acqua; ma l'altro non si dilata relativamente all'ostruzione. E questo perché in quella dilatazioine [relative al contenuto di acqua] la causa è l'espulsione con forza dello spirito, che si trova nell'occhio compresso, verso l'altro. Ma quando si verifica prima il fenomeno dell'ostruzione, in qualche modo la forma non penetra; questo soprattutto; e tanto meno l'altro si dilata, a meno che non scenda acqua in grande quantità: allora non ci sarà stata ostruzione" Avicenna, Canon 233.H. Anichini, "Retorica del corpo," 115.

beloved, and its effect on the vital spirit in the heart and on the cognitive faculty.[34]

Cavalcanti includes this description in his poetry:

> Lagrime ascendon de la mente mia,
> sì tosto come questa donna sente,
> che van faccendo per li occhi una via,
> per la qual passa spirito dolente,
> che [d]entra per li miei sì debilmente
> ch'oltra non puote color discovrire
> che 'l 'maginar vi si possa finire.[35]

He then represents it to the reader, after having called the reader's attention to the lover in the opening lines "vedete che…":

> **Novella doglia m'è nel cor venuta,**
> **la qual mi fa doler e pianger forte;**
> e spesse volte avèn che mi saluta
> tanto di presso l'angosciosa Morte,
> che fa 'n quel punto le persone accorte,
> che dicono infra lor: **«Quest' ha dolore,**
> e già, **secondo che ne par de fòre,**
> dovrebbe dentro aver novi martiri».[36]

The malady of erotic love also manifests itself in the form of unpredictable emotions or mood swings in the lover. It is in relation to the changing emotions that Bruno Nardi was the first to find the parallel of the condition of "follia" (madness) in Cavalcanti's poetry with that of the medical tradition.[37] Cavalcanti renders it as: "Ma, per **lo folle tempo** che m'ha giunto, / **mi cangio di mia ferma oppinïone / in altrui**

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[34] Anichini, "Retorica del corpo," 114-115.

[35] "Tears rise up from my mind / As soon as it senses this lady; / They make, through the eyes, a conduit / Through which passes the grieving spirit / That enters through my eyes so weakly / That it cannot reveal any color / [From] which imaging could [be] complet[ed.]" Additions mine, for the sake of meaning. XIX, 18-24. Nelson, 27.

[36] "Fresh grief has come into my heart / That makes me greatly grieve and weep; / And it often happens that anguishing death / Greets me so close by / That then and there it forewarns people / Who say among themselves: 'This man has sorrow, / And now from what appears outwardly / He must inwardly have fresh torments'." X, 5-12. Nelson, 17.

[37] Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 58.

condizione."[38] According to Avicenna, this condition can be moderated with *anhelitus* (breath) described as the following: "the spirit has frequent interruptions and inversions and **it is good to inhale deeply**: the disposition of the subject mutates to laughter and to joy and to sadness and to tears, when he listens to a love song, especially when the memory of a rejection or a separation emerges:… ."[39] These symptoms are also represented in "Donna me prega" where Cavalcanti describes love as: "Move, cangiando – color, riso in painto",[40] love changes the colour of the face and changes "laughter into tears".

Anichini connects the images of the "automaton"[41] in sonnet VIII as well as the hand of the poet in sonnet XVIII to the condition of *stupor* or *tremor*.[42] According to Avicenna, this condition affects voluntary movement. It manifests itself when the subject is in front of something terrible and frightening: "Tu m'hai sì piena di dolor la mente, / che l'anima si briga di partire". Consequently, the subject either cannot move voluntarily or he loses control of his movement. In the case of the poet's hand, the subject freezes: "la man che ci movea dice che sente / cose dubbiose nel core apparite".[43] In the case of the automaton, the subject loses control of his movement:

> **Tu m'hai sì piena di dolor la mente,**
> **che l'anima si briga di partire,**
> e li sospir' che manda 'l cor dolente
> mostrano agli occhi che non può soffrire.

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[38] "But on account of the mad season that has overtaken me, / I change from my own set state of mind / to someone else's outward appearance." XI, 9-11. Nelson, 19.
[39] "Ed è, lo spirito, di frequenti interruzioni ed inversioni ed è bene che profonda sia l'inspirazione: la dispozione del soggetto muta al riso e alla gioia e alla tristezza e al pianto, quando ascolta una canzone d'amore, soprattutto quando emerge il ricordo di un rifiuto o di un allontanamento:…" Italian translation from Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 58. English translation mine.
[40] "It [Love] moves making the colour change, turning laughter into tears," Ardizzone, 168.
[41] De Robertis, Rime, 29.
[42] Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 84.
[43] "The hand that used to move us says it feels / Dreadful things that have appeared in the heart." XVIII,7-8. Nelson, 25.

[...]
I' vo come colui ch'è fuor di vita,
che pare, a chi lo sguarda**, ch'omo sia**
fatto di rame o di pietra o di legno,

che si conduca sol per maestria
e porti ne lo core una ferita
che sia, com' egli è morto, aperto segno. [44]

In Cavalcanti's poetry, the death of the soul refers to the inability to imagine, the death of the rational faculty of the human being. Ardizzone explains the death of the imagination as a result of an excess of feeling: "According to Avicenna, death arises from the weakness of the spirit in the absence of a union between body and soul, and pain and fear (*dolor et pavor*) weaken the spirit, leading to death … Avicenna states that an excess of feeling can lead to death … *dolor* means feeling an opposition (*contrarietatem*)."[45] In addition, though inhaling deeply can rebalance mood, sighing is considered an audible symptom of internal harm.[46] In his analysis of sonnet V, Domenico De Robertis writes that love itself is a condemnation.[47] Love is cruel, "fero", and fear, "temenza", is unremitting. With Avicenna's definition in mind, Cavalcanti has connected sighs, fear and pain:

Li mie' foll' occhi, che prima guardaro
vostra figura piena di valore,
fuor quei che di voi, donna, ma'acusaro
nel fero loco ove ten corte Amore,

e mantinente avanti lui mostraro
ch'io era fatto vostro servidore:
per che **sospiri** e **dolore** mi pigliaro,

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[44] "You have my mind so filled with sorrow / That the soul contrives to depart, / And the sighs that the sorrowing heart sends forth / Show on sight that it cannot bear up. / [...] / I go like one who is outside of life, / Such that, to the onlooker, he seems a man / Made of brass or stone or wood, / That can walk only by artifice / And that bears in [his] heart a wound / That is a manifest sign of how he is dead." VIII, 1-4, 9-14.
[45] Ardizzone, 28.
[46] "Anhelitus motus equalis naturalis vacui nocumento coplet motu velaminis" Avicenna. Canon. 258.E.15 See Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 145.
[47] "…l'amore è per sé una condanna." De Robertis, Rime, 20.

vedendo che **temenza avea lo core.**[48]

The pathology of erotic love functions as sign posts along the path of the incompletely perceived image. The symptoms indicate the processes of sensation, where it has gone wrong and what the result is – the inability to imagine. In order for the reader to understand how erotic love is an illness, he/she would first have to understand how the corporeal system functions correctly. Cavalcanti employs what theologians, doctors, and love poets are already familiar with in order to prove, through malfunction, how his theory of knowledge is viable.

Guarding against Deception

According to Gundisalvus in De Scientiis, logic is the instrument of knowledge and the only method of reaching knowledge that can be considered true and certain. Through it we can reason and come to know the world around us. When employed it keeps us from erring and can help us to instruct or correct others. Without it we risk living a life based on deception and beliefs. Logic rectifies this:

> However, the science of logic intends to give rules by which we perceive the truth of discourses either from ourselves or for others; or they perceive the truth for us or for someone else. Nevertheless, we need the rules of logic for verifying all discourses. Among those things which we utilize in reasoning there are some statements that do not need proof; for example, "The whole is greater than its parts" and "Every three is an odd number." There are others that do need to be proved because someone could be deceived by them.[49]

Near the end of the chapter on logic Gundisalvus explains why Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric and Poetics exist. The first reason is that they were invented as tools for achieving the truth, in particular for those who cannot make use of demonstration. The

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[48] "My foolish eyes that looked first / On your face full of worthiness / Were those which, lady, indicted me as yours / In the cruel place where Love holds courts, / And in his presence showed at once / That I had become your servitor: / For this, sighs and sorrows seized me, / Seeing that fear had my heart." V, 1-8. Nelson, 5.

[49] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 210.

second reason is to guard against error and doubt.[50] Logic provides a means to reason correctly and employed by the different arts it provides knowledge based on different degrees of certitude (belief). Gundisalvus succinctly enumerates the five types of syllogism as modes of knowing[51] with their corresponding degrees of certainty that the mind employs in ascertaining truth:

> These methods by which knowledge is verified are five: namely, Demonstration, Topics, Sophistics, Rhetoric and Poetics.
> [...]
> These, therefore, are the types of syllogism and the syllogistic arts and the types of proof which humans use to certify something in all matters. But these five can also be called by these names: the Certain, the Probable, the Erroneous, the Sufficient, and the Imaginative. Every one of these has elements particular to it and common elements which each shares with the others.[52]

A note should be made at this point on the difference between truth and assent. A subject that merits much more than a paragraph, assent is the intellectual act of accepting one proposition over another: "Assent, by its very nature, involves the decision to accept one contrary and deny the second; otherwise the soul would be in a state of doubt and hesitation, not belief."[53] To paraphrase Deborah Black, assent is given after a judgement has been made on the truth or falsehood of the proposition in question thus bringing

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[50] "The second cause is on the basis of caution. For if these parts are not distinguished by the appropriate names and by the proper rules and intentions. Surely it happens that when a man desires by proof to comprehend the truth and have certainty about some matter, if he does not know whether to utilize Topics or Rhetoric or Sophistics or something else [Poetics], then [...] instead it is more likely that he will make an error and nothing will be made certain, instead he ends up with what is believed or imagined, and being so deceived, he thinks himself most perceptive of certainty: having sought the truth, he instead becomes involved with error and doubtfulness." Addition and omission mine. Weber, Translating and Adapting, 214-215.

[51] Deborah Black's terminology. Logic and Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* in Medieval Arabic Philosophy, ed., Hans Daiber, (Leiden: Brill, 1990) 1.

[52] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 212-213.

[53] Black, Logic, 112.

about the end of a belief or an opinion. The premises of assent vary according to the art (demonstrative or non-demonstrative) to which they are applied.[54]

Demonstration and rhetoric are the most efficacious modes of achieving assent, albeit by different means and to different audiences: demonstration through scientific/philosophical knowledge for a like audience, and rhetoric through persuasion for the non-specialized audience.[55] Assent through rhetorical means is not at all equal to the certitude that can be provided through scientific demonstration. It is instead a "satisfaction" with having arrived *thus far* on the path to intellectual truth – knowledge.[56] Rhetoric pertains to opinion or belief about the truth not the truth itself. The difference between demonstration and rhetoric as modes of knowing is best summed up by Deborah Black:

> In demonstration, the potential rift between the modes of being and of being known is overcome: objects are known in a way consonant with their mode of existence, that is, they are grasped essentially, and not accidentally. In rhetoric, however, our knowledge is based upon properties and characteristics that are not those essential to the object's being what it is, but those that are most prominent in our commonplace, everyday acquaintance with that object.[57]

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[54] Deborah Black concludes that: "On the one hand, ... [the Islamic philosophers] remain tied to the hierarchical ordination of all logical and philosophical endeavours to the attainment of demonstrative certitude, and for this reason tend to deny any strictly autonomous worth to the goals of the non-demonstrative arts. ... Nonetheless, it cannot be emphasized too strongly the extent to which the concept of assent, in its specific development into the underlying principle of a new system for the epistemic classification of premises, provides a countervailing force against this dominant trend. For the assignment to each art of particular kinds of premises , which produce particular varieties of assent provides an important measure of autonomy to the individual logical arts by ensuring that each of them will fulfill an epistemological function that is clearly independent of the functions of every other art. It is mainly within the more detailed and individualized treatments of rhetoric and poetics that the fruits of this development are reaped in the Arabic context." Logic, 102. The notion of assent and its premises is refined by Avicenna who elaborates on those of al-Fārābī. See Black, Logic, 96.

[55] In Logic Deborah Black writes that in contrast to Aristotle's lack of discussion of the concept of persuasion, "the Islamic tradition generally finds it necessary to develop a more systematic account of the epistemology of persuasion, and to clarify the role of persuasion in relation to the cognitive ends of the other logical arts, especially demonstration and dialectic (104)."

[56] Black, Logic, 105.

[57] Black, Logic, 123.

For the purpose of attaining truth and certitude demonstration "excels all the other parts [of logic] in dignity and sublimity"[58] as a mode of knowing. In his poetry Cavalcanti uses the premises of proof in demonstration in order to validate his theory of knowledge.

Experience and Certitude

Cavalcanti's recourse to demonstrative science in representing the pathology of erotic love is indicative of his desire to enter the debate on the nature of knowledge and prove his theory; demonstration is the one logical tool that combats doubts entirely. In De Scientiis Gundisalvus writes the following:

> It is the property of Demonstration to give certain knowledge about propositions in question, whether for one's self or others, whose contradiction should be impossible and within which no deceit can exist. [...] certain knowledge of the truth is not to be had except through demonstration [...].[59]

As examined in Chapter One, according to Roger Bacon there is an element missing in scientific investigation as it has been defined by Aristotle the absence of which perpetuates doubt and deception. Scientific knowledge based on observation, testimony, and the Aristotelian notion of drawing conclusions based on the observation of repeated occurrences of a fact (*empeiria*) is not enough to achieve certitude. Until the experience itself can be verified through re-enactment there is still doubt as to the nature of the fact and its causes. On acquiring knowledge and its certainty, Bacon writes:

> For there are two modes of acquiring knowledge, namely, by *reasoning* and *experience*. Reasoning draws a conclusion, but does not make the conclusion certain, nor does it remove doubt so that the mind may rest in the intuition of the truth (*in intuitu veritas*), unless the mind discovers it by the path of Experience. Since many have arguments concerning what can be known, yet because they lack experience they neglect the arguments and neither avoid what is harmful nor follow what is good.[60]

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[58] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 214. Addition mine.
[59] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 212-213.
[60] Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 290-291.

As an example of his theory Bacon gives that of a person who understands the concept of a fire, per se, but has never seen one. Consequently, because he does not have a complete knowledge of it he does not know to avoid it. To paraphrase Hackett, conceptual knowledge (that gained through syllogistic reasoning) alone is not enough, for Bacon "it must be accompanied by the appropriate experience." He reiterates this in reference to the statement in Aristotle's Metaphysica that art is superior to experience; the person who knows the art knows the reason for the fact, and the person who knows through experience, knows the singular fact. Bacon disagrees and adds: "But I am speaking about the man who knows the reason and the cause *through* experience (*Per experientiam*)."[61] Personal experience of a fact gives thorough and indubitable knowledge and therefore, other than inspired knowledge,[62] only argument *and* experience can give certain knowledge (truth).

Cavalcanti brings his theory of knowledge to the level of his readership and also brings the reader himself into the debate. The first method of obtaining knowledge of an object is through the senses the most thorough of which is sight. In his minor poems Cavalcanti grants objective knowledge of the symptoms of erotic love to the anonymous third party through the powers of observation. Because the party making the observations is anonymous, referred to as 'whomever', "chiunque", or "chi", "qualunque", "qual", "ciascuno" and "le persone" the reader is included in the process of observation by default. The fusion of the reader with the observer means that the reader is led to assent to the validity of the observations made thereby gaining personal knowledge of the object

[61] Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 292.
[62] Roger Bacon divides experience and therefore knowledge into two types, acquired and inspired. Both types can lead to the truth, but inspired is not verifiable through experience. It is 'illumination' from the divine. Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 293.

and simultaneously becoming witness to that experience. In sonnet VII, the observer, "chiunque" is called upon to testify to the soul's nearness to death: "e **chi vedesse com'ell'è fuggita** [anima mia] / **diria per certo: «Questi non ha vita».**"[63] Likewise in sonnet VIII, the "onlooker" witnesses the lover's state of stupor: "I' vo come colui ch'è fuor di vita, / **che pare, a chi lo sguarda,** ch'omo sia / fatto di rame o di pietra o di legno."[64]

Death is also visible to "everyone" in the lover's countenance, as in Ballad XXXII, "**guardi ciascuno e miri / che Morte m'è nel viso già salita!**"[65] and again in Ballad XXXIV to "whomever", "Io pur rimagno in tant' aversitate / **che, qual mira da fòre, / vede la Morte sotto al meo colore.**"[66] By virtue of the reader's inclusion in the observations made in the poetry the reader himself goes through the cognitive processes of observation and reason and hence experience. Because the knowledge the reader obtained is objective, the reader must reach a rational conclusion or consciously deny what he has "seen" and reasoned through.

Cavalcanti does not only rely on the observation of symptoms to make his point. In demonstrating the lover/poet's unstable character, "lo folle tempo" (the mad season), he also gives the reader tangible evidence that the poet, one of such obvious talent, is in dire straights through the form of the poem itself. The poem consists of one stanza of a canzone. By his contemporaries Cavalcanti was known for his talent as a poet,[67] in addition Dante himself described this particular poem as being of "excellent

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[63] "And whoever saw how it [my soul] fled / Would surely say: 'This man is lifeless.'" VII, 7-8. Addition and emphasis mine. Nelson, 11.
[64] "I go like one who is outside of life, / Such that, to the onlooker, he seems a man / Made of brass or stone or wood." VIII, 9-11. Emphasis mine. Nelson, 11.
[65] "Let everyone look and see / That Death has risen into my face!" XXXII, 13-14. Emphasis mine.
[66] "I still remain in such adversity / That whoever looks from without / Sees Death underneath my colour." XXXIV, 29-31. Emphasis mine. Nelson, 55.
[67] See footnote 16 in Chapter One.

construction".[68] Gianfranco Tanturli's interpretation is that the poem is a surrendering of the lover/poet to the theme the poem enacts as well as a testament to his inability to complete it.[69] The form of the poem imitates its content:

> Poi che di doglia cor conven ch'i' porti
> e senta di piacere ardente foco
> e di virtù mi traggi a sì vil loco,
> dirò com' ho perduto ogni valore.
> E dico che' miei spiriti son morti,
> e 'l cor che tanto ha guerra e vita poco;
> e se non fosse che 'l morir m'è gioco,
> fare'ne di pietà pianger Amore.
> Ma, per **lo folle tempo** che m'ha giunto,
> **mi cangio di mia ferma oppinïone**
> **in altrui condizione,**
> sì ch'io non mostro quant'io sento affanno:
> là 'nd'eo ricevo inganno,
> ché **dentro da lo cor mi passa' Amanza,**
> **che se ne porta tutta mia possanza.**[70]

The "interrupted canzone"[71] is evidence of the lover/poet's condition. The imagination is fixed in a vicious cycle of uncontrollable thoughts brought on by the excessive beauty of the beloved and the simultaneous incomplete perception of the beloved. The vital spirit, in the heart, cannot connect the mind and the body thus the mind cannot function and the poet cannot finish composing the canzone. With the stanza in hand the reader can then testify to poet's inability to imagine.

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[68] De Robertis cites Dante's De vulgari eloquentia on the quality of the poem; "come esempio di 'gradus constructionis excellentissimus' (II, VI, 6)." Rime, 40.
[69] De Robertis, Rime, 40.
[70] "Since I must bear a heart of grief / And feel the burning fire of pleasure / And be dragged down to such a debased place, / I shall tell how I have lost every strength. / And I declare that my spirits are dead, / And that my heart has much war and little life; / And if it were not that dying for me is joy, / I would make Love, out of pity, weep over it. / But on account of the mad season that has overtaken me, / I change from my own set state of mind/to someone else's outward appearance, / So that I do not show how much anguish I feel: / And thus I suffer injury, / For Love slips inside my heart / And carries off all my might." XI, 1-15. Nelson, 19.
[71] De Robertis Rime, 40.

In the Didascalia al-Fārābī lists testimony as one of the things necessary to induce persuasion. Though rhetoric can never lead to certain knowledge, it can lead to assent. When oratory is supported by the testimony of witnesses it is convincing. However, it is even more so when there are numerous witnesses as their collective testimony allows the audience to feel secure in their belief. [72] Personal experience, then, is synonymous to the testimony of a witness.

Cavalcanti takes the reader through the rational premises[73] of his theory of knowledge with the metaphor of erotic love. In so doing, the reader witnesses the lover's ailments thereby giving the reader experience of the pathology of love. The anonymous third party serves to give the reader certainty that can only be gained through objective observation and testimony. In short, Cavalcanti bases his argument in what is scientifically demonstrable. Consequently, he not only provides his readers with certain knowledge, "truth", but he increases the persuasive power of his discourse.

Bacon states and re-states the necessity of using scientific experience as an investigative tool for "the notable conclusions of all the other speculative sciences:[74] "For the other sciences know how to **discover** their principles by reasoning drawn from Principles discovered (by experience). But if they should have **a Particular and**

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[72] Al-Fārābī, "Didascalia," Deux ouvrages, §4, 157-158.

[73] In her analysis of the metaphor of love in Cavalcanti's minor poems as well as "Donna me prega" Maria Luisa Ardizzone, states that because Cavalcanti organizes his poetry with technical terms, specifically those of medical science, that the connection between logic and medical science is extended to poetry: "These aspects of Cavalcanti's poetry suggest that the technicality of his language comes about because he relates poetry and knowing or, better, because he looks at poetry as a special kind of logic. "Donna me prega" will show that the reasoning contained in the poem encloses, like logic, **a rational procedure** [emphasis mine]. ... The connection established between poetry and logic that makes poetry an instrument for knowing shows how much Cavalcanti is in step with the learning of his time, which generally considered poetry as a kind of logic and which regarded Aristotle's poetics and rhetoric as a part of the *Organon*." 41-42.

[74] Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 295.

Complete Experience of their own Conclusions, they must have it with the aid of this noble Science."[75] Cavalcanti puts this theory to practice.

In Defense of Science

Part and parcel of the search for certitude is distinguishing truth from falsehood, as already mentioned. However, this issue extends beyond determining the veracity or not of knowledge. Bacon's idea of scientific experience is that it is also a tool for exposing manipulation and dishonesty, in his terms "Magic", in the same way as logic uncovers sophistry. Experimental science can be applied to all the speculative sciences with the goal of separating science and nature from magic:

> Since this Experimental Science is wholly unknown to the rank and file of university Students, I am therefore unable to convince people of its utility unless at the same time I disclose its excellence and its proper meaning. **This science alone, therefore, Knows how to test perfectly what can be done by Nature, what by the effort of Art, what by Trickery, what by the Incantations, Conjurations, Invocations, Deprecations, and Sacrifices that belong to Magic mean and dream of, and what is in them, so that all falsity may be removed and the Truth alone of Art and Nature may be retained.** This science alone teaches us how to view the mad acts of magicians, that they may not be accepted but rejected, just as **Logic** considers sophistical reasoning.[76]

The contrast of magic with science and the subsequent rejection of magic ultimately functions to legitimize the scientist/philosopher and his work. Similar conclusions are expressed by Gundisalvus in De Scientiis at the end of the chapter on logic. Logic and its parts are the ultimate instruments of discernment:

> Consequently, the four parts [of logic] following Demonstration were invented for this purpose: that the properties of their rules and intentions might be distinct, so that when anyone wished to make a topical argument – or a sophistical one or one of the other types [rhetorical or poetic] – he knew by which rules this could effectively be done, and he could discern between the arts of logic, knowing by which certainty could be attained and by which only faith or opinion.[77]

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[75] Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 295.
[76] Hacekett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 294.
[77] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 215.

For both Bacon and Gundisalvus it is clear that experiment and logic are the only tools that can lead to "true"/certain knowledge. They expose deception and at the same time they can combat prejudice and doubt regarding the enterprises of science itself, issues that would resonate with someone on the margins[78] like Cavalcanti.

Bacon's modification of scientific investigation builds on the Aristotelian notions of observation and testimony while expanding on the notion of verification through experience:

> Experience is two-fold. One kind [the other kind is divine inspiration] is gained through our **external senses**, and in this manner we gain **experiences of things in the heavens by means of instruments** in astronomy. We experience things on earth primarily by means of **vision**, and by the **testimony of scientists who have had authentic experiences of nature**. ... This experience is human and philosophical as far as man can act according to the grace given him.[79]

Verification necessarily involves artifice, in the case above, instruments. As Charles Kauffman[80] has shown, poetry can argue. Poetry and argument are artifice. They are means to affect cognition in the audience. Cavalcanti uses both to represent his theory of knowledge through the pathology of erotic love to the reader. In so doing he gives his reader his/her own personal experience of its rational premises as well as confidence in those premises.

As mentioned at the beginning, it is not possible to demonstrate *coniunctio* – the connection of the individual human being with the separated possible intellect through the medium of the image. Consequently, the debate over transcendence itself (the Averroistic notion of transcendence versus the Christian notion) becomes one of belief and choice; there can be no *proof* of either. Given Cavalcanti's employment of and

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[78] Anichini, Retorica del corpo, 24.
[79] Hackett, "Roger Bacon on *Scientia Experimentalis*," 293. Addition and emphasis mine.
[80] Kauffman, 407.

adherence to the premises of scientific investigation and verification in demonstrating his theory of knowledge, the conclusion he reaches in "Donna me prega" comes as no surprise: "Human beings *do not* participate in the intellectual activity of the possible intellect and therefore cannot have philosophical happiness as a goal."[81]

Because human beings are of a separate genus to that of the separated possible intellect, "perché **da qualitate non descende**", it is not possible to partake in its activity, "In quella parte mai non ha possanza", despite humankind's temporary connection to it. Therefore, though Cavalcanti *believes* that *coniunctio* does take place,[82] "Vèn da veduta forma che s'intende", "forma" being both the seen object and its image, he limits his conclusions to that which human beings can sense. The image, and thus the individual, is passive not active in the process of intellection, as indicated by the passive form of the verb "s'intende" as it is related to the relative pronoun "che".[83] Humans cannot sense *coniunctio* when it happens, and so the goal of philosophical happiness, "consideranza", is not proper to our genus while that of pleasure, "diletto", is because it belongs to the sensible:

> Vèn da veduta forma che s'intende,
> che prende – nel possibile intelletto,
> Come in subietto, – loco e dimoranza.
> In quella parte mai non ha possanza
> perché da qualitate non descende:
> resplende – in sé perpetual effetto;
> non ha diletto – ma consideranza;
> sì che non pote largir simiglianza.[84]

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[81] Ardizzone, 131.
[82] Ardizzone, 119.
[83] See the section "Grammar and Knowledge" which explains Cavalcanti's employment of grammar. Ardizzone, 113-118.
[84] "[Love] derives from a seen form that is intellected, that takes place and dwelling in the possible intellect as in a substance. In that part [love – the sensible] never has any power. Since it does not derive from quality [the same genus]; it [the possible intellect] shines in itself as perpetual effect; it does not have pleasure but rather contemplation; and thus it cannot create likeness [in humans]." Ardizzone, 165-168.

The integrity, then, of Cavalcanti's theory of love and knowledge is synonymous with the integrity of the scientific method – demonstration and verification.

Chapter Three

An Appeal to Emotion

In Cavalcanti's minor poems the disdain/lack of compassion for the lover/poet is a frequent theme. In the tradition of love poetry unreciprocated love is symbolized by the unreciprocated gaze of the lover upon the beloved; his calls for compassion are calls for this exchange of gazes. Cavalcanti's lover/poet seeks compassion from two sources, the beloved herself, and his readership, represented by the anonymous third party – "chiunque", "chi", "uom", "sì pietoso core", "cui". In both cases the lover is unequivocally rejected; no one looks at him. It is this opposition of the readership to the radical Aristotelian theories espoused by Cavalcanti, and ultimately the willingness of the readership to create space for them that is of interest here. Through the representation of "rejection" Cavalcanti sets the stage for his calls to his readership to reconsider their conclusion. To do so he appeals to their emotions. Where he thinks rational persuasion is possible, he employs rhetorical techniques. However, where he thinks it will not, he uses poetic techniques to purposely bypass the cognitive process of deliberation and affect a change of heart.

In the context of the debate between Cavalcanti and Dante on the theory of knowledge disdain/lack of compassion for the lover/poet is a metaphor for the possible opposition to the theory of knowledge that Cavalcanti puts forth: that transcendence, the Averroistic notion of *coniunctio*, originates in natural science and rational knowledge –

sensation and imagination. Ultimately, the reasons for the objections to this theory pertain to what Aristotle and Averroes define as the instigator of knowledge – matter.[1]

As Maria Luisa Ardizzone explains, arriving at the theory of matter involves an excavation of the layers of analogy between theories: those of knowledge, sensation, perception, passion, matter, alteration, and the eternity of the world. All of these theories (except the last) represent phenomena that are part of the state of matter being acted upon – passion. In other words, knowledge, sensation, and perception are reactions to being acted upon by "external influences."[2] That process is alteration.[3] As seen in Chapter Two, the process of knowledge is analogous to that of sensation. The agent that begins the process is the sensible ("seen" in the case of vision) object (a form of matter) that acts upon the system of spirits in the body whose proper functioning culminates in the activity of imagination and the formation of an image – rational knowledge.

Alteration, generation and corruption are key concepts in Aristotle's theory of matter. Since "in nature nothing is born from nothing,"[4] matter is eternal. Matter is a passive substance that when acted upon can become anything.[5] Generation and corruption

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[1] Ardizzone, 74.

[2] "Aristotle's theory of perception as contained in *De anima* II was solidly organized around the theory of passion. In *De memoria et reminiscentia* and *De sensu et sensato*, Aristotle has worked on the same topic, building a theory of perception or sensible knowledge in which perception includes passion. That is, perception is a largely passive condition that receives influences and reacts to them." Ardizzone, 75.

[3] "An important indication on the extent of Aristotle's theory of passion is given in [...] *De anima* II, 416b32-417a, where Aristotle connects sensation with physics, thus referring his reader to the theory of passion (and action) as set forth in *De generatione et corruptione*: 'Let us discuss sensation in general. Sensation consists, as has been said, in being moved and acted upon; for it is held to be [a] sort of change of state [alteration] ... we have already stated in our general account of acting and being acted upon'." Ardizzone, 75-76. The first omission and the following addition are mine.

[4] Ardizzone, 76.

[5] "The material cause that makes generation possible is what can be or not be, that is, the changing substance (accident) (*De genration*e II, 9 335a33-335b6). It is characteristic of matter to be moved, and matter is absolute potentiality. Matter, per se, as we may define it, is the changing substrate that seeks its form." Ardizzone, 76.

are transformations of matter into different forms not new and disappearing substances,[6] whereas alteration is a transformation of an aspect of an already existing form. What acts upon matter is matter, albeit in different forms. Matter, and therefore human beings, are also influenced by the stars-intelligences. The separated possible intellect, however, is not matter; it is of the intellective species/genus[7] and it is for this reason that humankind can only participate in intellection, *coniunctio*, through a medium – the image. Aristotle defines matter as: "the matrix or womb in the genesis of things … matter as something the very nature of which is to desire and yearn towards actually existing."[8] Cavalcanti's theory of knowledge, then, ties human beings, our sensory and rational capacities to biological necessity and therefore to the cycle of potentiality and act of matter.

However, this is problematic for Dante and Christian theologians. Firstly, by subjecting rational thought to physical necessity it follows that choice, and therefore ethics, is also determined by necessity. This "astral determinism" was opposed by theologians on the basis that it subjugated free will to the laws of physics.[9] A result of this debate is the common association of freedom with immateriality.[10] Secondly, the fundamental tenet of the eternal cycle of the transformation of matter[11] in essence presents an alternate theory of creation, one that negates the Christian notion of creation,[12] the power of God to create something out of nothing. Lastly, if the world is

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[6] "According to Aristotle, generation is just a transformation that appears as generation becase it is imperceptible to the senses. Generation and transformation are two different aspects of the transformation of a single substance." Ardizzone, 76.
[7] Ardizzone, 83.
[8] Physics I, 9,192a12-20 in Ardizzone, 77, 189.
[9] Ardizzone, 81.
[10] "Odon Lottin and E. Gilson have emphasized that it was a common assumption from the beginning of the thirteenth century, under the influence of Aristotle, to associate freedom with immateriality." Ardizzone, 81.
[11] Ardizzone, 78.
[12] Ardizzone, 77.

eternal, according to Averroes, the survival of the individual soul, as it is matter, is not possible – it is part of the cycle of generation and corruption.[13] Ultimately, Cavalcanti's theory of knowledge presents not only an account of the life and capacities of human beings as grounded in physics and natural science, but it is precisely these avenues that connect humankind to the transcendental, the separate possible intellect. Dante circumvents necessity with the woman-angel, Beatrice. In so doing he maintains the superiority of the divine to the human, and thus the cultural and religious tenets of his time.

The implications of Cavalcanti's espousal of radical Aristotelianism are such that it denies the creation of the world by God and posits the death of the individual soul; it subjects human beings and free will to necessity. Christianity defined the culture and the understanding of the universe in Europe in the Middle Ages. Adopting Cavalcanti's theory of knowledge as it is involves a fundamental reworking of the theological framework of analysis through which the universe was determined and filtered. An ideological change of such monumental proportions is threatening on a personal level as well as societal. For this reason new knowledge is more easily presented, and hopefully accepted, when persuasive techniques are employed. Persuasion, then, is a means with which Cavalcanti can make headway in the intellectual imaginary of others, at least in that of his audience. He uses it (and the physical object of poetry itself) to create a space in which the "new" can exist.

The rhetorical and poetic techniques that Cavalcanti employs in his minor poems seem to stem from the related texts in circulation at the time. As has already been explained in the previous chapters, Roger Bacon was integral to the diffusion of the

[13] Ardizzone, 83.

works of al-Fārābī, Avicenna and Averroes, not only because he actually cites them in his own work Opus maius (in use at the universities of Paris and Bologna in the thirteenth century along with al-Fārābī's/Gundisalvus' De Scientiis) but because he pursued the acquisition of Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics in Latin and critiqued their translations.[14] Moreover, he was a personal friend of Hermannus Alemannus,[15] the Latin translator of Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics* (1256)[16] and al-Fārābī's preface of his commentary on Aristotle's Rhetoric, known as the Didascalia in Rethoricam Aristotelis ex Glosa Alpharabi (1256),[17] a text that influenced and was cited in subsequent Latin commentaries on Rhetoric.[18] Not only did he have access to the texts mentioned but to their translator. Regarding the works of Avicenna, aspects of his treatises on Poetics and Rhetoric were included by Averroes in his own commentary on

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[14] See Chapter One, page 25, footnote 83.

[15] Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, xvii: "Evidence pertinent to Hermannus' method of translation is found in the writings of Roger Bacon, who knew Hermannus personally, and in Hermannus' own prefatory remarks [...] He further notes the difficulty of translating Ibn Rušd [Averroes] in words paralleled by Roger Bacon." Also in John Henry Bridges, ed., "Introduction," The 'Opus Majus' of Roger Bacon, vol 1 (Frankfurt/Main: Minerva-Verlag, 1964) liii.

[16] Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, xvi-xvii: "The Hermannus Alemannus translation of Ibn Rušd's [Averroes'] commentary was, [...], accomplished in 1256 and printed in 1481 and 1515. Its popularity in the interim is attested by the number of manuscripts still preserved, twenty-four, as opposed to only two for the much-heralded William of Moerbeke translation only recently discovered. That the Hermannus version received careful study, moreover, is shown not only by the preserved manuscripts themselves, but also by the existence of a commentary written by Bartholomew of Brügge, member of the University of Paris Faculty of Arts in 1307, as well as numerous references in excerpt-literature. [...]." See also O. B. Hardison, "The Place of *Averroes' Commentary on the 'Poetics'* in the History of Medieval Criticism." Medieval and Renaissance Studies: Proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Summer, 1968, ed. John L. Lievsay (Durham: Duke University Press, 1970) 64; Eugenio Massa, Ruggero Bacone: etica e poetica nella storia dell'*Opus maius* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura,1955) 137-143.

[17] "traduits [*Rethorica, Poetria*, e *Didascalia*] au cours de la période 1243-1256, ces ouvrages furent publiés en meme temps et les prefaces furent écrits à cette occasion." M. Grignaschi, ed., "Didascalia." Deux ouvrages inédits, 127.

[18] "La Glossa [the *Didascalia*] d'al-Fārābī fornisce così la base a molte delle questioni che si pongono i commentatori latini e ad alcune delle distinzioni correnti tra XIII e XIV secolo, almeno a giudicare dai commenti alla *Retorica* pervenutici. E anche a voler dare un rapido sguardo a tre su Quattro di essi (quelli di Egidio Romano, di Giovanni di Jandun e di Buridano), risulta non solo che al-Fārābī è citato, ma che alcune sue posizioni sono riconoscibili al fondo di molti discussioni [...]." Maierù, "Influenze arabe", 256-257.

Poetics[19] as well as by Hermannus Alemannus in his Latin translation of al-Fārābī's Didascalia[20] as has been attested to through posterior textual analysis and Hermannus' own admission to having consulted/incorporated other texts in the course of translation.

Virtues of Thought: Intelligence and Deliberation

The defining characteristic of Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics* is that the primary goal of poetry is moral: "Aristotle says: Every poem and all poetic speech are either blame or praise. And this is evident from examination of poems themselves, especially the poems which are concerned with matters of choice, either honest or base."[21] Tragedy as the highest form of poetry represents the actions of virtuous men for the purpose of encouraging virtuous actions in the audience: actions of justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, generosity, intelligence, and wisdom.[22] The virtue on which Cavalcanti focuses in representing the act/decision of rejection is intelligence, in so far as it is deliberation about human/practical concerns.[23] In

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[19] I could not discern whether Avicenna's books on rhetoric and poetics (contained in *Shifā'*) had been translated into Latin by the thirteenth century. However, Avicenna's related ideas did come to the Latin world, albeit diluted. This is addressed by Charles E. Butterworth, ed. and trans., Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) 19.; Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, ix; xv-xvi; and M. Grignaschi, ed., "Didascalia." Deux ouvrages inédits, 134-137, see next footnote.

[20] "Pour traduire de l'arabe en latin la *Rhétorique*, Hermann en a consulté un certain nombre d'exemplaires (134)." Grignaschi writes that al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), Ibn Rušd (Averroes) based their comments on the same "ancienne traduction" from Greek to Arabic. However, due to difficulty in translating al-Fārābī from Arabic to Latin, Hermann also made recourse to the same text as well as to its subsequent commentaries by Avicenna and Averroes. Thus the Didascalia also contains traces of their comments/ideas in addition to those of al-Fārābī (136-137). Hermannus admits this: "... Nec miretur quisquam vel indignetur de difficultate vel quasi ruditate translationis. Nam multo difficilius et rudius ex grec in arabicum est translata. Ita quod Alpharabius qui primus conatus est ex rethorica aliquem intellectum glosando elicere, multa exempla greci propter ipsorum obscuritatem pertransiens dereliquit. Et propter eandem causam multa dubie exposuit et ut Avicenna et Avenrosd estimant, propter hanc etiam causam glosam usque ad finem negocii non perduxit. [...]." "Didascalia." Deux ouvrages inédits, 134-137.

[21] "Dixit: Omne itaque poema et omnis oratio poetica au test vituperation au test laudation. Et hoc patet per inductionem poematum et proprie poematum ipsorum que fiunt de rebus voluntariis idest honesties et trupibus." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 3.

[22] Rh.I. IX. 5-6

[23] Terence Irwin, trans., "Intelligence," Nichomachean Ethics. 411-412.

Nichomachean Ethics[24] Aristotle defines intelligence as: "a state grasping the truth, involving reason, and concerned with the action about human goods."[25] Moreover, he states that deliberating well is the responsibility of the intelligent person more than any other.[26] In light of the reasons for resistance to radical Aristotelianism, *correct* deliberation becomes very significant.

The difference between correct deliberation and corrupt deliberation is its goal. Because deliberation involves the part of the soul that rationally calculates about non-scientific issues – practical human concerns[27]– the goal is subject to choice. Deliberation itself is guided by the goal we *want* to pursue: "[...] the function of what thinks about action is truth agreeing with desire."[28] When both elements define the deliberative process, the perfect decision results: "If, then, the decision is excellent, the reason must be true and the desire correct, so that what reason asserts is what desire pursues."[29] The difficulty is that the results of rational calculation and our desire do not always jibe.

As has been discussed in Chapter Two, Cavalcanti cannot prove *coniunctio* any more than Dante can prove miracle. However, he demonstrates his theory of knowledge through what is observable and testified to by the medical profession and clergy, the physiological symptoms of love as an excess/illness. From Cavalcanti's perspective denying the truth of the observable is a choice and it constitutes the ultimate betrayal of the rational faculties of human beings, and thus virtue. This seems to be what Cavalcanti

[24] Hackett writes that Nichomachean Ethics was translated by Robert Grosseteste in 1249, and thus was available to Roger Bacon. "Roger Bacon on Rhetoric and Poetics," 148.
[25] NE 1140b20-23
[26] NE 1141b10-11
[27] NE 1139a10-15
[28] NE 1139a25-30
[29] NE 1139a20-25

refers to in his sonnet to Dante in which he laments, "molto mi dòl", his friend's line of reasoning, "pensar troppo vilmente":

> I' vegno 'l giorno a te 'nfinite volte
> e tròvoti pensar troppo vilmente:
> molto mi dòl della gentil tua mente
> e d'assai tue vertù che ti son tolte.[30]

The misuse of deliberation is described by Aristotle as follows: "For the incontinent or base person will use rational calculation to reach *what he proposes to see*"[31] – as opposed to the truth. The virtues of thought – intelligence and deliberation – seem to be what Dante has lost, "d'assai tue vertù che ti son tolte." He is unwilling to confront the implications of the theory of matter on the ideological/theological system he espouses. It is because of this reticence (and that directed at his person) that Cavalcanti employs persuasive techniques in his poetry.

Poetry and Reticence

The power of poetry in instruction lies in its psychological appeal; it is pleasurable. Imaginative representations capture one's attention in a way that objects perceived by the senses don't, regardless of whether the imitation is of a table, a philosophical concept or a moral concept. Imaginative representations evoke delight and as a result people are more open to learning about that object. With poetry the delight is not just in the verbal image created, but in the meter and rhythm that people can repeat.[32]

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[30] "I come to you during the day countless times/And find you thinking too basely:/I deeply grieve over your noble mind/And your many virtues of which you are deprived." XLI 1-4. Nelson, 67.
[31] NE 1142b18-20. Emphasis mine.
[32] "Et signum huius scilicet quod homo naturaliter letatur et gaudet ex assimilatione est quod delectamur et gaudemus in representatione aliquarum rerum in quarum sensu non delectamur. Et precipue quando representatio valde subtiliter exprimit rem respresentatam ut contingit in formatione multorum animalium que periti exprimunt sculptores aut pictures. Et propiter hanc causum utimur in docendo exemplis ut facilius intelligatur quod dicitur propter hoc quod in eis est de motivo imaginative. Recipiet ergo anima perfectius proposita secundum delectationem sui quam habet in exemplis. [...] Et ex quo imitations exemplars non sunt nisi quedam assimilationes ad res que iam ceciderunt in sensum, patet quod non

In this sense poetry is incredibly useful in the realm of persuasion and subliminal instruction: "phrases first uttered because of their pleasing images or delightful sounds are repeated for the same reason and eventually come to shape opinions and patterns of thought."[33] It is not necessary for poetry to directly address the process of cognition in order to educate. It can educate through its appeal alone. To this end Averroes echoes his intellectual predecessors al-Fārābī and Avicenna and of course, Aristotle.

Both Gundisalvus and Avicenna pointedly discuss the power of poetic representation as a means to affect action when the audience initially balks at a notion. Reticence is due either to knowledge (the audience has "knowledge" – or believes they have knowledge – that is contrary to what they are being asked to do) or will. Poetic representation, or the imaginative syllogism, aims at the "acceptance or rejection of a moral action"[34] by appealing to emotion instead of to intellectual assent. It cultivates the emotional terrain in favour of the action desired by the poet. In De Scientiis Gundisalvus addresses this directly:

> The property of Poetics is by its own words to make in the imagination something beautiful or foul, that does not actually exist, so that the hearer believes it and either abhors or desires something. For however much we might be certain that such a thing is not in fact true, nevertheless the image is aroused in our soul either to its horror or delight as we imagine. For sometimes imagination is more effective in humans than knowledge or thought. Often human knowledge or thought are opposite to the imagination; at that point, a person is affected by what he imagines rather than by what he knows or thinks.[35]

The imaginative syllogism is effective when logical reasoning is not. By appealing to emotion the poet can steer the audience in the direction he desires, eventually creating a

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assumuntur nisi ut citius et facilius intelligatur quod dicitur. Intelligitur autem citius per ipsas propter delectationem imaginabilis quod representant. Hec est causa prima generative poetrie. Causa vero secunda est delectation quam habet etiam homo per naturam ex metro et simphonia." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 11-12.

[33] Butterworth, Averroes' Middle Commentary, xi.

[34] Dahiyat, Avicenna's Commentary,19.

[35] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 212-213.

different attitude toward the object/action he has represented. In effect, the poet manipulates the emotions of the audience, proof of the power of poetry and the poet.

Poetry in and of itself can be amoral; it can be used to affect action or belief of any kind. Averroes specifically mentions the use of poetic discourse by power structures in general to establish belief systems in politics (though he avoids overtly associating it with amorality by relating its use in scripture). In Butterworth's translation of Averroes, poetic discourse was used before rhetoric by the "earliest founders of regimes" to instill belief systems through which it was possible to rule. Furthermore, Averroes distinguishes between poetry aimed at affecting character and poetry aimed at affecting belief. While the first encourages and discourages, the second, only insists on the existence or inexistence of something.[36] It is the latter that is the aim of Cavalcanti.

Elements of a Successful Appeal to Emotion

Conviction through the Rational

In Rhetoric Aristotle provides an extensive list of the misfortunes appropriate to tragedy which he neatly sums up as "all signs and actions that indicate suffering."[37] These misfortunes, or as Averroes calls them "calamities", are appropriate because they are plausible and because they evoke the emotions of pity and fear in the audience. Charles Kauffman illustrates how Aristotle's Poetics provides criteria for poetry to be

[36] "Et pars tertia tragedie est credulitas, et hec est potential representandi rem sic esse aut non sic esse. Et hoc est simile et quod conatur rethorica in declaratione quod res existat aut non existat, nisi quod rethorica conatur ad hoc per sermonem persuasivum et poetria per sermonem representatiuum. Et hec representation reperitur etiam in sermonibus legalibus. Dixit: et iam alkedemonii legume positores contenti fuerunt ad firmandum credulitates in mentibus hominum sermonibus poeticis quousque posteriors ceperunt adinvenire vias rethoricales. Et differentia inter sermonem poeticum preceptiuum et instigatiuum ad credulitates et preceptiuum et instigatiuum ad consuetudines est quoniam ille qui instigat ad consuetudines instigat ad operandum et agendum aliquid aut recedendum et fugiendum ab eo. Sermo vero qui instigat ad credulitatem non instigat nisi ad credendum aliquid esse aut non esse, sed non ad inquirendum ipsum aut respuendum." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 21-22.

[37] Rhetoric, II.VIII.15-16

convincing and therefore effective, three of the five kinds of objections that a critic can make are related to congruity.[38] In other words, for poetic representation to induce conviction it must represent "actual and possible matters."[39] The ultimate reason why poets should only represent the actual and the possible is to affect virtuous action: "only if people are persuaded by or believe in the poem will their souls be moved to do or refrain from doing certain actions."[40] The affective success of poetry depends on the logical progression of actions, in Gerald Else's words: "the marvelous is to be attained *through* rationality, not in defiance of it. The events are to be surprising at first glance, or in themselves, but the surprise is to come from, and be heightened by, the reflection that they are perfectly natural and logical in light of what went before."[41] As a measure of congruity Averroes, like Aristotle, uses sight; events should be represented in the same way as they happen before the eyes.[42] To this end, Cavalcanti represents the visible symptoms of the pathology of erotic love as analogous signposts of his theory of knowledge.

Cavalcanti directs the attention of the reader to two aspects, the observable symptom represented and the decision to discount it. Ballad X begins with calling attention to the lover's tears, "piangendo", their visibility, "dimostrando", and their cause, "il giudicio d'Amore", in sum the condition *oppilatio*. Tears, caused by the excess of sensation from the sight of the beloved, obstruct the lover's vision thus sensation and therefore imagination are incomplete: "Vedete ch'i' son un che vo piangendo/e

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[38] See Chapter One, page 11 and footnote 20.
[39] Butterworth, Averroes' Middle Commentary, 25.
[40] Butterworth, Averroes' Middle Commentary, 26.
[41] Kauffman, 412.
[42] "Dixit: et oportet ut sit fabularis adinventio pavorosa dolorosa inventio quasi ante oculus constituta que quasi ex visi fiem habeat. Quando enim fabularis narration ambigua fuerit et adinventa ab adinventione dubitabili no aget actionem que per ipsam intentia fuerat. Quo enim non crederit quis non movebit eum neque ad timendum neque ad miserendum." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 42.

dimostrando – il giudicio d'Amore." And yet, his demonstration is rejected, "**e già non trovo sì pietoso core / che, mè guardando, – una volta sospiri.**"[43] In relation to the same medical condition, in ballad XIX he asks his fellow poets, "voi che di dolor parlate", to consider what he says: "**I' prego** voi che di dolor parlate / che, **per vertute di nova pietate, / non disdegniate** – la mia pena udire".[44] He follows his request with a description of the typical physiological effects as well as a medical one.[45] However, sandwiched in between is an additional appeal to his fellow poets for comprehension on the basis of affinity;

> **Se voi sentiste come 'l cor si dole,**
> **dentro dal vostro cor voi tremereste**:
> ch'elli mi dice sì dolci parole,
> **che sospirando pietà chiamereste.**
> **E solamente voi lo 'ntendereste:**
> ch'altro cor non poria pensar né dire
> quant'è 'l dolor che mi conven soffrire.[46]

They have also written about love, reasoned about knowledge and transcendence, and most importantly have also experienced the inability to write because their imagination was blocked. All of these constitute reasonable grounds for reconsidering the radical Aristotelian theories put forth by Cavalcanti.

Inducing Compassion and Tenderness by Representing Calamity

In his commentary, Averroes states that if the poet wants the reader/audience to embrace virtue and act accordingly he must first cultivate a mindset that is open to doing

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[43] "You see that I am one who goes weeping / And showing outwardly Love's judgement, / And I find no heart so compassionate / That, looking on me, would even sigh once." X, 1-4. Nelson, 17.
[44] "I beg of you who speak of sorrow/That, by dint of rare compassion,/You not disdain to hear my woe." XIX, 1-3. Nelson, 27.
[45] See Chapter Two, page 34-35 and footnote 33.
[46] "If you could sense how the heart grieves, / Within your hearts you would tremble: / For it says to me such sweet words / That, sighing, you would invoke mercy. / And only you would understand it: / For no other heart could think or tell / How great is the sorrow I have to suffer." XIX, 11-17. Nelson, 27.

so. In both Averroes' commentary on Poetics and al-Fārābī's Didascalia in Rethoricam, creating the appropriate disposition is done through an appeal to the emotions.

In the case of poetic representation the success of the poet's argument is measured by its tragic effect, the evocation of sadness, fear and compassion in the audience. According to Averroes, this is done by describing the "misery" or "calamities" that someone has undergone unnecessarily and undeservedly. The misfortunes evoke sadness and compassion because they are undeserved and they evoke fear because they are plausible. However, speaking about virtue in and of itself is not enough to induce the audience to perform the correct action. The misfortunes undergone must be mentioned as it is fear, sadness and compassion that bring about virtuous action.[47] On this count, traces of Avicenna's commentary on the Poetics are also present in Averroes'. Concisely put, the success of tragedy is its ability to make the audience feel these emotions:

> By seeing tragic suffering, the audience is made to transcend their own affliction and distress, and their souls are humanely enlarged. Such a view is also consistent with the two emotions that Avicenna had already singled out as a positive effect of tragedy, namely, kindliness and piety. [...] Thus, the effect of tragedy is both immediate and lasting.[48]

Consequently, the audience is receptive to enacting virtue. The predominance of the calamities and misery in tragedy are also characteristics of Cavalcanti's poetry, described by Gianfranco Contini as "dominated by the theme of fear and death."[49]

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[47] "dixit: et accidit quidem miseratio et compassio cum narratur miseria et calamitas incidens ei qui eam non meruit et indebite. Et formido quidem et pavor accidit ex horum narratione propter imaginationem nocumenti potius cadere debentis super eos qui indigniores ipsis sunt, scilicet super auditores verbi, qui se recognoscunt indigniores illis. Tristitia ergo et miseratio accidit quidem ex istis propter hoc quod contingit ei qui non meruerat. Et quando facta fuerit mentio virtutum singulariter, non incutit anime timorem perdendi eas neque miserationem neque amorem. Necesse est ergo ei qui vult instigare ad virtutes ut ponat partem representationis sue in rebus inducentibus tristitiam et formidinem et misericordiam." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 39-40.

[48] Dahiyat, Avicenna's Commentary, 93.

[49] In his misinterpretation of "Pegli occhi fere un spirito sottile" XXVIII as "autoironia", Gianfranco Contini says it is to counterbalance "il mondo poetico del Cavalcanti, dominato dal tema della "paura" e

In the case of rhetoric, the success of the accuser's or the defendant's argument is measured by a judgment in his favour which can be achieved with various types of oratory. However, the type of oratory that is most efficacious for a defendant is virtually the same as tragedy: lamentation. In al-Fārābī's Didascalia, lamentation is described as invoking the emotions through the mention of undeserved calamities experienced by the defendant. He considers lamentation as part of poetics but it is also used in rhetoric.[50]

The lover of Cavalcanti's poetry is not physically dead, but the imaginative process is blocked, hence so is intellectual activity.[51] The ballad Quando di morte mi conven trar vita is an ironic, slightly exasperated embodiment of the methodology prescribed by Averroes and al-Fārābī for evoking compassion and fear. De Robertis aptly describes it as a "ballad of exceptional drama, pain and death; of the inconceivability and yet fatality of a life and a love as pain and death."[52] The first ten lines are lamentations in the form of two questions, which in light of the above methodology, are rhetorical:

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della morte", an accurate description. Gianfranco Contini, "Dolce Stil Novo," Poeti del Duecento, vol 2.1, La letteratura italiana: Storia e testi, eds., Raffaele Mattioli, Pietro Pancrazi and Alfredo Schiaffini (Milano: Ricciardi, 1960) 490.

[50] "[...] Lamentatum enim non est nisi oratio quedam inductive passionis alicuius et mestitie, seu per quam intenditur eius inductio. Es test meroris et miserationis et liquefactionis anime provocativum et passionis super aliquem cui, sine merito aliquot ipsius, accidit calamitas et affliction, ipso existente probo et virtuoso. Quando ergo laus ingreditur in lamentationem, non ingreditur nisi ut sciat auditor quaniam ille, quem talis obtruit calamitas, non meruit ipsam huius virtutis causa et ut inducatur compassio super huius detrimenta ex miseria, quoniam talibus proditus erat virtutibus. [...] Est ergo iste modus laudandi defunctum ingrediens in rethoricam simul et poet(ri)am. Set lamentation etiam est poetrie. Quando ergo usitatur in rethorica, usitatur quidem in orationibus passionalibus propter causam, que intenditur per usum earum in rethorica. Et isto etiam modo interdum accusantur et similiter defenduntur vivi et defenduntur mortui. Causa vero deliberativa nequaquam pertinet nisi vivis, tanquam propria ipsis existens." Al-Fārābī, "Didascalia," Deux ouvrages, §25, 188-191.

[51] "It is in relation to intellectual activity that Cavalcanti's poetry introduces imagination. For Cavalcanti, imagination is an activity that presupposes a series of bodily functions and a series of conditions in which imagination can take place. Imagination is a process. The events of the body culminate for Cavalcanti in the activity of imagination. Love and imagination appear to be correlatives and yet at the same time are opposed. The reason is that love is in itself an excess that impedes the process of the imagination." Ardizzone, 29.

[52] "Ballata d'eccezionale drammaticità, di dolore e di morte, e dell'inconcepibilità e tuttavia fatalità di una vita e di un amore come dolore e morte." De Robertis, Rime, 124.

Quando di morte mi conven trar vita
e di pesanza gioia,
come di tanta noia
lo spirito d'amor d'amar m'invita?

Come m'invita lo meo cor d'amare,
lasso, che'è pien di doglia
e di sospir' sì d'ogni parte priso,
che quasi sol merzé non pò chiamare,
e di vertù lo spoglia
l'afanno che m'ha già quasi conquiso?[53]

Through the questions themselves Cavalcanti manages to simultaneously recount his misery (and his theory of love) while bringing attention to his narration of it. But the lamentation doesn't stop there.

He patiently re-lists the array of physiological calamities that have befallen him. He catalogues the prognosis of his theory of love as a passion of the body. The by-now familiar condition of the jammed imaginative process, subsequent to which the image of the beloved remains fixed in his heart is again described:[54] "Amor, che nasce di simil piacere, / dentro lo cor si posa / formando di disio nova persona; / ma fa la sua virtù in vizio cadere."[55] He ends the description of his miserable physiological condition with the final question, "Dunque d'amar perché meco ragiona?"[56] The deceptive nature of love, or rather its dual nature, as the process of and obstacle to sensation and imagination is not only succinctly outlined in the ballad, but is echoed in the overall bitter, yet reconciled tone of the ballad and in the questions themselves. Cavalcanti closes the ballad with the

[53] "Since from death I must draw life / And from affliction joy, / How is it that from such distress, Love's spirit exhorts me to love? / How is it that my heart exhorts me to love, / Alas, when it is full of grief / And so beset on all sides with sighs / That it almost cannot invoke mercy, / And is stripped of strength/By the anxiety that already has nearly overcome me?" XXXII, 1-10. Nelson, 51.
[54] The condition of "*oppilatio*" as described in Chapter Two of my thesis.
[55] "Love, which is born of mutual pleasure, / Stays within the heart, / Forming a new person of desire; / But it makes [heart's] strength decay to weakness." XXXII, 15-18. Nelson, 51.
[56] "Why then does [Love] discourse with me about loving?" XXXII, 21. Nelson, 51.

answer to his own rhetorical questions making his intention obvious to the reader. He declares: "I' mi posso blasmar di gran pesanza/più che nessun giammai."[57] And he does:

I' mi posso blasmar di gran pesanza
più che nessun giammai:
ché Morte d'entro 'l cor me tragge un core
che va parlando di crudele amanza,
che ne' mie' forti guai
m'affanna là ond' i' prendo ogni valore.
Quel punto maladetto sia, che'Amore
nacque di tal manera
che la mia vita fera
li fue, di tal piacere, a lui gradita.[58]

Another calamity. In his commentary on Poetics, Averroes writes that one of the "hardest vicissitudes" to bear is that which is "inflicted voluntarily by one friend on another."[59] The theme of disdain/lack of compassion so present in Cavalcanti's minor poems is also an appeal to the reader for comprehension of the poet himself. A limited yet concordant picture of the historical figure of Cavalcanti has been patched together from various sources. He was unanimously described as being of significant intellect and difficult character. Giovanni Villani described him as: "come filosofo, virtudioso uomo in più cose, se non ch'era troppo tenero e stizzoso";[60] and Dino Compagni as "nobile

[57] "I can complain of great affliction / More than anyone ever did." XXXII, 25-26. Nelson, 51.
[58] "I can complain of great affliction / More than anyone ever did: / For Death draws from within my heart a heart / That continually speaks of cruel loving, / Which in my loud groans / Assails me right where I draw all strength. / Cursed be that moment when Love / was born in such a way / That my harsh life / Was to him, with such pleasure, gratifying." XXXII, 25-34. Nelson, 51.
[59] "dixit: Et notum est que sint res que faciunt per representationem sui delectationem absque hoc quod accidat inde dolor vel pavor. Res autem per quarum representationem accidit cum delectatione sua tristitia sev dolor et pavor poterir homo inquirendo que sint difficilia et gravie ex his que solent incidere hominibus et que res sint parve et exiles ex quibus non sequitur magnitude tristitie neque pavoris. Et huius sunt que accident amicis quibusdam a quibusdam amicorum suorum voluntarie, et parentum interfectio et periculaa et dampna et cetera consimilia nocumenta, non einem quod accidit inimicus quibusdam a quibusdam inimicorum suorum." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 43.
[60] "as a philosopher, a virtuous man in many things, even though he was touchy and irascible." Translation mine. Anichini cites Giovanni Villani. See La poesia del corpo, 10.

cavaliere, [...] cortese e ardito ma sdegnoso e solitario e intento allo studio."[61] His interests in natural philosophy, and specifically Averroism – as it was taught by Taddeo Alderotto in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Bologna[62] – and politics – for which he was exiled from Florence[63] in 1300, and subsequent to which he died – testify at least to his attraction to culture and ideas at the margins and his involvement in controversy. In addition, he was described as an introvert, "solitario". Of the many appeals for compassion, the two poems that follow are examples of what seem to be expressions of his own personal frustrations with his condition of solitude and "otherness".[64] Both poems are instances of direct appeals for compassion and comprehension of the poet.

Cavalcanti employs the same metaphor of love as a passion of the body, specifically an ailment.[65] However, in Sonnet XV[66] the points of reference are wish, emotion, and an overall sense of resignation. He begins with a wish for reprive, "Se Mercé fosse amica a' miei disiri," from the circumstances in which he finds himself: "che **'l forte e 'l duro lagrimar** ch'e' fanno / ritornerebbe in **allegrezza** e 'n **gioia**." However,

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[61] "a noble knight, [...] courteous and courageous but arrogant and solitary and intent on studying." Translation mine. Dino Compagni is cited by De Robertis, Rime, xvi and Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 10.
[62] "È seguendo il loro sapere che Guido scivola via dal centro della cultura per occuparne piuttosto I margini dai quail egli sceglie di compiere la propria impresa intelletuale [le sue rime]." Anichini, La poesia del corpo, 24, also 21. Addition mine. See also Ardizzone 19, 123, 127.
[63] De Robertis, Rime, xv.
[64] Ardizzone, 6.
[65] "That poetry is a cognitive activity is confirmed in Cavalcanti's own use of metaphor. His discourse is about love. But love in Cavalcanti is a metaphor for the nature and essence of human beings. Their life, their desires, their fight for imagination and intellectual life – all these are the foci of his poetry. The way in which he employs a metaphor in order to focus on this nature and essence of human beings is of the utmost importance." Ardizzone, 41.
[66] "If Favor were friendly to my desires / [...] / That the hard and insistent weeping they perform / Would turn into cheerfulness and joy / But there is so much trouble in [my] sorrowing heart / And there is so much injury in [my] aggrieved soul / That out of scorn no one gives them greeting." XV, 1,10-14. Nelson, 23.

he finds neither comfort nor solidarity:[67] "Ma sì al cor dolente tanta noia/e all'anima trista è tanto danno, / che **per disdegno uom non dà lor salute**."

Sonnet XXXIII[68] turns around his personal misfortune, his awareness of it, the despair it incurs, and the decision to go forth regardless. It seems to express a growing realization, "ch'i' sento nel cor un **pensero**", of an impossibility: "e par che dica: «Amor **non t'assicura** / in guisa, **che tu possi di leggero** / a la tua donna **sì contar il vero, / che Morte non ti ponga 'n sua figura**»." However, in spite of his looming sense of despair, "Io temo che la mia **disaventura** / non faccia sì che'i' dica: «I' **mi dispero**»", he nevertheless, indicated by the word "allor", continues his poetic activity, "contar il vero". Once again he seeks compassion: "**Allor d'un uom che sia pietoso miro**, / che consolasse mia vita dolente / **dicendo: «Spiritei, non vi partite!**»". In his personal poems Cavalcanti asks to be listened to.

A comment by Robert Harrison on the personal aspect of Cavalcanti's poetry is relevant at this point. Harrison interprets Cavalcanti's "psychic space"[69] as characterized by a "wound", which he reads in the key of romantic drama and modern psychology as opposed to the medical and philosophical terminology brought to light by Ardizzone and Anichini. Nonetheless, he feels his way to an astute observation; Cavalcanti, he says, is a poet who lives his wound "in love and not in loathing."[70] The meticulous intricacy of his

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[67] De Robertis, Rime, 53. See footnote 14 in which De Robertis cites Ferrero in his interpretation of 'dà ... salute'.

[68] "I fear that my misfortune / Makes me say: "I despair," / As I feel in my heart a thought / [...] / And [the thought] seems to say: "Love does not give assurance / That you may safely be able / To tell your lady the truth / Without Death transforming you into its likeness." / [...] / Then I seek out a compassionate man / Who might console my grieving life, / Saying: "Little spirits, do not depart!" XXXIII,1-3,4-8,12-14. Nelson, 53.

[69] Robert Harrison, "The Ghost of Guido Cavalcanti, Revisted," Guido Cavalcanti fra i suoi lettori. Proceedings of the International Symposium for the Seventh Centennial of his Death. November 10-11, 2000, ed., Maria Luisa Ardizzone (Florence: Cadmo, 2003) 122.

[70] Harrison, "The Ghost," 126. Emphasis mine.

poetry alone is a sign of dedication and absorption, as well as a kind of fulfilment achieved through it.

Bypassing Deliberation

Cavalcanti attempts to reverse the misfortune of the lover/poet by reformulating his requests for compassion with the aide of novelty. Both Aristotle and Averroes suggest animating inanimate objects, personification,[71] as a method of capturing attention through the pleasure of novelty. Averroes goes into more detail. Using inanimate objects instead of rational beings is a technique used in Arabic poetry specifically when the poet's (or orator's) discourse involves reasoning on the part of the audience.[72] This echoes al-Fārābī's (and subsequently Gundisalvus') explanation of the ability of imaginative representation to affect action in the audience when the audience would otherwise be ill disposed to doing so.

To this end Cavalcanti tries again, animating the spirits and the sighs of the lover/poet's body: in sonnet VII, "se vedesse li spiriti fuggir via, / di grande sua pietate piangeria"[73]; again in *canzone* IX, "[gli spiriti] vanno soli, senza compagnia, / e son pien' di paura";[74] and again in sonnet XVI, "e vanno [i miei sospiri] sol ragionando dolore / e non trovan persona che li miri."[75] However, his masterpiece plea for compassion specifically for the poet, "la man che ci movea", comes from his own quills, little scissors

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[71] On the frequency of personification in Cavalcanti's poetry, Robert Harrison writes that it is "by far the most frequent rhetorical figure deployed in Guido's *Canzoniere*" and names two other critics, Calenda and Marti as having noted the same; "The Ghost,"122. His above references are: M. Marti, Poeti del Dolce stil nuovo (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1969) 157; C. Calenda, Per altezza d'ingegno (Napoli: Liguori, 1976) 27-30.

[72] "dixit: et est hic locus sextus famosus sive vulgatus quo utuntur arabes, scilicet cum rei inanimate attribuitur quod est rei animate, ut loqui vel ratiocinari. [...] Et ipse quoque mentionem eius fecit in rethorica e dixit illic quoniam Homerus in multis locis utitur ipsa." Boggess, Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium, 54-55.

[73] "If he should but see the spirits take flight,/He would weep out of great pity." VII, 13-14. Nelson, 11.

[74] "And they [The spirits that have fled from my heart (v.48)] go lonely, without company,/And are full of fear." IX, 51-52. Nelson, 15. Addition mine.

[75] "[My sighs] go about expressing only sorrow/And find no one to look on them" XV,7-8. Nelson, 23.

and penknife who personify the lover's "triste" and "isbigotite" soul (poor and bewildered):[76]

> Noi siàn le triste penne isbigotite,
> le cesoiuzze e 'l coltellin dolente,
> ch'avemo scritte dolorosamente
> quelle parole che vo' avete udite.

The poet has lost his ability to move voluntarily: the medical condition of *stupor* or *tremor* has been brought on by fear, "cose dubbiose nel core".[77]

> Or vi preghiàn quanto possiàn più forte
> che non sdegniate di tenerci noi,
> tanto ch'un poco di pietà vi miri.[78]

The effect of novelty in this sonnet and the delight it produces in the reader is best described by Italo Calvino: "It is a sonnet that speaks of pain in almost every verse, and yet, the effect, music, is a quick movement with a liveliness of extraordinary lightness."[79] Novelty through personification presents an image to the audience that is delightful (or not, as the case may be) in order to endear the object represented to the audience – to evoke the desired emotion, in this case compassion – so that the audience, in future, will react to the object itself with compassion. In this case the object represented is the poet. This, the imaginative syllogism, bypasses the process of rationalization by enticing the

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[76] Ardizzone, 39.
[77] See Chapter Two, page 36 and footnote 42.
[78] "We are the poor bewildered quills,/The little scissors and the grieving penknife,/Who have sorrowfully written/Those words that you have heard./Now we tell you why we have left/And presently come here to you:/The hand that used to move us says it feels/Dreadful things that have appeared in the heart,/Which have so undone him/And brought him so close to death/That nothing else is left of him but sighs./We now beg you as earnestly as we can/That you not scorn to keep us/For as long as a little compassion suits you." XVIII. Nelson, 25.
[79] Translation mine. "È un sonetto che parla di dolori quasi ogni verso, eppure l'effetto, la musica, è un allegro con brio d'una straordinaria leggerezza". Italo Calvino, "La penna di prima persona," Italo Calvino: Saggi 1945-1985, ed. Mario Barenghi (Milano: Arnaldo Mondadori, 1995) 361-368.

audience to do or not do something through attraction or repulsion.[80] It is employed with the goal of affecting a change of heart in the audience.

Disdain/lack of compassion is ultimately a metaphor for the reticence on the part of the audience. Through the observable symptoms of the malady of erotic love and the equally observable state of friendlessness, Cavalcanti uses the "seen" to demonstrate the incongruity of the audience's opposition to his theory based on the deliberative process he takes them through. Given the historical impression of him, "sdegnoso", "troppo tenero" and "stizzoso" (arrogant, irascible, and touchy) and the opposition to – at best tentative approach to – his theory of knowledge as one of passion and matter, he employs rhetorical and poetic techniques to render his audience more receptive to the new knowledge he proposes, and also to him. His representation of misery and the lack of compassion for it is a method of encouraging correct reasoning for its own sake as well as placing the responsibility of it in the hands of the audience.

[80] In relation to the "honey is vomited bile metaphor" and the imaginative syllogism, Deborah Black writes the following: "From this audience-oriented perspective, the imaginative depiction embodied [...] is the minor, actuating premise of a practical syllogism [...]. The major premise becomes the practical maxim, or rather, the affective attitude commonly associated with the predicate of the metaphor – in this case, the loathsomeness of vomited bile. The conclusion in turn is the affective attitude transferred to the subject-term of the metaphor – here, the honey – by its subsumption under the imaginative force of the major premise. Thus, as is the case with practical syllogisms, the conclusion is not merely a proposition affirmed or denied, but an object sought or avoided." "The Imaginative Syllogism," 262.

Conclusion

The entrance of the "new" Aristotle in the Latin west in the thirteenth century upset the order of the dominant cultural and ideological structure through which the universe was perceived and explained. The concept of revealed knowledge – let alone the fundamental tenets of Christian theology – was undermined by the natural science of Aristotle in its basic attestation to the capacity of human beings to produce knowledge. Along with the translations of the texts on natural science came those of the commentaries on Rhetoric and Poetics, which having derived from the Islamic world that had already digested and incorporated the "new" Aristotle some three hundred years earlier, were acutely aware of the difference between certainty and belief in relation to the concept of knowledge. In addition, the Islamic philosophers were accordingly dextrous in using the instrument of knowledge, logic, as a means of discovery, refutation and education. Therefore their arrival in Europe, described by John Henry Bridges as "a barren land infested with metaphysical mirage" where scientists were "thirsting for reality",[1] in this case Roger Bacon, was of no small consequence.

Logic and experiment are the modes through which knowledge is acquired – in Bacon's own words, reasoning and experience. The concept of logic as inclusive of Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics – espoused by the Islamic philosophers – adds subtleties of thought to the toolbox of the scientist. Rhetoric and poetics refine the means of distinguishing between falsehood (sophistry) and persuasion by focussing on that which is particular to each object or situation. It is through a familiarity with these means, combined with their grounding in logic itself, that the scientist can debunk false

[1] Bridges, "Introduction," xxvii.

convictions and employ rhetoric and poetics himself to incur new convictions about new knowledge, especially to a non-specialized audience. Experiment, on the other hand, is the tool of certain knowledge. Demonstrable science re-enacted is proof positive of the truth of something. In this way experiment gives both verification of and testimony to the truth of "a fact". Ultimately, logic and experiment are means of incurring intellectual assent.

This intersection of logic, knowledge, and belief, accompanied by an alternate view of the universe, is found in the poetry of Guido Cavalcanti. Though "Donna me prega" is set off in the literary tradition as a lone ambassador of natural science and logic, with the investigations of Maria Luisa Ardizzone and Federica Anichini we can now say that it was never alone in that endeavour. Cavalcanti's minor poems are a venue for the exploration and advocacy of radical Aristotelian philosophy. His major canzone is a venue for expressing his conclusions.

Cavalcanti's approach to the new knowledge contained in the commentaries of Aristotle's Islamic commentators is crystallized at the end of the book on logic in De Scientiis where Gundisalvus, following al-Fārābī, "specifically contrasts those who know with certainty through demonstrative logic with those who merely hold opinions and beliefs".[2] In his minor poems, Cavalcanti fuses rhetorical argumentation with demonstration in order to prove his theory of knowledge, *coniunctio*, in so far as the activity of the mind is directly related to the harmonious reactions of the body being acted upon. However, in "Donna me prega" his conclusions are confined to what he can know with certainty – that which is dependant on matter and on the functioning of the

[2] Weber, Translating and Adapting, 212-213. For the citation from De Scientiis see Chapter Two, page 22 and footnote 78.

body and mind that one can sense. Consequently, for him, the goal for human beings is "diletto", pleasure, and not "consideranza", participation in the separate possible intellect. In concluding as he does, Cavalcanti recognizes in the Averroistic notion of transcendence itself those elements that pertain to certainty and those that pertain to belief.

With the inclusion of rhetoric and poetics as part of logic the new Aristotle brought the science of persuasion and subliminal instruction to another level, beyond that of classical rhetoric. The identification of emotion as a product of a rational process, a belief, that could be altered through speech led the Islamic philosophers to expound on the particulars of that process, and especially the ability of poetic representation to sway a reticent audience by bypassing the intellectual process of deliberation. In other words, poetic representation can pursue imaginative assent as well as intellectual assent. It is in these commentaries that Roger Bacon saw the utility of knowing how to construct and deconstruct beliefs and belief systems not only as a method of legitimizing scientific endeavours, but as a way of directing the actions of individuals and groups, hence his "Moralis philosophia" and his specific treatment of conversion. Though not the word Bacon would have used, the concept of "ideology" as an overarching framework for the perception of the universe and the unwillingness of people to change or alter their paradigm had been formally addressed by al-Fārābī, Avicenna and Averroes. This is precisely the aspect that Cavalcanti picks up on and employs in his minor poems through both reason and emotion.

Cavalcanti's pointed representation of opposition to his lover/poet, the disdain/lack of compassion for him, and thus to his radical Aristotelianism, provide the

premise for an appeal to emotion. Reasoning by means of demonstrative proof does not always engender a desire in the audience to draw the conclusion that rational calculation leads to. Therefore Cavalcanti attempts to make his audience more receptive to the ideas he puts forth, and to himself, by evoking the emotions of pity and fear – the emotions proper to the moral goal of poetry defined by Aristotle and Averroes. The repeated mention of the pain, disablement and nearness to death suffered by the lover/poet not only reiterates his theory of love/knowledge but also fills the role of misery and misfortune in tragedy. In dialogue with his readership Cavalcanti laments his case either through the metaphor of the lover/poet himself or through the personification of body parts, spirits and sighs, and writing instruments; he uses novelty together with misery to evoke compassion.

With regard to the poetry itself, the medium and protective casing for Cavalcanti's argument and appeals, Paul Ricoeur, I think, expresses Cavalcanti's historical position, what he was trying to achieve and what he was up against:

> Conversion of the *imaginary* is the central aim of poetics. With it, poetics stirs up the sedimented universe of conventional ideas which are the premises of rhetorical argumentation. At the same time, this same breakthrough of the imaginary shakes up the order of persuasion, from the moment it becomes less a matter of settling a controversy than of generating a new conviction.[3]

Though Cavalcanti may not have succeeded in creating a niche in the intellectual imaginary contemporary to him, his poetry is an architecturally sound structure containing his ideas that, eventually, came to be understood on their own terms.

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[3] Ricoeur, "Rhetoric-Poetics-Hermeneutics," 66.

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