The Psychophysical Theory of the Passions of the Soul in Aristotle and Aquinas: The Case of *Cárcel de amor**

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The wide-ranging field of the theories of the passions of the soul is a premodern quasi-equivalent of what today is the purview of, for instance, "emotional psychology" in social sciences and "affect theory" in critical literary and cultural studies. The study of emotions has undergone a series of ideological, terminological, and methodological modifications since Classical Antiquity, the period that has arguably influenced reflections on this area of human psychosomatic and cognitive behaviour to the present. A radical change in the conceptualization of emotions takes place as of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century. During that period, "passion" – a term originating in Greek "pathe" and rendered in Latin as "passio," which in turn is associated with the notion of "passivity" and its linguistic derivatives ("patient," "passive," "patience") – became "activated" (Auerbach; Luhmann 61). Consequently, coinciding roughly with the rise of Romanticism, the notion of "passion" was recast from an experience that had been conceptualized as subjecting an impassioned individual to a state of involuntary captivity to an experience that propels an emotional subject to activity. This conversion in the conceptualization of affective states from passivity to activity was accompanied in the nineteenth century by a related lexical change in several Western European languages, so that the premodern concept of "passion" was replaced by the modern concept of "emotion."[1]

But before this modern, Romantic re-evaluation of emotions would take place, Aristotle's formulation of the faculty psychology, his discussion of different passions, and his reflection on the role of passions in political and moral life instigated an influential current in a richly diverse field of theories of the passions in premodern Western culture.[2] In the following pages I will briefly present the place of passions within the wider framework of Aristotle's metaphysical and political-ethical theory, the influence of Aristotle's notion of passions in medieval Europe as of the thirteenth century as seen in St. Thomas Aquinas's theories of passions, and the subsequent weight of Aquinas's own study of the passions in literary representations. The influence of Aristotle's biological theorizing about the reproductive faculty of the vegetative (or nutritive) soul, tied up in medieval literature with the experience of desire and (or) love, has received ample attention in medieval literary scholarship. For that reason, I will attend to the field of studies in medieval

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[1] See Fitzgerald (2-5) for a discussion on the terminology of affects (*pathe*, *passio*, *emotion*) (2-5); Dixon on the eighteenth and nineteenth-century secularization of psychology that was accompanied by a transition from the language of passions to that of emotions (4-5), and Štrbáková's study of the entrance of the term "emotion" into several Romance languages, including Castilian.

[2] Scholars have widely acknowledged the importance of Aristotle's treatise on the soul and of his ethics in medieval culture, but the same has not been the case with recognizing the role of his *Rhetoric*. In a pioneering study of medieval rhetoric, James Murphy suggested that Aristotle's *Rhetoric* had insignificant presence in the language art studies at medieval universities but, considering the number of surviving manuscripts, appeared to have widely circulated as a supplement to the studies of ethics and political science. Subsequent studies have found that, by the year 1300, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* was integral to medieval intellectual life and that Giles of Rome, the first commentator of the Latin translation of the text, and Aristotle's *Rhetoric* became central in "reviv[ing] the study of rhetoric in the arts curriculum of the universities and in the theological studies of both the universities and the schools of the mendicants" (Briggs 247).

literature that has not received as much attention in the past: the notion of passions, presented in the hylomorphic framework of Peripatetic-Scholastic philosophy as a set of cognitive and psychosomatic events that take place at the meeting point of the sensitive soul and the body and that are in medieval and early modern literature often represented as resulting in characters' states of physical passivity.

Among the many methodological issues that hinder an effort to establish the notion of passions in medieval and early modern period, of particular importance is the fact that any single reading of either of the two philosophers' works is filtered by interpretations that may stand in the way of appreciating the philosophers' own positions. This filtering may also stand in the way of any one's interpretation of how, for example, Aquinas understood his eminent predecessor (Elders 29-30; Pasnau 1999, xiii-xxi). Philosophers - including historians of philosophy - continue to qualify the precise implications of specific passages in either Aristotle's or Aquinas's writings, the precise extent of similarities or differences between Aristotle's and Aquinas's theories, and the precise extent of Aristotle's influence on Aquinas.[3] In studies of medieval intellectual culture, the difficulties in accessing the ideas of different authorities are further compounded by problems in the quality of translation and of textual diffusion.[4] Moreover, if we try to grasp the precise weight that these authorities may have had in society by reconstructing their influence from literary texts, we are additionally dealing with the complexity of sorting out the different sources that vie for influence on the pages of a literary text, as well as with the fact that literary authors need not be committed to reproducing correctly the philosophical-theological positions they reference.[5] Considering these difficulties, and in order to circumvent as much as possible the interpretative controversy regarding specific passages in Aristotle or Aquinas, this exposition of their psychological systems will aim to avoid the highly specific aspects of their respective theories while aspiring to offer a sufficiently precise explanation of their contributions to the comprehension of human emotions in late medieval culture and of their repercussions in late medieval Iberian literature.

As of the early twelfth century, the leading medieval translation centres in Sicily, Constantinople, and Toledo experienced vibrant activity in the translation of philosophical texts from Arabic and Greek. Thanks to the work of translators in those centres, Latin renditions of Aristotle's writings and of the writings of his commentators – Averroes in particular – transformed the content and the direction of theological and philosophical debates in high medieval culture.[6] Whereas the new, twelfth-century translations of Aristotle's logic and ethics complemented the existing curriculum taught at medieval universities, the influx of his natural philosophy and

[3] See, for example, Owens's overview of the similarities and differences between Aristotle's and Aquinas's philosophies within their respective historical and cultural contexts.
[4] For the transmission of primarily Aristotle's, as well as Aquinas's associated works (such as his Aristotelian commentaries, for instance) in medieval Iberia, see Díez Yáñez, Escobár, Martínez Casado and Morrás. For the European-wide diffusion of Aquinas's writings, see Hillgarth, and for the presence of his writings in Dominican convent libraries, including on the Iberian Peninsula, see Vose (especially 94-130).
[5] See Cuenca's introduction to his edition of *Compendio*, in which he observes conceptual and transcript errors with respect to Aristotle's text (xiv-xlviii).
[6] For the dates and titles of translations of Greek philosophical works, realized between the first and fourteenth centuries, see Trizio et al., "Appendix B - Medieval translations." See Santoya's overview of the different cultural spheres in which translation took place in medieval Iberia; Santoya's article is but a sample of the thriving scholarship on translation activities in Iberia since the Middle Ages.

metaphysics – whether through his own writings or through those of his Arabic commentators – had triggered an intellectual revolution that Fernand von Steenberghen described with the terms "radical" or "heterodox Aristotelianism" and "Latin Averroism." As one of the outstanding and representative figures of scholasticism, Thomas Aquinas had a leading role both in opposing these intellectual currents that – inspired by Aristotle's writings – threatened the postulates of Christian faith and in adapting Aristotle's system of thought to the foundations of Christian theology.[7] Within that wider context of Aquinas's historical stature and more directly relevant to the present context, Aquinas is important because he developed the most systematic study of passions in the Western world up to his time (Lagerlund 164). While he drew on the enormous and varied pre-existing philosophical and theological tradition of the theories of the passions, Aristotle's notion of hylomorphism, his faculty psychology, and his concepts of action and passion, whether through the translation of his own writings or those of his great Arabic commentators, had a determining influence on the Angelical Doctor's own psychological theory

1. Passions in Aristotle

If Aristotle did write a separate psychological study of passions, it has not been preserved. For that reason, his concept of passions can only be reconstructed from his extant writings. Some of the fundamental elements that inform his notion of passions, and that are particularly relevant to his medieval acceptance as reflected in literature, are: (i) the concept of the soul presented in his study of biological psychology (*On the Soul; DA*); (ii) the categories of action and passion (discussed in *Generation and Corruption; Gen Corr*); (iii) the use of passion-arousing strategies in oratory (*Rhetoric; R*); and (iv) the relationship of passions to virtuous life (*Nicomachean Ethics; NE*).

[7] For the dynamic relationship between Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology in medieval intellectual history and for the reception of Aristotle from medieval through the early modern period, see Van Steenberghen (1955, 1980) and Pasnau (2012). The status of Aristotle's philosophy in the Middle Ages progressed from being prohibited at the University of Paris (1210) to eventually becoming a fundamental system of thought in Christian theology. The latter happened in no small measure owing to Thomas Aquinas's integration of the elements of Aristotle's philosophy into his own systematization of Christian theology. Even so, medieval scholasticism was not a unified system of thought, and Aquinas's authority did not go unchallenged during and after his lifetime. Commenting on the skewed panorama of medieval philosophy that we get by disproportionate scholarly focus on the three great figures (Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham), Spade notes:

> Religious orders tend to keep good records, including the writings of their members, so that historians of medieval philosophy typically have more material to work with for authors in the various orders than they do for "secular" figures like Buridan. Besides, other things being equal, orders understandably prefer to "champion their own" in academic as in other matters... In this way, Aquinas soon became the semi-"official" philosopher and theologian of the Dominicans, a status that was enhanced in 1879 in Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, which called Aquinas "the chief and master of all the scholastic doctors," and urged that preference be given to Thomistic doctrine in Catholic schools.... As a result, Aquinas enjoyed far greater authority in the late nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century than perhaps he ever did in the Middle Ages.

Spade's cautioning against oversimplifying the dynamics of thirteenth-century intellectual life is not to be taken as diminishing Aquinas's importance. As Steenberghen's study of intellectual upheavals caused by the entry of Aristotle's philosophy into the West demonstrates, Aquinas was the central figure in opposing "radical Aristotelianism" and "Latin Averroism." In 1323, Aquinas was canonized, and in 1567, Pius V proclaimed him the Doctor of the Church.

Aristotle substituted Platonic dualism, which had advanced the concept of man[8] as constituted by body and soul as two separate entities, with a hylomorphic theory of all being.[9] Hylomorphism refers to Aristotle's concept of being according to which everything that is, is a unity of matter (*hylê*) and form (*morphê*). Applied to living organisms – plant, animal, or human – hylomorphism means that every living thing is an indivisible compound of body (matter) and soul (form) ("the soul plus the body constitutes the animal" *DA* II, 1, 413a 2-3). Aristotle defines the soul as the life-giving principle of all living organisms (e.g., "what has soul in it differs from what has not in that the former displays life," *DA* II, 2, 413a22-23) and as "an actuality of the first kind of a natural body having life potentially in it" (*DA* II, 1, 412a27-8). This means that the soul actualizes – gives life – to the body that is potentially alive, as well as it determines its nature, that is, it determines the kind of a living organism that it is (Brentano 32). Aristotle identifies three kinds of soul that differentiate as many classes of living organisms. Each soul is characterized by faculties ("powers" or "capacities') that perform a set of specialized functions appropriate to the kind of life that they support. The souls are ranked according to their faculties from the most basic to the most advanced as vegetative, sensitive, and intellectual soul, so that every higher level of animate being includes all the lower levels of the souls with their faculties. The soul's vegetative (or nutritive) faculty, responsible for growth, nutrition, reproduction, maturation, and decline of the organism, is found in all forms of life (plants, animals, humans). The higher faculty of sensation (or perception) is made possible through the five senses whose purpose is to enable animals, a higher form of life than plant, and humans to interact with their environment. Finally, the highest, intellectual faculty or reason (*nous*, mind), is found only in humans as the highest form of life. Aristotle defines the mind as that "part of the soul with which the soul knows" (*DA* III, 4, 429a 10), and, in the opening line of *Metaphysics*, he defines human nature by "desire to know" (I, 1, 980a22). As an exception to his hylomorphic theory, Aristotle claims that intellective faculty is impassible and independent of the body (*DA* III, 4, 429a24-28). As an immaterial instrument of reason, intellect is not subject to movements that change matter.

In the third book of *De anima*, Aristotle discusses two additional capacities of the soul: imagination (*phantasia*) and appetite (*orektikon*). Imaginative and appetitive powers are not distinct souls because they do not characterize different forms of life; rather, imaginative, and appetitive, powers can be identified in higher organisms pertaining to different forms of life (Brentano 40). Imagination (*phantasia*), Aristotle maintains, exists in humans and in most higher animals, and it furnishes thoughts, dreams, and memories with sensual content (Knuuttila 44). The last, appetitive capacity of the soul (*orektikon*) is the seat of the power that is in general terms labeled appetite (*orexis*). This power is responsible for guiding an animal's motion with respect to objects or events of either desire or its opposite, aversion.[10] Aristotle identifies three kinds of appetites, which have been organized in two subcategories: irrational and rational. One kind of irrational appetite (*epithumetikon*) includes desire (*epithumia*) for food, drink, and sex, the desires which are commonly characterized by pleasure. Another kind of irrational appetite, more difficult to conceptualize in simple terms, has been translated as spirited capacity (*thumikon*) that manifests as impulsivity and anger (*thumos*). The rational appetite (*logistikon*) is the seat of rational wish or

[8] Considering Aristotle's views on gender, I will tend to reference male gender in my use of nouns and pronouns.
[9] For a more detailed analysis of Aristotle's hylomorphism, see Corcilius (2015) and Shields.
[10] See Corcilius (2011) for a study of non-rational pleasure and pain and desire in Aristotle.

volition (*boulêsis*), which manifests as "a dynamic attitude to those goals which make people deliberate about how to achieve them" (Knuuttila 29).[11]

Aristotle presents his most extensive discussion of passions and appetites in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and in the *Rhetoric*. He argues that passions as a subject matter of ethical inquiry because they influence human behaviour and deeds, which are the objects of moral evaluation. Aristotle lists appetite and ten passions – anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hatred, longing, emulation, and pity – and acknowledges the existence of other comparable psychic experiences (*NE* 2, 5-19, 1105b20), some of which he lists in the *Rhetoric*. Passions are central to Aristotle's analysis of rhetoric because, he claims, orators must understand the human soul to be able to arouse or calm passions in their listeners for the purpose of altering their judgments and motivating them to carry out actions that are conducive to the good of men and of the state (*NE* 1, 2).

Aristotle establishes in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that, in order to define the goods that constitute happiness (*eudaimonia*) as the highest end of man, he must first identify the function (*ergon*) of the human being. The function of any form of life is established by identifying the particular nature that sets it apart from other organisms. Considering that man is the only animal that possess the rational soul, Aristotle argues that the function of man is an active life of reason in accordance with virtue (*NE* 1097b22-1098a20; Kraut 4-6). Aristotle divides virtues into intellectual (consist of philosophical wisdom, understanding, and practical wisdom) and moral (liberality and temperance, for instance) (*NE* 1, 13, 1103a4-10). How to succeed in a virtuous management of passions, that is, achieve temperance, argues Aristotle, is the subject of moral investigation.

In keeping with his hylomorphism, Aristotle defines passions as psychophysical affects that are associated with physiological manifestations and accompanied by sensations of pleasure and pain (Trueba Atienza 152). They are caused by imagination (*phantasia*), which is either rational (proper to men alone) or sensitive (found in other animals as well). Aristotle assigns different passions to different parts of the soul. In *Topics*, he situates the experience of love in the spirited faculty (*thumos*) because, he reasons, the emotion that is opposed to love – hatred – and that accompanies anger, arises in this part of the soul (2.7 113a35-b3). The experience of shame is assigned to the reasoning part of the soul (*logistikon*), fear and anger to the spirited part (*thumos*), and distress and pleasure to the appetitive part (*epythumia*) (*Topics* 4.5, 126a8-10) (Knuuttila 27-8). Aristotle's understanding of sexual desire (an *epithumia*) as a natural impulse for procreation that resides in the vegetative soul has afforded many of his medieval readers with material for much amusement. The greatest example in medieval Spanish literature is Juan Ruíz, who in *Libro de buen amor* combined the meanings attributed to sexual desire with those that had been attributed to the passion of love, to illustrate the pleasurable and disruptive force of sexual desire.[12]

Regarding their role in the functioning of the soul, Aristotle proposes that passions (*pathe*, "affections" or "modifications") are among the three "things" in the soul. The other two are

[11] This, necessarily simplified, summary of the concept of appetite and its different manifestations is based on Pearson's study. Pearson's systematization of Aristotle's terminology and its various translations is particularly helpful (4-8). I am striving to follow as much as possible a consistent use of translated terms, and, to further facilitate the reading of the remaining variations, I accompany the translated terms by their Greek equivalents.

[12] Among the early studies on the topic, see, for instance, Cátedra's fundamental study of the influence of philosophical naturalism on late medieval literature. See also Rico's reading of the verse "por aver mantenençia" in *Libro de buen amor* in light of Aristotelian concept of vegetative soul and Heusch's take on the same within the historical context of heterodox Aristotelianism. Among a vast bibliography on *philia* (love/friendship), see Cuenca Almenar's study of terms for *philia* in fifteenth century Castilian translations of *Ética a Nicómaco*.

faculties (*dunamis*, "capacities"), and states (*hexis*, "dispositions") (*NE* 2, 5-19). Whereas faculties are the capacities which enable a human being to experience passions, states (dispositions) indicate whether "we stand well or badly with reference to passions" (*NE* 2, 5, 1105b19-1106a19). Within the framework of ethical theory, Aristotle determines that persons are praised or blamed, respectively, for their virtues or vices, which are dispositions (*hexis*, states), but not for their passions, which are movements of the soul. To the extent that they originate within the person, either by habituation (*di'ethos*) or by appetite (*di'orexin*), and to the extent that they are accompanied by pleasure, especially as regarding the appetites (*epithumia*) (*NE* 3, 1, 1111a22-1111b3), Aristotle considers that passions can be guided by reason, because they can be subject to deliberation and subsequent choice.[13] Whereas one may have no choice in being subjected to a sudden yet voluntary onset of a passion, virtuous agents are habituated through moral education to such a characterological disposition that allows them to experience the right kind of passion, directed at the right target, in the appropriate degree of intensity. Following deliberation, a well-disposed man will be able to channel his tempered passion into an appropriate judgment about a situation, leading to a correct course of action, directed toward a morally approved goal, that is accompanied by a feeling of pleasure. According to this theory of passions and of their role in moral life, virtue (*arete*) or moral excellence "... is that sort of moral active disposition (*hexis*) which sets a person to act or react in a mean, in situations involving choice (*prohairesis*), following reason (*logos*) as the person of practical wisdom (*phronimos*) does, in matters concerning *pathe* and actions" (Oksenbert Rorty 535). There are two groups of persons that are afflicted by disorders on account of which they fall short of Aristotelian ideal of virtuous life: the akratic (incontinent), who act on passionate impulses against reason, and the enkratic (continent) persons, who follow the mandates of reason even though their passions battle the rational choice (Kraut 13). The akratic and the enkratic persons are thus ruled, to a greater or lesser extent, by passions which distance them from the active, reasoned life in accordance with virtue.[14]

The meanings attributable to the category of psychic experiences designated by the term *pathe* can largely be derived from the meanings attributed to the corresponding metaphysical categories of being – passion and action. "Action" and "passion" explain the qualitative change that occurs in a person when a subject (agent) affects an object (patient) and produces in the patient a motion or a change (*Gen Corr* 1, 7). When, therefore, this kind of motion (*kineseis*) or change originates outside of the affected object, and when it affects the patient so as to change him in a way that does not conduce to his natural principle or end - that moral end that, in the case of man, is an active life of reason in agreement with virtue - it is a *passion*. In contrast to the meaning of "action" (*energeia*; also stands for "actuality") as "doing" or "affecting," "passion" (*pathe*) means "being done to," "undergoing," "enduring" or "suffering" (in Spanish, "sufrir," "padecer"). Other implications of passion are "misfortunes, or harmful experiences such as attacks of illness or disease" (Oksenberg Rorty 523). Oksenberg Rorty calls attention to the following set of definitions of *pathe* in *Metaphysics*:

[13] Kosman believes that for Aristotle "[f]eelings are deliberate and chosen" (113); Trueba Atienza argues that one must distinguish between an involuntary event of being affected by a passion, and a voluntary action following the passion (166). In Book 3 (1, 1111a 22 - 5, 1115a5) of *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle discusses the difference between the voluntary, the involuntary, and the choice.

[14] Aristotle also allows for the existence of men who are disinterested in the pursuit of a virtuous life; he calls them evil (*kakos*, *phaulos*) (Kraut, 13).

> We call an affection (1) a quality in respect of which a thing can be altered, e.g. white and black, sweet and bitter, heaviness and lightness, and all others of the kind. — (2) The already actualized alterations — (3) Especially, injurious alterations and movements, and, above all painful injuries. — (4) Experiences pleasant or painful when on a large scale are called affections (V, 21, 1022b15-20).

Although Aristotle explicitly states in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that passions are morally neutral, the meanings attributed to the notion of "passion" in the *Metaphysics* and the ideal of life guided by reason that is supposed to reign in the passions cast a shadow on passion's value-neutral status. For, the very nature of passions is such that, if under their influence, men fail to use their reason for the sake of deliberation leading to proper judgments about situations they face. If they thus relinquish their reason, they also surrender their agency, and thus have no claim to virtue.

1. Passions in Thomas Aquinas

These principles of Aristotelian psychology within the framework of ethical theory have had a bearing on Aristotle's Arab, Jewish, and Latin readers. Aquinas, as the greatest representative of thirteenth-century Scholasticism and one of Aristotle's greatest commentators, adapted the framework of the Aristotelian philosophical system, nuanced with neo-Platonic overtones, to Christian theological principles.[15] Aquinas accepted a number of postulates about the nature of the soul, virtue, and the place of the passions as they figure in Aristotle's psychological and ethical writings. As he systematizes and orders, aided by Avicenna's and Averroes's previous work, the principles of Aristotle's psychology scattered throughout his opus, he assigns equivalent life-functions to the equivalent faculties of the soul as the Philosopher did. Like Aristotle, Aquinas defines the soul as the first principle of life and classifies its capacities in the three faculties - *anima vegetativa*, *sensitiva*, and *rationalis*. The sensitive soul, a middle ground between man's material or corporeal and his immaterial or spiritual nature, mediates between the external physical world and man's interior nature. According to this theory, the sensitive soul receives stimuli either directly through an external source of knowledge (one of the five external senses) or indirectly through an internal source of knowledge – imagination or its creative counterpart, fantasy (Harvey 55). The sensible stimulus is passed onto the internal sense called the cogitative power. This power processes the received stimulus and evaluates it as either attractive or repellent. As a result of that evaluation, a corresponding passion takes place in the appetitive power of the sensitive soul.

The role of Aristotelian categories of passivity and activity in the event of undergoing passions and the moral implications of the right management of passions figure centrally in Aquinas's study of human psychology, considered in a wider context of his study of morality. The connotations of the term "passion" entered Thomistic psychology implying, as in the Classical tradition, a metaphysical "passivity" of this psychosomatic experience. Aquinas distinguishes three meanings of the term "passion." Most properly, the passivity of the passions is evident for

[15] For an account of the transmission of the theories of the soul from Classical Antiquity via Avicenna's and Averroes's interpretations and up to Thomas Aquinas, see Harvey and Serés (15-66). Most useful is Serés' reproduction of a map that helps visualize the soul's complex configuration of the different faculties (73). But, see also Jordan, who asks for a re-evaluation of the term "Aristotelianism" as applied to Aquinas's adaptation of his philosophy to Christian doctrine and Stump's study of differences between Aristotle's and Aquinas's interpretations of the passions with regard to ethics.

Aquinas in the interplay between the subject experiencing the passion and the agent-cause of the passion: "For a thing is said to be passive from its being drawn to the agent: and when a thing recedes from what is suitable to it, then especially does it appear to be drawn to something else" (*ST* I-II, q. 22, 1). The passive movement – passive, because caused by an agent external to the soul experiencing the movement – as an indicator of the soul's unsettling under the influence of a passion can be contrasted with the activity of the intellective soul:

> Knowing is the assimilation of the known in the knowing subject. One can also put it this way: the goal of knowledge is taking the known object into the soul *secundum modum animae*. In contradistinction to the cognitive operations of rational faculty of the soul, the appetitive, passive powers draw the soul out of itself toward an object" (Uffenheimer-Lippens 538).

The movement of the soul amounts to a change that the impassioned object undergoes while exposed to external influence. According to Aquinas, when "this transmutation is for the worse, it has more of the nature of a passion, than when it is for the better: hence sorrow is more properly a passion than joy" (ST I-II, Q 22, Art. 1). Considering these implications of Aquinas' definition of the passivity of the passions, Uffenheimer-Lippens argues convincingly that "passion," for Aquinas,

> in its most proper meaning... entails suffering. Passion can imply that the natural disposition of an individual substance is harmed, but even more than that: it can cause an individual substance to be impeded from fulfilling its natural inclination and reaching its natural end. (534-35)

A failure to gain control over one's passions is thus a moral problem that distances the man from the proper goal of life. In the Christian context, according to Aquinas this goal is the achievement of happiness in *visio Dei*.

Aquinas addresses the problem of moral responsibility with respect to the management of passions by admitting passions and sexuality as natural. However, like Aristotle, he stipulates that the lower, sensitive soul (which man has in common with other animals) should respond to the dictates of the higher, rational soul that, in the realm of creation, characterizes human nature alone. Thus, to the extent to which a man is a spiritual being with a soul, argues Aquinas, the cogitative power or the particular reason and the appetitive powers of his sensitive soul are subjected, respectively, to the guidance of universal reason and rational appetite (the will), both powers of the rational soul. While ideally the sensitive appetite should obey the lead of the rational appetite or will, insofar as a man is also a material substance, his passions can disobey the direction of the higher, rational soul. The disobedience of the passions is owed to the original sin, the cause of sensuality – a concept of Christian coinage that stands for one's surrender to the pleasures of the material, sensible world (Payer 51). While human beings, therefore, have a choice of following either their sensual passions or their rational will, if they succumb to the unrestrained passions, they are forfeiting their capacity to use free will – a concept unknown to Aristotle – and are morally responsible for that decision.

2. Psychophysiology of Passions, Rational Agency, and Unvirtuous Life in *Cárcel de amor*

The precise extent to which both Aristotle and Aquinas may have consistently defined passions as passive and, consequently, as indicators of moral weakness may be of secondary importance in the present context; there are surely diverging opinions on that as on any other issue in their writings. However, I do emphasize such a reading of the theories of the passions because such a view of the passions had supplied medieval and early modern readers with engaging material for literary representation. In *Compendia de la ética nicomaquea*, we thus read:

> ... el seynal de la operación ser viciosa o virtuosa son la delectación e la tristeza con que se obran. El que es abstinente e se parte de las delectaciones corporales e se goza averse partido, aqueste dezimos temperado. E, por el contrario, el que se intristeçe, intemperado. (48; [segundo libro capítulo segundo])

As Aquinas taught, those passions that are characterized by sadness are more so passions than the ones that result in joy. Hence, when characters experiencing passions show sorrow and pain, this experience is as a sign of the vice of intemperance resulting from disorderly passions. Happiness, or emotional tranquility, indicates that a man is fulfilling his function of a life of active reason in accordance with virtue, a purpose which in the Christian context is realized in *visio Dei*. We can take a look at Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor*, a veritable treasure-trove of references to the reigning notions about passions in late medieval or early Castilian humanism, and compare some of the events in the text with the fifteenth-century fusion of Aristotelianism and Thomism in *Compendio de la ética nicomaquea*. The representation of emotions in San Pedro's sentimental romance reveals the influence of the Peripatetic-Scholastic notion of hylomorphism in the description of psychophysical manifestations of passions, whereas the characters' contriving deliberations leading to a poor choice of action calls attention to the interference of passions with the work of reason, and consequently with the fulfilment of their *ergon*.

Following Aquinas's proposition, after St. Augustine, that love is the cause of all other passions,[16] Leriano's amorous courting of Laureola unchains a series of passions and disastrous events. These events call for different characters, beset by passions, to resolve conflicting situations in which they find themselves.[17] For example, confronted with Leriano's indiscrete courtship, Laureola is tormented by powerful emotions while navigating between the political, honour, and courtly love codes. While trying to persuade Laureola to correspond with Leriano, El Auctor interprets psychosomatic manifestations of her passions in an attempt to identify her feelings: "bolvíase súpito colorada y después amarilla" (17). As Leriano's go-between, El Auctor sees what he wants to see, that Laureola is in love. But – as he acknowledges ("segúnd lo que después mostró, ella recibía estas alteraciones más de piedad que de amor" 17) – his original interpretation was incorrect. As a matter of fact, even his reappraisal is incorrect. Aristotle advises: "Shame... is defined, at any rate, as a kind of fear of disrepute and produces an effect similar to that produced by fear of danger; for people who feel disgraced blush, and those who fear death turn pale" (*NE* 4, 9, 1128b10-14). The *Compendio* claims the same: "E dize que los que temen perder la vida se paran amarillos e los que han vergüença se paran colorados..." (94 [libro cuarto,

[16] "There is no other passion of the soul that does not presuppose love of some kind." (ST I-II, Q. 27, Art. 4); and "Augustine says, [is this comma in the original?] (*De Civ. Dei* xiv, 7, 9) that all emotions are caused by love." (I-II, Q. 29, Art. 2).
[17] For more detail, see Munjic (2012, 2014).

capítulo nono]).[18] Facing the danger of dishonour, Laureola is alternating between blushing and paling because of a double fear: fear of disrepute because of her impending dishonour, manifesting as shame, and another fear, manifesting in paling, the fear of the danger of a death sentence, the punishment stipulated in the Kingdom of Macedonia for the transgression of dishonouring the King.

Other episodes in *Cárcel de amor* provide parodic illustrations of the Peripatetic-Scholastic proposition that passions be met with deliberations that produce a balanced judgment and a correct choice of action as indicators of an active life of reason in accordance with virtue. In the opening lines of the text, San Pedro presents in his own voice the vexing reasoning that, after an erroneous judgment, resulted in the composition of the very text held in the reader's hands:

> Aunque me falta sofrimiento para callar, no me fallesce conoscimiento para ver quánto me estaría mejor preciarme de lo que callase que arepentirme de lo que dixiese; y puesto que assí lo conozca, aunque veo la verdad, sigo la opinión; y como hago lo peor, nunca quedo sin castigo, porque si con rudeza yerro, con vergüença pago. (3)

The (historical) author's use of "sofrimiento" instead of "paciencia" (< Lat. *patientia* - endurance, endurance of pain) emphasizes the displeasure that accompanies a preferred course of action – remaining silent. In an allusion to Aristotle's distinction between truth (knowledge) and belief (opinion), the author confesses having chosen belief over truth ("aunque veo la verdad, sigo la opinión"). Compare with the following:

> Ddize Aristótil que cinco son los hábitos intellectuales cerca de los quales el ánima siempre entiende la verdad, sin ser decebida [engañada] de la falsía. E aquestas son // [f. 61v.] el arte, la sciencia, la prudencia, sabieza, el entendimiento. Hay otros dos hábitos çerca de los cuales contece el ánima muchas vezes ser decebida [engañada] o las más. E aquestos dos son opinión e sospecha, car aquestos dos hábitos muchas veces deciben [engañan] los simples. (*Compendio* 116 [Capítulo segundo, libro sesto])

In declaring his choice of "opinión" over "verdad," the author is confessing imprudence, which consists not only of his faulty deliberative procedure, but of its outcome as well. As an example of an akratic (incontinent) person, he decides against his knowledge to follow his desire to write a text about amorous passion.[19] Because the outcome of that decision – the text itself – is a mistake, he already regrets what is said in it ("si con rudeza yerro, con vergüença pago"). In a blurring of the lines between fiction and reality, in his later life, San Pedro will retract in *Desprecio de la fortuna* from what he wrote in his earlier best-seller.

This passage illustrates the parodic strategies that San Pedro uses in the rest of the text, which consists of different dilemmas that require solutions to complex political, legal, and ethical

[18] Compare with Aquinas: "Hence it is that 'those who are in fear of death turn pale' (*Ethic*. iv, 9). But the evil that shame fears, is contrary, not to nature, but only to the appetite of the soul... those who are ashamed blush" (*ST* I-II, Q. 44, Art. 1, Rep. Obj. 3)

[19] "el incontinente presume que no las [concupiscencias] deva seguir e síguelas movido por la passion. E dize [Aristótiles] que aquellos que dezían que el incontinente no tiene sciencia sino opinión de las cosas malas no dizen bien, car en el obrar no diferencen la opinión e la sciencia, porque muchos de los oppinantes no dubdan más de la opinión que de la sciencia" (*Compendio* 139 [libro séptimo, capítulo tercero]). San Pedro does not seem to follow this view to the letter. He does not claim that his "opinion" is correct; instead, he confesses to following an opinion although he knows better.

situations that embroil the characters. Leriano is the most incontinent (*akratic*) character. Explaining to the El Auctor why he is in the prison of love, he reasons that "los primeros movimientos no se pued(e)n en los honbres escusar..." (9). This statement is directly informed by Stoic theory according to which a man can bring his passions under control at the sign of their first stirring in the soul (Knuuttila, 64). However, Leriano's negation of the Stoics' position on passions might point to his own version of the Peripatetic theory, according to which passions are natural and even ethically necessary occurrences. Or, he could be betraying his ignorance of the Stoic ideal of *apatheia*, according to which passions ought to be purged at the sign of the first movements in the soul. In either case, he is revealing ignorance of what constitutes virtue as a "theoretical" basis of his own incontinence (*akrasia*), amply illustrated by his excessive behaviour. El Auctor, on the other hand, attempts to deliberate and make informed choices, but his reasoning is flawed, and he usually chooses the worst course of action available. While failing to manage their passions, relying on flawed reasoning, and making poor decisions to pursue morally objectionable goals, neither character realizes the *ergon* of the active life of reason in accordance with virtue.

Conclusion

Peripatetic-Scholastic theories of the passions of the soul admit affective experience as a necessary component of a complete life. Yet, unless submitted to the control of reason, "passions" carried negative connotations of "passivity" and "suffering," which in turn were the signs of reason's defeat. The host of suffering, prostrate, incarcerated, and chained lovers of medieval and early modern literature illustrates this effect of *pathe*, as the beloved agents of passion inflict the harm of passionate love upon willing lovers who consequently endure a series of psychophysical alterations that take them away from the proper end of a virtuous life. But there are numerous examples of other passions in medieval and early modern literature that display the influence of Aristotle's and Aquinas's psychological and ethical theories. Texts like *Cárcel de amor* offer nearly inexhaustible opportunities to read late medieval or early humanist literature against the rich background of its literary, philosophical, medical, and theological sources. They also provide a fascinating contrast to representations of human subjectivity in modernity, which, even within the moralizing constraints of (post)Victorian sensibilities, frees the passions of their passivity. This activation is to be understood primarily as resulting from a loss of metaphysical meanings implied in the concepts of action and passion, form and matter, and potentiality and actuality that had informed the discussion of affects in premodernity. Unlike the premodern virtuous subject who lives in freedom when submitting his affects to the control of reason, the passionate (post)Romantic subject is free precisely because he follows his unrestrained desire. In an iconic poem of Spanish Romanticism, José de Espronceda celebrates piracy as a symbol of freedom at open sea, away from the constraints of regulated society and its blind urgencies:

Allá muevan feroz guerra
ciegos reyes
por un palmo más de tierra;
que yo aquí tengo por mío
cuanto abarca el mar bravío,
a quien nadie impuso leyes.

Within that spirit of sovereignty and longing for beauty - “Sólo quiero / por riqueza / la belleza / sin rival” – in the unbridled passions attending his flight – “y mi furia es de temer” – reigns supreme a new, modern sign of freedom.

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