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FRANCESCO DA BARBERINO

THE EXPERIENCE OF EXILE AND THE ALLEGORY OF LOVE

The interconnection between exile and literature is the starting point of my remarks¹. The experience of exile sometimes opens, so to speak, a sort of escape in writing or in a different form of writing. The most famous example is of course Dante (1265-1321), who begins to reflect theoretically on language and later conceived the *Commedia* while in exile from Florence. Another important example, also from Florence, is Brunetto Latini (c. 1220-1294), who compiles his great encyclopedic work, *Li livres dou tresor*, as well as the *Tesoretto* during his years of exile in France from 1260 to 1266². His aim is to convey the experiences and the new knowledge he gained during his exile to the citizens of his home-town. In some ways this is an educational program to improve the political situation, and of course it is also an attempt to stay in touch – intellectually at least – with his homeland. The experience of exile is present in his work in many forms, very explicit in the second book of the *Tresor*, where the allegory of Security answers the Allegory of fear: «My homeland is not forbidden to me, only the place, because everything that is under the sun is my homeland; there I will find cities, I will find the sea, I will find ports. All lands are home to the wise man, just as the sea to the fish. Wherever I go I will already be in my land, because I am exiled from no land, only from foreign places, for well being belongs to man, not to the place»³. He makes an intelligent and

1. I would like to thank Katharina Boehm for correcting my English version of this text; nevertheless the remaining mistakes are my own.

2. C. J. Campbell, *The Commonwealth of Nature, Art and Poetic Community in the Age of Dante*, Pennsylvania 2008, 21 sgg; B. Ceva, *Brunetto Latini: L'uomo e l'opera*, Milano 1965; J. Bolton Holloway, *Twice-Told Tales: Brunetto Latini and Dante Alighieri*, New York 1993.

3. Translation quoted after Campbell, *The Commonwealth*, 25 n. 2.

also defiant distinction between land and place, between *pais* and *lieu*, but nevertheless we can also hear echoes of melancholy and nostalgia. For Brunetto Latini, writing is one means of finding his way back to his homeland, even while he remained in exile.

Another case in point is Francesco da Barberino, also a Florentine poet and writer. Francesco da Barberino was born in 1264, he was a jurist and notary as was common for members of the intellectual elite in the Italian city-states. From 1290 to 1296 he studied in Bologna and in 1297-1304 he was a notary of the bishop in Florence. After the fall of the black Guelfs under Corso Donati he had to leave Florence, although he was probably never officially condemned and banned⁴. For four years (until 1308) he stayed in Padova, than he was in Treviso, where he met Corso Donati, who worked there as Podestà. In 1309 he traveled with a Venetian delegation to Avignon. He remained there at the Curia of Clemens V and traveled in France and northern Spain until 1313. In May 1313, he was called by the emperor Henry VII to come to Pisa together with other members of the Ghibelline party. The death of the emperor in the same year changed the political situation and Francesco could return to Florence, where he worked again as notary and as judge until he died in his old age during the Black Death in 1348.

Francesco responded to the experience of his exile, which lasted ten years from 1304 until 1315, by writing literary texts and combining them with allegorical images. He wrote his main literary works, the *Documenti d'amore* and the *Reggimento e costumi di donna*, in France⁵. In the

4. For his biography see: E. Pasquini, «Francesco da Barberino», in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, XLIX, Roma 1997, 686-91; A. Thomas, *Francesco da Barberino et la littérature en Italie au Moyen Âge*, Paris 1883; C. Guimbard, «La vie publique de Francesco da Barberino», *Revue des études italiennes*, 27 (1982), 5-39; E. Frojmovic, *Der Illustrationszyklus zu den Documenti d'amore des Francesco da Barberino*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Munich 1994, 12 sgg. At the 9.10.1304 Francesco deposits his documents at another notary, Frojmovic, *Der Illustrationszyklus*, 13 and Guimbard, *La vie publique*, 12.

5. See Francesco da Barberino, *I Documenti d'amore*, ed. by M. Albertazzi, 2 vols., Lavis 2008 as well as *I Documenti d'amore di Francesco da Barberino secondo I manoscritti originali*, ed. by F. Egidi, 4 vols., 1902-1927, repr. Milano 1982. See also: Frojmovic, *Der Illustrationszyklus*; S. MacLaren, «Shaping the Self in the Image of virtue: Francesco da Barberino's I Documenti d'amore», in *Image and Imagination of the Religious Self in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by R. Falkenburg, W. S. Melon, T. M. Richardson, Leiden 2007, 71-95; V. Nardi, «Le illustrazioni dei Documenti d'amore di Francesco da Barberino», *Ricerche di storia dell'arte. Studi di Miniatura*, 49 (1993), 75-92; E. Jacobsen, «Francesco da Barberino Man of Law and Servant of Love», *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici*, 15 (1986), 87-118 and 16 (1987), 75-106; D. Goldin, «Testo e immagine nei Documenti d'amore di Francesco da Barberino», *Quaderni d'Italianistica: Official Journal of the Canadian Society for Italian Studies*, 1 (1980), 2, 125-38. For the «Reggimento e costumi di donna» see: C. Giunti, *Per un testo definitivo del Reggimento di Francesco da Barberino: apparato, pos-*

Documenti d'amore, he develops complexes and programmatic ethics out of the theory of Amor, which is disseminated in the love-poetry of the 13th century. It is a kind of educational book on social conduct and political *manoeuvre* in the Italian city state and here we have a strong parallel to Brunetto Latini. But earlier in Padova, during the first years of his exile, he conceived an *Officiolum* or book of hours, which besides the usual prayers also includes very personal elements and which is my main topic here. For a long time, this manuscript seemed to be lost, but it reappeared eight years ago when it was sold in 2003 at Christie's in Rome⁶.

At the beginning of his exile in Padova, Francesco da Barberino became acquainted with the book of hours, which at that time was a novelty in Italy. It was an invention of Northern Europe and around 1300 was only emerging as a new genre. Indeed, Francesco's *Officiolum* is the oldest documented book of hours in Italy⁷. Obviously Francesco was fascinated by this new type of a personal book and its characteristic combination of text and images. He had such a book of hours made for himself with the usual texts in a handy, very small format (13,4 × 10 cm), and he added a lot of new, unconventional miniatures and also some texts, which are probably his own. He integrated in this book of devotion other elements which are not genuine religious, but pertain to communal experience and also to the experience of exile. So this little book of hours is shaped by the news he encountered in his Padovan exile. At the same time, it is an intellectual reflection on the experiences of this exile.

The calendar stood normally at the beginning of a book of hours. Together with the signs of zodiac we see here not the labors of the months as usual, but the personifications of vices. This is – to my knowledge – singular and we have to understand it as an attempt to place all the vices within a system which is combined with the cycle of the year. Every month has his specific vice, like drunkenness in November or sadness at the end of winter. So already the calendar is combined with an ethic, educational concept.

telle e discussioni, unpublished tesi di dottorato della Università degli Studi di Bologna 2004; C. Giunti, «L'interazione fra testo e immagini (perdute) nel Reggimento di Francesco da Barberino», *Bollettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo*, 104 (2002), 121-44.

6. Christie's Roma, *L'Officiolum di Francesco da Barberino*, Venerdì 5 dicembre 2003, lotto 404 and K. Sutton, «The lost 'Officiolum' of Francesco da Barberino rediscovered», *Burlington Magazine*, 147 (2005), 152-64. I had the opportunity to look at the manuscript very shortly before the auction, but my remarks are based on the carefully description and analysis of Kay Sutton.

7. F. Manzari, «Les Livres d'Heures en Italie. Réception et diffusion d'un livre d'origine septentrionale», *Gazette du livre médiéval. Bulletin semestriel*, 45 (2004), 1-16 (2).

The following and biggest part is the office of the Virgin (ff. 3r-78v). The prayers are of course organized according to the canonical Hours. These hours, however, are illustrated by images which fill more than half of the page (Fig. 1). These miniatures are inspired by cosmological diagrams, which are usually found in treatises on the natural sciences. We see a reduced scheme of the cosmos with the position of the sun over the horizon and opposite the moon with the stars under the horizon. In the middle of the diagram on a piece of earth there is a woman who personifies the ages of man. The parallelism of the ages of man and the canonical hours is not new, but what is new is the image, which uses the rising and setting of the sun as a poetic metaphor for human life. This is even more impressive as the picture-cycle portraying the life of Mary is organized in strong correlation. As Francesco himself explained later in the *Documenti d'Amore*, where he describes his book of hours and also added a copy of this cycle: «At compline the Virgin is dead, the ages are complete and the day is ended»⁸ (Fig. 2). Obviously he was very proud of the invention of this specific cycle of images, which offers an intensive visualizing of the general conditions of the life-cycle for every-day use. This includes of course an element of self-reflection for anyone over forty, and Francesco da Barberino himself was over forty at the time.

This extraordinary cycle has also a final image which fits not at all within the context of religious devotion. It is the image of *Laus* or praise which is the reward of a finished work (fol. 78v, Fig. 3). We know this because Francesco uses this image again at the end of the *Documenti d'Amore*, where he also gives additional explanations in his commentary⁹. However, in his book of hours every indication or explanation is missing, so that the picture calls for intensive reflection on the part of the reader. There is a *titulus* in golden letters on black ground, which makes clear that we see three versions of the same personification in different steps of a development. The inscription relates the speech of the personification: «Coming incomplete from the roots I have adopted the form swaying between the branches, when I grow, the summit constitute permanence» (*A radice proveniens imperfecta formam titubans inter ramos assumpsi, quam et*

8. *Officiolum*, ff. 64v-65r. *Documenti d'amore, Documentum VIII sub Prudentia*, v. 5013: «Vide etiam ut tibi pulcior appareat hic tractatus, quod insimul cum horis representantur etates ita etiam per se in ipso Officiolo presentabantur ystorie, ut in completorio decesserit Virgo Beata et complete sint etates et completes sit dies [...]», Albertazzi, vol. 2, 444 sg.. See also Sutton, *The lost 'Officiolum'*, 157.

9. Frojmovic, *Der Illustrationszyklus*, 215 sgg. and ed. Albertazzi, II, 586 sgg.



Fig. 1. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 32v: First canonical hour (prima) and *infancia*.

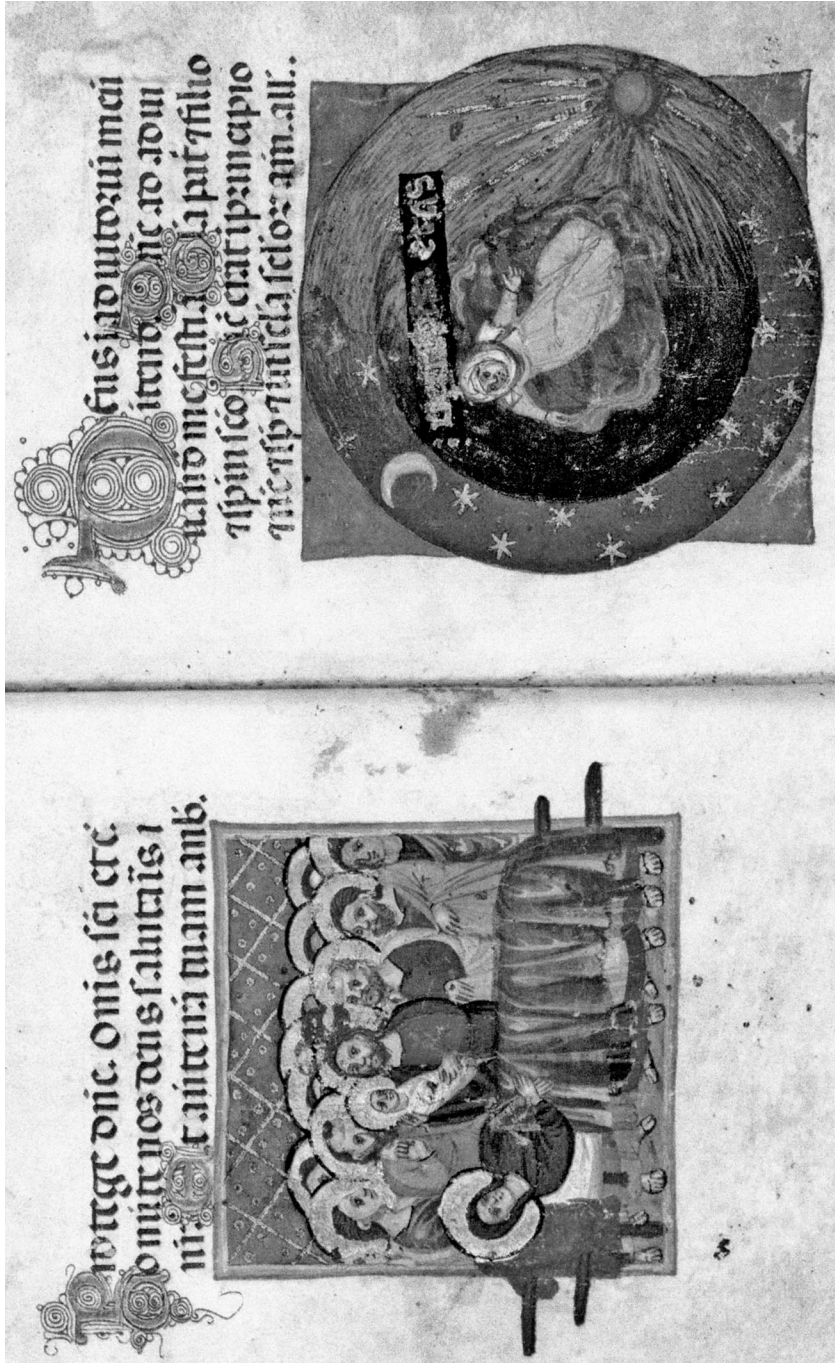


Fig. 2. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 64v-65r: Death of Mary, compline and *decepias*.

auctam michi summitas perbennem constituit). The metaphor of the tree is the central idea of the image, the growth from little shoot to greatness and permanence. We can observe this process in the different forms of the woman figure, from an incomplete half-figure at the beginning whose lower part is still lodged in the earth and who keeps hold of the tree-trunk to the young girl balancing high up in the branches and guarding an older woman with a veil who sits on three lions, forming a throne of sorts, and appears in an aureole. This is the vision of the future praise when the work will be completed and which will be unshakeable and permanent. The allegorical picture demonstrates first of all the development of praise expressed in the metaphor of the tree's continuous growth.

The motif of insecurity is the focus of this allegory, since the swaying situation of the young girl in the branches relates to the present. It is only in the future that full praise can be expected. This is also a form of self-reflection which has a specific actuality in the new situation of exile and in the continuation of his juridical studies. Chosen as a final image, it gives the cycles with the ages of man a surprising turn which is not related to the Christian hope of salvation. Even if corporal strength weakens, the sun goes down and death is certain, there remains the imagined reward of praise and enduring fame in a distant future. Similar ideas are expressed by Dante several times in the *Commedia*, for example when Brunetto Latini explains in the *Inferno* that he continues to live in his book of the *Tesoro* and that he wants nothing more¹⁰. Besides the prayers to Mary, the cycle of images here also offers a profound reflection on philosophical and ethical aspects, which focus on earthly life and the political world of the *Comune*.

After the office of the Cross and the office of the dead the book ends with extraordinary allegorical poetry in images invented by Francesco da Barberino and later described by him as «tractatus cuiusdem ystorie»¹¹. This last part of the book of hours (ff. 166r-172v) is written in golden letters, which highlights its particular importance. It starts with the old antiphon of Mary «Salve, regina misericordie...» where the singer laments his exile in the earthly valley of tears¹² (ff. 165r-v). The initial

10. Dante Alighieri, *Inferno* XV, 120; see also *Inferno* XXIV, 46 where Vergil is speaking on fame.

11. *Documenti d'Amore* III, 10; see Sutton, *The Lost 'Officiolum'*, 160 sgg. and Jacobsen, *Francesco da Barberini*, 94, 103.

12. *Analecta hymnica mediæ ævi*, L, ed. by G. M. Dreves, 1907, 318 n. 245: «Salve, regina misericordiae, / Vita dulcedo et spes nostra, salve! / Ad te clamamus exsules filii Evae, / Ad te sus-

page is decorated with an ornamental border and above the text we see the allegory of *Intelligentia* in a robe of light red kneeling in front of the enthroned virgin. Surprisingly *Intelligentia* do not make a gesture of praying, but has folded arms and seems to be self-confident or even a little defiant. This establishes a form of contrast between the intention of the traditional antiphon and the message of the image!

Subsequently, we see a multiform monster which has the head of a woman, one paw of a lion, one claw of an eagle and the back part of a cow (Fig. 4). It is a very ambivalent monster, dangerous and tempting at the same time. This ambivalence is heightened by the fact that it suckles a human child. In the few lines of text which are added both protagonists are speaking. The monster reveals the fact that it secretly poses a dangerous threat to the boy. The little boy expresses his hope that the milk will give him powers that will allow him to overcome the monster¹³ (f. 167r). Image and text are intentionally kept ambiguous and open. What kinds of threats the monster is supposed to allegorize is not explained and not clear at all, but lies completely in the fantasy of the beholder.

The classical reference for monsters with female heads is the apocalypse where they appear with the fifth trumpet to torment that part of mankind which has not been elected¹⁴. Dante describes in the *Inferno* the fraud (*froda*) as a monster with a friendly human head, two giant paws and the body of a serpent¹⁵. Francesco da Barberino is obviously using similar ideas. Kay Sutton has suggested that the model for Francesco's monster was a personification of ecclesia – the church composed out of the different parts of the evangelist symbols – and that this monster was an allegory of the papal Guelf party¹⁶. I think this interpretation is too narrow and too simplistic. The monster has only three different legs and

piramus gementes et flentes / In hac lacrimarum valle. / Eia ergo, advocata nostra, / Illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte / Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, / Nobis post hoc exsilium ostende, / O Clemens, o pia, / O dulcis Maria».

13. F. 167r: «Lente pergo quod capio vix dimitto potenter agredior et dolose subintro» («I proceed slowly, what I grasp I scarcely let go, I attack forcefully, I approach and enter by stealth»), «Si lactabor in te iuvabor ab illo qui tibi preest et superabo potentiam tuam, latis tamen ante victoriam angariabor angustiis et tormentis» («If I am suckled on you, I will be sustained by that which rules over you and I will overcome your power. Nevertheless before victory I will be afflicted with great anguish and torments»); text and translation after Sutton, *The Lost 'Officiolum'*, 164. The original order of the folios is disturbed, but reconstructed by Sutton, *ibid.*, 160.

14. *Apocalypse* 9, 7-10.

15. Dante, *Inferno* XVII, 10 sgg.

16. Sutton, *The Lost 'Officiolum'*, 161.



Fig. 4. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 167r: Beginning of picture-poem with the monster suckling the author.

no human leg, so there is no reference to the number four of the evangelists. The back part is a cow, not a bull. Therefore it cannot refer to the symbolic animal of Lucas. The cow is a peaceful, positive element; together with the female head it forms the positive part of this ambiguous monster. Francesco conceived his allegory not with a simple, fixed meaning, but in an open and ambiguous way. So I would see here rather an embodiment of all the vices with their different effects which of course also shape the area of politics. And I also see a connection to the encyclopedic attempt to organize the vices along the cycle of the year in the calendar at the beginning of this little book. There we find a differentiation, a gradual separation into specific forms, and here in the allegorical picture-story at the end we have a kind of synthesis. The garment of the boy or main person has the same color as the robe of the allegory of *Intelligentia* at the beginning. This is probably not accidental, but shall establish a connection between the two figures. Therefore we are confronted presumably also with a struggle between intelligence or reason and the combined vices or passions.

If we turn the page we see that the boy tries to ride and dominate the monster (f. 167v; Fig. 5). It is obvious that this will not be successful. In the text below the miniature we can read how the boy laments his failure¹⁷. It also becomes clear that this picture-story is a first-person narrative with great potential for identification. As a consequence the monster attacks the boy with her claw at the other side of the double page (f. 168r). The boy has grown, but is not yet an adult. So we realize that part of the story is to show a development. The boy now calls in vain to a higher power for help. This could be God, but this is not made explicit¹⁸. There is always the same lay-out of the pages with a framed miniature which covers half of the page and a short text in five lines. The text remains incomprehensible without the pictures and contains poetic lamentations in the style of the psalms. Whoever looked at the pictures and read the text practiced a form of devotion which is not religious, at least on the main level, and which offers several modes of identification.

17. F. 167v: «Non supero quoniam puritas et inocencia superat igitur non letatur cor meum cum hiis defitientibus mea solatia sint caesura» («I do not overcome because purity and innocence overcome, therefore my heart does not rejoice since my consolations are torn away by these deficiencies»); text and translation after Sutton, *The Lost 'Officiolum'*, 164.

18. F. 168r: «Autem qui prees regibus et incolis non deseras servum tuum nec permittas illum extra spem sic torqueri et recognoscam quoniam tu es ipse» («However, you who govern kings and peoples do not desert your servant nor do you permit him to be tortured thus beyond hope and I will remember since you are the one»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

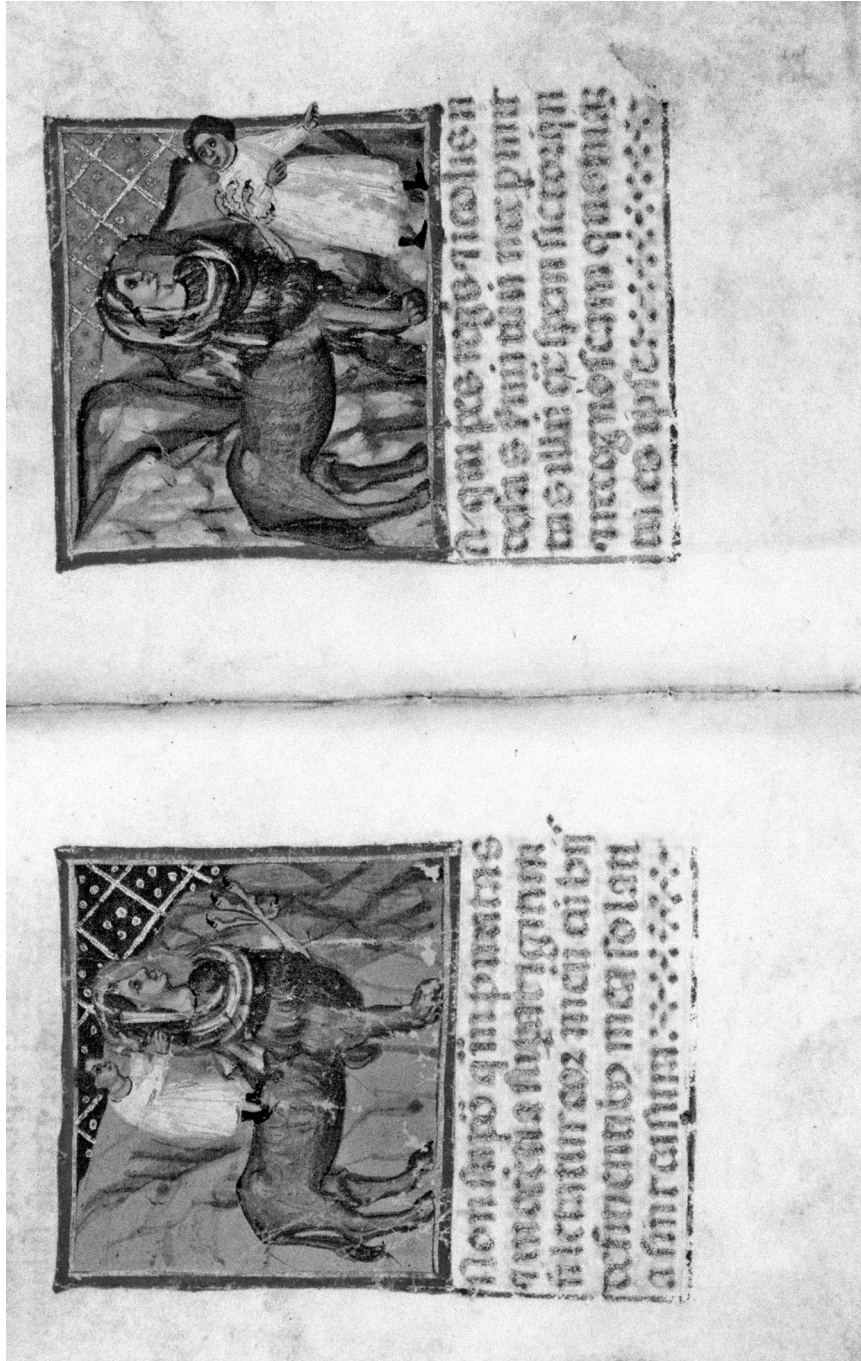


Fig. 5. Francesco da Barberino, *Officialum*, f. 167v-168r: The monster and the growing author.

The defeat of the boy, who has now reached adulthood, is inevitable; he lies defeated under the paw of the monster (f. 168v; Fig. 6). So the human or the author cries out in desperation the father, who has abandoned him: «Dereliquisti me pater et depressus sum...»¹⁹. This echoes, probably intentionally, the last words of Jesus Christ on the cross. The image of total defeat is confronted with a vision of hope and salvation, which is in no way religious but completely part of this earthly world (f. 166r). The author, now on the back of a horse, meets a king with his entourage at an ample fountain, where he can water his horse. «Video [...]» so begins the text its enumeration of things to come like a filled treasure, a pure heart and the hope for peace, but all this remains a deceptive vision²⁰. Attention is also drawn to this double page through the artistic means of form. The images occupy the whole page, even filling some of the margins. The text has been reduced to a minor element. The rock comes out of the framed miniature and opens a wide landscape of fantasy which fills all of the available space. This double page confronts the crude reality with dreamful vision, but that vision of a better future remains vague and makes use of old metaphors: a fountain in abundance, a noble king who appears in the open nature outside his palace and his state. Of course, as we know very well from romances of chivalry, all of these are mere dreams.

Again we have to turn the page and finally Christ appears outside the frame to encourage the author (f. 166v; Fig. 7). With a sword and a book the author attacks the monster, saying to Christ: «Whoever hopes in you is not forsaken...and I shall follow what you write and shall go into the water in order to live in the fire»²¹. The stepping into the water recalls baptism, the fire evokes a hostile environment for life, maybe the exile.

19. F. 168v: «Dereliquisti me pater et depressus sum numquid iuvabor et videam apparentem in nubibus potentiam tuam et dicam defitio quia te non cognovi» («You have abandoned me father and I am cast down. Shall I be helped and shall I see your power appearing in the clouds and shall I say 'I am wasting away because I did not know you?'»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

20. F. 166r: «Video quod implebitur thesaurus iste, nec nocebunt delicta finita et dabit mihi cor mundum, ut serviam servientibus tibi et pace fruam» («I see that the treasury will be filled, and that past transgressions shall cause no harm and that a cleansed heart will allow me to serve your servants and to enjoy peace»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

21. F. 166v: «Qui sperat in te non deseritur sed ab ista deseritur et augetur ut bellet et superet eam et ecce sequar quod scribis et vadam in aquam ut in igne vivam» («Whoever hopes in you is not forsaken but is forsaken by her and grows in strength in order to fight and overcome her and, behold! I shall follow what you write and shall go into the water in order to live in the fire»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

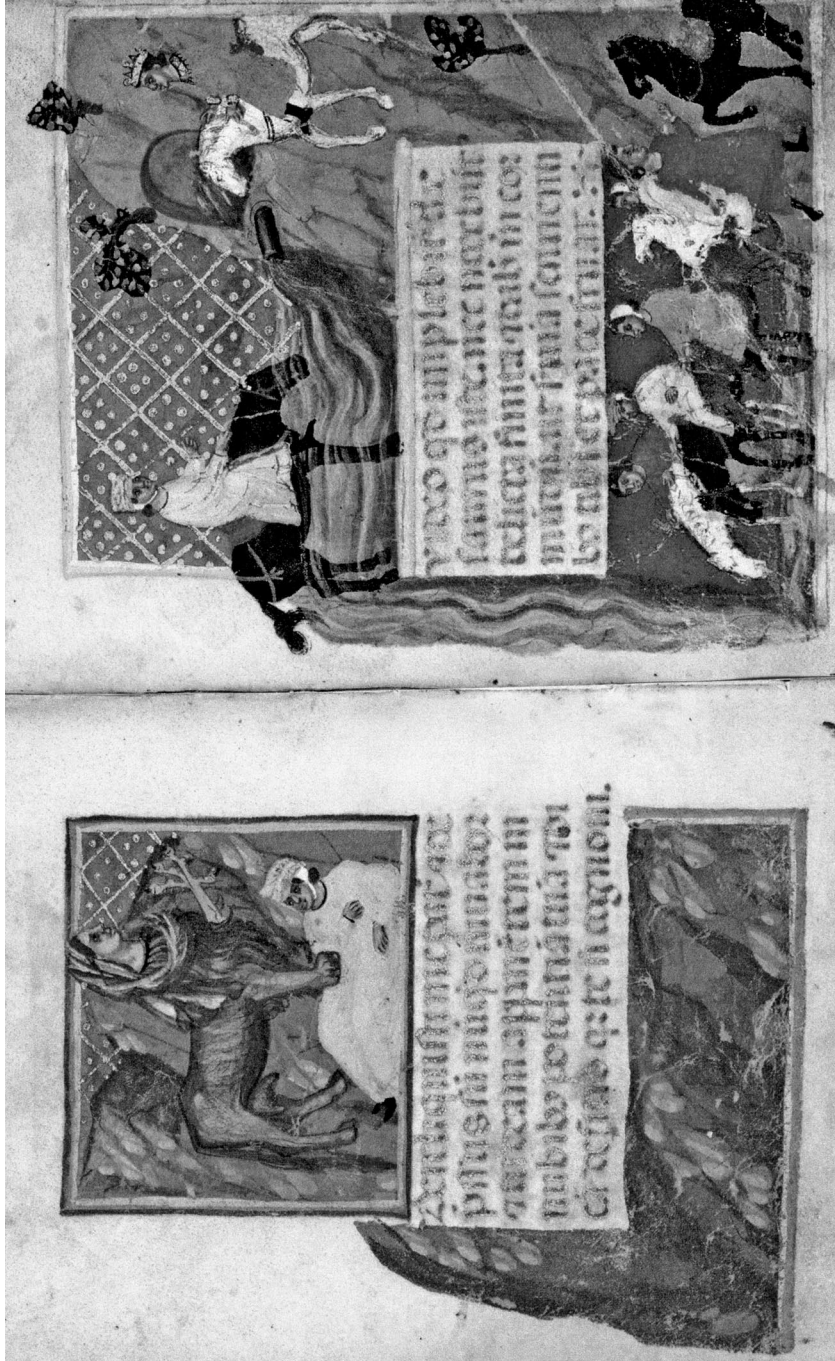


Fig. 6. Francesco da Barberino, *Officialum*, f. 168v-166r: The author lying under the paws of the monster and his dreams.

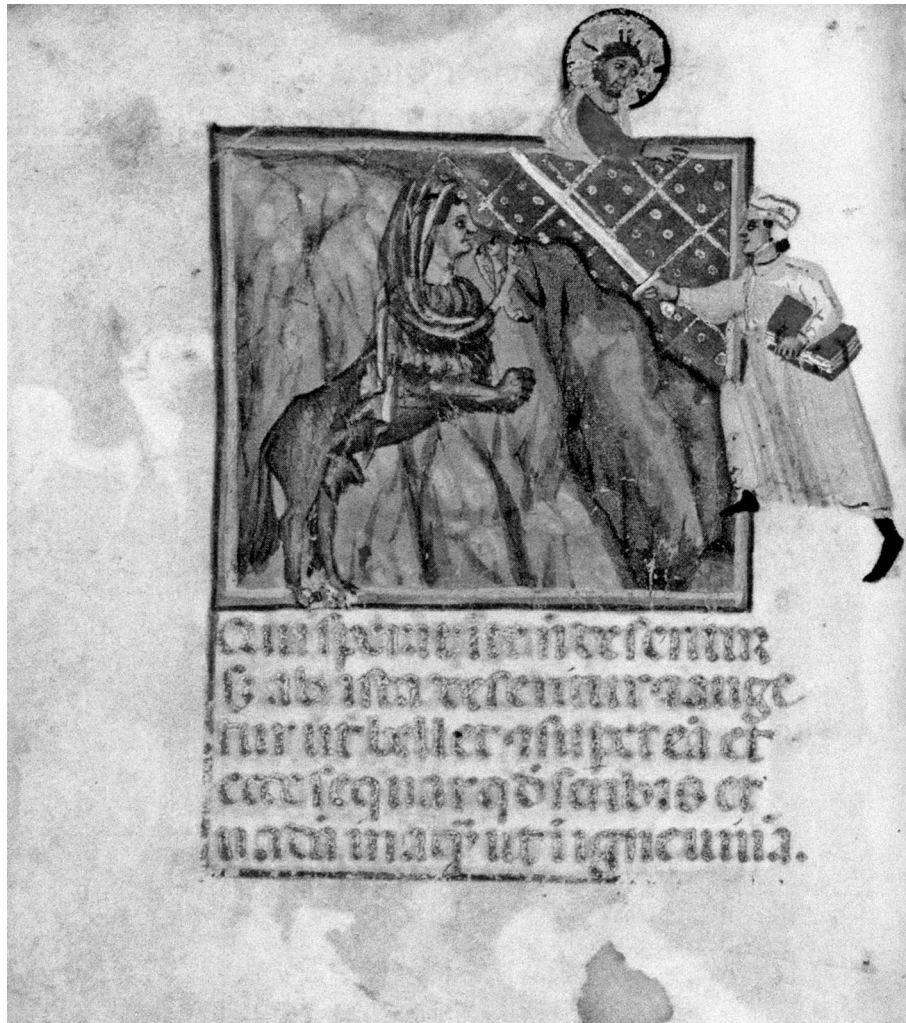


Fig. 7. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 166v: The author fighting the monster.

In the next image the author is riding two horned birds and so his attack appears to be followed by a small, but false victory (f. 171r). He is riding over a bridge while a group of excited people which are called seekers in the text-lines is watching and applauding him. The author expects the end of mourning and the fulfillment of his desires²². Turning the page we see that the monster responds with a heavy counter-attack (f. 171v). Using her claw it grabs the shoulder of the rebellious man who runs away towards the figure of Christ outside the picture-frame. Full of fear the man asks where he can find safety now²³. On the other side of the double page the author returns to the fight, now armed with bow and arrow (f. 169r; Fig. 8). He fires a lot of arrows at the breast of the monster, but in vain because they all bounce off or break on impact. Indeed he has no effective weapons and so he laments his exhaustion and the loss of his heart and courage²⁴. The final triumph of the monster seems very near.

The next double page shows only one huge image and presents the decisive turn of the story (ff. 169v-170r). In front of the picture we can read the desperate cry of the author: «I lost my heart and like a wild beast I'm displeased or ignorant of my own self. You alone brought support to my life»²⁵. Addressed is *Spes*, the hope, and as an answer she appears in form of an angel in white robes at the top of a high wall (Tav. 1). *Spes* turns to a group of hopeful man in the left part of the image and points them to the five different towers behind her. These towers are marked as the temple of the earthly power, the temple of virtue, the temple of health and life and the temple of love. In the middle the highest tower with the baldachin at the top is the temple of God. A staircase leads to the door of this tower while a simple ladder leads to the temple of

22. F. 171r: «Erit hic finis luctui et implebitur quod desideraverit angustus, et querentes eum videbunt et letabuntur dicentes anime nostre pro anime eius, et corpora pro corpore suo» («This will be the end of mourning and the needy will be filled with whatever he desires, and the seekers will see him and they will rejoice, saying 'Our souls for his soul and our bodies for his body'»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

23. F. 171v: «Numquid iam calcabitur vita mea et honor meus et ruet spes mea queso salute per debillissimos tramites gentium (or generum), donec dedis mihi palmam» («Shall now my life and my honour be trodden underfoot and my hope fall to ruin? I seek safety along the most barren byways of mankind until you give me the palm»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

24. F. 169r: «Durum est mihi bellum et anxiantur et attenuantur spiritus mei sicut continuo archantes in ferrum, movuntur et querunt carcarem pro quiete» («The war is hard for me and my spirits are made anxious and weakened as though continuously firing arrows into iron. They are disturbed and seek prison for the sake of rest»); text and translation after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

25. F. 169v: «Deficit anima mea et quasi ferus sum michimet ipsi displicens, tu sola vite mee suffragium contulisti»; text and translation (with some variations) after Sutton, *ibid.*, 164.

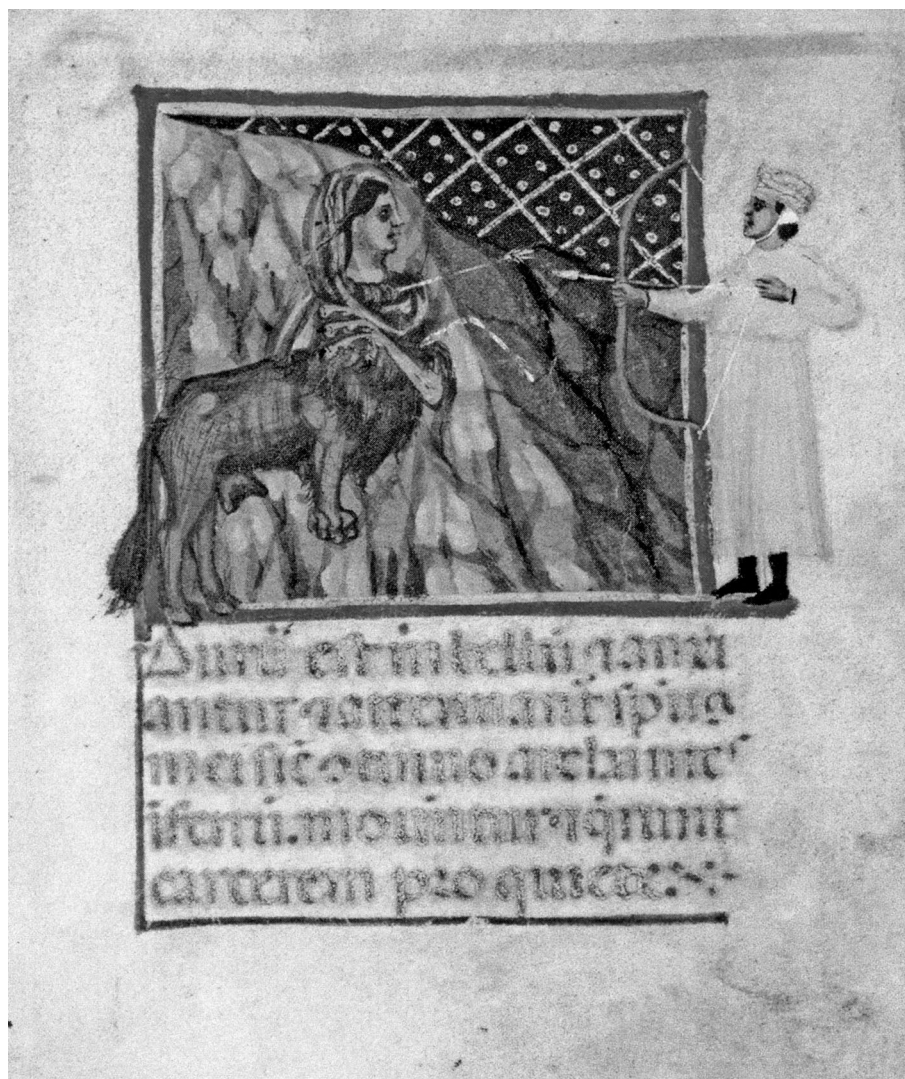


Fig. 8. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 169r: The author firing arrows to the monster.

virtue. Obvious both of these towers represent the most desirable goals. There are ropes which come from the doors in the towers and join in the hand of the personification, and hope passes them on to the people. The men pull at these ropes without knowing which rope they grasp and what they could reach. Some of them are falling down with broken ropes in their hands. But our author in his robe of light red points to the text lines with his words and maintains visual contact with *Spes*. With his raised left arm he pulls cautiously on one rope – as we will see this leads to success.

The figure of *Spes*, which we encounter here, is surprising in many ways, and I follow in my remarks the thoughtful analysis by Eva Frojmovic²⁶. This *Spes* has not very much in common with the well-known theological virtue, which is regarding God alone. Here we find the exact opposite since most of the desired goals are very mundane in nature. *Spes*'s form with the white robe and the wings of an angel is inspired by Giotto's famous invention in the Arena chapel in Padova but the meaning is rather different. *Spes* here is the mediator between the men who hope for the future and the goals they aspire to. *Spes* acts as a medium of sorts, which bundles up all the men's aspirations and which distributes them in a way that is strange and full of surprises. The men do not know what they will gain in the end or if they will gain anything at all. In the *Documenti d'Amore* Francesco da Barberino speaks of the deceitful and unreliable nature of every hope and this is an important part of his composition. Francesco also declares that hope is not really a virtue but rather a passion²⁷. This characterization explains the hectic behavior of the people in the miniature. So even if you are hoping it is important to cultivate moderation and temperance. All this has a strong Aristotelian foundation but it is remodeled to serve a very personal purpose by Francesco da Barberino. The impressive image of this combined double page shows us a vision which contains a lot of deceitful elements and which likens hope to a game of chance, akin to a popular game of chance that is hosted by showmen at the market place.

Our author is successful and his rope opens a door and we turn the page. There appears a huge, impressive figure of a woman in a dark robe (Tav. 2). Her aureole with golden rays blinds the author so that he raises a hand to cover his eyes. He has nothing more to say, a further

26. Frojmovic, *Der Illustrationszyklus*, 158 sgg.

27. Francesco da Barberino, *Documenti d'Amore, Glossae*, ed. by Albertazzi, 387: «Et spes etiam ibi dicitur secundum quod est passio: non est virtus, sed secundum quod est michi appetite partis intellective».

lamentation is not necessary and therefore there is no text on this page. The lady, *la Donna*, rises from her throne and she fires arrows at the monster in the right half of the double page (f. 170v and f. 172r). The monster holds a shield as a weapon and rears on his back legs so that it comes to the same height as the lady. Our author has fallen on one knee and holds the quiver with the arrows like a servant of the lady.

Who is that lady? We don't know. Again we are confronted with a figure whose meaning is not fixed and on whom we can project different sets of meanings. This is intentional. I think we can speak of a superior virtue which includes all the others. But it is not a religious virtue, we don't see Jesus Christ again – he failed earlier on in the story in his attempt to assist the author. Christ appears twice in this tale, but his interventions are not very successful. The lamentations of the narrator are not directed at him explicitly. The goal is apparently not religious salvation. The hopes and efforts of Francesco da Barberino are directed towards earthly life. The duel between the lady and the monster ends of course with the victory of the lady. Some of her arrows hit the monster and in the final picture the monster lies wounded on the ground, surrounded by hunters (f. 172v). Even our author is among them and can fire a last arrow at his great enemy.

This very impressive picture story shows a development which is made evident in the growth of the protagonist, but which also carries psychological meaning in the increasing distance, which is put between the boy or man and the monster. This refers to a mental process within the soul of the author, which is reflected in the short lamentations that are written in the poetic style of the psalms. The culmination is the duel of the two allegories – a duel between an authoritative lady or *Donna* and a multi-form monster which combines frightening and tempting aspects. We are confronted with a psychomachia in the truest sense of this Greek word.

We are also confronted with a special form of poetry, poetry in pictures which has no need of more than a couple of short accompanying words. Even if what we have here is not a real *canzone* or *ballata* this picture story is rooted deeply in the Italian lyric tradition of the 13th century and based on that form of poetry which we call, following Dante, *dolce stil novo*²⁸. These poems tell stories about inner troubles, about feel-

28. H. Friedrich, *Epochen der italienischen Lyrik*, Frankfurt 1964, 49 sgg.; G. Contini, *Poeti del Duecento*, Milano 1960, 2 vols.; A. Kablitz, «Intertextualität als Substanzkonstituion. Zur Lyrik des Fraunelobs im Duecento: Giacomo Lentini, Guido Guinizelli, Guido Cavalcanti, Dante Alighieri»,

ings and desires, about the desperation of the lovers who love in vain and about the inaccessibility and the severity of the lady or *Donna*. The yearning in these poems remains always unsolved and unrequited. And so the poet transforms his lady into a higher being that resembles an angel. In the picture story of Francesco da Barberino the author is not, like the other poets, the servant of Amor, governed by Amor's supreme power. Instead, he is oppressed by a monster. Furthermore his yearning finds fulfillment in the mystical appearance of the lady and her action. She kills the monster as a distorted counter image of herself but remains of course a higher being. The threat has ended and there is the possibility of peace. Our author's relationship to the monster and to the lady, who finally appears, is very similar to the relationship between the poet and his beloved lady or *Donna*.

Working with the motifs and ideas of the poetry of love Francesco's piece of exile literature tells an allegorical story about trouble, emotional turmoil and hope with a strong ethical meaning and also an eminent political significance. He establishes a strong connection between the consolation of religious prayer and the daily worries of political life as well as the worries of exile. Therefore he combines the pictures he invented not with verse in *volgare*, but with Latin sentences in the manner of the Psalter. The allegorical picture poem at the end of Francesco's book of hours functions as a screen onto which concrete personal troubles can be projected. It is a poetic consolation and encouragement in hard times.

This book with the moving picture-poem at the end is a very personal work of art. The intended audience is obviously the author himself and only in the second place his family and some friends. But in the *Documenti d'Amore* he reports that one of his friends, the Florentine Baldo da Passignano, who was in Padova at the same time, copied the image of *Spes* as a frontispiece for his own treatise²⁹. So the book was possibly also part of discourse among friends and acquaintances with similar interests. The images Francesco invented were seen by others and in this way they received some extent of dissemination. This could also explain how it was possible that the singular picture-cycle of the canonical hours was imitated at the beginning of the 15th century in the frescoes of the

Poetica, *Zeitschrift für Sprach und Literaturwissenschaft*, 23 (1991), 20-67; H. Wayne Storey, *Transcription and Visual Poetics in the Early Italian lyric*, New York 1993; J. Schulze, *Amicitia vocalis, Sechs Kapitel zur frühen italienischen Lyrik mit Seitenblicken auf die Malerei*, Tübingen 2004.

29. *Documenti* III, 10; see Frojmovic, *Der Illustrationszyklus*, 161; Jacobsen, *Francesco da Barberino*, 94.

Palazzo Trinci in Foligno³⁰. Francesco da Fiano, who was the humanistic adviser on these wall-paintings, must have seen the miniatures in the book of hours or in the *Documenti d'Amore*.

The preference for images, which is so characteristic for Francesco da Barberino, has also a foundation in the mentioned tradition of love poetry. In this tradition it is always the sight of the beautiful lady which kindles love in the heart of the poet. The act of looking is the starting point, the sight of beauty and grace. Therefore the passion and the yearning of the lover find consolation even in observing a painted picture which shows the appearance of the beloved lady. The most intensive effects of love are connected to images and to the act of looking³¹. Francesco da Barberino has further developed this idea and so images are more important for him than words and text. Images are more persuasive. Therefore Francesco represents the virtues always as beautiful women. Merely observing these painted ladies in the carefully conceived images is intended to persuade the beholder whose soul is supposed to develop a passion for these virtues. Later in the *Documenti d'Amore* this concept is applied more systematically.

The poetry of love in the 13th century attempts to deal – with intensity and also with great pleasure in artistic variations – with topics such as the sentiments, the feelings of loss and fear, and all the problems of rejected love. In the process, a repertoire of motifs and a collection of metaphors emerged which could easily be appropriated by different fields – and this is exactly what Francesco da Barberino achieved in his allegorical picture-poem. For me, the subtle variations in his engagement with all kinds of sentiments as well as the poetic multiplicity of meanings in his allegorical figures are a very important element of modernity – the same modernity that is so characteristic for the intellectual culture of the Italian Trecento.

30. D. Blume, *Regenten des Himmels. Astrologische Bilder in Mittelalter und Renaissance*, Berlin 2000, 121 sg.

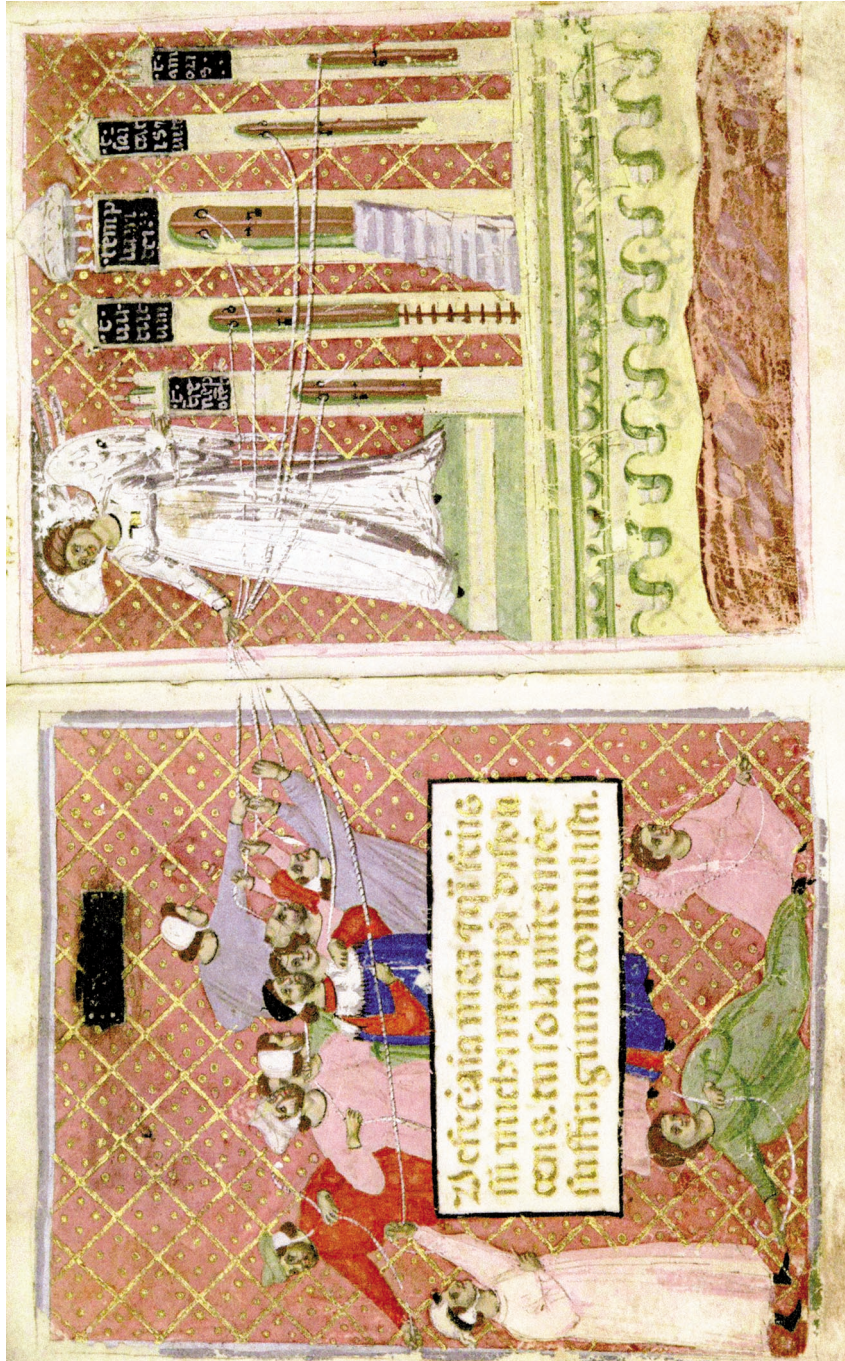
31. A. Kablitz, «Pygmalion in Petrarca's Canzoniere, Zur Geburt ästhetischer Illusion aus dem Ungeist des Begehrens», in *Pygmalion, Die Geschichte des Mythos in der abendländischen Kultur*, hrsg. M. Meyer, G. Neumann, Freiburg Br. 1997, 197-225; G. Wolf, «Giacomo da Lentini: Der malende Notar oder das Bildnis im Herzen (um 1230/40)», in *Porträt*, ed. by R. Preimesberger, H. Baader, N. Suthor, Berlin 1999, 156-67; M. Zeiner, *Der Blick der Liebenden und das Auge des Geistes, die Bedeutung der Melancholia für den Diskurswandel der Scuola Siciliana und im Dolce Stil Nuovo*, Heidelberg 2006. For the corresponding statements by Francesco da Barberino in the *Documenti d'Amore* see MacLaren, *Shaping the Self*, 87.

ABSTRACT

The Florentine notary Francesco da Barberino (1264-1348) was in exile in Padua and Avignon from 1304-1313. In these years he wrote his main literary works and at the beginning in Padova he conceived the *Officiolum*, a book of hours for his personal use.

He composed very specific images which bring other, more profane elements in this religious prayer book. At the end he added an allegorical picture-story containing 15 miniatures accompanied by short texts in the manner of the psalms. This is a moving picture-poem inspired by the Italian lyric tradition of the 13th century and the *dolce stil nuovo*. It offers a sort of screen onto which concrete personal troubles and the problems of exile can be projected. It is a poetic consolation and encouragement in hard times.

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Tav. I. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 169v-170r: Allegory of Spes (Hope).



Tav. 2. Francesco da Barberino, *Officium*, f. 170v-172r: The Lady is killing the monster.