

# The Medieval Fate of the Cantigas de Santa Maria: Iberian Politics Meets Song

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The Cantigas de Santa Maria, devotional songs in honor of the Virgin Mary composed and assembled at the itinerant court of Alfonso the Learned, king of Castile and León (d. 1284), have been regularly performed and cherished by modern audiences since the 1960s. Musicologists have also begun to recognize the Cantigas for what they are: a monument of devotional song crossing lyrical and narrative genres, and aristocratic and urban contexts; a testimony to the courtly confluence of northern and southern, Christian and Islamic cultures; a pioneering experiment in the notation of patterned meter beyond the narrow limits of the French rhythmic modes; and a unique witness to the richness and variety of urban refrain-songs—in short, one of the most impressive European musical achievements of the thirteenth century, or indeed of the whole medieval era. But in their own time the Cantigas were virtually ignored. They remained a brilliant but isolated narrative and musical accomplishment. This disparity still perplexes modern scholars. What prevented the Cantigas, at the apex of Marian devotion, from enjoying lasting success?

The Iberian Peninsula was then divided into five political entities: Portugal along most of the Atlantic coast; the recently united kingdoms of León and Castile occupying the northwestern corner (Galicia) and a large strip of land, including Toledo and Seville, in the center, down to the Mediterranean; mid-south, the Islamic kingdom of Granada; and Navarre and Aragón respectively in the north- and southeast. In Portugal and León-Castile courtly poetry was written in Galician-Portuguese (the language of the Cantigas), while Arabic, French, and Occitan were preferred respectively in the Granadan, Navarrese, and Aragonese courts.

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The southernmost territories of King Alfonso's domains had been freshly conquered by the Christian armies, and Islamic culture still retained a significant presence and prestige there. In spite of their Christian outlook and Romance language, the Cantigas were in fact a cross-cultural product that, in connection with the royal program of Christian restoration in the south, attempted to bridge social divisions by adopting a typical Arabic-Andalusian song form, the *zajal*, as a model. The Cantigas, being indissolubly associated with the self-image, ideology, and ambitions of King Alfonso, were also conceived as a means of affirming and propagating his exceptional authority in both secular and religious matters. The whole project was thus overtly political. This, I propose, is the clue to its intriguing medieval fate.

In this article I review the evidence for the medieval performance of the Cantigas de Santa Maria, both courtly and ritual, consider their creator's intentions for the work, including the intended audience, and argue that the Cantigas came into being as an ambitious cultural enterprise, but were doomed to failure by the steep decline of the political prospects of their author, first on the European stage and then on the national one. I offer a wide-ranging discussion of references to lost and extant manuscripts and their functions, in an attempt to illuminate pathways for the circulation and performance of their contents. I reconsider and analyze the Barbieri MS, virtually ignored by modern scholarship, taking into account the relationships between the Alfonsine court and its Portuguese counterpart. By examining anew the appendices of two thirteenth-century sources, I reveal a "pairing mechanism" by which the original five *cantigas* intended for Marian liturgical feasts were each teamed with related songs, with important consequences. A critical discussion of the competing views of Keller, Griffiths, and Fidalgo concerning the intended audience for the Cantigas opens the way to considering the role of local minstrels, the constraints posed by the Galician-Portuguese language, and the opportunities provided by the Andalusian *zajal* form. Finally, I argue that the choice of the *zajal* and associated musical schemata for the vast majority of the Cantigas was based on previous experiments in satirical song by Alfonso and his circle of troubadours, and that it represents a personal, "popularizing" intent linked to a program of religious and dynastic propaganda, eventually frustrated by adverse political circumstance.

### The Sources, Their Use, and Their Rediscovery

The Cantigas de Santa Maria (hereafter CSM), a collection of 419 songs (plus an introductory poem), were the creation of Alfonso X of Castile and León, assembled at his court during approximately the last two decades of his life, and under his authority.<sup>1</sup> The preliminary stages of the project are

1. The standard scholarly numbering of the CSM, which extends to no. 427 since it does not take duplications into account, is based on the critical edition by Mettmann, *Afonso X, o Sábio*. The edition is most conveniently accessed in its revised, compact version: Mettmann, *Alfonso*

not well documented, but as far as can be ascertained, King Alfonso, an accomplished author of troubadour poetry, devised a book of pious songs, composed some himself, and commissioned others in order to form a coherent collection. He eventually broadened the project into a much larger, and fully historiated, kind of book, expanded the collection with new songs, and supported an ambitious program of manuscript illumination, encompassing more than 250 full-page illustrations—besides those lost or left incomplete, forty miniatures portraying musical instruments, and a few isolated scenes. The finished collection was copied in the same courtly environment (if not in the same scriptorium) into four large thirteenth-century manuscripts that are extant today.<sup>2</sup>

What use was made of these books? Where, when, how, and for whom were the songs read, sung, or otherwise performed?<sup>3</sup> Evidence gleaned from the four extant manuscripts of the CSM suggests only limited usage. Performative use can be ruled out at the outset for the manuscript now kept in Florence (*F*); it was left unfinished and the music was never entered. Another book (*To*)—formerly in Toledo, now in Madrid—corresponds to the earliest stage of compilation to which we have direct access, with one hundred *cantigas* plus appendices; it features a unique, semi-mensural kind of musical notation. The remaining two, formerly in Seville, have been kept at the Royal Monastery of El Escorial since 1576, and have a more international, even if nonstandard, kind of mensural notation.<sup>4</sup> The fully illuminated manuscript of El Escorial (*T*, or “códice rico”) and the one in Florence together comprise most of the collection, being respectively the first and second volumes of an illustrated set (the “códices de las historias”). In fact, they are the

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*X, el Sabio*. Unless otherwise stated, this standard numbering corresponds (up to no. 400) to the numbering of songs found in the medieval sources.

2. Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Mss 10069 (siglum: *To*); El Escorial, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio, MS. T. I. 1 (siglum: *T*), “códice rico,” and MS. b. I. 2 (siglum: *E*), “códice de los músicos”; Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, B. R. 20 (siglum: *F*). For a critical description of the manuscripts, see Schaffer, “Los códices”; Domínguez Rodríguez and Treviño Gajardo, *Las Cantigas de Santa María*, 21–25; Fernández Fernández, “Los manuscritos”; and Parkinson, *Alfonso X, the Learned*, 2–7. The numbering of the songs in manuscript *To* often departs from the standard scholarly numbering, which is based on manuscript *E*. References to folios in my citations of manuscripts in these footnotes indicate only the folio on which a text begins, not its full extent.

3. Traces of oral performance in the texts of the CSM have been uncovered and analyzed in Fidalgo Francisco, “*Joculatores qui cantant*.” The question has recently been revisited by Divalgo and Rossi, “Un cantar que cantassen os jograres,” “Modelos cortesanos,” and “Entre la juglaría y la liturgia.” These writings are primarily concerned not with material traces left in the manuscripts but rather with the general performative framework as indirectly revealed by iconographical, literary, and musical evidence in the CSM. On this subject, see also Snow, “Music and Musical Performance.”

4. I refer to notation as “mensural” when most notational figures denote a rhythmic meaning (even if this may vary according to context), recording, for each note or group of notes, a choice between relative lengths of time. On the musical notation of the CSM and its interpretation, see Ferreira, “Bases for Transcription,” “Stemma of the Marian Cantigas,” “A música no códice rico,” “Editing the *Cantigas*,” and “Rhythmic Paradigms.”

outcome of one of the most ambitious and expensive editorial projects ever launched in medieval Europe. The remaining Escorial manuscript (*E*, or “códice de los músicos”), distinguished by the representation of musical instruments, contains a version of the entire collection.

The nearly perfect state of conservation of these books implies that few people turned their pages, and infrequently. This would have been in conformity with King Alfonso’s expectations, since in his own words these were, together with a few other volumes, “very rich and noble things, which pertain to kings”; they should accordingly be safeguarded (circumstances allowing, in a royal library).<sup>5</sup> Evidence that the narrative stories and lyrics were being read, and some of the associated images seen, at some point in the late Middle Ages is suggested by prose versions in Castilian of twenty-four songs in *T*, copied in blank spaces; by an intercessory prayer entered into the last folio of *E*; and by a fifteenth-century partial copy of its miniatures; but these provide no evidence of musical performance. The twin volumes *T* and *F* probably entered the royal library only a few decades after being deposited at the cathedral in Seville (ca. 1330?), access to them being thus much restricted.<sup>6</sup> Except for rare marginalia in *Ta*, discussed below, the manuscripts show no marks of continuous manipulation or practical use; and as far as we know, almost five hundred years passed after their compilation before a copy of both text and music was made from one of them.

Infrequency of use seems the likeliest explanation for the lack of further copies. In fact, no medieval sources of the CSM survive apart from the books commissioned by King Alfonso. This monumental song collection was apparently forgotten as soon as he died, or shortly thereafter. As Filgueira Valverde put it, “the impact [of the CSM] was . . . minimal”; its miracle narratives “are not, and not even within Iberian literature, a link in the chain of versions”; in fact, the compositions “appear as an isolated flowering, collecting all the weight of the tradition and using it wisely, but with no further transmission.”<sup>7</sup> The same applies to its musical notation and melodic contents.<sup>8</sup>

5. This is the argument used in the 1284 codicil to his will to support the provision that his successors could, with due compensation, reappropriate the books of the CSM, among others, from the church where they were to be provisionally deposited: *Memorial histórico español* (1851), reproduced in Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 618: “ca son cosas muy ricas e muy nobles que pertenescen a los reyes.”

6. On the date of the addition to the last folio of *E* (fifteenth century) and the fortunes of *T* and *F*, see Avenzoza Vera, “Codicología alfonsí,” and Fernández Fernández, “Cantigas de Santa María.” An excellent synthesis of the Castilian prosifications of CSM 2–25 in *T* can be found in Fidalgo Francisco, *As Cantigas de Santa María*, 209–39. The texts are transcribed in Filgueira Valverde, *Alfonso X, El Sabio*, 329–73, and reproduced in Mettmann, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 1:313–44. On the miniatures, see Homo-Lechner, “Une copie inconnue.”

7. Filgueira Valverde, *Alfonso X, El Sabio*, lviii–lix: “La repercusión fue . . . mínima. . . . no son, ni siquiera para las letras ibéricas, un eslabón en la cadena de las versiones . . . se presentan como brote aislado, recogiendo todo el peso de la tradición y utilizándola sabiamente, pero sin transmitirla.” Translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

8. The musical notation in the CSM manuscripts was not replicated elsewhere. Possible melodic survivals, either in Renaissance sources or in oral tradition, do not necessarily depend

When interest in the CSM rekindled in later centuries it centered at first on their literary value and did not include revived musical performance. Serious interest resumed in the late sixteenth century among scholars whose concerns were mainly historical and literary. Sevillian humanist Gonzalo Argote de Molina, who wrote a laudatory poem on the “Learned King” and transcribed CSM 185 from *T*, was one of them.<sup>9</sup> Almost a century later another Sevillian scholar, Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga, transcribed from *F* the full text of six songs, with commentary; these were singled out because they witnessed historical events related to Seville and to the royalty buried in its cathedral (King Ferdinand III and his wife, and their son Alfonso X).<sup>10</sup> Interest in the CSM was revived at the Spanish court in the middle of the eighteenth century, when some Enlightenment-era intellectuals were encouraged to pursue the paleographical description, copy, and study of old manuscripts by the Portuguese-born Queen Bárbara de Bragança, long-time pupil and protector of Domenico Scarlatti. Among the results of this project we find a rather faithful copy of *To* (both text and music) prepared in 1755 by Francisco Xavier Palomares, the best calligrapher of the time, with marginal notes by Andrés Marcos Burriel. A notated example was included in the *Paleografía española* printed that same year and again, in revised form, in 1758.<sup>11</sup> A generation later Juan Andrés, a historian of literature, referred in passing to this example, to illustrate the thesis that a feature of French *ars nova* notation had previously been used on Spanish soil. He assumed that Alfonso’s book had been innovative in presenting vernacular songs with music, and suggested Arabic influence as a possible reason.<sup>12</sup> At almost the same time José Rodríguez de Castro would add to Zúñiga’s and Burriel’s references, respectively to *F* and *To*, information about, and textual transcriptions from, *T* and *E*.<sup>13</sup> All of this scholarly interest, however,

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on the CSM, as these can be contrafacts and the melodies current elsewhere. For potential survivals, see Preciado, “Pervivencia de una melodía”; Cohen, “Reluctant Woman Pilgrim”; and Crivillé i Bargalló, “Algunas monodías medievales.”

9. Snow, *Poetry of Alfonso X*, 1–2.

10. Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Annales eclesiásticos y seculares*, 36–37 (CSM 221), 43–44 (CSM 256), 109 (CSM 257), 111–12 (CSM 323), 116–21 (CSM 292, 324). Source *F*, a book then owned by Juan Lucas Cortés (referred to at 36, 129, 132), was identified by Anglés, *La música de las Cantigas*, 2:16–17n2. Anglés nonetheless overlooks three songs when referring to Zúñiga. The reference to *F* by Zúñiga was echoed in passing by Antonio, *Bibliotheca hispana vetus*, vol. 2, bk. 8, ch. 5, 55.

11. Boynton, “Reconsidering the Toledo Codex”; Boynton, *Silent Music*, 113–40. The Palomares copy is now online; see <http://bdh.bne.es/bnesearch/detalle/bdh0000014908> (accessed March 14, 2016). On the authorship of the *Paleografía española*, see Galende Díaz, “Repertorio bibliográfico,” 244n8.

12. Andrés, *Origen, progresos y estado actual*, 2:31–41, 51–61, 102. Andrés also proposed Arabic roots, through Spanish poetry and song, for courtly Provençal lyrics.

13. Rodríguez de Castro, *Bibliotheca española*, 2:361–62, 631–42. This includes complete textual transcriptions of CSM 2 (from *T*), CSM 410, 411, Prologue A, Prologue B, CSM 401, 402 (from *E*), and other excerpts, in this order.

was restricted largely to academic circles; no musician is known to have been directly involved.

The CSM entered the realm of historical musicology with the publication in 1855 of the first volume of a history of Spanish music written by Mariano Soriano Fuertes. The author describes the notated thirteenth-century manuscripts, but in fact takes his examples of songs from the CSM from an eighteenth-century source.<sup>14</sup> The first published nineteenth-century musical transcriptions from one of the medieval manuscripts, *To*, were made by the composer Miguel Hilarión Eslava, who also provided a short evaluation of its notation, which he saw as related to that of contemporary *cantus mensurabilis*.<sup>15</sup> From the early twentieth century onward the CSM became the subject of much wider study, including that of its musical contents.<sup>16</sup> Questions relating to the processes of manuscript compilation and production and the significance of the miniatures have shaped research on the CSM for the past forty years.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, interest in performing the CSM, which had previously been restricted to select social circles with access to musical transcriptions, reached unprecedented levels, fueled jointly by the early music movement, growing concert and recording opportunities, and the more recent interest in Mediterranean cross-cultural dialogue.

By comparison with their modern notoriety, the medieval circulation of the CSM was severely limited. This article will ask what can be ascertained about the medieval echo of the CSM, however quiet it may have been. The absence of historical records attesting use of the collection by specific agents, and the established fact that the extant medieval manuscripts were not directly used for performance purposes, still leave open the possibility of investigating other kinds of traces, both external and internal. This is no

14. Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española*. For historical context, see Hernández, “Mariano Soriano Fuertes.” The late musical source used by Soriano Fuertes is identified below (see Figure 1, note 24, Examples 1–3, and related discussion).

15. Hilarión Eslava, *Cantiga 14<sup>a</sup> del Rey Don Alfonso* and *Paráfrasis de la Cantiga 10<sup>a</sup>*. The date of the former score (1864) is given in the latter’s prologue, written in 1876. Both publications include a paleographical transcription of the respective song in *To* and the following assessment: “The original song is written in early notation of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, according to the rules then applying to the proportional values of shapes used in the genre called *música mensurabilis*” (“La cantiga original está escrita en notación antigua propia de los siglos XII y XIII, según las reglas que entonces se observaban en los valores *proporcionales* de las figuras que se usaban en el género llamado *cantus mensurabilis*”). The musical translation into modern values is admittedly free but follows the original closely. The numbering of the songs follows *To*: no. 14 in *To* is no. 13 in *E/T*.

16. Ferreira, “Periphery Effaced.”

17. See, for instance, Keller, *Pious Brief Narrative* and “Threefold Impact.” On the illuminations, see Domínguez Rodríguez, “Algunas precisiones,” and Domínguez Rodríguez and Treviño Gajardo, *Las Cantigas de Santa María*. On other aspects of the manuscript production, see Parkinson, “False Refrains”; Schaffer, “Epigraphs as a Clue”; Ferreira, “Stemma of the Marian Cantigas”; Parkinson, “Layout in the *Códices ricos*”; Parkinson, “Structure and Layout”; Schaffer, “Evolution’ of the *Cantigas*”; Parkinson and Jackson, “Collection, Composition and Compilation”; and Campbell, “Song and Source.”

easy matter, since evidence is scarce and its interpretation often dubious. Documentary evidence of early circulation in both courtly and clerical environments will first be examined, and then internal iconographical, literary, and compositional data will be considered in order to determine how the CSM were intended to be used, by what kinds of people, and for what purposes. Finally, the CSM will be placed within the larger cultural and political context of the reign of Alfonso X, in the light of which it will be suggested that Alfonso, the author and compiler, had much more ambitious literary aspirations than he was able to realize, and that the relative obscurity of the CSM was inextricably linked to the political failure of the monarch who created them.

### Early Circulation: The Courtly Environment

Sources directly attesting the reception of the CSM in courtly circles are few and far between, and almost mute. Circulation beyond the regal holdings seems to have been severely limited; the few known instances, all related to Portugal, may have at their root close political and family ties with Portuguese royalty. (King Afonso III married Beatriz, natural daughter of Alfonso X, in 1253; their son Dinis inherited the Portuguese throne.) Three threads of evidence point, albeit inconclusively, to copies of the CSM reaching Portugal at an early date:

- (1) *Deus te salve, Gloriosa* (CSM 40) reappears, followed by the beginning of an otherwise unknown devotional song, *Falar quer'eu da senhora bem cousida*, among the secular *cantigas* by Alfonso X in the “Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional.” This is a sixteenth-century copy of the songbook put together in Portugal by the Count of Barcelos, natural son of King Dinis, in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. We do not know, however, whether one or both songs were part of the original compilation, or added to it at an unknown date or place.<sup>18</sup>

18. The “Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional” (B), in Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (no call number), can be easily accessed (digital photographs and transcriptions of texts) through the site <http://www.cantigas.fcsh.unl.pt>. It was probably written around 1525–27. *Deus te salve, Gloriosa* (B 467, To 30, E 40) is copied on folio 103r. See Pellegrini, “Le due laude alfonsine.” Copying from a *rotulus* could explain the inclusion of devotional songs in the antecedent of B. Schaffer, “Marginal Notes,” 84n22, observes that CSM 40 “in all likelihood occupied one of the few folios now missing from the *Códice Rico*, which folio was, based on examination of the codex, purposely cut from its gathering.” This raises the alternative possibility that this very folio ended up in the lost “Cancioneiro do Conde de Barcelos.” The linguistic traits of this song in B diverge, however, from both *To* and *E* (to which the lost *T* version would have been related), suggesting instead independent transmission; see Fidalgo Francisco, *As Cantigas de Loor de Santa Maria*, 104–11. The music of the song was first discussed by Lopes, “Uma ‘Cantiga de Santa Maria.’” A full edition of CSM 40 by Ferreira (music) and Parkinson (text) can be found in Ferreira, *Antologia de música*, no. 16, 1:138–39, 2:35.

- (2) In 1438 three songbooks are listed among the holdings of King Duarte: “O livro das trovas del Rey Dom Denis,” “Livro das trovas del Rey Dom Afonso, e[n]cadernado de couro o qual co[m]pilou F. de Montemor-o-Novo,” and “Lyvro das trovas del Rey,” all of unknown contents and all presumably lost.<sup>19</sup> Around 1528 the Italian humanist Angelo Colocci reports having seen a songbook by Alfonso X with musical notation, which likely refers to the CSM; since he had access in Rome to medieval Portuguese sources, and since the notated Castilian manuscripts of the CSM all seem to have remained in Spain, Portuguese ownership is a strong possibility.<sup>20</sup> Late in the sixteenth century Duarte Nunes de Leão reports that a songbook with lauds of the Blessed Virgin Mary could be found at the Torre do Tombo in Lisbon. This book, which he attributes to King Dinis (but which could merely have been owned by him), has since disappeared.<sup>21</sup>
- (3) Finally, and most importantly, Soriano Fuertes reproduces in 1855 the initial lines (refrain and first stanza) of CSM 67, which he presents as an example of Portuguese poetry from the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. He claims that it was taken from the “Cancioneiro do Conde de Marialva,” the songbook of Dom Francisco Coutinho, fourth Count of Marialva (d. 1532), and adds that the song appears there with the same kind of musical notation found in the Alfonsine codices.<sup>22</sup> In an appendix Soriano Fuertes reproduces CSM 67 again after six other songs from the CSM (221, 256, 2, 17, 6, 28), all with music; the melodies are provided with a bass line.

Higinio Anglés was initially skeptical of Soriano’s claims to have found an early Portuguese version of the CSM. Later, however, he changed his mind,

19. Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Manuscritos da Livraria, no. 1928: “Livro dos Conselhos de D. Duarte,” fol. 212v (<http://digitarq.arquivos.pt/viewer?id=4248785>). See Vasconcellos, *Cancioneiro da Ajuda*, 2:129–32, 232–36. Vasconcellos proposes that the title of the book “Livro das trovas del Rey Dom Afonso,” allegedly containing CSM, may refer to Afonso III of Portugal rather than Alfonso X of Castile and León; this hypothesis is acceptable only if Afonso is seen as the book’s former owner, since no song was ever attributed to him. The songs contained therein could have been secular, devotional, or both.

20. Fidalgo Francisco, “Notas coloccianas sobre Alfonso X.”

21. Vasconcellos, *Cancioneiro da Ajuda*, 2:64n5, 112–13, 232. At page 154 the author assumes that this book was once part of King Duarte’s possessions.

22. Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española*, 117. On the history of the Marialva songbook, see Braga, *Manual da história*, 137–43; Vasconcellos, *Cancioneiro da Ajuda*, 2:64n5, 104, 267–69; and Askins, *The Hispano-Portuguese “Cancioneiro,”* 200–203. According to Vasconcellos, the “Cancioneiro” was inherited by Dom Fernando, Duke of Guarda (1507–34), a royal Portuguese infante. He was known for his artistic and cultural patronage, and in 1530 married the count’s daughter, Dona Guiomar Coutinho. A book of apparently similar contents, described in the eighteenth century in Portugal, seems to have been a later miscellaneous copy, possibly the model for a section in the manuscript in the Barbieri collection described below, note 24.

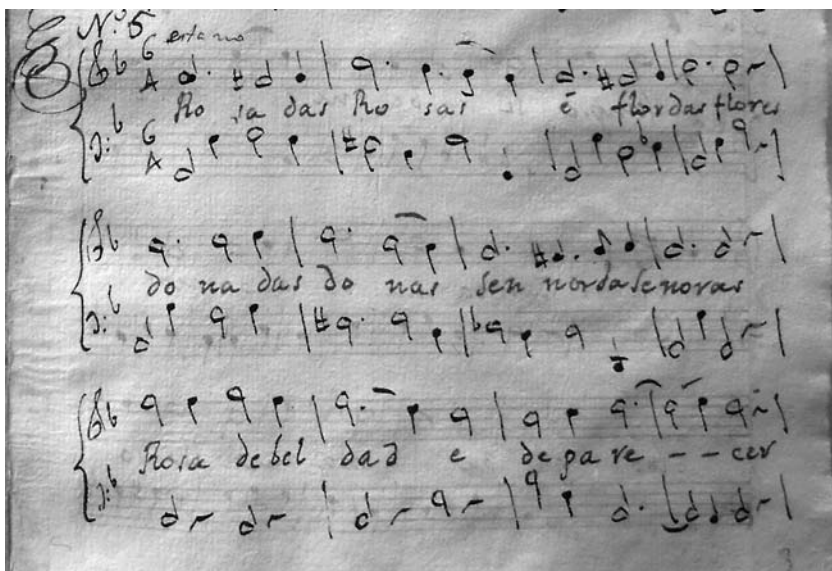


for in the meantime he had become aware of a late eighteenth-century gathering now in the Barbieri collection at Madrid that contains versions of CSM 221 (new melody), 256 (new melody), 2, 10, 17, 6, 67, and 28, in this order.<sup>23</sup> The coincidence with Soriano Fuertes's appendix in overall order and content, and the annotation "esta no" (not this one) entered next to the single Alfonsine song (CSM 10) that he chose not to reproduce, led Anglés to conclude that this gathering, possibly a modern copy of the "Cancioneiro de Marialva," was indeed the source actually used by Soriano Fuertes (see Figure 1).<sup>24</sup>

The hypothetical connection between the Barbieri gathering and the "Cancioneiro de Marialva" must, however, be partial, for the Barbieri MS reflects a miscellaneous collection of materials that retained their individuality there. The connection must also be indirect, since the Barbieri MS was copied in a single run by a hired professional, which is incompatible with simultaneous artistic remodeling of its contents; this implies that the stylistic adaptation of the medieval songs in its first section predates the copy.

23. Anglés, *La música de las Cantigas*, 2:16–17n2, concedes that Soriano Fuertes might have seen an old Portuguese *cancioneiro*, but suggests that he did not examine it carefully and concludes that he took five melodies directly from the Alfonsine manuscripts and freely modified them, two others being his own creation. For his later view, see *ibid.*, 3/1:148–50.

24. This compilation, Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, M. C<sup>a</sup> 3881-8, written by a professional copyist on Romaní paper from around the second half of the eighteenth century, is now online at the Biblioteca Digital Hispánica (<http://bdh.bne.es/>) under the tag Mc/3881/8. I wish to thank José Carlos Gosálvez Lara for his help in the identification of both its correct call number and its watermark, as well as his collaboration in deciphering a marginal note by the copyist. The transcriptions published by Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española* (plates 1–6, 8), are—discounting an error in the choice of clef in the upper part of no. 4 (c for g)—accurate copies of the music, in almost the same order, of the Barbieri MS, whose respective numbering is, however, different: 3–5, 7–9, 11. Soriano Fuertes did not transcribe CSM 10 (no. 6, on fol. 3r) and he put CSM 28 (no. 9, misplaced in the manuscript on fol. 6v) before CSM 67 (no. 11, on fol. 6r). Not only the absence of CSM 10 but also the new position of CSM 28 within the appendix left traces in the Barbieri MS: the original "n<sup>o</sup> 9" was crossed through and "6" added afterward. Contrary to Anglés's suggestion in 1958, the gathering was not copied by Soriano Fuertes himself, as the leaves are all rubricated and the conclusion of the copy is dated as expected in a commissioned work; the paper watermark also points to an earlier date. Anglés discussed the CSM together with the initial song in Castilian (no. 2, on fol. 1v), a Galician-Portuguese ballad in the middle (no. 10, on fol. 5r), and a Marian song in Catalan; the latter belongs, however, to a different section, as inferred from the new numbering (no. 1) and the reference to the respective folio (225) in the exemplar it was copied from. The manuscript comprises a paper cover with a title inscribed in Barbieri's hand, "Música española," and eighteen paper folios. The first section, taken from folios 85–89 of the presumed model, encompasses folios 1–10 (nos. 1–12). Its nucleus is a collection of CSM; nos. 1–2, 10, and 12 were presumably entered (in the model copied, or its source) as additional material, on spaces left blank. The second section, corresponding to folios 225–28 in its exemplar, encompasses folios 11–18 (new numbering, also 1–12). Its main contents are Spanish songs from the second half of the seventeenth century, with miscellaneous materials (nos. 1–3) added at the beginning.



**Figure 1** The Barbieri MS (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, M. C<sup>a</sup> 3881-8), fol. 3r, detail. Photograph by the author.

It is nonetheless likely that the first section of the manuscript depends on Portuguese sources, since between the *cantigas* one finds the *romance No figueiral*, whose late medieval text, unknown in Spain, surfaces in Bernardo de Brito's *Monarchia Lusitana*.<sup>25</sup>

It seems likely that the lost manuscript that served as the ultimate, indirect source of the Barbieri MS was produced in Portugal, partly before and partly after 1275. This dating may be inferred from the relationship of the contents to Alfonso's shifting political ambitions. Between 1257 and 1275 Alfonso aspired to the office of Holy Roman emperor. Later on, he mainly sought to advance the prestige of the Castilian-Leonese lineage. Through his Staufen mother, Queen Beatriz (née Elisabeth of Swabia), Alfonso descended from both Byzantine and Holy Roman emperors. In 1257, in Frankfurt, four of the seven German prince-electors voted to appoint Alfonso X Holy Roman emperor, while the remaining three separately voted for Richard of Cornwall, who a few months later had himself crowned in Aachen. From that point

25. Brito, *Segunda parte da Monarchia Lusytana*, bk. 7, fol. 296v; Barbieri MS, fol. 5r, no. 10, reproduced in Anglés, *La música de las Cantigas*, 3/2:588; Soriano Fuertes, *Historia de la música española*, 112–14 and plate 7 (11–13); Frenk Alatorre, *Nuevo corpus*, no. 894, 1:610–13. Although some have doubted the authenticity of this text, its language and metrical features are compatible with a fifteenth-century origin; see Pulsoni, “Di un’antica lirica pretrobadorica,” 633, and Vitali, “O Discurso acerca,” 204–10.

onward Alfonso embarked on an international campaign to have his status acknowledged and to outstrip his rival by securing his own coronation by the pope. Alfonso's newly acquired status as emperor-elect explains his self-presentation as the rightful king of the Romans in the *intitulatio* of the CSM ("E que dos Romãos Rey / é per dereit' e Sennor"). This status would reinforce his claims of supremacy among the Iberian monarchs, justified by his being a descendant of Alfonso VII, who in 1135 crowned himself in León "Imperator totius Hispaniae," Emperor of all Hispania. Even if only symbolic, the title was a diplomatic weapon in Alfonso's dealings with Navarre, Aragon, and Portugal.<sup>26</sup>

The CSM project went through several phases, each with a different focus; the melodies unrelated to the medieval notations (CSM 221, 256) belong to a late layer, dating most probably from 1275–80 (corresponding to CSM 201–300 in *E*), while the remainder belong to the earliest layer (corresponding to CSM 1–100 in *To*), dating most probably from before 1270: *To* nos. 2, 5, 7, 10, 27, and 65. CSM 10 is a *cantiga de loor*, a lyrical song of praise, while the others have a narrative content. The miracles related in these earlier *cantigas*, all of them previously transmitted by Gautier de Coinci and other sources, refer to only three cities, Toledo, Rome (twice), and Constantinople, seats respectively of the Visigothic Empire (of which the king of Castile and León claimed to be the rightful heir) and of the Roman Empire (whose authority the Holy Roman emperor claimed to represent), making this set especially useful as propaganda for Alfonso's would-be imperial status, when he was still campaigning to be crowned by the pope (i.e., before 1275).<sup>27</sup>




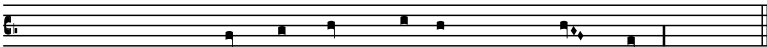
Melodic variants in the Barbieri MS also support an early date. The three medieval manuscripts with musical notation, *To*, *T*, and *E*, record three successive stages, from ca. 1270 (*To*) to 1284 (*E*). The Barbieri MS melody of CSM 6 is aligned with the earlier sources (see Example 1: melisma on "cree-," absent in *E*); the melodies of CSM 10 and 17 are closer to manuscript *To* than to either *T* or *E* (see Example 2: consistently long Bs, compatible with *To* but not always with *T/E*; and Example 3: two final longs, as in *To* but not in *T/E*).<sup>28</sup> These melodic versions may even predate *To*, as suggested by a variant in CSM 10 (see Example 3: G to C direct jump on "das ro-"; the interval is filled in with a B in *To* and with A–B in *T/E*).

26. González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 111–20.




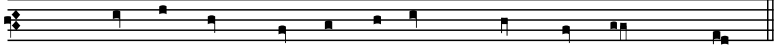
27. Kleine, "El carácter propagandístico," discusses and endorses the applicability of the "propaganda" concept in medieval history and hints at the propagandistic potential of the CSM.

28. The music in the examples was transcribed directly from the manuscripts; the medieval notation is based on the complete paleographical transcription of the music in the CSM that is presented in Ferreira, "Understanding the *Cantigas*." Manuscript *To* uses a different notation from *T* and *E*; it is unique, whereas the latter develop a French mensural precedent.


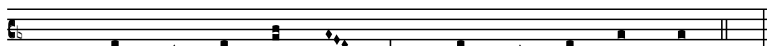
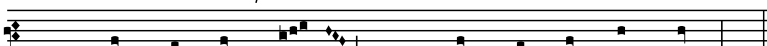
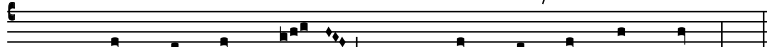
Example 1 CSM 6 (= *To* 5), as it appears in the Barbieri MS, *To*, *T*, and *E*

Barb.  *To*  *T*  *E*   
 nen - bra - lle, cre - e - d'a mi

Example 2 CSM 17 (= *To* 7), as it appears in the Barbieri MS, *To*, *T*, and *E*

Barb.  *To*  *T*  *E*   
 Sem-pre se - ja bē - ei - ta e lo - a - da

Example 3 CSM 10, as it appears in the Barbieri MS, *To*, *T*, and *E*

Barb.  *To*  *T*  *E*   
 Ro - sa das ro - sas e fror das fro - res

One may speculate, then, that fully notated exemplars of the CSM containing selected songs were made available to the Portuguese court before the collection was expanded beyond one hundred items—that is, before ca. 1270. Conversely, a few late *cantigas* would have circulated without music, which was provided long afterward. Various motives could be adduced to explain a gift of notated songs from Alfonso's court in Seville to the Portuguese court, other than the deep affection between Alfonso and his natural daughter Beatriz (named after her grandmother), who had married Afonso III of Portugal in 1253 as a child and in 1261 became the mother of Prince Dinis. Despite this marriage tie between the two monarchs, relations between Alfonso and his son-in-law had been soured between 1253 and 1263 by disagreements over the sovereignty of the Algarve in southern Portugal, by Alfonso's decade-long occupation of castles there, and possibly also by occasional skirmishes along the Portuguese-Castilian border. In 1264, in exchange for Portuguese military help in the suppression of the Murcia rebellion, Alfonso renounced his lordship over the Algarve and repatriated his garrisons. The Badajoz Treaty of 1267 sealed and supplemented this settlement with provisions concerning the Portuguese-Castilian border, ending Leonese claims to supremacy over Portugal. By presenting himself to Afonso III as emperor-elect, a cause he was now willing to pursue with renewed energy, Alfonso would apparently keep the upper hand and safeguard his prestige. A gift of appropriate *cantigas* would have reinforced this image.

While Alfonso's renunciation of his imperial claim in 1275 provides a *terminus ante quem* for such a hypothetical gift, another possible *terminus* is 1279, the year in which Dinis became king and assumed an antagonistic attitude toward his grandfather, a cause of much suffering that was reflected in Alfonso's will of 1282.<sup>29</sup> Melodic variants suggest, however, that the versions of the CSM arrived in Portugal before 1270. Likely political contexts for their transmission are furthermore concentrated between 1264 and 1269—the visit that Dinis paid to his grandfather in Seville sometime between 1264 and 1269, and, perhaps most likely, the joint signature in 1267 of the Badajoz Treaty by Alfonso X and Afonso III.<sup>30</sup>

If the two songs that were transmitted without music reached the Portuguese court, they may have arrived later, not as a royal gift but through other agents, most probably after Alfonso's death in 1284. This additional selection of *cantigas* may have been connected with the cult promoted by Alfonso at the Royal Chapel in Seville's cathedral from 1279 onward. This is suggested by the fact that the miracles told in CSM 221 and 256 benefitted

29. Pizarro, *D. Dinis*, 78–80. The will is reproduced in Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 609–15. Although the will is often dated to 1283 it was in fact written on November 8, 1282; see González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 358.

30. Mattoso, *História de Portugal*, 2:136–39; Mendonça, “D. Dinis e a fronteira sul”; Pizarro, *D. Dinis*, 59; González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 52–58, 187–90; González Jiménez, “Alfonso X y Portugal”; Vasconcellos, *Cancioneiro da Ajuda*, 2:153–54.

Alfonso's parents, King Ferdinand III (celebrated as the conqueror of Seville in 1248) and his wife Queen Beatriz, both of whom were buried in the Royal Chapel.<sup>31</sup> The texts of the songs could have traveled with Dom Martim Gil, who commissioned the first genealogy of Portuguese nobility, and who accompanied Alfonso X in Seville between 1280 and 1284 (where he probably inspired the group of *cantigas* that narrates miracles set in Terena, one of his possessions in Portugal).<sup>32</sup> They could also have come via Alfonso's daughter Beatriz, who spent the years 1282–84 with her father in Seville before returning to Portugal in 1285.<sup>33</sup> And given that the dynastic cult established by Alfonso X in Seville received a second impulse between 1330 and 1345, under Alfonso XI—as witnessed by the late illustration campaign in manuscript *F*<sup>34</sup>—the songs could also have arrived much later, as dynastic propaganda to enhance the reputation of the Royal Chapel in Seville. The cult at the Royal Chapel received its final impulse with the canonization of King Ferdinand III in 1671.

Thus, a small number of the CSM were transmitted to the Portuguese court in the thirteenth century, and may well have been performed there, although we have no external evidence for this. The only surviving evidence for the presence of the CSM at the Portuguese court (indeed, the only evidence of their presence at any court outside Alfonso's own) is the abovementioned Barbieri MS, an eighteenth-century descendant, through intermediary copies, of a lost thirteenth-century original. It presents late, performable versions of eight *cantigas*, six of which are given with their medieval melodies. Three of these do not feature variants of note, while the remaining three relate overall to variants found in the earliest source, *To*. The presence of a Portuguese ballad in their midst and a plausible but indirect connection with the lost “Cancioneiro do Conde de Marialva” make it probable that this set of *cantigas* was copied from a Portuguese manuscript.

The most likely context for the arrival of notated *cantigas* in Portugal is the royal court, between 1264 and 1269; the melodic variants point to a similarly early date. The older set of songs in the Barbieri MS may thus be textual descendants of the first stage of compilation and notated diffusion of the CSM, prior to the stages represented by the extant Alfonsine manuscripts. The fact that the initial pair of songs appears in this manuscript with new melodies can be explained by their independent transmission, at a later date, without musical notation, which in turn relates to their belonging to a different layer in the Alfonsine collection. Assuming that the addition was

31. Laguna Paúl, “La capilla de los Reyes”; Fernández Fernández, “‘Muy noble, et mucho alto.’”

32. Rei, “Os Riba de Vizela.” Dom Martim Gil (1235?–95) had also been on Alfonso's side between 1264 and 1275. In 1285, after Alfonso's death, he was appointed *alférez-mor* (field marshal) to King Dinis of Portugal.

33. Ventura, *D. Afonso III*, 204–5.

34. Sánchez Ameijeiras, “La fortuna sevillana.”

made at an early stage, these songs may have been sent to Portugal in order to enhance the dynastic cult of Ferdinand III and Beatriz of Swabia at Seville, which could have been accomplished without their being performed by their Portuguese recipients. The original set, with or without interspersed additions, was eventually copied into the “Cancioneiro do Conde de Marialva.” At an unknown place and date the unnotated texts were provided with melodies and all the contents transcribed into modern notation and given an additional bass line, for performance purposes. The Barbieri MS provides a copy of this final stage.

### Early Circulation: Ritual Context

Toledo and Seville, Castile’s two archiepiscopal sees and the principal capitals for Alfonso X’s itinerant court, were the two most obvious sites for ritual performance of the CSM in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Toledo, the ancient Visigothic capital, was Alfonso’s own birthplace; he acknowledged it as the “head of Spain,” probably had himself crowned there in 1254, and often used it as his capital. Toledo’s clergy claimed to be particularly devoted to the Virgin Mary, since its renowned seventh-century bishop, Saint Ildefonsus, had promoted her cult in his writings.<sup>35</sup> It has often been asserted that the CSM were performed in Toledo’s cathedral, not as part of the formal liturgy but in paraliturgical rites. Around 1785 the chronicler Hernández Vallejo claimed that this practice had begun in the thirteenth century.<sup>36</sup> Like many others of its kind, however, the claim cannot be substantiated, as there is no record of the presence of manuscript *To* in Toledo before 1726, nor of vernacular language being used in celebrations there before the sixteenth century.<sup>37</sup>

Seville, the city conquered by Alfonso’s father, has a much stronger claim to have witnessed ritual performances of the CSM. Alfonso resided in Seville for much of his later reign, and chose its cathedral as the burial place for both his parents, as well as (as a second choice) for himself. (His mother Beatriz had died more than a decade before Seville’s reconquest, and was first buried in Burgos, but Alfonso arranged to have her tomb transferred to Seville in 1279.) A passage in the codicil to Alfonso’s will, written in Seville in January 1284, three months before his death, states, “We also command that all the books of the songs of praise of Holy Mary should be kept in that church

35. O’Callaghan, *Alfonso X*, 17ff., 74–75. On Saint Ildefonsus, see note 42 below.

36. See Felipe Antonio Hernández Vallejo, “Memorias i disertaciones que podrán servir al que escriba la historia de la iglesia de Toledo desde el año MLXXXV en que conquistó dicha ciudad el rei Alfonso VI de Castilla” (MS, ca. 1785), cited in Donovan, *Liturgical Drama*, 43.

37. Fernández Fernández, “Cantigas de Santa María,” 328–30; the author, however, gives credence to the speculative hypothesis entertained by Ramón González Ruiz that the book arrived in Toledo in the luggage of Archbishop Gonzalo García Gudiel (1280–99).

where our body will be interred, and that they should cause them to be sung on the feasts of Holy Mary.”<sup>38</sup> This suggests that all the books, including *To*, were sent in the thirteenth century to Seville’s cathedral, which Alfonso had richly and repeatedly endowed during his reign and where he was eventually buried.

Seville’s post-reconquest cathedral (built as a mosque in 1172–98) was a huge structure with seventeen naves and a roofed space of more than 8,200 square meters; it was eventually replaced by a vast Gothic building erected during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In Alfonso’s time the church employed ten dignitaries, forty canons, half as many full-portioners (incumbents who shared the choral duties and a portion of the revenues of a canonicate), the same number of half-portioners, and a host of other clerics serving in the choir, in chapels, or in parishes. The Blessed Virgin Mary was the patroness of the church from its dedication in 1252, the year of King Ferdinand III’s death. A papal bull of 1254 granted twenty days of indulgence to anyone who visited the church on a Saturday (the weekday singled out for the Marian cult), prayed for the soul of King Ferdinand, and practiced almsgiving. From 1259 onward the cathedral benefitted from a papal privilege granting one hundred days of indulgence to all who attended the Feast of the Assumption (August 15), which the cathedral recognized as its own feast day, or any other Marian feast singled out by a procession. In 1279, the year that Queen Beatriz’s tomb was transferred to Seville, a Royal Chapel with a second Marian altar was newly established; it was arranged on a platform artificially elevated from the ground, which occupied around 440 square meters, and had at its center a richly dressed and coronated articulated sculpture of the Virgin, which is still extant. Daily service there was entrusted to chaplains from the Royal Chapel’s foundation, although it was specifically endowed to fulfil these duties no earlier than January 1285.<sup>39</sup>

Alfonso established in his codicil that Seville’s canons should arrange for *cantigas* to be sung on the feast days of Mary. While they would have been expected to comply, there is only slight evidence that they did so. It seems likely that for a while some form of performance of the CSM in or around the church occurred as planned, drawing on the many clerical singers

38. *Memorial histórico español* (1851), reproduced in Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 616–22, at 618: “Otro sí mandamos, que todos los libros de los Cantares de loor de Sancta Maria sean todos en aquella iglesia do nuestro cuerpo se enterrare, e que los fagan cantar en las fiestas de Sancta Maria.” English translation from O’Callaghan, *Alfonso X*, 12. Another translation (of a longer excerpt) is given in Kennedy, “Alfonso’s Miraculous Book,” 202. The Latin version of the will can be found in Daumet, “Les testaments d’Alphonse X,” 91.

39. Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Annales eclesiásticos y seculares*, 87, 91; Instituto Enrique Flórez, “Sevilla, archidiócesis de,” 2447; Laguna Paúl, “La capilla de los Reyes”; Laguna Paúl, “Una capilla mía”; Laguna Paúl, “Mobiliario medieval”; Laguna Paúl, “Devociones reales”; Jiménez Martín, “Notas sobre la mezquita mayor.”



available. At the end of the eighteenth century it was claimed that the books of the CSM had been kept for many years in the archive of the cathedral, and that their contents were sung on the feasts of Mary, until King Philip II requisitioned them for El Escorial (where manuscripts *T* and *E* arrived in 1576).<sup>40</sup> Other sources, however, suggest that only one book, *E*, remained in Seville until the sixteenth century; *T* and *F* probably returned to the royal court holdings as early as the second quarter of the fourteenth century, under Alfonso XI;<sup>41</sup> and there is no explicit mention in other known sources of the CSM being performed in the church during the Middle Ages.

Performing instructions are nonetheless found in some of the manuscripts, and an effort seems to have been made to facilitate the singing of selected *cantigas* according to the church calendar. In manuscript *To* five songs were singled out to be sung on five different Marian feasts, listed according to the order of events in Mary's life: Nativity (September 8), Annunciation (March 25), Virginité (December 18),<sup>42</sup> Purification (February 2), and Assumption (August 15). This does not correspond to the order of the feasts in the

40. Antonio María Espinosa, *Anales eclesiásticos y seculares . . . continuación de los que formó D. Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga* (1795–96), cited in Fernández Fernández, “Cantigas de Santa María,” 336n52.

41. Fernández Fernández, “Cantigas de Santa María,” 337–41, 344–47.

42. The feast should be identified with the Expectation (December 18), not with the Conception (December 8), as is often assumed. The four Marian feasts of Nativity, Annunciation, Purification, and Assumption were already commemorated in Rome before 701. The feast of December 18 corresponds to the Feast of Mary, or of the Annunciation or Incarnation, which had been in the Visigothic calendar since 656; its implementation, liturgical arrangement, and the introductory prayer for the Mass were attributed to Saint Ildefonsus of Toledo (archbishop 657–67), who wrote a famous treatise on the virginity of Mary, thus justifying the alternative name for the feast, Virginité, in the CSM. See Domínguez del Val, “Ildefonso de Toledo,” and Ibañez and Mendoza, *María en la liturgia hispana*. The Hispanic church also commemorated the Assumption, at least from the ninth century onward; see Vives, “Liturgia. C. Calendarios litúrgicos,” and Gironés, “La Virgen María.” Toledo kept the December feast after the adoption of the Roman calendar; the name eventually changed (to “Expectatio partus” or “Virgen de la O”) to avoid confusion with the Roman commemoration of the Annunciation on March 25. The polemical feast of the Conception (December 8), adopted in England and parts of France before or during the twelfth century, was resisted in Spain until the fourteenth century, and was acknowledged by Rome only in 1476. Cistercians and Dominicans were utterly opposed to it, and even the Franciscans began to add it to their calendars only from the fourteenth century onward, not from 1263 as is often claimed. See Corbin, “L’Office de la Conception,” 140–41, and De Fiore, “Inmaculada,” 935. Post-reconquest Seville took its liturgical usages from Toledo. According to Ortiz de Zúñiga, *Anales eclesiásticos y seculares*, 87–88, on May 5, 1259, the pope conceded the *pallium* to the local archbishop, allowing him to use it on the four (Roman) festivities of the Virgin; to these the local feast inherited from Toledo, not the Conception, must be added. This is confirmed by a Seville sacramentary dating from the last quarter of the thirteenth century (Seville, Biblioteca Colombina, ms. Vitr. BB 149-11), which records on folio 194v the “Annuntiatio sancte Marie” commemorated on December 18. See Janini, *Manuscritos litúrgicos*, 1:285–87. (Juan Pablo Rubio Sadia, OSB, kindly drew my attention to the information in this catalog.) The Feast of the Conception was introduced in Seville only in 1369; see Laguna Paúl, “Un sacramentario sevillano,” 16.

calendar year, however, which was the order followed by liturgical Sanctoriale and processional books, intended for performance.

A contemporary marginal note below the last song states that on the Vigil of Saint Mary in August (i.e., the Feast of the Assumption) the *cantiga Des quando Deus sa Madre aos ceos levou* (CSM 419), which recounts Mary's miraculous assumption into heaven, should be sung, and that on the day itself, during the procession, the choice should be *Bêeita es, Maria* (CSM 420).<sup>43</sup>

The latter song must have been performed from a separate processional source, since it is not found in this manuscript but only in *E* (the "códice de los músicos" now in El Escorial), which is too bulky and heavy to be portable. This provides a link between *To* and the scriptural environment of *E*. The marginal note in *To* also agrees with the rubrics for the corresponding songs in *E*. The latter's initial gatherings, where the *cantigas* appear, may have been kept apart from the main body of the book before it was first bound or rebound; none of the gatherings is self-contained, however, and both their large format and their refined decoration make them inappropriate for processional use.<sup>44</sup> The variants in *E* suggest that the songs were transcribed there from an intermediary copy or copies.<sup>45</sup> Martha Schaffer's conclusion that the marginal comment "represents a plan for performance which is either commemorated or realized in *E*" is sound, although "commemorated" is more appropriate than "realized."<sup>46</sup>

For this section of manuscript *E*, twelve songs (preceded by a prologue), including the original five, were selected (see Table 1). The prologue (CSM 410) refers to the five feasts in biographical order, as they appear in *To*, associating them with the five letters of "MARIA." In the following folios the arrangement of the original *cantigas* was changed, most likely to fit the order of the first annual performance of each song, as in liturgical books: *Tod' a queste mund' a loar deveria* (originally for December 18) was put before *Tan Bêeita foi a saudaçon* (March 25). The latter still precedes the *cantiga* meant for Purification (February 2), but it could in fact have been performed previously, either during the Feast of the Expectation (which, from the time of Saint Ildefonsus of Toledo, also commemorated the Annunciation), or, more likely, at Vespers during the last week of Advent, during Vigils or sometime after Lauds before the main Christmas Mass, or even on Sundays

43. Fol. 144r (abbreviations resolved): "A uigilia de santa maria d'agosto seia dita *Des quando deus sa madre aos ceos leuou* / e no dia seia dita a precisson *Beeita es maria filla madr' e criada*." The transcriptions presented here were made directly from the facsimile; they do not always coincide with Schaffer, *Afonso X o Sabio*.

44. The first gathering encompasses folios 1–8, the second folios 9–12. The contents of folio 9r are the continuation of the song begun on folio 8v (the break falls in the middle of the first stanza). Although folios 9–12 appear to belong together, this is in fact not the case; see Avenozá Vera, "Codicología alfonsí."

45. Ferreira, *Aspectos da música medieval*, 199–205.

46. Schaffer, "Marginal Notes," 83.

**Table 1** “Festas de Santa Maria,” with excerpts from the relevant epigraphs in manuscripts *To* and *E*. Epigraphs for CSM 412, 414, 416, and 422 are omitted entirely. Abbreviations have been resolved.

<i>To</i>	<i>Finalis</i>	<i>E</i>
<i>Esta primeira é da sa nacêça que cae no mes de setêbro</i>	D	0. Quen Santa Maria servir [410] <i>Esta é a primeyra da nacença de santa maria que cae no mes de setembro</i>
1. Bêeito foi o dia [411]	D	1. Bêeito foi o dia [411]
	D	2. Virgen Madre groriosa [340 = 412]
	G	3. Tod’ aqieste mund’ a loar deveria [413]
	G	4. Como Deus é comprida Trüidade [414]
<i>Esta segunda é de como o angeo gabriel uêo saudar a santa maria, e esta festa é no mes de março</i>		<i>Esta quita é de como o angeo gabriel uêo saudar a santa maria e esta festa [é] no mes de março</i>
2. Tan Bêeita foi a saudaçon [415]	F	5. Tan Bêeita foi a saudaçon [415]
	D	6. Muito foi noss’ amigo [210 = 416]
<i>Esta terceira é da uirgüidade de santa maria, e esta festa é no mes de dezenbro, e fezea sant alifonso</i>		
3. Tod’ aqieste mund’ a loar deveria [413]	G	
<i>Esta quarta é como sãta maria leuou seu fillo ao templo e o ofereçeu a san simeon, e esta festa é no mes de feureyro</i>		<i>Esta .vii. é como santa Maria leuou seu fillo ao templo, e o offereçeu a san symeon, e esta festa é no mes de frebreyro</i>
4. Nobre don e muy preçado [417]	D	7. Nobre don e muy preçado [417]
	D	8. Os sete dôes que Deus dá [418]
<i>Esta quinta é como sãta maria passou deste mundo e se foi ao ceo, e esta festa é no mes d’agosto meçãte</i>		<i>[E]sta .ix. é da uigilia de santa Maria d’agosto como ela passou deste mundo e foi leuada ao çeo</i>
5. Des quando Deus sa Madre [419]	F	9. Des quando Deus sa Madre [419] <i>Esta deçima é no dia aa proçession como as proçessiões do çeo reçeberon a santa maria quando sobiu aos çeos</i>
	D	10. Bêeita es, Maria [420] <i>Esta .xi. en otro dia de santa maria é de como lle venna emente de nos ao dia do iuzzio e rogue a seu fillo que nos aia merçee</i>
	D	11. Nenbre-sse-te, Madre [421]
	D	12. Madre de Deus, ora [422]

between Christmas and Purification—all occasions on which Marian processional antiphons commemorating Mary's virgin pregnancy, mostly starting with the letter "O," used to be sung in southern France and Castile.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to this reordering every one of the five original *cantigas* was paired with a *cantiga de loor* following it, the whole being provided with an introduction and an additional pair of songs at the end, thus significantly expanding the "Festas de Santa María" subcollection (FSM). Maria Cristina Borges has demonstrated the architectural cogency and self-sufficiency of this subcollection in *E*, and remarked that the choice of *loores* to go with the original *cantigas* is thematically justified.<sup>48</sup> Thus, CSM 411 (Nativity) celebrates in the refrain the birth of the Virgin, but mostly concerns her Immaculate Conception; CSM 412 glosses the "whiteness" of the Virgin, the fact of her being spotless, and is thus a celebration of purity. CSM 413 (Virginity) celebrates and explains virginity; CSM 414 tells of three ways in which Mary is a virgin. CSM 415 and CSM 416 both speak of the Annunciation. CSM 417 (Purification) tells of the presentation of Jesus at the Temple and Mary's offering of two doves; CSM 418 is about the gifts of the Holy Spirit (whose symbol is a dove) with which Mary is infused. CSM 419 (Assumption) is about the Legend of the Assumption; CSM 420 tells of the life and deeds of Mary, but also of her reception into heaven. The last two songs are both prayers for Mary's intercession in order to secure salvation, and both are contrafacts of liturgical chants. The fact that this annex precedes the main body of *E*, rather than following it, seems supported by the respective prologue (CSM 410): "And because I take great pleasure in serving Her, I shall serve Her and try with all my might to tell of Her miracles. . . . But first I shall tell in pleasing melody of Her five feast days."<sup>49</sup>

47. See, for instance, folio 14r in the twelfth-century Plenary Missal in the Biblioteca Universitaria de Salamanca, Ms. 2637 (<http://pemdatabase.eu/source/4126>). Many other examples are given in Clément-Dumas, "Le processionnal en Aquitaine." See also Roederer, "Eleventh-Century Aquitanian Chant," 1:19, 34, 85–87, 125–26, 154, 160–63; 2:12–13, 23–25.

48. Borges, "The *Festas de Santa María*" and personal communication of October 18, 1989.

49. "E porque eu gran sabor ey / de a servir, servi-la-ey, / e quanto poder punnarey / d'os seus miragres descobrir. . . . Pero direi ant' en bon son / das sas çinque festas." Avenoz Vera, "Codicología alfonsí," established that *E* is formed of two different codicological units, since the initial section of the FSM (fols. 1–12) had autonomous existence before it was bound together with the main body of the volume. Fernández Fernández, "Los manuscritos," 106–7, agrees. Although from a codicological point of view this section indeed seems artificially attached to the main body of the volume, it may have been made expressly to occupy its current position, as an afterthought, when the book was nearing completion. Schaffer, "Marginal Notes," 79–80, posits that "The *E* cluster represents an effort, most likely undertaken subsequent to Alfonso's death, to expand the *To festas* (a complement to the expansionary tradition of Alfonso's Marian miracles), perhaps with the terms of Alfonso's will in mind. It may have existed briefly as a booklet, but then was incorporated into MS *E* in order to complement and enhance that collection." Kennedy, "Alfonso's Miraculous Book," 204, remarks, however, that "there is no powerful, palaeographical reason" to assume that alterations to *E* "were not made during Alfonso's reign . . . with royal wishes in mind. Placing a series of poems which could be sung on Marian feast days at

Musical compatibility seems to have been taken into account in the FSM expansion, in that paired *cantigas* have the same or related *finalis*, the ending note being a defining feature of ecclesiastical modality.<sup>50</sup> When a song based on F is followed by another based on D the latter's intonation has F as the first or second note. *Cantiga* 100 in *To* (CSM 422) was transposed down a fifth to D, the same *finalis* as in the preceding song. Since both the melody, and structure, of CSM 421 are based on a troped version of the Offertory *Recordare virgo mater*, which is associated with the Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the "other day" referred to in the epigraph may be any Saturday or additional Marian commemoration, such as the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, introduced in 1243. The pairing with CSM 422 is confirmed by the epigraph to the song, "This . . . is about how [we pray that] She be mindful of us on the Day of Judgment and beseech Her Son to have mercy on us,"<sup>51</sup> which makes sense only if CSM 421 was performed together with CSM 422, the only one of these two to refer to the Judgment Day.

Another marginal note in *To* relates to the five Feasts of Our Lord Jesus Christ (FJC). Just below the second *cantiga*, intended for Epiphany, an annotation instructs us that it should be followed by *Aver non poderia* (*To* 50 = CSM 403), apparently associated with the Octave of the Epiphany (Feast of the Baptism of the Lord).<sup>52</sup> The two songs share the same final G. Thus, the same pairing principle observed in the preceding feasts, using new or appropriate preexisting *loores*, is applied here too. This suggests that the FJC were eventually expanded along the same rationale as the FSM, though the end result has not survived. One may thus conclude with confidence that some form of paraliturgical performance in Seville, implying paired CSM,

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the start of an anthology of Marian miracles broadened the purpose of the codex by turning a work of personal devotion into an object suitable for rituals of public worship."

50. This editorial decision is likely to have been taken by a cleric, since King Alfonso himself, like most troubadours, did not compose on the basis of a chosen *finalis*; see Ferreira, "Alfonso X, compositor." CSM 340 was wrongly provided with a refrain, ending on G, made up of the initial five lines of the first strophe; the corresponding CSM 412 keeps the original structure, with D final. The rubricator, however, hesitates, either because he was used to providing refrain incipits in lines left blank by the first copyist or because he had CSM 340 in *E* as a model and took a while to recognize the falsity of its refrain. This suggests that the FSM appendix could have been prepared after CSM 340 was copied into the main body of *E*—that is, during or after its final stages of copying. See Parkinson, "False Refrains," 36–39 and plates 7–8, and Parkinson, *Alfonso X, the Learned*, 154–57.

51. "Esta . . . é de como lle uenna emente de nos ao dia do iuyzio e rogue a seu fillo que nos aia merçee."

52. Fol. 145v: "Pois desta deue seer / A  ~~festa de ramos~~ do batismo / *Auer nõ poderia lagrimas que chorasse*." The crossed-out assignment for Palm Sunday may reflect earlier practice: this would have been thematically appropriate, since five of the Seven Sorrows of Mary, contemplated in the song, relate to the events of Holy Week. The song may have been assigned afterward to the Octave of Epiphany.

for at least ten feasts in the church calendar was, at some point, planned and, at least for the Marian feasts, very likely put into practice in the late thirteenth century.

## Modes of Transmission

Aside from these liturgical instructions for selected feast days, the extant manuscripts of CSM offer few unambiguous clues as to how the *cantigas* were to be performed. Outside of ritual celebrations in Seville's cathedral, who were the intended audiences for the songs? Who sang them, for whom, and where? What messages were they meant to convey, beyond the most overt praise of the Virgin Mary? Modern scholars have proposed a strikingly diverse array of answers to these questions, many of them quite speculative.

Some have tried to see in the CSM an educational program for the Castilian masses, while others have made them out to be a private compilation for the king's inner circle alone. In order to assess these competing claims, we will examine both the internal and external evidence. The enticing idea that the CSM reached a wide medieval audience cannot be reconciled with the existing evidence, which, as noted above, suggests quite a limited circulation. A careful evaluation of the internal evidence, both textual and formal, nonetheless indicates that Alfonso did intend the CSM to circulate, and be performed, across a broad range of social classes, as part of an ambitious cultural program with both religious and political objectives. These intentions were unfulfilled because of the ultimate failure of the monarch himself, and his posthumous denigration.

The idea that the CSM had a very large audience in the Middle Ages has gained undeserved currency in modern Alfonsine studies. The fact that *T* and *F* are spectacular works of art has suggested to some modern interpreters that they were meant as showcases: according to John Keller,

it is possible that the volumes might have been on display. Artistic items of great value were to be seen in the treasuries of cathedrals, where many might have been displayed along with tapestries, jewels, and other priceless items. Alfonso was very proud of the *Cantigas*. It is unlikely, then, that he would have kept the volumes hidden . . . a reasonable number [of Spaniards] must have seen the illuminated pages.<sup>53</sup>

Keller unfortunately projects modern cultural assumptions onto the thirteenth century: proximity to precious liturgical objects was normally the privilege of the clergy, richly painted ceilings and sculpture were often too far up to be fully appreciated (except by the One who really mattered), and access to medieval cathedral treasuries was highly selective. Moreover,

53. Keller, "Threefold Impact," 11–12.

King Alfonso's will clearly implies that the rightful place for the books of the CSM would be a library, unlike other items that he actually offers to Seville's cathedral to be put on display—an altarcloth and two altarpieces, a reliquary to be held during Marian processions and otherwise placed on the main altar, and a historiated panel with ivory images, to be placed on the altar of the Virgin during the Saturday Mass.<sup>54</sup>

Keller proposed that the miracle songs among the CSM “were carefully planned and couched in three media—poetic, melodic, and visual—to catch and hold attention.”<sup>55</sup> He was not entirely satisfied, however, with his already generous belief that “a good many people” saw the CSM volumes, for this still excluded “the multitudes, who never saw the illuminations,” from experiencing the threefold impact of the CSM; he therefore suggested that this might have been achieved through dramatic production.<sup>56</sup> In this spirit he interprets the illustrations of CSM 18 in *T*, where the statue of the Virgin and the Child Jesus changes position, as an attempt to capture the movement of an actress playing the role of the seated statue, in the context of a hypothetical dramatization of the miracle narrative.<sup>57</sup> Keller seems unaware that in Alfonso's time articulated statues of the Virgin were in use, allowing for different bodily postures.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, Galician-Portuguese song cannot be assimilated to or derived from dialogue-ridden, ceremonial “liturgical drama.” This has its own lineage of Latin and Romance ramifications.<sup>59</sup>

The fact that the historiated twin volumes *T* and *F* are not ordinary song-books does not imply that they were mere luxury objects, or display exhibits. Rather they should be seen as enameled writings accruing to the prestige of the monarchy: precious encasements, with miracle stories—a sacred content, shaped by a devout king—at their core. CSM 209 claims that Alfonso X was cured by contact with the book of *cantigas* that traveled with him (possibly *To*). A collection of CSM could thus acquire the thaumaturgic status of a relic, and accordingly deserve a magnificent wrapping, made of exquisite miniatures, generously inlaid with gold.<sup>60</sup> Thus we must reject as unfounded

54. Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 617–18.

55. Keller, *Pious Brief Narrative*, 82.

56. Keller, “Threefold Impact,” 11.

57. Keller, *Pious Brief Narrative*, 109.

58. A case in point is the thirteenth-century *Virgen de los Reyes*, the central piece of the King's Chapel devised by Alfonso X, that can still be seen in Seville; see Domínguez Rodríguez, “Algunas precisiones,” 156–60, and Laguna Paúl, “Devociones reales,” 137–38.

59. Donovan, *Liturgical Drama*, established that “liturgical drama”—taken in its wider, nineteenth-century meaning—took root in the Catalan area but was virtually ignored elsewhere in Iberia. On an early and apparently unique Toledan example of Castilian mystery play, see Deyermond, “El *Auto de los Reyes Magos*”; Castro Caridad and Lorenzo Gradín, “De lo espectacular a lo teatral”; and Gutiérrez, “Estudio y edición.”

60. On the cure, see Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 275–84 and plate 22. On CSM 209 as an instance of medieval healing book narratives, see Kennedy, “Alfonso's Miraculous Book.”

speculations that “royal patronage provided for the *Cantigas* a large and general audience,” and that the “potential for impact on a large audience was considerably enhanced both by the beautiful illustrations which were probably publicly exhibited and also (possibly) by dramatized renderings.”<sup>61</sup> On the contrary, the actual visual impact of the CSM was probably exerted upon only a privileged few; and this by design rather than by accident.

In sharp contrast to Keller’s speculations, which exaggerate the popular diffusion of the CSM, John Griffiths considers a minimalist hypothesis—“the possibility that the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* might never have been intended as a performance repertory” but were “simply a manifestation of the medieval imagination, an idealised and imaginary repertory that never really otherwise existed.” He suggests that

the collection of *Cantigas* was made, on the one hand, as part of the king’s program of encyclopaedic gathering of knowledge about all areas of life and, on the other, as a device to help him achieve his own eternal salvation through pious deeds such as the compilation of the collection itself, perhaps through singing from it, or simply from reading and admiring it in silent devotion.<sup>62</sup>

Griffiths’s main purpose is not to settle definitively the question of whether or how the CSM were actually performed, but “to focus attention on the encyclopaedic dimensions of the whole enterprise.” While it is commonly agreed that the CSM are the product of a conscious attempt to gather miracle stories from all quarters and “to encompass a full range of human experience,” and that the set of miniatures found in manuscript *E* “represents the most comprehensive pictorial encyclopaedia of musical instruments to survive from the entire medieval period,” the view of the CSM’s melodies as an encyclopedia of monodic song, comprising real materials otherwise unrecorded, is plausible but not so easily accepted. Griffiths argues that this is borne out both by the contrafacts identified so far and by the fact that “the compilers appear to have run out of melodies as they approached the end of their task,” and instead of composing new tunes afresh “began to recycle some that had already been used in earlier songs.” In the context of Alfonso’s endeavors, he finds it perfectly logical to view the collection as “a systematic threefold encyclopaedic compilation of miracles of the Virgin Mary, popular melodies and musical instruments,” the whole process resulting in “comprehensive, wondrous books.”<sup>63</sup>

Griffiths’s tantalizing suggestion that the CSM are not “real living performance materials” but rather “an imaginary idealisation of performance” rests

61. Flory, “Berceo’s *Milagros*,” 15.

62. Griffiths, “Alfonsine Encyclopaedia of Music,” 224.

63. *Ibid.*, 228, 224–25, 223. The Davidic scope and presentation of the CSM, akin to that of the Book of Psalms, is dealt with by Snow, “Cantando e con dança,” and Fernández de la Cuesta, “La música de las Cantigas.”



on two main arguments: on their formal homogeneity, which seems to indicate that they were “constructed as a collection rather than drawn directly from a living performance tradition,” and on “the absence of any evidence of their performance”; even allowing for oral transmission, he finds it “strange that no specific documentation exists confirming the performance of the *Cantigas de Santa María*.”<sup>64</sup> While both arguments are reasonable, Griffiths may stretch them further than is warranted. Formal homogeneity is certainly a sign of coherent conception as opposed to piecemeal juxtaposition, but it does not exclude relation to a living performance tradition, as we will shortly see in the discussion of form. The second argument is an argument from silence, which is plausible only insofar as the survival of written descriptions, performance materials, or further manuscript copies of the CSM would be expected if they had actually been performed in public. Such an expectation is misplaced, considering the potential role of oral transmission, the nature of the extant medieval documentation (note sheets were typically disposed of and ad hoc performance arrangements disregarded), and the personal nature of the CSM enterprise (which made its diffusion vulnerable to adverse political contexts). One must also consider the possibility that performance was locally initiated but not sustained because of insufficient practical support (such as dedicated endowments, or confraternity statutes to ensure performance continuity for more than a few years), its documentary trail thus being reduced to nil.

Griffiths does acknowledge that some compositions might have been meant to have a larger impact as performed songs, as implied by the traces of courtly circulation and intended practical use of specific sets of the CSM explored above. It may be wondered whether, even if Keller’s claims about popular diffusion are exaggerated, he is right to suggest that the CSM were “written to be sung publicly at court and in churches” and “directed at all levels of society.”<sup>65</sup> Elvira Fidalgo offers the more modest opinion that the CSM were written to be sung, possibly only on selected occasions, for the enjoyment of an elite, courtly audience capable of appreciating their poetic and musical artifice. She adds, however, that some songs, either singly or in small groups, may have been performed by clerics and court minstrels in public spaces, and possibly appropriated by *jongleurs* in those Marian sanctuaries where the narrated miracles were located, thus extending their reach much beyond the court.<sup>66</sup>

64. Griffiths, “Alfonsine Encyclopaedia of Music,” 223–24, 228. Griffiths argues that “the manuscripts themselves exhibit no signs of wear through usage. More importantly, there are no known records that point to a performance tradition of devotional Marian *cantigas* at Alfonso’s court or elsewhere in Spain. The only reference to the performance of these songs is in Alfonso’s own will” (224).

65. Keller, *Pious Brief Narrative*, 83.

66. Fidalgo Francisco, *As Cantigas de Santa María*, 87–89.

Fidalgo's approach is prudent in its identification of possible audiences, correct in its assumption that specific targets may have changed over time, and plausible in its estimation of the actual reach achieved by the CSM in Alfonso's lifetime. The crucial problem in her statement is the presumption, diametrically opposed to Keller's, that the king created these songs mainly for personal and courtly delight, "for the entertainment and benefit" of a select few. One is thus led to believe that the CSM represented an almost private, playful activity, akin to troubadour engagement among courtiers. It will be argued below that, on the contrary, the collection reflects an ambitious political and religious agenda, and that it was designed at the outset to have aural public impact both within and beyond the court. In the remainder of this section I will argue the more fundamental point that Alfonso conceived the CSM as a collection of songs that should be publicly performed according to either established clerical usage or the courtly tradition with which he was intimately familiar.

Alfonso's project involved a large group of collaborators, including translators, able versifiers in Galician-Portuguese, copyists, illuminators, cultivated musicians, and *jongleurs*. In codex *T* (fol. 4v) we see the king with a *rotulus* featuring the beginning of the prologue to the CSM (its text separated by horizontal red lines, suggesting staves), giving orders to collaborators, dressed as courtiers, with empty *rotuli* in their hands (see Figure 2). This represents the beginning of the project and seems to imply teamwork in the production of versified narratives. On the facing page (fol. 5r) a picture above CSM 1 in all probability shows the process of publication in book form and transmission that a *cantiga* underwent as envisaged by Alfonso X and his team (see Figure 3).

At the center the king, with an open book, raises his left hand with the index finger pointing—a conventional gesture of command—toward the copyist on his immediate left and looks at him. The king is represented as the book's author; we may imagine him to be dictating, since the copyist, seated and facing him, with a pen in his right hand, is holding a roll of parchment on which may be read the words "pola señor onrada" (for the Honored Lady). This is the continuation of the text begun on the left, on another roll held by a cleric who is running the index and middle fingers of his right hand over the words written there—the beginning of CSM 1—on which tetragrams are superimposed: "Desoge mais *quer*' eu trobar" (From this day forth my song will be); he is the music copyist. On the far right we see three clerics standing and holding an open book, their gaze directed toward another cleric with half-open mouth, possibly a solo singer. This foursome represents a mode of performance that is vocal, unaccompanied, and ecclesiastical: the soloist (left) alternates with a three-man chorus who follow the book while awaiting their turn. This suggests a paraliturgical context. Finally, on the extreme left stand three *jongleurs*, identifiable by their instruments: one holds a fiddle but without using it; another fiddler seems to be



Figure 2 Manuscript *T* (El Escorial, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio, MS. T. I. 1), fol. 4v, detail. © Patrimonio Nacional. Used by permission. This figure appears in color in the online version of the *Journal*.



**Figure 3** Manuscript *T* (El Escorial, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio, MS. T. I. 1), fol. 5r, detail. © Patrimonio Nacional. Used by permission. This figure appears in color in the online version of the *Journal*.

talking to the first, though ready to play; while a third tunes the fourth string of his citole, holding the corresponding peg in his left hand and plucking the string with a plectrum. The *jongleurs*, separated from the singers, are only partially active and not coordinated among themselves. They may symbolize the melody that the cleric next to them will soon try to capture in musical notation. But it seems just as plausible that they are meant to embody the idea of ulterior circulation that was intended to occur in reality, giving further kinds of life (both vocal and instrumental) to the CSM. King Alfonso declares in CSM 172, “And about this [miracle] we made a song for the minstrels to sing.”<sup>67</sup> This is a poetic image, and not necessarily a performance prescription or realistic description; but *jongleurs*, in the troubadour tradition, were everywhere expected to sing their patron’s compositions. The image of minstrels singing a *cantiga* would not have been used if it were not a credible representation of what Alfonso intended to happen at his court.<sup>68</sup>

Minstrels educated in the troubadour tradition would have provided a very natural performance medium for Alfonso. As an infante he had been surrounded by Galician and Portuguese troubadours (many of them in exile after supporting King Sancho II against his brother Afonso III during the

67. “E desto cantar fezemos que cantassen os jograres.”

68. This interpretation expands and qualifies the one proposed in Ferreira, *Cantus coronatus*, 154, 224. During a summer course on the CSM held at El Escorial in June 2015 Stephen Parkinson observed that the rhyme “-ares” is a difficult one to pursue, and that the reference to the singing of *jograres* in the last stanza may therefore have no special significance, being merely a means of allowing the rhyme to stand.

civil war of 1245–47), and he himself became an important author of Galician-Portuguese troubadour songs.<sup>69</sup> Playful poetic discussions between troubadours and *jongleurs* were enjoyed, and some *jograres* such as Johan, Lopo, or Lourenço gained a measure of recognition. The *cantiga d'amigo* was their specialty, but other genres were familiar to them as performers who were expected to absorb and reproduce whatever was required for entertainment, including all kinds of Galician-Portuguese song.

The CSM were a direct continuation of the Galician-Portuguese troubadour tradition, both in their choice of the established poetic language<sup>70</sup> and in their array of literary techniques.<sup>71</sup> Galician was, together with Castilian, one of the languages used for daily communication in Alfonso's early years: he had been reared as a child by a Galician noblewoman near Burgos in Castile, and as a teenager possibly also near Orense in Galicia; and around 1240 he became infatuated with a Galician lady, his young half-aunt Maria Afonso, who had just been widowed.<sup>72</sup> But this personal experience was not what determined the choice of language. Alfonso's court, rather, was a multilingual environment, in which individuals cultivated different languages for different purposes. In this context Galician retained its traditional association with poetry, while Castilian was used and actively promoted as a language of prose. Alfonso's minstrels were expected to sing in Galician-Portuguese irrespective of the listener's mother tongue.

69. Oliveira, "D. Afonso X . . . II." For an edition of the texts of Alfonso's songs, see Paredes, *El cancionero profano*. On the manuscript transmission of the surviving corpus, see Oliveira, "O irrequieto cancionero profano." Concerning Alfonso's use of the Galician-Portuguese language, Filgueira Valverde, *Afonso X e Galicia*, 14–15, argues that Galician-Portuguese was a language of daily communication at Alfonso's court, and that popular speech naturally found a place within literary expression. The subject is also dealt with in Scarborough, *Holy Alliance*, 119–31, and Leão, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, 147–65.

70. Fidalgo Francisco, "La gestación de las *Cantigas*." Although it has been said that "the Galician in the *Cantigas* is simple, direct, and, though generally grammatical and correct, redolent of popular speech" (Keller, *Pious Brief Narrative*, 88), it is no more colloquial than, and can be as complex as, the contemporary Galician-Portuguese troubadour lyrics: "a refined Galician, as is to be expected of the author, who admits only a few traits of popular speech" ("un galego culto, como corresponde ó autor, que non deixa pasar moitas peculiaridades da lingua popular"): Lorenzo Vázquez, "A lingua das *Cantigas*." On this subject, see also Filgueira Valverde, "Rasgos popularizantes," 152–60, which identifies a naturalist tendency in the portrayal of daily speech from CSM 272, with the suggestion that the change may betray the taste of a new collaborator (157).

71. Connections between the CSM and Galician-Portuguese secular poetry as practiced by Alfonso himself and his fellow troubadours involve versification, turns of expression, and a rich palette of technical and rhetorical resources, summarized in Parkinson, *Alfonso X, the Learned*, 10–15. The presence in the Galician tradition of *cantigas d'amigo* aimed at the celebration of a particular sanctuary, and thus devotional by implication (Filgueira Valverde, "Poesía de santuarios"), does not seem to have directly influenced Alfonso's project, which on account of the overwhelming presence of narrative texts was closer to the satirical strand of courtly song.

72. Ballesteros Beretta, *Alfonso X el Sabio*, 52–53, 58; González Jiménez, "Alfonso X, Infante"; Oliveira, "D. Afonso X . . . I."

While Galician was thus a natural choice for courtly poetry, and did not necessarily connote either a regional or a “popular” bias, Alfonso may well have had political motives for wanting to uphold the profile of Galician poetry before a larger Castilian audience. Galician was the western vernacular of the Leonese kingdom, as opposed to the northeastern Asturian-Leonese (which was not acknowledged then as an independent Romance language and surfaced in writing only in local juridical documents).<sup>73</sup> As heir to the throne, between 1240 and 1242 Alfonso centered his household in the southern lands of the Leonese kingdom, including León, Toro, and Salamanca, and exerted judicial powers over the entire kingdom through delegation by his father, certainly until 1249 and probably afterward as well.<sup>74</sup> Either because the kings of León claimed continuity with the Visigothic throne and the corresponding supremacy among Iberian royalty, or because Alfonso needed to enforce royal supremacy over the high aristocracy, it may have been crucial for his political ambitions that Galician was appropriated and promoted as a linguistic emblem at court.<sup>75</sup> Outside the court the daily experience of dialectal variety (the continuum of slightly different, unstandardized Romance dialects then in use) and the close proximity between western Romance dialects ensured mutual intelligibility between Galician-Portuguese and Castilian speakers. With the exception of a minority who, in recently conquered territory, clung to their Hispano-Arabic dialect, Alfonso’s minstrels had no need to change poetic language in order to be understood.

73. García Arias, “La escritura medieval asturiana”; Viejo Fernández, *Llingua y cultura llieteraria*, 322–25, 346–50, 375–84; García Gil, *Asturian-Leonese*.

74. González Jiménez, “Alfonso X, Infante.”

75. These alternative hypotheses were recently advanced by Inés Fernández-Ordóñez and José Carlos Miranda. “Since the whole political construct of Alfonso the Learned is meant to assert the legitimate aspiration of the Castilian-Leonese monarchy to the peninsular *imperium*, one cannot forget that this edifice had at its foundations both the Castilian and the Leonese kingdoms. . . . In the Alfonsine cultural paradigm Castilian as the language of written culture in Castile goes hand in hand with Galician as the language of León” (“Si toda la construcción política de Alfonso el Sabio propone a la monarquía castellano-leonesa como legítima aspirante al *imperium* peninsular, no hay que olvidar que ese edificio se levantaba tanto sobre el reino de Castilla como sobre el de León. . . . En el paradigma cultural alfonsí el castellano como lengua de la cultura escrita en Castilla se flanquea del gallego como lengua de León”); Fernández-Ordóñez, “Las *Cantigas de Santa María*,” 12. “It is the need . . . to forge close links with the nobility of western Iberia that pushes Alfonso to become a troubadour and later, inside the troubadour circle, to affirm himself through word and deed as the leading voice of that very circle. . . . a subtle operation of the appropriation and royal transfiguration of an essentially vassalic and aristocratic language” (“É a necessidade . . . de estabelecer relações estreitas com o mundo senhorial do ocidente peninsular que leva Afonso a tornar-se trovador e, mais tarde, no seio do mundo trovadoresco, a procurar, pela palavra e pela ação, tornar-se a voz de comando desse mesmo mundo. . . . uma subtil operação de apropriação e de transfiguração monárquica de uma linguagem essencialmente vassálica e aristocrática”); Miranda, “O galego-português.”

## Popular Forms and the CSM's Didactic Purpose

More crucial clues about Alfonso's imagined audience can be found in his choice of poetic and musical forms. Alfonso chose and manipulated both kinds of form to create associations with his audience, to define a "social horizon" by which to allure listeners into the performance and its subject. This was a complex enterprise that involved deliberate juxtaposition of courtly and non-courtly models. On the one hand, Alfonso manipulated poetic and metrical forms from within the troubadour tradition that would highlight the dignity of his subject, the Virgin Mary. On the other, he chose forms from outside the troubadour tradition that were familiar to popular audiences, including recent converts from Islam, in order to encourage the penetration of his songs beyond the limited courtly circle of the troubadours, especially into the recently Christianized areas where the Islamic imprint was still strong.

The entire collection of CSM is framed by "high" register songs of a strongly personal character, which highlight the lofty object of these Marian devotions: "I wish from this day forth to be Her troubadour" (Prologue B); "From this day forth I will sing for the Honored Lady" (CSM 1); "and I constantly praise Her and sing for Her" (CSM 300).<sup>76</sup> These songs are either refrainless or feature a sophisticated verse form reminiscent of the Galician-Portuguese *cantiga d'amor*. Conversely, when Alfonso apparently criticizes his fellow troubadours in CSM 260 for singing only of earthly love, he chooses the metrical form of a parallelistic *cantiga d'amigo*. This is a female-voiced genre that, while anchored in local tradition, was, by this time at least, as central to serious poetic endeavor in the Western courts as the Occitan-inspired *cantiga d'amor*.

Dized', ai trobadores,  
a Sennor das sennores,  
*porqué a non loades?*

Se vos trobar sabedes,  
a por que Deus avedes,  
*porqué a non loades?*

A Sennor que dá vida  
e é de bem comprida,  
*porqué a non loades?*

Tell me, oh troubadours:  
the Lady of ladies,  
*why do you not praise Her?*

If you well know your art,  
she through whom you have God:  
*why do you not praise Her?*

The Lady who gives life  
and is filled with grace:  
*why do you not praise Her?* [etc.]

The same formal choice applies in CSM 160, also aimed at the troubadours, as proclaimed by its opening lines: "Whoever wants to praise a worthy

76. The English versions of Alfonso's verse presented here are taken, with occasional modification, from Kulp-Hill, *Songs of Holy Mary*.

lady / praise the one who has no peer: / *Holy Mary*.” The parallelistic *cantiga d’amigo* was typically associated with Galician-Portuguese minstrels performing at troubadour courts. Alfonso’s use of a form associated with a “low” register to signal, not minstrelsy, but troubadour identity (contrasted with his own choice of a “high” register to frame his Marian project) has the rhetorical effect of portraying secular song as inferior to devotional, thus reinforcing, by aesthetic means, his explicit criticism, and elevating, in the eyes of the court, his own Marian enterprise.<sup>77</sup>

Alfonso’s formal and metrical choices in other parts of the CSM are likewise intended to communicate cultural messages to the audience. The large majority of CSM, narrative or otherwise, depart from the clerical precedent of Gonzalo de Berceo, and from troubadour precedent as well, in the overall choice of metrical and musical forms.<sup>78</sup> The typical *cantiga* has an opening refrain and a strophe divided between *mudanzas* (lines with contrasting rhyme-endings) and *vuelta* (the return of the verse length and rhyme of the refrain). This formal scheme, which encompasses all the miracle songs and three-quarters of the others, has been associated both with dance forms, namely the Occitanic *dansa* or French *virelai*, and with the Andalusian song of the *zajal* type. The latter most probably provided the model for the CSM, for the reasons outlined below.

Specialists in Andalusian Arabic and Hebrew poetry hold widely divergent views on the ultimate origins of the *zajal*—whether to see it as an imitation of earlier Iberian Romance song or as a local adaptation and expansion of an Arabic poetic precedent. Romance philologists also disagree on the ultimate origins of the *virelai*—whether it is an imitation of an Iberian precedent or a pan-European derivation from popular or Latin models. What we can confidently say is that in the thirteenth century the *zajal* was a long-established, popular genre in southern Spain, including its Mozarab population, and that it is almost certain that Alfonso was personally acquainted with *zajalesque*

77. On “high” and “low” registers in medieval song, see the authoritative synthesis by Haug, “Musikalische Lyrik im Mittelalter,” 72–97, though also taking into account the critical discussion in Aubrey, “Reconsidering ‘High Style’ and ‘Low Style.’” Questions of genre and register in Galician-Portuguese song nevertheless require a specific approach; see Deyermond, “Some Problems of Gender and Genre”; Cohen, “In the Beginning”; Paden, “Principles of Generic Classification”; and Lopes, “*E dizem eles que é com amor*.”

78. On the music, see Ferreira, “Some Remarks on the Cantigas.” The melodic fabric of the CSM may have been similar to that of the Galician-Portuguese troubadours; we have barely a dozen melodies to compare, by Martin Codax and Dom Dinis. A few parallels have been found; see Ferreira, *O som de Martin Codax*, 116–19, 150–51; Ferreira, “Afinidades musicais”; and Ferreira, *Cantus coronatus*, 50–51, 86n9, 102–3. Generally speaking the CSM behave modally, not always in accordance with ecclesiastical precedent; they do not seem to depart from the European troubadour idiom except in a few songs based on E-modality, which by the thirteenth century was an archaism that may have echoed a particular southern Iberian taste; see Ferreira, “Alfonso X, compositor.”



forms from, at the latest, the time of his first stay in Murcia in 1243—that is, before equivalent forms are documented across the Pyrenees.

In Alfonso's time Murcia retained more vestiges of Muslim culture than neighboring parts of Castile. It was not conquered by Castilian or Aragonese knights, unlike other towns and regions of Andalusia, nor was its population and culture initially displaced by northern, Christian newcomers. Militarily pressed and defeated in parts of its domains, in 1243 the Muslim kingdom of Murcia put itself under the yoke of King Ferdinand III, Alfonso's father, as a vassal kingdom, allowing his army to take charge of its castles and assume defense duties, while political, religious, and economic affairs remained almost exactly the same, against the payment of a heavy tribute. Alfonso, as an infante, led the occupying Christian army and resided in Murcia, then essentially a Muslim town, for at least a couple of months in both 1243 and 1244. He probably had the opportunity to participate in the daily life of Murcia's court, including all aspects of cultural endeavor.

Some years later Alfonso met the king of Granada, Muhammad I, who declared himself a vassal of Ferdinand III. They fought together at the siege of Seville in 1247–48, to which the Granadan king contributed cavalry, and began a close friendship that lasted at least until 1260. In the meanwhile Alfonso became king himself in 1252 and returned to Murcia in 1254, where he spent July and August, and in 1257, staying at first in his vassal's palace as a special guest and then in the vicinity, for more than two months. These early contacts may have had a considerable impact on Alfonso's taste and interests, from chess to magic, astronomy, and, presumably, music.<sup>79</sup> The king became so fond of the city, in fact, that he expressed a wish to be buried there, although, as we will see, this was fulfilled only in part.

It is well known that Alfonso, besides visiting monasteries to read and borrow Latin books for copying, collected and commissioned translations of courtly and scientific Arabic texts, for which he employed permanent non-Christian collaborators; his architectural achievements included not only the Gothic-style cathedral of León in the north, but a number of *mudéjar* buildings in the south. Indeed, his rule encouraged the spread of Muslim-inspired Christian architecture.<sup>80</sup> The intimate connection of the CSM with song forms practiced in southern Spain make them the musical equivalent of the southern *mudéjar* Christian architecture: familiar Andalusian forms serving a new religious ideology.

Of the rare surviving *zajal*-like secular songs in Galician-Portuguese, the earliest secure examples are authored by Alfonso X and two other troubadours

79. González Jiménez, "Alfonso X, Infante"; González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, esp. 24–30, 123–25, 163–66; Ballesteros Beretta, "Itinerario de Alfonso X."

80. Snow, "Alfonso X: un modelo de rey letrado"; González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 439–43. When for four months in 1282 the king shared his dwellings with his former enemy the Emir of Morocco, who had come to his rescue with an army, he felt unsurprisingly comfortable and reinvigorated within this environment: see Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 504–8.

who very likely participated in the lengthy siege of Seville and afterward maintained some connection with him. These are *Penhoremos o daian* (B 459), by Alfonso X; *Par Deus, ai dona Leonor* (A 198, B 349) and *Un ricomaz, un ricomaz* (B 1437, V 1047) by Roi Paez de Ribela (fl. ca. 1246–?); and *Ai amor, amore de Pero Cantone* (B 1553), *Lop' Anaia non se vaia* (B 1555), and *Rei Judeorum, Jesu Nazareno* (B 1557) by Fernan Soarez de Quinhones (fl. ca. 1248–71).<sup>81</sup> The zajalesque schemes aabBB, aaabBB, and aaabBBB were used only occasionally before the mid-century. They then received a crucial impulse from Alfonso's circle, but never achieved much success among the troubadours.<sup>82</sup> Otherwise a connection with the zajal (with initial refrain missing on

81. References to the secular Galician-Portuguese *cantigas* follow current scholarly usage in identifying their manuscript sources and numerical position within them. Established scholarly sigla for songbooks are A (Lisbon, Biblioteca do Palácio Nacional da Ajuda, “Cancioneiro da Ajuda”), B (Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, cód. 10991, “Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional”) and V (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Lat. 4803, “Cancioneiro da Vaticana”). Four of the abovementioned *cantigas* use the most usual form of the zajal, AA bbbaAA. The remaining two expand this scheme into AA bbbabaAA (*Penhoremos o daian*) or ABAB cccebcbABAB (*Lop' Anaia non se vaia*). *O genete* (B 491, V 74), by Alfonso X, may also be interpreted as a zajal, although the manuscripts fail to repeat the initial lines as a refrain. There remain only two zajals of a later date: *Pois min amor non quer leixar* (B 885bis, V 469) is a zajalesque version of a *cantiga* by Airas Nunes, who was in the service of Sancho IV between 1284 and 1289, and who may have previously been a collaborator of Alfonso X. *Ūa donzela sei eu* (B 1164c, V 770), whose linguistic features fit the thirteenth century in spite of current scholarly doubts about its authenticity, may have been written by Rui Martins do Casal, who flourished in the late thirteenth century and died in 1312; reference to Granada in two of his songs suggests that as a young man he may have participated in Alfonso's campaigns against the Mudéjar uprising. Three other Galician-Portuguese secular *cantigas* with an initial refrain, but with non-zajalesque stanzaic forms, are authored by Paio Soarez de Taveirós, Alfonso X, and a troubadour from his early circle, Afonso Soarez Sarraça (fl. ca. 1248–62). For a printed edition of the texts, with biographical and bibliographical apparatus, see Brea, *Lírica profana galego-portuguesa*; contents available also through the Lírica Profana Galego-Portuguesa database (MedDB), <http://www.cirp.es/>. Updated biographical profiles of the medieval Galician-Portuguese authors, digital reproductions of the sources, and alternative editions can be found in the Cantigas Medievais database, <http://cantigas.fsh.unl.pt>. See also Alvar, “Apuntes para una edición”; Dionísio, “As cantigas de Fernan Soarez de Quinhones,” 101–6; and Ferreira, *Aspectos da música medieval*, 1:86–87. I wish to thank Stephen Parkinson for his help in tracing potential cases of zajal form in secular *cantigas*.

82. Beltrán, “De zéjeles y dansas,” 255–58 and notes; Correia, “Refrães sem autonomia rítmica.” Of the approximately 1,680 surviving lyrical texts in Galician-Portuguese, 962 have a refrain but only 127 refrains repeat a rhyme also found in the strophe. Zajalesque formal schemes occur in no more than twenty-four *cantigas*. Before the mid-thirteenth century the scheme aaabBB appears in only three songs: *Gran mal me faz agora 'l-Rei*, by Fernan Paez de Tamallancos, *Que cousiment' ora fez mia senhor*, by Fernan Rodriguez de Calheiros, and *Emmentar quer' eu do brial*, by Lopo Lias. The latter also authored *A mi quer mal o infançon*, in the form aaabBBB. *A mais fremosa de quantas vejo*, by the Santarém Anonymous, and *Faz-m' agora por si morrer e tras me mui coitado*, by Vidal, could be added to the aaabBB group, but their chronology is uncertain. (Vidal's poem is interpreted here according to Cohen, “Colometry and Internal Rhyme.”) Between 1240 and 1275 the authors who use this scheme, or the related aabBB form are, alongside Alfonso X, Airas Perez Vuitoron (fl. ca. 1246–?), Roi Paez de

account of either the model or its appropriation) can be argued for in only two songs in the form aaaBB, with clear non-Christian associations: one by Vidal, a Jew from Elvas (unknown chronology), and the other a contrafact based on a “song of infidels” by Lopo Lias (first half of the thirteenth century).<sup>83</sup> The appropriation of the full zajal form for troubadour song seems therefore to have been a mid-century experiment by Alfonso and his immediate circle. With one exception these zajal troubadour songs employed the satirical register, which lent itself to contrafaction (the use of an existing melody for a different text); this choice of form found little echo in the secular manuscript tradition, yet it pervades the CSM.

The connection between the CSM and southern Iberian song is reinforced by the fact that the music uses a kind of rondeau form found only in the Andalusian tradition, with an initial repeat in the strophe of section B rather than section A, as in the French variety. The virelai, whose origin is disputed, is also found in the Andalusian musical heritage. Musically, only 11 of the CSM use typical troubadour forms, whereas 379 have initial refrain and melodic recapitulation in the strophe. Of these, 274 are of the virelai kind, while 86 correspond to the Andalusian rondeau and 19 to the French rondeau. The zajal probably used both the virelai and the Andalusian rondeau forms.<sup>84</sup>

Although one may speculate that in the mid-thirteenth century there were undocumented, popular Romance dance-songs circulating in central Iberia, or some instances of related Latin compositions, this supposition has to compete with a factual, three-centuries-old tradition of Arabic-Andalusian song, which Alfonso could not fail to be acquainted with. The simpler way to explain the formal, metrical, or musical novelties of the abovementioned satirical songs and the CSM in the Galician-Portuguese context is therefore to assume that they were directly inspired by the Andalusian zajal. The connection with the zajal is recognizable even if the strophic structure of the poems is varied, thereby enriching the Galician-Portuguese metrical and rhyming vocabulary: the use of a given form goes hand in hand, in Alfonso’s project, with the projection of artistic cleverness or superiority.<sup>85</sup>

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Ribela (fl. ca. 1246–?), Johan Soarez Coelho (fl. ca. 1235–79), Afonso Paez de Braga (fl. ca. 1258), and Johan Servando. The songs of these six authors are respectively, in Tavani’s numbering, 18,1 and 18,39; 16,9 and 16,11; 147,15; 79,33; 8,3; and 77,5, 77,12, and 77,23: Tavani, *Repertorio metrico*. Airas Perez, Roi Paez, and Johan Soarez were part of Alfonso’s circle when he was in his twenties, as was Martin Soarez (fl. ca. 1225–60), to whom the song *Pois non hei de Dona Elvira*, also in aaabBB form, is attributed in one source. The same could also be true of Afonso Paez and Johan Servando, both of unknown whereabouts. This accords with the hypothesis put forward by Beltrán that the peak of the “estrofa con vuelta” begins in the mid-thirteenth century under Alfonso’s influence (256).

83. Cohen, “Colometry and Internal Rhyme”; Ferreira, *Cantus coronatus*, 93n34.

84. Ferreira, “Rondeau and Virelai” and “Jograis, *contrafacta*, formas musicais.” A different view of the virelai, as a type rather than a fixed form, is put forward in Campbell, “Inside the *virelai*.”

85. The intimate connection between the CSM and the zajal in terms of poetic structure is acknowledged by modern scholars whatever their persuasion, including those generally

The central place of the zajal in the CSM suggests that they were aimed at a popular audience. Written in colloquial dialect, the zajal was a “popularizing” or urban register of song, with an important narrative component. This formal register was rooted in the mixed local culture of Toledo and of the newly occupied southern territories, forming an arc around the kingdom of Granada, from Seville in the west to Murcia in the east. Had the king been mainly concerned with the entertainment and approval of his courtly circle, the appropriation of familiar troubadour forms or Latin conductus and sequences, in the wake of Gautier de Coinci, or some upgrade of the repetitious epic or lai narrative styles, would have been the most obvious choice. While such forms appear in the CSM, they are quite rare.<sup>86</sup>

Thus the choice of the zajal as a poetic model for the CSM was not simply a pragmatic, technical decision, allowing a maxim or punchline, contained in the refrain, to intersect a narrative development; it also fulfilled a didactic purpose. As Elvira Fidalgo has argued, it invited easy public access to the miracle, as well as its easy diffusion, on account of its familiarity among the minstrels. Once the model had been chosen, the internal organization of the narrative

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unsympathetic toward the thesis of Arabic influence on Romance poetry: “In Alfonso’s literary output the two aspects of the stanza with return, the zajaesque and the romance, can be seen to converge; in his secular songbook the two are equally represented but in his Marian production . . . the zajal predominates with rare exceptions” (“En la misma obra alfonsí se cruzan por tanto las dos vertientes de la estrofa con vuelta, la zejelesca y la romance; en su cancionero profano ambas aparecen igualmente representadas pero en el mariano . . . el zéjel se impone con muy pocas excepciones”): Beltrán, “De zéjeles y *dansas*,” 257. Irrespective of any views concerning origins and metrics, compatibility between medieval Arab-Andalusian and Hispano-Romance song in terms of strophic structure, accent, and/or line length is explored in Monroe and Swiatlo, “Ninety-Three Arabic *Ḥarḡas*”; Clarke, “Versification of the *Ḥarḡas*” (this article includes a comparison with the CSM); Monroe, “Elements of Romance Prosody”; Corriente, *Poesía dialectal árabe y romance*; Beltrán, “Las formas con estribillo”; Monroe, “Literary Hybridization in the *zajal*”; Corriente, “The *kharjas*”; and Cohen, “Internal Rhyme.”

86. Epic formulae have left a number of traces in the CSM; see Fidalgo Francisco, “*Joculatores qui cantant*.” A few songs can be suspected of musical links with the epic tradition, whose relationship with devotional narrative is beyond doubt according to Zumthor, *Essai de poésie médiévale*, 543. Higinio Anglés mentions a few CSM whose melodies could be adapted to epic singing, including CSM 27, 73, 120, 168, and 296: Anglés, *La música de las Cantigas*, 3/1:74–80; 3/2, Parte musical, 3. Taking his cue from Johannes de Grocheio, Anglés admits as a possibility that epic songs could just reiterate a melody, or end each *laisse* with a contrasting musical phrase. This is the more probable when the last line fails to reproduce the rhyme and length of the previous lines; see Page, *Owl and the Nightingale*, 69–73. In addition to syllabic style and iterative melodic form (with or without a short coda), clear metrical proximity to the Castilian narrative tradition is found in CSM 46, 90, and 236; CSM 423 can rather be connected to French examples. Although the use of a refrain was not unknown in French epic—imitated by Afonso Lopes de Baião, an acquaintance of Alfonso X, in his Galician-Portuguese satirical song *Seixi Don Belpelho* (see Lorenzo Gradín, *Don Afonso Lopez de Baian*, 173–229)—it corresponds in the CSM to an adaptation fitted to a specific strategy; see Montoya Martínez, “‘Razon,’ ‘refran’ y ‘estribillo.’”

content followed the structure of a sermon, codified by the contemporary *artes praedicandi*.<sup>87</sup>

Alfonso's intention to reach a "popular" audience can also be inferred from the geographical associations of many of the CSM. The fact that a number of subcollections in its later layers have a particular sanctuary as a focal point, and that some of these sanctuaries were linked to Alfonso X either directly (Santa María del Puerto),<sup>88</sup> or indirectly, through some of his close collaborators (Santa María de Tentudía, Santa María de Terena)<sup>89</sup> and longtime partisans (Santa María de Vila-Sirga),<sup>90</sup> suggests an ad hoc effort to attract pilgrims, settlers, or supporters. This applies most obviously to Santa María del Puerto, founded and provided for by the king. In the case of the remaining sanctuaries, which lay far from the areas targeted for resettlement, the inclusion of songs based on local narratives might simply bear witness to the collecting of stories from oral tradition through personal ties; in this case Alfonso would have intended their inclusion as a token of his liberality toward the sanctuaries' founders and patrons, akin to the generous inclusion in the CSM of miracles set in Aragon, which honor the origins of Alfonso's wife Violante.

The propagandistic character of the set for Santa María del Puerto may or may not represent a late reorientation. Christian settlement in frontier towns was a consistent aspect of Alfonso's political strategy, and was especially intense in the 1260s. As argued by various authors, the promotion of the Marian cult was instrumental in the consecration, protection, and reconstruction of conquered land; it comforted new Christian settlers, who after 1264 constituted most of the urban population, and also provided a bridge for individual religious conversion, since Mary was respected and her virginity acknowledged in the Qur'an, as stated in CSM 165 and 329.<sup>91</sup>

87. Fidalgo Francisco, "Esquemas narrativos," pt. 1, 32–35; pt. 2, 31–32.

88. González Jiménez, "Devociones marianas y repoblación"; Beltrán, "Tipos y temas trovadorescos"; Snow, "Alfonso X, cronista lírico"; Scarborough, "Las Cantigas de Santa María"; Ramón Pena, "De Alcanate . . . arredor dun 'cancioneiro'"; Ramón Pena, "De Alcanate . . . algunhas reflexións"; Montoya Martínez, *Cancionero de Santa María de El Puerto*.

89. Pelay Pérez Correa and Martim Gil (incidentally, both Portuguese). In the former's case the connection with the sanctuary of Tudía is legendary but historically very plausible. The corresponding songs were composed after his death in 1275, one of them (CSM 347) possibly by the king himself. See López Fernández, "La evolución de la Vicaría de Tudía"; López Fernández, "De las cantigas alfonsinas"; López Fernández, "Un maestre santiaguista"; Rodríguez Blanco, "Alfonso X"; Parkinson, "Santuarios portugueses"; and Rei, "Os Riba de Vizela."

90. This shrine was established by the family Girón-Cisneros and run by the Templars; see Sánchez Ameijeiras, "*Mui de coração rogava a Santa Maria*."

91. García-Arenal, "Los moros en las Cantigas"; Freire, "The CSM"; González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 191–205; Scarborough, *Holy Alliance*, 81–117; Rodríguez, "Devotion to Land." Christian converts of Moorish origin are attested in Seville in 1274; Ferdinand III was accused by Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406), a Muslim historian of Sevillian descent, of having empowered a convert as head of the local Mudéjar community, thus favoring Christian

In short, Alfonso structured the CSM as an accessible instrument by which to further popular urban devotion, particularly in areas of recent Christian settlement. He constructed them in a way that would allow them to serve as an exemplary, festive complement to clerical preaching, and to this end he must have imagined them reaching an appropriately large audience. We can see this vision reflected not only in their musical and metrical forms, but in the subject matter of some of the song texts. CSM 409, *Cantando e con dança* (F, fol. 109v), heralds precisely the all-encompassing social reach of the Marian cult. It mentions, in hierarchical order, kings and emperors (stanza 3), preachers, and other people of religious standing (stanza 4), knights and honored ladies (stanza 5), and damsels, squires, burghers and city dwellers, villagers, artisans, common folk, and merchants (mentioned last but, the poem assures us, not least; stanza 6). All should be united in praise, as brothers, hands raised (joined in a round?) with hearty good will.

This is a strikingly different image from the elite worldview reflected in most troubadour poetry. A satirical Galician-Portuguese poem, for example, criticizes a knight for composing songs that were appreciated by the “wrong” audience (villagers, burghers, craftsmen, and their youngsters), with melodies so poor that they could be played with trumpets and percussion.<sup>92</sup> But this was precisely the kind of audience that Alfonso’s *cantigas* apparently aimed to reach. A similar intention is conveyed by the Latin *virelai Stella splendens in monte*, copied into the *Libre Vermell* more than a century later; one may speculate that CSM 409 either mirrors or explicitly proposes a socially encompassing agenda for Iberian Marian shrines. The picture it paints anyway suggests that *jongleurs* could have been required by Alfonso to learn selected *cantigas* and to sing them in urban parishes where images of Mary attracted popular devotion, and possibly in towns and villages along pilgrimage roads, to Christians and Muslims alike.

It seems logical, in short, to conclude that the CSM were aimed at different kinds of audiences—sometimes the courtly circle, but mostly the larger audiences connected to palace and cathedral as well as other urban and even rural populations—and that the form of the songs could be modulated accordingly. In Alfonso’s imagination the CSM could reach the highest and lowest members of Castilian society, in some instances serving as a catalyst to the mingling of classes that medieval society tended to keep apart. Such

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proselytism; see Fernández y González, *Estado social y político*, 4; Echevarría Arsuaga, *La minoría islámica*, 37.

92. Martin Soares, *Cavaleiro, con vosos cantares* (B 1357, V 965). For a critical edition, see Bertolucci Pizzorusso, *As poesias de Martin Soares*, no. 32, 119–23. Manuscript versions, an online edition, and commentary may be found at <http://www.cantigas.fcsh.unl.pt>. See also Tavani, “Cantiga de vilão,” and Fernandes, “A cantiga de escárnio.”

speculations based on the form and content of the CSM themselves are, however, difficult to reconcile with the codicological and external evidence. As we have seen, the CSM left few traces beyond the books commissioned by the king himself, and seem to have circulated very little. The popular performances just described appear to have remained only a figment of Alfonso's imagination. Why did the Learned King's ambitious cultural program leave such an inaudible echo in the historical record? The answer must be sought in the political failure of Alfonso's reign.

### The Silencing of the King's *cantigas*

The CSM were inseparable from the persona of the king himself. The collection is presented as the result of a personal decision, and idealized portraits of Alfonso in *T* and *F* underline his role in its compilation.<sup>93</sup> The whole collection, as Elvira Fidalgo observes, demonstrates the king's privileged connection with the Virgin, both in its incorporation of as many songs as possible and in its inclusion of autobiographical narratives in which the Virgin acts to protect him or his family.<sup>94</sup> The authorial voice of the king, a constructed persona as the Virgin's troubadour, returns repeatedly in the CSM, not only in songs of praise but also among the narrative ones. This usage is not consistent: the king is referred to in the third person in the title (Prologue A) and twelve narrative poems, four of them related to Puerto de Santa María: CSM 18 (Segovia), 243 (Santa María de Vila-Sirga), 295 (place unknown), 299 (somewhere in Andalusia), 328 (Santa María do Porto), 345 (Jerez), 348 (somewhere in Andalusia), 358 (Santa María do Porto), 361 (Las Huelgas de Burgos), 371 (Santa María do Porto), 386 (Seville), and 398 (Santa María do Porto). This alternation in voice highlights the use of the first person as a significant choice. Although it may at times reflect an artifice used by anonymous collaborators to link the songs to the troubadour persona of the king, Alfonso's signature (first-person direct speech, claiming authority and responsibility for doing such and such, or narrating personal and family experience) is found throughout the collection, such as in CSM 284, where he recounts that after finding the story of a miracle in a book, he had had it translated and had then composed the corresponding song; or in CSM 64, 188, 293, and 347, where direct responsibility for both text and music is explicitly claimed.

93. The Alfonsine iconography is thoroughly presented and analyzed in Domínguez Rodríguez and Treviño Gajardo, *Las Cantigas de Santa María*, 57–96. See also García-Varela, “La función ejemplar de Alfonso X.”

94. Fidalgo Francisco, *As Cantigas de Santa María*, 81. Three instances of family-related songs are analyzed in Kinkade, “Don Juan Manuel's Father.” Miracles relating to Alfonso or his family are extensively dealt with in Scarborough, *Holy Alliance*, 133–67.

Xosé Filgueira, Jesús Montoya, and Joseph Snow, among others, have dealt with questions of literary authorship and self-referentiality in the CSM.<sup>95</sup> The latter sees in the collection “the sure hand of Alfonso’s tastes and preferences as he went along guiding it, massaging it, choosing content and directing the writing in it . . . and, too, overseeing its expansion from an original, more modest collection of just one hundred core compositions” toward a monument increasingly marked by local and dynastic references.<sup>96</sup> The certainty of Alfonso’s authorial and editorial guidance of a creative team does not exclude the possibility of his occasional composition of individual *cantigas* or even of their melodies; indeed, this would be consistent with Alfonso’s background as a Galician-Portuguese troubadour.<sup>97</sup>

The CSM should also be seen in the context of the king’s imperial ambitions. As noted above, in 1257 Alfonso was chosen by a faction of electors to become Holy Roman emperor, a claim he failed to achieve but did not renounce until 1275. Even after that he continued to present himself as “King of the Romans,” as no other emperor-elect was crowned until 1312. The western and eastern seats of the Roman Empire are referred to in several miracles, two of which (CSM 306, 342) allude to the proximity of the emperor to the Virgin, an idea that had become ingrained in the West since the eleventh century.<sup>98</sup> The Staufen emperors, through the universal history commissioned from Gottfried of Viterbo—followed by Alfonso in his “General estoria”—underlined this connection by attributing to Cassandra, a prophetess belonging to the Trojan royal family (by mythical implication a Roman relation, and therefore an imperial ancestor), the pseudo-Sibylline oracles announcing the birth of Jesus Christ from the Virgin Mary, and his expected return on the day of the Last Judgment. Alfonso’s Marian gloss on the Song of the Sibyl (CSM 422) announcing the Last Judgment is therefore also a dynastic affair, a circle being closed in both the spiritual and the political sense; unsurprisingly, it closes the first version of the collection, as the one-hundredth song in *To*.<sup>99</sup>

Alfonso’s Marian ideal of fraternity in song presupposed the simultaneous acceptance and celebration of royal supremacy. His political ideology is coherently inscribed in the CSM insofar as the king provides an example of devotion

95. Filgueira Valverde, *Alfonso X, El Sabio*, xxvii–xxxiv, lv–lvi; Montoya Martínez, “El concepto de ‘autor’”; Snow, “Central Rôle of the Troubadour *persona*”; Snow, “Alfonso as Troubadour”; Snow, “Alfonso X y las ‘Cantigas’”; Snow, “El *yo* anónimo y las *Cantigas*.” See also Schaffer, “Questions of Authorship,” and Castro, *As Cantigas de Santa Maria*, 178–200.

96. Snow, review of *Alfonso X*.

97. Fidalgo Francisco, *As Cantigas de Santa Maria*, 59–65, provides a short synthesis of the authorship debate in the twentieth century. Full bibliographical guidance is found in Snow, *Poetry of Alfonso X*. The musical aspect of the authorship is dealt with in Ferreira, “Alfonso X, compositor.”

98. This has early historical roots; see Corbet, “Les impératrices ottoniennes.”

99. Ferreira, “Notas sibilinas.” On Mary’s intercessory image, see also Domínguez Rodríguez, “Algunas precisiones,” 156.



to be followed by the people, and mobilizes all his learning (poetic, musical, theological, and hagiographical) to express it.) In demonstrating his superior devotion and culture the king underlines his divine right to occupy the throne.<sup>100</sup> Alfonso thus shows himself in the CSM “as divinely appointed intermediary between the Virgin and his subjects . . . a literary image which, in the illustrated manuscripts, is reinforced by miniatures of Alfonso leading his subjects in praise” (or penitence).<sup>101</sup> But as Kirstin Kennedy observes, this political statement becomes, after 1275, less Europe-oriented (CSM 422, once the culmination of the collection, is relegated to an appendix in *E*, corresponding to the Common of the Virgin) and more oriented, through the choice of subject matter, toward Iberian supremacy. Kennedy notes, “this political ideology, in which Alfonso is presented as spiritual mediator between heaven and his subjects, in a deliberate parallel with the Virgin’s own role as intercessor between God and the earthly faithful, extends to objects associated with him and to the Castilian royal family in general.”<sup>102</sup> Although the king may have wished that the connection, found in several *cantigas*, between miracle-working objects and different generations of the Castilian royal family would be taken up by his successors as an emblem—“dynastic exaltation” in song—the voice heard in the CSM was still, explicitly or by implication, clearly Alfonso’s voice, the voice of the king and emperor-elect.

While Alfonso must have hoped that this joint Marian and dynastic exaltation would be joyfully undertaken throughout the kingdom by subjects of high and low station alike, a careful reading of some internal references suggests that these hopes were soon frustrated. Even before the project was completed it seems to have met with some resistance from his own aristocratic circle. The expansion of the collection may in fact have eroded rather than consolidated his courtly audience. Juan José Rey has noticed that topical expressions asking the audience to pay attention occur very sparsely in the first two hundred songs (CSM 59, 78, 84, 199) but later multiply (eleven occurrences in the third hundred, twenty in the fourth hundred).<sup>103</sup> They include an overt complaint about the attitude of the courtiers: “because they so little appreciate my songs and melodies” (CSM 300). This is consistent with previous impatient remarks by Alfonso or his ghostwriters, such as “as you will now hear if you remain silent,” “if you lend me an ear and keep quiet,” and “In God’s name, pay good heed and stop talking” (CSM 233, 241, 266).<sup>104</sup>

100. Fernández-Ordóñez, “Evolución del pensamiento alfonsí”; Fierro, “Alfonso X ‘The Wise.’”

101. Kennedy, “Alfonso’s Miraculous Book,” 205. On the penitential associations of some of the presentation images in *T*, see Sánchez Ameijeiras, “Imaxes e teoría da imaxe,” 269–72.

102. Kennedy, “Alfonso’s Miraculous Book,” 208. See also Kennedy, “Seeing Is Believing.”

103. Rey, “El trovador don Alfonso X,” 173–75.

104. “[P]orque me tan mal gradecen meus cantares e meus sões”; “en com’ agora oiredes, se esteverdes calados”; “se m’ oír quiserdes e parardes femença”; “e, por Deus, parad’ i mentes non faldes en al.”

Rey interprets the statistics, the obsessive injunctions to keep silent and stop flitting about, and the claim that compositional efforts were coldly received as indicating both that Alfonso's courtly circle, his most immediate audience, became increasingly unappreciative of his unending additions to the repertory, and also that the king felt ever more isolated and in need of moral support. It may be that this interpretation makes too much of what is merely conventional literary rhetoric.<sup>105</sup> But there are plausible reasons to connect these comments with real disaffection at court.

Alfonso had often opposed the extended authority and particular interests of both feudal nobility and northern Spanish bishops. His defense of royal supremacy—which would have been reinforced had his international imperial campaign been successful—threatened the most powerful Castilian lords, who rebelled repeatedly and finally found in Alfonso's son Sancho an effective ally.<sup>106</sup> The political situation became increasingly dramatic from 1277 onward. The CSM collection grew *pari passu* with social unrest, discontent, and defection, culminating in 1282, when Sancho, in alliance with the nobility and disaffected clerics and burghers, led a coup d'état intended to remove his father from the throne. Although this drastic legal outcome was avoided and Alfonso retained the crown for another two years, his power was limited to little more than the county of Seville, and his diplomatic efforts to secure outside help were ignored by his fellow Christian kings. Sancho and his allies had in the meantime initiated a propaganda campaign against Alfonso that depicted him as impious, arrogant, and unworthy of the crown. After Sancho had deposed him in all but name, Alfonso denounced and disinherited his son in a dramatic public ceremony.

It is easy to imagine that in these final years of Alfonso's reign the CSM were ignored by the enemies who seized power from him, while the king's supporters, whose number was shrinking, politely endured their megalomaniac expansion. In this environment, both courtly and non-courtly circulation opportunities for the CSM would have become narrower than ever—ironically, just when the repertory was booming and the most splendid manuscripts were being produced.

105. While lamenting a lack of appreciation for one's work may be no more than rhetorical convention, or serve merely as a space filler, Jesús Montoya Martínez suggests that such possible explanations do not seem to account fully for Alfonso's complaints in the CSM: Montoya Martínez, *O cancionero marial*, 66–67.

106. González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 337–71. For political context, see González Jiménez, "Fernando III"; MacDonald, "Derecho y política"; Kinkade, "Alfonso X, *Cantiga* 235"; Beltrán, "El Rey Sabio"; Escalona, "Los nobles contra su rey"; and Weiler, "Kings and Sons." The conflict between Alfonso the Learned and the most influential ranks of the Castilian nobility in the north of the kingdom is vividly portrayed in a letter he wrote to his son Fernando in 1273, reproduced in González Jiménez, *Crónica de Alfonso X*, ch. 52, translated in *Chronicle of Alfonso X*, 165–72: "And just as kings made [the nobles] powerful and honored them, they strove to make the kings less powerful and to dishonor them . . . for all things that moved me to do what they wanted, they rejected them—particularly the journey to the empire, which is the greatest" (166).

Alfonso died just two years after Sancho's **coup**, in 1284, defeated and friendless. He had tried, in word and deed, to present himself as a pious king. Yet his reputation suffered severely after he was succeeded, against his wishes, by his rebellious son. Sancho had never been close to his father, had married against his father's counsel, and had conspired against him for years. **When Sancho finally inherited the throne, he and his own courtiers were not inclined to honor his father's memory: on the contrary, they continued to engage in systematic character assassination, spreading the word that Alfonso had committed blasphemy. This fed a branch of Spanish historiography, echoed by Portuguese writers, that served to justify Alfonso's removal from power.**<sup>107</sup>

Alfonso's despair at Sancho's betrayal would be captured in a fourteenth-century *romance* known as *Querellas del Rey Don Alfonso X*, which portrays the king as blaming church dignitaries and his son Sancho for the eventual alienation of most of his kingdom:<sup>108</sup>

Yo salí de mi tierra	para ir a Dios	I left my land to serve God,
servir,		
e perdí cuanto avía	desde Enero	and I lost whatever I had from
fasta Abril,		January to April:
todo el reyno de Castilla	fasta al	the whole kingdom of Castile as far
Guadalquivir.		as the Guadalquivir.
Los obispos e perlados	cuidé que	I trusted the bishops and prelates to
meterían paz;		make peace,
ellos dexaron aquesto,	e metieron	but they failed in this and sowed
mal asaz		trouble enough
entre mí e mis fijos,	como en	between me and my sons, as is not
derecho non yaz;		right;
non a excuso, mas a voces,	como	not secretly but loudly as the
el añafil faz.		trumpet sounds.

107. González Jiménez, *Alfonso X El Sabio*, 448–55. The character assassination of Alfonso X, by means of the attribution to him of a spurious blasphemous remark, traversed the Pyrenees and ultimately found its way into an influential history of music; see Lipsius, *Monita et exempla política*, ch. 4, “De impietate,” 30–31; “Castille (Alfonse X du nom Roi de),” in Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 2:94–98, note 95 H (English translation, 4:196–202, note 198 H); and Hawkins, *General History*, vol. 2, bk. 2, ch. 2, 141n (reprint ed., 1:218).

108. Attributed to King Alfonso in the “Cuarta crónica general” or “Estoria del fecho de los godos,” compiled in the fourteenth century; reproduced in Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 624–25; commentary and English translation (reproduced here with minor changes) in O’Callaghan, *Alfonso X*, 224–27. The *romance* is first recorded in a manuscript from the mid-fifteenth century: Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Ms. 9559. See also Romeu Figueras, “Una version manuscrita.” For versions printed in 1564 and 1566, see Wolf and Hofmann, *Primavera y flor de romances*, 1:197–200. The version presented here is based on the “Cuarta crónica general,” with variants freely taken from these other sources.

<p>Fallescióronme amigos, e parientes que yoavía, con averes y con cuerpos, e con su cavallería. Ayúdeme Jesucristo e la Virgen Santa María, que a ellos me acomiendo de noche e de día. Non he más a quien lo diga ni a quien me querellar, pues los amigos queavía no me osan ayudar, que con miedo de don Sancho desamparado me han: No me desampare Dios cuando por mí embiar. Ya yo oí otras veces de otro rey contar, que, con desamparo, se ovo de meter en alta mar a se morir en las ondas o las aventuras buscar; Apolonio fué aqueste, e yo faré otro tal.</p>	<p>My friends left me and the relatives that I had, with goods and bodies and troops of knights. Help me, Jesus Christ and Holy Virgin Mary, to whom I commend myself by night and day. I have no one else to whom to say it, nor to whom I can complain, because the friends I had do not dare to help me: for fear of Don Sancho they have abandoned me. May God not abandon me when he sends for me. Another time I heard tell of another king who, abandoned, put out on the high seas to die in the waves or to seek adventures; that was Apollonius and I will do as much.</p>
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The historically informed details, the mention of the fear inspired in Alfonso by Sancho, the muted reference to disaffected nobility, the allusion to Alfonso's Marian devotion, and the self-comparison to Apollonius, king of Tyre (the latter also to be found in the celebrated *cantiga Non me posso pagar tanto*, which no doubt circulated only among close courtiers or literati)<sup>109</sup> suggest that the ballad was created by a well-informed nobleman whose family had been close to Alfonso, and was used to help rehabilitate the memory of the king, as a counterweight to the prevailing hostile propaganda promoted by his son and heir.

As noted above, in the codicil to his will Alfonso had asked for some *cantigas* to be performed during Marian feasts in the church where he was to be buried (which turned out to be Seville's cathedral). The scant evidence suggests that his request may have initially been put into effect but was halted within a few years. Alfonso's deep unpopularity during Sancho's reign helps to explain why, despite his own great hopes for his masterpiece, the CSM seem to have vanished into thin air after his death. One cannot separate the

109. In this poem by Alfonso X, the king, or a nobleman personifying his troubles, eager to fly from a poisonous human landscape, proposes to pilot a merchant ship and sail across the ocean; see Dronke, *Medieval Lyric*, 223–24, and O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X*, 200–202.

fate of the CSM from the political fate of Alfonso: this was his most personal project, and his person was inseparable from his ancestry, status, and political ambition as king of Castile and León and Holy Roman emperor-elect. When Alfonso died Sancho IV and his supporters were unlikely to give continuity to the CSM project, not only because it departed in many ways from the mainstream tradition of courtly song, as remarked above, but especially because it was a living reminder of Alfonso's person, and a piece of literary propaganda that exalted his memory.<sup>110</sup>

The CSM had all been composed before Alfonso's death, but their presentation in book form remained incomplete. Work may have continued for a while, but priorities must have changed and eventually the completion of *F* was abandoned. The manuscripts were entrusted to the cathedral of Seville, where the king's body, together with his books of songs, came to lie. His corpse was eventually interred in the same chapel as those of his parents; this chapel, completed before 1279, was presided over by an image of Mary, the *Virgen de los Reyes*. Although Sancho IV realized that he had everything to gain by supporting the cathedral and the funerary chapel of his ancestors, he declared, in February 1285, his wish to be buried not in Seville but rather in Toledo; in so doing he clearly distanced himself from his father's memory.<sup>111</sup>

Alfonso seems to have failed to anticipate just how far his son would go to undermine his legacy. Kirstin Kennedy remarked that he did not attempt to establish any new form of ritual, having been seemingly content to subsume the devotional objects associated with him into the wider practices of the Catholic liturgy.<sup>112</sup> Moreover, he did not think it necessary to provide specific resources to ensure the fulfillment of his wish to have the CSM performed in the future. He seems to have had a blind confidence in the transformative power of devotional song, the multiplying effect of his exemplary piety, and the compliance of the local clergy with his will. Alfonso's provisions for the singing of the CSM were in fact overly optimistic. Wills were often violated in the thirteenth century, the more so when private funding for the fulfillment of specific duties, in the form of, for example, land revenues, was lacking.<sup>113</sup> The only firm monetary provision found in Alfonso's codicil is a sum of one thousand silver marks, trusted to the Master of the Templars in the kingdoms of Castile, León, and Portugal, the Portuguese knight Johan Fernández, for

110. If the Marian project had been a more neutral, conventional means of advancing the prestige of a king, Sancho IV would no doubt have provided for its continuation, as he continued in 1293–94 the payment of Moorish trumpet players and kettle drummers who had presumably been present during his father's reign; see Anglés, *La música de las Cantigas*, 3/1:126. The trumpet and kettle band was at that time an inescapable symbol of heraldic and military might and a valuable addition to communicational and psychological warfare.

111. Pérez Monzón, "La dimensión artística," 587–88.

112. Kennedy, "Alfonso's Miraculous Book," 211.

113. On the execution of royal wills, see Brown, "Royal Testamentary Acts."

chaplains to sing a daily Mass or Office (“divina officia”) in whatever place his chapel should be (if possible in Jerusalem). In fact Alfonso’s heart ended up in the chapel of the main *alcázar* (the citadel) in Murcia.<sup>114</sup>

The canons of Seville were not expected to support minstrels; nor could they be expected to take an interest in the organized promotion of the Marian cult, through vernacular song, among the urban population. The CSM were not supported by an independent urban tradition akin to the Italian devotional confraternities that were encouraged by mendicant friars.<sup>115</sup> Thus, despite Alfonso’s own hopes, the books of the CSM were probably treated by his successors as a treasure to be kept, rather than a repertory to be publicized and shared among the people. If some *cantigas* were indeed sung on selected feast days in accordance with Alfonso’s will, the practice seems to have been discontinued not long afterward. The faint echo that the songs may have had in courtly circles probably derived from their early public circulation during Alfonso’s lifetime. Once the Learned King was defeated and disgraced and buried in Seville, his Marian *cantigas* were, for most purposes, buried with him.

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114. On Alfonso’s will, see Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, 617; Daumet, “Les testaments d’Alphonse X,” 89–90; and Torres Fontes, “El corazón de Alfonso X.”

115. No confraternities are known to have been formed in Andalusia before 1300; see Sánchez Herrero and Pérez González, *CXIX reglas*. I owe this information to Manuel García Fernández (personal communication, September 5, 2014). The Franciscan friars in Castile, however close to the king (as attested by the presence of music theorist Juan Gil de Zamora at court) and attuned to his Marian theology and devotional program, are not known to have had any role in the transmission of individual CSM. Their influence over the CSM project in matters of Marian spirituality and imagery was, however, signaled by Ana Domínguez and other authors; see Sánchez Ameijeiras, “Imaxes e teoría da imaxe,” 272–76, 292–93.

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## Abstract

This article reviews the evidence for the medieval performance of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (CSM) and discusses King Alfonso’s intentions for the work, including the intended audience. The CSM were conceived as an ambitious cultural enterprise with both religious and political objectives, but were doomed to failure by the steep political decline of their creator. The only surviving evidence for the CSM’s presence in any court outside Alfonso’s is the Barbieri MS, an eighteenth-century descendant of a lost original, plausibly transmitted to the Portuguese court before 1270. Other traces of performative use are rubrics and marginal notes in an appendix to manuscript *To* and their corresponding reworking in manuscript *E*, which point to short-lived ritual use. Internal iconographical, literary, and compositional evidence

suggests that Alfonso did intend the CSM to circulate among a broad range of social classes. He manipulated poetic and metrical forms from the troubadour tradition to highlight the dignity of the Virgin Mary, but he privileged forms directly inspired by the Andalusian *zajal* familiar to popular audiences and among the minstrels, to encourage the penetration of his songs beyond his courtly circle. The CSM were meant to consolidate Christian restoration in the recently conquered southern territories, but also to serve as personal and dynastic propaganda, asserting their author's royal supremacy over Castilian lords, his preeminence among Iberian kings, and his status as the Christian monarch most worthy of the office of Holy Roman emperor.

**Keywords:** Cantigas de Santa Maria, Alfonso X, medieval song, Galician-Portuguese poetry, *zajal* form

