The Courtly Arts of Praise and Insult in Medieval Literature

by

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Abstract

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This dissertation compares the poetry of two political figures, the Buyid vizier al-Ṣāḥib Ibn ᶜAbbād (938-95 CE) and King Alfonso X of Castile (1221-84 CE). I argue that they produced poems to control elite discourse, managing rules of linguistic style and social decorum. In so doing, they ensured an obedient court. This technique is most evident in their authorship of ribald, slanderous poetry, which purported to break down social rules but in fact shaped and enforced the court's normative logic. Ibn ᶜAbbād, writing Classical Arabic poetry, did not seek to change preexisting notions of high and low speech; nor did Alfonso, who codified the Spanish language and was the most famous troubadour of Galician-Portuguese lyric. Instead, they recognized the utility of writing across the rhetorical spectrum of a courtly poetic tradition. Most of their political forebears and contemporaries limited themselves to writing such poetic motifs as panegyric, chaste love, and friendship. Invective poetry had been considered an outside force, a pastime of disgruntled or merely playful poets seeking to chide or manipulate the patron. Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso made proprietary, authorial claims to scathing invective as well as grand praise, a combination that allowed them to dominate would-be opponents in the poetic field. I suggest that this dominance of language translates into political advantage, a sign of protection from opportunistic poets and a potential threat to enemies.

Diverging from prior taxonomies of medieval literature, which station panegyric and invective as ethical opposites, I argue that the specific court politics of the Buyid and Castilian court resist this binary reading. The first chapter provides historical and linguistic accounts of the two empires, then details Ibn ᶜAbbād's and Alfonso's interventions therein. Because they took seemingly contradictory positions in their legislation, administrative prose, official correspondence, rhetoric, and poetry, their work forecloses certain broad arguments on ethics. This breach makes way for my epistemological discussion of poetic form, which connects the poetic analysis in chapters 2 and 3. The study then moves into a structural account of the poetic utterance. In chapter 4, I show how the social hierarchies invented in the poetic text push insistently outward, shifting our critical view toward the hierarchy of the court.

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Abbreviations

AW = Al-Tawḥīdī, Abū Ḥayyān. *Akhlāq al-wazīrayn*. Ed. Muḥammad bin Tāwīt al-Ṭanjī. Damascus: Maṭbūᶜāt al-Majmaᶜ al-ᶜIlmī al-ᶜArabī, 1965.

CBN = Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa (Colocci-Brancuti), Codex 10991.

CEM = lyric poems known as *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer*. Unless otherwise noted, all citations of the original texts are from *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer dos cancioneiros medievais galego-portugueses*. Ed. Manuel Rodrigues Lapa. Lisbon: Edições J. Sá da Costa, 1995. (Individual *cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer* cited by the number Lapa assigns them.)

CHALABL = Ashtiany, Julia, et al., eds. *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: ᶜAbbasid Belles-Lettres*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

CPAS = *El cancionero profano de Alfonso X el Sabio*. Ed. Juan Paredes. Rome: Japadre editore—L'Aquila, 2001.

CSM = Alfonso X el Sabio's lyric poems known as *Cantigas de Santa María*. All citations of the original texts are from *Cantigas de Santa María.* Ed. Walter Mettmann. 3 vols. Madrid: Castalia, 1986-1989. (Individual *cantigas de Santa María* cited by the number Mettmann assigns them.)

DDGM = *Dicionario de dicionarios do galego medieval*. Santiago de Compostela: Instituto da lingua galega. Online resource. <http: http://sli.uvigo.es/DDGM>

DSIA = Ibn ᶜAbbād al-Ṭālqānī, Abū al-Qāsim Ismāᶜīl ("al-Ṣāḥib"). *Dīwān al-ṣāḥib ibn ᶜabbād*. Ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Āl Yāsīn. Baghdad: Maktabat al-nahḍa, 1965.

EAL = Meisami, Julie Scott, and Paul Starkey, ed. *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

EI2 = Bearman, P.J., et al., ed. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 2nd Ed. Leiden: Brill, 1954-2005.

EI3 = Krämer, Gudrun, et al., ed. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. 3rd Ed. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

H = Hijra (Islamic calendar) dates

HAI = Brice, William Charles, ed. *An Historical Atlas of Islam*. Leiden: Brill, 1981.

KB = Ibn Abī Ṭāhir Ṭayfūr, Aḥmad. *Kitāb baghdād*. Ed. Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī. Cairo: Maktabat nashr al-thaqāfa al-islāmiyya, 1949.

KH = Alfonso X el Sabio. *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise*. Trans. Kathleen Kulp-Hill. Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000. (Kulp-Hill's edition does not feature strophic line breaks, so they have been inserted in this study when necessary.)

Lane = Lane, E.W. *Arabic-English Lexicon*. Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 1984. First published 1863-93.

MU = Al-Rūmī, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī ("Yāqūt"). *Mu^{c}jam al-udabā': irshād al-arīb*. Ed. Iḥsān ^{c}Abbās. 7 vols. Beirut: Dār al-gharb al-islāmī, 1993.

YDQ = al-Tha^{c}ālibī, Abū Manṣūr ^{c}Abd al-Malik. *Yatīmat al-dahr*. Ed. Mufīd Muḥammad Qumayḥa. 5 vols. Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-^{c}ilmiyya, 1983.

Chapter 1: History, Language, and Heteroglossia

The social and political rules at work in medieval poetry are as imposing as the poetry's own rules of meter, rhyme, and style. They are also equally productive. Critics and literary historians encounter a two-part challenge as in approaching court poetry, the centerpiece of official artistic culture in the times and places I will discuss here. That challenge is to understand both the sociopolitical function of poetics and the sociopolitical order embedded in the poetic text. I argue that, to produce rigorous and convincing answers to both questions, it is necessary to read the court as a set of competing literary claims; the politics of a poem emerge only in conversation with other poems and, importantly, other poetic forms. My research emerged originally out of an interest in jocular and especially derisive poetry. In medieval Arabic and Iberian Romance languages, this irreverent literature flourished in discrete periods, so I began investigating what role it might have played in imperial politics at those times. It became clear to me that any such role would be discernible only in a study of court literature in its various forms, in particular the more widely-studied genres of praise and chaste love poetry, the predominant literary idioms by which the court represented itself. This more mainstream poetry, whose political qualities are acknowledged and analyzed in modern scholarship, invites a scholarly revisitation, a gloss of the sociopolitical vocabulary of invective poetry, which up to this point has received little historicist criticism. I argue that praise and invective are contrapuntal but by no means in clear opposition, and both serve to confirm and shape the logic of courtly life. My more specific contention on invective is that, precisely because it claims to upset or lampoon the social order, it becomes an extraordinary tool for the political leader who knows how to use it. Often he will use his wealth and prestige as patron, soliciting poets to issue attacks on other individuals in the court system. But the cases I will discuss in this study seem more compelling yet in a political sense: the political leader himself authors the attack. It will be a central task of this study to analyze the poetic move of the powerful asserting his power, or insidiously claiming to be powerless—and thereby availing themselves of the language of subversion.

Jocular poetry, as self-referential a poetic mode as one might find anywhere, talks a great deal about the rules that do not govern it—but then the point of this poetry is that the reader not take it at its word. The poetic speaker shrugs off the oppressive and damaging effects of time—the object of more serious poems' complaint—free to drink, sing, leer, and deride his enemies. This conceit of course is part of the joke, but a great many scholars have written about it as if the poetry itself were somehow at a remove from history. Medieval literary study has begun to heed the historicist call in the last three decades of scholarship, discussing court poetry in its political context and articulating the patron-poet relation that informs the poetic text. What is curious is that such lowbrow forms have remained generally beyond the pale of historicist criticism, even though the patrons and poets of libertine works are the very people receiving scholarly attention for their serious literature. Such is the case with al-Ṣāḥib Ibn ᶜAbbād (326-85 H, 938-95 CE)

in the late ᶜAbbasid Empire and with Alfonso X of Castile (1221-84, r. 1252-84 CE), the two patron/poets on whom this study is focused.

This study argues that medieval scholarship in general should be more attentive than it has been to the lowbrow, but that is not in itself a fully-wrought argument. Rather than valorizing such literature or redeeming it from dismissive scholarship (of which there is plenty from both Arabists and Romance-language readers), I will insist that "high" praise poetry and "low" jocular forms are parts of broad, overarching political conversations. In short, I will argue that political and social history does not allow the critic to view these disparate poems as independent expressions of personality or culture. I will also treat the dual traditions of medieval rhetoric and modern criticism to articulate how the high/low binary has arisen and gained acceptance in two epochs of reading. Analyzing the poems is also an analysis of the poems' categorization, appraisal, and placement in literary tradition. On Arabic, philologists have tended to identify little historical import in such genres as *hijā'* (invective) and *mujūn* (libertinism), although there are notable exceptions to this trend to be discussed subsequently. The major historicist studies of Arabic poetry examine genres of praise, and their vital role in my argument will become clear. The comparative lack of such studies on *hijā'* and *mujūn* points to a gap in our critical conversation and of course the encouraging sign that we might benefit by reading literature more broad-mindedly and history more closely than before. It does not seem plausible that poetry written for and performed in a politically organized court could have been politically irrelevant or innocuous. Reading these poems, one gains an impression of the political and social hierarchy of which they appropriate, comment upon, and reinscribe—this content is far from subtle. The same is true in Iberian Romance study, which is increasingly attentive to reading literary texts as historically salient, but the medieval genres of interest are predominantly pious works and epic. The *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer* ('Songs of scorn and slander,' hereafter CEM) receive a small fraction of the attention scholars pay to the *Cantigas de Santa María*, despite the fact that the two oeuvres are nearly identical in the number of poems produced—and profane *cantigas* as a whole outnumber the sacred three times over. There seems to be an accepted notion in Romance philology that the CSM are more politically significant than the CEM, but I am unaware of any concrete historical evidence to support this.

The reason extant studies are circumscribed in this way, I would argue, is that we as medievalists are still in the middle of a decades-long effort to articulate what is a literary court.[1] I hope that this study will contribute meaningfully to that project, because it seems to me one of the most substantive and important challenges to historians and critics. Because the court is the center of literary production in both of the literary movements I discuss in this study, it is crucial to lay out its internal power dynamics as well as its relation to the culture around it. The limited and inexact nature of available historical data (e.g., what these courts looked like, where they were convened and for how long, exactly who populated them and when, etc.) is in some ways a hindrance, but it

[1] For examples of that effort in the past few decades, see Algazi and Drory, "L'amour à la cour"; Ali, *Arabic Literary Salons*; Bumke, *Courtly Culture*; Carrión Gutiérrez, *Conociendo*; Lemaire, *Les visions;* Naaman, "Literature and Literary People"; Rodríguez-Velasco, *Castigos*; and Rowson, "Religion and Politics."

underscores a structural question that is very much available to the literary scholar. The task of rendering the court in theoretical terms is no doubt fundamental to the broader work of understanding premodern social, legal, and artistic norms; it also very much an evolving project that seems to me yet in its early stages. The court that is emerging in contemporary scholarship is less a fixed place than an idea, a moveable venue for language, social interactions, and political maneuvers. The poetic analyses that follow will rely upon certain secondary sources that map the court theoretically, and at the same time will insist that much of the historical terrain is yet uncharted. I will take on some of the diachronic concerns of describing two particular historical courts; but the larger project is synchronic, and it is there that I hope to offer a substantive contribution.

One of the many benefits of theorizing the court is that it compels us to revise certain historical ideas that have thus far held in secondary literature. It is a commonplace of Arabic philology that Ibn ᶜAbbād had a great court, but because his court was geographically transient and its membership changeable, how exactly was that court his own? A patron's court is his only insofar he is able to control who is admitted to it, what kind of speech its invitees use in it, and whom those people address. Past scholarship, which has tended to rely on fixed notions of a patron's personality and power base in order to depict a court, marshals specific historical evidence in ways useful to the current project; the necessary task we medievalists have taken up in the past four decades is to question the nature of patrons' relationships to their respective courts. The specific questions I want to ask here destabilize the notion of the proprietary role to which scholarship has, generally without reservations, attributed to these patrons. This is more than a theoretical exercise, because in the case of many of the poems I will discuss, the extant analyses cite the strength or peculiarity of the author-patron's personality as the operative force in the literary text. This gloss is applied most of all to Alfonsine *cantigas* studies, and it is precisely this court that would question most pointedly a biographical treatment of the individual author. While clearly there are significant biographical themes in his lyrics, particularly in the CSM, these poems are products of highly integrated cooperatives of artists, groups that themselves operate according to linguistic and artistic conventions. The CSM are understood as a collaborative effort by professional composers, hagiographers, scribes, calligraphers, and illustrators; Alfonso's authorial role is a major question, which would seem to argue against the readings of explicit personality some scholars have pursued in their studies.[2] What is unquestionable is his symbolic importance in the songbook's construction and the lyrics' performance from the thirteenth century onward. I will focus on the character and function of that symbolism in both the Arabic and Iberian Romance traditions. Finally, it must be noted that the court,

[2] Studies that suggest Alfonso's personality drove his court's *cantiga* composition include Anglés, *La música de la Cantigas de Santa María* (see in particular the third volume) and Montoya Martínez, "El milagro de Teófilo." The biographical methodology is practiced most insistently in O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the* Cantigas de Santa Maria. For such an approach to Ibn ᶜAbbād, see Mafizullah Kabir, "The Sahib." All of these works are extremely helpful to subsequent research, including this study; I sound a of caution chiefly to privilege the court as the sociopolitical organizer of poetic production and a key hermeneutic in understanding poetic content. Of course both court and individual character are ideas require that we piece together what historical materials we have, and that process is as much about apprehending gaps as it is completing a picture. This study intends to follow the structural trajectory and therefore focus on the court and the languages it uses, although elements of biography will at times figure prominently.

as a social and political space, has rules that precede and transcend the people therein, including the patron figure presiding over speech and cultural production. These structural concerns inform all chapters to follow, but will become most explicit in chapter 4. The task of the current chapter is mainly to survey the pertinent cultural and linguistic conditions at work in the late-[c]Abbasid empire and thirteenth-century Spain.

Insofar as I advocate a particular methodology, it is important to recognize that the choice of method is itself an argument. It is not the case that we can read a work of medieval poetry to glean reliable or thorough descriptions of the court. Explicit diachronic accounts of courts—who attended a particular gathering, who sat or stood where in relation to the person presiding, who said what to whom—are few, especially in the literary text proper (for the researcher, a benefit of the Arabic tradition is that a medieval anthology or chronicle will sometimes include such details in anecdotes with which it frames a poem). But the important point I wish to make here is that, even when a poem does describe the court, or the patron who convenes it, or one of the courtiers below him, what the text is in fact doing is building the court. The court is less an object that the literature might characterize than it is a product of the literature itself. So, my statement as a critic—i.e., that courts are structures and ideas rather than discrete social groupings or occasions—is functionally the same as my statement of methodology: the nature of the texts at hand compels us to read literature as the catalyst, not the secondary descriptor, of the court.

Theoretical Background

I want to read the literature associated with the court as an inquiry both into the court's workings and into extant relevant criticism. Since the mid-twentieth century, Structuralist and Formalist approaches have dominated the conversation about medieval literature, especially on jocular and satirical genres. Pioneering Formalist Viktor Shklovsky displays a strong affinity with parodic, obscene, and subversive literature, a position whose most obvious explanation is that such genres destabilize linguistic and narrative conventions—exactly the work of 'enstrangement' he deems crucial to art (*Theory of Prose* xviiii-xix, 155, 167). Despite Shklovsky's fame, in medieval literary studies he is well overshadowed by his contemporary, Mikhail Bakhtin. Bakhtin seems to fashion his own variation upon Formalism, maintaining a clear interest in literary forms but using elements of Structural criticism to map those forms diachronically. In the field of premodern literary studies, and particularly among scholars of jocular literature in the Middle Ages, the conversation about genre is very often a conversation with Bakhtin.[3] This dissertation is no exception to that rule, but my aim is to respond meaningfully and critically to his dialogic theory, a move which I think is much needed in our field. Scholars of many premodern canons, including Arabic and Romance languages, have tended to adopt his ideas and language without as much scrutiny as a critical reader would want from secondary literature.

[3] Scholars disagree as to whether Bakhtin is properly a Formalist, but there is little question that he emerges from Formalist analytical training.

The two basic problems I see in Bakhtin's methodology are (1) he is more thorough in terms of linguistics than in terms of history and (2) his generic statements on prose are more accurate than those on poetry. On both counts, I hope to offer useful theoretical responses. First, there is the self-evident point to consider: Bakhtin's understanding of genres is a product of reading Slavic and Western European literatures, so his taxonomy needs adjustment when applied to other language families and specific languages such as Arabic. And, even when we turn to Iberian Romance languages, his models do not always work. As this chapter addresses the Castilian language and its historical development, we will see a compelling example of Bakhtin's ideas of monologue and dialogue: a language used for epic literature becomes a national language, then acquires novelistic techniques as it opens up to the literary possibilities of heteroglossia. But in the same time and place, poetry runs counter to some of Bakhtin's key ideas. He ties poetry to epic, asserting that poetic language (especially its lyrical subset) aspires to the authority of epic speech (*Dialogic* 13, 296-97); but that theory does not accurately describe medieval Iberian lyric. His evidence for the contention is not clear to me; it seems possible that he is unaware of certain rhetorical trends from Antiquity which are, in turn, highly relevant to medieval writers:

> For the ancient Greeks and Romans, lyric was a category of form and meant *strophic song*; it had nothing to do with theme. No ancient poet or theorist would have thought the "lyric I" a necessary component of lyric poetry. The introspective and emoting I, which may stem from Renaissance misreadings of *non-lyric* ancient poetry (e.g., Roman elegy), was enshrined by the Romantics and has held sway in critical theory ever since. But the Galician-Portuguese *cantigas* are lyric in the strict formal sense, since they are strophic songs […] (Rip Cohen, "Poetics" 95-96).

In one respect, it is difficult to imagine Bakhtin, well-acquainted with Classical poetry and rhetoric,[4] applying an anachronistic version of the lyric voice to ancient genres. In another respect—one which acknowledges the transitory nature of popular theories—it may not be so far-fetched to see him emerging from a readerly school which reveres Romantic modes of interpretation. Whatever the precise reasons might be, the contemporary scholar is clearly constrained when recalling Bakhtin's language, faced with a Galician-Portuguese poetry that is both dialogic (according to Bakhtin's own definition of the term) and lyrical.[5] As I hope to demonstrate in this study, it would do serious and unnecessary violence to lyric to try to categorize it as monologic. The most rigorous analysis of the poems is therefore the most productive way to work with Bakhtin: to revise his theories when necessary, and bring them into conversation with alternate models of literature and its social functions.

Investigating literature as a facet of court life will require the synthesis of primary-source research with social theory. The court requires what Erving Goffman calls "a

[4] Cohen's use of the term "theorist" to describe an ancient scholar of literature seems less than accurate.
[5] An effort to reconcile this problem—taking into account T. S. Eliot's insistence on the individual voice in lyric—is to be found in Jacob Blevins, *Dialogism and Lyric Self-Fashioning* (11-21).

language of relationships" (*Stigma* 3), because any role one might play in it (e.g., patron, legislator, counselor, poet, savant, musician, scribe, illuminator, host, and visitor) is only comprehensible as relative to the other positions held in that court. To map out this matrix, I rely largely on Pierre Bourdieu for his articulation of relative social positions and hierarchical structures. Two of his most basic ideas, emerging gradually into a clear light as his bibliography evolves in the late twentieth century, merit explication here:

> (1) The researcher must define a social system by the tensions that constitute it. Bourdieu's term is 'field' for these tensions in any particular group of people selected by the researcher to study. "Fields mediate the relationship between social structure and cultural practice" (Swartz, *Culture* 9). What is important about this idea for my purposes is not so much the definition of 'field' but rather the insistence that the social object of study—e.g., a salon, a court, a professional class, etc.—cannot be assumed to exist *a priori*. It exists only if and when a study articulates its boundaries, character, and the positions individual people take in it. (2) No one position or stratum in a social system can of itself produce substantial, lasting social norms. Rather, these norms always result from a kind of cooperative work, performed between multiple strata, whether or not anyone involved is aware of the process. According to Bourdieu, no single socioeconomic group *by itself* determines that its members should speak a certain way, attend a certain kind of school, or prefer a certain artist. Nor can a group dictate rules to another, even from a position of socioeconomic dominance. The nature of a social hierarchy, as Bourdieu conceives of it, is that any one group's methods of selecting dialects, schools, and artworks, depend upon the other groups in the hierarchy. Furthermore, the association between a group and its cultural tastes must be constantly maintained and reinforced by the behavior of the group's members, otherwise it will break down (*Distinction* 1-2, 24, 41, 88; *Language* 45, 51-54).

From this point of view, it is not just preferable but necessary that the researcher identify how a given system divides into classes and groups, and what sort of rules they collaborate in making. To be sure, there are significant problems encountered in applying Bourdieu's theories to a premodern context: he organizes his theory of art production and consumption around such ideas as the bourgeoisie, the press, mass publication and purchase of artwork, the artist's appeal for autonomy, etc., none of which exist *per se* before modernity. But several of his theoretical building-blocks are broadly transhistorical at their most basic level. With certain qualifications and adjustments, they can speak to medieval art production: I will adapt in particular ideas of capital (economic, educational, cultural).

Basis for Comparison

At no point in my study will I imply a genetic relation between Ibn ᶜAbbād's poetry and Alfonso's. The questions of intertextuality and influence between Iberian Romance and Semitic-language literatures is a fraught one, debated with particular fervor

in the past century. The fact that Alfonso was so dedicated a student of ᶜAbbasid-era Arabic literature—an era in whose waning years Ibn ᶜAbbād plays an active part—is only tangentially related to the historical trends which I discuss in this chapter.[6] That may seem ironic, because there is no doubt that Alfonso's engagement with Middle Eastern literatures is essential to understanding his worldview and intellectual consciousness, what Francisco Márquez-Villanueva calls "The Alfonsine Cultural Concept."[7] But I detect in the *cantiga* no formal resemblance to ᶜAbbasid poetry (in fact Alfonso's translators seem to have worked with very little of that poetry; Middle Eastern didactic prose concerned them more). And, although Iberia was home to a strong Arabic and Hebrew lyrical tradition (which is also a tradition of multilingual poems), the *cantiga* was primarily a northern-looking poetry, in clear dialogue with Provençal lyric. All of this is to say that my comparison of Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso is based in literary and social theory, not in literary form itself. Tempting though it might be to read into Alfonso's poetry evidence of his Eastern-language interests, the most substantive arguments to that effect are strictly musicological, and even they are controversial (Anglés, *La música* 3:36-38; Touma, "Indications" 137-50; Wulstan, "Pretty" 191). Certainly at the level of poetic content, his Arabic philological interests do not emerge clearly.

What makes Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso so rare among medieval literati is no single one of their traits taken by itself, but rather the confluence of those traits.[8] I propose that this is because of the specific linguistic, cultural, and political conditions that obtained in their respective times and places. We might find any number of patrons who were also poets, or Janus-faced authors of pious "high-" and defamatory "low" literature, or political officials who produced linguistic and lexicographic texts; but to find those qualities together is a scholarly challenge. It seems very probable that other historical figures exist who combined these qualities and, if indeed they do, I surmise that the basic cultural factors I describe below will be found to have obtained, especially the specific kinds of diglossia in Ibn ᶜAbbād's and Alfonso's respective empires.[9] This underscores

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[6] For discussion of Alfonso's translation schools and their work from Middle Eastern sources, see Gonzalo Menéndez Pidal, "Cómo trabajaron" 364-80.

[7] See Márquez-Villanueva's chapter of that name in Márquez-Villanueva and Alberto Vega, eds., *Alfonso X of Castile: The Learned King*. For a fuller redaction of that argument, see his *El concepto cultural alfonsí*.

[8] This is not to imply that Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso they are at a similar level in terms of their historical importance or the profundity of their works. There is no doubt that they are major figures in their respective cultures, but Alfonso stands out in the Spanish canon as few individuals do in any tradition. He enjoys a legacy as the founder of an entire national linguistic tradition (Castilian as the foundation of modern Spanish), to be discussed subsequently in this chapter.

[9] Other than Alfonso, the only royals I have encountered who clearly exhibited all these traits are two kings of Portugal, Sancho I (1154-1211) and Dinis (1261-1325). Sancho was in fact a pioneer of the *cantiga*. The fact that Dinis was Alfonso's grandson and both kings composed in a common language and form (the Galician-Portuguese *cantiga*) attests to the favorable conditions thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Iberia offered to the patron/poet. Both Sancho and Dinis, accomplished *cantigueiros*, could claim only a fraction of Alfonso's poetic productivity—Dinis is thought to have authored 137 and Sancho well fewer, compared to Alfonso's 462-471. (The precise number of poems differs according to paleographic accounting.) Further, Sancho and Dinis certainly did not approach the range of poetic voices Alfonso spanned; Alfonso is the only Galician-Portuguese author to have versified sacred motifs.

The Provençal duke and troubadour Guillaume IX (1071-1127 CE) authored graphically libertine songs and oversaw an active coart, although he did not equal Alfonso in the breadth of his patronage (nor, of course, in political rank). The troubadours will come up subsequently in this chapter, for their relations with Alfonso and Castilian courts generally.

just how essential sociologic methods of reading are if my argument is to be useful in medieval studies. The work of this chapter will be to characterize the broad cultural, linguistic, and political contexts in which both patron-poets intervened, with an eye toward informing the poetic contents that subsequent chapters will treat. In the concluding chapter of this dissertation, I will build from these findings my comparison of Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso's respective courts.

Poet-patrons: historical factors, language developments, education, and poetics

Setting aside for now questions of culture, it is clear that the political realities of Ibn ᶜAbbād's and Alfonso's respective empires were near-opposite. The Buyid regime (of which Ibn ᶜAbbād was a prominent member—more on this subsequently) decentralized power in the large and bureaucratic ᶜAbbasid Empire; in Spain, Alfonso set as political goals to consolidate the recently-expanded empire bequeathed to him by his father, and to then expand anew.

Ibn ᶜAbbād in Imperial Context: Decentralization

It is a testament to political strategy that Ibn ᶜAbbād, as a provincial administrator in an empire granting more and more authority to its provinces, seems to have had so much smoother a political career than did Alfonso. The Buyid vizier rode a volatile historical and political wave, but positioned himself such that the wave almost always broke in his favor. The *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (hereafter EI2 or EI3, depending on edition) places him in "the category of ministers who, in the service of princes who were either not suited to or were indifferent to the tasks of administration, were able to acquire an almost autonomous personal power and to become temporarily the true masters of the State" (EI2, "Ibn ᶜAbbād" para. 3). These princes, particularly the brothers ᶜAḍud al-Dawla (324-72 H, 936-83 CE; a young Ibn ᶜAbbād served him only indirectly), Mu'ayyid al-Dawla (date of birth unknown; died 373 H, 984 CE), and Fakhr al-Dawla (341-73 H, 952-83 CE), displayed political adeptness perhaps overshadowed by their fraternal power-struggles and intrigues. (Ibn ᶜAbbād served both Mu'ayyid and Fakhr directly.) It may seem surprising that secondary sources on late ᶜAbbasid life tend to pay them less

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In the Middle East, Ibn ᶜAbbād had among his contemporaries patrons who were accomplished poets, such as Abū Muḥammad al-Muhallabī (291-352 H, 903-963 CE). Al-Muhallabī enjoyed *mujūn* (Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, *Sexuality in Islam* 130). But YDQ's chapter on al-Muhallabī does not highlight *mujūn* the way Ibn ᶜAbbād's section does, nor have I found evidence elsewhere that he composed it at court. For the vizier Abū ᶜAbd Allāh ibn Saᶜdān (ca. 310-374 H, 922-84 CE) there is ample evidence of his taste for *mujūn* in al-Tawḥīdī's *Kitāb al-imtāᶜ wa-l-mu'ānasa* (191-97), but Ibn Saᶜdān is not known to have authored that kind of poetry.

In late-medieval Egypt and Syria, the ruling Mamlūks resemble the Buyids in their political takeover of Arabophone lands followed by their acquisition of the language and eventual energetic participation in literature. Licentious poetry is popular during their reign, with such *mujūn* authors as Shams al-Dīn ibn Dāniyāl (646-710 H, 1248-1310 CE), Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl al-Ṣafadī (696-764 H, 1297-1363 CE), Taqī l-Dīn abū Bakr al-Badrī (ca. 782-847 H, 1380-1443 CE). But these authors are not patrons, and to my knowledge the major Mamlūk patrons who author poetry do not produce *mujūn* (EAL 2:501-3). Because I am not an expert on Mamlūk literature, I can make no definitive comments on trends in its themes and authorship.

attention than their political inferior Ibn ᶜAbbād; that fact probably testifies to the vizier's success at building a legacy of belles-lettres from positions of patron and author. The Buyid princes of ᶜAḍud, Mu'ayyid, and Fakhr's generation were active and munificent patrons of literature, although historians do not give them a great deal of credit for their cultural careers. It is Ibn ᶜAbbād's distinction to have been (1) an extraordinary patron and (2) a famous author in his own right. And, though it might seem counterintuitive, he probably benefited from his subordinate position to the princes. The brothers were well-known for infighting after the death of their father Muᶜizz al-Dawla, and Ibn ᶜAbbād seems to have used to his advantage both his cunning and his geographic stations on the eastern edges of the empire.

The Buyid takeover marks a physical contraction of the ᶜAbbasid Empire, but also an ideological expansion. Iraq at that time (the Buyids rose during the early tenth century and establish real political dominance around the time of Ibn ᶜAbbād's birth) was the center of a vast but compromised empire. Much of the land it had conquered in the previous two centuries remained under ᶜAbbasid control, but that control was loose throughout Central Asia and in the western garrisons of Anatolia. (And Central Asia is precisely the region from which the Buyids had emerged to dominate the capital Baghdad.) Thus, we might speak of the empire in this period as contracting, or at least wavering in its geographic dominance—a gradual process, rather than a dramatic set of events (Kabir, *Buwayhid Dynasty* 1-14). The expansion I mention, though, was yet more subtle, because it was not tied directly to geographic occupation: from the provinces a ruling regime came to Baghdad, speaking Persian, unfamiliar with—and initially uninterested in—ᶜAbbasid courtly culture. It must have been jarring for those Arabocentric elites to find themselves governed by "uncultured" (i.e., uneducated in Arabic) Persians; that jarring experience must also have been eye-opening in a certain respect. Whatever this first generation of Buyid rulers lacked in ᶜAbbasid cultural legitimacy, they were no fools in strategic matters; and the Old Guard must have sensed the geographic shift that the coup represented: the princes who shared military and administrative powers in the Buyid system were comfortable oscillating between Baghdad and the provinces, where they stationed viziers and garrison commands. Baghdad and its caliphal seat lost some administrative primacy while maintaining symbolic import. Before the Buyids started the decentralization process in earnest, they had already served notice to Baghdad that the provinces would host great courts, with all the governmental and cultural action those courts facilitated.

For these reasons, Ibn ᶜAbbād stood to capitalize on a great legitimizing opportunity, an opportunity shared—but not necessarily seized—by many in this second generation of Buyid administrators. Their mostly provincial origins seem to have been an asset rather than a liability;[10] at the same time they had the Arabic cultural competence

[10] We might include in Ibn ᶜAbbād's peer group of dignitaries Abū l-Fatḥ ibn al-ᶜAmīd (337-66 H, 948-77 CE), Abū Ṭāhir ibn Baqiyya (ca. 308-67 H, 920-77 CE), Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābī (313-84 H, 925-94 CE), and Ḥusayn ibn Saᶜdān (date of birth unknown; d. 374 H, 974/75 CE). Abū l-Fatḥ's family was from the historically Persian city of Qom—he is the son of Abū l-Faḍl ibn al-ᶜAmīd (ca. 287-360 H, 900-970 CE), a major figure in Ibn ᶜAbbād's life, who will figure heavily in this study. Ibn Baqiyya was from a farming family in Awānā, about 35 miles (approx. 60 km.) north of Baghdad (*Eclipse* 2:285); Ibrāhīm ibn Hilāl al-Ṣābī was from the Northern Mesopotamian city of Ḥarrān (YDQ 2:287), in modern-day Turkey. Ibn Saᶜdān's geographic origins are unknown

that remained vital in the minds of ᶜAbbasid elites—who, in turn, remained vital to the imperial power structure.[11] Ibn ᶜAbbād represented an outstanding new member of the cultural elite. The two most famous anthologists of late-ᶜAbbasid literature, Abū Manṣūr ᶜAbd al-Malik al-Thaᶜālibī (350-429 H 961-1038 CE) and Yāqūt al-Rūmī (575-626 H, 1179-1229 CE), portray the vizier as a cultural dynamo, his court unsurpassed in his age. Al-Thaᶜālibī's account is particularly noteworthy for its conviction, and perhaps hyperbole: he asserts that Ibn ᶜAbbād's court outstripped its predecessors in ᶜAbbasid history, gathering more great minds than even the great caliphal courts had managed at the peak of imperial power.[12]

Despite compelling historical evidence that provincial political life served Ibn ᶜAbbād extremely well, he expressed a strong desire to settle in Baghdad. The benefits of decentralization may be clearer to us from our position surveying centuries of ᶜAbbasid history. While the Buyids appear to have been quite cognizant of political strategy as they spread out power, there is no doubt that Baghdad retained enormous authority in the their concept of empire and culture (al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rīkh Baghdād* 1:119). Therefore, I want to argue on one hand that the arc of Ibn ᶜAbbād's career, political and cultural, confirmed the advantages provinces enjoyed as burgeoning power centers. On the other hand, he saw the unique opportunities for political and cultural primacy that the capital offered. The Buyids are famous for having diminished the role of the caliph in political affairs but they understood the importance of the institution of caliph, which ᶜAbbasid imperial conception tied indelibly to the Baghdadi seat of power (Hanne, *Putting the Caliph in His Place* 107-09). Because our view of ᶜAbbasid history presupposes Ibn ᶜAbbād experience thereof, and because he lived most of his life at far remove from Baghdad, I think it important to describe Baghdad as an *imaginary*, a site of political and cultural glory in the vizier's mind. This of course requires a distinction made in our minds, between an ontology of Baghdad and—more important for this study—the vizier's apprehension of the city. Michael Cooperson notes a historiography some three centuries after the Buyid takeover but already in its early stages during Ibn ᶜAbbād's time: Baghdad's "'center-of-the-world' thesis even when the material prosperity and political importance of the city had receded" ("Baghdad" 100).

The many lacunae in our historical data notwithstanding, there is no doubt that Ibn ᶜAbbād was uncommonly ambitious—he seems to have taken every opportunity for advancement that Buyid Iraq offered him—and he made plain that Baghdad was where his greatest ambitions lay. It is unclear just how much time he spent there throughout his

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(HAI 398). All of them seem to have capitalized on the socio-cultural advancement that their political positions afforded them, with the pronounced exception of Ibn Baqiyya—he seems to have been unconcerned with Arabic eloquence and gathering literary salons. Medieval accounts say he bribed his way from royal kitchen supervisor to vizier; the historian Miskawayh excoriates him as unlettered (*Eclipse* 2:310, 5:333).

[11] One such elite is the vizier Abū Muḥammad al-Muhallabī (mentioned above), a member of the Arab ᶜAbbasid "Old Guard" but who seems to have embraced the Buyid regime in which he served. Al-Muhallabī figures prominently in Ibn ᶜAbbād's writings (DSIA 227-28; Ibn ᶜAbbād and Abū l-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī, *Nafā'is al-makhṭūṭāt* 87-88, 104-6, 243-44).

[12] For al-Thaᶜālibī, see YDQ 3:225; for Yāqūt, see MU 662-64. Following Arabic secondary sources, I refer to Yāqūt al-Rūmī as "Yāqūt."

life; his formative visit there[13] was in 347/958. Because Baghdad was the one place where a young vizier could do his finishing work in *adab* (belles-lettres) and administrative competency, I think it probable that he resided there for substantial periods—perhaps even settling there—until the chronicles of his provincial career resume in 968. If indeed he spent a good portion of that decade in Baghdad (and assuming that the experience were to have gone well), then that provides some explanation for (1) interest in basing himself there throughout his subsequent career, and (2) his close association with such Baghdadi luminaries as Abū Muḥammad al-Muhallabī (291-352 H, 903-63 CE) and the al-Munajjim clan. In his 347/958 debut in Baghdad, Ibn ᶜAbbād was at the bottom of his upward trajectory, politically and socially. Even when he had become a full-fledged vizier, traveling from his own province to the capital probably means assuming a guise of extra humility. In Rayy and Isfahan he was the proverbial big fish in a small pond; Baghdad was thus a big pond, where he would have been surrounded by equal and bigger fish. In chapters to come we will see his statements of reverence and humility while in Baghdad, and how those statements may have served his ambitions.

Arabic, Persian, and Ibn ᶜAbbād's Habitus

If Ibn ᶜAbbād's appetite for Arabic achievement is easy to understand, his relationship with Persian is somewhat more complex. There is no doubt that he was bilingual but his major cultural projects were in Arabic; that is logical given the ᶜAbbasid cultural space in which he operated. The challenge for the Buyids was to demonstrate excellence in Arabic—this is especially important for Ibn ᶜAbbād's generation, as the previous Buyid rulers had not always been concerned with mastering Arabic, let alone developing Arabophone courtly culture. In that endeavor, Ibn ᶜAbbād was among the most successful Buyids of any generation. The role of Persian in his court is unclear from extant sources—on the one hand, he made ample space in his court for Persian discourse and poems;[14] on the other, his poetry condemns the pro-Persian dogma of the *shuᶜūbiyya*.[15] It seems that he had ample appreciation for Persian poetry but not as a canonical part of his own literary career. And he tolerated no promotion of Persian cultural identity at the expense of Arabness—the reasons for this should become clear in the course of this study.

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[13] The prince Mu'ayyid al-Dawla (then Abū Manṣūr) traveled from Rayy to Baghdad on an official visit to Muᶜizz al-Dawla, the *amīr al-umarā'* (Prince of Princes) and Buyid chief. Mu'ayyid's mission was to request Muᶜizz's daughter as his bride. He took with him Ibn ᶜAbbād, who had been studying under Abū l-Faḍl in Rayy (CHALABL 98).

[14] Evidence of Ibn ᶜAbbād's Persian knowledge is to be found in Muḥammad ᶜAwfī, *Lubāb al-albāb* 255; Edward Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* 1:463-6, 2:93-94; AW 142-44, 306, 466; and MU 2:699. AW is especially remarkable for its report that Ibn ᶜAbbād used his Persian speaking ability to include commoners at his salons, holding debates in spoken dialects of the language (142-44)—presumably because those commoners could not take part in Classical Arabic discourse. These texts, in discussing Ibn ᶜAbbād's knowledge of Persian, also provide evidence of his Persian poetic activity.

[15] EI2 defines *shuᶜūbiyya* as "a movement within the early Muslim society which denied any privileged position of the Arabs" ("Al-Shuᶜūbiyya"). The most important moment for *shuᶜūbī* thought was the rise of the ᶜAbbasid Empire, a time of great ethnic diversity in the largest and most powerful Islamic cities. The most vocal proponents of the movement tended to be of Persian descent like Ibn ᶜAbbād himself, so his poetic condemnation of a pro-Persian dogma is significant. For a discussion of this poem, see chapter 3.

Ibn ᶜAbbād maintained his circumspect position on language and culture—dogmatic in certain respects but not an extreme endorsement of one language over the other—perhaps as a response to the intricate Persian-Arabic relationship among the Buyids generally. Contrasting the regime to the historically-overlapping empire in Central Asia, Joel Kraemer notes,

> The Buyid sovereigns, unlike their Samanid counterparts, did not stimulate the development of Persian letters. It is telling that, whereas Muᶜizz al-Dawla was unfamiliar with Arabic, and required an interpreter, his sons were proficient enough to write in this language. The second generation Buyids assimilated Arabic cultural standards, their Iranian sentiments notwithstanding (*Humanism in the Renaissance of Islam* 54).

A canny use of his bilingual talents, details of which we will see subsequently, may also have been one of the Ibn ᶜAbbād's numerous techniques for political advantage. It is of great significance that, although he hardly shied away from his Persian identity (i.e., he used Persian comfortably at court), his writings do not emphasize that identity; all the texts I have been able to locate that describe his use of Persian were written by others. In order to promoted himself, he demonstrated his powers of reasoning, his literary erudition, and his literary taste—in other words, competencies that he had *acquired*, and acquired in Arabic exclusively.

In a famous quip, Ibn ᶜAbbād likens Baghdad to his teacher Abū l-Faḍl ibn al-ᶜAmīd,[16] and that comparison might give rise to some very productive historical observations. His words, 'Baghdad among cities is like the Professor among men' ("*Baghdādu min al-bilādi ka-l-ustādhi min al-ᶜibādi*"[17]), give us an inkling of how he constructed his ideals of high culture. There is no question that a preexisting idea of the ᶜAbbasid court and courtly discourse was for the vizier a large part of his cultural formation, but we must also view this cognitive and self-building process as an active part of the development of a Buyid cultural regime. The Buyids did not view themselves as separate from the narrative of ᶜAbbasid political preeminence, and they recognized that narrative as inextricably tied to ᶜAbbasid artistic culture. This is especially true of Ibn ᶜAbbād's generation, for whom Arabic was a native language, or at least the language of their initiation into public discourse. The idea of a hegemonic culture into which one is raised and educated raises for us the crucial theoretical moment at which Bourdieu uses, and recasts, the term *habitus*. The word, whose roots lie in Latin sciences and philosophy, achieves a definition in Bourdieu's works that seems quite distinct from any previous use: "durable, transposable *dispositions*" (*Outline* 72, emphasis original), social forces whose power derives largely from their lack of explicit articulation. In another of his works, *Language and Symbolic Power*, the volume's editor provides a slightly more explanatory gloss: "a set of *dispositions* which incline agents to act and react in certain ways. The dispositions generate practices, perceptions and attitudes which are 'regular'

[16] I will refer to him by his first name in order to distinguish him from his son, the vizier Abū l-Fatḥ ibn al-ᶜAmīd, whose association with Ibn ᶜAbbād is known as having been a competitive one.
[17] SeeYDQ 183.

without being consciously co-ordinated or governed by any 'rule'" (Thompson in Bourdieu, *Language* 12, emphasis original). The absence of a stated belief allows a very strong adherence to rules that are by definition unclear, absent the intervention of social research.

How might we read Ibn ᶜAbbād's above axiom, its conspicuous show of admiration and its undertone of aspiration, in dialogue with the sociological claim of cultural theory? In Ibn ᶜAbbād's writings, Baghdad and Abū l-Faḍl are the sites of gloried history, inherently auspicious by virtue of the culture they speak. They are reference points of achievement and standards by which the young Buyid might judge his own work in court settings. Explicitly and unsubtly, they represent both the possibilities available to him and the pressures he seems to take on as an ambitious vizier and litterateur. To understand his habitus, I suggest that it is necessary to see how he constructs ideals such as Baghdad and Abū l-Faḍl. This is not because either city nor mentor is an *a priori* representative of culture, but because of (1) the structural relation Ibn ᶜAbbād inserts between them in his quip and (2) topoi of the praise poetry we will read subsequently. Geography and exemplary biography become refrains in the poetic imaginary, and it will be useful to bear in mind the roles Baghdad and Abū l-Faḍl will take as centers around which Ibn ᶜAbbād charts a cultural periphery.

To medieval literati writing about Baghdad, key elements of the city's grandeur and mystique are its fantastic size and its appetite for material goods.[18] Histories written during and shortly after ᶜAbbasid rule make grand statements about what Baghdad consumes (goods) and what it produces (arts and learning). Probably the most famous passage about Baghdad's abundance is by Aḥmad ibn Abī Yaᶜqūb (ca. 215-78 H, 830-91 CE), better known as al-Yaᶜqūbī:

> وذكرت بغداد لأنها وسط العراق[...] وانتقل إليها من جميع البلدان القاصية والدانية؛ وأثرها جميع أهل الآفاق على أوطانهم، فليس من أهل بلد إلا ولهم فيها محلة، ومتجر ومتصرف. فاجتمع بها ما ليس في مدينة في الدنيا ثم يجري في حافتيها النهران الأعظمان، دجلة والفرات، فيأتيها التجارات والمير براً وبحراً، بأيسر السعي؛ حتى تكامل بها كل متجر، يحمل من المشرق والمغرب، من أرض الإسلام، وغير أرض الإسلام، فإنه يحمل إليها من الهند، والسند، والصين، والتبت، والترك، والديلم، والخزر، والحبشة، وسائر البلدان؛ حتى يكون بها من تجارات البلدان أكثر مما في تلك البلدان التي خرجت التجارات منها؛ ويكون مع ذلك أوجد وأمكن حتى كأنما سيقت إليها خيرات الأرض؛ وجمعت فيها ذخائر الدنيا؛ وتكاملت بها بركات العالم
>
> (*Kitāb al-buldān* 4)

> I mention Baghdad first of all because it is the heart of Iraq […]. (P)eople emigrate to it from all countries, both near and far; and everywhere there are men who have preferred it to their own country. All the peoples of the world have their own neighborhoods there, their trade and commercial centers; that is why there is gathered together here what does not exist in any other city in the world. It stretches out on the two banks of those two large rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, and watches commercial products

[18] See al-Ṭabarī 3:873-74; Yaᶜqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān* 241, 246, 248, 254; Yāqūt, *Muᶜjam al-buldān* 1:686.

> and staples flow to it on land and on water. For it is with great ease that each commercial object is transported endlessly from East and West, from Moslem and non-Moslem regions. Indeed, merchandise is brought from India, Sind, China, Tibet, the land of the Turks, the Khazars, and the Abyssinians—from everywhere in short—to such a degree that it is found in greater profusion in Baghdad than in its country of origin. It is procured so easily and surely that one would think that all the goods of the earth are sent there, all the treasures of the world gathered there, and all the blessings of the universes concentrated there (trans. Wiet and Feiler 8-9).

Certainly, Baghdad continued as the empire's economic center in the Buyid period, though noticeably less preeminent than in the previous two centuries. To a member of the cultural elite like Ibn ᶜAbbād, even a diminished trade volume subtracted little from the value he ascribed to the city. As Michael Cooperson notes: "Baghdadi scholars were so numerous and so eminent that reference to them could continue to support the 'center-of-the-world' thesis even when the material prosperity and political importance of the city had receded" ("Baghdad" 100). The capital's record of achievements is cumulative; it is not reset with each generation, century, or even regime. The *kātib* (official secretary) Hilāl al-Ṣābī (359-448 H, 969-1056 CE) and vizier Abū Shujāᶜ al-Rudhrāwarī (437-88 H, 1045-95 CE) report,

> The Sa*h*ib (sic) Ibn 'Abbad at all times of his life was attached to Baghdad and anxious to rule there, and watching for opportunities for this. When Sharaf al-daulah died, he [Ibn ᶜAbbād] aspired to realize his ambition, and believed it was within his reach. He suborned certain persons to put before Fakhr al-daulah the glories of the territories of 'Iraq and assure him that they could easily be conquered (trans. Margoliouth, *Eclipse* 6:171, parentheses and brackets added).[19]

We might here note the irony that, although Ibn ᶜAbbād's patronage was a major reason tenth-century writers and artists favored provincial courts over Baghdadi ones, he would have preferred to oversee all this cultural activity in the capital itself—at least according to the predominant historical narrative of his era.

Abū l-Faḍl, a famous *kātib*, demonstrated to Ibn ᶜAbbād extraordinary upward mobility in the Buyid system and how to consolidate the social advantages of that position. Whereas Ibn ᶜAbbād's father and grandfather were both high-level bureaucrats, Abū l-Faḍl is the first in his family line to ascend to a government position—his forebears farmed and peddled (EI2, "Ibn al-ᶜAmīd" para. 1). It seems probable that Ibn ᶜAbbād's father died ca. 334/946,[20] and that the boy joined Abū l-Faḍl in Rayy not long thereafter. That he learned literary arts from the preeminent epistolary writer of his era

[19] Margoliouth's transliterations vary from those used in this study, although (it is hoped) not at the expense of coherence. Also, a historical note: evidence suggests that, among Ibn ᶜAbbād's many ambitions, that of establishing himself in Baghdad is one of the few he never accomplished.

[20] This date is unverified; certain accounts claim that father and son both died in 995, though this seems unlikely (CHALABL 96).

was a distinction not lost on Ibn ᶜAbbād, who praised his mentor and addressed him with great deference even after establishing himself as an administrator. Ibn ᶜAbbād's writings suggest that the mentorship included poetry, rhetoric, official correspondence, and logical argumentation.

Just as Baghdad is the place Ibn ᶜAbbād associates with the ᶜAbbasids' great architectural, scientific, philosophic, theological, and literary milestones, Abū l-Faḍl is a repository of eloquence, acquired knowledge, and political success. In the language of Ibn ᶜAbbād's oeuvre, 'The Professor' is a glorious *mamdūḥ* (praised figure) and an abstract standard of excellence, as if he were a text to which Ibn ᶜAbbād's writerly voice refers when seeking inspiration. This textual treatment is consistent with the language subsequent writers use to describe Abū l-Faḍl—indeed, they may take cues from Ibn ᶜAbbād's writings in this regard—but what distinguishes this particular teacher-pupil relationship is how closely the pupil seems to model his ascent on that of his teacher. Ibn ᶜAbbād, although he seems to have acquired more lasting fame than Abū l-Faḍl, was in a certain respect not as accomplished as his mentor. Abū l-Faḍl seems to have ascended further, in that he was born into a lower-class family. Yāqūt reports that ᶜAbbād, the father, worked in Ṭālaqān as a teacher before acceding to provincial *kātib* and vizier under Rukn al-Dawla (MU 663). In other words, it is clear that Ibn ᶜAbbād was born into an elite position and that his status (perhaps also ᶜAbbād's death, though this event is not reliably documented, as noted above) was probably the main reason that Abū l-Faḍl invited him to be an understudy.

To sum up these biographical points, the data suggest quite strongly that Ibn ᶜAbbād privileged Baghdad as the capital of culture, while he employed sound strategy to maximize his provincial role. So while his ultimate ambitions lay in Baghdad, he hedged his bets by maintaining his famous courts in the eastern lands, where he could direct literary currents. The many great thinkers he attracted to the cities where he was posted (Isfahan, Rayy, and Jurjān) would in previous centuries have probably settled in the Fertile Crescent centers of Baghdad, Basra, and Kufa. The eastern ᶜAbbasid Empire, substantial portions of which were Persian-speaking and identified with Persian culture, provided him a convenient space to establish his political and cultural fame. The region's predominantly Shīᶜī character was also, no doubt, a great advantage for Ibn ᶜAbbād as a writer and patron. As we will see in chapters 2 and 3, he seems to have enjoyed a certain bully pulpit, above and beyond the symbolic dominance of the courtly patron, in versifying theological themes and arguments. While there is no way of knowing whether his peregrinations between cities far east of Iraq (the term *al-ᶜirāq* denoted the Lower Mesopotamia in the Middle Ages) truly inform the strength of his poetic statements, it will become clear that the theological content is inseparable from places marked and commemorated in his poetry. His interest in the Zaydī branch of Shīᶜa—there is no scholarly consensus as to whether he subscribed to it fully—is attested by his prose work *al-Zaydiyya* and his patronage: two of the era's most prominent Zaydī Shīᶜī imāms traveled from Baghdad to join his court in Rayy (EI2, "Zaydiyya" para. 12).[21] Of particular note is that Ibn ᶜAbbād was Muᶜtazilī, and famously so in his era. This Islamic

[21] For a consideration of the Zaydī question in Ibn ᶜAbbād's *curriculum vitae*, see Gabriel Reynolds, *A Muslim Theologian in a Sectarian Milieu* 48.

theological movement received caliphal endorsement only briefly in ᶜAbbasid history; that official position's revocation in 233 H/848 CE might suggest that Muᶜtazilism was marginal by Ibn ᶜAbbād's time, but in fact the movement was quite strong at that moment. The Buyids promoted it energetically and do not appear to have been overly concerned with the Caliph's position on the matter. All of this is to say that Ibn ᶜAbbād's Muᶜtazilism, although scorned famously and which Ibn ᶜAbbād himself suggested was controversial, does not seem to have truly destabilized his political or intellectual standing.[22] It was in the eastern provinces that he was born, educated, and vested with authority, and it was there that he assembled the most famous ᶜAbbasid court of his era. Thus, returning to Ibn ᶜAbbād's appeal to Fakhr al-Dawla that they take Baghdad, we might reasonably ask if the failure of that plan was ultimately in the vizier's best interests.

Poetics and Taste in the Buyid Vizierate

We have seen that tenth-century politics offered Ibn ᶜAbbād a great legitimizing opportunity; he also found such an opportunity in the contested arena of poetic language debates. In addition to his roles as patron, poet, lexicographer, and official *kātib*, he intervened in the literary field as a critic of poets past and present.[23] Read in the context of Ibn ᶜAbbād's career, many of these prose works seem to execute personal agendas as well as to promote a particular literary position—I refer particularly to Ibn ᶜAbbād's treatment of Abū l-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbī[24] (303-54 H, 915-65 CE) in the treatise *Al-Kashf ᶜan masāwī shiᶜr al-mutanabbī* ('The Revelation of Faults of al-Mutanabbī's Poetry').

What seems of utmost importance to Ibn ᶜAbbād, in the poetry he authored and most of all in his prose, was to affect the predominant literary taste of his era. Just as he shrewdly navigated political currents in the empire, in his work he paid constant and careful attention to his era's major literary arguments. That interest is not merely academic; rather, it is a function of his overall interests in cultural hierarchy. Erez Naaman, studying Ibn ᶜAbbād using Bourdieu's concept of habitus, describes the vizier's project as the attempt "to make *his* literary taste the hegemonic in the field" ("Literature and Literary People at the Court of Al-Ṣāḥib Ibn ᶜAbbād" 290). Taste, for Ibn ᶜAbbād and for a great many ᶜAbbasid contemporaries, was neither a personal idiosyncrasy nor an inexplicable force that inhabited people but rather a key element of socio-political standing. In Ibn ᶜAbbād's hands, literary taste is dynamic and versatile, an indispensable lever with which to influence the people around him. It will require further analysis to understand how the vizier's taste might or might not be discernible from that of his

[22] For al-Sulāmī's derision of Ibn ᶜAbbād's Muᶜtazilism, see MU 2:662—although the poet is identified by family name only, he is most likely Ibn ᶜAbbād's courtier Abū Ḥusayn al-Sulāmī. For Ibn ᶜAbbād's comment on Muᶜtazilism's many critics, see YDQ 3:320.

[23] "Critic" should not be understood here in its modern sense of literary critic, but rather as something closer to what a film critic does in a newspaper or magazine. In other words, Ibn ᶜAbbād does not analyze poetry so much as he judges certain sections of certain poems good or bad. It is important also to keep in mind the overall rhetorical thrust of this criticism; medieval prose about poetry is didactic and, explicitly or implicitly, its lessons are about how to compose good poetry.

[24] The same is true of the derision aimed at Ibn ᶜAbbād, most importantly Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī's (310-414 H, 922-1023 CE) ruthless criticism, which will be treated at various points in this study.

contemporaries, and how the dominant position in the field might have been attained through literary work.

The late ᶜAbbasid era was a high point of rhetorical prose production and therefore a period full of metapoetics. Among rhetoricians, two binary oppositions became popular to categorize poets: *maṭbūᶜ*/*maṣnūᶜ* ('natural'/'crafted') and *qadīm*/*muḥdath* ('Ancient'/'Modern'). These binaries overlap to a large extent, but as Naaman has argued convincingly, *maṭbūᶜ*/*maṣnūᶜ* are the terms most pertinent to Ibn ᶜAbbād's milieu—and in fact *qadīm*/*muḥdath* do not appear very relevant to the vizier's literary debates (Naaman 80). As did Abū l-Faḍl before him, Ibn ᶜAbbād valorizes *maṭbūᶜ* in the form of Abū ᶜUbāda al-Buḥturī (206-284 H, 821-897 CE), the famous ᶜAbbasid panegyrist. Late ᶜAbbasid historiography shows how significant al-Buḥturī is in the *maṭbūᶜ*/*maṣnūᶜ* paradigm, and in turn the significance of Abū l-Faḍl's and Ibn ᶜAbbād's repeated references to al-Buḥturī as a model to be imitated. To rhetoricians of that era, al-Buḥturī represented *maṭbūᶜ* greatness at the precise moment when *maṣnūᶜ* poetry had begun to rise. Rhetoricians' binary categorization of *poets*, a synecdoche for the *maṭbūᶜ*/*maṣnūᶜ* stylistic split, is al-Buḥturī vs. Ḥabīb ibn Aws Abū Tammām (ca. 190-231 H, 806-845 CE).[25]

The labels *maṭbūᶜ* and *maṣnūᶜ* (the latter term is often translated as 'artificial' or 'mannerist,' in addition to the translation given above) carry with them weighty suggestions of a poet's cultural background. They also presume a certain cultural history of Arabic in which Arabophones grew increasingly distant from a natural- or intuitive-sounding language—and therefore turned away from 'natural' poetry—as they urbanized. In this formulation, *maṭbūᶜ* style is more common among Bedouin (or at least Bedouin-trained) poets while the *maṣnūᶜ* is a product of urban culture. Poets themselves do not tend to self-identify as one or the other ("*maṭbūᶜ* and *maṣnūᶜ*" para. 3). I agree with Naaman's main critical arguments on this topic, which can be summed up as follows:

- Ibn ᶜAbbād and many of his most admired associates profess a general preference for poetry which, in the predominant narratives of poetic style and development, exemplifies *maṭbūᶜ* style (129).
- This preference is not unequivocal. There seem to be no instances in which Ibn ᶜAbbād or the poets around him use the terms *maṭbūᶜ* and *maṣnūᶜ*.[26] Instead,

[25] *Qadīm* and *muḥdath* are metapoetic categories—that is to say, prose writers on poetry use them but poets do not describe themselves as such. Also, they are not strictly temporal. To distill grossly a long and intricate literary conversation, the general consensus holds that the Ancients are poets predating the second to fourth centuries H/eighth to ninth centuries CE (i.e., the apex of ᶜAbbasid imperial expansion and wealth), while what emerges from this period of flux is Modern style; *within* those two centuries, certain poets are labeled Ancient and some Modern. In Ibn ᶜAbbād's era a contemporary poet's work might be called Ancient if rhetoricians find in his work echoes of the Ancients, e.g., early Bedouins and Umayyads, whose style is closely associated with Bedouin imagery and the tripartite *qaṣīda* ('ode'). For descriptions of the *maṭbūᶜ*/*maṣnūᶜ* nomenclature and the historiographies it engenders, see *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (hereafter EAL), "*maṭbūᶜ* and *maṣnūᶜ*" para. 3; and Mansour Ajami, *Neckveins* 20.

[26] Ibn ᶜAbbād does however mention a closely related word, *ṭabᶜ* (literally 'nature' but which we might translate as 'natural poetic ability'), in the letter of recommendation he writes for his courtier Abū l-Ḥasan al-Nawqānī (YDQ 4:392).

> the ‘natural’ style of which al-Ṣāḥib speaks highly as the model for the contemporary poet is a perfected hybrid. Easy flowing in spite of being rich in *badīᶜ*;[27] pure like the ancient Bedouin style without using archaic and uncouth expression; fluent but devoid of the weak excessive facility of ‘modern’ urban poetry and hence preserving the solidity of the Bedouin style. This remarkable statement outlines an ideal poetic style, which may be hardly materialized in practice, but yet one attempted at by al-Ṣāḥib and others. This was probably the ‘natural’ style shown to him as a model by his admired master Abū l-Faḍl Ibn al-ᶜAmīd […] (Naaman 200).

Now that I have shown that Ibn ᶜAbbād’s taste is (1) a synthesis of literary currents, (2) an inheritance he claims from Abū l-Faḍl, and (3) an instrumental part of his cultural authority, the question arises of how he used his taste to influence those around him. This is in fact the central question in Naaman’s study (and by now my debt to that work is obvious), which concludes that “as the source of power al-Ṣāḥib took advantage of his privileges to make *his* literary taste the hegemonic in the field, and more generally *his* vision of the court and the courtier the one in effect. Those unwilling to adapt to the courtly habitus that to a high degree took its shape from the aggregate of the vizier’s cultural preferences, had no place at court” (290, emphasis original). I want to branch out from Naaman’s theoretical language in one important way and in so doing open the opportunity for my comparative, diachronic argument.

Rather than “the source of power” I would call Ibn ᶜAbbād the conduit, who enjoyed little to no autonomy as a power symbol.[28] The contingent nature of his bureaucratic position—as opposed to that of a sultan or prince, who has a genealogical claim to power—was probably a key factor in his high ambition, motivating him to organize the most famous Buyid court. True, he fell into his secretarial profession as his father’s legacy, but he inherited no real guarantee of his mandate; as vizier he worked at the pleasure of his prince, who could have demoted or punished him at any time. It is thus unsurprising that in his writing he cites Abū l-Faḍl constantly and cites his father almost never—it is his training that justified his vizierate, not his family line. What makes Ibn ᶜAbbād so vivid an illustration of dynamic, fluid, temporary power is this professional distinction he maintained and his techniques for demonstrating it at court.

On the matter of Ibn ᶜAbbād’s taste I would also like to expand on Naaman’s language. I see nothing inaccurate about mentioning and italicizing “*his* taste” but, in Naaman’s study, that high-poetic taste is essentially an elaboration upon that of Abū l-Faḍl. I have established just how predominant a role Ibn ᶜAbbād assigns to his mentor in demarcating the habitus. Like political authority, cultural authority is not something Ibn ᶜAbbād created for himself but rather derived from leaders, teachers, and (perhaps to a lesser degree) institutions such as the Buyid regime and the vizierate in the abstract. I

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[27] *Badīᶜ* is stylistic term often translated as ‘manneristic.’ Arabic rhetoricians tend to associate *badīᶜ* with the archetypal *muḥdath* (‘modern’ poet—see footnote above), a category to which Naaman also refers in this quotation.

[28] As I have posited, Ibn ᶜAbbād used his provincial administrative role to maximize his autonomy *as a functionary of the regime*—this is a separate matter from autonomy in the more abstract world of symbolic power. His day-to-day exercises of power, those often-banal administrative actions only rarely mentioned in the chronicles, are where he was most autonomous.

would therefore say that, in the realm of belles-lettres, Ibn ᶜAbbād's taste was scarcely his own at all.

Where the vizier seems to have staked out his own literary corner and to distinguish himself boldly in terms of taste is in the aggressive and transgressive poetry he composed and sponsored: *hijā'* and *mujūn*. This poetry enjoyed popularity from the Umayyad era through the ᶜAbbasid era,[29] perhaps most of all during the latter part, in which Ibn ᶜAbbād lived. However, its role in the court and its relationship with the highest-prestige poetic genres was volatile. Among litterateurs of that period there is no consensus on these genres' merits, in contrast to the dominant poetic modes of praise and elegy. The major arbiters of ᶜAbbasid literature—i.e., patrons, writers of prose, and anthologists—vary greatly in their appraisals of *hijā'* and *mujūn*. Their treatments range from valorization to apology to dismissal to condemnation,[30] and I know of no evidence that, in Ibn ᶜAbbād's time, the positive responses dominated the negative, even though both literary registers were alive and well. *Mujūn* production in particular seems to have been at a historic peak, although medieval rhetoric offers less direct commentary on *mujūn* than on *hijā'*. There is no way of knowing Abū l-Faḍl's stance on *hijā'* and *mujūn*; their absence in his *Yatīmat al-dahr* (hereafter YDQ) section suggests that he did not write works in that vein, or at least not much of it. But we cannot be sure of what survived in textual form, nor what editing al-Thaᶜālibī may have performed in the anthologization process. Finally, this lack of irreverent poetry authored by Abū l-Faḍl of course does not tell us whether he liked it or not. Ibn ᶜAbbād himself does not cite his mentor vis-à-vis *hijā'* or *mujūn*. In other words, he relies on mandates probably separate from his educational habitus to justify his involvement in these controversial poetic forms. The danger of such involvement manifests in *Akhlāq al-wazīrayn* (hereafter AW): al-Tawḥīdī's relentless critique of Ibn ᶜAbbād, his morals, and his literary sensibilities.

As we will see in chapter 3, *hijā'* is a poetic mode essential to Ibn ᶜAbbād's career and to his management of the court. One of the problems in understanding the role of *hijā'* in ᶜAbbasid poetics overall is that it is not altogether clear how the major literati station it in the territory of taste. The idea of the invective poem is not one of the central concerns of medieval Arabic rhetoric but it arises in several key texts: Qudāma ibn Jaᶜfar's *Naqd al-shiᶜr* (44, 114); Abū ᶜAlī ibn Rashīq al-Qayrawānī's *Al-ᶜUmda* (2:174-76), and Najm al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr's *Jawhar al-kanz* (310). In addition to the perspectives they give on how literature was read in the latter years of the Classical tradition, these texts reveal some of the accretive and dialectic techniques that Arab rhetoricians practiced. Ibn Rashīq bases his *hijā'* remarks on those of Qudāma. Ibn al-Athīr, in turn, draws from Ibn al-Rashīq. All three are equanimous on the subject of *hijā'*, demarcating

[29] The most famous fully *hijā'* poems in Classical Arabic literature are those of Umayyads: "Al-Akhṭal" Ghiyāth ibn Ghawth ibn al-Ṣalt (ca. 20-92 H, 640-710 CE), "Al-Farazdaq" Tammām ibn Ghālib (ca. 21-112 H, 641-730 CE), and Jarīr ibn ᶜAṭiyya ibn Badr (32-113 H, 653-732 CE). The poetic rivalry between the latter two is particularly well known. Bashshār ibn Burd (ca. 95-167 H, 714-784 CE) and Al-Ḥasan Abū Nuwās (ca. 129-200 H, 747-815 CE) are the two most famous poets who wrote *mujūn* in the ᶜAbbasid age, the latter most famous of all. Bashshār began his life and career under the Umayyad regime and, although the Umayyads are more famous for praise and satire than for *mujūn*, there is a quite plausible argument to be made that they played a major role in crafting *mujūn*'s early thematics, especially in the satirists' sometimes-bawdy personal attacks. The medieval scholar Abū Hilāl al-ᶜAskarī (ca. 338-400 H, 950-1010 CE) suggests a close generic grouping between *hijā'* and *mujūn* (*Dīwān al-maᶜānī* 1:211).

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space in the canon for invective but cautioning poets to be judicious in their choice of targets and words. Ibn al-Athīr distinguishes himself in that, among these three rhetoricians, he cautions most strongly against vitriol in *hijā'*.

For the purposes of this study, the most important Classical Arabic reader, other than Ibn ᶜAbbād himself, is probably al-Thaᶜālibī, who anthologized and commented upon much of the poetry we will read. It seems logical that he would appreciate both *mujūn* and *hijā'* poetics, given how much of them he accommodates in his anthology, and his high praise (YDQ 3:35-36) of Abū ᶜAbd Allāh ibn al-Ḥajjāj (330-91 H, 941-1001 CE), whose *mujūn* is as brazen and scandalous as any in Arabic literature. Al-Thaᶜālibī's nomenclature and selection of poems also remind us of the major overlap between *mujūn* and *hijā'*, such that they are more accurately grouped together than separately, especially in the ᶜAbbasid canon. And, al-Thaᶜālibī's anthologizing work seems to argue another important formal point: although *hijā'* as a writerly tradition recalls the tribal and courtly exchanges between two slanderers, the invective poem's cheeky attack presupposes the lack of consequences that the very name *mujūn* denotes (on which see chapter 3).

Al-Tawḥīdī seems to take two quite different positions on the matter of lowbrow poetry, writing with evident enthusiasm about the vizier Ibn Saᶜdān's '*mujūn* night': he quotes Ibn Saᶜdān saying, 'Come, so that we might make this night of ours *mujūn*-ish!" (*Al-imtāᶜ wa-l-mu'ānasa* 191). But al-Tawḥīdī, in a clearly personal attack, faults Ibn ᶜAbbād both for nasty habits and for favoring *mujūn* (AW 139-51); in fact he criticizes Ibn ᶜAbbād on these moral and literary-taste grounds throughout AW. In so doing, al-Tawḥīdī suggests that nasty habits and a taste for *mujūn* are closely related. This also alerts us to the inconsistency of al-Tawḥīdī's position on *mujūn*. Al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, probably the most famous rhetorician to devote substantial text to *mujūn* as a poetic question, shares with al-Tawḥīdī the tendency to address libertine behavior and literature together. He however refrains from judging *mujūn* as inherently good or bad. His chief concern is to present *mujūn* as a category of poetic topoi with which his literate audience should be familiar (*Muḥāḍarāt al-udabā'* 264-304). For an unambiguous condemnation of both *mujūn* and *hijā'*, see Abū Muḥammad ibn Ḥazm, *Rasā'il* 66 (although it cannot be assumed that this work is representative of ᶜAbbasid arguments, as its Andalusi provenance suggests that it would have been peripheral to medieval Eastern scholars).

Following Bourdieu's argument that the same techniques of accumulation, maintenance, and exchange apply to both symbolic and material capital (*Outline* 177-83), I would characterize Ibn ᶜAbbād's demonstrations of taste as investments to benefit his social status. Just as his deliberate echoes of Abū l-Faḍl's tastes were conservative investments, Ibn ᶜAbbād's career in *hijā'* and *mujūn* invited some risk. It is highly probable that he enjoyed these forms of poetry aesthetically, but all questions of his taste lead us to questions of social and political standing. It will be my argument that he taps into great potentialities in this transgressive and lowbrow literature, using it as an instrument of control at the same time as he exploits its entertainment value.

In the case of *hijā'*, the social efficacy of the genre is obvious: there is a long history of poets using invective poetry to (1) influence patrons afraid to become its object

and (2) intimidate rival poets.[31] In certain accounts, poets have had to flee courts and even cities, lest their good names be ruined in a sustained attack. Importantly, there are no rhetorical mandates condemning or dampening *hijā'* on the grounds that its author is too powerful in society—in other words, there are no rules to ensure a fair fight. This of course is to Ibn ᶜAbbād's advantage in all cases except that of trading insults with a prince or a caliph, and there is no evidence of such a conflict. It is therefore not difficult to imagine the power wielded by a *hijā'* poet who is also a vizier, a prominent scholar of Arabic, and the organizer of the most important intellectual court of his generation. If his invectives are not always in good taste—and, again, good taste is a crucial part of his sociopolitical standing—then we might assume that bad taste is a price he is willing to pay in exchange for a powerful poetic weapon.

Mujūn's sociopolitical value lies in its entertainment value, i.e., the very quality that would seem to make it innocuous. As I will argue below, it is anything but innocuous in Ibn ᶜAbbād's politically dynamic milieu. The avowedly disingenuous quality of the poetry gives the *mājin* (libertine; grammatically, the active participle of *mujūn*'s verbal root) speaker a reliable escape route should he be taken to task for his verses. Addressing wine, one of the most popular conceits in *mujūn*, Andras Hamori points out: "The Muslim writer who set about praising the joys of alcohol had a ready excuse: the Prophet himself declared that poets say one thing and do another. The widespread doctrine that poetry has nothing to do with reality was tailored for the irreverent" (*On the Art of Medieval Arabic Literature* 52). Ibn ᶜAbbād's society observes varying levels of acceptability and exculpability of the other behaviors depicted in *mujūn*—fornication, pederasty, scatology, and jokes at the expense of one's self and others—but Hamori's point holds true for all of them.

In the economic terminology I have been using to describe Ibn ᶜAbbād's cultural maneuvers, *mujūn* is a form of conspicuous consumption—its literal definition suggests carelessness and profligacy. When the *mājin* speaker celebrates his indiscretions in verse, he is affirming that one of his rarefied class can somehow get away with them. So, even though the content of *mujūn* is much like the European carnivalesque—the poetic persona playing the fool, fornicating, making a mess of his appearance—the idea of class reversal popularized by Bakhtin does not apply to the genre as nicely as it does to premodern European literature. In many ᶜAbbasid examples, and certainly in Ibn ᶜAbbād's case, *mujūn* indeed has subversive functions, but here they are firmly in the hands of the powerful. Recalling Naaman's above-cited statement on Ibn ᶜAbbād's regulation of taste at court, we will see the potential in *mujūn* to lend *hijā'* a mien of exculpability, and therefore a false sense of harmlessness. Therefore, when we encounter the vizier's bawdy poems under the corporate heading of '*mujūn* and *hijā''* (YDQ 3:314), we gain a sense that these terms do more than complement each other, and indeed do more than overlap. That the invective work can take recourse to its own supposed lightness allows it to speak a language of very heavy-handed power.

[31] It is not totally clear just how dangerous *hijā'* can be. Ibn Rashīq details certain Arab tribes laid low by *hijā'*, when the charges leveled were true (*al-ᶜUmda* 2:182). In the top-down political space of Umayyad and ᶜAbbasid caliphates, individual rulers and administrators rarely mete out public punishments for *hijā'* poets, although Islamic law allows 80 lashes for falsely accusing someone of fornication (Geert Van Gelder, *The Bad and the Ugly* 31, 129), which is one of the favorite expressions in *hijā'*.

Poetic Language and Alfonso's Habitus

I want to emphasize the cultural factors *around* Alfonso during his education and ascension for two reasons: (1) they are key to the basic sociological picture I am trying to draw and (2) there is very little specific information on Alfonso's education. He began training in Burgos, Castile, under the nobleman García Fernández de Villamayor and his Galician wife, Doña Mayor Arias. (It is a royal custom, common at the time, that surrogates rear young princes at a remove from the kingdom's main cities.) They had extensive land holdings in Galicia and it seems likely that they would have brought him to visit that area in his years under their care, although specific Galician itineraries are not specified in Alfonsine texts. He thanks the two teachers for their care and training in towns in the region of Burgos (Ballesteros Baretta, "Un detalle" 409-11). In addition to Castilian and Galician-Portuguese, it seems very probable that he would have learned Latin in childhood, as Spanish royal traditions dictate that the crown prince should be prepared to communicate—orally, at least—in the erstwhile language of administration (Rodríguez de la Peña, "Los reyes" 33). Which other languages he knew, and the extent to which he might have known them, is unknown. Some scholars have conjectured that he learned Arabic (Dodds et al. 221) but I am aware of no clear evidence for that. What is clear is that Arabic texts and Arabophone translators circulated through his court and that he supported Arabic education along with Latin in his kingdom (Beltrán de Heredia, *Bulario* 1:43, 1:197; Sánchez Herrero, "Centros" 375-76).

In the thirteenth century, to be an Iberian troubadour meant to compose lyric in Galician-Portuguese. Medieval sources state that the troubadour title was among the highest artistic distinctions, if not the highest very one; it also plays an essential role in modern methods of understanding the court structure, historically and theoretically (Rodríguez Velasco, *Castigos* 42-44). When "Alfonso" as lyric speaker states in the prologue of the CSM that he wishes to be Mary's troubadour (CSM "Prologo B," Mettmann ed. 55), it is a given that no language except for the one in which he is speaking is serviceable for the realization of that wish; the only other language of troubadourism was Provençal, which was appreciated in his court but not adopted as a language of poetic composition.[32]

To describe Alfonso's acceptation of *cantiga* patronage and authorship, I use the terms genotypical and phenotypical. I intend neither in all its empirical-sciences designations, strictly speaking.[33] My use for them is simple and abstract: taste as owned and passed between generations (genotypical) and taste as demonstrated in courtly activities (phenotypical). These terms also underscore a key difference between Ibn ᶜAbbād's cultural story and Alfonso's. Simply because he was king, Alfonso owed his legitimacy more to his genealogy than to his competence, no matter how his

[32] Catalan poets wrote lyric works in Provençal but this did not characterize Iberia generally, and the Catalans eventually developed a lyric tradition in their native language (Martín de Riquer, *Història* 1:21-22).

[33] The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the following definitions for the two terms, noting with both their roots in the field of biology: for *genotype*, "[T]he genetic constitution of an organism"; for *phenotype*, "The sum total of the observable characteristics of an individual, regarded as the consequence of the interaction of the individual's genotype with the environment; a variety of an organism distinguished by observable characteristics rather than underlying genetic features."

contemporaries might have judged (or how we as scholars might judge) his competence. Ibn ᶜAbbād is a subject in whom a prince has vested authority—a retractable authority, for which the vizier must continually prove his competence.

It is crucial to see Alfonso's affinity for the *cantiga* as a cultural and theological dogma that he inherited—actively and cognizant of his own agency—from his forebears. He takes every possible opportunity to draw on his father's memory as the main source of Castilian-Leonese legitimacy (*Primera crónica general* 2:772-73 [chapter 1132] and CSM 221, 292, 345). Fernando is well-known as a *cantiga* patron; that and his political legacy both inform Alfonso's genotype (Braga, *Cancioneiro* xxxvi-xxxviii; Ferreira, *O som* 119; Snow in Akehurst and Davis ed. 274). It is therefore unsurprising that Alfonso's *cantiga* career—in the lyric texts themselves and in his way of describing himself as troubadour—is freighted with political meanings. In the *Setenario*, a didactic work on king-vassal relations,[34] Alfonso describes his father "pagándose de omnes cantadores e sabiéndolo él ffazer; et otrosí pagándose de omnes de corte que ssabían bien de trobar e cantar, e de joglares que sopiessen bien tocar estrumentos; ca desto se pagaua él mucho e entendía quién lo ffazían bien o quién non" (13).[35] Thus we might see the king's position as a studied form of taste, i.e., an earned position to distinguish the best lyrics, i.e., phenotypical. But because Alfonso's link to his father is so critical to his status as king—and because Alfonso is the implied speaker in the *Setenario*, the narrator of sorts—Alfonso claims it as part of his own accumulated cultural wealth. So it is also genotypical. The *Setenario* makes clear that musico-poetic taste is (1) very much a distinction of the highest classes and (2) something that Alfonso, in claiming for himself, attributes to his own father.

If Alfonso indeed learned to enjoy, discern, and judge *cantigas* as a young student, that educational experience is inseparable from the material inheritance he claims when his father dies and he succeeds the throne. This discipline, a form of taste that Alfonso proclaims in writing here and demonstrates at court, I group with what Bourdieu calls 'legitimate manners' which

> owe their value to the fact that they manifest the rarest conditions of acquisition, that is, a social power over time which is tacitly recognized as the supreme excellence: to possess things from the past, i.e., accumulated, crystallized history, aristocratic names and titles, […] paintings and collections, vintage wines and antique furniture, is to master time, through all those things whose common feature is that they can only be acquired in the course of time, by means of time, against time, that is, by inheritance or through dispositions […] only acquired with time and applied by those who can take their time' (*Distinction* 71-72).

[34] The *Setenario* is part of the Alfonsine canon, although it is not entirely agreed-upon whether Fernando initiated it and left for his son to finish or if Alfonso's court produced it and applied Fernando's posthumous imprimatur (see Craddock, "*El Setenario*: Ultima [sic] e inconclusa reundición alfonsina de la primera Partida").

[35] '[Fernando III] used to appreciate singing men and he knew the craft, and he also used to appreciate courtiers who knew well [how to perform] lyric poetry and singing, and [he appreciated] minstrels who knew how to play instruments well; thus, he appreciated this [music] very much and knew who did it well and who did not' (translation mine).

The pages in which Bourdieu asserts this claim lead into a brief discussion of kings, how they acquire and pass on competencies along with their belongings, as if Bourdieu felt the need for a premodern referent amidst a book dedicated to modern social ideas. For royals, perhaps even more than the bourgeoisie with which he is so centrally concerned, the burden of their social standing is a political burden. A twentieth-century European professor or banker or restaurateur (i.e., the kinds of white-collar Frenchmen who make up much of Bourdieu's survey sample) whose artistic tastes do not fit his/her class is simply an unsuccessful social agent according to the rules defining that class; the consequences might include a certain social stigma and missed opportunities for advancement professionally, but not a complete fall from that person's position. A medieval king with the same discordance may be seen by his court as a dilettante and thus compromise his royal mandate. Power, insofar as people associate it with one person, seems to require a certain legerdemain or enchantment to make it adhere. The laws iterated in Alfonso's *Las siete partidas* say as much, albeit from multiple points around the subject of the king's appearance and behavior at court.

> Vestiduras facen mucho conoscer á los homes por nobles ó por viles, et por ende los sabios antigos establecieron que los reyes vestiesen paños de seda con oro et con piedras preciosas, porque los homes los pudiesen conoscer luego que los viesen á menos de preguntar por ellos (*Partida* 2.5.5):
>
> Dress has much to do with causing men to be recognized either as noble, or servile. The ancient sages established the rule that kings should wear garments of silk, adorned with gold and jewels, in order that men might know them as soon as they saw them, without inquiring for them […]' (trans. Samuel Parsons Scott 2:288).
>
> Costumbres et maneras debe haber el rey muy buenas, ca maguer fuese apuesto en su contenente et en sus vestiduras, si las costumbres et las maneras non fuesen buenas, vernie grant desacordanza en sus fechos, por que menguarie mucho en su nobleza et en su apostura (2.5.6):
>
> A king should have very good habits and manners. For, although he may be well-bred in his demeanor and his dress, if his habits and manners are not good, he will display much incongruity in his actions, for the reason that he will be greatly deficient in nobility and elegance' (trans. Scott 2:289).

These prescriptions are for kings generally and in perpetuity, not just for Alfonso himself, and this is crucial for two reasons. First, the *Partidas* are explicitly interested in their own durability in Spanish royal administration. Second, I must be borne in mind that inheritance and the generational transfer of the crown are not only essential to monarchies, but also indicative of the intra-familial transactions essential to Bourdieu's

theory of taste. For him, the social class of one's family can and often does overshadow other determinants of taste, such as formal education, monetary wealth, and profession (*Distinction* 63-65).

In the logic of the legal code, the king's appearance merges with his practices; his clothing becomes part of his comportment, and it is contingent upon him to animate his visual features in such a way that they achieve harmony with his movements and speech. Further, he must wear his dress in such a way that it is clearly outside that which his subjects might acquire—or even *in*quire about. Properly turned out, he makes his vestments tools of control.

The same *Partida* from which we have read also sanctions reading (2.5.16), music appreciation (2.5.21), hunting (2.5.20), and games of strategy (2.5.21): any of these activities may be for self-edification or diversion, both of which are acceptable motives. The criteria are ability and moderation, themes to which we will return in reading court poetry.

> [E]l rey que non sopiese destas cosas bien usar, segunt que desuso deximos, sin el pecado et la malestancia quel ende vernie, seguírsele hie aun dello otro grant daño que envilecerie su fecho, dexando las cosas mayores por las viles (2:41):
>
> a (sic) king who does not know how to practice these things skilfully, as we stated above, in addition to the sin and impropriety of which he will be guilty on this account, will also suffer great injury, which will degrade his actions, on account of his abandoning great and good things for those who are vile (trans. Scott 2:297).

As the text returns to how the king might best represent himself so as to be distinct from other people—the kind of work with which the first citation, on clothing, begins—the echoes of Bourdieu are of course very strong. But even from the limited historical perspective of medieval court life, it become clear that the maintenance and exercise of royal power depends on a relational notion of the court's members. In dress, physical behavior, and speech (content and sound), the king affirms constantly a difference between his way and the ways of others, whether peasants, merchants, soldiers, or nobles of the highest order. In his cultural projects, he exerts control over himself most of all, lest he cede mastery of his mind and let the game or song overpower him. So, while the *Partidas* emphasize *consistency* on one hand—demeanor and dress lose their significance if habits and manners are not of a certain quality—the end goal in all these instructions is to manage and mark difference.

I hope to have demonstrated that Alfonso, for all his far-reaching vision of language and culture, was less a revolutionary than an astute subscriber to cultural trends already in motion. Just as he accelerated definitely (rather than initiating) the move to Castilian underway since Fernando's reign, thus cementing the process, Alfonso adopted (and adapted, rather than overturning) the prevailing poetic tradition in Galician-

Portuguese. This musical and literary project must be viewed against the backdrop of the Castilian ascendancy in Spain for several reasons, chief among them that Castilian would replace Galician-Portuguese as the main poetic language nearly a century after Alfonso's death in 1284.[36] To him, the efficacy of Galician-Portuguese lies in its dynamic relationship with the languages around it, particularly Castilian and Occitan (the latter of these two will come to the fore subsequently in this study).

Alfonso's main innovation in lyric, the CSM, is a measure of his exertions to shape the Galician-Portuguese poetic language and use its unique poetic cachet for his own purposes. Again, the *cantiga* up to that point was areligious; if Alfonso had a model the only plausible model seems to have been Provençal religious lyric, but I am aware of no evidence that Alfonso was exposed to such works.[37] In Iberia, some thirty years before the CSM, Gonzalo de Berceo (ca. 1190-1264) embarked on a comparable project, albeit much broader in hagiographic scope. Berceo's *Milagros de Santa María* and *Loores de Nuestra Señora*, like the CSM, drew much of their content from extant Latin accounts of Marian miracles. In other words, these religious odes took on a Castilian character (more precisely, Riojan, which is Berceo's dialect, closely related to Castilian) a few decades before Alfonso gave them a Galician-Portuguese voice.[38]

The project of refashioning the *cantiga* into sacred lyric makes clear that Alfonso sought to outdo his father not in poetic taste (Fernando represents the apex of taste in the *Setenario*) but rather in poetic role. Alfonso, a poet-king to an extent unrivaled by his forebears, reshaped the Galician-Portuguese tradition dramatically. The CSM make up a remarkable subset of the *cantiga*, their entirely devotional content rendering them autonomous, at a certain level, from other Galician-Portuguese lyrics. As a textual corpus they are just as authoritative as Alfonso's governmental works in Castilian—although, as I will detail later, he derives that authority from different sources in the respective corpora.

In that Alfonso fashioned an identity as a lyric poet with a quasi-divine mandate,[39] he created for himself a privileged space as religious poet—a space not enjoyed by poets or patrons theretofore, including Fernando. By inventing the CSM sub-genre, Alfonso ensured that he would share the role of sacred poet with no other author in the Galician-Portuguese canon. In this way, it is not just a poetic voice he derived from this language

[36] As Galicia represented Iberia's lyrical homeland and Castilian was rising so conspicuously in official culture, it hardly seems coincidental that "the Galician-Portuguese tradition modulated into a Galician-Castilian lyric school in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries" (Paden, "Chronology" 196-97). In Portugal very much the same process seems to have occurred when Portuguese of a southern character (as opposed to that spoken in Galicia) disseminated from the royal scriptorium: "na primeira metade do século XIV se acentua o proceso de nacionalización lingüística a despeito do componente galega—xa encarreirado no século precedente": 'in the first half of the fourteenth century the process of linguistic nationalization distinguishes itself, at the expense of the Galician component—(a process) already underway in the preceding century' (Tavani, *A poesía lírica* 62; translation mine).

[37] On this religious trend in Provençal poetry, see Brittain, *Medieval Latin and Romance Lyric* 29-30.

[38] There is no fully satisfactory answer—other than the banal observation that the kingdom WAS rich with multilingual cultural ferment—as to why these seemingly contradictory trends happen in the same century. Alfonso may not have known of Gonzalo de Berceo (Berceo, *Collected Works* xvi). The textual record suggests that Berceo was among the very first poets in Castilian; he was not well-known until being anthologized in the eighteenth century.

[39] The lyric speaker says 'I wish from this day forth to be Her troubadour, and I pray that She will have me/for Her troubadour […]' (*CSM* Prologue B).

but also some of his most important claims to speak on the sacred. It is debatable whether one can talk of Alfonso having one coherent poetic voice, because of the extreme contrast between his sacred and profane works.

The *cantigas*, and the CSM illuminated manuscripts depicting Alfonso at the center of a harmonious and productive court are, of course, propaganda in many respects, but their very existence and their propagandist thrust give us a sense of how important court life was to Alfonso's self-styled reputation. Whatever problems the king had with his nobles, and the residents of his cities and countryside, he seems to have enjoyed great success overseeing his intellectual and artistic court. There, scribes, savants and musicians collaborated with the king to produce his prose (legal, administrative, didactic, etc.[40]) and lyric poetry. Extant texts suggest that Galician-Portuguese lyric reached its apex of production in the thirteenth century—we see a statistical peak in activity even if we do not count Alfonso's contributions, which themselves far outnumber any other poet's. Despite the inherent problems of relying upon the textual record,[41] the data at hand suggest quite clearly that Alfonso was at the historical center-moment of the tradition. A century before his reign, his royal forebears in Castile (including Fernando III), Leon, and Navarre set precedents for welcoming Provençal troubadours into Spanish courts—a practice that intensified in the early thirteenth century as those troubadours faced political and military aggression from the Albigensian Crusade (Carlos Alvar in Izquierdo Benito and Sáenz-Badillos ed. 333-34). Alfonso continued with great vigor this practice of opening his court to literary wayfarers from the north. The cross-pollination between Occitan and Galician-Portuguese lyric traditions is potent well before he makes his intervention.[42]

It is hard to overstate the importance of the troubadour title, whose definition and distinction attracted strong interest in Alfonso's court.[43] The term as it exists in English probably does not adequately express the complexity of the Galician-Portuguese *trobador*

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[40] A great deal of Alfonsine prose is the translation work he sponsors, the bulk of which is produced in Toledo and Seville. Historical sources do not specify, to my knowledge, the degree to which he oversees this translation personally—and indeed how much of the total textual production he oversees, *cantigas* included.

[41] Our access to extant texts can not account for how much of this music is being *performed* in any one period, nor for inevitable losses of manuscripts since.

[42] Joseph Snow writes, "One composition attributed to Fernando III, written in Galician-Portuguese, even has the hallmarks of troubadour art (nine-line stanza, rhyme-scheme, vocabulary). But whether or not it is in fact Fernando's, this poem certainly anticipates the troubadouresque *cantigas* of Alfonso X, Fernando's son. Alfonso speaks, in one of his secular poems, of the failure of a court poet to meet the high ideal of the Occitan poets. This admiration for the Occitan manner is borne out in the remainder of Alfonso's verse production. In fact, it may be thought that he pays the highest accolade to that art and style in his compilation of 420 songs to Mary, his *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, in which he introduces a second protagonist (probably himself) in the guise of a troubadour serving a Liege Lady (the Virgin) in hopes of winning the sought-after reward, Salvation. This embedded narrative (as well as many of the illustrations that illuminate one of the *Cantigas* manuscripts) not only adopts the external disguise of the troubadour figures with whom Alfonso must have associated as prince in his father's court, but also imitates—indeed, revitalizes—the forms and conceits of the then decadent poetic manner of the troubadours" (Akehurst and Davis ed. 274).

[43] In the *Declaratio*, a response to the Provençal poet Guiraut Riquier's *Suplicatio*, the figure of Alfonso X provides for Riquier definitions of *joglar*, *inventor*, *trobador*, etc., and places them in a qualitative hierarchy with *trobador* at top. The work, purporting to be Alfonso's own, may well be in fact a Provençal author's. Its Occitan language and its conspicuous approbation of Riquier lead some to believe that it is actually Riquier's disingenuous attempt at self-promotion. In any case, we know that Riquier was indeed a member of Alfonso's court (Paden, "Guiraut Riquier" para. 1).

(usually rendered *trovador* in Old Spanish). In all Iberian languages of that period, it is inseparable from its Provençal associations; the Occitan troubadours, famous for centuries before Alfonso's time, provided the archetype for the Galician-Portuguese poet-musicians. Eukene Lacarra Lanz points out that troubadours 'were characterized by their refined education. The complex formal technique of their poetry and the rigor of their metrics, rhythms, and strophic schemes did not permit improvisation. On the contrary, it [the poetry] required a good understanding of grammar and a solid rhetorical base […]' (Amorós, et al., ed. 410, trans. mine, brackets added).[44] The height of lyrical authorship is less a matter of genius than a matter of craftsmanship; in medieval poetics, the troubadour may possess natural abilities but he is mostly the product of a rigorous education. The *trobador* title is a symbol of competence and not of a sentimental attachment to Romance lyrical traditions. Alfonso's corpus of *cantigas*—and in particular his appeal to the title in the CSM Prologue—is a demonstration of his education. Even in the context of professing one's devotion to Mary and recounting her miracles, Alfonso as 'Mary's troubadour' is less an enraptured, inspired conduit for divine eloquence than a supremely eloquent savant. It was his technical training—or at least the implication of technical training which his musicians might have provided him at court—that allowed him to (1) enter a heavily love-themed poetic discipline and (2) elevate and refine the character of that love theme to encompass the sacred.

Further, use of Galician-Portuguese was an effective move of cultural diplomacy. Authoring (or at least overseeing the composition of) Galician-Portuguese poetry was a shrewd way of managing Alfonso's court, which was full of Provençal poets,[45] while using a poetic language distinctly Iberian, comprehensible to many of his Spanish elite subjects—quite possibly to the more plebian population as well—and strategically aligned with the peninsula's western lands. Although Old Spanish was well-established as an epic language by the thirteenth century, and seems to have been a popular lyrical currency as well, it could only have been the medium of *juglares* (a broad term for minstrels), not the more specific and distinct class of troubadours (R. Menéndez Pidal, *Poesía juglaresca* 101). Even as we view the transition, a century afterward, to Spanish as musical language, "Galician-Portuguese […] attained the unique position of acting as a bridge for troubadour conceits, lexical terms, and, to a lesser extent, strophic forms and rhyme-schemes for the newly confident and dynamic lyric of both 'Spain' (the Castilian-dominated areas) and Portugal" (Akehurst and Davis ed. 273). In this way, Alfonso was able to capitalize on the gloried past of Occitan, the dynamic present of Galician-Portuguese, and prepare—even if unknowingly—the poetic vocabulary of a future Spanish-language lyric production.

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[44] "Los trovadores eran autores de la música y la letra de sus canciones y se caracterizaban por su educación refinada. La compleja técnica formal de su poesía y el rigor de su métrica, ritmos y esquemas estróficos no permitían la improvisación. Por el contrario, exigía tener un buen conocimiento de la gramática y una sólida base retórica [...]." While I follow with Lacarra Lanz's characterization of the rigor of troubadour discipline, I am unsure why he seems to conclude that improvisation is not in the troubadour's range of artistic practices. If the singer performs a lengthy repertoire of songs from memory, I would think that certain amounts of improvisation would be inevitable, no matter how stringent the formal training involved.

[45] We know of five major Provençal troubadours who attended Alfonso's court and five others who had productive relations with him as patron, although their physical presence at his court is unknown (Akehurst and Davis ed. 274).

Chapter 2: The Use Value of Praise

The member of the medieval political elite who used poetry to build and demonstrate his power had two social maneuvers he might make in the texts he produced. One option was to affiliate, by praising a beneficent figure, rhapsodizing about the beloved, or confirming the bonds of friendship. The other maneuver was to construct an enemy—a poetic persona almost always wrought from the identity of one of the poet's contemporaries—and to slander him or her. In Arabic, at least, there has long been a temptation to see these two registers of poetic speech as opposing bookends; poets and rhetoricians have represented panegyric as 'building' and slander as 'destroying' since the seventh century CE (Van Gelder, *Bad* 35-36). But panegyric can 'build up' not just the receiver of praise but also its deliverer, whereas slander does not necessarily 'destroy' the slanderer—so the metaphor is only of partial utility.[46] It is easy to see why a contrastive, oppositional model of praise and slander should be popular in premodern literary endeavors such as the anthologizing of poems and the composition of instructive rhetorics. The challenge now is to understand genres in literary history, and more specifically to examine why literary scholars in the Middle Ages might have used the language of opposites to arrive at their own understandings of the canon. Together, this chapter (on panegyric) and the following one (on invective) will present poetic dualities as interrelated, codependent, and collaborative genres in larger sociopolitical projects. Rather than breaking down the stylistic barriers between praise and slander, I will argue that Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso create and maintain those barriers so as to benefit conspicuously from both taxonomic sides.

Ibn ᶜAbbād

Ibn ᶜAbbād's praise poetry was a key part of his campaign for legitimacy—cultural and political. It, along with his grammatical, medical, theological, and epistolary works, marks a clear effort to subscribe to Arabic high culture in its most rarefied written forms. But what makes this poetry particularly important to this study is its function parallel to, and in conjunction with, his derisive and jocular works.

In order to understand how these various poetic registers function, it is necessary to keep in mind one of the main contentions of chapter 1: Ibn ᶜAbbād's *cultural* legitimating effort was, to a great extent, synonymous with his *political* claim to legitimacy. This is generally accurate throughout ᶜAbbasid court history, but its relevance and immediacy for the Buyids is accentuated by their Persian roots. They were demonstrably successful in rendering the (Arab) caliph a mere symbolic leader, thus ensuring for themselves the empire's chief administrative roles. But they recognized Arabic as the hegemonic language of culture at a time when Persian literature was not

[46] Abū Muḥammad ibn Qutayba (213-76 H, 828-89 CE), one of the major Arabic rhetoricians, refutes the slander-as-destruction premise, calling both praise and slander modes of building (*Al-Shiᶜr wa-l-shuᶜarā'* 1:94).

widely disseminated as a literary currency. All available evidence points to the Buyids' keen interest in appropriating Arabic for themselves rather than trying to develop or promote Persian poetry. The need to demonstrate Arabic mastery, and in some cases artistry, is underlined during Ibn ᶜAbbād's era by the recent memory of Buyids unable to converse in Arabic: the regime's founder, Muᶜizz al-Dawla, required a translator at court and is portrayed as generally uncultured in his *akhbār*. It thus provides us no small insight that his sons—including his successor as Emir, ᶜIzz al-Dawla—became competent, literate Arabic speakers (Kraemer 54). Moreover, it is the *vizierate* of ᶜIzz al-Dawla's generation, rather than a supreme ruler, that establishes a Buyid legacy of privileging, writing, and sponsoring court literature.

I want to insist, with Bourdieu, that a person who acquires cultural competencies and objects need not be aware of an articulated set of rules, even the very ones that s/he follows, and adapts (*Outline* 72); the most acute awareness is instead most likely focused on harmony or dissonance between class and taste (*In Other Words* 131-32). Returning to the previous chapter's invocation of the habitus, I would append John B. Thompson's description of it generating "practices, perceptions and attitudes which are 'regular' without being consciously co-ordinated or governed by any 'rule'" (12). The "perceptions and attitudes" about Arabic language are, in Ibn ᶜAbbād's milieu, not always immediately clear from extant texts; but the practices are thoroughly detailed. Whether Ibn ᶜAbbād (or, for that matter, ᶜIzz al-Dawla, or any other Buyid of that era) states or describes the importance of Arabic mastery in his career is not the most important question. What merits our attention more is how they privilege certain kinds of speech and literary forms, thereby providing a view into their perceptions and attitudes. Bourdieu explicitly rejects what he calls 'structuralist determinism' (*In Other Words* 13), i.e., the disappearance of individual agency into the all-encompassing system of language: for Bourdieu, this is one of the more unproductive strains of structuralist arguments made by Louis Althusser, Ferdinand De Saussure, and Claude Lévi-Strauss (*In Other Words* 9, 13).

Ibn ᶜAbbād's career at court illustrates the kind of educational and adoptive practices described above. This includes all forms of Arabic discourse he employs, e.g., legislation, debates, proclamations, poetry he authors and commissions. His brilliant success as Arabophone intellectual is informed by, and in some small part a measure of, Arabic's importance as the official imperial language. It follows that the hierarchical structure within Arabic discourse—i.e., the relative positions of linguistic registers, dialects, accents, literary genres, etc.—is also extremely important as a social determinant. Chapters 2 and 3 intend to show Ibn ᶜAbbād's navigation of the linguistic hierarchy within the Classical Arabic tradition. The particular category with which the argument starts is his praise poetry: a category whose name (*madḥ* or *madīḥ*) suggests praise of others but, as we will see, Ibn ᶜAbbād's task is to move it closer to self-praise (*fakhr*).

Ibn ᶜAbbād, like his fellow Buyids, was a Shīᶜī Muslim, and loyalty to that sect is probably the most obvious feature of his poetry. I posit that he uses the poetic format to promote his Shīᶜī affiliation at the same time that he legitimizes himself as a member of the Arabophone elite. The former legitimizing campaign, because its claims are controversial and resonate greatly throughout the empire, tends to overshadow the latter

campaign of self-promotion; but both projects should be viewed in concert. To conclude that his *dīwān* is all about being Shīᶜī is no less accurate, and no less banal, than saying *Moby Dick* is all about a whale. It is exactly the rhetorical strength of Ibn ᶜAbbād's pro-Shīᶜa polemics—i.e., the unsubtle content—that motivates a study of the poetry's less obvious cultural and political claims. The poems analyzed in this chapter show that his insistent theological messages enable, and in turn are enabled by, the poetic speaker's *fakhr* and bravado.

"*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*": 'O Visitor, coming to Ṭūs' (DSIA 91-95; translation mine): poem praising Abū l-Ḥasan ᶜAlī al-Riḍā (151-203 H, 768-818 CE, hereafter "Imam Ali"), eighth Imām of the Twelver Shīᶜa

1	يا زائراً سائراً إلى طوسِ	مشهدِ طُهر وأرض تقديسِ
2	أبلغْ سلامي الرضا وحطَّ على	أكرم رمسٍ لخير مرموسِ
3	واللهِ واللهِ حَلفةً صدرت	عن مخلصٍ في الولاء مغموسِ
4	إنّي لو كنت مالكاً إربي	كان بطوسٍ الغنّاء تعريسي
5	وكنت أمضي العزيم مرتحلاً	منتسفاً فيه قوة العيسِ
6	لمشهد بالذكاء ملتحف	وبالسنى والسناء مأنوسِ
7	يا سيدي وابن سادتي ضحكت	وجوه دهري بعقب تعبيسِ
8	لما رأيت النواصب انقلبت	راياتها في ضمان تنكيسِ
9	صدعت بالحق في ولائكم	الحق مذ كان غير مبخوسِ
10	يابن النبيّ الذي [به] قصم الـ	ـلّهُ ظهورَ الجبابر الشوسِ
11	وابنَ الوصيّ الذيّ تقدّم في الـ	ـفضل على البُزل القناعيسِ
12	وحائز الفضل غير منتقَص	ولابس المجد غير تلبيسِ
13	إن بني النصب كاليهود وقد	يخلط تهويدهم بتمجيسِ
14	كم دفنوا في القبور من نجس	أولى به الطرح في النواويسِ
15	أنتم حبال اليقين أعلَقها	ما وصل العمر حبل تنفيسِ
16	ما زال عن عقد حبك أحد	غير تهيم النصاب مدسوسِ
17	إذا تأملت شؤم جبهته	وجدت فيها أشراك إبليسِ
18	كم فرقة فيكم تكفرني	ذللت هاماتها بفطيسِ
19	قمعتها بالحجاج فانخذلت	تجفل عني كطير منحوسِ
20	عالمهم عندما أباحثه	في جلد ثور أو مسك جاموسِ
21	لم يعلموا والأذان يرفعكم	صوت أذان أو قرع ناقوسِ
22	إنّ ابن عبّادٍ استجار بكم	فما يخاف الليوثَ في الخيسِ
23	كونوا أيا سادتي وسائلَه	يفسحْ له اللهُ في الفراديسِ
24	كم مدحة فيكم يحبّرها	كأنّها حُلّة الطواويسِ
25	وهذه كم يقول قارئها	قد نثر الدر في القراطيسِ
26	يملك رق القريض قائلها	ملك سليمان صرح بلقيسِ
27	بلغه الله ما يؤمله	حتى يحل الرحال في طوسِ

1 O Visitor, coming to Ṭūs,
Site of purity and land of sanctity,

2 Give my greetings to al-Riḍā, and alight on

the holiest grave of the greatest of men.

3 By God, I swear that the oath "By God!" comes forth
from a faithful one deeply devoted.

4 Ṭūs the Lush is where I wish
to stop and rest in my journey,

5 And then push on,
with more strength than the noblest camels have—

6 —to Mashhad, wrapped in Purity,
with me my companions Nobility and Exaltation.

7 To my Leader, and son of my Leaders, I say,
Faces of my age were frowning but now laugh.

8 When I see those who oppose the Caliph Ali,[47]
their flags turn abruptly back!

9 I speak the truth openly, in loyalty to you—
—the truth, from its first moment, has received its just due!

10 O Son of the Prophet,[48] the one
whom God endows with the strength to break those arrogant
enough to reject Him;

11 And O Ḥusayn, Caliph Ali's Chosen Successor,
more virtuous than the most mature, experienced men;

12 And O Imam Ali, who achieved the Greatest Rank, who wants for nothing,
who wears glory without anyone dressing him up in it.

13 As for those who oppose, like the Jews—
—for them, Judaism might as well be mixed with
Zoroastrianism![49]—

14 —Oh, how many people did they bury in graves ritually impure,

[47] I.e., ᶜAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (hereafter Caliph Ali), the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law and the fourth Rightly Guided Caliph.
[48] See previous footnote. Here, Caliph Ali's relation to Muhammad is exaggerated.
[49] This reference to 'those who oppose' is a permutation of a term used in line 8 (*nawāṣib*); here, it is *banī al-nuṣb*, literally, 'the Sons of Opposition.' The poem here does not equate Judaism with Zoroastrianism but rather implies that the Jews' devotion to their own religion is so weak that they might as well be Zoroastrians.

who deserved to be buried instead in Christian sepulchers!

15 You[50] are secure cords to which I stay attached
as long as I continue breathing.

16 No one pulls away from the bond of your love
except for a hidden opposer.

17 If you scrutinize the ill omen on his forehead,
you find in it the Devil's trap.

18 How many a sect around you has called me an infidel!
With a large hammer, I bash them (into submission).

19 I overmaster them with proofs, so they are silenced,
fleeing from me, terrified, like a downed bird!

20 Their scholar, when I debate him,
is in a bull's skin and a water buffalo's hide![51]

21 They have never known—although the calls[52] exalt you—
the sound of a call (to prayer), nor the beating of the
Christians' chime.

22 Ibn ᶜAbbād seeks your protection,
so he does not fear the lions of the den!

23 O my Leaders, please stay at his side,
so that God might make room for him in Paradise!

24 How many a word of praise for you has he wrought,
as if each word were the garments of peacocks!

25 This poem, how many times will its reader say,
"He has scattered pearls on paper!"

26 Its author masters the fineness of poetry
as Solomon ruled the palace of Bilqīs.

27 May God grant him what most wished,
that he might stay in Ṭūs![53]

[50] I.e., Ḥusayn and Imam Ali.
[51] I.e., an animal that does not learn from any number of beatings it gets.
[52] Reference to the addition Shīᶜīs make to the call to prayer, invoking the Caliph Ali.

Two apparently disparate campaigns merge in this poem. Clearly, the main agenda of this poem is to specify geographically a sacred space (Ṭūs). Ibn ᶜAbbād oversaw a vizierate well to the east of Baghdad; Ṭūs is further flung, in the northeast corner of modern Iran. (Rayy is near the modern metropolis of Tehran in north-central Iran.) A common theme of the *dīwān*, as mentioned earlier, is Shīᶜī propaganda. In other words, Ibn ᶜAbbād's poems designate as sacred a set of particular dogmas, beliefs, and historical accounts of religion. As both messages—geohistorical and theological—coalesce here, they serve to draw ᶜAbbasid political attention to the empire's easternmost reaches and mark that space as Shīᶜī territory. That sign-posting work did not require major effort; in Ibn ᶜAbbād's time, as now, Ṭūs was indeed predominantly Shīᶜī. His court, too, divided fairly evenly between Sunni and Shīᶜī Muslims, and probably the occasional Christian and Jewish courtiers. The poem's total audience is difficult to estimate, since we do not have information on the dissemination of this work. Despite the author's fame, my suspicion is that this poem did not gain much of an audience west of Ibn ᶜAbbād's provincial base; it would not seem to have elicited great interest among ᶜAbbasid literati.

The significance of this poem's topic is underscored by certain geographic and historical realities of the period. The Buyids were rapidly decentralizing the ᶜAbbasid Empire's political and theological base. In minimizing the caliph's potency and assigning major administrative powers to their own viziers and generals, the Buyids enabled their regime to flourish provincially. Thus, courts such as Ibn ᶜAbbād's in Rayy acquired a political and cultural distinction they had not previously enjoyed (Kraemer, *Humanism* 52-53; Bosworth, *Mediaeval* 1:53-54). If Rayy was an eastern stronghold of ᶜAbbasid power, Ṭūs was an outpost: hundreds of miles further east, deeper in Shīᶜī *and* Zoroastrian territory. A major Zoroastrianism presence endured throughout Iran and eastern Iraq, including Rayy, as late as the fourth century H/tenth century CE; concurrently, temples of fire worship were active near Ṭūs (EI2, "Madjūs" para. 15).

Furthermore, Ṭūs is the site not just of Imam Ali's grave, but also of Hārūn al-Rashīd's. Having died within ten years of each other, they are interred adjacently, as Ibn ᶜAbbād would no doubt have been aware. Even as Imam Ali's grave makes Ṭūs one of the most revered Twelver Shīᶜī pilgrimage destinations, the city memorializes ᶜAbbasid greatness as well as Shīᶜī holiness. It is precisely Hārūn al-Rashīd and his legacy as the ᶜAbbasid caliph and patron par excellence who is invoked in YDQ to detail Ibn ᶜAbbād's success in gathering and contracting great poets.[54] The fact of Hārūn al-Rashīd's interred presence in Ṭūs and the fact that the poem makes no mention of him[55] emphasizes the praise of Imam Ali even more than the poem's high-flown language already suggests. Thus it is not surprising to find in the poem that Shīᶜī identity trumps ᶜAbbasid identity.

There is little doubt that this poem accomplishes what it claims to do: marshaling its author's eloquence for the sake of praising Imam Ali. In so doing, it also performs that task in reverse; it uses the Imam's holiness and grandeur as an idea through which to

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[53] This and all translations of poetry mine, unless otherwise noted.

[54] In what is perhaps exaggerated praise, al-Thaᶜālibī opines that Ibn ᶜAbbād outstrips his predecessor in that respect (YDQ 225-26).

[55] Indeed, no extant poetry by Ibn ᶜAbbād mentions Hārūn al-Rashīd; those leaders memorialized in the *dīwān* are overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, Shīᶜī.

prove the poem's eloquence. As the poem associates its speaker more and more closely with the Imam, explicating the particular rhetorical and theological techniques that the speaker uses to cement the bond, an ontological argument emerges. The speaker's claims of his own intellectual prowess fold into moral purity and Shīᶜī identification: line 6 reads "*li-mashhadin bi-l-zakā' multaḥifin*," the grammatical case endings making clear that Mashhad is 'wrapped in Purity,' although of course Imam Ali and the speaker gain Mashhad's purity by association. Further, the idea of a pure material of wrapping-up suggests the tactile image of the body prepared for burial—the historical memory of the Imam's death and internment, fundamental to the poem's sense of saluting place and person.

The purity-intelligence relation becomes clear in lines 18-20, when the poetic speaker begins to advertise his own language. Here, the poem makes its boldest and most controversial claim, alluding to critics defaming the speaker. This leaves the question open of who these critics are in the social and religious landscape drawn up in this work. Certainly it is possible that they are Sunnī and/or an anti-Muᶜtazilī group of thinkers (see chapter 1 for an introduction to Muᶜtazilī debates). The poem does not speak against Sunnī readings of Islam, nor does it imply a Shīᶜī *coup d'etat*, although that is arguably what the Buyid takeover accomplished in the ᶜAbbasid empire. Instead, it alludes to a 'sect' or 'faction' (the *firqa* of line 18), implicating a challenge whose identity is suggested without the more controversial poetic move of naming names. Those Jewish and Zoroastrian interlocutors—who are identified as such—represent much easier scapegoat, i.e., one that was largely unrepresented in the ᶜAbbasid political structure.

In contrast to the easy targets of Jewish group who 'oppose' (*banī al-naṣbi ka-l-yahūdi*), Sunnī Muslims would make a formidable political challenge to the poem's polemic, and maligning them might invite social and political risk. Direct references to Jews and Zoroastrians (line 13) are an invective warm-up, preparing for the move to intra-Islamic dogma. When the poem alludes to an unnamed but clearly identified 'sect' (*firqa*), that sect is in direct contention with the poem's speaker. The Jews' faults are opposition to Imam Ali and impure burial practices. Even this latter fault, in context of the poem, is itself a form of opposition; it flies in the face of purity, whose supreme form is Imam Ali's own grave. This slight seems to result more from the Jews' incompetence than any threatening rebellion. They are an effete, voiceless faction, less an enemy than a foil; the group indicated in line 18 are the real opposition the poem invents, and I extrapolate that they are Muslims of some kind. Because the motif of conflict with the *firqa* is in an intellectual arena, rather than the resistance to prophecy and negligent practice of religious rite that we have seen in the Jewish and Christian polemic, it seems to me most logical that the speaker is making reference to Muᶜtazilism. The ontological and theological nature of the Muᶜtazilī debates in ᶜAbbasid history seem to lend themselves to the imagery introduced in line 18. Jews and Christians are blind to Islamic revelation and incompetent in their practices; the *firqa* may hear but resists understanding. The speaker, claiming to beat the fraudulent 'scholar' with repeated and ritualistic strokes, reminds us of the multivalent nature of discipline: this work that he executes he suggests to be simultaneously physical and academic.

Line 18 constitutes the transition-point in the poem, on which the historiography and the speaker's vocal register both turn. Where the work has marshaled geography to occasion praise and religious debate to spur the problematic with which the speaker must contend, now the speaker focuses on his own intellect. As adversaries, the sect is armed with rhetoric. The possession of speech is a faculty that distinguishes this group from the poem's conception of Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians; the motif of debate allows the poem itself to take on a new historiographic argument. The opportunity presented in this challenge is for the Shīᶜī, Muᶜtazilī speaker, in his love for the Imam, to summon his intellectual powers to rebuff them. It is his academic preparation, his deductive and rhetorical prowess, that wins the day. Faith is not the criterion here—nor is purity, as it was in the Jews' case. From 18 onward, the poem is almost entirely dedicated to *fakhr* (self-praise) and supplication to its Shīᶜī heroes. The poem's speaker, initially suggesting that his fealty to the Imam was unlimited while the speaker's *authority* was limited, now indicates that his potency has no limits as he completes his sectarian argument. Although, as we have seen, he enters the poem's final third with a plea to his Shīᶜī lords, in fact the speaker has already asserted growing self-confidence by that point in the composition. When the speaking adversaries themselves resort to accusation (18), he brings to bear his best argumentative faculties and strategies to shut them down. The poem is at least as much an advertisement of his intellectual worth as of Shīᶜī dogma.

The resonance of line 18 carries through to the Solomon-Bilqīs reference, when it becomes clear that the final thrust is intertextual, i.e., self-praise in the form of textual history. Sexual domination, whose political function in ᶜAbbasid poetry is well-documented,[56] secures this poem's *fakhr* and polemical content. The mention of Solomon and Bilqīs (1) places the poem in a certain vintage of literary history, (2) aligns the text with Qur'anic authority, and (3) invokes sexual politics for the purposes of affirming its own potency. To understand how this operation takes place—the ancient literary resonances from which Ibn ᶜAbbād draws, and the ways line 26 might resonate in his milieu—it is helpful to know how Arabic texts render Bilqīs, and how they relate her to Solomon:

> The name Bilqīs does not appear in the Ḳur'ān but is current with Muslim commentators. Sūra XXVII, 15-45 reflects some of the principal elements of the Sheba legend and desribes (sic) the sun-worship of the Queen, how a hoopoe (*hudhud*) carries a letter to her from Solomon, the Queen's consultation with her nobles, and the despatch of presents to Solomon. When these are not well received by the King, the Queen of Sheba comes herself and, by a ruse (mistaking the polished floor for a pool of water), is made to uncover her legs. Eventually, she surrenders (together with Solomon) to Allāh, i.e. she becomes a Muslim. (EI2, "Bilḳīs" para. 2, parentheses author's)

The *fakhr*, as with any reference to the supremely authoritative Qur'anic text, asserts the reliability of the poem's own arguments—and, in this case, aesthetic worth. But what is

[56] See Suzanne Stetkevych, *Poetics* 144-79.

particular to the poem, as noteworthy as its claim of verity, is its claim of virility. Bilqīs is dominated via her home, i.e., both her property and an extension of her physical self. In the Arabic textual matrix that informs line 26,[57] Solomon fetches her throne and disguises it in order to show her the superior abilities his faith allows him.[58] Then, the palace, too, is rendered marvelous—but according to the Qur'anic telling, Bilqīs's palace is not exactly hers. It seems rather to be Solomon's own palace—or one he erects specially to confound Bilqīs when she visits him—therefore in line 26, the construct "*ṣarḥa bilqīsi*" is probably best understood as 'the palace of the Bilqīs story' or '"Bilqīs's" palace,' where the internal quotation marks indicate that the palace is associated with her but is not in fact hers. Solomon has it built and orchestrates the ruse to make it look like water; it is his domain and functions to reveal that which *is* hers: her legs.

The soundness of the palace's design—the workmanship Solomon ensures in its construction—is the wonder it exhibits, proven by Bilqīs's initial supposition that its glass surfaces are water. In other words, her error is cognitively the same sort of error she makes in her selection of an object of worship. The error of her perception, ironically orchestrated by the rightly-believing Solomon, reveals to her the error of her beliefs. Bilqīs's baring of her legs represents a clear violation—albeit done by her own hand—of her physical sovereignty. Transposed into the Arabic poetic tradition and its durable pre-Islamic conceits, the image of the bared queen comes to bear significantly on this praise piece. Suzanne Stetkevych points out the early Arabs' taboos on the royal female body, forbidding sight *and* verbal description of those body parts the queen keeps covered (*Poetics* 11, 17). Solomon's accomplishment of a licit violation—which renders Bilqīs shocked and renders her monotheistic—is one of the most striking physical dominations a king can accomplish over another royal. This story, known to virtually any member of this poem's elite *adab* audience, is a key hermeneutic to my reading.

The gloried violation is an allegory for the poem's previous *fakhr*, which presents the poetic speaker as religiously and cognitively superior to his opposing debaters. By likening himself to Solomon, the authorial figure places a mantle of incontestability onto the poem. It is essential to note that he accomplishes this by means of Bilqīs's violation story, and not just his use of the palace. In line 26's claim that "[i]ts author masters the fineness of poetry as Solomon ruled the palace of Bilqīs" ("*yamluku riqqa l-qarīḍi qā'iluhu mulka sulaymāna ṣarha bilqīsi*"), the palace image is thoroughly apropos of the author's well-crafted poetry; the idea of his *rulership*, I contend, is most closely linked with Bilqīs herself, specifically her vulnerable body and her religious conversion. Reinforcing this is the double entendre of "*riqq*," ("*a*" omitted as it is merely a grammatical case ending) which can mean slavery as well as fineness (Lane, "*r-q-q*").

I have analyzed at length this final line of *fakhr* because I think it is the poem's crucial thrust into the theme of this chapter: Ibn ᶜAbbād's claim on Arabic literacy,

[57] That is, the poem rests not only on Sūra 27, but also on the many Arabic legends outside the Qur'an that treat Bilqīs. The various claims about Solomon and Bilqīs are relevant. (See EI2, "Bilḳīs" para. 4-6 for a brief synopsis of these claims.)

[58] One edition of Ibn ᶜAbbād's poem, in *ᶜUyūn akhbār al-Riḍā*, reads "*ᶜarsha bilqīsi*" (4), or 'Bilqīs's throne.' In the Qur'anic telling, the throne is properly hers but is moved and disguised by Solomon's minions. I am in agreement with DSIA editor Muḥammad Ḥasan Āl Yāsīn, who reads "*ṣarḥa bilqīsi*" ('Bilqīs's palace') with the version in *Majālis al-mu'minīn*.

virtuosity, and, ultimately, canonicity. There may very well be no finer allegory for Ibn ᶜAbbād's Arabic-letters career than Solomon's intrigue with the Queen of Sheba. First, they are both foreigners, of a type, who are rendered Muslim in the Qur'anic narrative. To the ethnically Arab community that first accepts the Qur'an in the first century of Islam, Solomon is an ancient Israelite, a Jew, until the Qur'an insists that he is a sort of proto-Muslim. His interlocutors with Sheba are animals, who do reconnaissance for him in Sheba's domain and are able to communicate with Solomon because he understands their languages. Solomon is like Ibn ᶜAbbād in that he uses his polyglot abilities to secure his political position, to advance his religion's cause, and to do reconnaissance. Bilqīs, whom Arabic traditions place in southern Arabia, is also a foreigner, but of a quite different pedigree. A potent ruler of an errant people, she submits when Solomon displays to her the feats which his God allows him to perform. Her failure to identify a physical object (mistaking glass for a pool), and then her physical submission (baring her legs), coalesces in moral, religious submission. The Qur'an declares this result with a near-paronomastic use of the Arabic root system. "*Aslamtu maᶜa sulaymāna li-llāhi*" exclaims the Queen: 'I have submitted with Solomon to God,' i.e., 'I have converted with Solomon to Islam' (27:44). The diction of this verse suggests a doubling or the *s-l-m* root, once explicitly in "*aslamtu*" (*tu* is added at the end to indicate tense and the verb's subject), then implicitly in Solomon's name, *sulaymān*. Finally, it should be noted that the entire act of converting hearkens back to Solomon's deception of Bilqīs, the sexual politics thereof, and the story of a recognition. The verb that she uses to characterize her submission takes, in Arabic morphology, the gerund *Islām*, a reminder that Bilqīs's acceptance of Solomon's religion also the afterword of her embarrassment on the polished floor.

Reading praise in context

It is a pity that Bourdieu wrote very little about the Middle Ages, because the medieval cultural market which Ibn ᶜAbbād navigates is very effective exemplar of capital exchanged.[59] The extreme efficacy of the medieval salon, or dictionary, or grammatical treatise, or epistle, or indeed the poem in mendicants' slang,[60] lies in the highly efficient and clear system of material payment. When an artist or academician composed a work for a specific patron, performed it in that patron's presence—or entrusted its performance to a professional reciter—and was subsequently paid (or left unpaid or, worse, punished) according to the patron's response as audience, the payment may be a singularly precise measure of the cultural capital attributed to that work. Because the patrons about whose courts we know the most occupied positions at the very peak of Islamic elite culture, they represented a gold standard of cultural capital, its most reliable and highest-value denomination. And, because the exact payments for specific poems are often documented in the compendia that record the poems themselves, the

[59] For a critical consideration of Bourdieu and his theoretical ties to medievalist scholarship, see Holsinger, *The Premodern Condition* 94-113. In pages 107-13 Holsinger ties Bourdieu's conception of *habitus* to a project of translating and commenting on Erwin Panofsky's *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism*.

[60] I.e., the *Qaṣīda Sāsāniyya*, which Ibn ᶜAbbād commissions from Abū Dulaf al-Khazrajī (birth and death dates unknown but perhaps close to Ibn ᶜAbbād's).

medieval Arabic canon provides extremely efficient gauges of an extremely efficient cultural-material market. It bears noting that modern scholarship has identified substantial strains on that system that, at times, affect the entire literary economy. James Monroe and Mark Pettigrew argue that this norm of medieval Arab culture becomes challenged at discrete points in history, citing the Buyid period in the East and, in the Andalus, during Almoravid reign. They cite examples of shifting or waning patronage: high-ranking officials showing little interest in praise poetry and poets responding to poor market conditions by composing for mid-level officials with questionable cultural authority. According to their argument, such conditions produce some of the most important shifts in Arabic literary form after the peak of Islamic imperial power ("The Decline of Courtly Patronage and the Appearance of New Genres in Arabic Literature" 138-39).

Monroe and Pettigrew provide an important reminder of how fraught is the question of a market in the Middle Ages. I wish to use this as an opportunity to view the broad picture of Arabic literary patronage as a set of intricate economic and political questions. Among the first complicating historical factors to note is that patrons of Arabic poetry varied markedly in their behavior toward poets and texts. They were well known for their relative generosity or miserliness vis-à-vis poetry, and it was typical for a patron to pay great sums to certain authors they favored and pittances to other poets. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that the units of material payment that represented much of that market's currency[61] held the same value in each and every poetic court. Rather, the inter-court networks of patrons and poets created an atmosphere in which all literary figures compared their practices with those of their peers. The result was that not only were poets judging one another as texts were disseminated in the empire, but also patrons knew who was paying whom what amount, and for which compositions. That the market was functional meant that it applied and reapplied values to poems, the ceremonies in which they were delivered, and the goods for which they were exchanged. I therefore argue that it was efficient, historically dynamic, and a system of singular utility to modern scholarship. One other economic aspect bears noting: a poet's acquisition of fame and cultural capital could grant him certain forms of autonomy[62] in the courts he frequented. Should he become disenchanted with a patron, or vice versa, and the payments not suit him, his good name and the popularity of his works would open for him options: offering his presence and services to someone else or, more pointedly, composing invective against the patron who had displeased him. When patrons paid poets it was understood, in

[61] Patrons would pay with coinage, precious stones, valuable garments, animals from the patron's stables, and land parcels, to name a few examples. They also offered political favors and would make official governmental positions available to poets, e.g., market inspector and head of the imperial post service, the latter of which was practically an intelligence position in the ᶜAbbasid system, although some accounts claim that it was minimized and fractured under the Buyids (EI2, "Barīd" para. 1-4).

[62] "Autonomy" not to be understood in the specific sense Bourdieu ascribes to it in *The Rules of Art*, which provides an account of Gustave Flaubert's interest in 'art for art's sake' (8). To Bourdieu, the literary field in which Flaubert invervened, dominated by publishers with commercial interests and strong consumer demand, experiences a marked change with Flaubert's establishment of an autonomous pole of artistic production. While it is useful for us to bear in mind the idea of autonomy in any market for art, including the medieval cases of interest to this study, there is no question that Flaubert's appeal toward autonomy in nineteenth-century France was totally different, economically and philosophically, from the situation of a premodern author.

many situations, as a measure to prevent damaging poems as well as to promote and commemorate the poems they wanted to hear.

Study of this market is an undertaking more theoretical than empirical. The major historical and literary texts on the Buyid era[63] are often our only sources of the poems, quotations, and anecdotes they contain, and are therefore not readily corroborated. But this study takes a view of history propounded by Hayden White, i.e., that historical texts are structured narratively and are questionable narratively (*Tropics of Discourse* 81-100). Although historical accounts surely differ from one another in the reliability of their contents, they are not more inherently or generically reliable than narratives labeled as fiction or folklore. Just as Ibn ᶜAbbād constructs a cultural and political narrative for himself and al-Thaᶜālibī constructs a historical and literary narrative in his anthologizing of ᶜAbbasid poetry, so do we modern scholars construct versions of history according to our methodological loyalties and critical perceptions. When, for instance, al-Thaᶜālibī reports that Ibn ᶜAbbād ordered nine silken garments for Abū l-Qāsim al-Zaᶜfarānī in response to al-Zaᶜfarānī's poetic request for clothing (YDQ 227), the most important matters are that (1) a major Arabic anthology confirms the anecdote and that (2) therefore the patron and poet are known to exchange poetic speech for material goods and sociopolitical promotion. Whether the event actually took place, or if the vizier ordered 12 garments instead of nine, is generally unverifiable and certainly less important than the anecdote's written existence. The question is also peripheral to a study of Arabic canonicity; al-Thaᶜālibī's inclusion of the anecdote makes it important in intellectual history in very much the same way that a famous patron renders a poem important, regardless of how aesthetic or important the reader might find the poem's contents.

The inclusion of the story, rendered in prose and limning the text of al-Zaᶜfarānī's poem, commemorates the poem and in so doing grants it an ex-post-facto approbation. It also assures the reader that the successful transaction has pushed along the general economic progress of the patron-poet model of the market. The anecdote's status as a recorded moment—or perhaps more accurately, the idea of that moment having happened—constitutes several claims, large and small. Without saying as much explicitly, al-Thaᶜālibī asserts the success of poet and patron, in addition to the demonstrated success of the poem. Al-Zaᶜfarānī, his material desires spurring him to offer his services, works under a deadline (Ibn ᶜAbbād urges him to compose quickly) and his work evidently pleases the vizier. Ibn ᶜAbbād confirms through performance the virtues of the generous benefactor. The poem itself, having pleased the patron within the anecdote, stands in YDQ as its own statement of success, because YDQ is a great anthology.

Here, we come to a point that applies to literary cultures well beyond the Classical Arabic tradition. When we examine our own reliance on an anthologist such as al-Thaᶜālibī—i.e., our credulity that the anecdote happened as described in the text at hand—we see how we may be implicated in a many-centuries-long process of textual truth claims. The anecdote's utility to us can come at a cost; in relying on al-Thaᶜālibī's account, we not only promote him, we also tend to reproduce the ideology of the market ideal which underpins the anecdote itself. An analysis of the story's transmission may

[63] E.g., *Yatīmat al-Dahr*, *Muᶜjam al-Udabā': Irshād al-Arīb*, *Maḥāsin Iṣfahān.*

help to reveal the ideological work of interest here. Al-Thaᶜālibī's report of a successful poem-reward transaction is its own kind of claim, in that it seeks to confirm the smooth functioning of the poetic market during Ibn ᶜAbbād's career. This is a key element to the ideology that sustains a market, its stability as a past-historical phenomenon. If we view a market as functional and self-sustaining, and if we then view as possible a series of such markets emerging in an overarching history of a culture's development, we are taking active part in an extremely potent ideology. To read al-Thaᶜālibī's report (he credits it to ᶜAwn al-Hamadhānī al-Tamīmī, a courtier of Ibn ᶜAbbād) in a credulous way is to open the possibility of its reproduction; when we have consigned it to a narrative of cultural history, we can use it as a reference point if we identify and outline subsequent markets in later epochs. But what is perhaps most striking and enabling about the ideology of a market's soundness is how dependent it is upon the existence of anthologies and their retrospective voice. In a broad view of history, ideology, and cultural developments, the anthology is what allows the poem, the story of its composition and performance, and the resultant lasting sense of confidence that the system has worked. The point made above—that the appraisal of poems is a continuous, often repetitive process through history—echoes here. Patrons respond to and commemorate poems, as of course do their courtiers and, eventually, broader audiences in the reaches of textual transcription, dissemination, and recitation. But the anthology gives what is probably the most important form of commemoration.

The methodological and historiographic questions around Ibn ᶜAbbād's career come to the fore when he praises his contemporaries. He specializes in panegyric, judging by YDQ and his *dīwān*, which together contain all known poems he authors.[64] This is typical of poetic production in his era; what distinguishes him from most poets is the position he occupies in the official political hierarchy. We will see that the voice of "Ibn ᶜAbbād" the poetic speaker changes markedly when it praises a contemporary individual rather than a transcendent religious figure.

That change of voice, I will argue, is a calculated response to Ibn ᶜAbbād's political position, an attempt to draw attention away from his own political authority as he advertises his (junior) affiliation with a major authority. His panegyrics to his mentor suggest a poetic figure of "Ibn ᶜAbbād" who is docile, humble, and obedient—in other words, quite the opposite of the "Ibn ᶜAbbād" emerging from "*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*." This would seem to contravene the claim I have made about his career generally, i.e., that his political and cultural ascendancy is largely the same move. But this apparent humility is little more than a feint, an poetic convention of the era that, in the vizier's hands, is as artificial as it is useful.

Abū l-Faḍl, one of the great writers of the Arabic epistle, mentored both ᶜAḍud al-Dawla and Ibn ᶜAbbād in that discipline. Unlike ibn ᶜAbbād, Abū Faḍl seems to have had a modest upbringing; al-Tawḥīdī recounts that his father, al-ᶜAmīd, was a seller of grain in Qom (MU 663). Abū l-Faḍl's career as vizier and *kātib* (official secretary) stationed him throughout the eastern ᶜAbbasid empire, in such major cities as Fars, Isfahan, Khurasan, and Rayy. Ibn ᶜAbbād's affection and high regard for him is attested in

[64]The *dīwān* fails to include Ibn ᶜAbbād's explicitly sexual and brazen invective, as editor Muḥammad Āl Yāsīn claims to chafe at its obscenity (DSIA 306).

chronicles (see chapter 1), with the notable and predictable dissent suggested by al-Tawḥīdī, who in AW quotes the vizier criticizing his mentor for not knowing theology or Islamic law, in fact not knowing the Qur'an well at all. Even here, though, al-Tawḥīdī quotes Ibn ᶜAbbād as praising Abū l-Faḍl as virtuous and a great author (284).[65]

From time to time, a certain kind of book seems to surface in the contemporary academic market, opening with an Acknowledgements section graciously thanking mentors and begging forgiveness of any errors—then proceeding with a polemical monograph, thrusting aside competing arguments and maximizing its own academic authority. In this poetic analysis, I will attempt to show how Ibn ᶜAbbād maximizes his authority through exactly the same sort of ingratiating language.

[65] It cannot surprise us to find al-Tawḥīdī attributing to his most prominent enemy words of dissent and ungraciousness. What is striking to note is that, in another work, al-Tawḥīdī voices almost exactly the same backhanded praise and explicit criticism of Ibn ᶜAbbād, as if al-Tawḥīdī were recycling a formula of 'good writer, bad and ignorant Islamic scholar' (*Kitāb al-imtāᶜ wa-l-mu'ānasa* 61).

"*Qadima l-ra'īsu muqaddaman fī sibqihi*": 'The Leader stepped forward, favored in his preeminence' (DSIA 249-50, translation mine), poem praising Abū l-Faḍl ibn al-ᶜAmīd upon his coming to Isfahan

1	قدم الرئيس مقدماً في سبقه	وكأنما الدنيا جرت في طرقهِ
2	فجبالها من حلمه وبحارها	من جوده، ورياضها من خلقهِ
3	وكأنما الأفلاك طوع يمينه	كالعبد منقاداً لمالك رقهِ
4	قد قاسمته نجومها فنحوسها	لعدوه وسعودها في أفقهِ
5	ما زلت مشتاقاً لنور جبينه	شوق الرياض إلى السحاب وودقهِ
6	حتى بدا من فوق اجرد سابحٍ	إن قال فت الريح فاه بصدقهِ
7	يحكي السحاب طلوعه فصهيله	من رعده ومسيره من برقهِ
8	فنظمت مدحاً لا وفاء بمثله	وسجدت شكراً لا نهوض بحقهِ

1 The Leader[66] stepped forward, favored in his preeminence,
as if the entire world followed the course of his footstep;

2 and its[67] mountains were shaped by his judicious quality, its seas
from his generosity, and its lush gardens from his noble
character,

3 as if the heavens were subject to his authority,
like the servant submissive to the one who owns his
indenture.

4 Its stars are shared with him: the inauspicious ones
are his enemies', the auspicious ones are on *his* horizon.

5 I remain fervently desiring the light of his brow
with the same desire the lush gardens have for the cloud and
its rain.

6 To such a point that he[68] appears atop a short-haired stallion
striding—
—were he to say, "I have surpassed the wind!" he would be
speaking the truth.

7 His[69] features resemble the cloud, his ascent
like thunder, his course like lightning.

[66] I have translated "*al-ra'īsu*" as 'the Leader.' "*Al-ra'īsu*" must trigger in the poem's audience the accompanying title *al-ustādhu*, 'the Professor' and Abū l-Faḍl's best-known honorific; the latter term does not appear, probably for metrical reasons and mere economy in this short composition. A key benefit of this English term is that it denotes an academic and administrative position, which is what the poem itself does with the figure of its *mamdūḥ*.
[67] I.e., 'The world's […]."
[68] I.e., Abū l-Faḍl.
[69] I.e., 'The stallion's […]."

8 I have put into poetry praise that cannot possibly do him[70] justice,
and bowed down in gratitude, with no pretense of rising to his true level.

Bourdieu insists, "The power of words is nothing other than the *delegated power* of the spokesperson, and his speech—that is, the substance of his discourse and, inseparably, his way of speaking—is no more than a testimony, and one among others, of the *guarantee of delegation* which is vested in him" (*Language* 107, emphasis author's). He is of course referring to systems: the language systems from which a speaker chooses words and the social hierarchies that overlap and co-function with language. This poem advertises a particular system of education and formal comportment (phenomena rendered most economically and aptly in the Arabic term *adab*), embodied here in Abū l-Faḍl. Bourdieu's point lines up almost too well with the poem, because the testimony he sees as implicit in discourse is in this case quite explicit. The poem praises the man who has taught literary language to Ibn ᶜAbbād, so by extension, it praises the very language in which it is written. It is like a billboard advertising the effectiveness of billboards.

This poem not only is written in—and in reference to—the linguistic guarantee that Bourdieu describes; it also actively requests the guarantee of legitimacy. Arabic praise poetry, at least in the ᶜAbbasid period, is agenda-driven and materially interested. In her survey of poems from pre-Islam onward, Suzanne Stetkevych argues:

> We can reduce the qasida ceremony to the simplest case or pattern: a poet comes before a patron offering him a poem praising his generosity and requesting a gift. The patron, if he denies the request, at the same time denies the claim of the poem, that he is generous, and in doing so undermines his own moral authority as a legitimate ruler. To legitimize himself, that is, to confirm the veracity of the virtues enunciated in the panegyric, the patron must accede to the poet's request or demand (*The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy* 34).

This model requires some adjustment to work with the poem of interest here. "*Qadima l-ra'īsu*" is clearly a poem of praise, but it does not explicate a request from Abū l-Faḍl. Secondly, it does not appear that the elder vizier, for all the adoration Ibn ᶜAbbād heaps upon him, is a political superior. If anything, Ibn ᶜAbbād has the more distinguished administrative career—but that is not necessarily salient in this poem, since we do not know precisely when it was composed. In my reading of this poem, the political dynamics Stetkevych identifies in the *qaṣīda* performance are useful, but only if we understand what Abū l-Faḍl might have that Ibn ᶜAbbād would want from him.

Ibn ᶜAbbād's education is, in all likelihood, already complete by the time he composes this poem, judging by the mere fact that his poetry is deemed worthy of anthologizing. The primary transaction in their professional, academic relationship—Ibn ᶜAbbād sharing in Abū l-Faḍl's cultural capital as his successfully trained student—has

[70] I.e., Abū l-Faḍl.

already occurred. The propagandist, opportunistic element in this poem is most probably its citation of their bond; the announcement of their longstanding relationship seeks to renew that relationship and reinforce it. Clearly, that effort can be successful only if Abū l-Faḍl approves of the poem. Line 5's testimony, 'I remain fervently desiring the light of his brow' (*mā ziltu mushtāqan li-nūri jabīnihi*), is more than hyperbolic flattery. As he avows his desire for *al-ustādh*, the poem's speaker renews his allegiance and asks to deepen the debt to which he refers at the poem's conclusion.

The poet-patron dynamic Stetkevych cites is a *quid pro quo*, in which the poet expects his praise to be affirmed (i.e., paid for) according to the measure with which he lavishes it. But "*Qadima l-ra'īsu muqaddaman fī sibqihi*" deems itself insufficient and indeed claims that its author can never be sufficient to fully praise the *mamdūḥ*. This admission could well be precisely because Ibn ᶜAbbād does *not* seek payment. If, in Stetkevych's model of the supplicatory *qaṣīda*, *quid* is praise and *quo* is payment, then we might conclude it to be counterproductive for the poem to minimize its own worth in the closing line. But that is precisely what panegyrists do, here and in many ᶜAbbasid works. What the poem is soliciting of Abū l-Faḍl is his confirmation that the mentor-mentee relationship still obtains during Ibn ᶜAbbād's adulthood, and that Ibn ᶜAbbād owns the momentum (i.e., the legacy) of his mentor's career.[71]

It is unclear if the poem is meant to procure a material reward of any kind—I suspect that it is not, as a prominent vizier requesting payment from an equal seems to go against courtly protocols. Instead, I believe that it invites Abū l-Faḍl to approve of its language, so that Ibn ᶜAbbād's poetic (and, perhaps his prose, by extension) language becomes a surrogate of Abū l-Faḍl's own eloquence. If successful, the poem achieves for its author a share of Abū l-Faḍl's tremendous cultural capital. The hyperbolic modesty with which the poem ends is, as I have noted, disingenuous. Still, it is not illogical that the poem should observe a literary hierarchy of which its *mamdūḥ* is the apex—that hierarchy is widely accepted, judging by the report that "his correspondence […] was so famous and considered so important as a model that there was scarcely a scribe who did not possess a copy of it […]" (EI2, "Ibn al-ᶜAmīd" para. 3). Perhaps stronger praise is to be found in a good many medieval anthologies, attesting as widespread the phrase "*bada'at al-kitābatu bi-ᶜabdi l-ḥamīdi wa-khatamat bi-bni l-ᶜamīd*": 'Writing style began with ᶜAbd al-Ḥamīd [ibn Yaḥyā ibn Saᶜd] and ended with [Abū l-Faḍl] Ibn al-ᶜAmīd.'

To understand exactly what the poem accomplishes for its author, I return to Bourdieu's above-cited "guarantee of delegation" enjoyed by the speaker: that delegation is what the poem requests of Abū l-Faḍl. It is a sizeable reward and, I surmise, it would be sufficient as the only clear thing the poem requested. The famous phrase that posits Abū l-Faḍl as the last great prose stylist may or may not already be current by the time of this poem's issuance, but there is no doubt that Ibn ᶜAbbād's reverence for his teacher was widely held among the Buyid elite. If Abū l-Faḍl approves of the poem, he makes Ibn ᶜAbbād heir to his stylistic legacy and his political career, the two of which are thoroughly intertwined. Abū l-Faḍl has the authority not only of preeminent stylist but also as the model of a cultured vizier. Ibn ᶜAbbād may wield more overt political power

[71] Neither of the poem's two medieval sources (*Yatīmat al-dahr* and *Khāṣṣ al-khāṣṣ*) informs us when the poem was composed and/or performed. Ibn ᶜAbbād was 32 years old at the time of his mentor's death.

than his teacher, but only Abū l-Faḍl has the distinction of having tutored ᶜAḍud al-Dawla, who occupies the highest levels of Buyid power.[72] The status as ᶜAḍud al-Dawla's fellow pupil—already advantageous in that it implies a shared past among the two alumni—Ibn ᶜAbbād parlays into future dividends. That is, in seeking the mantle of Abū l-Faḍl's vizier-protégé, Ibn ᶜAbbād secures for himself Abū l-Faḍl's mantle of wisdom and reliable counsel. The cachet in such high intellectual and political renown is obvious for the vizier, whose career and well-being depend largely on his relations with his superiors.

Through these poems and in a great many of his intellectual endeavors, Ibn ᶜAbbād earns the privilege of swearing at court. This is one of many privileges he earns; I emphasize it not because it overshadows other exercises of authority but because it is a key part of that authority *as he exercises it*. In the chapters to follow, I will integrate Ibn ᶜAbbād's transgressive and outrageous literature into his large-scale project of Arabophone cultural primacy. Contemporary Arabists such as Beatrice Gruendler, Stefan Sperl, and Suzanne Stetkevych, have done much to reveal the political function of "high" literature, most of all ᶜAbbasid praise poetry.[73] I will further argue such that forms as *mujūn* and *hijā'*—whose artistic and social merits are controversial among literati in ways that *madḥ* is not—are not mere entertaining diversions from the political work of "high" art. Rather, the extreme forms of transgression and lowbrow literature, of which Ibn ᶜAbbād is a known author and patron, are tools just as sharp—if not as large or famous—as their highbrow counterparts. In terms that bring me once again into Bourdieu's economic model, the vizier, in authoring and commissioning *mujūn* and *hijā'*, is not merely spending cultural capital but earning it and investing it for his own profit.

As I hope to have demonstrated above, Ibn ᶜAbbād is fully engaged in using argumentation as a poetic mode. His poetry comes very close, at times, to rhetoric. This move is quite consistent with the Muᶜtazilī thought popular throughout ᶜAbbasid literature —as noted above, Ibn ᶜAbbād is himself Muᶜtazilī. All of this is to say that he taps into the logical, empirical powers of Arabic *prose* to effect a poetry that is authoritative, convincing, and conclusive. He is by no means the first—or even one of the first—to do so in Arabic, but he is one of the best. What makes his poetry compelling are (1) his mastery of prose eloquence which he imports as poetry and (2) the historical fact of his great prominence, politically, socially, and culturally. When we read al-Thaᶜālibī's exultant praise of Ibn ᶜAbbād for his gift of words, it is useful to keep in mind that the anthologist—himself quite astute politically—is probably grafting Ibn ᶜAbbād's prominence on to his eloquence and in a certain way praising both. Bringing both those qualities together in his praise, al-Thaᶜālibī offers a reminder of the sociopolitical weight granted not only to the composition of ᶜAbbasid poetry but also to the way it is read and anthologized during the Middle Ages. In this respect, such historicist modern scholars as Gruendler, Sperl, and Suzanne Stetkevych echo a very old practice of reading poems as

[72] After Abū l-Faḍl's death, and thus after the issuance of this poem, ᶜAḍud al-Dawla would become the ᶜAbbasid Amīr al-Umarā' ('Prince of Princes,' or preeminent ruler of the empire).

[73] The particular works in which these historicist arguments are made include Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry: Ibn Al-Rūmī and the Patron's Redemption;* Sperl, "Islamic Kingship and Arabic Panegyric Poetry in the Early 9th Century"; and S. Stetkevych, *The Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy*.

politics. And, I argue, Ibn ᶜAbbād must be included in this critical idiom, not just for his praise works but also for his *mujūn* and *hijā'*, to which the next chapter is dedicated.

Alfonso

Of the many conceits and mechanical elements that distinguish Alfonso's praise poetry from Ibn ᶜAbbād's, the most important difference, for the sake of this study, is his technique of mobilizing ideology. The *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (hereafter CSM) are as conscious of eloquence—specifically, attributing eloquence to their putative author—as are Ibn ᶜAbbād's poems, but the CSM use a language of miracle to anchor their claims of veracity. Theirs is not a dialectical model but a testimonial one. Ibn ᶜAbbād composes works that are canonical first and foremost because of their consistency with, and their integrity within, the Classical Arabic linguistic and literary norms of his era. The author's political position is clearly relevant, but the Arabic canon has demonstrated that to be a secondary or tertiary criterion.[74] The CSM are canonical because of the sacred register in which they speak and, perhaps just as importantly, because Alfonso is in a position to perform canonical speech acts.

What I mean by this is what Gerald Bruns defines as canonical: "forceful in a given situation" (Hallberg ed. 68), which he illustrates with a story from 2 Kings in the Hebrew Bible. In this account, King Josiah receives a book from Hilkiah, the high priest. Hilkiah confirms that the book contains commands from God and that previous kings have not heeded its words.

> And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the Law, that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest […], saying: "Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found; for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us."
>
> […] And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood on the platform, and made a covenant before the Lord, […] to keep His commandments […], with all his heart, and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book; and all the people stood to the covenant (2 Kings 22:8-23:3).[75]

[74] The most famous poets of the Buyid era were often given appointments in government, but they were not at the highest levels of administration. One outstanding example of an author with a poor record of ascent in the social and political systems is al-Tawḥīdī, whose writings have proven historically more famous and widely-read than those of his contemporary, Ibn ᶜAbbād. And Ibn ᶜAbbād, more than any other patron, represents al-Tawḥīdī's failure to rise in the world of late ᶜAbbasid courts.

[75] Following Bruns, I use the Jewish Publication Society of America's 1917 translation of the Hebrew Bible.

Bruns posits that "[t]he lesson of Hilkiah is that canon is not a literary category but a category of power […]." I find his definition of canonicity very useful, for the historical breadth it signals and for its insistence on the political nature of reading. Two elements of language history bear noting here. First, Bruns's selection of a Hebrew holy text places us in territory distinct from Alfonso's medium of Romance languages (even though Alfonso marshals those languages to make translations of Middle Eastern texts); Louis Gardet describes "the Semitic idea of the effective value of the spoken word" (EI2, "Du^{c}ā'"), i.e., the tautology between utterance and act, at least when God is invoked in the utterance. This kind of binding speech, in which the declaration of one's intents or desires vis-à-vis God is materially the same as offerings and actions (e.g., physical rituals such as rending clothes), is a logic different from that observed in medieval European Christendom: Alfonso may state his wish to be Mary's troubadour but the CSM—despite their many suggestions of Mary's favor toward Alfonso and his family—do not depict her explicit approbation of that wish. Secondly, canonization as a concept recalls scholars' work, especially in Late Antiquity. An originary version of European canonization is the process of including, excluding, and editing certain Biblical texts, especially those Greek works that came to make up the New Testament. So, if canonizing a book meant approving it as sound and sacred, Bruns now alerts us to a form of canonization occurring within the book itself.

At a political level, Josiah is of course only partially analogous to my medieval example of the king vis-à-vis literature. The model of the ruler obeying God in the Hebrew Bible is quite different from a Castilian king's obeisance. Josiah rends his clothes to indicate his humiliation and grief that the book has theretofore been unheeded, then he speaks to his inner circle, and then to the greater public. The book is itself a kind of event, whose ramifications are dire but have not been comprehended until Josiah's recognition of the text. Alfonso begins his CSM project "to reveal the miracles She (i.e., Mary) performed" (KH 2), i.e., to celebrate graces already given to Iberians and other people from Christian empires. These miracles are well-known among Alfonso's audience by virtue of the oral and written accounts from which he seems to be working. (Many Marian stories were in circulation at that time in Latin, e.g., Juan Gil de Zamora's *Liber Mariae*, produced in close association with Alfonso and the CSM [*Medieval Iberia*, "Gil de Zamora," para. 3]. The CSM draw on many of the same anecdotes as do the Latin versions.)

Alfonso's task is therefore not to convince anyone that the miracles are real but to convince the audience that his reverence is real and his language credible. He is responding to the canonicity of the miracle stories, written and oral, which he folds into his songs. So, while he resembles Josiah in his public performance of devotion, he is clearly interested in making a canonical work, which Josiah is not. For Josiah the text is an end unto itself—certainly his reading it aloud is its own work, which we might call a performance of canonicity—while for Alfonso the challenge is to make truth claims in a lyrical language theretofore used for statements about people, not saints or deities. Furthermore, and probably just as importantly, Alfonso's will stipulates, "Otrosi 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 […]" (Antonio G. Solalinde ed., *Antología* 236, emphasis editor's): 'We also order that all the codices of songs praising Saint Mary be interred in the Cathedral (of Seville) and that they be sung at the festivals of Saint Mary' (translation mine). From the proto-history of the lyric text, to its performance, to its physical manufacture and recitation in perpetuity, Alfonso's effort works on the model of canonicity as delineated in the Hebrew Bible.

The lyrical nature of the CSM brings up a problem mentioned in chapter 1: how do we speak about this poetry as both authoritative and distinct from epic literature? Insofar as Bakhtin characterizes the epic as "a world of 'beginnings' and 'peak times' in the national history, a world of fathers and of founders of families, a world of 'firsts' and 'bests'" (*Dialogic* 13), then indeed the CSM appeal to an epic form of authority, and Bakhtin's epic-lyric proximity model stands (296-97). Certainly the universal claims of the lyric voice narrating the works—and especially the refrains—support the theory. I will focus on two elements of the CSM that trouble Bakhtin's argument: the particular lyric language of the poems and the shifting position of Mary from *cantiga* to *cantiga*. As I have noted, Bakhtin argues that epic and lyric are interested in monologic authority; but he takes as his starting-points the Greek and Latin traditions, in which both epic and lyric are composed in the same language. (In this use of the term "language" I mean the sort of conventional term one might use in describing a large linguistic system, e.g., "the Greek language" and "the Latin language" as basic textbooks mean those phrases. Bakhtin of course has a much more multivalent use for the term "language"; when he describes "epic language" and "lyric language" he seems to mean languages or glosses that, through their authoritative descriptions of the world, imply particular kinds of literary speakers, in both cases imperious and undialectical.) His reading of Classics is of course not immediately portable to the medieval period and its linguistic and literary developments in the vernacular. Castilian enjoyed no lyric fame in Alfonso's time; it did not emerge as a major lyrical medium until the fourteenth century, and came to dominate the peninsula only in the fifteenth century (Beltrán Pepió, *Poética, poesía y sociedad* 105). In other words, it was only then, more than a hundred years after Alfonso's death, that the great epic (the *Cid*) began to share a language with the most famous works of contemporary lyric.

Bakhtin's diglossia is a flexible critical idea, which we might use to describe characteristics within one language or among several languages (and with which we might question the very identification of a language as unitary and consistent). The problem is that Bakhtin's definition of lyric does not seem as versatile; the monologic quality he attributes to it would preclude diglossia and thereby foreclose the wide theoretical possibilities his work allows in other genres. The historical picture of medieval Iberian literary culture, specifically the divisions of genres among distinct vernacular languages (see chapter 1), does not in and of itself contravene Bakhtin's ideas, but it does problematize them greatly. Galician-Portuguese as a poetic language is in clear dialogue with Iberian epic mainly insofar as it marks the generic edges of Castilian, which, as noted above, was at that point is the language of epic.

I therefore argue for a clear scholarly distinction between lyric and epic in the discussion of the CSM; in understanding the poems as a corpus, I think their lyrical

quality should merit the bulk of our attention. I have noted how important the Provençal troubadours and their lyric tradition were to the *cantiga* generally. People from France played a key role in early Spanish consciousness of ancient languages: it was twelfth-century Cluniac bishops who began the Toledo translation effort and thereby galvanized the academic understanding of Latin in Spain (Alvar, *Traducciones y traductores* 60-61; Donovan, *Liturgical Drama* 25; Márquez Villanueva, "Ways and Means" 150). When Alfonso reenergized and expanded that effort, Latin remained the default language for translations from Arabic, from which vernacular versions were sometimes produced.[76] Latin was also the predominant language in which Marian miracles were recorded, both in prose and lyric poetry. The project of building the CSM was therefore largely a project of reading, synthesizing, and retelling accounts from Latin—in other words, a project very similar to translation. There can be little doubt that the CSM texts drew upon Latin's authoritative cachet, i.e., the scholastic importance which is the Cluniacs' legacy and the more remote cultural memory of the Roman Empire in Iberia. And, of course, Latin was the language of official histories and of the Classic epic tradition, two textual practices using the same language of authority, in Bakhtin's opinion (*Dialogic* 13). In this sense, there is a hint of the epic inherent in any work drawing from Latin, including that of composing the CSM. I want to emphasize how deep that epic layer is, and insist that the *cantiga* is written in a fully-formed lyrical language well before Alfonso's project. In its lyrical existence, Galician-Portuguese is unequivocally what Bakhtin would term dialogic, with only partial qualities which he ascribes to epic and lyric. Alfonso seems to maintain quite faithfully the form of the Galician-Portuguese *cantiga* as it exists prior to the CSM, not only in terms of length, melody, and meter, but also in the construction of a speaking (singing) voice. The CSM do indeed seek the authority of truth, but they use techniques different from those of epic and official history.

Here I encounter a problem in dialogic theory, a cul-de-sac from which I think it necessary to exit in order to understand the *cantiga*. I want to describe lyric in an extremely basic, formal way, then review other descriptions of the poetry. Lyric is no doubt a multivalent term but, it seems safe to describe it as a historically sung poetry whose and that its singer is often a solo performer. It is then logical to conclude that the song's authority rests very much upon the figure of that singer. If the singer lacks fame or gravitas, then he[77] might signal the author to whom the song is attributed, in order for the song's claims to resonate. (Of course, this presumes that author and singer are identified as different people, and the ideology of early troubadour poetry wants a unitary singer/songwriter. It is difficult to imagine Alfonso X as the sole author of any of his works, least of all the very large collection that the CSM represent. I will address the problems of identifying author and performer below.)

For reasons of literary historiography, it is necessary to speak of, and privilege, the fraught problem of the individual in modern critical language. In the past century or more, philologists and critics have tended to associate the lyric with individuality. It is not altogether clear to me how well-founded this idea is; even if we are to accept its

[76] A notable exception is the *Libros del saber de astronomía*, translated from Arabic directly into Castilian.
[77] Iberian troubadours were exclusively male, as opposed to *juglares*, a more capacious title in terms of class and gender, on which see Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Poesía juglaresca* 30-34.

accuracy, it does not seem readily portable to sung poetry outside of a European idiom. Indeed, the entire question of the individual poetic voice is more complicated in Alfonso's poetry than that of his less-powerful contemporaries in Galician-Portuguese. But it seems essential to address this conventional description of the lyric for the mere fact that it is so popular with major artists, philosophers, and critics of the European canon. T. S. Eliot's argument of "The Three Voices of Poetry," although it claims dissatisfaction with the term "lyric," is predicated upon the notion that the lyric is better suited to self-expression than are other literary genres. During the same decade of the 1950s, Theodor Adorno also confirms this theory. It is striking that, in such a contentious argument as his "On Lyric Poetry and Society," he seems to accept received wisdom about the lyric. (Although he signals very compelling directions lyric is capable of taking in a social context, he does not argue against the historiography itself, which associates lyric with a lone speaker.) To approach a famous body of songs from a Romance canon is to confront a history of reading such songs; perhaps more accurately it is a historiography of reading, a way of viewing the lyric as under the ownership of the solo performer. The logical extension of this point is that, in the canon of Western criticism, the lyric owns the individual, i.e., it enjoys a generic privilege in the minds of many famous theorists. European Modern criticism, which since the Romantic Period has assigned tremendous importance to self-expression, seems therefore to assign great importance to lyric. (The irony is that in Eliot and Adorno's time and in the languages which they read very little of the poetry being produced is called lyrical, and very little of the lyric being produced is called poetry.)

The other reason for privileging the individual is a political reality of 13th-century Christian empires in Iberia: Although much premodern literature is more genre-driven than author-driven (Kilito, *Author* 3, explicitly following Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests* 90), the CSM display an extraordinary preoccupation with promoting the troubadour and author as individuals. Alfonso builds this corpus of poems for the express purpose of assigning them to his name and his legacy as king. Joseph Snow, referring to the CSM exclusively, confirms this: "Of Alfonso's known works, the *Cantigas* is the one with which he is most personally identified and which may prove to contain important keys—even at this remove of time—to the kind of person he was or, better yet, the kind of person he wanted to be" (Burns ed., *Emperor* 124).

These two points are meant to illustrate that when we speak of identification and individuality in the CSM we are speaking about ideologies of producing and reading poetry. In other words, the focus on the individual probably tells us more about criticism of lyric than about lyric itself, especially in its premodern forms. At every level of CSM's composition, production as written and illuminated pieces, and recital as music, there are elements of collaboration, borrowing, and diffusion. It is not clear whether Alfonso performed them himself; even assuming that he did, he was one among many singers, historically.[78] As compositions, the CSM are self-referential, like the *Cantigas*

[78] Just as lyric theory reveals at least as much about modern reading practices as it does about the medieval ur-text, the history of *cantiga* performance brings us to the modern period. The CSM are the most widely-performed of all *cantigas* today. Because much more of their music is preserved than of profane *cantigas* (Sharrer 459), and because musicians and musicologists have tended to prefer the corpus's sacred vein, musical interpretations of the CSM are many. The large number of voices that sing CSM—an ever-increasing number, as CSM are to this day a favorite

d'escarnho e maldizer (CEM); but I would argue that they are distinct from the CEM in that they aim for posterity as much as they speak to their thirteenth-century audience. Another contrast with the CEM, whose manuscripts tend to be quite plain and lacking illuminations (or with illuminations that are incomplete), is that the CSM codices seem to have received great personal attention from Alfonso. The CSM are not only lavishly rendered in many cases, but they are also the subject of Alfonso's instructions to his artists and bookmakers as to the poems' appearance, decoration, and musical notation; they are mentioned explicitly in his will (Greenia, "Politics" 326; Guerrero Lovillo 14). Martha Schaffer opines, "Creo que Alfonso manda copiar la música porque corresponde con sus ideas sobre el poder del libro; la música se incluye para que el «lector» del códice comprenda el texto de la misma manera en que el «oyente» de una cantiga lo comprende": 'I believe that Alfonso orders the copying of the music because it corresponds with his ideas on the power of the book; the music is included so that the "reader" of the codex understands the text in the same way in which the "listener" of a *cantiga* understands it' (ed. Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, *El Scriptorium* 141, translation mine). Another way of saying this is that the music is essential to the work's canonicity.

The *cantiga* readings in this chapter will confront the tight binding between individual and lyric text, both in the critical language on lyric and in the specific logic of the CSM. That Alfonso wished these songs to become a major part of his identity (and vice versa) is attested by their textual contents and the king's production of intricate CSM manuscripts; this effort of legacy-building through poetry resonates in modern criticism's association of lyric with the individual singing subject. The result is that Alfonso now receives a dividend in the form of literary historiography, one he might never have anticipated.

The fact that the CSM depict miracles throughout Iberia as well as certain stories from elsewhere in Europe, while it might seem a mundane feature of the collection, in fact signals a major formal challenge faced by Alfonso. I have argued for the importance of geography in Ibn ᶜAbbād's praise, not only in understanding of the poems' function but also in the work of praise itself. Just as ᶜAbbasid provincial cities Ṭūs and Mashhad are different panegyric sites from Baghdad—whose very name is a sort of honorific in the medieval Arabic lexicon—we must consider the centrality and remoteness of places evoked in *cantigas*. For Alfonso, the task is twofold. The CSM must be broad in their truth claims, while treating Iberia with an insider's eye for detail. As mentioned in chapter 1, the CSM come out of a long tradition of Marian miracle tales in Latin, at once provincial and cosmopolitan, specific and universal. The miracle in Latin spans Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean: stories issue from all around Christian empires and attest to events everywhere therein, as well as the eastern and southern Mediterranean. So just as medieval epics (e.g., *El Cid*, *Song of Roland*) tie an empire together with specific geographic references and the integrity of the hero's conquering mission, the miracle story insists that particular towns, cities, and roads have experienced divine intervention. A significant portion of the CSM adapt extant Latin works, and their geographic scope

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among early-music players—may effect a dilution of the pool, and therefore loosen the identificatory bond between Alfonso and these works.

reflects that: the songs tell of events in France, Italy, Syria, Morocco, Palestine, etc. Because Latin is the main language of Christian triumphalism and medieval hagiography, the CSM must make a case for their own vernacular language as suitable for the pan-Mediterranean miracle claim. They make this case implicitly, as we will see below. When they take on a local Iberian flavor, they speak of remarkably specific events, as if the miracles were rumors spreading, becoming legends, and then—through the insistence of authoritative speech act—solidifying as accepted truths. It is reasonable to assume that many of the Iberian villages and roads, convents, inns, and stables, were insignificant before they became the topoi of miracle stories.[79] The CSM, of course, render these places all the more famous; but the poetic text is careful to note the particular characteristics of each place, as if the obscurity-to-fame narrative were itself a miracle.

[79] Oftentimes, it must be noted, proper names (including place names) appear in CSM primarily for the sake of rhyme. The reference to the gorge Muradal in CSM 292 seems to be one such case. The clearest cases of this occur with persons' name invoked as clear rhyming mechanics (e.g., CSM 5, 35, 122, 125, 135, 155, 353); but there are also several cases of conveniently-rhyming place names, whose geographic importance is clearly peripheral to the main sites of miracles and peregrinations noted in the songs (e.g., CSM 182, 271, 273, 277, 329, 386).

CSM 292: "*Muito demostra a Virgen, a Sennor esperital,/sa lealdad' a aquele que acha sempre leal*": 'The Virgin, Spiritual Lady, clearly reveals Her loyalty to the one She finds ever loyal' (translation KH 352-54)

Throughout his multilingual oeuvre, Alfonso rarely misses an opportunity to cite the legacy of his father, Fernando III, but that tendency is especially significant in the CSM. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Fernando was a patron of the *cantiga*, and in fact a major work of profane Galician-Portuguese praise lyric celebrates his conquest of Seville (Iglesia 2:223-24), an event which CSM 292 cites to great effect. In the logic of this *cantiga*, Fernando was an earner of Mary's favor because he paid her such careful tribute, accumulating successes of spiritual, political, and material nature and reserving for his son a fortuitous situation of an expanded Christian empire. Fernando and his success demonstrate Mary's intervention in the world and her intentions for certain outcomes, such as the defeat of Islam and the takeover of Seville. In death, he becomes her interlocutor as well: the explanatory introduction of this song recounts "Como el Rey Don Fernando vẽo ao Tesoureiro de Sevilla e a Maestre Jorge que tirassen o anel do seu dedo e o metessen no dedo da omagen de Santa Maria": [80] 'How King don Fernando came in a vision to the treasurer of Seville and to Master Jorge and told them to the take the ring from his finger and place it on the statue of Holy Mary' (KH 352). The physical element of the miracle is the discovery, by high-ranking royal subjects, that the ring has come off of the statue's finger. This event seems rather unremarkable to be deemed a miracle; its inclusion in the CSM likely indicates Alfonso's interest in promoting an event under his reign as miraculous, and of course to implicate himself in the event.

The motive of this song, to illustrate recent Castilian history rather than long-past events in Christendom generally, has great structural and stylistic consequences. The conventional CSM structure, in which the lyric speaker tells of Mary intervening directly in people's lives, is subordinated here: Fernando performs the acts normally reserved for Mary herself. Mary's active role in the kingdom is contained in the past, an analepsis that, as I will demonstrate, frames Fernando's persona even as the song itself frames the Marian past.[81] The construction of a recent past in this song makes clear that the CSM want to change extant methods of hagiography: although many of them adapt Latin miracle stories with only subtle structural and narrative changes, here the text bypasses the Latin model altogether. The work is to versify the immediate, contingent world of Iberian royal politics.[82] The CSM's initial audience in all likelihood includes Fernando's

[80] Each of the CSM starts with a brief prose explication of what story the song will tell.

[81] I cite Gérard Genette for this term and its definition: "any evocation after the fact of an event that took place earlier than the point in the story where we are at any given moment" (*Narrative Discourse* 40). Two qualifications are in order: (1) a shorthand version of this definition is 'flashback,' but that near-involuntary act of memory is not precisely how analepsis works in the poem; (2) my use of Genette's notion of analepsis should not be interpreted to mean I read the CSM as narrative in genre nor as a study in cognition. I invoke Genette's work here because I find it useful for its precise taxonomy of narrative devices and for its widespread familiarity in the canon of literary theory.

[82] We see very much the same phenomenon with Gonzalo de Berceo, whose *Milagros de Nuestro Señora* is the other major example of medieval Marian lyric in an Iberian vernacular. In the *Milagros*, the one song which appears to be entirely of his own composition (and not an adaptation of Latin works) is "La iglesia robada," which cites Fernando. It should be noted however that Mary is the intervening entity in this song; Fernando receives praise but his main role is to mark the precise reign in which the miracle happens.

own past subjects, who will remember him—even if their memories are faulty, Alfonso will not let them forget. And, it is logical to assume, they judge Alfonso against his father's legacy.

I would argue that any panegyric literature produces a praise economy, a set of exchanges which criticism serves to make visible. The CSM are so explicit about the units of exchange that some critical phrases become near-redundant. This song invokes a language of transfer—deeds, goods, labor, safe-passage guarantees—to produce the blessings to which it and all CSM attest. To explain why King Fernando's ring has value—i.e., why it should represent a substantive amount of capital to Mary—the *cantiga* lays out a back-story in which the living Fernando was constantly paying tribute to her. In this historiography, their relationship had both intimate and public manifestations. A rigorous series of regular tributes from Fernando secured for him Mary's grace and support in his projects: when he would wrest a city from Muslim control, he would erect a statue of Mary in the portico of the central mosque. A *quid pro quo* emerges in the poem: Fernando's good comportment and pious (i.e., triumphalist Christian) deeds pleased Mary and she blessed him so that he might continue to do the same. Discrete languages intermix and produce a very worldly form of theology: as with so many of the CSM, the languages operative here are of commerce, marital status, and intimacy. For Fernando's loyalty, Mary "ben ll' ar pagou seu jornal":[83] 'generously paid him his wages in return' (KH 352).

As noted above, this talk of exchange and payment is the norm in the CSM, but what arrests our attention is how abrupt the move is to marital fidelity, love, and pious political speech. In what I consider to be the most complex lyrical moment in this work, the speaker explains that Fernando's service to Mary coalesces in a bond that only Fernando was equipped to articulate to the world: "Assi estes dous leaes lealdade fez amar,/ca el sempre a servia e a sabia loar": 'Thus these two loyal ones, loyalty made them love (each other),/as he served her always and praised her' (translation mine). *Leaes*—literally, 'loyal ones' but of course it also means 'legal ones,' i.e., those bonded legally (DDGM, "leal")—is so emphasized here that it is doubled and redoubled. Simple numbers (*dous*: two) do it first, then the aural and morphological doubling in "*leaes lealdade*" renders *leaes* not only multivalent but also a refraction of its own self: loyalty and legality, both, made both of them love each other, as lovers loyal to one another and in a licit bond. This repetition—first the plural form of *leal*, followed immediately by the abstract noun *lealdade*, indicating the state of being *leal*—suggests epanalepsis in its insistence and its suggestion of polysemy. The stacking of these two words, directly next to one another as we might find in a lexicon or morphology chart, is unsubtly didactic. But its placement in poetic speech allows it great depth of expression: this one line walks the reader across an entire range of ethical and legal significations for *leal*(*-dade*), which cumulate in Fernando's *loar*: to laud, praise. The artifact of the *cantiga*, the proof of its existence, is proof of another doubling, because the *cantiga* is of course Alfonso's document of *loar* and therefore evidence of the father's practice taken up by the son.

[83] The word *jornal* appears "jor[nal]" in Mettmann, indicating that the manuscript's text may be damaged or obscured but it is surely *jornal* in the original. Given the context and rhyme obligation of an *-al* ending, there are few to zero other possibilities.

E pois lo ouv' y metudo, segundo com' aqui diz,
muitos miragres o Fillo da Santa Emperadriz
mostrou por el senpr' e mostra, e ssa moller Beatriz
aduss' y depois seu fillo, non passand' a Muradal.

After She had set him (Fernando) there, according to what it says here,
the Son of the Holy Empress[84] wrought many miracles for him,
as He does all the time. He (Jesus) brought his (Fernando's) wife Beatriz there,
then his (Fernando's) son, not passing through Muradal
(translation mine).[85]

The song is explicitly about transfer, of precious people and precious metals. The bond between Fernando and Mary allows the lyric speaker to explain Castile's immediate past as a product of religious devotion and the legal contract of marriage. Then, as events in the song approach the contemporary (i.e., Alfonso's reign), they take on a material and governmental character: Fernando visits in spirit form to declare that his statue in Seville should be changed, lest it overshadow that of Mary. He visits the world of mortal affairs in the form of a vision—the *modus operandi* of Mary herself in the CSM—and tells the character of Mester Jorge to relay a message to Alfonso. Fernando's instructions are to alter his statue such that, rather than sitting on his throne by himself, he will be depicted kneeling before Mary. Furthermore, he wants his ring moved from his finger to Mary's. The conveyance of Fernando's ring from his statue to that of Mary will set the narrative down at a marital endpoint, the full realization of all the Christ parallels the song has suggested.

The family structure itself is an argument in this song. Whereas we have seen that Fernando's relation to Mary is near-matrimonial, Alfonso's maternal family line is a near-metonymy for Mary's family. Through strenuous work of double entendre and suggestive language of the Alfonsine family line, this song lends a sense of inevitability

[84] 'The Son of the Holy Empress' ("o Fillo da Santa Emperadriz") is Jesus.

[85] In my translation I have tried to adhere to the syntax and line breaks in the original text whenever possible, although often I have found it too awkward to make the English imitate the flexibility of syntax in Galician-Portuguese poetry; therefore, line breaks in the two versions vary considerably. When using KH's translations, which do not include line breaks within stanzas or choruses, I insert line breaks. In the translation of CSM 292, the many parentheses are regrettable but necessary to clarify the many pronouns in the original text. I have offered my own translation here because I believe KH contains an error. She translates "E pois lo ouv' y metudo" as 'After he had placed his son there' (KH 352). The lower-case "he" indicates Fernando; pronouns referring to Mary and Jesus are always capitalized in the translations. Therefore, the translation understands this line to mean, 'After Fernando had placed his son there.' This does not seem possible in context; if it were, the lyrics would suggest that Fernando placed Alfonso in Seville, and thereafter Jesus somehow brought both Beatriz and Alfonso to Seville again. The other possibility is that the song is suggesting that Beatriz's safe passage to Seville is in the company of one of Alfonso's brothers when it refers to Beatriz's son. "[…] Beatriz/aduss' y depois seu fillo": '[…] He (Jesus) brought Beatriz and his (Ferndando's) son' (translation mine). Neither possibility would fit the *cantiga* well. Narrating a story in which Alfonso has gone to Seville, and then somehow goes to Seville over again, would be counterintuitive; and if the lyric were referring to one of Alfonso's brothers, it would most likely specify one of the six rather than saying 'her son.'

to Alfonso's royal position, in Iberia and beyond. What is crucial about this turn to Jesus (some CSM invoke him, many refer only to Mary) and in particular his title of "Fillo da Santa Emperadriz" is that Alfonso sought a very closely-related title for himself. Chapter 1 has cited his campaign for the Holy Roman Empire; the striking historical fact is that Alfonso's legitimacy as a candidate rested on his mother Beatriz's (1198-1212) bloodline: she was the daughter of Philip of Swabia (1177-1208), the son of Frederick I Barbarossa (1122-1190), Holy Roman Emperor. The symbolism is unsubtle, placing Alfonso in close and productive relation with Jesus. As Jesus is the 'Son of the Holy Empress,' so is Alfonso. It follows that Fernando, Beatriz, and Alfonso's safe passage to Seville is parallel to Joseph, Mary, and (prenatal) Jesus's move to Bethlehem.

In a collection of songs valorizing certain sites as *spiritually* prominent (especially Santiago de Compostela; but many others emerge, such as Badajoz, Burgos, Constantinople, Damascus, and Jerusalem), in CSM 292 it is clear that Seville's *political* prominence is what occasions the spiritual event of miracle. When Fernando dies, he enjoys such favor from Mary that she ensures he is 'aclaimed (sic) the best king ever to hold the throne and (She) caused him to place his son in Seville' (KH 352): "que polo mellor morreu/rei que en seu logar fosse, e fez per que o meteu/el Rei seu fill' en Sevilla […]." Seville becomes the topos of perpetual miracle.

Fernando invites a historiographic redress in his selection of Mester Jorge ('Master Jorge') as his interlocutor. Jorge is the artisan who, at Alfonso's orders, made the statue and the gold ring that sits on its finger. That is to say, Fernando is issuing a corrective to Alfonso's statue-building project—a subtle statement that Fernando, close to Mary in life and all the closer in the afterlife, knows better than his son how to serve her. As Jorge receives the message, he 'hearkens unto the words,' to adapt slightly the phrasing of 2 Kings above. Jorge rushes to the statue's site, the city cathedral, whose doors are made "d' our' e non d'outro metal": 'of gold and of no other metal' (KH 353). Precious metals become a motif and find two agents to perform their worth: Jorge needs the city treasurer to open the church doors for him—i.e., the one who accounts for royal wealth and under Fernando oversees the portion of tithes claimed by the king[86] must appreciate the import of Jorge's words and operate the precious-metal gateway.

Words function as a form of currency, weighed and exchanged for materials and pious acts. This premise of course subtends the CSM as a lyrical production, a vocal and textual tribute to Mary requesting "que me dé gualardon com' ela dá/aos que ama": 'that She give me the reward which She gives to those she loves' (KH 2). Here in CSM 292 it enters the realm of the intellect, cogitated and performed by the treasurer, whose very job it is to oversee rewards, incomes, payments, and savings. Although a great many CSM turn on economic themes, this composition is so keenly focused on promoting the Castilian monarchy that it might recall for us the workings of a budget.

What we see in this *cantiga* is what is in many ways redundant in the next song to be analyzed here, CSM 132. Whereas 132 explicates its textual sources (i.e., a well-known written account in Latin), CSM 292 reports recent happenings and imbues them with causality and intention. CSM 292 deals with an anecdote probably well-known

[86] The collection of *tercias reales*, 'royal thirds' from tithes, was an innovation of Fernando's regime, for which he gained papal approval, after some effort (O'Callaghan, *History* 455-56).

through *informal oral* transmission. The object is to convert that anecdote into an indisputable fact of history, and to associate it as strongly and personally as possible with Alfonso himself.

The temptation to follow Bakhtin is evident here: is not this mode of lyric historiography an example of epic language as he characterizes it? Partially, yes. The lyric speaker—who, as we have seen, identifies himself as "Alfonso" in the Prologue—derives his authority from the reliability of anecdotes that he has received ("segundo com' aqui diz"); he then relies on his troubadour credential to distinguish himself as the appropriate, competent performer of those anecdotes. But that entire operation rests upon the image and narrated actions of Mary in these *cantigas*, and she is a major complicating factor in the epic-lyric proximity Bakhtin suggests. As we will see in the course of this chapter, Mary's role and behavior vary so markedly that she herself resists a monologic reading. Her beatific presence in these works can be transcendent, abstracted from certain worldly concerns,[87] but then she intervenes in some of the exact worldly matters and mortals' actions which she supposedly transcends. At such moments, she imitates not only the behaviors of mortals but also their vulnerabilities, as if her descent to earth had temporarily deprived her of the ability to transcend. In this way, we see that the multivalence and canniness of dialogue need not be limited to satire, or even profane genres more broadly.

[87] To take two examples, CSM 165 and 251 insist that Mary's spiritual power is wholly separate from the world, and even present an argument against any importance we might assign to physical, mundane reality.

CSM 132: "*Quen leixar Santa Maria/por outra, fará folia*": 'He who leaves Holy Mary for another, acts unwisely' (translation KH 163-64)

The CSM may be an attempt to destabilize the *cantiga*'s profane base as they reach for the sacred, but their texts demonstrate that there is very little transcendence going on at a stylistic level. As argued in chapter 1, Alfonso's ambitions do not include any outright revolution in language, and he is in many ways moderate as he reshapes poetic genre. The worldly concerns of the *Cantigas d'amor*, *Cantigas d'amigo*, and of course the CEM[88]—i.e., the entire *cantiga* corpus prior to the CSM—are also the concerns of his sacred works.

This song is a kind of theoretical counterweight to CSM 292. My intention in selecting CSM 292 for analysis was to show the specific historical valences Alfonso wishes to apply to events in his own kingdom, in or near his own epoch. CSM 132 showcases the other major historicist move these songs make: the archival work of troving recorded events from throughout Christendom, rendering them into the signature Iberian lyrical idiom of the thirteenth century, and in the process adapting the extant Latin accounts to make them as resonant as possible in the songbook as a whole. Because the CSM treat the living culture of church, crown, and religious pilgrimage—all as Spanish phenomena—the effort inherent in composing and performing CSM 132 is to show its relevance to a Spanish audience. So, on the one hand, there is a remarkable Iberian specificity to many of these *cantigas*, which is not only conspicuous but also politically operative in CSM 292. On the other hand, the CSM select and adapt extant miracle stories from the Latin corpus, adding certain details, omitting others, and generally refashioning European hagiography as an Iberian production. This helps to further problematize the Romantic-era association of lyric with the individual; the collaborative effort of making the CSM songbook is an act of collecting previous texts from various sources, all with an eye toward delivering the sacred *cantigas* to the collective of the Spanish audience.

The generic claim I have made previously—that the CSM maintain constant tension between the profane and the sacred—now becomes more specific: this tension is centered in the speech and actions of Mary. She signals the key critical problem in the CSM and the key problem with Bakhtin's theory of lyric. In certain *cantigas*, she is a monologic textual presence, the gaze upon her a gaze toward a triumphant, monolithic, untouchable past. The miracle of her having conceived the son of God, an event never to be repeated nor equaled, produces residual minor miracles among believers and infidels. The temporality of Mary-related events is less important than the fact that the miracles related in the CSM are subordinate to and dependent on her originary miracle. In this sense, and quite clearly in CSM 292, Bakhtin's contention holds: "The important point here is not that the past constitutes the content of the epic. The formally constitutive feature of the epic as a genre is rather the transfer of a represented world into the past, and the degree to which this world participates in the past" (*Dialogic* 13). But as we turn to CSM 132, we see the *past* participating in the *world*, i.e., Mary speaks in ways that blur the distance between her and the quotidian, materialistic, language of Christian

[88] These labels are applied by scholars after the thirteenth century.

mortals. Here a very useful set of questions emerges about the CSM and the lyric more broadly.

The CSM are at least as preoccupied with the body as are any other kind of *cantiga*. Even the acts of transcendence depicted in the CSM are often achieved in a tactile realm of senses and bodies interacting with the physical world. The body is worked, regulated, protected, and laid bare; the work of building sacred speech neither marginalizes nor erases the corporeal. This desired and desiring body informs the CSM's preoccupation with fealty, which is exquisitely fleshed out in this song. The choral opening, with its admonition that '[h]e who leaves Holy Mary for another acts unwisely,' makes clear that Mary is in competition with certain members of the laity—especially women, and most especially those who are good marriage prospects, i.e., wealthy and endowed with physical and libidinal charms. The CSM insist on two seemingly contradictory attributes of Mary: she is both a transcendent figure of the infinite and, at times, a worldly consort. We know from the lyric corpus that people can and do leave her—priests, most often—and that she responds with speech and physical gestures wholly consistent with a betrayed wife. The priest's fealty to Mary is a project of self-denial ('a handsome and wealthy priest of high position,' nonetheless 'so humble that he always wore a hair shirt next to his body') but it is also a project of uxoriousness.

The problem with which the song is working is corporeal and economic: how does Mary manage the whims of a man who will enjoy physical *and* financial benefits with another woman? The priest, hairshirted and faithful (i.e., celibate), gets a taste of private wealth when his parents bequeath to him their vineyards and orchards around Pisa, whence comes this story.[89] His relatives, glad for the sound transaction of property from deceased parents to son, take this as the opportunity to entice the priest to parlay his good fortune. Certain predictable conflicts arise from this campaign—the ideal of subservience against the ideal of social ascent, spiritual purity against material prosperity—but perhaps not so predictable is the opposition of piety versus reason.

> E do que lle mais falavan
> per que sse mais alegrasse,
> era de como ll' achavan
> casament', e que casasse;
> e razões lle mostravan
> muitas que o outorgasse,
> mais a el non lle prazia.
> *Quen leixar Santa Maria*
> *por outra, fará folia.*
>
> Pero tanto o trouxeron
> per faagu' e per engano
> que outorgar-lle fezeron

[89] For Iberian audiences, the reference to events in Pisa may recall Bona de Pisa, the saint who is said to have walked from her hometown to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia (Dangler, *Mediating Fictions* 30-31). As of the twentieth century, she has been designated the patron saint of flight attendants.

que casass' en aquel ano;
ca de chão lle disseron
que faria gran seu dano
se el moller non prendia.
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

E demais que lle darian
hũa menynna donzela
das mais ricas que sabian
ena terra e mais bela,
porque ambos vivirian
sen coita e sen mazela
e sen toda tricharia.
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

[…]
Pois aquest' ouv' outorgado,
o prazo das vodas vẽo
en que ouv' a seer grãado
que do seu, que do allo; [...]

So that he might be even happier,
they urged him to marry
and said they would arrange
a match for him.
They presented him with many good arguments
to make him agree to it,
but he did not like the idea.
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely.[90]

However, they pressed him
by flattery and deceit so strongly
that they made him consent
to marry that year,
for they told him plainly
that it would be greatly to his detriment
if he did not take a wife.
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely.

[90] In KH the chorus appears only once. I have added it at the end of each stanza, as that is the way the CSM indicate each song was performed.

Moreover, they would give him
a young maiden
chosen from the richest and most beautiful
they knew in the land,
and both would live
without sorrow
or flaw or deception.
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely.
[…]

After he had agreed to this,
the time set for the wedding arrived
in which he was to be enriched
by his own and another's wealth (KH 163).

The medieval Romance corpus attributes to *engano* (*enganno* or *engaño* in Castilian) a highly negative connotation. In *Las siete partidas* Alfonso defines the court as the place in which *la espada de la justicia* ('the Sword of Justice') is kept, which punishes "los escarnios e los *engaños* e las palabras sobejanas e vanas que fazen a los omes envilescer e ser rahezes" (2.9.27, emphasis added): 'the jeers, *falsehoods*, and outrageous and vain speeches which render men contemptible and mean' (trans. Scott 2:328, emphasis added).[91] Further, the term *engaño*'s most famous literary appearance is the *Libro de los engannos de las mugeres*, translated as *The Book of the Wiles of Women* (Keller), translated from Arabic during Alfonso's reign by the king's brother (Wacks, *Framing* 92).[92] In CSM 132 this deceit (as translated in KH), or wile, is in fact worldly reason: the family presses the priest to marry for the clear and immediate benefits that such a move would offer him. The song presents a curious argument: the family-members' perfidy (*engano*) and the oral presentation of reasons (*razões*)[93] stand in close proximity to one another, which would be striking enough even without the chorus. Making truth-claims that presume universality, the chorus suggests that the family's ideas become foolishness (*folia*, which also denotes insanity) when implemented by the priest. Here one is reminded of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, much of which is a quarrel with rationalism: "The exercising of reason is its own temptation; its perverse sweetness ravishes the intellect and drives one's thoughts from Heaven 'whose sweetness would make us blessed'" (Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin* 241).

[91] Note the neighboring positions occupied by *escarnios* and *engaños* in this passage, perhaps a suggestion that the legal corrections for both slander and intrigue are part of one overarching administrative logic.
[92] This Castilian book of Eastern didactic tales is best known by another title, *Sendebar*: Sindbad. Sendebar, one of the major characters in the book, suffers as a result of a queen's *engaños*.
[93] KH translates *razões* as 'good arguments,' which gives the sense of the persuasion that the parents are trying to accomplish, and also conveys the sense the term has as 'word' (DDGM, "razon" and Benjamin Liu, *Medieval Joke Poetry* 5).

Engano/razões is one of several juxtapositions with which this song makes plain the human faults it wants to fix. The lyrical introduction alerts us that it will use the language of juxtaposition and comparison to forward its axioms about the world:

> toda a ffremosura
> das outras é nemigalla
> nen toda ssa aposturatanto come hũa palla
> contra a desta
>
> For all the beauty
> of the others is nothing,
> nor is all their charm worth a straw
> compared to Hers (KH 163).

The priest enacts this truth claim in his appearance and treatment of the self; the stanza directly following begins the narrative with

> un crerigo fremoso
> e ric' e de mui gran guysa;
> mais era tant' omildoso
> que celiço por camisa
> sempre acaron vestia
>
> a handsome
> and wealthy priest of high position.
> However, he was so humble
> that he always wore a hair shirt
> next to his body' (KH 163).

His body, upon which the world has shown great favor, must be made to suffer—even if slightly—in order to regulate it. As the lyric speaker has laid out a hierarchy of attributes among women, the priest then shows an example of that hierarchy in his own masculine form. The sense of self that is articulated in "era tant' omildoso" ('he was so humble') must impose discipline on the outer layer of the body: he uses physical, habitual techniques to maintain the position of piety and morality over physical and material attributes.

The chorus is the center of *cantigas*' authoritative speech, but it is not the exclusive source of their authority. Note that the language of argument and domination is explicit in several lines quoted above:

> Pero tanto o trouxeron
> per faagu' e per engano
> que outorgar-lle fezeron

However, they pressed him so much
by flattery and deceit
that they made him consent.
(translation from KH 163 adjusted here to emphasize important line breaks)

Outorgar derives from *auctōrĭcāre* in Latin vulgate, whose idiomatic meaning is to admit (DDGM, "outorgar"). We should not however lose sight of the term's morphological significance, stemming as it does from the other Galician-Portuguese word *outoridade* ('authority,' also spelled *autoridade*). Therefore, the appearances of *outorgar* and *outorgado* above have an economic, mercantile valence: KH renders "outorgar-lle fezeron" as 'they made him consent' and "[p]ois aquest' ouv' outorgado" as '[a]fter he had agreed,' but what he is consenting to, or indeed authorizing, is a contract. That the contract is for marriage does not in any way mitigate its economic nature.

The priest is made the fool because he has not only devotion to Mary but also an unceasing practice—he should therefore know better than to assent to the marriage plan. "Demais las oras rezava/ da Sennor de piadade": 'Furthermore, he prayed the hours of the Merciful Lady' (KH 163), that is to say, he learns a form of wisdom which should insulate him from the pernicious rationalism of his family members. The idea of marriage, thoroughly logical in the mundane and material reality the family occupies, becomes foolish when accepted by the priest, whose prayer is a form of training meant to preclude such decisions.

How, then, does the *cantiga* account for his failure? As with Ibn ᶜAbbād's tribute to his mentor Abū l-Fadl, I want to recall Bourdieu's point, "The power of words is nothing other than the *delegated power* of the spokesperson […]." The priest has no words; he is acted upon but never a catalyst of ideas or speech. I therefore argue that he is not competent to make decisions. This deficit of course requires miracle to redeem it: the priest withdraws momentarily from the wedding preparations, recalling his long neglect of praying the hours (i.e., ever since he had agreed to wed). He enters a church to pray, attempting to resume the practice of a pure devotee. Sleep overcomes him mid-prayer, and he has a vision of Mary,

dereita-
mente a el vẽo logo
e disse-lle: "Sen sospeyta
di-m' hũa ren, eu te rogo,
que de ti saber querria:
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

Non es tu o que dizias
que mi mais que al amavas
e que me noytes e dias
mui de grado saudavas?
Porqué outra fillar yas

amiga e desdennavas
a mi, que amor ti avia?
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

Demais saudar-me vẽes
pois que te de mi partiste;
en todo torto me tẽes,
di, e porqué me mentiste?
Preçaste mais los seus bẽes
ca os meus? Porqué feziste,
sandeu, tan grand' ousadia?"
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

She came directly to him
and said to him: "I pray you,
tell me something in all frankness
which I should like to know from you.
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely.

"Are you not the one who used to say
that you loved me above all else
and constantly prayed to me
with all your heart?
Why were you going to take another
love and spurn me,
who loved you?
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely.

"Furthermore, you come to worship me
after you have left me.
You have done me great wrong.
Tell me, why did you lie to me?
Did you value her attributes
more than mine?
Foolish one, why did you do such a rash thing?"
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely (KH 164).

As I have noted, the song articulates the priest's relationship with Mary—its own contract—in worldly terms. His fealty is a practice through which he is educated; it is

also a monogamous relationship, requiring tribute as well as self-denial. The priest has at this point lapsed twice—the first time compromising his mind and morals in the face of his relations' appeal to him, the second time losing hold of his conscious mind at the very moment he has resolved to pray once again. And although both of these lapses signify his lack of mental fortitude and clear weaknesses in his Christian self, the second one is the productive one: *deus ex machina* or, more properly, *Maria ex machina*. Succumbing to sleep—i.e., losing his already-unreliable abilities to maintain his convictions and practice Christian ritual well—he allows his moment of salvation.

Mary's speech in this composition is remarkable for its synthesis of divine authority and personal, intimate vulnerability. The *cantiga* graphs several forms of quoted and reported speech from the dramatis personae, such that Mary is the only one who speaks directly. She is clearly in a different class of persona from the average mortals who populate this work. But even though her voice grants her an agency and incontestability matched only by the lyric speaker's (and, as we will see below, the speaker makes clear in his remark 'as I found written' that his truth claims derive not from his person but from his research abilities), her speech could just as well be that of an outraged mortal wife. What stands out so starkly against this authoritative figure of Mary, as she intervenes in the priest's slumber, is that she demonstrates indignation and outright jealousy, inferring that she can be hurt by the priest's negligence. We might conclude that she crafts her speech in the language of the wronged courtly beloved (1) because this is the language which the lyric speaker has already established in explaining how the priest's story signals general moral truths; and (2) because such a language is the one most likely to resonate with the priest, who lets the prospect of domesticity distract him from his clerical fealty. But most importantly, this choice of language indicates how crucial it is for the song to make its moral and religious claims in an idiom of profane love. There are formal reasons for this. Firstly, the *cantiga* was an exclusively profane genre until Alfonso expanded its repertoire, as I have noted. Secondly, the versions of this story in Latin and Riojan[94] suggest that they are all drawing from one or more common source(s) in which Mary speaks to the priest as a wronged companion. There are also pragmatic reasons: the CSM were crafted to appeal to an audience that included the laity, whom amorous and domestic messages were likely to affect more than abstract calls to revere Mary.

The priest, though troubled by his encounter with the Virgin, proceeds with the wedding. As he sleeps and encounters Mary, his many guests have taken their places for the banquet.

> Pois que ll' aquest' ouve dito,
> foi-ss' a mui Santa Reynna;
> e el no coraçon fito
> lle ficou end' a espinna.
> E, per com' achei escrito,
> as mesas mandou agynna

[94] For the Latin, see Gil de Zamora, Milagros *Liber Mariae* (trans. Francisco Rodríguez Pascual 142-43); for the Riojan, see Berceo, *Obras completas* 61-64.

põer; mais pouc’ el comia,
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

[…]
Enton ambo-los deytaron
na camara en un leyto;
e des que soos ficaron
e el viu dela o peyto,
logo ambos ss’ abraçaron,
cuidand’ ela seu dereyto
aver del, mais non podia.
Quen leixar Santa Maria
por outra, fará folia.

Ca pero a gran beldade
dela fez que a quisesse
o novio de voontade
e que lle muito prouguesse,
a Virgen de piadade
lle fez que o non fezesse.

When She had told him this,
the Most Holy Queen went away
and left him
with the thorn of Her reproach in his heart.
Then, as I found written,
he ordered the tables to be quickly spread,
but he ate little,
He who leaves Holy Mary
for another acts unwisely.

[…]
Then the couple lay down
on a bed in their chamber,
and as soon as they were alone
and he saw his bride's breast,
they fell into an embrace,
and she thought to enjoy her rightful pleasure with him,
but she could not.
[…]

For although her great beauty
caused the bridegroom to desire her

and feel great attraction for her,
the merciful Virgin
caused him not to possess her
(KH 164, ellipses added to fit lines' order and breaks of the original).

The song cements its claim to authoritative speech by using two techniques. First, the lyrics establish mastery of time; second, they master an idea of the domestic. These stanzas, which set up the concluding statements (i.e., that the priest leaves his wife and returns to his devout, cloistered existence), underscore both techniques. The priest loses his ability to navigate time as he attempts devoutly (*devotamente*), but fails, to pray the hours. As he sleeps, his wedding guests await him, and his deficiency becomes more and more outstanding. Mary solves this temporal problem by visiting him in his sleep state: strictly within his own body, time has stopped, and she takes advantage of this stasis in order to make him revisit his past decision, i.e., to leave her for a mortal woman. At the moment in the song that begins in the quotation above, Mary releases him from direct discourse with her, but 'the thorn of Her reproach in his heart' ensures that her monologue to him maintains itself indefinitely. He enjoys neither the pleasures of food nor of sex, as we discover when night arrives and he is unable to consummate the marriage—a revelation that leads to his leaving his new wife and returning to the clergy. He endures two episodes of horizontal interactions, one lying down, the other kneeling. Sleep brings him to Mary, who penetrates his heart. This prefaces the now-married priest's attempt at sex: his failure to penetrate *breaks* him from his desirous wife.

To make its claim on things domestic, the *cantiga* performs a simple calculation to show the accretion of worldly goods the priest will acquire through marriage. He, himself a recent inheritor of substantial wealth, stands to benefit once more by wedding the rich maiden his relations have selected for him. Recalling the line quoted above, 'the wedding arrived in which he was to be enriched by his own and another's wealth,' we see how temporal and financial ideas converge, and it is also clear how much the song must privilege both so that its anecdotal technique will coalesce in an effective argument for revering Mary. Only once a certain level of wealth has accrued in the audience's mind—the accounts of his and her respective holdings, a description of the size of the wedding party, and the end tally of how much the priest himself will gain from the contract—does the annulment achieve its requisite importance.

By understanding wealth and virtue in this way, the *cantiga* places itself in a very old tradition of accounting in poetry, a literary-historical position advantageous for the authority it offers. Leslie Kurke, in her study of ancient Greek praise, understands poetic economies as a function of *oikos*, the idea of the household from which triumphant figures emerge, then return with collected glory. She applies Bourdieu's theoretical language to this process of emergence, achievement, and storing in the household: "the voyage out to achievement is the means of production of symbolic capital, but that capital is not available until it is properly lodged in the house. … [T]he poet 'brings the victory home'—that is, integrates it into the substance of the house" (*The Traffic in Praise* 38). In the *cantiga*, too, goods and glory do not truly belong to a person until they are

deposited in the house; by preventing the sexual union between husband and wife, this song withholds from the husband any form of gain his marriage might signify.

Although the early characterization of the priest suggested that he oversaw a domain of land and wealth, we find that he is properly a unit of exchange, transferred from Mary to a worldly household and back again, the final step of which allows him to be deposited once and for all in the holiest of collections. When he recognizes the impossibility of holding his worldly acquisitions, he marks them as unattainable by officially renouncing them. When he returns to his life of poverty and devotion to Mary, he finds that the benefits of that union are still intact, i.e., he earns a place in Heaven. At those moments in which he has worldly authority to make decisions, he demonstrates that he is incompetent: he allows himself to be won over by his deceitful and avaricious family members, then fails the test of marriage with his guilt and impotence. The song establishes its authority by minimizing that of its central mortal character. His return to the priesthood means he takes his place as another's property; he has strayed but gravitates back, and becomes a part of God's household, His collection of pious souls.

Chapter 3: Regulation, Economy, Insult

The most basic difference between praise and slander is not ethical or linguistic, but epistemological. "If we turn to the Homeric hymns or Sappho's hymn to Aphrodite, for example, we might wonder what kind of knowledge a praise poem offers or, to put it another way, why the gods must be told what they already know" (Susan Stewart, "What Praise Poems Are For" 237). Stewart's consideration of praise identifies the key theoretical problem which that poetic register presents, and there is good reason to elaborate on the question she poses. It is necessary to note the formal reality of the panegyric, seen in the previous chapter, that the poem invents its object of praise. But when the articulation of that figure's name indicates a mortal being rather than a god, the problematic of the poem's reading often takes on a shape it does not in the sacred text, particularly if the name connotes someone present at the poem's recitation. In such circumstances, we might appreciate the burden borne by the poetic text: to convey information to the audience while insisting that the praised figure already knows what the speaker is saying. What the poem is supposed to do is confirm for the larger audience certain qualities that person has—or to insist that those qualities are inherent, lest the patron or anyone else harbor doubts. This can function smoothly within the poem's construction of reality, but it is troubled by anxieties over what social consequences the work might have. The poem's imagines its own end and afterlife, the possibility of a transaction between patron and poet that would commemorate the text and reconfirm its contents. (See Suzanne Stetkevych's digest of the "qasida ceremony" quoted in the previous chapter.) The panegyric's use of the past—exploits, inherent features, glory gained, dominance established—is a structural necessity of the genre, but in a certain sense it is also a feint. The poem needs eventually to coalesce in a vision of the future, specifically a future in which the resonating poem will benefit its patron and author. Praise wishes to produce an accord. In the Arabic model, the patron is to "confirm the veracity of the virtues enunciated in the panegyric" (S. Stetkevych, *Poetics* 34). In the CSM, what the Marian anecdote claims is that the divine and worldly meet, to the benefit of the worldly; the existence of the song is a request that those benefits continue to accrue.

Invective takes on a guise of the didactic as it derides and entertains. The slanderous claim is a statement of outrage or ridicule because its object does not appreciate its veracity. The third party—i.e., the unnamed audience—occupies a varying position. The poem may bespeak a sense of shared knowledge, that the slander is only confirmation of known disgraces; or it may exert persuasive efforts on this third party whose judgment, the reader can generally assume, is crucial. What is constant is the slander's justification for its own utterance: its presumption that the object of scorn is not aware of what the poem has to say, or at least does not appreciate exactly how s/he has invited slander. In this way, it is just as didactic as praise, but it must point out the fact of unknowing, the ignorant or hubristic enemy, in order to make the outrageous claim to its

audience. Analyzing slander means working in the space between the object of slander and the epithets made against him.

This chapter seeks to expand on a contention made in chapter 2, namely that praise and slander do not make the exact sorts of poetic opposites their nomenclature suggests. Further, I will argue that the hyperbole in the attack tends to distract—and quite cannily so—from a key function of this poetry: rigorous, economic regulation of the court, and an appeal toward politically expedient social norms. Bakhtin discerns carnivalesque art from satire, on the basis of the differing kinds of laughter they contain and produce. The key criterion for him is the kind of world suggested by the artwork: the carnival is a celebration of abundance, imperfections, and of course social reversals; laughter at one's society allows for liberation and a productively irreverent view of one's surroundings. Bakhtin maps this carnivalesque world to how it is tapped into by literature, which then is able to imagine broad, organic modes of existence. This "people's laughter," i.e., the currency of *common* people, he contrasts with "the pure satire of modern times. The satirist whose laughter is negative places himself above the object of his mockery, he is opposed to it. The wholeness of the world's comic aspect is destroyed, and that which appears comic becomes a private reaction" (*Rabelais* 12). The forms of humorous literature Bakhtin valorizes display two essential criteria: grotesque imagery; and the popular, welcoming form of laughter described above. Satire can display these qualities but, in his view of history, it has tended in directions away from populism since the Middle Ages: although it often uses grotesqueries, its ability to universalize its humorous worldview become diluted. Satirical laughter becomes that of a single, authoritative voice of negative ridicule rather than the welcoming gestures of festive parody (*Rabelais* 60-63, 101-2, 118-20, 241, 290-91, 301-2, 395-96). In his framework, invective poetry of the kind we are reading would almost certainly be satire, not carnivalesque. The register of laughter in the poems we will read confirms the status quo. This is not just because their authors happen to be enforcers of the dominant sociopolitical order; the invective *against* kings and high administrators often invokes just the same kinds of norms—this expedites the charge that such a figurehead ill-deserves his authority.[95] Bakhtin's generic binary is also a political model, and it compels us to question the role of Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'* and the Alfonso's CEM in literary history. Is this poetry moving us toward "the pure satire of modern times," as Bakhtin would suggest? The distinction between carnivalesque and satire is extremely helpful to the work of this chapter. I would append the caveat that satire can be no less pure than carnival, regardless of epoch. The Formalist critical work of identifying these categories must acknowledge their overlap and their resistance to any pure quality; the historicist readings that I will do here must acknowledge the varying politics of individual poetic works.

Terry Eagleton notes the political ambivalence, if not outright insidiousness, of the carnival (*Walter Benjamin: Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* 148), and he has ample company in literary criticism (Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and*

[95] Al-Tawḥīdī does just this in AW. One example is the charge that Ibn ᶜAbbād is foul-mouthed and has low poetic tastes (121-22, 123-24, 140, 394), support for which al-Tawḥīdī finds in rhymed prose he claims to have heard at court or repeated by peers. (I gratefully credit Naaman for locating these instances [95].) With regard to Alfonso, while he has no shortage of political detractors, I am not aware of CEM aimed at him personally.

Poetics of Transgression 12-16; Roger Sales, *English Literature in History 1780-1830* 169). This extends to other genres of laughter, and seems to raise questions beyond the scope of this study, namely, the social and political valences of laughter itself. The main point I wish to argue here is that the humorous mechanism in literature is not inherently egalitarian—and certainly not antinomian—even though it can of course perform that role. In Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso's poetic works, slander is just as imperious and ideological as praise. Bakhtin's exquisite phrase, "Laughter proved to be just as profoundly productive and deathless a creation of Rome as Roman law" (*Dialogic* 58), may be even more accurate than he had intended: laughter speaks law quite ably.

The previous chapter has averred the importance of displaying and moving cultural capital via poetry; this will come to the fore again here, and the language of transfer will also help explicate how the poet aims his slanderous attack. Capital, and the ways it moves, is related to but quite distinct from slander—what they have in common in my critical lens is that both have relatively little significance without an understanding of the hierarchical positions at their origins and destinations. In terms of methodology, it seems necessary to read an attack on an inferior differently than an attack on an equal or a superior. (Also operative is the distinction between social and political hierarchical positions. That difference is a fine one in the medieval court systems from which the texts issue but it requires explication so that it might inform the poetry as fully as possible.) Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso author different sorts of invective about different sorts of people, and the shifting thematics and registers of slander are not happenstance. As asserted in chapter 1, the lightness to which this poetry pretends—and which is reinforced by the medieval rhetoric that describes it—is the very mechanism that allows poetic slander and can make it so devastating.

Ibn ᶜAbbād: Genre and Criteria

In Arabic literary discourse, invective (*hijā'* or *hajw*) overlaps with libertine poetry (*mujūn*),[96] a logical enough taxonomy but perhaps misleading when we consider the origins of the Arabic term *mujūn*. Muḥammad ibn al-Mukarram ibn Manẓūr (630-711 H, 1233-1311/12 CE), in his major lexicon of Classical Arabic, identifies *mujūn*'s morphological root as m-j-n (مجن) and asserts that its most basic meanings are physical inflexibility and thickness, from which is derived the figurative definition associated with *mujūn*: not caring for the results of one's actions (*Lisān al-ᶜarab*, "*m-j-n*"). Edward Lane's lexicon, although it does not mention *mujūn* per se, associates its root with carefree attitudes and behavior (Lane, "*m-j-n*"). The reason I wish to delineate slightly between *hijā'* and *mujūn* is that Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'* is almost always an attack on his assumed adversary's faulty sense of economy. In other words, what is blameworthy about this adversary is that he lacks control, and lacks care for consequences. (His lack of understanding, mentioned above, relates to both of these faults, and I will try to delineate the fault-finding methods Ibn ᶜAbbād employs in his poetry.) Contrary to the impressions *mujūn* as a term might leave with us, this *hijā'* valorizes a sense of discretion, which is of course a key part of maintaining social and political power.

Ibn ᶜAbbād occupies a unique position in the history of invective literature: his *hijā'* appears exclusively in short form, whereas he is the target of his age's most famous long work of literary slander—perhaps the longest in medieval Arabic generally. All of his extant *hijā'* is in short form—even shorter than the class of 'occasional poem' (*qiṭᶜa*) that acquires greater and greater stylistic sophistication in the Umayyad and ᶜAbbasid eras (Muhammad Mustafa Badawi, "From Primary to Secondary Qaṣīdas" 25). There is nothing surprising about the short length of these slander poems, given their source of YDQ; throughout the anthology, al-Thaᶜālibī is fond of quoting *mulaḥ* (witticisms or *bons mots*) as short snippets. Here, he groups Ibn ᶜAbbād's licentious works under the heading "*Mulaḥ min shiᶜrihi l-hijā' wa-l-mujūn*": 'Witticisms from his Invective and Libertine Poetry' (3:314). In some cases they may represent the entirety of a poetic composition but it seems likely that some of them are excerpts of longer poems now lost. Turning to Ibn ᶜAbbād's role as the slandered party, we see reversals of both political hierarchy literary format. Not only is his slanderer/slandered position shifted, so is the readerly lens: al-Thaᶜālibī's extraordinary praise for Ibn ᶜAbbād makes evident the two paradigms of invective the vizier occupies. AW is one of the most famous extended polemics against an individual—more accurately, against two individuals, although Ibn ᶜAbbād is most often in the spotlight. "A whole book of insult is unprecedented in the field of medieval Arabic prose. Insult in Arabic belles-lettres, although common, is to be found mainly in poetry as the main topic of a *qasida*" (Frédéric Lagrange, "The Obscenity of the Vizier" 167). Among the *mathālib* (acts of faultfinding) al-Tawḥīdī employs to denigrate Ibn ᶜAbbād is that the vizier is fond of vile, abusive speech—in

[96] This overlap seems intuitive, as much of the best-received *hijā'* has tended to be sharp but clearly joking in one respect or another. When humorlessness and virulence characterize *hijā'*, the efficacy can wane: the supporting opposite example of invective would be AW, the very possession of which book was said to bring bad luck (Ibn Khallikān, ᶜAbbās ed. 5:113). The *hijā'-mujūn* overlap is quite explicit in scholarship on Abū Nuwās: see Ḥamza al-Iṣfahāni's commentary in *Dīwān Abī Nuwās* 2:132; also see Philip Kennedy, *Abu Nuwas* 98-99.

other words, the major work of prose invective against Ibn ᶜAbbād blames him for liking *hijā'*. One wonders if al-Tawḥīdī bore in mind this irony.[97]

Al-Tawḥīdī is as formidable an enemy as one might have in the literary field, but that should take nothing away from Ibn ᶜAbbād's accomplishments in *hijā'*. Because of the short, likely fragmentary nature of the poems making up *Mulaḥ min shiᶜrihi l-hijā' wa-l-mujūn*, I believe that we should read Ibn ᶜAbbād's invective works as an accretion, a set of inflammatory claims whose collection suggests certain unfinished, tortuous, but nonetheless discernible narratives. The source available to us is YDQ—to my knowledge, this anthology is the only source we have of his *hijā'* other than AW, whose reliability seems highly suspect given al-Tawḥīdī's agenda. Reading YDQ, one might imagine these charged bits of vitriol as shrapnel, moments of speech at court which, after their moments of performance and the responses of bemusement or humiliation or horror they elicit, the anthologist has dutifully collected so as to render one facet of the vizier's literary personality.

The technique Ibn ᶜAbbād uses most frequently to denigrate in poetry is to station the presumed enemy in the territory of taboo. The idea is that this figure has been engaged in abhorrent behavior and the poem justifies itself by explaining how unacceptable that behavior is. Al-Thaᶜālibī provides a brief introduction before each quotation of *hijā'*:

وقال في رجل يتعصب للعجم على العرب ويعيب العرب بأكل الحيات:

يا عائب الأعراب من جهله ... لأكلها الحيات في الطعمِ

فالعجم طول الليل حياتهم ... تنساب في الأخت وفي الأمِ

وقال فيمن زوج أمه:

زوجت أمك يا فتى ... وكسوتني ثوب القلقِ

والحرُّ لا يهدي الحَرا ... مَ إلى الرجال على طَبقِ

(YDQ 3:316)

> He said about a man who sided with the Persians against the Arabs and who disparaged them (the Arabs) for eating snakes:
>
> O He who, out of ignorance, censures the Bedouin Arabs for eating snakes,

[97] Several distinctions should be made here. Lagrange refers to AW as *hijā'* but it is not clear that medieval Arab literati would agree. *Lisān al-ᶜarab* defines *hijā'* as specific to poetry (*Lisān* "*h-j-w*"). Van Gelder also discerns al-Tawḥīdī's class of prose attack from *hijā'*, calling it satirical prose (*Bad* 2). AW is, as its title suggests, a condemnation of both Ibn ᶜAbbād and another vizier, Abū l-Fatḥ ibn al-ᶜAmīd (I will refer to him by his first name so as to distinguish him from his father, Abū l-Faḍl, who of course figures heavily in Ibn ᶜAbbād's biography and the praise poetry analyzed in the previous chapter). It becomes clear in reading the work that al-Tawḥīdī's priority is in attacking one vizier in particular. Abū l-Fatḥ is the putative subject of slightly less than half of the book, but even in that text, the speaker slips into tirades against Ibn ᶜAbbād, as if the Abū l-Fatḥ treatment were a pretext for a more important defamatory project. Another formal note on AW vis-à-vis poetic slander: AW's text purports itself to be nonfiction, a move that would seem to distance it from the avowedly hyperbolic *hijā'*. But the venom and luxuriation in foul language—always placed in the mouth of one of the viziers, predominantly Ibn ᶜAbbād's, and often the quoted speech is poetic or in rhymed prose—require that the critic read the work for its poetics. For further reading of the *mathālib* mode of derogatory speech (depending on the edition AW is titled either *Akhlāq al-wazīrayn*, *Mathālib al-wazīrayn*, or both *Akhlāq* and *Mathālib*), see EI2, "Mathālib."

The *Persians*' snakes spend all night slithering into their sisters and mothers!
He said about a man who married his own mother:
You married your mother, Young Fellow, giving me the creeps all over—
—a free man doesn't serve up sin to mankind on a platter!

That family is so important a conceit in this slander is quite consistent with modern theory, social and cultural. It has been taken more or less for granted since the 19th century that incest is one of the most important taboos in the individual psyche and in the organization of social groups.[98] The second *qiṭ^{c}a* of the two above is the one more directly concerned with taboo per se, and its basis for condemning the Oedipal transgression is social.[99] The implication of *ḥurr* (a free man, as opposed to ^{c}*abd* or *mamlūk*, a slave) is that he should exercise his choice in the question of whom to marry—although slave status would hardly seem to justify marrying one's mother. One can easily see why al-Tha^{c}ālibī might have grouped these two pieces together, but that is also a somewhat deceptive pairing when one considers the broad commentary embedded in the snake *qiṭ^{c}a*. It rests much more upon hyperbole than does the marriage *qiṭ^{c}a*, the accusation that the Persians commit incest is clearly forwarded humorously, whereas the Oedipal man truly did marry his mother, if one follows al-Tha^{c}ālibī's reading.

To take on the question of ethnicity, the poetic text mobilizes the same basic taboo, but toward an entirely different end. The *shu^{c}ūbī*[100] enemy merits ridicule, intellectual punishment, and a half-serious form of correction, all because he has proposed an errant historiography. The opening hemistich "*Yā ^{c}ā'iba l-a^{c}rābi min jahlihi*" plays on the term *jahl* to produce a disingenuous and overtly jocular marker of cultural history. I have translated it as 'ignorance' but *jahl* also means 'rashness,' 'impetuousness,' or more specifically the quality of being quick to anger and aggression without forethought. The period of Arab history prior to Islam is *jāhiliyya*, whose heavy Bedouin significations color the polemic in the hemistich and those following it. The speaker assigns to the *shu^{c}ūbī* himself the very quality for which one could most easily criticize Arab Bedouins, i.e., the version of their history told in Islamic accounts of history. The *shu^{c}ūbī* has left himself vulnerable by championing a vile ethnography. Ethnographic statements on Arabs is in fact a common technique in the ^{c}Abbasid-era movement of *shu^{c}ūbiyya*, although far more sophisticated arguments are also common,

[98] See such seminal works as Edvard Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*; Sigmund Freud, "Totem and Taboo" (*Standard* vol. 14); and Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*.
[99] "Oedipal" is used here merely to indicate the taboo on marrying one's mother. The term here should not be taken to suggest that ^{c}Abbāsid literati had knowledge of Oedipus; they seem to have had none (Van Gelder, *Close Relationships* 143). Van Gelder contends that "[a] theory of inbreeding was never developed by the Arabs" (*Close Relationships* 35) but that is more a matter of textual history than of culture writ large. He demonstrates the Qur'an's clear proscriptions on marrying one's mother, which are echoed in subsequent Islamic instructive texts (89-93).
[100] A *shu^{c}ūbī* is an ideologue supporting extra-Arab ethnic identity over Arabness, a phenomenon of ^{c}Abbasid cultural life since the empire's early years. Chapter 1 has noted Ibn ^{c}Abbād's complex relationship with his Persian origins.

including those using Islamic historiography as their basis.[101] Of course, sophistication is not the priority of this poetic work, but rather a succinct and humiliating turn of phrase.

The Persian-primacy argument common in ᶜAbbasid *shuᶜūbī* writing inevitably uses the language of family and lineage to assert primacy over Arabs—one's Arabness or Persianness is a broader way of phrasing one's parents, grandparents, etc.—and this verse goes beyond a counterargument. The *shuᶜūbī*'s claim of superiority is not only wrong but so is the enterprise that presupposes it, the appeal to genetic purity. The *shuᶜūbī* is doomed before he begins because the Persians, from whom he hails, resort to incest; the reader does not know whether this practice issues from sexual desire or eugenic fantasies or both, but the important thing is the *shuᶜūbī*'s attempt to privilege such people. The fascination with ethnic purity is a form of pedantry, so the poetic speaker condemns the *shuᶜūbī* by making incest a metaphor for pedantry.

What purpose does such a poem serve Ibn ᶜAbbād when he is himself of Persian origin? To make an obvious point, this is not a poetry of sincerity, and it is dubious to what (if any) degree it is traceable to a biographical, or historical, figure of the vizier. The playful yet mean-spirited invective rests somewhat on *mujūn*'s built-in exculpation (see the citation of Hamori in chapter 1). Still, there is no avoiding the fact that *shuᶜūbiyya* is largely the production of Persian-descended authors, whose familial background, peregrination, and settlement in the ᶜAbbasid empire resemble Ibn ᶜAbbād's. (This fact would be understood as a given among the poem's audiences.) In a way, then, this conspicuous ridicule of the Persians seems an overcompensation, a gesture toward the acceptance that the vizier Ibn ᶜAbbād wanted in his Arabic career. It also reads as an iconoclastic statement of independence from his roots. The only thing that seems to matter—and this applies to his poetry in general—is where the poem might deliver this fictional, manufactured persona of an author. In the course of deriding Persians, the *qiṭᶜa* makes no statement of the primacy of Arabs, an observation that is entirely consistent with Ibn ᶜAbbād's overriding concern, namely, distinction among his peers in Arabic.

What these works of *hijā'* underscore is the surprisingly subtle, even delicate work of moving the pieces of an argument. As blunt as the insult itself might be, there is a great deal of intellectual nuance in the process of identifying (perhaps more accurately, inventing) the enemy's desires and sources of pride and then ascribing to them the signifiers of disgrace. If we fixate only on the force of the humor and insult in this poetry, we might not notice that it is an effort in symbolic logic. As I have argued, epistemology informs *hijā'* and that the poetry, for all its bluster, is didactic, in tone and structure. By didactic structure I mean that the short invective *qiṭᶜa* contains within it a short history of the enemy, a gesture toward his perverse present-time, and an abrasive that can also function as a corrective—at least for the audience. This primitive narrative structure ties in to the structure of these works as al-Thaᶜālibī anthologizes them—here I will elaborate on my contention that their aggregate is a set of narratives, however disjointed.

[101] See Abū ᶜUmar ibn ᶜAbd Rabbih, *Al-ᶜIqd al-farīd* 2:537-8; and Yaḥyā ibn ᶜAlī al-Munajjim in Abū l-Ḥasan Masᶜūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab* 1:282. *Al-ᶜIqd*, an Andalusi work, surveys an impressive variety of *shuᶜūbī* arguments and counterarguments. Ibn ᶜAbbād himself is said to have read it and declared of it, "*Hādhahi biḍāᶜatunā ruddat ilaynā*" (Al-Ṭāhir Makkī 287): 'These are our goods returned to us,' i.e., he declares that Ibn ᶜAbd Rabbih, despite being Andalusi, wrote in an ᶜAbbasid idiom.

I will bring the focus to a grouping of poetic *mulaḥ* whose quasi-narrative quality disrupts, or remakes, another narrative: the family line of the enemy. This of course is very similar to the attack on the *shuᶜūbī* seen previously, in that it folds into genealogy such untidy topics as sexual acts, perversions, and the biology of procreation. The insult is different, however. To denigrate Persians, the *qiṭᶜa* renders their ethnicity an incestuous one; the insult of the family line is more concerned with social practices and the elements of manhood.

رأيت لبعض الناس فضلاً إذا انتمى يقصر عنه فضل عيسى ابن مريم
عزوه إلى تسع وتسعين والداً وليس لعيسى والد حين ينتمي
(YDQ 3:317)

> I've seen virtue in some people but, when they traced their origins, they fall short of the virtue of Jesus, son of Mary.
> They (each) had ninety-nine fathers, whereas Jesus had none when his origin was traced!

This *qiṭᶜa* is a good place to start in order to understand the schematics of the familial insult, which works in the tension between bloodline, behavior, and the passage of time. The specific invocation of Mary is also convenient in that it recalls my discussion of the CSM. Here, as in Alfonso's praise lyrics, she models a sublime form of lack, a moral and numerical sort of reference point for adjudging the worth of one's family—although the moral value is more prominent in the CSM's accounting than in this *qiṭᶜa*. The insult of the enemy's mother, including the specifics of his/her conception and upbringing, is as popular a technique in medieval European and Middle Eastern works as it is in their modern counterparts (Borovsky 1-14; Schaus ed., "Cuckold" and "Honor and Reputation"; Van Gelder, "Against" 61-65). Note the move we have made in reading: where the previous piece was a study in ethnic attack, now we are working in the more linear space of simple parentage. That difference is not just one of scope but also of ethical judgments. The *qiṭᶜa* against the *shuᶜūbī* ridicules the careful regulation of genetics, as if the Persians had warped the normal process of selecting sexual partners and thus cast in doubt their progeny's bloodline. So, whereas that overdetermined work of regulation is the butt of the ethnic joke, now it is a lack of regulation that the poetry derides.

What this tells us is that the only thing *not* derisible is moderation. Tightening the frame to the discrete field of one person's parentage, this poetry belies the devil-may-care connotations of *mujūn*. Despite the absurdities on which this jocular literature thrives, it has in it strains of didacticism and instructional rhetoric. In the works quoted above, the quantities regulated are as follows, each one important for the critical and historiographic insights it opens:

- Desire: Persian men and the Oedipal groom cannot suppress their attraction to their women kin. The mothers of 'some people' cannot suppress their attraction to multiple sexual partners, thus ruining their bloodline.

- The body: the ridiculed parties are people who manage poorly the procreative function of their sex. They fail to partner with the right candidates or with the right number of candidates, throwing into doubt the integrity of their bodies and their familial reputations.
- The household: violation of the body is also violation of the place—tangible and imaginary—in which people live (see chapter 2 for a brief discussion of the household in Greek Classical poetry). To marry one's mother is, as I have noted, an intrusion into the taboo; but what exacerbates it is the groom's status as a free man. The added insult to injury he commits is in his failure to properly demonstrate his class. Further, the marriage will add no wealth to his house.

What sort of sense does it make for literature to valorize moderation when it itself aims to transgress courtly decorum and the court is the most significant moderator of literary life? This suspension of an audience's disbelief, enabled by the laughter that the poem anticipates, is both the entertainment value of this poetry and its potency in the social sphere. The slandered enemy's lack of control of these three quantities—and one finds more of them in the *mulaḥ*—creates an overabundance, as if he were holding a fire hose abruptly switched on, sending him flailing around because of his own incompetence.

The enemy's lack of control renders him unable to master time or, more specifically, how he conducts himself and his family name through time. Insofar as this poetry fixates on genealogy, it does historiographic work, even if its whole point is the rather limited endeavor of perverting the enemy's ethnic and familial narratives. But a complex, challenging question emerges when we read this poetry against major critical arguments on history. The enemy fails to exercise moderation, and renders himself poorly developed, incomplete, and therefore intolerable to a world defined in *hijā'*, i.e., a world in which manhood is both the key criterion of worth and a distinction to lord over the enemy. His inability to master any and all of these quantities creates a historiographic problem, wherein a defective man is not only incompetent in handling his own affairs but also in maintaining his paradigmatic, anchoring position as a man in his family.

This architecture of insult recalls important elements of historiography. The fixation on regulating the human body and its behaviors opens up a critical vocabulary on sexuality and society articulated by Michel Foucault, who connects certain practices in history: sexual, semantic, political, and social. Foucault takes on a project whose difficulty and magnitude are well beyond the scope of this study, seeking to identify meanings of homosexuality and separate them critically from same-sex client relations (relations that, in the Ancient Mediterranean, could and did include physical intimacy); but the critical moves he makes enable much of what this chapter wants to argue. At a basic mechanical level, his expression of sexual mores as economic measures is of great importance here. Viewing sexual behavioral texts alongside concomitant philosophy (most prominently, the Aristotelian ideal of moderation), Foucault notes that in Ancient Greece

> it was the opposition between activity and passivity that was essential, pervading the domain of sexual behaviors and that of moral attitudes as

> well; thus, it was not hard to see how a man might prefer males without anyone even suspecting him of effeminacy, *provided he was active in the sexual relation and active in the moral mastering of himself*. […] In the eyes of the Greeks, what constituted ethical negativity par excellence was clearly not the loving of both sexes, nor was it the preferring of one's own sex over the other; it consisted in being passive with regard to the pleasures (Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure* 85-86, emphasis added).

Effeminacy is very nearly the charge Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'* levels at the defective man it ridicules, although of course this poetry is concerned with manhood more broadly. What is striking here is that the criterion Foucault lays out for "ethical negativity" is echoed so pitch-perfectly in the slander poetry we have read. What is blameworthy about the enemy figure in this poetry is not so much that he wants the wrong thing but that he wants a thing too much. The realization of the desire, because it is immoderate, throws into question the enemy's very ability to desire in the first place—his agency gone, he loosens his hold on pleasure itself. Granted, the accusations of incest suggest strongly an entirely wrong desire, but what must be noted about these invective works is that they vilify actions, not desires per se. '[A] free man doesn't serve up sin to mankind on a platter!' The crime is an action. Again, the insult aims at the failure to actively manage one's desire. Any originary state of the desire is not important.

The origin that *is* important is one's genetic origins; the poetry's concern with history is intensely personal. Judging from YDQ, one of Ibn ᶜAbbād's chief concerns in his slander is to excoriate one Ibn Mattawayh, along with his son—when we encounter someone carrying the Mattawayh name, we know that the poem will tell us about his organs and imprudent acts. By associating "Mattawayh" with things low and ridiculous, the poetry wrests from the name the cachet it likely enjoys in Buyid elite society of the eastern provinces. The Ibn Mattawayh mentioned in this poetry may be Abū Muḥammad ibn Mattawayh (dates of birth and death unknown but likely straddling the fourth/firth centuries H, tenth/eleventh centuries CE). Of those holding a name associated with Mattawayh, Abū Muḥammad is the one about whom there is the most documentation that survives, but it is by no means clear that he is referent of Ibn ᶜAbbād's poetry—more on this question later. He is a prominent Muᶜtazilī who some scholars believe studied with Abū l-Ḥasan ᶜAbd al-Jabbār (320-414 H, 932-1024 CE). This would be a high distinction; ᶜAbd al-Jabbār is one of the main Muᶜtazilī thinkers and Ibn ᶜAbbād appoints him chief judge of Rayy (Heemskerk, *Suffering* 65-66, 41). Supposing that Abū Muḥammad is our Ibn Mattawayh, it is not altogether clear why Ibn ᶜAbbād would wish to take on Ibn Mattawayh and his family line. Perhaps they are not truly enemies at all; the ethics of *hijā'* allow a sparring form of slander, essentially play-fighting (Badawi, "From Primary" 9-10). At this point I will concentrate upon a formal element distinguishing this invective from the others we have read, in that it names names.

Ibn ᶜAbbād: Name, Renown, Title, and Defamation

One of the consequences of how rarely *hijā'* is studied, in relation to praise and love poetry, is that there is little discussion on the precise invective techniques the poet employs in order to defame. Here I will explore how this poetry invokes and reworks the enemy's name. The efficacy of that strategy is attested in *hijā'* generally, and links the invective mode of Arabic poetry to the canon more broadly; the naming pun, with positive or negative connotations, is a hallmark of mainstream panegyric (McKinney, *Case* 186-87), linguistics (Kinberg, *Studies* 202, 206), literary historiography (Fārūq al-Qāḍī, *Āfāq al-tamarrud* 348), and Post-Classical literature (S. Stetkevych, "*Jāhiliyyah* to *Badīᶜiyyah*" 219, 230). The most common gesture is to parse and then phoneticize, or literalize, elements of the name. Early invective examples include: Qays ibn ᶜAmr al-Najāshī (22?-49 H, 600?-669 CE) imagining the forefather of the ᶜAjlān family as a slave, so named because of an order given to him, ending with "*wa-ᶜjal*!" ('and hurry up!'); and Muḥammad ibn ᶜIlqa al-Taymī (dates unknown) likening the sounds of Ibn al-Fanshakh's name to hawking and spitting (Van Gelder, *Bad* 25, 75).[102] But the very use of the enemy's name, even when it is not the object of linguistic play, is key in understanding *hijā'*, its formal elements, and its consequences. The name has complex and overlapping historical, ethnic, social, and political valences, the most pertinent of which I will examine here, before presenting the invective on Mattawayh.

The proper name in literature engages not only familial history but also mythopoetic and literary history. Classical Arabic as a literary and analytic written language comes out of conversation with certain Middle Eastern canons that predate it and, especially in the ᶜAbbasid era, Greek textual culture. In these ancient literary traditions, poets and storytellers merge names with achievements; the work in establishing that connection makes clear just how fundamental those semiotics are to myth, panegyric poem, and epic.[103] I would argue that this close binding of name and accomplishment is vital in Arabic literature, especially in this era of a panegyric-centered court culture. In *The Epic of Gilgamesh*—one of the earliest works for which a Semitic language was employed to relay it in the Sumerian-Akkadian linguistic nexus—leaving for posterity one's name as a conqueror ranks just below immortality as a heroic ambition (Andrew George xiii). The poetry of *Gilgamesh* insists upon the necessity of the name and its operative role in authority: "Who is there can rival his kingly standing,/and say like Gilgamesh, 'It is I am the king'?/Gilgamesh was his name from the day he was born […]" (2). Certainly the status and circulation of the name is a criterion for a king's preeminence, but it is also what distinguishes certain gods, monsters, and sub-royal warriors from common society (George 20, 39, 56, 62-63, 112, 134, 151). In sum, the name is an index of demonstrated physical achievements, power as a category in which

[102] This linguistic work to torture the name is popular in prose fiction, as well. Muḥammad ibn Dāniyāl's *Ṭayf al-Khayāl* (*Three Shadow Plays*, ed. Kahle, et al.) is probably the most brazen and ingenious example, in which characters' names are complex phrases of sex and scatology.

[103] The Ancient Greek word *kleos*, of central importance in panegyric and epic, means 'glory' but also 'renown' (Kurke 15-18). In Greek literature concerned with glory—i.e., epic and panegyric—*kleos* is a substance that, like all forms of social capital, is acquired and passed down to inheritors (Zeitlin 6; Kurke 18).

kingship, heroism, and immortality are all parts. Although the physical presence of the *Gilgamesh* text is highly unlikely in the ᶜAbbasid Empire, and even a recited oral version is not known to be in circulation at that time, this is a time and place in which a plurality of literary and political ideas—many of them quite ancient—fold into political and artistic consciousness.

The Bible of course also uses a language of onomastics, but distinguishes itself from the earlier Mesopotamian models with its ethical thrust and genealogical sensibility. In the Hebrew text the act of making a name is the composition of kingship and its inheritance; it also can be the attempt, always doomed, to reach the level of God. The people of Babel seek to make a name for themselves with the height of their tower—from their initial success on the vertical, God makes them abruptly and helplessly horizontal, scattering them across the earth (Genesis 11). In the field of tribal politics, Biblical figures use their names as repositories for their achievements and those of their forebears. Johannes Pedersen argues, "The name is gained by actual deeds. When David takes the city, it makes part of his honour. […] The substance of a name must, to a very large extent, depend upon the contents imparted to it by those who have formerly borne it" (250-52). For reasons that have become clear in the praise ("*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*" in chapter 2) and *hijā'* pieces we have already seen, the genealogical factor is as essential to Ibn ᶜAbbād's poetry as it is to a Biblical account of people and their world. What is new in Arabic figurations of genealogy, and its intersection with personal attributes, is the division of *ḥasab* and *nasab*. Here, we see some of the accounting work that informs Kurke's discussion of the Greek *oikos* (see chapter 2 of this study) articulated according to the temporality of family past and present. According to pre-Islamic traditions of measuring nobility, *nasab* was confined to the past achievements of one's ancestors but *ḥasab* "could be acquired also by an individual by means of virtuous acts or brave exploits" (EI2, "Ḥasab wa-Nasab" para. 3). Therefore, the basic qualitative structure of one's family name would be fixed in a historical sense; the work of the derisive poem could then be to rewrite that history according to its agenda, as we will see below. The *ḥasab*, in many valorized in the ᶜAbbasid period, would seem to take on particular symbolic importance with the Buyids, who dedicate themselves to advancing in Arabic cultural primacy rather than citing, or inventing, past glories for their bloodlines. The referential function of genealogy is no doubt a major factor in Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'*, but his invective language is one of practice and behavior. Honor and dishonor are earned through the name, as in ancient Hebrew, but the striking prescriptive values this *hijā'* wants to claim alert us to its uniquely Arabic view of family history.

The question of Arabic contacts with earlier Near Eastern texts is fraught, especially in the case of Mesopotamian literature, and this study cannot pretend to contribute substantially to that conversation. Instead, the priority here is to show that ᶜAbbasids fashion their (however innovative) models of identity and power from preexisting models—this is true of how they render those ideas in text as well. Clearly, their primary field of reading and recitation is the Arabic tradition, and there is convincing evidence that connects early Arabic writings not only to the Bible but also to ancient myths and literature of Greece, northeastern Africa, Asia Minor, and Mesopotamia (J. Stetkevych, *Muḥammad* 62, 94). ᶜAbbasid poetry, like virtually all

premodern Arabic literature, is rife with pre-Islamic and Qur'anic motifs; it must be borne in mind that this work of reference and allusion has secondary and tertiary levels: the Qur'an and early Arabic poems have themselves already embedded other, more ancient motifs from the regions mentioned above as well as from Arabia before the emergence of Arabic language (J. Stetkevych, *Muḥammad* 89, 100; S. Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām* 134, 232 and *Mute* xiv). The ᶜAbbasid cultural palate is especially variegated among Islamic empires in that it includes major translation efforts from Hellenic sources (Gutas, *Greek* 1-2). Its demography ensures that powerful Sasanian models of authority permeate political thought (Gutas 34-35), so much so that "[t]he ᶜAbbāsid Caliph was the heir of an ancient royal tradition-the kingship of Mesopotamia and Iran" (Sperl, "Islamic Kingship" 21).

Now that I have given some idea of the historical, political, and textual structures that inform ᶜAbbasid courtly life, I want to shift directly toward the name in poetry, and how it works in that structure. As a unit in the praise economy, it is not intrinsically weighted either positively or negatively but rather depends on (1) the achievements and attributes with which the audience might already associate that name, and (2) the achievements and attributes which the poem assigns to it. It is in almost all cases a mark of intimacy. Ibn Rashīq, writing just after the time of Ibn ᶜAbbād's death and drawing from a broad bibliography of Classical poetry and ᶜAbbasid rhetoric, notes,

> One of the most notable characteristics of poetry is that the poet may address the king by his name and link him with his mother and speak to him in a very informal way, as he does with the most unimportant of his subjects, without the king reprimanding him for that. On the contrary, he finds it preferable in a eulogy and more effective for the person being praised. All this signifies a desire and wish for poetry and for its perdurance in spite of the passing of time and change of ages. The scribe will be able to accomplish this only if he does it with 'joined', not with 'loose' speech. This is an obvious superiority and evident prerogative [of poetry] (1:22; trans. Cantarino 144-45, brackets translator's).[104]

By emphasizing this form of address/reference as a stylistic distinction, Ibn Rashīq tells us more about his concept of poetry than his concept of the name. The implication seems to be that poetry has a fundamentally different protocol, at the level of performance in a gathering, than does prose.[105] It is hard to imagine Ibn Rashīq, a court poet himself in North Africa and Sicily, denying or ignoring the necessity of careful decorum when approaching a ruler or invoking his name; what he is saying is that poetry has proper

[104] What Cantarino translates as "joined" and "loose" speech is the binary of *manẓūm* vs. *manthūr*. *Naẓm* (the noun from whose verb *manẓūm* is the passive participle) is the act of stringing pearls, rendered metaphorically as joining or organizing words in a poetic meter: versifying. *Nathr* is the act of scattering, thus it refers to Arabic prose, which often rhymes but is not metered. Ibn Rashīq is drawing from the ᶜAbbasid convention of applying these terms to literature (EI2, "Naẓm" and " Nathr").

[105] There is no doubt that Arabic restricts direct, named address of a royal, caliph, or what Annemarie Schimmel terms "great people and women" (*Islamic Names* ix). As with so many languages, it tends to prescribe the use of titles and epithets when the utterance aims at the highest sociopolitical ranks or at the object of love.

decorum built-in. Or, at least, sound 'joined' poetry does, demonstrating with its meter and idioms that it is appropriate for the court. The poet may dispense with the ritual of titling-rather-than-naming, and might even benefit from his assumed intimacy with the royal patron.

Ibn Rashīq opens up a curious political possibility: poetry can release both poet and patron from certain constraints of the power discrepancy between them. Without overemphasizing this point—he is perhaps the most comprehensive Classical Arabic rhetorician but not necessarily the most authoritative—it stands to be very consequential for the current study. If a poem cancels, or at least suspends, the need to use title or epithet to identify the king, then the 'prerogative' (*maziyya*, which has the sense of advantage or merit) of this literary mode can shift a key dynamic in courtly behavior. The king should not only expect certain intimacy in a panegyric delivered to him; the literati around him expect him to appreciate and enjoy that intimacy. He is compromised to a degree, subject to rules he has not authored in the poetic-political exchange. As argued in chapter 1, taste resists any autonomy an individual might want to exercise with it; taste is much more the product of social groups than of a person, however powerful he might be socio-politically. I would like to take a broader view of Suzanne Stetkevych's illustration of praise delivery, which has been crucial to this study thus far. For the material interests of the poet, not only is the *ceremony* of the poem instrumental and at times insidious, but so is the linguistic category of poetic speech. If Ibn Rashīq is right—and, whether he is right or not, his observations on court poetry hold tremendous weight in how Arabic is read, from the Classical period onward—then his point probably applies to patrons at every level down from the king's. That is not to say that any taboo obtains barring utterances of the patron's name; rather, the identifying marks of poetry might allow the speaker more intimate forms of reference and direct address than if he were delivering prose. The small number of poems analyzed in this study means that I cannot pose this question to Classical Arabic in general, but it is nonetheless possible to read these poetic examples with the question in mind. There is no doubt that Ibn ᶜAbbād seeks to maximize the benefits poetry might gain him, from his positions as patron and poet; the recurring question is how he does so, and Ibn Rashīq suggests here that the fact of versification is a technique at Ibn ᶜAbbād's disposal.

This brief review of texts and ideas pre- and postdating the ᶜAbbasids is meant to bring us closer to a theory of defamation in the ᶜAbbasid age itself. My premise is that the name is essential to defamation. From there, I aim to parse as specifically as possible the process of manipulating one's name in an unflattering way. The name is also of course a key criterion for authority, but not just for rulers and epic heroes. A development in Arabic, not necessarily unique to the language but certainly a key formal feature in poetry and theology, is a spectrum of referential formulas and the proper name's place therein. In Arabic praise- (and love-) poetry, it is common to apply a sobriquet or an aggrandizing title to the object of praise—this has obvious practical uses if the poem expresses unsanctioned love, but it is so embedded in the tradition that it comes to represent desirability and high standing even when there is no need to mask anyone's identity. In fact, it may be that in those many instances when the pseudonym is unnecessary, it acquires a certain extra distinction, a proverbial luxury good in the poet's cache. It is also

quite compatible with the stylistic trends in *badīᶜ*, discussed in chapter 1, a literary movement in which the connections between signifier and signified are elastic and flexible. An inventive metaphor—a hallmark of *badīᶜ*—and a grandiose title or nickname seem to be of a kind, on a stylistic or linguistic level.

As stimulating as it might be to consider Ibn Rashīq's argument, ᶜAbbasid textual evidence demonstrates the popularity of titles and epithets for the *mamdūḥ*. The most glamorous way of augmenting, replacing, or eliding the proper name is to use a *laqab*, an honorary title containing a descriptive element. This technique recalls the tradition of God's ninety-nine 'beautiful names,' (*al-asmā' al-ḥusnā*) each one a title taking the definite article, describing one of His attributes, e.g., *al-ᶜazīz* ('the Mighty'), *al-mutakabbir* ('the Supreme'), *al-qahhār* ('the All-Conquering'), *al-samīᶜ* ('the All-Hearing'), *al-muqsiṭ* ('the Requiter'), *al-ṣabūr* ('the Patient One'). The use and ubiquity of the *laqab* becomes evident in praise for rulers, beginning in the earliest decades of Islam, when the second Caliph ᶜUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was called *amīr al-mu'minīn* (Commander of the Faithful), a title taken by many subsequent caliphs and still in use. When, more than a century before the Buyid period, Abū Tammām calls the caliph Abū Isḥāq al-Muᶜtaṣim (179-227 H, 794-842 CE) *amīr al-mu'minīn* (*Dīwān abī tammām* 1:53) in a panegyric, he is following in a long tradition among court poets. And, whether he is aware of it or not, he is reinforcing convention in a most forceful way, because that particular composition becomes paradigmatic in the history of the praise genre. In the Buyid regime this convention is taken up with much verve (and less lexical creativity), the caliph titling the new princes Fakhr al-Dawla ('Pride of the Era'), ᶜAḍud al-Dawla ('Strength of the Era'), Mu'ayyid al-Dawla, ('Aide of the Era'), and Rukn al-Dawla ('Foundation of the Era'). Referring to this period, and a mainstay poet of Ibn ᶜAbbād's court, Annemarie Schimmel writes,

> Already at that time the use of honorific *alqāb* must have been frequent enough to inspire al-Khwārizmī, a somewhat rebellious poet, to write:
>
> What do I care that the 'Abbasids have thrown open the gates of *kunya*s and *alqāb*?
>
> They have conferred honorifics on a man whom their ancestors would not have made doorkeeper of their privy!
>
> This caliph of ours has few dirhams in his hands—
>
> So he lavishes honorifics on people![106]
>
> (*Islamic Names* 60)

This account suggests that a long-running trend of overusing titles has diluted the field, degrading the very worth of the title such that, at this moment in the ᶜAbbasid era, the

[106] *Kunya*, 'agnomen,' is another honorific form (Schimmel 4-5), indicating that someone is the father or mother or someone (e.g., Abū … or Umm …). *Alqāb* is the plural of *laqab*. The poem is by Abū Bakr al-Khwārizmī (323-83 H, 934-93 CE) and reads as follows:

ما لي رأيت بني العباس قد فتحوا — من الكنى ومن الألقاب أبوابا
ولقّبوا رجلاً لو عاش أولّهم — ما كان يرضى به للحش بواب
قلّ الدراهم في كفيّ خليفتنا — هذا فأنفق في الأقوام ألقاباً
(YDQ 4:264)

caliph is pathetic and uses up one of the last symbolic reservoirs of his authority.[107] It also seems to implicate the empire as a whole, or at least its uppermost political segment. The economic perspective I have taken on literature in this study finds that it echoes some of the sentiments of its medieval primary sources. The poem sets honorifics as a commodity exchangeable for dirhams, a point echoed by Bourdieu's contention that symbolic capital can be traded for material capital and vice versa (*Outline* 177-83).

It is tantalizing to consider that this poem may be a product of Ibn ᶜAbbād's court, because the ironies and tensions al-Khwārizmī lays bare here are very much the vizier's poetic tools. Ibn ᶜAbbād makes us read for the tension between name and title, as well as the socioeconomic anxiety al-Khwārizmī is lampooning with his jab at "high" patronage—what the latter poet makes a thematic priority, the former one uses actively to speak praise and contempt. Turning once again to the *hijā'* texts and Ibn ᶜAbbād's excoriation of Mattawayh, we see the name marshaled for a defamatory project whose claims are at once more and less ambitious than those we have seen in his *hijā'* thus far. More, because the named enemy is rendered most vulnerable to the poem as it controls and tortures his familial historiography. Less, because broad social taboos and ethnic prejudices are not as readily available to an explicitly personal attack. The effectiveness of the insult depends on how we read it. If we are looking for broad social critique, we may find the hermeneutical work difficult in projecting what seems to be a discrete personal attack on to a broader group of people. If we read the work as pertinent mainly to the court itself—i.e., as an index of how certain members of that court impose their poetry upon other members, and how sociopolitical rank informs such an operation—then the content even of very short occasional *mulaḥ* becomes major.

Mattawayh and his male family members (several of them seem to figure heavily in Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'*) present us with a difficult task of relating literary history to the literary imaginary. As mentioned earlier, it is tempting to read this persona in Ibn ᶜAbbād's poetry as Abū Muḥammad ibn Mattawayh, not least because it would open up a unique historicist reading of these poems as Muᶜtazilī polemics, or at least polemics charged with Muᶜtazilism's controversial nature.[108] In the following verses, all the slandered parties seem to carry "Mattawayh" in their names, although they may be of more than one generation in that family, and the spelling varies depending on the *qiṭᶜa*. For reasons I will demonstrate, it is not known in historical terms who these Mattawayhs are, or if they are one person expressed differently as a matter of poetic license. Al-Thaᶜālibī frames a set of Ibn ᶜAbbād's pointed *mulaḥ*:

قال في ابن متويه:
يا فتى متويَّ رفقاً لست من ينكر أصله
إنما ينكر منه من جنون فيه ثقله
أنت نذل من كرام أنت في الطاووس رجله

[107] In his article "*Laqab* for a Future Caliph" the historian Jere Bacharach unearths a remarkably literal version of this *laqab*-as-commodity dynamic, and the potential for such a commodity to rise or fall in value.

[108] Ibn ᶜAbbād and Abū Muḥammad ibn Mattawayh are both major voices in Muᶜtazilī debates. Muᶜtazilism—*al-muᶜtazila* or *al-iᶜtizāl* in Arabic—in its popularity as invective topic is somewhat like ethnic contests, such as the *shuᶜūbiyya* we have already seen. As a philosophical and theological phenomenon, Muᶜtazilism is complex and its finer points are far beyond our scope. Two of the central questions, both very controversial, it raises in Islamic thought are free will and the nature of the Qur'an's creation. For an overview, see EI2, "Muᶜtazila."

[…]
وقال في معناه:
أبوك أبو علي ذو علاءٍ إذا عدَّ الكرام وأنت نجله
وإن أباك إذ تُعزى إليه كالطاووس يقبح من رجله
[…]
وقال فيه:
قال ابن متويه لأصحابه وقد حشوه بأيور العبيد
لئن شكرتم لأزيدنكم وإن كفرتم فعذابي شديد
[…]
وقال فيه:
سبط متوي رقيع سفله أبداً يبذل فينا أسفله
اعتزلنا نيكه في دبره فلهذا يلعن المعتزلة
(YDQ 3:314-15)

He said about Ibn Mattawayh:

O Ibn Mattawayh, to put it nicely: You're not one to deny his origin[109]—

No, you're one who is *denied* an origin because madness weighs so heavily in him!

You're short on noble traits—of the peacock, you're its leg!

[…] And he said along the same lines:

Your father is Abū ᶜAlī ('Father of the High'), He of High Standing; when Nobility is taken into account, you are its son.

When you're identified as your father's son, it's like the peacock besmirched by his ugly leg!

[…] And he (Ibn ᶜAbbād) said about him (Ibn Mattawayh):

Ibn Mattawayh said to his companions after they had stuffed him with penises,

"If you thank me, I'll give you more, but if you're ungrateful, my punishment is harsh!"

[…] And he said about him:

Mattawayh's grandson[110] has a ragged bottom, he is always showing us his lower end!

We have cut ourselves off (*iᶜtazalnā*) from fucking his behind—that's why he curses Muᶜtazilism!

Before analyzing these pieces as a poetic production, it is necessary to address the significant technical, historical questions which these verses raise, especially the last of

[109] An alternate translation, based on the spelling of the name (rendered as متويً in YDQ) and the multiple readings of the word رفقاً, would be 'O Twisted Young Fellow, you're not one to deny his origin for the sake of seeming pleasant,' or even 'O Lost Young Fellow […]".

[110] Madelung reads the name Sibṭ Mattūya (EI2, "Ibn Mattawayh" para. 1), although other vocalizations are possible of the consonants *m-t-y*. Qumayḥa reads the final letter as the consonant *yā*, doubled—this would appear to render the name Sibṭ Mattawī. Such an interpretation, if accurate, would suggest a relation to the name Mattā, Matthew.

them. Al-Thaᶜālibī himself, in presenting the ten successive *mulaḥ*[111] from which these two are taken, sees the whole series as slandering Ibn Mattawayh, introducing the lines "*wa-qāla fīhi*": 'And he (Ibn ᶜAbbād) said about him (Ibn Mattawayh),' where the pronoun's referents are clear due to the lines that precede them. This suggests that *sibṭ mattūya* is figurative language—al-Thaᶜālibī seems to view as unimportant the literal meaning of *sibṭ*, 'Grandson,' in this case. The anthologist's proximity, both chronological and physical (born in Nishapur, he is a lifelong resident of the eastern provinces and the Fertile Crescent) to Ibn ᶜAbbād and the Ibn Mattawayh in this poetry, mean that he may well know something we do not; these details might appear insignificant in the text itself, before undergoing the historicist scrutiny that I would like to apply. It seems impossible to judge the accuracy of his readings: Mattawayh/Mattūya may well be the same family line and may be sufficiently old and large that Mattawayh is an ancestor at many generations' remove, thus *ibn* and *sibṭ* may not have much literal meaning, other than to attach a man to his family.

Despite the temptations this verse presents the critic to read for specific Muᶜtazilī historical notes in this verse, I think it most sound methodologically to resist the association with Abū Muḥammad Ibn Mattawayh. Aside from the orthographic matters reviewed above, we also face serious problems of historical evidence. It cannot be said for certain when Abū Muḥammad lives; data vary and some of them suggest dates a generation or two later than Ibn ᶜAbbād's (*Encyclopædia Iranica*, "Ebn Mattawayh" para. 1; EI2, "Ibn Mattawayh" para. 1; Heemskerk, *Suffering* 62). If it is Abū Muḥammad being scorned in this section of YDQ, and if he is a contemporary of al-Thaᶜālibī—as is suggested by the former's tutelage by, and survival of, ᶜAbd al-Jabbār—then it seems likely that al-Thaᶜālibī would have appended slightly more information than just "*wa-qāla fīhi*," letting the reader know that it was indeed a famous theologian ridiculed.

The most productive route—the one least likely to founder in doubts of history and biography—is to read this slandered figure first and foremost as an invention of the poetry itself. To say he is an invention is not to say he did not actually exist; the norms of *hijā'* suggest that, when the enemy is identified by name, he is a person in the author's midst. But because it cannot ascertained that this poetic Ibn Mattawayh is Abū Muḥammad, and because I have uncovered no evidence of another so-named person in Ibn ᶜAbbād's time and place,[112] it seems more fruitful to view the persona in his poetic existence rather than try to append him to a dubious biography. Certain elements of his life and societal standing make clear *a priori* that he (and his family, in all likelihood) is part of the *khāṣṣa* (elite society); anything else is virtually unthinkable for persons who would garner sufficient attention in a vizier's poetry. It is also logical to suppose that only someone prominent in one respect or another would deem the sort of studied, repeated invective Ibn ᶜAbbād devotes to Ibn Mattawayh. Attacking family in the *ᶜāmma* ('commoner' class) would probably seem quite absurd to Ibn ᶜAbbād's contemporaries.

[111] There is one other instance of slandering Ibn Mattawayh, written as متويً , in a subsequent piece by Ibn ᶜAbbād (YDQ 3:318).

[112] Nurit Tsafrir cites an Ibn Mattūya, mufti of Isfahan, but he dies around the time of Ibn ᶜAbbād's death ("Beginnings" 14). The Qur'an commentator Ibn Mattūya of Nishapur's status as a disciple of al-Thaᶜālibī (Huart, *History* 260) precludes the possibility of his having been contemporary with Ibn ᶜAbbād. Either or both of these two Ibn Mattūyas might bear a relation to the family line attacked in the poetry I present in this study.

He is a member of the *khāṣṣa* but not a political peer (if he were a vizier, there would almost certainly be a record of him as such). I have shown the deep cultural, historical implications that a family name might carry, and the degree to which family honor is stored in a name. The effort to defame presumes fame, and in its exertions it provides evidence of the importance an individual and/or his family might maintain. Logically then, this series—by far the longest and most detailed attacks on a particular family name in Ibn ᶜAbbād's extant poems—assigns real privilege to the Mattawayh line. It would be unproductive, or even counterproductive, for the poetry to state that the slandered party is unimportant, because even such tongue-in-cheek literature wants to imply that it is substantive.

Hijā' plays not only with the name's phonetic character but also with its history. In these compositions, Ibn ᶜAbbād uses the latter technique to the exclusion of the former.[113] Strictly in stylistic terms, this is not especially noteworthy; here, the poet is not the sort of archetype for the form that his Umayyad predecessors are, and ᶜAbbasid rhetoric on poetry does not lay out guidelines for *hijā'* the way it does for praise or ekphrasis or direct epistolary address. (This is probably because, as I have noted, there is no unanimity among major rhetoricians on the suitability of *hijā'*, or whether it merits attention in the first place.) But the vizier's focus on genealogy, a straightforward stylistic decision, asks the audience to consider history first and foremost, and in doing so allows us a larger perspective on his slanderous technique.

The progression of the poetic fragments, excoriating the Mattawayh family name, becomes its own genealogy of the family. Ancient and medieval texts I have discussed in this chapter develop family names in order to tie those names to histories of power and achievement; in the aggregate, they develop the very notion of history in a particular cultural, intellectual environment. *Hijā'* too is the writing of a history, in constant conversation with whatever merits the name might advertise for itself. As text, it tends to invite the reader into pathetic fallacy, as if the genealogical work of this jocular poetry were merging with the genealogies contained in coeval literature whose truth claims are larger, such as epistles and histories. When one reads Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's attacks on al-Mutanabbī—just to take one example from Ibn ᶜAbbād's time, place, and literary circle—the readerly impulse is to see how that slander might overlap with historical and biographical data from other sources. In the Mattawayh case such research does not seem plausible in the current state of the textual field, so one hermeneutic problem is replaced by another: rather than wrestling with poetic persona and biography and how applicable one is to the other, the reader confronts the pronounced paucity of detail provided to us by this brief, fragmentary poetic format.

The enemy's place in his family—how the poem stations him relative to his predecessors and successors, but especially to his father—is such a fundamental aspect of *hijā'* that it should figure into any theoretical treatment of the form. Bourdieu's inheritance model (see chapter 1) tells us a good deal about why inheritance matters so much in societies—in the Middle Ages, probably, just as much as in Modernity.

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[113] Note the minor example of name-play in YDQ 3:314, quoted above. It is not the phonetic wordplay that I have mentioned as common in *hijā'*, rather it likens a the name Ali (*ᶜalī*) to its morphological relative *ᶜalā'* (high standing).

Recalling his example of collecting objects through inheritance, mastering time and demonstrating that mastery materially and symbolically (*Distinction* 71-72), the reader begins to recognize the flexible walls of the family name for storing capital.[114] This poetry assigns itself a task greater than ridiculing Ibn Mattawayh as an agent in one time and place; instead it stations him unflatteringly in his family line. He is a disappointment to his father, an undeserving inheritor of whatever the elder generation has passed on to him. Significantly, the poetry does not lay low that generation (although that is as popular a *hijā'* move as it is insult genres throughout European languages up to the present) but instead suggests that the father's name is valuable ('Your father is Abū ᶜAlī, He of High Standing'). Ibn Mattawayh is an embarrassment to the name Mattawayh, what the poem terms 'the peacock's leg': a drab and tiny appendage beneath brilliant plumes.[115]

The inability to master desire and sexual politics—that commonplace which has defined the discussion of invective thus far—catalyzes in the enemy a second vital failure. The poetry demonstrates to Ibn Mattawayh and the audience that he is too much the fool and the passive sodomite to maintain (much less parlay) the worth of the Mattawayh name. Overmastered by desire and mental ineptitude, he then fails to master time, as Bourdieu says the inheritor means to do. This shift from the physical to the ethical, and on to the temporal, reveals in *hijā'* metaphysical characteristics not generally ascribed to it. Here I return to the broad discussion of slander at the beginning of the chapter, i.e., the epistemological argument. When the invective work is a performance of addressing the enemy and explaining to him why he merits slander, it becomes most vividly clear that the process of informing is the attempt to produce a change in knowledge from one moment to the next ('O Ibn Mattawayh, to put it nicely […]!'). In other words, in this poetry there is a consciousness that, as it declares ignominious the changes over time within the enemy's male family, there is also a change over time it is trying to effect in the poem's receiver. From the outset of the poem to its conclusion, there should be discovery and an arrival at conviction. If its language becomes outrageous, then that can be explained by the exertions required to deliver unwelcome information as a matter of performance.

Of these short poems, the last one presented above invites the broadest historicist speculation, which makes it probably the most complex of the group. The wordplay that, as I have noted, allows *hijā'* poets to warp and ridicule the proper name, gives way here to the double entendre in Muᶜtazilism. As the verb *iᶜtazalnā* means 'we isolated ourselves' and 'we took up Muᶜtazilism,'[116] the poem makes the anti-Muᶜtazilī position look pathetic (Sibṭ Mattawayh is passive in his sodomy) and ridiculous (he is insatiable

[114] In its most explicit form, the name and the physical collection of goods merge in galleries and museums: a patron may endow a building or construct a new one, but oftentimes the naming of a collection attests that the patron already owned the pieces to be displayed, and the gallery is essentially the vehicle for making private rituals into public ones.

[115] Ibn ᶜAbbād's predilection for the peacock image is clear from his praise poetry (see chapter 2) as well as his invective. It would be tempting to read this as supporting the popular praise/invective opposition mentioned in chapter 2 (see also Van Gelder, *Bad* 35-36). I would argue that it instead attests to the popularity of the peacock image throughout Classical Arabic poetry.

[116] This basic meaning predates the ᶜAbbasid period and the emergence of theologies which yield the verb's figurative meaning. Also, a grammatical point: the speaker might be understood as individual or plural; the third person common subject of this verb is often used as a formal way of voicing the first person singular.

and desperate). Recalling "*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*" and its tendency to raise historicist questions of Mu^{c}tazilism, it becomes evident how reliably the poet might use domination conceits in order to frame a partisan theological controversy. As with previous pieces of Ibn ^{c}Abbād's invective, the enemy undoes himself with his failure to take control (i.e., his subordinate position as the passive sodomite rather than the active one) and his inability to moderate his urges. His body bears the marks of uncontrolled sex: *raqī^{c}un sufluhu*/*sifluhu* (neither YDQ nor the other editions of *Yatīmat al-dahr* mark decisively which vowel the *sīn* consonant takes but the meaning is the same in either case), literally, 'his bottom is patchy.' The verb from which *raqī^{c}* derives means to patch, to insert pieces into a hole, or to be deficient and need patching—therefore *raqī^{c}* can mean, in certain contexts, mentally weak. The body, mind, and language converge, as is so often the case, not just in the text itself but also in the work that the reader might exert in theorizing it.

There is another problem, perhaps more complex, at play here, which invites the reader to revisit Bakhtin's politics of satire and the carnivalesque, as well as the problematizing arguments of his interlocutors (e.g., Eagleton, Stallybrass and White, and Sales).[117] I wish to review briefly the poetry's relevant physiology and to gloss Ibn ^{c}Abbād's nomenclature, in order to question the functions of the carnivalesque and grotesque. I have noted an important multivalence in *raqī^{c}*. Bearing in mind that, in this period, the emotions were believed to be determined by the processing of humors in the lower body, the range of meanings for *raqī^{c}* map out, in simple form, the distance between thinking mind and ragged posterior. What therefore stands out is a cognitive argument, stationed in the space between these two definitions. Soundness of the rear and soundness of the mind—both lacking in this young man of *raqī^{c}* character—are part and parcel of one another in this schematic of personal intercourse. Not only does *raqī^{c}* suggest a poor mind in the textual system of Classical Arabic surrounding this composition, but of course that implication become explicit in the poem's second line. The flimsy, patchy rear of this Mattawayh (be he Ibn Mattawayh, as al-Tha^{c}ālibī suggests, or that man's son) is of course a marker of the passivity Foucault has outlined. We have furthermore seen in several cases how closely that passivity accompanies a lack of bodily control and mental acumen generally. To indulge oneself to excess is no doubt a key ritual in carnivalesque imagery, and Bakhtin's argument of its productive, organic character jibes with other critical discourses which stress the capacious and the unfinished.[118] But because this *hijā'* speaks so consistently and virulently *against* overindulging the organs, it signals that the reader is now in territory uncharted by Bakhtin. Further, the particular organs of the buttocks and anus bear the marks of promiscuous passive sodomy—they therefore identify their owner as defective or not fully formed. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the poetic speaker's authoritative claims to knowledge and his prescriptive statement distance us, in decisive fashion, from a theory of the carnivalesque, and seem to intersect with Bakhtin's model

[117] Those critics' works, noted previously in this chapter, are Eagleton's *Walter Benjamin* (148), Stallybrass and White's *Politics* (12-16), and Sales's *English Literature* (169).

[118] Examples include the field of Subaltern Studies, Edward Said's contrapuntal model of criticism (*Culture and Imperialism* 32), open-source computing, and the online wiki (Christopher Kelty, "Geeks, Social Imaginaries, and Recursive Publics" 185-87; William Westerman, "Epistemology, the Sociology of Knowledge, and the *Wikipedia* Userbox Controversy" 146).

of satire. But this conceptual process is by no means smoothly executed in reading Ibn ᶜAbbād, especially when one takes into account the broader implications of Bakhtin's dialogic theory, which I will discuss in detail below.

It is important to bear in mind the narrative of partiality and fullness Bakhtin tells in his account of the carnival. He contends that the unfinished quality of carnival rituals produces, in its repetition and celebration of the human body in nature, a full and sustaining realization of human life. Such rituals of play, feast, celebratory drink, excreting, and marking time according to seasons are constantly generative and regenerative. Their appropriation in art means generating and regenerating life through language. I want to turn again to the second *qiṭᶜa* quoted above. For all the canniness of the satirical voice, the composition is still an appeal toward fullness, at least at the ethical level if not at the gastric one. It marshals the grotesque but at the same time showcases transactions (sexual and intellectual) that only truly benefit one of the two parties involved. The fulfilled, moderate poetic speaker considers his overindulgent, underwrought, and ill-equipped enemy, then belittles him by drawing up an economy of sexual and moral acts. These poems' preoccupation with dominance, desire, and manhood compel us to acknowledge the distance they try to establish from the dialogic strategies Bakhtin favors. For all the superficial characteristics this *hijā'* might share with the carnivalesque, it is ultimately a conspicuous attempt to deride with a unitary language.

It goes against a great deal of the past century's criticism and theory to read invective poetry as an authoritative literary idiom. This however is necessary work, because these texts compel the reader to view the acts of domination wrought, both in their literary language and in the politics that inform them. The perspective on power dynamics offers the ancillary benefit of retrieving and revising an element of Bakhtin's theory not always taken into account, namely his distinction between carnivalesque and satire (see the introductory section of this chapter). It is true that Ibn ᶜAbbād's *mulaḥ* are explicit attempts to elicit laughter, and I agree with Bakhtin that this moment of laughter ensures a dialogue—the literature produces an object of laughter and a laughing speaker, both of whom share a language in Bakhtin's ideal of robust parody. It is equally clear from my readings that these two figures must relate to their shared language differently from one another; that, I would argue, approximates satire more than carnival in the Bakhtinian framework. What I think necessary is to interrupt his narrative: he argues that the carnivalesque becomes degraded as it moves in a satirical direction after the Middle Ages, and this account seems to me misleading. No amount of political triumphalism and ideology—all of which marks Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'*—can produce a pure discourse of any kind. The carnivalesque, similarly, cannot be unambiguously or purely grotesque; it seems likely Bakhtin would readily accept this point, given his exact use of the nomenclature "grotesque," "incomplete," and "unfinished." The violence of parody and satire mean ensure critical instabilities of laughter. Satire's authoritative voice, it is worth bearing in mind, presupposes a complaint, a collision of social or theological rules. In other words, its call to ridicule arises from the anxiety of having an enemy. This formal feature of invective is animated in the historicist view upon Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso. The poetry I present in this chapter has as its framing conceit the spectacle of the high-ranking

political figure attacking an individual of lesser political power. At the moment laughter erupts and inhabits the utterance of the text, that power discrepancy is thrown into relief, and the poem speaks an ambivalence that must inhabit the court as the speaker asserts his control.

Alfonso X: Hermeneutics in Law and Literature

I have pointed out that slander is a form of story-telling, in Ibn ᶜAbbād's fragmentary works but all the more so in the *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer* (CEM). This observation is less important as a rote Formalist consideration than as a window into the pedagogy of poetic insult. It also helps explain the CSM, whose anecdotal nature seems to derive from two sources. The first, as seen in chapter 2, is the previously-existing tradition of Marian tales from which Alfonso draws the data for many of his songs. The second source is the *cantiga* form that allows for sung storytelling along with entreaty, description, and other less narrative lyric techniques. To tell a story—in which the slandered party is responsible for stupid or immoral acts and there is a discrete causality between desire, act, physical effect, and the poem's ridicule—is to create a world for the express purpose of dominating it. Neither *hijā'* nor the CEM is inherently any less authoritative than the praise works we have read; a literary work derives authority from its own utterance, its performance, and the sociopolitical relationships it establishes in its language and imagery.

Just as Arabic rhetoric ascribes to poetry special forms of linguistic intimacy and moral excuse, allowing poets certain freedoms among authority figures, Iberian Romance languages distinguishes the lyric poem from other spoken and written discourse.[119] Whether or not those distinctions protect the CEM or allow the troubadour special freedoms is not altogether clear. *Hijā'* seems to enjoy a form of protection through rhetorical categorizations: the two projects of anthologizing and describing poetry in prose both tend to place *hijā'* and *mujūn* in close proximity to one another, which provides the invective text a convenient means of exculpation. A clear example of this close grouping is *Yatīmat al-dahr* itself, in which *hijā'* and *mujūn* appear under one heading, so that there is no real distinction drawn between the two as the poetry unfolds (YDQ 3:314). When called to account for its harshness, the *hijā'* text may take refuge in the lightness of *mujūn*. In a certain respect, this exculpatory attempt informs the CEM, although the textual basis for the exculpation is not at all obvious.

The other complicating factor is Alfonso's extraordinary status as author: of slanderous literature and also of a legal treatise addressing slander as a concept. It should also be pointed out, because that treatise is *Las siete partidas*, to which much of modern Spanish law texts hearken, Alfonso is far better-known as a founder of a legal code than as an author of irreverent poetry. The reader therefore has the opportunity to observe the king in multiple authorial positions, as if Alfonso had several personas in his texts, each one in conversation with the others. Benjamin Liu reflects upon the apparent irony that Alfonso, "though himself one of the major poets of *escarnho* and *mal dizer*, prohibits certain kinds of insulting speech in the laws of the *Las siete partidas,* particularly when

[119] Both the sung status of these works and their textual status come to bear on our historical understanding of the CEM. "When we sit down to read the *CEM* in a modern, printed edition we are engaging in an activity that had no real equivalent in this poetic culture. The surviving *cancioneiros* that bring the *CEM* to us […] can be thought of as written remnants of a vital and dynamic process of poetry, one that was based on orality and memorization and in which poems could be imbued with meaning extra-verbally (e.g. vocal inflection, a gesture, nod, or wink) in performance. The *cancioneiros* are to Galician-Portuguese lyric what a diploma is to the conferral of a degree: a record of the event, but not the event itself" (Blackmore, "Locating" 10).

these are fashioned in the memorable forms of rhyme or writing" ("Risabelha" 41), at which point Liu cites the following law from the *Partidas*, whose title reads "De la deshonra que face un home á otro por cántigas ó por rimas" ('Concerning the Dishonor Which One Man Causes Another by Means of Songs and Rhymes'):

> Enfaman et deshonran unos á otros non tan solamente por palabra, mas aun por escriptura faciendo cántigas, ó rimas ó dictados malos de los que han sabor de enfamar. Et esto facen á las vegadas paladinamente et á las vegadas encubiertamente […] (7.9.3).
>
> Some men render other infamous and dishonor them not only in speech but also in writing, by making songs or rhymes, or evil statements of those whom they desire to defame. They do this sometimes openly, and sometimes secretly […] (Trans. Scott 5:1352).

The law goes on to insist that aspersions on one's character be cast in a legal court[120] rather than in the ambiguous world of rumor, or in any other place where the governmental apparatus does not have direct jurisdiction. In addition to this meta-legal clause—the official text affirming the necessity of the official court space to enclose and regulate charges between persons—the law comments upon the nature of speech. The gravest danger it points out is the durable quality of a charge; slander takes on its most pernicious character when allowed to resonate over time, by virtue of (1) its being written down or (2) the mnemonic advantage of tune and rhyme. (It is salutary to note that this second quality is itself a technique of using time, i.e., organizing speech so that it fits metrical divisions and syllabic measures of duration. *Partida* 7.9.3 therefore folds two views of time into one argument, insisting that the intricate fine mechanics of sung poetry produces, via its audiences, a broad time signature of collective memory and repetition. Organized, versified language, insinuating itself into the arc of time experienced by social groups, produces political results; *sabor de enfamar* [desire to defame] becomes a real and measurable degradation of a man's public character. This temporal duality informs the very language of the *partida*, which achieves an urgency as a behavioral warning while it maintains its customary breadth of view as legislation.) The law would seem to constrict the troubadours of CEM, but of course they could and did compose direct attacks on their contemporaries, with no legal consequences so far as I have found.

Scholars of the CEM almost always employ a taxonomic strategy when trying to place the genre in Christian Iberian history—literary and sociopolitical. Certainly this is a useful approach when trying to place the CEM in a history of language and decorum; a certain view of taxonomy allows for officially-excusable slander. According to the *Arte de trovar*, the rhetorical prose work written anonymously in the century after Alfonso's reign and bound with CBN, *cantigas d'escarnho* use a recondite style, whereas *cantigas*

[120] This indicates that Castile, in contrast to the ᶜAbbasid Empire, discerns clearly between a court whose function is to adjudicate on legal matters and a court where artistic discourse is exchanged—even though those respective courts may be populated by some of the same officials.

de mal dizer are direct and unequivocal.[121] Endorsing this stylistic opposition between *escarnho* and *mal dizer*, the critic can use it as a criterion by which to judge individual compositions, and specifically to decide upon its (im)permissibility in the context of medieval Spanish norms. In the last six decades of CEM studies, many scholars have adopted for their own arguments the *Arte de trovar*'s binary (Filgueira Valverde in Díaz-Plaja ed. 1:577; Montoya Martínez, "El carácter" 433, 440-42; Liu, "Risabelha" 41-42). I however agree with Lapa, who views the *escarnho*/*mal dizer* distinction as more a product of rhetoric than of poetic practice itself.[122] The *Arte de trovar*'s author was of course inestimably closer than we are to the Galician-Portuguese cultural moment in which the *cantiga* flourished. Nonetheless, the work's status as an *ex post facto* commentary raises significant questions of literary historiography. I would argue that CEM authors cannot be assumed to have viewed their art within the same framework or even with all the same nomenclature laid out in *Arte de trovar* (Filios, "Women Out of Bounds" 36). It seems to me methodologically questionable to read fourteenth-century prose about twelfth- and thirteenth-century lyric as a reliable statement on the character—formal and social—of that lyric. And it seems all the more questionable to project that interpretation yet further to the field of law.

The efforts critics have exerted to understand the CEM within the framework of Alfonso's legislative writing, while undoubtedly worthwhile, cannot be considered conclusive. It seems necessary to add several historical possibilities that inform the poems:

- He may have issued the *Partidas* as more of an archetype or an ideal than an immediately binding writ. The laws were not promulgated by the Castilian monarchy until 1348, some six decades after his death. If he had the text written with the understanding that its laws would not be enforced until the century to come, this would open up the possibility that the laws as written did not in all cases affect Alfonso and his contemporaries. (Lapa argues that the CEM's very existence indicate that the above-quoted *Partidas* law could not have been enforced [*Liçoes* 178].) Or, even if it was enforced upon its issuance, it may have postdated Alfonso's CEM sufficiently that he is not considered responsible for an offence under *Partidas* code.
- His status as king may have placed him in a virtually untouchable position among CEM authors, such that his works did not come under legal scrutiny. (This possibility should not lead us to conclude that lesser-ranked CEM troubadours were prosecuted for their works; I am aware of no evidence at all of a CEM author tried at court or punished by the state for his lyric slander.)
- The privilege Alfonso, following the practice of several royal generations, assigns to troubadour arts in his court may have given the troubadours themselves preferential treatment in legal appraisals of speech.

[121] See *Arte de trovar* 42-43. The question of direct and indirect style also figures heavily in medieval Arabic rhetoric on *hijā'* (Ibn al-Athīr, *Jawhar* 310).
[122] See CEM, "Prefácio" 8 and, for subsequent critics in agreement with Lapa, see Benjamin Liu, *Medieval Joke Poetry* 2 and Simone Marcenaro, "Tipologías" 164

- The law cited above may not have pertained to the CEM specifically. The intra-court performance traditions of *cantigas* and their elite core audience may by themselves have protected the troubadour, in the eyes of the law.[123] Denise Filios argues that the circumscription of the CEM's audience reduced the danger of poems harming the reputations of those persons whom they slandered. This points out a pragmatic factor not exactly the same as legal protection but nonetheless key to understanding why the CEM enjoyed such license to defame (*Performing* 14).
- *Las siete partidas* make it clear that slander is most dangerous when it persists in people's memories; this may suggest that slander that did not reach the general populace was not a major legal concern.

What, then, can be said confidently about Alfonso's position vis-à-vis the CEM? The difficulty answering this question is unsurprising; the above observation of Alfonso's multiple textual personas is basically a response to the equivocations we might find within those texts—that is particularly true of the *Partidas*. Some combination of the above-listed factors may obtain. My suspicion is that the last one is most plausible.

Repeating once more the caveat that literary norms cannot be lumped in with legal discourse, I conclude from my reading of the *Partidas* that in medieval Castile, any example of the CEM would be considered something other than normal speech. It is unclear exactly what kind of speech the poems would have constituted according to the legal code; but one possibility has been suggested in recent scholarship merits consideration (1) for its foreshadowing of the next poem I will examine and (2) for its attempt to explain the CEM's existence in the same royal courts where the laws were written. Along with slander, the *Partidas* address the phenomenon of *juego de palabras* ('word-play,' in the sense of an actual game between people rather than a single word or phrase used) and treat it as a legal game with specific rules. The *juego*'s defamatory goals are acceptable because the format of the game, according to the legal text, is hyperbolic sarcasm rather than literalist or sincere enumerations of faults (*Partida* 2.9.30). The *Partidas*' law on *juego de palabras* (wordplay) might be viewed as a logical opposite bookend to the slander law.

Filios explores the possibility that the *Partidas* sheltered the CEM under the canopy of play. Her hypothesis is that the CEM qualified as *juegos de palabras*. This has significant legal and critical implications. Her interpretation distances the CEM from the legal categories of *enfama* ('infamy,' *Partida* 7.6.5) and *enfamamiento* ('defamation,' 7.6.6), focusing instead on questions of the songs' performance. She suggests that a defamatory *cantiga* is dialectical—it presumes a response, at least in many cases, and may therefore be an assay that begins the *juego*.[124] In this understanding of CEM, the

[123] On the question of audience and performance, it is important to acknowledge the difference between CEM and CSM. While there is no doubt that *cantigas* are the creations of societal and political elites, and that their initial recitations were typically in royal courts, the CSM appear to occupy a special position in the Castilian model of lyric performance, in that their authorial figure states explicitly that they should reach a broad audience. For Alfonso's instruction in his will that the CSM be recited in his kingdom's churches during holidays, see chapter 2; relevant text of the will in Antonio G. Solalinde ed., *Antología* 236.

[124] The *juego de palabras* of course requires more than one player. *Partida* 2.9.30 refers to an abstract 'those who play' ("quien jugaren").

poetic text can be the beginning of a conversation rather than a definitive statement. The elegance of Filios's argument is that it offers a solution to both major questions raised above, i.e., how the CEM were allowed to exist in elite political culture and how Alfonso could have composed CEM without violating his own laws. I find it the most compelling and theoretically challenging resolution of the two questions I have raised, although it is speculative and not demonstrable with the textual evidence at hand. She herself qualifies her work in this way, describing it as speculation in dialogue with previous scholars' speculations on the *cantiga* (*Performing* 19-20).

Although the present study does not scrutinize performance *per se* as Filios does, the question of how the CEM were performed overlaps with my social inquiry into the poetry. Furthermore, to hold up the CEM against the legal idea of *juego de palabras* is a meta-reading of the songs, a gesture toward an audience member and audience position that I have not yet considered. If the *Partidas* manufacture a juridical speaker—i.e., a speaker who aims to both understand and instruct individuals, society, and institutions—then the question is, How does that speaker receive and situate slanderous lyric? This identification of a speaker simultaneously allows some approximation of the CEM to the *Partidas*, and relieves us of the burden of two projects that seem methodologically questionable: (1) drafting a "real" Alfonso from his complex and multivalent texts, and (2) coordinating that figure with the discrete texts of *cantigas*.[125] It is also a reminder that, even in a tightly-framed view of intellectual history, it is necessary to view Alfonso as having several textual personas. It becomes less important to assimilate these personas than to analyze them as the complementary and dissonant, altogether problematic, devices that they are.

[125] Examples of this methodology include Bell, "*Cantigas*," and O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the* Cantigas de Santa Maria.

"*Domingas Eanes ouve sa baralha/con ũu genet', e foi mal ferida*" (CEM 25; pp. 308-15 in CPAS; original-language version given here is from Manuel Ferreiro in Arbor Aldea and Fernández Guiadanes, ed., *Estudos* 246-58[126]).

Domingas Eanes ouve sa baralha
con ũu genet', e foi mal ferida;
empero foi ela i tan ardida
que ouve depois a vencer, sen falha,
e, de pran, venceu bõo cavaleiro;
mais empero era-x' el tan braceiro
que ouv' end' ela de ficar colpada.

O colbe colheu-[a] per ũa malha
da loriga que era desmentida;
e pesa-m' ende, porque essa ida,
de prez que ouve máis, se Deus me valha,
venceu ela; mais [pel]o cavaleiro,
per sas armas e per com' er' arteiro,
ja sempre end' ela seera sinalada.

E aquel mouro trouxe con o veite
dous companhões en toda esta guerra;
e demais á preço que nunca erra
de dar gran colpe con seu tragazeite;
e foi-[a] achar come costa juso,
e deu-lhi por én tal colpe de suso
que ja a chaga nunca vai çarrada.

E dizen meges que usan tal preit' e
an atal chaga: "Ja máis nunca serra,
se con quanta lãa á en esta terra
a escaentassen, nen con no azeite,
porque a chaga non vai contra juso,
mais vai en redor come perafuso,
e por én muit' á que é fistolada".

Domingas Eanes had her scuffle
with a Moorish horseman, and she was badly injured.
But she was so ardent
that, in the end, she won by a rout.

[126] Ferreiro's edition is a revision of both Lapa's CEM version and Paredes's in CPAS, and of course an interpretation of the CBN and Vatican *cancioneiros* in which the *cantiga* appears. He raises significant questions of Lapa and Paredes, and argues strongly for his own lexical and orthographic readings; I am therefore inclined to favor his text over that of his predecessors, even these two most prominent among them.

And, it's true, she beat the great knight,
although he is so good with the lance
that she had to sustain some injuries.

The blow she received hit a link
in her chainmail, which was undone:
and, dear me, because at this thrust,
she was tougher—God help me!—
—she won. But then the horseman,
because of his weapons and because he was so crafty,
saw to it that she would be marked forever.

That Moor carried, along with his rod,
two "companions" throughout this battle;
he is also known for never failing
to strike a great blow with his dart.
He went to topple her, mouth open,
and gave her such a hit from on top,
that now the wound will never be closed.

The doctors who make this their business say
about such a wound: "It can never be closed
even with all the wool there is in this land,
nor with oil can it be cauterized,
because the wound doesn't go straight in—
—it goes around, like a screw,
and that's why it's been draining[127] for so long!"

The text of this song presents us with a problem that in many ways transcends the CEM: the figure of the *soldadeira*, a female servant who sings and dances.[128] The scholarly consensus that Domingas Eanes is a *soldadeira* stems not from historical records but from a generic convention of the CEM, i.e., this professional class of women is the main target of misogynist *cantigas*. Domingas Eanes does not appear in any other medieval text I have discovered,[129] so there are no sources to fix her as a historical figure, much less to confirm her profession. The history of the genre takes the place of a social history, in this case.

[127] 'Draining' is far from a literal translation of "fistolada" ('fistulated,' i.e., having a fistula cut in to the wound to treat it). Of commonly-used English words, 'ulcerated' might be closer to the meaning of the original, but it does not have the sense of a form of treatment, and it is furthermore awkward-sounding to my ear.

[128] For a definition of the *soldadeira* and her role in both society and poetry, see Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *Poesía juglaresca* 31-33.

[129] There is archival evidence of a widow named Domingas Eanes in northwest Iberia (Boullón Agrelo, et al., ed., *As tebras* 135) but the records' dates place her almost a century after Alfonso, so if he was indeed the cantiga's author, it must be about a Domingas Eanes undocumented in other known sources.

Female identity is undoubtedly one of the most problematic and critically productive elements of Galician-Portuguese lyric.[130] Even setting aside the CSM, whose fascination with female identities is obvious, in the much larger profane corpus there is a studied and anxious meditation on women, particularly in the chaos and *engano* (see chapter 2) the *cantigas* associate with them. The *soldadeira* title requires some contextualization, as a category both professional (i.e., historical) and literary. It denotes a professional singer and dancer; her status as a minstrel does not, however, deliver her to any form of parity with the *trobador*/*joglar* strata mentioned in chapter 1. This is most plainly seen in her literary role. What seems most striking is not the *soldadeira*'s role as a favorite target of ridicule—other Iberian Romance genres are also quite consistent in their selection of female stock characters to deride (Filios, *Performing* 1-5)—but rather the basis of that ridicule. It is worth bearing in mind that the *cantigas* are a corpus predominantly of men's poems, where the male troubadour authorial figure is privileged even when the lyrical voice is presented as a woman's.[131] The *soldadeira*'s status as a singer and dancer—i.e., a professional who uses her talents and physical charms in order to elicit emotions from audiences, including the nobility—seems to render her vulnerable to slander, but her singing and dancing itself are not at issue. Whether or not she is good at performing music and dance is irrelevant to the CEM; she is not shown performing anything except ribaldry, sex, and primitive forms of *engano*.

> The links between female performers and perceived sexual availability are widely acknowledged and amply documented. I would argue, therefore, that these poems represent the consequences of female minstrelsy—the lust, the degradation, the grotesque physicality thought to be produced when a woman performs. In short, performance is textually there, but only as an embedded effect. *To portray this effect explicitly as the result of a female minstrel singing, accompanying, or dancing would be counterproductive, since it would call into question the ethical basis of court performance itself,* which relied so heavily on professional minstrels (Weiss in Deyermond and Taylor ed. 250-51, emphasis added).

Julian Weiss provides a logical explanation for the *soldadeira*'s exclusively sexual role in CEM; but he goes beyond that, exposing an anxiety of the court. The fact that Alfonsine rhetorical prose fixates on the relative positions of performers alerts us to the political aspect of the artists' courtly roles (Rodríguez-Velasco, *Castigos* 42-43, 269-300). The entertainment provided by those performers is not a mere distraction from the more "serious" tasks of legislation and writing didactic texts, but rather an essential element of the court's political life. This is true not only of male troubadours and the *juglares* who typically performed the troubadours' works, but also of the many lower-class minstrels who populated courts, even if in peripheral artistic roles such as the *soldadeira*'s (R.

[130] On female identification in the CEM, see Ana Paula Ferreira, "A 'Outra Arte'"; Filios, "Jokes" and *Performing* 3-5 and 21-22; and Julian Weiss in Deyermond and Taylor ed. 245-57.

[131] The *cantigas d'amigo*, numbering approximately 400 among extant works, are attributed to male authors but their conceit is of a woman in search of, or lamenting, her male lover.

Menéndez Pidal, *Poesía juglaresca* 31-32). Acknowledging their indispensable function as entertainers and interlocutors, I nonetheless think it necessary to consider the possibility that the CEM's ridicule of the *soldadeira* is a sexualized expression of social, political, and artistic messages. In other words, the violation of Domingas Eanes—and the smirking valorization of her inner resolve—opens up a much broader set of questions about the *soldadeira* as court presence. Modern readers of European languages are accustomed to euphemisms for sex, but this medieval poem is sex as euphemism.

The presumed biographical fact of Domingas's professional-performer status combines with her conspicuously non-noble social rank to justify the attack. (Noble women, of course, do not perform work of any kind, are not named in love-songs about them, and are not subject to the lascivious poetic language employed in this *cantiga*.) What is surely in the audience's mind, and what I want to privilege here, is the performance-for-payment exchange implicit in the *soldadeira*'s work. It is as if the only avenue over which to deliver her to elite courtly art were to elide her artistic role altogether and to focus exclusively on her identity as paid professional. This requires of course that her "performance" itself, in the *cantiga*, be a process of negotiation. The battle is an exchange even before the reader acknowledges its sexual allegory as sex. The most basic exchange is that of the 'injury' Domingas sustains for the win she earns, the poem's mention of the former explicating how nominal a victory it is. Somehow, she comes out the winner without (so far as the text tells us) parrying at all. The disposable quality of the won battle provides a frame of the pathetic around the set of exchanges within the battle itself. The knight attacks with weapons (organs: his *tragazeite*, 'lance,' as penis; his *dous companhões*, 'two "companions"' as testicles) that are effective and confidently wielded; Domingas has armor (clothing) that is either defective, incompetently fastened, or insufficiently strong to withstand the blow.

The one-sided economy of the fight is foretold in the sexual economy of medieval lyric, in which a man's desire can place the beloved in a double bind. In courtly love works, the feminine beloved must of course not engage in sexual acts, depiction of which would tear apart the elaborate love conceit. However, if she is too aloof—or, worse, antipathetic—the tradition dictates that the stricken speaker should suffer illness, sometimes fatal (Gerli ed., *Medieval Iberia* 269). In both cases the speaker attributes to his beloved the qualities of preeminence and control; she is the resource from which he seeks sustenance, usually in the form of acknowledgment and fleeting moments of contact. Aside from the obvious formal factors that would distance this work from the chaste love tradition—i.e., the graphic physicality of the composition, its irreverent tone, and the fact that the masculine desiring figure is not the lyric speaker but an unspeaking character—there is also a structural difference in the relationship between the two characters. Whereas the object of courtly love is measured by the physiological effects she produces in her masculine interlocutor, this *cantiga* measures Domingas by the physiological effects her masculine interlocutor produces in her. The noblewoman possesses quantities (these aside from her *qualities*, e.g., beauty, grace, etc.) that she must be careful to mete out moderately to her lover: she might return his gaze briefly, allow slight physical contact, or make available discrete moments of her time for conversation with the lover. The masculine lover seeks these quantities, which are measurable yet

intangible, so as to sustain his health, which is tangible in that it registers in his organs. Domingas has dominion—and that only partial—over her body, i.e., she does not have the sort of property that signifies the upper classes or the (noble) chaste beloved. The actuation of the horseman's desire registers, as I have noted, on her body and in her organs. It is only logical that Domingas should fail to protect herself, because the very strategy of protecting the body from violation is a specialty of noble women. Given the poem's unsubtle equivalences between combat maneuvers and sexual interactions, there is strong temptation to read "ũa malha/da loriga" ('a link/in her chainmail') as a hymen, and the *genete*'s strike as its rupture. The only factor that argues against that interpretation would seem to be socio-historical: virginity, as a demonstrable form of physical and ethical chastity (see chapter 2), is not the province of the *soldadeira*. Her middling position in the court economy mean that courtly poetry with instrumentalize her to perform physical labors (singing and sex) the audience wants but cannot explicitly endorse. In the CEM, her body comes prefigured as degraded but attractive, worthy of men's attention but imminently expendable—in other words, useful.

Not only is the ethical basis of love inverted—courtly love requiring a high degree of the beloved's control and an absolute lack of consummation—but so is its metaphysical basis, the relation between corporeal and abstract. In medieval poetry, there are a great many stylistic and structural factors that mark corporeal lust, thereby distinguishing works from the courtly love genre. It is clear that this poem takes part in several conventions of its genre and of Iberian literature more broadly. The interweaving of war and sex—in this case, war *as* sex—is a literary device dating back to the twelfth-century *Cid* at least (Hutcheson and Blackmore ed. 51). It is also evident that the CEM use social class as a criterion by which they ridicule *soldadeiras* individually and as a group (Scholberg, *Sátira* 84-85). What is remarkable about this poem's particular technique is that the composition as a whole is dedicated to producing an allegory and then, with both narrative accounts standing beside one another in the audience's mind (i.e., the explicit story of battle next to the implicit story of sexual violation), it becomes clear that they serve to articulate her social position. With the allegory complete, both war and sex convert into metonymies for class.

The ethnic and religious questions raised by this *cantiga* are no less fraught. Domingas, whom the audience already knows to be socially transient by virtue of her *soldadeira* status—she can move between courtly and plebian circles to converse and perform—takes on all the more social dimensions in her encounter, not with just any man, but a Muslim knight. The term *genete* (shortened to *genet'* in line 2) refers to a North African horseman (DDGM, "genete"), whose martial role confirmed by the Old Spanish cognate *jinete*. The combat motif of this poem suggests that he belongs to a Muslim army, although that cannot be fully ascertained; Arab and Berber mercenaries are known to have fought under Christian kings in medieval Iberia (Kagay and Villalon ed. 258). But because this is a joke of a fight, and the Christian Domingas would most likely be "fighting" with an enemy of the greater group with which the song would identify her, it seems most logical that this *genete* would be part of a Muslim force. Muslims figure prominently in jocular Romance texts as a partner in illicit, hedonistic, or physically

arduous sex; this is certainly the case in the CEM. Like *soldadeiras*, these *mouros* ('Moors') presuppose fornication, marathon-sex practices, and rape.[132]

Both Domingas and the *genete*, as character types, serve to blur the palette of images with which the troubadour renders Iberian life. In broad view, this instability of roles and identities is logical, given the confusions implied by the Moorish-Christian physical encounter itself. The *soldadeira* operates between social (and, in this case, religious and ethnic) groups—this is true historically and in the poems themselves—while the *genete* indicates a foreign threat that can nonetheless be co-opted occasionally into serving Christian imperial interests. That the *soldadeira* can traverse classes and religious groups is an asset, albeit a liability in the questionable moral realm of the CEM's abuse. Furthermore, the language of crossing-over and instability may be a necessary formal element of the CEM in general: "Because representations of interfaith sexual misalliances touch on highly taboo zones of both conduct and language, it is not surprising that they often take refuge in equivocal registers, especially those of war and commerce, which are more permissible modes of intercultural association" (Blackmore and Hutcheson ed. 51).

This poem, viewed in context of the CEM as genre, confuses categories—not only that the two characters represent, but in the ambivalent sense of social rule suggested by the lyric speaker. The fact that the law clearly forbids the sort of sexual encounter imagined by this *cantiga*,[133] and that such encounters are a favorite trope of the CEM, means not that the act is somehow socially normalized but rather that it is converted into a courtly stigma. The primary members of the court were of course the king, his advisors and savants, and nobles; entertainers such as *juglares* served to perform the compositions of noble troubadours, and *soldadeiras* were a class of entertainer at the lower fringes of *juglares*.[134] With this in mind, Weiss's point above seems especially compelling: the social hierarchy of the court insists upon marking its strata but has no basis on which to eliminate or condemn the *soldadeira*, so the CEM speak a form of troubled official ridicule. This is especially pronounced in such a composition as CEM 25, whose authorial troubadour figure is the king himself.

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[132] In David Ashurst's opinion, the probable connotation that the Moor is an enemy of Castile "only makes the joke at her expense more stinging and elaborate […]" ("Masculine" 2). For other accounts of *genetes*, see CEM 21, 60. For other poems featuring *soldadeiras*, see CEM 11, 14, 47, 48, 49, 146, 189, 190, 195, 205, 206, 233, 244, 245, 246, 247, 321, 323, 333, 335, 344, 347, 384, 386, 425. For other poems associating Moors with virility and promiscuity, see CEM 23, 51, 189, 229, 230, 297, 300, 408, 409. (Of all these poems, CEM 11, 14, and 21 are attributed to Alfonso.) For an analysis of non-Christians, including Moors, in the CEM, see Rosenstein, "Voiced" 68-72.

[133] According to the *Las siete partidas*, a Muslim man is to be put to death by the state if he has sex with a Christian woman (the same penalties apply to Jewish men found guilty of such an act). The offending woman is to be placed in the power of her (Christian, since religious intermarriage is of course forbidden) husband, who may choose to let her live or have her burned her to death (*Partida* 7.24.9, 7.25.10). Municipal codes, *fueros*, are more insistent that both parties die (Blackmore and Hutcheson ed. 54-55)

[134] R. Menéndez Pidal affirms several points on these topics. *Juglares* were not only mouthpieces for the more elite troubadours who composed courtly literature; they performed that function but were also authors themselves, albeit of less highly esteemed genres (*Poesía juglaresca* 16). The nobility had the kind of inconsistent relationship with *soldadeiras* that typifies "high" society vis-à-vis "low" art: official texts suggest that *soldadeiras* are morally low—that in addition to the fact that their singing was not considered high art—but nobles and priests were fond of hiring *soldadeiras* for gatherings (31).

Filios, probing the historical possibilities of *cantiga* performance in order to draw up an ontology of CEM, argues that the maligned and ridiculed *soldadeira* may be present when the song is recited and therefore may respond to it.[135] This facet of Filios's *juego de palabras* hypothesis, mentioned above, would render the CEM an element of a dialectic so vigorous and multi-voiced that it would mark a logical apex of Bakhtin's dialogic model. Her understanding of the genre is new for the social and temporal potentialities it puts forward. Social, because the possibility that the *soldadeira* could rebut the attack would level the field—only relatively, of course, because the space is designed by, and serves the interests of, male troubadours and the king. Temporal, because she envisions a poetics following the extant text: an exchange of insults and innuendo, perhaps sung, that were a facet of courtly arts, albeit not recorded in *cancioneiros*. Filios's theory allows us to imagine poetics beyond and after the poetic text, a prolepsis distinct from Genette's—where Genette observes the boundaries of narrative to suggest its own pasts and futures, Filios imagines a social history of poetic performance to see the places where the *soldadeira* might respond. The lack of extant texts to document such a response, predictable given the *soldadeiras'* social identity and the sort of lyric they performed, opens room for speculation rather than foreclosing historical and critical possibilities that I would like to consider.[136]

I wish to extend this critical language of time and its emphasis on the advancement forward of events, but focus on the poetic text as a unit. What I find most important about CEM 25, for the purposes of this study, is the story of Domingas's body and the curious form it takes as it arrives to the courtly audience. Neither Domingas nor the *genete* speak, of course, and, as the work closes, the reader is left with Domingas's physical proof of the sexual encounter. Comparing the first and last stanzas, the new information proffered at the end is empirical—doctors have become involved, in order to apply a scientific motive to the grotesque detail of the wound—and also a statement of time's progress. From the outset, the poem has provided a history; the first stanza provides a summary of its own story, so it is clear in the audience's minds that the rest of the poem's task will be to explain events and their significance. The joke with which the work closes, "'Ja máis nunca serra,/se con quanta lãa á en esta terra'" ['"It can never be closed/even with all the wool there is in this land"'], taking the form of doctors' lament, [137] brings the body into the "real" time of the courtly spectacle. The veneer of scientific concern solidifies the claim that Domingas—who, it should be borne in mind, probably was a *soldadeira* in contact with Alfonso and his close associates, perhaps as their hired performer—is, physically, beyond the past events CEM 25 tells, affected by the 'wound.' Modern critics have understood this wound as either the vagina itself or a sexually communicable

[135] With regard to CEM 25, Filios cautions that, "Given this song's hostility toward Eanes and her consistent treatment in the third person, I expect she did not participate in its presentation" (*Performing* 58). But her overall reading of the CEM is that they allow for, and oftentimes engage, their target as interlocutor present in the audience. This is of course a key component of her proposition that the CEM fit into a *juego de palabras* rubric.

[136] Filios notes her skepticism that Domingas might have responded in kind to CEM 25, although she does not rule out the possibility. The evidence she cites is the poem's high level of derision and its third-person references to Domingas (*Performing* 58), as opposed to second-person address, which we find in other CEM on *soldadeiras*.

[137] Lapa (see p. 36, on which appears CEM 25) and Paredes (CPAS 308), in contrast to Ferreiro, read this section not as a direct quotation of the doctors but rather as the lyric speaker's paraphrase of them.

disease.[138] My argument is that the poem plays with time and physical evidence so as to give its derisive claims a lasting quality, and thus an authority over time among the audience. The wound, and specifically the plural readings that might be applied to it, compel the reader to view time as flexible and multidirectional. The possible significations—and, easily as important, the fact that they are all sexual, pathological, damning, and durable—are to me evidence of the overall interest this poem has of advancing time for its own derisive interests.

I would like to argue further that the pluralities in and around this work do not, in and of themselves, create distance from an authoritative voice, as other scholarship has maintained about the CEM. Noting the types of court performers in Spain and the fact that such singers as soldadeiras and male juglares moved easily from royal audiences to public squares, José D'Assunção Barros argues that performing arts rendered even the most elite courts into relatively democratic zones of interaction. Although he says forthrightly that poetry was a key medium of power, he maintains that the grasp on that power varied according to poetic medium and speaker. His theory is that a variety of classes and voices made the discourse of the court permeable and flexible, and that social control could therefore not be ascribed exclusively to dominant political agents such as Alfonso ("Poesia e poder" 23-26). Liu contends that the CEM, an "equivocal poetics," signify a mixing of languages, ethnicities, and social groups, the result being a productive other language, an alternative to the absolute interpretive authority that legal texts grant the king (Blackmore and Hutcheson ed. 52, 54). The framework of Bakhtin's theory informs both Barros's and Liu's arguments. One might say that they ascribe to the CEM a political dialogism that I do not find, although I agree that they are very much a linguistically plural form of literary speech. There is no question that certain literary devices and historical considerations—the semantic questions I have just raised, the ethnic variety of characters, the invitation of laughter inherent to any humorous genre, and the equivocal nature of Domingas's profession vis-à-vis the court—inform a productively unstable text in the CEM. But that instability of meanings, social positions, and personas is not the same thing as a non-authoritative poetic voice.

Both of the CEM I discuss in this chapter argue the above point, CEM 25 most strongly. Filios points out, "The humor of this song lies precisely in its brutal elimination of ambiguity with respect to female sexuality" (*Performing* 58). On certain points, this poem is insistent and absolute: the *genete*'s attack on Domingas requires an inspection of her body that is also an attack, negating any possibility of feminine physical integrity. This version of an exquisite corpse, much more literal than the French Surrealists who invented the term might have imagined, has in certain respects the same telos as the medical examination depicted in the *cantiga*. The movement of the *genete*, from African enemy territory to the Iberian war front, to Domingas's poorly-armored body, and then to the courtly audience in the form of Domingas's continually draining wound, demonstrates that her body is a medium of knowledge. By suggesting that the wound is

[138] Martínez Pereiro considers the 'wound' as thoroughly multivalent, signifying the vagina, venereal disease, and/or a female sexual insatiability ("Del combate" 26). Carlos Alvar opines that it could mean the vagina or even impregnation (Touber ed., *Rayonnement* 13). It should be noted here how conspicuous are the invitations to read this poem psychoanalytically, a method Benjamin Liu pursues thoroughly in his works on the CEM (see "Joke Work and Sex Work" and *Medieval Joke Poetry*).

observable and its symptoms perpetual, Alfonso's speaker invites the audience to participate in the narrative he has created. I have discussed Genette's mechanic of analepsis in chapter 2; as this poem ends, it makes a near-proleptic move (toward the future: "'Ja máis nunca serra,'" '"It can never be closed'"), not narrating future events *per se* but guaranteeing Domingas's state in perpetuity. This is followed by the analepsis (toward the past: "'muit' á que é fistolada,'" '"it's been draining for so long"') that ends the work. Both of these statements, although so ideological as to be almost banal, gain purchase through their engagement of the audience. The laughing response to which they must appeal means that the amused court, predisposed toward the poem's gender- and class ideologies, sharpens the blunt edges of the poetic text. As with all CEM, the work ends with the supposition that its audience will buffet the lyrics with laughter following the music. Prolepsis, therefore, is a tool not only of the sung narrative, but also of the *juglar*-audience interaction, without which the song's ideology cannot resonate.

"*Se me graça fezesse este Papa de Roma*" (CEM 33; original-language version given here from CPAS 125)

We have seen in Alfonso's Marian songs the differences between implicit political arguments (CSM 132) and explicit ones (CSM 292); the CEM require the same shifts of analytical gear. If Alfonsine political questions require substantial work to become evident in CEM 25, in CEM 33 they make themselves known from the outset. In CEM 25, political hierarchies are a given that enables the song's polemic of social class, whereas CEM 33 makes politics into a joke of socioeconomic pretense. Following Epifanio Ramos's identification of a political subgroup of Alfonso's CEM,[139] Juan Paredes describes political CEM as comprising their own genre

> en el que la sátira gallego-portuguesa alcanzó un mayor grado de perfección formal y estilística. En estas composiciones, que tratan aspectos más o menos directamente relacionados con su política, el Rey utiliza la sátira como arma, más persuasiva en ocasiones que la fuerza del poder o las leyes, y la cantiga adquiere un sentido trascendente, que rebasa el nivel de lo puramente poético para convertirse en literatura de denuncia (ed. Carmona and Flores 451):
>
> in which Galician-Portuguese satire reached a higher grade of formal and stylistic perfection. In these compositions, which deal with aspects more or less directly related to his policy, the King (i.e., Alfonso) uses satire as a weapon at times more persuasive than the force of power or the laws, and the *cantiga* acquires a transcendent meaning, that exceeds the level of the purely poetic in order to become literature of denunciation (translation mine, parentheses added).

Paredes's attribution of formal superiority to political CEM may speak more to his individual tastes (his CPAS is the only book-length critical revision and translation of Alfonso's profane *cantigas*) than to any discrete features of the poems, but a part of his above comment is most pertinent here. His situation of CEM vis-à-vis legal texts recasts the problem addressed earlier: whereas some of the secondary literature I have presented has seemed too credulous that the *Partidas* apply to troubadour lyric, Paredes raises the very interesting historical possibility that the king at times needed lyric to impose his power in ways that the law could not.

In other words, this study has moved from questioning the comparability of written discourses, and the power one type of speech might have over another, to the questions of relative power and the king's *selection* of one discourse over another for certain inherent advantages. In this reading, not only did certain political predicaments call for Alfonso to compose slanderous *cantigas*, but also this process of selection refined the form at a stylistic (and, Paredes seems to strongly believe, aesthetic) level. Paredes

[139] Ramos considers CEM 33 a prime, although not representative, example of these political compositions (*Las cantigas* 49-54).

suggests that historical events affecting Alfonso, his court, and his kingdom, became the engines of literary development—in this case, a development Paredes deems salubrious and auspicious for the *cantiga* in general. This view of a close, even causal, relationship between political motive and poetic integrity goes well beyond my historicist view of the CEM. But it is nonetheless evidence of an attempt in the critical corpus to integrate these poems into the political structure of the court in which they were composed and first performed.

Se me graça fezesse este Papa de Roma!
Pois que el[e] os panos da mia reposte toma,
que en levass'el os cabos e dess'a mi a soma;
mais doutra guisa me foi el vende-la galdrapa.
Quisera eu assi ora deste nosso Papa
que me talhasse melhor aquesta capa.

Se m'el graça fezesse con os seus cardeaes,
que lh'eu desse, que mos talhasse iguaaes;
mais vedes en que vi en el[e] maos sinaes,
quand'o que me furtou, foi cobri-lo sa capa.
Quisera eu assi [*ora*] *deste nosso Papa*
[*que me talhasse melhor aquesta capa.*]

Se conos cardeaes, con que faça seus conselhos,
posesse que guardasse nós de maos trebelhos,
fezera gran mercee, ca non furtar con elhos
e panos dos cristãos meter so [es]sa capa.
Quisera eu assi ora deste nosso Papa
[*que me talhasse melhor aquesta capa.*]

If only this Pope of Rome would do me a good turn!
Seeing as how he takes the clothes from my closet,
I wish he'd take the low-down ones and leave me the ones up top;
In more than one way, he's tried to sell me clothes.
So now I'd like this Pope of ours
to cut that cape better for me.

If only he'd do me a good turn with his cardinals,
that he'd give it to them a bit, so that he might cut them up equally;
but you see, from what I've described, all the bad signs from him,
when that which he's stolen went to cover his cape.
So now I'd like this Pope of ours
to cut that cape better for me.

If only he and those cardinals, with whom he makes his orders,

would bother to free us from our hardships,
grant (us) the great favor of not scamming with them
and keeping the Christians' coarse clothes underneath that cape.
So now I'd like this Pope of ours
to cut that cape better for me.

Generally speaking, praise literature in the Middle Ages is passed upward, i.e., written for a patron by definition wealthier and more politically powerful than the author. Invective moves in all directions on the social and political hierarchy. Medieval epics are rhymed histories, recited by an unidentified (and historically unmarked) speaker about a named (and historically marked) hero. Praise poetry almost always travels from an inferior social position (the courtier speaker) to a superior one (the patron, or saint, or deity), thus, a king such as Alfonso would be hard-pressed to praise anyone but a legendary past hero or a canonized Christian figure. Invective, on the other hand, goes from peer to peer and from potentates to subjects.[140]

This *cantiga* illustrates the multidirectional quality of CEM along social and political hierarchies. A few qualifications and specification are in order. The slander points upward in this case, but I cannot say that its direction is totally vertical. The relationship between these two figures would not have been one of orders given and obedience offered; kings and popes made requests of one another, courted each other's favor to achieve certain ends, so that their relative powers ebbed and flowed depending on the situation. And, at a practical level, the Pope did not enjoy the direct command of great armies and dominion over expanses of lands as did kings such as Alfonso. His legal works the *Espéculo* and *Las siete partidas* set out very clear divisions between king and pope, as well as outlining the hierarchy of the kingdom itself:

> Comparing king and people to the human body, he emphasized that the king was the head and the people the members. As such, they formed a unity under the guidance and direction of the head, the king. The king was God's vicar on earth in temporal affairs, placed here to rule the people in justice, rendering to each man his due. The king wielded the same powers in his kingdom as did the emperor in his empire. Although Alfonso acknowledged the supremacy of the pope in spiritual affairs, he stressed that "we have no superior in temporal matters." By affirming two notions common among the jurists of the thirteenth century, namely "a king is emperor in his kingdom" (*rex in regno suo imperator est*) and "a king recognizes no superior in temporal affairs" (*rex non recognoscat superiorem in temporalibus*), the king was proclaiming his independence of all other rulers, while also declaring his direct dependence on God, whose vicar in temporal matters he professed to be (O'Callaghan in Burns ed., *Emperor of Culture* 15-16).

[140] This is true in both the Arabic and Iberian Romance traditions. On Arabic, see EI2, "Hidjā'" paras. 9, 12. On Galician-Portuguese, see Barros, "Poesia e poder" 23-28 and Liu, *Medieval Joke Poetry* 20-22.

It is a given that the worldview and argumentative language of these legal statements stand at many layers' difference from the literary project of transgression and derision. The main point to underscore about this Alfonsine political digest is the category of the temporal which, in a medieval Christian context, means something very close to 'worldly.' The question of whether the Pope held temporal authority was very much a concern to medieval theologians, jurists, and leaders. There is evidence that Alfonso was attentive to those theorists who attributed such authority to the Pope (Burns ed., *Worlds* 155) although, as we see above, his most important legal works argue unequivocally against that position. The division Alfonso sets between pontiff and the tangible matters of administration throw into relief the *cantiga*'s insistent motif of the Pope as tailor, as worldly and tactile a profession as one might imagine. The other important point in the above quotation is the bodily connection Alfonso makes between king and subject. Clearly, the poem attempts a very similar connection, developing a supplicant-master relationship between king and pope as a populist gesture, a theme to which I will return.

Alfonso was very much in the position of supplicant (albeit a vociferously disgruntled one) to the Pope after his 1257 election as Holy Roman Emperor.[141] Of the successive popes who, after that date, were in position to crown Alfonso and make official his title, none of them did so, frustrating one of the king's main ambitions on the European stage. It is very likely that this painful process informs the *cantiga*. Surveying the history of Alfonso vis-à-vis the Vatican, many other instances of friction emerge—I will present one more, which seems pronounced and suggestive enough to justify its consideration.

From the late 1260s onward, Alfonso conflicted with major Church officials in Iberia, a set of events that seem to have reached a peak of acrimony in deciding the bishoprics of Santiago de Compostela (Inés Fernández-Ordóñez in Martin ed., *La historia alfonsí* 55-70). The clerics in that city, alarmed by the pressures Alfonso had placed on their leadership in the church, complained to their peers throughout the kingdom, who then passed on word in official letters to Pope Nicholas III (r. 1277-80), who would eventually decry Alfonso as an oppressor of the Church (Burns ed., *Worlds* 60). Peter Linehan gives the following account:

> Alfonso X's neglect of Santiago was eloquent, but it was not benign. During the 1270s the church of Compostela suffered "muchos dannos" ('many damages') at the hands of el Rey Sabio. Alfonso drove the archbishop, Gonzalo García, into exile and engaged in wholesale attack on the rights and privileges of the church, with the result—reported to the pope by the Castilian-Leonese bishops in 1279—that "los Romeros despreciando esto assi como desguisada dexan de aver devoción e de yr en Romeria ala sobredicha" ('the pilgrims, denouncing this as a crime, are choosing not to make [their] devotions, nor to go on pilgrimage for this reason'). There is, I believe, a connexion between this and another of the bishops' *gravamina*

[141] The title of Holy Roman Emperor was, by Alfonso's time, largely symbolic. In sum, then, Alfonso's struggles with a succession of popes to confer the Empire to him was the requisition of symbolic title from the holder of another symbolic title. (Burns, *Worlds* 155-57).

> (ecclesiastical grievance) on that occasion: their complaint that the king had instituted, *auctoritate propria*, "nueva orden a religion" ('[of his] own authority,' '[a] new religious order'). They were referring to the Order of S. María de España, known also as the Order of "la Cavalleria de España," established by Alfonso in the early 1270s, incorporated into the Cistercian Order, and granted handsome privileges by the king, including free grazing rights thoughout (sic) the kingdom, as well as the monopoly of presenting at the royal court petitions […]. Small wonder that the bishops were aggrieved ("Politics of Piety" 395, parentheses added, translations mine).

The poem may predate these events and, even if it does not, there is no way of determining that they relate to the lyric complaint. It is nonetheless a real possibility, raised by Lapa in his notes to the *cantiga*; and Paredes is convinced that Santiago controversies come to bear on the lyrics. As proof, he cites the remonstration "que en levass'el os cabos e dess'a mi a soma": 'I wish he'd take the low-down ones and leave me the ones up top' (line 3). Noting that "os cabos" means the lower part of something and "a soma" the upper part, Paredes interprets the meaning specific to this poem and its moment as "que dejase al Rey elegir en última instancia quien debía ser el arzobispo": '[Alfonso wanted the Pope] to leave it to the King to decide in the end who should be the archbishop' (CPAS 127n3). This interpretation would fix us in a discrete set of years (the process of selecting Santiago's new archbishop begins in 1266); and would also invite a parallel reading of Alfonsine laws, discussed by O'Callaghan above. When O'Callaghan paraphrases Alfonso "[c]omparing king and people to the human body, he emphasized that the king was the head and the people the members" above, the source text is *Las siete partidas*:

> Et naturalmente dixieron los sabios que el rey es cabeza del regno; ca asi como de la cabeza nacen los sentidos por que se mandan todos los miembros del cuerpo, bien asi por el mandamiento que nace del rey, que es señor et cabeza de todos los del regno, se deben mandar, et guiar et haber un acuerdo con él para obedescerle, et amparar, et guardar et endereszar el regno onde él es alma et cabeza, et ellos los miembros (2.1.5):
>
> And, naturally, the wise men declared that the king is the head of the kingdom, for, as from the head originate the feelings by which all the members of the body are controlled; so also by the commands which originate from the king, who is the lord and head of all the people of his kingdom, they should be directed and guided, and act in harmony with him, to obey him, and support, and protect, and aggrandize the kingdom, of which he is the soul and head, and they are the members (trans. Samuel Parsons Scott 2:272).

The Santiago controversy, intensifying Alfonso's tumultuous relationship to the Church, demands attention for several reasons. If one is to agree with Paredes, then the

butt of the poem's joke would be, in addition to the far-off Pope, the king's own subjects in the Galician church. Also, the impact of that joke would be all the more pronounced: the priests and bishops in the Galician metropole would be ridiculed—guilty by association and, from Alfonso's perspective, collusion with the Vatican—in the very language spoken by those cleric's congregation.

If the poem were following the conflicts arising from Santiago, there would seem to be more dangers for Alfonso than advantages. The bishops' charge quoted above, that Alfonso had made life difficult for pilgrims traveling to the shrine of Santiago, would suggest a contradiction in the king's policy toward the city and its status as a pilgrimage destination, and would furthermore argue against Santiago's utility for the king in this composition. His laws explicitly address pilgrims to Santiago, calling for their protection and insurance of well-being (Alfonso X, *Opúsculos legales* 2:159-61). The Castilian-Leonese bishops' complaint to Nicholas therefore suggests that the king had violated—or, perhaps more accurately, neglected to enforce—his own orders. As noted in chapter 2, one of the most important projects of the CSM is to valorize Santiago. That effort would seem to be undercut, even if slightly, if CEM 33 were alluding to problems originating in that holy city. The documented historical discord there would seem to work against Alfonso's broader interests of promoting his wise rule, although that alone is not sufficient reason to rule it out—his enormous textual corpus is as equivocal, even contradictory, a legacy as could be imagined, no less mixed than his record of political gains and losses. The plentitude of Alfonso's documented squabbles with various clerics over at least two decades, combined with the lack of documentation surrounding CEM 33's composition, means that I can only speculate as to which pope this work might slander. The most logical guess would be Gregory, for the pointedly bad relations between him and Alfonso, although other popes are possible targets. It is practically beyond doubt that this *cantiga* targets a specific pope, rather than the institution of the papacy. In general, the CEM choose to scorn individuals and usually name them; premodern European literature in general, when explicitly critical or satirical, focuses on individual figures.[142]

The historical considerations addressed above produce questions not only sociopolitical, but Formalist as well. What makes this *cantiga* different from CEM 25

[142] The question, then, is which pope. Due to the minimal or nonexistent documentation we have about the time and circumstances of this work's composition, the answer is unclear. Technically speaking, any one of the pontiffs in power during Alfonso's rule could be considered as the target of this poem; but it seems overwhelmingly likely that Alfonso's court composes it sometime after the 1257 election mentioned above. This would narrow the field to Alexander IV (r. 1254-61), Urban IV (r. 1261-64), Clement IV (r. 1265-68), Gregory X (r. 1271-76), Innocent V (r. 1276), Adrian V (r. 1276), John XXI (r. 1276-77), Nicholas III (r. 1277-80), and Martin IV (r. 1281-85). Most of these individuals can logically be excluded because of the shortness of their respective tenures; the *cantiga* makes reference to a long period of mistreatment. In his notes to CEM 33, Lapa speculates that Clement or Gregory is the target; subsequent critics have tended to follow that judgment (Hernández Serna, "Cantigas" 146; Kinkade, "Alfonso X, Cantiga 235" 292; Paredes, CPAS 126). Gregory reigned longer than Clement; more to the point, Alfonso's relations with Gregory were especially poor. A set of Castile-Vatican conflicts having to do with Santiago clergy during Gregory's papacy (discussed in detail in the main text of this study), and Gregory's official refusal in 1272 to crown Alfonso (Ballesteros Beretta, *Alfonso X* 674-76), give us good evidence by which to identify him as the poem's "este Papa de Roma." Paredes at one point mentions Nicholas as a possibility as well, but neither he nor other CEM scholars seems to think that very probable (Paredes, "Cantigas de escarnio y las genealogías peninsulares" 140).

(and from the other CEM generally) is simply its choice of target, a contrast whose ramifications are greater than they might initially seem. The CEM, viewed as a whole, are almost always about fellow Iberians, usually noblemen, clerics, or performers (Liu, *Medieval Joke Poetry* 18, 21). The slandered party would have easy access to the lyric text, that is, s/he would understand Galician-Portuguese. Furthermore, s/he in some cases could respond to the charges and jokes made in the compositions (see the reference to Filios on the *juego de palabras* and Domingas Eanes above). The fact that this work had little potential to reach the person about whom it speaks—who would not readily understand even were he to receive it—means that its text has a very different instrumental, propagandist quality than that of more typical CEM, including other Alfonso compositions. It is a joke that celebrates its own exclusivity, and reminds its audience members of a solidarity they might not normally consider as such. Not only might this gain the sympathies of the Iberians hearing it—a humorous complaint reserved for linguistic and cultural insiders—but it might also serve as a reminder of the specifically Iberian character of the *cantiga*, an art form in which the king and the elite literate class under him took great pride.

The modeling operations this poem executes make clear Alfonso's complex relationship to the variety of languages he used for royal works. The cumulative effect of his textual projects, discussed in chapter 1, was to make clear that vernacular languages such as Castilian and Galician-Portuguese dominated cultural production *except for diplomatic and ecclesiastical speech*, which continued to be in Latin. Therefore, the motif of the Pope's inequitably cut cape and his private speech with his cardinals is all modeled in the very Galician-Portuguese lyric that complains of it. This ideological work in the *cantiga*'s language is strikingly effective, but it should not be allowed to elide certain compelling facts from Alfonsine history. There is no small irony in the vernacular-Latin tension implied by Alfonso's lyrical polemic, given that he of course used Latin actively and knowledgeably in his career. Alfonso viewed Latin as key to his own education, and used it for correspondence with clergy and non-Iberian rulers;[143] that is to say, he did not rely on the then-popular tradition in European courts of the illiterate royal dictating to scribes and/or translators.

But there exists a more prominent and sharp point on the Latin terrain Alfonso mapped out for himself. In the two decades following Alfonso's election as Holy Roman Emperor in 1257, the king seems to have employed a remarkable technique to court favor among European leaders in order to improve his position with them and thus with the Vatican. His translation schools, which had already rendered important Arabic astronomical work into Castilian, began to produce Latin versions. This re-translation effort had the effect of expanding and updating the Latin astronomic corpus; it probably coincided with Alfonso's post-1257 campaign for the Pope to crown him Emperor, which is to say that it may well have been part of that campaign (Samsó, "Alfonso X" para. 1). Of little additional value to Iberian scholars, for whom the Castilian texts were sufficient, these subsequent Latin texts were produced clearly for the dissemination of important

[143] In some cases, Alfonso seems to have used Latin to communicated with fellow Iberian royals as well as his interlocutors across Europe. On this and his Latin knowledge more generally, including his conception of education and the possibility that he had poetic skills in Latin, see Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X* 68, 83-84, 604-08.

scientific knowledge to the rest of Europe. So, although these historical observations cannot by themselves prove that Alfonso was campaigning through his translation work, there is no doubt that Latin was more than just a necessary language of correspondence for Alfonso. Rather, it was a multifaceted world of chancellery, literary, and scientific texts circulating between Castile and the rest of Europe. I have show CEM 33 as a poem of foul speech, decrying foul play; and it uses a language of exclusiveness to bemoan another form of exclusion. Alfonso's Latin work, especially that which pertains to the Pope, is the key historical and linguistic tool that he provides us to problematize his poem's claims. Discerning particular uses of language serves to reveal the intricate logical and ethical problems embedded in the text.

The intricate linguistic games in CEM 33 are not played solely by Alfonso and his lyric speaker. While the poem's language revels in its incomprehensibility—perhaps irrelevance—to the Pope himself, the reference to cardinals in the second stanza destabilizes that position, and makes way for the dysfunctional economy that is the poem's overarching goal. The Pope 'makes his orders' ("faça seus conselhos") with the cardinals, a depiction of activities the medieval Iberian audience would know happened in Latin. The private, near-conspiratorial quality of those imagined consultations provide a fitting counterweight to the private joke that is this poem. As each stanza—and even more so the chorus—fixates on the act of withholding, the idea of private speech blurs with the mercantile stinginess and privacy the Pope is said to commit. That privacy is compromised by the knowledge shared by audience members: the College of Cardinals naturally included many Spaniards, i.e., speakers of Iberian vernaculars, many of whom probably had significant exposure to Galician-Portuguese, given the importance of the language to intellectual life and the celebrated role of Santiago in Christians' pilgrimage. This fact might undercut the furtive, grumbling quality of the poetic complaint, but I suspect it had the opposite effect: the act of speaking ill of someone *who might indeed hear and understand the speech* makes the derisive act more piquant and inflammatory.

Reviewing this point, I wish to reorient the reader in the epistemology that begins and extends throughout this chapter: who is the audience, how might the audience and the putative target of scorn overlap, and what specific concerns does the poem have for enemy and audience? In delivering his tongue-in-cheek lessons about ethics and behavior, how does the lyric speaker determine who needs to be taught what? This is also a return to the territory of questioning the *cantigas*' performance, and to the discussion of *soldadeira* attacks and the *juego de palabras*. If Domingas Eanes was a speaker in the court—i.e., a performer, albeit at significant disadvantage to the troubadour author disparaging her—and could therefore respond to CEM 25, how to articulate the position of CEM 33's vaguely-sketched cardinals? It seems highly improbable that any of them would have been present for the song's major performance(s), and of course the idea of their responding in any form resembling poetic *juego* stretches the imagination. The work the poem does with the cardinals is not fully representable in terms of history and performance; its logical end is metapoetic. As noted above, the *Arte de trovar* discerns *escarnho* from *mal dizer* according to certain inherent qualities of words and phrases: *escarnho* is subtle and multivalent, *mal dizer* is direct and aggressive. CEM 33 demonstrates another criterion with which the reader might divide the two. When the

cardinals emerge as a slandered party, they also emerge as historical figures within the circulation of the *cantiga*, with the necessary language knowledge to understand it. Having started with a distant and unknowing Pope, by the second stanza the reader must consider the possibility of maligned cardinals who change the character of this slander simply by virtue of their Iberian vernacular knowledge. In this way, I argue that the audience can make the stylistic difference between the *escarnho* from *mal dizer* instead a cognitive difference. The lyric speaker grants his enemy, *deus ex machina*, a key form of agency in receiving the poem.

CEM 33 provides a useful theoretical counterweight to CEM 25 because each poem has a much different use for the royal court. CEM 25 needs to divide the court so as to reveal the basis on which it maligns Domingas: she is presence in elite company who is conspicuously non-elite herself. That effort is redundant in a certain respect; any courtier would be well aware of the *soldadeira*'s transient position, which, as Weiss has argued above, speaks to the instability of a court ethic. It is important because it makes way for a second redundant operation: impugning her honor, which courtly logic could never have ascribed to Domingas in the first place. If we can say that *soldadeiras* and other female performers were credited with moral consciousness in the court system,[144] then those morals are understood in the *cantiga* as something needing invention—and only through that process of poetic invention can Domingas be derided.[145] Only through that process, too, can the poem cohere. Although there is an element of moral flexibility and improvisation in all libertine poetry—this includes the Arabic canon from which we have read—the mode of *soldadeira* ridicule is distinguished by its reliance upon an ethical system so different from that of the court, which the poem would like to distance from the *soldadeira* even though she was a key part of the nobles' entertainment. In contrast, CEM 33 wishes to unite the court around the figure of the king pleading poverty. This might seem an easy task, given Alfonso's conspicuously dominant position overseeing cultural production at court; but the historical picture of that time suggests that any union—sentimental or pragmatic—between king and nobles would have been difficult. Alfonso's tax policies appear to have been extraordinary and unpopular, among both nobility and clergy, who seem to have been unaccustomed to the burdens placed upon them by Alfonso's military, intellectual, and administrative projects (Burns ed., *Worlds* 55-62). The broad scope of these projects may help us contextualize the scope of this poem, which reaches toward its noble primary audience but also goes well beyond that sphere. Achieving a sympathetic quorum necessarily starts with the court in which the work first takes form, and then we see the political ambition of the poem unfold.

[144] It seems extremely dubious that the courts' textual culture would vest in *soldadeiras* and their non-noble peers any kind of moral claim, given that the court itself hardly ever documents their presence. Oftentimes our only evidence of *soldadeiras* at court is not the texts proper but the illuminations that accompany them. The illuminations of the *Cancioneiro da Ajuda*, which are unfinished, are among the main sources documenting female minstrels at court (Carolina Michäelis de Vasconcelos, *Cancioneiro da Ajuda* 2:162-63).

[145] Recalling the problem Foucault identifies in ancient Greek manhood ("being passive with regard to the pleasures," cited above), it becomes evident that pleasure is not attributed to Domingas in the first place, i.e., she does not have the agency of desire.

To reach the endpoint of its polemical, the *cantiga* wishes to speak for the greater public. By the last line, we sense this as the speaker makes claims for 'the Christians' in their 'coarse clothes.' The cape on which the poetry has fixated is shown to cover something much humbler and evocative of a non-royal, non-noble existence. And, most importantly, the clothes which the cape covers do not properly belong to the Pope—the last line insists that this poem's personal complaint is generalizable and in the interests of the variegated Christian nation. The cape, by virtue of the fine material of which it is wrought, serves as a unit of exchange only between Pope and King; but the poem uses the metaphysic we encountered in Alfonso's *partida* to suggest that "Alfonso" the troubadour is voicing, naturally and inevitably, the interests of Castilian subjects.

What the legal speaker describes, the lyric speaker performs. The king's retention of supreme temporal authority in *Las siete partidas*, violated in the Pope-as-miserly tailor, is the disequilibrium to which the poem claims to respond. From the motifs of the *cantigas* we have read, and especially that of CEM 33, I would like to propose a critical motif in which I see broad historical implications. In this poem, a certain legal worldview collides and overlaps with the ethical concerns of profane literature, highlighting a problem very much at play in twentieth- and twenty-first century arguments. For novelist Charles Baxter, a lawyerly obsession with noncommittal speech has infected literature in English. His culprit is Richard Nixon:

> There he is, the late lawyer-President setting forth the brief for the defense, practicing the dogged art of the disclaimer in *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*. […]
>
> Lately I've been possessed of a singularly unhappy idea: the greatest influence on American fiction for the last twenty years may have been the author of *RN*, not in his writing but in his public character ("Dysfunctional Narratives" 67-68).

From this melancholic position as reader, Baxter pauses to question, if cursorily, his lament. "So what if the President of the United States is making himself out to be, of all things, a *victim*" (68)? The answer, and the reason for the essay's sounding of an alarm, is that this President-speaker has created "a climate in which social narratives are designed to be deliberately incoherent and misleading" (68-69), and no form of literature is immune.

So what, then, if the King of Castile and Leon is making himself out to be a victim? The question is only half-serious, but it is that serious half on which I want to conclude. Chapter 1 has made brief reference Bakhtin's carnival model, an idea that in many ways leads to, and stops at, this question. The irony of this hapless "Alfonso" character would not have been lost on his subjects who listened to the *cantiga*; but of course this literary form presupposes a mirthful and canny reception, not the sort of credulity a modern political memoir would like of its reader. For Bakhtin, the carnival is a form of social interaction but also a device, a vehicle for medieval life to reach achieve cultural fullness:

> This universal character of laughter was most clearly and consistently brought out in the carnival rituals and spectacles and in the parodies they presented. […]
>
> Next to the universality of medieval laughter we must stress another striking peculiarity: its indissoluble and essential relation to freedom. We have seen that this laughter was absolutely unofficial but nevertheless legalized. The rights of the fool's cap were as inviolable as those of the *pileus* (the clown's headgear of the Roman Saturnalias). This freedom of laughter was, of course, relative; its sphere was at times wider and at times narrower, but it was never entirely suspended (*Rabelais* 88-89, parentheses original).

Here we arrive at Bakhtin's broadest category and most important criterion for dialogue in premodern art. It is also the site of one of the most outstanding political problems in his theory. The lyric speaker folds into his own king-as-disgruntled-customer character, who then tries to associate with a Christian community of poverty and privation; it is laughter that allows this move. Baxter's objection to *RN* is of course untenable in a medieval lyric context, simply for reasons of political history (a king's authority and responsibility to his subjects is unquestionably different from a twentieth-century president's) and form (the claims of credibility in *RN*'s memoir are equally different from the appeal to laughter in CEM lyric). It is also probably safe to say that CEM 33 makes for a more pleasant experience of reading, or listening: Baxter remarks of *RN*'s style, "Leaden and dulling, juridical-minded to the last, impersonal but not without savor" (67). What these two works share is an ethical and literary kernel, a game that they play with causality, the sleight of hand that allows them a very useful passive role in politics events *specific to the fiction of these texts*.

Bakhtin is right that a literature dependent on humor anticipates the laughter-response, not only in the historicizing of that literature but as a structure that the reader can observe in its written form. He is also right that laughter constructs speech, allows alternative rules to the social world; the anticipatory element of the humorous text necessitates a speaker (laugher) aside from the lyric speaker (*Rabelais* 16-17, 71, 87-88). What is not so convincing in Bakhtin's theory is his attribution of autonomy to that laughing second speaker, the key member of the dialogic operation. The presence of a laughing respondent to the poetic language does not ensure that the respondent affects the poem's political thrust. Dialogic theory moves from linguistic terminology to the social and then political, and it is in that social-political moment that I think it requires braking and a revised route. In various respects, all the poems selected above argue for that revision, most of all CEM 33. With all its cheek, its marketplace imagery and populist tone, this *cantiga* nonetheless insists upon a rigid political structure. A critical reading of this text finds a striking and disquieting semiotics: what the king wants is what the king wants, and no amount of playful allegory complicates that equation. Whether Alfonso wanted, at the moment he produced this *cantiga*, the crown of the Holy Roman Empire or an untroubled process of naming the Archbishop of Santiago, the desire is unitary and the lyric cannot mask the one royal voice from which it issues.

Chapter 4: The Work of Definitions and Conclusions

Las siete partidas' version of the court, to which I have referred briefly already, is so illustrative of certain medieval textual cultures, and so rich as its own text, that it requires a lengthier examination than I have thus far given it:

> Corte es llamado el logar do es el rey, et sus vasallos et sus oficiales con él, que le han cotianamente de consejar et de servir, et los otros del regno que se llegan hi ó por honra dél, ó por alcanzar derecho, ó por facer recabdar las otras cosas que han de veer con él […]. Otrosi es dicho corte segunt lenguage de España, porque alli es la espada de la justicia con que se han de cortar todos los males tambien de fecho como de dicho, asi los tuertos como las fuerzas et las soberbias que facen los homes et dicen, porque se muestran por atrevidos et denodados, et otrosi los escarnios et los engaños, et las palabras soberbias et natias que facen á los homes envilescer et seer rafeces. Et los que desto se guardaren et usaren de las palabras buenas et apuestas, llamarlos han buenos et apuestos et enseñados; et otrosi llamarlos han corteses, porque las bondades et los otros buenos enseñamientos, á que llaman cortesia, siempre los fallaron et los preciaron en las cortes (2.9.27).
>
> The place where the king, his vassals, and his officers, whose duty it is daily to advise and serve him, and where the men of the kingdom gather, either for his honor, or to obtain justice or dispense it, or to transact other business, which they are required to communicate to him, is called the Court. […] It is called *corte*, in the Spanish language, because there is kept the sword of justice, with which all evil acts in word or deed are punished, as, for instance, the wrongs, violence, and arrogance which men do and say, by which they show themselves to be insolent and bold, as well as the jeers, falsehoods, and outrageous and vain speeches which render men contemptible and mean. Such as[146] avoid things of this kind, and use words which are proper and well-considered, are called good and educated. They are also called courteous because the excellent qualities and other beneficial instruction which compose what is called courtesy, are always to be found and learned in courts (trans. Scott 2:328).

To abbreviate where possible, I have omitted the etymological section, in which the text provides a lucid commentary of *corte*'s root in Latin (*curia*) and its cognate term in French (*cohors*). That omission also helps highlight the exertions this legislative speaker makes in the linguistic claim about Spanish, which is what I believe demands our attention most forcefully. Comparative linguistics give way to the self-referential, aligning *corte* ('court') with *cortar* ('to cut'). The law displays its creativity with

[146] "Such as […]" meaning 'Those who […]' in this context.

language history and its willingness to depart from a demonstrable etymology in favor of a strictly phonetic association.[147] The move seems more paronomastic than historicist or linguistic, which is to say, the wordplay seems intentional and self-conscious. It is therefore poetic in character, and extremely useful: likening *corte* to *cortar* insists that the reader imagine the court as both a template for new speech and a critical tool that separates good utterances from bad. (One is reminded of the Arabic term *ḥadd*: meaning, in the material world, 'edge,' e.g., of a sword or the boundary of a realm; and in intellectual affairs meaning 'limit' and 'definition.') The 'sword of justice' is an intellectual tool that discerns and defines. In so doing, it defines the court itself. It requires little imagination to understand—and, in 2.10.3, this *partida* says so explicitly—that the sword is wielded by the king and no one else. Therefore, we might conclude that the king's duties include a form of editing that necessarily precedes the punishment he must mete out when he determines speech to be unacceptable.

Ibn ᶜAbbād, too, was closely attuned to the court's adjudicatory power on language, although he was famously assailed for having contaminated his court. Al-Tawḥīdī claims in AW that the vizier had no sense of the etiquette befitting his position (188) but, even if the many Ibn ᶜAbbād-related anecdotes cited in that book are veracious, there is another account that would seem to argue vigorously against al-Tawḥīdī's thesis. On the authority of two interlocutors (one relaying the story to another, who then tells al-Thaᶜālibī), YDQ relays Ibn ᶜAbbād's story about visiting the prince with whom he had delicate relations, politically and personally:

> ما استأذن لي على فخر الدولة وهو في مجلس الأنس إلا انتقل إلى مجلس الحشمة، فيأذن لي فيه، وما أذكر أنه تبذّل بين يدي وما زحني قط إلا مرة واحدة، فإنه قال لي في شجون الحديث بلغني أنّك تقول المذهب مذهب الاعتزال، والنيك نيك الرجال. فأظهرت الكراهة لانبساطه وقلت بنا من الجد مالا نفرغ معه للهزل، ونهضت كالمغاضب، فما زال يعتذر إليّ مراسلة، حتى عاودت مجلسه، ولم يعد بعدها لما يجري مجرى الهزل والمدح.
> (YDQ 3:237)

> When Fakhr al-Dawla would host a salon of companions, I was only granted an audience with him when it shifted to an extremely polite gathering, at which point he would receive me. I do not recall him ever becoming informal with me and he never joked with me at all, except for one time, when he made a remark to me with more than one meaning: "I've heard that you say, '*The* theology is that of Muᶜtazilism, and *the* sex to have is sex with men.'" So I showed my disgust at his brazenness, saying, "We take seriously that which should not be wasted with joking!" and I rose as if in anger. He apologized to me continuously in writing until I returned, and after that he did not go back (to that kind of speech) when the conversation turned to joking and praise (translation mine, emphasis and parentheses added).

[147] This is far from the only such instance of questionable word histories in Alfonsine legislative prose, which are most acute with Arabic-derived terms, on which see García González, "El contacto" 357-65.

This suggests that both the prince and vizier are sensitive to the intricacies of populating the court session, and how the patron overseeing that session can define the session in terms of language use. Fakhr al-Dawla exercises his prerogative to receive certain courtiers for certain occasions, with certain groups who are expected to speak and behave according to a tone Fakhr al-Dawla sets; Ibn ᶜAbbād notes this without discernible complaint. Although this practice limits his opportunities to sit with the prince—and although we cannot be sure whether the vizier accepts this policy to which he is subject—we have no indication it offends Ibn ᶜAbbād in any way. Even that which does offend him is, as he acknowledges, is not altogether clear in meaning. Fakhr al-Dawla's 'brazenness' (*inbisāṭihi*), at which the vizier bristles, may connect with the Muᶜtazilism reference (Khan, "The Sahib" 192); it surely connects with the sexual adage that then follows. By virtue of his well-known Muᶜtazilī loyalties, Ibn ᶜAbbād is implicated as the advocate of man-on-man sex, but this is hardly a stylistic terrain with which he is unfamiliar—in his "*sibṭ mattawayh*" attack in the previous chapter, he himself associates Muᶜtazilī arguments with sodomy. Clearly, what he is claiming to reject is the violation of the 'extremely polite gathering' (*majlis al-ḥishma*) with which he associates his meetings with Fakhr al-Dawla. Ibn ᶜAbbād wants there to exist a clear and consistent logic of patronage at court, i.e., the patron should make consistent his rules of decorum. This matter of policy allows Ibn ᶜAbbād, as a courtier, to enter the session confident that he understands how to speak and what he can expect to hear. Had Fakhr al-Dawla opened his court to Ibn ᶜAbbād in all manner of occasions—formal and informal, polite and intimate, or even rowdy—we might assume that the vizier would accept that arrangement and acclimate to the variety of discourse he could expect there.

What Ibn ᶜAbbād seems to want is a fixed relation between policy and speech. When he views that relation as loose, he protests in such a way that demonstrates (at least if the account is to be believed) his power, even over his political superior. He asserts his superior mastery of the rules that Fakhr al-Dawla would pretend to enforce in his own gatherings. Those rules are not limited to how one should speak; they also determine who populates a particular *majlis*. While the vizier fulfills his passive role as selected courtier, and the prince does not fulfill his active role as selector and guarantor of the expected polite norms of speech, Ibn ᶜAbbād appoints himself as the active party instead, briefly suspending his own membership. When he rejoins, he notes his success in recalibrating the *majlis*—which is tantamount to recalibrating Fakhr al-Dawla—to his standard of consistency and dignity. The prince puts himself to work in this narration, lest he lose his courtier who is perhaps most important of all non-royal attendees. Told in this way, the story credits the vizier as asserting control, not in an abstract form but rather measured concretely in the higher-ranked party's labor.

Reading the above *partida* in conversation with the feigned powerlessness of CEM 33, or reading Ibn ᶜAbbād's anecdote, we follow dual narratives of rigidity and flexibility. On one hand there are legal and rhetorical calls for clear rules, boundaries that are understood, and understood as inviolable. On the other hand, the literary texts that I have presented almost all agree with the anecdote above, in that they show how strategically Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso assume personas in (often fictional but, as I have argued, authoritatively rendered) political hierarchies. In both anecdote and poem, we see

how strategic is that process of political invention, and how the speaker allows himself to shift positions according to his agenda. The above anecdotes invite us to revisit the poems treated in this study, to examine the fictional power structures within the poetic text and to see how that power—i.e., those political structures—allow for political meaning outside the text. I have argued that invective is a multidirectional tool for navigating social and political hierarchies. This applies to "invective" broadly understood: the named poetic forms identified by medieval rhetoricians (e.g., *hijā'* and the CEM) and the more abstract sense of invective, a goal of literary speech regardless of generic label. Because praise is not supposed to reach in any direction but upward, we see that poets—including the two of interest to this study—make use of the evocative, fictional structures available to poetry, in order to make the sociopolitical rules more flexible than they might initially appear.

Ibn ᶜAbbād makes use of a technique common in Arabic literature, the *duᶜā'* (meaning appeal, invocation, or even supplication, generally voiced toward God or one's patron) in order to shift backward the register of self-promotion in his poems. We see that his praise of Abū l-Faḍl ibn al-ᶜAmīd ("*Qadima l-ra'īsu*") ends with a cathartic *duᶜā'*, a predictable move consistent with the mentor-student relationship affirmed throughout the poem. Praising Imam Ali ("*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*"), he writes a more fraught and compelling version of supplication. The lyric speaker who (serving as advocate for a discrete persona he names "Ibn ᶜAbbād") extols his own rhetorical prowess against enemies ignorant of calls for daily religious practice; the timbre and volume of those calls allow the speaker to issue his own call. Asking the Shīᶜī imams (Ali in particular) to protect this "Ibn ᶜAbbād" in life and usher him into the righteous side of the afterlife, the speaker blurs the distinction between himself and the persona for whom he speaks. This has the important effect of dividing between him and "Ibn ᶜAbbād" the humbling force inherent in *duᶜā'*, so that the self-aggrandized speaker momentarily lowers himself in the interests of his client, who assumes *a priori* the position of modest supplicant to the imams. This move also speaks subtly of a patron-poet relation within the composition, the patron of course as "Ibn ᶜAbbād" who has contracted the lyric speaker as a pious kind of poet and rhetorician. Ending the poem with a reversion to triumphal speech, the speaker foresees the acclaim his poem will elicit from audiences; he remains the self-promoter and "Ibn ᶜAbbād" remains a silent beneficiary of the poem's performance.

Alfonso of course also plays the role of supplicant, or rather supplicants: we have seen how the economy of desire and withheld payments drives the CEM, but the CSM are themselves a sustained request. From the Prologue to the work marking the last phase of Marian lyric production, a personal appeal to Mary runs through the CSM as a plumb line. The Prologue's invocation of the troubadour title (see chapters 1 and 2) puts forward a motive that resonates in CSM 279, in which the chorus pleads with Mary to save "vosso trobador" ('your troubadour') from illness. Because the *cantiga* demonstrates that Mary has heeded the request, the confirmation of Alfonso's cure joins with confirmation of his Mary's-troubadour status. In a certain sense, then, one of the CSM's most important desires is fulfilled. But because the CSM appropriate so much of the profane-love structure, and because that structure precludes fulfillment of the central desire for union, the sacred songbook insists upon leaving important bonds untied.

CSM 401 effects, through its work of supplication, an open quality of the Alfonso-Mary relationship. The ritualistic quality of addressing and beseeching the beloved reaches its zenith and conclusion, fitting for its thematic and codicological status as ending the collection. The CSM as a project require Alfonso's voice as a living man; they cannot definitively reconcile the speaker's stated desire (to be Mary's troubadour and chaste companion) with the royal biography they sketch, because the true union with Mary is only possible through the speaker's death, a reflection of love poetry's insistence that its sense of lack or pain be ameliorated only in the speaker's arrival at love union or his own death. All of this represents a remarkable intersection with my findings in chapter 3 that slanderous poetry privileges control of desires and the body. Alfonso's lyric lover calls out in CSM 401 for the Virgin to protect him from intemperate, dangerous desires, both others' and his own. As plaintive troubadour, Alfonso laments his sins (in lines to be discussed subsequently) and asks Mary to ensure he not "meu aver enpregue tam mal com' enpreguey/en algũus logares, segundo que eu sey,/perdend' el e meu tenpo e aos que o dey": 'employ my wealth so foolishly as I have done on certain occasions, as I well know, thereby losing it and my time and those to whom I gave it' (KH 483). This view of personal history takes advantage, partially, of the victim trope we see in CEM 33's view of papal history, marshaling simple monetary transactions as broad imperial allegories. And, also resonating with that CEM, the Petition grasps certain disputes that may have had very public and widespread impact in the kingdom, and renders them personal and financial. In this way, the above-quoted lines may even serve as a reluctant apology for past fiscal policies.

But what is most immediately compelling about the poem's historiography is how surely it bridges my critical view of both praise and invective: CSM 401 suggests that the route to salvation *and* good governance lies in moderation. The cantiga prosecutes a certain amount of its legalistic argument in the very lexicon from which it draws, Alfonso seeking safety "daqueles que dan/pouco por gran *vileza* e *vergonna* non an" (emphasis added): 'from those who think nothing of [committing] great *disgrace* and who have no sense of *shame*' (trans. mine).[148] I have italicized the two Galician-Portuguese words whose Spanish cognates function so prominently in *partida* 2.9.27, to signal the multiple levels at which CSM 401 assumes a prescriptive, even juridical authority. *Vergonna* in particular stands out. In *Las siete partidas*, the term *vergüenza* denotes shame in the sense of honorable self-control, or even simple moderation. It is crucial to knightly status (2.21.2, 2.21.22), and therefore crucial to one's good standing in the king's court—we see the implicit argument of CSM 401 made explicit in the legal text. There is a lengthy elaboration on this in Spanish imaginative literature as well: Don Juan Manuel (1282-1348), Alfonso's nephew and a preeminent medieval author, in two works meditates on *vergüenza* and its role in the nobleman's life.[149]

[148] KH translates this excerpt "from those who hold vile deeds in little and have no shame" (483). I have chosen to translate it differently because the phrase to "hold in little" would imply restraining little, which is not exactly what the original texts seems to say; or it may be that KH neglected a word, i.e., the text would read "from those who hold vile deeds in little regard […]," to imply that these immoral people see vile deeds as common, cheap, and acceptable.

[149] See Juan Manuel's *Libro del cavallero et del escudero* and *El Conde Lucanor*, both in *Obras completas*.

To read *vileza* and *vergonna* in a theoretical context is to return to the territory marked by Foucault and his ethical problematic: "being passive with regard to the pleasures" (*Use* 86) which, I argue, enables languages of poetic praise and slander. If the above quotation shows the particular royal prescriptions of the CSM—Alfonso aspiring to a kingship model familiar to us from *Las siete partidas*, and in so doing refining the CSM's didactic voice—then what is left for this poem to do is to parlay its ethics into a broader political worldview. The supplication extends from the individuality of the king to his relationships generally as the speaker seeks protection "daquel que se preça muit' e mui pouco val,/e de quen en seus feitos sempr' é descomunal": 'from him who thinks much of himself but is worth very little/and from him who makes an inordinate fuss about his actions' (translation mine).[150] The mismatch between words and deeds, between words and attributes, and finally between actions and their appraisal—to be *descomunal* literally means to be extreme or aberrant (DDGM, "descomunal")—makes a man dangerous in his proximity to the king. And, although it is understood implicitly (and explicitly in the *Partidas* themselves) that the king himself is to avoid adopting these cognitive and behavioral qualities, this poem is distinct in that it shows how misunderstanding one's inferior position vis-à-vis the king creates a disequilibrium that threatens the king himself. These imbalanced subjects seem to function as we might imagine free radicals doing in an organism, their lacking composition making them highly reactive with other atoms and molecules, and thereby damaging living cells with which they come into contact.

Scholars call CSM 401 the *Petiçon* or Petition *cantiga* because its text bears the epigraph, "Esta é petiçon que fezo el rey a Santa Maria" ('This is a petition the King made to Saint Mary'). Among the remarkable qualities of this work is that it comments not only on its own composition, but also on the CSM as collected texts.[151] As with the self-effacement ending Ibn ᶜAbbād's composition "*Qadima l-ra'īsu muqaddaman fī sibqihi*," the Petition apologizes for its author's inadequacy. In so doing, it ruminates upon the Prologue's stated desires, seeming to leave them open as questions but at the same time confirming their fulfillment. The criterion on the lyric Alfonso fears he has failed is not his ability in *trobar*, nor Mary's acceptance of him as troubadour; these in fact elevate him to the position necessary to apologize and request:

> Pois a ti, Virgen, prougue que dos miragres teus

[150] I depart from my usual practice of using KH's translations here because this stanza (lines 72-81) is missing in the most recent edition. In e-mail correspondence about this lacuna, Kathleen Kulp-Hill has told me that a forthcoming edition will correct this problem.

[151] The strongest historical and codicological evidence indicates that Alfonso's original ambition was to create and compile one hundred CSM and, presumably time and resources allowed their expansion, he set to making the collection four hundred long (O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the* Cantigas de Santa Maria 11). Mettman has collected 427 works from all extant manuscripts, the latter twenty-six thought to have been extraneous to the concerted Alfonsine compilation efforts. The Petition *cantiga* appears in two manuscript versions. In the Toledo codex (dating to 1257 or after), the shortest of CSM sources but reflecting the earliest versions of the lyrics, the Petition ends the collection, remarking upon the one hundred poems that have preceded it in that codex. In the younger Escorial codex (dating between 1270 and 1285) the Petition follows four hundred works, and its text is amended from the Toledo version so that it does not specify a total number of CSM. This editorial change is picked up by Mettmann in his edition, so as to reflect the expanded volume of CSM composed after the Toledo version (ed. Mettman 3:303, O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the* Cantigas de Santa Maria 9).

fezess' ende cantares, rogo-te que a Deus,
teu fillo, por mi rogues que os pecados meus
me perdon e me quiera reçebir ontr' os seus
no santo parayso, u éste San Matheus,
Sand Pedr' e Santi[a]go, a que van os romeus, […].

[…] que possa mias gentes en justiça tẽer,
e que senpre ben sábia enpregar meu aver,
que os que mio fillaren mio sábian gradeçer.

Since it has pleased you, Virgin, that I have made songs
from your miracles, I beg you to pray for me to God
your Son that He may pardon my sins
and deign to receive me among His own
in Holy Paradise, where sit Saint Matthew,
Saint Peter, and Saint James, to whom the pilgrims go […].

[…] May I govern my people with justice
and employ my wealth wisely
so that those who inherit it from me will be grateful to me for it (KH 482).

False modesty has become so clearly a key mechanism to the poems we have read that its emergence in a pious vein should come as little surprise. That which is most compelling here, and deepens the critical inquiry into Alfonso's writings, is the shifting positions he takes vis-à-vis Jesus, Mary, and then the people of Spain.

As in CEM 33, the speaker's hierarchical transience allows a kind of transcendence. In both profane and sacred poems, the king negotiates his position among other people, so that he is never locked into one definitive role as elevated lord or common-class subject. CEM 33 and 401 imagine hierarchies for the express purpose of allowing the speaker to take multiple positions therein. His portability is his power. And while this maneuver of text and speaker runs through a great many of Alfonso's CSM and CEM, we see it most acutely in those compositions which explicate requests and demands. The Petition places Mary in the middle, the interlocutor via whom the persona "Alfonso" issues pleas to Jesus (who is in the CSM's Trinitarianism both God and His son). By this point in the accretion of songs, her approbation is understood as given, earned by the *trobar* mastery the speaker has demonstrated. As the exhortation follows, in the fourth stanza, "que possa mias gentes en justiça tẽer," the king's subjects enter the matrix, rendering it almost symmetrical vertically (see below).

Jesus
Mary (intermediary between Jesus and Alfonso)
Alfonso (intermediary between God and Subjects)
Spanish subjects

The request that Jesus ensure Alfonso's sound governance completes the logical circle begun in this and many CSM preceding it, i.e., the premise that Fernando (and Alfonso as his son) was chosen by God to rule. It also allows the CSM to reflect a fundamental premise of *Las siete partidas*. O'Callaghan, as cited in chapter 3, notes Alfonso's concept of the king as "God's vicar on earth" [Burns ed., *Emperor of Culture* 15]; he is quoting almost verbatim *Partida* 2.1.5, which argues, "Vicarios de Dios son los reyes cada uno en su regno puestos sobre las gentes para mantenerlas en justicia […]": 'Kings, each one in his kingdom, are the vicars of God, appointed over people to maintain them in justice […]' [trans. Scott 2:271].)

Supplication as ritual, and its potential to open up multiple positions for Alfonso's lyric persona to fill, connects the CSM to the CEM in ways that go beyond the sociopolitical mechanics we have seen. When read alongside CEM 33, the CSM's Prologue is tangibly, forcefully historicist. The postscript quality of the Petition caps the CSM, of course, but also cements a political bond between sacred and profane canons. This connection has hardly been explored in *cantiga* studies, which often read one or the other form of *cantiga* in conversation with Alfonsine prose (especially *Las siete partidas*) but do not acknowledge the common techniques, nor the common goals, shared by these two sides of the king's poetic endeavors. The CSM's sustained pursuit of a transcendental aim by no means excludes more worldly matters; the language of quotidian concerns that we see in CSM 292 and 132 informs Alfonso's entire Marian project, and we see how prominent worldly *politics* become elsewhere in the collection.[152] In a sense, the campaign for Emperor that marks CEM 33 is just as important to the CSM's Prologue. Detailing all the Iberian kingdoms ruled by Alfonso, Prologue A goes on to call him 'King of the Romans' ("dos Romãos Rey," ed. Mettmann 1:54), leaving no room for doubt that this body of poems, at first glance seeming far-removed from the CEM teleologically, rests on the same sense of yet-unfulfilled desire. As the poems unfold as a sequence, every tenth composition is a *cantiga de loor* (song of praise), in which the speaker not only exhorts his audience to join in the general devotional movement of praising Mary, but often adds personal statements of his own devotion. We might read CSM 401 as a culmination of this personalized and generalized desire, and an important stopping-point where "Alfonso" the lyric speaker emphasizes the CSM as a life's endeavor.[153]

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[152] For works dedicated in large part or wholly to the politics of the CSM, see Fontes, "A função"; Kinkade, "Alfonso X, *Cantiga* 235"; O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the* Cantigas de Santa Maria; Presilla, "Image of Death"; and Scarborough, *A Holy Alliance*.

[153] Two of the best-known instances of scholars taking this view are Mettmann and Snow. Mettmann, in the introduction of his CSM edition, considers the history of those *cantigas*' manuscripts and their respective dates; he cites variations in codices containing CSM 401 as evidence for certain manuscripts' respective ages, and also for the scope of Alfonso's project (21-23). Snow, citing Mettmann, offers his own interpretation of the texts of CSM 400 and 401, which he sees as adding finishing notes of *loor* and humility to the collection ("Central" 308-9). He emphasizes "the establishment of the troubadour persona in the *CSM*," "the internal consistency needed as the collection grew from 100 poems to 400," and "the creation of a troubadour persona to provide an internal unity to the entire collection" (309). In this formulation, the coherence of the songbook depends upon a consistent lyric-speaker's personality; the overall CSM project is the creation of that personality through an accretion of poetic documents, and then the merger of that personality with the divine.

* * *

Comparative Literature as a discipline suffers from an acute anxiety—notable even within the Humanities more generally, whose legitimacy and use value is itself under great scrutiny in institutions and society at large. To compare texts and authors and careers leads to the charged questions of comparing histories and cultures, questions whose urgency has doubled and redoubled since European philologists and critics claimed for themselves cosmopolitan roles in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Terence Cave, looking back upon Erich Auerbach's seminal comparative work, *Mimesis*, remarks, "[W]hat stands out most is the innocence (the ingenuousness, even) with which he uses his key word. One shudders at the difficulty of rewriting *Mimesis* now, when the concept of representation has become a battlefield on which rival factions fight openly (if at times obscurely) for an impossible victory" (*Recognitions* 5, parentheses original). That shudder speaks a theoretician's response to *Mimesis*, an appraisal of the term itself and its refractions in the forty years between Auerbach's 1946 magnum opus and Cave's intervention. But it is also a comparatist's response. If we inspect the major theoretical trends to which Cave seems to attribute the "battlefield"—Postmodernism, Structuralist criticism, Post-Structuralism, Subaltern Studies, and Identity Politics all come to mind—we see debates over representation becoming increasingly focused on authority, ethnography, and how the two intertwine. It seems of no small significance that, the same year (1988) in which *Recognitions* was published, so was Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?"—a precursor of a trend that would mark the next decade of scholarship, questioning the very possibility of representation in certain European theories of language, culture, and subjectivity.

In other words, these debates throw into question the comparative impulse itself. This is true of contests over representation, over mimesis as a portable idea, and over *Mimesis* as a historically specific book. It is no longer tenable to present, chapter by chapter, two dozen major works of literature from various languages and assume that (1) their canonical status makes them exemplars of whole historical movements in literature; and (2) the comparative criticisms made in the study itself are justified by the critic's philological credentials and an overarching, binary language of appraisal (in the case of *Mimesis*, parataxis/hypotaxis). Bereft of the license Auerbach enjoyed, scholars of Comparative Literature at times feel compelled to issue careful apologias for their studies. This compulsion is especially strong when the study goes beyond what Auerbach calls in his book's subtitle 'Western Literature' (*abendländischen Literatur*) because, among the controversies Cave seems to have in mind, some of the thorniest are over the representation of West and East.

The task, then, is to make that self-reflexive scholarly tendency more productive than restrictive. If we agree that comparative literary study issues from a desire to treat texts and languages in a capacious manner, then we might recall the Structuralist school of linguistics and cultural criticism. The boldest, and ultimately most assailable, move Structuralism made was from the diachronic model of philology to the synchronic. If a truly synchronic understanding of language—or culture and texts, as anthropologists and

literary critics would attempt in adopting Structuralist techniques from linguists—were possible, the entire object of study would be perfectly demonstrable as a system of parts, each part defined by its function and not by its sound or appearance. Even Roman Jakobson, perhaps the most important critical interlocutor between Structuralist linguistics and literary study, warns against rigid or exclusive synchronic methods.[154] Structuralism is no longer fashionable *per se* as a critical mode, but there is no doubt that it has been folded into the language of literary criticism since crossing over from linguistics in the mid-twentieth century. The reason I raise it as a critical issue here is that Structuralism affords a unique opportunity to review this study's contentions on Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso, and to indicate how those contentions may apply to other authors' works. Furthermore, because every theorist we have thus far encountered is informed, directly or indirectly, by Structuralism, we are able to conclude in such a way that traces a common thread through this study's critical bibliography.

The multiple political and social positions we have discussed, which Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso open up for their poetic speakers to occupy, neither hold nor generate any inherent power. Bourdieu says of modern cultural products that "one can never entirely escape from the hierarchy of legitimacies" (*Distinction* 88); it is my argument that his point applies to (1) the artworks of medieval courts and (2) class status or dominance in those courts as sociopolitical spaces. Structuralism is no doubt a contested school of thought—just to take the example of Bourdieu, his clear appropriation of some of its techniques comes with serious reservations about its uses across social sciences and the humanities (*In Other Words* 6, 20). Despite that, it seems uncontroversial to claim that a position within a hierarchical structure has no meaning without the positions around, above, and below it. In the process of creating and assigning such positions in their poems, Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso write small political worlds, highly efficient for their simplicity but also illustrative of the larger systems around them. (One need only to read "*Yā zā'iran sā'iran*" for its drawing-up of a religious, theological, and dogmatic taxonomy; and CEM 33 for its elaborate fiction of power.) In all of these individual compositions, there is a clear sense of who is superior to whom; furthermore, the speaking persona occupies a privileged role, even if privileged by virtue of its strategic inferiority to a patron, pontiff, or divine figure. Viewed as a collective, the works of each of these two poets create a sense of power by the variability of the speaker's position relative to the other personas and groups written into the poetry.

As we identify the varying modes in which the speaker conveys his paeans, desires, requests, demands, judgments, condemnations, etc., we engage in the very process by which poems as a collective demonstrate the binding element of their text. This recalls Bruns and his understanding of the canonical (see chapter 2 of the present study), which I would like to revise slightly now that we have had the benefit of reading slander in addition to praise poetry. Bruns's term, "situation," as in "forceful in a given situation" becomes plural, to accommodate the multiplicity of position-takings we have now seen. The capacious aspect of Comparative Literature is at work in how we read the Arabic anthology or the Romance *cancioneiro*, even independently of one another; the

[154] Jakobson in fact co-authors this critique with longtime collaborator and fellow analyst of Russian poetics Jurij Tynjanov ("Problems in the Study of Language and Literature" 30).

capacious potential of Structuralism is at work in the construction of a songbook such as the CSM which, as we see above, has a deliberate function of walking the audience through a linear process of persona-building from song to song. That persona has rather little authority in the context of just one composition. Instead, he demonstrates through his versatility—and, in the CSM, evolution[155]—the mastery he exerts socially. Then, through a process of ordering in the minds of the audience, that social dominance transfers to a form of political dominance.

Although Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso display an extraordinary sensitivity to power dynamics—and their poems, legislations, and anecdotes all evince that quality—there are of course important layers and devices that mediate between poetic persona and worldly politics. The social and political impact of the poem is a crossing-over of several levels of separation between poetic text, social space of the court (which we as researchers create, in some senses, by theorizing it), and the larger political situation (to which we have partial access through our reading of court documents and literary texts) informing all of the court's projects. Both Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso append their own names to the speaker in certain poems; although these speakers are always avatars of one kind or another for the historical figure of vizier or king, it would be a methodological error to elide speaker with author. These poems only function—as pieces performed in discrete social spaces, with discrete political realities at work—in the indirect nexus of contact between text, performance, and reception.

The echoes of Structuralist criticism applied above to the literary texts should, ideally, apply to a broader understanding of medieval literature. And, if we appeal to the synchronic motive that marks Structuralism's origins, we hope to characterize literary devices beyond the Middle Ages, a project beyond the scope of this study but nonetheless worth considering. It would, for one thing, be a useful product of the critical response this study hopes to elicit from its readers. I have argued that both poets' literary projects do their strongest political work by shifting the poem's speaker in his voice and his role vis-à-vis the other personas around him in the poetic imaginary. It would be worthwhile to consider the possibility that comparable medieval literary figures—i.e., other authors with historically demonstrated political goals, especially authors who are also political leaders—use this same technique. This is the outer limit of the present study's argument, a hypothesis obviously untested here; I am hopeful that future scholarship will explore it and test its soundness.

Now that we have seen common sociopolitical mechanics in Ibn ᶜAbbād's and Alfonso's respective oeuvres, the question is whether this commonality is incidental or whether it tells us something about medieval cultural history in general. I suspect that the latter is the case. Precisely because of Alfonso's involvement with Arabic literary culture, and the temptations presented by extant scholarship to associate his writings with Arabic *adab*, poetry, and music, I have tried to delineate from the outset that such associations are probably unwarranted in the literature discussed herein. To make this caveat clear, I have cited the broad temporal, cultural, linguistic, and political distances between Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso—perhaps surprising to readers accustomed to Andalus-oriented

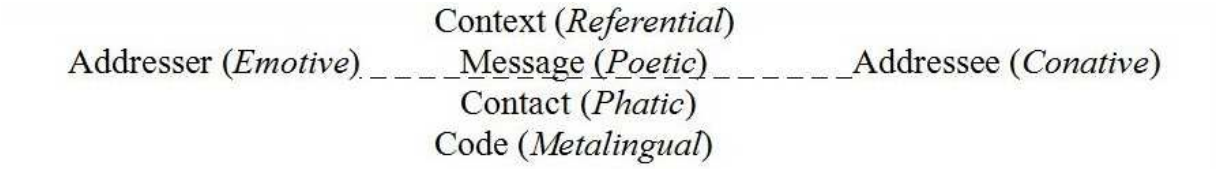
[155] Evolution to be understood in a linear-development sense only in the case of the CSM, the one group of compositions we have read that reflects an order the author(s) seem to have envisioned.

Spanish historiography, still popular some sixty years after Américo Castro changed the field with his insistence on a multicultural discourse of history. Because of the crucial links Castro and many of his students have made between Spanish culture as we know it and the medieval Islamo-Arab civilization that flourished in Iberia, and the irrefutable fact of Alfonso's deep engagement with ᶜAbbasid *adab*, it seems necessary to have explained in this study that Alfonso did not author poetry in direct conversation with Ibn ᶜAbbād's work, nor indeed with the Arabic poetic form writ large. (There is an argument to be made, in my estimation, for an indirect poetic interaction, although it has generally been limited to musicology, on which see chapter 1.) With all that being said, the distance I have tried to chart between these two figures is one of the strongest arguments for the speculative structural claim forwarded here: the lack of poetic intertextuality between these two oeuvres suggests strongly that the poet's manufacture of a versatile, portable, and multivocal speaker is an ideological technique available and useful across literary traditions. It will require the input of other scholarship, reading from other premodern canons and perhaps modern ones as well, to see whether or not this speculation holds true.

The turn to epistemology in the previous chapter sought to pull apart poems and view some of their simplest and most essential mechanics, a move closely aligned with the Structuralist impulse to identify the working parts of a system. Revisiting that language of knowledge, we begin to focus on the discrete site from which the poem delivers information, and on the destination site. This work of conveyance happens as any poem is uttered; but there is of course another level, evident in both the praise and slanderous pieces we have read, at which the poem purports to deliver information. In other words, we want to distinguish between that which the audience in general receives and that which the assumed target of the poem is portrayed as receiving within the poem's own logic. The contrast that has emerged through chapters 2 and 3 is between a praised figure, whom the poem understands as already aware of the qualities which the poem attributes to him or her; and a slandered figure, whose ignorance is both a topic of slander and the very quality that allows the speaker to take an explanatory role. When we speak of the poem's archetypal, historically specific audience, we imagine the population of the court, a group in which Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso (as well as all their peers, both politicians and literati) have obvious and deep investments. The careful thought that both men paid to understanding courts and how to navigate them is attested by the medieval prose quoted above, and echoed in Weiss's phrase, "the ethical basis of court performance" (see chapter 3). In both the ᶜAbbasid and Castilian empires, the concern with ethics, behavior, and language—the attributes that qualified people as courtiers, how those people should act, what they should say and to whom—makes the court not only the proving ground for those seeking admission therein, but also an ideal for the royal subject in the abstract. This is especially true in Alfonso's case: *Las siete partidas* use the historical functions of etymology to insist that the court as trans-historical, even though they characterize its Spanish iteration as distinct from other kingdoms'. In this way, the court fashions the subject—not just s/he who gains admittance to the court, but also the member of the masses, who would never be able to approach a courtly gathering, much

less enter.[156] In treating praise and slander, we examined the poems' techniques for delivering information to their targets and referents, i.e., the praised and slandered parties invoked in text. Now I wish to shift attention to these same poems' delivery of information to their audiences as collective groups. What unites both of these critical inquiries is that they inspect the poems' ways of designing and identifying a speaker.

In the essay "Linguistics and Poetics," Roman Jakobson attempts to isolate the basic feature distinguishing poetry from other kinds of speech. To that end, he plots out a basic structure of spoken language, then projects that structure onto a parallel chart of the language functions in poetry. I have combined both charts below, with the structural elements of speech in plain type and language functions in italics:



(*Language in Literature* 66, 71)

To analyze each part of the speech schema would require a substantial detour and would essentially repeat the explanation Jakobson himself includes in his essay. The important points to bear in mind here is that the terms appearing in plain type depict the movement of a unit of speech from the Addresser to the Addressee, each of whom has some role—its magnitude varies from one utterance to another—in shaping spoken language. The four elements in the middle column (the dotted line represents the physical and conceptual space over which the utterance travels) also determine the character of the utterance and, like Addresser/Addressee, work in varying proportions to one another. In any moment of speech, one or more of these functions may play a more prominent role than the others; all of them figure in to the utterance, even if to a subtle, minimal degree.

I have combined the two schema for two reasons: (1) to show Jakobson's movement from analyzing language to providing a critical apparatus for the analysis of literature; and (2) because, within the literary field, his essay's priorities align with my own, i.e., poetics. Briefly, the italicized functions work as follows. The emotive is that which provides the most information about the speaker, or the presumed speaker, specifically his/her disposition at the moment of speech: Jakobson's example of a predominantly emotive phrase is "'Tut tut!'" which has basically no signified object other than the speaker's feeling of disapproval. The referential may also be termed denotative or cognitive—in other words, that part of the word or phrase that tells what the message is *about*, the meanings around what is actually uttered. The poetic is very close, in Jakobson's understanding, to the aesthetic aspect of speech; Homer's refrain of 'the rosy-fingered dawn' extends into the poetic when it could limit itself to the more direct and pragmatic 'sunrise.' The phatic is that which emphasizes or checks the open connection

[156] Using the term "subject," I mean only the subject of a royal leader and system, not the concept of the subject articulated in modern philosophy and critical theory. It would seem inaccurate to speak of a subject in the latter sense when discussing the Middle Ages, before the development in Modernity of an autonomous individual self.

between addresser (who might issue an interrogative “Hello?”) and addressee (who might nod or murmur “Mm-hm” as the speech proceeds). The metalingual function emphasizes the shared code between addresser and addressee, the range of words and affects that people at either end of the utterance can recognize. Jakobson distinguishes the metalinguistic as the function most directly opposed to the poetic: to him, composing poetry (i.e., acting as the addresser delivering poetic speech) involves selecting words so as to combine them in a felicitous or otherwise compelling way, with a close eye on syntax. Metalanguage has the opposite priority, privileging the equivalences between words with little interest in assigning to them an order. Finally, the conative function, corresponding with the addressee’s position, indicates how speech poses itself directly toward the one receiving it: it “finds its purest grammatical expression in the vocative and imperative” (67). (Lines 1, 7, and 10-12 of Ibn ᶜAbbād’s “*Yā zā’iran sā’iran*” are all examples of discrete conative gestures, each indicating a different addressee; likewise, the sense of intimacy and supplication Alfonso achieves in the Petition of CSM 401 is due largely to its conative language.)

Whereas Jakobson seeks to define what makes speech poetic, this study seeks to define what makes poetic speech political. This is not an analysis of the political events and individuals that surface, via reference or allusion, in the poems’ text; the previous chapters have sought to address such matters in detail. What we address here are the mechanics with which the poem places its personas and social groups into hierarchies, i.e., simple political orderings. Jakobson’s two visual representations of language, above, are among the most useful tools any theorist has fashioned for linguists and literary critics; but they are of only partial utility to this study, because they reflect social aspects of speech and not social hierarchies that inform speech. The movement of an utterance from one pole to another occurs on the flat plane of Jakobson’s linguistic inquiry, whereas we would require another dimension illustrated for this study. To imbue Jakobson’s model with a political consciousness of discourse among people, I adapt his horizontal model of discourse and propose a vertical orientation.

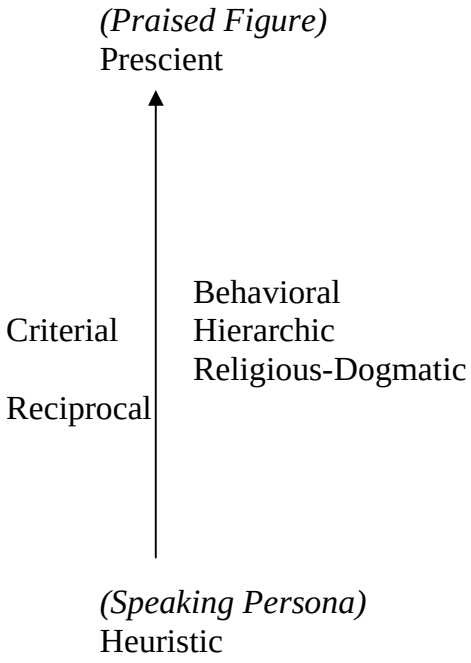


Figure 1: Model of political functions in praise poem

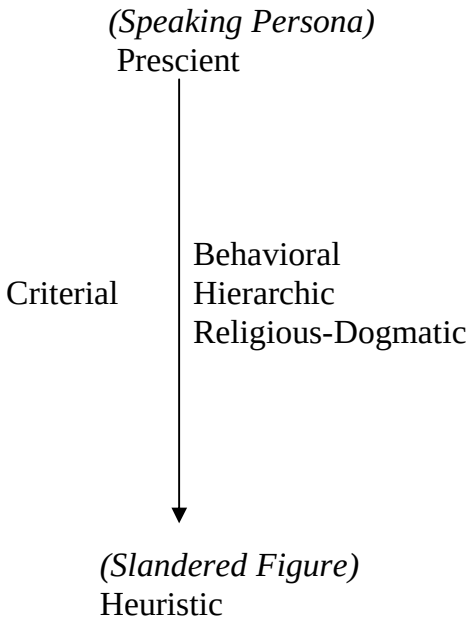


Figure 2: Model of political functions in invective poem

What these schemas mean to illustrate is the kinds of societal and intertextual logic the poem speaks, and how it uses them to evince a political relation between the speaker and the target of praise/slander. A key clarification is that they do not reflect a political hierarchy documented in historical texts; i.e., the direction of the arrow depicts only the presumed relation between speaker and target, not that of the author to the actual patron or beloved. I therefore distinguish the claim made in chapter 3—that panegyric is generally an upward-aimed sociopolitical endeavor, whereas slander is multidirectional—from the argument made here. Chapter 3's claim about the poem's trajectory treats the poem as a unit of exchange between two historically-identified people; figures 1 and 2 treat the poem's own imaginary.

If there is one central link to be drawn between the two figures above and the epistemological argument in chapter 3, it is that the positions of knowing and unknowing are political positions. The stationing of poetic speaker at one end of knowledge, and the poem's target figure at the other end produce a model of differential power between speaker and target. The juxtaposition of the two figures is itself an argument: insofar as a poem depicts itself as the delivery of information, the utterance of the poem's text is an action of movement from one point to another, very much consistent with Jakobson's model. These two figures seek to illustrate, among other things, the point made in chapter 3: the main difference between praise- and slander poetry is which end of the informational utterance is occupied by whom. It follows that the panegyric speaker associates closely with a heuristic function, or motive; the invective speaker identifies with prescience, which indicates he knows things the slandered target does not understand, and must therefore use the poem to reveal. The arrow pointing downward in figure 2, then, represents a movement of information from one persona to another; in the specific case of slander, this movement is also the process of convincing (on which see chapter 3). It is true that the slanderous persona evinces a certain form of heurism—reeling in incredulity with the target's inability to recognize his/her own failings—but that is less a matter of knowledge than appreciation. The most important work of discovery is the poem's professed desire for a response from the persona it targets. In the praise format, there is usually an element of canny wonder expressed by the panegyrist, more pronounced than that of the slanderer and, most importantly, a professed inability to fully express the virtues of the patron. At times, the poem articulates this heuristic quality by conveying a sense in the speaker that s/he is discovering the virtuous truths s/he speaks about the patron or divine figure, at the moment of utterance. This demonstration of the discovery process can be so charged with energy and hyperbole that the speaker portrays himself as overwhelmed.[157] At other times, the text simply recounts the discovery, as we see in CSM 132's "per com' achei escrito": 'as I found written.'

[157] Not coincidentally, this sense is often derived from the emotive function of language, which Jakobson places with the addresser, who is in our case converted to the speaking persona. An example of a highly emotive depiction of the poetic speaker (and the praised figure) pondering knowledge and its revelation, is Ibn Sahl al-Ishbīlī's (ca. 609-49 H, 1212-51 CE) "*Hal darā ẓabyu l-ḥimā an qad ḥamā qalba ṣabbin* […]": 'Does the fawn of al-Ḥimā know that he has kindled the heart of a lover […]' (Monroe ed. and trans., *Hispano-Arabic Poetry* 304-5)? This rhetorical question has the effect of simultaneously emoting, delivering information, and suggesting emotively that the praised figure by rights *should* know what has happened. (This sense of expectation is rendered referentially and metalinguistically in addition to emotively, because the Classical Arabic poetic tradition tends to inflect the

The behavioral, hierarchic, and religious-dogmatic functions lend themselves most readily to whatever prescriptive aims the poem might have for its audience. This is because they directly concern the world around the composition and the text's performance, i.e., the court and society more broadly. (To be sure, they apply to the world of other literary texts too, as we will see below.) A poem will oftentimes propose codes that, although they may reflect a logic internal to the composition itself, are only comprehensible as they relate to social codes in the living world around the literary production. In Ibn ᶜAbbād's works, we see the behavioral function most clearly in *hijā'*: the Mattawayh family line is full of boys and men who cannot control their urges, and their urges themselves are ethically risible, according to the *mulaḥ*. In another example, class, religion, and quotidian ethics (i.e., social hierarchy, religious dogma, and behavior, as represented in the figures above) all are enmeshed: the vizier writes to a character who has married his own mother, '[A] free man doesn't serve up sin to mankind on a platter' (YDQ 3:316, see chapter 3)! What is provocative about such an axiomatic remark is not that the poetry alludes to a field of religion and ethics, but that it claims to represent worldly ethics, wholesale, in the poetic utterance. Perhaps even more compelling of attention is the partial blindness that allows this claim of ethical mastery.

The behavioral function comes to the fore in virtually all of Alfonso's CSM and CEM. In CSM 292 it is most pronounced, using praise of Mary as an opportunity to grant valor to Fernando, "De mannas e de costumes […]/nonas pod' aver mellores outre que el ouv' en ssi": "he could not have had better habits and comportment than those he had" (KH 352), a contention that of course justifies the favor Mary shows to Fernando's statue and to his son. (The reciprocal relationship between Fernando and Mary should not be confused with the reciprocal function included in figure 1. That function, discussed below, operates between speaker and addressee.) We have already seen the fixation, shared among the CSM and Alfonsine legal prose, on the king's behavior: 'A king should have very good habits and manners. For, although he may be well-bred in his demeanor and his dress, if his habits and manners are not good, he will display much incongruity in his actions, for the reason that he will be greatly deficient in nobility and elegance.'[158] Here, at least, Bakhtin's likening of lyric monologism to official discourse rings true. The CEM's use of behavior is perhaps more problematic in technique than the CSM, and they seem to studiously avoid injecting into the text any model of the king similar to the *partidas*' version.[159] Chapter 3 points out that Domingas Eanes (CEM 25) is scorned for being of low moral caliber, even though a performer of her class is not necessarily granted a moral code by the court or its presiding members. Further, we see that the complaint about the Pope (CEM 33) presumes a mercantile relationship whose terms the

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interrogative particle *hal* with a sense of "Isn't … ?" or "Doesn't … ?" or "Surely … ?" above and beyond the sense of "Is … ?" or "Does … ?" which is how it is used in Modern Standard Arabic.)

[158] *Las siete partidas* 2.5.6, trans. Scott 2:289. See chapter 1 for original Spanish version and full citation.

[159] In fact the king is not represented very much at all, a formal feature that indicates a certain limit imposed on the heuristic function. Alfonso's CEM seem hesitant to implicate a royal figure, despite the apparent mitigations that (1) such a persona would be understood to be a fiction and (2) the CEM in general occupy the ethical limns of courtly discourse. This observation of course does not apply to all CEM, since some of them directly lampoon a king, most famously Joan Soares of Paiva's (ca. 1140-1213) "Ora faz ost' o senhor de Navarra" against King Sancho Sánchez of Navarre (1154-1234).

speaker wants to improve. The problem with this is that economic regulation is the king's own purview (recalling *Las siete partidas*' apportioning of all temporal matters to the king and not to the pope), so the king-persona's complaint founders in the very economy the poem creates. The claim to victimhood is an attempt, using the "equivocal poetics" Liu has identified (Blackmore and Hutcheson ed. 52, 54; see chapter 3 of this study), to efface the sociopolitical divisions between king and populace. It also effaces the divisions of authority made in Alfonso's own court, between king and pope—in fact, the poem disavows some of the very powers which the *Partidas* insist are inherent to royalty.

Such sleight of hand introduces the hierarchic function, which is one of the more self-referential categories in the above schemas, at least insofar as they pertain to politicians' literary works. The hierarchic is the poem's tendency to (1) acknowledge and confirm the very structure we identify with the chart, and (2) relate that structure to the hierarchies in which the patron lives. It is the mediator between political history[160] and the personal politics specific to the poem. All of the supplications we have reviewed carry out a substantial hierarchic function, as of course do the praise works in which they are couched. "*Qadima l-ra'īsu*" begins with the fanfare of triumph—Abū l-Faḍl's and the speaker's, the latter of whom derives his confidence from the former—and ends with a canned form of humility (see chapter 2). That is to say, the seal that the poem places upon Abū l-Faḍl's preeminence is the speaker's own declaration of his inferiority. The variability of the *duᶜā'* mechanism in Classical Arabic is discussed above; in just the two praise works we have read by Ibn ᶜAbbād, we see how the move can make difference in one case and erase difference in another.

In Alfonso's works, the naming and singling-out of Domingas Eanes in CEM 25 makes her legible to the court—bearing in mind that the feminine figure is not to be named in profane love poetry—as an inferior but essential part of high culture. Her position allows her to mediate between the entertainment spaces of the court and the bordello life to which the CEM as a whole would consign the *soldadeira*. All that stands out in sharp relief against the knightly mission Domingas pursues in the poem's narrative. The character and structure of her sortie into battle is precisely that of a typical Christian knight, i.e., the very sort of figure who issues calls of longing in courtly love, a figure of superior social rank, albeit degraded physiologically by the strength of his desires. Domingas too is degraded, but physically (as noted above, there is a contradiction inherent in an ethical downgrade, given her social status). Responsibility for that work on her body falls to the *genete*: also a knight, but the term marks him as foreign and hostile, as well as historically fixed in an Alfonsine narrative of warring empires. Domingas, in contrast to her Muslim adversary and violator, represents the "right" side of the war; her shortcomings are of sexual control and restraint, not of political ideology, which she herself barely has enough agency to access but nonetheless authorizes her as part of the accepted, hegemonic organizer of the kingdom.[161] In the sexual battle itself she shifts

[160] "Political history" here understood to mean our concept, derived through prose texts, of who were such people as Ibn ᶜAbbād, Alfonso, Abū l-Faḍl, Pope Gregory X, etc., what their ranks were, and how those ranks related to those of the people around them.

[161] Filios argues precisely the opposite: "This song allows Eanes no acceptable performances; while this could be due to her presence in the homosocial space of the Andalusian front, the following, more affirmative song suggests instead that this hostility is provoked by Eanes's choice of sexual partner. By engaging with the *genete*, Eanes

from dominant to dominated and back again, a set of exchanges that serves to deliver her character in degraded form to the audience that wants to laugh at her.

In sum, Domingas's hierarchic position shifts several times as it is prepared for its appraisal at the fictional doctors' hands and of course the audience receiving the poem.[162] She is both a questionable agent of empire (a comically failed knight who might bring to our minds the appearance of Don Quixote some three centuries later) and a questionable member of the court, both positions unstable and prone to minor hierarchical shifts. The fact that she occupies positions in two hierarchies—her role on the war's front lines of course prepares her for her eventual delivery, via the poem, to the court system—places her in a bind. How does one persona negotiate both the disingenuous valorization she receives as warrior and the denigration (equally disingenuous, as Weiss argues) she receives as a *soldadeira*? The poem resolves that problem by staking its own position in court literature, a doubled exertion of indicating context for Domingas in the lyric canon. The courtly love tradition against which she is set makes her a despicable lust object on the one hand but a desirous and enterprising knight on the other. In that tradition, the knight is of course the lover,[163] i.e., he has the agency both to love chastely and to fight. So Domingas's battle approximates her to such a figure in an overarching literary picture, even as her passivity (she sustains sexualized injuries but does not deliver them in the actions depicted) makes her despicable and ridiculous. CEM 25 demonstrates the need for the intertextual to open logical avenues through and around its own politics.

The religious-dogmatic is also a key form of mediation and circumnavigation, but investigating it requires that we follow a textual trail distinct from the other functions of praise. The poem's assumption of religious themes are both referential and prescriptive: the speaker in "*Yā zā'iran sā'iran*" draws upon an extra-poetic world of Shīʿī thought and promotion at the same time as it drafts new and distinct Shīʿī slogans. The reference to prayer calls (Islam's chanted version and the Christian chime) and the derisive questioning of Jews' devotion all form an argument that each of these religious groups do not cohere in itself, and its members do not understand the ideologies that distinguish their group from another. "Religious-dogmatic" is, admittedly, awkward in its wording and subject to dangerous clichés, but I deem it necessary to distinguish this function from an abstract idea of the religious, which does not seem specific enough to denote the instrumental use of religious messages and imagery. I wish to emphasize the ideological and argumentative sense of dogma. Its role in the poetic work is two-sided: we might imagine the poet sampling available religious language from the world in which he lives,

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collaborates with the enemy, allowing him to shaft Christian Spain in an erotic-symbolic renactment (sic) of the Muslim conquest" (*Performing* 58).

[162] As noted in chapter 3, we might follow Filios's reading of *Las siete partidas* and its *juego de palabras* to include the possibility of Domingas's response, although Filios cautions that she doubts Domingas had such an opportunity in that case (*Performing* 58).

[163] The fact that the loving knight is often a troubadour himself—the speaking lyric persona—argues for the Domingas's status as perverted analogue, since the *soldadeira* is of course a minstrel, albeit of far lower repute than the troubadour. And, in case this point bears repeating, the knight in courtly love is always a Christian European, never a *genete*. (Unless we include the Andalus's multilingual *muwashshaḥ* tradition of strophic poetry, which derives its ideas of love more from the Classical Arabic canon than from European-language poetry, I am not aware of Iberian Romance literature depicting a chaste Muslim lover until the prose work *El Abencerraje y la hermosa Jarifa* ['Abencerraje and Sharifa the Beautiful'].)

then editing them in subtle ways so as to synthesize them into a dogma specific to the poem. In other words, a corpus such as the CSM samples liberally from extant miracle songs and stories and imports, more or less whole, their claims of causality (in CSM 132, the priest's pious/worldly motives, Mary's intervention, and the moral of the story are the same as in the Latin version, on which see chapter 2); but the CSM always refigure these components in key ways. The action of deriving, distilling, and revising dogma ensures that the praise poems they bear the mark of Galician-Portuguese troubadour style, especially with regard to courtly love. (That style is of course more specifically an Alfonsine one; the troubadour is not generic but rather the specific sacred-minstrel personality that Alfonso so carefully cultivates in and through the songbook.)

Dogma is, then, an appropriation and a re-appropriation. It is clearly the product of a certain kind of research, the author's engagement with the speech (much of it textual) around him. With that appropriation comes the invention of a poetic persona and his voice, speaking a dogma whose provenance may be familiar to the patron and audience, but is also clearly novel and subject to the logical rules of poetic imaginary. The definition I am proposing of dogma *as it applies to the medieval texts we have seen* intersects with Louis Althusser's definition of ideology. The many provocative claims he makes on the issue invite exploration far beyond the scope of this study,[164] but what I wish to emphasize is simply the opening he provides to isolate moments of ideology, to attribute to them specific social and political histories, and to criticize them vis-à-vis the larger and more diffuse monolith of ideology. By creating that opportunity, Althusser gives a great many readers, across disciplines, a mechanic with which we can analyze languages of power (I argue that ideology and dogma are two such languages) without having to constantly redefine the structure of those languages. In other words, I propose religious dogma as an essential *but divisible* element of medieval poetry, and I do not think it necessary to be a scholar of religion to use and mobilize the term dogma. Each close reading we do of a poem—especially if that reading is historicist—represents a division of specific dogmas and, in the best case, an analysis of how larger structures of dogma inflect the specific messages in the text.

We have seen unsubtle uses of the criterial function, which allows the sorts of metapoetic perspectives achieved with the hierarchic, but it seems to effect more intertextual harmony than intertextual detours and exit routes. The criterial function is the

[164] Faced with Karl Marx's argument that ideology is bereft of and incompatible with history, Althusser makes one of his most important philosophical moves: dividing the question of ideology, in order to reconcile Marx's foundational theory with Althusser's own discernment of historically specific ideologies (*Lenin* 159). Althusser's contention seems to be that, if the latter understanding of ideology is possible (and shown not to be antithetical to Marx's broader notion), then we can attach individual moments of ideology to parsable narrative histories, and therefore criticize ideology not just structurally but materially as well. It is tempting to liken my own argument to his ideology/ideologies division, specifically to my above contention that there is a key and operative difference between appropriating and re-appropriating dogma in the process of making a poem. My interpretation of Althusser is that the static fiction of ideology finds its living and tangible form in people's repeated inscriptions of it in their material ideological projects, i.e., ideologies; this bears a schematic resemblance to my claim but ultimately I think the two are not directly comparable. My definition of dogma is obviously much less ambitious than Althusser's of ideology. Whereas he seems to advance a definition that is portable and useful in the broad overlap between philosophy, history, politics, and social theory, I seek to limit my claims to a few centuries of imaginative literature in the Middle East and Europe. I am not sure whether my semantic work is useful outside that realm, and if it is not, that does not pose a problem.

poem's ability to comment upon itself as artifact. Although there are a great many fields, especially ethical ones, in which criteria are applied, I do not intend this function to speak to anything but criteria of speech. It is much more conspicuous in praise than in slander because praise genres appeal more directly to an appraisal of the poetry as good, so that they might resonate in the social and political ways we have detailed. With that being said, there is no doubt that poetic criteria inform CEM 25 at a deep level. Filios's position, which this study has adopted with a few cautions in chapter 3, is that the legal permissibility of *juego de palabras* may well have applied to the CEM; this affects my reading of those poems, because the textual artifact to which I have referred becomes a poetic beginning whose end we cannot know. Reading an individual CEM as an initiator of a *juego*, despite the fascinating dialogic possibilities it presents, is nonetheless a limited critical exercise, for the simple reason that there is no known documentation of respondent songs. Furthermore, Filios herself is skeptical that CEM 25 might have engendered a response from Domingas (*Performing* 58, as cited in chapter 3 of this study). What I wish to underscore is that the *juego de palabras* seems to be highly criterial in its legal definition: *Partida* 2.9.30 frames it completely within an argument about skilled ridicule, an ability which the text calls a *grant bienestancia* ('great gift'), requiring *entendimiento* ('understanding'), distinguishing *caballeros* from *atrevidos* (Scott translates *caballeros* as 'cavaliers' but does not gloss it fully as 'knights' in the sense of chivalry; *atrevidos* he translates as 'bold' but the term suggests insolence as well) and "necios" ('ignorant' ones).[165] So, while the CEM (similar to Arabic invective in this respect) make little explicit mention of poetic skill, they are inseparable from the logical, even legislative, world of such a criterion.

"*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*" plies its *fakhr* (poetic self-praise, on which see chapter 2) section, "How many a word of praise for you has [Ibn ᶜAbbād] wrought, as if each word were the garments of peacocks!/This poem, how many times will its reader say, 'He has scattered pearls on paper!'" The text asserts its integrity as a finished object, but also its reception, as if a third party were necessary to confirm for Imam Ali (the praised figure) that the text had succeeded. "*Qadima l-ra'īsu*" does what appears to be the opposite, issuing a short apologetic *duᶜā'* at its end (for discussion of which, see above in this chapter and chapter 2). The point always is that there are discrete, stable rules to composing and performing poetry, so that when the poem refers to itself, it consciously places itself into a coherent and observable structure of aggregate poetry. The audience's qualitative understanding of that aggregate is almost irrelevant, in that sense that the poem's statements of self-appraisal do not usually resonate in an intertextual way with past poems. Instead, the criterial function is a gesture toward the canon, using other words to speak the poem's most immediate criterial concern, i.e., the patron's positive or negative reception of the work. When the patron is a dead figure, as in "*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*" or elegies for the recently dead, the gesture often remains the same, a calling-out to the praised figure while highlighting the qualities of the poem as a canonical entrant. Given how crucial the criterial function is to praise poetry, it seems safe to assume that such instances are directed most immediately toward the living members of the audience. Those who would seem to matter most are those who knew the

[165] All terms from the *partida* trans. Scott 330-31; amendations mine.

departed and who, naturally, are literate elites. Receiving the poem, this particular group is uniquely qualified to mediate between the performed text, the dead figure whose attributes that text would like to represent poetically, and the literary field of text into which the poem is aimed. In sum, this group oversees the juncture of multiple criteria, just as the living patron (assuming he himself can claim high literary repute) does when praised.

The CSM have a peculiar relationship with poetic ideals of quality, because the songs appeal to more than one set of criteria for speech. Alfonso was affixed to the profane lyric tradition that preceded his endeavor but, as we have seen, he was at the same time keenly aware of the changes he was making to it by authoring sacred love poetry. In a certain respect, the criterial function—centered as it is in the confines of poetic quality rather than ethics or religion—avoids the problem Alfonso takes on with his literary innovation. The Prologue makes clear the lyric speaker's cognizance that he will be judged on his powers of versification. He deftly places the prospect of that judgment between the figure of Mary and the worldly reception of his works:

> Porque trobar é cousa en que jaz
> entendimento, poren queno faz
> á-o d'aver e de razon assaz,
> per que entenda e sábia dizer
> o que entend' e de dizer lle praz,
> ca ben trobar assi s'á de ffazer.
>
> E macar eu estas duas non ey
> com' eu querria, pero provarei
> a mostrar ende un pouco que sei, […] (Prologue B).
>
> Because composing songs is an art which requires
> great understanding, therefore, he who undertakes
> it must have this quality, and good judgment,
> so that he may understand and be able to say
> that which he understands and wishes to express,
> for thus are good songs made.
>
> Although I do not possess these two qualities
> to the extent that I might wish, I shall nonetheless try
> to show the little that I know of the art […] (trans. KH 2).

That this passage performs dogmatic and criterial functions is a measure of the CSM's effort to change the generic breakdown of Galician-Portuguese literature. It does not seem an overstep to read this section of the Prologue as synecdoche for the songbook overall. Without saying so in any immediately identifiable way, this prefatory song suggests that its audience group piety and lyric mastery together. The cognitive and ideological effect of this move is more substantive than it may at first seem. Alfonso

harnesses the potential energy of criterial statements—we should bear in mind that artistic and intellectual excellence was the driving force of much courtly activity, especially among the troubadours themselves—to push forward a view of song-making as a uniquely devotional discipline. Because Alfonso, as the only troubadour to address Mary, monopolized the very discourse of Galician-Portuguese sacred lyric, the Prologue in essence lays out a territory of pious practice exclusive to him. In this way, the passage above is not a prescription for other people, even though it seeks a universality of its claim. It is instead a delineation of the territory he is about to claim in his poems, and a rationale for why he will claim it. He justifies with his competence the generic innovation that the CSM represent.

It may seem counterintuitive that figure 1, the representation of praise, includes the reciprocal function while figure 2, on invective, does not. There is no doubt that Arabic invective, including Ibn ᶜAbbād's, comes out of a pre-Islamic tradition of attack and counterattack, alive and well through the ᶜAbbasid period (see mention of Umayyad rivalries in chapter 1). And my exploration, above, of the role some CEM may have had in *juegos de palabras* also might seem to emphasize the reciprocal. Despite all this evidence that the slander I have presented is informed by the response model, there is very little acknowledgment in the text themselves of a reciprocal relationship between poetic speaker and the enemy he constructs. The reciprocal function is, at its simplest and most definitive, the poem's understanding of its part in a transaction. It is an invitation that the poem extends, or at least shows itself extending, to the persona it targets. My argument is that we can attribute reciprocal mechanics to a poem only when we can conclude that its text anticipates the target's response. There is no doubt that invective literature does this, as well as oral traditions of slanderous wordplay and rhyme—the *juego* phenomenon codified in *Las siete partidas* parallels many unofficial such games, to take one example, the Dozens, which remains popular in North America.[166] The literature I have discussed, however, demonstrates that the potential of reprise varies from work to work; the call for response is consistent only in the praise works of chapter 2. Furthermore, my readings of all Ibn ᶜAbbād's and Alfonso's slanderous poetry suggest that they limit such a move to their praise works.

Every time I have asked what the panegyric poem might be requesting, wanting to produce in its praised figure, I have attempted to investigate the reciprocal function. Reciprocity is both a metapoetic and a historical consideration. Metapoetic, because messages of reciprocity draw the audience's attention to what the poem will, or could, produce, whether that be payment or commendation or versified response. Historical, because we rarely read about the performance of a poem unless the recording anthologist or chronicler deems noteworthy the patron's reaction. A good example of that is noted in chapter 2: Ibn ᶜAbbād's reward to Abū l-Qāsim al-Zaᶜfarānī, recorded in YDQ. As with the discussion of the *juego de palabras* as its proleptic tendencies, the reader is compelled to view the future events a poem might suggest. The difference between the *juego* model of invective and the discourse of praise is that invective requires that the critic read legal prose and speculate upon what poetry might follow the poem at hand,

[166] For a description of the Dozens and the game's social dynamics, see Lefever, "'Playing the Dozens': A Mechanism for Social Control."

whereas the panegyric poem is in itself a hopeful speculation upon future outcomes.[167] The response of a patron to a poem or, more precisely, the documentation of such a response, has the potential to affect a critical interpretation of the poem's text.

This is not necessarily a good thing. The fact of a documented response often has the effect of consigning—or promoting, depending upon one's view—the entire poetic performance and aftermath to the status of historical event, a marker of artistic and economic life in a particular court. The problem in the Arabic panegyrics we have seen is that they give few clues as to what, if any, reciprocations the poem might solicit. "*Yā zā'iran sā'iran ilā ṭūsi*" praises a long-dead religious figure and "*Qadima l-ra'īsu*" praises a vizier probably less politically dominant than Ibn ᶜAbbād himself. Chapter 2 notes the difficulty, in both cases, of ascertaining what sorts of reciprocal transfers or gestures would even be possible to these poems. But there is no doubt that they seek response; Arabic panegyric is scarcely imaginable without it, which is why its expectation is so clearly built into the poetic form (Gruendler, *Medieval Arabic Praise Poetry* 20-21, 50-52, 71, 75, 229-41; Suzanne Stetkevych, *Poetics of Islamic Legitimacy* 34). When we hold up the Arabic praise we have read against the more common paradigm (from which Gruendler and Stetkevych read in their above-cited critical texts) of poet addressing a political superior, the main difference is that a vizier-poet such as Ibn ᶜAbbād most probably seeks only symbolic reward, whereas the more typical court poet stands to gain both material and symbolic capital.

In many ways, the choice of studying political elites and their poetry is a concession to studying one kind of capital at the expense of the other, i.e., it is symbolic more than material. While there is no doubt that material units of exchange are important to kings and viziers, it would be odd for them to compose poetry in request of such goods. The closest we have come to a language of material payment is CEM 33—and its system of payment is, obviously, imagined and jocular. The CSM operate in a predominantly symbolic-capital system of exchange, like that of Ibn ᶜAbbād's panegyric. The most conspicuous textual example articulating that system is the bookend model of the Prologue and the Supplication, analyzed above. What remains for me to point out is that the symbolic benefits Alfonso's persona requests lie in two layers: first is his desire that Mary intercede on his behalf (note that she may do so in worldly matters and in the ranks of the Holy Trinity, i.e., she might aid Alfonso in life and afterlife); then the broader ideological benefit he seeks, performing for his subjects his devotion to Mary and the favor she shows him in his career. The clause in his will and testament that the CSM be sung during Marian holidays (see chapter 2) activates several political functions detailed above, especially the hierarchic and religious-dogmatic; but it is also an attempt to confirm that future kings, clerics, and audiences of the CSM all head the poems' call for them to reciprocate. In a sense, the idea of audience response is predicated upon the text's own interest in forwarding ideological messages. Alfonso's will and testament is an acknowledgment, both of the songbook's need for a credulous audience and of Alfonso's understanding that reciprocation—i.e., resonance—happens over time. It is an anticipation of a discrete ideological effort which requires, as we might conclude from Althusser's above-cited theory, a history (even if the structure of ideology is ahistorical)

[167] See chapter 3 for a characterization of praise as a future-oriented poetic register.

of the king's devotion, versification, auspicious political career, death, and conferral unto the family of Christ. This effort of narrative-building, and view toward the afterlife of the songbook (and not just that of Alfonso himself), indicates how dependent the reciprocal function is upon rapport—that between lyric speaker and praised figure, but also that between performed poetic text and audience.

I wish to return to the discussion of dogma once more, in the interests of addressing a theoretical quandary I have confronted throughout this study. It seems crucial to divide slander from broad cultural or political critique, that is to say, discern the attack on an individual from the attack on a norm or ideology. Ibn ᶜAbbād's condemnation of the Oedipal in his *hijā'* is a reminder of how difficult it is to generalize any social commentary out of the distinctly personal (and therefore circumscribed) attack on an enemy. Within that poetic fragment lies a behavioral and dogmatic claim, made so that the poet might convert hubris into art. Among the text's aims is to blur the division between the world and the literary text; my analytical work has, I hope, served to identify that effaced borderline. An anecdote about Abū Nuwās, the great figurehead of *mujūn*, may help to more closely scrutinize the compound problems of Ibn ᶜAbbād's *hijā'*. Andras Hamori paraphrases the story to contextualize the poetics therein:

> Abū Nuwās and some companions are on a drinking excursion and are having a jolly time when a cloud of piety abruptly settles over some of the drinkers, who remind Abū Nuwās of the dreary prospect of divine punishment. If there is one thing Abū Nuwās cannot stand it is a spoil-sport, and he answers:
>
> mā ṣaḥḥa ᶜindī min jamīᶜi l-ladhī
> tadhkuru illā l-mawtu wal-qabru
> *Of all you have been saying, I find only death and the grave indubitable,*
>
> which, not surprisingly, horrifies his companions. To deny the resurrection is not at all of the same order of sinning as to wet one's throat on a fine day (Hamori, *On the Art* 57).

Where Hamori focuses on the difference between the behavior of drinking and an inflammatory theological statement, I would like to draw attention to the difference of medium. The anecdote has it that Abū Nuwās engages with his companions in a questionable act and, when confronted by questioners, he responds with defiant poetry. Having begun with behavior, we move to social discourse, and then to the discrete, separate field of the poetic. Hamori's synopsis continues,

> Reproved by his friends, Abū Nuwās recants and apologizes. He holds no faith but Islam; however, *rubbamā nazā bī l-mujūnu ḥattā atanāwala l-ᶜaẓā'ima wa-mā aᶜlama annī mas'ūlun ᶜanhu wa-muᶜadhdhabun ᶜalayh*, "from time to time *mujūn* (libertinism, frivolity) overcomes me to such an extent that I commit mortal sins, oblivious of being answerable for it

> (*mujūn*) as well as of the punishment that it will bring upon me." This is followed by an extempore poem—it turns out to be one of his most famous in the ascetic genre—and after that is over, all go back to do some more drinking (Hamori, *On the Art* 57-58, parentheses original).

Note that the poet issues his apology in prose, then breaks into *zuhdiyya* (ascetic poem) performance, thereby (1) sealing a two-phased project to repent, (2) returning to poetry to atone for his act and previous poetic flippancy, and (3) demonstrating poetic virtuosity with his improvisational skills. Then of course he brings the entire ethical trajectory full circle, leaving off from theological musings and returning to the behavior with which he began the episode. This anecdote seems to argue that the poet make certain divisions between acts and speech because the two relate in differing ways to the ethical world. The fact that a *mujūn* work and a *zuhdiyya* counterbalance one another is of no small import; a lighthearted and irreverent poetic mode does not grant Abū Nuwās unlimited license, and certainly not unlimited authority to make truth claims. It is a pronounced moment of conversation between poetic forms, a simplified model of a dynamic that is consistently at work in literary production.

The larger observation we can draw is that *mujūn* is basically meaningless without the poetic forms of a serious and reverential mien, such as praise, martial, and ascetic poetry. Such contingency and reciprocity probably marks all kinds of poems that attempt to resonate in the ethical sphere. The gesture toward the world the *audience* inhabits presupposes and requires the literary world the *poem* inhabits. Pointing this out is not a matter of surveying the Classical Arabic canon (of which *mujūn* and *hijā'* are key parts) as some kind of finished multipartite object, but rather of reviewing the claims these varying poems make as a conversation. By demarcating behavioral, hierarchic, and religious-dogmatic functions as possible products of a composition, I mean to show the inherent readerly work the poem does when accomplishing those functions.

Mujūn and *hijā'* are of course not truly separable, as noted in chapters 1 and 3; the irreverence and celebratory '*carpe diem*' theme of *mujūn* colors a great deal of invective poetry and, it could be argued, the utterance of insult is in itself a casting-off of decorum, a hallmark of *mujūn*. My conclusion from the above passage is that we might separate the two in terms of ethical message, and in particular a sense of causality in ethics, speech, and behavior. What they have in common rhetorically is that their first level of referent—i.e., the most immediate structure of standards and norms with which they play—is literature, not society. When we read *hijā'*—of course Ibn ᶜAbbād's works have been our basis but I would suggest this applies to Arabic invective generally—we see the same kinds of intertextuality but a much different sort of ethical rules. The formal reasons for this are plain: despite the great overlap between *mujūn* and *hijā'*, *mujūn*'s organizing principle is lack of thought paid to the consequences of one's actions (see chapter 3 for a review of the term's definitions), i.e., a refusal to acknowledge certain causalities in one's life and the afterlife.

Hijā' and its pragmatism—its focus on an individual target, its goal of demonstrating that figure's failure on at least one important criterion—tends not to reject dominant religious or worldly systems. On the contrary, it invokes a particular such

system and claims to speak for it, building a backdrop against which the poem projects the enemy unfavorably. It is surely conceivable that a poet apologize for his invective, but unlikely he would need to invoke a religious long view of life in the apology. If he is called to account for his poetic speech, he is answerable to the slandered party and perhaps that person's loyalists;[168] but not to God, as in the case of Abū Nuwās's *mujūn* performance. *Mujūn* is allowed to confront dogmas, be they religious or more mundanely societal, as large and impermeable structures. *Hijā'*, on the other hand, reduces dogmas to their smallest possible permutation; because the attack is on an individual, the invective poem forces dogma to fit inside that individual, creating the temporary illusion that it resides exclusively in him/her. By suggesting that a dogma or a mode of thought (e.g., the anti-Muᶜtazilī stance of Mattawayh's grandson[169]) is limited to a person and expedient poetic target, *hijā'* marks a soluble problem and nominates itself as the solution. Finally, it makes a very fraught and widespread set of conflicts—Muᶜtazilī theology had already proved, by Ibn ᶜAbbād's time, to be one of the most divisive religious and social issues of the ᶜAbbasid Empire—not just humorous but intellectually manageable.

That is why it is so crucial to acknowledge that invective literature is not subversive in any broad social sense. If anything, *hijā'*—and, as I have argued, the CEM—seeks to relieve logical and philosophical dilemmas, not create them nor compound existing ones. Invective poetry upsets neither the social nor the political order; this point is more easily made vis-à-vis Ibn ᶜAbbād and Alfonso than more typical poets who hold no high political posts, but I would argue that the point is broadly applicable. The generic features of *hijā'* indicate its specificity, not only in the selection of an individual target, but also its role within the court. The argument that poetic slander is epistemologically different than praise, that slander insists the speaker's knowledge outstrips the target's and indeed the audience's as well, is an argument that both praise and slander are poetic tools for speaking knowledge to the court. Their respective structures, as detailed above, ensure that they, like any useful set of tools, work differently and perform differing functions in the delivery of informative messages. Sinan Antoon, writing on the Buyid-era court as a template for the poet Abū ᶜAbd Allāh ibn al-Ḥajjāj (330-91 H, 941-1001 CE), shows that even the most superficially subversive poetry performs many of the same services we have seen in praise and slander. Antoon notes that Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's trademark *sukhf* (denoting an extreme form of *mujūn*, marked by scatology and explicit sexual images) is both a codifier of courtly rules and a vehicle of knowledge:

> *Sukhf* allowed the elite to listen to, take a peak, and mock the inability of these nameless characters, who were presumed to be and represent the *ᶜāmma*,[170] to restrain and refine their expression and control their bodies, which are always represented as grotesque and uncontrollable. This laughter was accompanied by the disgust scatology spontaneously

[168] Suzanne Stetkevych points out an ethical framework that, at times, allows one composition to serve as a unit of exchange for another. The example she gives (in a pre-Islamic case) is a contrite praise poem offered to ameliorate the damage caused by a poem of indiscrete erotics or all-out *hijā'* (*Poetics* 43-44).
[169] See YDQ 315, and chapter 3 of this study for translation and analysis.
[170] The term *ᶜāmma* denotes the common classes of society (see chapter 3).

> engenders. This disgust, however, is sociopolitically productive as it reinforces the distance and boundary between the elite and the filth and unrestraint of the masses. Ibn al-Ḥajjāj's 'wallowing in filth,' for which he, and other scatologues are condemned, was, on one level, a performance, that allowed his audience to symbolically cleanse themselves of unwanted nearness implied in expressions of disgust. Needless to say, this reinforcing of boundaries justified and legitimized, unconsciously, the way the world was configured and naturalized socioeconomic and other inequities by linking them to nature and the body ("The Poetics of the Obscene: Ibn Al-Ḥajjāj and *Sukhf*" 241-42).

On the subject of laughter, Antoon echoes pitch-perfectly the point made in chapter 3 of this study, i.e., the response to Bakhtin's sociopolitical argument of premodern humor. But most pertinent here is the characterization of *sukhf* itself. Antoon's argument, in that it closely parallels my discussion of *hijā'*, indicates the extraordinary force that the court exerted upon all poetry, by no means limited to the praise genres with which we associate official Classical Arabic literary culture. All literature produced in and for the court was subsumed into general intellectual project: articulating the court's internal structures and the features that discerned it from everything below it.

A modern literary landmark may help to place this argument in context. Literature served medieval elites in organizing and parsing the world and, no doubt, that remains one of its functions now, despite the obvious changes in social, political, and literary structures since then. It is salutary to note Jorge Luis Borges's fame for, among a great many other things, writing in an Orientalist key while deeply involved with the Iberian Romance canon. The Argentinean paid tribute to and appropriated—in the droll, beguiling way he composed what he called his *ficciones* ('fictions')—both medieval Spanish literature and the ᶜAbbasid Empire, the former of which he knew intimately from the time of his early education, the latter of which he demonstrated he had researched whimsically but with great enthusiasm in the many European languages he read. In biographies, the international literary title with which he is often associated is the Cervantes Prize, Spain's most prestigious, which he won in 1980. As appropriate—or ironic—as that distinction might be for an author who played with the figure of Miguel Cervantes and the book *Don Quixote* in postmodern *ficciones*, there is a lesser-known honorific moment in Borges's life that attracts our attention. His acceptance of the Legion of Honor in France, 1983, tends to overshadow his visit that same year to Spain, where he received a prize less famous but possibly equally symbolic, the Great Cross of Alfonso X El Sabio.

Borges, blind and ailing three years before his death, might have thought of his journey to Spain as a last reunion with a country he had visited many times since childhood (and a country whose literature would bear deeply the marks of his interventions, despite the centrism typical of historical imperial centers). As a person, he probably shared rather few common traits with Alfonso, other than fame in Spanish letters, an intimacy with great libraries, and a fascination with the Islamic East. But both of them understood, as did Ibn ᶜAbbād before them, some of the thrilling and frightening

potential in literature. In one of Borges's best-known *ficciones*, the narrator Borges (so named, he is also the protagonist and a professional writer within the story) eagerly enters the house of fellow author Carlos Argentino, who tells of the house's impending demolition and of his resolve to save it in court. Argentino's fury at the prospect losing his house stems not only from his sentimental attachments to but also from the marvel contained in its cellar where, beneath one stair, everything in existence may be seen in a sphere 'probably two or three centimeters in diameter […]' (129). Because the vision of everything occurs in one moment, the narrative laments the struggle with the linear constraints of relaying its contents within the linear constraints of written language. The litany it delivers, though—of natural phenomena, man-built edifices, curios, intimate details of sensory life in Argentina as well as ancient books and Oriental talismans—can hardly be considered random or careless; Borges taps into something more disturbing, an ordering of items impossible 'except in the immaterial sound of the voice pronouncing their enumeration, or on the page transcribing it' (Foucault, *Order* xvi-xx).

The sphere is called the Aleph, named of course for 'the first letter of the alphabet of the sacred language' (132), but Borges the narrator tells us what we must already know: as a textual object whose name is a word, it is a knot of irresolvable problems. The Aleph forces the narrator, as well as the reader, to wrestle with the polysemy of a letter whose meanings stack on the horizontal axis of written text—explanation—and on the vertical axis of signification: 'it has also been said that its shape is that of a man pointing to the sky and the earth' (132). In the story's last three pages, he explains the terrible combination of broad and specific knowledge the Aleph imparted upon him—after his revelation in the cellar, every person he saw in Buenos Aires had become known to him—and how he was able to ameliorate this condition into a manageable form of life. Sleep does not return to him until he taps into the ability of disability, i.e., forgetfulness. This catharsis he acknowledges but does not mention the other avenue toward his recovery, namely writing. The order which he is forced to apply to the radically synchronic experience viewing the Aleph is, he suggests, a dimming of the object's brilliance, a syntactic violence he does to the experience; but it is also a triumph of language over vision.

It seems to me there are two ways we might understand the relationship between the infinitely capacious, three-dimensional nature of the Aleph and the straight line on which the writer lays down words. One option is to draw from the sense of loss the narrator professes, 'a writer's hopelessness', one he might in some other world have hoped to transcend: 'In a similar situation, mystics have employed a wealth of emblems: to signify the deity, a Persian mystic speaks of a bird that somehow is all birds; Alain de Lille speaks of a sphere whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere […]. Perhaps the gods would not deny me the discovery of an equivalent image, but then this report would be polluted with literature, with falseness' (129).[171] The "real" Borges, who

[171] That which Hurley translates as 'a writer's hopelessness' is in the original "mi desesperación de escritor" (*El Aleph* 163); the difficulty of translating to English the dual ideas of '*my* hopelessness' and 'a writer's hopelessness' are evident here, the former of which Hurley omits in favor of the latter. The other above-quoted passage reads as follows in the original: "Los místicos, en análogo trance, prodigan los emblemas: para significar la divinidad, un persa habla de un pájaro que de algún modo es todos los pájaros; Alanus de Insulis, de una esfera cuyo centro está

directed the National Library of Argentina and accepted the Great Cross of Alfonso X El Sabio, liked to write a fictional version of himself perennially befuddled, both amused and melancholic. But all this lament of 'falseness' and the 'polluted' seems to sublimate a delight in literature—and here I mean that of Borges the narrator of "The Aleph."[172] This guilty pleasure marks a much of Borges's fiction but is most anxiously close to the surface when he gestures toward the freeing possibilities of the mystical, not just its imagery but its analytic and spatial technique as well.[173]

Acknowledging, and perhaps following in that pleasure is what I consider the other interpretive option. This move is, admittedly, cathartic in a readerly sense but I ascribe to it a more rigorous and useful function: it provides us a direct line into the courtly world we have investigated in this study. The entirety of the Structuralist discussion in this chapter wants to articulate the sense-making work of poetry; by drawing a line and placing sociopolitical functions of a poem along that line, I have meant to schematize and order elements of that poem in a way that consciously echoes the poem's own work. In other words, the methodological arguments we have seen about horizontal space and movement—Jakobson's drawing of a line across which speech moves from addresser to addressee, Borges's professed despair that he must place words on a written lines to narrate—are themselves resonant of the work court poetry has done. Poems may succeed in inventing worlds and alternate logics, but they do so always in an instrumental fashion. They produce courtly knowledge, a form of knowing distinct from the empire's other intellectual systems (no doubt ample in medieval societies but rarely documented). *Las siete partidas*' 'sword of justice' cuts in order to punish, but that can happen only after the work of intellectual "cutting" to discern truths, falsehoods, acts and utterances as either acceptable or unacceptable. My own intervention, placing poetic work on a vertical line, hardly seems radically variant from Jakobson's or Borges's. It is at its simplest an identification of a political concern that seems to me requiring critical attention.

In light of Antoon's comment, it is tempting to liken court poetry to the Aleph, a device that allows access to the world in all its facets. We have discussed the court as a venue in which an elite person might make sense of the world, and literature as a primary tool in that endeavor. Borges, from his position as a modern elite whose gaze turns consistently to the Middle Ages, acknowledges this vital hermeneutic function of literature. Still, he insists that the Aleph is a different kind of optical and intellectual device, distinct from literature and in certain ways opposed to literature; and I agree. I think that he does in fact motion toward an idea of court literature as I have discussed it, but does so only in his complaint of what he cannot do as a writer. The Aleph may be, as his narrator says, the world bereft of its classifications, epochs, and other human-imposed logics; but it nonetheless falls into the paradox that it can only be conveyed—tentatively,

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en todas partes y la circunferencia en ninguna […]. Quizá los dioses no me negarían el hallazgo de una imagen equivalente, pero este informe quedaría contaminado de literatura, de falsedad" (163-64).

[172] In addition, the narrator entertains the possibility that Carlos Argentino's aleph is a false one, preceded and overshadowed by an ancient column displaced from its source and erected in Cairo's earliest mosque, which is said to speak (not show) the world to those who hold their ears directly to it (*El Aleph* 169).

[173] See "The Kabbalah" in *Seven Nights* 95-106. We should note that this theoretical essay, which Borges delivered originally as a lecture, is written in the voice of the "real" Borges discussed above.

apologetically, but still conveyed—in literary language. We see therefore that language maintains a certain dominance over the wonders of Borges's space and perception. Ultimately, the Aleph only exists insofar as the orderly placement of words allows it, that is to say, it exists in what the narrator calls a degraded, denuded, and false form. That which remains is Borges's own frustrated utterance. Examining the court, we see that its documents consistently represent it as the place where courtiers master knowledge and demonstrate that mastery. In other words, the court is a social space that dominates the people within it, even as those people themselves seek to dominate each other and the disciplines of lyric and *belles-lettres*. But that dual work, that display of artistic mastery in order to gain a favorable position with other people, coalesces in an act of submission. Those who gain access to the court—political leaders, poets, rhetoricians, savants, *soldadeiras*, and minstrels—recognize that, even as they wield language for their own purposes, they must in some way acquiesce to the logic of that language. When Ibn ʿAbbād storms out of Fakhr al-Dawla's court, he is arguing that his political superior did not calibrate his speech in accordance with the rules of that court, in that particular instance, among the company he had received. The vizier is able to gain the upper hand over the prince by appealing to a higher power. We tend to discern between medieval royals and subjects; but, seen in this light, they are all subjects, vying with one another, recognizing collectively the need to master a language and at the same time submit to it. That recognition is what makes a court.

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