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«PLAZENS PLASERS» AND OTHER FOURTEENTH-CENTURY  
CATALAN REFRAIN SONGS\*

Catalan poets writing at the turn of the fourteenth century (e.g. Andreu Febrer, Gilabert de Pròixida, Jordi de Sant Jordi) were captivated by the work of Guillaume de Machaut, with its brilliant recodification of the *formes fixes*. Such fascination proved crucial to the establishment of trends in Catalan poetry which had emerged much earlier in French song. In particular, early Catalan poets demonstrated a proclivity for refrain songs.<sup>1</sup> The process whereby such songs became standard in Catalan poetry included the fusion of strophic varieties of French origin with the genres inherited from the troubadours. It likewise comprised the adoption of a new style of phrasing intended to refashion the language employed by the Catalan poets, as well as the horizon of expectation of their public. Following the impact of Machaut's works upon the Aragonese court, Catalan poetry embraced a new mode of expression which increased the syntactical resources used to enhance the emotive aspects

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1. For the purposes of this study, I consider the term "refrain song" to include all songs in a strophic form and containing a refrain, notwithstanding the position of the latter within the strophe: *dansa*, ballade, rondeau, virelai, that is to say, Friedrich Gennrich's "Rondeltypen" in Id., *Grundriss einer Formenlehre des mittelalterlichen Liedes als Grundlage einer musikalischen Formenlehre des Liedes* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1932). On the influence of French poetry upon Catalan literature, see Amédée Pagès, *La poésie française en Catalogne du XIII<sup>e</sup> à la fin du XV<sup>e</sup>* (Toulouse, Paris: Privat, Didier, 1936) and Lluís Cabré, "Los enuigs de Jordi de Sant Jordi i l'adaptació del lai líric a la poesia catalana medieval", in *Estudis de literatura catalana en honor de Josep Romeu i Figueras*, ed. Lola Badia and Josep Massot i Muntaner (Barcelona: PAM, 1986), Vol. 1, 183-206, and Id., "El conreu del lai líric a la literatura catalana medieval", *Llengua & Literatura* 2 (1987): 67-132.

of texts.<sup>2</sup> This new “syntax of sentimentality”, wherein echoes of other literary traditions were assimilated into poetic text (e.g. the Dante of the *Rime*, the earliest readings of Petrarch’s *Canzoniere*), proved to be greatly appealing to the Catalan poets writing at the end of the fourteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

The strophic forms of this new poetry seem to have found ready ground in the Catalan court thanks to the sustained presence of musicians and jongleurs from the Angevin territories where refrain songs thrived. From the end of the thirteenth century onwards, these artists had cultivated the tastes and the ears of the courtly public of the Crown of Aragon with their dance songs in the French style. Few manuscript witnesses to the earliest Catalan refrain songs survive. However, a number of recently discovered texts have enriched our understanding of the development of this poetic and musical genre.<sup>4</sup> Such recent discoveries stir one to reconsider other compositions possessing similar characteristics which were transmitted independently from the chansonnier manuscript tradition, or have been sporadically exhumed from the archives. They have thus tended to remain outside the consideration of literary historiography. The marginal nature of these pieces may have led to the masking of their presence and, as a result, to the minimisation of their role within the narrative encompassing the evolution of fourteenth-century Catalan poetry. However, the gathering of a series of poetic “vestiges” (*tracce*) implies the existence of a textual corpus, and behind the texts of this corpus necessarily lies a textual community and a corresponding cultural demand.<sup>5</sup>

2. For a description of some of the syntactic resources present in this novel mode of expression, see Marta Marfany, “La influència de la poesia francesa des d’Andreu Febrer a Ausiàs March”, *Estudis Romànics* 24 (2012): 259–87.

3. It was not until the second half of the fifteenth century that Ausiàs March rhetorically claimed to depart from such style in the well-known opening of his poem 23, 1–4: “Lleixant a part l’estil dels trobadors / qui, per escalf, trespassen veritat, / e sostrahent mon voler affectat / perquè no-m torb, diré-l que trob en vós”, cf. Ausiàs March, *Poesies*, ed. Pere Bohigas (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 2005), 125 [Disregarding the style of the troubadours who, through <their> ardour, exceed <the> truth, and casting aside my <own> affectionate desires in order that they do not unnerve me, I shall tell you what I find in you].

4. This work has been mainly undertaken by the BITECA team, *Bibliografia de Textos Antics Catalans, Valencians i Balears*: [https://bancroft.berkeley.edu/philobiblon/biteca\\_ca.html](https://bancroft.berkeley.edu/philobiblon/biteca_ca.html) (last accessed July 2, 2020). For the Catalan corpus of *danses*, see Gemma Avenzoa, “La dansa. Corpus d’un genre lyrique roman”, *Revue des Langues Romanes* 107 (2003): 89–129 and Ead., “La dansa. Introducción a la tipología de un género románico”, in *Cancioneros en Baena. Actas del II Congreso Internacional Cancionero de Baena In memoriam Manuel Alvar*, ed. Jesús L. Serrano Reyes, (Baena: Ayuntamiento de Baena, 2003), Vol. 2, 89–105. The text of the poems can be found at the RIALC website (*Repertorio informatizzato dell’antica letteratura catalana*) under «Anonimi aggiunti», reference number o.bis: <http://www.riale.unina.it/indice.htm> [last accessed July 2, 2020].

5. My use of the term *traccia* (or ‘vestige’) aligns with that of Armando Petrucci, “Storia e Geografia delle culture scritte (dal secolo XI al secolo XVIII)”, in *Letteratura italiana. Storia e Geografia*, II. *L’età moderna*, ed. Alberto Asor Rosa (Turin: Einaudi, 1988), 1193–292, and after-

The influence of French poetry on the Catalan repertory of the first half of the fourteenth century, as well as the activity of the minstrels documented in the correspondence of and payments made by the Royal Chancellery of the Crown of Aragon, lead one to question the supposed marginality of the oldest refrain songs preserved in Catalonia. In this article, I shall focus upon the small corpus of fourteenth-century Catalan *danses* based on the scheme aaab with refrain. The aim is to advance in two directions: 1) towards new editions which enable a better comprehension of the texts and their transmission; and 2) towards a reassessment of already-known pieces in the light of novel documentary or historiographical information in order to establish their position in the history of fourteenth-century Catalan poetry, including the intertextual networks that place them in specific contexts of production and reception. The hypothesis underlying this approach is that refrain songs represented the stimulus for a renewal of the formal possibilities of medieval Romance lyric which broadened the universe of the troubadour courtly song by way of popularising and archaicising touches.<sup>6</sup> To what degree did the reception of refrain songs, filtered through the troubadour tradition and refashioned following Machaut's recodification of the *formes fixes*, determine the characteristics of the Catalan repertory composed at the end of the fourteenth century and the turn of the fifteenth century?

#### THE STANDARDISATION OF REFRAIN SONGS IN CATALONIA

In 1936, Amédée Pagès discussed the presence of jongleurs at the Catalan court who, throughout the medieval period, disseminated melodies from French songs and epic poems. Pagès was the first scholar to realise the importance of studying the ways in which poetic forms of French origin (chiefly refrain songs and lays) were adapted and received within Catalan literature. Nevertheless, he was unaware of four lyric pieces discovered by Fr Higiní

wards used by Alfredo Stussi, *Tracce* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2001). The term 'textual community' is used in the sense established by Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). For the – problematic – parallel with the early Italian poetry set to music as "tracce di una tradizione sommersa" ("vestiges of a submerged tradition"), see Maria Sofia Lannutti and Massimiliano Locanto, *Tracce di una tradizione sommersa. I primi testi lirici italiani tra poesia e musica* (Florence: SISMEL - Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2005).

6. See Maria Sofia Lannutti, "Per uno studio comparato delle forme con ritornello nella lirica romanza", in *La lirica romanza del Medioevo. Storia, tradizioni, interpretazioni. Convegno triennale della Società Italiana di Filologia Romanza (S.I.F.R.)*, Padova-Stra, 27 settembre-1 ottobre 2006, ed. Furio Brugnolo and Francesca Gambino (Padua: Unipress, 2009), 337-62, esp. 337.

Anglès in 1935, copied onto the endpapers of certain notarial documents from Sant Joan de les Abadesses, in the Catalan Pyrenées, unusually preserved with musical notation, and dateable to the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Further new items of poetry have progressively come to light in recent years. In many cases these lyric pieces have been preserved in the form of notes within notarial protocols or in the margins of manuscripts devoted to other works. They have come down to us without musical notation, yet present formal structures identical or closely related to those of the *danses* from Sant Joan. It therefore seems likely that these poems were performed as songs, consistent with the formal and thematic characteristics of the *dansa* genre.

Three of the four songs from Sant Joan de les Abadesses (*S'anc vos ame, Ar lausetz, ...era-us preg*) are based on the scheme aaab with refrain, a form widespread in the oldest French repertory: some 70 examples are recorded, of which 40 are to be found in chansonnier I (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 308)<sup>8</sup>. As Maria Sofia Lannutti (2012) has explained, the form aaab | AB or aaab | BB involves a musical interaction between the final line of the strophe, which possesses a fixed rhyme, and the refrain: in other words, the melody of the final line of the strophe completely or partially anticipates the melody of the refrain (A or B). The resultant melodic repetition has a function equivalent to that of the *volta* in the Italian ballata and the *tierce* in the virelai. According to Lannutti, the melodies from Sant Joan can be considered to be akin to that of the French ballette, *Amours a cui je me rench pris* (RS 1602), the

7. Higini Anglès, *La música a Catalunya fins al segle XIII* (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Biblioteca de Catalunya, 1935; repr., Barcelona: Biblioteca de Catalunya, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 1988). The manuscript is now preserved at the Biblioteca de Catalunya in Barcelona (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya [olim Biblioteca central de la diputación provincial de Barcelona], 3871). Following their initial publication by Anglès, the poetic pieces from Sant Joan de les Abadesses have been edited and studied by Gerald A. Bond, "The last unpublished Troubadour Songs", *Speculum* 60, 4 (1985): 827-49 (repr. in *Capçalera: revista de divulgació històrica i cultural de l'Ajuntament de Sant Joan de les Abadesses* 1 (1989): 66-94, translated into Catalan); Isabel de Riquer and Maricarmen Gómez Muntané, *Las canciones de Sant Joan de les Abadesses. Estudio y edición filológica y musical* (Barcelona: Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres, 2003); Pär Larson, "Ço es amors e altre possibili tracce italiane in poesia occitanica del secolo XIII", in *Studi di Filologia romanza offerti a Valeria Bertolucci Pizzorusso*, ed. Pietro G. Beltrami, Maria Grazia Capusso, Fabrizio Cigni and Sergio Vatteroni, (Pisa: Pacini, 2006), Vol. 1, 777-803; and Maria Sofia Lannutti, "L'ultimo canto: musica e poesia nella lirica catalana del medioevo (con una nuova edizione del Cançoneret di Sant Joan de les Abadesses)", *Romance Philology* 66 (2012): 309-63.

8. In the introductory study to their edition, Isabel de Riquer and Maricarmen Gómez Muntané already noted the northern origins of this form, while correlating this aspect with the Gallicisms found in some of the texts and with the Messina or Lorraine system of musical notation employed within the protocol from Sant Joan. The texts have subsequently been reedited, with important linguistic and metrical observations, by Pär Larson and Maria Sofia Lannutti. For the Oxford chansonnier, see Eglal Doss-Quinby and Samuel N. Rosenberg, *The Old French Ballette. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Douce 308* (Geneva: Droz, 2006).

only other secular example of this structure to have been preserved with musical notation. This confirms the circulation of a variety of responsorial melodies arranged in strophes consisting of three monorhymed lines with a reprise line (*volta*) and a refrain. This structure, already used in the religious repertory, must have also been associated with texts of an amorous nature enjoying a certain level of dissemination in Occitania and Catalonia between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>9</sup> Such diffusion, as we shall see, had an impact on the poetry composed by the Catalan poets writing at the turn of the fourteenth century and afterwards.

Various pieces of the Occitan lyric poetry repertory so highly valued at the French court of Charles I of Anjou (1227-1285), King of Naples and Jerusalem as well as Count of Provence, share a similar structure, particularly the *danses* from the final section of the Occitan chansonnier Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 1749 (E), probably added to the collection at the last minute.<sup>10</sup> Cerverí de Girona (1259-1285) employs these “low” strophic forms with refrains and crosses them with those of the “learned” register associated with the last generation of troubadours, thus establishing a precedent and model for subsequent Catalan poets. It remains unclear, however, whether as a result of these choices, Cerverí’s compositional style was innovative or whether he was following models already in vogue at the court of Peter the Great.<sup>11</sup> Whatever the case, it seems that the taste for these dance songs in the French style must have influenced Catalan poetry during the first half of the fourteenth century.

Besides the manuscript witnesses, we possess proof of the significant presence in Catalonia of musicians and jongleurs originating from the courts in

9. See Lannutti, “L’ultimo canto”, 330-1, and Anna Alberni, Maria Sofia Lannutti, “*Lay ves França*. Les structures formelles de la musique et de la poésie dans la lyrique catalane des origines”, in *Les Noces de Philologie et Musicologie. Textes et musiques du Moyen Âge*, ed. Christelle Cazaux-Kowalski, Christelle Chaillou-Amadiou, Anne-Zoé Rillon-Marne and Fabio Zinelli (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018), 371-99, esp. 382-3. For the *ballete* RS 1602, see Doss-Quinby and Rosenberg, *The Old French Ballete*, 202-5.

10. Stefano Asperti, *Carlo d’Angiò e i trovatori. Componenti ‘provenzali’ e angioine nella tradizione manoscritta della lirica trovadorica* (Ravenna: Longo Angelo, 1995). Anna Radaelli, ed., *Danses provenzali del XIII secolo. Appunti sul genere ed edizione critica* (Florence: Alinea, 2004), 86-7, describes the section as a kind of *plquette* consisting of fifteen texts added to the end of the chansonnier once the project of compiling the collection had already been concluded. On chansonnier E, see most recently Caterina Menichetti, *Il canzoniere provenzale E* (Paris, BnF, fr. 1749) (Strasbourg: ELiPhi, 2015).

11. Miriam Cabré, *Cerverí de Girona: un trobador al servei de Pere el Gran* (Barcelona-Palma: Universitat de Barcelona-Universitat de les Illes Balears, 2011), 201-10. In general, scholars consider Paulet de Marselha as the troubadour to have introduced the *dansa* to Catalonia, and have highlighted the mediating role played by the court of Rodez in the dissemination of the genre. See Asperti, *Carlo d’Angiò e i trovatori*, 108, and Anna Radaelli, “La dansa en llengua d’oc: un gènere d’èxit entre Occitània i Catalunya”, *Mot so raso* 6 (2007): 49-60.

which such poetic forms circulated. In the years following Cerverí's death, King James II (r. 1291-1327), himself the author of a Marian *dansa* in the form of a ballata, made frequent payments to jongleurs of the King of Naples, Charles II of Anjou (r. 1285-1309).<sup>12</sup> These transient jongleurs performed at the Catalan court: on the 24th of November 1295, James II issued a gracious concession to Malapert, a jongleur in the service of the King of Naples.<sup>13</sup> On the 6th of February 1297, from Rome, King James ratified payments to Guillaume Renard, jongleur of Philip IV of France, as well as to Bertran de Ros, jongleur of King Charles II of Naples.<sup>14</sup> Shortly afterwards, in April of the same year, the king ratified further payments that had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Bernat de Sarrià, while he, the king, was in Rome. Among these were imbursements to Joaní and Jacomí, both jongleurs of Robert of Anjou, Duke of Calabria, as well as to Gambó, Giovanni da Procida's jongleur.<sup>15</sup> The presence at the Catalan court of jongleurs in the service of Robert of Anjou, Duke of Calabria and future King of Naples (r. 1309-1343), is of considerable note.

Robert of Anjou was linked to the Crown of Aragon from the time of his infancy, when he was held prisoner by Peter the Great as a result of the episode known as the Sicilian Vespers. Robert was imprisoned in place of his father, Charles II, who had been captured at the battle of the Gulf of Naples on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 1284, and was set free as a result of the Treaty of Canfranc on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 1288. Robert arrived in València in around December of 1288, and remained there until 1295, following the Treaty of Anagni.<sup>16</sup> Later, he would marry two Catalan princesses: Violant (Yolande), daughter of Peter the Great and Constance of Sicily, and Sanxa (Sancia) of Majorca, daughter of

12. *MiMus DB. Ministrers i música a la Corona d'Aragó medieval*: [www.mimus.ub.edu](http://www.mimus.ub.edu), last accessed July 2, 2020 (Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 263, f. 5v). A preceding summary of the document can be found in Josep Trenchs i Òdena, *Documents de cancelleria i mestre racional sobre la cultura catalana medieval*, coord. M.T. Ferrer i Mallol, ed. I. J. Baiges, D. Duran, T. Huguet, M. Rfaust and E. Redondo (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2011), doc. 212. I cite and make use of only a small part of the documents contained in the MiMus DB (in progress).

13. For the *dansa*, *Mayre de Deu e fylha* (RIALC. *Repertorio informatizzato dell'antica letteratura catalana* [www.rialc.unina.it](http://www.rialc.unina.it) [last accessed July 2, 2020] 84bis, 1), see Cesare De Lollis, "Ballata alla Vergine di Giacomo II d'Aragona", *Revue des Langues Romanes* 31 (1887): 289-95; Irénée Cluzel, "Princes et troubadours de la maison royale de Barcelone-Aragon", *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 27 (1957-1958): 321-73; Maurizio Perugi, "Il Sordello di Dante e la tradizione mediolatina dell'invettiva", *Studi Danteschi* 55 (1983): 23-135; Pär Larson, "Ancora sulla ballata *Molto à ch'io non cantai*", *Medioevo Letterario d'Italia* 1 (2004): 51-72; Id., "*Ço es amors* e altre possibili tracce italiane"; Alberni and Lannutti, "*Lay ves França*. Les structures formelles".

14. *MiMus DB* (Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 321, f. 331r-v).

15. *MiMus DB* (Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 245, ff. 4v-5r). Edited by Trenchs i Òdena, *Documents de cancelleria*, doc. 230.

16. Jesús Ernest Martínez Ferrando, Santiago Sobrequés and Enric Bagué, *Els descendents de Pere el Gran: Alfons el Franc, Jaume II, Alfons el Benigne* (Barcelona: Teide, 1954), 32-3 and 75-8.

James II of Majorca and Esclarmonde of Foix. This fact probably helps to explain his interest in possessing a manuscript containing the works of Cerverí de Girona, a Catalan poet who had incorporated into his chansonnier genres and forms of French poetry that were fashionable at the Angevin courts.<sup>17</sup> Thus, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1304, King James ordered his steward Arnau Messeguer to hand over two books (or at least one) to the jongleur Comí, consisting of the works of Cerverí de Girona, because he was obliged to send them to Robert, Duke of Calabria.<sup>18</sup> Noteworthy here is the participation of Comí as a messenger in this transaction, possibly the same jongleur who would go on to sing the *Sermó* before the king in 1322, as recorded by the *Crònica* of Ramon Muntaner. Was it the very same Comí who “dix una cançó novella que hac feta lo dit senyor infant en Pere” [...] [sang a new *cançó* composed by the said Lord Prince Peter], Count of Ribagorça and of Empúries (1305-1380), son of James II and uncle and counsellor to the future Peter the Ceremonious, during the coronation of his brother, Alfonso IV (r. 1327-1336) in 1328 at Zaragoza? The *Crònica* points out that this jongleur led the way in the performance “per ço com En Comí canta mills que null hom de Catalunya” [...] [for the reason that Comí sings better than any man in Catalonia] (*Crònica*, Chap. 298). Given that the *Sermó* had to be sung “en so de Gui Nantull” [according to the melody of the French chanson de geste *Gui de Nanteuil*], it is plausible to think that the performer must have been of French origin.<sup>19</sup>

17. See Amédée Pagès, “La *dansa* provençale et les *goïgs* en Catalogne”, in *Homenatge a Antoni Rubió i Lluch. Miscel·lània d'Estudis Literaris, Històrics i Lingüístics* (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1936), Vol. 1, 201-24, and Miriam Cabré, “La lírica d'arrel trobadoresca”, in *Història de la Literatura Catalana, Literatura medieval* (1), *Dels orígens al segle XV*, ed. Lola Badia (Barcelona: Enciclopèdia catalana, Editorial Barcino, Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2013), 219-96, esp. 260-9. Cerverí de Girona's composition *A la plug'e al ven iran* (Alfred Pillet and Henry Carstens, *Bibliographie der Troubadours* [Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1933], 434, 1a [from now on, *BdT*]), structurally close to the Occitan *balada*, is described as “Espingadura d'en Cerverí” in the rubric of the Catalan chansonnier Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya (*olim* Biblioteca central de la diputación provincial de Barcelona), 146 (Sg), f. 33v-34r. According to Cabré, *Cerverí de Girona*, 215-216, the genre's name could have its origins in the verb *espingar*, meaning “to play the flageolet” (cf. *Diccionari etimològic i complementari de la llengua catalana III*, ed. Joan Coromines (Barcelona: Curial, 1980-2001), 649b, s.v. “espinguet”) and, therefore, could refer to a form of dance accompanied by this instrument. This hypothesis is encouraged by attestation of the term *espranguier* or *espanguier* in French (Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke, *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* [Heidelberg: Winter, 1935], 8185, s.v. “springuen”), as has been noted by Ilaria Zamuner, ed., *Le baladas del canzoniere provenzale Q. Appunti sul genere e edizione critica* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2012), 15-7. The rubric, then, could allude to the manner of performing the text, i.e., to the performance itself rather than to a genre determined by its form.

18. *MiMus DB* (Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 235, f. 167v). Document first cited by Martí de Riquer, “Treinta composiciones del trovador Cerverí de Girona”, *Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona* 17 (1945): 59-157, esp. 61.

19. Comí is the affectionate version of the name Jacomí (Fr. *Jaquemin*). On the identification of this jongleur, see Marina Navàs Farré, “Poètica i literatura tardotrobadoresca a la cort de l'infant

The document relating to the books by Cerverí has not escaped scholarly attention, although read in the light of the aforementioned poetico-musical contacts between the Catalan court and the Angevin court of Naples at the turn of the fourteenth century, it reveals a more richly nuanced context. First of all, the Duke of Calabria's interest in the two "librorum operis factis per Cerverinum qui sunt in Barchinona" [books of works composed by Cerverí which are in Barcelona] constitutes an example of the earliest reception of Cerverí de Girona's poetry in Angevin territories, within a multilingual and refined cultural setting that included French, Occitan, Tuscan, Neapolitan and, of course, Latin.<sup>20</sup> Second, the presence of French musicians and jongleurs at the Court of Aragon during this period – and after, until the end of Peter the Ceremonious's reign – presents a fitting background for the standardisation of refrain songs in Catalan poetry in the first half of the fourteenth century. Mention of at least two "trobadors de danses" (lit. "troubadours of dance") in the service of Peter the Ceremonious (1336-1387) and Eleanor of Sicily (1349-1375), namely, Pere de Rius (documented as a "minstrel", "troubadour of dance" and "troubadour of song" between the years 1362 and 1381) and Andreu Gascó (documented as a "troubadour of dance" and a "joglar de boca" in 1372 (lit. "jongleur of the mouth"), i.e., someone who either sang or recited verse), both originating from the court of the Count of Foix, Gaston Fébus, bears witness to the prestige in which the *dansa* was held in the closing years of the fourteenth century, and can be considered testimony to the ennoblement of the genre.<sup>21</sup>

Further proof can be found in the celebrated account given by Ramon Muntaner in his *Crònica* (Chap. 297), where he explains that Prince Peter

Pere", in *L'infant Pere d'Aragó i d'Anjou "molt graciós e savi senyor"*, ed. Antoni Conejo da Pena (Valls: Cossetània Edicions, 2015), 87-110, and Stefano Maria Cingolani, "Joglars, ministrers i xantres a la Corona d'Aragó (segles XIII-XV). Observacions i perspectives de recerca a propòsit d'un diplomatar en curs", in *Cobles e lays, danses e bon saber. L'última cançó dels trobadors a Catalunya: llengua, forma i edició*, ed. Anna Alberni and Simone Ventura (Rome: Viella - Institut de Recerca en Cultures Medievales, 2016), 237-68, and Id., forthcoming. For the *Crònica* of Ramon Muntaner, see Ferran Soldevila, *Les quatre grans cròniques. III. Crònica de Ramon Muntaner* (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2011). For new information concerning the other two jongleurs who, besides Comí, sang and recited compositions by the Prince Peter of Ribagorça (the future Count Peter of Aragon and Anjou) at the coronation feast of Alfonso IV ("The Kind") of Aragon (1328), see n. 22 below.

20. As regards the cultural climate prevailing in Angevin Naples, see *Boccaccio e Napoli: Nuovi materiali per la storia culturale di Napoli nel Trecento*, ed. Giancarlo Alfano, Emma Grimaldi, Sebastiano Martelli, Andrea Mazzucchi, Matteo Palumbo, Alessandra Periccioli Saggese and Carlo Vecce (Florence: Cesati, 2014); and Jane Gilbert, Catherine Keen and Ella Williams, "The Italian Angevins: Naples and Beyond, 1266-1343", *Italian Studies* 72 (2017): 121-7. On Cerverí's poetic heritage, see Cabré, *Cerverí de Girona*.

21. Alberni and Lannutti, "Lay ves França. Les structures formelles". For the relevant documentation, cf. *MiMus DB*.



sang “una dansa novella que hac feta” [a new *dansa* that he had composed] after “cascun menjar” [each course of the meal] during his brother’s coronation. The chronicler highlights the fact that each piece was performed after each course of the meal and that “all those who had brought the dishes gave their response to him” or, in other words, sang the refrain or response. This scene, wherein the prince performed at least ten *danses* composed *ex novo* for the coronation ceremony, serves to corroborate the prestige attached to the *dansa* genre.<sup>22</sup>

The process whereby the *dansa* was ennobled at the Catalan court seems to form part of a broader movement which led to a redefinition of the poetic genres produced in the Crown of Aragon. In order to survey the paths this process followed, it may be useful to re-examine the small group of *danses* that exhibit the most primitive form, namely three monorhymed verses with a reprise line implying melodic repetition and a refrain. The characteristics of these pieces will enable me to establish connections with compositions whose strophic structure is more complex, such as the *danses* of the *Cançoneret de Ripoll*. These latter compositions have been preserved in a manuscript which did not envisage musical notation, and wherein the copying of the poems was combined with an interest in metapoetical reflection (Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Col·leccions, Còdexs: Ripoll 129 [Rip129]). A similar prescriptive-descriptive component constitutes the principal feature of the manuscript in which the *dansa*, *Plazens plasers* (BdT 461, 193a) is preserved, a piece whose

22. The three jongleurs who, according to the account given in Muntaner’s *Crònica*, took part in this ceremony were Ramasset, who recited “un serventesc novell que el senyor infant En Pere hac fet” [a new *serventes* composed by the Lord Prince Peter], the jongleur Comí, who recited “una cançó novella” [a new *canço*] by the same author, and the jongleur Novellet, who recounted “en parlant set-cents versos rimats” [in spoken voice seven hundred lines <of verse>], composed by Prince Peter. Now, thanks to the *MiMus DB*, we know that Muntaner’s Ramasset was Salvador Ramàs, the youngest of a family of jongleurs in the service of the Catalan princes. Among the documents in which Salvador Ramàs appears, one dating from 1329 (*MiMus DB* [Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 575, f. 36rv]) informs us that he was considered to be a *mimus* in the service of Pere de Ribagorça (“mimo incliti infanti Petri”), and that the jongleur Novellet bore the nickname “Novellet d’Espanya” (“Novelleto Ispanie”). A further document dating from 1321 confirms payments to Salvador Ramàs, jongleur to Prince Peter, for having brought certain *cobles* composed by Peter to Alfonso (*MiMus DB* [Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d’Aragó, Cancelleria, reg. 301, f. 120r-121r]). At the seminar entitled *Cobles e lays, danses o e bon saber. La poesia catalana abans d’Ausias March: llengua, forma, edició* (Universitat de Barcelona, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013), we revealed the existence of this corpus of documents, which at that time were still in the process of being compiled, as is explained in Alborni and Ventura, *Cobles e lays, danses e bon saber*, 22-4 and 244-5. We kindly acknowledge Marina Navàs for having issued some of these documents (see Ead., “Poètica i literatura tardotrobadoresca”). Raül Sanchis, “La dansa metafòrica en la festa valenciana” (PhD diss., Universitat de Tarragona, 2019) has also cited a number of items of the *MiMus DB*. For an analysis of the relevant documents, see Cingolani, “Joglars, ministrers i xantres” and Id. forthcoming, as well as the *MiMus DB*.

strophic characteristics are very simple though rendered more intricate by a complex interplay of internal rhymes and retrogradation: I shall linger upon this particular fact, because it seems to me that it may help assess the “institutional” scope of the lyric tradition that underlies this group of texts.<sup>23</sup>

Listed below are the incipits of the small corpus of anonymous fourteenth-century Catalan aaab-structured refrain songs containing a melodic reprise line and a refrain – a corpus still susceptible to expansion by virtue of the incorporation of new discoveries:

1. *S'anc vos ame, era us vau desaman* (BdT 461, 215c; Rao 0, 125)<sup>24</sup>
2. *Ar lausetz, lauset, lauset li comandamen l'abbe!* (BdT 461, 27b; Rao 0, 1)
3. *... era us preg qe m'aujatz, bela mia* (BdT 461, 251b)
4. *Plazens plasers, tant vos am e us dezir* (BdT 461, 193a)
5. *Na dolça res, be m'es greu* (Rao 0, bis)

To the three *danses* from Sant Joan de les Abadesses,<sup>25</sup> should be added, first of all, the *dansa*, *Plazens plasers* and the so called *ballada*, *Na dolça res* (in fact, another *dansa*). The blueprint of these five pieces has a Catalan precedent in Cerverí de Girona's *dansa-balada*, *Pus no vey leys cuy son amics* (BdT 434, 9c), and without shifting from the immediate troubadour context, in the *baladeta*, *Lo fin cor qu'ie-us ai m'ausi, dona Gaia* (BdT 244, 4), attributed to Guiraut d'Espanha and added to the end of the Occitan chansonnier E.<sup>26</sup> This piece shares a specific style of composition with *Plazens plasers* and *Na dolça res*. In turn, the latter two may be related to various *danses* from the *Cançoneret de Ripoll* and to the other two *danses* from the Florence manuscript, where *Na dolça res* is also preserved: namely, *Bon esforç mal astre venç* and [...] *domna de bon ayre* (Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Pal. 1052 [Pal1052], ff. 14v-15v). In a forthcoming paper I shall address the relationship between these pieces and a composition copied into a notarial protocol from Besalú (1348),

23. As regards the French and Occitan poetic and metapoetic tradition, see Adrian Armstrong and Sarah Kay, *Knowing Poetry: Verse in Medieval France from the Rose to the Rhétoriciens* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 165-96.

24. “Repertori d'autors i obres”, in *Repertori mètric de la poesia catalana medieval*, ed. Jordi Parra-mon i Blasco (Barcelona: PAM, 1992)

25. See Lannutti, “L'ultimo canto”.

26. Texts edited by Pagès, “La *dansa* provençale”, 206-7; Cerverí de Girona, *Lírica*, ed. Joan Coromines, 2 vols. (Barcelona: Curial, 1988), 212; Otto Hoby, *Die Lieder des Troubadours Guiraut d'Espanha* (Fribourg: Sant-Paulus Drukerei 1915), 43; and Radaelli, *Dansas provenzali del XIII secolo*, 143-53. Both Radaelli and Ilaria Zamuner, “Les *baladas* occitanes: origen del gènere i definició del corpus”, *Mot so raso* 6 (2007): 61-74, and Ead., *Le baladas del canzoniere provenzale Q*, 8-9, describe the “zajalesque” structure of the *baladeta*, *Lo fin cor qu'ie-us ai m'ausi, dona Gaia* (BdT 244, 4), and underline its singularity.

*Madona, xantant vos diria*, brought to light by Josep Romeu (1980) as the first of a series of three *cobles esparses* having mutually related metrical schemes. I will propose a new edition of the three anonymous *cobles* as a single piece, akin in form and register to the other compositions constituting this corpus. At present, I shall be dealing principally with the interpretation and the *mise en recueil* of the *dansa*, *Plazens plasars*.

#### «PLAZENS PLASERS» AND THE COLLECTION OF POETIC TREATISES IN MS BC239

*Plazens plasars, tant vos am e us dezir* is a *dansa* formed of two *cobles* and a *respos* structured aaab | AB, as copied into MS Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya (*olim* Biblioteca Central de la Diputació Provincial de Barcelona), 239 (BC239) between the *Razos de Trobar* by Ramon Vidal de Besalú and the anonymous *Doctrina de compondre dictatz*. In the most recent edition of the text, Field considered it to be the work of Ramon Vidal,<sup>27</sup> whereas Asperti has roundly refuted the attribution of such authorship.<sup>28</sup> As has been explained by Marshall,<sup>29</sup> the poem could have been copied onto an empty space in the manuscript's antigraph. The structure and content of this exemplar could have been similar to those of BC239 from Barcelona, itself a collection of vernacular works concerning poetic composition which dates from approximately the fourteenth century.

The compiler of BC239 (or, more probably, of its model) put together a collection of poetic treatises of diverse origin, conferring upon them uniform pagination wherein the apparatus consisting of rubrics, capital letters and spaces had the role of lending cohesion and coherence to the whole. I present an outline of its contents, below:<sup>30</sup>

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| [ff. 1r-11r]  | Berenguer d'Anoia, <i>Mirall de trobar</i> – 1300?                               |
| [ff. 12r-23r] | Jofre de Foixà, <i>Regles de trobar</i> – end of 13 <sup>th</sup> c.             |
| [ff. 24r-29r] | Ramon Vidal de Besalú, <i>Razos de trobar</i> – beginning of 13 <sup>th</sup> c. |

27. Ramon Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, ed. Hugh Field, 2 vols. (Barcelona: Curial, 1989; repr. 1991), Vol 2, 177.

28. Asperti, *Carlo d'Angiò e i trovatori*, 106.

29. John H. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar of Raimon Vidal and Associated Texts* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), LXXVI.

30. For a detailed description of the manuscript's contents, see Simone Ventura, "La *Doctrina d'Acort* di Terramagnino da Pisa fra copia e riscrittura", in *Transcrire et/ou traduire. Variation et changement linguistique dans la tradition manuscrite des textes médiévaux, Actes du congrès international, Klagenfurt, 15-16 novembre 2012*, ed. Raymund Wilhelm (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2013), 151-89, esp. 154-8.

- [ff. 29r-31r]      Anonymous, *Doctrina de compondre dictatz* – end of 13<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 32r-56r]      Joan de Castellnou, *Compendi* – mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 57v-64v]      Terramagnino da Pisa, *Doctrina d'acort* – end of 13<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 65r-82v]      Joan de Castellnou, *Glosari* – mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 83r-158v]      *Flors del gai saber* (= verse redaction of the *Leys d'amors*) – mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 161r-184v]      Jaume March, *Libre de concordances* – 1371. Different hand.

From a codicological viewpoint, BC239 can be split into two parts: the first, consisting of the first ten octerns, copied by the same hand, gathers together the treatises which extend from the *Mirall* to the *Flors*; the second part consists of the *Libre de concordances* by Jaume March, the most recent of the treatises and one copied by a different hand in the final two sexterns of the codex. The *Mirall de trobar*, the *Regles de trobar* and the *Razos de trobar* occupy an opening section that constitutes the first two quires of the manuscript. The *Doctrina de compondre dictatz* closes the second quire, immediately after the *Razos*. Between quires three and six, we encounter works by Joan de Castellnou, namely, the *Compendi* and the *Glosari* to the *Doctrinal de trobar* of Ramon de Cornet. The sequence is interrupted by the *Doctrina d'Acort* by Terramagnino da Pisa, a short verse treatise deriving from the *Razos de trobar*, which may have been added later, as an exemplar became available. Lastly, the *Flors del gai saber*, a verse redaction of the *Leys d'amors*, fills the four other remaining quires from the first part of the codex.

From the point of view of content, this first part of the collection can be split into two unevenly configured groups:

a) the treatises of the so-called “Vidal tradition”,<sup>31</sup> namely, the *Razos de trobar*, the *Regles de trobar* and the *Doctrina d'acort*;

b) the series of works deriving from or related to the *Leys d'amors*: in other words, the treatises by Joan de Castellnou (the *Compendi* and the *Glosari* to the *Doctrinal de trobar* by Cornet), and the *Flors del gai saber*, a verse redaction of the earliest edition of the *Leys d'amors*.<sup>32</sup>

According to Marshall, the *Doctrina de compondre dictatz* was written in order to complement the *Regles de trobar* by Jofre de Foixà.<sup>33</sup> From a codicological viewpoint the *Doctrina*, copied onto the final three folios of the manuscript's second octern (ff. 29r-31r), immediately after the *Razos de trobar* by Ramon Vidal, also seems to exercise the function of completing the contents of the *Razos* and of the *Regles* by Jofre de Foixà.

31. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, XCVI-XCVIII.

32. Cf. Beatrice Fedi, “Per un'edizione critica delle *Leys d'Amors*”, *Studi Medievali* 40 (1999): 43-118.

33. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, XCIII-XCV: in fact, Marshall attributes authorship of the *Doctrina* to Jofre himself.

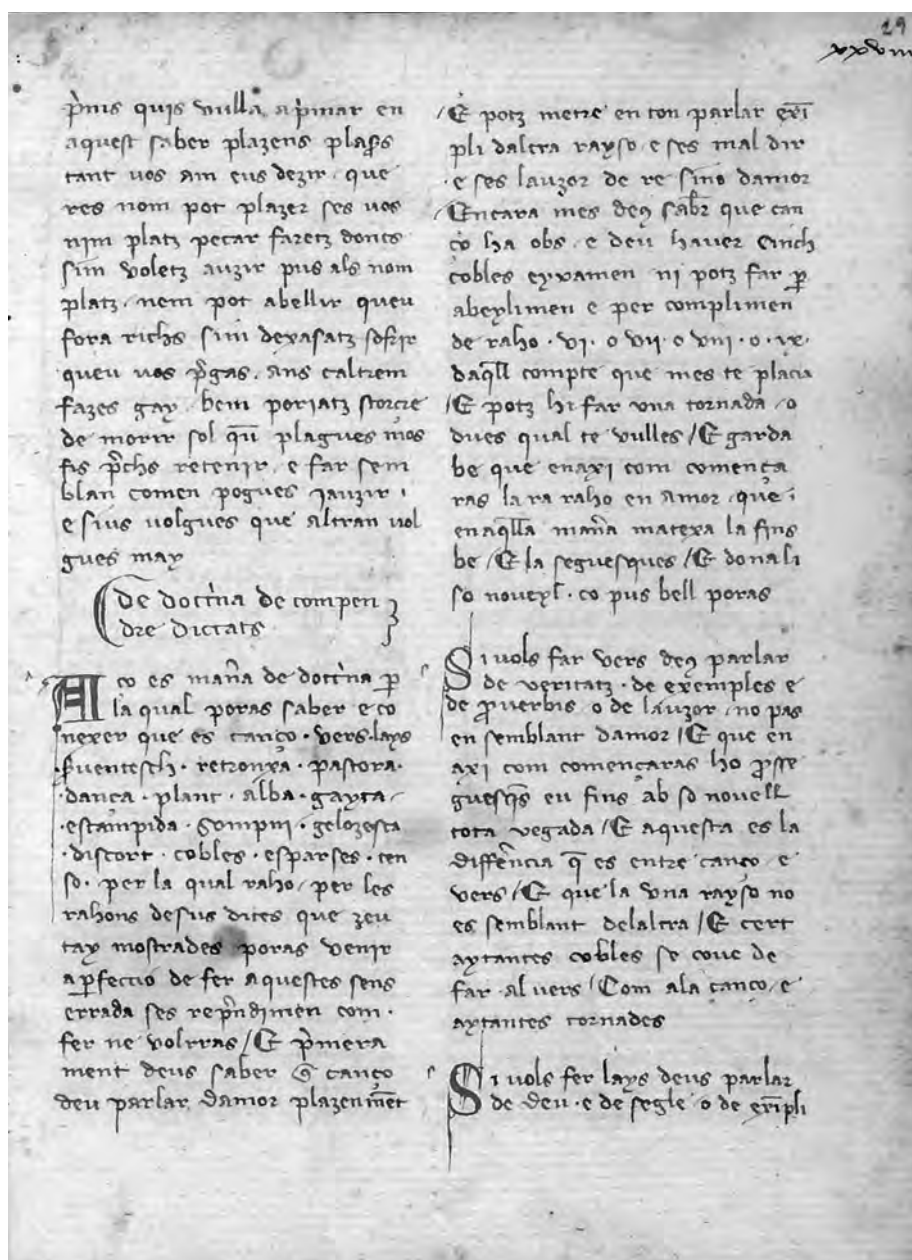


Figure 1. Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya (*olim* Biblioteca Central de la Diputaci3n Provincial de Barcelona), 239, f. 29r: end of the *Razos de trobar* – beginning of the *Doctrina de compondre dictatz*

As the image in Figure 1 reveals, the *Doctrina de compondre dictatz* does not begin on the front side (recto) of the page, as is customarily the case in BC239 at the beginning of each treatise. If we focus on the macrotextual structure of the *Doctrina*, the rubric which opens the treatise, “De doct(ri)na de compen|dre dictatz” (note “comprendre”, erroneously, instead of “compondre”), has a hierarchical value equivalent to that of the rubrics indicating the subchapters of a treatise, as in the case of the *Mirall de trobar* (cf. ff. 29ra, 5ra), for instance.

Immediately prior to this rubric, anomalously hierarchised as a subchapter instead of as the opening of the work, we find the verses of the *dansa*, which the scribe seems to have accidentally appended to the end of the *Razos de trobar*. They are not even situated at the beginning of the written line: folio 29r opens halfway through a sentence from the *Razos*, and the *dansa* itself commences before the end of this line:

Ez eu no puch dir ges totas las paraulas malvadas ne las rayzos, mas tant ne cuig dir que totz homs // 29ra primis qui-s vulla [...] aprimar en aquest saber *plazens plasers tant vos am e us dezir que res no-m pot plaser ses vos ni-m platz pecar faretz doncs* [etc.].

[And by no means can I mention all the wicked words and remarks, but I can only think of saying about this matter that everyone // 29r subtle enough who wishes [...] to grow more subtle in this <form of> knowledge *pleasant pleasure, so much do I love and desire you that in your absence nothing can please me, nor succeeds in pleasing me. You shall commit a sin, therefore*, [etc.].

Like Asperti,<sup>34</sup> I do not share Field’s hypothesis to the effect that the placement of the *dansa* at the end of the *Razos de trobar* constitutes a commentary on the use of *paraules biaxades ni falsades* [distorted and deformed words] and an appropriate and perhaps satirical complement to the final words of the treatise [“Ez eu no puc dir ges totas las paraulas malvadas ne las rayzos”, etc.].<sup>35</sup> If we bear in mind the fact that this manuscript is probably a copy of a lost exemplar, we notice that the transcription of the poem occurs at a point when the hierarchy of the collection’s system of rubrics seems to falter, becoming less consistent. Such hesitancy was possibly present in the scribe’s exemplar, a fact which may have brought about the transcription of the poem in our manuscript. Or perhaps the space left blank between the *Razos* and the *Doctrina* was already occupied by the short poem in the exemplar, as Marshall points out, and it was precisely this which subsequently caused the copyist’s hesitancy vis-à-vis the rubric of the *Doctrina* in BC239.<sup>36</sup>

34. Asperti, *Carlo d’Angiò e i trovatori*.

35. Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, 186.

36. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, LXXVI.

Whatever the case may be, and without losing sight of the question implicit in Field's approach, one has to ask oneself what were the reasons behind the presence of the *dansa* in this collection of vernacular treatises on poetry dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and copied in Catalonia. Let us return, then, to the characteristics of the text and of the manuscript witness: *Plazens plasens* is a poem transcribed by the copyist or compiler of an ambitious encyclopaedic collection of – mostly Catalan – treatises on the *art de trobar*. The collection ends with the *Diccionari de rims* by Jaume March (1371), added by a different hand though fully consistent with the “book” as a whole. Beyond the “vestigial” [traccia] nature one may attribute to the insertion, the text possesses characteristics akin to those exhibited by the small group of *danses* added to the end of the Occitan chansonnier E.<sup>37</sup> This does not mean that it constitutes a marginal piece: on the contrary, there are elements which lead one to think that it formed part of a well-established textual tradition within the milieu in which the poetic treatises were compiled, or in the mind of the person who, slightly later, ordered the collection to be copied.

We know very little about the setting in which BC239 was produced: the only thing that seems certain is that the compilation took place within Catalan-speaking territories during the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>38</sup> The collection is demonstrative of the interest in didactic troubadour works in Catalonia towards the second half of the fourteenth century. Such interest is explicitly connected to a king of the House of Aragon, as is shown by the first paragraph of the *Regles de trobar* by Jofre de Foixà, a text written “per manament del noble e alt senyor en Jacme, per la gracia de Deu rey de Sicilia, qui en trobar pensa e s'adelita grantmen” [“at the command of the noble and lofty Lord James, by the grace of God King of Sicily, who greatly ponders upon and enjoys troubadour poetry”].<sup>39</sup> This dedication restricts the dating of the treatise to between the years 1286 and 1291; namely, the brief period in which James II was King of Sicily.<sup>40</sup> The characteristics of the text, a form of

37. Radaelli, *Dansas provenzali del XIII secolo*, 86, makes use of the term ‘instant-song’.

38. As far as the dating of the manuscript and the Catalanisms within the text are concerned, it is difficult to narrow things down any further than the *terminus post quem* implied by the addition of the *Diccionari de rims*.

39. Jofre de Foixà described his work as “doctrina en romanç, per que cells qui no-s entenen en gramatica, mas estiers han subtil e clar engyn, pusquen mils coneixer e apendre lo saber de trobar” [instruction in Romance whereby those who are not familiar with Latin, though otherwise possess subtle and clear intellects, may better acquaint themselves with and learn the knowledge <involved in composing> troubadour verse] (Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, 56).

40. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, LXXII. It should be recalled that Jofre de Foixà was the abbot of San Giovanni degli Eremiti in Palermo (1293).

“digest” of the *Razos de trobar*, including an additional series of basic advisory materials concerning poetic composition, led Marshall to define the “target audience” of the *Regles* as “an aristocratic circle of amateurs anxious to compose Provençal verse correctly”.<sup>41</sup> The same point is likewise applicable in 1324, when Ramon de Cornet finished his *Doctrinal de trobar* with a dedication to the Infant Pere de Ribagorça, son of James II:

Mos libres es complitz, / Dieus ne sia grazits / e la Verges Maria. / E vulh que donatz sia / a-n Pedro, filh del rey / d’Arago, car lo vey / savi, cert e valen / e de trobar saben / e gent enamorat / quez yeu non hay trobat / en est mon tan cortes / per que caps d’amor es / e dignes de lauzors / ez er mi grans honors / si vol mon libre prendre (vv. 514-528).<sup>42</sup>

[My book has ended, / for which may God / and the Virgin Mary be thanked. / And I wish it to be given / to Peter, son of the King / of Aragon, for I see / <that he is> wise, well-informed and worthy of respect / as well as knowledgeable about poetry / and tender in his love / <inasmuch as> I have never found / such a courtly <man> in this world, / since he is an experienced poet [lit. ‘leader in love’] / and worthy of praise / and it would now be a great honour <to> me / if he wished to receive my book].

Some twenty years later, in 1341, Joan de Castellnou dedicated the *Glosari* he had composed in order to correct the *Doctrinal* by Cornet to the same “mout aut poderos senhor mon senhor l’enfant en Pere, del mout aut poderos senhor en Jayme de bona memoria Rey d’Arago fill, per la gracia de Deu Comte de Ribagorça e d’Ampuries” [“very lofty <and> powerful lord, my Lord Infant Peter, son of the very lofty <and> powerful Lord James, King of Aragon, of fond memory, by the grace of God Count of Ribagorça and of Empúries”]. As is well known, between these two dates, the encyclopaedic compilation of the *Leys d’amors* (finished in 1350, though begun in 1323) had been set in motion: the *Glosari* placed emphasis upon the points at which the *Doctrinal de trobar* failed to adhere to the precepts of the Toulousain *Leys*.<sup>43</sup>

41. “[a circle] anxious to continue an established mode of poetic expression which was for them not merely an object of antiquarian curiosity but a living tradition of which they still felt themselves to be part” (Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, LXXV).

42. Joan de Castellnou, *Segle XIV. Obres en prosa. I. Compendi de la coneixença dels vicis en els dictats del Gai Saber. II. Glosari al Doctrinal de Ramon de Cornet*, ed. Josep M. Casas Homs (Barcelona: Fundació Salvador Vives Casajana, 1969), 201-2.

43. On this subject, see Alfred Jeanroy, “La poésie provençale dans le sud-ouest de la France”, in *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Vol. 38 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1949), 99-110, and Giulio Cura Curà, “Il *Doctrinal de trobar* di Raimon de Cornet e il *Glosari* di Johan de Castellnou”, *La parola del testo* 9 (2005): 125-91. Andrés Descalzo, “Comentarios sobre algunos trovadores al servicio de Pedro IV o de paso por su corte”, *Recerca Musicològica* 9-10 (1989-1990): 295-301, esp. 296, pro-



The manuscript BC239, as well as the *Cançoneret de Ripoll*, must have been compiled during this time, the latter constituting a further exceptional witness to the aforementioned interest in metapoetic reflection.

#### «PLAZENS PLASERS» AND METAPOETIC REFLECTION

The case of *Plazens plasers* in BC239 can be interpreted in the light of another, better known manuscript. The codex from the Ripoll collection Rip129 includes a fragment from the *Regles de trobar* by Jofre de Foixà, as well as two short, anonymous treatises on genre and rhyme. These brief treatises are followed – without interruption to the Romance section of the manuscript – by the eighteen poetic pieces known as the *Cançoneret de Ripoll*, twelve of which are *danses*.<sup>44</sup> The contents of the codex that are now of interest to us consist of the following:

- [ff. 19r-25r] Jofre de Foixà, *Regles de trobar* (without a heading) – end of 13<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 25v-26r] First short treatise on poetic genres – mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 26r-26v] Second short treatise on types of rhyme – mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.
- [ff. 27r-30v] Anthology of eighteen poetic pieces (*Cançoneret de Ripoll*) – mid-14<sup>th</sup> c.

In the study which precedes her edition of the poems, Lola Badia considers it likely that the short treatises are the work of the chansonnier's compiler, and she observes that Catalan poets of the fourteenth century must have felt a particular need (or had a particular taste) for the prescription of poetic rules.<sup>45</sup> This atmosphere of grammatical erudition is common to other Catalan manuscripts containing poetry, and corresponds to a perception – specific to the fourteenth century – of poetry as knowledge.<sup>46</sup> As Badia explains, the

posed the identification of Joan de Castellnou with the poet and treatise writer of the same name, who certain scholars consider also to be one of the overseers (“mantenidors”) of the Jeux Floraux in Toulouse. For Joan de Castellnou, see most recently Sadurní Martí, “Joan de Castellnou revisité: notes biographiques”, *Revue des Langues Romanes* 121 (2017): 623-59, who has edited and/or cited a number of documents from the *MiMus DB*.

44. For the Ripoll manuscript, see Jordi Rubió i Balaguer, *Del manuscrit 129 de Ripoll: Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó. Regles de trobar, tractat poètic, col·lecció de poesies* (Barcelona: L'Avenç, 1911) and Id., “Literatura catalana”, in *Historia general de las literaturas hispánicas* (Barcelona: editorial, 1949), Vol. 3; Lola Badia, ed., *Poesia catalana del s. XIV. Edició i estudi del Cançoneret de Ripoll* (Barcelona: Quaderns Crema, 1983).

45. Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*.

46. Regarding this approach, see Armstrong and Kay, *Knowing Poetry*. For a general approach to the prevailing Catalan literary circles, and an up-to-date account of the Catalan/Occitan

two treatises were written while bearing in mind poems VII (*Fis vos suy aman* [Rao 20,1]), XVII (*Li fayt Dieu son escur* [Rao 20,2]) and VIII (*Dompna, de mi merce-us prenya* [Rao 33,1]) from the anthology.<sup>47</sup> Even though it is not possible to determine whether the poems were written in order to exemplify the subjects of the short treatises, or whether the short treatises were written in light of the collected material in order to explicate it and to set it up as a model, it is noteworthy that the aspect which seems to interest the author of the first treatise the most is the functioning of internal rhyme within the Chaplain of Bolquera's *dansa*, *Fis vos suy aman*. I will return to this question, because it seems to me that it can help to explain the presence of the *dansa*, *Plazens plasers* in BC239. Let us first of all take a look at the poem's text:

*Plazens plasers* (BdT 461, 193a)<sup>48</sup>

Plazens plasers, tant vos am e us dezir  
que res no-m pot plazer ses vos, ni-m *play*. 2

Pecat faretz, doncs, si-m voletz auzir,  
pus als no-m platz ne [no-]m pot abellir,  
qu'eu fora rics si-m dexasatz sofrir  
qu'eu vos pregas, ans c'altre-m fazes gay. 6

Be-m poriatz storçe de morir  
sol que us plagueſ mos fis prechs retenir  
e far semblan co m'en pogueſ jauzir,  
e, si us volgueſ, que altra-n volgues may? 10

1 after dezir, the copyist has inserted a virga 2 play] platz 3 pecat] pecar 4 a virga after platz 6 a virga after pregas and after gay 8 que us] que; a virga after retenir 9 a stroke or virga after jauzir 10 a stroke, possibly to indicate vocalic contact, above que altra-n.

manuscripts in question, including the *Registre Cornet* (1340-1360) and the protocols from Castelló d'Empúries, see Cabré, "La lírica d'arrel trobadoresca", 273-8.

47. The poems' numeration follows Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 150-1. The author of the first two danses is the Capellà de Bolquera [Chaplain of Bolquera], called "lo xantre de Bolquera" and "lo noble archipreste de Bolqueres" by Francesc Eiximenis in his *Terç del Crestià*, where the Chaplain is cited next to Cerverí. His works must have enjoyed considerable dissemination, since another of his poems, *Li fait Dieu son escur*, is also preserved in *Cançoner Vega-Aguiló* (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya [olim Biblioteca Central de la Diputació Provincial de Barcelona], 7, f. 94r [VeAg; Rao 20,2]). For VeAg, see Anna Alberni, "Intavulare", *Tavole di canzonieri romanzi (serie coordinata da Anna Ferrari)*, I. *Canzonieri provenzali*, 11. *Biblioteca de Catalunya: VeAg (mss. 7 e 8)* (Modena: Mucchi, 2006). It is not clear whether the author of *Dompna, de mi merce-us prenya* is the Dalmau de Castellnou cited at the foot of f. 28r of the Ripoll manuscript: cf. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, xlv, n. 1, and Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 221, n. 27.

48. There exists an eighteenth-century copy of BC239 which also transmits the brief poem (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, 13405). I have not been able to consult this *codex descriptus*, which, according to Hugh Field (Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, Vol. 2, 177), possesses no variants apart from its slightly simplified punctuation.

### Translation

*Response.* Pleasant pleasure, so much do I love and desire you, that in your absence nothing can please me, nor succeeds in pleasing me.

I. You shall commit a sin, therefore, if you kill me, since there is nothing else [apart from you] which pleases me or which I find appealing; for I should consider myself well rewarded were you to allow me to make my entreaties to you, rather than that another lady should make me happy.

II. With ease shall you be able to dissuade me from dying, should it please you merely to listen to my faithful entreaties, and to show me how I might take delight in this situation; and, should you wish, would I love another lady more?<sup>49</sup>

The first editor of the text, Paul Meyer, transcribed it without making any interventions therein, though he did indicate certain significant emendations in the footnotes. The metrical form of the short poem was described by István Frank in his *Répertoire* (I, 10, 44:2 and 44:3),<sup>50</sup> who linked its structure to that of one of the anonymous *danses* from Sant Joan de les Abadesses, namely, *S'anc vos ame* (then unedited, though reproduced as a facsimile by Higiní Anglès, *La música a Catalunya fins al segle XIII*, 185 and 406, with musical transcription of the *respos* and of the first two lines of the first *cobla*). Martí de Riquer subsequently republished the poem, transporting the majority of the emendations suggested by Meyer to the body of the text, while adding a new interpretation of the final word of the *respos* (v. 2): *play* instead of *platz*, which is the reading found in the sole surviving manuscript witness.<sup>51</sup>

While this emendation is minuscule, it bears important consequences for an understanding of the poem's structure. Despite the fact that he failed to retain the reading "*play*" in his edition of Ramon Vidal de Besalú's works, Hugh Field intuitively recognised the importance of the line-end, and he

49. Or, following Paul Meyer, "Traité catalans de grammaire et de poétique", *Romania* 6/23 (1877): 341-58, and Riquer's emendation in v. 10 ("altra-m valgues" instead of "altra-n volgues"): "and, should you wish, another lady would grant me her favour". The text proposed by Meyer, and followed by Martí de Riquer, *Història de la literatura catalana. Part antiga* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1964), Vol. 1, 112, is probably closer to the original than that of BC239. In this article, however, I preserve the reading from the sole manuscript, a reading which, despite the repetition of the verb "voler", is intelligible. A further possible emendation to the line consists in the introduction of an antihhiatic "z" within the vocalic sequence "que altra".

50. István Frank, *Répertoire métrique de la poésie des troubadours. Tome premier, Introduction et répertoire*. Tome second, *Répertoire (suite) et index bibliographique* (Paris: Champion, 1953-1957).

51. Avenoza, "La dansa", 124, likewise accepts this interpretation in a footnote, without, in the end, actually getting round to implementing the emendation, possibly being aware of the implications it bears for the metrical scheme: "Peut-être devrions-nous corriger la rime du v. 2 en *play* (au lieu de *platz*); ainsi se réaliserait la répétition de la rime du refrain au dernier vers de chaque *cobla* (v. 6 *gay*, v. 10 *may*)".

identified it as belonging to a complex series of internal assonances and consonances in the text, which had gone unnoticed by the previous editors. Thus, in his introductory study, Field describes two series of vocalic and consonantal endings occurring at the fourth syllable in lines 1, 2 and 4, and at the eighth syllable in line 3 of each *cobla*.<sup>52</sup> Such endings, which, in fact, should be considered as correspondences akin to internal rhymes, are organised according to a dual system of retrogradation which works in both directions: first, in relation to the major rhymes (3/1, 1/3); second, the vowel sequence in the second *cobla* reverses that of the first *cobla* (e/a/a/a, a/e/e/e). This subtle “double game” consisting of a chiasmic contrast in terms of the distribution of rhymes, as described by Field,<sup>53</sup> is indicated by italics (vocalic correspondences) and underlining (consonantal correspondences) in my edition.<sup>54</sup>

In the *Leys d'amors*, within the paragraphs entitled “De la diffinitio de rim” [On the definition of rhyme], “De las diverses maneras de rims” [On the different types of rhyme], “Dels rims acordans e primieramen dels rims sonans” [On *rims acordans* and, first, on *rims sonans*], and “Dels rims consonans” [On consonantal rhyme], one can gauge the ambiguity affecting the terminology from the semantic field of *acordansa* [agreement]. This latter, in principle, is to be understood as phonetic identity at line-ends, an identity which can be either *sonan* (a correspondence pertaining to vocalic sounds alone) or *consonan* (a correspondence pertaining to all sounds) and, in each case, can be split into *borda* (*simples/dobles*) and *leyal*. Both *sonansa borda* and *consonansa borda*, belonging as they do to the realm of imperfect rhyme, are considered unacceptable in the *Leys*, with the sole exception of *versos estramps* (i.e., unrhymed, separate lines of verse within a *cobla*, showing preference for feminine forms). Despite this rule, however, the author of the preceptive treatise acknowledges its generalised use, particularly in poetic forms of “la pus iusana species” [the lowest kind] such as *viaderes* or *viandelas*, which should be avoided because they fail to have “cert compas” [<an> assured rhythm].<sup>55</sup>

52. Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, Vol. 2, 177-87.

53. *Ibid.*, 186.

54. One should also ask oneself whether the poem is complete: according to Field (Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, Vol. 2, 182) the system of retrograde internal rhymes does not permit the composition of a third *cobla*. Avenzoa, “La *dansa*”, considers it to be incomplete and therefore excludes it from her catalogue. Bearing in mind the text’s nature as a material “vestige”, it is not easy to issue judgement on the matter, although I am inclined to side with Field on this point. The poem, moreover, has a very marked bipartite structure which seems to have expended itself within the space of the two stanzas.

55. “Sonansa borda reproam del tot, jaciayssó que tot jorn uza hom d’aquesta sonansa borda en viandelas, de les quals no curam, quar d’aquelas no vim, ni trobar non podem cert actor, so es a dire que no sabem don proceizssó ni qui las fa, ni podem trobar cert compas en aquelas. Empero aytal sonansa e consonansa bordas pot hom be pausa[r] per manera de rimes estrampas”. [We roundly

The most noteworthy characteristic of the anonymous *dansa*, *Plazens plasers* is that these vocalic and consonantal correspondences are not situated at the end of the line, but rather are placed internally, and that they act as internal rhymes between consecutive lines. The *Leys* describe such internal correspondences (or rhymes) in the paragraphs devoted to *bordos empeutatz* (and, we might add, to *bordos biocatz*), defined in opposition to *bordos principals*.<sup>56</sup>

The idea that *bordos principals* may “otherwise [be] called *verays principals*” is supported by the first of the short treatises from Ripoll, where the *dansa* is specifically treated as a genre. Firstly, the text defines the genre’s strophic features (i.e., a refrain and three *cobles*, plus one or two *tornades*) as well as its theme (“tostemps de materia d’amor e de lahor de dona” [invariably concerning <the poet’s> love for and praise of a lady]), following the guidelines associated with the descriptive models of the *canso*, the *tenso*, the *sirventes*, the *cobla* and the *vers*. An additional and significant observation is then made concerning the number and types of rhyme: thus, a *dansa* must have “iiij rimes principals” [four principal rhymes], and, after these, the text that follows “deu

condemn *sonansa borda*, even though such *sonansa borda* is commonly used in *viandelas*, with which we are not concerned, since we are not considering those, nor can we discover a recognisable author for them, which is to say that we do not know where they come from nor who composes them, nor can we discover <an> assured rhythm therein. Such *sonansa <borda>* and *consonansa borda*, however, can be used in *rims estramps*]. The numbering of the chapters as well as all the quotations from the *Leys d’amors* derive from the edition by Beatrice Fedi, *Las Leys d’Amors. Redazione lunga in prosa* (Florence: SISMEL - Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2019), II, 23 4 (at 263). For an in-depth treatment of the matter, I refer the reader to the comments by Fedi, in preparation. Cf. also the chapter devoted by Radaelli, *Dansas provenzali del XIII secolo*, 62–70, to the technical rhymes of her corpus of *danses*. For the *viadera*, see Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, 142. A definition of *viadera* is found in the first treatise from Ripoll (Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, 103).

56. “Vist [h]avem dels bordos de quatre sillabas, de .v., de .vi. e de .vii. et en ayss[i] entro .xii. E devetz saber que nos [h]avem tres manieras de bordos, [so es assaber bordos] principals, [en altra manera digz verays principals], [et havem] bordos enpeutatz e bordos biocatz. Bordos enpeutatz es quar, segon qu’es estat dig, can la pauza d’alqun bordo ha acordans[a] am l’autra pauza del bordo seguen oz am la fi d’aquel meteysh bordo oz am la fi del promda verset preceden, adonc[z] cascuna d’aquestas pauzas es apelada bordos enpeutatz, quar, en ayssó que la una pauza s’acorda per acordans[a] ab l’autra oz ab la fi d’aquel meteysh bordo o del preceden, cascuna pauza pot far bordo per si meteysha. [We have examined the lines of verse consisting of four, five, six, seven and, likewise, of as many as twelve syllables. And you should know that there are three kinds of *bordos*, namely, *bordos principals*, called otherwise *verays principals*, and there are *bordos enpeutatz* and *bordos biocatz*. As has been said, *bordos enpeutatz* <occur> when the *pauza* (i.e., caesura) of any *bordo* is in agreement with the other *pauza* from the following *bordo* or with the ending of the very same *bordo* or with the ending of the previous, neighbouring line, so that each of these *pauzas* is called a *bordo enpeutat*. For, insofar as one particular *pauza* accords by agreement with another or with the ending of that very same *bordo* or with the previous <such>, each *pauza* is capable of creating a *bordo* by itself]. Fedi, *Las Leys d’Amors*, II, 12 and 13 (246–7). The *Torcimany* by Lluís d’Averçó contains a description of the varieties of *bordos empeutatz*; see Josep M. Casas Homs, ed., “*Torcimany*” de Lluís d’Averçó. *Tratado retórico gramatical y diccionario de rimas*, 2 vols. (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1956), Vol. I, II 2 (104–8).

esser semblant al refrayn en rimes e en so" [must resemble the refrain in terms of rhyme and music]. The passage in question then immediately proceeds to explain the nature of the *rimes principals* and *meyns principals* (the latter also bearing the name *doblades*), distinguishing them from each other depending on whether they occur at the end of or are internal to the relevant line. Although it is well known, I reproduce the entire passage of the first Ripoll treatise on *rimes meyns principals* in the *dansa* below. It is exceptional in that the whole explanation is given in the form of a metrical commentary on one of the *dances* from the *Cançoneret* (*Fis vos suy aman*), from which the refrain and the first *cobla* are copied.<sup>57</sup>

Rimes principals dich io a diferencia de les meyns principals, axi com aqueles qui son doblades, axi com par en la dança del Capela de Bolquera qui diu:

Ffis vos suy aman ses enian  
 ab ferm talan, cors ben estan;  
 donchs prende-us merçes, pus tot bes,  
 dopna, n vos es,  
 que no-m auciat desiran.

Aço es refrayn; pus seguex se la cobla, qui diu:

Al prims que vos vi vos plevi  
 ab cor fi, dompna, mi e tots quans bens puyx far ni dir  
 ab cor que non vir de servir  
 vos, qu'eu mir e desir en mon cor ser e mayti.

Assi a .iiii. rimes principals, ço es la primera qui es en *-i*, d'aquel mot qui diu *plevi*, e la quarta d'aquel mot qui diu *mayti*; les altres dues son en *-ir*. E hi ha d'altres mots termenats en *-i* o en *-ir*: fa-s per doblar les rimes.

[I distinguish primary rhymes (*rimes principals*) from those which are less primary (*meyns principals*), such as those which are duplicated (*doblades*), as is apparent in the *dansa* by the Chaplain of Bolquera, which states:

I am your faithful lover, lacking in guile,  
 Firm <in my> desire, <O lady> fair of body.

57. For the paragraph concerning the *dansa* genre, see Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, 102, vv. 49-66, from which I quote. Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 50, n. 6, reproduces the passage on rhyme when commenting on the metrical structure of the *dansa*, *Fis vos suy aman*, reconstructed by Marshall and Riquer, following the instructions provided in the treatise. Gérard Gonfroy, "La rédaction catalane en prose des *Leys d'Amors*: édition et étude critique des trois premières parties", 2 vols. (PhD diss., Université de Poitiers, 1981), Vol. 2, 227, also compares the two passages. Radaelli, "La dansa en llengua d'oc", 50-4, re-examines the description of the *dansa* genre as given in Occitan treatises, including those from Ripoll.

Have mercy on me, therefore, for every good,  
 <My> lady, lies within you,  
 Do not lead me to perish from my love!

The above constitutes the refrain; next follows the *cobla*, which states:

As soon as I saw you, I pledged to you  
 With a faithful heart, <O> lady, myself, as well as any good things I can do or say  
 With a will that shall not turn from serving  
 You, upon whom I gaze and <whom I> desire in my heart day and night.

There are thus four primary rhymes, namely, the first which is in *-i*, as regards the word which says *plevi*, and the fourth, as regards the word which says *mayti*; the other two are in *-ir*. And there are other words ending <either> in *-i* or in *-ir*: this is done in order to duplicate the rhymes.]

The second short treatise from Ripoll, bearing as its heading the rubric “Aquestes son les maneres de les rimes” [These are the kinds of rhyme] (f. 26rv), likewise discusses internal rhymes, though it defines them as *dobles* rather than as *doblades* and once more quotes the first two lines of the same *dansa* (an argument to support sole authorship of the two treatises, or the idea that the author of the second treatise might have tried to complete the preceding one).<sup>58</sup> Despite the divergence between these two accounts, it is evident that what is being defined constitutes a single phenomenon, namely, rhymes occurring within the same line of verse (in this case, a correspondence with the preceding line-end).<sup>59</sup>

The most interesting aspects of this brief exploration of terminology are as follows: 1) in fourteenth-century treatises on poetry, internal rhyme and assonance are described in relation to dance genres such as the *dansa* and the *vian-dela* (in the *dansa*, *Na dolça res*, as we shall see, the rhyme *carrera: bela* stands out; and the metrical scheme employed in *Madona, xantant vos diria*, accord-

58. *Rimes dobles*, partly corresponding to Latin Leonine rhymes, occur when the rhymes are internal, and are present at the end of both the first and second hemistichs of a line of verse; *rimes doblades*, on the other hand, generally speaking, indicate rhyming couplets. A good starting point for the terminology of internal rhyme in medieval Catalan poetry is Jordi Parramon, *Diccionari de poètica* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1998), s.v. “rima interna”.

59. “Rimes dobles no son sino con una mateixa rima se dobra, axi con aquella qui diu: Fis vous suy ayman sens enian / Ab ferm talan, cors ben estan”. [*Rimes dobles* occur only when one and the same rhyme appears twice, as is the case with <the poem> that states ‘Fis vous suy ayman sens enian / Ab ferm talan, cors ben estan’]. A little further on, the treatise adds a new element of confusion to the terminology when it defines *rimes doblades* as being those “qui van de dues en dues, axi com aquestes: Er veu qu’em venguts als iorns lonchs / Que flors s’arenguen sobre ls troncs” [which occur in twos, such as the following: Er veu qu’em venguts als iorns lonchs / Que flors s’arenguen sobre ls troncs]. As Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, 143, clarifies, the *Lays* describe this combination of lines as *rims caudatz*.

ing to the new edition I am preparing, is built upon recourse to *sonansa borda* at certain points within a stanza); 2) the author of the two short treatises from Ripoll displays a particular interest in lending order to the classification of varieties of rhyme, classification either overlooked or disregarded by previous and contemporary treatises; 3) the association of the *dansa* by the Chaplain of Bolquera, *Ffis vos suy aman*, with the definition of *rimes menys principals* or *doblades*, set forth as a metrical commentary on one of the poetic pieces from the *Cançoneret*, accords enormous significance to the Ripoll manuscript.

The system of retrograde correspondences akin to internal rhymes that we encounter in *Plazens plasars* is not explicitly defined in any of the treatises. It is evident, however, that the idea of a poetic text conceived as a verbal fabric susceptible to being made richer and more complex by virtue of the artifice of “technical” rhyme sits well alongside the concept of poetry evident in the rhetorical treatises. In BC239, the major rhymes and the *sonansas* of the *dansa*, *Plazens plasars*, are signalled by the use of a stroke or virga (cf. Figure 1). Despite the fact that the use of such signs is not consistent in the manuscript, one is bound to conclude, with Field,<sup>60</sup> that the copyist recognised the existence of correspondences between sounds situated within a given line of verse, as indeed the edition in question reveals.<sup>61</sup> Such correspondences might have been perceptible as regards the intonation of the melody, which has not been preserved. Be that as it may, the artifice is deliberately sought by the author, as well as recognised by the copyist of MS 239: this makes it clear that the text’s literary code was still operative within the milieu in which it was received. The treatise writer from Ripoll, being attentive to internal rhyme and to exemplifying the description of such rhyme by means of a *dansa* from the *Cançoneret*, must have belonged to this very milieu, which has been located within a setting close to the Catalan court of the first half of the fourteenth century. We should recall that in the first treatise from Ripoll, among the examples of *cobles* provided “de materia d’acuyndamens” [concerned with encounters], one such *cobla*, attributed to Pere de Vilademany, is quoted which opens with the line “del orde suy del noble infant en Pedro” [belonging to the Order of the noble Prince Peter], thereby alluding to Prince Peter of Ribagorça.<sup>62</sup> It has not proved possible to identify with any certainty what this Order might be, nor the role – if any – played therein by Prince Peter as regards the diffusion of particular genres of poetry. It can be confirmed, how-

60. Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, Vol. 2, 182.

61. The eighteenth-century MS from Madrid reproduces the punctuation marks of BC239 (commas instead of virgas, and full stops, at all times according to Field (Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, Vol. 2, 182)).

62. Marshall, *The Razos de Trobar*, 102.



ever, that the Catalan court held *danses* in high regard as one of the most greatly cherished forms of entertainment.<sup>63</sup>

#### POETIC LANGUAGE, ALLUSION AND RECURSIVITY

One of the distinctive elements of medieval Catalan poetry is the use of a language traditionally described as being hybrid, which in this case refers to the mixing of Catalan and Occitan morphological features.<sup>64</sup> On the basis of this idea, Field has highlighted the “metrically marked” distribution of forms from the two languages which alternate in the rhymes and assonances of the *dansa*, *Plazens plasars*, describing the phenomenon as if it were an exceptional case linked to the particular metrical complexity of the text and to its supposed semantic ambiguity.<sup>65</sup> For Field, a representative example of this linguistic behaviour can be found in the form *dexassatz* (v. 5), which belongs neither to Catalan nor to Occitan and should be considered expressly to have been coined in order to resolve the poem’s specific equation between rhyme and metre (interpreting the line as “were you to allow me to make my entreaties to you”). Meyer and Riquer, on the other hand, have proposed the “standardising” emendation *denbassats*, thereby causing the discursive value of a style of phrasing particular to the courtly register to prevail over the first-person pronoun in the very same line (*si-m*), a pronoun which governs the verb (thus interpreting the sense as: “were you to deign to accept my entreaties to you”). Given the difficulties of justifying the emendation *denbassats*, I have decided to maintain the morphologically mixed reading found in the manuscript, namely, *dexassatz*.

As is well known, linguistic hybridism formed part of the established tradition as regards the poetic language of *fin’amor* in Catalonia. The study of the

63. Rubió i Balaguer, “Literatura catalana”, 676, interprets the term *orde* as a core group of poets; Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 36-38, suggests a chivalric order. The question remains open. For an account of the *status quaestionis* regarding the possible role of Prince Peter as a promoter of poetry at the Catalan court, see Cabré, “La lírica d’arrel trobadoresca”, 273-9, and Ead., “Pere d’Empúries, un poeta de nissaga reial a la ‘crònica’ de Ramon Muntaner”, *Mot so razo* 17 (2018): 63-76, as well as Cingolani, forthcoming.

64. See Andreu Febrer, *Poesies*, ed. Martí de Riquer (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1951), 140-60.

65. It ought to be said that Field’s definition, formulated without regard to the perspective of contact linguistics which we are currently applying to medieval language, still remains valid: “El poema, doncs, és escrit en un metallenguatge que no és ni occità ni català, sinó una mescla de tots dos en la qual l’autor forja noves formes per exigència de la rima quan els recursos de què disposen aquestes llengües resulten insuficients” [The poem, therefore, is written in a metalanguage which is neither Occitan nor Catalan, but rather a mixture of them both wherein the author coins new forms in virtue of the requirements of rhyme when the resources available to these languages turn out to be insufficient] (Vidal de Besalú, *Obra poètica*, Vol. 2, 184).

manuscript transmission of poetic texts brings to light the awareness felt by both copyists and authors that they had within their reach a literary language of a composite nature, which permitted alternation. Such alternation bore reference both to reasons of poetic economy (e.g. syllabic count, metrical form, the requirements of rhyme) and to the allusive nature of certain words.<sup>66</sup> Catalan poetry of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries offers us many examples of alternation and of linguistic “fusion”, from the *Cançonet de Ripoll* to the *Cançoner Vega-Aguiló*.<sup>67</sup> In some cases, this poetic language includes features from French and Italian, as occurs in the case of the *Cançonet de Ripoll* itself (which contains Gallicisms such as *beutey*, *sotmis*, *entremis*, *guionatge*) as well as in the *danses* from Sant Joan de les Abadesses.<sup>68</sup>

Linguistic mixture, then, is not a feature specific to this poem, and should not be related to any supposed ambiguity of the text: the problems of meaning that the poem presents are attributable to its manuscript transmission. I do not believe, for example, that we have to assume a semantic ambiguity between the verbs *auzir/aucir* in v. 3 (see the verb *morir* in v. 7, located in perfect strophic and syllabic symmetry at the line’s end). In this short poem, the ambiguity does not reside in the linguistic mixture itself but rather in the viewpoint of the lyric “I” who speaks, and which can be interpreted as the ironic correlate of the play of retrograde internal rhymes occurring within the poem’s very lines.

The *dansa*, *Plazens plasers*, is written in a language characteristic of medieval Catalan poetry of troubadour origin. If we consider the phenomena of linguistic contact fostered by this literary code, rhyme B of the *respos* (i.e., *platz*) can be likened to the rhymes from the final line of the following two

66. The awareness of the cultural nature of this linguistic choice is borne out by a text such as the *Mirall de trobar* by Berenguer d’Anoia, a text dating from the earliest years of the fourteenth century and transmitted by a sole witness in BC239: see Simone Ventura, “Poesia, grammatica, testo: il *Mirall de Trobar* di Berenguer d’Anoia e il ms. 239 della Biblioteca de Catalunya”, in *Cobles e lays, danses e bon saber*, 159–86.

67. Such is the case of *retreg* in Ripoll V, v. 22, on which see Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 65: “L’africada final és provençal (*retrach*) però la qualitat vocàlica es catalana” [The final affricate is Provençal (*retrach*) though the vocalic quality is Catalan]. On linguistic hybridism in VeAg, see Anna Alberni and Fabio Zinelli, “The Last Song of the Troubadours: une recherche sur la poésie occitane et française dans l’espace catalan (résultats, problèmes d’édition, enjeux)”, in *Actes du XXVII Congrès international de linguistique et de philologie romanes* (Nancy, 15–20 juillet 2013). Section 13: *Philologie textuelle et éditoriale*, ed. Frédéric Duval, Lino Leonardi and Richard Trachsler (Nancy: ATILF, 2017) [<http://www.atilf.fr/cilpr2013/actes/section-13.html>, last accessed July 2, 2020]; Fabio Zinelli, “Costruire una lingua. Elementi linguistici tolosani nella poesia catalana del medioevo tra prestito e convergenza”, in *Cobles e lays, danses e bon saber*, 33–92; Anna Alberni and Fabio Zinelli, “La réception des troubadours entre deux langues: le Chansonnier Vega-Aguiló (Barcelona, mss. 7–8)”, in *La réception des troubadours en Catalogne*, ed. Miriam Cabré, Sadurní Martí and Albert Rossich (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming).

68. See Larson, “Ancora sulla ballata”, and Lannutti, “L’ultimo canto”, 324–8.

stanzas (i.e., *gay*, *may*): one only has to assume that the *play* of the original was transformed into *platz* by the copyist, as Riquer has suggested.<sup>69</sup> In this way, the rhyme from the *respos* anticipates those situated at the end of each of the stanzas. In other words, rhyme b of the stanza functions as a genuine melodic repetition or line with *volta*, as likewise occurs in the three *danses* accompanied by musical notation from Sant Joan de les Abadesses according to Lannutti's text (*S'anc vos ame, Ar lausetz, . . . era us preg*), and thus follows a responsive pattern widespread within the oldest French repertory which also influenced Occitan poetry composed within an Angevin setting.<sup>70</sup>

The strophic form of the *dansa*, *Plazens plazers*, is very simple. As we have seen, however, the aaab | AB model is enriched by a series of internal assonances and consonances (*sonansas*) which must have been perceptible to the ear. More than derivative or grammatical rhymes, though, we find a network of words from the same lexical family: *plazens*, *plazers* (v. 1); *plazer*, *play* (v. 2); *platz* (v. 4). The poem has a clear bipartite structure which enables the poet to highlight the recursivity and specular effect of synonymous or antonymous terms which are situated in symmetrical positions within the strophe or the line: "si no-m voletz auzir" (v. 3), "storçre de morir" (v. 7); "pus als no-m platz" (v. 4), "sol que us plagues" (v. 8); "sofrir" (v. 5), "jauzir" (v. 9); "ans c'al-tre-m fazes gay" (v. 6), "que altra-m valgues may" (v. 10).<sup>71</sup> The above constitute customary formulae and resources in the genre of the dance song, subject as it is to a repertoire of themes and motifs limited and, in good measure, determined by the constrictions of rhyme.

Worthy of remark, in this respect, are the thematic and formal similarities with the anonymous *baladeta*, *Lo fin cor qu'ieu-us ai m'ausi*, *Dona Gaia* (BdT 244,4), copied into the Occitan chansonnier E, a composition constructed entirely upon the same metrical scheme, plus word endings in *-ire* (a), *-aia* (b), which recall those of *Plazens plazers* (*-ir*, *-ai*):

69. The idea that poetic texts written in Catalonia were composed in a "purer" Occitan, and that responsibility for the mixed (Catalanised) forms lay with the incompetence of the copyists has changed in recent years as a result of an approach to the texts based upon contact linguistics: see Fabio Zinelli, "Occitano e catalano, 'dialetti in contatto' nel canzoniere Vega-Aguiló (Biblioteca de Catalunya, 7-8)", in *Transcrire et / ou traduire*, 111-50.

70. It might be refuted that, by adopting the emendation *play* from v. 2, one is casting doubt on the author's awareness, in the refrain, of the presence of internal rhymes within the *cobles*. Field has rejected it for this very reason, and his edition has *platz* at the end of the *respos*, on the understanding that the author sought to indicate, in the lines of the refrain, the assonance (*sonansa*) which subsequently reappears in the internal rhymes of the stanza, specifically by offering the clue of the alternation: *-s/-tz*. This supposed function of the *respos* as a "technical prologue", however, does not seem to me to be demonstrable enough to maintain the reading the manuscript offers in this passage.

71. Both the reading of the MS ("altra-n valgues may") and the emendation proposed by Meyer and Riquer ("altra-m valgues may") enter into this game of conceptual and lexical symmetries.

*Lo fin cor qu'ieu-us ai m'ausi, Dona Gaia (BdT 244,4)*

<i>Lo fin cor qu'ieu-us ai</i>	<i>m'ausi, Dona Gaia,</i>	
<i>si de vos non ai</i>	<i>ioi, ni re que-m plaia.</i>	

M'amia, Bel Cors	blanc com flor de li <re>	
avinen e pros,	don an lo bendire,	4
qu'ieu am mais de vos,	dona, lo dezire,	
que d'autra ricor,	si tot s'a que-m plaia.	

Ai las, que farai?	E voletz m'ausire?	
C'ab un dous esgar	m'avetz dat consire,	8
e faitz gran pecat	quar tan grieu martire	
mi faitz esperar,	si-us tenetz tan cara. <sup>72</sup>	

### *Translation*

*Response.* The pure desire I bear for you kills me, Dona Gaia, if from you I do not receive anything which may gratify me.

I. <O> my beloved, <O> Fair Body, white as the lily flower, gracious and demure, praised by all, for, <O> lady, I cherish the desire <I bear> for you more than the possession of another lady, even though she might have in her what pleases me.

II. Alas, what shall I do? Do you <really> wish to kill me? For with a sweet glance did you make me ponder, <and> yet you commit a great sin, for you lead me to expect such a severe martyrdom, should you hold yourself so dear.

The central theme of the *dansa*, *Plazens plasers*, is that of the topic of the lover who prefers his unreciprocated desire for his lady to its requitement with any other such lady (vv. 5-6: “qu'eu fora rics si-m dexassatz sofrir / qu'eu vos pregas, ans c'altre-m fazes gay” [for I should consider myself well rewarded were you to allow me to make my entreaties to you, rather than that another lady should make me happy]). There is also a secondary motif consisting of the entreaty itself (v. 8: “sol que us plagues mos fis prechs retenir” [should it please you merely to listen to my faithful entreaties]), as well as the theme of the merciless lady, presented as being capricious and cruel, to the very extent that the poet accuses her of being sinful since her actions could result in leading her lover to his death (v. 3: “Pecat faretz, doncs, si-m voletz auzir” [You shall commit a sin, therefore, if you kill me]). The tone is intentionally flip-

72. Text cited from Radaelli, *Dansas provenzali del XIII secolo*, 145-6. The metrical scheme, as the editor explains, does not match that of the Occitan *balada*. Zamuner, *Le baladas del canzoniere provenzale Q*, 7-9, relates this piece of poetry to the French model pertaining to the earliest examples of the *ballette* form.

pant, it being accompanied, as it is, by sensual allusions tinged with a small degree of irony.

Many of these thematic and formal elements, which are customarily described as being particular to a para-courtly register, are also found in the anonymous *baladeta* from chansonnier E. In fact, the third line (v. 3) quoted from *Plazens plasars* seems to be a synthesis of vv. 7 and 9-10 from *Lo fin cor qu'ieu-us ai* (cf. text above), containing, as they do, the same rhyme in *-ir(e)* on the verb *aucir(e)* in v. 7: “Ai las, que farai? E volets m’ausire?”, “e faitz gran pecat quar tan grieu martire / mi faitz esperar, si-us tenetz tan cara”. In v. 10, the final line of the *baladeta*, the assonance *-ara* stands out in a position which befits a rhyme in *-aia*, a further characteristic feature of “low” forms, as the *Lays* call to mind in the previously quoted passage concerning *sonansa* and *consonansa borda*.

The theme of the lady capable of causing the death of the lover, a death described as pleasant and  *fina* (or exquisite), is likewise found, with emphasis on the forms *plaire* (to please/gratify) and *auzir* (to kill), in the *respos* from another *dansa*, this one attributed with certainty to Guiraut d’Espanha, *Gen m’ausi midons, e s’ill plazia* (*BdT* 244,2):

*Gen m’ausi      midons, e s’ill plazia*  
*c’apres si      m’ausizes, be-m plairia,*  
*e tenria      per fina ma fi.*<sup>73</sup>

#### *Translation*

My lady (lit. “my lord”) kills me slowly/softly, and if it pleased her to kill me <while I was> at her side, it would please me well, and I should consider my end to have been exquisite.

The above choice of themes from the *fin’amor* repertoire in *Plazens plasars* – with its consequent rarification of images and turns of phrase, and the constant recourse to the repetition of word sequences (*syntagmata*), words themselves and rhymes which become emblematic precisely in virtue of such recursivity – constitute the common features of thirteenth-century Occitan dance song. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that we find a still more limited choice of themes in the *danses* from the *Cançoneret de Ripoll*: 16 poetic pieces from a total of 18 elaborate upon the sentimental repertoire of the lover, without explicit reference to courtly topics such as the lovers’ secret, the *lauzengiers* (“flatterers”/“slanderers”/“betrayers”) or the value of *joi* (“joy”/

73. Text cited from Radaelli, *Dansas provenzali del XIII secolo*, 173-80.



Na dolça [res, be m'es greu  
qu'a partir m'ich hay en breu.]<sup>76</sup>

*Translation*

I. Sweet creature, it pains me deeply that I have to leave you so soon.

II. When I had to leave <my > mistress with <the> sweet gaze, I could not have been consoled had the whole world been mine.

III. Sweet [creature, it pains me deeply that I have to leave you so soon.]

The literary interest of the text lies in its form as a dialogue between a lady, “madona ab dolç esgar” [<my> mistress with <the> sweet gaze], and her “amich” or “lover”, a dialogue which concludes with a dedication to the composition itself, charged as it is with acting as a messenger between the lovers. Worth noting, first of all, is the indication we find in the manuscript as to the repetition of the refrain. The two lines of the *respos* have been written only once at the beginning of the piece, as in *Plazens plasers* and the *danses* from Sant Joan de les Abadesses; however, in the case of *Na dolça res* the first two syllables of the line (“Na dolça”) are repeated at the end of each strophe, preceded by a pilcrow, to indicate the return of the refrain as is customary in the transcription of refrain songs. Driven by the monotony of such repetition, the copyist even reaches the point of writing the formula at the end of the initial refrain: “¶Na dolça res, be m'es greu / [qu']a partir mich hay en breu ¶Na dolça”. This indication, emphasised by the copyist’s carelessness, leads one to think that the refrain should likewise be repeated after each strophe in the case of the *dansa*, *Plazens plasers*, which has the same metrical structure as *Na dolça res*, though it lacks any specific reference to a repetition.

The *balada*, *D'amor m'estera ben e gent* (*BdT* 461,73), from the Occitan chansonnier Q, structured as two monorhymed lines with a reprise line (or *volta*) and an intercalated refrain line, likewise repeats the two lines of the *respos* at the end of each strophe (a B a b | BB). Cerverí would complicate this form in *Pus no vey leys cui son amics* (*BdT* 434,9c), the first line of the refrain being intercalated after the first and second lines of the strophe, while the entirety of the *respos* is repeated at the end, in a hybridisation of the basic pattern of the *dansa* with that of the Occitan *balada* (a A a A a b | AB): the rubric, in

76. Text cited from Gemma Avenoz, “Poemes catalanooccitans del s. XIV en un manuscrit florentí. Edició i estudi de *Na dolça...*, primer del recull”, in *Trobadors a la península ibèrica. Homenatge al Dr. Martí de Riquer*, ed. Vicenç Beltran, Meritxell Simó and Elena Roig (Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 2006), 73-90, at 81.

fact, defines the composition as a “dansa-balada”. Thus Cerverí’s poetry, characterised by innovation on the basis of the resources offered by tradition, seems to act as a link between the earliest French and Occitan models and the Catalan poetry of the fourteenth century.<sup>77</sup>

The dedication of the *dansa*, *Na dolça res*, calls to mind the *formule de délivrance* (“release formula”) from the *balada*, *Amors m’estera ben e gent*:<sup>78</sup>

Ballada, ten ta carrera  
e digues a la tan bella  
que heu m’i seray en breu.

*Translation*

*Balada*, go on your way and tell <my> most beautiful <lady> that I shall shortly be there.

This formula and, above all, the dialogical nature of *Na dolça res*, recall the clever dialogue between Pere Alemany and his own composition (*Rao* 4, 1) in the *Cançoneret de Ripoll*, and they do so in a manner which seems to imply the dramatised representation of a dialogue between the author and the *dansa*-interlocutor, embodied by the jongleur:

– Ay, senyer, saludar-m’ets?	
– Ma dança, Deu vos don jay.	
D’un venits? – Eu-s o <i>diray</i> :	
de leys que n’es blanxa, saura.	4
– Dança, quo-l va? – Senyer, be,	
per ma fe.	
– Ay las, porets pendre haura	
qu’eu la veja çela re?	8
– Far cove,	
qu’autreyat m’o ha tres vets.	
– Er me diats, donchs, quo-l play.	
– Mon senyer, eu-s o <i>diray</i> . <sup>79</sup>	12

77. The vogue for such forms of *dansa* in Catalonia during the thirteenth century leads one to consider that perhaps it is not fortuitous that we find mention of a king of Aragon in the anonymous *balada*, *D’amor m’estera ben e gent*: “q’ar estauc sai en Aragon / ab lo rei q’a bon preç valen” [for here I am in Aragon / with the king, who is very worthy and noble] (vv. 11-12).

78. “Balada, vai ad esperon / d’amor m’estera ben e gent / e saluda-m lei, de cui son, / qar manten valor e iuvent” [*Balada*, go swiftly / Love will treat me well and kindly / and greet her on my behalf, the one to whom I belong / for she upholds worth and youth] (vv. 33-36). Text cited from Zamuner, *Le baladas del canzoniere provençale Q*, 35-7.

79. Text cited from Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 225-6, and cf. 114-7. Dialogical form is



### Translation

I. “Oh! <My> lord, you greet me?” “My *dansa*, may God give you joy. Whence have you come?” “I shall tell you:

II. From her who is fair and blonde.” “<O> *dansa*, how is she?” “By my faith, <she is> well, my lord.” “Alas, can you see to it that I may behold that creature?” “It must be done, for three times has she acknowledged it to me.” “Now tell me, then, how can I see her.” “My lord, I shall tell you.”

The agility of the metrical combination (7+3) and the syncopated syntax, capable as they are of including both replies and counterreplies in the space of a heptasyllabic line (“–Fay tot bes. –Vos, que-u farets”, v. 31 [“Do every <kind of> good.” “No, *you* shall do it.”])), heightens the comic nature of the scene and brings the *dansa* close to contemporary verse narrative. This has been noted by Lola Badia, who has highlighted the expressive affinities between Pere Alemany’s *dansa* and certain passages from the anonymous narrative poem *Fraire de Joi e sor de Plaser*. The genre par excellence which plays with the dialogic form of the love letter is the *salut* (or greeting), including the more-or-less leading role played by the lovers’ go-between, be it the composition itself or, as is often the case, a small bird.<sup>80</sup> We should not be surprised, therefore, that the characterisation of the lady in the *danses* from our corpus shares features with the oldest French and Occitan *saluts* as well as with the subsequent Catalan evolution of the genre in the fourteenth century.<sup>81</sup>

explained in the *Leys* in relation to the *dansa*. One of the *danses* from Sant Joan de les Abadesses, *Ar lauset lauset lauset*, also makes use of dialogue, though in this particular instance we are a long way from the “courtly love” atmosphere characteristic of the genre.

80. For Occitan *saluts*, see Francesca Gambino and Speranza Cerullo, eds., “*Salutz d’amor*”. *Edizione critica del corpus occitanico*, Testi e documenti di letteratura e di lingua, 29 (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 2009). For French *saluts*, see Estelle Doudet, Sylvie Lefèvre, Marie-Laure Savoye, Agathe Sultan and Hedzer Ulders, eds. *Lettres d’amour du Moyen Âge: les saluts et complaintes* (Paris: Librairie générale française, 2016). For Catalan *saluts*, see Hedzer Ulders, “*Letres qui van per tal afar*. Un nouveau salut occitano-catalan et la fortune du genre en Catalogne (I)”, *Estudis Romànics* 31 (2009): 77–103, and Id., “*Letres qui van per tal afar*. Un nouveau salut occitano-catalan et la fortune du genre en Catalogne (II)”, *Estudis Romànics* 32 (2010): 215–48.

81. Cerverí’s verses lead one to conclude that the *salut* and the *dansa* forms might have had a point of contact in the melody employed (*Pus fis amayre no nasc de mayre* 434a, 51, vv. 5–8): “Doncs, ses estrayre, fay lay retrayre, / xantàn, en loc de dança, / ans qu’eu repayre en son repayre, / salutz, ab desirança” [So, ceaselessly, cause her to return, by singing, with desire, a *salut* instead of a *dansa*, before I repair to her abode]. Martí de Riquer, ed., *Obras completas del trovador Cerverí de Girona* (Barcelona: Instituto Español de Estudios Mediterráneos, 1947), 78. The passage from Cerverí is recorded by Cerullo, “*Salutz d’amor*”, 40, n. 51, and repeated by Ulders, “*Letres qui van per tal afar* (II)”, 218–9, who points to a possible parallel between the forms of the *salut* and the Catalan *dansa*. The musical dimension of the *salut* is explained by Agathe Sultan, “Les refrains et leurs résonances”, in *Lettres d’amour du Moyen Âge*, 42–55.

The topic of the *descriptio puellae* is present in nearly all the dance songs, wherein the lady, in addition to being beautiful, is characterised by her sweetness. This contrasts with the “ingratitude” of the *midons* from Catalan courtly song of a refined nature, where the lyric “I” usually limits itself to describing its own emotional state, generally one of distress, and to pleading for mercy. It is true that the poetry of Andreu Febrer contains multiple feminine gestures described as being sweet, and, in doing so, imitates turns of phrase and rhymes from Guillaume de Machaut. Such sweetness, however, forms part of the attributes pertaining to the inaccessibility of the beloved, and as such is destined to fertilise the ground of longing and despair. The foregoing characteristics thus set up a scenario different from the one we find in the *danses*, wherein the dialogue between the lovers is not only possible, but is also frequently tinged with eroticism and accompanied by an exchange of gestures which implies possession.

In *Na dolça res*, allusion to the lady occurs via the sweetness of her gaze, “madona ab dolç esgar” (vv. 4, 22), by means of the intensifying exclamation “tan dolces hulahades feu!” [such sweet glances you offer] (v. 26), just as in the *baladeta* attributed to Guiraut d’Espanya, and then via the epithet “madona” [mistress], which we encounter anew in the third poetic piece from the Florence manuscript, a *dansa* whose metrical scheme is close to those from Ripoll ([...] *domna de bon ayre*: “Ay las, madona, que us val?”, v. 11) as well as in the anonymous piece copied into the notarial protocol from Besalú, “Madona, xantant vos diria” (refrain), “madona, la vostra amor”, “madona, la nug e-l dia” (vv. 3 and 6). The epithet “madona” occurs only once in the lyric poetry from the chansonnier VeAg, specifically in the enigmatic address of a *dansa* by Joan Basset to the Mother of God (*Ab letres d’aur per mesura*, Rao 14,2). On the other hand, it is most definitely to be found in the amorous Catalan *saluts* (*Madona dolça*, *Deus vos sal*, and *En nom de Deu totpoderos*) as well as in contemporary *noves rimades* (a type of Catalan narrative poetry written between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries), beginning with the rubric from the *Ventura del cavaller n’Huch e de Madona*, in a discursive context very remote from that of the courtly song.<sup>82</sup> In the second poem from the Florence manuscript (*Bon esforç malastre venç*), the lady is addressed by way of two series of adjectives: “francha douça dona mia” [generous, sweet lady of mine] (v. 6) and “gentil prous dona plasens” [kind, virtuous and pleasing lady] (v. 3), emphasising the fetish word upon which the *senhal* is constructed in each repetition of the refrain in *Plazens plasers*.

82. On the *Ventura*, see Lola Badia and Amadeu J. Soberanas i Lleó, “La ventura del cavaller N’Huch e de Madona: un nouveau roman occitano-catalan en vers du xive siècle”, *Romania* 114/1-2 (1986): 96-134.

The smile, one of the gestures which expresses the lady's sweetness, is another trait which the *danses* share with the *saluts*. In the small corpus of examined refrain songs with an aaab structure, there occurs "un bel riso" [a winning smile] alighting upon the beloved's lips in *Amors, merce, no sia* (v. 10); and a smile, together with song, prepares the way for the more-than-encouraging response of the beloved in *Na dolça res* (vv. 22-38). Three items from the *Cançonet de Ripoll*, two of which are *danses*, allude to a "ris" [smile], always qualified by the adjective "dolç" [sweet]: VII, v. 15 ("tan gin mi conquis le dolç ris"); IX, v. 16 ("ab un dolç ris gracios"); XIV, v. 26 ("e, quan me veu, fa-m un dolç, placent ris"). In the poetry of Gilabert de Pròixida, on the other hand, the elusive smile of *midons* serves to elicit melancholic – if not despairing – thoughts on the part of the lover, in tune with the poetry made fashionable by Machaut and the poets of his generation (*Fort me desplay quant no vey*, *Rao* 139,13, vv. 35-36: "e say que morray breumén / si no la vey dels huelhs rire" [for I know that I shall shortly die / if I fail to see her smile with <my own> eyes]).

Let us turn now to the principal themes of *Plazens plasers* and *Na dolça res*, which consist of desire and word games. The speaker of *Na dolça res*, the lady's privileged interlocutor, declares himself to be under the sway of his mistress, who, already in her initial response, grants him an uninhibited "yo son al vostre plaser" [I am at your pleasure] (v. 18): a new pun on the rhyme which opens the *dansa* from BC239, *Plazens plasers*. In such a context, the pleas for mercy constitute recurrent expressions of desire: we see this in *Madona xantant vos diria* and in *Na dolça res*, as we likewise do in *Plazens plasers*, the *danses* from E and the *baladas* from Q. Similarly, the refrain from the *dansa* by the Chaplain of Bolquera quoted in relation to the rhymes that are "meyns principals" [less principal] in the second short treatise from Ripoll, namely, *Fis vos suy ayman*, hammers home the theme of a plea for mercy in order to avoid the death of the lover on account of unreciprocated love:

doncs, prenda-us merces, pus tot bes, dompna, n vos es,  
que no m'alçiats desiran.

#### *Translation*

Have mercy on me, therefore, for every good, <my> lady, lies within you. Do not lead me to perish from my love.

Let us note that this passage, whose internal rhymes stand out as if in *bas-relief*, contains three *biocs* (or short lines) which reproduce the aaab sequence of rhymes (i.e. -es, -es, -es, -an), and thus blur the boundaries of the line once more by means of a device that the melody might have emphasised.

A similar phenomenon can be seen in one of the two Marian *danses* from the same *Cançoneret de Ripoll*, *Guays e jausents xanti per fin'amor* (Rao 82,1), which begins its final strophe with the formula "Sovint sospir":

Sovint sospir  
 ab gran *desir* de veser sa *figura*,  
 que-m fay languir  
 un mays remir son laus e la *Scriptura*;  
 mas *revenir* me fay per sa valor  
 un soptil xant ab gaya melodia, 25  
 me cofisan, car ila-s dolçe pia,  
 qu'en paradis me fassa son cantor.<sup>83</sup>

#### Translation

I often sigh with great desire to see her face [or form], which makes me languish in further contemplation of her acclaim and of Scripture; on account of her worth, however, a subtle song with gay melody comes back to me and inspires the confidence within me, since she is sweet and merciful, that in paradise I may be her cantor.

The sighing motif constitutes one of the many crystallisations of the theme of *amor de lonh* or "love from afar", a theme which abounds in the oldest repertory of French lyric poetry.<sup>84</sup> The author of the *dansa* could have drawn it from the French *estampie*, *Souvent souspire* (RS<sup>85</sup> 1506), whose text is preserved in French manuscripts K N P X and whose metrical structure and melody are highly similar to those of *Kalenda maya*.<sup>86</sup> The oldest source (Paris, Bibl. de l'Arsenal 5198) dates from the mid-thirteenth century. If one bears in mind the dating of the *Cançoneret de Ripoll* (1324-1358) as well as the information we have concerning the dissemination of the first witnesses of Guillaume de Machaut's texts in Catalonia (i.e., during the 1380s, around the time of the marriage of Joan I – John I, King of Aragon from 1387 – to Violant – or Yolande – of Bar), it seems clear that the motif cannot be a reminiscence fil-

83. Text cited from Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*, 232.

84. The distance is implicit, since the lady is the Mother of God: in the refrain it states that "ma dolçor fora qu'an ley pogues parlar un dia" [Sweetness would be mine should I be able to speak to her one day]. For an interpretation of this passage as an expression of the *Magnificat*, see Lannutti, "L'ultimo canto", 346.

85. Hans Spanke, *Gaston Raynauds Bibliographie des altfranzösischen Liedes* (Leiden: Brill, 1955).

86. For this text, see Maria Sofia Lannutti, "Intertestualità, imitazione metrica e melodia nella lirica romanza delle Origini", *Medioevo romanzo* 32 (2008): 3-28, esp. 8-11; repr. in Maria Caraci Vela, *La filologia musicale. Istituzioni, storia, strumenti critici*, Vol. 3 (Lucca: LIM, 2013), 175-200. The manuscripts in question are: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 5198; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 845; fr. 847; and n.a.fr. 1050.

tered through the oeuvre of the great Champenois poet, as often occurs in Catalan poetry dating from the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries.<sup>87</sup>

The first part of the strophe in the *dansa* from Ripoll is structured on the basis of a combination of lines consisting of 4 and 6 syllables and featuring internal rhymes, which leads one to conclude that the poetic piece was intoned at a rapid rhythm akin to that of the *estampie* and the lyrical lays, something which would fit in well with the “gaya melodia” mentioned in v. 25. Cerverí de Girona, as we know, likewise wrote certain pieces following this metrico-melodic model. One detail, however, could help us to trace the language of the model in question, namely, the rhyme *figura:Esriptura*. If we consider a lax pronunciation of the French *u* sound, we have a sequence of six rhyme-words (combining lines and *biocs*) employing the *-ir(e)* ending, as occurs in the *estampie*, *Souvent souspire*.<sup>88</sup>

The formula “Sovint sospir” in the *dansa* from Ripoll, associated, as it is, with the desire to gaze upon the inaccessible image of the lady or of that by which she is represented (“son laus e la Scriptura”), is accompanied by rhyme-words which resonated in the verses of some of the best Catalan poets of the fourteenth century. In the *cançó* by Gilabert de Pròixida, *Pus que vos play, dompna, que res no us dia* (Rao 139,19, vv. 41-45), “figura” rhymes with “sepultura”, and thus deploys the motif of the imprint of the beloved’s image upon the poet’s heart even beyond the latter’s death. The new context of the rhyme, however, elicits the pathos of French fourteenth-century *chansons*:

Ja no us porets ab me plus deportar  
 —  
 car tant n’ay duy t que n fau la sapultura,

87. For information regarding the Machaut manuscript known as the Ferrell-Vogüé codex (MachVg), see Lawrence Earp, “Machaut’s Role in the Production of Manuscripts of His Works”, *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 42 (1989): 461-503, esp. 478, n. 35; Anna Alberni, “El Roman de Cardenois i l’empremta de Guillaume de Machaut en la poesia catalana medieval”, *Romania* 130/1 (2012): 74-108; *The Ferrell-Vogüé Machaut Manuscript. Introductory Study*, ed. Lawrence Earp, Domenic Leo and Carla Shapreau (Oxford: DIAMM Publications, 2014), 28-68. For a summary of the presence of MachVg in Aragon, see also Anna Alberni, “Guillaume de Machaut at the court of Aragon, 1380-1430”, in *Translation and Reception of Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century French Literature*, ed. Marta Marfany and Kevin Brownlee, *Digital Philology: A Journal of Medieval Cultures*, 7/2 (Fall 2018): 173-90.

88. “Souvent souspire / mon cuer plain d’ire / pour la plus belle de l’empire / si me martire / que ne l’os dire / souvent mi fet plourer et rire: / ele mi set bien escondire / et moi seur tousz autres despire [...]” [My heart, full of sadness, often sighs for the most beautiful <lady> in the empire. She torments me so much that I dare not describe it <and> often causes me to <both> weep and laugh: she knows well how to deny me and to despise me above all others]. Metrical scheme: a4’a4’a8’a4’a4’a8’a8’a2’a2’a8’a2’a2’a6’. Here I quote the text from Lannutti, “Intertestualità, imitazione metrica e melodia”, 10.

mas, enquer mort, celhs qui volran mirar  
dins en mon cor, veyran vostre figura.<sup>89</sup> 45

*Translation*

I. You may no longer have sport with me [...]

II. [...] for so much have I endured that I long for the grave; even <once I am> dead, however, those who wish to look into my heart shall see your form [*figura*].

In the opening strophe of his well-known *cançó*, *Just lo front port vostra bella semblança* (Rao 164,10) Jordi de Sant Jordi carries the allusive potential of this word to its apex: here the “figura” of the lady (v. 3) is no longer a rhyme-word but a *rim estramp* (a non-rhyming word) bearing a dramatic level of semantic eccentricity, as described by Costanzo Di Girolamo:<sup>90</sup>

Just lo front port vostra bella semblança  
de que mon cors nit e jorn fa gran festa,  
que remirant la molt bella figura  
de vostra ffaç m'es romassa l'empremta 4  
que ja per mort no se-n partra la forma;  
ans quant seray del tot fores d'est segle,  
çels qui lo cors portaran al sepulcre  
sobre ma faç veuran lo vostre signe.<sup>91</sup> 8

*Translation*

Deep in my mind [lit. “beneath my forehead”] I bear your beautiful image, at which, night and day, I take great delight. For, having gazed at the very lovely form of your face, its imprint has remained with me, and even death shall not cause its form to depart therefrom; but rather, when I shall be wholly outside this world, those who shall bear my body to its grave will see your sign upon my face.

It is interesting to see how Jordi de Sant Jordi repeats the formula of the sighs from afar in the incipit of his *cançó*, *Sovint sospir, dona, per vos de lluny* (Rao 164,15), that focuses on the subject of longing or absence, in this instance filtered through the reception of the ballade of the *Loange des dames*, *Loing de vous*

89. Text cited from Gilabert de Pròixida, *Poesies*, ed. Martí de Riquer (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 1954), 66.

90. Costanzo Di Girolamo, “La versification catalane médiévale entre innovation et conservation de ses modèles occitans”, *Revue des Langues Romanes* 107 (2003): 41-72.

91. Text cited from Martí de Riquer and Lola Badia, *Les poesies de Jordi de Sant Jordi: cavaller valencià del segle XV* (València: Tres i Quatre, 1984), 168.

*souvent souspir* (Lo30). As Jaume Torró has observed, the poets of the reign of Alfonso the Magnanimous drew inspiration from this and other poems by Jordi de Sant Jordi, making them serve as an intertext for their *danses* employing retroenchal devices (i.e., refrain-words or -lines) and their French ballades.<sup>92</sup>

Thanks to the work of Yolanda Plumley on allusion and citation,<sup>93</sup> we know the extent to which the “new style” adopted by the generation influenced by Machaut was indebted to the tradition of quoting French thirteenth-century poetry and music. Just as Machaut and his contemporaries made good use of lines and refrains originating from earlier anonymous songs and turned the use of such borrowing into an avant garde style, Catalan poets from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries availed themselves of poetic and musical materials circulating within their milieu. It is logical to think, therefore, that, through the influence of Machaut’s oeuvre, these poets had already absorbed part of the discursive and formal tradition of the earliest French poetry, disseminated through music. The younger poets of Alfonso the Magnanimous’s era continued putting this technique into practice. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that Jordi de Sant Jordi, who had filled his *cançons* with quotations from songs that were fashionable in his own day, was foremost among their preferences.

Scholars of the Ars Nova have shed light upon a body of poetry until relatively recently unknown, and an extraordinary range of potential “intertexts” have emerged relevant to the study of the medieval Catalan lyric. However, the manuscript tradition of the Ars Nova corpus has tended to privilege the music over the text, while, as we know, with rare exceptions, the text is the only thing to have been preserved of the settings of secular Catalan poetry from the period. Various studies within the present volume reveal the interest in surveying the networks of borrowing and quotation in the songs of the Ars Nova at the same time as highlighting the difficulty in doing so in the absence of reliable critical editions of the texts, both verbal and musical. One of the cases studied by Maria Sofia Lannutti in this volume,<sup>94</sup> namely, *En*

92. On this subject, see Jaume Torró i Torrent’s review of Jordi de Sant Jordi, *Poesies*, ed. Aniello Fratta, (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 2005), in *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics* 26 (2007): 822-6; Id., *Sis poètes del regnat d’Alfons el Magnànim*, ed. Jaume Torró i Torrent (Barcelona: Editorial Barcino, 2009); Marfany, “La influència de la poesia francesa”; Alberni, “El Roman de Cardenois”.

93. Yolanda Plumley, *The Art of Grafted Song: Citation and Allusion in the Age of Machaut* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

94. Maria Sofia Lannutti, “‘Sofrir m’estuet’ ‘En attendant’ ‘Sus la fontayne’ from Pavia to Florence and Rome”, 263: “En remirant vo douce pourtraiture, / en laquele est tout doulz ymaginer, / m’a point Amours d’une tres fort pointure / d’ardant desir, si que mon cuer durer, / las, il ne puet, doulce dame sans per, / se vo doulçour ne me va secourrant: / pour vostre amor, dame, vois languissant”.

*remirant vo douce pourtraiture* by Philippoctus de Caserta, enables one to appreciate the evocative power of certain turns of phrase and key words in the opening strophe of the *Estramps* by Jordi de Sant Jordi (the gerund “remirant”, the ending in *-ure*, the presence of the rhyme-word “figura”). The anonymous song dating from the fourteenth century, *En mon cuer est un blanc cine pourtrait*, that Plumley has connected to certain melodic motifs from various ballades by Guillaume de Machaut as well as to the text of another ballade by Grimage, *Dedens mon cuer est pourtrait un ymage*, contributes further elements to this rich web of intertextual and musical reverberations.<sup>95</sup> This should not surprise us, given that Jordi de Sant Jordi was a poet who set his own compositions to music, as the Marquis of Santillana explained. This fact made him particularly receptive to bringing together the echoes from a musical repertory which crossed frontiers.<sup>96</sup>

The ballade, the poetic form with refrain par excellence for Machaut’s generation, and the love song in the troubadour style, constituted the genres that served as the foundation for Catalan poets to explore the transformative possibilities of such a legacy.<sup>97</sup> The *dansa*, for its part, seems to have “narrowed itself down” to certain characteristics, both formal and pertaining to content, which differentiated it from the other strophic forms in use at the end of the fourteenth century. If we focus upon the corpus of the VeAg *danses*, we encounter 10 poetic pieces in total, from the *dansa e scondit* by Jordi de Sant Jordi (*Rao* 164,16) to the small group of *danses* emanating from the circle of Joan Basset (*Rao* 14,2 and 14,17), Gabriel Ferrús (*Rao* 64,2) and Guerau de Massanet (*Rao* 105,1), passing through the *dansa* composed by Pere Tresfort (*Rao* 181,3), plus the anonymous pieces added by a second hand in spaces left blank on the manuscript (the *Cobles de la Ballesta*, and two dialogical pieces in Castillian: the *coblas* by Fray Antón and the *malmonjada* [verses of the reluctant nun], *Madre por no me dar nada*). In three instances, one can find recourse to *retronxament* (*Rao* 14,2, 105,1 i 64,2), which should be understood as the

95. Yolanda Plumley, “An ‘episode in the South’? Ars subtilior and the Patronage of the French Princes”, *Early Music History* 22 (2003): 103–68, esp. 131–6 and Ead., *The Art of Grafted Song*, 292–3.

96. The textual network behind Jordi de Sant Jordi’s *Estramps* includes also the opening lines of Machaut’s *ballade* L110, with its syntactically “marked” use of the fetish word “belle” in v. 2: “En remirant vo gracios viaire / e vo gent corps, belle, qui tant m’agree, / douce esperance en mon fin cuer repaire, qui rejoist mon cuer e ma pensee / si doucement que ma joie doublee / en est cent fois quant je vous puis veoir, / se’n sui amis loyaus sans decevoir”. On the French and musical background of Sant Jordi’s *Estramps*, see the coinciding observations by Marta Marfany, “Postil·les musicals franceses als *Estramps* de Jordi de Sant Jordi”, *Qui fruit ne sap collir. Homenatge a Lola Badia*, ed. Anna Alberni, Lluís Cifuentes, Joan Santanach and Albert Soler (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, Editorial Barcino, 2021), Vol. 1, 413–21.

97. On the Catalan ballades, see Dominique Billy, “La ballade dans la poésie catalane des XIVe et XVe siècles: un genre entre deux traditions”, *Revue des Langues Romanes* (2014): 185–214.



late manifestation of a tendency towards a high level of technicality, as we have seen in the texts under analysis.<sup>98</sup>

In terms of content, the *danses* seem relatively immune to the pathos which impregnates the Catalan love poetry of the period straddling the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Like *Plazens plasers* and the other refrain songs upon which we have commented in this essay, the *danses* of the VeAg chansonnier present a tone of sober and serene optimism (quoting Badia<sup>99</sup> on the Ripoll *danses*). This tone includes irony (Tresfort, *Jovencelhs qui no a-ymia*, “Amors, d’ome pech fai destre, / atressi de paubre rich [...] e fay dormir ab rafil / en lit de mayritz tot dia” [Love makes a dullard shrewd and, likewise, a pauper wealthy [...] and leads one to sleep all day long while snoring in a husband’s bed]); a popularising flavour, with the refrain “mirant la flor de l’amethla” [gazing at the almond blossom] (Massanet, *Amoros joy mi renouvelha*); a feminine voice and a deliberately base or “low” style, with the humorous refrain “tostemps veniu con om sopa” [you always come round when I’m eating supper] (Ferrús, *Pus flach sou que nulha stopa*); as well as the thematic hybridism found in the *dansa* by Sant Jordi (*Tant es li mals que-m fayts soffrir*), related as it is to the troubadouresque *escondit*. Of the two *danses* by Fra Joan Basset, one is of a Marian variety (*Ab letres d’aur per mesura*) and the other a *maldit* or *desdansa* (*Pus havetz bondat despesa*). We can thus see how at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries the *dansa* tended to adopt certain themes and tones, which remained outside the discourse of the lover’s sadness typical of the great courtly song form.<sup>100</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

In fourteenth-century Catalan poetry, refrain songs fostered a process of hybridisation between the “low” and the courtly akin to that which has been described with regard to the origins of the responsorial metrical model in

98. As has been suggested by Lannutti, “Concordia discors”, 155, the persistence of the poets of Alfonso the Magnanimous’ period in cultivating the *dansa retronxada*, alongside the French *balade*, may be attributable to the fact that both forms share a very similar metrical structure, since their respective refrains are repeated at the end of each stanza. The *danses* by the Chaplain of Bolquera in the *Cançonet de Ripoll* are the earliest examples of this form within a Catalan setting.

99. Badia, *Poesia catalana del s. XIV*.

100. This fact is confirmed by the *danses retronxades* by Pere Torruella, Rodrigo Dies and Francesc Sunyer, all of which address the theme of love and possess a significantly toned-down level of dramatism or use popularising and proverbial touches, even when they adapt their phrasing to French models such as that of Oton de Grandson. Those of Martí Garcia and Lluís de Vila-rasa, on the other hand, crammed with reminiscences of and turns of phrase from the songs and lays of Jordi de Sant Jordi and Andreu Febrer, are fully immersed in the “serious” style made fashionable by the poets of Machaut’s generation.

Romance literatures. These forms functioned as a stimulus of renewal for the lyric poetry produced in Catalonia, which was probably disseminated by means of music. This tendency is exemplified by both the proliferation of rhyme correspondences which blur the boundaries of the lines, as occurs in the *dansa*, *Plazens plasers*, with the rhetorical and musical possibilities that are offered thereby, and the repetition of lines by means of the technique of *retronxament* in the *danses* from Ripoll, which recalls the responsorial purpose of the reprise line (or *volta*) in the earliest dance songs of French origin.

The manuscript tradition of the contemporary precepts for poetry seems to reflect an interest in refrain forms, both as regards the descriptions of the genres within the treatises and the presence of poetic and preceptive texts alongside each other in the manuscripts (BC239; Rip129). If we bear in mind the dedications found in, and the information that emerges from the texts surveyed here, we can assert that the tradition was not marginal nor threadbare, as some critics have maintained.<sup>101</sup> New archival documentation has enabled us to depict a more specific context of production and reception for such poetry.

101. This idea, which was inherited from the studies of Alfred Jeanroy and Martí de Riquer, and asserts that the poetic tradition in fourteenth-century Catalonia was marginal and moribund or antiquarian, has been revised in recent years: see Miriam Cabré, Sadurní Martí and Marina Navàs "Geografia i història de la poesia occitanocatalana del segle XIV", in *Translatar i transferir. La transmissió dels textos i el saber (1200-1500)*, ed. Anna Alberni, Lola Badia and Lluís Cabré (Santa Coloma de Queralt, Tarragona: Obrador Edèndum, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, 2009), 349-76.

## ABSTRACT

The influence of French poetry on the Catalan repertory of the first half of the fourteenth century, as well as the activity of the minstrels documented in the correspondence of and payments made by the Chancellery of the monarchs of the Crown of Aragon, lead one to question the supposed marginality of the oldest refrain songs preserved in Catalonia. In this article I focus upon the small corpus of fourteenth-century Catalan *danses* based on the scheme aaab with refrain. The aim is to advance in two directions: towards new editions which enable a better comprehension of the texts and their transmission; and towards a reassessment of already-known pieces in the light of novel documentary or historiographical information. This might help establishing the place that befits refrain songs in fourteenth-century Catalan poetry, including the intertextual networks that place them in specific contexts of production and reception.

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