

Structural Confusion in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*: Navigating Unstable Narratives in the Miracles of Castrojeriz

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Abstract This article addresses links between musical-poetic structure and architecture in four songs of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. Made at Alfonso X of Castile's court in the latter years of his reign (1252–84), the *Cantigas* present a unique case of miracle narratives (*cantigas de miragre*) set to song. As Parkinson has shown, the four songs in the Castrojeriz set present technical faults that hinder effective comprehension of their miracle texts. This article shows that the songs' cyclical structures can aid textual logic by aligning narrative highlights with points of sonic focus in the poetry and music. Tension between textual and musical-poetic form often mirrors the songs' narratives, which concern difficulties during the construction of Castrojeriz's church. This article argues that such tensions can be read as a text-as-building metaphor, also alluded to in the songs as they appear in surviving manuscripts.

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The music, text, and translations are my own. Textual editions are based upon Walter Mettmann, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, Acta Universitatis Conimbrigensis, 4 vols (Universidade de Coimbra, 1959–72), II, 358–59, 375–76, and III, 5–6, 41–42. Translations are adapted from Stephen Parkinson, *Alfonso X, the Learned. Cantigas de Santa Maria: An Anthology*, MHRA Critical Texts, 40 (MHRA, 2015, 249–50); and Kathleen Kulp-Hill, *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise: A Translation of the Cantigas de Santa Maria*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 173 (ACMRS, 2000), 293, 302, 306, 323. Musical editions are based upon Higinio Anglés, *La música de las Cantigas de Santa Maria del rey Alfonso el Sabio. Facsímil, transcripción y estudio crítico*, 3 vols (Diputación Provincial, Biblioteca Central, 1943–64), III, 3, 267, 276, 280, 297; and Manuel Pedro Ferreira, *The Notation of the Cantigas de Santa Maria: Diplomatic Edition*, 3 vols (CESEM, 2017), III, 265, 272, 276, 290. The following manuscript sigla are used in this article:

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The links between musical composition and architecture have long been a source of debate in the intellectual discourse of the later Middle Ages. From Vitruvius's *De architectura*, laws that govern the rational arrangement of space within a building have been compared to the acoustic designs for theatres, musical instruments, and machines designed to make various forms of noise.¹ In her analysis of the intersections between musical and artistic theory, Bonnie J. Blackburn has shown how the crossover between the two disciplines attests to a drive to 'elevate architecture to the status of a liberal art', and while her study focuses on Renaissance musical theory it also testifies to strong precedent in the writings of medieval authorities.² This confluence between composition and construction is compelling, and has retained currency long beyond the departure of Renaissance humanism. The dictum that architecture represents music in material form – as a kind of 'frozen sound' – has persisted through the Romantic era and, some have argued, continues to inform contemporary approaches towards sound, space, and composition.³ The power of this analogy rests upon processes and parameters that are common to the art of making in both disciplines. To make a composition requires creative imagination, which must be regulated by planning, organization, and an awareness of one's practical limitations. Such restrictions to a writer's or composer's creativity can also emerge through the structural parameters of textual or musical form. These priorities remain pertinent to the art of construction, too, where laws of physics pose structural boundaries that regulate an architect's creative drive, along with principles of aesthetic taste.

This article considers the porous boundaries between the architectural and the musical-poetic in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, a collection of 427 Marian devotional songs, written in Galician-Portuguese at the court of Alfonso X of Castile in the latter half of the thirteenth century.⁴ This collection is multifaceted in its choice of song forms, yet the majority – 356, or 83.4 per cent of the total – are narrative miracle songs, which are known as *cantigas de miragre*. This article offers a context-rich analysis of a subset of four *cantigas de miragre*, all of which are set in the northern Castilian fortress town of Castrojeriz. These songs recount the building of the church of Nuestra Señora

¹ Daniel K. S. Walden, 'Frozen Music: Music and Architecture in Vitruvius' *De Architectura*', *Greek and Roman Musical Studies*, 2.1 (2014), 124–45.

² Bonnie J. Blackburn, 'Music Theory and Musical Thinking after 1450', in *Music as Concept and Practice in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Reinhard Strohm and Bonnie J. Blackburn, *The New Oxford History of Music*, 3/1, 2nd edn (Oxford University Press, 2001), ch. 7 (p. 342). See also Marvin Trachtenberg, 'Architecture and Music Reunited: A New Reading of Dufay's "Nuper Rosarum Flores" and the Cathedral of Florence', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54.3 (2001), 740–75.

³ Alexander Michailow, "...Architektura ist erstarrte Musik..." Nochmals zu den Ursprüngen eines worts über die Musik', *International Journal of Musicology*, 1 (1992), 47–65. Hugh Honour, 'Frozen Music', in *Romanticism* (Routledge, 1979), ch. 3. On later research between the two disciplines, see Mikesch W. Muecke and Miriam S. Zach, *Resonance. Vol. 1: Essays on the Intersection of Music and Architecture* (Culicidae Architectural Press, 2007).

⁴ On the intellectual context that generated Alfonsine literature, including the *Cantigas*, see Henry T. Drummond, *The Cantigas de Santa Maria: Power and Persuasion at the Alfonsine Court*, *New Cultural History of Music* (Oxford University Press, 2024), chs. 1–2; Kirstin Kennedy, *Alfonso X of Castile-León: Royal Patronage, Self-Promotion and Manuscripts in Thirteenth-Century Spain* (Amsterdam University Press, 2019), chs. 1–3.

del Manzano, a structure that still stands on the edge of the town today.⁵ Their narratives concern a series of accidents that took place during this period of the church's construction.⁶ In 'O que no coraçom d' ome' (CSM 242) and 'Aquel que de vontade' (CSM 249), a stonemason loses his footing on a scaffold inside the unfinished church.⁷ Meanwhile, 'Tan gran poder a ssa Madre' (CSM 252) recalls how a team of masons, working underneath the church, is trapped by an avalanche of sand.⁸ Finally, in 'De muitas guisas miragres' (CSM 266), a beam falls onto a congregation from precarious heights during a mass.⁹

The Castrojeriz set has been examined before, and earlier studies prove how the set's songs pose unique questions regarding poetic structure, narrative cohesion, and compositional process. In his 1998 study, Stephen Parkinson noted copious grammatical errors that occur in all four songs, and several of these complicate the logic in sentence formation.¹⁰ Parkinson theorized that at least two of the miracles in the set (CSM 242 and CSM 249) represent parallel miracles composed at the same time, using similar schematic narratives with prominent reuse of text. His findings, corroborated by a later 2011 study, point towards a wider phenomenon throughout the *Cantigas* of narrative duplication, evidenced by similar patterns of paired, or grouped, narratives.¹¹ Parkinson's analyses show the complications inherent in setting the Castrojeriz tales to song, where poetic manipulation of their texts works alongside a complex series of compositional stages in the surviving manuscripts.¹² This present article adds a further, musicological voice to this discussion. The following analysis suggests that the Castrojeriz songs' structural issues can help inform their interpretation, where text and music, when crafted into a song structure, can work metaphorically to mirror the building blocks that form an architectural edifice. Songs can thereby depict

⁵ While features of the original Castrojeriz church survive, the original stone vaults intended for the collegiate church were either never erected or collapsed; those now present in the structure date from the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. Note also the significance of local shrines within the *Cantigas*, of which the Castrojeriz set are but one instance. See Stephen Parkinson, 'Two for the Price of One: On the Castrojeriz *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', in *Ondos do mar de Vigo. Actas do Simposio Internacional sobre a Lírica Medieval Galego-Portuguesa*, ed. Derek W. Flitter and Patricia Ódber de Baubeta (Seminario de Estudos Galegos, Department of Hispanic Studies, University of Birmingham, 1998), 72–88 (pp. 72–73, fn. 14–20).

⁶ The narrator alludes to other miracles in 'Tan gran poder a ssa Madre' ('En Castrojeriz foi est | de que vos quero contar, | que por fazer a ygreja, | de que vos fui ja falar,' 2.1–2). Here the use of 'ja' suggests an implied common knowledge of the set as a group defined by a common theme of structural problems.

⁷ The Castrojeriz set appear in codices **F** and **E**. For CSM 242: F 68 (fols. 87^v–88^r) and E 242 (fols. 220^v–221^r); and CSM 249: F 69 (fols. 88^v–89^r) and E 249 (fols. 226^v–227^r).

⁸ F 63 (fols. 81^v–82^r) and E 252 (fols. 229^r–v).

⁹ F 65f (fol. 84^r) and E 266 (fols. 239^r–240^r).

¹⁰ Parkinson, 'Two for the Price of One', 76–80.

¹¹ Stephen Parkinson, 'The Miracles Came in Two by Two: Paired Narratives in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', in *Gaude virgo gloriosa: Marian Miracle Literature in the Iberian Peninsula and France in the Middle Ages*, ed. Juan Carlos Conde and Emma Gatland, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 69 (Queen Mary, University of London, 2011), 65–85 (pp. 73–74).

¹² On this complex series of stages, see Stephen Parkinson and Deirdre Jackson, 'Collection, Composition, and Compilation in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', *Portuguese Studies*, 22.2 (2006), 159–72.

architectural stability – or lack thereof – sonically through the medium of poetry and music, as well as visually when such songs are inscribed onto the pages of a manuscript.

This article builds its own line of argument by examining thirteenth-century intellectual associations between song composition and the construction of buildings. Such interplay between ideals of musical-poetic composition and architecture demonstrate a long historical precedent, and the following discussion shows how allegorizations of the rhetorically regulated text as a strong and stable edifice rests upon a much older, literary foundation built from Classical and Biblical sources. This article then presents a focused study of two Castrojeriz miracles – ‘O que no coração d’ ome’ and ‘Aquel que de vontade’ – which are of interest given the close similarity that Parkinson has already observed between their narrative plotlines. Assessing these songs’ musical-poetic forms alongside their texts, sonic structures – particularly the *cantiga de miragre*’s prominent *vuelta* section – can emphasize significant moments within the songs’ narratives. The song form thereby works as a sonic scaffold that supports the dissemination of textual meaning. Conversely, moments where music and poetry clash with narrative logic allegorize problems in the Castrojeriz church’s construction. Similar themes of structural cohesion and rupture also emerge in the miniatures of the Castrojeriz narratives that survive in one of the *Cantiga* manuscripts, codex F. This dialogue between musical-poetic and visual architecture points to a new understanding of the construction of the *Cantigas*, and suggests further ways in which the poets’ priorities might have been echoed by others who were part of the wider *Cantiga* project, such as musicians and illuminators.¹³ Such a methodological approach – one that integrates musicology, poetry studies, art history, and architecture – is rare in the discipline. Yet this blurring of methodologies offers invaluable potential for scholars in disparate fields, who might consider how other repertoires can be read as analogous to architectural edifices or processes of construction.

Composition and Construction: An Intellectual Context to the Castrojeriz Set

Early associations between the composition of texts and the art of construction emerge in rhetorical treatises, which compare the subdivisions of a speech to the blocks that make up a building. David Cowling notes how Plato’s *Gorgias* likens the ordering, framing, and gathering of rhetorical tools to the preparation of building material. These parallels are also echoed in Dionysius of Harlicarnassus’s *De compositione verborum*.¹⁴

¹³ On the collaborative nature of the *Cantigas* compilation, see Manuel Pedro Ferreira, ‘Alfonso X, compositor’, *Alcanate*, 5 (2006–07), 117–37; Stephen Parkinson, ‘Alfonso X, Miracle Collector’, in *Alfonso X, las Cantigas de Santa María. Códice Rico, MS T-1-1, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial*, ed. Laura Fernández Fernández and Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, 2 vols (Patrimonio Nacional, Testimonio Compañía Editorial, 2011), II, 79–105; Parkinson and Jackson, ‘Collection, Composition, and Compilation’, 160–61.

¹⁴ See Walter R. M. Lamb, *Plato: Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, Loeb Classical Library, 166 (Harvard University Press, 1925), 454–57; and Stephen Usher, *Dionysius of Harlicarnassus: The Critical Essays*, 2 vols, Loeb Classical Library, 466 (Harvard University Press, 1985), II, 22–25; cited in David

The author and engineer Vitruvius's treatise *De architectura* borrows Ciceronian rhetorical terms for order (*ordinatione*), arrangement (*dispositione*), and proportion (*eurythmia*) for the erection of buildings.¹⁵ Quintilian in his *Institutio oratoria* compares the role of rhetorician and poet to that of builder or architect. Buildings, Quintilian reasons, consist not just of raw building materials; rather, they need to be deployed and assembled into a rational organization (or *dispositio*), linking them up logically.¹⁶ A speech, poem, or song must make use of the necessary constituent parts, assembled rationally by those skilled in the art of rhetorical reasoning.¹⁷ This procedure requires a writer to assemble their text, which is achieved by arranging the material into a hierarchically compiled form that comprises interlocking textual components. Mary J. Carruthers observes how these ideas were adopted into early Christian thought, from the representation of Christ as the keystone of the Church, to the designation of St Peter and the popes as the foundations upon which the Church is built (Matthew 16. 18).¹⁸ In the New Testament image of the Church centred on Christ, early Christian sources incorporate the community of the faithful into this architectural ensemble. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he regards the body of believers within the Church as an assembly of kinsmen and friends to the saints, built upon foundations of apostles and prophets, with Christ as the cornerstone (Ephesians 2. 19–22). All unite into one cohesive, logical assembly of faith, supported ultimately by Christ. These New Testament ideas stem from a passage in Psalm 118 that compares God to the rejected cornerstone (Psalm 118. 22), which Christ, his disciples, and the evangelists heavily quote in the gospels and epistles.¹⁹

The theological link between architecture and text in biblical sources was highly influential to early patristic thinkers from the time of Origen. In his *Ars rhetorica*, Atilius Fortunatianus compares the architectural *ductus* – which comprises a channel used in the conveyance of liquids – to the *ductus* of rhetoric.²⁰ Both the rhetorical and the musical

Cowling, *Building the Text: Architecture as Metaphor in Late Medieval and Early Modern France*, Oxford Languages and Literature Monographs (Oxford University Press, 1998), 140–41.

¹⁵ See Frank Granger, *Vitruvius: On Architecture*, 2 vols, Loeb Classical Library, 251 (Harvard University Press, 1931–34), I, 24–25; cited in Cowling, *Building the Text*, 17–8.

¹⁶ See Donald A. Russell, *Quintilian: The Orator's Education*, 5 vols, Loeb Classical Library, 126–27 (Cambridge, 2001), III, 150–1 and 462–3, IV, 74–75; cited in Cowling, *Building the Text*, 141.

¹⁷ See Sarah Spence, *Figuratively Speaking: Rhetoric and Culture from Quintilian to the Twin Towers* (Bloomsbury, 2007), 19–96; and Paul Crossley, 'Ductus and Memoria: Chartres Cathedral and the Workings of Rhetoric', in *Rhetoric beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary J. Carruthers (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 214–49.

¹⁸ See Mary J. Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 14–21; and Friedrich Ohly, 'Haus III (Metapher)', in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum: Sachwörterbuch zur Auseinandersetzung des Christentums mit der antiken Welt*, ed. Theodor Klauser and others (Anton Hiersemann, 1986), 954–71.

¹⁹ Psalm 118. 22, quoted by Jesus and reported in Matthew 21. 42, Mark 21. 10, Luke 20. 17, and 1 Peter 2. 7. Note also the large number of New Testament passages that draw links between architecture and words/text: for Matthew 7. 24–27, Luke 6. 46–49, and 1 Corinthians 14. 26. Likewise, those that draw links between the strength of a building and the faith of the assembly of believers, such as 1 Peter 2. 7, and Colossians 2. 7.

²⁰ See Mary J. Carruthers, 'The Concept of *Ductus*, or, Journeying through a Work of Art', in *Rhetoric beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary J. Carruthers (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 190–213 (pp. 197–98).

ductus share the idea of leading: whereas a rhetorical *ductus* comprises elements of a speech that direct listeners to think in a particular way, the musical *ductus* leads a melody to a particular range or tonality.²¹ The musical *ductus* can refer to the signal of either a conductor or a notational grapheme that leads performers to make specific melodic gestures. Meanwhile, Rabanus Maurus likens exegetical methods for scriptural text to parts of a building in his prologue to the *Allegoriae in universam sacram scripturam*, with *historia* as the foundation, *allegoria* forming the walls, *anagogia* the roof, and *triopologia* as the decoration.²² In Rabanus's allegory, *historia* sets the precedent for *inventio*. It is thus the basis of *memoria*, which Elizabeth Eva Leach shows to be the source of available, pre-existing ideas that the mind assembles – like a builder or craftsman – into new structures and ideas.²³ This text-as-building metaphor was also used as a rhetorical means to justify the morality of architectural standards. In his treatise on the construction of church buildings, John Bromyard uses the terms *ordinatio* and *dispositio* for the organization of a monastic house's cloister. Such rhetorically charged terms imbued the spatial organization of a sacred house with the moral and spiritual beauty characteristic of a well-constructed sermon or religious letter.²⁴ This porousness between building and composition emerges, too, in Geoffrey of Vinsauf's influential *Poetria nova*, where he instructs writers of verse to assess the material relevant to the matter at hand before the act of composition, as an architect draws up a circle with a compass to plan a building. The workman–poet should construct the whole fabric of the poem within the buildings of the mind.²⁵ Here, Carruthers observes the conventional image of the composer as master builder, comparing the depiction of the builder or surveyor as mapper to the composer as mapper: one who needs to plot a composition in the mind before performing it or writing it down.

The text-as-building metaphor most commonly deploys a church or temple as an allegorized receptacle of logically structured arguments within sacred texts. Such a metaphor helps strengthen the faith of the believers, who are convinced by the reading of these texts. Most instances of the metaphor describe a sacred building as resting on strong foundations, representing a firmly argued basis in *historia* and *memoria*.²⁶

²¹ See Nancy van Deusen, *Theology and Music at the Early University: The Case of Robert Grosseteste and Anonymous IV*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 57 (Brill, 1994), 37–53.

²² Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia latina*, 217 vols (Garnier, 1844–91), cxi, 849–50; cited in Cowling, *Building the Text*, 143. Additional architectural references are noted in Maurus's Bible commentaries. See Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, 3 vols (T&T Clark, 2000), II, 48, 109, 267, 334.

²³ Elizabeth Eva Leach, 'Nature's Forge and Mechanical Production: Writing, Reading and Performing Song', in *Rhetoric beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary J. Carruthers (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 72–95 (p. 73).

²⁴ Paul Binski, 'Working by Words Alone': The Architect, Scholasticism and Rhetoric in Thirteenth-Century France', in *Rhetoric beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary J. Carruthers (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 14–51 (p. 36).

²⁵ Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XIIIe et XIIIe siècle* (É Champion, 1924), 199; see translation in Margaret F. Nims, *Geoffrey of Vinsauf: Poetria Nova* (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2010), 20; cited in Carruthers, 'The Concept of *Ductus*', 190.

²⁶ Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, 19–21. See, for instance, Hugh of St Victor, who in a text-as-building metaphor notes that once students of scripture have completed their reading, 'the foundations of the story have been laid in you' (p. 20).

The impenetrable walls represent either the *allegoria* that supports an argument, or the *approbatio* of circumstantial evidence.²⁷ Both these components must be suitably well constructed to support the *argumentatio* in the building's roof.²⁸ Thus, the text-as-building metaphor consistently valorizes the building in positive terms as robust, secure, and impregnable. Why then might the writers of the Castrojeriz set complicate this metaphor, by highlighting complications in the church's construction? How can participants make sense of four songs that – rather than uphold the text-as-building metaphor in its conventional form – instead subvert it to highlight its potential shortfalls?²⁹ Given that rhetorical texts made in Iberia close to the time of the *Cantigas'* production rely heavily on sources that deploy text-as-building metaphors, composers and listeners would have approached such repertoire with certain expectations.³⁰ If the *Cantigas'* participants performed or listened to the Castrojeriz set, the metaphor would have acquired new meaning, given that these texts potentially imply God's house as prone to structural collapse.³¹

Castrojeriz is just one of a series of places that form the focus of miracle collections in the *Cantigas*.³² Yet the presence of four related stories about the church is unsurprising, given the significance that it and the surrounding town held to the Castilian royal family.³³ Alfonso X's grandmother Berengaria of Castile (c. 1179–1246) was a distinguished patron of the Order of Santiago, which defended all towns that – like Castrojeriz – lay along the pilgrimage route of the *Camino de Santiago*. Berengaria's

²⁷ With reference to Hugh of St Victor, see Karlfried Froehlich, *Sensing the Scriptures: Aminadab's Chariot and the Predicament of Biblical Interpretation* (Eerdmans Publishing, 2014), 56–59.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 38, 94–95.

²⁹ It is generally assumed that the performers and listeners of the *Cantigas* were those at the Alfonsine court, who were educated to a significant degree in the liberal arts; however, for all their lavish display, the *Cantigas'* reception was probably limited. See Manuel Pedro Ferreira, 'The Medieval Fate of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*: Iberian Politics Meets Song', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 69.2 (2016), 295–353 (pp. 301–16); Drummond, *The Cantigas de Santa Maria*, preface.

³⁰ See, for instance, Teresa Jiménez Calvente, 'El prefacio del *Breve compendium artis rethorice* de Martín de Córdoba. Edición, traducción y estudio', *Revista de poética medieval*, 2 (1998), 227–42 (pp. 229–34).

³¹ The role of architecture in the *Cantigas* is profound, making the relevance of such a metaphor apparent to its readers. See Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, 'Tres ensayos sobre el arte en las *Cantigas de Santa María* de Alfonso el Sabio', *El Museo de Pontevedra*, 33 (1979), 265–94; José Guerrero Lovillo, 'Las miniaturas. Estudio técnico, artístico y arqueológico', in *El Códice Rico de las Cantigas de Alfonso X, el Sabio. MS T.I.1 de la Biblioteca de El Escorial*, ed. Matilde López Serrano and others, Serie B: Códices artísticos, ediciones facsimiles, 2, 2 vols (Edilan, 1979), II, 269–320; Fernando Gutiérrez Baños, 'Pintura monumental en tiempos del Códice rico de las Cantigas de Santa María', in *Alfonso X, las Cantigas de Santa María. Códice Rico, MS T-I-1, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial*, ed. Laura Fernández Fernández and Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, 2 vols (Patrimonio Nacional, Testimonio Compañía Editorial, 2011), II, 377–443.

³² Parkinson, 'Miracle Collector', 88–93. On the extensive work surrounding older miracle collections, see Juan Carlos Bayo, 'Las colecciones universales de milagros de la Virgen hasta Gonzalo de Berceo', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 81/7–8 (2004), 849–71; and Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record, and Event 1000–1215*, The Middle Ages Series (Scolar Press, 1982), 33–165.

³³ Conquered from Aragon by Alfonso VII of Castile-León (1155–1214), the town was assimilated under Castilian rule in 1131. Nuestra Señora del Manzano, formerly part of a Benedictine monastery, was transferred to Burgos Cathedral by Alfonso VII and secularized under his grandson Alfonso VIII of Castile.

special devotion to Nuestra Señora del Manzano is implied through her will of 1214, which commanded the construction of a new church building. Given Alfonso X's close family relationship with his grandmother, it is understandable that a church into which she invested active interest should be mentioned several times in his own personal, artistic, and spiritual project.³⁴ Since these four works fall nearby to each other in their two surviving witnesses, were written at a similar stage of the *Cantiga* project, and contain a unified construction theme, it is also feasible that they would have been perceived as a self-contained set.³⁵ Structural or narrative features common to the *Cantiga* collection therefore operate differently here, given the interaction between the set's subject matter – concerning the assembly of a church – and the parallel construction of a story set to song. A product of the following analysis is therefore a reframing of conventional *Cantiga* analysis and its need to apply universal standards across the repertoire. In so doing, this article questions the cohesiveness of the repertoire – grounded in the theory that Alfonso X represents the unifying author of the collection – and instead considers the Castrojeriz set as a product of more than one individual, each of whom responded to the specific contexts under which the set was created.³⁶ This article therefore offers a new way to approach universal methodologies towards vernacular song studies, accommodating the tendency to apply generalizing standards where specific contexts are also important.³⁷

Two *Cantigas de Santa Maria*: ‘O que no coração d’ ome’ (CSM 242) and ‘Aquel que de vontade’ (CSM 249)

Two accounts of the same story, ‘O que no coração d’ ome’ and ‘Aquel que de vontade’, form the focus of Parkinson's study.³⁸ Both contain similar storylines of a stonemason who loses his footing while working at the top of Castrojeriz's church. There is only one significant narrative difference between these two songs: in ‘O que no coração d’ ome’, the stonemason is saved from falling by the Virgin, whereas in ‘Aquel

³⁴ Berengaria's marriage to Alfonso's grandfather, Alfonso IX of León (c. 1171–1230), reunited the crowns of Castile and León after decades of political struggles. It was partly due to Berengaria's political manoeuvring that her son Ferdinand III (c. 1199–1252) was able to inherit the Castilian throne outright through his maternal line. Following her husband's death, Ferdinand inherited Castile and León, passing on a united realm to Alfonso. Referring within the *Cantigas* to a church whose construction she ordered may have served as an implicit reminder of her role in a united Castile. See Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the Cantigas de Santa Maria: A Poetic Biography*, *The Medieval Mediterranean*, 16 (Brill, 1998), 42–43; H. Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, the Learned: A Biography* (Brill, 2010), 20–33.

³⁵ Parkinson, ‘Two for the Price of One’, 72–73.

³⁶ For a useful summary of existing debate surrounding Alfonso X's level of involvement in the composition of his works, see Kennedy, *Alfonso X of Castile-León*, introduction; on general issues that challenge medieval aspects of authorship, see Alastair Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd edn (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), ch. 3.

³⁷ On the need to understand local manifestations of general trends in lyric song, see Elizabeth Aubrey, ‘Vernacular Song I: Lyric’, in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Music*, ed. Mark Everist and Thomas Forest Kelly, 2 vols (Cambridge University Press, 2018), i, 382–427.

³⁸ Parkinson, ‘Two for the Price of One’, 73–82.

que de vontade' the worker manages to fall and survive without injury. Parkinson has argued convincingly that 'O que no coração d' ome' in its current form arose from a five-strophe version that had been expanded by a well-meaning yet technically inexperienced scribe, whereas 'Aquel que de vontade' is an adaptation from CSM 242's original.³⁹ Parkinson concludes that expansion in 'O que no coração d' ome' explains the want of narrative progression in its third to fifth strophes, as well as its infelicities of syntax and grammar. The purpose of the following discussion is not to refute Parkinson's valid claims regarding both songs' origins. This article does nevertheless suggest alternative ways in which these songs could have conveyed meaning to their participants, despite ostensibly lacking syntactical or grammatical direction.

It is certainly true that CSM 242 has a less than conventional narrative structure (Example 1). In most *cantigas de miragre*, the authorial voice – implicitly but probably not literally Alfonso X – speaks to the reader in the first strophe as part of an opening *exordium*.⁴⁰ Such an opening is common to a large number of the *Cantigas*, but 'O que no coração d' ome' is unusual in that this introduction is distributed across two strophes. Strophe one expands upon the sentiments described in the refrain ('E d' ela fazer aquesto | á gran poder, a la fe', 1.1). The listener then hears Alfonso X state his will to narrate – a common trope of the opening – at the beginning of the second strophe.⁴¹ The main narrative body – in which the stonemason slips and is saved miraculously by his fingernails – only begins in the third strophe, and continues to the fifth strophe with much copying of material in between.⁴² Parkinson suggests the first strophe's dramatic redundancy is proof that it was added later, which justifies 'giving musicians what they frequently want – good reason for omitting one or more strophes to make a performance of manageable (or recordable) length'.⁴³ While Parkinson's analysis accurately

³⁹ Ibid., 82–85. Parkinson argues that T and F's folio layout requirements of eighty-eight lines called for seven-strophe songs. Such dimensions would allow each song to start at the top of a new folio.

⁴⁰ On further use of the *exordium* in vernacular song, see Roger Dragonetti, *Le technique poétique des trouvères dans la chanson courtoise: contribution à l'étude de la rhétorique médiévale* (De Tempel, 1960), 140–41; Jennifer Saltzstein, *The Refrain and the Rise of the Vernacular in Medieval French Music and Poetry*, Gallica, 30 (D. S. Brewer, 2013), 53, 64–67, 105. On its use within the *Cantigas*, see Elvira Fidalgo Francisco, 'El exordio en *Las Cantigas de Santa María*', *Cantigueiros*, 5 (1993), 24–25; and Elvira Fidalgo Francisco, 'Aproximación a un análisis del esquema estructural de *Las Cantigas de Santa María* (con relación a sus fuentes)', in *Literatura medieval: actas do IV Congresso da Associação Hispánica de Literatura Medieval*, ed. Aires A. Nascimento and Cristina Almeida Ribeiro (Edições Cosmos, 1993), 325–32 (pp. 327–30).

⁴¹ Parkinson argues that strophe two's opening 'E dest' un muy gran miragre | vos quer' [eu] ora contar', (2.1) suggests that it was the close of the original first strophe. The conclusive final strophe necessitated expansion elsewhere, while the first strophe (now strophe two) already explained the narrative logic of the song. The easiest solution was to create a new first strophe that instead paraphrased the refrain, rather than expand at the end of the song. See Parkinson, 'Two for the Price of One', 77.

⁴² For instance, both strophes four and five duplicate the stonemason's appeal to the Virgin ('e assi | coidou caer, e a Virgen | chamou', 4.3; and 'e assi chamand' estava | a Sennor que nos mantem', 5.3).

⁴³ Ibid., 86. It should be noted, however, that while modern performers frequently do excise strophes in recordings, this practice is not necessarily done with any consideration of narrative logic, and that numerous recordings merely include the minimal number of acceptable strophes that appear first in the manuscript sources. Support for song curtailment is given in John G. Cummins, 'The Practical Implications of Alfonso el Sabio's Peculiar Use of the *Zéjel*', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 47.1 (1970),

Example 1 Text, translation, and melody of ‘O que no coração d’ ome’ (CSM 242).

0.1	Esta é como Santa Maria de Castroxeriz guaríu de morte	This is how Holy Mary of Castrojeriz saved from death
0.2	un pedreiro que ouvera de caer de cima da obra, e esteve	a stonemason who fell from the top of the building, and was
0.3	pendorado e teve-sse nas pontas dos dedos da mão.	hanging and hung there by the tips of his fingers.
R1	O que no coração d’ ome é mui cruu de creer,	That which in the heart of man is very difficult to believe,
R2	pode-o Santa Maria mui de ligeiro fazer.	Holy Mary can do very easily.
1.1	E d’ ela fazer aquesto á gran poder, a la fe,	And for her to do this she has great power, by faith,
1.2	ca Deus lle deu tal vertude que sobre natura é;	for God gave her such virtue that she is beyond nature;
1.3	e poren, macar nos ceos ela con seu Fillo sé,	and so, while in her seat in the stars with her Son,
1.4	mui tost’ acá nos accorre sa vertud’ e seu poder.	she rushes to our aid very quickly with her virtue and her power.
1.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
2.1	E dest’ un muy gran miragre vos quer’ [eu] ora contar	And concerning this a very great miracle I wish to tell you now
2.2	que en Castroxeriz fezo esta Reynna sen par	which in Castrojeriz performed this peerless Queen
2.3	por un bon ome pedreiro, que cada día lavrar	for a good stone mason, who every day went
2.4	ya ena sa ygreja, que non quis deixar morrer.	to work in the church, of her who did not allow him to die.
2.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
3.1	Este era mui bon maestre de pedra pôer con cal,	This man was a very skilled master at laying stone with lime
3.2	e mais d’ outra ren fiava na Virgen esperital;	and did not trust anyone more than the spiritual Virgin;
3.3	e porende cada día víya y seu jornal	and thus each day he came to his job
3.4	lavrar encima da obra. E ouve d’ acaecer	working above the building. And it happened
3.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
4.1	Un día en que lavrava no mais alto logar y	One day when he was working on the highest place there
4.2	da obr’, e anbo-los pees lle faliron e assi	of the building, that both his feet failed him and so
4.3	coidou caer, e a Virgen chamou, per com’ aprendi,	he was wary of falling, and he called to the Virgin, according to what I have heard,
4.4	os dedos en hña pedra deitou, e fez-lo têr,	and placed his fingers on a stone; and she made him hold on,
4.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
5.1	A Virgen Santa Maria. Enas unllas atan ben	The Virgin Holy Mary. She held him so well
5.2	o teve, macar gross’ era, que sol non caeu per ren;	by the fingernails, that while he was big he did not fall at all;
5.3	e assi chamand’ estaba a Sennor que nos manten,	and so he was crying to the Lady who preserves us,
5.4	dependorado das unllas e colgado por caer.	hanging by his fingernails and hanging so not to fall.
5.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
6.1	E estev’ assi gran peça do día, com’ apres’ ei,	And he was like this for a great part of the day, as I heard,
6.2	que acorrudo das gentes non foi, segund’ eu achei;	as the people did not rush to him, as I have learned;
6.3	mas acorreu-lle a Virgen, a Madre do alto Rey,	but the Virgin rushed to his aid, the Mother of the high King,
6.4	ata que vêu a gente e o fez en decender.	until the people saw and let him down.
6.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
7.1	Todos quantos esto viron loaron de coração	All those who saw this praised with their hearts
7.2	a Virgen Santa Maria, e aquel pedreyr’ enton	the Virgin Holy Mary, and that stonemason then
7.3	ant’ o seu altar levaron, chorando con devoçon,	they took to her altar, weeping with devotion,
7.4	e fezeron o miragre per essa terra saber.	and they made the miracle known throughout that land.
7.R1	O que no coração d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...

notes the narrative stasis at this early section of the song, the inference that strophes can simply be omitted must be probed further. Although the narrative of CSM 242 may seem incoherent – and even though the song may have functioned in an earlier form that was subsequently expanded – the analyst can still consider how such a rehashed form might have been approached and rationalized by the song’s participants.⁴⁴

1–9 (pp. 5–8); Stephen Parkinson, ‘False Refrains in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*’, *Portuguese Studies*, 3 (1987), 21–55; and Hans Spanke, ‘Die Metrik der *Cantigas*’, in *La música de las Cantigas de Santa Maria del rey Alfonso el Sabio. Facsímil, transcripción y estudio crítico*, ed. Higinio Anglés, 3 vols (Diputación Provincial, Biblioteca Central, 1943–64) III.1, 189–235 (pp. 211–13).

⁴⁴ From a purely performative stance, omitting *Cantiga* sections has been roundly rejected in Judith Cohen, ‘“Ey-m’ acá!” *Cantigas* Performance Practice in Non-Specialist Settings: An Ethnomusicologist-Performer-Educator Perspective’, *Portuguese Journal of Musicology*, 1 (2014), 53–66 (pp. 59–63). Note also Cummins’s observations on CSM 240, where the refrain is clearly meant to be declaimed, and hence is an integral part to the piece. See Cummins, ‘The Practical Implications’, 8.

Example 1 (cont.)

R1: O que no co-ra-çon d'o-me é mui cru-u de cre-er,

R2: po-de-o San-ta Ma-ri-a mui de li-gei-ro fa-zer.

1.1: E d'e-la fa-zer a-ques-to á gran po-der, a la fe,

1.2: ca Deus lle deu tal ver-tu-de que so-bre na-tu-ra é;

1.3: e po-ren, ma-car nos ce-os e-la con seu Fi-llo sé,

1.4: mui tos-t'a-cá nos a-co-rre sa ver-tu-d'e seu po-der.

Despite the problems posed by the narrative structure, the musical-poetic form offers consistency to 'O que no coraçõ d'ome' and the rest of the set.⁴⁵ A feature observed across the *cantigas de miragre* – present in both CSM 242 and the rest of the Castrojeriz songs – is the combination of a cyclical musical-poetic structure with a linear miracle narrative.⁴⁶ The structure of most *cantigas de miragre* is one based upon repetition, typified by the form commonly known as the *zejel* (Example 2).⁴⁷ This structure is

⁴⁵ For an attempt to group songs of the Castrojeriz set into structural categories along with the wider *Cantigas* repertory, see Manuel Pedro Ferreira, 'A música no Códice Rico: formas e notação', in *Alfonso X, las Cantigas de Santa María. Códice Rico, MS T-I-1, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial*, ed. Laura Fernández Fernández and Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza, 2 vols (Patrimonio Nacional, Testimonio Compañía Editorial, 2011), II, 187–204 (p. 197).

⁴⁶ On this unusual combination, and on text–music relations more generally, see Stephen Parkinson, 'Phonology and Metrics: Aspects of Rhyme in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *Proceedings of the 10th Colloquium of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar*, ed. Alan D. Deyermond, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 30 (Queen Mary, University of London, 2000), 131–44; Stephen Parkinson, 'Text-Music Mismatches in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', *Revista de Musicologia Portuguesa*, 1.1 (2014), 15–32; Alison D. Campbell, *Words and Music in the Cantigas de Santa María: The Cantigas as Song* (MLitt dissertation, University of Glasgow, 2011), 111–46.

⁴⁷ On structure in the *Cantigas*, see David Wulstan, 'The Muwaššah and Zağal Revisited', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 102 (1982), 247–64; Stephen Parkinson, 'Questões de estrutura estrófica

Example 2 Simplified structural summary of the majority of *cantigas de miragre*.

Lines	R1	R2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.R1	1.R2
Syllables	11	11	7	7	11	11	11	11
Rhyme	a	a	b	b	b	a	a	a
Melody	a	b	b	b	a	b	a	b
	Refrain		<i>Mudanza</i>		<i>Vuelta</i>		Refrain	

grounded around moralistic refrains, which alternate with a sequence of narrative strophes. Complicating this cyclical refrain–strophe model is the repetition that takes place within a strophe, which is typified by the oscillation between two sections, known the *mudanza* and *vuelta*. The section that occupies the first half of the strophe – the *mudanza* – characterizes itself by its distinction from the refrain, achieved by deploying different metrics, rhymes, and melody. The unfamiliarity generated by the *mudanza* is short-lived, however, since it is followed by the *vuelta*. This latter section represents a point of sonic return and familiarity – one that is ‘memorially marked’ – achieved by recapping the refrain’s metre and melody, which brings listeners back to the memory of the original refrain.⁴⁸ This culmination of familiar metrics and melody intensifies with the arrival of the refrain’s rhyme, which usually occurs in the final line(s) of the *vuelta*. This build-up of familiar elements propels the *vuelta* forward, leading audiences to expect the return of the refrain with its moralistic message. It is this constant switching – first between refrains and strophes, and second between the *mudanza* and the *vuelta* – that makes the *cantiga de miragre* embody an almost-perpetual cycle between the familiar and the unfamiliar.

Such a form does not always coincide with the narrative linearity of the strophes. The switching between refrain and strophe interrupts narrative trains of thought, while the refrain that breaks apart the plotline has little to do with the strophe text in a strictly narrative sense.⁴⁹ Such rupture is made more apparent by the frequency of enjambement, or incomplete syntax that occurs at the end of a musical-poetic unit.⁵⁰ Enjambement forces narrative segments to spill over into the following line, and where this

nas *Cantigas de Santa Maria*: estruturas múltiplas, assimetrias e continuidades inconsistentes’, in *Estudios de edición crítica e lírica galego-portuguesa*, ed. Mariña Arbor Aldea and Antonio Fernández Guiadanes (Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, 2010), 315–36; Manuel Pedro Ferreira, ‘Rondeau and Virelai: The Music of Andalus and the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*’, *Plainsong & Medieval Music*, 13.2 (2004), 127–40; Ferreira, ‘A música no Códice Rico, 192–98; Campbell, *Words and Music*, 10–58; Alison D. Campbell, ‘Inside the Virelai: A Survey of Musical Structures in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*’, in *Analizar, interpretar, hacer musica: de las Cantigas de Santa Maria a la organología. Escritos in memoriam Gerardo V. Huseby*, ed. Melanie Plesch (Gourmet Muisca, 2013), 153–70.

⁴⁸ See Parkinson, *Alfonso X, the Learned*, 12–15. *Mudanza* and *vuelta* are often used with reference to poetic structure to the exclusion of melody or narrative.

⁴⁹ The refrain does nevertheless serve a useful role in providing exegetical furnishing to strophic texts. See Jesús Montoya Martínez, ‘Las “razones” en las *Cantigas de Santa Maria*: su función’, in *Studies in Honor of Gilberto Paolini*, ed. Mercedes Vidal Tibbits (Juan de la Cuesta, 1996), 11–24.

⁵⁰ On the frequency of enjambement in the *Cantigas*, see Anna McGregor Chisman, ‘Enjambement in *Las Cantigas de Santa Maria*’ (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1974), 619–32; Anna McGregor Chisman, ‘Rhyme and Word Order in *Las Cantigas de Santa Maria*’, *Kentucky Romance Quarterly*, 23.4 (1976), 393–407; and Cummins, ‘The Practical Implications’.

break occurs between strophes the narrative must be cut by the interjecting refrain, thereby generating a sense of structural separation. This article argues that the Castrojeriz songs deploy these structural features as a metaphor for the construction theme of the church of Nuestra Señora del Manzano. The *cantiga de miragre*'s structure is sound enough to use the *vuelta* as a point of familiarity, which hones listeners' attentions to the central narrative points of the miracle story. On the other hand, moments of disjunction – intensified by jarring interstrophic enjambement – mirrors the theme of unpredictability in the town church's construction. Given the specific contexts under which the Castrojeriz songs were written, and the subject matter they handle, universal facets of style – interstrophic enjambement and circular musical-poetic form – acquire new and unique meaning when framed within these construction narratives. Parkinson's valuable analysis of the Castrojeriz set therefore sits alongside a specific context, where unstable song forms were rationalized and reinterpreted based upon particular approaches towards understanding song text.

A sonic turning back is an essential component in CSM 242's strophe, with its *vuelta* falling in lines 3–4. Melodically, CSM 242 incorporates a complete recap of the musical refrain beginning in line 3 of the strophe – that is, two full lines before the recap of rhyme 'a'. The song's poetic form is identical to the other three songs: recap of the refrain rhyme 'a' in line 4 of each strophe, falling at the conclusion of the *vuelta*. CSM 242 also displays a clear division between a musical-poetic *mudanza* in the earlier half of each strophe, and the sonically charged *vuelta* in the latter half, which prefigures the arrival of the refrain. Integral to this process – as in the majority of *cantigas de miragre* – is the gradual return of the refrain's metre, melody, and (finally) its '-er' rhyme in the *vuelta*. This sense of return generates expectancy for and focuses attention upon the refrain that ensues.⁵¹ It follows – as has been argued elsewhere – that the sonically impactful *vuelta* displays a clear affordance for highlighting its text, and thrusts it into prominence in contrast to the less distinctive *mudanza* sections.⁵² It is through sonic familiarity that CSM 242's structure can support its narrative and carry home the central points of the miracle.

In 'O que no coraçõ d' ome', this structure works in such a way that when placed together – separate from their *mudanzas* – the texts of each successive *vuelta* work to create a coherent, independent narrative, as displayed in [Example 3](#). Turning to the main narrative events in the third to fifth strophes, Parkinson notes much duplication of text; however, when taken sequentially, there is a clear sequence in the *vultas* of the stonemason working ('lavrar encima da obra', 3.4), falling ('coidou caer', 4.3), invoking ('e assi chamand' estava | a Sennor', 5.3), and being saved ('e colgado por caer', 5.4). The interstrophic enjambement between strophes three, four, and five – ponderous

⁵¹ Related ideas in other repertory are observed in Marisa Galvez, *Songbook: How Lyrics Became Poetry in Medieval Music* (University of Chicago Press, 2012), 48–52.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 49–50; Drummond, 'Accommodating Poetic, Linear Narratives', I, 66–69. Drummond, *The Cantigas de Santa Maria*, ch. 2; Henry T. Drummond, 'Linear Narratives in Cyclical Form: The Hunt for Reason in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', *Music Analysis*, 38.1–2 (2019), 80–108 (pp. 84–95); Henry T. Drummond, 'Sonic Cursing and Enjambement: Sounding Blasphemy in Two Songs of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', *Medium Ævum*, 90.2 (2021), 300–33.

Example 3 Strophes 2–6 of ‘O que no coração d’ ome’ (CSM 242), with successive *vuelta* sections emphasized to show narrative progression.

2.1	E dest’ un muy gran miragre vos quer’ [eu] ora contar	And concerning this a very great miracle I wish to tell you now
2.2	que en Castroxeriz fezo esta Reynna sen par	which in Castrojeriz performed this peerless Queen
2.3	por un bon ome pedreiro, que cada día lavrar	for a good stone mason, who every day went
2.4	ya ena sa ygreja, que non quis deixar morrer.	to work in the church, of her who did not allow him to die.
2.R1	O que no corazón d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
3.1	Este era mui bon maestre de pedra pder con cal,	This man was a very skilled master at laying stone with lime
3.2	e mais d’ outra ren fiava na Virgen esperital;	and did not trust anyone more than the spiritual Virgin;
3.3	e porende cada día víya y seu jornal	and thus each day he came to his job
3.4	lavrav encima da obra. E ouve d’ acaeecer	working above the building. And it happened
3.R1	O que no corazón d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
4.1	Un día en que lavrava no mais alto logar y	One day when he was working on the highest place there
4.2	da obr’, e anbo-los pees lle faliron e assi	of the building, that both his feet failed him and so
4.3	coidou caer, e a Virgen chamou, per com’ aprendi,	he was wary of falling, and he called to the Virgin, according to what I have heard,
4.4	os dedos en hũa pedra deitou, e fez-lo têer,	and placed his fingers on a stone; and she made him hold on,
4.R1	O que no corazón d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
5.1	A Virgen Santa Maria. Enas unllas atan ben	The Virgin Holy Mary. She held him so well
5.2	o teve, macar gross’ era, que sol non caeu per ren;	by the fingernails, that while he was big he did not fall at all;
5.3	e assi chamand’ estaba a Sennor que nos manten,	and so he was crying to the Lady who preserves us,
5.4	dependorado das unllas e colgado por caer.	hanging by his fingernails and hanging so not to fall.
5.R1	O que no corazón d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...
6.1	E estev’ assi gran peça do día, com’ apres’ ei,	And he was like this for a great part of the day, as I heard,
6.2	que acorrudo das gentes non foi, segund’ eu achei;	as the people did not rush to him, as I have learned;
6.3	mas acorreu-lle a Virgen, a Madre do alto Rey,	but the Virgin rushed to his aid, the Mother of the high King,
6.4	ata que vêu a gente e o fez en decender.	until the people saw and let him down.
6.R1	O que no corazón d’ ome...	That which in the heart of man...

when viewed as a succession of strophes with interposed refrains – allows these sections to link narratively (and almost syntactically) when they are viewed as a hypothetical supra-narrative edifice.⁵³ Parkinson views such repetition as corruptions from an original pair of strophes that were expanded.⁵⁴ Had ‘O que no corazón d’ ome’ been written anew – without recourse to this older draft – he shows how the narrative structure would have been more linear, with fewer cases of duplication. While Parkinson’s claims are certainly valid, it is also possible to see the *vueltras* as conveying the main points of action throughout the narrative. As the *vuelta* – with its memorable refrain-based metrics, melody, and rhyme – is more readily heard and remembered, these sections of text sound more prominently to performers and listeners, even when scattered in between other narrative material. The text stands out because of the *vuelta*’s melodic similarity to the refrain, a sonic highlight that may well have been intended for audience participation, and hence called for greater expectation.

⁵³ [3.4] E ouve d’ acaeecer [...] [4.3] coidou caer, e a Virgen | chamou, per com’ aprendi, | os dedos en hũa pedra | deitou, e fez-lo têer [...] [5.3] e assi chamand’ estava | a Sennor que nos manten, | dependorado das unllas | e colgado por caer’.

⁵⁴ Parkinson argues that the material for strophes three to five existed initially as strophes two to three of an older version of the song. It was due to ‘Aquel que de vontade’ having seven strophes that ‘O que no corazón d’ ome’ was initially expanded: current strophe three was given a new ‘-al’ rhyme, and use of the stock phrase ‘na Virgen esperital’ meant that two strophes had insufficient space to accommodate the narrative, requiring expansion to three strophes. Strophe five of ‘Aquel que de vontade’ may be based on the narrative structure and rhyme sounds (‘-ou’) of the original strophe three, in ‘O que no corazón d’ ome’. This necessitated the redrafting of strophes four and five in CSM 242 to adopt a new set of rhyme sounds, and relegating the original ‘-ou’ rhyme words to other points in strophe four. See Parkinson, ‘Two for the Price of One’, 82–84. Major instances of narrative duplication fall in lines 3.4 and 4.1–2; and 4.4, 5.2, and 5.4.

As well as shoring up potential weaknesses in narrative structure, *vuelta* sections frequently furnish additional exegetical meaning to what has been heard already.⁵⁵ In the first strophe, Parkinson correctly notes that there is poetic deficiency brought about by repetition of vocabulary. Specifically, lines 1.1–2 and 1.4 both make use of ‘vertude’ and ‘poder’. Nevertheless, their division within two sections of the strophe imbues them with subtly different meanings. Lines 1.1–2 offer up circumstantial information on Mary’s authority: it has been given to her from God (‘ca Deus lle deu tal vertude | que sobre natura é’, 1.2). Yet it is only in the *vuelta* section where the essential explication is given: Mary utilizes this power and virtue to come to the aid of her believers, and this is done swiftly to those who ask for it (‘mui tost’ acá nos acorre | sa vertud’ e seu poder’, 1.4). The audible reappearance of the ‘a’ rhyme (‘-er’) in line 1.4 accentuates the relation between her aid (‘e seu poder’) and the faith of her believers mentioned in the refrain (‘mui cruu de creer’, R1): it refers implicitly to the pair of line endings in R1 and R2, linking her faithful (‘creer’, R1) and the active verb of performing (‘fazer’, R2) with the Virgin’s divine authority (‘poder’, 1.4). Thus there is a clear accord in semantics, generated by the simultaneous harmony in metre, melody, and rhyme that can only occur between the *vuelta* and refrain.

Subsequent sections of the song work in similar ways. In the second strophe, the listener observes geographical specifics in the *mudanza* (‘que en Castroxeriz fezo’, 2.2), whereas the *vuelta* clarifies the agent (‘por un bon ome pedreiro’, 2.3) and his devotion (‘que cada dia lavar | ya ena sa ygreja’, 2.3–4), while summarizing the fundamental narrative of the miracle. The main miracle event – Mary not letting the stonemason die (‘non quis leixar morrer’, 2.4) – is reserved for the end of the *vuelta* at the recurrence of the ‘a’ rhyme. Parkinson notes that the *vuelta* in the fifth strophe essentially repeats material found in the *mudanza* (‘Enas unllas atan ben | o teve’, 5.1–2; ‘dependorado das unllas’, 5.4), and yet it also reframes repeated information within the didactic message of the song; namely, that the stonemason was saved from falling (‘caer’) as a consequence of his invocation to Mary (‘e assi chamand’ estava | a Sennor que nos manten’, 5.3). This passage in the *vuelta* contradicts its *mudanza*, which is dramatically superfluous: that the stonemason did not fall, even though he may have been large and unwieldy (‘macar gross’ era’, 5.2). Similarly, the enjambed line between 4.4 and 5.1, although ungainly in construction, fulfils some demand for clarity. It aligns the ‘teer’ of 4.4 sonically with Mary’s miraculous act that is mentioned in the refrain (‘ligeiro fazer’, R2). That the rest of the sentence is enjambed to the end of the line is less problematic: although the grammatical structure is corrupted, the Virgin as subject is apparent by context, and is implied intertextually by her mention in the refrain text that follows (‘pode-o Santa Maria | mui de ligeiro fazer’, R2).

Given that ‘Aquel que de voontade’ was probably based upon a common exemplar to CSM 242’s original, five-strophe version, it is instructive to reassess this second narrative of the lucky stonemason, with attention to the links between its refrain

⁵⁵ On the significance of the refrain’s moral message within the standard *Cantiga* poetic structure, see Montoya Martínez, ‘Las “razones”’, 11–24.

Example 4 Text, translation, and melody of ‘Aquel que de voontade’ (CSM 249).

0.1	Como un maestre que lavrava a eigreja que chaman	How a master who was working on the church which is named
0.2	Santa Maria d’ Almaçan, en Castrojeriz, caeu de cima	Holy Mary of Almaçan in Castrojeriz, fell from the very top,
0.3	en fondo, e guardó-o Santa Maria que sse non feriu.	and Holy Mary protected him so he was not hurt.
R1	Aquel que de voontade Santa Maria servir,	He who with pleasure serves Holy Mary,
R2	d’ ocajon será guardado e d’ outro mal, sen mentir.	will be saved from blame and other misfortune, it is no lie.
1.1	E de tal razon com’ esta un mirage vos direi	And on such a topic as this I will tell you a miracle
1.2	que en Castrojeriz fezo a Madre do alto Rey,	that in Castrojeriz performed the Mother of the high King,
1.3	a Virgen Santa Maria, per com’ eu aprix e sei;	the Virgin Holy Mary, as I have learned and know;
1.4	e por Deus, meted’ y mentes e querede-o oyr.	and by God, set your mind to it and listen if you please.
1.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...
2.1	Quand’ a ygreja fazian a que chaman d’ Almaçan,	When they were building the church which is called Almaçan,
2.2	que é en cabo da vila, muitos maestres de pran	which stands on the edge of the city, a great many masters
2.3	yan y lavrar por algo que lles davan, como dan	went there to work for money which they gave them, as they give
2.4	aos que tal obra fazen. Mas un deles ren pedir	to those who perform such work. But one of them asked for nothing
2.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...
3.1	Non queria, mas lavrava ali mui de coraçon	He did not wish [it], but worked there most dutifully
3.2	pora gaannar da Virgen mercee e gualardon.	to get from the Virgin mercy and favour.
3.3	E poren’ or’ ascoidade o que ll’ avêo enton,	And thus hear now what happened to him then,
3.4	e senpr’ averedes ende que falar e departir.	and you will always have it to tell and recount.
3.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...
4.1	El maestr’ era de pedra, e lavrava ben assaz	The master was a stonemason, and worked very well
4.2	e quadrava ben as pedras e pöya-as en az	and squared off the stones well and formed them in a line
4.3	eno ma[i]s alto da obra, como bon maestre faz.	at the highest point of the building, as a good master does.
4.4	E un dia fazend’ esto foron-ll’ os pees falir,	And one day doing this his feet had failed,
4.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...
5.1	E caeu ben do mais alto; e en caendo chamou	And he fell straight from the highest point; and while falling he called
5.2	a Virgen Santa Maria, que o mui toste livrou:	to the Virgin Holy Mary, who very quickly delivered him:
5.3	ca pero que da cabeça sobelos cantos topou,	although he struck his head on the stones,
5.4	assi o guardou a Virgen que sol non se foi ferir,	the Virgin so protected him that he was hardly hurt at all,
5.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...
6.1	Nen sentiu sol se caera nen recebeu en neun mal;	Nor did he hardly feel as though he fell nor did he receive any harm;
6.2	ante ss’ ergeu mui correndo, que non tev’ ollo por al,	instead he got up with much urgency, so as not to make any delay,
6.3	mas foi ao altar logo da Virgen espiritual	but went straight to the altar of the spiritual Virgin
6.4	por loar a ssa mercee e os seus beês gracir.	to praise for her mercy and to make thanks for her blessings.
6.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...
7.1	E quantos ali estaban deron loores poren	And those who were there thus gave praises
7.2	aa Virgen groriosa, que os seus val e manten.	to the glorious Virgin, who saves and keeps her followers.
7.3	E poren’ lle roguemos que senpr’ ajamos seu ben	And thus let us pray that we always have her blessing
7.4	e nos gaann’ o de seu Fillo, que nos vêo remiir.	and that she win us those of her Son, who came to redeem us.
7.R1	Aquel que de voontade...	He who with pleasure...

and *vuelta* sections.⁵⁶ Whereas both CSM 242 and CSM 249 display a great deal of structural likeness, ‘Aquel que de voontade’ was evidently created along simpler, more narratively chronological lines (Example 4). Compared to the pervasive enjambement between strophes in CSM 242, no cases emerge in ‘Aquel que de voontade’ that create serious disruption of the narrative.⁵⁷ Each return of the *vuelta* introduces a new turn in the miracle’s plot, with the *mudanza* in lines 1–2 merely recycling narrative material from the preceding *vuelta*. Thus, lines 2.3–4 introduce the protagonist of the miracle

⁵⁶ Noting their similar versifications, narrative structures, and unadventurous use of oxytonic rhymes, Parkinson remarks that transformations of rhyme endings could easily result in an entire strophe of ‘Aquel que de voontade’ being incorporated into ‘O que no coraçon d’ ome’. See Parkinson, ‘Two for the Price of One’, 80. Parkinson additionally notes that twenty-eight oxytonic lines across all four Castrojeriz songs only make use of fifteen different rhyme endings (see p. 78).

⁵⁷ Cases of enjambement nevertheless fall in lines 2.4–3.2, 4.4–5.1, and 5.4–6.1.

Example 4 (cont.)

R1: A quel que de vo - on - ta - de San - ta Ma - ri - a ser - vir,

R2: d' o - ca - jon se - rá guar - da - do e d' ou - tro mal, sen men - tir.

1.1: E de tal ra - zon co - m' es - ta un mi - ra - gre vos di - rei

1.2: que en Cas - tro - xe - riz fe - zo a Ma - dre do al - to Rey,

1.3: a Vir - gen San - ta Ma - ri - a, per co - m' eu a - prix e sei;

1.4: e por Deus, me - te - d' y men - tes e que - re - de - o o - yr.

(‘Mas un deles ren pedir’, 2.4), whereas 3.3–4 announces the miracle for the second time (‘E porend’ or’ ascoitada | o que ll’ avêo enton’, 3.3). In lines 4.3–4 listeners learn of the accident (‘foron-ll’ os pees falir’, 4.4), whereas 5.3–4 introduces Mary’s salvation (‘assi o guardou a Virgen’, 5.4), and 6.3–4 turns to the protagonist’s praise (‘por loar a ssa mercee | e os seus bês gracir’, 6.4).⁵⁸ This structure therefore supports the telling of novel and significant material, which is focused in the memorially marked *vuelta*. Old narrative material tends to fall in the *mudanza*, allowing performers to relay it to those listeners who did not grasp it fully the first time. Sonic cues of melody and rhyme also help recall previous sections of the song’s narrative that are thrust into new contexts. The recap of the refrain’s ‘a’ rhymes displays prominent themes of devotion to Mary (‘Santa Maria servir’, R1), as well as listeners’ potential to doubt an unlikely miracle (‘sen mentir’, R2).⁵⁹ It explicates the Thomist view – popular in the late thirteenth

⁵⁸ Note, on the other hand, the duplicated references to the stonemason working in the *mudanza* of lines 3.1–2, 4.1–2, and the repeated mention of his fall in 5.1–2.

⁵⁹ ‘Sen mentir’ is a common phrase that is frequently used to make up line lengths. Note its use in ‘Tan gran poder a ssa Madre’, line 1.2; however, unlike other stock phrases that frequently emerge in strophes (i.e., ‘per com’ aprendi’), ‘sen mentir’ has particular consequence in ‘Aquel que de vontade’ given its placement in the refrain at the end of a line.

century – that though doubt may beset the believer, faith acts as the primary vehicle to truth, over and above scientific reason.⁶⁰ Thus there is reference in 1.4 to ‘mentes’, a cognate of ‘mentir’ in R2, reflecting the subject’s ability to heed the message in the first strophe, despite doubting its validity.⁶¹ The authorial voice of Alfonso therefore requests that the audience hear attentively (‘e querede-o oyr’, 1.4) – a common trope in opening strophes – to understand the message of the song: truth via faith literally arrives to the believer through sonic experience.

This revelation emerges through an understanding of the text, but also via sonic recall of the refrain, instigated during each return of the *vuelta*. For instance, the narrator in strophe three exclaims that listeners can recount the miracle to others if they take heed (‘que falar e departir’, 3.4). Yet here participants’ doubts are also implied: if they are truly faithful, the reader of the miracle will be willing to risk scepticism and even derision when they recount it to others. Other strophes use the sonic memory of the refrain to comment further on the implausibility of the miracle: the refrain that follows 4.4 (‘foron-ll’ os pees falir’) and 5.4 (‘que sol non se foi ferir’) implies that the believer may take the story for a lie. Nevertheless, R1 assures the listener that they will be willing to believe the miracle if they are genuine followers. The good faith of the narrative subject – he who asks for nothing more than to serve Mary (‘ren pedir’, 2.4) and give thanks for his blessings (‘os seus beês gracir’, 6.4) – is thus implicitly conjured up through association with the ‘a’ rhyme at each successive *vuelta*.

The relations between these two songs are obvious given the similarity of their stories, not to mention the ways they deal with the sonic planning of narrative. Although their narratives are far from straightforward, the sonic weight of both songs’ refrain melodies offers a scaffold that supports and restores meaning to sections that are otherwise misunderstood. So far, this article has shown how cyclical structures – far from impeding the intelligibility of narrative – can work as a tool that guides the audience, driving home essential narrative messages in miracle stories, which concern the characters’ needs to remain faithful to the Virgin in the face of mortal danger. The imbrication of the stonemason narrative and the songs’ moral lesson is achieved by the sonic impact of the refrain, which functions both as a textual motif to interrupt the miracle, and its melodic reminder in the *vuelta* that re-emerges with new text contra-facted to it. This musicological contribution to the Castrojeriz set’s existing scholarship also showcases the role of sound and memory in supporting messages within a song’s text for the benefit of its audience.

Destabilizing Enjambement

Even in a group as self-contained as the Castrojeriz set, there are instances where the sonic power of the *vuelta* cannot paper over blatant cases of rupture. Many of these instances occur at moments of interstrophic enjambement, which sever narrative passages mid-clause and place the non-narrative refrain in between. Such an interruption occurs in line

⁶⁰ See *Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologica* (2.2.1.3.1) <<http://www.dhsprior.org>> (accessed 21 May 2024).

⁶¹ ‘Mentir’ deriving from the Latin ‘mentior’, itself a denominal verb of ‘mens’.

3.4 of ‘O que no coraçõ d’ ome’. Here the strophe ends with a passive, non-descriptive word, ‘acaecer’ (‘to happen’, or ‘to befall’). Given that refrain rhymes are often associated with narrative drive when recalled in the *vuelta*, ‘acaecer’ seems anticlimactic in comparison to the preceding narrative. We can attribute such writing to poor craftsmanship; however, ‘acaecer’ also helps create dramatic suspense. The concomitance of such an unrevealing term with the dynamically active sonic cue of the *vuelta* informs listeners that although ‘acaecer’ is non-descriptive, it should be referring to something much more dramatic. The audience does not learn what this unknown event is until the next strophe (lines 4.3–4). The refrain then not only acts as a dramatic parenthesis, but also provides exegetic commentary. It informs the audience that although whatever happened may be hard to believe – as implied by the refrain (‘O que no coraçõ d’ ome | é mui cruu de creer’, R1) – it not only happened to the stonemason of the miracle: his hanging serves as a metaphor to all of Mary’s believers when their faith is put to the test in the face of earthly danger. The word ‘acaecer’ is also euphemistic: inviting the possibility of something terrible yet unknown happening to the stonemason, it softens the metaphorical blow, but in so doing suggests to audiences that the thing is so terrible that it cannot be mentioned. Derived from the Latin *a(d)- + -cadere* (literally, ‘to fall’), the use of ‘acaecer’ is unsubtle in implying the stonemason’s fate. Placing the narrative climax across two strophes therefore generates a *praeteritio* that is fully realized in performance. The arrival of the fourth and fifth strophes, in which the event is depicted in more detail (‘no mais alto logar y | da obr’, e anbo-los pees | lle faliron’, 4.1–2), renders the previous euphemism of ‘acaecer’ a paralipsic exclamation, in recompense for the suspense created earlier. Listeners’ expectations are first thwarted by the euphemistic ‘and then it happened’; the cue of the stonemason’s feet slipping, precipitating his fall (‘e anbo-los pees | lle faliron’, 4.2) overcompensates this, forcing the audience to relive the accident in agonizing detail. The expansion of strophes four and five – viewed by Parkinson as an infelicity of style – may therefore be seen instead as manipulation of the strophic form to generate maximum dramatic suspense.

Enjambement can create anticipation within the miracle narrative, but it can also work as an allusive implement, mirroring the state of physical or psychological estrangement in a miracle’s characters.⁶² To demonstrate this point, it is worth considering briefly the two songs in the Castrojeriz set that do not form the focus of this article. ‘Tan gran poder a ssa Madre’ (CSM 252, [Example 5](#)) contains several passages of enjambement, yet its two most significant cases fall in 2.4–3.2 and 4.3–5.1. The passage in 2.4–3.2 is dramatic: ‘logo’ and the adversative conjunction ‘mas’ both surprise the listeners in a dramatic turn of events. Here interstrophic enjambement divides the simile that qualifies the avalanche. Before audiences can learn what closes the workers off in the

⁶² The ways in which a character’s psychological state is represented through song has been studied in other repertories, although not extensively in the *Cantigas*. For similar attempts at mirroring such states in vernacular song, see Sarah Kay, ‘Desire and Subjectivity’, in *The Troubadours: An Introduction*, ed. Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 212–27; Slavoj Žižek, ‘Courtly Love, or Woman as Thing’, in *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Woman and Causality* (Verso, 1994), 89–112. On use of emotions in Alfonsine literature, see Simon R. Doubleday, ‘Anger in the Crónica of Alfonso X’, *Al-Masaq*, 27.1 (2015), 61–76.

Example 5 Text, translation, and melody of ‘Tan gran poder a ssa Madre’ (CSM 252).

0.1	Como Santa Maria guardou ùs omêes que non moressen	How Holy Mary protects her people so they do not die,
0.2	dejuo dun gran monte de arêa que lles caeu dessuso.	from the tops of mountains as from the depths of hell.
R1	Tan gran poder a ssa Madre deu en[o] fondo da terra	Such great power God gives to his Mother to rescue the fallen,
R2	Deus d’acorrer os coitados, ben come en alta serra.	from the depths of the earth as from the tops of the mountains.
1.1	E sobr’ aquest’ un miragre pequenn’ e bõo d’oyr	And concerning this a miracle, short and good to hear,
1.2	direi que Santa Maria fez fremoso, sen mentir;	I will tell that Holy Mary performed beautifully, it is no lie;
1.3	e per y saber podedes como guarda quen servir	and through it you can know how she protects he who serves her
1.4	a vai de mal e de morte, e daquesto nunca erra.	away from misfortune and from death, and of this he never errs.
1.R1	Tan gran poder a ssa Madre...	Such great power God gives...
2.1	En Castrojeriz foi esto de que vos quero contar,	In Castrojeriz was this of which I wish to tell you,
2.2	que por fazer a ygreja, de que vos fui ja falar,	which to build the church, of which I have spoken to you already,
2.3	omes so terra entraron per arêa cavarl	men went under the ground to dig out the sand;
2.4	mas caeu logo sobr’ eles o mont’, e come quen serra	but suddenly there fell onto them a pile of it, as though someone closed
2.R1	Tan gran poder a ssa Madre...	Such great power God gives...
3.1	Porta, assi enserrados foron todos, e sen al	A door, thus they were all trapped, and without doubt
3.2	cuidaron que eran mortos. Mais a Sennor spirital	thought that they would all die. But the spiritual Lady
3.3	os acorreu muit ag’ya e os defendeu de mal	came to their aid very quickly and defended them from the harm
3.4	do demo, que ben cuidava aver sas almas per guerra.	of the devil, who much wished to have their souls through the accident.
3.R1	Tan gran poder a ssa Madre...	Such great power God gives...
4.1	Os da vila, quand’ oyrn esto, per com’ aprendi,	Those from the town, when they heard this, as I have learned,
4.2	quiseron cavar o monte pera tira-los dali,	thought to dig into the mound and take them out of it,
4.3	cuidando que mortos eran; mas acháronos assi	believing that they were dead; but they found them thus
4.4	todos oraçon fazendo aa Virgen que aterra	all making prayers to the Virgin who terrifies
4.R1	Tan gran poder a ssa Madre...	Such great power God gives...
5.1	O demo. E poren todos foron logo dar loor	The devil. And thus all were at once giving praise
5.2	aa Virgen groriosa, Madre de nostro Sennor,	to the glorious Virgin, Mother of Our Lord,
5.3	ant’ o altar da ygreja u fazian o lavor,	before the altar of the church where they were working,
5.4	ca o que o demo mete en ferros, ela desferra.	since those whom the devil puts in chains, she frees.
5.R1	Tan gran poder a ssa Madre...	Such great power God gives...

song’s narrative, they are themselves closed off from the message by the refrain.⁶³ The refrain does not just act as a suspense holder: it also undertakes a metaphorical re-enactment of what is described in the text. It bridges participants from the rest of the miracle where the expected relief will arrive. Yet as a part of the song best suited for wider participation, it puts listeners into the builders’ shoes, challenging them to question their own religious convictions.⁶⁴ Its message, particularly its claim that the participants can be rescued from the depths of the earth (‘deu en[o] fondo da terra’, R1), acts as reassurance for the troubled. Lines 4.3–5.1 are of an altogether different character: the devil has laid claim to the builders’ souls, but Mary has vanquished him (‘aa Virgen que aterra || O demo’, 4.4–5.1). The enjambed passage prevents listeners from hearing whom it is Mary terrifies, since ‘O demo’ falls in line 5.1. Given that this passage repeats much of the material used already in the third strophe, it is

⁶³ ‘Serra’ is also chosen due to the paucity of available rhyming words for ‘-erra’ (of which the only remaining rhyme used in the *Cantigas* would be ‘Ingraterra’). Note also that ‘serra’ very frequently takes ‘porta’ as an object. See Maria Pia Betti, *Rimario e lessico in rima delle Cantigas de Santa Maria di Alfonso X di Castiglia*, Biblioteca degli Studi Mediolatini e Volgari, N. S. 15 (Pacini, 1997), 378. On rhyming skill in the *Cantigas*, see Stephen Parkinson, ‘Meestria métrica: Metrical Virtuosity in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*’, *La corónica*, 27.2 (1999), 21–35.

⁶⁴ Note the mention of doors – accompanying the topos of closure – at these points of structural division. Similar behaviour emerges in ‘De muitas guisas miragres’ (‘e a torr’ e o portal’, 2.4), and in CSM 232 (‘e pois entrou pela porta’, 8.3).

Example 5 (cont.)

R1: Tan gran po - der a ssa Ma - dre deu e - n[o] fon - do da te - rra

R2: Deus d' a - co - rrer os coi - ta - dos, ben co - me en al - ta se - rra.

1.1: E - so - br' a - ques - t' un mi - ra - gre pe - que - nn'e bõ - o d' o - yr

di - rei que San - ta Ma - ri - a fez fre - mo - so, sen men - tir;

1.3: e per y sa - ber po - de - des co - mo guar - da quen ser - vir

1.4: a vai de mal e de mor - te, e da - ques - to nun - ca e - rra.

implicit who fears the Virgin: each refrain mentions the devil's realm, describing the depths of the earth ('eno fondo da terra', R1). Nonetheless, this enjambed line provides a further level of reference. Not only does the Virgin terrify the devil, but also the withheld agency of the clause suggests that listeners too must show fear and deference. Followed immediately by the refrain – which speaks of God's great power that he bestows to Mary, qualified by 'tan gran' – audiences remember not just to be thankful to the Virgin, but also to fear her and God lest they receive a similar fate.

A further case occurs between strophes four and five of 'De muitas guisas mirages' (CSM 266, [Example 6](#)). Here the audience has learned that the Virgin's intervention saved the congregation from the falling beam ('quis a Virgen que ferissa | a nunll' om', 4.4). Appended to the end of line 4.4 is an introduction to a new clause, explaining that bystanders were so crammed in that they could not have escaped injury ('E quen viu tal || Miragre! ca tan espessa | siya a gent' aly', 4.4–5.1). The enjambement occludes what the people in the miracle have seen. Although the event was unearthly, as implied in lines 4.3–4, the enjambed line allows performers to suggest that something else – perhaps something worse – may have befallen the congregation. The interruption of the refrain leaves a further suggestion: beginning with the mention of miracles

(‘De muitas guisas miragres’, R1), participants effectively sing a gloss upon the material that is yet to be told in line 5.1, but which can be inferred from the events of lines 4.3–4.⁶⁵ In so doing, the passage offers reassurance that what listeners will learn in the following strophe can only be good under the Virgin’s promise. The message of the refrain hence urges participants to believe in good (‘por que en Deus creamos’, R2), just as the refrains of ‘O que no coração d’ ome’ and ‘Aquel que de vontade’ urge listeners not to doubt their miracles’ validity. Given their close placements within **F** and **E**, the message of faith in the face of man’s natural tendency to doubt could have informed related Castrojeriz songs on an intertextual level. Thus, this case of narrative dislocation could be interpreted as dramatic suspense, but one that reinforces the essential message of refrains in the wider set.

Cohesion and Rupture in the *Cantiga* Manuscripts

This article has so far addressed the text-as-building metaphor through the Castrojeriz’s text and music. Now consideration turns to ways in which this allegory is played out in the surviving manuscripts. While many such cues are overt – achieved using illuminations or decorations that illustrate an architectural theme – it is also worth addressing those that are metaphorical, and which refer to a manuscript as a container, or a conceptualization of physical space.⁶⁶

This spatial analogy emerges through the large-scale organizing of the *Cantiga* codices, which function as metaphorical edifices that are built upon smaller structural components. Such blocks that help structure the surviving *Cantiga* sources are the *cantigas de loor*, which head the beginning of each song decade. In the case of manuscripts **T**, **F**, and **E**, longer miracle songs are also assigned for every ‘quint’ in the middle of the decade (i.e., 5, 15, 25, 35). Such structuring turns the codex into an architectural assemblage, comprising different markers that divide the codex into manageable subsections. It resembles, as Galvez points out, the rhetorical rooms that form the pillar of *memoria*, which rhetoricians advise orators to adopt to memorize their speeches.⁶⁷ Compartmentalizing a speech and locating these sections within rooms in one’s mind – spaces grouped by their identification with words, concepts, or objects – is a principle that aids the reader’s recollection, and which corresponds to the rational structuring of a speech (or its *dispositio*).

All three *Cantigas* with miniatures rely on elements of repetition that supplements this codicological structure. The four manuscripts all make use of colour to demarcate sections of the songs’ refrains – distinguishable by the use of rubricated text – which stand out from the strophes’ black text, and which divide songs up into smaller units. The *Códice de los músicos* (**E**) incorporates a visual place-marker for each *cantiga de loor*

⁶⁵ The use of the refrain as a narrative gloss has been considered in Carlos Alberto Vega, *The Role of the Refrain in the Cantigas de Santa Maria: A Study of its Functions and Literary Implications* (MA dissertation, University of Virginia, 1976), 53.

⁶⁶ Galvez, *Songbook*, ch. 4.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 150–51. See also Francisco Corti, ‘Retórica y semiótica visuales en la ilustración de las *Cantigas de Santa María*’, *Alcanate*, 7 (2010–11), 215–34 (p. 216).

Example 6 Text, translation, and melody of ‘De muitas guisas miragres’ (CSM 266).

0.1	[C]omo Santa Maria de Castroxerez guardou a gente que	How Holy Mary of Castrojeriz protected people who
0.2	sii na ygreja oy[n]do a sermon, dũa trave que caeu	were in the church listening to the sermon, from a beam that fell
0.3	de cima da ygreja sobr' eles.	from the top of the church onto them.
R1	De muitas guisas miragres a Virgen esperital	Miracles of many forms the spiritual Virgin
R2	faz por que en Deus creamos e por nos guardar de mal.	performs so that we believe in God and be protected from misfortune.
1.1	E por esto contar quero dun escrito en que diz	And thus I wish to tell of a text which tells
1.2	un mui fremoso miragre que fezeste en Castroxeriz	of a very beautiful miracle that the Virgin Holy Mary
1.3	a Virgen Santa Maria, ond' aqueste cantar fiz;	performed in Castrojeriz, through which I made this song;
1.4	e por Deus, parad' y mentes e non faledes en al.	and by God, turn your minds and do not talk of anything else.
1.R1	De muitas guisas miragres...	Miracles of many forms...
2.1	Aquesto foi na ygreja que chamada é de pran	This took place in the church that is called Holy Mary
2.2	de todos Santa Maria, e muitas gentes y van	all over by everybody, and many people go there
2.3	têer ali ssas vegias e de grad' y do seu dan	to hold vigils there to her and with pleasure give offerings
2.4	por se fazer a eigreja e a torr' e o portal.	to construct the church and the tower and entrance.
2.R1	De muitas guisas miragres...	Miracles of many forms...
3.1	E por aquesto madeira fazian ali trager,	And for this wood they had brought there,
3.2	pedra e cal e arêa; e desta guisa fazer	stone and lime and sand; and thus they began
3.3	começaron a ygreja tan grande, que ben caber	to build the church so large, that it could well
3.4	podess' y muita de gente, pero non descomunal.	house many people, but was not abnormally large.
3.R1	De muitas guisas miragres...	Miracles of many forms...
4.1	Onde avêo un dia que estando no sermon	And thus one day that there were during the sermon
4.2	mui gran gente que y era, conteceu assi enton	a great many people who were there, that suddenly
4.3	que caeu hũa gran trave sobre la gente; mas non	a great beam fell upon the people; but
4.4	quis a Virgen que ferissa a nunll' om'. E quen viu tal	the Virgin did not let it hurt anybody. And whoever saw such
4.R1	De muitas guisas miragres...	Miracles of many forms...
5.1	Miragre! ca tan espessa siya a gent' aly	A miracle! for so crammed were the people there
5.2	aquele sermon oyndo, como contaron a mi,	listening to that sermon, as they told me,
5.3	que de cima non podia nihũa ren caer y	that nothing could fall from the ceiling
5.4	que non matass' ou ferissa e fezesse gran sinal.	and not hurt or kill someone and wreak great destruction.
5.R1	De muitas guisas miragres...	Miracles of many forms...
6.1	Mas a Virgen groriosa, cujo era o lavor,	Yet the glorious Virgin, whose work was thus,
6.2	non quis que aquela trave fezesse senon pavor.	did not will that the beam do anything except scare them.
6.3	Poren quantos y estaban deron a ela loor,	Thus all who were there gave praise to her,
6.4	que senpr' aos seus accorre nas grandes coitas e val.	who always comes to her followers in great peril and misfortune.
6.R1	De muitas guisas miragres...	Miracles of many forms...

comprising a miniature of a singer or instrumentalist (Figure 1). While existing scholarship has explored their links to intended performance practice, the function of codex E's miniatures also points to manuscript navigation, since such images help the reader to locate the beginning of each song decade. Visual structuring is yet more complex in the two *Códices ricos* (T and F), which incorporate a lavish illustration scheme where each song is illustrated by a full folio – or folios – each comprising six miracle panes per page.⁶⁸ Ideals of stability – generated by this large-scale repetition and consistency – and instability (engendered by inconsistency and interruption of this structuring) can be observed throughout the sources. Such structural organizing points to a rhetoric in the *Cantigas* that is both sonic and visual, and which influenced the ways these songs were written, assembled into manuscripts, and understood.

This visual rhetoric also emerges in the subject matter of the miniatures in T and F, offering a more literal analogy to the contents of a miracle's text. Both *Códices ricos*

⁶⁸ Stephen Parkinson, 'Layout in the *Códices ricos* of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*', *Hispanic Research Journal*, 1.3 (2000), 243–74; Kirstin Kennedy, 'Seeing is Believing: The Miniatures in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* and Medieval Devotional Practices', *Portuguese Studies*, 31.2 (2015), 169–82 (pp. 169–72).

Example 6 (cont.)

R1: De mui - tas gui - sas mi - ra - gres a Vir - gen es - pe - ri - tal

R2: faz por__ que en Deus cre - a - mos e por nos guar - dar de__ mal.

1.1: E por es - to con - tar__ que - ro dun es - cri - to en__ que__ diz

1.2: un mui fre - mo - so mi - ra - gre que fez en__ Cas - tro - xe - riz

1.3: a Vir - gen San - ta Ma - ri - a, on - d' a - ques - te can - tar fiz;

1.4: e por__ Deus, pa - ra - d' y__ men - tes e non fa - le - des en__ al.

replicate architectural details – urban settings, interiors of churches – in multiple consecutive miniature panes (see CSM 66, codex **T**, fol. 98^r, Figure 2).⁶⁹ A trope consistent in most *cantigas de miragre* is the placing of Mary’s altar, which – when present in the story – usually appears in the right side of its associated illustration. For Francisco Corti, the presence of recurring motifs in the miniatures of codices **T** and **F** amount to a rhetorical structuring, where consistency achieves a sense of balance and cohesion to the miracle narrative.⁷⁰ Such visual rhetoric mirrors the textual rhetoric of the *Cantigas*’ miracle texts, which often contain similar structural markers. For instance, the frequency of miracles that incorporate a final miracle pane with a church setting, including Mary’s altar in its right-hand side, echoes the concluding strophe in a *Cantiga*’s text, which frequently addresses the need to praise the Virgin in its closing strophe. Such visual repetition reflects the practical limitations of the miniature teams,

⁶⁹ See José Guerrero Lovillo, *Las Cántigas: estudio arqueológico de sus miniaturas* (CSIC, 1949). Francisco Corti, ‘Retórica visual en episodios biográficos reales ilustrados en las *Cantigas de Santa María*’, *Historia. Instituciones. Documentos*, 29 (2002), 59–108 (pp. 72–76).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 59–60; Corti, ‘Retórica y semiótica visuales’, 215–16; Mihai Iacob, ‘A retórica visual no “Códice Rico” das *Cantigas de Santa María*’, *Boletín Galego de Literatura*, 36–7 (2006–07), 37–59.



Figure 1. Miniature initials of four *cantigas de loor* from codex E: a) CSM 10 (fol. 39^v); b) CSM 170 (fol. 162^r); c) CSM 240 (fol. 218^v); and d) CSM 370 (fol. 333^r). Reproduced with permission. Foto: Patrimonio Nacional, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, B-I-2.

who may have deployed easily replicable templates in what was most likely a rushed compilation process. They do nevertheless attest to a structuring within the visual narrative that – alongside the repetition within the musical-poetic form – achieves an order and equilibrium in each miracle story.

While consistency is a frequent priority in the manuscript's visual rhetoric, such stability is at times countered by prominent points of rupture, where figures in miniatures break apart a story's visual consistency. Such moments are few, and most occur within the *cantigas de loor* (see CSM 50, codex T, fol. 74^v, Figure 3), facilitated by their tendency to leave out miniature captions. While most miracles in T and F place a spatial limit on their visual depictions – set within the squares of each miniature pane –



Figure 2. Miniatures from CSM 66 in codex T (fol. 98^r). Reproduced with permission. Foto: Patrimonio Nacional, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, T-I-1.



Figure 3. Miniatures from CSM 50 in codex T (fol. 74^v). Reproduced with permission. Foto: Patrimonio Nacional, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, T-I-1

certain scenes in these praise *Cantigas* emerge out of their frames and into the empty caption space, jarring with the order set by the manuscript's spatial boundaries. These few occurrences often coincide with points where God or Mary emerge signifying their ability to break beyond the sublunary world and intercede in the miracle story.⁷¹

The songs of the Castrojeriz set also show this balance between consistency and inconsistency.⁷² In CSM 266 (codex **F**, fol. 84^r, [Figure 4](#)), readers observe the visual balance where the top two panes – which preface the main miracle scene and are parallel to the opening introductory strophes – are set outside the space of the church in what appears to be a forest, showing the same scene of a man on a cart pulled by oxen. Meanwhile, the bottom four panes show the main event of the miracle, and offer a consistent architectural backdrop, with the left-hand arch under construction. Mary's altar appears in the right-hand corner on steps, with scaffolding in the nave, and the left-hand and middle arches occupied by the congregation. Visual symmetry also emerges in CSM 252 (codex **F**, fol. 82^r, [Figure 5](#)), where the first and last panes depict the architecture of the Castrojeriz church. As with many *cantigas de miragre*, Mary's altar appears in the right-hand aisle of the church structure. Meanwhile, in the middle panes the team of workers – trapped under their pile of debris – receives a different setting, under a mound of earth and building material. Here the visual scene changes to somewhere outside the church, symbolizing the rupture from safety and the protection of the Virgin within the house of God. Here the readers see from the final pane – as the song text and captions affirm – that the team of masons is ultimately saved. Such visual use of place to symbolize safety with Mary in her church, and peril without her in a foreign location, is common. A similar example emerges in CSM 41 (codex **T**, fol. 59^v, [Figure 6](#)), where a moneychanger is tormented by a pack of devils. This particular scene where the main character is almost tempted away from the Virgin has a barren background, and is visibly distinct from the surrounding vignettes – all of which are in set in buildings – showing the character's estrangement from civilization and the Virgin's protection.

CSM 242's miniatures (codex **F**, fol. 88^r, [Figure 7](#)) offer a complex interplay between stability and instability, and this visual dialogue emerges from the miracle's own architectural subject matter. Its six panes show an almost identical architectural edifice to the Nuestra Señora del Manzano church in the remainder of the set, with Mary's altar in the right-hand side. Further consistency emerges through the well-like device that appears in panes 2–6, while the stonemason hanging by his fingertips provides symmetry to the two middle vignettes. Yet in panes 2 and 5 there is a visual rupture, where the teams of stonemasons are shown to breach above into the space reserved for the empty captions. Given the lack of captions throughout **F**, it is possible that they would have been entered last, and it is strange to think that miniaturists would have not

⁷¹ Made possible on a practical level, since in both manuscripts they usually appear without miniature captions, and where the space is typically left blank. See Kathleen Kulp-Hill, 'The Captions to the Miniatures of the "Códice Rico" of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*: a Translation', *Cantigueiros*, 7 (1995), 3–64.

⁷² All but one song in the set appears with miniatures; the places intended for CSM 249's visual narrative on fol. 89r were ruled up, but the contents never included.

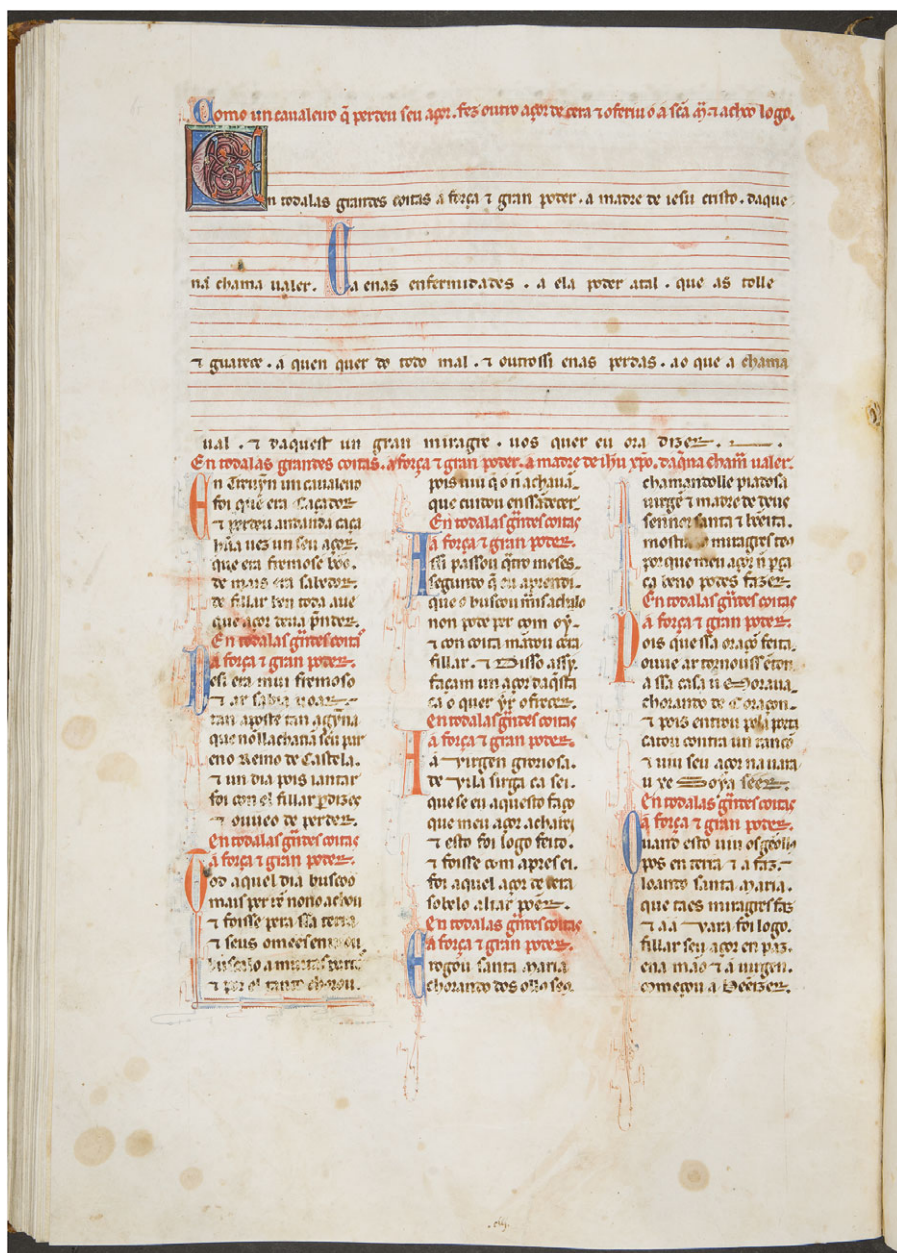


Figure 4. Song text and miniatures from CSM 266 in codex F (fols. 83v–84r). Reproduced with permission. Su concessione del Ministero della Cultura - Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze. E' vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione con qualsiasi mezzo.



Figure 4. (cont.)

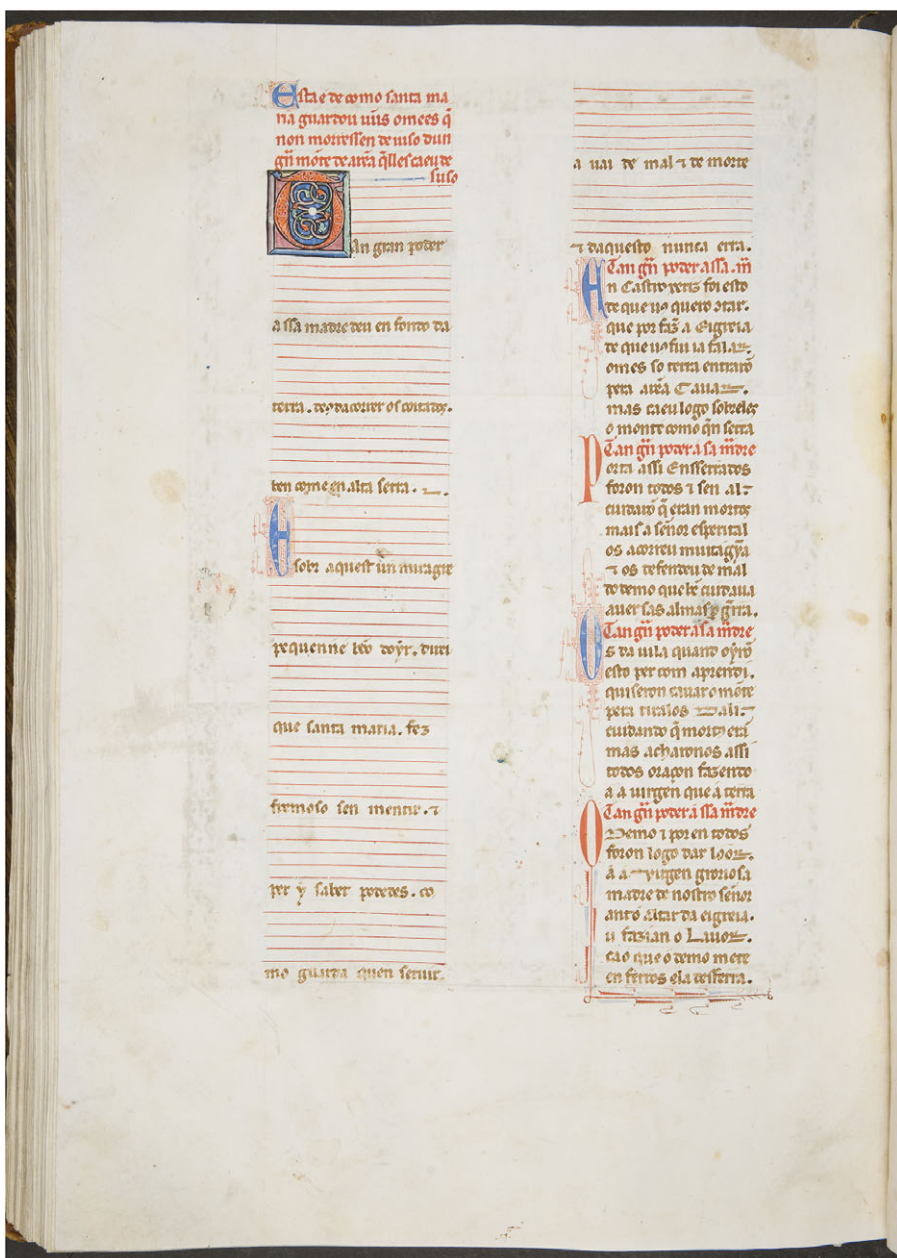


Figure 5. Song text and miniatures from CSM 252 in codex F (fols. 81^v–82^r). Reproduced with permission. Su concessione del Ministero della Cultura - Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze. E' vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione con qualsiasi mezzo.



Figure 5. (cont.)



Figure 6. Miniatures from CSM 41 in codex T (fol. 59^v). Reproduced with permission. Foto: Patrimonio Nacional, Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, T-I-1.



Figure 7. Song text and miniatures from CSM 242 in codex F (fols. 87^v–88^r). Reproduced with permission. Su concessione del Ministero della Cultura - Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze. E' vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione con qualsiasi mezzo.



Figure 7. (cont.)

followed precedent by limiting their illustrations to the panes provided.⁷³ While it is possible that the codex's rushed final assembly was a factor in this rupture of space, it is also feasible to view such breakage as a mirror to the sonic destabilization that interstrophic enjambement creates for the narrative text. Here the audience witnesses an awkward combination of two priorities played out both sonically and visually. First, a need for cohesion and consistency, created by repetition of visual cues such as architectural edifices, and through sonic elements such as the refrain and its mirroring in the *vuelta*. Contrary to this stability is the subtle use of rupture and conflict, where symmetry and balance are broken – by visual breaks in the miniature pane, and sonically by enjambement – and then resolved later at the miracle's closing, where communal faith in the Virgin restores order.

Analysis of the miracle *Cantigas* – or of any song repertory from the Middle Ages – benefits from a variety of methodological approaches. As this interdisciplinary analysis of the Castrojeriz songs has shown, universalizing analytical tendencies, typified in the *Cantigas* by forms such as the *zejel* and *virelai*, can be better understood when their functions are considered alongside specific contexts. This article has demonstrated how narrative themes of structural instability and interstrophic enjambement – both in the *Cantigas* and more specifically in the Castrojeriz set – provoke a radical rethinking of the hermeneutical and epistemological principles that supported construction, performance, and reception of song. While the Castrojeriz set's structural instability complicates their integrity, this article contends that such weaknesses are the key to the set's success. Given their plot lines that detail haphazard construction, the structural abnormalities in the Castrojeriz set invite readers to consider how specific contexts might invite a more nuanced understanding of text–music relations than has been considered previously.

In an intellectual environment that privileged the intelligibility and logical structuring of sound over its mere beauty, the Castrojeriz set – because of its narrative disjunction and divergence – poses questions to its audience. Both performers and listeners are faced with the challenge of heeding to a song's structural priorities at the expense of its narrative logic. From Augustine's perspective – where music must act as a vehicle for its associated text – such an approach is unacceptable.⁷⁴ Yet to repair narrative disjunction by eschewing refrains and strophes runs the risk of structural collapse in the songs themselves. Medieval listeners may have appreciated the parallels between the physical toil involved in the construction of the Castrojeriz church and the spiritual doubts of the believer as they struggle to appreciate both a song and its fundamental text. For a performer or listener to sing a structurally correct version of the song, their comprehension of its narrative – and, implicitly, their own faith in the

⁷³ Parkinson, 'Miracle Collector', 85.

⁷⁴ For wider discussion on Augustine's writings on sonic propriety, see Elizabeth Eva Leach, 'The Sound of Beauty', in *Beauty: The Darwin College Lectures*, ed. Lauren Arrington and others (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 72–98.

Virgin – may just as surely suffer, mirroring the characters in the *Cantiga* miracles when faced with moments of turmoil in their crises of faith.⁷⁵

Ultimately, however, the Castrojeriz church's integrity is maintained by its sufficiently robust structure. The narratives of the four Castrojeriz songs are likewise saved by their musical-poetic scaffolds. The set's reliance upon the sonically charged *vuelta* is key here, functioning as a memorially marked sonic cue, which provides clarity to the songs' disjointed narratives. Likewise, visual rupture in the manuscripts – summarized in the broaching of proscribed space in codex **F**'s depiction of CSM 242 – is compensated by the reliance upon the stability of the codex's visual rhetoric. These songs therefore represent potential corruptions that fulfil their narrative requirements through unorthodox and original means, informed by nuanced contexts that depend upon an equilibrium between consistency and technical flair. These contexts are conditioned by the text-as-building metaphor, which engages with the *Cantigas*' musical-poetic, codicological, and visual elements alongside rhetorical principles. This allegory between construction and composition thereby rationalizes the set's unique, interior logic where suspense, instability, and disjunction are central.

While only a small number of *cantigas de miragre* directly involve the theme of construction in their narratives, this article has opened up novel approaches in the analysis of vernacular song, with broader consideration for the intellectual environment that surrounds it. Such a methodology is of relevance far beyond the theme of construction, since it considers narrative themes and their interactions with the creative outputs of people involved in the production of artistic works. Viewing such repertoires through different perspectives – poetic, musical, art-historical – permits analysts to consider the different stages involved in the manufacture of a song repertory, and the ways narrative ideas might feed into that process. Beyond that, though, it challenges analysts to reflect on the ways in which divergent roles in the manuscript production process can communicate, exchanging ideas and techniques in their drive to create vernacular song.

⁷⁵ For a comparable allegorization of a crisis of faith by structural collapse, see *Piers Plowman* (XX.229). Here, imperfect priests are said to corrupt Christian doctrine, testing its validity and the faith of its believers, which translates into the collapse of Piers's barn as a reference to the Christian church. See Helen Barr, 'Major Episodes and Moments in Piers Plowman B', in *The Cambridge Companion to Piers Plowman*, ed. Andrew Cole and Andrew Galloway (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 15–32.