

The Primary Audience and Contexts of Reception of Thirteenth-Century Castilian *cuaderna vía* Poetry

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Thirteenth-century Castilian *cuaderna vía* poems share a common system of literary production and communication. While the act of writing and the individual reading of sources played an essential role in their creation, these works were intended originally to be read aloud to a stable, homogeneous audience.¹ This would explain why authors of the sources, authors of the Romance poems, scribes, vocal emitters and receptors are all inscribed in the extant texts as co-creators (Ancos García, ‘El Autor’ and ‘La forma primaria’ 396–419). For the most part, it seems clear that the authors of the vernacular poems and their scribes, as well as the authors of the sources, were male *clerici*, either in the cultural and/or the professional sense (Ancos García, ‘El Autor’ and ‘La forma primaria’ 420–1).² Here, I shall argue that the same is true of the vocal emitter and the primary audience of most of the Romance texts.³

¹ For questions concerning the ways in which *cuaderna vía* poetry was delivered and received and their implications for the extant texts, see the pioneering article by Gybbon-Monypenny. More recent considerations are found in, e.g., Gómez Redondo, ‘Narradores’; Grande Quejigo, ‘Orígenes’ and *Hagiografía* 210; Marimón Llorca 71–9; Uría Maqua, ‘La forma’ and *Panorama* 134–53; and Ancos García, ‘La forma primaria’ 242–447. For opinions different from those expressed above, see Bailey and the ambitious book by Weiss. Both studies appeared while the present article was in press.

² For the polysemy of the word *clericus* in the Middle Ages, see, e.g., Clanchy 226–7; Stock 26–7; Vitz 49–51; and Ancos García, ‘La forma primaria’ 57–61.

³ The following abbreviations and editions are used in reference to the poems: *LALex* (*Libro de Alexandre*), ed. Cañas (variant readings are given from Willis’ paleographic edition); *LApol* (*Libro de Apolonio*), ed. Corbella; PFG (*Poema de Fernán González*), critical text by López Guil (problematic manuscript readings are given from the paleographic transcription included in her edition of the poem). From Berceo’s corpus: *Duelo* (*El duelo de la Virgen*), ed. Orduna; *Himnos*, ed. García; *Loores* (*Loores de Nuestra Señora*), ed. Salvador Miguel; MNS (*Milagros de Nuestra Señora*), ed. Baños Vallejo; MSL (*Martirio de San Lorenzo*), ed. Tesauro; PSO (*Poema de Santa Oria*), ed. Uría Maqua; *Sacrificio* (*Del sacrificio de la misa*), ed. Cátedra; *Signos* (*Los signos del juicio final*), ed. García; vSD (*Vida de Santo Domingo de Silos*), ed. Ruffinatto; vSM (*Vida de San Millán de la Cogolla*), ed. Dutton. I generally follow these editions, but do not graphically mark the caesura between hemistichs. I also resolve without mention abbreviations and superscript characters, transcribe the Tironian *et* as &, and correct obvious typographical errors. Textual citations from the above editions are referenced

First, I shall consider aspects of the works' immediate context of reception. In Gonzalo de Berceo's *vsm*, for instance, the narrator tells us that the saint-to-be flees to the area surrounding the San Lorenzo peak, where 'encara oy en día parecen los altares, / los que estonz fizieron los sos santos polgares' (49cd). These altars must have been near the upper monastery of San Millán and are not mentioned in Braulio's *Vita S. Emiliani*, the passage's Latin source. However, while the Romance text adds reference to the altars, it fails to indicate their proximity to the monastery. Had Berceo expected the work to be read aloud/heard in either of the two houses dedicated to Millán, a deictic reference to the altars through an adverb or place expression would be expected. Such reference does not occur.⁴

The last stanzas of *vsm* are also significant:

El Rei de los cielos al so siervo leal [Millán],
 dióli grand privilegio, un dono special:
 quando faze grand seca, tuerce el temporal,
todos por ganar pluya *vienen* al su [portal (MSS *Mecolaeta* and *L*, Silos
 MS 56) / corral (MS *Ibarreta*)].
 Quando devotamientre *van* al su oradero,
 e *lievan* el so cuerpo do yogo de primero,
 esto *vid* por *mis* ojos e *só* ende certero,
 luego dona Dios pluya e sabroso tempero.
 Dues campaniellas *pienden* sobre el so altar [de Millán, en el
 monasterio de suso],
 de la sogá qe suele la corona colgar;
pueden como dos uevos non mayores estar,
 si omne bien non cata no las podrié asmar. (483–5; emphasis added)
 Assí pueda la gloria del Criador veer,
 como por *mis* orejas las *oí yo* tanner. (487ab; emphasis added)
 Muchas otras noblezas, de precio muy mayor,
cuntecen en la casa del santo confessor;
 Dios por sue santa gracia *nos* dé la sue amor,
 el libro es cumplido gracias al Criador. (488; emphasis added)

In the above, the audience is categorized as distinct from the group that visits the saint's oratory, systematically referred to as *they*, as well as distanced from the

by strophe or line number; however when referring to the editorial material itself (notes, introductions, etc.) or to other editions of the poems, page numbers are indicated. When citing from paleographic editions, I suppress all transcription codes and unify the graphic appearance of certain letters (such as *s*). For *psO*, I indicate first, in Arabic numerals, the lines or stanzas of the poem according to Uría Maqua's edition, followed by, in Roman numerals, the lines or stanzas as they appear in the extant manuscripts, when different. Other changes or editions used are indicated and explained individually as required. Casas Rigall's superb edition of *LAlex* appeared while this article was in the final page-proof stage.

⁴ Whether critics postulate a largely literate or illiterate audience, many seem to suggest that this poem was intended to be primarily delivered and received in or near the monastery of San Millán (see, e.g., Dutton's edition of *vsm* 185; Uría Maqua, 'La forma' 110–15 and *Panorama* 152; Grande Quejigo, *Hagiografía* 187–324; and Lappin, *Medieval Cult* 263). For a survey of the scholarship in this regard, see Ancos García, 'La forma primaria' 151–241.

oratory itself, which is treated as a *there* in relation to the *here*, where the vocalization of the poem takes place. A collective receptor then appears as an inclusive *we* in line 488c. In addition, the narrator describes the oratory and states that he was there and witnessed the prodigies he now relates (note the use of the preterite – *vid, oí* – in 484c and 487b).⁵ These miracles still occur in the oratory (483cd, 484ab, 484d and 485; note the switch to the present tense in 488ab), when neither the narrator (author, vocal emitter or both) nor the audience seem to be there.

Something similar could be said about PSO. In stanzas 183–4 (CLXXX–CLXXXI), the narrator explains in detail where Oria’s tomb is located (near San Millán de Suso), but never indicates its proximity to the place where the poem is to be read aloud.⁶ The same happens in VSD, in relation to Silos. Stanzas 384–6 provide a transition, absent in the Latin source, between miracles:

Todos los sus miraglos [de Domingo] ¿quí los podrié contar?
 No lis dariemos cabo nin avriemos vagar;
 ennos que son contados lo podeades asmar
 de quál mérito era el barón de prestar.
 Si de oír miráculos avedes grand sabor,
 corred al monesterio del sancto confessor,
 por ojo los veredes, sabervos an mejor,
 ca cutiano los face, gracias al Criador.
 Hi fallaredes muchos que son end sabidores,
 siquiere de mancebos, siquiere de mayores,
 decir vos an mil pares de tales e mejores,
 qui sacarlos quisiere busque escrividores.

The narrator asks the receptors to run to the monastery if they wish to hear, witness or have more miracles in writing, which suggests that Berceo did not expect the primary dissemination of the work to be in the monastery at Silos (see Ruffinatto 15, as well as his edition of VSD 354n385).

Similarly, it does not seem that PFG was composed for primary delivery in the monastery of Arlanza, although the author has been linked to that place (see, e.g.,

⁵ The switch from *they* to *we* does not occur in the different versions of Fernandus’ *Liber miraculorum*, the probable source of this passage. However, both Romance poem and Latin source coincide in that the narrator presents himself as a witness (Dutton’s edition of vsm 247–9; Grande Quejigo, *Hagiografía* 161–3).

⁶ Among other reasons, which include the length and complexity of the poem and the lack of external evidence, this makes problematic Lappin’s contention that PSO was intended to be vocally delivered near Oria’s shrine as the sermon for the mass on her feast-day (see his *Berceo’s ‘Vida de Santa Oria’* 3, 8, 44, 90n1 and 105n19b). Lappin’s textual support for this assertion, a rather debatable reading of lines 23b (xixb) and 189d (CLXXXVIII), is inconclusive.

López Guil in her edition of PFG 25). Instead, San Pedro is treated as a *there* in relation to the place where the poem was to be read aloud:

Fallaron [las tropas cristianas] de marfyl arquetas muy preçiadadas,
con tantas de noblezas que non serién contadas;
fueron pora San Pedro las más d'aquellas dadas:
están en su altar oy día asentadas. (273)
con toda su ganancia a San Pedro venieron. (274d)
Quand' fueron y llegados a Dios graçias rendieron. (275a)

This impression is reinforced by the introduction of the monastery's name in line 228d ('San Pedro avié nonbre essa casa sagrada'), which seems illogical if the poem was intended to be vocalized there.

When it comes to the geographical origin of the work's contemporary audience, Dutton states in his edition of *vsm* (184–5) that stanzas 479–80 are directed at the villagers who should pay *tributo* to the monastery of San Millán:

Si estos votos [de Fernán González y de Ramiro de León] fuessen
lealment enviados,
estos santos preciosos [Millán y Santiago] serién nuestros pagados,
avriemos pan e vino, temporales temprados,
non seriemos com somos de tristicia menguados.
Amigos e sennores, entenderlo podedes,
qe a estos dos santos en debda lis yazedes;
d'esto seet seguros, qe bien vos fallaredes
si bien lis enviáredes esto qe lis devedes. (479–80)

For Dutton, these stanzas are evidence of the propagandistic nature of *vsm*.⁷ It is true that the *votos* referred to in this passage include those made by Fernán González, which required payments to the monastery of San Millán. But they also refer to those of King Ramiro of León, who prescribed a *tributo* to Santiago, as stated in stanzas 418–25. The plural *you* in stanza 480, quoted above, refers to a collective audience subject to *tributos*, either to San Millán (the Castilians) or to Santiago (the Leonese). In the first half of the thirteenth century, this potentially double audience would have widened the poem's expected context of delivery and reception to all the Christian, Castilian-speaking kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula.

Similarly, PFG reveals a primary listener who lives in Spain:

⁷ The propagandistic theory was developed by Dutton in his 1967 edition of *vsm* (and maintained in the 1984 edition 1–59, 177–203 and 231–51), where he applied it to other poems by Berceo. His thesis received wide support. For an account of the scholarship on this respect, see Ancos García, 'La forma primaria' 185–238. Recently, some critics have challenged Dutton's views (see Uría Maqua, *Panorama* 140–4; Grande Quejigo, *Hagiografía* 241–7; Baños Vallejo, *Las vidas de santos* 162–73 and the introduction to his edition of *MNS* xxxix–xli; and, for *VSD*, Lappin, *Medieval Cult* 254–64).

mejor que otras tierras es la que vós morades [España],
de todo bien conplida es la que vós estades.⁸ (145bc)
Com' ella [España] es mejor de las sus vezindades,
sodes mejores quantos en España morades. (156ab)

It is striking that the narrator, through the constant use of *vos* to address the audience, seems to exclude himself from those who reside or were born in Spain. It is also worth noting that, although it is stated that 'de toda Spaña, Castyella es mejor' (157a), Spain then disappearing from the narrative, the narrator always refers to the Castilians as *they* and to Castile as *there* (162a, 172cd, 173a, 595a, 596a, 597a, 599ab, 599d, 648c, 671a and 671c). He never includes the receptor as part of the group of people who were born or reside in Old Castile. Was the narrator (author and/or vocal emitter) not a Spaniard? Was his audience not (only) Castilian?

VSM and PFG stand out among these poems for their emphasis on the audience's geographical demarcation. However, they share with the other works a collective listener explicitly characterized by the Christian faith. In each poem, examples can be found in which the narrator and the receptor form part of the *we* of a shared Christianity.⁹ This particularly occurs at the beginning and end of the poems and at junctures between narrative segments. The whole work, along with all those who participate in its literary communication, is set into an unmistakably Christian framework. In addition, the narrator (author and vocal emitter of the poem) often adopts the attributes and attitude of a preacher. This invests him with a certain moral and intellectual authority and, I would suggest, conditions the kind of person that would ideally read the poems aloud. Thus, at the end of *LApol*, a switch from the third person to an inclusive *we* unites narrator and receptor in the praise of God (Surtz 333–4; Ancos García, 'Vocalidad' 49–50; Corbella in her edition of *LApol* 284n651):

finó [Apolonio] como buen rey en buena ffin conplida.
Muerto es Apolonyo, nos a morir auemos,
por quanto nos amamos, la fin non olvidemos;
qual aquí fiziéremos, allá tal recibremos,
allá hiremos todos, nunqua aquá saldremos. (650d–651)

Additionally, stanza 656, a colophon in the form of a prayer, requires the audience's answer, which is inscribed in the manuscript itself by the repetition of the word *amen*:

⁸ The manuscript reading for line 145b is: 'mejores son que otras tierras enlas que vos morades'. To further complicate the passage, line 145c reads: 'de todo es bien conplida enla quevos estades'. All modern editors alter the manuscript readings to offer a version similar to the one given by López Guil, quoted above.

⁹ See, e.g., *LAlex* (279cd), *LApol* (110d), PFG (59), VSM (396cd), VSD (777a), PSO (1ab), MSL (30a and 30d), MNS (18), *Duelo* (11c), *Loores* (187), *Himnos* (III, 2a), *Sacrificio* (281a),

El Sennyor que los vientos & la mar ha por mandar,
 Él nos dé la ssu graçia & Él nos denye guiar;
 Él nos dexé tales cosas comedir & obrar
 que por la ssu merçed podamos escapar.
 El que houiere sseso responda & diga Amen.
 A.-M.-E.-N.- deus.-

Like *LApol*, and accentuating a tendency already present in the sources, *LAlex* (MS *Osuna*), VSM, VSD, PSO, the first two *Himnos*, *Signos* and six of the MNS also close with an *amen* that requires the open assent of the hearers.

Inclusion of the listeners is also achieved through the frequent use of vocatives. The following are found in eight poems: *señores* (used twenty times), *señores e amigos* (eleven), *amigos* (eight), *amigos e señores* (four), *amigos e vassallos de Dios omnipotent* (one) and *señores e hermanos* (one).¹⁰ The vocatives are always plural: in these poems there is not a single trace of an individual receptor, just as there is not a single trace of ocular, individual reading as a means to access the texts. It is also worth mentioning that women never appear as part of the public and that, in VSD and MNS, Berceo consciously changes the vocative system used in the Latin sources when addressing the receptor: *Fratres karissimi*, *dilecti fratres* or *fratres dilectissimi* become *señores*, *amigos* or any combination of these.¹¹ It is true that the masculine plural form in Spanish can refer to a group of males and females, and the above-mentioned vocatives are the commonest in the literature of the time. It is significant, though, that these are the only ones used. This is particularly notable in the case of PSO, which, due to its content and tone, has often been regarded as addressing a primary audience of nuns (Ruffinatto 22; Uría Maqua, ‘La forma’ 115 and *Panorama* 152). However, while none of the receptors is referred to as feminine, when the extradiegetic narrator

Signos (36d and 47c). In MSL and *Duelo*, the inclusive *we* unites the intradiegetic narrator and receptor. However, in both cases it seems obvious that the extradiegetic narrator and audience must also form part, by extension, of that Christian community.

¹⁰ The texts and lines where these vocatives can be found are: *señores* (*LAlex* 1a, 2424a, 2669c, 2670a, 2673a; VSM 108a, 109a, 320a, 362a; VSD 287a, 288a, 315a, 754a, 759a; PSO 187a, CLXXXVa; MNS 583a, 859a; *Loores* 167c; *Sacrificio* 157a; *Signos* 1a); *señores e amigos* (VSM 317a, 435a; VSD 533a; MNS 16a, 42a, 182a, 497a, 500a – followed by the apposition ‘compañias de prestar’; *Sacrificio* 143a – followed by the apposition ‘vasos del Criador’, 234a, 297a); *amigos* (*LAlex* 2398 [MS *O*] and, in the Trojan digression and theoretically addressed to Alexander’s troops as intradiegetic receptors, 719a; MNS 74a, 75a, 625a, 863a; *Loores* 187a; *Sacrificio* 193a); *amigos e señores* (VSM 480a; VSD 349a; MNS 44d; *Loores* 181a); *amigos e vassallos de Dios omnipotent* (MNS 1a); *señores e hermanos* (*Loores* 166a).

¹¹ See, e.g., VSD (533a) and MNS (497a and 500a), and cf. the corresponding passages in, respectively, the *Vita Dominici Siliensis* (I, 23; Valcárcel 312–13) and miracle XXI of the Latin collection included in MS Thott 128 of the Copenhagen Royal Library (Carrera de la Red and Carrera de la Red 236–7) and MS 110 of the Madrid National Library (Baños Vallejo in his edition of MNS 368).

refers to mixed groups of characters or when some characters refer to others as internal receptors of messages, women are habitually and explicitly included in the poems as *christianas e christianos*, *mugieres e varones*, etc.¹² If the group of characters is exclusively female (as has been said about the extradiegetic receptor of PSO), then the term used is feminine: *amigas* or *dueñas* (e.g., MNS 553 and 561; *LApol* 593), but not *señores*. All this suggests that Berceo, while seeking a male public, did not foresee, at least in the case of MNS and VSD, the monastic audience that may be inferred from the sources as exclusive.

The use of the inclusive *we* allows us to understand further the nature of the poems' audience. In *Loores*, the three Marys' announcement of Christ's resurrection leads the narrator to praise women:

Unas buenas mugieres del sepulcro vinieron,
estas nuevas tan buenas [la resurrección de Cristo] ellas nos las
dixieron. (108ab)

A la mugier en esto grant gracia li acrovo,
todo l' á mejorado el tuerto que nos tovo;
en esto con lo ál grant privilegio ovo:
por mugieres al mundo grant alegría crovo.
Si por mugier füemos e por fuste perdidos,
por mugier e por fuste somos ya redemidos;
por essos mismos grados que fuemos confundidos,
somos en los solares antigos revestidos.
Madre, el tu linage mucho es enalçado;
si Eva falta fiço, Tú lo as adobado;
bien parece que Christo fue vuestro abogado;
por ti es tu linage, Señora, desreptado. (109–11)

Here, the third-person singular or plural is always used in reference to females: the woman (*she*) or women (*they*) condemned humanity, but then co-redeemed it, the narrator says. In no instance are women included in the first-person plural or explicitly alluded to as *vos*. In fact, many other passages of *Loores* reveal a male audience of ordained clerics. For instance, in lines 180ab the narrator (both author and vocal emitter) states: 'Quand' era en la glesia, las horas m'enojavan; / los pensamientos vanos de seso me sacavan.' He had stated before that God 'siete veces al día se quier' de nos loar' (144c), clearly including the audience, the author and the person who read the poem aloud as part of the group that prays the canonical hours. Moreover, in stanzas 227–30, the narrator asks Mary to help and protect humanity. The only group addressed as *we* is that of the regular and secular clerics, as stanza 228 demonstrates:

Madre, contién' las órdenes, salva las clerecías,
alarga la credencia, defiende las mongías;

¹² See, e.g., *LALex* (223, 758, 867–8, 933, 1114 [MS *O*], 1276 [MS *Paris*], 1538); *LApol* (305); PFG (95, 432); VSM (87); VSD (270, 275); PSO (39, xxxvi); MSL (53); and MNS (388, 541).

siempre mester t'avemos las noches e los días,
ca nuestras voluntades de tod' bien son vacías.

As is usual in thirteenth-century *cuaderna vía* poems, these final stanzas are in the form of a prayer. As such, they seem to require the audience to join the person reading aloud in its verbalization or, at least, silently to repeat and assent to what the narrator says. If this is so, author, vocal emitter and receptor seem united in a *we*, characterized in the lines quoted above as members of the clergy.

Similarly, in the last stanzas of *vSD*, also in the form of a prayer, the narrator begs: 'Señor [Domingo], tú nos ayuda que seamos varones, / que vencer no nos puedan las malas tentaciones' (763cd). *Nos* includes author, vocal emitter and receptor as part of the group of *varones*.¹³ In *vSM*, the author attributes to himself and the person who reads the poem the ability to intone the *Tu autem Domine, miserere nobis*, stating that he is going to 'dezir "Tu autem Dómine", la lección acabar' (482d). The same expression is also used in stanza 429 of *MNS* and in stanza 752 of *vSD*, but cannot be found in any of these poems' sources. While I do not believe that the use of this concluding cliché denotes an exclusively monastic audience, it does indicate that the public could recognize the meaning and function of the expression.¹⁴

As mentioned above, in *vSD* (384–6) the narrator encourages the audience to run to the Silos monastery to hear more miracles, see them and, perhaps, have them written down. What kind of public would want to (or could) order the writing of miracles? Stock studies the case of Bernard of Angers, who, in the first half of the eleventh century, compiled a version of Saint Foy's miracles from oral sources at the instance of one of his superiors (64–71). Two hundred years later, in ten of Berceo's twenty-five Marian miracles (III, VIII, XII, XIV, XVI, XVII, XIX, XXII, XXIII and XXV), the narrator states that one or several characters decided to write down the Virgin's miracle to preserve it for human memory. The Latin source does not provide similar information. Although sometimes the initiative to put the miracle in writing is attributed to the common people, it is much more usual for a religious authority, such as an abbot or bishop, to order a written record of the miracle. The Latin *vitae* of Santo Domingo and San Millán were also commissioned by a high-ranking cleric. Is it possible that something similar could be said of Berceo's Romance hagiographical poems, or even of *MNS*, if, as we have seen, they do not seem to have been composed for primary dissemination in Silos or in San Millán? I would like to suggest that *vSM*, for instance,

¹³ Lappin believes that a first version of *vSD* was written in 1233 to be performed in the royal court of Fernando III (*Medieval Cult* 224 and 254–64). There is no space here to discuss in detail Lappin's daring theories on the double redaction, composition date and context of reception of Berceo's poem. Labeling the listeners as *varones*, however, speaks against the likelihood of a primary audience of men and women.

¹⁴ Molina thinks that line 482d of *vSM* demonstrates that Berceo addressed his poem to monks, since the *Tu autem* was said at the end of each reading of the morning office (11).

had been similarly requested by someone who did not belong to the monastery, maybe someone related to the University of Palencia, who was familiar with Berceo's poetic abilities and could appreciate the technical subtleties of a new and complex kind of work. Berceo wrote *vsm* before 1236, probably around 1230, according to Dutton ('A Chronology'). It is also believed that Berceo studied in Palencia between 1222 and 1227 (Dutton, 'French Influences'; Uría Maqua, 'Sobre la unidad' and *Panorama* 269). He was sent there from San Millán, where he later returned to work, although perhaps his duties were frequently conducted outside the monastery (Rico 136). It is even possible that he composed this text in the university town, given that in the poem's conclusion the narrator claims to have seen and heard in the past and *in situ* certain miracles that are still occurring in the monastery, referred to as *there* (*vsm* 483–5 and 487–8). If this were so, *vsm*'s supposed composition date would need to be altered by three or four years.¹⁵ Taking the lead from Amador de los Ríos' and Menéndez y Pelayo's early ideas, some scholars have recently emphasized the essential role of scholastic education in general and the University of Palencia in particular in the *mester de clerecía*'s origin and development.¹⁶ The scholarly and clerical atmosphere (in the cultural as well as religious-secular sense), fostered by the educational developments of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, may have been the context in which many of these works were disseminated and received.

That aside, some of our texts seem to exclude certain social groups as primary receptors. This happens, for example, with the pilgrims in *vsd*. Towards the end of the poem, the narrator prays to Santo Domingo:

Ruega por los enfermos, gánalis sanidad,
 piensa de los captivos, gánalis enguadad,
 a los peregrinantes gana seguridad,
 que tenga a derecho su ley la christiandad. (773)

Ruffinatto believes that the mention of *peregrinantes* among those who need the saint's aid suggests that the work was addressed in part to an audience of pilgrims on their way to Santiago (19, and see also his edition of *vsd* 452n773c). However,

However, Green has noted the use of *Tu autem* as a conclusion formula in medieval German texts, some of which seem to address a lay audience (78–9).

¹⁵ For a reconsideration of the composition dates of *vsm* and *vsd*, see Lappin, *Medieval Cult* 254–64. While Lappin's contention of an early composition date for *vsd* is possible, although debatable, his assertion that *vsm* was written after *vsd* seems unsubstantiated. Also unsupported is his affirmation that while *vsd* was destined to a sophisticated courtly audience, 'the *Vida de San Millán* would seem to have been written for the local Riojan peasantry, yeomen and townsfolk' (263).

¹⁶ The bibliography on this question is too large to cite here in detail. For a critical account, Uría Maqua's *Panorama* is essential, especially 57–69. See also Ancos García, 'La forma primaria' 151–241.

this stanza also includes the ill and captives, since the narrator is summarizing at this point and remembers the three groups most favored by the saint. Following Ruffinatto's reasoning, we should also infer a public of sick people and captives. In my opinion, the use of *they* in stanza 773 actually excludes these three groups as typical receptors, since in the surrounding stanzas (754–6, 762–3, 766–72, 777) narrator and audience are lumped together in an inclusive *we* that changes into *they* only when reference is made to *enfermos*, *captivos* and *peregrinantes*. In addition, the treatment of pilgrims in this text does not portray them as a very attractive public, especially if one considers the work as propaganda intended to obtain economic benefits from the audience, as does Ruffinatto. Pilgrims are always presented as poor and needy, if not as obnoxious rogues and thieves; they are always asking, never giving (VSD 105c, 408abc, 469a, 479cd and 688c).¹⁷ Furthermore, this negative opinion seems proverbial in view of lines 620ab: 'Como diz el proverbio que fabla por razón, / que el romero fito éssi saca ración.'

VSD is not the only poem in which, contrary to its Latin sources, we find criticism of pilgrims or their depiction as a group from which no profit will be gained. The same is true in *LApol* (e.g., 151, 164, 275, 457 and 513) and *LALex* (e.g., 1124 and 2486). The phenomenon is particularly striking in MNS, which repeatedly has been considered as having a pilgrim audience.¹⁸ In miracle XXII, the narrator states that the shipwrecked man saved by Mary 'semejaba que era romeruelo mesquino' (604d), because of his pitiful condition. Teófilo, in miracle XXIV, 'acogió los romeos que vinién fridolientos' (708b). And in 'La iglesia robada' (miracle XXV) the main characters' act of burglary is twice labeled as a pilgrimage (887d and 891b). In several poems, Berceo develops the topics of *peregrinatio vitae* and *homo viator* (e.g., MNS 17–19; *Sacrificio* 171). Metaphorically speaking, his entire audience was one of pilgrims, since, according to the poet and to religious tradition, everyone is a *romero* in this world. However, we should not jump to the conclusion that these metaphorical pilgrims were also real ones. In addition to their less-than-favorable depiction, the *peregrinos* are always referred to as *they*, thus distinct from both the narrator and the receptor: for example, in the final stanzas of VSD (773), *Duelo* (206) and *Sacrificio* (296–7).

On the other hand, both *Duelo* and *Sacrificio*, like *Loores*, clearly suggest a clerical audience, at least in the religious sense. *Duelo*'s stanza 208 reads:

Madre a Ti comendo mi vida, mis andadas,
mi alma e mi cuerpo, las órdenes tomadas,
mis piedes e mis manos, pero que consagradas,
mis ojos, que no vean cosas desordenadas.

¹⁷ Another socio-professional group generally disdained by Berceo are the *merinos*. See, e.g., VSD (58d), VSM (184d), MNS (581d) or *Signos* (45d); and, for a survey of the scholarship on Berceo's attitude towards these judges, see Baños Vallejo's edition of MNS 332n581d.

¹⁸ This view is defended, e.g., by Dutton (*Los milagros de Nuestra Señora* 1–12) as well as by Wilkins, Gerli, and Kelley, 'Ascendant Eloquence' 74–5 (but see also her 'Spinning' 820).

Sánchez, the first modern editor of *Duelo*, noticed that 208bc indicate that Berceo must have been a priest when he wrote the lines (433n1; see also Ramoneda 210–11n208; and Dutton, *El duelo* 52n208c). I believe that the clerical status should be extended to the work's vocal emitter as well. Otherwise, we would have to accept that a lay person would stand before his public (clerical, as we are about to see) and pretend to be a *clérigo ordenado*.

As regards this audience, *Duelo*'s final stanzas typically invite the hearers to repeat the prayer they contain, either vocally or mentally. Thus the receptors must have shared the narrator's status as ordained cleric. The same can be said of *Sacrificio*. I quote here a few lines in which a clerical receptor (in the religious sense) seems obvious:

Si nós derechamientre quisiéremos andar,
lo que pronunciamos [al consagrar la Hostia] devémoslo obrar. (181ab)
Si nós tales non somos en dezir e en far,
non somos derecheros vicarios del altar. (183cd)¹⁹

As Andrachuk has observed (26), in the above passage the inclusive *we* involves a narrator and receptors who are 'vicarios del altar', can say Mass and consecrate the Host. For the same reasons as noted in *Duelo*, I believe this clerical condition of narrator-author and audience should be extended to the vocal emitter. Otherwise, the vocalization of the text by a person not authorized to perform those actions might lead to irony, which could undermine the poem's serious doctrinal content.

Similarly, in *LAlex*, after Darius' death, the narrator inserts a moral digression in which he mentions several social groups that live without considering their own mortality. These groups, which include high-ranking clerics, are alluded to as *they*. However, when talking about minor *clérigos*, the narrator switches from the third-person plural to an inclusive *we*: 'Somos [los simples clérigos (MS P) / siempre los clérigos (MS O)] errados e viçiosos, / los prelados mayores ricos e desdeñosos, / en prender son agudos, en lo al perezosos' (1824abc). This religious-clerical condition would be applicable to anyone associated with the narrator: author, vocal emitter or even scribe; but it also implies the audience, who become incorporated in the text through the use of *we* (Ancos García, 'El Autor' 33–4).²⁰

¹⁹ See also stanzas 70, 95, 99, 143–4, 170 and 174–5. The clerical condition of *Sacrificio*'s audience has been very convincingly pointed out by, among others, Andrachuk; Uría Maqua, 'La forma' and *Panorama* 150–2; Grande Quejigo, *Hagiografía* 196–8; and Cátedra in his edition of *Sacrificio* 935–43 and *passim*. In view of their arguments, Capuano's theory of a public of laborers does not seem plausible.

²⁰ Gómez Redondo considers that stanzas 1956–7 and 2508 of *LAlex* suggest a scholastic milieu as the more appropriate context for the dissemination and reception of the poem ('Narradores' 268–9). In view of the inclusion of Aristotle's advice to the young Alexander (*LAlex* 51–84), Willis believes that the poem was a sort of *speculum principis* ('Mester de clerecía' 222–4; for a similar opinion, see Cañas' edition of *LAlex* 146n, and especially

Other instances in *LAlex*, PFG and some poems by Berceo (VSM, VSD, PSO, MNS, *Loores*, *Sacrificio* and probably *Duelo*) reveal a learned, if not ordained, public. In these texts, the verb *leer* is frequently used to designate the way in which the sources of the vernacular poems were received. Sometimes, the subject of *leer* is an *I* that can be identified with the author. However, very often the subject is *we*. In some cases it seems to include the author, vocal emitter and even the listeners, which suggests an audience that would be able to listen to the vernacular poem as well as access the Latin source.²¹ In particular, three poems (PSO, *LApol* and *LAlex*) explicitly direct the audience to the Latin source to confirm certain information or gather more data on a specific topic. In PSO, the narrator tells the public: ‘si su vida leyerdes [la vida latina de la santa] así lo probaredes [que vivió emparedada]’ (24d, vid).²² Lines 372ab of *LApol* are also significant: ‘Su nombre fue Teófilo, si lo saber queredes, / catatlo en la estoria si a mí non creyedes.’ *Catatlo* implies the receptor’s ocular consultation of the Latin source.²³ In lines 1492cd of *LAlex*

Arizaleta, *La Translation* 226–61 and ‘Alexandre’). Gómez Redondo states that ‘por supuesto, no puede ser el mismo el público al que Berceo dirige sus poemas, que el del *Libro de Alexandre* o el del *Libro de Apolonio*’ (‘El hermoso hablar’ 236n). However, the above-mentioned passage of *LAlex* seems to imply a creation and communication of the poem dominated by ordained clerics. Of course, these *clérigos ordenados* could also be clerics in the cultural sense, since they could have been (or still be) part of the higher education community as students and/or teachers. *LAlex* is a complex, multifaceted poem with a variety of possible intentions and functions. I would like to suggest that, among its many possible purposes, the individual or collective author of *LAlex* intended the poem to be also a sort of preachers’ manual. The narrator expects that the receptor will learn and retell (*retraer*) some of the narratives contained in the book (3), categorizes the whole text as a *sermonario* (1957b) and calls *sermoniello*s some superfluous materials in the book (1761a [MS O]). Similarly, Aristotle’s advice to Alexander is considered a *sermón* (48c) and the narrator calls the history of Troy (332a and 762a) and some speeches by Alexander (206a, 206d [MS O], 262b [MS O] and 2622d) and Nestor (728a) *sermones*. Once the narrative portion of the Trojan digression has ended and Alexander introduces his moralization, the narrator explicitly compares the narrative and rhetorical techniques of the character with those of preachers:

Pero com’ es costumbre de los predicadores
en cabo del sermón [adoban (MS P) / aguisar (MS O)] sus [razones (MS O) /
sermones (MS P)],
fue aduziendo él [unos estraños motes (MS P) / unas estrañas conclusiones (MS O)].

(763abc)

Therefore, it seems clear that *LAlex* assumes an audience familiar with sermon techniques. This fits very well with the public of ordained clerics postulated above.

²¹ See, e.g., *LAlex* (2164b, 2390ab, 2508, 2604ab); PFG (684ab, 720); VSM (26cd); VSD (27cd, 28, 171ab, 227, 549b, 677a); PSO (11, IV); MNS (42, 101ab, 143, 377, 582, 586, 673abc); *Duelo* (101); *Loores* (103cd, 119ab, 142, 155a); and *Sacrificio* (95). For the development of this idea, see Ancos García, ‘La forma primaria’ 349–68 and 636–41.

²² Lappin believes that stanza 24 (vi) refers not to Oria but Amunia, her mother (see his Berceo’s ‘*Vida de Santa Oria*’ 11–12, 95n6 and 200–1n171c). Therefore, the mentioned *vida* would not be Munio’s lost Latin life of Oria, but an equally lost record of Amunia’s mortifications and penances. I do not subscribe to this view, but, if true, it would not contradict my argument here.

²³ See Ancos García, ‘Vocalidad’ 52–3. In this article, a primary courtly-clerical context of delivery and reception for *LApol* is also suggested.

(MS O), the curious audience is sent to consult the source of the lapidary included in the Babylonian digression, that is, Book XVI of Saint Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*: 'qui más quisier saber [sobre las piedras], busqu' allá do son [nadas (MS P) / notadas (MS O)], / ca yo quiero fincar con las que he contadas.' In addition, stanza 43 of *Duelo* indirectly suggests an audience that is familiar with the Gospels of Matthew and John, and therefore needs few details on the passion of Christ; while in stanzas 411–12 of MNS the public is sent to consult texts containing miracles of the Virgin as proof that Mary's prodigies grow every day. Literally interpreted (and I do not see any reason not to do so), these examples suggest an audience able to access Latin texts, that is, a clerical audience in the cultural sense of the word.

To conclude, thirteenth-century *cuaderna vía* poems present a multiple creative voice that conflates those of the authors of the vernacular poems, their vocal emitters and scribes, their audience and the authors of the textual sources. In some cases (*LAlex*, *Sacrificio*, *Loores*, *Duelo*) this multiple voice appears to be clearly both male and clerical in the religious sense. VSM, VSD, MNS, *Signos*, PSO, *LApol* and PFG also contain clues pointing to male, cultural and/or professional clerical voices. This, I maintain, allows us to consider the thirteenth-century *cuaderna vía* production as a true *mester de clerecía* at all levels of its literary creation and communication.

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