

Music and misogyny in the Crown of Aragon c. 1412

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Abstract

Little is known about women and music in the Iberian Peninsula in the early fifteenth century, although archival documentation, such as pay records, and in some instances, correspondence, shows that women of high birth were actively involved in the patronage of musicians in the Crown of Aragon around the time of the Compromise of Caspe. One such woman was the French duchess Yolande of Bar, second wife of Joan I, who was largely responsible for establishing the primacy of French culture at the Aragonese court in the last decades of the fourteenth century, and, in particular, for the dissemination of the works of the poet-composer Guillaume de Machaut in the Iberian Peninsula. The arrival of the Trastámara dynasty in the Crown of Aragon served to consolidate established musical networks along which musicians and their repertoires, both imported and local, flowed between Aragon and Castile. The strictures against women found in moralistic tracts such as Francesc Eiximenis's Llibre de les dones (c.1396), viewed music—and specifically French song—as a deplorable aspect of feminine self-indulgence and vanity, in the same category as cosmetics, ostentatious clothing and jewellery. The vogue for French song that spread from court to convent is also reflected in allegorical commentaries such as Bernat Metge's Lo somni (1399), where a more liberal attitude towards women who indulged in music as a pastime is presented. Such literary sources, if analysed with due care for their original function and purpose, can shed light on the performance contexts for women's involvement with music and reflect trends in musical patronage and appreciation on their part.

Key words

Women and music, music patronage, music in convents, Yolande of Bar, Joan I of Aragon, Guillaume de Machaut, Francesc Eiximenis, Bernat Metge.

Resumen

Se sabe poco sobre las mujeres y la música en la Península Ibérica a principios del s. XV, aunque la documentación de archivo revela que las de alta cuna desempeñaron un activo papel en el mecenazgo musical en la Corona de Aragón en tiempos del Compromiso de Caspe. Una de ellas fue la duquesa francesa Violante de Bar, segunda mujer de Juan I, responsable en gran parte del establecimiento de la primacía cultural francesa en la corte aragonesa en las últimas décadas del XIV, así como de la difusión de las obras del poeta-compositor Guillaume de Machaut en la Península. La llegada de la dinastía Trastámara a la Corona aragonesa consolidó las redes musicales existentes a lo largo de las cuales músicos y repertorios (locales y extranjeros) fluyeron entre Castilla y Aragón. Las invectivas en contra de la mujer en tratados moralistas, como el Llibre de les dones de Francesc Eiximenis, vieron en la música (en especial en la chanson francesa) un ejemplo deplorable de la autoindulgencia y vanidad femeninas, al mismo nivel que los cosméticos, la ropa ostentosa y la joyería. Pero el gusto por la chanson, que se expandió de la corte al convento, aparece en comentarios alegóricos como Lo somni de Bernat Metge, revelador de

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una actitud más tolerante hacia el cultivo femenino de la música como pasatiempo. Estas fuentes literarias, analizadas con el debido cuidado, pueden arrojar algo de luz sobre los contextos de la participación femenina en la música, así como acerca de la evolución de su papel como mecenas y conocedoras de la música de su época.

Palabras clave

Mujeres y música, mecenazgo musical, música en los conventos, Yolanda de Bar, Juan I de Aragón, Guillaume de Machaut, Francesc Eiximenis, Bernat Metge.

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One of the songs that enjoyed considerable popularity in the Aragonese court in Naples in the mid-fifteenth century was Juan de Cornago's setting of Pere Torroellas's *Yerra con poco saber*,¹ a savage indictment of the fickleness of women. The message underlying Torroella's *canción*, expressed so cogently in the last line of verse —*olvidança sin ver*, or *out of sight is out of mind*— suggests that he who erroneously believes in female fidelity and constancy has much to fear from periods of absence. Torroella's misogynistic writings earned him a considerable reputation and added fuel to the fire of the age-old debate on female constancy and the place of women in society, *topoi* that continued to smoulder and emit sparks throughout the fifteenth century and beyond.² So infamous was Torroellas's misogyny that in the 1470s Juan de Flores, in his *Tractado de Grisel y Mirabella con la disputa de Torellas y Braçayda*³ has him meet a grisly death at frenzied female hands in the manner of Orpheus and the Ciconian women, a theme, as will be discussed below, found in Bernat Metge's *Lo somni*. This essay explores the perspectives on musical culture and women, as patrons, consumers and performers, afforded by close reading of misogynist literary sources in the context of the historical and cultural ramifications of the Compromise of Caspe.

Cornago's *Yerra con poco saber* is one of the earliest extant polyphonic settings of a Castilian text and reflects a shift in song composition from a well established autochthonous tradition of improvised, instrumentally-

¹ Cornago's three-voice setting of *Yerra con poco saber* survives in three music manuscripts, dating from the 1450s to about 1480, and three poetic anthologies, including the *Cancionero General* of 1511; see FALLOWS, D., *A Catalogue of Polyphonic Song, 1415-1480*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 635-636. An edition and brief study of the song is available in POPE, I. & KANAZAWA, M., *The Music Manuscript Montecassino 871. A Neapolitan Repertory of Sacred and Secular Music of the Late Fifteenth Century*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1978, pp. 268-269 & 572-573.

² Suero de Ribera and Juan del Encina were among the poets who directly condemned Torroellas's misogynistic stance, and Ausias March and Jorge Manrique among those who elaborated the theme of the dangers of absence. See: RODRÍGUEZ RISQUETE, F., *Pere Torroella. Obra completa*, 2 vols., Barcelona, Editorial Barcino, 2011, II, pp. 75-77.

³ WALDE MOHENO, L. VON DER, *Amor e ilegalidad. Grisel y Mirabella de Juan de Flores*, Mexico, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1996.

accompanied song to the notated, polyphonic *forme fixe* songs favoured in France and northern Europe.⁴ This example of cultural transference mirrors that recently suggested in critical analysis of Torroellas's *Coplas de maldezir de mugeres* (also from around 1450) in which a misogynist poetic tradition formerly developed only in the Catalan language was transferred to verse in Castilian.⁵ According to music historiographical tradition, this development in song composition, which appeared to favour Castilian over Catalan verse for polyphonic treatment, stemmed from the accession to the Aragonese throne of the Trastámara dynasty in 1412 and found particular favour at Alfonso V's court in Naples. Higinio Anglés, writing in 1940, saw this process as one of unification of musical traditions to create a *national* Spanish school: (...) *así en tiempo del Magnánimo podemos ya hablar de una escuela musical polifónica típicamente española. Entonces es cuando se empieza a unificar* [Anglés's emphasis] *la escuela musical de Cataluña-Aragón con la de Castilla* (...).⁶

In the early 1930s, Anglés's primary concern as a historian of Spanish music was to show that polyphony had been cultivated in the Spanish kingdoms before the arrival of the Franco-Flemish choir of Philip the Fair in the early sixteenth century,⁷ and to prove that a *national* school had existed. For Anglés, the Compromise of Caspe was, therefore, a key moment in this process of unification through the Castilian Trastámara dynasty that would result in the *national* musical idiom that he characterized as a tendency towards *simplificación absoluta* and the *nacionalización de sus temas musicales típicamente castellanos*.⁸ Yet it is difficult to maintain that Castilian cultural

⁴ Maricarmen Gómez Muntané has suggested that the collaboration between Torroella and Cornago occurred in Naples, which would make the song *la primera fechable con relativa certeza entre todas la del cancionero español*, see: GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M., *La música medieval en España*, Kassel, Edition Reichenberger, 2001, p. 305. See also FALLOWS, D., "A Glimpse of the Lost Years: Spanish Polyphonic Song, 1450-70", in Wright, J. & Floyd, S. A. Jr., *New Perspectives in Music: Essays in Honour of Eileen Southern*, Detroit Monographs in Musicology/ Studies in Music 11, Warren MI, Harmonie Park Press, 1992, pp. 19-36. Rodríguez Risquete suggests that Cornago's musical setting contributed to the renown and circulation of *Yerra con poco saber* (RODRÍGUEZ RISQUETE, F., *Pere Torroella...*, *op. cit.*, II, p.75).

⁵ *Ibidem*, II, pp. 96-97; ARCHER, R., "Tus falsas opiniones e mis verdaderas razones: Pere Torroella and the Woman-Haters", *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 78, 2001, pp. 551-566, at p. 553 where Archer describes the poem as *an act of cultural transference*.

⁶ ANGLÉS, H., "La música en la corte del Rey Don Alfonso de Aragón, el Magnánimo (años 1413-1420)", in López-Caló, J. (ed.), *Higinio Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, Storia e Letteratura Raccolta di Studi e Testi 132, 3 vols., Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1975, II, pp. 913-962, at p. 918.

⁷ ANGLÉS, H., "La polyphonie religieuse à la venue de musiciens flamands en Espagne", *Higinio Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, III, pp. 1172-1177. A response to the writings of north European scholars such as Edmond van der Straeten, this was Anglés's contribution to the first meeting of the International Musicological Society in Liège in 1930 (published in *Société Internationale de Musicologie. Premier Congrès, Liège 1^{er} au 6 septembre 1930. Compte-Rendu*, pp. 67-72).

⁸ ANGLÉS, H., "La música en la corte del Rey Don Alfonso de Aragón...", *op. cit.*, pp. 917-918. The political aspects of this emphasis on unification and national identity are discussed in CARRERAS, J. J., "Hijos de Pedrell. La historiografía musical española y sus orígenes nacionalistas (1780-1980)", *Il Saggiatore Musicale*, 7, 2002, pp. 122-169.

hegemony held sway at the Neapolitan court of Alfonso the Magnanimous (1396-1458); rather, it was a continuation of the international cultural melting-pot that had been the Aragonese court before the arrival of his father, Ferdinand of Antequera (1379-1416), albeit with a stronger Italian emphasis than previously.⁹

Musically, at least, the immediate result of the arrival of Ferdinand of Antequera could be described as *business as usual*. Strong dynastic ties had resulted in cultural exchange between the Castilian and Aragonese courts years before the political events of 1412. An established musical network triangulating the Castilian, Aragonese and Navarrese courts was in operation from at least the second half of the fourteenth century, and along these routes musicians travelled, often bearing with them repertory and instruments as gifts from one prince or noble to another.¹⁰ Musicologists such as Higinio Anglés, Maricarmen Gómez Muntané and, more recently, Francisco de Paula Cañas Gálvez have charted these networks and the dissemination and exchange that resulted in terms of musicians and musical repertories.¹¹ An example from after the Compromise of Caspe is a letter of recommendation of 1427 from Alfonso to the Constable of Castile, Alvaro de Luna, for *los fiels ministrers de cuerda de casa nuestra Johan de Escobar e Johan de Sevilla van de present a la cort del Rey de Castilla, nuestro muy caro e muy amado primo, por star alli algunos dias en su servicio e de los otros grandes de la dita cort*.¹²

These musicians, Juan de Escobar and Juan de Sevilla, played the lute and sang, reflecting the well-established performing tradition of singing songs to an improvised instrumental accompaniment. They straddled the changes of dynasty with ease and without great effect on continuity; for example, Rodrigo de la Guitarra, probably the lutenist Rodrigo de Sevilla, was in Ferdinand I's service before he went to Aragon in 1412, and subsequently in that of Alfonso. Rodrigo was accompanied by a boy singer by the name of Diego,¹³ while another instrumentalist in Ferdinand's service, Guillermo Sardo, employed two singers: Johan Leonillo and Millori

⁹ On music at the Neapolitan court, see: ATLAS, A., *Music at the Aragonese Court of Naples*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

¹⁰ For example, Alfonso sent a *very fine lute* to the Duke of Peñafiel; cited in GÓMEZ, M., "Some precursors of the Spanish lute school", *Early Music*, 20/4, 1992, pp. 583-593, at p. 593.

¹¹ On the musicians known to have served Ferdinand I, see ANGLÉS, H., "Spanien in der Musikgeschichte der 15. Jahrhunderts", *Higini Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, II, pp. 869-912, at pp. 877-879. For a more recent study of the Castilian-Aragonese court network of musicians see: CAÑAS GÁLVEZ, F. DE P., "La música en la corte de Juan II de Castilla (1406-1454)", *Revista de Musicología*, 23/2, 2000, pp. 367-94, at pp. 372-83.

¹² GÓMEZ, M., "Some precursors...", *op. cit.*, pp. 588-589.

¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 583-584. In February 1411 Rodrigo was visiting the Navarrese court.

Crifolino (who appears to have had a deputy, Lucha Desciro).¹⁴ It is fair to assume that the musical repertory of these peripatetic musicians was shared between the courts of Castile and Aragon.

It is also clear that the female members of the royal family were involved in such musical transactions: in a letter of 1418 Alfonso enjoins his mother, Leonor of Albuquerque, to support his lutenist Pedro Alfonso of Seville, while in 1422 his wife, María, Queen of Aragon, rewarded the same musician with 15 gold florins.¹⁵ María also favoured minstrels on other occasions,¹⁶ in particular the blind minstrel Martín de Bruna (also known as *Martín tañedor* or *Martín el Ciego*) to whom she granted a gift of 300 *sueldos* while he was in the service of the King of Castile.¹⁷ Two of Martín's songs have been preserved in anthologies of verse, both with Castilian texts, although the poet Alvaro Alvarez de Villasandino (1345-1428) suggests that he sang in both Castilian and Catalan (*lymosyn*):

*A mi mas me plaze oyr a Martyn
quando canta o tañe algunas vegadas
sus cantigas dulçes, muy bien concordadas,
asy en castellano commo en lymosyn.*¹⁸

At least one of these peripatetic minstrels was a woman, Graciosa Alegre, who, according to pay documents, worked at the French royal court in the service of Queen Isabelle in 1409-10, where she was referred to as *ménestrelle d'Espagne*, and subsequently at the Navarrese and Castilian courts as well as, in 1417-1419, that of Aragon, where she was described as a *juglaressa de casa del Senyor Rey*.¹⁹ Graciosa was of Valencian origin, one of a succession of Moorish singers and dancers who entertained at court

¹⁴ ANGLÉS, H., "Spanien in der Musikgeschichte...", *op. cit.*, p. 878; GÓMEZ, M., "Some precursors...", *op. cit.*, p. 584.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 588.

¹⁶ ANGLÉS, H., "La música en la corte del Rey Don Alfonso de Aragón...", *op. cit.*, p. 940: in July 1419 she paid six solidos *als juglars de Cervera per entrenes con la senyora Reyna ne passà aquell dia*. Anglés provides further information on María's patronage of musicians in ANGLÉS, H., "La música en la Corte Real de Aragón y de Nápoles durante el reinado de Alfonso V el Magnánimo", *Higini Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, II, pp. 963-1.028, especially at pp. 1.000-1.004.

¹⁷ GÓMEZ, M., "Some precursors...", *op. cit.*, pp. 589-590. In this document, Martín is described as a lutenist and gittern-player.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 590. Villasandino was himself a court poet who sang and played lute, vihuela and rebec.

¹⁹ Queen María also rewarded Graciosa in 1417, see: ANGLÉS, H., "Alfonso V d'Aragona mecenate della Musica ed il suo ménestrel Jean Boisard", *Higini Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, II, pp. 765-778, at p. 775; ANGLÉS, H., "Spanien in der Musikgeschichte...", *op. cit.*, p. 901; GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M. C., *La música en la casa real catalano-aragonesa 1336-1442*, 2 vols., Barcelona, A. Bosch, 1977, I, p. 26; GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M., *La música medieval en España*, p. 288; and GÓMEZ, M., "Some precursors...", *op. cit.*, p. 590.

from at least the late fourteenth century. In May 1424 Alfonso was forced to grant another singer-dancer, by the name of Catherina, royal protection since her Moorish dress was attracting disrespect at court.²⁰

The rich documentation concerning the musicians who were employed through the court network confirms the importance of the improvised song tradition with verse in Castilian and Catalan, as well as the active involvement of the female members of the royal family in the rewarding of these performers and, presumably, in listening to this repertory. However, in addition to these local musicians from the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon and their lute-accompanied songs, were others from north of the Pyrenees, with French-texted polyphonic chansons. Once again, this did not change—certainly not immediately—after the Compromise of Caspe.²¹ On assuming the Aragonese throne, Ferdinand I inherited his cousin Martí I's chapel of seven singers and an organist; of these singers, two were French and two Flemish.²² A tradition for employing French or Franco-Flemish musicians at the royal court in Barcelona dates back into the fourteenth century and was greatly boosted by the presence of the two French wives of Martí's older brother Joan I (1350-1396), in particular of his second wife Yolande of Bar (c. 1365-1431), niece of Charles V of France.

There can be no doubt that Yolande of Bar was an important patron of the arts at the Aragonese court, and her promotion of her beloved French cultural inheritance, in particular, the poetico-musical works of Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300-1377), is well documented.²³ Indeed, Montserrat Piera suggests that Yolande may have known Machaut personally since he stayed at the court of Bar in 1371 when she was a young girl.²⁴ One of the surviving manuscripts of Machaut's oeuvre (Vg), thought to have been copied in Paris in the years 1371-5, was owned by Yolande, who probably received it from Gaston Febus, Count of Foix, before it eventually passed, probably

²⁰ Catherina was also the wife of the royal minstrel Joan de Muntpalau (GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M^a. C., *La música en la casa real...*, *op. cit.*, p. 174; GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M., *La música medieval...*, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

²¹ On the tradition for French-texted polyphonic song in fifteenth-century Spain, see: KNIGHTON, T., "Isabel of Castile and Her Music Books: Franco-Flemish Song in Fifteenth-Century Spain", in Wiessberger, B. (ed.), *Queen Isabel I of Castile. Power, Patronage, Persona*, London, Tamesis, 2008, pp. 29-52.

²² ANGLÉS, H., "La música en la corte del Rey Don Alfonso de Aragón...", *op. cit.*, p.919.

²³ BRATSCH-PRINCE, D., *Violante de Bar (1365-1431)*, Madrid, Ediciones del Orto, 2002, pp. 18 and 54; PIERA, M., "L'impacte de Violant de Bar en la cultura humanística de Catalunya: una revolució a la francesa?", *Catalan Review: International Journal of Catalan Culture*, 22, 2008, pp. 293-308. See also ANGLÉS, H., "Gloriosa contribución de España a la historia de la música universal", *Higini Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, II, pp. 807-842, at p. 827, and ANGLÉS, H., "De cantu organico. Tratado de un autor catalán del siglo XIV", *Higini Anglés: Scripta Musicologica*, III, pp. 1.321-1.356, at p. 1.330.

²⁴ PIERA, M., "L'impacte de Violant de Bar...", *op. cit.*, p. 297.

at the time of her death, into Alfonso's library in Valencia.²⁵ Yolande owned other manuscripts of Machaut's works,²⁶ as is borne out by several references to books of Machaut in the surviving correspondence between herself and her husband and between them both and others who moved in court circles, men and women.²⁷ It is undoubtedly significant that a book of *Mechaut* was in the possession of the Valencian noblewoman and courtesan Carroza de Vilaragut²⁸ in January 1390, when Yolande asked her to return it, which the other lady—probably her rival in the affections of the king—refused to do.²⁹ It is clear that Yolande valued the book highly, even if she was here motivated by an underlying jealousy.

Montserrat Piera has suggested that Yolande saw herself as the figure of *Toute-Belle* from Machaut's *Voir dit*: a cultivated woman, with literary and musical talents, who influenced her lover/husband for the good, and thus to the benefit of his kingdom.³⁰ She argues that Yolande's preference for Machaut's verse and music served to raise her status as a woman by associating her with the cultural interests of her family, with its French royal connections, and by her identification with *Toute-Belle*, a creative woman, actively involved in learning and able to exert influence.³¹

Indeed, under Yolande's influence, the Aragonese court became Francophile in almost every respect, and nowhere more so than as regards the music that was heard there. Joan I constantly sought French musicians,

²⁵ PAGÈS, A., *La poésie française en Catalogne du XIII^e siècle à la fin du XV^e*, Paris, Henri Didier, 1936, pp. 85-86; PIERA, M., "L'impacte de Violant de Bar...", *op. cit.*, 297-299; EARP, L., "Machaut's Role in the Production of Manuscripts of His Works", *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 42/3, 1989, pp. 461-503, at pp. 478-479.

²⁶ *There was no need for Vg to contain the Voir dit, because this circle already had a manuscript of that work (ibidem, p. 479)*. On Yolande's books, see RIQUEUR, I. DE, "Los libros de Violante de Bar", in Graña Cid, M^a M. (ed.), *Las sabias mujeres: Educación, saber y autoría (siglos XIII-XVII)*, Madrid, Asociación Cultural Al-Mudayna, 1991, pp. 161-173.

²⁷ PAGÈS, A., *La poésie française en Catalogne...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-87. See also EARP, L., "Machaut's role...", *op. cit.*, pp. 478-479.

²⁸ Carroza de Vilaragut was herself an important patron, having Andreas Capellanus's *De amore* translated into Catalan (PAGÈS, A., *La poésie française en Catalogne...*, *op. cit.*, p. 87).

²⁹ *L'altre jorn nos, ab letre de creença comanda an Anthoni Nosar, de nostra tresoreria, vos fem saber que liurassets lo libre que tenís nostre appellat Mechaut al dit Anthoni, e vos no n havets res fet* (RUBIÓ I LLUCH, A., *Documents per l'història de la cultura catalana mig-eva*, 2 vols, Barcelona, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 1908-21, vol. I, n^o. CCCCIV). The letter to Anthoni Nosar is reproduced in PAGÈS, A., *La poésie française en Catalogne...*, *op. cit.*, p. 86: *en ço que ns fets saber que havets demenat a Madona Carroça lo libre que te nostre, apellat Mechaut, lo qual ella no us ha volgut liurar, nos li n scriuim, manant-li que l vos do de continent e l nos trameta per persona certa*.

³⁰ *Un efecte beneficiós en el seu amant, el rey Joan I i, per extensió el seu regne* (PIERA, M., "L'impacte de Violant de Bar...", *op. cit.*, p. 301). Piera also highlights the importance of familiarity with Machaut's *Voir dit* for the development of Catalan sentimental fiction (*ibidem*, p. 300) and considers that Yolande's activities as a patron were revolutionary for Catalan culture (*ibidem*, p. 302).

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 303. On women as book-owners, see GROAG BELL, S., "Medieval Women Book-Owners: Arbiters of Lay Poetry and Ambassadors of Culture", in Erler, M. & Kowaleski, M. (eds.), *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1988, pp. 149-187.

and sent his own minstrels to the schools in the north of Europe so that they would learn new techniques and bring back new (French) repertory. In 1379, for example, he ordered that singers recruited from Avignon should be sure to bring polyphonic mass-settings, motets and songs with them.³² The king became so enamoured of French songs that he even composed a polyphonic rondeau himself—with the aid of his musicians—and, in addition to having his song performed and shown to anyone who might be interested, he encouraged his brother Martí and other members of his entourage to try composing French songs themselves:

Car frare. Sapiats que lo jorn de la festa de ninou prop passada nos, entrevenents alguns dels nostres xantres, fahem I rondell notat ab sa tenor e contratenor e ab son cant, traslat del qual vos trametem dins la present entreclus, pregants vos, frare car, que l cantets e l façats cantar e que l mostrets o l façats mostrar a tots aquells qui us sera semblant, e si vos ne alter alcu qui ab vos sia vol fer virelay o rondell o ballada en ffrances, enviats la ns quan feta sia car nos la us trametem notada ab so novell.³³

Joan I's obsession with French music was put forward by his royal secretary Bernat Metge (c.1346-1413) as one of the reasons why the king had to pass through purgatory after his sudden death out hunting.³⁴ In *Lo somni* (1399), Metge, to whom Joan I had some years earlier given a copy of Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* to read and discuss,³⁵ describes how the dead king appeared to him in his cell, accompanied by a pack of howling dogs, the seer Tiresias and the musician Orpheus. When the royal secretary asks the royal apparition why he is in purgatory, he admits that although his twin passions for music and hunting were not enough to send him to hell, since these personal pleasures and interests did not harm anyone but himself, he nevertheless has to atone for his excesses:³⁶ *jo m'adelitava molt més que no devia en caçar e escoltar ab gran plaer xandres e ministrers, e molt donar e despendre (...).*³⁷

³² GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M^a. C., *La música en la casa real...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-199; and KNIGHTON, T., "Northern Influence on Cultural Developments in the Iberian Peninsula During the Fifteenth Century", *Renaissance Studies: Journal for the Society for Renaissance Studies*, 1/2, 1987, pp. 221-237, at pp. 230-231.

³³ GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M^a. C., *La música en la casa real...*, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

³⁴ Joan I's passion for music was equalled only by his obsession with hunting; see TASIS, R., *Joan I El Rei Caçador i Músic*, Biblioteca Biogràfica Catalana, Barcelona, 1959.

³⁵ METGE, B., *Lo somni*, ed. Jordà, M., Barcelona, Edicions 62, 2nd edn., 1986, pp. 16-17; METGE, B., *Book of Fortune and Prudence*, introduction and translation by Barnett, D., Barcelona & Woodbridge, Barcino/ Tamesis, 2011, p. 11. Metge's career in the royal chancery is outlined at pp. 11-18. Barnett suggests that another important dream source for *Lo somni* was Petrarch's *Secretum* (1347-53), which he believes Metge probably read during an amabassadorial visit to Avignon in 1395.

³⁶ BUTINYÀ JIMÉNEZ, J., "Un altre Metge si us plau. (Al voltant de la dissortada mort del rei Joan I a Foixà, a propòsit d'un parell de noves fonts de *Lo somni*)", *Annals. Institut d'Estudis Geronins*, 41, 2000, pp. 27-50, at pp. 38-39. It should be noted that the main reason Metge gives for the king's sojourn in purgatory was his role in prolonging the Great Schism through not having been prepared to negotiate a solution. Joan I's unexpected death while out hunting in May 1396 also inspired Ramón de Perellós's *Viatge al Purgatori*.

³⁷ METGE, B., *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

By way of penance, God has decreed that while the deceased king is in purgatory he should be heralded by the unceasing screams and howling of hunting birds and dogs, and accompanied by the best musician of mythology, Orpheus, playing the *rota*, or lyre, extremely badly—out of tune and out of time—to add to the infernal cacaphony: *e per tal com jo trobava gran plaer en xandres e minstrers, aquest hom qui té la rota entre les mans, ab molta discordança me fa deuant sons desplaents e llunyants de bon temps e mesura e finalment de tota melodia*.³⁸

Interestingly, João I of Portugal (1385-1433), in his *Livro da Montaria*, begun in about 1415, compares the harmoniousness of Machaut's music to that of the sound of hunting dogs in full cry: (...) *podemos dezir muy bem, que Guilherme de Machado nom fez tan fermosa concordança de melodia, men que tam bem pareça, com a fazem os caães quando bem correm*.³⁹

Metge's version of the Orpheus myth also reflects this vogue for French song. Having lost Euridice, Orpheus determines never to love another woman, and takes himself to the Thracian mountains, where he sings virolais, ballades and chansons in praise of a life without women: *e aqui, com pus melodiosament pogui, sonant la rota, canté alguns virolais, balades e cançons, lloant vida llunyada de companyia de dones*.⁴⁰

Metge follows Ovid (*Metamorphosis*, X) in recounting Orpheus's fate at the hands of the Ciconian women, who, spurned by the musician, beat him to death, decapitate him and throw his lyre and his still singing head into the river. Echoes of the violence of Orpheus's death resound in the horrible end met by the poet-misogynist Torroellas in Juan de Flores's *Grisel y Mirabella*.⁴¹ Orpheus's musical performance failed to placate the scorned Ciconian women who closed their ears and minds to its legendary power, and Joan I's penance for his excessive indulgence in music was, in Metge's dreamworld, to have to listen to Orpheus playing badly. However, as we shall see, Metge's attitude towards women and music was more positive than that of many of his contemporaries.

The *formes fixes* cultivated by Machaut continued to find favour, and verses by him were copied into Catalan manuscripts, while later in the

³⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 67-68. Joan I's other minor sin, seeking out fortune-tellers to learn the future, is to be accompanied by Tiresias, who constantly reminds the king of all the less glorious moments of his past.

³⁹ ESTEVES PEREIRA, F. M., *Livro da monteria feito por D. João I, Rei de Portugal*, Coimbra, 1918; cited in ANGLÉS, H., *La música en la corte de los Reyes Católicos*, I: *Polifonía religiosa*, Monumentos de la Música Española, I, Barcelona, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1941, 2nd edn. 1960, p. 39.

⁴⁰ METGE, B., *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

⁴¹ FLORES, J. DE, *Grisel y Mirabella*, ed. Flores Peña, J., Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 2009, text available on-line at www.laciesma.com/griselymirabella [consulted: 12-IV-2012]. The story ends with the sustained torture and murder of *Torroellas* at the hands of the queen and her ladies for his attacks on women and his role in the death of *Mirabella*.

fifteenth century Torroella continued to cite Machaut in French in his own works.⁴² Machaut's works were also known in the Castilian court, at least in part because of the constant cultural traffic along the network of musicians and poets between Aragon and Castile. The Marquis of Santillana, Íñigo López de Mendoza (1398-1458), who famously mentioned Machaut among the list of poets in his *Proemio e carta al Condestable don Pedro de Portugal* (1449), travelled to Aragon in the retinue of Ferdinand I in 1412 and was later *copero* to Alfonso V, before he returned to Castile.⁴³ In the *Proemio*, Santillana mentions the song forms cultivated by Machaut: *Michaute escrivio asy mismo un grand libro de balades, cançiones, rondeles, lays, violays, e asono muchos dellos*.⁴⁴ This brief description shows that Santillana had seen, or heard, Machaut's music, possibly first when he was at the Aragonese court and probably both there and in Castile. Certainly, the French *formes fixes* were known in Castilian court circles, as is shown by Gutierre Díez de Games's chronicle of don Pero Niño, I Count of Buelna (1378-1453), begun in the early years of the fifteenth century, continued in 1436 and completed in 1448 with a posthumous epilogue added in 1453.⁴⁵ Díez de Games (?1378-1450) served Pero Niño from 1401, and while his chronicle is a mixture of literary construct and historical reality, it can nevertheless shed light on the ideals of chivalry that pertained at the Castilian court in the early fifteenth century.⁴⁶ One of the earlier chapters (XV) with its description of the different degrees or levels (*grados*) of love is of particular musical interest. For the sake of love, a true knight, in accordance with literary tradition, will take care of his demeanour, excel in the chivalric skills of arms and jousting and undertake daring adventures that may take him abroad, all for the honour and praise of his beloved. He will, however,

⁴² PIERA, M., "L'impacte de Violant de Bar...", *op. cit.*, p. 299. Seven of Machaut's poems are found in the Vega-Aguiló songbook; see ALBERNI JORDÀ, A., "El cançoner Vega-Aguiló (BC, mss.7 I 8): estructura i contingut", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Barcelona, 2003. On Torroellas's citation of Machaut, see: PAGÈS, A., *La poésie française en Catalogne...*, *op. cit.*, p. 88; RIQUEUR, M. DE (ed.), *La belle dame sans merci. Amb la traducció catalana del segle XV de Fra Francesc Oliver*, Barcelona, Quaderns Crema, 1983, p. xxi; MARFANY, M., "Balades, lays i rondells francesos en la literatura catalana del segle XV", *Mot so Razo*, 8, 2008, pp. 16-26; and RODRÍGUEZ RISQUETE, F., *Pere Torroella...*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 97. David Barnett has recently suggested that one of the sources for Bernat Metge's *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudencia* may have been Machaut's *Remède de Fortune*; see METGE, B., *Book of Fortune and Prudence*, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

⁴³ PAGÈS, A., *La poésie française en Catalogne...*, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁴⁴ Cited in TRIGUEROS CANO, J. A., *Santillana y Poliziano. Dos cartas literarias del siglo XV*, Murcia, Universidad de Murcia, 1992, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁵ DÍEZ DE GAMES, G., *El Victorial*, ed. Beltrán Llavador, R., Salamanca, Universidad de Salamanca, 1997; see also BELTRÁN LLAVADOR, R., *Un estudio sobre la biografía medieval castellana: la realidad histórica de Pedro Niño y la creación literaria de El Victorial*, Valencia, Universidad de Valencia, 1987. On the circulation of French Ars Nova repertory in Castile, see CAÑAS GÁLVEZ, F. DE P., "La música en la corte de Juan II de Castilla...", *op. cit.*, p. 370.

⁴⁶ OSORIO DOMÍNGUEZ, M. R., "El mundo de la caballería a través de la crónica de Don Pero Niño", *Norba. Revista de Historia*, 13, 1993, pp. 105-125, at p. 112.

also be skilled in creating songs in which he will express his love for his beloved: *é aún facen dellas é por su amor graciosas cantigas, é favoroses decires, é notables motes, é valadas, é chazas, é rondelas, é lais, é virolais, é complaintas, é figures, en que cada uno aclara por palabras, é loa su entencion é proposito.*⁴⁷

In addition to the idealized prowess displayed by the fictional knight, the enumeration of a list of song forms also suggests literary convention. Yet these were the song forms developed by Machaut, and French song was, according to several sources from the period, appreciated by women who had them performed for their own entertainment, and who may occasionally have performed them themselves. Paradoxically, the evidence for this female context and practice is often found in what have generally been deemed to be misogynistic writings.

The vogue for French song among women, undoubtedly stimulated at the highest levels in society by Yolande de Bar's influence at the Aragonese royal court, is generally viewed with opprobrium by male authors such as Francesc Eiximenis (1340-1409), whose *Llibre de les dones* was written in the mid-1390s and dedicated to Doña Sancha Jiménez de Arenós, Countess of Prades.⁴⁸ The work is essentially moralistic, a litany of feminine moral failings expressed in the generally accessible way common to Franciscan writers. In some respects, Eiximenis took a moderate stance on women, notably in his advocacy of their learning to read;⁴⁹ he did not specify what they should read, but his moralizing tone shines through when he suggests that through reading they might learn better how to lead a virtuous life and educate their children. Ever the practical Franciscan, Eiximenis also suggests that reading helps control women's fickle and moody natures. He draws widely on the writings of Sts Augustine, Bonaventura and many other patristic authors, including St Jerome, who, tellingly, disapproved of women studying music beyond being able to sing the psalms (*Epistolarum*, CVII, 4).⁵⁰ Eiximenis does not discuss this point in his *Llibre de les dones*, but he includes music, specifically French songs, among the many *dissolucions* he lists in chapter 54 of the first part of his tract.⁵¹ In this extended indictment of feminine behaviour, aimed at *dones del temps, dones de la guisa, e dones de la*

⁴⁷ Cited in ANGLÉS, H., "La música en la corte del Rey Don Alfonso de Aragón...", *op. cit.*, p. 948.

⁴⁸ PELÁEZ, M. J., "La mujer en la obra de Francesc Eiximenis. Un ejemplo de literatura antifeminista en la baja Edad Media", *Collectanea Franciscana*, 53, 1983, pp. 41-49, at p. 42. Part I of the *Llibre de les dones* discusses women in general, while the much more extensive Part II is divided into five sections corresponding to girls, young ladies, married ladies, widows and nuns.

⁴⁹ VIERA D. J. & PIQUÉ, J., *La dona en Francesc Eiximenis*, Barcelona, Curial, 1987, pp. 31-34.

⁵⁰ Cited *ibidem*, p. 30.

⁵¹ EIXIMENIS, F., *Lo libre de les dones*, ed. Naccarato, F., revised by Wittlin, C. & Comas, A., 2 vols., Barcelona, Curial Edicions Catalans, 1981, I, pp. 87-89.

verdura, e dones de la cort,⁵² he criticizes women along well worn lines: their obsession with their appearance, with make-up, jewels, dress and scent, by which they intend to attract and ensnare men. Among women's vanities, between jewels and scent, he also comments acidly that these women spend the whole day *with French song (tot jorn ab cant francès)*.⁵³ It is not clear from this context whether these dissolute women are singing French songs, or merely listening to them, but presumably either way the Franciscan considered it an unsuitable pastime.

Eiximenis's views on music are also expressed in a later chapter instructing nuns on the necessity of prayer.⁵⁴ Following the strictures of St Bernard, the Franciscan accepts the power of music to incite devotion, at least when sung by the (male) clergy (*E estech ordenat per los pares passats que los ecclesiastichs orant cantassen, per tal que los seglars oren pus devotement quant oen que los ecclesiastichs oren a Deu per ells*), and insists that the introduction of any secular music into the Office should be considered sinful and scandalous:

*E fan gran peccat aquells qui en l'offici de Deu canten o permeten cantar, si han aquí presidència, cants trencats e dissolts e provocans a luxuria et a rialles e a dissolucio. E semblantment pequen greument aquells qui canten e qui permeten en la esgleya cantar res en vulgar, o en romanç, o cantilenes en son de cansons seglars o coses semblans, con totes aytals coses sien contra la forma de cantar en l'esgleya dada per los sans pares passats (...).*⁵⁵

Eiximenis's reference here to the practice of singing popular songs *a lo divino* is of particular interest given that this became such a widespread practice during the fifteenth century, and not only on certain special occasions or feast-days in church, but also as a pastime among noblewomen.⁵⁶ Eiximenis cites Fulgentius's literary prototype of a dissolute nun —Carina— to criticize the immorality of convents in his own day.⁵⁷ Carina's indulgence in the luxury of washing her face in rose-water and using perfume, and in taking delight in French songs (*s'adelitava fort en polits cantars trencats e francesos*), caused Bishop Celidonium, says Eiximenis, to warn nuns against such sensual luxuries: 'know', he has Celidonium exclaim, *that within five days all her songs would be turned into weeping, and all her fine scents into a vile stench, for her religion has cried out against her before God*.⁵⁸

⁵² *Ibidem*, I, p. 87.

⁵³ KNIGHTON, T., "Isabel of Castile and Her Music Books...", *op. cit.*, p. 34; GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M. C., *La música en la casa real...*, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁵⁴ EIXIMENIS, F., *Lo llibre de les dones*, *op. cit.*, II, p. 501: Chapter 345: "Com som tots obligats a orar".

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, II, pp. 501-502.

⁵⁶ ROS-FÁBREGAS, E., "Melodies for Private Devotion at the Court of Queen Isabel", in Wiessberger, B. (ed.), *Queen Isabel I of Castile...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-107.

⁵⁷ PELÁEZ, M. J., "La mujer en la obra de Francesc Eiximenis...", *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁵⁸ *Sapiats que dins sinch jorns tots los cants d'aquesta li seran girats en plors, e totes se bones odors en gran pudors, car sa religio ha cidat devant Deu contra ella* (EIXIMENIS, F., *Lo llibre de les dones*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 236).

The phrase *cants trencats* (literally, *broken songs*), used by Eiximenis in the context of both sacred and secular music, is unlikely to refer to the specific practice of hocketing as suggested by Gómez Muntané,⁵⁹ but it may possibly refer to vocal ornamentation as would seem to be suggested in another passage (Book II, Chapter 26) where Eiximenis condemns the sensuality of singing. According to him, French customs, such as eating and drinking to excess, dancing and pleasures that included kissing in the palace gardens, had corrupted the court of Robert, King of Sicily and Naples (1309-1343), where too much time was spent *remirándose en las canciones, procurando hazer requiebros y puntos doblados con la garganta, solfeando a todas las horas como hazen las damas hermosas en Francia*.⁶⁰

Eiximenis thus associated luxurious, or sensually provocative, music with French song, and possibly specifically with polyphonic French song. Bearing in mind Eiximenis's close relationship with the royal court,⁶¹ it is hard to escape the notion that these musical references, so striking in their specificity, were personally directed against Yolande de Bar. Certainly, the royal court was accused of corruption and over-spending on luxury items such as bringing musicians from abroad.⁶² However, Eiximenis's comments surely reflect the more widespread vogue for French song among women, including nuns. King Martí I appears to be citing Eiximenis's arguments in a letter written in November 1403 to his cousin, Violant, a Franciscan nun in Valencia.⁶³ Violant had been appointed abbess, a position she did not wish to take, giving as one of her reasons her inability to sing. The king urges her to obey the will of her Order, saying that its foundress, St Clare, could not sing, and that it was better to read the Office devoutly than introduce inappropriate music: *car l'offici dien ligent ab gran devocio qui val mes que no dir lo cantant ab rialles e ab motets francesos ab sons seglars provocatius a tota inhonestitat, qui es cosa que sta fort mal en religioses dones*.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M., *La música medieval...*, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

⁶⁰ Cited in MARTÍN, J. L., *Isabel la Católica. Sus hijas y als damas de corte, modelo de doncellas, casadas y viudas en el Carro de las Donas (1542)*, Ávila, Imprenta C. Diario de Ávila, 2001, pp. 121-122.

⁶¹ PELÁEZ, M. J., "La mujer en la obra de Francesc Eiximenis...", *op. cit.*, p. 44; and PELÁEZ, M. J., "Banquets et festins dans la pensée sociale de Francesc Eiximenis", *Banquets et manières de table au Moyen Age, Aix-en-Provence*, Université de Provence, 1996, pp. 127-139, at pp. 130-132. From 1384 Eiximenis was royal confessor to Joan I.

⁶² BRATSCH-PRINCE, D., *Violante de Bar...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-32; VIERA, D., "Sant Vicent Ferrer, Francesc Eiximenis, i el pogrom de 1391", in Kobbervig, K. I., Pacheco, A. & Massot, J. (eds.), *Actes del Sisè Colloqui d'Estudis Catalans a Nord-Amèrica Vancouver 1990*, Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1992, p. 252.

⁶³ GIRONA LLAGOSTERA, D., *Itinerari del Rey en Martí (1396-1410)*, Barcelona, Imprempta de Henrich y C^à, 1916, pp. 126-127.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 126; also cited in ANGLÉS, H., "Spanien in der Musikgeschichte...", *op. cit.*, pp. 899-900.

Eiximenis's strictures against the practice of singing French songs in convents appear to have made little impact on the reality of the situation suggested by the king's letter. In the mid-fifteenth century, the Catalan poet Antoni Vallmanya⁶⁵ praised the singing of a Cistercian nun by the name of Caterina Boyl in a poem he wrote on 28 May 1458 while listening to her perform what he describes as a *lay* in the choir of the Monastery of Valldonzella, Barcelona:

*Clarament viu, ab forma cortesana
E gest estar semblant una deessa,
D'art musical mostra ser capitana,
Axí canta com sentit de maestra;
He'lo cant molt fi e maner'artizada,
Passà un Lay molt gloriós d'ohir,
Lo seu sentit basta per discernir
Tot las d'Amor (...).*⁶⁶

Vallmanya's use here of the term *lay* (possibly with the French text *Tout las d'amour*) is intriguing, as his description of the singer whose appearance and musical skills suggest a courtly persona. Eiximenis would have been scandalized.

In *Lo somni*, Bernat Metge, writing only a few years later than Eiximenis, appears to defend a taste for a more sophisticated song repertory among women, although he does not identify it as specifically French. Nevertheless, Metge's more liberal stance is expressed in an overtly misogynistic context. Following Orpheus's narration of his violent death for having scorned women, Metge describes his own love affair in the hyperbolic fashion characteristic of chivalric love poetry. This causes the seer Tiresias to unleash a misogynist diatribe against female vanities very similar to Eiximenis's, both having their roots in earlier misogynistic writings, notably Boccaccio's *Corbaccio* (1355/65).⁶⁷ Tiresias's tirade presents women as know-it-alls who dominate the conversation, claim to know many languages and (...) *recordar moltes cançons e noves rimades, al.legar dits de trobadors e les Epístoles d'Ovidi,*

⁶⁵ On Antoni Vallmanya see: RODRÍGUEZ RISQUETE, F., *Pere Torroella...*, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 67-68.

⁶⁶ ANGLÉS, H., "Spanien in der Musikgeschichte..." , *op. cit.*, p. 900; MASSÓ-TORRENTS, J., "Les dames en els poetes de l'escola de Barcelona", *Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der mittleren und neuern Geschichte und ihrer Hilfswissenschaft. Eine Festgabe zum siebzehnten Geburtstag Geh. Ratprof. Dr. Heinrich Finke*, Münster s. w., Verlag der Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuch Handlung, 1925, pp. 308-315, at p. 311. Caterina Boyl later became Mother Superior (1478-1503) of the Cistercian monastery.

⁶⁷ Boccaccio's *Il corbaccio* (1355/65) was translated into Catalan as *El corbatxo* by Narcís Franch towards the end of the fourteenth century and printed in Barcelona in 1498; MOLL, F. DE B., *El Corbatxo de Giovanni Boccaccio traduït per Narcís Franch (segle XIV)*, Mallorca, Edicions de l'Obra del Diccionari, 1935; 2nd edn, Textos i estudis medievals, Barcelona, Ab de Mour, 1982, pp. 43-119. For the many other literary sources identified in Metge's *Lo somni*, see METGE, B., *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

*recitar les histories de Lancelot, de Tristany, del rei Artús e de quants amorosos són estats a llur temps.*⁶⁸

Metge here presents the modern historian with probably a fairly accurate list of women's reading material in the years around 1400: love poetry, Ovid's epistles⁶⁹ and the chivalric romances of Lancelot, Arthur and Tristan. It is particularly interesting, therefore, that memorizing songs appears to be a feat undertaken, and prized, by women (though scorned here by Tiresias). The trope associating music with idleness and indulgence also finds expression in Tiresias's misogynistic outburst; having described how women generally spend most of the day lounging in bed, he continues with the pastimes they indulge in when they do finally get up: *cançons e danses e semblants coses escolten ab gran plaer, majorment si per amor d'elles seran fetes: e si per altres seran dictades o cantades, han-ne sobiran fastig, car de totes volrien haver lo títol.*⁷⁰

These barbed comments are truly misogynistic, suggesting as they do, that women only really like songs when they are addressed to them personally, a distortion of the chivalric ideal expressed by Diez de Games in *El Victorial*. Through Tiresias, and in association with the Ovidian version of Orpheus's fate, Metge is here playing with the literary convention of misogyny, as the fourth book of *Lo somni* makes clear, for it is a tract written in defence of women.⁷¹ Metge's feminist apologia begins with the female heroines of antiquity and the Bible, and concluded with praise for the two queens he has known personally: Yolande de Bar (extolling her intelligence and her generosity) and María de Luna, wife of Martí I.⁷² María de Luna's patronage of music has yet to be studied in detail, although it is known that in August 1404 she purchased a book of polyphonic motets specifically for her chapel.⁷³ Having set up his exempla of feminine virtue, Metge proceeds to dissect all the points made by Tiresias, not only by showing

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 107.

⁶⁹ Metge himself translated the second book of Ovid's *De vetula* with the title *Ovidi enamorat*; see METGE, B., *Book of Fortune and Prudence*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁷⁰ METGE, B., *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

⁷¹ PIERA, M., "L'impacte de Violant de Bar..." , *op. cit.*, p. 303. María de Aragón, wife of Juan II of Castile, is believed to have reacted angrily to Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*, a reaction that resulted in a later series of works in defence of women by Juan Rodríguez del Padrón, Diego de Valera and Álvaro de Luna.

⁷² METGE, B., *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124. See also BUTINYÀ JIMÉNEZ, J., "Bernat Metge, defensor de la dona i l'ideal de la pau", *Revista de Filologia Románica*, 20, 2003, pp. 25-40.

⁷³ RUBIÓ I LLUCH, A., *Documents per l'història de la cultura catalana...*, *op. cit.*, II, p. 372: payment made to fray Martí Duncastiello *lochtinent de capella maior de la capella de la senyora reyna (...) per .i. libre appellat de cant dorgue de motets que de manament de la dita senyora ha comprat a ops de la dita capella (...)*. On María de Luna see: SILLERAS FERNÁNDEZ, N., "La piedad urbana de María de Luna, reina de la Corona de Aragón (1396-1406)", in Claramunt Rodríguez, S. (ed.), *El mon urbà a la Corona d'Aragó del 1137 als decrets de Nova Planta: XVII Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón*, Actas, 2 vols., Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona, 2003, II, pp. 889-894.

that women are not the fickle, deceitful, lazy and stupid beings suggested by the misogynistic tradition, but also by turning the attack against men. Hyperbole characterizes much of Metge's discourse; to counter Tiresias's complaint of female ignorance, he claims that without women there would be no knowledge, and no fun: *ne faren festes, jochs, dançes ne amor, que totes coses sobrepuje*.⁷⁴ A liking for music and dance, in Metge's view, is only natural, and at least, he maintains, women tend to like more sophisticated musical entertainments than men:

*Danses e cançons dius que escolten les dones ab gran plaer. No m'en meravell, car natural cosa és pendre delit en música, e especialment que sia mesclada ab retòrica e poesia, que concorren sovent en les danses e cançons dictades per bons trobadors. Poc s'adeltaven los hòmens en oir semblants coses, les quals deurien saber per fer fugir ociositat e per poder dir bé lo concebiment de llur pensa. Mes deleiten-se molt en oir trufadors, escarnidors, ralladors, mala parlers, criadors, avolotadors, jutjadors e mijancers de bacallaries e de viltats.*⁷⁵

Thus, Metge's view of women and music was essentially positive: if the music was of good quality, it was a pleasant pastime, and, even if a liking for music was indulged to excess, as was the case with Joan I, it was not an unpardonable sin.

Lo somni presents women not only taking pleasure in songs, but also as being able to memorize them. Whether this was to be able to perform them, or merely cite them in a social context, is not clear, although, as we have seen, professional women entertainers were rewarded at court. An interesting document dating from later in the fifteenth century suggests that women performers at court were not unusual, although it would appear that musical performance was associated above all with younger women. In 1459, Charles, Prince of Viana, in Mallorca en route from Naples to Barcelona following the death of Alfonso the Magnanimous, decided to reward Guyomar de Sayas by granting her dining rights as a servant of the court (*doméstica e comensal*) and by gently advising her that she need no longer entertain now that she has reached a certain age.⁷⁶ According to Charles's letter, Guyomar was an accomplished lady, who delighted the courtiers with her conversation (*vuestra dócil fabla e dulce exprimir*), her dancing (*en singularitat dançadora*) and her musical skills: *en el género de la música muy experta, exerciendo species de aquella con voz sonora, manos promptas, emanant de vos maravellosa melodia con mucha suavidad*. The reference to Guyomar's hands as well as her voice would suggest that she

⁷⁴ BUTINYÀ JIMÉNEZ, J., "Bernat Metge, defensor de la dona...", *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

⁷⁵ METGE, B., *Lo somni*, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁷⁶ RODRÍGUEZ RISQUETE, F., *Pere Torroella...*, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 170-171.

accompanied herself on an instrument such as a lute or vihuela (or possibly even a keyboard instrument), presumably in an improvised song repertory, although her musical expertise might have extended to reading notation. Whether she sang French songs is not specified, but Charles of Viana continued the deeply entrenched tradition of employing French musicians at the Aragonese court, notably the composer Enrique de Paris.⁷⁷

Further research is required to deepen our knowledge of women and music in the fifteenth century, whether as patrons, performers or listeners. The French princess Yolande de Bar set a positive role model for women as patrons that found echoes in other royal and noble women such as Carroza de Vilaragut, María de Luna and María, Queen of Aragón. Yolande's passion for French polyphonic song seems to have found such favour among women, including those women who entered convents, that performance of these songs became, among male writers, from Franciscan moralists to kings, paradigmatic of women's natural tendency to indulgence, sensuality and vanity, attributes considered to be morally reprehensible and threatening. The evidence, both documentary and literary, suggests the active participation of women in different ways and at various levels in both strands of court song tradition and practice: the polyphonic chanson as developed by Guillaume de Machaut; and the improvised song, with Castilian or Catalan text and instrumental accompaniment, of the minstrels who circulated freely between the courts of Aragon and Castile both before and after the Compromise of Caspe.

⁷⁷ GÓMEZ MUNTANÉ, M. C., "Enricus Foxer, alias Enrique de París (1487-8)", *Nassarre. Revista Aragonesa de Musicología*, 9/2, 1993, pp. 139-146.

