# Medieval intersectionality: uncovering fluid identities in thirteenth and fourteenth century Castilian epic poetry

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Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham

For the degree of Master of Arts by Research in Hispanic Studies

Supervised by Professor Jeremy Lawrance

**November 2017**

## Abstract

This thesis assesses two major texts from the epic corpus of medieval Iberia: the *Poema de mio Cid* and two chronicle redactions of the *Siete Infantes de Lara*, with the aim of uncovering the way in which the epic poets unconsciously acknowledge the fluid, contextually-contingent nature of identity that evolves according to circumstance. The poetry is, as one would expect, entirely at odds with the models of identity presented in the officialised discourse found in the legal and political texts of their contemporary Iberia, as well as inherited classical and patristic models. It is the first analysis of its kind to depart from a narrow analysis of identity in the epic texts that is solely predicated upon either gender, cultural, religious or social difference. These socialised categories of identity are discussed simultaneously in order to assess the way in which socio-cultural background shifts the dynamics of power within and across characters of both genders. This method is inherently intersectional, and is one that untangles the complexity of defining the self in a pluricultural society within permeable borders next to al-Andalus.

The intersectional approach to gender and identity will ultimately tease out an unconscious deconstruction of the pervading power structure that favours male, blood-born Castilian nobility in both texts. An intersectional analysis of character in the *Poema de mio Cid* locates power in the collective; a fundamentally egalitarian perspective that both thematically and linguistically erases borders between men and women of varying socio-cultural backgrounds. Meanwhile the *Siete Infantes de Lara* departs from the heroic-epic model in its implicit, often humorous, derision of noble masculinity in Castile, which in turn is held up in sharp relief against the stable counterpoint of al-Andalus.

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# Introduction:

# The case for historicising intersectionality to Medieval Iberia

Intersectionality as an analytical, indeed juridical, framework originated in the context of discrimination, oppression and power struggle in the latter half of the twentieth century. Its application to medieval Spain, a society in which mechanisms of oppression and power did not operate along the same racial and gendered lines as they do today, wherein white men are automatically in receipt of the most privilege, may at first sight seem an indomitable task. Naturally on the Iberian Peninsula in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries race and gender as nominative concepts did not exist as we know them today. Yet the method is still incredibly useful in a medieval Christian society bordering a Muslim one that was within the frontiers of present day Spain. Much scholarly work has dealt with identity in medieval Castilian literature: studies on femininity are vast, as are those that deal with Muslim, Christian and Jewish identity. Fewer in number are those that specifically consider masculinity and social rank[1]. Yet no scholar of the Medieval Castilian Epic – or in medieval Spanish literature more widely – has explicitly considered the way in which these categories overlap, and what this means for the socio-cultural power structure within the texts.

[1] Whereas modern studies that employ the intersectional method would refer to this category as 'class', here I use social rank to avoid anachronism. I also substitute the more modern concept of 'race' with religious and cultural background, for in the Middle Ages "ethnicity was defined by and manifested in culture as much as, or more than, descent" (Bartlett 2001: 47).

What then is intersectionality specifically, and how can it be used as a framework for literary analysis – let alone a framework for historicised, medieval literary analysis? Here I take guidance from Chepp and Hill Collins, who acknowledge the slippery attempts to define intersectionality in the period to 2013 and instead propose the following working definition:

> Intersectionality consists of an assemblage of ideas and practices that maintain that gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ethnicity, ability, and similar phenomena cannot be analytically understood in isolation from one another; instead, these constructs signal an intersecting constellation of power relationships that produce unequal material realities and distinctive social experiences for individuals and groups positioned within them. (2013: 3)

Cho, Crenshaw and McCall's description of intersectional analyses is a helpful complement:

> What makes an analysis intersectional […] is its adoption of an intersectional way of thinking about the problem of sameness and difference and its relation to power. (2013: 795)

The application of intersectionality to other fields is moreover well under way: what originated as an analytical framework in legal and gender studies is now being extrapolated across multiple disciplines as diverse as sociology, politics and economics (Chepp and Hill Collins 2013: 2). Whilst the prevalence of the intersectional method in name may have increased in the twenty-first century, its basic tenets are not

fundamentally new in feminist approaches to history. Joan Scott's seminal article on gender as a category for historical analysis underlined the importance of gender as "a primary way of signifying relationships of power"; that is, the way in which contextually-contingent gender norms are complicit in the acquisition and/or denial of power can be historicised to any given societal context (1986: 1067-69).

I now propose to map this framework onto medieval studies; in particular the study of medieval Spanish literature, in order to consider the formation of character and identity in medieval Castilian poetry from the intersections of gender, religious or cultural background and the social rank to which each individual belongs, given the pluricultural nature of both the society and texts of thirteenth and fourteenth century Iberia. Intersectionality by definition will thus take us beyond the simplistic analysis of how, say, a Muslim male character's Islamicness affects his poetic portrayal, to an acknowledgement of his identity as a Muslim *man*, as distinct from Christian men and Muslim women, with whom his portrayal (and indeed perception by other characters, and corresponding lived experience in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) has some similarities, but in essence it is entirely unique. What then follows is a socio-political analysis of gender that aims to deconstruct dynamics of power within the society of the epic texts to be studied; be it as broad as the Kingdom of Castile or as narrow as one noble faction or family. I firstly seek to complicate the notion of medieval identity as being founded on essentialist paradigms governed by the definition of social categories by received philosophical and ecclesiastical wisdom, from the classical period to the fourteenth century. The poetic works in question necessarily complicate the image of man and woman propagated by officialised, theoretical texts of the period. The same can be said of Muslim and Jewish men and women, as well as men and women of varying social standing. Secondly, the intersectional lens will then enable an untangling of the

location of power within the textual *milieux.* I posit that the origin of the epic - albeit transcribed in the forms analysed here - as orally-composed poetry with an unfixed, potentially public, origin means it is underpinned by an egalitarian ethos that acknowledges the fluidity of power and its potential to be wielded by those from a variety of social backgrounds. Moreover, the poetry uncovers a concentration of power (particularly within the noble class) to be a symptom of societal decay.

The framework of intersectionality further reinstates the relevance of the medieval past for today. An intersectional analysis of character reveals that the epic poets of medieval Spain were unconsciously aware of the heterogeneity of identity and the fundamentally flawed nature of any attempt to categorise and define the human condition; something that is admittedly hotly contentious even in 2017. Indeed, some strains of scholarship still insist on solely extolling Spain's Visigothic (and, by implication, Christian) heritage, thereby denying the very real role al-Andalus plays in the history of the nation. The years from 711-1492 have been erroneously referred to as an "invasion" and "occupation", upholding an exclusionary mentality towards Muslim Iberians, as García-Sanjuán explains:

> Conservative configurations of historical memory problematically reject the Andalusi past [...] It seems reasonable to call for the greater involvement of scholarly specialists in rebutting the myths, prejudices, and distortions associated with the notion of *Reconquista*, in order to promote a more balanced reading of the medieval Iberian past. (2016: 15)

Such ideas entered popular consciousness in 2006 with Aznar's call for Muslims to ask for forgiveness for "ocupar España durante ocho siglos" (*El País*: 2006). Present-day political

tension has thus occasionally been reflected in academia, resulting in a re-appropriation and re-reading of the medieval period on the Iberian Peninsula. Whilst my approach is by no means a political endeavour, the findings set out in this thesis nonetheless continue the approach spear-headed by the 2008 collection, *In the light of medieval Spain: Islam, the West and the Relevance of the Past,* in which Doubleday cogently explains how "Medieval Spanish history is made thoroughly relevant to global (post)modernity by virtue of its pluricultural, and indeed plurilingual, dimensions" (2008: 13). I also firmly adhere to Menocal's view of medieval Iberia, that our questions of its socio-political, cultural fluctuations can be "answered via our contemplations of the aesthetic"; that is, primarily the poetry of the period (2006: 10). The proceeding literary analysis not only demystifies the misconception that subjectivity in literature began in the Early Modern period[2]; it also - if implicitly - points towards the futility of any attempt to insist on the essential nature of social categories in the twenty-first century: namely gender, cultural background, religion or social class. It moreover uncovers an unconsciously proto-Foucauldian view of power and authority in the epic; one that implicitly acknowledges its presence in all strata of society, away from the institutionalised forms of power wielded by the monarchy and nobility. In this way, an exercise in "myth-breaking" for thirteenth and fourteenth century Iberia may (inadvertently) translate into a veiled lesson for the present day.

Of the extant Epic corpus of medieval Spain, known as *cantares de gesta*, I will present a comparative analysis of the *Poema de mio Cid* (henceforth *PMC*) with what

[2] For a summary of scholarship that propagates this assumption, see Aers (1992).

remains in chronicle form of the *Siete Infantes de Lara* (henceforth *SIL*)[3]. As with all theoretical-based studies of the Middle Ages, it is important to acknowledge the danger of anachronism from the outset. I do not purport that the authors or audiences of the Castilian epic were fully aware that categories of identity are socially constructed; nor did they consciously advocate a decentralisation of power and authority away from the monarchy and nobility. Rather, the modern theoretical lens of intersectionality can illuminate the unconscious fluidity with which medieval literature depicted men and women, Muslims, Jews and Christians, and noble and townsperson as individuals engaging in behaviour that refuted contemporary theoretical models for their social group defined by received wisdom, as well as legal and political texts of the same era. Epic poets therefore reveal the unstable foundations of their diametric opposition by written authorities, be they ecclesiastical, philosophical or juridical. They moreover raise complicated questions of how religious or cultural background, social rank and even regional affiliation intersect with gender in the acquisition, transferrance and sharing of power in one society.

I will begin by assessing the extant scholarly work on identity in the Castilian Epic to outline the critical lacunae that remain. What then follows is an overview of the socio-political context of thirteenth and fourteenth century Iberia that is variously painted by political and legal sources of the period, as well as the theoretical models available from the classical period onward; what may be deemed the "officialised" medieval discourse on gender, social rank and religious or cultural identity. These erudite contemporary attitudes will then be juxtaposed against modern concepts of identity and power. This will

[3] I thus accept Pidal's argument for the *SIL* to have once existed in epic meter, a conclusion also supported by Deyermond (1987: 75), although I will not refer to the former's reconstructed cantar de gesta that constitutes his 1896 *Leyenda*.

then foreground the theoretical framework within which to analyse the formation of gender, social and religious or cultural identity in the *PMC* and *SIL* and how the epic ultimately works to dismantle the officialised models of identity and power available to the medieval poet and instead exhibits a view of identity, and its relation to power, that is more representative of what modern theorists only began putting into words in the twentieth century.

## Literature Review: Existing Scholarship on Identity in the Medieval Castilian Epic

Much headway has already been made in existing scholarship on identity formation in the epic. Thus far critics have largely confined studies of character in the *PMC* to solely gender, social rank or religious or cultural identity.[4] Regarding gender, thus far critics such as Gerli (1995) and Sponsler (1975) have given valuable insights into the depiction of men and women and the importance of both to the *Poema's* overall resolution and pervading power structure. Most have, however, tended to focus on how the Cid's enemies are feminised (for example, Ross 2008), whilst the contradiction between this fact and the comparatively positive portrayal of women in the poem, as well as the Cid's own particular brand of 'masculinity', is yet to be reconciled. Mirrer too has done much to advance work on gender in the epic, particularly with an important piece on the feminisation of the *PMC*'s Jewish characters through a literary analysis of their characterisation that proves "a desire to construct - and reconstruct - an image of a dominant Christian culture" (1996: 70). What is surprising, however, is the way Mirrer presents a contingent, evolving view of religious identity yet is decidedly essentialist when it comes to formations of medieval Castilian masculinity, deeming its most important features "daring, strength and bravery on the battlefield" (1996: 74), when such a definition completely excludes the second, equally important 'sentimental' nexus

[4] For studies concerning gender see, for example, Sponsler (1975), Lacarra (1988), Gerli (1995), Mirrer (1996), Ross (2008), and Caldin (2016). For examples of those concerning social rank, see Duggan (1989) and Harney (1993). For those that assess religious or cultural identity, see Resnick (1956), Barbera (1967), Burshatin (1985), and Mirrer (1996).

of the *PMC* as pointed out by Gerli and ignores how unstable and contextually-contingent formations of gender and identity are[5]. Moreover, whilst Mirrer's connection of Rachel and Vidas' attention to the cosmetic as a marker for femininity is a crucial observation, it is an association the *PMC* problematises with Minaya and the Cid himself showing interest in dress and decoration. Fewer scholars still have assessed the connection of a character's identity position to the acquisition of power in the text. Harney has most extensively assessed the poem's social and power structure, and gives a useful summary of older scholarship such as that of Hart and Walker who both argue for a hierarchical reading of power relations in the poem (1993: 152). By contrast, Harney's own reading dislocates power from the king and nobility:

> The poem reveals a very diffuse authority structure in keeping with the pre-state, pre-stratified, kin-ordered nature of the society portrayed. (1993: 153)

I take Harney's argument for a kin-ordered society further by also acknowledging the authority variously delegated to social groups 'marginalised' by existing scholarship (such as women, Jews and Moors). Moreover, no scholar of the *PMC* has noted the influence of the multiple social categories each individual belongs to, and it is at these points of intersection where a complex nexus of power relations begins to coalesce in each character. For example: taking gender as a starting point, Jimena, Elvira and Sol are women, but they are specifically women of the travelling *infanzón* class who play a crucial role in maintaining their leader and his wider retinue; Abengalbón is a man, yet one that is both Muslim and of high social status; the Infantes de Carrión are men, noble by birth

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[5] Gerli highlights the *PMC*'s "inner universe that exists in consonance with social and political values" (1995: 260).

but also Leonese outsiders in Castile. Meanwhile the Cid himself, a Castilian man, is simultaneously in a state of exilic flux.

By contrast, literary discussions of the *SIL* are limited given the *cantar de gesta* is lost. Extant analyses often have a more historicist focus, although several studies on gender are notable[6]. Krow-Lucal interestingly finds in Doña Lambra a non-conformist, "a shrewish wife who is taking far too much interest in revenge – which is (or should be) a masculine concern" (1995: 357). Many scholars insist on a sexual motive behind the story's entire conflict: both Burt (1992) and Ross (2008) have suggested her assault on her nephew Gonzalo with a phallic, blood-filled cucumber is an act of emasculation. Barton moreover analyses the episode of Gonzalo Gustioz's imprisonment by Almanzor and his subsequent impregnation of his captor's sister as a metaphor for Muslim submission; one that becomes more extreme in the *1344* chronicle redaction with an insinuation of rape, though overlooking the Moorish girl's instrumental role in reasoning with the suicidal Gonzalo (2015). A persistent lacuna in scholarship is an acknowledgment of the over-arching critique of noble, Castilian masculinity present in both versions of the text to be discussed; one that exploits extremes and is framed within the context of humorous denigration. The blame for the story's tragedy is incongruously often placed on Doña Lambra, who speaks but does not act herself: her influence stems from her nobility. The deceptive or hyper-masculine members of the Castilian nobility (such as Ruy Velázquez and the Infantes) ultimately fail in their quest to gain socio-economic power, instead coming to a violence end that is redolent of their methods. Meanwhile, it is the culturally-diverse alliance of the Castilian noble Gonzalo Gustioz with Almanzor, the Cordovan ruler, and the former's half-Muslim son Mudarra, which ultimately succeeds.

[6] See Sponsler (1975), Krow-Lucal (1995), and Ratcliffe (2011).

A review of extant scholarship has thus revealed how necessary it now is to apply a critical lens to identity in the medieval Castilian epic that takes into account the pluricultural society in which it was composed. The intersectional method will ascertain the way in which the *PMC* and *SIL* undermine essentialist models of identity that were in turn used to justify the superiority of Christian, Castilian men in officialised political or legal discourse. It will moreover unveil the inherent relationship between identity formation and power acquisition in the societies depicted within the texts and, ultimately, the way in which the epic posits an alternative to the officialised discourses of power in their contemporary Castile.

## Historical Context: Gender, Social Rank, Religion and Cultural Background in Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Iberia

Prior to a textual analysis of the poetic works it is important to review the socio-cultural context of the *PMC* and *SIL* in the forms in which we have them today. The surviving manuscript of the *PMC* is widely dated at 1207, whilst the earliest extant version of the *SIL* is found in Alfonso X's *Estoria de España* composed between 1270 and 1284 (Catalán: 1992). I will also refer comparatively to the version of the *SIL* found in the *Crónica de 1344.* What follows is a summary of the officialised discourse on gender identity, social rank and identity - with a focus on the relationship of the nobility to the crown (the central sociological theme of both the *PMC* and *SIL*) - and finally that on religious and cultural identity. Such "officialised discourse" ranges from classical philosophy and the ecclesiastical writings of the early Church that were widely in use in the period in question, through to the legal and political texts composed contemporaneously to the Castilian epic. The notion of identity presented in these writings differs considerably from that which we will see in the poetry, given the former's erudite origin and usage. They can be said to constitute the theoretical attempt to draw boundaries between categories of identity and subsequently allocate to them varying levels of power in one society; an essentialist, oppressive model that the epic texts deconstruct in practice. What will moreover become obvious are the contradictions within and across these juridical, ecclesiastical and political writings, revealing their fundamentally unstable foundations.

The foundations of the academic understanding of gender, or rather ‘sex difference’ in the Christian West are to be found in the writings of ancient philosophy and those of the church fathers.[7] During the period in question the Aristotelian concept of gender had triumphed over other schools of thought. Allen highlights that from 1255:

> The institutionalisation of Aristotelian criteria for the concept of woman when Aristotle's works became required reading in the faculty of arts [..] at the University of Paris [and] subsequent foundations of other universities across Europe adopted the curriculum from Paris as a model for their own. (2005: 7)

Aristotle therefore provides the most frequently cited point of departure for an assessment of medieval gender relations, summarising three diametrically-opposed sets of gendered behaviours:

> Women are more compassionate and more readily made to weep, more jealous and querulous […] more subject to depression […] more shameless and false, more readily deceived […] more idle and less excitable than the male. (1862: 231)

That is, woman as unpredictable or passionate versus man’s constancy, woman as deceptive versus man’s honesty and her passivity versus man’s action. Departing from Aristotle and looking at misogyny throughout the Middle Ages, Bloch deconstructs the Christian conception of gender into its three key features: the feminisation of the flesh, the aestheticisation of femininity which is both a physical allusion to the cosmetic and a source of women’s supposed tendency to verbally deceive, and the condemnation of any materialist pursuits (2009: 14). Bloch cites evidence to show that in the early Church the

[7] The word gender only came into common, academic use in the 1970s (see Bennett 2006: 16).

creation of woman "is synonymous with the creation for metaphor" in early biblical exegesis, stemming from the Fall Narrative (2009: 38). This is reflected in the works of Tertullian, who claimed "with the word the garment entered", as well as Jerome, for whom "poetry like all representational pleasures, is directly threatening" (Bloch 2009: 46). Ambrose similarly saw the use of cosmetics as inherently feminine and therefore deceptive, for "the result is a work of deceit" (2009: 46).

Sexuality is also treated by the Church Fathers. Bullough quotes the views of St. Isidore: "*femina* is derived by a Greek etymology from 'fiery force', because she lusts so strongly, for the female is much more sensual than the male" (1994: 33). The prevailing academic and ecclesiastical wisdom available to the medieval European writer was therefore grounded in ancient and biblical misogyny; broad generalisations about the inherent nature of man and woman. Whilst these ideas were in circulation and available to medieval writers, I wish to problematise the historicist tendency to apply ancient and ecclesiastical academic wisdom universally to the Middle Ages, such as catch-all statements that claim women in the Middle Ages were understood to be inferior to men in both physical and moral terms. In doing so we risk limiting ourselves to 'history from above' and taking for granted complex, evolving social structures.

It was against a largely misogynist backdrop of classical and patristic writings that the legal and political writers of the thirteenth and fourteenth century wrote law codes, tractates and treatises that attempt to modulate the gender-based power dynamics of their contemporaneous societies. The contradiction between the classical and/or ecclesiastical notions of gender and the reality of the Middle Ages has already been noted by Bynum:

> The notion that vast binaries - reducible to a male/female binary - marched through the medieval past from Plato to Descartes [...] is not tenable. (1995: 16)

Bynum moreover emphasises the "polymorphous" nature of the medieval use of gender categories and images which undercut traditional understandings of gender (1995: 16). The same can be said, to an extent, of the legal and political texts of Castile contemporaneous to the epic texts in question, as they do not unquestionably enshrine woman in a position of subservience to man. The most influential law code on the period was Alfonso X's *Siete Partidas*, completed in 1265 (henceforth *Partidas*)[8]. Whilst many of the laws apply to both sexes in conjunction, many do treat men and women – and their behaviour – individually. What is most interesting is how the *Partidas* describe the societal roles available for women and men versus their inherent characteristics. Alfonso was undoubtedly influenced by Aristotle and Galen's views on women as being under a moral and intellectual subservience to men (Burns 2012, XII). We find overt moments of moralisation, particularly in the fourth *Partida*:

> Otrosi de mejor condicion es el varon que la muger en muchas cosas, e en muchas maneras. (*Partida* 4: 23, 2)

> Son las mugeres naturalmente cobdiciosas et avariciosas. (*Partida* 4: 11, 3)

Women are moreover excluded from the legal profession, as the example female jurist Calfurnia "era sabedora pero tan desvergonzada" (*Partida* 3: 6, 3). Alfonso thus does not deny woman's competence; the prohibition thus stems from the supposed

[8] All subsequent references to the *Partidas* are taken from digitised version edited by the Biblioteca Universal General (2006), in the format *Partida*: title, verse(s).

incompatibility of juridical duties with "vergüenza", a characteristic coded feminine. Elsewhere, however, Alfonso acknowledges the potential and ability of women to take up office in society and fulfil public posts:

> Women can serve as proctors before the court when acting on behalf of old or ill relatives […] they can be judges if they are queens, countesses, or feudal ladies with jurisdictions. (Burns 2012: xii)

The very fact that women of higher social status could represent themselves alone in court implies women were capable of autonomous speech acts that held weight in a legal context. The socio-political importance given to women's speech, infrequent as it may be, is a motif we find throughout both epic texts, and fundamentally contradicts the foundational view of female speech as deceptive rhetoric. In places, then, the *Partidas* exhibit contradictory views on the power that ought to be granted to men and women solely by virtue of their gender identity.

Men in the *Partidas* are mostly treated en masse as an unspecified collective. We do, however, find more detail on what sort of men a king should keep in his company (*Partida* 2: 9), as well as what sort of men should be judges, indicating the qualities or behaviours necessary to ascend social hierarchies (see *Partida* 2). The *Partidas* also acknowledge the existence of male weakness, namely the characteristics of men who could not fulfil the above offices. There were therefore men who could not be judges, and women who could. It is in these sorts of exceptions that the *Partidas* begin to contradict classical and patristic theory on sex difference, instead more closely reflecting the role of women and men in practice in society – something only intensified in the epic poetry.

Contemporary *Fueros* and *Concilios* are sources of similar contradictory evidence. Vassberg's study underlines the disjunction between legal theory and practice:

> Economic realities permitted medieval and early modern Spanish women to enjoy far more autonomy than the *fueros* had intended. (1994: 181)

This is corroborated by the *Fuero de Soria*, whose manuscript dates from 1274 (O'Callaghan 1989: 119): González shows how the *Fuero* prohibits women from representing others at court, yet goes on to describe notable exceptions to the rule: women can act alone in court when the matter in hand is one of "las otras cosas que pertenecen a los fechos mugeriles fasta en cinco sueldos" (González 1983: 47). Similarly to the *Partidas* we find women barred from "oficios de varón" yet simultaneously capable of fulfilling them and necessary in some instances. Dillard finds evidence elsewhere in Castilian *Fueros* of the importance of women's occupations and businesses: female shopkeepers were commonplace, as were those who worked as fishmongers, *vinaderas* and *panaderas* (1984: 158-159).

Legal attitudes towards female sexuality are moreover contradictory. In the *Concilio de Toledo* of 1324 in a description of women who were the *barraganas* of priests or monks the blame is firmly placed on them and their tendency towards deceptive speech: "con su mala conversacion y dichos deshonestos corrompen muchas veces las buenas costumbres y hacen espectaculo de si mismas" (Guzman 1983: 43). Interestingly in the *Partidas* when the situation is reversed – that is, when it is a man who pursues a romantic relationship with a woman in a religious order – the blame is firmly on the man: "gravemente yerran los hombres que hacen por corromper las mujeres religiosas" (*Partida* 7: 19, 1). The language here, "hacen por", suggests such men went to

considerable effort to pursue such women, even to the extent of dishonest scheming. In availing the woman of all blame Alfonso contradicts the aforementioned views of Aristotle and St. Isidore, who saw woman as inherently lustful. We also find evidence of women's patrimonial power. In an assessment of the *Fuero Juzgo,* Ratcliffe describes the inheritance protocol:

> The moment a marriage was finalised the wife could inherit half of her husband's belongings. Daughters could inherit equally with their brothers. (2002: 545)

Historians have also begun to point out the complex realities of gender relations in the medieval period in Castile, using a variety of historical source texts to paint a more realistic picture of the lives of Castilian women. Dillard's 1984 work on women in Castilian town society highlights the need for modern scholarship to question:

> Old stereotypes of female passivity and irrelevance, rampant misogyny and only commonplace negative generalities about medieval women. (1984: 9)

Dillard goes on to explain that this is because "women as a group assumed indispensable biological and economic functions" (1984: 215). It is thus evident that there was no prevailing, politically-sanctioned discourse on gender difference in Castilian legal and political texts; indeed, the location of power in the societies contemporaneous to the *PMC* and *SIL* was not defined in the first instance by gender, as women of varying social ranks played important socio-economic and, at times, juridical roles. A similar note of ambiguity is struck by the same texts on matters relating to other categories of identity: namely social position and religious or cultural background. The political atmosphere of

thirteenth century Iberia saw growing concerns about identity, both individual and collective, that are also to be found in contemporary epic literature.

Taking gender as the starting point, then, when one subsequently considers its intersection with social rank and regional identity in epic literature there are clear differences in the portrayal and experience of men and women within the texts; differences that are uniquely predicated upon their social status in conjunction with their gender. The political and legal theory that was variously utilised or elaborated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries together with historiographical sources will serve as evidence for the large-scale social structures imagined for Castile in officialised discourse. The textual analyses of the *PMC* and *SIL* then function comparatively as alternative readings of the social fabric of their contemporary Iberia, necessarily complicating the theories of social rank found within official, academic writings. It is important to note that I do not envisage a hierarchy that posits officialised, regal discourse in the privileged position of being able to universally enforce its tenets. On the contrary, the reach of such texts was limited to the erudite *milieux*; they thus convey an idealised framework of social power relations that did not reach, influence or hold power over the populace, as evidenced by the differing conceptualisation of power and authority found in epic poetry.

By way of departure I take Rodríguez-Velasco's 2016 work which filled an important lacuna in Iberian political history by assessing:

> How certain bourgeois groups that accrued a growing economic importance set up new spheres of power by invoking and reinventing discourses on chivalry. (2016: 2)

Rodríguez-Velasco takes the early fourteenth century as a case in point within which literature (specifically the chivalric fable) functions as a vehicle for the "transformation of authority" as a discursive reimagining of how the nobility might assume jurisdictional authority (2016, 5-6). The proceeding analysis shares in Rodríguez-Velasco's method:

> Literary construction aids the articulation of dialectical experiences [...] in a way that the abstract forms of theory and philosophy cannot, since it is based on the relationship between theory and human emotions. (2016: 6)

An assessment of the "literary constructions" of the *PMC* and *SIL* will similarly show the ways in which their respective poets or poet-chroniclers re-imagine identity and power in a way that fundamentally contradicts what we find in officialised legal, philosophical and political discourse. The same "articulation of dialectical experiences" are present in the epic poetry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; through the portrayal of human interaction and emotions both texts exhibit a unique social ethos that relocates power from the centralised leadership, be it royal or noble, to a collective comprised of heterogeneous identities, both social and religious or cultural.

The fluid depiction of social identity presented in the epic was imagined at a time of considerable social unease in the Castile of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Again the thirteenth century *Partidas* are a rich source of the officialised contemporary discourse on social rank and identity. Alfonso propagates a notion of kingship based on the 'body politic' model:

> Fue necesario por derecho fuerza que hubiese uno que fuese cabeza de ellos, por cuyo seso se acordasen y se guiasen, así como todos los miembros del cuerpo de guían y se mandan por la cabeza. (*Partida* 2: 2, 7)

Alfonso conceives of a model of rulership that is both authoritarian, with the king as the controlling "cabeza", and acknowledges the importance of the kingdom's constituent parts, the "miembros" – a concept I will later argue is partially reflected in the Cid's *mesnada*, without the authoritarian overtones. Alfonso's description of knighthood is also pertinent given the noble *milieu* of the epic texts: Alfonso expects them to be paragons of fixedness, of the stasis and consistency that is the antithesis to the classical notion of feminine inconstancy.

> La cordura les hará que lo sepan hacer a su provecho y sin su daño; y la fortaleza, *que estén firmes en lo que hicieren* y que no sean cambiadizos, y la mesura, que obren en las cosas como deben y no pasen a más, y la justicia, que la hagan derechamente. (*Partida* 2, 21: 4, emphasis mine)

Expectations of knighthood are thus not only bound up with behaviours coded masculine in the legal codes, but also show a desire on the part of Alfonso's judiciary to propagate notions of fixed identity and behaviour – an ideal we find male characters in the epic texts failing to live up to.

Historians have moreover shown how Castilian society had become polarised by the thirteenth century: the gap had widened between the urban aristocracy and the lower classes, whilst *caballeros villanos* "constituted an urban participate of wealthy and distinguished families" who dominated towns that gradually lost their "democratic

character" (O'Callaghan 1975: 447). This is perhaps what leads Rodríguez-Puértolas to argue that the medieval Castilian Epic is social propaganda in service to an emerging social class: "la poesía épica no es sino el arte de propaganda del feudalismo" (1977: 144). While "propaganda" is too strong a word, the way in which the *PMC* implicitly extols an egalitarian collective network of shared power as an alternative to a centralised monarchy arguably substantiates this claim. Harney agrees with Pidal's assertion that the *PMC* in particular illustrates a confrontation between the *infanzón* class and the *ricos hombres* and argues that a sensibility of class emerges in the *PMC*: we see the "implications of organised resistance to a pattern of dominance governed by exclusion principles" (1993: 6).

Identity was also in question on a larger, regional scale in the thirteenth century. Ruiz has noted that in the mid thirteenth century new ideas about territoriality arose: the word *frontera* is found more frequently in legal documentation and easily definable borders were created with "custom houses, fortifications and other symbols of Royal and local authority" (2014: 212). The very text in which we find the earliest extant version of the *SIL* arguably constitutes a propagandistic tool of identity politics:

> The preface of the *General Estoria* and that of the *Estoria de España* shared a concern for transmitting a moral and political identity to [Alfonso X's] subjects. (Gómez Redondo 2010: 590)

While the *SIL* as it is transcribed in the *EE* cannot be said to advocate a clear "moral and political identity", it does work to actively undermine the current state of affairs (that is, the dominance of the Castilian nobility) and implicitly suggest an alternative rebalance of power across socio-cultural categories. The question of regional identity in the *PMC* has

been deemed monolithic by Rodríguez-Puértolas, who has argued that "se ridiculiza…todo lo que no es cidiano-castellano: lo leones, lo catalán, los judíos, los de Carrión, Bucar" (1977: 152). Yet the positive depiction of non-Castilian characters in the poem undermines this supposed agenda; notable examples being Minaya and Abengalbón. There is therefore mounting evidence in the officialised discourse contemporaneous to the epic poetry of a desire to solidify a social structure and a regional identity, one that was being consciously crafted by Alfonso X and earlier in the thirteenth century in a legal, political attempt to textually transform the macro-structure of Castilian society and the power dynamics therein.

The third pre-defined, socially-constructed identity category with which both gender and social rank intersect is religious or cultural identity. In order to contextualise the two epic texts in question, I will outline the officialised discourse of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in which we find attempts to define Christian, Muslim and Jewish identity and the extent to which religious and cultural background determines the power an individual is able to exert in Castilian society. An unavoidable caveat is the fact that the legal and political texts from which evidence will be drawn are necessarily Castilian, as per the preceding contextualisation of gender and social relations and the authorship of the epic texts. From the start, then, the legal and political discourse is at a significant distance from Muslim and Jewish Iberians, albeit a similar distance that is presumably found between the likely male, Castilian epic poets and their diverse subject matter. While the legal and political texts primarily exhibit a desire to proclaim Christian dominance and limit the lives of Muslims and Jews through legislature, there remains a note of ambiguity in the possibility for those of minority backgrounds to wield power alongside Christians in one society – an ambiguity that has at times been used as evidence for the fabled *convivencia* of the period. One school of thought, arguably ignoring such ambiguities,

maintains that the legal and political texts of medieval Castile demonstrate that *convivencia* was, indeed, a myth. Tieszen, for example, contends that:

> The system of parallel societies marginalised the religious minorities, exposed them to contempt and stereotyping, and restricted their freedom except within their own autonomies. (2002: 50)

Soifer, in an assessment of the Castilian laws pertaining to Muslims, corroborates Burns' conclusion:

> Whether as an interfaith utopia, or as a pale Christian imitation of the Islamic *dhimma* model, or as a sign of Spain's supposed exceptionality, *convivencia* has consistently failed on empirical grounds. (2009: 30)

Yet the ambiguities evident within officialised discourse on religious and cultural difference complicate the idea that minorities were indisputably marginalised, something that is also evident in epic poetry in which Moors, and to an extent Jews, are depicted not as oppressed but rather as constituent members of collective, fluid power structures. Beginning with the officialised discourse on Christian identity, the decisive Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 in many ways defined what it meant to be a Christian in medieval Castile. Ruiz postulates that it "created discourses of inclusion and exclusion" and marked the beginning of widespread persecution of Muslims and Jews (2014: 209). Ruiz's view is corroborated by Tieszen's work on religious identity in medieval Iberia: the latter's study of religious polemic in the construction of identity argues that religious identity did not exist spontaneously and was necessarily drawn in treatises as early as 851 in order to

differentiate Christians from Moors, in which the latter was often demonised to construct an image of the former (2013: 3). Christian authors:

> Tried to ensure that the borders distinguishing Christian communities from Muslim ones [...] remained clearly visible so that individuals might remain safely within (or outside of) them. (2013: 3)

Tieszen thus exposes an awareness on the part of the writers of the early medieval Church of the possibility of acculturation and the ensuing anxiety to define a fixed religious identity. Akin to the epic texts, then, ecclesiastical doctrine unconsciously acknowledged the social (or in this case academic) construction of these identity groups. Ruiz, writing specifically on the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, similarly notes the tendency of officialised ecclesiastical discourse to define Christian identity through animosity towards non-Christian groups, in a way that:

> Emphasised membership in a community and that was circumscribed by the administrative and pastoral structure of the Castilian Church and by the close relationship between religion and politics. (2014: 210)

Religious and political identity were thus entwined in the thirteenth century. The fact that Christian identity was still in the process of definition is corroborated by Cohen's assertion that medieval European Christendom was arguably "a conflicted nexus of discourses, lacking uniformity and full cohesion, mutable over time" (2001: 7). This applies not only to medieval Christianity but also to the discourses on gender, religious/cultural background and social structure in medieval Spain. The slippery foundations of Christian identity give weight to the idea that the literature of the period

would necessarily undermine an officialised discourse that has theoretical rather than practical origins.

The legal discourse referring specifically to religious identity in Castile interestingly combines theoretical and practical pronouncements. The former tends to explicitly marginalise non-Christians, while the latter is where we find the ambiguities that implicitly contradict this marginalisation. For example, the *Partidas* devote substantial space to Castile's Muslim population, and both Muslims and Jews are tellingly included in the seventh *Partida* on crime. Several titles relate to practical matters; Burns has also shown how "Alfonso repeats conventional attitudes, restrictions and protections" (2002: 53) towards both Moors and Jews, many of which were cascaded from the Fourth Lateran Council, such as restrictions on dress and appearance. Yet elsewhere we find a simultaneous toleration of separate legal systems and religious practices (such as the allowance for Muslims to have their own oath before a court of law in *Partida* 3: 9, 21) that contradicts the boundary-drawing legislature in the seventh *Partida*. Successive kings of the thirteenth century moreover ignored papal legislation that banned the muezzin's call, and trading across the border in prohibited commodities continued past 1300 (Linehan 2008: 96). Linehan moreover notes that in the *Partidas* more than half of such laws in fact deal with Christian conversion to Islam (2008: 95), as opposed to expanding on the restrictions relevant to Muslims living in Castile. The focus is thus inadvertently on the maintenance of Christian identity in the *Partidas*, rather than imposing practical methods of societal marginalisation. There is thus mounting evidence of an ambiguous attitude towards Muslims in the legal and political texts contemporaneous to the epic. It is thus just as untenable to dismiss *convivencia* in its entirety as it is to claim medieval Spain constituted a post-racial utopia.

The legislative stance towards Jews was similarly ambivalent: Soifer uses evidence from the *Fueros* of Teruel and Cuenca to argue that "Jews were property of the Royal *fisco*" in the thirteenth century, which meant they were often driven to money-lending to satisfy the Crown's demand for loans and taxes a social reality that disproves the antisemitic trope of Jews willingly taking up such occupations (2009: 26). Nirenberg has also pointed out the symbiotic dependence of Jews working in administration and the monarchy: in the thirteenth-fourteenth century in both Castile and Aragon "they served as administrators in the royal court, as physicians, ambassadors and translators" (1996: 28). While Ruiz argues that Jewish-Christian relations were marred by "mistrust and animosity" (2002: 64), such a view is complicated by Linehan who outlines the way in which Fernando III in 1219 petitioned the pope to exempt Castile from the requirements of the Fourth Lateran Council for Jews to wear distinctive dress (2008: 88). The officialised discourse in the form of legal, political decrees in Castile in the thirteenth century also demonstrates an ambiguous, often contradictory, attitude to Jewish-Christian relations that is not necessarily reflective of any social group other than the royal court. A wider social perspective on the Christian attitude towards Jews is found in the *PMC*, the only epic poem to feature Jews in detail. As a product of the early thirteenth century it interestingly corroborates the ambiguity found in officialised discourse, as will be analysed below: the poet comparatively exhibits some of the tolerance noted in the royal decrees, as well as employing anti-Semitic stereotype. The ambiguous stance in thirteenth century Iberian legal and political writings on both Jews and Muslims therefore demonstrates an awareness of and anxiety that religious identity was not fixed, akin to the attempts to define Christian identity in the period. There was thus no homogeneous discourse of oppression; in fact, there remained the possibility for Muslims and Jews living in Castile to wield political and economic power, particularly in the case of the latter

given their close relation to the crown – something we will see magnified in the contemporaneous epic poetry.

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## Modern Identity Theory & the Medieval Epic

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The historical context to the two epic texts in question thus forms clear evidence to show that simplifying, socially-constructed categories of identity abounded in the officialised discourse of medieval Castile. They were used as discursive tools to theoretically empower dominant groups and subject others, yet this theory was not always relevant in practice: as we have seen in the contradictions that start to emerge within the *Partidas*, for example. The definitions of such categories were slippery even in the theoretical models of identity, and these definitions become even slipperier – indeed, they are often erased altogether – in the epic texts in question. What is thus far clear is that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the categories of man, woman, Muslim, Christian, Jew, noble, and townsperson:

> Signal an intersecting constellation of power relationships that produce unequal material realities and distinctive social experiences for individuals and groups positioned within them. (Chepp and Hill Collins 2013: 3)

The *PMC* and *SIL* will both unveil these “unequal material realities” and offer up alternatives that are more egalitarian in nature. The epic is not transgressive or subversive, per se, as the real impact of theoretical discourse is hard to measure. Rather, it provides a view on lived experience. Modern theoretical frameworks such as

intersectionality are therefore eminently useful in decoding both the officialised, legal texts of the period and the complex network of power relations and identities crafted by medieval poets. I will now briefly outline further theoretical models that will be usefully applied to the epic in order to unveil the non-essential, evolving nature of identity and the extent to which identity formation determines the power a character can wield in the society of the text.

First and foremost, I employ Foucault's conception of power; one that is particularly apt for the epic poetry in opposition to officialised discourse, as the former has public, indeed collective, origins, and is closer to the real interaction between identity and power in practice in their contemporary society. Foucault understands power not as "a general system of domination exerted by one group over another" (1998: 92). Rather, he outlines:

> The omnipresence of power [...] because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere. (1998: 93)

In summary, for Foucault:

> Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society. (1998: 93)

Power can thus be said to reside in all interactions; in all relationships and microcosmic societal groups functioning within one larger collective. This can thus be historicised to the Middle Ages, for the epic poets acknowledge both identity and power as fluid – one is able to acquire it through identity transformation, and it is shared between those belonging to multiple identity categories apart from the dominant male, Castilian nobility. The relevance of the Foucauldian conception of power to formations of gender identity in the Middle Ages has been noted by Erler and Kowaleski, although it has not yet been mapped onto Iberia or complicated with additional categories of identity and their intersection with gender. An intersectional approach to identity in the Castilian epic is even more thorough and similarly brings

> Power relations to light, not by examining the political level of the state, but by focusing attention on discourses at the micro-level of society. (Erler and Kowakeski 2003: 15)

That is, between families, rival kin-groups, and those across and/or on the moving borders of Castile.

Power can thus be said to evolve out of identity formation and interaction in society. In order to better understand the fluidity of identity in the poetry, and by association the fluidity of power between heterogeneous groups, I will moreover make reference to modern theoretical models of identity that show it to be fluid and socially constructed. In addition to the intersectional method, modern gender theory is useful in decoding the poetic techniques with which the epic texts demonstrate the constructive nature of identity. Wharton quotes Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin who view gender as "a system of social practices", a system that "creates and maintains gender distinctions and

it organises relations of inequality on the basis of these distinctions" (2001: 8). Butler's conception of gender is also relevant to understand the way in which epic characters perform and construct their own identity. Indeed, the idea that gender is the social significance that sex assumes within a given culture (1993: 5) is easily historicised to the Middle Ages. Moreover, Butler's idea that gender is non-verbal is particularly pertinent to the epic form:

> An identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylised repetition of acts. The effect of gender is produced through the stylisation of the body, and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. (2002: 179)

Butler's focus on non-verbal communication is moreover particularly suitable to epic poetry, in which identity formation and power acquisition is achieved through action and interaction in a society marked by perpetual warfare. The notion of gender identity as a stylised performance will be applied at the intersection of social rank in the *SIL*, where we find Castilian noblemen patently constructing their own identity in the public *tablado* that opens the text. I will moreover take further the methods of extant feminist scholarship on the Middle Ages that has applied modern gender theory, such as Hadley's application of social constructionism to masculinity in the Middle Ages, advocating an approach that is culturally-contingent:

> Masculinity is problematic as an analytical category […] it was created and recreated in historically specific contexts. (2015: 4)

Mazo-Karras' important work on medieval masculinity similarly emphasises the need to treat it as fluid:

> The different forms masculinity takes even in a single society in the same time period confirm dramatically that it is not a single entity. (2003: 9)

Modern theories of identity formation and power acquisition thus put into words what Bynum has already identified as unconsciously present in medieval texts on identity: that when medieval theorists write about identity in the sense of individual, those passages "are not about definition at all, and are certainly not essentialist" (1995: 18). There were a variety of discourses around the body, some essential, others not; identity was in debate then as it is now, a debate or indeed a "working through" that is at the core of both the *PMC* and *SIL*.

Finally, my analysis proceeds with an assumption of the subjectivity of the medieval self and self-reflexivity in medieval literature; something that - although perhaps patently obvious in analyses of modern literature - is still being debated amongst the different schools of thought in medieval Hispanic studies, as well as in medieval studies more widely. Aers summarises the polemic in his rejection of 'new historicism' and the idea that the Middle Ages was a "homogenous, uncomplicated monolith" (1992: 178). Aers agrees with Spearing's view that in the twelfth century "knowing the inner core of human nature within oneself is an explicit theme and preoccupation in literature of the period" (1992: 182). Cohen takes this notion further still by using medieval humoral and astrological theory to prove that "the body is a site of unraveling and invention in medieval texts of numerous genres" (2003: xviii). Delbrugge has also rejected new historicism, identifying "the existence of individual agency in the construction of identity,

either conscious or unconscious" (2015: 4). I therefore hope to go some way in exploring Aers' call for further studies to:

> Explore the relations between different versions of the self, different genres, different communities, ideologies, class and gender experiences in the later Middle Ages. (1992: 195)

The intersectional method will consider the aforementioned experiences simultaneously, whilst also decoding the way in which poetic identity formation is connected to power in the society of both texts, and to what extent this contradicts the officialised line of discourse discussed above.

Henceforth I will use gender as a starting point to discuss the poets' conception of identity in the *PMC* and *SIL*. Chapter one presents a comparison of the depiction of women in both the *PMC* and *SIL*. As well as analysing the extent to which women's behaviour contradicts the officialised discourse on 'femininity', which will then be considered in light of their socio-cultural background and how, regardless of this background, they are able to wield power in what at first sight is the Christian male-dominated Castilian *milieu*. I will then separately address the texts' male characters in chapters two and three; a more extensive analysis that is necessary given paucity of scholarly enquiry on epic masculinity – as well as how it intersects with religious/cultural background and social position. Taken together, the *PMC* and *SIL* demonstrate a true epic subjectivity; that is, an awareness on the part of the poets that identity is not essential and cannot be defined by the sex, religion or social position an individual is born into. The fluidity of identity categories will moreover reveal a destabilisation of the nexus of power from the monarchy or nobility. In the case of the *PMC,* power is relocated within the

collective, regardless of the social rank, gender or religious or cultural background of its constituent members; while in the *SIL* the concentration of power within one homogeneous societal *milieu* is depicted as a force for eventual failure and decay.

# Chapter One

# Intersectional female identities in the *Poema de mio Cid* and *Siete Infantes de Lara*

The primary aim of this thesis is an intersectional analysis of identity across the *PMC* and the *SIL,* firstly in order to demonstrate an unconscious awareness on the part of the poets that contemporary categories of identity (gender, social rank, religious and cultural background) are fluid and evolving.[9] The preceding introductory analysis has thus far uncovered an incongruity between medieval theoretical models of gender, religious and cultural background and social rank and the realities found in legal and political texts. I now argue this to be taken further in the epic poetry of the period, to the extent of an unconscious erasure of the boundaries between men and women, Christian and Moor and royalty, nobility and townspeople drawn by officialised texts. Epic poetry can thus be argued to correspond more closely to what can be deemed lived experience. The discordance of poetic characterisation with officialised discourse on identity in both texts then implicitly undermines the unequal power relationships established by legal, philosophical, ecclesiastical and political models of identity between socially-constructed groups. This undermining takes the form of a relocation of power within the

[9] All references to the *PMC* are henceforth taken from *The Poem of the Cid* (1984), referring to verse numbers only. The *SIL* does not exist as an epic poem per se. The story is best preserved in the *Estoria de España* (henceforth *EE*) and the *Crónica de 1344* (henceforth *1344).* All references made here refer to the versions of both chronicle redactions by Pidal in *La leyenda de los siete infantes de Lara* (1896), in the following format: chronicle: page, line number(s).

deinvidualised collective in the *PMC*, and of an unconscious critique of the male nobility across both versions of the *SIL*.

I will begin with an analysis of female characters and the intersection of femininity with religious and cultural background and social rank in the *PMC* and *SIL*. By assessing the poetic presentation of men and women separately, I aim to fill extant lacunae in scholarship on the texts that have not yet addressed the ways in which socio-cultural background influences the portrayal of gendered behaviours. The women of the *PMC* are willing conduits of male authority and influence in both their speech and action. Their femininity coupled with their social position means they share in and transform the Cid's identity, who in turn is dependent on women in his attainment of absolution from the King and militaristic success. In comparison, the at once overlapping and divergent depictions of women in the two versions of the *SIL* will reveal an anxiety to define women's roles across varying social groups, a conception of femininity that is at once heterogeneous and open to outside influence; permeable borders that one finds echoed in their socio-political context. The poet-chroniclers' inability to define the limits of female power means the ensuing violence and eventual outcome of the story is unconsciously ironic, as it is incongruously attributed to the female protagonist, Doña Lambra, by the men of the text, who are blind to their own quest for power.

The world of the *PMC* has been deemed by scholars as inherently masculine[10], as one that advocates a monolithic, indeed stereotypically medieval, perception of womanhood, "una ideología estática" (Lacarra 1988: 20). Yet an analysis of each female character's situation in their own specific context- their location, home life, and cultural

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[10] Harney argues that at the core of the *PMC* is warfare which allows "men to prove their manhood to the maximum." (2013: 22)

provenance in addition to their gender – will show the poet conceives of female identity as socially influenced, if not entirely constructed. Moreover, the fluid nature of femininity means women can adopt traits and behaviours coded masculine in officialised discourse, and subsequently wield a power shared with men. The poet's depiction of women in the *PMC* is, however, on the basic level of the plot symptomatic of a society governed by the interests of men: Jimena and the Cid's daughters depend on him financially and emotionally, whilst the latter are fundamental to his political progression and influence for posterity. Yet they are not confined to one role and wholly limited and silenced. The female characters of the *PMC* evolve, adapt and react as much as their male counterparts; their behaviour changes with each situation and their role as quite physical extensions of the protagonist means they also embody and guard his power and reputation. Their importance is moreover acknowledged repeatedly by male characters in the poem: treatment of women is highlighted by the Cid to be a mark of honourable behaviour: "si bien las servides, yo vos rrendré buen galardón" (2581). "Galardón" has financial implications which encapsulates women's decisive link to social rank and economic power; thus the *PMC* crosses over from the epic to the chivalric in the importance placed upon men treating women well in order for both to maintain their social position. Women therefore not only determine male honour but also monetary power.[11] Indeed, a passing comment from Minaya to the Cid shows recognition of what is the most important role played by women - the maintenance of lineage: "en buen ora nasquiestes de madre" (379). Men are irrevocably joined to and/or from ("de") women; the latter are physically an extension to the protagonist that must be given away for

[11] Gerli has moreover noted how the poet's conscious adaptation of historical sources emphasises the role played by women in the *PMC*: the poet excludes the Cid's historical son from the poem "to emphasise the significance of the feminine in the dynamics of the plot and in the fictional hero's life" (1995: 263).

acceptance into the Leonese fold. They are powerful yet independent tools to extend his influence, as from the very beginning the Cid is preoccupied with building his own and his daughters' prestige by finding them a match in marriage, asking God "que aún con mis manos / case estas mis fijas" (282). The poet therefore blurs the distinction between the Cid's honour and reputation and those of his wives and daughters: the social context of a stratified society and an unstable existence as an *infanzón* means the borders between the Cid and his female family members are permeable, resulting in a heterogeneous conception of identity, one defined by multiple individuals who then share in the spoils of – that is, the socio-economic power that comes with – collective reputation.

The first woman we encounter in the poem is, interestingly, a stranger to the Cid: the nine year old girl at the gates of Burgos. On news of his exile the Cid travels to Burgos from Vivar, hoping to lodge there but the king's orders incite fear into the populace: "el rrey don Alfonso tanto avié la grand saña" (22). The only person to come forward is the nine year old girl: the notable choice of a young, female spokesperson for the town thus prefigures the importance of women in the Cid's quest to regain the king's favour. Like the Moorish girl in *SIL* she is not in a position of social superiority, yet her words have power over the protagonist and ultimately spur on the story's progression and overall resolution. Her language is juridical, she is fully aware of *ira regia*: "el rrey lo ha vedado, anoch d'el entro su carta" (41). She speaks on behalf of the collective and is aware of the importance of earthly possessions and wealth, something that later becomes a key focus of the Cid and his retinue throughout their campaigns:

> "Si non, perderiemos los averes e las casas
> e demás, los ojos de las caras." (45-46)

Most importantly the girl brings clarity to the regretful Cid who up until this point has been in a state of denial: after she has finished speaking "ya lo vee el Cid que del rrey non avie gracia" (50). The girl's speech is incited by a unique political situation which causes her to step outside of expectations of both her age, gender and social rank, for she returns to her house after her speech so is likely the daughter of ordinary townspeople. The poet therefore begins the text with an embodiment of femininity that was marginalised in officialised discourse; yet in a practical situation, the poet depicts the power she is able to wield over a man of higher social status solely by virtue of her words.

The nine-year-old girl begins a consistent pattern of female characterisation throughout the *PMC*: women linguistically motivate the Cid and are tied to his honour. This continues in the portrayal of both the Cid's wife, Jimena, and his daughters Elvira and Sol. They first appear during the Cid's arrival at Cardeña where they are piously depicted praying for the Cid. Jimena addresses her husband as "canpeador" on more than once occasion (241, 266). She is aware of the political situation, blaming "malos mestureros" (268) for his exile. Also addresses him with another masculinised epithet, "barba tan conplida" (268), a public display of aggrandisement. Jimena is speaking in the language of the Cid's retinue; she has adopted this language for effect in a performance to both him and his retinue (as indeed the nine year old girl does in verse 41). It is important to note the reason why Jimena speaks this way where she is at Cardeña: as a wife of an *infanzón* her home life is unstable and fluctuating. Critics often focus on the Cid as a character in exile but often neglect to assess the effect a fluctuating, unstable living situation has on his family and what we see of them in speech; thus one could therefore conclude that Jimena's unstable position results in a politicised speech: the only way she is able to contribute to the Cid's – and by her association her family's – acquisition of security and power. The Cid's reaction is equally important, for it is both physical and emotional:

> A las sus fijas en braço las prendía (275)
>
> Llora de los ojos, tan fuertemientre sospira (277)

Jimena then elaborates in a long prayer from line 326, the longest soliloquy in the text performed by a woman who is highly eloquent and capable of addressing a group. Official doctrine prized good speech as an important marker of masculinity in the period, as Bailey has shown:

> Knights had to be adept at expressing themselves in speech [...] Status is reflected in speech and [...] good speech coupled with high status sustains power and authority. (2003: 255)

Jimena may not strive for power but is aware of her influence over her husband's, which is hers too by proxy. After her prayer we see the very physical importance of Jimena and the daughters to the Cid: "assis' parten unos d'otros como la uña de la carne" (375, also repeated in 2642 upon the girls' marriages). This constitutes a bodily, even violent separation: the family are quite literally part of the Cid – his public, heroic identity is therefore a composite of himself and those who bolster his honour, an idea corroborated by Sponsler's argument that the epic emphasises "the role women and family play in creating and maintaining a man's honour and masculinity" (1975: 44). While masculinity is not created by women, its borders are problematised by their behaviour – as we see here in the way that Jimena speaks of her husband in politically aggrandising terms akin to his retinue. The physical imagery used by the poet is later echoed in the *Partidas*' concept of the body politic, with the King as the head of the nation, his subjects become the body's various composite parts (*Partida* 2: 2, 7).

Women's language is therefore not only confined to the religious sphere; the use of epic formulae implicitly demonstrates Jimena's enduring socio-political function. For example, before their victorious entry into Valencia Jimena declares: "¡Merced, Campeador, /en buen hora cinxiestes espada!" (1595). Jimena reinforces his warriorhood and once again speaks in public terms, using the same words as the Bishop Jerome in his absolution; thus she too importantly absolves and reconciles the soldier role with his familial one, aiding the creation of the Cid's perfectly balanced identity, his *mesura*, by adopting the language of his male contemporaries. Women are therefore not only crucial in the creation of the identity of the hero: they are part of it. The importance of Jimena's speech in the formation of the Cid's identity – and her adoption of the language of his male contemporaries – is supported by Gerli's assertion, that:

> The relationship between the masculine and the feminine is portrayed as a constructive force transcending the physical and capable of producing mutually beneficial effects. (1995: 263)

The inter-dependence that characterises the Cid's own family can moreover be found mapped by the poet onto the wider community of Castile itself from the very start of the poem. As the Cid departs Burgos, we see how "exiénlo ver mugieres e varones / burgeses y burgesas por la finiestras son" (16b-17), and subsequently that "de las sus bocas todos dizían una rrazón" (19). It is moreover notable that both men and women are depicted as crying, "plorando de sus ojos" (18). Regardless of gender or social rank the citizens exclaim their regret in unison. The Cid therefore incites collective identity at home and beyond – a unifying ideology that was particularly prevalent in historiographical texts of

the thirteenth century as we have seen, one that leaves behind gender distinction for the progress of the populace.

The characterisation of the Cid's daughters Elvira and Sol similarly departs from monolithic expectations of medieval femininity and has them wield power on behalf of, or indeed together with, their father the Cid. This is best demonstrated during the *Afrenta de Corpes* episode in the third *cantar*. After the girls' marriages to the Infantes de Carrión at the end of the second cantar, the brothers are humiliated in front of the Cid and his men as they cower away from the lion – causing them to declare "nos vengaremos por aquésta la del león" (2719), in the form of abusing the girls on their journey back to Carrión. The girls' response transcends their age and social position as young women who are willingly raising their own, their family's and their father's retinue's stature through a strategic marriage alliance:

> "Por Dios vos rrogamos, don Diego e don Ferrando!
> Dos espadas tenedes fuertes e tajadores,
> al una dizen Colada e al otra Tizón,
> cortandos las cabecas, mártires seremos nós." (2725-2728)

Their invocation of a desire for martyrdom takes the daughters into a liminal position between masculinity and femininity, as Schaus explains:

> The image of the martyr was essentially male [...] Nevertheless, early Christian women saints were praised by denying or transcending the natural weakness of their sex; they became a *femina virilis*, or 'female man of God', and as such won the crown of martyrdom. (2006: 348)

Their desperate situation therefore leads them to redefine their identity in masculine terms: an example of women crucially wielding linguistic power over their adversaries to overcome the potential dishonour of both themselves and the collective they belong to. Despite their state of distress, the girls retain a last vestige of honour by lying face down, "tanto son de traspuestas que non pueden dezir nada" (2784). In denying an on-looking stranger (before Félez is identified to them as family) access to their faces or voices they selflessly conceal their identity to protect their familial honour, an extension of the desire for martyrdom professed in the previous scene. Their lack of speech simultaneously allows for implicit criticism of the Infantes, harking back in the passage to when their husbands are heard plotting their downfall. There is a therefore a linguistic focus throughout the *Poema* on the antitheses between the honourable and the dishonourable, the latter characterised by impetuosity; the daughters thus display a *mesura* akin to the Cid and the male members of his retinue, as they hold onto the last vestiges of power they have over the Infantes.

The girls do, however, eventually come round, and the Cid comes out of the passage's subtext in Sol's speech when she appeals to Feléz Muñoz invoking her father with "Si vos lo meresca, mio primo, nuestro padre el Canpeador" (2797), an epithet which not only exemplifies the way in which the women in the *Poema* contribute to the heroic image of the hero (akin to the way her mother Jimena employs masculine courtly discourse earlier in the poem) but also is a clever condensation of what is to come: it is an implicit prediction that the Cid will use his achievements, prowess and implied desire for revenge to triumph over the Infantes. Sol retains hope in the moment of greatest despair, impelling the trajectory of the narrative onward to the looming process of retribution:

Tan a grant duelo falava doña Sol:

> "Sí vos lo meresca, mio primo, nuestro padre el Canpeador,
>
> ¡dandos del agua, si vos vala el Criador." (2796-2798)

In ending in "el Criador", line 2796 then links it to "Canpeador" through assonantal rhyme to acknowledge that God is indeed on her father's side and that victory against their attackers is impending. The girls are calm and collected, following on from the scene of their assault wherein Sol pleaded with her abusers in eloquent, juridical language. Here the effect is very much the same: she speaks in a measured, direct manner, despite "Tan a grant duelo", whose primary concerns fall in the realm of family – her father and a basic necessity, water. She is excellent at prioritising, which calls to mind the antithetical materialism exhibited by the Infantes earlier who revel in their dowry but here the "galardón" demanded by Félez from God is quite the opposite (2782). The girls shutting down their sensorial perception would moreover suggest to a contemporary audience that they do not conform to the image of women found in officialised discourse of the medieval period, namely that of uncontrollable emotion. Women, regardless of age, are therefore able to exert power on behalf of their family in speech, as seen through the Sol's measured speech after their assault as well as through her mother's calculated manipulation of religious dialogue for political ends to publically aggrandise her husband and encourage his retinue, which by association she is ultimately part of. Women in the *PMC* are therefore presented by the poet as composite parts of the Cid; their relative and protagonist whose identity they are part of and appropriate and whose power they are directly responsible for. They too are responsible for upholding and growing the power of their family and their father's collective. The characterisation of the female characters in the *PMC* is thus fluid, with women exhibiting behaviours variously coded as both masculine and feminine in received wisdom. Moreover, this fluidity enables the women of the text to transcend both their gender and social position in the acquision of power,

particularly from blood-born Castilian nobility in the case of the daughters' moral victory over the Infantes de Carrión.

Women fulfil a similarly decisive function in the *SIL* as in the *PMC*, in that despite a physically passive role their speech enables them to independently wield power and have a decisive impact on the fate of the men of the story. The *SIL* deviates even further from the European epic tradition, with its echoes of romance and its blatantly comedic features, which I will argue to be often overlooked in extant critical work on the story.[12] I will discuss the story's three key female figures, all of whom depart from stereotypical notions of medieval femininity either in spite or because of their social status or religious/cultural background: Doña Lambra, Doña Sancha and the Moorish girl, noting difference where necessary between their portrayal in the *EE* and *1344*, as it is also at these points of difference that we find contrasting readings of character: a medieval conception of identity that is malleable and open to revision. By analysing the speech, actions and overall influence each female character has over the men of the story it is possible to ascertain a poetic anxiety surrounding the power wielded by women, both consciously and unconsciously, throughout both versions of the texts. The poet-chroniclers show female behaviour to be symptomatic of social factors rather than an innate femininity: Doña Lambra's vengefulness is rooted in her public dishonour, Sancha's violent, masculine blood-lust in *1344* stems from grief, whilst the Moorish girl admits having overcome traditionally feminine behaviours because of her background, thus serving as a paragon of courage to Ruy Velázquez.

[12] By 'epic tradition' I refer to its generic definition in the medieval context, summarised by McDonald as "a type of heroic poetry that purported to exhibit the defining moral values of the society for which it was created." (2002: 232)

Doña Lambra is often read as the instigator of the tragedy: the noble bride of Ruy Velázquez whose cousin is murdered before her at her wedding. Lambra's praise of her cousin's prowess at the *tablado*, together with her outrage at his murder by the youngest *infante* Gonzalo, often leads critics to deem her the story's antagonist. I propose a revision of the prevailing critical view of Lambra as the "witchlike" villain (Montgomery 1989: 883). Krow-Lucal goes as far as to argue that Ruy "has become a victim of a shrewish wife who is taking far too much interest in revenge – which is (or should be) a masculine concern" (1995: 357). Krow-Lucal ostensibly genders vengeance in the medieval mind in a reading that all too readily places the blame on Lambra, something entirely discordant with the critical depiction of Castilian masculinity present throughout the text. The true catalyst of the tragedy is the men's reaction to a passive noblewoman's unforeseen power: it is Lambra's overt praise of her cousin Alvar that then leads her husband to wreak destructive vengeance – a power constituted in words alone. Ruy in fact exploits her grief as a pre-requisite for a socio-political mission to ascend the noble hierarchy, as will be discussed in chapter three. This is supported by Pidal's assertion that Lambra was indeed seriously dishonoured at the *huerta* by Gonzalo, in addition to the murder at her wedding:

> La desonra de Doña Lambra era grandísima, no tanto por haberse matado a aquel hombre en su presencia, como por haberlo muerto bajo su manto. Este, según el derecho germánico, era un signo de protección. (1934: 6)

We cannot therefore assume that Lambra is "dramatizando su supuesta perdida de honor" (Ratcliffe 2011: 133) after Alvar's death. It is the unexpected, uncontrollable power of noble femininity and its all-consuming influence over Gonzalo González, and its opportune exploitation by Ruy Velázquez that leads to the untimely deaths of all of the

Infantes' and their father's imprisonment. The poet-chroniclers therefore problematise – and indeed mock - the instinctive response of Gonzalo González because of the medieval Castilian honour code and the intrinsically slippery nature of power. Although power is constituted in the words of one noblewoman, its recovery is paradoxically attempted through internal conflict between male members of the Castilian nobility.

Lambra's actions and motivations are portrayed very differently in the two versions of the *SIL* to be discussed.[13] Whilst in the *EE* the poet-chronicler affords her more direct speech and explains her genuine upset at Gonzalo González's ostensibly unexpected nudity as we shall see, in *1344* a condemning narrative voice blames Lambra for the entire tragedy from the outset: "por esto que Doña Lambra dixo se siguio mucho mal" (251, 10). Emphasis is placed on what Lambra "dixo", immediately suggesting her influence to be purely verbal. What is ironic, however, is that her words are indeed paraphrased by the narrator:

> Plogol mucho, e con grant plaser que ende ouo dixo aquellos que y feyan con ella que non vedaria su amor a ome tan de pro sy non fuese pariente tan llegado. (251, 8-10)

This is one of several instances in which Lambra is sexualised and the poet-chronicler insinuates adultery in *1344*. Yet when her speech is juxtaposed against the very real actions of the male characters, with their tangible, often bloody consequences, it is hard to ignore the poet's ironic excess in attributing the blame to the opinion of a single *muger*

[13] The differences in her portrayal have been noted by several critics on the *SIL.* Pattison, for example, deems her "more reprehensible" in *1344* (1983: 52), whilst Pidal similarly agrees that this version emphasises "los rasgos odiosos en la fisionomía de la orgullosa y vengativa dueña" (1896: 23).

*desonrrada*. When we compare the same passage to what is found in the *EE*, the praise is in direct speech and is concentrated on Alvar's physical prowess, avoiding any mention of *amor*:

> "Agora vet, amigos, que cauallero tan esforçado es Aluar Sanchez, ca de quantos alli son llegados non pudo ninguno ferir en somo del tablado sinon el solo tan sola mientre, et mas valio el alli solo que todos los otros." (209, 18-21)

Lambra emphasises Alvar's individual worth with the repetition of "solo", an obvious juxtaposition to the Infantes, so often depicted speaking and acting en masse throughout the text. Moreover we then see Alvar approach Gonzalo González "solo", whilst the latter brings a vassal to help. It is highly likely that the poet-chronicler had access to the *versión regia* of the *EE* (Pattison 2013: 391) as well as a later poetic version of the *Cantar de gesta* (Pattison 1983: 43-55) and departed from the former at this point, meaning a conscious decision was made to sexualise her admiration of her cousin. We thus have two Lambras: or rather, two interpretations of how Lambra would have behaved in order for the story to reach its denouement. These points of difference emphasise the heterogeneity of female personalities not only in the *SIL* but in the minds of the poet-chroniclers: the motivations of an influential noblewoman has no poetic consensus. In their revision the poet-chronicler of *1344* thus concedes an epic subjectivity; that is, the gap opened up between the two versions displays a conscious uncertainty as to why a powerful woman behaves how she does, revealing a medieval conception of gender as malleable. Bluestine has similarly noted that same passage in *1344* is more erotically suggestive (1989: 202). Lambra's effect on the masculine sphere of action is however the same in both versions: one woman's verbal praise has tangible power over the male social hierarchy; a threat to Gonzalo González whose hyper-masculinity is portrayed often in jest, as will be discussed

in chapter three. The young Gonzalo then goes on to kill Alvar Sánchez, and Lambra's reaction is reported in indirect speech: "llorando muy fuerte miente e disiendo que nunca duena fuera tan desonrrada como ella" (252, 16). After the murder, Ruy automatically arrives to punch Gonzalo without any real imploring from his new bride. Akin to the PMC, women hold power over men of the same societal *milieu*; their verbal power translates into a physical re-balance of power by men in the realm of violence and battle, as per Sponsler's argument that women are privy to and in control of male honour (1975: 44). In the *EE* Lambra's power is ambiguous and unconscious on her part, whereas *1344* deems her fully conscious and erotically motivated to disrupt homosocial bonds.

The episode that seals the fate of the Infantes at the hands of Lambra's husband Ruy occurs after the wedding at the secluded *huerta*, where the Infantes have gone in service to Lambra as penance for Gonzalo's prior indiscretion. It is vital to note the difference in the way in which this episode is introduced in the two chronicles. The structure of both dictates that the reader is often given the medieval equivalent of a 'spoiler' in the form of a chapter title: in the case of this episode, the *EE* title summary gives an ostensibly objective judgment of what is to follow: "De cuemo los siet inffantes mataron al vassallo de donna Llanbla" (213). The narrative focus is therefore wholly on her impending dishonour, as opposed to what drove the Infantes to murder, implicitly victimising Lambra. Comparatively, in *1344* we find a title unrelated to one of the most dramatic parts of the story, with the poet-chronicler instead choosing to emphasise how the story "tornan a fablar de Gonçalo Gustios, que era en Salas, e de Ruy Vasques su cuñado" (254, 6-7). *1344* continues in a similar vein by implying Lambra's sexual deviance: on one of the first occasions when she speaks directly she suggests that Gonzalo removed his clothes purposefully:

> "Amigas, non veedes como and a Gonçalo Gonçalez en panos de lino? Creo que lo non fase por al sinon por que nos enamoremos de el. Por çierto vos digo que me pesa mucho si el asi escapar de mi que yo non aya derecho d'el." (255, 22-24)

By comparison, the Lambra of the *EE* is portrayed as upset by this display, "pesol mucho de coraçon" (214, 1-2) as opposed to being lustful. The poet-chronicler also importantly retains the possibility of an erotic motivation on the part of Gonzalo who "desnuyose estonçes los pannos et paronse en pannos de lino, et tomo su açor en mano et fuel bannar" (213, 15-17). Conversely in *1344* there would be a dissonance between his lack of modesty and the poetic characterisation of Lambra as lustful, so the poet-chronicler poignantly adds the following detail: "cuydando que lo non veyan las dueñas" (255, 17-18) – insinuating that Lambra went out of her way to watch him bathe; once again a further example of her sexualisation from one version to the next which in turn implicitly divests Gonzalo of any blame.

In both versions this leads to the assault of Gonzalo with a blood-filled cucumber by Lambra's servant, on her instruction. Scholars have offered up various interpretations of this insult, ranging from medical to phallic[14]. Bluestine's reading goes as far as to describe Lambra as "the evil, immoral temptress, through verbal innuendo and symbolic actions which seriously compromise her sexual modesty" (1982: 207). Textual evidence from the *EE* does not support Lambra being the wholehearted temptress: she merely suspects Gonzalo's flirtation, and the audience never discovers her motives for entering the *huerta* at that time; thus the possibility for coincidence prevails and only adds to the ensuing humour of the episode in Gonzalo's extreme reaction to a carefully planned insult, which underscores Lambra's calculating nature. This comes to a head with her performance of

[14] See, for example, Lacarra Lanz (1993) and Burt (1982).

grief, both physical and verbal, after Gonzalo kills her servant in retaliation: grief not only for the death of her servant but for her absent husband who is not there to physically defend her as would befit a noblewoman:

> Lloro ella e fiso tan grant llanto sobrel con todas sus duenas, por tres dias, que por maravilla fue, e rronpio todos sus panos, llamandose biuda e que non auia marido, e desto mando querellar a Ruy Vasquez. (*EE*: 258, 3-4)

Lambra emasculates her husband in a pseudo-sexual gesture of mourning as a "biuda": the poet refuses to elucidate whether she is mourning Ruy's potency or indeed her servant with whom she had a close relationship. Until the very end of the story – in both the *EE* and *1344* – the audience is thus left with only insinuations as to Doña Lambra's motives. The poet-chroniclers thus carefully craft an ambiguity: the fact it could have been either Gonzalo González's hyper-masculine ego or Lambra's unquenchable lust only heightens the humour of the episode and reveals the dramatic outcome of the story to be entirely discordant with its catalyst.

Ultimately it is her social position, that of a noblewoman directly related to the count, which guarantees Lambra's survival until the latter dies in the *EE*. If Lambra had been killed earlier, this likely would have caused further bloody vengeance-wreaking by the Count. Her nobility privileges her and extends her sphere of influence. Meanwhile *1344* has the count turn against her: Lambra argues "si don Rodrigo alguna cosa fiso yo non he culpa en ello" (313: 13-14). The count then retorts "ca vos basteçiestes todas estas trayçiones e males que el fiso" (313: 15-16) depicting Lambra as the scheming puppet-master of Ruy. By having the count blame Lambra and acknowledge her boundless power and influence, the poet-chronicler in *1344* illustrates an anxiety that Castilian noblemen

lack total agency – an anxiety that Ruy himself exploits in his conscious use of Lambra as a scapegoat (as will be discussed in chapter three). Lambra therefore occupies a problematic space between unconsciously powerful victim and knowingly all-powerful villain, as neither text is conclusive. By granting her the status of villain *1344* thus empowers her, and makes female speech just as offensive and powerful as male violence. The more balanced portrayal found in the *EE* leaves open the possibility that Lambra is indeed the victim, whilst the men of the story are violent and reactive. Lambra is thus ultimately a malleable figure; the varying levels of power she potentially could wield across the *EE* and *1344* versions of the text thus retain the possibility for noblewomen to have been either powerless or entirely powerful in contemporary Castile; a power that runs fluidly from Lambra to have a real physical impact between her male counterparts.

The two other female characters in the *SIL* both play far more pivotal roles in the story's outcome in the *1344* than in the *EE*, from which one can draw clear comparisons between both chronicler-poets' view of women. The Moorish girl, with whom the Infantes' father Gonzalo Gustioz is imprisoned, is a testament to the way in which literary texts at the time of the Islamic conquest demonstrate "plural, ambivalent attitudes" towards Moors (Hazbun 2015: 4). There was no monolithic attitude of Moors as 'bad'; something corroborated by the two versions of the *SIL* giving two very different accounts of this outspoken female character, who is both servant-prisoner and noble. In the *EE* significant power is attached to her words: she is able to successfully console Gonzalo Gustioz, is very aware of her own femininity and praises herself for having overcome it in not succumbing to grief after the death of her own sons:

> "Et pues yo, que soy mugier, me esforçe, et non di por ende tanto que me yo matasse, nin me dexe morir". (238, 8-10)

These words inspire Gonzalo to overcome his own grief; thus Moorish femininity serves as an exemplar to Castilian masculinity. Whilst in *1344* the Moorish girl also "fablaua muy bien e muy apuesta mientre" (283, 18), her story is revealed to be nothing more than a lie that begets violence: she is then raped by Gonzalo Gustioz and conceives Mudarra. Her speech is more in line with that of Lambra's in *1344*; a view of the feminine rhetoric as fundamentally manipulative, enabling male violence. Thus as modern readers at a privileged standpoint we see both a thirteenth and fourteenth century poet's view of the evolving nature of a character's identity. Lambra does not evolve so drastically from the *EE* to *1344*; there thus existed an uncertainty surrounding Moorish women and a recognition of identity as non-essential and need of (re-) interpretation by the medieval chroniclers, particularly with regards to those that belonged to different social groups to a text's author. There thus retains the possibility in the EE that even Moorish women of lower social status can have a considerable impact within the male, Castilian, noble *milieu*.

The Infantes' mother Sancha also dramatically changes from one chronicle to the next: in the *EE* she is hardly mentioned, whereas in *1344* we see her depart from the image of the demure, mourning noblewoman constructed in the former text. Despite obvious associations with the blood of Christ, Sancha's pagan – even vampiric – dream to drink her brother Ruy's blood in an abject gesture of vengeance is entirely incongruous to her social rank and religious identity. McCracken has convincingly argued that blood signifies differently depending on the gender of the body from which it flows: in this case, the bleeding male body is feminised (2010: 1-21). After wreaking destruction on behalf of his wife Lambra, Ruy's emasculation and rejection from respectable society is conducted by his own sister. With the arrival of Mudarra we see Sancha's blood lust intensify,

bordering on the sexual: she hears the news that her step-son has all but killed her brother “con muy grant plaser” (311). Sancha then attempts to fulfil her dream by drinking his blood and is only stopped by Mudarra:

> “Non quiera Dios que tal cosa pase, que sangre de ome traydor entre en cuerpo atan leal e bueno como el vuestro.” (311-312)

Sancha desires the merging of her brother’s body with her own: the boundary herself and her brother thus break down. In doing so the poet undermines gender difference between the feminised Ruy and his sister whose uncontrollable blood-lust conforms to the medieval stereotype of the lustful woman[15]. Unconscious irony also stems from the fact that Christian morality is enforced by a recently converted Muslim, and that Ruy’s blood already runs in his sister’s veins. Sancha still does not cease in a quest for the most violent end possible for her brother, requesting another *tablado* so that “los carnes del traydor fuesen todas partidas en pedaços” (312: 18-19). Sancha’s overt desire for physical, violent revenge contrasts to Lambra’s verbal insinuations. Indeed, her behaviour is more akin to that of the violent Infantes earlier in the story: something corroborated by Ratcliffe who views Sancha’s behaviour as “poco femenina” (2011: 137). Mudarra eventually cedes to Sancha’s violent demands: another example of the verbal power of female, Castilian nobility to exert physical power over Castilian noblemen – a power that is conducted via the violence of other Castilian noblemen, as conduits of women. Women are thus able to transform verbal influence into physical violence: a violence that has the power to determine life and death.

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[15] For examples of popular medieval discourse wherein women are depicted as inherently lustful, see Mazo-Karras (2012: Chapter 3)

The three women of the *SIL* therefore behave entirely differently and disrupt the story's predominantly male power structure in varying ways: Lambra, whether or not we blame her scheming or the Castilian honour code, is believed by the texts' male characters to dictate events, despite the overwhelming ambiguity surrounding her motivations. The Moorish girl in the *EE* is a paragon of constancy and eloquence, an image undermined by the poet-chronicler of *1344*, something one could read as an anxiety of deeming a Moorish woman as morally superior to a Christian man in the later version. Finally, the Sancha of *1344* is ruled by a bloodthirsty lust for revenge comparable to her male counterparts. There thus lacks a poetic consensus on female identity and behaviour both within and across both versions of the text. Women are able to both wield power and be dominated; to be honest and eloquent as well as deceptive – an unconscious acknowledgement that the power and influence one has in one's corresponding societal *milieu* is thus not defined by the sex one is born into at birth, or by one's social rank or religious/cultural identity.

# Chapter Two

# Reframing heroic male identity in the *Poema de mio Cid*

A comparative intersectional analysis of women in the *SIL* and *PMC* has thus far demonstrated the way in which the texts complicate and problematise the officialised discourse on gender, racial and social paradigms available in the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries. The *SIL* has drawn two contrasting depictions of Castilian and Moorish women; the interpretative gap that opens up between their characterisation in the *EE* and *1344* demonstrates the fluidity of power that cannot be pinned down to one sex, religious/cultural identity or social rank: as the officialised discourse of thirteenth and fourteenth century Castile attempted. The *PMC* depicts a more homogeneous group of Castilian noblewomen, yet also demonstrates the way in which they operate within their society's power structure as conduits of an authority they develop and share with their male counterparts.

I also now argue that male characters cross the ideological boundaries that ecclesiastical, legal and philosophical texts tried to draw between genders, religious or cultural background and social rank. In doing so, the men of the epic are able to constitute a collective within which power and influence is the responsibility of – and belongs to - its constituent members, regardless of their identity. Beginning with the *PMC*, it is often taken for granted that the poet unquestionably exalts warrior-like, virile men: Harney, for example, argues that the poem exhibits an "obvious glorification of the

masculine adventures of the Cid and his followers" (1993: 23). Yet the poet depicts male characters faltering and behaving differently according to circumstance, and moreover problematises the image of violent masculinity in its implicit critique of the Infantes de Carrión – something we find echoed in the *SIL* poet's portrayal of Gonzalo González. Behaviours coded feminine by the medieval Church and Iberian legal texts - namely deceptive speech, excessive emotion, attention to the cosmetic, and passivity or inaction – are embodied not only by women and negatively feminised men but also by supposed paragons of masculinity throughout the *PMC*. How do we then reconcile the supposed feminisation of the Cid's enemies[16] with the way in which the Cid and his retinue often behave similarly to the poem's positively portrayed female characters? The simple answer is that we cannot, and an examination of this contradiction reveals a shift away from the association of effeminacy with degradation and of stereotypical masculinity with violence and honour that we find in non-literary texts of the period: something we have seen in the portrayal of female characters in both the *SIL* and *PMC*. The behaviour of men of the *PMC* is necessarily at odds with officialised models of the medieval period, and they are moreover portrayed collectively, as reliant on each other and on women. The motif of de-individualisation is implicit in the very poetic fabric of the *PMC* – in the language used by the poet and the characters themselves, with a lexical emphasis on kinship, boundaries and the body. The borders of the individual, like those of the realms the Cid conquers, are thus depicted as permeable: they can change, adapt and extend to include others. Group masculinity enables shared emotions, goals and ultimately determines the success or failure of the Cid's retinue, an interesting parallel to which we find in the ultimately unsuccessful exploits of the *Siete Infantes*.

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[16] Several critics have noted the supposed feminisation of the *PMC*'s Jewish characters (see Mirrer, 1996 and Ross 2008: 82).

The *PMC* provides rich material for a discussion of epic masculinity, so much so that I shall focus on its intersection with three further categories of identity: social position and by extension regional identity, religious or racial identity and collective group identity. Whilst many scholars argue for the existence of a clear-cut masculine ideal in the epic, I instead posit that what it means to be a man is ambiguous by the end of the third *Cantar*: this instead remains an open question throughout the text through the variations found in not only the Cid's behaviour but that of his followers and enemies. The fluid depiction of male identity means difference is erased across the socially-constructed categories of gender, social rank and cultural/religious identity. In turn, the poet relocates power within the collective: the Cid's *mesnada*, the constituent members of which are equally responsible for upholding and growing the power that is the Cid's in name, but in practice belongs to the entire group. The Cid is thus a figurehead of a movement that works to destabilised the exertion of power by the blood-born nobility, who attempt to do so solely by virtue of their social background and fail in practice.

Firstly I will assess the intersection of epic masculinity with the social rank and by extension the regional identity of the men of the *PMC*. The poet makes every effort to both undermine difference between men of varying social backgrounds, whilst also highlighting the differences between those of the same social rank or region. This conception of character works ultimately to reinforce the over-arching sociological commentary in the poem: the idea that nobility and success in Castile is not determined by birthright[17]. Rather, it can be earned and shared, and throughout the text we see the acquisition and the loss of status that in turn evolves a character's identity. The Cid himself is the primary case in point: he is of the *infanzón* class, and spends the majority of the poem working his way back into the king's favour through economic and territorial

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[17] See Duggan (1989: 80)

gains in battle against various Moorish armies. He assembles a retinue indiscriminately; the group is ever-changing and grows consistently, taking in men from multiple regions and social strata: news of his exile – not even military success – drives over a hundred men to join him at the start of the poem, "unos dexan casas, e otros onores" (289) – clearly men of varying economic means. Harney takes this notion further by arguing that it is not only in their composition but also in their practical roles that the Cid's retinue eradicates difference and does not confine characters to one role: "there is a constant blurring of definitions as representatives from one supposed category perform tasks from another" such Jerónimo the warrior-bishop, the Cid as both a warrior and an economist, and Minaya's role as diplomat (1993: 203).

Power and social influence, like identity, is moreover revealed to be something a character is able to construct of their own accord: it is not necessarily inherited, and can be built up through reputation. This is made obvious at the very beginning of the *PMC*, in the Rachel and Vidas episode. We see the Cid quite literally magicking wealth and by association economic power out of nowhere with the sand-filled *arcas* that acquire monetary value simply by virtue of his immaterial reputation. In the world of the *PMC* socio-economic power can be acquired and embodied by anyone, which implies an acknowledgement on behalf of the poet that these ranks are indeed socially constructed and evolving. Harney has argued wealth to be the Cid's fundamental motivator (1993), but textual evidence proves his retinue to be less economically focused: to his men the spoils of battle "non precian nada" (475), and Minaya also rejects wealth (see 494-505). The Cid does advertise his quest as an economic opportunity for all: "quien quiere perder cueta e venir a mitad" (1189), rescuing willing men from poverty and improving their social station. Social status and wealth are therefore not in direct correlation: it is how one uses the wealth that determines the acquisition of power in the society of the text. A

good example of this is found in verse 2114 after his audience with King Alfonso: the Cid gives away as many mules as people wish to take in a very public display of extreme generosity after he is once again in favour at court. Similarly, after his daughters' wedding "rricos' tornan a Castiella los que a las bodas llegaron" (2261): the Cid shares and distributes his wealth to maintain influence. Meanwhile, the Infantes de Carrión are unquestionably portrayed as covetous, expressing interest in the Cid's quest and his daughters only because of his monetary success (1373-1376). They are materialistic to the extent of purchasing on credit: "lo uno adebdan e lo otro pagavan" (1976) which stands in stark contrast to the Cid's very real wealth he earns from physical labour in battle. The Infantes are passive and inactive, unable to earn money, and therefore unable to share in the socio-economic and political power gained by the Cid's retinue through warfare. Their behaviour moreover harks back to the classical gender dichotomy, placing women on the side of "passive" whilst men are "active". The poet thus shows passivity to be a genderless trait; one that correlates to a lack of socio-economic success. The behaviour of the Infantes thus belies the notion that blood-born nobility are indisputably powerful because of the rank into which they were born: they in fact steadily lose power in the course of the text, which in turn is revealed to be fluid and can be acquired by anyone regardless of social position.

The correlation between wealth and social position is further tied up with expectations of masculinity most obviously in the visual displays of wealth that are prevalent throughout the *Poema*. All primary male characters, from the Cid himself to the reviled Infantes de Carrión, employ adornment as a sign of success and status. Moreover, particular attention to embellishment and appearance coincides with critical episodes such as the Cid's reunion with Alfonso and the initiation of the courts at Toledo. Yet we know from the *Partidas* that Alfonso X explicitly discouraged knights to indulge in excess

and should exercise “mesura, que obren de las cosas como deuen, e *non passen a mas*” (*Partida* 2: 21, 4, emphasis mine). Whilst the clothes of knights are not outlined in detail in the *Partidas* (other than the fact that they must be kept clean), other 12th and thirteenth century sources are more explicit: St Bernard of Clairvaux, writing from 1120-1136, criticised ostentatious clothes, horses and weapons questioning “are these military insignia or rather womanish ornaments?” (Mastnak 2002: 157). Ramon Llull took up a similar theme in the late thirteenth century:

> On les armes ab que luxurie combat fortitudo son jovent, beyles faysons, molt menjar e beure, ornats vestiments. (2015: 154)

The latter are weapons of the sin of “luxurie” which knights are explicitly told to avoid. The source of the gendering of adornment as feminine and the consequent sinfulness thereof is argued by Bloch to reside in the writings of the early Church – from Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Augustine: “the feminisation of the esthetic is a topos to be found practically everywhere” (2009: 44). Yet is adornment, ornament and attention the aesthetic so divorced from maleness in the medieval reality of thirteenth century Spain? The *PMC* would suggest not: the poet does not problematise physical adornment in the context of the accumulation of wealth and status: indeed, it is presented as a method by which to acquire and reinforce socio-political power. Whilst Mirrer takes the medieval association of adornment with femininity for granted in her analysis of Rachel’s desire for a fur tunic as effeminate (and therefore anti-Semitic on the part of the poet) (1996: 75), this jars entirely with the attention to male appearance we find elsewhere in the *Poema*: something inseparable from the maintenance of social position and the acquisition of power within a given *milieu*. We find characters ensuring men and women wear ornate clothes, for example when Minaya has the Cid’s family in his charge:

> Bien salieron dén ciento que non parecen mal
>
> en buenos cavallos a cuberturas de cendales
>
> e petrales a cascaveles; e escudos a los cuellos,
>
> e en las manos lanços que pendones traen,
>
> *que sopiessen los otros de qué seso era Álbar Fáñez*
>
> *o cuémo saliera de Castiella con estas dueñas que trahe*. (1507-1512, emphasis mine)

Minaya not only ensures his men are dressed well, but that they also make an audible impact with ostentatious "cascaveles". The narrator is moreover quick to point out Minaya's motivations for such a display: visual adornment and excess is linked directly to his outward reputation. The Cid enacts a similar display at Toledo (3085-3099). Adornment is thus a means of communicating and maintaining one's social position, used also by King Alfonso who relays his satisfaction with the Cid's success through improving the physical appearance of the messengers, Minaya and Pero Vermúez:

> "mándovos los cuerpos ondradamientre servir e vestir
>
> e guarnirvos de todas armas, como vós dixiéredes aquí,
>
> que bien parescades ante Rruy Díaz Mio Cid." (1870-1873)

There is therefore less chance of the Cid doubting his intentions that could be misconstrued in the subjective language of the proxies' reports. In another example the Cid's new economic means is used to erase social difference using adornment – a difference that would have been otherwise visible:

> Tanta buena capa e mantos e pelliçones
>
> chicos e grandes vestidos son de colores. (1989-1990)

Here there is a dual emphasis not only on an aesthetic display of the Cid's success but also a visual dismantling of the borders between "chicos e grandes". Their social position can thus undergo a real change through aesthetic means. In stark contrast, the Infantes de Carrión use adornment to deceptive ends, appearing "con buenas vestiduras e fuertemientre adobados" (2212). The verb "adobar" implies affectation and "fuertemientre" illustrates the unnatural efforts to which they have gone to achieve their appearance – all with money they have borrowed. Attention to physical appearance and adornment is therefore presented by the poet as entirely compatible with epic masculinity, despite its association with effeminacy in other contemporary writings on knighthood. The poet removes gendered associations from the aesthetic and shows it to be vitally important in the construction of male identities and the power they subsequently wield in society. The attention paid to physical appearance by the Cid, the King, Minaya and the Infantes de Carrión further demonstrates the control each man has over his social significance; the aesthetic has real visual, symbolic role in the maintenance and acquisition of power. The way in which power is communicated and attained through aesthetic display further reveals it to be located within and manipulated by the collective in action. The poet thus conceives of socio-political power as actively embodied, communicated, and, ultimately, fluid. It is not static within one social group as we see the Cid's *mesnada* growing its power through their own actions and physical, aesthetic display. The Cid's heterogeneous group of followers thus have total agency over the maintenance, acquisition and communication of a collective power, which can be exerted and attained on an individual basis.

Verbal expression is also important in the construction of male social status and power. As Bailey has shown, speech is linked to knightly ‘masculinity’: “status is reflected in speech and that good speech coupled with high status sustains power and authority” (2003: 255). The *PMC* poet has good speech embodied by various members of the Cid’s retinue and his relatives, regardless of their social status and gender. This makes sense when applied not only to the Cid, but also to Martín Antolínez in his discussions with Rachel and Vidas and Minaya in his addresses to the King who “fabló tan apuesto” (1320). The Cid’s own social rank remains precarious into the third *Cantar*, despite his successes in battle. His legitimacy is questioned in speech by his enemies at court towards the end of the poem:

> “¡Fuesse a Rrío d’Ovirna los molinos picar,
> e prender maquilas, como lo suele far!
> ¿Quíl’ darié con los de Carrión a casar?” (3379-3381)

Ansur, the elder brother of the Infantes, here questions the Cid's regional origins and social status as coming from a family of millers. Even if what he claims is true, the veracity of his speech is automatically undermined by the way in which he delivers it: “en lo que fabló avié poco rrecabdo” (3376), red-faced and likely drunk. When we compare this to the way in which the Cid’s daughters and Jimena speak, it is clear good speech is not the preserve of one social category (such as male nobles). It is a tool with which power can be gained; if not employed it can be lost, as in the example of Ansur here.

While bad speech with a public audience is intrinsically connected to a loss of power, regardless of a character’s gender, social rank or cultural/religious background, this is problematised by the poet with the concept of deception. In the officialised

discourse on gender of the period, we have seen how deception constituted bad speech and was often coded as feminine. Deception transcends gender in the *PMC* and does indeed lead to a loss of socio-political power and influence in the case of the Infantes de Carrión after their wedding: together they plot "assí las escarniremos a las fijas del Campeador" (2555), yet to the Cid's face they promise to look after his daughters in Carrión and pass wealth down to their offspring together (2560-2568). Whilst many critics have taken their behaviour to be purposefully emasculating on the part of the poet, based on the medieval idea that "trickery and deception, along with passivity, were associated primarily with women" (Leech 2013: 218), the poet problematises this easy dichotomy by having the Cid deceive too. Physical and verbal deception thus also has the potential to be a direct contributor to social progress and the acquisition of power through the Cid and his retinue: as we shall see in the episode with Rachel and Vidas, the Cid is forced to deceive them to secure the loan. Thus honesty can be insufficient in the acquisition of power and progress for a larger collective in the face of an opposing one, such as when the Cid necessarily deceives the citizens of Alcoçer: "él fizo un art e non le detardava" (574), then "A guisa de menbrado por sacarlos a celada" (579). The poet therefore complicates the boundary between good, honest, speech and deceptive speech, and their connection to the power and influence they ultimately beget. Deception constitutes a very necessary part of the Cid's *sapienta* and thus his social progress, if used for the good of a wider collective.

Closely linked to social rank is the regional identity of the *PMC's* men. As with social rank, the poem's audience cannot easily recognise behavioural similarities between characters of the same regional provenance. This stance is in contrast to Mirrer, who uses Smith's association of the poem's Jews with the Count of Barcelona and the Infantes de Carrión to argue that all 'other' characters are negatively portrayed – indeed they are

feminised - including Catalonians and Leonese (1996: 72). I propose that the interaction of the Cid's Castilian faction with characters from other regions is not a clear-cut case of good versus bad; moreover, regional identity is ultimately superfluous in defining one's ability to acquire power. The Count of Barcelona may be a "blustering aristocrat" (Smith 1965: 524), but he cannot be compared to the Infantes de Carrión because he evolves in the course of his interaction with the Cid. The Count is an excellent example of the narrator's conception of identity as evolving: a powerful man from a foreign region, whom we might expect to stay stubbornly resolute in his opposition to the Cid and cause him as many difficulties as possible. At first sight he does so, refusing to cooperate and eat once captured. Yet after the Cid treats him well, promising to release him and offering him food, he rescinds any further threat and announces "de venir vos bus buscar sol non sera pensado" (1075). The Cid's goodness is infectious – both to his retinue and his enemies. The Cid's ability to influence and change behaviour grants him a power that stems from a careful balance between verbal manipulation (i.e. that which is deceptive and coded feminine in officialised discourse) and his physical demonstration of the right thing to do – letting the count go. Also important to note is the avoidance of gratuitous violence and its implications for male identity. The Cid's *mesura* has both a positive effect on others in begetting peace and disassociates him from contemporary expectations of masculinity as violent. The Cid takes a similar attitude towards the Valencians: he does not take their retaliation as an offence and takes pity on them for suffering at the hands of his retinue:

> "En sus tierras somos e fémosles todo mal
>
> bevemos so vino e comemos el so pan
>
> si nos cercar vienen, con derecho lo fazen." (1104-1106)

The poet's undermining of regional difference even extends to Minaya. Kaplan has cogently argued for the undercurrent of Minaya's Leonese sympathies throughout the text, given he praises the Infantes in battle against Búcar and is notably absent from the *Afrenta* episode (2005: 160). Bar his own family, there is no character closer to the Cid than Minaya, whom the Cid physically treats as his "diestro braço", allowing him to plan offensives and liaise with Alfonso on his behalf (see, for example, 1127-1133, 1316-1384). Indeed, Minaya's role as proxy means he shares in the Cid's identity and power: one that is therefore not defined by regional boundaries in contemporary Iberia. Finally, we also see the Cid's own regional origins becoming steadily less important throughout the *PMC:* the Cid refers to himself as "el salido" (980), devoid of regional identity and defined instead by exile and movement. He also conceives of his retinue as such: "como omnes exidos de tierra estraña" (1125), thus the new community he creates erases geographical difference and ensures a renewed, collective identity for all that take part. The fluid nature of social and regional identity therefore allows men, regardless of their social rank or regional provenance, to acquire and wield power as part of the Cid's collective: a power that is created and communicated both visually, through adornment and the aesthetic, physically, through success in battle, and verbally, through speech.

Religious and cultural background is the next category of identity I will consider in an assessment of their intersection with epic masculinity. The poet's often ambivalent portrayal of Muslim characters and complex associations of the two Jewish characters with other characters in the poem serve to undermine any notion of identity as fixed and determined by religious or cultural background in the *PMC*. Furthermore, the fluid, contextually-contingent nature of religious/cultural identity in the *PMC* also reveals the very real power members of the religious or cultural "other" wield over their Christian counterparts; they are thus not presented as

oppressed solely by virtue of being a minority in the textual *milieu*. This view is at odds with some critical precedent on the *PMC's* treatment of Moors and Jews; namely those critics who see their depiction as fundamentally emasculating or as orientalist[18]. Such assessments by definition assume an ideal of white Christian Castilian masculinity that the 'other' is somehow not living up to – such as Mirrer's assertion that:

> Representing 'other' men in the epic and frontier ballads was always a matter of limiting access to traits and behaviours considered ideal for men in medieval Castile. (1994: 173)

As we have seen from the portrayal of women in the *PMC* and *SIL* there is no 'ideal' medieval Castilian masculinity that can be easily defined. Any concept of masculinity is fluctuating and exemplary men even exhibit behaviour coded as feminine in officialised discourse. The standard is thus not "aggressive" as Mirrer would have it (1996: 67): what we have seen thus far is in fact a dissociation of laudable masculinity (if we take it to mean the qualities associated with the good men of the *PMC* such as the Cid) with violence and aggression. Firstly I will discuss the poet's portrayal of Moorish characters, before discussing the much debated episode of the Jewish moneylenders, Rachel and Vidas.

The *PMC*'s stance towards Moors is not one easily definable from an ideological or political standpoint. Whilst as occupants of the various towns and cities conquered by the Cid they are the undisputed enemy in battles sanctioned by and on behalf of a Christian God (for example, at Alcoçer the Cid exclaims "¡Con la merced del Criador nuestra es la

[18] See Burshatin on Moors in the *PMC* (1985) and Mirrer's assessment of the *PMC's* Jews (1996).

ganancia!", (598)), they can also be powerful allies and peers of the Cid, as is Abengalbón. Indeed the enmity that constitutes the axis of the entire plot is in fact directed towards fellow Christians - the Infantes de Carrión - thus the interaction between Christianity and Islam through the battles of the Cid's *mesnada* is not the focus of the poem's moral resolution. Although the *PMC* deviates from the life of the historical Cid in many ways – and it is beyond the scope of this study to assess where, why and how – it is important to note that the real Cid was a mercenary soldier who fought for both Christian and Moorish kings (O'Callaghan 1975: 205). The fact that this is left out is cited by Duggan as proof of an ideological censuring on the part of the poet (1989: 59); yet textual evidence suggests the portrayal of Moors in the *PMC* is entirely concordant with this detail from the life of the real Cid. This is in contrast to Burshatin who takes a resolute stance on the *PMC*'s portrayal of Muslims as entirely oppressed by the poet:

> Either [the Moor] is reduced, metonymically, to an item of value in the booty lists […] or he is the reassuring and orientalised projection of the hero's sway over reconquered lands. (1985: 100)

Albeit a detailed argument that rests on linguistic evidence of the way in which the Cid and his retinue collect the spoils of battle, it ignores the real, human interactions the Cid has with the residents of the towns he conquers as well as with Moorish leaders such as Búcar, and the very real power exercised by Abengalbón. These key moments are the evidence for what I will now argue: that firstly a Moorish character is portrayed by the poet as a man of significant social standing and worthy of respect rather than an emasculated one, and that the Cid's interaction with various Moorish groups and individuals in war shows them treated as equals and thus the poet does not go out of the way to:

> Ensure that the borders distinguishing Christian communities from Muslim ones […] remained clearly visible so that individuals might remain safely within (or outside of) them. (Tieszen 2013: 3)

This is we have seen in the officialised legal and political discourse of the period, an ideological view that the poetry necessarily deconstructs in its refraction of the lived interactions between Christians and Muslims.

The portrayal of Abengalbón is often described as that of the stereotypical 'friendly Moor' who is powerless in the face of the Cid: for example, Montgomery calls him "benign" (1998: 111). I am more aligned to Smith's view, who notes the important contrast between Abengalbón and the Infantes: the former "is, though a Moor, a much more honourable man than the Christian Infantes" (1983: 101). The fact that he is indeed "more honourable" implicitly aligns him to the Cid; his similarity to the Cid's Castilian faction is supported by a plethora of evidence from when he is first introduced as a willing escort to join the Cid's retinue to fetch Jimena and the daughters from Medinaceli. The poet devotes several lines to a description of Molina and the lavish reception given to the Cid's vassals, which draws clear similarities between the way in which the Cid's retinue and indeed King Alfonso and Abengalbón display their social status and success – for we have already seen how attention to the aesthetic is a method through which the Cid's retinue reinforce their socio-economic power:

> Entrados son a Molina, buena e rrica casa,
> El moro Avengalvón bien los siervié sin falla,
> De quanto que quisieron non ovieron falla,

Aun las ferraduras quitárgelas mandava,

A Minaya e a las dueñas ¡Dios, cómo las ondrava! (1550-1554)

The repetition of a word at the end of two consecutive hemistichs is rare in the *PMC* – it is thus particularly important that the poet chooses to repeat "sin falla" which emphasises the absolute generosity and wealth of Abengalbón. Most importantly Abengalbón recognises the importance of honouring women – a central theme of the poem and one of the Cid's primary concerns: "Traedes estas dueñas por ó valdremos más" (1521). By having Abengalbón appear before the Corpes episode specifically to protect the Cid's family there is an obvious contrast drawn between the way in which a Muslim character treats the daughters and the way in which the Christian Infantes do.

His treatment of women leads Gerli to believe that "Abengalbón introduces a note of gallant urbanity that critics have in general failed to recognise" akin to a stylised character of chivalric romance (1995: 261). Yet this still implies his portrayal is tinged with exoticism, which is not textually supported given the similarities of Abengalbón's behaviour to the Cid: in addition to his treatment of women and his attention to the aesthetic, Abengalbón has real power as the governor of Molina and his alliance with the Cid as "amigo de paz" (1464) is strategic and defined by militaristic displays of arms and the large retinue of knights that accompany him to do the Cid's family service. The poet uses even stronger language later to describe their bond: "Tod' esto les fizo el moro por el amor del Cid Campeador" (2658). The relationship between the Cid and Abengalbón is thus one of equals, and a good example of the importance of homosocial bonds, a feature of Romance as identified by Brown-Grant:

> Such homosocial friendships were often expressed through the circulation of goods and money and so were linked to the much-prized chivalric quality of *largesse*, or generosity. (2008, 22)

Abengalbón's generosity is well-documented, and given the similar way in which the Cid treats his retinue the audience can be sure he would repay the favour; both therefore recognise the importance of chivalric *largesse* in maintaining and extending power beyond the borders of Castile or al-Andalus. The official nature of their friendship is also underlined by Harney, who argues the poet "provides an additional hint of ritualized friendship" (1993: 68). Despite such copious evidence that erases rather than draws lines of difference between the Christian Cid and the Muslim Abengalbón, Mirrer has argued his portrayal to be passive and therefore feminised (1996: 170-173). This is, however, ultimately untenable, for the poet alludes to the fact that Abengalbón would be skilled in battle if he chose to fight when he reappears to escort the Infantes de Carrión and the daughters: once he has uncovered the treachery of the brothers, he threatens "tal cosa vos faría" (2678). The poet moreover takes time to describe his physical prowess:

> Mucho era buen barragán. (2671)
>
> Teniendo iva armas al trocir de Salón,
>
> Cuemo de buen seso a Molina se tornó. (2687-2688)

This description echoes that of the Cid, Minaya and other members of their retinue who are similarly "de buen seso" and skilled with arms. It is therefore both anachronistic to map tropes of Orientalism onto the *PMC* poet's portrayal of Abengalbón as is argued by Burshatin (1985). Given the real Cid was a mercenary soldier who fought on both sides, it is more likely that his friendship with Abengalbón was understood by the poem's

medieval audience as one of mutual respect. His role is similar to that of Almanzor in the *SIL*: both hold territory, are in positions of authority and provide invaluable support to the Christian protagonists. The poets recognise the possibility for Moors to wield real power and do not attempt to undermine their position. In their portrayal of powerful Muslim men, then, the epic poets do not demonstrate a crusading mentality[19]. The *PMC* arguably serves as further evidence that:

> Rather than propagating triumphalist Christian propaganda, [the poets] are acutely aware of the precarious state of any polity and any single person at any given time, and so tend to look for lessons in the variegated history of Islamic polities in Spain. (Hazbun 2015: 4)

Abengalbón shares in the traits embodied by the Cid, Minaya, et al. Both Christian and Muslim men are therefore depicted similarly; the poet thus deconstructs the attempts to demarcate boundaries of difference between them by officialised discourse by having both the Cid and Abengalbón represent two co-existing spheres of power – a power that is therefore not concentrated within the Christian, Castilian *milieu*.

Abengalbón is only one of many Moors the Cid comes into contact with, and the Cid's interaction with the Moorish enemy is - surprisingly – consistent with his relationship with his ally Abengalbón. Firstly, the Cid is careful to avoid excessive and therefore futile violence to reinforce his own virility (in contrast to the Infantes de Carrión): he frees a hundred Moors at Castejón (534). He then requires the help of the inhabitants of Castejón, Hita and Guadalajara: he cannot stay in Castejón and so asks

[19] Indeed as Colin Smith puts it, the *PMC* poet "hardly welcomed or comprehended" the idea of Crusade (1983, 102).

them to pay him for the return of the fortress which he is content to leave back in their possession, "moros en paz, ca escripta es la carta" (527). The Cid therefore works together with Moors in his quest which is not an ideological one to conquer and possess their lands at all costs. Later on in the poem we see similar conciliatory behaviour after the battle with King Yusuf who attacks Valencia, as some Moors who live in the area are granted some of the spoils: "los moros de las tierras ganado se an í algo" (1779). Even in the detailed battle against King Búcar we see an example of a fair contest between equals, which acts as a foil for the upcoming secret treachery of the Infantes. We can see the Cid in good spirits – even joking – with Búcar: "Saludar nos hemos amos e tajaremos amistad" (2411). Whilst this is a sarcastic comment, if we take it in the context of how the Cid has thus far treated his enemies after battle (most obviously, the release of the Count of Barcelona and the generosity towards the citizens of Alcoçer) we can safely assume the Cid would be open to an alliance and a resolution. He does not take great offence at their meeting in battle; the poet therefore draws a clear contrast between acceptable public warfare against the Moors and the private, secretive dishonour by the Infantes that comes soon after. The poet's portrayal of both allied and enemy Moors in the *PMC* thus does little to highlight real differences between them and the Cid's Christian retinue. Even as enemies in battle they are treated fairly, and as is the case with Abengalbón, a powerful Moor is a useful and worthy ally, in contrast to the treacherous Infantes, thus highlighting the similarities between the two religious/cultural groups as opposed to demarcating "boundaries of difference" between them, a pattern found by critics in other European medieval Romances (a genre with which the *PMC* shares many traits) that feature Moors.[20] For the *PMC* poet, it is entirely plausible for both Christians and Moors

[20] See Burge (2016: 14) – although the *PMC* is not a Romance text per se, it shares many features with the genre, such as the emotional nexus of the poem being the marriage of the Cid's daughters as opposed to the hero's militaristic exploits.

to share in and grow power independently from each other, as well as gaining it from each other in battle. Moreover, Moorish characters are depicted similarly to members of the Cid's retinue as opposed to being disempowered (or 'feminised' as some scholars have contended) solely by virtue of their religious/cultural identity.

The second religious and racial group the Christian Cid comes into contact with is Jews, in the notorious *arcas de arena* episode. Critics thus far have either highlighted its comic nature and denied any note of antisemitism, or have used contemporary historiographical evidence to prove a likely hostility towards Jews in contemporary Castile and the episode's subsequent antisemitism[21]. I do not doubt that in many ways this episode is antisemitic[22], nor do I disagree with Aizenberg's pertinent analysis that Raquel and Vidas are likened to the Infantes de Carrión and implicitly demonised in their avarice (1980). However, I wish to point out two instances where the moneylenders are distinct from the Infantes, and one instance in which they share in characteristics demonstrated by the Cid, to enable a more nuanced view of the episode that demonstrates an indeterminacy on the part of the poet who ultimately does not deny the two Jews access to traits considered respectable (or 'masculine' by officialised, medieval standards) or from acquiring real power to be exerted alongside or against the Cid's retinue. Finally, I will assess the implications these three inconsistencies with the dominant view of Jews in

[21] See Aizenberg (1980) for a full critical assessment until 1980, Küpper (2011) for a more recent argument against the episode's antisemitism, and Mirrer (1996) for an analysis that (perhaps all too readily) reads an element of feminisation into the antisemitic portrayal of Rachel and Vidas.

[22] In this vein I disagree with critics such as Küpper (2011) who claim that the acquisition of wealth is such an all-pervasive motivation for all characters in the *PMC* that the portrayal of the Jews does not stand out as negative, and with those who see it as merely humorous and therefore not seriously antisemitic (see Aizenberg 1980 for a full assessment of such views).

the *PMC* have for the construction of epic masculinity. The first instance undermines the idea that their characterisation is unreservedly 'effeminate', an argument put forth by Mirrer:

> Rachel and Vidas' speech, appearance and behaviour are clearly distinguished from that of male Christian Castilians and are often paired with that of women and non-Castilian Christian male characters. (1996, 75)

Yet after receiving the chests from the Cid the poet points out:

> Al cargar de las arcas veriedes gozo tanto,
> Non las podién poner en somo, maguer eran esforçados. (170-171)

Whilst it is true that the pair are depicted away from the realm of battle where we find the Cid's retinue and even Moors, the poet still calls them "esforçados"[23] – strong and therefore capable of the physical prowess the former groups display, and a trait not ascribed to the Infantes. Another argument for their supposed ridicule is put forth by Aizenberg (1980): the fact that they do not check inside the chests is surely a source of humour. However, Martín Antolínez also does not act with due diligence when he is paid by them, "sin peso los tomava" (185): the whole episode is therefore rushed, with both sides focused on the reward. A second argument put forth to prove their emasculation concerns their de-individualised portrayal as "amos" (pointed out by both Aizenberg and Mirrer): Rachel and Vidas go aside to speak like the Infantes and they do so in unison, "aparte ixieron amos" (191) – they are not individualised and thus their identity is

[23] Given the first half of the sentence clearly refers to Rachel and Vidas' joy, grammatically it makes sense for the subject to say the same in line 171.

subsumed to their function in the story (see also 123-130). Yet we absolutely cannot say that they are always pictured talking and speaking together when there is a long passage of Rachel taking the Cid aside and speaking alone to ask for a Moorish tunic:

> Rrachel a Mio Cid la mánol' ba besar:
>
> "¡Ya Canpeador, en buen ora cinxiestes espada!" (174-175)

Rachel addresses the Cid confidently using an epithet also used by the Cid's Christian retinue and by the narrator himself – in stark contrast to the Infantes de Carrión who never introduce themselves individually to the Cid and go via the King with their proposal. The depiction of the two Jews as effeminate is therefore inconsistent: the poet affords them both physical strength and individual verbal prowess, traits shared by other revered men in the poem.

The final instance in which their portrayal is not wholly negative concerns the presumption of their supposed avarice as moneylenders which can indeed be viewed as a similarity with the Infantes de Carrión.Yet critics have thus far overlooked the fact that Rachel and Vidas are generous and reward Martín Antolínez for organising the deal:

> "Martín Antolínez, un burgalés contado
>
> Vós lo merecedes, darvos queremos buen dado." (193-194)

Rachel and Vidas did not have to reward Martín. Küpper has used the *PMC's* economic focus to argue that the passage is in fact not antisemitic: "material greed does not singularise them with respect to the other figures of the text (2011: S69) – because everyone pursues the acquisition of wealth. I agree with Küpper to the extent that the

poem shows the desire to acquire wealth transcends all categories of identity. Yet I must disagree on the point of their covetousness being fundamental to Rachel and Vidas: their treatment of Martín echoes the way in which the Cid rewards his retinue's hard work later on in the poem. Neither the Cid nor Rachel and Vidas have to reward those who have helped them, but it helps characters build networks of homosocial bonds that in turn enable the acquisition of social power in the world of the *Poema*. This once again echoes Brown-Grant's explanation of the "chivalric quality of largesse" (2008: 22) that applies to Abengalbón. Rachel and Vidas do ultimately build a successful network as later in the poem they approach Martín to enquire after the chests and he receives them well. It is therefore clear that the *PMC's* Jews are portrayed in an anti-Semitic manner from their introduction, when the poet characterises them immediately "en cuenta de sus averes, de los que avién ganados" (101). The fact that they are moneylenders is however realistic for thirteenth century Castile; there were few other jobs open to them (Soifer 2009: 26). The fact that they have this job is not necessarily anti-Semitic. Their portrayal as covetous is, however, and this is aligned to the Infantes de Carrión. What is most interesting here is the clear similarity drawn between the two in this regard, for religious or cultural background clearly does not define a character's attitude towards money. Secondly, we find the poet then differentiates Rachel and Vidas by including a moment of generosity we never see from the Infantes, implicitly likening them to the Cid. Moreover, the poet refers to their physical strength which undermines any argument to suggest they are effeminate and weak. The audience would automatically question what they had done to become physically strong if their main activity is indeed moneylending. It is in these three moments of inconsistency discussed that undermine the dominant – indeed all too easy- reading that Rachel and Vidas are feminised and weaker than the Christian men of the *Poema*. They are not disempowered by the Castilian poet on account of their religious/cultural background. On the contrary, they are equipped with similar tools to

acquire power and extend their influence (such as the chivalric quality of *largesse*) as the Cid's Christian retinue.

The final aspect of Cidian epic masculinity to be discussed works to erase difference across multiple categories of identity, not just between cultural or religious background or social strata. It is collective masculinity, which is arguably the most notable sociological phenomenon in the *PMC*. Akin to the Cid's family, his men adopt his identity which becomes that of the collective which de-individualises others. The hero's identity extends beyond the borders of his own 'body', it is shared and influenced by his followers, family and even the physical world around him; the boundaries between all four are never clear. The development of a collective identity moreover means power and influence is shared within the collective: a proto-Foucauldian reading of power that relocates it away from the hierarchichal, authoritarian model that grants power to royalty and blood-born nobility such as the Infantes de Carrión. As we have already discussed, the Cid's female relatives are part of him, as is his retinue and his King who both act as proxies at some point in the poem. The borders of both the male characters themselves and the group are thus permeable and overlapping; they are susceptible to the influence of others – as in the example of the Count of Barcelona changing under the Cid's influence – and even the Cid himself is not immune. The poet therefore rejects fixed categories of identity and shows it to be mutable over time; identity is thus fundamentally similar to and tied to power in its constant evolution. Thematically the poet demonstrates shared collective identity and the subsequent power that is acquired with this identity in three ways: firstly, through the function of proxies (both on behalf of the Cid and other characters), secondly through a lexical emphasis on group movement, speech and emotion that is often unconscious or affective, and finally through the ultimate subsuming of the individual into nature and the Cid's influence thereupon.

The function of proxies in the Cid's quest is the most obvious way in which the protagonist extends his identity, allowing others to exercise his power and trade upon his reputation by acting on behalf of him. This is clearest in the arrangement of the Cid's daughter's marriage as a political move on the part of the Cid, but also extends to the day-to-day functioning of his men. Firstly, it is important to note that the Cid's reliance on his retinue is consistent with the generic nature of the *PMC* as an epic that diverts from tradition: emphasis is taken off his individual exploits and the protagonist is much stronger when accompanied rather than alone. Lawrance highlights the way in which:

> The Cid subordinates emotions to expediency and rational calculation of the greater good […] he does not stake his life for honour. (2000: 42)

To compensate, he therefore influences others to act on behalf of him. From the very start of the poem it is Minaya who has the most crucial complementary role to play as he spurs the Cid on out of passivity. The Cid is reluctant to leave his family at Cardeña, as they are a physical composite part of him: "assí's parten unos d'otros como la uña de la carne" (375); he then nostalgically looks back, as he did at Burgos: "a todos esperando, la cabeça tornando va" (377). It is Minaya who is more centred and unemotional and encourages the Cid to continue on:

> "Cid, ¿dó son vuestros esfuerços? En buena ora nasquiestes de madre;
> Pensemos de ir nuestra vía, esto sea de vagar." (379-380)

The second hemistich of line 379 extends it beyond the usual length of epic verse and in doing so the poet implicitly underlines the absolute necessity of Minaya reassuring the

Cid that “pesar” will turn to “plazer”. The audience therefore assumes that without his influence, the Cid would not be as decisive and thus successful. Minaya is thus a fundamental part of the Cid without whom the battles against the Moors may not have taken place, had the Cid refused to leave Cardeña. The language used by the poet to describe their relationship echoes the ethos of the *Siete Partida*s on the body politic in kingship: the Cid refers to Minaya as “el mio diestro braço” (751), the same arm Minaya had just used to kill in line 750. This is proof of the Cid recognising Minaya’s role in his military success, as one of his own composite parts.  If we then compare Minaya’s behaviour in battle to that of the Cid, the poet’s description is far more graphic:

> Espada tajador, sangriento trae el braço,
>
> Por el cobdo ayuso la sangre destellando. (780-781)

By comparison, the Cid is depicted talking to his enemies and is also lenient releasing prisoners such as the Count of Barcelona; thus Minaya functions as what the medieval audience would identify as the Cid’s stereotypically masculine, violent side – necessarily tempered by the Cid’s own lenience and empathy for maximum efficacy in battle and at court. The latter’s power and influence is therefore necessarily wielded by his retinue that form part of the wider collective identity. The Cid also uses Minaya to be omnipresent even when he is not there, across the realms he conquers back to the King in Castile: for example, from 871-97 we see Minaya’s first trip to bestow gifts upon Alfonso as a sign of the Cid’s success, and similarly from 1831-1876.  Collective masculinity and action is therefore also tied up with the negative view of stasis that was coded feminine in classical and patristic texts. We find the Cid warning his men against the dangers of stasis in 948: “Qui en un lugar mora siempre, lo so puede menguar”. Yet then we see him adopt this policy later at Valencia: “Tres días le speraré” (1194), “e yo fincaré en Valencia” (1470).

Lack of action, which could be deemed effeminate or passive, can be a shrewd decision if a retinue can compensate for his: his proxies are real parts of him in motion, extending his influence. The *PMC* poet therefore eschews the negative connotations of stasis: it is just as beneficial for the Cid as he is also able to pursue action simultaneously through the absolute alignment of the collective with his ideals. In its portrayal of collective behaviour, the *PMC* thus breaks down constructions of masculinity and femininity in officialised discourse by showing male characters exhibiting behaviours that were coded as both masculine and feminine. Moreover, men and women who align themselves with the collective are portrayed similarly upon admission: a fundamentally fluid conception of identity, which then enables members of the collective to wield the power that is the Cid's in name but can be exerted and acquired by all those who belong to the group.

Another important proxy is Martín Antolínez, whom the Cid clearly instructs to trick Rachel and Vidas. Once instructed the proxies never question the orders, and the poet emphasises their unquestioning allegiance with time phrases such as "non lo detarda" and "apriessa" (96-98). The importance of proxies in speeding up action is clear later on in the poem when the Cid himself is shown to be bad at timekeeping when he arrives late to the Cortes. Martín is then very manipulative, "a guisa de menbrado" (102) Repeated again in 131, calling them "los mios amigos caros" (103). Indeed he uses similar tactics to Ruy Velázquez in *SIL*, a concealed rhetoric coded as feminine by patristic and classical authors (Bloch 2009: 14). The narrator does not qualify it but merely refers to his shrewdness – manipulation is alluded to and the possibility remains open for him to have been genuine. After the deal is sealed, the narrator then refers to him as "don Martino" (185) – implicitly with more respect – thus once again the poet reframes deceptive speech which then loses the gendered associations granted to it by officialised discourse. When necessary, it is a fundamental facet to male identity. Most interestingly when he

returns back to the camp, Martín then starts dictating the next course of action: "Mandad coger la tienda e vayamos privado" (208). Like Minaya, he spurs on the action and takes position as commander. We also see decisive, quick action in the behaviour of Muño Gustioz and Félez Muñoz when they act as proxies. Muño Gustioz is asked to take a message to King Alfonso on behalf of the Cid and he "privado cavalgó" without question (2917), and the poet then emphasises once more "andan quanto pueden" (2920) away from Valencia. The poet similarly uses a quick succession of preterite verbs to emphasise the speed at which Félez seeks out his cousins at Corpes on behalf of the Cid:

> Llamando "¡Primas, primas!" Luego descavalgó,
>
> arrendó el cavallo, a ellas adeliñó. (2778-2779)

Upon finding them Félez "partiéronsele las telas de dentro del coraçón" (2785) – an emotional reaction similar to that of the Cid's pain at parting from his family, "como la uña de la carne". The Cid's men thus not only unquestioningly share in his aims; they are able to exert his power by proxy in his absence. Whilst the Cid's retinue are an invaluable asset as an embodiment of his ideals beyond his own physical body, when there is no shared ethos or motivation proxies can also be used to negative ends in the appropriation of power and the negation of responsibility. Nowhere is this clearer than when the Infantes go to Alfonso and ask for the Cid's daughters' hands in marriage:

> Vinién al rrey Alfonso con esta poridad:
>
> "¡Merced vos pidimos como a rrey e señor natural!
>
> Con vuestro consejo lo queremos fer nós
>
> Que nos demandedes fijas del Campeador." (1884-1887)

The use of “poridad” highlights the secrecy and private nature of their scheme in contrast to the open, honest requests of the Cid to his proxies elsewhere in the *PMC*. The King then fails to read the situation as such: “Seméjam’ el casamiento ondrado e con grant pro” (2077). A stark contrast is therefore drawn between a successful symbiotic relationship with proxies who share the ethos and therefore the identity of the instigator (in this case the Cid), and with the manipulation of a person in power to one’s personal advantage. The way in which this power is exerted therefore blurs the boundaries of social rank, regional identity and gender, for they are men of varying social means and origin exhibiting similar behaviours. The poet thus uses the Cid’s proxies to underline both the fluid nature of identity – through the way in which the Cid’s men adopt his behaviour – and power, through the way in which they share in his goals and exert his influence independently. I would therefore take Pascual-Argente’s argument further that epic masculinity is predicated upon its relationship to romance and is “constructed through an appropriate (and passionate) relationship towards other men” (2013: 550). This homosocial element is of great importance, as we have seen with Abengalbón, but the Cid’s relationship with the Christian members of his retinue goes even further to a shared belief system: members of the retinue are quite literally parts of the Cid himself – different but complementary and necessary for the progress of the collective. Both the Cid and his men benefit from the collective erasure of difference: once subsumed into the collective identity, his men are crucial to the acquisition of power and status of the retinue, through both warfare and individual actions such as the examples of Martín and Félez.

In contrast to the pre-arranged and agreed functioning of proxies, we then find further evidence of collective identity in conscious and unconscious actions en masse. Harney has already noticed the frequency of the use of collective nouns to refer to the

Cid’s men as a group (1993: 77-78), which I then argue enables collective, often unconscious, action in line with a shared goal. These examples add further weight to the argument that the poet sees identity and power as something that is evolving and can be shared – and thus not defined by any social or religious *milieu* a person may belong to. In sociological theory the unconscious alignment of the Cid’s retinue turns it into an ‘affective network’ of shared beliefs and ideals driven by the identity of their leader (Hoggett 2009: 10-11). Not only do we find the Cid’s objectives and aims unquestioningly adopted by those around him who act as proxies; but we also find the poet describing shared action, speech and emotions. There is ample linguistic evidence of the subsuming of the collective into the Cid throughout the *PMC*: for example, the narrator speaks of the Cid ravaging lands, “mucha tierra preava” (902); but of course he is doing this with his men – thus the Cid becomes a by-word for the entire collective movement who gain territory and defeat Moors. The collective is subsumed under the ethos and identity of one man again in 1167: “en ganar aquellas villas Mio Cid duró tres años”. We also find physical examples of his men portrayed as one in battle:

> Veriedes tantas lanças premer en alçar,
> Tanta adágara foradar e passer. (726-727)

The poet uses the language of abundance to universalise the efforts of battle. Conscious group behaviour is also evident as the entire retinue are part of decision making on the Cid’s invitation: “Dezidme, cavalleros, cómo vos plaze de far” (670), and from 733 onwards we hear a description of individual efforts. The poet therefore contrasts the specific and the general in battle scenes, to highlight how important individual efforts are to seamless collective success. Once again in 789 we see the narrator goes back to the general: he no longer fathoms the extent of the men as adversaries and dead in battle,

"que non saben rrecabdo". There is moreover evidence that the narrator shares in the ethos of the Cid and his retinue, and qualifies his own opinion such as the didactic statement, "qui a buen señor sirve siempre vive en delicio" (850). The narrator thus endorses the relocation of power within the collective, as opposed to it being concentrated autocratically within an individual – something I denote as a uniquely epic egalitarian ethos all those who follow the Cid can benefit from. As their success in battle grows, news spreads organically to the masses: "Los mandados son idos a todas partes" (956). Even the speech of those witnessing the Cid's success becomes disembodied and universalised as part of his movement; the exploits take on a life of their own. The effect their success has on the retinue itself is then portrayed as an unconsciously shared emotion: "Grand es el gozo que va por és logar" (1148). "El gozo" is personified and shared by all after the capture of Valencia, as the Cid's 'affective network' has worked cohesively. The individual members have thus adopted similar traits; their identity has evolved to grow a collective power.

As with the dichotomously useful and futile function of proxies throughout the *Poema*, we also find a binary opposition in the formation of collective identities: that of the Infantes de Carrión. In contrast to the Cid's collective we are shown the negative effects of homogeneous, collective identity through the Infantes, who are rarely differentiated by the poet and are characterised by inaction and verbal scheming. They do not attain any real progress or power alone, and their thoughts and speech are often private and hidden from the Cid's men: for example in 1372 and 1386, "aquí entraron en fabla los iffantes de Carrión". When they arrange their marriage, we see the Infantes:

> Fablando en su consejo, aviendo su poridad
>
> "Las nuevas del Cid mucho van adelant,

> Demandemos sus fijas pora con ellas casar,
>
> Creçremos en nuestra ondra e iremos adelant." (1880-1883)

The Infantes are obsessed with progressing "adelant": attaining power through internalised scheming, discussing and no real action to benefit their narrow, homogeneous group – in contrast to the Cid's diverse collective who work for the mutual acquisition of power for a large retinue. The Cid's men even mock them for not participating fully in battle, after which "Amos salieron apart, veramientre son ermanos" (2538). Clear similarities can be drawn from their collective behaviour to that of the Cid's enemy at court García Ordóñez who goes aside to talk, scheming and gossiping, showing his insecurity about the correlation between his diminishing fortunes and the Cid's success (1861). The narrator also gives us a rare but crucial insight into the shared psychology of the Infantes after the battle against King Búcar: the Cid praises them "Por bien lo dixo el Cid, mas ellos lo tovieron a mal" (2464). They are thus unable to understand the Cid's perspective, hence the misunderstanding: they are incapable of evolving their own identity to join the *mesnada*. The poet therefore gives us two examples of collective identity to show that it can be beneficial and denigrating to the individuals that comprise it: it can bolster group success, as an adopted collective identity allows its constituent members to act alone or together to acquire power for the wider group. Yet it can also be insular and deceptive: within a homogeneous, smaller group such as the Infantes collective identity is damning and de-individualising, eroding away their individual identities and letting a shared desire for vengeance and avarice take over. In both cases, however, the poet reveals societally created difference to be insubstantial and erased by unifying collective wants and needs that transpire into collective action.

The final and most pervasive way in which the poet advocates the power of the colletive and the fundamentally fluid nature of identity is in the protagonist's connection to nature. The ethos of the Cidian retinue not only evolves and shapes the identity of the Cid, his followers and family; it is so all-consuming that it controls or is complemented by the natural world within which the retinue operates. We find the first example in the early battle for Castejón, the weather works in the Cid's favour as the townspeople go out to check their land, leaving the doors to the city open, because "ixié el sol" (457). The poet employs natural imagery later in the poem to suggest nature itself carries the message of the group's success: "Sonando van las nuevas allent parte del mar" (1156); the extent of the group's power therefore conceptualised by the poet in terms of natural boundaries rather than political or ecclesiastical ones. Their quest goes beyond Castile and is universalised. Nature is also depicted as acting in support of the Cidian collective in battle as the river Júcar swallows up Moors in the battle against the King of Seville (1228). Moreover, after the Cid is pardoned by Alfonso nature seemingly reacts, "Claro salié el sol" (2063). By contrast, the Infantes are unable to hold the same influence over nature to the extent that the Cid is: during the Afrenta episode the area in the forest they try to manipulate into a secure stronghold to abuse Elvira and Sol is permeable to the outside world as Félez Muñoz is able to locate and penetrate it: "en un monte espesso, Félez Muñoz se metió" (2769) in order to save his cousins. This is in stark contrast to the solid borders the Cid is able to construct at Cardeña and Valencia:

> Que del alcáçar una salir non puede
> fata ques' torne el que en buen hora nasco. (2007-2008)

The strength of his stronghold suggests that not only is nature implicitly supportive in the group's gradual acquisition of power: but the *Campeador* is also able to manipulate the

natural world to his own advantage. There are many more such examples of natural cooperation subtly included by the poet to heighten the powerful influence of the collective identity over its surroundings, but the most memorable and pivotal occasion is that of the captured lion at Valencia.

> El león, quando lo vio, assí envergonçó,
> ante Mio Cid la cabeça premió e el rrostro fincó. (2298-2299)

In this example, it is the Cid himself who demonstrates absolute mastery over a natural phenomenon, whilst the Infante Fernán looks for a route to escape. Nature is thus portrayed as an extension of the Cid's collective: fully under the affective influence of the shared group ethos, a consistent part of the retinue enabling its success.

The characterisation of men in the *PMC* therefore not only contradicts the medieval paradigms of masculinity found in officialised discourse; it moreover erases difference between men of different social positions, religions and cultural backgrounds. We find revered men of varying social statuses and religions exhibiting behaviours coded as feminine in received wisdom (such as deception and stasis), which can be both conducive and unhelpful in a man's social progression – something dependent on whether it is for the good of a wider collective. An additional layer of difference is then deconstructed when we see men of different social ranks and cultural/religious backgrounds acting similarly as well as differently to each other. The refutation of essentialist models of identity then enables the concomitant redistribution of power across the collective. The Cid's *mesnada* share in his identity and trade in his reputation to gain a collective power. For the *PMC* poet, power ought not to be the preserve of one social group by virtue of their socially contingent identity – or indeed one individual. It

can be successfully wielded by man and woman, Christian and Moor, noble and townsperson alike, as individuals evolve and develop in order to work together.

# Chapter Three

# Dissecting toxic masculinity in the *Siete Infantes de Lara*

The two versions of the *SIL*, by contrast, give us two versions of the same male characters whose masculinity, “Christianness”, “Islamicness” and social position are conceptualised quite differently. As with the analysis of the texts’ female characters, these differences by default give us characters that are re-interpreted from one version to the next; some barely noticeably, others remarkably so. Thus far we have concluded that the poet-chroniclers of the *SIL* had no consensus on women’s behaviour and influence – and by association, on what constitutes femininity and as women do indeed exert considerable power within their corresponding societal *milieu*. All three female characters depart from the stereotypical models of noble and Moorish femininity available to the medieval poet and in different ways across both versions of the text. Similarly, the characterisation of men in both the *EE* and *1344* necessarily contradicts the attempts to define genders, religious or cultural background and social rank in contemporary, officialised discourse. Yet neither poet-chronicler does this to expound the benefits of an egalitarian, shared ethos and acquisition of power that erases difference between different social ranks, cultural/religious background and genders, as in the *PMC*. On the contrary, by refuting medieval models of masculinity (in this case Christian, Muslim, and noble masculinities) the poet-chroniclers implicitly critique the societal system that theoretically concentrates power within the noble, Castilian, male *milieu*, the existence of which is evidenced by legal and political texts of the era. The poet-chroniclers thus work

to destabilise the nexus of power that at the start of both texts rests within the nobility; by the end we find it relocated within a cooperative heterogeneous *milieu* that incorporates both Christians and Moors.

The relocation of power from the Castilian nobility to an alliance between Christians and Moors is contextually foregrounded by the relationship of the crown of Castile to the nobility at the end of the thirteenth century through to 1344, one that notoriously gave rise to the majority of internal conflict within the kingdom. Most obviously embodied in the nobility's revolt against Alfonso X in 1271, a climate of mutual hostility pervaded the latter half of the thirteenth century between the king and his aristocratic subjects who objected to the imposition of new taxes, the lack of noble judges at court and the royal foundation of new towns, amongst other reforms motivated by the promulgation of new laws based on those of ancient Rome (culminating in Alfonso's *Fuero real* and *Espéculo* which was extended to form the *Siete Partidas*)[24]. Indeed although the *Crónica de 1344* was Portuguese in origin, its composition coincided with the reign of Alfonso XI in Castile, also marred by his intense internal conflict with the nobility due to his "determination to build a strong central government" (Deyermond 2009: 66), along the same lines as his great-grandfather the learned. The real Lara family were themselves still prominent figures in the Castilian court, centuries after the events of the epic are said to have taken place. Doubleday highlights the growing tension in 1269 before the full scale revolt in 1271, when family figurehead Nuño González de Lara (once Alfonso X's childhood friend) allied himself with the Haro family against the king (2015). In such a climate, then, is it all the more likely that the versions of the *SIL* contained within royally-sanctioned chronicles constitute a literary critique of the nobility – and specifically the Lara family.

[24] See O'Callaghan (1996: 117-128) and Linehan (2008: 114-127).

Akin to the *PMC*, the *SIL* thus makes a social commentary; one which is also embodied in the way in which characters fit or refute stereotypical contemporary models of identity. In this context, a historicised version of Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity can be applied to the *SIL*, as Castilian, Christian, noble masculinity can be considered the hegemonic model that facilitates an "ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions and persuasion" (2005: 833). An additional layer of critique is also found in the texts' implicit contradiction of essentialist models of identity: we see the downfall of Castilian nobles that cling to normative medieval models of gender, religious or cultural identity or social rank. Those that transcend them, namely the Moors and - to an extent - Mudarra, escape unscathed. Ruy Velázquez is a special case, in that in theory he upholds stereotypes associated with women, the conjugal relationship and with Moors, yet in practice he ironically finds himself in a liminal position without any fixed identity or allegiances. Ruy's evolving identity within the text is an example of what Demetriou (in a critique of Connell) has deemed "internal hegemony" that refers to the way in which a dominant model of masculinity begins to appropriate traits from other masculinities (in this case, Moorish masculinity) for continued domination (2001). The *EE* and *1344* also acknowledge the synthetic nature of the boundaries between Christian and Muslim and deconstruct it in different ways: the former through the more islamicised Mudarra, and the latter through the expanded role of the Moors Alicante and Almanzor. Yet where the *SIL* fundamentally differs from the *PMC* is in its over-arching critique of the social system within which it is possible for such tragicomic events to take place; a critique not only reserved for Ruy Velázquez, "el traydor", but one that extends to the purportedly 'heroic' figures of the Infantes themselves. We witness the disempowerment of the homogeneous, hyper-masculine Castilian nobility, whose internal conflict and constant transferrance of power has created a state of perpetual decay. By contrast, the faction that succeeds by the end of the text is the heterogeneous alliance of Almanzor

and Gonzalo Gustioz, together with Mudarra. The poet-chroniclers thus depict a bombastic Castilian nobility that assumes it comparatively exerts the most power. Members of this group are shown attempting to acquire power from each other in the only way they know how: violence. Their internal conflict then paradoxically leads to their downfall through either death or banishment.

I will begin with an assessment of noble, Castilian masculinity, given that the central axis of the plot and all ensuing enmity stems from inside this community; culturally heterogeneous elements are introduced later initially as instruments of Christian wrath, which then ultimately work against Castilian hegemony. Male, Christian characterisation will be compared in both chronicles to elucidate by virtue of re-interpretation a definitively fluid, re-inscription of masculinity on the part of the chronicler of *1344,* with a focus on Ruy Velázquez. The behaviour of Ruy and his interaction with the wider nobility will be assessed to underline the decadence of the societal *milieu* that enables his actions. I will then argue that both collectivity (the Infantes as a group) and hyper-masculinity (referring primarily to Gonzalo González) work to ultimately disempower the Castilian nobles, particularly in *1344* which only serve to further its unconscious, and often humorous, critique – something hitherto unnoticed by scholars of the text in its various forms. Finally, the unlikely association of the Castilian nobility with hyper-masculinity will link into the contrastingly positive portrayal of the story's Muslim men and how 'Islamicness' intersects with masculinity in both versions, culminating in the alliance between Gonzalo Gustioz and Almanzor, and ultimately the hybrid figure of Mudarra who eventually suppresses the internal Castilian conflict.

From the macro level of the story's basic plot – which remains constant from the *EE* to *1344* – one can immediately draw a clear conclusion on noble, Castilian masculinity.

It is in crisis – or rather, it is self-destructing from within the social system it perpetuates. One woman's verbal power (Doña Lambra at the *tablado*) instigates almost instantaneous violence on the part of the noble Christian men of the story, beginning a spiral of vengeance that can only be stopped by the powerful influence of the Moor Almanzor and, later, Mudarra, who is brought up a Muslim. In order to dissect what I deem decadent, noble, Castilian masculinity, I will discuss three principle ways in which this decay is evident in both versions of the text: it most obviously comes to light through the driving force of the plot, Ruy Velázquez. Secondly, it is thematised through ineffective collective masculinity in the Christian *milieu* – which forms a comparison to its conception in the *PMC*. Finally, I will touch on hyper-masculinity and how this trope works to critique those often deemed heroic: the Infantes, particularly Gonzalo González. In neither version, then, is the *SIL* an epic of one rebel rising up against a morally flawless social system administered by the Count Garci Fernández; that is to say, it is not the inverse of the *PMC*. The extant mechanisms of power and authority that enable – and indeed encourage – internal violence is critiqued on all sides through the behaviour of a range of Castilian nobles, and is put into sharp relief against that of al-Andalus.

Ruy Velázquez is the most conspicuous example of the decayed Castilian nobility, and the motivation for his violent treachery is largely attributed by scholars to the influence of his wife, such as Montgomery's indictment that "Lambra has used a feminine weapon, grief, to dominate, emasculate and subvert him" (1998: 18).[25] Whilst a level of emasculation is evident on the part of the narrator, Ruy in fact has total agency and his

[25] A second example of the almost ubiquitous scholarly assumption that Lambra is Ruy's fundamental motivator is Camacho's view that "Ruy Velázquez chooses marriage over blood ties and exacts revenge against his own sister's seven children and husband not realizing the importance of blood ties" (2006: 150).

calculated exploitation of his power is evidence for the moral decline of the nobility given his ubiquitous notoriety and influence over the wider populace. His downfall can be attributed to the weakness of noble masculinity and the power structure within which it resides, rather than the influence of women. In both versions, Ruy's decline is firstly evident through a pattern of linguistic and physical degradation – the latter more evident in the *EE*. Secondly, Ruy's social rank as a wealthy noble enables his vengeance as the people of Castile – including his own family – have blind faith in his intentions. In *1344* these intentions extend to socio-economic greed, as vengeance becomes a pretext for a larger socio-political mission to gain territory (and thus power) from Count Garci Fernández. Finally, both poet-chroniclers show Ruy's failed efforts to align himself with the Islamic enemy: his lack of loyalty to Christian Castile is evidenced through his close relationship to Moors, yet this relationship – and any similarity between them - is undermined by his treachery. In *1344* in particular, we see Ruy verbalising how wrong he was to assume his Moorish 'allies' would naturally, by virtue of their religious and/or racial identity, oppose Christians. Ruy is in fact a liminal figure, somewhere between the socially contingent polarisations of Christian and Moor, and his actions form part of a wider commentary not only on the constructed nature of social categories (as we find in the *PMC*) but on nobility and war itself – a fundamental pillar of male identity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

As we have seen in the portrayal of the Infantes de Carrión in the *PMC*, medieval poets implicitly criticise ineffectual men by aligning their speech and action to that which was coded as feminine in officialised discourse; in short, they portray them as inactive and deceptive. Ruy Velázquez is undeniably degraded and 'emasculated' (according to officialised discourse) by both poet-chroniclers in speech, whilst in the *EE* this is also done through his action, or lack thereof. Ruy is ironically the most verbally promiscuous

character in both versions of the tale, not his oft-accused wife. A noble of considerable power, his influence is felt over the populace, his family and even Moors. He is depicted in speech interacting with the latter two groups, and in most exchanges in both versions the narrative is at pains to emphasise the deceptive nature of this speech. The narrators of the *EE* and *1344* both directly transcribe as well as report Ruy's deception. For example, early in both versions of the text the audience is told of Ruy's deceptive intentions towards his nephews rather than give any evidence in speech:

> Començo estonces luego a falagar a sos sobrinos con sos engannos et sus palabras enfinnidas et falssas. (*EE:* 217, 21-23; *1344:* 259, 16-18)

The reader never discovers what these "palabras falssas" are. Ruy's words and intentions are pre-supposed by the narrator, a similar technique to that of *1344* when Lambra is denied direct speech. The use of selective narration is echoed a few lines later, as Ruy plots the (ultimately unsuccessful) murder of the Infantes' father Gonzalo Gustioz by writing a letter to Almanzor requesting his beheading. We are tellingly told in reported speech that Ruy wants to talk to Gonzalo simply because "ca auie otrossi mucho de fablar con ell." (*EE:* 218, 2-3). What is most interesting, however, is the way in which both narrators not only report Ruy's deception but at times implicitly deny it all together. Directly after the aforementioned passage, the narrators then neutrally transcribe Ruy's monologue to convince Gonzalo Gustioz to go to Almanzor (*EE:* 218; *1344:* 260), a request the audience assumes is deceptive as he has previously promised Lambra that he will wreak vengeance. Yet there is no hint of "falagar" or "lisonjar", words used to qualify his speech to his nephews. Soon after, however, the tone changes and Ruy's deception is acknowledged when he manages to persuade Gonzalo and convinces the latter's wife (and his own sister) that this death sentence will be beneficial:

> Dixo a su hermana donna Sancha con palabras de enganno luego que entro por el palaçio: “hermana, muy rico verna de Cordoua don Gonçalo, si Dios quisiere, dol yo enuio, ca tanto adura de auer que por sienpre ia mas seremos todos ricos et abondados.” (*EE*: 219, 17-21)

Further evidence of qualified deception comes later in both versions in battle with the Infantes, when Ruy purposefully misreads the omens: “Començoles de lisonjar e desir, “fijos, estas agueros muy buenos son.” (*1344*: 266-267). Yet several lines later in the midst of the growing Muslim threat, a speech to his nephews is not qualified as deceptive, even though the audience infers it to be so, as Ruy counsels them, “fijos, non ayades miedo” (*EE*: 228, 2; *1344:* 269, 18). There is thus a clear tension between Ruy’s directly deceptive speech and the narrative allusions to it. Both narrators add a further level of uncertainty to Ruy’s character in moments where his speech is not qualified as deceptive, even though in the context the audience expects it to be so. Both narrative voices therefore incorporate purportedly effeminate speech patterns into Ruy’s persona, an example of the way in which he corrupts the model of noble masculinity by necessarily appropriating traits pertaining to medieval femininity (in theory rather than practice) in order to maintain power.[26] Ultimately Ruy is denied a clear identity in speech, as he remains elusive to both narrator and audience; the ultimate ejection from the noble community he was once a prominent part of. Yet could the fact that there remains even the slightest possibility that some of his verbal manipulation is not deceptive – and that Ruy is thus not a wholly treacherous, effeminate, corrupted noble - point to a nihilistic attitude towards

[26] This is another example of the way in which Ruy embodies the process of “internal hegemony” (see Demetriou 2001). However, Demetriou’s concept refers only to the process of one group of men ascending above all others by appropriating useful traits from the latter. Here Ruy in fact appropriates purportedly feminine traits.

nobility? This reading of the texts does indeed hold when one considers the fact that other nobles are portrayed as latently deceptive. Gonzalo Gustioz implicitly manipulates Ruy after he has almost killed the former's son:

> "Sodes del mayor prez darmas que otro que omne sepa, de guisa que moros et christianos vos han por ende grand enuidia, et vos temen mucho." (*EE* 212: 12-15)

Given the context this cannot be said wholly seriously by Gonzalo. He is flattering the antagonised Ruy in order to placate him, all the while upholding exactly what was expected of noble knights as per Alfonso's *Partidas*: being courteous to other *fijosdalgos* in both speech and action (*Partida* 2: 21, 7). Thus in the world of the *SIL* all Castilian nobles are guilty of manipulating their power and upholding a culture of deception and flattery, to such an extent that there is little distinction between treacherous deception and everyday "lisonja". The models thus provided for nobility in the thirteenth century – such as in the *Partidas* - are by definition corruptible, as they intersect with the inevitable socio-economic power that comes with being a Christian, Castilian male, making all interactions a deceptive performance to retain power and ward off violent death: something we will see heightened in the hyper-masculinity of the Infantes.

Whilst both chronicles consistently portray Ruy's verbal deception (if ambivalently at times), there is a stark contrast in their depiction of his physical activity. In the *EE* the poet-chronicler puts emphasis on Ruy's stasis and ineffectual scheming in battle; something entirely incongruous with the frequent praise afforded to him by both the narrator and other characters as "un alto omne" (208: 1) and "del mayor prez darmas" (212: 12). At the start of the story we firstly find him organising the *tablado* for others to take part, and merely standing back. He then goes on to similarly orchestrate the battle planned in his letter to Almanzor, so that the latter will have "la tierra de los

christianos a vuestra voluntat" (219: 4). Yet Ruy is never actually depicted in battle in the *EE*: even as it begins, he acts as a go-between between, deceiving his nephews and instructing the Moors, and spatially the narrator never pins him to either side. By comparison, in *1344* we get a developed back story to his character. Ruy is a lauded warrior who attains glory in battle against the Moors:

> Por que fiso mucho bien en aquel dia ouol despues a dar el conde Garçi Fernandez por muger a doña Lambra, que era su prima cormana. (249: 2-5)

Ruy's marriage is therefore a reward for his physical prowess in battle, for achieving peak noble masculinity – a detail we never get in the *EE.* This is not the only discrepancy: whilst in the *EE* Ruy organises the *tablado* and stands back with his wife in the audience (209), in *1344* Ruy actually takes part, together with the count (250). The poet-chronicler of the *EE* therefore places Ruy's moral degeneration in a context of ineffectual stasis, whereas for the author of *1344* Ruy's identity as a skilled warrior, the noble male ideal according to officialised models, makes perfect sense. Could the latter therefore be crafting a more scathing critique of noble, Castilian masculinity, given Ruy's initial exemplary status and fall into eventual treachery? This interpretation ties with the inconsistent depiction of Ruy's verbal deception that borders on ambiguity. Thus whilst in the *EE* Ruy is an ineffectual vassal of the count from the outset, *1344* directly reveals the decadence of the entire social category that is the Castilian nobility: as the villain of the story in *1344* Ruy is not wholly vilified to the core, for treachery was able to spawn from the foundations of behaviour that is deemed perfectly acceptable, even laudable, by officialised discourse on social rank. By deconstructing identity along the lines of both gender and social rank, is is therefore clear that Ruy contradicts the model for Castilian male nobility and medieval masculinity depicted in officialised discourse in an attempt to gain the very power that theoretically defines his social rank in practice.

Thus far I have argued that Ruy Velázquez's partially effeminate, at times ambivalent, speech and action is implicitly critical of male nobility but have not yet elucidated why exactly he degenerates into treachery. The reason why not only critiques the noble *defensores* as a class, but also the society that is dependent on them behaving in this way. As discussed, Ruy's treachery is usually ascribed by scholars, including Pidal, solely to the influence of his wife:

> El honrado caballero Ruy Velázquez, instigado por las quejas de su mujer, entregó a los moros en el Campo de Almenar las cabezas de los siete Infantes de Salas. (1896: 3)

Yet in the expansion of the story given in *1344*, and when re-reading the *EE* in light of this, it is clear Ruy's motivations are not as personal and insular as the familial focus of the plot would have one believe. After orchestrating the death of the Infantes, the sheer scale of his quest to gain territory and fortresses from Count Garci Fernández suggests the real catalyst to be the acquisition of further political power and economic greed[27]. He is then enabled by the wider populace who are happy to support his endeavours under the guise of military campaigns. Indeed, by the thirteenth century the pan-European nobility was under pressure from above (the King and urban elites) and below from the peasantry. The emergence of a growing mercantile class, together with Alfonso X's predilection for aligning himself with urban elites to combat tensions with the aristocracy, gave rise to

[27] Pidal also notes Ruy's political mission in *1344*, although frames it as an extension of his initial betrayal as opposed to his motivation all along, outlining how Ruy decides to "añadir a la alevosía…una gran traición contra su señor natural" (1896: 25). Pidal's language here is telling, as by calling the Count Ruy's "señor natural" he implies Ruy is flouting an unspoken, codified model of noble masculinity.

noble rebellions (Procter 1980: 97, 133). Stuber's analysis of thirteenth century England is also pertinent for the contemporary Iberian nobility:

> Previously, power had been connected with land ownership and the estate one was born into. However, with the increasing urban population and occupations produced in these areas, the feudal society began to convert to a capitalistic one. (2008: 8)

Thus the need to gain power independently from one's *señor natural* was more urgent than ever. Indeed, even as early as 1285 Alfonso X was running out of land with which to reward loyal vassals (Linehan 2008: 223). Ruy's familial betrayal was thus composed in a real social context of the redistribution of power away from the nobility.

Although *1344* is far more explicit regarding Ruy's expansionist campaign after the murder of the Infantes, the *EE* clearly sows the seeds of his ambition, something that suggests the poet-chronicler of *1344* read the same sub-text into his source text as I am here. Evidence is found in a telling comment Ruy makes to Almanzor, that with the Infantes dead, "auredes la tierra de los christianos a vuestra voluntat" (219: 4-9): something that in hindsight applies to both Ruy and his Moorish ally. Moreover, after Lambra's servant is murdered in the *EE* Ruy comforts her:

> "Callad, non vos pese, et soffrit vos, ca yo vos prometo que tal derecho vos de ende que *todoel mundo aura que dezir dello*." (217, 9-11, emphasis mine)

He is immediately preoccupied with the public impact of his vengeance and finds in it a pretext to gain notoriety – and, by extension, socio-economic power as in *1344*. *1344* then takes this further with Ruy opposing the Count long after the Infantes' death. This is concordant with Pattison's view that in *1344* the Count "is tied to [the story] to a greater

extent and its events are invested with a greater degree of political significance" (1983: 52). If we therefore place the blame on Lambra we fall for exactly what Ruy would have his fellow nobles think. After he receives the letter condemning his behaviour from the Moor Alicante, Ruy is seemingly repentant, decrying "daqui adelante christianos nin moros non fiaran de mi, pues fis tan grant trayçion." (277, 16-18). He initially blames Lambra, who "en mi vida me fiso faser trayçion" (277, 21). The performative nature of both his regret and condemnation of his wife is, however, revealed when the real motive for his treachery is made clear, because Ruy then quickly moves on to decide a plan of action for "todos los castiellos que tengo del Conde" (277, 23). His plan is set in motion soon after his supposed repentance, for after Gonzalo Gustioz is freed by Almanzor we are told the Count and Ruy are in direct conflict as "Ruy Vasques le robaua las tierras quanto podia" (289, 5-6), his growing wealth correlating to the impoverishment of his sister and brother-in-law Gonzalo. Ruy is therefore shown exploiting essentialist paradigms of femininity; that is, the idea that it was perfectly plausible for him to be under the 'inherently manipulative' influence of Lambra - all the while veiling a calculated political mission.[28] He thus performs the role of the husband manipulated by a woman's purportedly deceptive discourse: a Butlerian example of the performative nature of noble masculinity that was constructed within officialised discourse such as the *Partidas*.

The implicitly negative portrayal of the power-hungry nobility revealed when one assesses masculinity at the intersection of social rank is not embodied solely by Ruy. Within the wider Castilian faction we see the interaction between noblemen as being predicated upon honour, dishonour, violence and remuneration (be it monetary or labour, as in the case of the Infantes serving Lambra after the wedding). Economic

[28] Indeed this possibility was acknowledged by Alfonso X in the *Partidas*, in which a wife is said to be capable of bewitching her husband into committing similarly heinous acts (see *Partida* 4: 7 & 8).

exchange is tied up with dishonour as a viable solution to enmity. For example, at the beginning of the text in both versions one of Gonzalo González's men kills one of Ruy's men who is trying to kill Nuño Salido (*EE*: 226-227). Ruy wants immediate revenge, "se querie vengar luego de sos sobrinos si pudiesse" (*EE*: 226 2-3). Gonzalo González then offers to "pechar la calonna que y ha, e son quinientos sueldos, et dar uos los emos" (*EE*: 226, 12-14). Gonzalo González does not admit to any wrongdoing; rather monetary reward overrides any emotional, affective working through of the enmity between the two men. Money, and by extension power, are the only currencies that speak; thus Gonzalo is no better than Ruy in his negotiation of male conflict – a point upon which I will expand in the following section on collective and hyper-masculinity.

The way in which noblemen behave – indeed, how they behave as men in comparison to the women of the texts, is thus conditioned by the expectations and pressures of their social rank specifically within the Christian, Castilian faction. The maintenance of one's masculine identity through attainment of power and wealth takes precedence over relations with one's kin group; one could therefore argue that both poet-chroniclers unconsciously advocate openness between men that is exemplified in the Cid's relationship with his vassals and the Moors of *SIL* as we shall see. Within the decadent Castilian nobility of the *SIL* this is no longer possible, as the struggle for power is an incessant source of internal conflict: reflective of the period from 1265 (the first iteration of the *EE*) to 1344 in contemporaneous Castile. Yet blame for their decay is not reserved solely for the nobility. In both the *EE* and *1344* we find an ironic portrayal not only of Ruy's fellow nobles, but of those men of lower social rank, the general populace, who unknowingly consent to Ruy's quest. Throughout both texts we find reference to the way in which the general populace reinforces Ruy's identity and how men in particular

facilitate his violent campaign. Ruy is able to succeed because of the response to his "pregón":

> Enuio dezir por toda la tierra que los que con el quisiessen yr en hueste et ganar algo que se guissassen mucho ayna et que se uiniessen luego pora ell. (*EE*: 221, 19-21)

Ruy indiscriminately seeks support from "toda la tierra" – presumably, from men of varying means - with a promise of material reward, akin to the Cid in the *PMC* whose *pregón* I have argued openly erases boundaries between men of different social ranks, offering economic opportunity to all[29]. Ruy's socio-political quest for power is not so selfless, however, and tellingly he only promises vaguely that they can "ganar *algo*" by his side – in stark contrast to the more concrete promise of the Cid, inviting "quien quiere perder cueta e venir a mitad" (1189). Ruy exploits the esteem to which he is held by the populace, whose views are channeled by the narrator. For example, in the *EE* he is given the honorific title of *don*: "Don Rodrigo siempre era bien andant" (222: 1), whilst in *1344* the narrator puts even more emphasis on the common view of Ruy's traditionally masculine physical prowess: "era muy buen cauallero de armas" (249: 1). The unquestioning respect for members of the nobility makes men of lower social rank complicit in his treachery as they are reliant on the *fijosdalgo* for economic advancement, forcing them to put trust in a man's physical ability as opposed to his moral character. The latter is thus implicitly extolled by both poet-chroniclers, undermining in turn the primary quality of knighthood as defined by the *Partidas*, "en defender yacen tres cosas: *esfuerzo*, honra y poderío" (*Partida* 2: 21 – emphasis mine). The *SIL* therefore undermines the dominant model of noble masculinity predicated upon physical strength, and instead

[29] Pidal also draws this similarity between the two events, "Puede dar una idea del pregón de Ruy Velazquez el que hizo echar el Cid por Aragon, Navarra y Castilla" (1896: 7).

advocates emotional intelligence – a trait coded as feminine by ancient and patristic writers and excluded in the model of knighthood put forward even by Alfonso X.

In addition to undermining the centrality of strength and violence to Castilian masculinity, Ruy's actions also reveal the synthetic nature of the boundaries between Christian and Muslim. Akin to the *PMC,* the *SIL* demonstrates that the ideal man is not necessarily by definition Castilian or Christian, as Ruy compares negatively to his Muslim counterparts. Moreover, just as he is fully aware of the stereotypes associated with women and the resulting societal tensions they entail (by attempting to blame Lambra), Ruy also attempts to exploit what he perceives as an essential and unyielding enmity between Christians and Moors – which is revealed to be nothing more than a fantasy in practice. I also argue it to be purposefully ironic that whilst Ruy upholds essentialist models of identity (i.e., the behaviour theoretically expected of women and Moors) he himself is in a liminal position, outside of both the Christian and Muslim communities. His first interaction with Moors occurs when he writes a letter to his ally Almanzor. Ruy willingly suspends himself between two cultures at the mercy of his Muslim servant: both poet-chroniclers depict him dictating the letter whilst the servant actively translates it into Arabic (*EE*: 219; *1344*: 260-261). The final contents of the letter are thus a mystery, meaning Ruy has relinquished linguistic control of the situation entirely, unconsciously giving power to Moors with whom he presumes to have a shared motivation. Yet upon receipt of the letter Almanzor readily defies Ruy's wishes to behead Gonzalo Gustioz (*EE*: 219, 2), suggesting the servant may well have communicated more than Ruy intended. In the text Ruy does dictate we moreover discover how readily he considers himself to be outside of the Christian community: Almanzor's army must kill the Infantes, "por que non me puedo dellos uengar aca *en la tierra de los christianos*" (*EE:* 218, 24, emphasis mine) - he tellingly refers to the Castilian community in the third person plural.

The clearest example of the way in which Ruy exploits what he believes is an essential rivalry between Christians and Moors is the climactic battle in which the Infantes are killed. The fact Ruy predetermines the outcome in both versions highlights the absurd nature of Christian-Muslim conflict and implicitly critiques the way in which war in the name of religion and/or a monarch is co-opted by personal ambition. Ruy is depicted as the puppet-master on both sides of battle, firstly directing the Infantes, "mas todo esto que les el mandaua fazen era enganno et nemiga" (*EE:* 227, 15). He then goes directly to the Moors Viara and Galve, instructing them "el auia ya enbiado su mandado a los moros que echasen los ganados a paçer" (*1344* 269, 6-7). In both versions his movement is described in vague terms: "Pues que les esto ouo dicho, furtose dellos et fuesse pora los moros" (*EE* 228: 10-11; *1344* 269: 25-26). Thus physically neither narrator is able to pin Ruy down. Nuño Salido then overhears his plot (*EE*, 228: 11; *1344*, 270: 7) but only the *EE* is clear in describing how Nuño "fuesse empos del" (228: 11-12) behind enemy lines. Thus *1344* suspends the action on the same plane, which serves to emphasise the ridiculously artificial nature of a battle conducted on the surface to further the Castilian reconquest of Moorish territory, but in reality to fulfil one noble's personal ambition for territory and influence – a noble who is quite literally moving back and forth between both armies.

The Moorish army is, however, able to tip the balance of power in their favour due to a moral superiority that aligns them to Ruy's Christian enemies. They allow the Infantes a temporary "tregua" in battle (*1344*: 272), and we then see in *EE* that Viara and Galve specifically look after the Infantes:

> Uiara et Galue ouieron dellos duelo, et fueron los sacar de entre la priessa, et levaron los pora su tienda, et fizieron los desarmar; desi mandaron les dar de comer pan et uino. (233, 14-16)

In *1344* this increases to four Moors: Viara, Galve, Alicante and Barrasin (274, 13) – thus the poet-chronicler here seeks to emphasise their moral compass over Ruy's lack thereof even more so than the *EE*. The ambivalent – and even positive - attitude towards Moors on the part of both narrators is also outlined by Hazbun, who argues that:

> Ruy's refusal to help the Infantes fight strikes the reader as a more deplorable act than the readiness of the Moors to fight for what is presented to them as an easy victory on Christian territory. (2015: 73)[30]

Some of Ruy's men then change allegiance as their leader's intentions become clear, and the way in which this is described clearly de-Christianises Ruy: "Metio Dios en coraçon a algunos de los cristianos que estauan con Roy Blasquez" (*EE*: 231, 24). Here "cristiano" is used more as a regional affiliation (i.e. Castilian) as they are only truly sanctioned by God after changing sides. Ruy's liminal identity therefore heightens the irony - and indeed humour – of the story in both versions. By having Ruy believe Moors will do battle with Christians regardless, all the while being allied to the former himself as a Christian, the poet-chroniclers reveal the falsity of essentialist paradigms of religious/cultural identity. The *SIL* deconstructs these clear categories and therefore acknowledges the natural evolution of the subject due to environmental factors. Moreover, Ruy's interactions with Moors further critique the Castilian nobility he represents: they too go into battle

[30] Even though here Hazbun refers to the tale as redacted in the *Crónica de veinte reyes*, the plot at this stage of the text is the same.

unquestioningly and are thus partially to blame for perpetuating a war of internalised conflict. Ruy is therefore not the sole focal point of the narrative critique of Castilian masculinity. This also extends to the Infantes, whose downfall is not necessarily a blameless tragedy wrought by their uncle. Their weakness lies not only in their blind faith in the intentions of warfare and of any man considered a noble – akin to Ruy's men - but in the way in which they are happy to be subsumed into a group; losing their identity to fight for the noble collective.

An analysis of male identity in the *PMC* has already shown how collective identity is most clearly evident in groups of men in the epic: group formation enables the dismantling of other socially enforced boundaries such as social rank. Men thus cease to be individual; they advocate a shared ethos and work together to further the interests of the group. This can be both to the benefit and the detriment of the individual, depending on how large and heterogeneous the collective is. In either case, the poet acknowledges the fluid nature of identity as it is influenced by other members of the collective so that the self-definition of the group becomes a homogeneous expression of masculinity. The poet-chroniclers of the *EE* and *1344* depict the latter, negative form of collective male identity in the form of the Infantes which works to reinforce both texts' over-arching critique of noble masculinity. Thus far we have seen the way in which Ruy Velázquez's behaviour is deplorable and symptomatic of a wider societal malaise that props up the self-interested, internal scheming of the Castilian *fijosdalgos*. The detrimental effects of collective masculinity are clear from the very start of both texts at the *tablado* scene. Secondly, through the Infantes' collective behaviour we also see the de-individualising impact of collective masculinity, which within the same social *milieu* is arguably debilitating (or feminising by the standards of officialised discourse) as well as a force for failure, similar to the *PMC's* depiction of the Infantes de Carrión (in contrast to the Cid's

socially diverse following). Far from embracing heterogeneous social elements, the Siete Infantes, as a small *mesnada* in their own right, wrongly assume being a homogeneous concentration of noble men will make them undefeatable against the Moors. This is ultimately reinforced postmortem solely in *1344* when we hear Gonzalo Gustioz's lament addressed to his sons' severed heads, rendering them indistinguishable composite parts of one whole: an abject embodiment of the ideal Castilian *caballero de armas*.

The *tablado* scene that opens both versions of the text is important in decoding the way in which noble masculinity is (per)formed and how power within (not outside of) the Castilian *milieu* is acquired in practice. It is a collective activity that shows individuals attempting to prove the extent to which their identity corresponds to the model for a medieval knight. When one individual – Alvar Sánchez - supersedes this model the collective reacts negatively and murders him for his efforts. The performative nature of the *tablado* moreover means ideal masculinity becomes a fictionalised persona adopted whilst on stage. In both versions of the text the *tablado* takes place in a context of celebration, at the wedding of Ruy and Lambra, where "fueron y grandes alegrías ademas" (*EE*: 208, 22). The language used by the poet-chronicler underlines the affective nature of the performance which at first sight appears more to do with warfare than the preceding nuptial ceremony. It is not, however, the theme of the performance, but rather the skill involved that in fact links directly to heterosexual relations and identity formation, as Fradenburg explains that warfare for sport "allows them to constitute themselves as 'men,' who fight for and who are watched by women" (1991: 212). What Fradenbug alludes to but does not point out explicitly is what "men" means in this context, and how important it is to conform to this definition. In the *SIL* for the social rank of noble it implies a level of modesty and a privileging of action over speech. When Lambra's cousin Alvar Sánchez takes to the stage, his "golpe" resounds as far as nearby

villages, courting due praise by Lambra (that is given a sexual subtext in *1344*, the implications of which are discussed above). It is important to note that it is not her reaction that seals his fate but his reinforcement thereof in speech - suggesting Lambra was indeed playing up to the courtly code outlined by Fradenburg. Alvar takes this too far, yet his response to Gonzalo's challenge is importantly coded in indirect references by the narrator: "Començo luego de decir sus palabras tan grandes." (*EE*, 210: 13-14) This is a recurring narrative technique in both versions of the *SIL* in their treatment of characters who fall out of favour with the Infantes.[31] What initially rouses the Infantes' ire is surprisingly often left out of direct speech; the narrators thus obfuscate the supposed villains' offence, rather than relishing in their provocative speech. What then actually provokes Gonzalo González to kill Alvar – be it Lambra's behaviour or Alvar's gloating – is thus immaterial compared to his disproportionate, indeed hyper-masculine, response to gain social power back from the linguistically provocative Alvar, which serves as the catalyst for Ruy's treachery. We are, however, then given concrete proof in direct speech as Alvar tells Gonzalo "valo mas que todos los otros" (*EE*: 210, 18-19). By conflating his physical prowess with his worth, with the verb "valer", Alvar in fact reveals the harsh truth that lies at the heart of the decay of the Castilian nobility: how physical strength (i.e. his performance at the *tablado*) is disproportionately tied up with economic power[32]. This notion is further underlined in the *EE* as the poet-chronicler specifically includes the detail

[31] For example, we have seen how Ruy's deception is described indirectly, and how Lambra is denied direct speech, emblematic of a narrative refusal to verbalise feminine desire and power.

[32] The *RAE* traces the roots of the Spanish *valer* to the Latin *valere*, meaning: "'ser fuerte', 'estar sano', 'tener tal o cual valor'". The Latin root thus denotes both strength and potential value (economic in a pre-capitalist sense, or indeed utilitarian), a conceit problematised by the poet-chroniclers as they recast the *SIL* as a critique of the way in which increasing one's socio-economic power as a noble inevitably begets violence.

that Ruy Velázquez offers “un don muy bueno” (209: 8) to the winner of the *tablado*. Alvar’s great offence, then, is differentiating himself from “los otros”, presumably the entire *fijosdalgo* class - something particularly offensive to Gonzalo who responds emotionally in both versions: “pesol mucho de coraçon e non lo pudo sofrir” (*EE:* 210: 13-14; *1344*: 252, 9). Flouting the homogenous behavioural model of noble masculinity thus causes so great an imbalance in the existing noble hierarchy that Gonzalo kills Alvar. This understandably provokes Ruy who then attacks Gonzalo, a beating that is only brought to an end when the latter pleads with his uncle:

> Par Dios, tio, nunqua uos yo meresçi porque uos tan grand colpe me diessedes como este; et ruego aqui a mios hermanos que si yo por uentura ende muriero, por uos lo non demanden, mas pero tanto uos ruego que me non firades otra uez, por quanto uos amades, ca vos non lo podria soffrir. (*EE*: 211, 7-12; *1344*: 253, 1-2)

Gonzalo employs violence as a bargaining chip by promising his uncle that his brothers will not retaliate or continue the cycle of vengeance should he die, only if Ruy stops his assault then and there. Violence is thus the true currency of noble interaction; one that is used as a way to re-distribute power according to a hierarchy predicated upon physical strength. The choice of both poet-chroniclers to open the *SIL* with the *tablado* therefore firmly focuses the central axis of the plot upon decaying Castilian masculine identity, and how those who embody it have necessary recourse to violence to maintain and grow their own power; indeed, as shown above, this is precisely how Ruy gets out of control, for he views violence and conflict as the only way to attain socio-economic power. The scene moreover underlines the narrative critique of the nobility in both chronicles: firstly through revealing the falsity of noble masculinity, given that it resides only in

performance, and secondly by showing the de-individualising nature of collective identity, as Alvar's nonconformity leads to a vicious cycle of revenge.

Collective masculinity is then an extended trope touched on throughout both texts through the Infantes as a cohesive, de-individualised unit. Their collective identity in fact disempowers the Infantes to the extent of humour: akin to the Infantes de Carrión in the *PMC*, they lack individual agency and self-definition which ultimately culminates in their death in unison. The group does, however, have one clear voice: that of Gonzalo González, whose influence dictates the actions of the others and determines their fate. The first example of this is the *tablado* itself. The others are actually depicted laughing at Lambra's response to Alvar showing off:

> Quando eso oyeron donna Sancha et sos fijos, tomaronse a riir…ningun dellos non part mientes a aquello que donna Llanbla dixiera, sinon Gonçalo Gonçaluez. (*EE*: 209, 21; *1344*: 251, 14-15)

Gonzalo is singled out by the narrator in his desire to respond violently, and the others then change their tone quickly, following suit to support him:

> Los fijos de donna Sancha caualgeron estonçes et fueronse pora el hermano, ca ouieron miedo que se leuantase dend algun despecho. (*EE*: 210, 10-12; *1344*: 252, 1-2)

The other six Infantes are responding to a group affect whereby feelings gather momentum and are thus uncontrollable. Throughout the remainder of the text both narrators consistently portray the Infantes acting and thinking en masse, in line with their

leader Gonzalo. For example, after the latter is hit with Lambra's blood-filled cucumber, his brothers automatic response is laughter (*EE*: 214, 18; *1344*: 256, 18-19); it is only when Gonzalo denounces their reaction that they agree: Diago González agrees with his brother, "mester es que tomemos coseio a tal cosa como esta" (*EE*: 215, 4; *1344*: 257, 2-3). Seemingly without thought and reaction, the brothers fall into line immediately: "tomaron todos sus espadas et fueronse poral palaçio" (*EE*: 215, 13; *1344*: 257, 11-12). Later in battle against the Moors it is clear they can also be collectively persuaded: Ruy gives them the option not to participate in battle but they cannot resist, responding in unison "fincar nos en la tierra et mucho demostrariemos en ello grand cobardia" (*EE* 221: 15-16*; 1344*, 263: 11-12). In battle the third person plural is then consistently used to refer to the Infantes as opposed to singling out individual actions and achievements:

> Tan de rezio los cometieron, et tan bien lidiaron, et tantos mataron y, que tan grand espanto metieron en ellos. (*EE*: 229, 25-26; *1344*: 271, 14-15)

This passage moreover incorporates the motif of excess with the repetition of "tan"/"tanto" which then culminates in *1344* with the lament over the Infantes' heads. In having Gonzalo speak about the Infantes en masse, thereby undermining the excessive praise with "tan", the narrator unconsciously reveals the paradoxical nature of the former's praise. Moreover, the fact that the collective actions of the Infantes are one of the few tropes to be portrayed consistently in linguistic terms from the *EE* to *1344* is testament to the way in which they work to disempower (or, in the terms of officialised discourse, 'feminise') the group - a constant theme throughout both versions. The collective portrayal of the Infantes in the *SIL* depicts them as an idea: their attempt to assert a homogenous group identity undermines any attempt to acquire power and leads to their death. Both poet-chroniclers therefore denigrate uniform collective identity with

power concentrated within one social group. Indeed the opposite is advocated, as we shall see later: power and success is conversely attained through the cooperation of heterogeneous social groups, such as that between Gonzalo Gustioz, Almanzor and Mudarra. The de-individualising power of collective masculinity is moreover contagious, as Ruy's men are also characterised similarly once they join the Infantes to form an even larger collective: they speak in unison, "queremos esta vez conuusco uiuir o morir" (*EE*: 232,20-21; *1344*: 273, 27) – suggesting that admission to the noble collective therefore entails acceptance of an untimely death.

The disempowering and ultimately damning effects of collective masculinity then culminate in *1344* with Gonzalo Gustioz's lament over his sons' heads, a passage unique to the later chronicle version. *1344* therefore has a developed level of unconscious irony in its approach to collective masculinity. Nowhere is this more evident than when the Infantes' heads are taken to Almanzor who duly presents them to their father Gonzalo for identification; the latter then begins to address them one by one in lamentation. The generic nature of the lament is hinted at by Pidal, who describes it thus:

> Las virtudes que el padre va loando en cada uno de sus hijos forman el conjunto de cuantas un caballero podía tener en el siglo XIII. (1896: 26)

Pidal implicitly thus acknowledges the officialised, public tone of Gonzalo's lament that focuses on the extent to which his sons conform to a model of knightly masculinity. The actual contents of the lament belie its generic nature which does more to highlight their similarities as opposed to unique traits. One by one, Gonzalo Gustioz hyperbolically describes his sons' superiority at a variety of knightly activities; together they form the composite parts of the ideal male warrior – a model that harks back to Alfonso X's body

politic of the *Partidas*. For example, Suero is a champion hunter: “de muy buen caçador non auia en el mundo vuestro par” (282, 3-4). Ruy, the fifth son, is the model knight: “nunca meior cauallero de armas en el mundo nasçio que vos erades” (282, 24-25). Finally, Gonzalo addresses Gustioz González, the sixth, with “vos erades muy buen cauallero a grant marauilla e feriades meior de espada que otro ningun cauallero” (283, 9-11). All three examples here are expressed in similarly formulaic language in an attempt to paradoxically express each son’s uniqueness. Moreover, each son is particularly praised for feats of arms, underlining the centrality of violence to knightly masculinity. Nowhere is this clearer than in the descriptions of the eldest and youngest sons, Diago and Gonzalo: the former’s successes in battle are related with precise detail of territory won (281. 1-15) and the latter is praised because:

> En armas erades mucho efforçado e muy granado en partir lo vuestro; e alançador de tablado non auia en el mundo tal como vos erades. (283, 21-22)

Gonzalo’s superior skills *en armas* are immediately called into question by the previous description of his brothers Ruy and Gustioz. Moreover, by also including a reference to Gonzalo’s supposedly unrivalled ability at the *tablado* the narrator underlines the irony of the passage, given the fact that Gonzalo’s upset at another man’s skill at the sport was ultimately the catalyst for his and his brothers’ violent death. All in all, a close reading of the lament reveals a clear incongruity between the Infantes’ supposedly unsurpassable knightly qualities and their death at the hands of one of their own: their noble uncle. The model of masculinity outlined by Gonzalo Gustioz through his sons is thus untenable in his contemporary Castile; his sons were supposedly successful nobles, yet any power they are claimed to have wielded was ephemerally embodied in their physical prowess.

Collective masculinity therefore not only contributes to the over-arching critical depiction of the Castilian nobility in the *SIL*, but moreover to the unconsciously ironic tone in which this is framed. This is also to be found particularly in the characterisation of Gonzalo González, who is depicted as reactionary, responding impulsively with gratuitous violence (or threats thereof) when he or his family is threatened, even when such threats are insubstantial – a theme that runs consistently across the *EE* and *1344*. A propensity towards violence was a marker of the noble knight's masculinity, something found in the *Partidas* and Ruy Velázquez's behaviour, and is also underlined by Mazo-Karras: "the norms for a young man of the chivalric class welcomed aggressiveness" (2003: 28). Yet it is taken to the extreme by Gonzalo, who can therefore be described as exhibiting hyper-masculine behaviour. Hyper-masculinity has been defined by Oswald as follows:

> Hyper-masculinity is a category marked by […] performances of aggression and domination: it is the exaggeration of male stereotypical behaviour. (qtd. in Boyer 2016: 6)

Tieszen also corroborates this conception of hyper-masculinity but also interestingly maps it onto medieval Spain, in which he argues Christian writers used hyper-masculinity in their writings on Islam, in "an effort to reform human qualities until they become uncontrolled and excessive […] they would be very much like animals" (2013: 135). The fact that the poet-chroniclers do not characterise the male Muslim characters as such (as we shall see) but instead choose to depict extreme behaviour on the part of Castilian noblemen is further evidence to show the decadence of the latter social group. Critics have already noted traces of hyper-masculinity on the part of the Infantes, albeit not mentioning it explicitly. Montgomery firstly points out the similarities between the youngest Infante Gonzalo's rage and that of Doña Lambra:

> When Gonzalo kills her cousin her anger, like his, seems exaggerated and arbitrary, as though the furore could now affect both sexes. (1998: 19)

Montgomery gets closest to identifying the purposefully over-the-top and thus arbitrary anger and subsequent violence. Armistead then also touches on the idea that blame could lie with the Infantes due to their behaviour, and notes “the young nobles’ unreflective impetuousness (*desmesura*)” (2013, 196). Yet neither goes as far as to explain what the poet-chroniclers sought to achieve with a negative portrayal of characters who so easily could be the tale’s heroes, which is ultimately a critique of the decadent Castilian nobility and the model of masculinity that underpins this. In direct opposition to the *mesura* of the Cid, then, we have the *desmesura* of both the Infantes and the more obviously villainous Ruy Velázquez. The first textual example is Gonzalo González’s reaction to Alvar Sánchez at the *tablado* which has already been touched upon; in summary Gonzalo’s reaction can be described as hyper-masculine given his immediate recourse to violence whilst the rest of his siblings stand back and laugh:

> E dexose yr para el atan braua miente que mas non pudo, y diole una tan grant puñada en el rrostro. (*1344*, 252: 11-13)

The language used to describe Gonzalo’s movement depicts him out of control, “atan braua miente que mas non pudo”: Gonzalo physically cannot bear not to act as he impulsively approaches his prey Alvar *con bravura*; with an animalistic ferocity.

The audience may be forgiven for reading this as a justifiably (if proud) reaction to another man’s obnoxiousness, if the exact same formula had not been used in the

second violent episode of the tale in which Doña Lambra's servant is murdered. Here again Gonzalo's brothers are laughing, this time at their brother being pelted with the suitably ludicrous blood-filled *cohombro*, albeit "non de coraçon" (214: 19), which suggests they hold themselves back for fear of his reaction. Their restraint is well-founded but not enough to prevent Gonzalo from chastising their reaction once more: "se me pudiera ferir con al, como con esto, et matarme" (*EE*, 214: 21). This is then followed by a hyperbolic call for immediate vengeance, for "non querria uiuir un dia mas que fasta quel non uengasse" (*EE*, 214: 22-23). The poet-chroniclers have Gonzalo use similar language to his depiction in the face of Alvar Sánchez as both passages convey a lack of control; he categorically cannot go on until his bloodlust is satiated. Gonzalo does then murder Lambra's servant, a reaction that is entirely incongruous to the crime given even his brothers (and indeed the audience) can sense the humour in the episode, making his violence gratuitous and an implicit mockery of noble masculinity. What truly underlines his hyper-masculinity, however, is the fact that his violence is not solely reserved for those outside of his immediate kin group. Later in the text in battle against Almanzor's army both poet-chroniclers depict Gonzalo threatening his very own *amo*, Nuño Salido, for suggesting they turn back from battle due to inauspicious omens, warning him "si non fuessedes mio amo, cuemo lo sodes, yo uos mataria por ello" (*EE*, 223: 8-9, *1344*, 265: 10-11). Gonzalo thus ironically threatens violence internally within the noble, familial group in response to the desire to turn away from violent battle: a perfect encapsulation of the futility of violent masculinity that works counter to any collective progress.

The final aspect of epic masculinity to be deconstructed is its intersection with the conflated concepts of Islamicness or Moorishness in the *SIL*. Islamic masculinity is not explicitly conceived as the direct antithesis to that of the decaying Castilian nobility and thereby a solution or better model to follow. There is a large amount of ambiguity, but

what is most notable is that neither poet-chronicler seeks to positively define the Christian, Castilian nobility in opposition to their Muslim counterparts. This is crucial as according to Tieszen – in an analysis of the *Liber denudationis* - authors in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were self-reflexively defining Christians in direct opposition to Muslims which was often conceived of in moral terms (2013: 223). Hazbun also notes this ambiguity, by arguing that Moorish men:

> Play a central part in the narrative of Christian enmity but are actually exempt from the connotation of treachery and cowardice this brings. (2015: 74)

Moorish men are thus complicit in the events of the *SIL* as they unfold, yet at the same time they are implicitly morally superior, a superiority that only serves to further denigrate the Castilian nobility. This is firstly evidenced by the clemency granted by Almanzor to Gonzalo Gustioz, and then by the behaviour of the Moorish kings – notably Alicante – towards the Infantes in battle and Ruy after the Infantes' murder. Finally, we are given the hybrid example of Mudarra who constitutes the ultimate refutation of essentialist paradigms of religious identity; given it is he who, in alliance with both his Christian father and Muslim uncle, puts an end to the thus far unremitting cycle of internal Castilian vengeance. Indeed, Mudarra serves as the perfect example of why essentialist models of identity are flawed: when the usually mutually-exclusive categories of Christian/Castilian and Muslim/Moor coalesce, that individual returns the focus once again on the good of the collective (in this case, the community of Castile that includes both the Count and the Lara family) as throughout the text it is clear that any extreme adherence to the norms of one category of identity (here in the form of Castilian masculinity) is ultimately regressive.

Almanzor, ruler of the Umayyads, casts a long shadow over the events of the text in both chronicle redactions. He is at once a military ally, confidant and father figure who comes to the aid of Ruy Velázquez, Gonzalo Gustioz and Mudarra, all the while remaining objectively outside of the internal disputes of the extended Lara family. An obvious comparison can be made with Abengalbón of the *PMC*, who enables the Cid's family's safe passage. Almanzor's relationship with the Castilian nobility in *SIL* is more complex, however, as he is depicted firmly using his discretion in his response to both Ruy and Gonzalo Gustioz's predicaments, as opposed to serving Christians purely out of chivalric *largesse*; a luxury partly afforded to him by virtue of his sheer power in comparison to not only Ruy but also the Count of Castile. As a Muslim man of high standing, both poet-chroniclers paint him as a favourable exemplar that freely crosses the boundaries between Christian and Moor in his allegiances and actions. Indeed, he can be considered the moral arbiter of the text as he goes out of his way to ensure Gonzalo Gustioz's fair treatment and an exemplary upbringing for Mudarra, all the while continuing to succeed military (at least in the *EE*). Ultimately, Almanzor's exemplary position stems from a narratorial ambivalence towards him, something already noted by Hazbun: he is "both the agent of Christian downfall and an empathiser with Gustioz's predicament" (2015: 73). He is there for the Castilian nobility to interact with, to misread and further expose their internal divisions and reliance on existing ephemeral social ones.

Almanzor's initial role in the text is as a currency of power in which Ruy tries to trade in order to firstly oust the Infantes and Gonzalo Gustioz, and secondly to control the very Moors that Almanzor has sent to his aid. He is introduced to the family dispute via Ruy's pleading letter: "Salut como a amigo que amo de todo mio coraçon" (*EE:* 218, 21; *1344*: 260: 18). The audience at this stage can only assume a close chivalric bond between the two men ostensibly in spite of their religious differences. Yet it is their difference that

proves crucial in Almanzor's role as exemplar: it enables the King to look at Ruy's letter and re-interpret it as treachery (and therefore differentiates him from Ruy's Castilian vassals who, as we have seen, acquiesce to their leader's demands solely because of his good reputation as a warrior). Almanzor exists outside of this sphere and therefore exposes the delusional nature of Castilian vassalage as he quickly understands the treacherous implications of the letter when it is brought to him by Gonzalo Gustioz: "Vio la nemiga que venie en ella" (*EE*, 220: 12; *1344*, 262: 12). Almanzor decides not to cede to Ruy's first demand to kill Gonzalo, avoiding the sort of gratuitous violence meted out indiscriminately by the hyper-masculine Gonzalo González. Almanzor's motivations are unclear – indicative of the narrator's inability to penetrate Moorish culture - yet we witness the way in which he addresses Gonzalo Gustioz in similar language used by Ruy in the letter:

> "Roy Blasquez me enuia dezir que te descabeçe, mas yo, por que te quiero bien, non lo quiero facer." (*EE*: 220, 15-17)

Ruy thus incorrectly projects an identity upon Almanzor as the inevitable punisher of Christian captives. Almanzor in fact flouts this stereotype in a clear dismantling of contemporary paradigms of Moorish identity. He does, however, still raise an army to go into battle against the Infantes, yet this is the sort of publicly sanctioned violence that stands in stark contrast to Ruy's extreme, private treachery.

Ultimately, the power Ruy believes to have successfully channeled through Almanzor is ephemeral. This is made clear after the Infantes' death when their heads are brought to his palace in Córdoba. Almanzor's reaction underscores his complementary role as a moral figure who enables the Castilian nobility to redeem themselves under his

influence, for not only does he allow Gonzalo Gustioz to kill several of his own vassals stationed at the palace in anger, he mourns the Infantes' loss together with Alicante, a detail only present in *1344*:

> Pesoles mucho e con grant duelo que del ouieron començaron de llorar, e dixo Almançor contra Alicante: "yo non querría que Gonçalo Gustios aqui muriese por quanto Cordoua vale, por que yo vi quanta trayçion a el fiso Ruy Vasques e a sus fijos." (284: 10-14)

Almanzor's inclusive attitude to mourning reveals the universal nature of Ruy's treachery: his sadness is not the exclusive preserve of those who live within his kingdom's borders. He mourns all losses, even those of Gonzalo Gustioz who as his prisoner is completely at his mercy. A similar role is played by Alicante in *1344,* whose disapproval of Ruy's actions shows their impact to go beyond the realm of the internal conflict of the Castilian nobility as they tarnish his reputation amongst Moors:

> La carta desia en como le enbiaua desafiar Alicante por el rrey Almançor, e por si, e por todos los otros que eran con el, e por todos los de allen mar e de aquen mar, e que lo desafiaua asi como traydor que era. (277, 7-1)

The repeated verb "desafiar" refers to broken trust: Almanzor and Alicante thus object to Ruy's behaviour as an unaffiliated mercenary with no kinship responsibility towards his allies. Ruy is incapable of a true alliance as he wrongly conceives of Moors as a homogenous group who hold an essential enmity towards Christians. Moreover, the language used by Alicante in the letter explicitly removes any political, cultural identity from those fighting in the battle by referring to them as "los de allen mar e de aquen

mar”. The Moors of the text thus have a fluid conception of human identity that is not essentially defined by the socio-cultural position a person is born into, and are open to real allegiances defined by shared motivations across frontiers. Their disapproval of some but not all Castilian nobles illustrates the supremacy of a universal morality free from any religious associations in both versions of the text. The poet-chronicler of the *EE* then poignantly closes the tale with news of Almanzor’s ongoing successful conquest of Coyança:

> Çercola et prisola, et desi fizola derribar de çimiento et astragarla todo, et despues tomose pora Cordoua. (243, 22-24)

Choosing to end the story thus (instead of, say, with a summary of the future glories brought upon Castile by Mudarra) is testament to the exemplary role played by al-Andalus as a societal model: internal harmony enables political progress; meanwhile Castile is preoccupied with internal conflict. The role played by al-Andalus therefore differs across the two chronicle versions: whilst the *EE* emphasises the connection between upstanding morals and ongoing military success, *1344* places more importance on the moral compass of both Almanzor and Alicante. The two Moors take a nuanced approach to allegiances and friendship that is not dictated by the boundary between Christian and Moor; a boundary that is thus implicitly revealed to be constructed, as a universal human morality prevails. In stark contrast, then, stands a Castilian nobility that calamitously privileges violence in order to uphold an essential model of masculinity and power.

The final example of Muslim/Moorish masculinity in the text is the inherently hybridic Mudarra, whose role in the story is to avenge the treachery exerted upon his father and

half brothers. By virtue of his identity as half Muslim/Moor and half Christian/Castilian, Mudarra's resolution of the story signifies the importance placed on mixed identities that do not adhere to strict cultural models. This is similar to the *PMC* that advocates a fluidity of identity across genders and social ranks; albeit in the *SIL* the categories under scrutiny are religious or cultural backgrounds. Although both chronicle versions have Mudarra grow up at Almanzor's court and move to Castile to meet his father Gonzalo Gustioz, there are some striking differences. Whereas the *EE* firmly depicts him as a Moor even when he has traversed the border into Castile, in *1344* Mudarra is conscious of his religious identity and asks to convert to Christianity. This detail is perhaps what leads Barton to say that Mudarra eschews "his Islamic heritage for good" (2015: 141); but this detail is only present in *1344*. Moreover, the extent of this conversion is dubious, given Mudarra retains his name and ties to al-Andalus. The varied portrayal of Mudarra across both chronicles ultimately gives a different inflection to the problem of toxic, Castilian masculinity: the *EE* depicts Mudarra as a stable counterpoint and an embodiment of Muslim masculinity; whereas *1344* has Mudarra adapt and adopt some tropes of Castilian masculinity, thereby pessimistically immortalising the effects thereof.

As discussed above, the conclusion to *SIL* in the *EE* is an implicit approbation of Moorish-Castilian allegiance, ending firstly with Mudarra ending the cycle of Castilian enmity by killing Ruy and Lambra, and then rounding off with the description of Almanzor's continued militaristic victories. *1344* is worth more discussion as the text hints that this cycle is not yet at an end. This is firstly implicit in the way in which Mudarra converts to Christianity for socioeconomic reasons, as he admits to the Count it is in order to "seer cauallero de vuestra mano" (301: 19-20). Moreover, he keeps his name upon conversion: "el non quiso que le cameasen su nonbre" (302: 14-15) which implies his conversion is nothing more than strategic. The Count then appoints him *alcayde mayor:*

> Entonçe fiso el conde don Garçi Ferrandes alcayde mayor de toda su tierra a don Mudarra Gonçales, como lo ante era el traydor de Ruy Vasques, e dixol que todos los castiellos que ganase de Ruy Vasques que gelos daua por heredat, e mando a todos los de la tierra que fisiesen su mandado. (303, 1-5)

The narrator thus makes an indirectly ominous association between Mudarra and Ruy, something unique to *1344* and concordant with the heightened level of unconscious irony specific to this chronicle (also found in the addition of the generic lament of the heads as discussed above). Even in his supposedly vengeful campaign against Ruy, Mudarra has one eye on gaining territory, as evidenced by his response to Ruy's men whom he refuses to take into his own *mesnada*:

> "Mas quiero que me dedes Castro e Amaya aquellos que lo tenedes, e quanto es las heredades del conde fincar le han, e vos catad a qui siruades". (310, 13-15)

This passage thus clearly harks back to Ruy's political ambition that spurred on his violent revenge as Mudarra's primary goal is territorial gain. Viewed in retrospect with Mudarra's political ambition in mind, his parting words to Almanzor take on an additional layer of meaning:

> "Si el fuere bueno e onrrado, tornarme he para vos; e si fuere otro, nunca me mas veredes en vuestra casa." (293, 15-16)

Mudarra thus places a renewed importance on social rank, refusing to acknowledge the mutability of such categories - all the while intrinsically negotiating the boundaries of

Christian and Moor. Finally, the method in which Mudarra exerts his revenge on Ruy in *1344* - via a public *tablado* (311-12) - further adds weight to the idea that the cycle of male violence to attain social dominance is an incurable part of Castilian society. The role of Moorish men in the *SIL* is thus to expose the fundamentally universal nature of treachery. In their interactions with the Castilian nobility they moreover further expose the latter's decadence and immorality that stems partly from a reliance on an essentialist model of masculinity taken to the extreme of violence within their own kin group. What is most important is the way in which Islamic masculinity exists as an alternative model – and not one that is inferior to Christian, Castilian nobility – as all Moors depicted are to varying extents morally superior. This concept is then problematised by the poet-chronicler of *1344* who acknowledges Mudarra's dual heritage and thereby has him fall foul to the instinct of Castilian masculinity to amass power through violence, at the expense of all else.

Unlike the *PMC*, the *SIL* therefore does not emphasise difference between noble Christian men and similarities between these men and their female and/or Moorish equivalents in order to champion an egalitarian ethos and relocate power within the collective, across the lines of gender, social rank and cultural or religious identity. Instead we see a glimpse of this vision through Almanzor's brief cooperation with his captive Gonzalo Gustioz, and the subsequent success of Mudarra – the progeny of heterogeneous cultural backgrounds. In this denouement the poet-chroniclers not only criticise Castilian nobility but moreover identify why it has decayed: because it has become fundamentally insular. What both versions of the text do share with *PMC* is an implicit undermining of the solidity of the socially-constructed categories of identity: woman, man, Christian, Moor and noble. Both in the *EE* and *1344* we find a contradiction not only of the stereotypical models of femininity and masculinity (such as Sancha and Gonzalo González

respectively) by taking them to the extreme, but also an implicit critique of the way in which their contemporary society employed these stereotypes in practice, such as the assumption of Lambra's unquenchable sexuality by several men in the text, and that of the Moorish characters' supposedly essential enmity towards Christians by Ruy Velázquez. The *SIL* thus exposes a decayed nexus of power within the male Castilian nobility: a homogeneous group that has ultimately become an inward-looking caricature of itself. The nobles attempt – but ultimately fail - to perform an essentialist model of masculinity that is distilled to violence, conflict against Moors, distrust of women and an unceasing desire to extend their authority.

## Conclusion

At the very beginning of this thesis I outlined the way in which the intersectional method is particularly adept at identifying the way in which socially-constructed identity categories:

> Signal an intersecting constellation of power relationships that produce unequal material realities and distinctive social experiences for individuals and groups positioned within them. (Chepp and Hill Collins 2013: 3)

An intersectional analysis of identity in epic poetry, taking into account gender, religion, cultural background and social rank, has unveiled a poetic contradiction of normative power relationships between the various social ranks of medieval Castile, between genders and between Christians, Moors and Jews. The 'material realities' of characters across both the *PMC* and *SIL* are not necessarily unequal between different identity categories. Both texts in fact decentralise the notion of power in the Foucauldian sense; in the *PMC* it is most successfully wielded by the socially diverse collective, while in the *SIL* it is relocated to the culturally heterogeneous alliance of Almanzor, Gonzalo Gustioz and Mudarra.

The epic poets of medieval Spain were therefore acutely aware, albeit unconsciously, that difference between such categories is socially constructed. That is not to say the epic was written in order to propagate such a theory; on the contrary, the texts neither strive for a wholehearted fixedness of identity, as one could argue of contemporary legal texts such as the *Partidas*, nor do they openly advocate a fluidity of

identity. The fundamentally fluid nature of the texts themselves in a manuscript culture means they come closer to depicting the real contradictions and ambiguities of lived experience, which is entirely discordant with contemporary officialised discourse. The epic's popular origins and multiple versions give rise to multivalent texts that provide honest insights into the human condition, in turn undermining the theoretical diametric oppositions of male and female, Christian and Moor and townsperson and nobility.

Through their fluid depiction of identity the *PMC* and the *SIL* uncover the malleable nature of power: it is not consistently distributed to or withheld from identity groups designated variously by the poets as men, women, Christians, Moors, nobility and others. Through the pervasive figure of the Cid, whose identity extends beyond the borders of his own body, the poet of the *PMC* constructs an egalitarian model of shared power that can be described as proto-Foucauldian. The poem actively takes the focus off difference and has individuals working as a collective, maintaining and growing a power that in name may be designated as the Cid's but in practice belongs to his wider *mesnada*. Individuals who inhibit collective progress are by contrast depicted as weak, such as the Infantes de Carrión, characterised predominantly as performers of deceptive speech and stasis, whose hyper-masculine violent retribution lacks *mesura*. The *SIL* contrastingly depicts a deplorable societal model in the form of male, Castilian nobles: both chronicle versions constitute an implicit critique of the ineffectual concentration of power within the decadent Castilian nobility, many of whom attempt to uphold and employ essentialist models of identity in practice, whilst their female and Moorish counterparts exercise power and influence by necessarily departing from behaviour coded as "feminine" or "Muslim" in officialised discourse of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is the tendency of the epic to grant supremacy to action that enables an overt subversion of received ideas about gender, religious or cultural identity and social rank, contributing to

an egalitarian ethos that ultimately has a diverse collective triumph over individual or socially/culturally homogeneous interests – an ethos that arguably substantiates the epic's popular origins in a thematic sense (albeit not the authorship of its developed form studied here).

Across both texts, then, the moving borders of their contemporary Christendom are starkly reflected in the poetic portrayal of the self. The individual is wholly permeable to outside influence; meanwhile those who cling to essentialist models of identity (such as the Infantes de Carrión and Ruy Velázquez) are depicted as regressively ineffectual. Identity is fundamentally in flux and evolving, a characteristic refracted in the microcosm of the Cid and his community and mapped onto the moving borders of Castile itself. The epic's provenance, genre and origin is debated to this day, and one could indeed argue that a rejection of academic and ecclesiastical views on gender, religion or cultural background and social rank could therefore prove its popular origins and a lack of learned influence, what Pidal called its *estado latente*. Whilst it is beyond my remit to discuss origin theories of the epic itself, what cannot be disputed is its heterogeneous nature and fluidity of composition. It has no set definition in the way it has come down to us, and it is this heterogeneity that means the shared ethos of the works in question - of identity as unfixed and in flux – is in many ways inevitable, given that unknown, unknowable, and collective authorship underpins the textual identity of the poems. Further studies might wish to consider the extent to which epic poetry can be considered self-reflexively aware of its own unstable, evolving identity as a shared cultural property and whether this is refracted onto the poetic portrayal of the individual.

It is finally important to note that the version(s) of the *PMC* and *SIL* analysed here do not exist in a vacuum, although it is beyond the realms of this study to consider the

multifarious extant medieval versions of both poems. Yet the nature of texts in a liminal literary culture transitioning from the oral to the manuscript tradition in fact neatly fits the medieval epic depiction of identity, for the identity of the text was never and can never be fixed – something I have elucidated throughout in the poetic differences between the two versions of the *SIL* discussed. Further studies on the epic could also conduct a comparison of the presentation of individual and collective identity in the different chronicle versions in conjunction with any surviving *cantares de gesta*, as it is at the points, or indeed *intersections*, of difference between each interpretation of the stories that one can draw further conclusions as to the identity of the epic itself in the mind of its redactor. The closer we come to understanding why epic characters such as the Cid were depicted in different ways during the medieval period the clearer it will be to prove the existence of varying attitudes towards the social categories of man, woman, Christian, Moor and the varying social groups of medieval Iberia. The very fact these opinions exist – that texts in a manuscript and oral culture are fluid – demonstrates the kind of self-questioning an instability of the 'self' we find in just one iteration (or two, in the case of the *SIL*), studied here.

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