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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Kathryn L. Brooks for the Master of Arts degree in Spanish were presented November 4, 1996 and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Kathryn L. Brooks for the Master of Arts in Spanish presented November 4, 1996.

Title: Anticlerical Sentiment in Castilian and Galician-
 Portuguese Medieval Literature

Clerical sexual incontinence was a prevalent satirical theme during the Middle Ages manifested by anticlerical sentiment towards reprobate clergymen and the laws that they disobeyed. This satirical genre of literature targeted not only the cleric of a small town, but bishops and cardinals who were also abusers of canon law.

The anticlerical theme originated in Western Europe in the time of Constantine when early Christianity was competing with many religions for dominance. In the fourth century, Constantine, through the Edict of Milan, granted religious tolerance to all, thus allowing Christianity to become a major religion. Clerical celibacy originated from the writings of early church fathers such as Augustine of Hippo, Origen, and Tertullian, who determined that celibacy provided greater spiritual access to God. Early patristic church fathers supported the ideal of sexual celibacy for Christians in order to spiritually overcome the other religions.

In the fourth century A.D., the church demanded that the clerics remain celibate even though they were married. By the twelfth century, canonical laws demanded that clerics not marry and remain celibate. These laws initiated an extreme sexual repression of clerics who began to sexually seek women, refusing them absolution for their sins if they refused the clerics' sexual advances.

The purpose of this thesis is to establish that the corrupt clerics victimized the laity, who, although fearing for their salvation, produced satirical poetry expressing their anticlerical sentiment. This thesis also will present literature that discusses the pros and cons of clerical concubinage.

There are three different forms of articulation in this thesis. The first is didactic and teaches the reader by demonstrating literature that encouraged clerical celibacy. The second illustration is satirical poems with the seven deadly sins as a recurrent theme. These poems are divided into two groups: the first is the poems written by the nobility, and the second is the popular anonymous poems, sung to music for peasant entertainment. The third articulation is the proponents of clerical concubinage. This poetry reflects the human side of companionship and need during a tumultuous time when people banded together in order to survive.

ANTICLERICAL SENTIMENT IN CASTILIAN AND GALICIAN-PORTUGUESE
MEDIEVAL LITERATURE

by
Kathryn L. Brooks

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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Let me die in your arms
as shadows dare waltz
 in fairlight of autumn,
the dance of one's life
on a meadow of heartache
 with a lover of moons.

Peter the great, God, Marisela, DeLys, Baixinha,
São Jorge, Luna, Marvin, and Mytz.

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Clerical celibacy was a demoralizing and repressive posture taken by the early Christian Church. It was an idea conceptualized by patristic ascetics of the fourth century in Western Europe as a means of attaining a higher spiritual level but, instead, fostered sexual repression of a natural God-given ritual. This repression led to the subsequent abuse of female laity. The power that the clerics had over the laity was so strong that the fear of damnation for unabsolved sin led many women to the beds of clerics. The protest of the laity to the actions of the clerics promoted the manifestation of anticlerical literature, a form of satire written during the Middle Ages.

During the medieval era in Western Europe, the Christian Church was a compelling force of power where corruption gradually took hold. In Spain, the abuse of clerical concubinage and fornication by members of the clergy reflected this power and corruption of the Christian

Church. It was the sexual promiscuity of the clergy that prompted an anticlerical sentiment among the laity. This comportment by the clergy was in direct violation of the church law regarding continence. The church's reaction to the disobedience of such law was to first prohibit clerics from sexual relations with their concubine. Then, it denied them the right to a concubine and, lastly, in the twelfth century the church by means of canon law ordered the complete abstinence from concubinage, marriage, and sexual intercourse. In this way, as a spiritual as well as an earthly power in the Middle Ages, the church sought to crush within its own organization the earlier practice of clerical concubinage once common in the Roman period (B.C.206-A.D.409). However, canon law in its nascent state did little to curb the incontinence of the clergy (Chapman 36). The repercussion of canon law prohibiting clerical concubinage led to clerical incontinence and repressive violence among the clergy.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the role of the clergy in the evolution of a genre of poetry which targets reprobate clergymen. It will also examine the literature that censures clerical concubinage as well as

the literature that defends its practice. Although it is common knowledge that corrupt clergy members in the Christian Church existed and were guilty of sexual incontinence, the literature offers a less accurate view of the clerics' sexual power over the laity that, although exaggerated, is factual.

I propose to show how the power of the church manifested itself in the prerogative of the clergy to coerce lay women into engaging in sexual intercourse. Church laws acted as the catalyst that produced an upheaval of sexual values by demonstrating societal repression among the clergy. The first testimony demonstrates the didactic posture against clerical concubinage and fornication. The second is the satirical, presented in the form of poetry and dialogue, which has as a recurring theme the seven deadly sins. The third example are the proponents for clerical concubinage which are presented in the form of a debate between two sisters and as a letter of protest to the Pope from the clerics of Talavera.

Section II

CHURCH CANONS CONCERNING CLERICAL CONCUBINAGE

The practice of concubinage traces its roots to Roman society where living with a concubine was common. A man was expected to keep a concubine as well as marry, since it carried no moral or social stigma (Brundage 24). This practice included marriage to a lady of noble lineage with a concubine from the masses for the men of nobility and concubinage with many women for men in the lower classes. The latter arrangement is a direct result of the economic situation of the times, since it was far cheaper to share a house with many than to have many houses to maintain.

In the late Roman period along with the rise of Christian asceticism and aspiration to purity emerged the theory of a "fantasy of the loss of vital spirit" that occurs during male ejaculation (Brown 19). The medical doctors of this period looked at the body as a fragile reservoir from which energy could leak away during sexual intercourse. This idea of loss of vital spirit is what gave the idea of clerical celibacy as a vehicle to God its

foothold in Christian society. According to the patristic writer Tertullian (A.D.150-240),

. . . the whole human frame is shaken and foams with semen, as the damp humor of the body is joined to the hot substance of the spirit. And then, in that last breaking wave of delight, do we not feel something of our very soul go out from us? (Brown 17)

During the Christian struggle for dominance in the second and third centuries, several Christian writers began to look at sexual relations as a separation from the one true God. They based this theory on Stoic ethical ideas and ancient religious beliefs about ritual purity. These ideas mixed with a theology based in part on Hebrew scripture, gave birth to an ideal sexual morality (Brundage 3). At this time, ascetics who wanted a higher spiritual relationship with God, chose voluntarily to deny the body its cravings for pleasure in order to save the soul. They preached celibacy as a means of attaining a higher spiritual plane (Brown 79). The early writers examined the ascetic ideal which was explained in the works of a Stoic named Tertullian, the first important Christian

ecclesiastical writer in Latin, and his contemporary Origen, a theologian of antiquity who became a eunuch by his own hand (Laeuchli 104). They were greatly influenced by the belief that sexual intercourse was wicked, as were women (all women) who attracted men to their perdition.

"Women, Tertullian declared, are the devil's door: through them Satan creeps into men's hearts and minds and works his wiles for their spiritual destruction" (Brundage 64).

Origen is in agreement with Tertullian when he says: ". . . as we have noted, [women] are indiscriminate slaves to lust, and like animals they rut without discretion. . . ." (Brundage 65).

Saint Justin Martyr (A.D.ca. 100~110-ca. 165/66) an early patristic writer, points to the large number of Christians living a celibate life as proof of the high moral ideal of Christianity (Lynch 17). He relates the story of one young man who begged to be castrated so that he would be safe from female sexual temptation. The information that led him to castrate himself was Matthew 19:12 in the Bible in which Jesus, in the New Testament, supposedly expresses that it is acceptable to God to

subject the body to castration (Brundage 65). The passage from Matthew reads as follows:

For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

Virginity, sexual abstinence, and castration were vehicles to create a group of Orthodox Christians who believed that they were superior to other human beings. As we shall see in the Elvira Canons, the feeling of a Christian elitist would be the stepping stone to encourage clerics to remain celibate, and, therefore superior to the other Christian sects. The Elvira Canons would become the means by which to push the church into a new epoch (Laeuchli 56).

In the third century most clerics were married or living in concubinage sanctioned by Roman law, without any restraints imposed by the church. According to John Lynch, the married cleric was an advantage as the church struggled to gain a foothold in the Roman world. A married cleric

encouraged community and shared a house with his spouse and children, which not only furnished shelter but provided a place for assembly (Lynch 16). By the early fourth century, a canon resulting from a situational response of married clerics versus celibate clerics fostered the first council denouncing clerical concubinage. The Elvira Canons held in southern Spain were a result of a synod that bore witness to the evolution of the Christian Church by imposing harsh moral demands on the clergy (Laeuchli 3). The outcome of canon law at the Elvira Synod induced a strict division between the clergy and the laity in regard to concubinage.

The Elvira Canons deprived bishops, priests, and deacons who committed fornication of the right to receive communion, save on their deathbeds; the Canons also required the higher clergy to divorce their wives and demanded that they cease marital relations if the wife had committed adultery.

(Brundage 69)

Canon thirty-three from the Elvira Synod reads:

Bishops, presbyters, and deacons and all other clerics having a position in the ministry are

ordered to abstain completely from their wives and not to have children. Whoever, in fact, does this, shall be expelled from the dignity of the clerical state. (Quoted in Laeuchli 131)

This most radical of the Canons, then, required that clerics abstain permanently from sexual intercourse with their wives, and those that did not follow canonical law were to be dismissed from their church office. This is the historical beginning of mandatory clerical celibacy, prohibiting clerics from marrying or living with a concubine so that they might remain pure and close to God.

Canon eighteen is also relevant to this study because it presents the consequence for clerical sex offenders:

Bishops, presbyters, and deacons, if-once placed in the ministry-they are discovered to be sexual offenders, shall not receive communion, not even at the end, because of the scandal and the heinousness of the crime. (Quoted in Laeuchli 128)

Canon eighteen explicitly states that clerics who are sex offenders will not receive communion on their death bed and will, therefore, not be saved. Although the punishment is

harsh, the power to determine the gravity of the crime remained with ecclesiastical authority.

Brundage states that the Elvira Canons were not enforced at this time but were a first-documented attempt to define a Christian self identity (70). The Christian writers at the time denounced concubinage as contrary to the New Testament as a means by which to gain moral superiority over the pagan populace. Before Constantine's Edict of Milan, there were many religious groups struggling to survive in pagan Rome. By creating an elitist group that was defined by an ascetic clerical leadership, the Christian fathers could promote Christianity in a class by itself; as Christianity began to take a foothold in the fourth century, the church became very powerful. According to Riane Eisler, "It was an integral part of the Church's highly political strategy to impose and maintain its control over a people who still dimly remembered, and clung to, much earlier [pagan] traditions" (30). According to Samuel Laeuchli, the laity found relief in being governed by clerics who seemed to live a life of purity and speak to the ideals of the clergy, although in reality those ideals were not honored (102).

Though the idea of clerical celibacy was in a developing state, the reality of a continent life presented a different picture from the one of a serene, content, and celibate cleric. The elimination of a natural act from the life of a human had its consequences. Although the clerics had to refrain from sexual relations, they still had to deal with women in daily clerical duties. The repression of sexual desire was a daily penance that the clerics had to undergo to remain chaste. G. Rattray Taylor writes that repression of sexuality can lead to violence and psychoneurotic symptoms (19). He goes on to say that persons vowed to total celibacy exhibit the earmarks of sexual repression more vividly, ". . . not only inversion but perversion and hysterical symptoms are found in the monasteries and cloister. . . ." (34). The Christian clergy began to control the women for whom they were spiritually responsible and created canon law which directly censured their existence (Laeuchli 97). Canon Fifty-seven of the Elvira Synod demonstrates the censures that women faced in the fourth century: "Matrons or their husbands are not to lend their finery to enhance a

procession in a worldly fashion and if they do so, they are to be kept away for three years" (Quoted in Laeuchli 133).

In A.D.313, in the Edict of Milan, Constantine the Great granted religious tolerance to all people under his rule (Ellerbe 14). This decree of religious freedom allowed the Christian Church to become integrated into Roman society, and shortly after Constantine's baptism and death Christianity became the official religion of the Roman state. Linda Ellerbe remarks, "Orthodox Christianity appealed to the government not as a religion that would encourage enlightenment or spirituality, but rather as one that would bring order and conformity to the faltering empire" (14).

During this time, St. Augustine of Hippo (A.D.354-430) is notable for his strong convictions regarding sexual abstinence and the clergy. Augustine believed that sexual desire was the most foul and unclean of human wickedness, the most pervasive manifestation of man's disobedience to God's designs (Brundage 80). Due to Augustine's influence and power exhibited through his writings on Christianity, his dissenting attitude towards sexuality would become the standard that would set the mood for more canon laws

demanding clerical continence from the clergy. Augustine's writings would also be responsible for clerical and lay sexual law during the Middle Ages and beyond. Peter Brown remarks on Augustine's influence on the clergy, "the celibacy of the clergy ensured that the Church's connection with normal sources of power was carefully masked out in perceptions of their role in society" (443).

In the fourth and fifth centuries, patristic writing offered a theology that advocated virginity and continence in everyday life. Not only were the clerics targeted but the laity as well. All writing was supported by subjective translations from Saint Paul with Biblical reference:

1 Cor. 7:1—"Now concerning the things where of ye wrote unto me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman."

1 Cor. 7:25—"Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful."

Gal. 5:16—"This I say then, 'Walk in spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh'."

Towards the end of the fourth century, Pope Siricius addressed clerical celibacy in three decretal letters, but never enforced them by demanding continence from clerics. In one decretal, Pope Siricius relates information from a Roman Synod, remarking that the church accepts two types of candidates for its clergy: those baptized in infancy, and who have remained virgins, and those baptized as adults who have kept chaste and have married only once (Lynch 25). The first two decretal letters were sent to the bishop of Tarragona in Spain, praising celibacy as a virtue and a matter of ritual purity. In his letter he pointed out to the bishop the large numbers of clergy that had fathered children long after their consecration to the church (Lynch 26). In the third letter to the bishops of Gaul, the Pope combined ascetic and purity themes demanding continence from the clergy under pain of suspension and deposition (Lynch 29).

There were other councils that encouraged clerical abstinence and forbade concubinage: The Council of Nicæa in A.D.325 forbade clerics to keep women in their households except for mother, sister, aunt or other person immune from suspicion (Brundage 112). We will again see

this theme when we examine the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X. The Council of Carthage in the mid-fourth century required that nuns and other women who had vowed chastity live in strict segregation from lay persons of either sex, but especially men, while local synods in Spain adopted canons imposing penalties on clerics who committed adultery and upon consecrated women who were guilty of fornication (Brundage 112-13).

In the Medieval Church the Pope had little success in stopping concubinage and encouraging sexual abstinence among the clergy. The clerics evaded canonical law by adopting the women with whom they slept, thus creating a legal relationship not forbidden by the church. Class distinctions and economic instability put pressure on the laity to look beyond the actions of the cleric. If local laity was against a union between cleric and woman, they had no recourse but to accept it even if the woman's family felt humiliated and dishonored by having one of its daughters flaunted as a priest's concubine. In the *Historia Franiorum*, Gregory of Tours relates the story of a concubine's family whose members imprisoned the cleric for taking away and thus dishonoring their daughter and then

burning alive the concubine in order to redeem the family honor (Brundage 151). The church was very powerful in small towns, and the clerics exercised their power to feed and clothe the parishioners or to let them die. The people believed in salvation through the absolution of the church and, in fear, succumbed to the lustful advances of the clergy who, exercising their authority, would refuse absolution for sin to women who rejected their amorous approaches.

In Spain at the close of the eleventh century, the kingdoms of Leon and Castile had complete ecclesiastical independence (Laeuchli 253). Frontier towns were beginning to crop up, and freeman and guild classes were beginning to emerge. The eleventh century introduced a class of nobility called the *caballero*. These were men from the ranks of freemen who were able to outfit themselves and offer services to the reigning king. In return for their allegiance, the king ennobled them, sometimes taking land from one true noble and giving it to the *caballero* (Chapman 34). The church in Rome was able to control some of its clergy, but the Moorish stronghold in Spain during this time prevented canon law from reaching the ears of the

Christian clerics (Laeuchli 253). The clergy of Leon and Castile were described as rude and illiterate, owing no obedience to the mother church of Rome, and governed only by the discipline of Toledo. They were described by a canon of Compostela as reckless and violent men ready for any crime, prompt to quarrel and occasionally indulging in mutual slaughter (Laeuchli 254).

The canonical laws governing the prohibition of concubinage by the clergy and encouraging abstinence played a major role throughout the Middle Ages. As the punishments for clerical concubinage became more severe, clerics transferred their sexual activity into fornication (Brundage 222). When they could no longer have wives, they would fornicate with whomever they could encourage to do so. Bernard of Clairvaux wrote in the twelfth century:

To be always with a woman and not to have sex relations with her is more difficult than to raise the dead. You cannot do the less difficult; do you think that I will believe that you can do what is more difficult? (Brundage 251)

Around the year 1140, a jurist named Gratian compiled a textbook of canon law which he entitled a *Harmony of*

Conflicting Canons (commonly known as the *Decretum*). It is a compilation of conciliar canons, papal decretals, citations from the Scriptures, words of the church fathers, penitentials, Roman Law, and other authorities (Brundage 229). Gratian added his own analyses and conclusions in order to regulate the differences of legal rules that abounded in the twelfth century. The *Decretum* provided direction to people who wanted to interpret the canons. It was a handbook of decrees with views on clerical celibacy which indicated the punishment by enslavement for wives, mistresses, and children of clerics but not necessarily for the cleric (Brundage 251). Part one of Gratian's *Decretum* considers the foundations and sources of canon law and its relationship to other types of law, the rights, powers, and obligations of the clergy. Marshall Baldwin cites an example of Gratian's law concerning clerical concubinage and continence which reads:

For the choosing of priests is of such surpassing importance that things which in other members of the church are not blameworthy, are yet held unlawful in them. For although they who are not within the ranks of the clergy, are free to take

pleasure in the companionship of wedlock and the procreation of children, yet for the exhibiting of the purity of complete continence, even subdeacons are not allowed carnal marriage: so that "both those that have may be as though they had not" (I Corinthians 7:29), and those who have not may remain single. But if in this order, which is the fourth from the head, this is worthy to be observed, how much more is it to be kept in the first, or second, or third, lest anyone be reckoned fit for the deacon's or presbyter's honorable position, or the bishop's preeminence, who is discovered not yet to have bridled his uxorious desires? (Part I Distinctions XXXII 252)

Gratian also took advantage of church councils to stress the punishments prescribed for disobedience to the canons on celibacy. The Second Lateran Council of 1139 reads:

Following in the footsteps of our predecessors, the Roman pontiffs Gregory VII, Urban, and Paschal, we command that no one attend the masses of those who are known to have wives or

concubines. But that the law of continence and purity, so pleasing to God, may become more general among persons constituted in sacred orders, we decree that bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, canons regular, monks, and professed clerics who, transgressing the holy precepts, have dared to contract marriage, shall be separated. For a union of this kind which has been contracted in violation of the ecclesiastical law, we do not regard as matrimony. Those who have been separated from each other, shall do penance commensurate with such excesses. (Baldwin 197-98)

From this example one can see that the letters concerning the law and the council that supported the law played a role in the formation of the *Decretal*. Gratian supports clerical continence, and violation of his decree would cause the cleric to lose ecclesiastical office and be confined in a monastery for the remainder of his life (Brundage 252).

In the twelfth century Bishop Ivo of Chartres (1091-1116) wrote canon law that denounced clerical incontinence

and promoted clerical celibacy not just a heroic ideal to be pursued by a few, but an absolute requirement to be imposed, by force if necessary, on every cleric in the Western Church (Brundage 183).

It appears that during this time clerics revolted against giving up their concubines. "In almost all countries rural priests, especially, lived in concubinage or real marriage" (Lynch 37). Lynch observes that rural life was difficult without the aid of a woman (37), which promoted concubinage. Below in Section IV, I will illustrate this situation reflected in the manifestation of anticlerical poetry that began to appear in the twelfth century. It was a genre of poetry that elevated sensuality and carnal relationships. People began to protest the austere perspectives of the church and began to write poetry and songs that offered colorful images of courtly love with its elaborate rules, laws, and orders of love. Poets from Provence, says Eisler, left us a powerful legacy despite the condemnation of the pleasures of sex by the Church. This legacy, she says, stems from much more ancient roots—from a time when sexuality was associated with the sacred rather than the profane and the obscene

(33). These poems were the documented legacy of the people voicing their concern at the depravity of the church.

In 1215, the fourth Lateran Council set the parameters for clerical celibacy but once again failed to enforce them. An anonymous poet criticized the council saying that the result of obliging clerics to be celibate would only lead to an increase in fornication and adultery:

Priests who lack a girl to cherish

Won't be minded lest they perish.

They will take whom'er they find

Married, single—never mind! (Brundage 402)

The protest from the laity demonstrates an interesting conviction with respect to their clerics and concubinage. The laity knows that if a priest has no woman he will take their women.

The thirteenth century was a turning point in the church's plight in maintaining celibacy among its clerics as universities flourished in Europe and civil law became established. At the University of Salamanca, founded around 1218 (Brundage 346), Gratian's *Decretals* as well as other decretals of the Middle Ages were studied, and canon law rapidly became a discipline linked closely to Roman

Law, which is considered the basis of all law. In the late fourteenth century, and continuing to the sixteenth century, civil law grew beyond church law, and judicial records were preserved. Although the Church still handled issues of clerical celibacy, they faced increasing competition from civil courts. By the sixteenth century, the Christian Church was divided between Catholics and Protestants. In 1545, all church reformers met at Trent to discuss canon law and the future of the Church. The Council of Trent continued for eighteen years, and during that time clerical celibacy came under attack. There were many members of the council who wanted to abolish canon law concerning clerical concubinage. Their argument was that in practice "priests commonly kept concubines, and that celibacy in many areas accomplished little more than to assure that priests' de facto wives and children received no share in their estates" (Brundage 569). Notwithstanding the validity of many points that were conducive to repealing mandatory celibacy, the church reformers opted for keeping the canon laws and reaffirming mandatory celibacy and no concubinage for all clerics. In the summer of 1563, the council approved the decree of *Cum*

adolescentium aetas, which became the cornerstone of seminary education for men wishing to enter the clerical vocation (Brundage 568). Since the sixteenth century seminaries have provided the intellectual and moral formation for young men who desire a life dedicated exclusively to God.

SECTION III

LITERATURE IN SUPPORT OF CLERICAL CELIBACY

Apart from the historical documentation concerning the evolution of clerical celibacy, there is also the literary manifestation which demonstrates the determination of the people to continuously resist the laws that influenced their lives. One articulation against concubinage and fornication is represented in the didactic literature of the Middle Ages, such as the *Siete Partidas* of the Wise King, Alfonso X.

Alfonso X realized an important undertaking in the thirteenth century when he established a legal codex that would strengthen legal and judicial institutions in his monarchy. These were the *Siete Partidas* or the seven divisions of law. The backbone of the *Siete Partidas* comes from diverse sources, such as old customs law based on the *Fuero Juzgo*, or *Lex Gothica*, which has roots in Visigothic law codes; the *Fuero Real*, or municipal codes; and the *Setenario*, or original code begun by Fernando III, father of Alfonso (Keller 120). The seventh-century *Lex Gothica* was established by the Visigoth king, Chindaswinth, for

both the Visigoths and the Hispano-Romans in order to find a uniform code between the laws of both peoples (Chapman 31). It was an important influence in the lawmaking process of Alfonso X.

Alfonso's codex functioned as a legal encyclopedia which judges and lawyers could consult as a guide in matters of legal considerations. It also contained elements of theory and didacticism not relevant to the law (Keller 119). Samuel Astly Dunham affirms that the *Siete Partidas*, "... is by far the most valuable monument of legislation not merely of Spain, but of Europe, since the publishing of the Roman code" (116). Robert Burns in his book, *Emperor of Culture*, reflects on the *Partidas* as a "reflective historic-moral disquisition. It is an exhaustive and systematic interweaving of age old wisdom" (7).

The first *partida* considers canon law. It is divided into twenty-four titles and eighteen laws and bases its knowledge on Christian doctrine and church canons. These were laws which evolved from Gratian's *Decretal* written about 1140 (Brundage 176) and the *Decretal* of Gregory IX written in 1234 (Brundage 327). Documentation of clerical

concubinage can be found in the first *Partida*. In order to be included in Alfonso's plan for a law, clerical incontinence must have been prevalent in the Middle Ages. In using canon law, Alfonso attempted to compel the clerics to follow his code and give up their wives, concubinage, and fornication. The following passage from Law XXXVII, "Que los clérigos deben ser honestos, et quáles mugeres pueden con ellos morar", is taken from Alfonso's first *partida* in which he states that clerics should be honest in choosing the women with whom they live.

. . . Et una de las cosas que mas avilta la honestad de los clérigos es de haver grant trianza con las mugeres: et por los guardar deste yerro tovo por bien santa eglesia de mostrar quales mugeres podiesen con ellos morar sin mala estancia, et son estas: madre, et abuela, et hermana, et tia hermana de padre ó de madre, sobrina, fija de hermano ó de hermana, su fija mesma que hobiese habido de muger de bendiciones ante que recibiese órden sagrada, ó su nuera muger velada de su fijo legítimo, ó otra que fuese su parienta en segundo grado, asi como

prima cormana. Estas pueden morar con ellos or esta razon, porque la natura del parentesco es tan acercada entre ellos que face á los homes que non deben sospechar mal: et como quier que tales parientas como estas sobredichas puedan tener consigo, non deben ellas tener otras mugeres de quien podiesen sospechar que feciesen yerro con ellas los clérigos (Partida I, Título VI, Ley XXXVII)

This law echoes Gratian's decree on whom a cleric may choose as a companion with which to live in order to prevent suspicion of improper or immoral living arrangements. Alfonso tried to include all possible family ties in this law, but what is not stated and what actually occurred is that a cleric would take on a woman or a young girl and adopt her as a family member, thus condoning his living arrangements. Since communication was slow during the Middle Ages, it was difficult for the church hierarchy to keep track of all the clerics in the many hamlets that existed throughout Spain. This is probably the second reason—besides the fact that the church was corrupt

everywhere—why there was no impact of Alfonso's laws during the thirteenth century.

The next law included in this study discusses the penalty not only for the cleric who marries after taking the vow of Holy Orders but also for the woman.

Casándose algunt clérigo que hobiese órden
sagrada non debe fincar sin pena, ca débenle
vedar de oficio, et tollarle el beneficio que
hobiere de la eglesia por sentencia de
descomulgamiento fasta que la dexe et faga
penitencia de aquel yerro: et la muger que fuere
vasalla de la eglesia et sopiere que es clérigo
aquel con quien casa, débela el obispo meter en
servidumbre de la eglesia: et si él por si non lo
pidiere facer débelo decir al rey ó al señor de
aquella tierra quel ayude á facerlo. Et si fuere
sierva débela vender, et el precio que por ella
dieren debe ser metido en pro de la eglesia, onde
es el clérigo que lo fizo: et los fijos que
nacieren de esta muger deben ser metidos en
servidumbre de la eglesia, et non deben heredar

los bienes de sus padres. (Partida I, Título VI,
Ley XLI)

Although the repentant cleric is able to be granted pardon for his transgression and saved from excommunication, the woman—along with any children from the union—is punished for life, although not eternally. This law demonstrates the power of the church to overlook the misdeeds of the cleric in order to focus on his position as a strong community leader who can be forgiven for his sins. On the other hand, it presents the woman and children from the union with the cleric as expendable. They are not damned to eternal pain, but are certainly punished sufficiently on this earth.

Clerics were also adulterous with wives of men who were not present due to business or war. In Law forty-two of the first *partida*, a cleric who commits adultery is forcefully sent to a monastery for the rest of his life. If he refuses, he is excommunicated.

. . . Et si algunt clérigo feciere adulterio con alguna muger que hobiese marido, debel echar su obispo de todo el obispado por siempre, ó facerle encerrar en algunt monesterio o faga penitencia

por toda su vida: et esto por el pecado, que es
muy grande et muy desfamado. (Partida I, Título
VI, Ley XLII)

This is one of the least clear laws. It distinctly states that any cleric caught in adultery will spend the rest of his life repenting in a monastery, but the truth is that clerics were notorious for their adulterous ways and did not as a result of their transgressions retreat to a monastery to live out their days in penance, even though excommunication was hovering over their salvation.

Alfonso's laws sought to set limits on the actions of the clergy but in effect had little impact, as evidenced by the poetry presented in Section IV. The Alfonsine Laws bequeathed an ideal that could not be successfully enforced during the Middle Ages because of rampant corruption in the church. This ideal can be observed in the forty-third Law of *Partida I*, where the Law decrees that parishoners should not assist the Mass of a cleric who lives with a *barragana* or concubine:

. . . et si non se quisiere salvar, ó non
podiere, debel toller el beneficio, et vedarle
que non diga horas en la eglesia: pero deste atal

non deben dexar sus perroquianos de oir las horas
 dél, nin de recebir los sacramentos mientras que
 su perlado sofriere que sirva la eglesia

(Partida I, Título VI, Ley XLIV)

While his law maintained that the laity should not hear the Masses said nor receive the sacraments of the church by a cleric living with a concubine outside of his vow, the reality of the situation in a small hamlet in Spain was that the people wanted salvation, and if only one cleric was able to offer the sacraments, then they went to him. He was the person that baptized their children and buried their dead. Laws meant nothing to people who could not read nor write. People sought salvation which they believed was through the clergy. The clergy, in turn, used the idea of salvation to draw the people to church. Whether or not the cleric had a concubine was irrelevant to those seeking absolution of sins.

Many Christian writers of the Middle Ages believed, as did Augustine of Hippo, that women were the source of all evil and a perpetual temptation to men. If a cleric pursued a married woman, it was usually the woman that suffered the consequences of the union rather than the

cleric. The *Corbacho*, written by the Archpriest of Talavera, is an example of Spanish misogynic literature that was popular in the Middle Ages. Medieval Christian Spain was not the only region where misogynic literature appeared. In the thirteenth century, Enrique, the brother of Alfonso X, returned from the Moorish lands with a book known as the *Book of Deceptions of Women* or *Sendebär*. This ancient non-Christian text is made up of twenty-six stories and was translated to Castilian from the Arabic in 1253. It is an example of Muslim literature that portrays woman as astute, perverse, and deceptive (Palencia vii). The story of "The Woman, the Cleric, and the Friar" is a didactic example that proposes to teach the reader a moral. In this case, it demonstrates the perversity of women, who seek to lure clerics into sin.

Enxemplo de la muger, e del clérigo e del Frayle

. . . Oý desir de vna muger, e fue su marido
fuera a lybrar su fasienda, e ella enbió al abad
a desir quel marido non era en la villa, e que
viniese para la noche a su posada. El abad vino
e entró en casa, e quando vino fasýa la media
moche. Vino el marido e llamó a la puerta. E

dixo él «¿Qué será?». E dixo ella: «Vete e escóndete en aquel palacio fasta de día». Entró el marido e echóse en su cama, e quando vino el día, levantóse la muger, e fue a vn frayle su amigo, e díxole todo cómo le acaeciera, e rrogóle que leuase vn ábito que sacase al abad questaua en su casa. E fue el frayle e dixo: «¿Qué de fulano?». E dixo ella: «Non es leuantado». Entró, e preguntóle por nuevas onde venía, e estouo allí fasta que fue vestido. E dixo el frayle: «Perdóname, que me quiero acoger». Dixo él: «Vayades en ora buena». E en egualando con el palacio, salió el abad vestido como frayle, e fuése con él fasta su orden, e fuése.

E, señor, non te di este enxemplo sinon que non creas a las mugeres que son malas, que dise el sabio que, avnque se tornase la tierra papel, e la mar tinta, e los peçes della péndolas, que non podrían escreuir las maldades de las mugeres.

(Victorio 186)

The story portrays a woman who is perverse and wily in her effort to cuckold her husband and commit adultery. The cleric, as well as the abbot, suffer no embarrassment or harm. It is a man's story told in a didactic tone that portrays women in their pure essence as wicked. While the author of the story uses hyperbole to make his point that enough could not be written on the deceptions of woman, it is interesting to note that no comment is made on the role that the abbot or cleric played in the tale. Having been translated from the Arabic, it is doubtful that there would have been a cleric living in a Muslim country, and perhaps the redactor of the narrative wanted to give it a Christian twist. The outcome of the story is the punishment of the woman who is sent to be burned in a dry caldron (Palencia 65).

Though didactic works had a place in the literature of the Middle Ages in giving credence to the validity of clerical incontinence, they can be regarded simply as a stepping stone in a series of endeavors aimed at halting the disobedience of the clerics. The literature advocating clerical continence demonstrates the failure of canon law to enforce mandatory celibacy, since it is in opposition to

the poetry that will be presented in this study. However, the didactic works do show a society that is aware of the existence of an unsatisfactory situation but at the same time powerless to rectify it.

SECTION IV

SATIRICAL POETRY

The evolution of Galician-Portuguese poetry and the subsequent rise of the songs of *escarnio* and *mal-dizer* are a common manifestation of anticlerical sentiment opposing the rebellion of the clerics to the canons regarding clerical concubinage and fornication.

Galician-Portuguese poetry traces its origin, as does all of European poetry, to ancient verse sung to music and accompanied by dance, a custom that functioned in celebrating the pagan rites of planting, harvest, and animism of pre-Roman indigenous cultures (Curchin 59). These primitive folk songs, handed down through the centuries by oral tradition, were the last surviving remnants in the aftermath of the imposition of Christianity on the Roman kingdom after the Edict of Milan in A.D. 313, which granted religious tolerance. Although the pagan focus of fertility, life, and nature were overshadowed by the powerful voice of the Christian Church, the roots of the folk lyric were able to endure even under the fear of damnation. The ninth Synod of Rome reported that mostly

women came to church on Sundays and holy days, but they came to dance and sing songs in the pagan way instead of attending Mass (Ellerbe 151). The pagan worshippers viewed sex as a common energy that linked human beings not only to the fertile herds, but to the blazing stars, while Christian leaders looked upon flesh as vulnerable to temptation and to death (Brown 434). Eisler comments, ". . . sex was integral to the cosmic order, . . . and for whom the body of woman was not, as the Medieval church proclaimed, a source of carnal evil but an attribute . . ." (57). The church condemned natural pagan sexual beliefs, and where once people danced and celebrated fertility, they were now prohibited from this form of worship. The church denounced pagan worship as demonic.

The church, in an effort to win over devotees, used pagan festivals in the hope of claiming the holidays as Christian and therefore winning the recognition of the peasants and the vitality of the festival (Ellerbe 143). A prototype borrowed from pagan festivals was the winter solstice. It is the time of the year when the feminine gives birth to Mithras, the sun. This festival has been adapted to Christmas and Epiphany in the Christian

tradition (Ellerbe 147). Other pagan rituals adapted to fit the Christian theme of the birth of Christ are yule fires, processions of lights, and tree decorating. Another example is the Spring Equinox where, in pagan culture, the sun is resurrected and gains prominence over the night. Christians call this time Easter and celebrate it in the pagan tradition of eggs and hares and a resurrection of an ideal (Ellerbe 147).

An important affiliation that influenced the development of the Galician-Portuguese lyric was a result of the pilgrimages made to Santiago of Compostela in the Northern Iberian peninsula. Pilgrims from Provence began crossing the Pyrenees in the ninth century to make the journey to the shrine of the supposed tomb of St. James the Apostle in Compostela creating, by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a center of European culture and erudition (Chapman 55). According to João Simões, these pilgrims transported with them the *«sementes da nova poesia»* (43). The minstrels that journeyed with the pilgrims as entertainment or as pilgrims themselves brought the oral tradition of verse from Provence, which included

epic tales of bravery as well as lyrical songs of courtly love. These songs brought into Spain a new technique and the theme of courtly love. While in Spain, these minstrels entertained at the courts of Spanish *hidalgos*. As a result of this timely influence, the rich folk roots of Galician-Portuguese song were fused with the oral tradition of Provence resulting in verses replete with romance and courtly love.

A great part of the early Galician-Portuguese poets were of noble lineage (Alvar 13). They were referred to as troubadours and cultivated poetry as an adornment of spirit (Alvar 13). Although they did not earn money for their works, minstrels who were considered the interpreters of the troubadours often worked the poems into song and then changed some of the lyrics for variety and to offer the people themes which were popular (Keller 97). The minstrels earned their living singing the songs of the troubadours (Simões 40). After the rise to the throne of Alfonso X, the Wise King, Galician-Portuguese was the language of poetry in Castile, and kings as well as clerics, soldiers, and learned men cultivated its beauty (Alvar 19). Alfonso was a great patron of the arts and a

poet himself. His court became a mecca for poets from all over Europe and enabled Galician-Portuguese poetry to reached its height during his reign (O'Callaghan 144). After Alfonso's death, Galician-Portuguese poetry digressed from Provençal influence and concentrated more on folk traditions. By the end of the fourteenth century, the *romancero* or ballad, a style of poetry totally Castilian which had already existed for centuries in the songs and dances from the agricultural regions of Spain, took precedence (Wright vii). According to C. Colin Smith:

The ballads take their material from all provinces and from abroad without prejudice; and since Castilian ballads often appear in Catalan and Portuguese versions and have echoes in it, and are lovingly preserved by the Jews in areas remote from Spain, it is clear that their appeal is broadly human rather than regional or sectional. (9)

Keller supports Smith:

The parallels between the origins and functions of ballads in Castilian and folk lyrics in Galician-Portuguese are many, and so close are

these elements that one can find poems in each of these distinct genres which are similar in subject matter and function, differing only in metrical form. (98)

Alongside the Galician-Portuguese songs of friendship and love, there existed a genre of poetry that directed itself to protest and was executed in a satirical manner. These songs were the *cantigas de escarnio* and the *cantigas de mal-dizer*. The collection of Galician-Portuguese poetry, *Colocci-Brancuti*, describes the *cantigas de escarnio*:

Songs of mockery are those which the troubadours write, wishing to speak evil of someone in them, and they say it in enigmatic words, which have two meanings for those who do not understand; and these words are called equivocations by learned men(Keller 103)

The *cantigas de mal-dizer*, however, have a different intention according to the *Colocci-Brancuti*:

Songs of malediction (*mal-dizer*) are those the troubadours make more openly; in them appear words which intend to speak evil and do not have

any other meaning than that which they state
clearly

. . . .(Keller 105)

These satirical songs reflect the problems, preoccupations, and moral concepts of an era. They were mordant songs of criticism, and directed attacks upon loose women, reprobate clergymen, cowardly knights, poets and noblemen (Keller 103). In order for a poet to satirize someone or something, he had to oppose it, as when satire condemns a society for its reference to an ideal that is not observed in the daily lives of its participants (Scholberg 11). The songs of *escarnio* and of *mal-dizer* are songs of black humor that come from a feeling of desperation when people are powerless over a corrupt society (Victorio 61). The power of satire is the destruction of the imperfect and the subsequent transformation and creation of truth and justice in the midst of an eternal antithesis that churns at the center of all society (Puértolas 56).

In his book, *História da poesia portuguesa*, Simões defines satire: "A sátira não pode manifestar-se á margem da socialbilidade: é um produto da orgânica social. Nasce tão

espontâneamente entre os homens como o lirismo na solidão" (76).

Expressions of satire were an individual down-to-earth instinct of people who presented the imperfection of the ideal. Simões remarks that the satirical songs of *escarnio* and *mal-dizer* were not influenced by the minstrels of Provence even though the minstrels had their own versions of satirical poetry aimed at morals, religion, politics, and people (77). The satirical songs in Galician-Portuguese emerged naturally, from the medieval satire that was popular at the time. The minstrels from Provence only stirred what was already there (Simões 77).

The importance of the satirical poems is more historic than poetic. They lead the reader to the knowledge of the realistic spirit of the peoples who existed during the Middle Ages. According to Simões:

Enquanto a sátira é realismo, a lírica é evasão. Através da música e da palavra, nos sentimentos altos e nas emoções fundas, busca o poeta, no lirismo, a comunhão com o Absoluto. Na sátira o poeta tem os pés na terra e é para a terra que se dirigem o seu gargalhar e o seu sarcasmo. (79)

Although we can find examples of satire in the thirteenth-century poems of Italy and France, the same themes in Spain are limited to a moral austerity that produced stories with a preference for a didactic emphasis (Victorio 10). In France, during the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, *fabliau*, or short ribald tales that burlesque human weakness, were composed by wandering minstrels (Encarta). The following is an example of *fabliau* that demonstrates the ease with which a cleric enjoyed his extra-curricular activities. This fragment shows no guilt on the part of the cleric as well as the wife of the absent bourgeois.

The clerk lay down completely naked
 With the wife of the absent bourgeois,
 They lay in each other's arms in bed.
 The wife liked the arrangement
 With the clerk and did what pleased her. (lines
 68-88)

("Braies au cordelier", Eichmann, 205)

In Italy during the fourteenth century Giovanni Boccaccio wrote the *Decameron*. His book alternates between tradition and humor and is rich in lyric (Encarta). He was

greatly influenced by the French fabliau. In Spain, the didactic quality of the *Corbacho* written by the Archpriest of Talavera offers an austere focus using women as the temptresses who lead men to their perdition, to the adverse side of satire and the power of the church to influence not only the lives of its patrons but its literature as well. Towards the fifteenth century, Spain began to produce its own versions of songs with an anticlerical sentiment, all of them satirical but with an undertone of melancholy that reflected the reality of the times.

I will discuss the subsequent satirical poems separately and thematically. The first group of poems was written by erudite poets who satirized the incontinence of the male and female clergy. The poems are quite malicious, with vocabulary that is explicit and sometimes obscene. The authors of these poems seem to be present in body and in spirit and serve as attestants from an admirable position to the situation at the time and the irresponsible actions of the clergy.

Fernand' Esquio was a noble who wrote poems towards the end of the fourteenth century, when poetry in Galician-Portuguese was in decline. The following poem is one of

escarnio, directing its attack on an abbess who receives very strange gifts.

A Vós dona abadessa

A vós, dona abadessa,
de min, don Fernand'Esquyo
estas doas vos envyo,
porque ssey que ssodes essa
dona que as merecedes:
quatro caralhos franceses,
e dous aa prioressa.

Poys ssodes amiga minha,
non quer'a custa catar,
quer'eu vus ja esto dar,
ca non tenho al tan aginha:
quatro caralhos de mesa,
que me deu hua burgesa,
dous e dous ena baynha.

Muy ben vos ssemelharán,
ca sequer levan cordões
de ssenhos pares de colhões;
agora vo-los darám:
quatro caralhos asnaes,

enmanguados en coraes,

con que caledes orans. (Alvar 389)

Fernand' Esquio is satirizing an abbess by giving her a questionable gift. He uses the word *caralho* which, according to Joan Coromina, in the *Diccionario crítico etimológico de la lengua castellana*, translates to stick, which is further translated to penis. He is comparing the *caralho* to table legs and then to an ass. This gift in a hyperbolic sense, then, is one of dubious size and ability since equines are known for large phalluses. Furthermore, history depicts convents as convenient whore houses which gives credence to the fact that the abbess is a whore. The author of the poem seems to have firsthand knowledge of her abilities when he satirizes this anonymous religious person.

Another poem by Esquio satirizes a clergyman who has an appetite for various peasant women, but is rumored not to have the physical ability to make love.

A un frade dizem escaralhado
e faz creud'a quen lho vai dizer,
ca, pos el sabe arreitar de foder,
cuid'eu que gaj'é de piss'arreitado:

e pois emprenha estas con que jaz
 e fase fillos e fillas assaz,
 ante lhe digu'eu ben encaralhado.

Escaralhado nunca eu diria,
 mais que traje ant'o caralho arreit'e,
 a o que tantas molheres de leite
 ten, ca lhe pariron tr3s en un dia,
 e outras muitas prenhadas que ten,
 e atal frade cuid'eu que mui ben
 encaralhado seria.

Escaralhado non pode seer
 o que tantos filhos fez en Marinha,
 e que ten ora outra pastorinha
 prenhe, que ora quer encaecer,
 e outras molheres que fode;
 e atal frade ben cuid'eu que pode
 encaralhado per esto seer. (Victorio 249)

Juan Victorio in his book *El amor y el erotismo en la literatura medieval*, translates *escaralhado* into Spanish as *picha*, which is a vulgar word for penis. The poet hears that the cleric does not have a penis, but, although the author of the poem would like to believe that, he sees many

women who have children by this cleric, and the poet believes that what people see is his penis at rest. This satirical poem is strong criticism of the incontinence of the clergy as it directs its attack on the notoriety of the size of the cleric's penis and not his spiritual prowess. This poem is also a fine example of anticlerical sentiment as it points out through its black humor the impotence of the church to control its clergy. Although Alfonso's Laws were paramount in shaping the civil code of the future, this poem attests to the futility of his laws on the clergy, even if disobedience to the law was punishable by excommunication.

The next example of a song of *escarnio* focuses on the talents of an abbess in the alchemy of making love. The author of the poem is Alfonso Eanes do Coton, a minstrel who visited the courts of Alfonso X and Fernando VII, the father of Alfonso. He is considered an excellent satirist of the thirteenth century.

Abadessa, oi dizer
 que erades mui sabedor
 de todo ben; e, por amo
 de Deus, queredes-vos doer

de mim, que ogano casei,
que ben vos juro que non sei
mas que un asno foder.

Ca me fazen en sabedor
de vós que avedes bon sen
de foder e de todo ben;
ensinade-me mais, senhor,
como foda, ca non o sei
nen padre nen madre non ei
qu m'ensin', e fiqu'i pastor.

E se eu ensinado voy
de vós, senhor, deste mester
de foder e foder souber
per vós, que me Deus aparou,
cada que per foder, derei
Pater Noster e enmentarei
a alma de quen m'ensinou.

E per i podedes gaar,
mis senhor, o reino de Deus:
per ensinar os pobres seus
mais ca por outro jajuar,
e per ensinar a molher

coitada, que a vós veer,

senhor, que non souber ambrar. (Victorio 245)

The satire in this poem is biting. The man, in exchange for learning the abbess's sexual secrets, promises to pray for her soul. In a stringent religious society where sexual continence is mandatory in the clergy, praying for a person's soul is a great gesture. However, the man is praying for someone, who according to Alfonsine Law, is committing sin and should be punished either by excommunication or by retreat to a monastery for the rest of their life. In addition, the Our Father is a prayer that ends with the lines, "and lead us not into temptation/but deliver us from evil." Surely the irony is that the abbess and the man desiring her services are acting antithetically to the prayer that he promises to recite for her each time he fornicates successfully with his wife. At the end of the poem he explicitly requests that the abbess teach his wife "how to open her legs," as he begs her advice and help in teaching his wife the art of love as well.

Nowhere in these poems has there been any suggestion of repentance by the clergy for their actions. Perhaps the

clergy thought themselves as omnipotent as their maker and powerful enough to be able to forgive their own transgressions and administer their own absolution.

The last example of an anticlerical poem written by a noble is the "Dayão de Calez," written by the Wise King, Alfonso X. It is a song of *mal-dizer* in which Alfonso criticizes a reprobate clergymen. It is one of thirty poems of *escarnio* or *mal-dizer* that Alfonso wrote. This poem of *mal-dizer* is aimed at the Dayão, a cleric appointed by the church to oversee a group of parishes. It is an obscene attack on the sexual habits of the Dayão and his victims: moorish women, possessed women, and prostitutes (Alvar 184). Keller states: "Apparently that worthy [Dayão] was addicted to a very sensual life and had perfected himself in the art of sexual pleasure through Oriental books written on the subject" (106).

Ao dayão de Calez eu achei
livros que lhi levavam da leger,
e ó que os tragia preguntey
por elle, e respondeu-m'el: senhor
como estes livros que vós veedes, dons
e com os outros que ele tem dos sons

ffod'er por eles quanto foder quer.

Ca inda vos end'eu mais direy
cá tam mal e muyt'a fee leer
por quant'en sa fazenda sey
com os livros que tem, nom a mulher
a que nom faça qu semelhe grous
os corvos et as aguias babous
per força de foder se x'el quiser.

Cá nom ha mais na arte do foder,
do que nos livros que el tem, jaz,
e el ha tal sabor de os leer
que nunca noite nem dia al faz,
e sabe d'arte de foder tam bem
que c'os seus livros d'artes que el tem
fod'el as mouras cada que lhi praz.

E com tod'est aynda faz al
com os livros que tem, per boa fé,
se acha molher que aja mal
d'este fogo que de Sam Marçal é,
assy vae per foder encantar
que fohendo lhi faz bem semelhar
que é geada, ou neve, nom al (Keller 107).

As with the poem of the *frade* by Fernand' Esquio, there is hyperbole. The Dayão of the church seduces women anytime he desires by using books that have a magical quality to them as related by the description of the visions that the women exhibit. The Dayão enjoys this activity and has little time for anything else. The satire is poignant as it illustrates the lack of interest that the Dayão had in church matters. The poet also refers to the books having a magical quality. Alfonso X had many Moorish works translated into Castilian during his reign in the thirteenth century. A book of magic written in Arabic and translated into Castilian would have been a heresy according to the guidelines of the Christian Church and the Alfonsine Laws. Perhaps Alfonso was exempt from his own laws, and conceivably this may be why the Dayão was satirized but never punished for his knowledge or his perversity. Historically, G.Rattray Taylor remarks that the courts took money from the clerics for sexual offenses and in the process built up a system of law that accommodated those who were above the law (66).

The second group of poems are popular, anonymous, anticlerical satire written to no cleric in particular and

pointing a finger at the church in general. The poems are in medieval Spanish and were written in the fifteenth century. They are an example of popular songs sung more for the entertainment of the country people than the nobility.

They function as a warning to women to be cautious with the cleric in their town. As mentioned before, although many women would not have wanted to fornicate with the clerics, they feared damnation by the church and an eternity in hell for their unabsolved sins. Taylor remarks in his book, *Sex in History*, that the clerics owned women by coercing them into fornication by holding back absolution for their sin (36). The clerics not only wielded their power over the laity by withholding absolution, but as an economically stable entity in the village in a time when hunger was rampant, they also fed and clothed the families of women who promised to fornicate with them. What follows is a fragment from a dialogue between a woman and a cleric:

Chiste de un fraile y de una dama

Dueña:.....Padre mío, que os boluáys en buen hora.

Fraile: !O, angelica señora,

no toméys alteración!

Recebid mi corazón
 lastimado,
 todo está muy mal llagado
 cercado de mil saetas.

Dueña: !Tira las manos de las tetas,
 enemigo!

Frayle: Uos soys mi amparo y mi abrigo
 por quien viuo tan penado.

Dueña: !Dexa estar mi verdugado
 qu'es de frisa,
 ay, Jesús !Y a mi camisa
 hauéys osado llegar!

Frayle: Señora, puedo tocar a lo que es mío.

(Victorio 239)

In the privacy of confession the cleric refers to the woman as his *amparo y abrigo*. These are two words used to describe God. In a reverse of Christian praise to God, the cleric tells the woman that she is his shelter and protection in his suffering. She looks upon him as her executioner and as he touches her, the cleric informs the woman that he can touch what is already his. Through sexual repression that resulted in ecclesiastical power, a

cleric not only had control over a person's soul but their body as well. Repression of sexual release manifested itself in sexual abuse by the clergy of the laity—married and single—and fostered the anticlerical sentiment found in the poetry of the Middle Ages.

The next poem is another example of a cleric who seeks the favors of a woman. This woman is married and seeking solace from the cleric who obviously is trying to covet the woman's affections for his own lustful needs.

ii

Corrido va el abad
por el cañaveral,
El abad de Oriejo,

viendo que aparejo
tiene la de Alejo,
.....
Ella se lo oía
y le respondía
que le curaría
su llaga mortal,
por el cañaveral.

El, con esperanza,
dentro se abalanza
sin temer mudanza
del mal temporal,
por el cañaveral.)

.....

Viendo Alejo al zote,
asió de un garrote
y del pie al cogote
le hizo cardenal,
por el cañaveral.

(Puértolas 349,¹) (1-5, 13-21, 27-31)

When the cleric is caught trying to fornicate with the wife of Alejo, he is beaten by the husband until he is red. The irony in the poem is that the cleric becomes a cardinal by the physical violence brought upon him by Alejo. The satirical play on words when recited to music and enjoyed by the populace over time can become the calling card for a cleric known all over by his sexual appetite.

¹The following three poems are from *Poesía crítica satírica del siglo XV*, by Julio Puértolas.

In a fragment from another popular poem, a woman
defends the actions of the cleric whom she is devoted to.

iii

Madre, yo no niego
que él burla conmigo,
y de aqueste juego
siempre le castigo;
mil veces le digo:
"Padre, tentación".
No me le digáis mal,
que le tengo en devoción.

Cuando estamos juntos,
ambos de rodillas,
sácame por puntos
algunas cosillas,
háceme cosquillas
en el corazón.

.....

Yo tengo reposo
con su reverencia,
que tiene presencia
de buen religioso,

aunque es peligroso

en mi salvación,

.....

Es fraile polido

de muy bien lindo talle;

que desde la calle

viene apercebido;

arroja el vestido

y queda en jubón. (5-18, 21-26, 29-31)

The idea in this satirical poem is that the cleric is wearing down the woman who tells her mother that although he has the presence of a good religious man, she knows that he is dangerous for her salvation. The chorus in this poem is as follow: "Don't tell me that he is bad for me/I am devoted to him." (3-4). Devotion can mean idolization, worship, veneration, and fondness. These synonyms for devotion speak of a behavior a Christian would exhibit at Church towards God and not the cleric. However, the cleric, who according to the poem is handsome and well-built, is her object of honor and devotion.

The following poem is an extremely satirical anticlerical invective offering a warning to young women to

be careful of the wiles of the cleric from whom no one is safe.

i

D'aquel fraire flaco y cetrino
 guardáos, dueñas, dél, qu'es un malino.
 Ni deja moza ni casada,
 beata, monja encerrada
 que dél no ha sido tentada,
 y este es su oficio de contino.

.....

Aunque le vedes tan flaquillo,
 echó en una dueña un frailecillo;
 yo no quise ir a decillo
 porque fue, señores, su padrino.

Para mantilla y pañales
 vendió o empenó las Decretales,
 y él, malo con todos sus males,
 no tiene juicio divino. (1-6, 11-18)

The theme of this poem is the satire and criticism of clergy that are not in control of their sexual appetites. In the first lines of the poem, the poet lists the women who are not safe from the cleric. These are laity as well

as devout women and nuns who—even cloistered away—are not safe from the cunning of the cleric. The cleric is described as a thin and melancholy man who is able to give a woman a baby and then call himself the baby's godfather. In order to keep himself above the law the cleric must renounce his parental responsibility, although the poet tells us that the cleric buys shawls and diapers for the babies. In order to do this he sells or hocks his copy of the *Decretals*. Mention of the *Decretals* offers evidence of the certainty that the clerics were aware of the canonical laws that existed and that, by law, they were to obey. Hocking the *Decretals* in order to feed and clothe his illegitimate children, is testimony to the priority of the cleric in a small village in Medieval times.

The popular poems seek to satirize the clergy for their sin of incontinence and the devastation that many felt for the injustice of having a cleric seduce their wives while holding their utter damnation over them. The noble poems obsess over the act itself. The theme that plays throughout the nobles' poems is entirely physical, which is contrary to the comportment a person of religious conviction should display. The authors of these poems

exaggerate at the size of male genitals using as a means of measure the ass, an animal that is considered well-proportioned sexually. Pregnant women are also targeted as the measure of a cleric's physical ability to sire children, while an abbess is sought for her magical abilities to teach a man, along with his wife, the secrets of recreational sex which is different from church oriented procreational sex.

The nobles are more detached from the consequences that incontinence brought to the families of the clergy. The satire is more of a private joke written as a poem of *mal-dizer*. The people targeted knew who they were. Perhaps they all sat around drinking fine wine while they satirized each other. On the other hand the victims in the popular poems remained nameless and hence, more universal. Whether noble or popular, the essence is the same. The Church had little power over the clergy. The reader of the poem is provided with food for thought regarding religious values as they ponder the poems which satirize the follies of the cleric but seek to warn women of clerical danger, while at the same time encouraging devotion. None of the poems presented herein address spirituality but rather

carnal matters, and the satire is so great that perhaps the clerics led a life which was close to the pagan one they wished to abolish. In the poems they ate and drank to excess in a Bacchalian way, and made love whenever they wanted with whomever they could convince to do so. As a wolf in sheep's clothing, they led women to the portal of their ruin with confidentialities that turned into the lustful covetousness so denounced as a deadly sin by Saint Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. The idea of the seven deadly sins was brought to the western world from Egypt in the early fifth century by John Cassian, a Christian monk and theologian (Encarta). They were part of a treatise that included sins that could be described as evil states of mind and the chief obstacles to perfection (Wilson xiii). These seven deadly sins of pride, covetousness, gluttony, lust, sloth, envy and anger are a prevalent theme throughout the poems presented herein.

Pride, the first deadly sin, is a sense of one's own value and targets the cleric who is physically attractive. This deadly sin can be seen in poem "iii" where the woman fears for her salvation. It is also obvious in *A un frade dizen escaralhado*, as the cleric is prideful of his member

and of all the women he has begotten with children. The cleric in poem "i", leaves no stone upturned in his quest for female flesh.

The sin of covetousness—or the desire to have what belongs to others—is apparent throughout the poems of *escarnio* and *mal-dizer* presented in this study. In the *Dayão de Calez*, the Dayão covets many women to fulfill his lustful needs, and the cleric in poem "ii" covets Alejo's wife, who comes to him in need of solace. He is more interested in what she has to offer physically than her spiritual state. In the dialogue, *Chiste de un fraile y de una dama*, the cleric tells the young woman that what she has anatomically is his to touch. He truly covets her physically as he already owns her soul, since he is the one that can absolve her of her sins.

Sexual indulgence is an example of gluttony, a sin of excess. It can be observed in the sexual indulgence of the clergy and the number of women with whom they fornicated. According to *A un frade dizen escaralhado*, *Ao dayão de Calez*, and poem "i," the various clerics could not have enough sexual encounters. The Dayão is an excellent

illustration of a holy man who spends his days and nights indulging his sexual appetite.

The lust that is prevalent throughout the poems is a direct result of the sexual repression of the clerics. It is also lust that led the laity to harbor anticlerical sentiment towards the concupiscence of the clergy. Lust is exhibited in the uncontrolled desire of the cleric in *A un frade dizen escaralhado*, the desire of a man to learn the sexual secrets of the abbess in *Abadessa, oi dizer*, in poems "ii" and "iii" and in the *Chiste de un fraile y una dama*.

Sloth can be defined as inactivity which generates neglect of duty. As a deadly sin, sloth is manifested as an anticlerical sentiment in poem "i" where the cleric sells his copy of the *Decretals* which are church law in order to buy diapers for his children. Both the abbess in *Abadessa, oi dizer*, and the Dayão in *Ao dayão de Calez* neglect their spiritual duties in order to engage in fornication which is not only a sin by church law, and punishable by excommunication and damnation but is a slothful neglect of the spiritual duties entrusted to them by the higher clergy.

According to Angus Wilson, "Envy is impotent, numbed with fear, yet never ceasing in its appetite; and it knows no gratification save endless self torment." (11)

The deadly sin of envy is evidenced by the repression felt by the clerics in their desire for female flesh. Women both married and single were not safe from the clerics. Adultery was common as adulterous doors were opened by envious clerics who waited with a voracious appetite for a husband to be gone in order to pay a visit to the wife. This is obvious in poem "ii" where the wife of Alejo goes innocently to the cane fields with the cleric. The envious cleric who leads the young girl into temptation in poem "iii" attempts to covet her before a husband can. When envy becomes lust to the clerics who could not have a wife and a normal sexual life, then fornication is committed and the woman is punished by guilt, pregnancy, loss of virginity, or by death, while the cleric continues as the cornerstone of the community.

Anger, the seventh deadly sin, manifested itself in physical violence visited on adulterous wives by angry husbands or the murder of virgins soiled by the cleric.

Poetry became the means by which the laity could

manifest a true anticlerical posture, one which presented a true picture of the corrupt clergy in Medieval times. The songs of *escarnio* in Galician-Portuguese are abundant in anticlerical sexual themes. There are also poems similar to the Galician-Portuguese anticlerical theme which were written in Castilian but leave out the element of the cleric. This places the blame of adultery on the wife, which protects the cleric from suffering the consequence of his actions. Alexandre Pinheiro-Torres relates that the anticlerical tradition is more definite in Galician-Portuguese than in Castilian (165). This could be for socio-historical reasons. It is important to note that the clerics were redactors of the oral tradition of the minstrels. Since many songs of *escarnio*, especially those of the theme of the unfaithful wife, were written in Galician-Portuguese and had as the culprit of adultery the cleric, I would like to suggest that the Castilian clerics who wrote the songs down for posterity eliminated the cleric and in his place put "the neighbor." An example of the theme of adultery in two different languages and many subsequent variants, is the poem "*Eu jungei os meus boizinhos*". The Galician-Portuguese variant of the poem

relates the story of a husband who goes out to his fields where he realizes that he forgot his gun. On returning home, he finds the door to his house locked. When he inquires of his wife why the door is locked, she tells him that the cleric has promised to help them economically. This is important because the cleric is having sexual relations with a married woman who is poor. The socio-economic situation could have convinced the woman that exchanging her favors for clothes and bread could be an advantageous move.

Indo eu para a campanha—esqueceu-me a espingarda;
tornei para trás por ela—achei a porta fechada.
—O mulher, abre lá a porta,—que me esqueceu a
espingarda.

When no one responds, he knocks down the door and finds the cleric with his wife. He asks, "Why?"

Que um senhor religioso—prometeu-me capote e saia
--mulher que tal falada—merece ser queimada
Em trinta carros de palha-e outros tantos de
ramalha.
E matou-a.

When she tells her husband what the cleric can offer, he tells her that she ought to be burned to death and kills her.

In a variant (734) of the same poem, the woman refers to the cleric as the "*gato do nosso cura*" or the cat of the cleric. In the Castilian variant (IX, 433), registered by Menéndez Pelayo, the wife refers to the cleric as "*el gato de la vecina*" or the cat of our neighbor (Pinheiro-Torres 169).

Since the Galician-Portuguese version is older, it is possible to observe the change that occurred from one variant to the next and assume that the church felt a responsibility to protect their reprobate clergymen, even if they were aware of the truth. Victorio states that songs of *escarnio* would not have existed if the people had not been courageous in voicing personal experience in their poems and refusing to allow the repression of the church to go unchecked (200).

Another example of a popular anticlerical poem is didactic in nature. It is about a cleric who breaks his vow of chastity.

No alto da serra Mora

No alto daquela serra-vive o rico lavrador;
Tem uma filha muito linda,-linda era como o sol.
Namorou-lha um clérigo,-um clérigo lha namorou;
Sete anos andou com ela-e nunca se confessou.
Ao cabo de sete anos-pr'a dizer a missa ele foi.
Baixou um anjo do céu,-no altar se lhe pousou:
-Que fazes aqui, sacerdote,-que fazes aqui,
pecador?
- 'stou aqui p'ra dizer missa,-p'ra consagrar o
Senhor.
-Tu aqui não dizes missa,-nem consagras o
Senhor, .
Porque tu vais para o Inferno,-que assim manda
o Senhor (Pinheiro-Torres 172).

This poem of a laborer with a beautiful daughter who was coveted by a cleric tells an age-old tale of the atrocities that the laity had to endure under the stewardship of the local cleric. The satire becomes clear when an angel of God descends and tells the cleric that no absolution will heal this sin, that he is going to hell. The emotion behind the satire is deep, as the poet seeks communion with

the reality of life and hopes that in this communion he will find solace in a situation out of his control.

The satirical poems serve as an intimate touch with a reality that focused on the incontinence and repressed lust of the clergy and fostered an anticlerical sentiment in the lives of all peoples, innocent victims caught in the vortex of corruption of the church.

SECTION V

PROPONENTS OF CLERICAL CONCUBINAGE

Even with the Church Canons opposed to clerical concubinage and the anticlerical sentiment of the laity, there were those who supported its existence. An illustration of an early proponent for clerical concubinage is the poem "*El debate de Elena y María*", written at the beginning of the fourteenth century (Pidal 120). It offers the reader a view into the Medieval world and two societies: that of the nobility and that of the clergy. It is the first satirical poem written in Castilian and not Galician-Portuguese and is an example of a sociological document that aims at a discussion of arms and letters (Puértolas 16). In this poem, however, the man of letters is a cleric of the church. Pidal remarks that the poem discusses the moral qualities of the two predominant classes in Medieval society: the learned who were knowledgeable and discreet and the gentry who were generally ignorant, fickle and boastful (139). According to history, the nobility was an important social class with many authorities and privileges, but when the *caballero*

class—a new nobility—springs up from the ranks of the people, the old nobility treats it as a threat. The *caballeros* were men who could be ready at any time to wage war and were popular with the king. This asset gave them many privileges. The clerics, on the other hand, had many privileges and personal immunities and were free from taxation of their lands (Chapman 85). The poem, "*El debate de Elena y María*", was written in the Leonese style with a nine syllable French meter (Merimée 49). It is based on the Provence style of debate in which two people can actually act out each part as in a drama.

"*El debate de Elena y María*" is a discussion between two sisters of noble lineage who debate the merits of living with a *caballero* or living with a cleric. The poem in itself is incomplete, but within the alternating verses, which give the poem a rhythm of pro and con, the reader can grasp the heated discussion that takes place between two sisters as they argue the benefits or lack thereof of their situations. When one listens to Elena's story of drafty palaces and little money, resigned to a life with a man that gambles heavily, it is no wonder that Maria is in a better situation. In the debate, each sister denegrates the

lover of the other and, therefore, the lifestyle of each. Elena accuses the cleric of leading a lecherous lifestyle. In support of her accusation, Elena accuses the cleric of gluttony, sloth, and lust. She points out that in his excessive greed he exploits the deaths of his laity by convincing them to give all they have to the church so that the cleric can sing masses for them after they are dead, but he does not help the poor (Scholberg 141). The worst invective, however, is that the cleric condemns clerical concubinage and Maria each time that he says Mass by denouncing concubinage as a mortal sin. Maria wants to support her cleric and, therefore, tells Elena of the advantages of living with a man of the church and of the things he can give her.²

ca él vive bien honrado
 e sin todo cuidado;
 ha comer e beber
 e en buenos lechos yacer;
 ha vestir e calzar
 e bestias en que cabalgar. (folio 3; ll. 41-45)

² All quotations from the poem "*El debate de Elena y María*" are from Menéndez Pidal, Ramon. *Textos Medievales*.

Later she adds,

Mas otra honra mejor
 ha el mio señor:
 se fueren reis o condes,
 o otros ricos homnes,
 o dueñas de linaje,
 o caballeros de paraje,
 luego le van obedescer
 e vanle ofrecer;
 bien se tiene por villano
 quien le non besa la mano. (folio 22; ll. 265-
 274)

Elena, in defense of her sister's slanderous attack regarding life with her *caballero*, reminds María that her union is not sanctioned by the church and she would rather suffer some want from life with a layperson than live with a cleric who aspires to ruin daughters of good men.

comer e gastar
 y dormir y folgar,
 fijas de omnes bonos en nartar,
 casadas y por casar. (folio 8; ll. 112-115)

After hearing Maria's description of her sister's life in a cold, damp castle with no money to spend on heat or food, it would seem more reasonable to be by the fire with a good bottle of wine and a favorite cleric than to live honorably in a drafty palace.

Another proponent of clerical concubinage were the clerics of Talavera who wrote in protest the song, *Cantigos de los clérigos de Talavera*—of which I have included a fragment—to show their distaste for the laws against clerical concubinage. According to Victorio, ". . . necesitan tal compañía para evitarlas la soledad, la tristeza y aliviarles los «ardores», aparte de que sin el «buen amor», perderían el «buen humor»" (68).

Victorio goes on to say that the clerics of Talavera actually threatened the archbishop and were willing to give up their clerical duties in order to keep their concubines (68).

El papa nos enbía esta constitución;
 hévoslo a dezir, que quiera o que non,
 maguer que nos lo digo con ravia de coraçon.
 Cartas eran venidas, dizen desta manera
 «que casado nin clérigo de toda Talavera,

que non toviés' manceba, casada nin soltera:
 qualquier que la toviere, descomulgado era».
 Con aquestas razones que la carta dezía
 fincó muy quebrantada toda la clerizía;
 algunos de los legos tomaron azedía:
 para aver su acuerdo juntáronse otro día. (IV, 14-
 24) (Victorio 223)

This song is perhaps evidence of the powerlessness the clerics felt as they were torn between the world of man with laws that governed their lives, and the natural God-given desire they were commanded to repress. Again, the irony is that the laws were made by the higher clergy such as bishops and cardinals who themselves kept concubines. The lower orders consisted of humble men who, aspiring to live a godly life, perhaps desired solace from the world with the comfort of a woman companion. Some clerics succeeded in fulfilling the Church laws for celibacy while others became the incentive for poems of an anticlerical nature. Although the church fathers were stringent in their demands for adherence to the canonical laws, the clerics prevailed as the victims of church bureaucracy in

their struggle between obeying canon law and following natural instinct.

At the Council of Trent in 1545, church reformers unsuccessfully attempted to abolish clerical celibacy. The examples in this section allude to the popularity of the possibility of such an idea. Man in his natural state wanted the companionship of a woman and, when denied this need for human warmth and intimacy, rebelled, as we have seen in the previous section. Although *El debate de Elena y María* was written during the reign of Alfonso when canon laws were intact, there existed an underlying rejection of church law, even in the face of excommunication. The poetry was the testimony of the rejection by the clergy of this church ideal and existed only because of the reality that sparked its birth. People, whether noble or peasant, were unable to stop the clergy. They were able, however, through the use of satire, to pass down through generations and for posterity, documented testimony to the incontinence of the clergy.

SECTION VI

CONCLUSION

The early patristic fathers aspired to a pure Christian spirit by denying themselves bodily needs in exchange for greater spiritual proximity to God. Through negligence of the body, early ascetics endeavored to achieve a mystical godly union. In light of the truly remarkable experience of communion, ascetics—in seeking to control natural desire—deemed sexuality as detrimental to true gnosis, an exemplary ideal in the fourth century, but unattainable when a church takes away the free choice of a human to love another human. The act itself is turned into a sordid, sinful deed so that the quest for the ideal can forge a religion. After human weakness is introduced into the cauldron of idealism, the original ideal is somewhat weakened by the majority of humans unwilling to subject their bodies to an ascetic experience. Out of this cauldron comes the antithesis of the ideal prototype or the imperfect.

Clerics were not an example of the patristic archetype that dominated the church in the Dark Ages. The Medieval

cleric was prone to human weakness, and the economic situation of the times led men to the church seeking to be fed and clothed and to serve a higher power. The church, in its great power, was able to care for the cleric of a community. The cleric, in turn, imposed that power on the laity who suffered at his hand. The impact of this imposed power is manifested in satire, which condemns a society for its ideal when it is not adhered to, as observed in the sexual incontinence of the clergy. As a result of the satire, the ideal is destroyed and the truth is understood.

Satirical expression offers a window to the reader, a glance at the behavior of clerics during the Middle Ages. The literature also offers the reader an invitation to observe the reaction of lay people, such as kings, poets, nobility, knights, and women who were not abbesses nor lived in monasteries. Proponents of clerical celibacy were people like Alfonso X, a king who sired many children, while the proponents of clerical concubinage were people like "Elena and María", who wanted peace and security. The Middle Ages were a violent time, and survival lay with the economically stable and noble of blood. Men fought in battles, women stayed home and scraped a living from the

earth, and children died of sicknesses. Women who were economically needy and believed that the clerics could really damn them to hell were victims of clerical repression. Men fought and women survived, sometimes by laying with a cleric in order to feed their children.

The literature reveals voices and realities different from the chronicles and journals that were kept during the Middle Ages. It brings a sense and perception of life from other points of view. As a universal language, poetry expresses an experience, a truth. There is little doubt that incontinent clerics who preached against the seven deadly sins were guilty of them all. These clerics were corrupt individuals, but only as corrupt as the institution that fostered their behavior. The different expressions of literature are a breath of fresh air that enlightens the reader to the reality of the Middle Ages, and bequeaths to us a true picture of life as it was.

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