

A NOTE ON *GILBERTUS POETA*

Gilbertus poeta is already known to students of mediaeval Spanish literature from a charter, dated Uclés, 3 March 1203, which records the donation by Count Fernando de Lara of the castle of Carabanchel to the Master of Santiago, Gonzalo Rodríguez; at the foot of the charter is written «Gilbertus poeta scripsit», and Menéndez Pidal, in his reference to this, appears to take it as evidence that Gilberto was one of the earliest *juglares* or troubadours known to us by name.¹

More recent evidence, however, would seem to throw doubt on this assumption, for, whilst examining, for other reasons, the documents of the military orders, I came across another charter, dated Toro, 1 June 1200, which recorded the exchange of some estates between the same Master of Santiago and a certain Gutierre Nazareno, and which bore the subscription «Frater Guilbertus poeta hanc cartam notuit».² These two subscriptions suggest that Gilberto was a literate friar of the Order of Santiago, who travelled about Spain with the Master, and occasionally acted as his scribe — although no other charters of the years 1190-1210 seem to bear his subscription. It is therefore unlikely that he was a *juglar* or troubadour, despite his French — or English-sounding name; more probably, the title *poeta* implied that he wrote Latin poetry, presumably religious; but a recent examination of the archives of Uclés, where Gilberto was perhaps a cleric, of San Marcos de León, and of Calatrava, failed to reveal any documents of literary interest prior to 1284, and, for the moment at least, Gilberto must remain little more than a name.

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1. Archivo Histórico Nacional, Órdenes Militares. Archivo de Uclés, cajón 205, núm. 1, published by L. DE SALAZAR Y CASTRO, *Historia genealógica de la casa de Lara* (Madrid 1694-1696), IV, 622; and cited from this edition by R. MENÉNDEZ PIDAL, *Poesía juglaresca* (Madrid 1957), 9.

2. Archivo Histórico Nacional, Códice 1316, lib. 3, núm. 7.