THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IN CASTILIAN AND CATALAN POETRY
OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY: A COMPARATIVE THEMATIC STUDY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to Pearl Lambert, whose determination
and unfailing courage are a constant source of inspiration.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CB	*Cancionero de Baena*
CM	*Cancionero de Montesino*
Coplas	*Coplas de Vita Christi*
1440 Certamen	*Certamen en llaor de la Concepció de Nostra Dona, València 1440*
1474 Certamen	*Certamen 'en lahors de la Verge Maria', València 1474*
1486 Certamen	*Certamen poètic en honor de la Sacratíssima Concepció, València 1486*
F-D	*Cancionero castellano del siglo XV*
JB	*The New Jerusalem Bible*
Milagros	*Los milagros de Nuestra Señora*
PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus siue bibliotheca universalis omnium S.S. Patrum, Doctorum scriptorumque ecclesiasticorum qui ab aevo apostolico ad usque Innocentii iii tempore floruerunt, Series (Latina) prima*

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INTRODUCTION

The background to this investigation of fifteenth-century
literature is the debate about Mary's sinless nature and the
moment of her purification from sin, as enshrined in the
doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Catholic doctrine
which holds that the Virgin Mary was sinless from the moment
of her conception.[1] Whether Mary was pure from the very
moment of her conception, and how this could be so, or
whether she was sanctified a moment after conception, a
distinction which may appear trivial to the modern mind, was
a question which provoked virulent argument, royal decrees
and even excommunication or exile for opponents in the
fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

At first sight it may appear strange to examine the
fifteenth-century manifestations of the debate about
the Immaculate Conception, when the dogma was not defined
until the nineteenth century. In 1854, the doctrine became
a dogma necessary to salvation.[2] The doctrine was discussed
before the date of its definition as dogma. As Le Bachelet
affirms:

> En *Ineffabilis Deus,* il y a toute une partie qui

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[1] For reference, an explanation of key theological terms is
included in the Glossary.

[2] *The Christian Faith in the Documents of the Church,* ed. by
J. Neuner, S.J. and J. Dupuis, S.J. (Bangalore: Theological
Publications in India, 1973). At p.196, Neuner and Dupuis
comment that in the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus,* 18 December 1854,
'The Pope thus raises to a dogma of faith a doctrine which
had behind it a long tradition'.

> précède à titre d'exposé historico-doctrinal: elle
> forme comme les considérants rationels de la sentence
> pontificale.[3]

It is immediately apparent from the general tenor of the papal definition that an unusually firm reliance was placed on tradition, as opposed to scriptural proof. This reliance provides a justification, should justification be needed, for the study of the development of immaculist tradition and its expression in literature in the fifteenth century.

Moreover, reflecting on the inferences of the 'marée montante' image described by René Laurentin, a present-day mariologist, a second more important justification emerges:

> Comme les vagues se soulèvent, culminent, puis
> s'étalent et refluent jusqu'à ce que la suivante porte
> plus loin son élan, ainsi chaque période préssent
> quelque aspect caché du visage de la Vierge, le
> découvre avec ferveur non sans excès parfois, et
> souvent non sans lutte.[4]

Dogma is defined only after each doctrine has arisen, been debated and been accepted. The fifteenth century represents a period of 'ferveur'.

The first tentative steps towards acceptance of the doctrine were taken early in the fourteenth century by

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[3] X. Le Bachelet, 'L'Immaculée conception' in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique contenant l'exposé des doctrines de la théologie catholique, leurs preuves et leur histoire (DTC)*, ed. by Jean Michel Alfred Vacant, Eugene Margenot, Emile Amann, Bernard Lott, Marc Albert Michel, 16 vols. (Paris: Letouzey, 1899-1950), VII, 846-1218, p.848.

[4] René Laurentin, *Court traité sur la Vierge Marie*, 5th edn. (Paris: Lethielleux, 1967), p.15.

scholastic teachers, but the fifteenth century saw impassioned debate and violent reprisals against opponents. Debate was rife in the Peninsula at the end of the fourteenth century and in the early fifteenth century. In the Peninsula itself, at the turn of the century, the Catalan monarchy was particularly active in the promulgation of decrees, demanding loyalty to the doctrine as a prerequisite of loyalty to the state; edicts were promulgated by Juan I, Martin I and Doña María de Aragón. The Dominican Order of Preachers, following the school of thought of Aquinas, was opposed to the spread of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, whilst the Franciscans, disciples of Scotus and Aureoli, promoted the doctrine. The debate from calm scholastic beginnings became increasingly widespread and, in consequence, increasingly acrimonious. By the 1380s, the Catalan Dominican, Monzón, was excommunicated by the Pope in Avignon for his attack on the doctrine at the University of Paris, whilst, in Cataluña itself, Nicholas Eymerich, a noted opponent, was banished from the kingdom for his support for the Monzón cause.

The fifteenth century was marked by the first conciliar recognition of the doctrine, when the Council of Basle in 1439 pronounced that the Feast of the Conception was to be celebrated throughout Christendom. The century saw the first steps toward papal recognition of the doctrine, marking the end of a first stage of controversy.

Interest in the Conception doctrine, fanned by

Franciscan preachers, was reflected in the poetry in the period in both Castile and Cataluña. In Valencia, in particular, because of royal support for the doctrine, Certàmens, competitions, modelled on the Toulouse troubadour *puys*, were held in honour of the Virgin Mary and even, on two occasions, specifically in honour of her Immaculate Conception. These Certàmens, published by Ferrando Francés, provide the basis for a study of the Catalan response to the doctrine.[5] In Castile too, Cancionero collections of the period show examples of the Conception theme, either in complete poems or as an additional stanza in poems dedicated to the Joys of the Virgin.[6] Both the *Cancionero de Baena* (*CB*) and the poems included in the collection of Cancionero poems, made by R. Foulché Delbosc in the early twentieth century, entitled *Cancionero castellano* (F-D), provide poetic evidence.[7] Evidence for the study will be drawn in the first instance from dedicated Conception poems or from dedicated verses

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[5] Antoni Ferrando Francés, *Els certàmens poètics valencians del segle XIV al XIX*, Institut de literatura i estudis filològics, Institució Alfons el magnànim (Valencia: Diputació de Valencia, 1983).

[6] Rosemary Woolf, *English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) discusses the development of the Joys of the Virgin. Joys poems traditionally devote one stanza to each joyful event in the life of the Virgin. By the fifteenth century, with the amplification of the traditional five or seven Joys to fifteen or twenty, the possibility of including the Conception of the Virgin as one of the events became a possibility.

[7] *Cancionero de Baena : Cancionero, estudio y edición crítica* (*CB*), ed. by P. J. Pidal (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Anaconda, 1949).
Cancionero castellano del siglo XV (F-D), ed. by R. Foulché-Delbosc, 2 vols., Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 19 and 22 (Madrid: Casa editorial Bailly-Baillière, 1912-1915).

within poems.[8]

The study of the theme of the Immaculate Conception divides into three main parts. The first section will concentrate on examining the rise of the doctrine and its place in mariology. The influence of University debate about the nascent doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and its impact on poetic discussion of the doctrine will be examined.

The second section discerns and examines the three principal Old Testament themes representing the Immaculate Conception: the description of the young lover from the Song of Songs; the battle between the woman and the serpent described in Genesis 3.15; and creation stories based on Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus.

The third section of the thesis will consider the key New Testament themes: comparison of the treatment of the apocryphal nativity narratives by Alfonso el Sabio with their treatment in Cancionero and Certamen poems. Fifteenth-century evidence of Revelations symbolism, which by the seventeenth century had become inextricably linked with the Immaculate Conception, provides the second principal New Testament theme.

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[8] Designated Conception poems are those where, either in the title of the individual poem, or in the title of the collection, there is a dedication of the poem or series of poems to the Immaculate Conception.

Although, in recent years, a small number of articles have appeared, which have considered the Immaculate Conception in the work of one poet or dramatist, and, although a number of major works dealing with the Immaculate Conception in art have been written, there has been no comparable work dealing with the existence of the theme of the Immaculate Conception and exploring its manifestations in literary works.[9] No scholar has compared the treatment of the Immaculate Conception in Castile and Cataluña.

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[9] Elizabeth Teresa Howe, 'Lope de Vega and the Immaculate Conception', *Bulletin of the Comediantes*, 38 (1986), 39-53. Suzanne L. Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: CUP; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

PART I

MARIOLOGY AND DOCTRINE

1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Before a study of the development of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception can be undertaken, it would seem wise to begin with the definition of the doctrine, since this will clarify exactly what came to be meant by the Immaculate Conception. Definition of what is understood by this doctrine is vital, since a number of scholars have made mistakes on this very point, confusing the Immaculate Conception with the Virginal Conception of Christ.

1.1 THE DEFINITION

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was defined by Pope Pius IX in the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus*, which was promulgated on the day of the feast of the Conception, 8 December 1854, and worded as follows:

> Auctoritate Domini nostri Jesu Christi, beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli ac Nostra declaramus, pronuntiamus et definimus doctrinam quae tenet beatissimam Virginem Mariam in primo instanti suae conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Jesu Salvatoris humanae generis, ab omni originalis culpae labe praeservatam immunem, esse a Deo revelatam, atque idcirco ab omnibus firmiter constanterque credendam.[1]

According to Jugie, the definition encompasses the following elements. It relies on the dogma of original sin, according to which every descendant of Adam, through generation of the

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[1] P. Martin Jugie, A.A., *L'Immaculée Conception dans l'Ecriture sainte et dans la tradition orientale*, Bibliotheca Immaculatae Conceptionis, III, Textus et disquisitiones edita cura Academiae Marianae Internationalis (Rome: Academia Mariana, 1952), p.10.

flesh, incurs a sin or stain which deprives each person of God's love. The deprivation is in direct relation to the sin of Adam and is caused by it. Secondly, Mary was conceived in the normal way. She would have been subject to the privations of original sin, had she not been preserved from it. Thirdly, the preservation of Mary was a special privilege accorded to her. Fourthly, the preservation was in respect of the merits of Jesus Christ. Just like other descendants of Adam, Mary needed to be redeemed but she was *sublimiori modi redempta*. In Mary's case, there was an anticipation of the merits of the Redeemer. Finally, the dogma affirms that from the very first moment when Mary existed as a human being, she was never tainted with original sin. Whilst Jeremiah and John the Baptist were purged of original sin in their mothers' wombs, Mary was preserved from it at the moment of her conception. She was never sinful, she was endowed with sanctifying grace, enriched with all the privileges of the original state of innocence. These are the main strands of the dogma, which is the culmination of the development of the doctrine.

In this chapter, the beginnings of the doctrine will be considered. The development of mariology in general will be presented, in order to give a broad overview of the movement of Marian thought and to show how the Conception doctrine fitted within it. The history of the doctrine will then be examined.

1.2 MARIAN THOUGHT AND THE CONCEPTION DOCTRINE

The development of mariology has been well documented.
Hilda Graef's *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* and
Marina Warner's *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of
the Virgin Mary* both provide, in their different ways, an
overview of the history of the Mary cult.[2] This chapter
contains a brief resumé of key points in the development of
mariology, pointing out the nature of mariological
development, in order to highlight the overall similarities
with the development of the doctrine of the Immaculate
Conception.

Mary appears in the New Testament, albeit in a
subordinate role. It is the Lucan Gospel which takes the
most interest in the infancy of the Christ and, thus, in
Mary as his mother. According to Marie Isaacs, Luke, at the
Annunciation, depicts Mary as the 'supreme example of the
faithful of Israel who pave the way for the Messiah and from
whom he was to spring'.[3] Her role is confined to the
opening chapters of the Gospel but contains the greeting
accorded her by the angel Gabriel, *Kecharitomene*, full of
grace. These words addressed specifically to Mary are the
first recorded words of praise to her, thus setting the
pattern by which future generations were to address her.

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[2] Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, 2
vols. (London: Sheed and Ward, 1963-1965).
Marina Warner, *Alone of All her Sex: The Myth and Cult of
the Virgin Mary* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976).

[3] Marie Isaacs, 'Mary in the Lucan Infancy Narrative', *The
Way*, Supplement, 25 (1975), 80-95, p.89.

Meditation on the angelic words has led mariologists down the ages to conclusions about Mary's nature and about her role in God's plan of salvation.[4] Most of the principal Marian feasts have a biblical origin. They sprang from interest in events in the Lucan infancy narratives: the Annunciation, the Visitation, the *Hypapante* or Purification.

One of the earliest Marian themes to make its appearance is the paralleling of Mary and Eve within the divine plan, as described by Irenaeus in his *Adversus Haereses*.[5] As René Laurentin comments: 'Justin et ... Irenée explicitent un élément du développement doctrinal. Ils dégagent la signification de Marie dans le plan du Salut. Marie joue un rôle inaugural analogue à celui d'Eve' (Laurentin, p.44). From the point of view of the development of the Conception doctrine, the importance of this mariological development is that the story of the Annunciation is set in contrast with the story of the Fall, and also that a link, provided by the divine purpose of redemption, is forged between the two women, Mary and Eve.

The next stage of mariological development is centred on debate about the nature of Christ, and thus, in a secondary way on the nature of Mary's motherhood. The fourth-century debate is particularly relevant to the

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[4] E. D. O'Connor, C.S.C., *The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception: Its History and Significance* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), p.25.

[5] St Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 5, 19.1; quoted by Warner, p.60.

Immaculate Conception in the way it concluded. The Docetists devised the concept of *virginitas in partu*, a doctrine which holds that Mary remained a Virgin even whilst becoming a mother. The Docetists were a group who denied the Incarnation, believing rather that Christ had temporarily united himself to the man, Jesus, or even that the Christ seemed to manifest himself without a real body. Initial reaction against the doctrine was strong, headed by Tertullian. In Laurentin's words, 'maternité intégrale, physique et corporelle' and 'virginité intégrale, physique et corporelle' were well-nigh impossible to reconcile (*Court traité*, p.48). However, the gnostic idea of perpetual integrity for Mary was to prove 'too attractive, too much in accord with the idealizing requirements of piety' [6]. The controversy cooled and the doctrine, once opposed by the Church, was quietly assimilated.

Also in the fourth century, the very same degree of violent opposition, followed by assimilation, was to be observed in the case of the Manichaean idea of *virginitas post partum*, a doctrine which held that the Virgin Mary retained her virginity even after giving birth. Once the Manichaean heresy was defeated, *virginitas post partum* became part of the Church's patrimony. It is clear that, in the conclusion of the Manichaean debate, 'mariological interest begins to take precedence over interest in the person of Christ' (Miegge, p.44). A similar consideration of

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[6] Giovanni Miegge, *The Virgin Mary: The Roman Catholic Marian Doctrine*, translated by Waldo Smith (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p.36.

a unique privilege for Mary was mirrored when the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was proposed. A conflict of interest between christology and mariology also required resolution.

Another factor was apparent in the conferral on Mary of the title *Theotokos*, Mother of God, at the Council of Ephesus in 431. The conferring of the title was intended to resolve a dispute between the Arians and the Monophysites about the nature of Christ. Its importance for the purpose of this study is the way in which popular demand influenced the outcome of the dispute. Ephesus, a centre for the worship of Diana, whole-heartedly replaced veneration of the pagan goddess with honour to the Virgin Mary (*Court traité*, p.49). The influence of popular demand becomes apparent in the development of the Conception doctrine.

Finally, the doctrine of the Assumption is a parallel development in mariology to the Conception doctrine.[7] First, the feast-day began to be celebrated in the East, springing from popular piety, and later in the western Church. It was not scriptural in origin and drew on

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[7] The Assumption doctrine was eventually defined as a dogma in *Munificentissimus* on 1 November 1950:
> From all eternity the august Mother of God is united in a sublime way with with Jesus Christ; immaculate in her conception, [...] she finally obtained as the crowning glory of her privileges to be preserved from the corruption of the tomb and, like her Son before her, to conquer death and to be raised body and soul to the glory of heaven, to shine refulgent as Queen at the right hand of her Son, the immortal King of ages (Neuner and Dupuis, p.199).

the *Transitus* legends to fill in gaps about Mary's death (Warner, p.84). There is some doubt about the exact origin of the feast. Laurentin places the origin of the feast in a celebration on 15 August dedicated to Mary *Theotokos* which soon focussed on the Dormition or bodily Assumption of the saint. It was imported to the West probably in AD 650. The arguments adduced in support of the Assumption and those most commonly used in favour of the Immaculate Conception rely on the fittingness of each prerogative for Mary.

1.3 THE HISTORY OF THE CONCEPTION FEAST

The story of the Conception doctrine begins between the third and fifth centuries, when apocryphal stories about Mary's birth and childhood began to circulate. These had a marked docetic flavour but were soon accepted by the Church and gained currency in the West. Initially, the infancy narratives about Mary seem to have owed their origin to analogy with the birth of John the Baptist. John, like Mary, was a miracle child, conceived in his parents' old age, and it was probably analogy with the Gospel stories of the events surrounding the birth of the Precursor, John, which fuelled the creation of the Apocryphal Gospels. Both had direct antecedents in the Old Testament story of the birth of Samuel, whose mother, Hannah, was also in her old age. The details of these stories as well as their connection with the Conception doctrine are to be examined in depth in the third section of this study (see below, p.262).

1.3.1 Celebration of a feast-day

As with the Assumption, the second stage of development, was the introduction of a feast-day. Once the link between John and Mary had been established, there was a certain pressure to establish a Nativity feast for Mary also to parallel the Nativity of John. The difference was, of course, that whilst John the Baptist's feast was based on the infancy Gospel of Luke, Mary's Nativity feast was not biblically based. The establishment of a feast dedicated to the holy birth of a saint had its antecedent in the existing feast day of John the Baptist and no new doctrine was required. The establishment of a non-Gospel feast followed the tradition of the Dormition feast. The Nativity of Mary was established in the East during the seventh century, soon spreading to the West, being celebrated on 8 September.[8]

By the early eighth century, a feast-day, dedicated to the mother of Mary, St Anne, was being celebrated in the East on the 9 December (Warner, p.239). Soon the feast changed in name and character and became known as the Conception of Mary, although for a time the Conception of St Anne and the Conception of Mary were celebrated on the same day. Eventually, as the more important of the two saints, Mary's name took precedence and the feast of St Anne was moved to 26 July. The first extant sermon for the Conception feast was preached by John of Euboea in the ninth

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[8] Alberic Stacpoole, O.S.B., 'The English Tradition of the Immaculate Conception' in *Mary's Place in Christian Dialogue*, ed. by Alberic Stacpoole (Middlegreen: St Paul's Publications, 1982), 217-231, p.218.

century.[9] The Conception feast soon spread from the East with monks fleeing the iconoclast persecutions and was taken up first in the Greek monasteries of southern Italy.[10]

Interest in the spread of the feast and its resurgence in England is attested by the existence of the Helsin miracle, which appears in many medieval miracle collections.[11] The feast was established in England by the twelfth century and was defended by the first mariological treatises which attempted to show how Mary had been pure at the moment of her conception.[12]

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[9] John of Euboea, *Sermo in conceptione Deiparae*, PL 96, 1475 A, quoted by Mgr. H. Francis Davies, 'Immaculate Conception' in *The Mother of the Redeemer*, ed. by Kevin McNamara, Maynooth Union Summer School, 1958 (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1959), 85-102. At p.90, Davies quotes from John's sermon:
> We celebrate first of all glorious feastdays the day on which Blessed Joachim and Anna received the glorious tidings of the generation of the fully Immaculate Mother of God.

[10] Grottaferrata, Naples and Rome are mentioned by Stacpoole, p.219.

[11] Edmund Bishop, *The Origins of the Feast of the Conception of the Virgin Mary* (London: Burns and Oates, 1904). At p.8, Bishop describes the miracle story. Abbot Elsinus or Helsin was returning from a mission to Denmark and was urged in a vision to introduce the feast into England. However, according to Edmund Bishop, the feast was known in the pre-Conquest period, being already celebrated in major religious centres such as Winchester, Canterbury and Ramsey. The feast is found in early missals. Bishop considers that the early feast must have been stamped out by the invading Normans.

[12] Numerous writers, prior to this date, had written about Mary's purity and had even used the words immaculate or without stain to describe her. The Greek writer Ephraem is a case in point. Often held to be the first Father to have written in favour of the Immaculate Conception, Ephraem wrote the following verse in one of his Nisibene Hymns: 'Only Thou [Christ] alone and Thy Mother are wholly beautiful; for neither in Thee, nor in Thy Mother is any stain'. See Davies, p.93. Hilda Graef, however, shows how Ephraem places the moment of Mary's purification at the time

The twelfth-century *Tractatus de conceptione B. Mariae Virginis*, probably written to justify the reintroduction of the Conception feast at Bury St Edmunds, constituted, according to Stacpoole 'a new level of thinking, at once theological and devotional, simpler than that of Eadmer's successors but undoubtedly more sophisticated than what had gone before' (p.227).[13] In the first part of the treatise, Eadmer argues that the feast of Mary's Conception is to be celebrated, since, whilst the author concedes that there is no mention of it in Scripture, he does not consider it 'contra fidem esse'. He holds the doctrine to be consonant with Mary's dignity as Mother of God: 'Quid enim major et excellentior aestimari debet conceptio futurae Matris Dei quam conceptio venientis in carne filii Dei?' (303 D). Eadmer argues that, even in her conception, Mary was free from original sin because of her role in Christ's redemptive work (305 B). His second argument relies on parity with John the Baptist and Jeremiah:

> Quis dicere audeat singulare totius saeculi propitiatiorium ac Filii Dei omnipotentis dulcissimum reclinatorium, mox in suae conceptionis exordio Spiritus sancti gratiae illustratione destitutum. (305 A)

St Anselm's ideas on original sin underpin the treatise.[14]

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when 'the light came to dwell in her' or at the moment of her conception of Christ (p.112). Graef shows how the Greek Fathers used terms, like immaculate, quite readily, taking them to imply outstanding moral and physical purity, rather than taking the terms to imply any reference to freedom from original sin.

[13] Eadmer, *Tractatus de conceptione B. Mariae Virginis*, PL 159, 301-318.

[14] St Anselm described original sin in terms of the deprivation of original justice, which had the effect of separating humankind from God. This state could be called

Eadmer was Anselm's disciple, as is revealed in his interpretation of original sin in 'gratiae ... destitutum'. By degrees the influence of Eadmer's treatise, propagated under the name of Anselm, started to change the face of mariology: 'Anselmian in thought it drove out Anselm's own main tenet' (Stacpoole, p.228).

1.3.2 The opposition of St Bernard

From England, the feast spread to Bec in Normandy and thence to Lyons, provoking the angry response from St Bernard that the celebration of such a feast was neither recognized by the Church nor approved by reason nor recommended by ancient tradition:

> Unde miramur satis, quid visum fuerit hoc tempore quibusdam vestrum voluisse mutare colorem optimum, novam inducendo celebritatem, quam ritus Ecclesiae nescit, non probat ratio, non commendat antiqua traditio.[15]

Bernard's opposition to the concept of the Conception feast does not derive from any desire to dishonour Mary, but from two tenets of faith which he sought to uphold. He subscribed to the Augustinian view of original sin, physically transmitted from parent to child, and he also sought to

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a sin, but differs from personal sin and from Adam's sin: Adam's sin arose from his own choice. Inherited sin arises from natural necessity.
St Anselm, *Liber de conceptu virginali et originali peccato*, *PL* 158, 451-464. Although St Anselm wrote elsewhere in opposition to the immaculate nature of the Virgin, writing in *Cur Deus Homo*: 'Virgo tamen ipsa [...] est in iniquitatibus concepta, et in peccatis concepta eam mater ejus et cum originali peccato nata est' (*PL* 158, 416), nevertheless his teaching on original sin was an important stimulus to thinking on the Immaculate Conception.

[15] St Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistola 174, Ad canonicos Lugdunenses: De conceptione S. Mariae, PL* 182, 332-336, 333 A.

uphold the doctrine of Christ's supreme holiness, a doctrine which appeared to be jeopardized by the new feast.

Bernard's rejection of the new doctrine typifies the uneasiness felt by the great medieval theologians. As Miegge comments:

> The point was that the virgin birth of Christ signifies the absolute exception, the complete uniqueness that sets Christ apart, elevating Him above others born of woman who were sanctified or predestined from the maternal womb. It was certainly the intuition of an analogous relationship that impeded the theologians of the scholastic age from attributing the Immaculate Conception to Mary (Miegge, p.120).

Having taught against the doctrine, Bernard contributed in two ways to subsequent acceptance of the Conception doctrine.

Firstly, the poetic language used by Bernard in his laudatory sermons made an enormous impact on his followers and was spread by the rapid expansion of the Cistercian order. Bernard's praise of Mary contributed in no small way to the creation of a climate of Marian piety in which a doctrine like the Immaculate Conception could flourish.

Secondly, Bernard broke entirely new ground in his defence of *sanctificatio in utero*, the sanctification of the Virgin in her mother's womb. Bernard based his arguments on the existence of the feast of the Nativity, arguing that, since the Church cannot celebrate an unholy feast, Mary's

birth must of necessity be holy.[16] Although his Augustinian view of original sin prevented Bernard from ranging himself with the supporters of the doctrine, nevertheless, his arguments in favour of the Nativity paved the way for subsequent defence of the Conception doctrine. Moreover, by his virulent attack on the feast, Bernard unwittingly raised its profile.

Following Bernard's rejection of the Conception feast, a controversy arose which lasted some thirty years and was based on an exchange of letters between Nicholas of St Albans and Bernard's disciple, Peter of Celles.[17] The crux of the difference between the two monks is that Nicholas places the Virgin in the proto-parental state of original perfection, whilst Peter maintains a certain degree of imperfection in her.

1.3.3 <u>The celebration of the Conception feast in Spain</u>

According to Lesmes Frías, the earliest recorded decree requiring observance of the Conception feast of 8

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[16] Bernard discusses the point as follows:
> Sed et ortum Virginis didici nihilominus in Ecclesia, et ab Ecclesia indubitanter habere festivum atque sanctum; firmissime cum Ecclesia sentiens in utero eam accepisse ut sancta prodiret (*Epistola 174*, *PL* 182, 333C).

[17] P. Lucas Modric, O.F.M., 'Illustratio privilegii Immaculatae Conceptionis per eiusdem consectaria iuxta doctrinam theologorum saeculi XII', *Antonianum*, 31 (1956), 3-24. Modric gives the following summary of Nicholas' defence of the doctrine:
> Nicholaus intelligere nequit quomodo concupiscentia existere possit sine sui motu, et viceversa, quomodo sentiri possit, si est ligata; unde adhuc altius problema, utrum nempe inveniatur in Virgine causa peccati an non, seu utrum existat in ea talis defectus ut eam ducere possit ad peccatum actuale (p. 20).

December is in a statute of the Archbishop of Santiago, Rudericus, written on 23 May 1309.[18] The first diocese to institute the celebration of the Conception feast was Barcelona in 1281, although there was no evidence of the feast being kept until a hundred years later.[19] Frías notes that references to the feast of the 'conceptio Mariae' prior to that date should be discounted, since the 'conceptio' was intended as a commemoration of the Incarnation, Mary's conception of Christ (p.32). The name of the two feasts caused confusion to historians. The Incarnation \Conception feast was allegedly instituted by Ildefonsus and was celebrated on 18 December.[20]

1.4 THE GOLDEN AGE OF SCHOLASTICISM

The doctrine had spread to France and by the mid-

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[18] Lesmes Frías, S.J., 'Antigüedad de la fiesta de la Inmaculada en España', *Miscelánea Comillas*, 23 (1955), 31-85, p.39. At p.37, n.13. Lesmes Frías describes how the celebration of the Conception feast was extended to the diocese of Santiago at the Council of Salamanca in 1310:
> Statuimos quod festum conceptionis beate uirginis gloriose per totam compostellanam prouinciam singulis idus VI december (*sic*) sollempniter celebretur (Archivo del Cabildo de Santiago, *Constituciones antiguas*, cajón 1, fol. XXXII-XXXIII).

[19] Frías, p.51, quotes from the Chapter meeting of 4 November:
> Ita videlicet quod in dicta sede fiat sollemnitas dicti festi sicut fit et fieri consuevit de festivitatibus que medie appellantur.

[20] Gonzalo de Berceo, *Obras completas*, ed. by Brian Dutton, 5 vols. (London: Tamesis, 1967-81), II: *Los milagros de Nuestra Señora*. Berceo discusses the reasons behind the transfer of the feast-day in *Milagros*. 54a:
> Entonz cae un tiempo, esto por connocía,
> non canta la eglesia canto de alegría,
> non lieva so derecho tan sennalado día.

Berceo also refers to the fact that the feast was placed 'cerca de la Natal' (*Milagros*.55 b) in the calendar.

thirteenth century had, at the very least, been discussed by theologians at the University of Paris, if only to be rejected. In fact, Jean de Pouilly, writing about 1310, could still affirm that no doctor, whose work had been published at the university, had defended the doctrine. Francisco Guimaraens summarizes the possible reasons for this:

> On a parlé de leur connaissance imparfaite de la doctrine des Pères, de l'influence exercée sur eux par Pierre Lombard et par S. Bernard, de la difficulté qu'ils éprouvaient de concilier l'exemption du péché originel avec quelques vérités incontestables admises par tous, comme le dogme de la Rédemption universelle, la génération de Marie selon les lois communs de la nature, la pureté incomparable du Christ.[21]

In addition, these factors were compounded by the opposition of the great theologians of the period, St Albert, St Bonaventure, Alexander Hales and St Thomas Aquinas.

1.4.1 The opposition of St Thomas Aquinas

St Thomas considers the doctrine in Question 27 of his *Summa theologiae*, arguing in a more systematic manner than St Bernard but echoing his conclusions.[22] Thomas argues in favour of *sanctificatio ante nativitatem ex utero*, holding that, although this is not a scripturally revealed truth,

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[21] Francisco de Guimaraens, O.F.M. Cap., 'La Doctrine des théologiens sur l'Immaculée Conception de 1250 à 1350', *Etudes franciscains*, 9 (1952), 181-205; 10 (1953), 23-53 and 167-87. At p.181, Guimaraens comments that the Greek Fathers taught the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. It is unlikely, that they did so (see above, p.15, n.11). Guimaraens' other points are not invalidated by his view of the Greeks.

[22] St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, ed. by Thomas Gilby, 61 vols. (New York: McGraw Hill; London: Blackfriars with Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1964-1976), Vol.51, ed. by Thomas R. Heath, O.P. (London: Blackfriars, 1969)
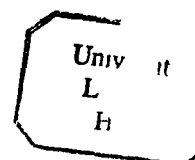
it is possible to deduce the proposition rationally. This doctrine would mean that the Virgin was sanctified sometime after the infusion of her rational soul, known as animation, but before birth.

Like Bernard, St Thomas Aquinas accepts the evidence of a Nativity feast as evidence in favour of sanctification *in utero*. However, with regard to the Conception feast, the equivalent deduction is rejected: 'Nec tamen per hoc festum Conceptionis celebratum datur intelligi quod in sua conceptione fuerit sancta' (Lib.III.27.art.2.resp.3). The long-standing practice of celebrating the Conception feast and the equivocal attitude of Rome on the matter, obviously caused Aquinas some difficulties. Concerned about major doctrines, which he considered to be jeopardized by the new doctrine, Aquinas did not pose the question of whether the Virgin was preserved from original sin. Instead he posed the question of whether she was sanctified before the infusion of her rational soul. He concluded that sanctification must have occurred after animation.[23]

However, like other opponents of the doctrine, Thomas made important contributions to its subsequent formulation. For example, his insistence that the gift of grace, accorded Mary in her sanctification, was a preservative, preventative grace, and the fact that this gift of grace was a special

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[23] *Summa theologiae*, Lib.III.27.art.2. resp.:
> Culpa non potest emundari nisi per gratiam: cujus subjectum est sola creatura rationalis. Et ideo ante infusionem animae rationalis beata Virgo sanctificata non fuit'.

privilege, granted to Mary by her Son, were elements later
incorporated into the dogma.[24] Aquinas' insistence that Mary
was in need of redemption was a factor which defenders of
the privilege had frequently failed to recognize. Whilst
Aquinas could not reconcile Mary's need for redemption with
sanctification at the moment of her conception, later
generations saw a way to reconcile the concepts, so that the
uniqueness of Christ's origin was preserved.

Aquinas made a further important contribution to the
development of the doctrine in teaching that Mary was
preserved from sin in a fuller way 'ampliorem ... gratiam'
than other saints, in that she was preserved from all sin,
venial and mortal after her sanctification (Lib.III.27.6.
resp.1). He uses the biblical verse 'Tota pulchra es
amica mea' from the Canticum Canticorum (4.7) to illustrate
the freedom of the Virgin from actual sins (Lib.III.27.4.
resp.1). The verse would later be used to indicate freedom
from all sin: original, mortal and venial (see below,
p.143).

The teaching of Thomas Aquinas has been developed at
some length, not because it contains any new perspective on

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[24] *Summa theologiae*, Lib.III.27.art.3.resp.:
> Et ideo melius videtur dicendum quod per
> santificationem in utero non fuit sublatus Virgini
> fomes secundum essentiam, sed remansit ligatus: non
> quidem per actum rationis suae, sicut in viris sanctis
> [...] hoc enim speciale privilegium Christi fuit; sed
> per gratiam abundantem quam in sanctificatione recepit;
> et etiam perfectius per divinam providentiam
> sensualitatem ejus ab omni inordinato motu prohibentem.

the doctrine, but rather because, like Bernard before him,
Aquinas' ideas were to have a major influence on the ensuing
debate. His disciples in the Dominican Order treated his
thought as an oracle and were to form one school of thought
in the Conception debate. At this point in the history of
the doctrine, the Franciscans were also united behind
Aquinas. Initially, division on the doctrine was national,
Oxford versus Paris, rather than congregational.

1.4.2 Duns Scotus: Doctor Subtilis

By the time Duns Scotus came to teach the doctrine in
Paris, in 1304, acknowledgement of the belief had gained
some little ground. In Paris, Scotus was preceded by Henry
of Ghent, who taught that the Virgin was sanctified
immediately after the first moment of her conception, thus
being immediately cleansed from original sin.[25] Henry's
ideas were rejected by numerous Parisian teachers including
Godefroid de Fontaines, Jean de Paris, Gilles de Rome and
Guillaume de Godin. Furthermore, in 1298, Ramon Lull had
already defended the Immaculate Conception in Paris with his
treatise *Disputatio Eremitae et Raymundi: super aliquibus
dubiis quaestionibus sententiarum magistri Petri
Lombardi.*[26]

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[25] Guimaraens (p.194) comments that:
> Le Docteur Solonnel y admet [à la q.13 de son
> Quodl.XV.] comme possible et même probable que
> la Sainte Vierge fut sanctifiée immédiatement après le
> premier instant de son existence....Tous les auteurs
> qui abordèrent le problème de la Conception examinent
> cette opinion de Henri de Gand pour la rejeter ou
> l'embrasser.

[26] Guimaraens gives brief details of this work by Ramon Lull
at p.202. Guimaraens considers that, since Lull was neither
teacher nor pupil at the University, it is difficult to

Scotus' own milieu was Oxford, where there was quite a tradition of immaculist thinking. Scotus' mentor, William of Ware, had taught the doctrine of Mary Immaculate at Oxford.[27] Moreover, Aquilin Emmen records a 'Geist ..., der in der nach Anselmus orientierten Franziskanerschule von Oxford herrschte' (p.369). Emmen draws out various similarities between Ware and Scotus showing how Scotus had clarified the imperfect thinking of his predecessor. Scotus is commonly called the first defender of the Immaculate Conception. He lectured at Oxford from 1297 to 1301 and reworked his original lecture notes when he lectured in Paris from 1305 to 1307. In fact, Scotus does not precisely affirm the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception but rather puts it forward as one of three possible alternatives available to God for the sanctification of the Virgin.[28] The Virgin could either have been preserved from original sin, allowed to remain in sin for one instant only (Henry of

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assess the impact his teaching may have had on subsequent development of the doctrine in Paris. Lull's influence on the development of the doctrine in his native land, particularly the influence of his followers on the monarchy, is discussed by Fernando Domínguez Reboiras, 'Els apòcrifs lul.lians sobre la Inmaculada: la seva importancia en la historia del lul.lisme' in *Del frau a la erudició dels segles XIV al XVIII*, ed. by Lola Badia, Randa 27 (Barcelona: Curial, 1990), 11-43. Domínguez points out (p.23, n.36): 'Hom s'ha de preguntar si va ser el lul.lisme la causa de l'extrema i militant posició immaculista de la Corona de Aragó i no més aviat un efecte d'aquella'. The influence of the Lullists on development of the Conception doctrine in Cataluña as well as Lullist references in immaculist writers merits further examination.

[27] P. Aquilin Emmen, 'Wilhelm von Ware, Duns Scotus Vorlaeufer in der Immakulatalehre: Neue Indikationen in der Werken seiner Zeitgenossen', *Antonianum*, 40 (1965), 363-394.

[28] P. León Amorós, 'La significación de Juan Duns Escoto en la historia de la Concepción Inmaculada de la Virgen Santísima, *Verdad y vida*, 14 (1956), 266-361, p.301.

Ghent's proposal) or have been allowed to remain in sin for a period of time. Scotus, whilst deferring to Church and scriptural authority, tentatively opts for the first possibility as the most probable: 'Videtur probabile quod excellentius est tribuere Mariae'.[29] Contemporaries, however, seem to regard Scotus as a more definite immaculist than shown by his published works.[30]

Scotus' Conception theory is, nevertheless, an important milestone in the history of the doctrine, in that, at a time when the Immaculate Conception was held in scant regard at the University of Paris, he managed to defuse the two main sources of objection, the two doctrines which generally had prevented recognition of the Conception doctrine: adherence to the doctrine of original sin and belief in the uniqueness of Christ. Scotus' argument shows that:

> Para la Santa Virgen este acto perfectísimo de mediación se convierte en una redención mucho más excelente y sublime que la común: los méritos de la Pasión de Cristo fueron ya en la mente divina previstos y aceptados en orden a [...] María (Amorós, p.295).

Scotus adds to the idea of redemptive grace through the merits of Christ, the idea of divine foresight of the merits of his passion. The preservation of the Virgin from sin is,

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[29] J. Duns Scotus, 'Quaestiones in Lib. III Sententiarum', *Opera omnia*, ed. by Franciscus Lychetus Brixiensis, 14 vols. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968), Vol.7, i, Lib.III d.3 q.1.

[30] Michael Bihl, 'Disputation des Iohannes Duns Scotus über die Unbefleckte Empfangnis', *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 30 (1906), 454-469. Bihl records the testimony of Landuphus Carriacolo.

thus, the perfect act of Redemption.[31] The preservation from
original sin or pre-redemption of Mary, in this way, becomes
a positive addition to Christ's uniqueness, rather than a
detraction from it. Scotus' influence on the subsequent
development of the doctrine is shown in that the new
doctrine was known as 'opinio Scoti' in the first half of
the fourteenth century and Scotus himself was accorded the
title 'Doctor of the Immaculate Conception'. The opposing
view became known as 'opinio Thomae' shortly afterwards
(O'Connor, p.212). Thus, the stage was set for the ensuing
conflict, which lasted well over a century, between the two
rival schools of thought.

1.4.3 Status Quaestionis

Peter Aureoli, one of Scotus' disciples was the first
Franciscan to compose an entire treatise devoted to the
Immaculate Conception. The Tractatus de Conceptione Sanctae
Mariae was written to defend Aureoli's preaching from
Dominican criticism.[32] In his treatise, as summarized by
Di Lella (p.149), Aureoli provides a useful definition
of conception which he defines as either 'pro semine
conceptione', carnal intercourse; 'pro formatione seu
formati corporis figuratione et lineatione', foetal
existence before the infusion of the rational soul; 'pro

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[31] The Scotian concept of perfect redemption depends on
Anselm's view of original sin as a deprivation of grace,
rather than on the physiological Augustinian doctrine of
original sin.

[32] Alexander Di Lella, O.F.M., 'The Immaculate Conception in
the writing of Peter Aureoli', Franciscan Studies, 15
(1955), 146-158. Di Lella summarizes Aureoli's teaching.

infusione animae rationalis', animation.[33] In his final

distinction, dealing with the infusion of the rational soul,

Aureoli distinguishes two modes of contracting original sin:

> For it is certain that Mary contracted original sin and
> was a daughter of wrath *de jure* ... because she was
> generated from the intercourse of husband and wife...
> That she contracted original sin and was a daughter of
> wrath *de facto* is doubtful and uncertain (Di Lella, p.
> , 150).

Aureoli's definitions clarify the different ways in which

conception could be regarded in the fourteenth and fifteenth

centuries. It is clear from this summary of his principal

ideas that Aureoli was far more overt in his defence of the

doctrine of the Immaculate Conception than Scotus had been.

Aureoli includes a final series of arguments based on

the admissibility of the new doctrine. He bases arguments on

contemporary ecclesiastical practice in celebrating the

Conception feast in much the same way that Bernard and

Aquinas had argued in favour of the Nativity feast.

Furthermore, the silence of the Church hierarchy is

interpreted as a positive factor, since debate is not

limited by any pronouncement.

The work of Petrus Thomae shows Catalan Franciscans to

have been very much aware of the developments in Parisian

theology. Several Catalan theologians taught and preached in

favour of the Immaculate Conception, including Bernardus de

Deo, who explicitly refers to Parisian teachers in support

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[33] Aureoli, following Aristotle, believed that animation
took place on the fortieth day for males and on the
eightieth day after fertilization for females. See Di Lella,
p.149, n.10.

of his own work.[34] The adoption of the doctrine by Bernardus
de Deo, a preacher, rather than a theologian, serves as an
illustration of the way in which the Franciscans were
uniquely placed to stimulate vast numbers of the faithful
through their immaculist sermons. The Dominicans, as a
preaching Order, had always catered for the elite, whilst
the Franciscans had always reached a wider audience. In this
way, Franciscan theologians were already prepared for the
dissemination of the Conception doctrine; they knew how to
expound even the most erudite scholastic doctrine in terms
to which lay people could respond. Thus, 'la tan debatida
cuestión del privilegio de María en su concepción, no pudo
menos de pasar de la cátedra universitaria al púlpito, a las
multitudes'.[35]

Whilst Franciscan support for the doctrine was
gradually rallying across Europe, opponents of the doctrine
were equally becoming more vehement in their denial. Jean
de Pouilly characterized the doctrine as 'hereticum',
voicing the first realization that the traditional view
was under threat from the new teaching.[36]

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[34] See Guimaraens, p.169, n.178:
  Maria... fuit sine culpa et amaritudine peccati, non
  solum actualis et venialis sed etiam originalis, ut
  volunt multi doctores, de quorum numero est magister
  Johannes Scoti, Garro, magister Hugo et communiter alii
  doctores in theologia Parisius (*Summa praedicabilium*,
  Valencia cathedral, MS. 141, fol.140 [ra-rb)].

[35] Alejandro Recio, 'La Inmaculada en la predicación
franciscano-española', *Archivo ibero-americano*, núm.
extraord., 57-58 (1955), 105-200, p.108.

[36] Jean de Pouilly's work is quoted by Guimaraens, p.175:
  Cum igitur illud quod est contra omnen scripturam non
  possit pro opinione probabile teneri, imo, in quantum

The first half of the fourteenth century witnessed a gradual progression to widespread acceptance of the doctrine in Oxford, Paris and eastern Spain. The second half of the century shows how support for the doctrine had become the norm at the University of Paris. In 1362, two Dominican friars, Jean l'Escacier and Jacques de Bosco had preached that the Immaculate Conception was false and heretical (O'Connor, p.223). They were ordered to retract by the authorities and the controversy died down.

A more serious crisis shook the University of Paris in 1376. Juan de Montesono or Monzón, a Catalan Dominican, scandalized the University by his *Vesperis*, an inaugural lecture presented on the eve of graduation. Fourteen proposals were extracted from Monzón's thesis and denounced. Four of them dealt with the Immaculate Conception.[37] Monzón's lack of circumspection, in declaring the Immaculate Conception 'expresse contra fidem', led to his condemnation.

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est contra sacram scripturam debet haereticum reputari (Jean de Pouilly, *Quodlibet* 3 q.4).

[37] Juan de Monzón's propositions are quoted by Le Bachelet, *DTC*, VII, p.1084:

Non omnem hominem praeter Christum contrahere ab Adam peccatum originale est expresse contra fidem.
Beatam Mariam Virginem et Dei genetricem non contraxisse peccatum originale est expresse contra fidem.

Tantum est contra sacram Scripturam unum hominem esse exemptum a peccato originali, praeter Christum, sicut si decem homines de facto ponerentur exempti.

Magis est expresse contra sacram Scripturam beatam Virginem non esse conceptam in peccato originali quam asserere ipsam fuisse simul beatam et viatricem ab instanti suae conceptionis vel sanctificationis.

The faculty pronounced that each of the propositions
relating to Mary should be withdrawn, terming Monzón's
propositions 'scandalizantes et pias aures offendentes'.[38]
Monzón, having failed to appear to answer the charges, was
denounced to the Bishop, Pierre d'Orgemont. Monzón failed to
appear before the episcopal tribunal on several occasions.
In desperation, the summons was read in Monzón's empty room
in the Dominican friary and pinned to Church doors
throughout Paris. Monzón had fled to Avignon to appeal to
the Pope but, before judgement could be reached, he slipped
over the border into Aragón, where he came under the
jurisdiction of the Roman Pope. Monzón was excommunicated on
27 January 1387 at the Pontifical Court of Avignon.

The controversy aroused by Monzón reveals the progress
made during the course of the fourteenth century with regard

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[38] P. Doncoeur, 'La Condemnation de Jean. de Monzón par
Pierre d'Orgement, évêque de Paris, le 23 août 1387', *Revue
des questions historiques*, 82 (1908), 176-87. At p.180,
P. Doncoeur reproduces the letter sent by the Faculty of
Theology at Paris to the Bishop of Paris, which shows the
strength of feeling generated by Monzón's thesis:
> Nuper delatum est viris venerabilis et discretis Decano
> et facultati theologiae per nonnullos fide dignos
> Baccalarios et scolares, regulares et seculares, in
> dicta facultate quod Magister Johannes de Montesono,
> mag. in theologia, O.F. Praed., multas praepositiones
> scandalizantes et pias aures offendentes in suis
> Vesperis et sua quaestione de Resumpta, asseruit et
> publice dogmatizavit in scolis fratres praedicatorum
> parisiensium, supra quibus matura et diligenti
> deliberatione habita per solemnes magistros deputatos
> ex parte dictae facultatis, ut moris est, nec non per
> singulos magistros ad partem nedum semel sed pluries,
> dicti Decanus et facultas declaraverunt [...]
> quattuordecim propositiones per eundem Magistrum in
> scolis publice dogmatizatas, zelo fidei et scandali
> vitandi, per eundem Magistrum fore publice revocandas
> sub forma inferius contenta.

to the acceptability of the doctrine and also is revealing

of the passion displayed on both sides of the widening

divide between supporters and opponents of the doctrine.

Monzón's actions also led to the promulgation of a decree

forbidding anyone to teach at the University, unless they

agreed to condemn Monzón's fourteen propositions. Since the

Dominicans could not condemn Monzón's propositions, being in

agreement with them, they were, thus, effectively excluded

from the University of Paris and only reinstated in

1403.[39] The University of Paris became an immaculist

stronghold by the end of the fourteenth century, a fact

which is underlined by the number of immaculist sermons

preached.[40]

1.5 CONTROVERSY IN CATALUÑA AND ROYAL INTERVENTION

Opposition to the doctrine and the effective silencing

of opponents were not phenomena confined to the University

of Paris. In Cataluña itself, Nicholas Eymerich, a noted

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[39] H. Denifle, *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis sub auspiciis consilii generalis facultatum Parisiensium, ex diversis bilbiotecis tabulariisque collegit et cum authenticis chartris contulit Emilio Chatelain*, 4 vols. (Paris: Delalain, 1887-1897), In vol. 4, no. 1781, Denifle includes the following text reinstating the Dominicans:
> Decrevimus concordi deliberatione predictos fratres ad nostrum consortium de nostra speciali gratia recipere et reintegrare sicut olim fuerant, priusquam lites iste moverentur, et de facto recipimus et reintegramus (p.56-7).

The reinstatement of the Dominicans was on condition that 'nullusque fratrum aut alius dogmatizaret aut legeret aut predicaret oppositum'.

[40] Two of the sermons were those preached by Juan Vidal, in 1387 or 1388. Jean Gerson, the Chancellor of the University, preached in 1401. Both took as the text '*Tota pulchra es, amica mea*' (see below, chapter 3, p.143). The dates for the sermons are those given by O'Connor, p.226.

opponent of the doctrine, who had held the office of

Inquisitor General for the kingdom of Aragón for most of the

second half of the fourteenth century, was banished from the

kingdom for his preaching against the Immaculate Conception.

He had also attacked the Lullists, strong supporters of the

immaculist doctrine, who followed the immaculist teaching of

Ramón Lull. As a result of Eymerich's preaching against the

doctrine, an edict was issued in 1393 by Joan I, proclaiming

the King's adherence to the Immaculate Conception.[41] The

penalty for preaching against the doctrine was forcible

ejection from convent, church or house and exile from

Aragón. Aragón, thus, became a haven of immaculism. The

measures were extended to Gerona on 5 December 1394 (*DTC*,

VII, p.1088).

On the King's death, Eymerich returned to Aragón but

was exiled again by Martin I. A further decree was issued on

17 January 1398 in Zaragoza, following an attempt by the

Dominicans to imprison a Franciscan, Fray Juan de Rota, for

preaching in favour of the Immaculate Conception. Martin I

finally proclaimed that those who preached against the

doctrine were the enemies of the king in the decree of 26

April 1408.[42] Loyalty to the state was bound up in loyalty

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[41] Le Bachelet, *DTC*, VII, p.1088, quotes from the edict:
Firmiter credimus et tenemos quod praefatae huius
sanctissimae Virginis sancta fuit penitus et electa
conceptio....Nec amodo liceat imo fortiter prohibemus
quibuslibet evangelizantibus sive praedicantibus verbum
Dei quidquam exponere vel proferre in aliquam puritatis
ipsius benedictae conceptionis facturam.

[42] See the decree of Martin I, cited by Recio, p.112, which
includes the following reference to the Dominican Order, the
'praedicatores':

to the Immaculate Conception. Confessors and preachers to the Kings of Aragón were now exclusively drawn from the Franciscan Order which gave them an important political advantage. It was difficult for the maculist viewpoint to be heard since its adherents were powerfully prevented from putting their case before the church as a whole by threat of exile and charges of high treason.

Thus, Joan I, by his edicts of 1393-94 and his successor, Martin I, who renewed and extended the decree in 1398 and 1408 respectively, were responsible for nurturing the Conception doctrine in Cataluña and for the silencing of debate in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Nevertheless, as Le Bachelet notes, the decrees provoked 'des écrits importants en réponse aux attaques d'Eymerich et de ses partisans' (*DTC* VII, p.1088). These treatises in favour of the Immaculate Conception written in Aragón contributed to awareness of the doctrine in the kingdom in the fifteenth century and led to a flourishing of literary support for the doctrine.

Further royal action on behalf of the doctrine, was taken in 1417 by Alfonso V, who urged the Emperor Sigismund to promote the doctrine and Conception feast at the Council of Constance (O'Connor, p.228). In 1425, Alfonso demanded a Council which would bring about universal acceptance of the

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Praedicatores seu pertinaciter obloquentes contra edictum hujus modi; pro inimicis nostris publicis reputentur.

doctrine. In 1431, the Council of Basle was called and the Immaculate Conception was discussed. By 1433, there is evidence that commitment to promotion of the doctrine had spread to the Castilian court, in that, at the Council of Basle, Juan de Segovia represented the University of Salamanca and also the King of Castile.

1.6 CONCILIAR APPROVAL: THE COUNCIL OF BASLE (1431-1449)

The Council of Basle was called in 1431. In response to Alfonso of Aragón's request for a Council which would pronounce on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Immaculate Conception was on the agenda. In 1435, a canon of Puy, John Roceti presented a treatise on the Immaculate Conception, based on the text 'Tota pulchra es, amica mea et macula non est in te'.[43] His discourse included an appeal to the Fathers of the Council to discuss 'the canonization of her conception and the declaration that she was conceived without sin' (O'Connor, p.229). Juan de Segovia was 'the outstanding protagonist of the doctrine' (O'Connor, p.229). Juan de Torquemada, Master of the Sacred Palace and a Dominican, was asked to present a summa of all the arguments contrary to the doctrine. This document was called Tractatus de veritate conceptionis. However, it was never presented at the Council. The papal legates left in 1437. Torquemada left with them. The proceedings of the Council continued without

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[43] Biblia sacra vulgatae editionis, ed. by P. Michael Hertzenaver, O.C. (Oeniponte: Sumptibus Librariae Academicae Wagnerianae, 1906), Canticum 4.7, p.583. The New Jerusalem Bible (JB) standard edn. (London: Longman, Darton and Todd, 1985 offers the translation: 'You are wholly beautiful, my beloved and without a blemish'.

papal mandate. Following a rather one-sided debate, the
Immaculate Conception was defined by the Council.[44] The
definition contributed to the spread of the doctrine in the
countries which considered the Council valid. Amongst the
countries which O'Connor considers to have witnessed such a
spread in the doctrine is Aragón (p.232). In 1457, a
provincial synod in Aragón ordained that the decree of Basle
be observed on pain of excommunication (O'Connor, p.232).
The response of eastern Spain was better defined and more
extreme than responses recorded in Castile.

1.7 PAPAL INTERVENTION

From the very beginning of the controversy,
participants in the debate had expected Rome to make a
pronouncement.[45] Whilst the feast-day had been celebrated in
the Roman Curia from the mid-fourteenth century, appearing
in the Calendar and Breviary, it was, nevertheless,

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[44] See the text of the decree published on 17 September
1438, Council of Basle, reproduced by O'Connor, p.232,
n.113:
> Nos doctrinam illam disserentem gloriosam virginem Dei
> Genetricem Mariam praeveniente et operante divini
> numinis gratia singulari numquam subiacuisse originale
> peccato, sed immunem semper fuisse ab omni originali
> et actuali culpa, sanctamque et immaculatam....ab
> omnibus catholicis approbandam fore tenendam et
> amplectendam definimus et declaramus, nullique de
> cetero licitum esse in contrarium praedicare seu
> docere.

[45] St Bernard stated that he would abide by any papal
decision:
> Romanae praesentim Ecclesiae auctoritati atque exqamini
> totum hoc sicut et caetera quae ejus modi sunt,
> universa reservo: ipsius si quid aliter spiis, paratus
> judicio emendare (*Epistola 174*, *PL* 182, 336C).

Peter of Celles appealed to Rome (*Epistola 171*, *PL* 202,
616). Aquinas was clearly puzzled by Rome's silence (*Summa
theologiae*, Lib.III.27.2.resp.3).

unofficial and private (O'Connor, p.275). Indeed, many Popes were actively opposed to the doctrine.[46] Even the wording of the liturgy 'cuius insuper senus erat vagus et indeterminatus, non stricte videlicet ac definitive immaculisticus' (Sericoli, p.374), seemed to indicate a desire to maintain discretion towards both sides in the dispute.

The papacy of Pope Sixtus IV, who acceded in 1471, showed two shifts from the actions of previous Popes in respect of the Conception feast. Sixtus was the first Pope to actively support the Conception doctrine. He gave his approval to two offices for the feast day of 8 December. In *Cum Praexcelsa*, 1477, the office of Leonardo di Nogarolis was approved and endowed with special indulgences (Miegge, p.125). The inauguration of a solemn octave for the feast marked an increase in prestige for what had previously been a minor feast day. Approval and indulgences were subsequently granted to the office of Bernardino de Bustis in *Libenter*, 1480.

Secondly, the nature of the feast became more overtly immaculist than had previously been the case. Nogarolis' office used the word 'immaculata' more than ten times. Bernardino de Bustis' office extracts proof of the doctrine from Scripture, the Fathers, Doctors of the Church and

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[46] Sericoli, Ch., O.F.M., 'De praecipuis sedis Apostolicae documentis De B.V.M. Immaculata Conceptione', *Antonianum*, 29 (1954), 373-408. At p.375, Sericoli mentions Innocentius III, Honorius III, Innocentius V, Iohannes XXII, Benedictus XII, Clemens VI and Bonifacius IX.

miracles.

Nevertheless, a certain neutrality was maintained in the wording of *Grave Nimis Prior* of 1482 and *Grave Nimis Posterior* of 1483. Both decrees are a response to the degeneration of debate into bitter invective. Maculists are forbidden to call immaculists heretics 'sub excommunicationis poena'. The immaculists were to receive the same punishment, if they called the maculists heretics (Sericoli, p.379).

Both *Grave Nimis Prior* and *Grave Nimis Posterior*, whilst apparently neutral, gave a further impetus to the immaculists. Firstly, it was the Dominicans and the Inquisition whose powers were being limited by the two constitutions. Secondly, the Pope touched on the possibility of future definition of the doctrine, thus adding weight to the immaculist position.[47] According to Sericoli, 'constat doctrinam de Immaculatae Conceptionis per xystinas constitutiones maiorem saltem probabilitatem ac securitatem obtinuisse' (p.380).

It is likely that the impetus afforded by both *Cum Praexcelsa* and *Grave Nimis* will be discernible in the literature of the late fifteenth century and also that the growing acceptance of the doctrine from the late fourteenth century onwards will be reflected in the literature of the

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[47] The possibility of a future papal decision 'nondum sit a romana ecclesia et apostolica sede decisum' is left open by Sixtus in *Grave Nimis Posterior*. See Sericoli, p.380.

period.

1.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, previous trends in mariology have been
described, particularly important being the pattern of
controversy followed by acceptance of new doctrine which
parallels the development of the doctrine of the Immaculate
Conception. The rise of the feast was charted together with
the initial rejection its celebration in Lyons occasioned
from St Bernard. The feast began to be celebrated in Spain
over a century later. The opposition of the Dominicans to
both the feast and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception
was hardened by the *Summa* of St Thomas Aquinas. The
immaculist support of the Franciscan Order stemmed from the
defence of the doctrine by a small number of English
Franciscans, including Johannes Duns Scotus, at Paris in the
early fourteenth century. From that point, the battle-lines
of the two great Orders gradually became traced. The
University was host to a major controversy centring on the
Immaculate Conception in the late fourteenth century, which
led to the first action by a Pope on behalf of the doctrine,
albeit a schismatic Pope. The fifteenth century saw the
first conciliar action, although the Council in question was
later declared schismatic. The first papal action occurred
in support of the doctrine. This authoritative activity
meant that supporters of the doctrine grew in number and
more overtly immaculist literature began to appear.

2 'DISCORDANS D'OPINIO': SCHOLASTIC INFLUENCE

From the early fourteenth century, following Duns Scotus' tentative defence of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception at the University of Paris, controversy developed between the Dominican Order of Preachers and the Franciscans. The Dominicans were opposed to the spread of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and their opponents, the Franciscans, promoted the doctrine. During the fifteenth century, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was still being debated; the debate was completely polarized into the Franciscan pro-conception position and the anti-conception\ pro-sanctification position, represented by the Dominicans.

2.1 THE CONCEPTION DOCTRINE AND CONFLICT

To understand why the doctrine was of such prime importance to fifteenth-century writers, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that in the thirteenth century the doctrine was almost universally denied:

> Cuando, [...] dentro del ámbito científico de los teólogos se expuso claramente la cuestión de sí la concepción de María fué inmaculada, la respuesta unánime, o casi unánime de los doctores de las universidades católicas, fué negativa.[1]

The history of the controversy shows that Spanish theologians were involved in the debate by the end of the

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[1] P. Antonio Riera Estarellas, 'La doctrina inmaculada en los orígenes de nuestras lenguas romances', *Estudios marianos*, 15 (1955), 245-284, p.245.

fourteenth and in the fifteenth centuries. The virulence of the debate is well documented (see above, p.34).

It is clear from the events which took place in the late fourteenth century that the controversy, which had begun as a scholastic debate, was becoming increasingly secularized, more polarized, more politicized and more acrimonious. It is in the context of debate, exile and excommunication that the present examination of evidence taken from poems dealing with the polemic must be set.

Given the heated emotions involved in the theological debate, the poetry of the period will be examined to see what effect the debate might have had on literary composition. The study of scholastic influence will be in three parts. Since it would be relatively easy for poets to borrow the vocabulary of debate from scholasticism, the appropriation of debate vocabulary seems an obvious place to begin. The second part of the study will concentrate on the importance of authority and the evidence of its influence in fifteenth-century poetry. The final part of the chapter will examine the borrowing of scholastic argument and its expression in literary terms.

2.2 THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOLASTIC VOCABULARY ON FIFTEENTH-CENTURY POETRY

The first aspect of scholastic influence to be examined is the use of vocabulary drawn from scholastic debate. According to Jan Pinborg, 'The holding of academic

disputations formed an integral part of the curriculum [...]

and records of the disputations in the form of *quaestiones*

disputatae constitute a valuable part of the output of many

medieval philosophers and theologians.[2]

In both Castilian and Catalan poems, references to

debate, a method of University teaching, take a variety of

forms. Some poets refer to the existence of an on-going

polemic. Iñigo de Mendoça refers to the polemic between the

two opposing camps and labels it a 'disputación', in

reference to the scholastic tradition of debating theology.[3]

This approach to study was the traditional mode of learning

in universities.

> Sobre esta preseruacion
> por excelentes doctores
> ay muy grand disputacion. (*Coplas* 161.1, p.383)

Fray Lope del Monte, in his poem dedicated to the

defence of the Immaculate Conception, refers to debating the

question of original sin within the guidelines laid down by

St Augustine:

> El [Sant Agustyn] propuso muy de grado
> Que quando quier que fablase
> Disputaçion de pecado,
> Que a la Virgen excusase; (*CB* 324.158)

In a second example from another in the series of 'preguntas

y respuestas', Fray Lope accuses his opponent, Diego

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[2] *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, ed. by
Jan Pinborg, Anthony John Patrick Kenny and Norman Kretzmann
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.21.

[3] Fray Iñigo de Mendoça, *Fray Iñigo de Mendoza y sus
'Coplas de Vita Christi'*, (*Coplas*), ed. by Julio Rodríguez
Puértolas (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1968).

Martines de Medina, of not being up to the mark in the
subject matter:

> Pero por mí entendido,
> Rrespondido,
> Ya quanto quier declarado,
> Fallo que lo contenido
> Ha seydo,
> Non yase en saber fundado.
>
> Non yase en deytar nota
> Una gota
> Disputar á tytulado
> En la dotryna que enfota
> Mas que cota
> Al que sabe su trabtado: (*CB* 328.7)

Fray Lope takes issue with the content of Diego Martines de
Medina's reply to *CB* 326 and implies that his opponent does
not really know his subject. The purpose of the exercise,
whether in the poem or in the university, is 'disputar á
titulado'. Fray Lope further insults his opponent by
intimating that, since Diego Martines is from Extremadura,
he can be excused for his ignorance: 'Vos d'ella [la
dotryna] non vystes mota' (*CB* 328.19). Scurrilous humour
lightens the tenor of the debate.

Theological disputations proceeded by the consideration
of *quaestiones*. In Catalan poetry too references to the
university style of debate in terms of 'qüestion' can be
discerned. Francí Johan, writing for the 1486 Certamen,
declares his belief in the Conception doctrine, adding:
'Habans d'açò sens mestre e qüestions \mare de Déu, aquesta
és entesa' (XV.79). In Jaume Roig's poem, *Espill*, also, the
term 'qüestió' is found on two occasions, both of which can

be taken as referring to scholastic debate.[4] In the first,
Roig cleverly captures the mood of scholastic debate in the
period:

> Pluralitat
> de doctós sans, grans, discordants
> d'opinió, la qüestió
> ret fort dubtosa, dificultosa
> de dicidir. (*Espill* III.2, p.157)

Through the use of rhyme 'sans, grans e discordants', Roig
also humorously depicts the inability of the learned doctors
to reach a decision as to whether the Virgin was without sin
from the very first moment of her conception or not.
Perhaps Roig is signalling that, in his view, it is not so
difficult to make a decision as to whether the Virgin's
conception was immaculate or not.

However, not only do poets refer to current university
practice, but they also refer to their own writing as being
a debate or 'quistion'. Thus, the rubric to the first debate
poem by Diego de Medina about the Conception contains a
reference to 'una quistion quel ovo con Fray Lope del
Monte' (*CB* 323). On examination of other poems in the *CB*, it
quickly becomes apparent that the term 'quistion' or
'qüestió' is not used exclusively to refer to theological
debate or even to poems with a religious theme.[5] For

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[4] *Espill o llibre de les dones*, Les millors obres de la
literatura catalana, 3, ed. by Marina Gustà (Barcelona:
Edicions 62 i La Caixa, 1978).

[5] Throughout this section of the thesis, reference will be
made to examples of scholastic vocabulary, chosen from the
CB. Whilst recognizing that this aspect of the influence of
scholastic teaching on Cancionero poetry undoubtedly merits
further study, the inclusion of the first results of
investigation, in an area outside the topic under
discussion, has the merit of preventing false claims being

example, Diego Martines de Medina himself uses the term
'quistion' in one of his secular poems which has no
theological content at all.[6] It is also found, for example,
in one of Diego de Valencia's poems.[7]

A third lexical reference to be highlighted is
'exercici'. Pinborg refers to the fact that lectures on a
series of *quaestiones* read aloud by the master came to be
known as '*exercitia*' (p.21). It is interesting that Jaume
Roig, referring to the effectiveness of the arguments of
opponents of the doctrine, writes:

> magnificat
> ha l'edifici llur exercici
> tant envejós com curiós
> e qüestió. *(Espill* III.2, p.157)

The effect of 'exercici' to describe the work of opponents
to the doctrine gives the impression that they are
rephrasing the work of others. This denigration of the work
of the opponents to the doctrine picks up an earlier
reference in the *Espill* to 'velles querelles \ han fet
pròpies' (III.2, p.157). The opponents' empty regurgitation

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made for the immaculist debate poems as to their being the
only poems to draw on scholastic influence. For this reason,
references to poems from a limited range of Cancionero poets
will be quoted as examples of the wider use of scholastic
debate in Cancionero poetry.

[6] Diego Martines de Medina, *CB* 329. The rubric refers to the
poem's process in the following manner:
> Este dezir fiso é ordenó Diego Martines de Medina por
> quistion é pregunta que fiso á Isabel Gonçales, la
> mançeba del Conde de Niebla don Juan Alfonso.

[7] Maestro Fray Diego de Valencia includes the following
reference in a mock scholastic poem:
> Doctor noble, pues queredes
> E vuestra merçed lo manda
> Que vos dé rrepuesta blanda
> A la quistion que fasedes; *(CB* 497.1)

of others' words, their 'exercici', have not had the desired
effect of diminishing interest in the doctrine of the
Immaculate Conception. According to Roig, in fact, the
opponents have only succeeded in promoting the doctrine
'magnificat ha l'edifici'.

There is further lexical evidence for the close
relationship between debate poems and scholastic
disputations. In a medieval theological disputation, after
the statement of a universally accepted presupposition,
arguments were developed in the form of syllogisms. In a
series of 'preguntas' and 'respuestas' dedicated to the
defence of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and to
an attack on the Dominican point of view, there is one
example of a reference to syllogisms. Lope del Monte uses
the term 'mal sylogicado' to refer to the works of Bocardo,
seeming to mean that his arguments are badly constructed,
almost in the sense of heretical. Again, however, the term
is used by Diego Martines de Medina in his 'pregunta que
fiso á Isabel Gonçales' in a poem with no theological
content, and where the term is used to mean cleverly
argued.[8] This usage of scholastic vocabulary seems to
suggest an appropriation of terminology from the university
disputations to poems with lay themes, as well as to poems
with theological themes, such as the series of poems
exchanged by Fray Lope and Diego Martines.

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[8]   Nunca tales poetrias
        Diçiones por sylogismo,
        Notificó el graçismo
        Catholicon nin Papias. (*CB* 329.10)

Scholastic vocabulary is, furthermore, reflected in the way in which scholastic arguments, adduced in support of the doctrine, are linked consistently by consequential indicators, particularly in the Certamen poems. As an example, 'donchs' is repeated five times in Frare Bosch's entry to the 1486 Certamen and 'per ço' three times. Arnau de Cors repeats 'd'on' twice and 'donchs' also twice. Indeed, in the 1486 Certamen collection of twenty-eight poems, or twenty-six, if the two poems not in Catalan are taken out of the reckoning, 'donchs' alone is repeated sixty-six times.[9] The incidence of the use of 'donchs' in the forty-six poems of the 1474 Certamen is far lower: only thirteen.[10] This difference in style, underlined by the proliferation of consequential indicators, reflects the very real difference in the two Certàmens.

The proclamation of the Certamen by Ferrando Dieç in 1486 is pugnacious. Entrants are forbidden to defend the maculist view: 'No admetent dients en lo contrari' (Libell I.61). More importantly, mention is made of the institution of the Conception feast by Sixtus IV, together with dark references to those who refuse to celebrate it:

> Mas huy los nostres capellans
> seguir no .1 volen,
> puix tals laors cantar no solen
> del ver parer. (Introit.62)

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[9] 'Donchs' was selected as representative of consequential indicators. However, other indicators are certainly used in both the 1486 and 1474 Certàmens. For example, 'd'on se conclou' is found in the 1474 Certamen (XXIV).

[10] This number is reduced to forty-three, once the Castilian and Italian poems are removed from the reckoning.

The aggressive approach to the opposition may explain why the 1486 Certamen, dedicated expressly to the defence of the Immaculate Conception and even to proselytism on its behalf, produces aggressive, argument-centred poetry, presenting the case in favour of the Immaculate Conception.

Vocabulary pertaining to doubt is another aspect of lexical appropriation into debate poetry. References are similarly woven into both Cancionero and Certamen poems. 'Dubitatio' or formally expressed doubt (Pinborg, p.27) is integral to the medieval method of arriving at the truth. Thus, Diego Martines ends his final *respuesta* with a heartfelt 'Ca yo dubdo, mas non creo' (*CB* 327.72), which has the feel of a scholastic distinction. The use of scholastic doubt to explain his position on the doctrine is accompanied by a plea to end the series of poems 'Demos por acabado \ lo trovado' (*CB* 327.70).

Another reference to doubt is present in the *CB*, again in one of Diego Martines de Medina's poems, where he raises the question of the interpretation of a text by St Augustine which refers to original sin:

> Pues ¿qual fue la entençion
> Porque d'aquesta çentella
> Saca á él é non á ella,
> Sy tal fue su conçebçion?
> Ca se sygue de rrason
> Quien fabló en lo mayor,
> Que fablara en lo menor,
> Do avie duda é quistion. (*CB* 323.33)

It is probable from the questioning style of the stanza and from the combination of 'rrason', 'quistion' and 'duda' that Diego Martines de Medina is using 'duda' again to

express a process of reaching an understanding in a
scholastic manner. The understanding gained from 'duda' as
expressed in this series of *preguntas y respuestas* is
confirmed by reference to the rubric of one of the other
religious poems in the *CB*.[11] In addition, a similar
application of doubt as a scholastic method of argument can
be encountered in a secular series of *preguntas y respuestas*
in the *CB*.[12] In this case, also, the debt of Cancionero
poetry to the scholastic traditions of debate is underlined.

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[11] The rubric to *CB* 525 is reproduced in full:

> Que fiso é ordeno el dicho Ferrant Sanches Calavera,
> comendador suso dicho é fundador de la dicha pregunta:
> la qual es muy bien fecha é letradamente fecha é
> rrespondida, por quanto rreplicó é rrespondió á sí
> mesmo é á todos los otros señores letrados que le avian
> rrespondido é declaró mejor la opinión é duda de su
> quistion.

[12] The scholastic vocabulary apparent in this poem from the
CB serves as an example of the interweaving of scholastic
vocabulary in the *preguntas and respuestas* of both
religious and amatory types:

> Señor maestro Diego , doctor muy loado,
> E sabio perfecto en alta sabiençia
> Yo fuy agraviado por vuestra sentençia
> que contra mí distes por el mi pecado:
> por la qual, señor, aveys pronunçiado
> Que syrva de grado en todo sason
> Aquella que tiene el mi coraçon
> Por fyna fuerça bien presto robado.
>
> Ca fuestes vandero en ansy judgar,
> Non fustes peso en aqueste fecho,
> Pues que judgastes contra derecho,
> Segunt las leys que suelen ussar;
> ca vos bien sabedes, syn otro dubdar,
> Que es en derecho escripto é fallado,
> Que qual quier que á otro oviere rrobado,
> Quel' entregue el doblo de quanto tomar. (*CB* 490.1)

The rubric to the poem is also interesting, since it should
be noted that Fray Diego de Valencia is termed 'maestro'
and 'doctor' and his 'sentençia' is sought:

> Este deçir fiso é ordenó el dicho Niculas de Valençia
> contra el dicho Maestro por manera de agravios que le
> fiso en su sentençia.

There are occasions on which doubt is expressed in
Certamen poems. Whilst the use of expressions of doubt does
not imply such overt reference to scholastic debate as in
the 'preguntas y respuestas' of Fray Lope del Monte and
Diego Martines, it is still worthy of note that, in poems
dedicated to the defence of the Conception doctrine,
references to doubt occur.

> Par que digam que .l Fill és en gran càrrech
> si li metem capell tal a sa mare,
> qui .ns ha manat que sos pares hom honre
> hi .ls faça bé. ¿Donchs qual és qui gens dupte,
> puix que li fon pare y mare sols verge? (XXVII.41)

In this poem, Ferrando Díeç proceeds from the premise that
parents are to be honoured, as required by the Commandments
and thus argues that there is no room for questioning that
the Virgin is honoured by Christ. The Introit to the 1486
Certamen also refers to doubt to reject it 'Qual lo sagell
tal és la .nprempta. \ Dubtar no y cal' (Introit.46).
'Dubtar' might be used in the scholastic sense, since the
premise of the imprint, which reproduces the seal exactly,
permits no questioning and no argument: 'Dubtar no y cal'.

'Prueva', 'provança' and 'provar' are other terms used
in both Cancionero and Certamen poems, which might point to
university disputations. Many poems include references to
proving the argument. One of these references to proof can
be found in the first version of his *Coplas de la Vita
Christi*, where Iñigo de Mendoça writes 'lo que digo he de
provar'.[13] These proofs, which he adduces in the early

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[13] Stanzas 162 A-E have been omitted from the revised
version and represent the earlier edition of the poem.
Omitted stanzas are indicated by letters in Rodríguez

version of the poem, are missing from the later version.
Iñigo de Mendoça marks the place where the omission occurs
with the words 'es bien que sobreseamos \ las pruevas de
esta quistion' (*Coplas* 161.9) which appear in the revised
version. In this case, the proofs in question appear to be
considered a little too tendentious for the finalized
version. Fray Iñigo omits them, as he points out in the
rubric to the stanza 'por no hazer cosquillas a nadie'
(*Coplas*, p.383).

The *CB* provides several examples of reference to proof.
Fray Lope, responding to Diego Martines, although he is
using stock phrases like 'syn dubdança' and 'sin provança',
nevertheless, selects terminology which he considers
appropriate to his debate poem:

> El dise que este Santo
> Non fabló syn dubdança,
> Nin entendió mas nin tanto
> Deste fecho syn provança:
> Vos poned en la balança. (*CB* 324.25)

The meaning of the stanza is not entirely clear, since three
lines are missing but the use of 'syn provança' is to show
that there is no proof of the premise. Within the final poem
by Fray Lope in the immaculist series, there are four
references to proof. The high level of incidence would seem
to suggest that such terms are not present by chance but
represent an attempt by the poet to centre his poetic debate
in the scholastic debating mode.

However, once again the use of scholastic terminology

Puértolas' edition (p.384).

in respect of proof is not limited to religious topics in

the *CB*. Proof of an argument is apparent in the *CB* in

secular poems, such as in the 'desir' written by Ferrant

Sanches Calavera.[14]

Many of the 1486 Certamen poems also include references

to proof from reason, including Francí de Vilalba's entry:

> Los sancts doctors han dit en laor vostra
> complidament, ab tota veritat,
> exemples molts e la rahó que u mostra,
> devia ser concepta sens peccat.
> Aquells beneyts són estats nostres guies
> per declarar los fets passats antichs
> ab grans rahons provant per veres vies. (XXVI.61)

Whilst Vilalba refers to debate which 'los sancts doctors'

have led in the universities, Frare Bosch uses scholastic

vocabulary as part of his own argument:

> Car no provat legíttim que .n tal culpa
> vós recaygau, per ço lo menys dubtós
> seguir devem. (VII.65)

The anonymous poet of the poem 'Mare de Déu' also refers to

proof, indicating that he will not be swayed from his belief

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[14] As an example of the procedure of proofs to the argument, the relevant section of Fray Diego de Valencia's 'pregunta' is reproduced:
> Ca çierto el fuego non puede congelar
> Piedra por ssy mesmo, é menos la agua;
> Aquesto se prueva quando en la fragua
> Le pon el ferrero por mas lo domar. (*CB* 493.9)

Verses from Ferrant Sanches Calavera's 'desir', including the rubric show the importance given to proof:
> Este desir fiso é ordenó el dicho Ferrant Sanches
> Calavera, comendador susodicho, commo á manera de
> requesta que tomava contra el Amor, afeandolo é
> disiendo mal dél é provando le sus males é daños por
> las coronicas é escripturas antiguas: el qual desir es
> bueno é bien fecho segunt la invençion dél é contra el
> Amor ay otros desires.

> E por que entiendas que digo verdat,
> Quiero lo provar por libros é testo
> De quanta es la tu gran maldat
> E quantos perdieron sus almas por esto: (*CB* 533.17)

by any arguments which are adduced by others:

> Temple sagrat jo crech, sens altre prova,
> de vostre Fill e vós res no m'innova
> l'argumentar per molt qu.algú n'escriva. (Mare.62)

This poem is a probable Certamen entry 'segons podem deduir de les al.lusions als jutges expressades en la darrera cobla', according to Ferrando Francés (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.61).

Just as in a scholastic debate, where the participant would be required to demonstrate his thesis with proofs, at times, a similar approach is taken in poetry. Poets state that they are demonstrating the truth of their point of view. There are numerous examples of this procedure from the Certàmens. In one example, drawn from the 1486 Certamen, Arnau de Cors demonstrates the truth of an argument:

> De semblant cas qui de gràcia plena
> fos que tostemps, com certament demostra
> l'angelical salutació vostra. (VIII.58)

According to Arnau de Cors, the greeting 'de gràtia plena', accorded the Virgin at the time of the Annunciation, is a proof that the Virgin was in fact always full of grace. Arnau de Cors takes the terminology of scholastic reasoning as the vocabulary of his own reasoning. In Vallmanya's poem too, there is evidence of the use of scholastic vocabulary to express the demonstration of reasoning but, in this case, the scholastic reasoning is the poet's own:

> No veig ni menys trobe rahó que .m demostre,
> ...
> per què la man dreta volgué fos loch vostre
> si ja en la squerra del crim fósseu vista.
> (1486 Certamen, V.42,45)

Wishing to show the Virgin's freedom from original sin, he

argues that, if she were in sin, she would not have been seated at the right hand of God. 'Squerra' contrasts with the 'man dreta', unifying the realm of evil with the left-hand side, as opposed to the rightful place of the Virgin at the right hand of God in heaven.

The demonstration of proof is found in both Certamen poems and in the Cancionero poems. However, in the *CB*, within the series of 'preguntas y respuestas' between Fray Lope and Diego Martines de Medina, both poets refer to a demonstration of the proof of St Bernard's retraction:

> Sy por vos, frayle onrrado,
> Demostrado
> Me fuere por escriptura,
> Fago me marabillado
> Sy glosado
> Non fuere por aventura. (*CB* 327.43)

Both poets use 'demostrado' in the sense of producing the text as evidence. Diego Martines de Medina claims that the text about St Bernard cannot be authentic and would like to see the text in question. Fray Lope admits this might be the case. It must be said that demonstration of an argument is found with relative frequency in other series of poems in the *CB*, and is not confined to immaculist poems.[15]

Conclusions are the final aspect of scholastic argument

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[15] The series of poems between 'Nicolas y el maestro' on the subject of love furnishes an example of scholastic vocabulary appropriated in a debate poem to lend mock gravity to the poems:
> Mas por el reçelo, que bien ser podria,
> Que fagas mestura de otra querer,
> Demuestra te gesto por tú triste ser
> Por dubda que tiene de tí todavya.

Niculas, sentençio en lo rasonado... (*CB* 489.29).

as any other argument. The poetry of the period also provides examples of conclusions to arguments within debate poems. The *CB* immaculist series does not itself provide any examples of conclusions given in the argument. One of the poems entered in the 1486 Certamen provides evidence of conclusions drawn in the debate:

> Conclució provada sens contrari,
> autoritat que Déu la corrobora,
> sant argument que sens vós, pur sacrari,
> Déu incarnat ni .l món creat no fóra.
> Rahons legals, gloses y profecies
> hi .l cànon sant de la Scriptura nostra
> dien que .l cel no fera nits ni dies,
> ni vérem Déu com huy tots jorns se mostra. (XII.73)

These are conclusions which do not need any proof. Logically, Canon law 'rahons legals', glosses and prophecies as well as Scripture say that it is impossible to see God. The poet argues that God is to be seen every day in the host. The conclusion is centred on the Real Presence in the host. The poet overturns the accepted tenet, giving a new twist to the argument. In this, he both shows his cleverness but, more importantly, also situates himself in the scholastic mould.

The final element of scholastic vocabulary to find its way into debate poetry is the *sentencia* which represented the decision of the *magister* in the university. Diego Martines de Medina makes one reference to judgement being passed in the series of debate poems about the Conception:

> Non queryendo replicar
> Vuestro escripto prolongado,
> Contrallando tal deytado
> Protesto de treplicar
> Ante quien ha de judgar
> Este fecho por sentençia; (*CB* 325.9)

Diego Martines does not wish to copy the style of Fray Lope's long-winded poem but will, nevertheless, give a third reply to the 'pregunta'. It is not certain who is to pass judgement, unless the reference to the recipient of the 'pregunta' in the initial rubric is a guide 'la qual pregunta fue dada á la abadesa de Sant Clemente'. 'Sentençia' is also a key feature of the series of poems (*CB* 488-492) between Nicolas and 'el maestro'. In this case, the use of scholastic terminology to designate Fray Diego de Valencia is integral to the parody of theological debate.

A final point of interest might be that each winning poem of the Certàmens is selected in the 'sentèntia', which represents the communication of the name of the winning poet and the opinion of the judges. The 'sentèntia', as in scholastic debate, represents the decision of the *magister* after the competition. In this sense, the series of Certamen poems can be seen to mirror scholastic debate.

It has become apparent in the course of this first section that most of the poets who are using the scholastic style of approach to writing about the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, repeatedly make reference to the vocabulary of scholastic debate. However, as has been pointed out, such references are also used in non-theological poems by clerical authors in the *CB*. It

becomes apparent, therefore, that it is not only poets, writing about contentious issues, who use the vocabulary of debate but poets who are writing on the theme of love also weave vocabulary drawn from the style of the universities into their arguments. This seems to suggest that perhaps the well-known *pregunta y respuesta* form was initially an imitation of the university style of debate, in which poets vied with each other to exhibit their cleverness.

Appropriation of scholastic vocabulary was one way in which this display of clever debating technique could be achieved. Evidence appears to point to the fact that the *pregunta y respuesta* form itself owed its origins to the schoolmen, being adapted or indeed parodied by poets writing about the religion of love.

2.3 SCHOLASTIC INFLUENCE ON REFERENCE TO AUTHORITY

Prior to considering the second element of scholastic influence on the poetry of the period, reference to authority, it might be noted that scholastic teachers often needed to refer to conflicting interpretations by Doctors of the Church (Pinborg, p.25). In order to support their own arguments, they used texts from previous Doctors of the Church. In theory, reference to authority might well be an aspect of university learning which could be adopted by poets to argue in favour of the Immaculate Conception in their poems. Each series of poems will, therefore, be examined in sequence to determine what references to authority are apparent in the poems and how they are used.

Reference to authority is found consistently in the series of debate poems between Fray Lope del Monte and Diego Martines de Medina in the *CB*. Initially, it must be pointed out that starting from the opposing argument, in order to counter it, is central to the scholastic approach. Diego Martines de Medina, therefore, states that he is beginning to believe in the Conception doctrine but that a number of important authorities give him reason to question the doctrine:

> Fas me luego dubdar
> Berrnaldo, ca non dixiera
> Contra esto, sy asy fuera,
> Pues que era su juglar. (*CB* 323.21)

Examining the reasoning from authority employed by Martines de Medina, the first reference to authority is made, as he opens the debate on the Immaculate Conception, and it is a reference to the authority of St Bernard, an important opponent of the doctrine. References to St Bernard are countered by Fray Lope (*CB* 324) and reintroduced by Diego Martines de Medina in *CB* 327. In *CB* 328, Fray Lope introduces a final reference to St Bernard.

Bernard's viewpoint on the Conception doctrine was an important and contentious one. In 1140, the Canons of Lyons had instituted a feast in honour of the Conception of Mary. St Bernard's reaction was to write a letter to the Canons of Lyons, in which he rejected the celebration of the Conception feast. Bernard's response directly stems from his understanding of the nature of conception which led him to rejection of the Conception doctrine. Bernard's authoritative arguments in favour of sanctification were one

of the main stumbling blocks to acceptance of the doctrine

of the Immaculate Conception in the thirteenth century:

> Unde ergo conceptionis sanctitas? An dicitur
> sanctificatione praeventa, quatenus jam sancta
> conciperetur, ac per hoc sanctus fuerit et conceptus;
> quemadmodum sanctificata jam in utero dicitur, et
> sanctus consequeretur et ortus?..... An forte inter
> amplexus maritales sanctitas se ipsi conceptioni
> immiscuit, ut simul et sanctificata fuerit et
> concepta.[16]

Fray Lope del Monte seeks to temper Bernard's

opposition to the Immaculate Conception, in his reply (*CB*

324), attesting that Bernard's prime concern was to defend

the doctrine of original sin:

> El escribió á Loguno
> Porque tiene eregia,
> Muchos mas de tres é uno
> Non de los de la nogria,
> Que en los chicos non avya
> El pecado original,
> Por non consentir lo tal
> Solo sacó al Mexia. (*CB* 324.30)

It is not clear what 'los de la nogria' means, but it seems

likely that Fray Lope is referring to the colour of the

habits of the secular canons, which would be black, as

opposed to the white habit of the Cistercians. 'Muchos mas

de tres é uno' is a reference to the thirty canons to whom

Bernard sent the letter. Fray Lope is also suggesting that

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[16] St Bernard, *Epistola* 174, *PL* 182. 335C.
The translation of the majority of the letter is quoted by
Giovanni Miegge, p. 112-115:
> Whence then the holiness of the conception? Will it be
> said that the sanctification preceded the conception,
> that it was conceived already sanctified and for that
> reason the conception was already holy.... But there
> could not be sanctification before conception nor was
> there existence before being conceived. Or perhaps in
> the conjugal embrace the sanctification mingled with
> the conception itself so that there was sanctification
> and conception at the same time?

a heresy was afoot. The nature of the heresy he refers to,
darkly, as 'en los chicos non avya\ el pecado original'. In
his letter, the saint refers to Jeremiah, David and John the
Baptist all of whom were sanctified in their mothers' wombs
(333D). It is the sanctification of minor figures which fray
Lope refers to by 'en los chicos'.

Fray Lope, in his desire to remove important Fathers of
the Church from the ranks of the opposition, is indicative
of how the Franciscan supporters of the doctrine struggled
to find ways around the unanimous opposition to the doctrine
expressed in the thirteenth century. In reality, Bernard
wrote to the canons to expressly forbid them to celebrate
the Conception feast, which had not at that time been
sanctioned by the Church (see above, p.22):

> Quo pacto, inquam, aut sanctus asseretur conceptus, qui
> de Spiritu sancto non est, ne dicam de peccato est: aut
> festus habebitur, qui minime sanctus est? (*Epistola
> 174*.336 B)

Fray Lope seems, as elsewhere, to be basing his arguments on
hearsay rather than on a careful study of the texts in
question. His argument proceeds by impetuous leaps of faith
rather than by close reference to the authorities supporting
his arguments.

Bernard's insistence on Christ's position of uniqueness
is mirrored by Fray Lope in 'Solo saco al Mexia' (*CB* 324.37)
and remains the orthodox view of the Church, according to

Miegge (p.116).[17] However, whilst the unique sinlessness of
Christ from his Conception by the Holy Spirit meant that
Bernard could not accept Mary as sinless from conception,
Fray Lope does not follow the arguments of St Bernard in
rejection of the Immaculate Conception.

Fray Lope uses a second method of undermining Bernard's
opposition with reference to Bernard's sermon on the
Assumption. He seeks references from arguments, taken from
other parts of Bernard's writing, to counteract the saint's
argument in *Epistola* 174. In this case, Fray Lope refers to
In assumptione sermo II (*PL* 183.420-421), which the poet
refers to in the words 'en su sermon de sobir ella à los
çielos' (*CB* 324.46), where Bernard praises the Virgin as
being without sin, 'syn estos duelos' (*CB* 324.49). In the
sermon in question, Bernard defends another feast, the feast
of the Nativity, saying that, if it were recognized by the
Church, then the Virgin must have been holy at the moment of
her birth, since the Church could not recognize and
celebrate sin. The argument Bernard employed in favour of
the Nativity of the Virgin became recognized as applicable
to the Conception feast also and is appropriated here by
Fray Lope.

The third line of counter-argument used by Fray Lope is
to attack the validity of the source material. Fray Lope
counters Diego de Medina's reference to Bernard with: 'Que

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[17] 'Solus itaque Dominus Jesus de Spiritu sancto conceptus,
quia solus et ante conceptum sanctus' (St Bernard, *Epistola
174, PL* 182. 336A).

non fueron aprovadas \ Estas letras que escrivides' (*CB* 324.58). Fray Lope appears to be placing the texts, about which his opponent, Diego Martines de Medina has written, outside the canon of St Bernard's authentic works. Fray Lope also appears to be referring to Bernard's legendary retraction of his opposition to the Conception doctrine. Fray Lope states: 'Bernaldo lo rretrató \ Por otras muchas vegadas' (*CB* 324.54). 'Rretratar' could mean either 'retract' or 'write about again'. According to Ignatius Brady, the use of the story of Bernard's retraction is a frequent response amongst scholastic defenders of the privilege, being first found in the letters of Nicholas of St Albans.[18] Nicholas defends the institution of the Conception feast against Bernard.

Reference to Bernard is taken up by Diego Martines de Medina in *CB* 327:

> Por ende, señor, dexado
> Olvidado
> Lo que atañe á contienda
> Fallo que vuestro tractado
> Tal estado
> Me manda que non entienda.
> En la madre del prymado,
> Aprovado
> Avedes por la leyenda,
> En Vernardo el causado
> Su pryvado
> Fablo so mejor enmienda. (*CB* 327.25)

Diego professes himself at a loss with the methods of Fray Lope, since the Franciscan picks out from his authorities only what suits him 'dexado \olvidado\ lo que atañe á

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[18] Ignatius Brady, 'The Development of the Doctrine on the Immaculate Conception in the Fourteenth Century after Aureoli', *Franciscan Studies*, 15 (1955), 175-202, p.182.

contienda'. 'En' could be read as 'ende' with the sense 'thus'. The lines remain difficult with the relationship between 'Vernardo', 'el causado' and 'privado' unclear. Whatever the exact meaning, Diego does not deny the truth of the amends made by Bernard in other texts 'Ca notado \Es assy en su lectura' (*CB* 327.38).

However, Diego de Medina then responds to Fray Lope's reference to Bernard's retraction included in *CB* 324. In *CB* 327, the brief allusion to Bernard's retraction, presented by Fray Lope, is rejected:

> Pero nunca fué fallado
> retratado
> Bernaldo de tal fygura; (*CB* 327.40)

It is likely that 'de tal fygura' has the sense of 'de tal manera'. The meaning of the line would then be that Bernard did not retract in this way. Legend had it that Bernard appeared after his death with a stain on his breast. Diego goes on to assert that, even were he shown such a retraction in writing, he would consider it to be a gloss:

> Sy por vos, frayle onrrado
> demostrado me fuere por escriptura,
> Fago me marabillado,
> Sy glosado
> Non fuere por aventura. (*CB* 327.43)

Fray Lope returns to the matter in *CB* 328, insisting:

> No ty lo afyrmó Bernardo
> con rreguardo
> estable é determinado
> En le feryr con tal dardo
> commo sardo
> a la Vyrgen tan osado; (*CB* 328.73)

Bernard 'osado' offended the Virgin by denying her the privilege of the Immaculate Conception.

The use of authority to strengthen arguments in the *CB* series between Fray Lope and Diego Martines de Medina is broadened by a reference to St Augustine, another major authority advanced against the Conception doctrine by medieval theologians in scholastic debates. Diego Martines de Medina, as might be expected from a poet holding the Dominican viewpoint, draws on the authority of Augustine, as a noted opponent of the doctrine, in his poem:

> E yo so marabillado
> Ca dixo Agustyn doctor,
> Que solo nuestro Señor
> Fuera de aquesto librado: (*CB* 323.25)

Diego's reference to Christ as being the sole person exempt from original sin 'de aquesto librado', echoes Augustine in *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*:

> Ab hoc peccato,ab hac agritudine, ab hac ira Dei, cujus naturaliter filii sunt, qui etiam si per aetatem non habent proprium, trahent tamen originale peccatum,non liberat nisi Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi (Joan.I.29). (*De peccatorum*, 23, *PL* 44.128)

Diego bases his next argument against the Conception doctrine on the above Augustinian text, posing the question:

> Pues ¿qual fue la entençion
> Por que d'aquesta çentella
> Saca á él é non á ella,
> Sy tal fue su conçebçion? (*CB* 327.33)

In contrast, Fray Lope's refusal to even admit Augustine as an opponent of the doctrine: 'A lo de Sant Agustyn \ Callad, nunca lo digades' (*CB* 324.138) is indicative of the sea-change in interpretation of texts traditionally taken to be contrary to the doctrine:

> Ca rromançe nin latyn
> De las sus abtoridades
> Non dirie tales maldades. (*CB* 324.140)

If the text is contrary to the doctrine, then the text must be erroneous, or misinterpreted. As Fray Lope says, such texts could not be found in any language 'rromançe nin latyn'. Those who say such things, according to Fray Lope, must be mad and he exhorts Diego not to believe them: 'A los locos non creades' (*CB* 324.145).

Another method used by scholastic doctors to explain texts which were contrary to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was to find other texts in the writing of the particular Father of the church to counter the first, even if in a different context. The same process was at work as in the case of St Bernard. Despite Fray Lope's assertion in *CB* 324.138, the passage from *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, quoted by Diego de Medyna, was universally interpreted as contrary to the immaculist position, until immaculist theologians began defending the privilege. Certain Augustinian passages came to be interpreted as favourable to the development of the doctrine and it is these that Fray Lope quotes:

> El propuso muy de grado
> Que quando quier que fablase
> Disputaçion de pecado
> Que á la Virgen excusase; (*CB* 324.146)

The reference is to *De natura et gratia*.36, which forms part of a series of treatises written by St Augustine to counter the Pelagian heresy. According to Edward O'Connor, 'the Pelagian heresy reduced all sin to actual sin, and consequently denied the possibility of a sin of nature transmitted from Adam by way of generation' (p.44). Augustine, in response, arguing the fact that none of the

righteous of the Old Testament were immune to sin, does not

bring himself to include the Virgin in this principle and

adds:

> Excepta itaque sancta virgine Maria, de qua propter
> honorem domini nullam prorsus, cum de peccatis agitur,
> haberi volo quaestionem: unde enim scimus quid ei plus
> gratiae collatum fuerit ad vincendum omni ex parte
> peccatum, haec enim virgo excepta (*De natura*,
> 36.42; *PL* 44.267).[19]

Diego de Medina, in *CB* 327, returns to this very same

reference to St Augustine's *De natura et gratia*, to counter

it, making the point that Augustine is dealing with the

absence of actual sins rather than original sin:

> Bien sabedes, sy vos plase,
> Que sy ovo protestado,
> Declarado
> Es é magnifiesto yase,
> Que su libro es fundado
> Del pecado personal
> Que omme fase. (*CB* 327.51)

The 'si vos plase' implies that Diego considers that there

has been an almost wilful misunderstanding of the textual

authority on the part of the Franciscan, Fray Lope.

Fray Lope's poem develops St Augustine's reference

from *De natura et gratia* about the special exception in the

case of the Virgin. The reference is developed at length:

> Ca falló que alcançase
> De ser de todos sacada
> Por tal graçia rreservada
> Que ninguno non dubdasse. (*CB* 324.150)

Fray Lope mentions 'tal graçia' and indicates a special case

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[19] Translated by Miegge, p.110:
> I make an exception for the Virgin Mary, about whom for
> the honour due to the Lord, I do not want to have any
> discussion when it comes to sins, since we know that
> she who has been worthy to conceive and bear him who
> was without sin, has received a greater grace to
> conquer sin completely.

for the Virgin. Indeed, he openly refers to his source in the following stanza: 'Esto en el libro dixo \ De la graçia é natura' (*CB* 324.154).

The texts from Augustine's *Contra Manichaeos* provide Fray Lope with a further authority to counter the authority of *De natura et gratia*. There are a number of texts to which Fray Lope could be referring. Augustine writes three separate documents with the precise words *contra Manichaeos* in the title, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, *De natura boni contra Manichaeos* and *De duabus animabus contra Manichaeos*. Fray Lope refers to one of these texts from St Augustine:

> Yo della non veo
> En todo lo que bien leo
> Tal cativo, el mortal
> Vyl pecado oryginal,
> Nin asy desir lo creo. (*CB* 324.165)

Diego Martines comments, in his response to Fray Lope's poem, that he has thoroughly studied the text but has been unable to reach the same conclusion as his Franciscan opponent:

> Yo asás he trastornado
> E buscado
> Lo de contra Manicheo,
> Lo qual, todo bien pensado,
> Mas cuydado
> Me pone quando lo veo. (*CB* 327.61)

Even after study, the text leaves him unconvinced: 'Mas cuydado \ Me pone quando lo veo' (*CB* 327.62). Fray Lope comes back to reference to Augustine in his reply to Diego Martines and considers that Diego has not read the text and studied it in the proper spirit:

> Por ende, sy por ventura
> La lectura

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        Por estudio afundado
        De la graçia é natura
        Con ardura,
        Non fue por vos onrrado,
        Escudero de mesura
        Syn rrencura,
        Ca non desir lo contado
        Non veredes su dulçura
        E derechura
        de testo tan avisado. (CB 328.145)
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There are further references to authority in the poems. Fray Lope finds other unlikely supporters for the Immaculate Conception in St Thomas, 'El que fue predicador' (CB 324.63) and St Dominic, although Fray Lope does not include any references to texts. Diego Martines is directed specifically to two major Dominicans: firstly, the founder of the order, St Dominic; secondly, St Thomas Aquinas, one of the most important theologians of the Dominican Order. Indeed, a reading of the writings of Aquinas does provide a number of positive statements about the nature of the Virgin, for example: 'Non autem fuisset idonea mater Dei si pecasset aliquando'.[20] Selective reading can also provide positive statements, since Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* proceeds on the basis of stating the opponents' argument, in order to respond to it and redefine it in the traditional scholastic method, and it may be this method which has been adopted by Fray Lope. The attempt to 'rehabilitate' Aquinas and other important opponents of the doctrine, evident in the poem by

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[20] St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Lib.III.a.27.4. Heath translates: 'She would not have been worthy to be the Mother of God if she had ever sinned'.

Fray Lope (*CB* 324) continues even today.[21]

The *CB* series of poems debating the Immaculate Conception makes use of a wide range of authorities. Fray Lope del Monte also makes reference to 'devoto San Alyfonso' (*CB* 324.90), mentioning the saint's office for the Virgin 'canta d'ella en rresponso'.[22] According to Lesmes Frías, this feast was celebrated on 18 December and was a celebration of Mary's *virginitas in partu*. Confusion between the feasts was frequent because of the similarity of the names *conceptio Virginis* and *In conceptione Virginis* (see above, p.24). The use of Ildefonsus as an authority to support the Immaculate Conception is a rarity, according to Ignatius Brady, and is first found in Petrus Thomae, where Petrus refers to the work *De partu virginale*, which he considers to be by Ildefonsus (p.183). Petrus was a Scholastic with little influence outside Spain, but who was likely to have studied in France, coming into contact with both Scotus' writing and possibly being taught by Aureoli (p.176). Fray Lope refers to the miracle story, known to Berceo, in which Ildefonsus was given a chasuble by the Virgin: 'Dió le una vestimenta \ Çelestial mucho preçiada'

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[21] See R.P. Manuel García Miralles, O.P. 'La Orden de los Predicadores en su aportación española al triunfo de la doctrina inmaculista', *Ciencia tomista*, 81 (1954), 565-589.

[22] This feast-day, allegedly instituted by St Ildefonsus, is mentioned in Berceo's *Milagros*. 52-57:
Fizo.l otro servicio el leal coronado
fízoli una festa en diciembre mediado.
La qe cae en marzo, día muy sennalado,
quando Gabrïel vino con el rico mandado.
See above, p.24.

(*CB* 324.204).

There are also included a number of less clear references to tradition. Fray Lope's reference to the Virgin as stainless 'que fuera santa syn mansilla' (*CB* 324.71) might be referring back to St Dominic or to St Thomas Aquinas or could be from another, unnamed 'padre'. Lope del Monte refers obliquely to Scotus: 'En mucho mejor acuerda\ El doctor sotil Escote' (*CB* 324.81) but without citing a particular reference or argument in favour. He does, however, use the title 'Doctor Subtilis' accorded Scotus (see above, p.28). There is also an obscure reference to another authority 'el maestro Suelchote' (*CB* 324.77), said to agree with Aquinas' argument that the Virgin was 'Syn mansilla de pecado'. The name is obscure and, after careful investigation of theologians of the period, it is not apparent to which theologian Lope is referring.

Lope also briefly refers to St Anselm. Anselm was in the main unfavourable to the doctrine, although he praises the Virgin's purity.[23] For many years, however, Eadmer's treatise was thought to be by Anselm and it may be to this

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[23] O'Connor comments that Anselm seems 'to have considered original sin to have been so ...universal that no exception was possible, even for the Mother of God... but he also 'asserts the principle that "it was fitting" for Christ to "be from a pure mother"' (O'Connor, p.168).
> Decens erat ut ea puritate qua major sub Deo nequit intellegi, Virgo illa niteret, cui Deus Pater unicum Filium... ita dare disponebat.

(St Anselm, *De conceptu virginale et de peccato originali,* PL 158, 451) The text is translated by O'Connor:
> It was proper that she should shine with a purity such as none greater than God can be imagined- that Virgin to whom God the Father gave His only Son (p.169).

work that Fray Lope is referring (see above, p.20). In the same stanza, Fray Lope alludes to 'Ovidio' and 'Alano' as well as Terenso. 'Alano' may be a reference to Alanus de Insulis, the author of the *Elucidatio in Canticum Canticorum*.[24] Fray Lope, as one of the 'new generation of poets' includes the names of Ovid and Terence as a symbol of his erudition.[25] He also makes a brief reference to 'Pedro Comedor', this is likely to be Peter Comestor, or rather the Pseudo-Comestor, who wrote a sermon favourable to the Immaculate Conception.[26] In true scholastic fashion, therefore, Fray Lope and Diego Martines de Medina are lining up their authorities one against the other, as Fray Lope states:

> Por ende aquestos doctores
> Santos contra vos trae
> Commo fueron sabidores
> E su entençion decae: (*CB* 324.178)

There are also a number of attacks on the opposition in both series of poems. Fray Lope refers to the Dominicans as 'faryseos' and hypocrites:

> Foyd d'ella grant falsya

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[24] According to O'Connor, 'it is difficult to say whether Alanus teaches the Immaculate Conception or not' (p.170, n.44). The *Elucidatio* contains references to the Conception of Christ which some may have interpreted as indicating that Alanus was favourable to the Conception. One of the references is quoted by O'Connor: 'Quia nullum credimus in Virgine ante et post conceptum fuisse peccatum' (p.170).

[25] Alan Joseph Stegmayer, 'Villasandino: an Introduction to the Cancioneros', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Indiana, 1986, p.21.

[26] *Sermo in conceptione B Virginis*. I am indebted to O'Connor for these references which are published in a rare edition: Alva y Astorga, P., ed., *Radii solis zeli seraphici* (Louvain: 1666).

> De los vuestros faryseos
> Que con su ypocresia
> Se tornaron Cananeos
> Commo á los Melyseos
> La Vyrgen perseguiera
> Ca les tanto non sufriera
> Por los sus locos meneos. (*CB* 324.202)

The Dominicans are compared to the Pharisees. The Pharisees were despised, not only because of the Jewish heritage, but also as the group of people which condemned Jesus. They are also termed 'Cananeos'. The Canaanites, apart from being also generically Jewish, were a group who at the time of the Exodus, worshipped other gods. They were also considered to influence others, leading them astray. Fray Lope considered that the Dominicans were behaving in the same way. The 'Melyseos' to whom Fray Lope also compares the Dominicans may be referring to the followers of Melitius, a heretical splinter group in the early Church. The Dominican group who have incited Diego to begin the series of 'preguntas', in other words 'los frayles predicadores de Sant Pablo de Sevilla', 'los vuestros faryseos', are, by implication, in the comparisons made by Fray Lope, likened to two heretical splinter groups, to two groups which ended up on the losing side.

Fray Lope is not the only Castilian poet to openly attack the Dominican viewpoint in poetry. An interesting insight into the Castilian approach to the maculists is given by a consideration of the early version of the *Coplas*. Fray Iñigo de Mendoça refers to the reader as 'pecador' (*Coplas*.162 D.6), warning the unwitting reader that the

Virgin Advocate will not stay the hand of God in the

judgement of maculists. Iñigo de Mendoça identifies the

likelihood of damnation for the Dominican who does not

believe in the Immaculate Conception:

> ¡O frayle preycador!
> D'aquí comiença a temblar
> que aquel Dios del temor,
> aquel justo juzgador,
> ella lo ha de amansar! (*Coplas*.162 E.6)

The revision of the first version of the *Coplas* was

undertaken in 1482, according to Rodríguez Puértolas, who

comments that:

> Quizá lo más curioso de esta parte de la *Vita Christi*
> sea la fuerte diatriba contra los frailes predicadores
> o dominicanos a propósito del discutido asunto de la
> Concepción Inmaculada ... porque nos muestra la
> capacidad que Fray Lope tenía para la discusión
> violenta; es reveladora la diferencia de actitud
> personal entre las primeras y las siguientes versiones
> de la *Vita Christi* (p.108).

It may well be that the promulgation of *Grave Nimis Prior* in

1482 caused Fray Iñigo de Mendoça to rethink his youthful

condemnation of the Dominicans, although no such inhibition

seems to have affected Catalan poets.

Many of the references to authority, included by Fray

Lope and Diego Martines de Medina, can be found in and bear

enough resemblance to the authoritative text to be

identified from the original. Such precise references to

authority are not frequently found elsewhere in Cancionero

immaculist poetry.[27] The one partial exception is to be

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[27] Other religious poems in the *CB* include precise reference
to authoritative sources. One example is from a 'respuesta'
about predestination by Fray Diego de Valencia:
    Alixandre de Ales que ovo loança

found in the Glosa to the 'Loores e suplicaciones de Nuestra Señora'. The author of the Glosa to Gómez Manrique's poem provides an insight into the influence of scholastic teaching on the poetry of the period.

Before beginning the Glosa, the author sets the poem in the context of the Incarnation and refers to the 'maestro e los doctores theologos'. This may be for the purpose of adding weight to the commentary on the poem provided by the Glosa. The Glosa begins as follows:

> La tu Encarnaçion por toda la santa Trinidat fue obrada
> mas solo enel hijo fue terminada e acabada, segunt dize
> el maestro de las sentençias e los doctores theologos
> sobre el enel tercero libro de las sentencias.
> (F-D 416, p.148)

In addition, under the heading 'Trinidat', the commentator refers in similar terms to the 'Tercer libro delas sentencias':

> Porque si toda la santa Trinidat la santa Encarnacion
> obro, en solo el hijo se termino, porque el solo se
> encarno, segunt dize el maestro delas sentencias e los
> doctores theologos sobre el tercero libro delas
> sentencias, enla distincion primera, e enel primero
> enla distincion XV. (p.148)

The commentator does not appear to be referring to any specific 'maestro' but rather to the manner of expounding the *sententiae* of Peter Lombard which was the accepted manner of teaching in the universities. Apart from these references, not specifically related to the question of the

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> En la teologia é maestro provado,
> De sy maestre Pedro de Paris en Françia
> Obispo é maestro Lonbardo llamado,
> E Santo Thomas, doctor coronado,
> Fablaron en esto que devemos creer,
> Que Dios fiso al omme por solo querer
> Que le syrviesse é fuese dél loado. (*CB* 519.17)

Immaculate Conception, there are no other references to scholastic authority in the immaculist Cancionero poetry. This is because immaculist poetry in the Cancioneros is either included in the tradition of the *vita Christi* or is present in poetry which is laudatory rather than argumentative.

Reference to authority in Certamen poems has a different perspective to the references which have been observed in the *CB* poems. In the *CB*, it is often possible to trace the original patristic text from the glossed and translated reference in a poem. There is one reference to St Augustine in the Introit to the 1486 Certamen but the purpose is not to use St Augustine's arguments. St Augustine is named but there is no textual citation:

> Al descubrir, giramantells,
> Que la regiren,
> molt prop d'eretges, si bé miren
> lo que .ns ha dit
> sent Agostí, del qu.és escrit
> dient: 'Qui u glosa
> al seny que vol, ab mala glosa
> sia maleyt. (Introit.36)

The purpose of Ferrando Dieç's reference to St Augustine seems to be the recalling of the stance he took against the Pelagian heresy and to tar the 'giramantells' with the brush of heresy.

There are also two brief references to Scotus in the 1486 Certamen. The first is in Pere d'Anyo's poem:

> Les grans escotilles ab proves fundades
> les han sobre .ls núvols axí sublimades,
> que resta per terra l'inich tomatista. (XXIII.87)

By 'les escotilles', Pere is referring to the disciples of

Scotus who become associated with the heavenly opinion on the doctrine 'sobre .ls núvols' and also with the opinion which is gaining ground. 'Tomatista' is used almost as a term of abuse. The term 'follower of Aquinas' exemplifies the Dominican Order, since Aquinas was an important Dominican theologian, whose opposition to the doctrine established the Dominican response for many centuries. In addition, the Dominican position is associated with the earthly point of view, and also with the devil's viewpoint, the devil being regularly termed 'l'inich' in the poems. The Dominicans, by being earth-bound, are also on the losing side in the debate.

Francí de Vilalba also refers to Scotus' writings on the Immaculate Conception, paraphrasing the theologian's view as follows:

> que .n vós may fon peccat original,
> segons escriu lo gran doctor Asquot,
> al dit del qual res contradir no .s pot. (XXVI.10)

In fact, the reference to Scotus' opinion is rather bland, since Scotus never stated his belief so openly, merely arguing that freedom from original sin would have been fitting for the Virgin. The poet states very firmly that there can be no opposition to Scotus' teaching 'res contradir no .s pot', which is an interesting, and no doubt widespread approach to debate. The statement marks a turnabout from the time of St Thomas, when the great master's teaching would have brooked no contradiction. Within two hundred years, the same claim is being made for the opposing view.

One reference, apparently general, may be worthy of
further comment, in Loís Roïç's poem which was entered for
the marzipan and which won the 'joya'. Loís Roïç counters
the authority of earlier theologians with the argument:

> Dels sants, les doctrines que tal no us loaren
> no foren perfetes que .rrar no poguessen
> que ligen-se moltes rahons en què .rraren,
> y aquells per aquelles jamés no peccaren,
> puix Déu no .1s donava més lum que més vesen.
> Tots jorns Déu revela de nou al món noves
> les quals ignoraven sants hi patriarques,
> e ja huy s'aproven no sols per ses proves
> mas tota la Sgleya com a regles noves
> per fe les decreta en nostres comarques. (XVI.49)

Roïç uses 'tal' to refer back to the Virgin's immaculate
nature. Roïç argues that new revelation uncovers, in his own
day, truths which were unknown to saints and patriarchs of
the Church. This is a key argument which allows evidence
contrary to the Immaculate Conception from earlier
theologians to be dismissed as imperfect revelation.
Although no explicit reference is made to any theologian,
the argument which considers that revelation to the earlier
Fathers was imperfect, owes its origin, according to Brady,
to Petrus Thomae (p.176). The influence of Petrus can, thus,
have had an effect, albeit indirect, on both Castilian
and Catalan poetry. In this case, an innovative argument
from the previous century is drawn on by the Certamen poet
to counter opposition to the doctrine. In addition, it is
likely that the Certamen audience would be well able to
decipher the reference to Petrus Thomae, who had been *lector*
at the Studium of Barcelona and, thus, a local theologian.
At the end of this argument, Roïç includes a reference to
'Aureli' who was the first to argue from the premise that
the Virgin was a 'virginal temple'. 'D'açò .1 gran Aureli

tenim per exemple, \la nova portant-nos del virginal temple'
(XVI.59). It is likely that the poet is using 'Aureli' to
refer to Peter Aureoli, 'the first Franciscan to write a
treatise or book devoted *ex professo* and exclusively to the
defence of the Immaculate Conception' (Di Lella, p.146).

Reference to theological authority seems to play a less
important role in the Certamen poems than reference to a
different type of authority. The Certamen poets, especially
in 1486, include a number of references to papal authority,
which are particularly striking. The Franciscans, just after
the publication of the Papal Bull *Grave Nimis* felt their
support for the Conception doctrine had been vindicated by
the Franciscan Pope Sixtus IV, in his recognition of the
Conception feast, and in his decree forbidding either side
to decry the opposition as heretical. The 'Introit' to the
Certamen contains an allusion to the recognition of the
Conception feast by the Pope:

        Ja lo Sixt Papa declarar
        vol en l'offici
        tan gran misteri en benefici
        dels crestians
        Mas huy los nostres capellans
        seguir no .l volen·
        puix tals laors cantar no solen
        del ver parer. (Introit.58)

The poet refers not only to the 'benefici' the feast will
bring, in pardons obtained for its celebration, but also
takes the opportunity to condemn priests who are refusing to
celebrate the feast. This was perfectly within the right of
the priests, since the feast was only to be optionally
celebrated.

The purpose of authoritative references in the Certamen poems is to establish the folly of the opinions of those who disputed the doctrine. For the most part, Certamen poets are content to hint at the opposing view, referring to the opposing school of thought in generic terms. Vilaspinosa for example uses 'Callen doctores' (1486 Certamen, III.13). Outside the Certamen genre, but in his long debate poem, the *Espill*, Jaume Roig refers to the 'altra scola...\ que opina altra doctrina' (*Espill* III.2, p.156) without precisely naming any authorities. The openness Roig shows to the opposing view was, however, amended by the editor of the 1531 edition:

> No va creure oportú aquesta actitud de tolerància probablement perquè l'opinió comuna o potser la de la cort reial era favorable a la creença en l'exempció de culpa original [...] i els versos van ser substituïts per d'altres, que proclamaven la fe en aquest dogma.[28]

Generally the group of opponents is unclassified. However, on two occasions the Dominicans are singled out for opprobrium in the 1486 Certamen:

> Hoiu, pricadors, les santes doctrines,
> gustau un poquet d'aquest letovari.
> A fe que són dulces, sabors tenen fines,
> hoiu lo concert de cobles divines
> de crim preservant lo digne sacrari.
> Lexau per mercé la fe tan errada
> bateu-vos los pits, digau vostra culpa,
> car may fonch mester entrar en bugada
> la tela .n lo cel tostemps preservada
> d'aquel trist foment que .ls altres enculpa. (XX.25)

The poem throughout describes the Virgin in terms of a marzipan sweet, since Centelles, the poet, is 'tirant al

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[28] Jaume Roig, *L'Espill o Llibre de les dones*, ed. by María Aurèlia Capmàny, Edicions 3 i 4, Serie La Unitat (Valencia: Eliseu Climent, 1992), xvii.

maçapà'. The 'pricadors', members of the Order of Preachers,
or Dominicans, are begged to taste the new doctrine 'gustau
un poquet'. The doctrine both tastes 'sabors tenes fines'
and sounds sweet 'lo concert de cobles divines'. The
Dominicans should leave behind their misguided opinions on
the Conception 'fe tan errada'. These opinions are treated
as sinful and the Dominicans are described in terms of
penitents, 'bateu-vos los pits, digau vostra culpa'. The
Dominicans are singled out once again by name in one of the
'sentèntias' following a series of poems for a particular
'joya'. On presentation of the prize to Roïç, Ferrando Dieç,
the judge, states that the reason for the selection of Roïç
is that 'contra .ls malignes \ de pricadors frares rahons
diu insignes' (Sentèntia.11, *Els certàmens poètics*, p.507).
Thus, the winning poem is selected not purely on literary
merit but because of its powers of reasoning and the fact
that it serves as a weapon against the opponents of the
doctrine.

The fact that there is a shift in how authorities are
used is typified by the use of scriptural authority in
Vilaspinosa's poem:

> No .s troba test en la Sacra Scriptura
> que vós siau en peccat concebuda,
> d'on s'infereix ab rahó clara y pura
> que l'Increat vos creà sens mixtura
> tant purament quant pura us ha volguda. (III.37)

The response which might be expected to such a dearth of
scriptural references to the Immaculate Conception, is
precisely the opposite of the conclusion drawn. From the
lack of references in Scripture, the poet concludes that,

because Scripture is silent on the matter and because there
is no text contrary to the doctrine, the immaculate nature
of the Virgin can be inferred from the lack of evidence.

Reference to authority is a part of poetry both in
favour of and in opposition to the Immaculate Conception,
being used in debate poetry from the Cancioneros and in the
Certamen poems. Reference to authority, however, has a
slightly different focus in the Certamen poems to reference
to authority in the *CB*. In the series of poems in the *CB*,
the two poets were keen to demonstrate their knowledge of
the key opinions expressed about the doctrine in a range of
texts culled mainly from the theology of St Bernard and St
Thomas Aquinas. The Certamen poets refer on occasion to
Augustine or Scotus without giving references to specific
texts. The poets appear to be far more interested in
present-day authorities, such as the very recent papal
recognition of the doctrine and the recognition of the
feast. Moreover, the poets are keen to establish that the
opinions of the opponents to the doctrine are wrong-headed,
associated with the devil and sure to fail. On occasion, the
opponents are specifically identified as the Dominicans. The
opposition of the secular priests to the newly recognized
Conception feast is also noted.

2.4 SCHOLASTIC ARGUMENT AS AN INFLUENCE ON FIFTEENTH-CENTURY POETRY

The third important way in which the Conception poems
draw inspiration from scholastic debate lies in the use of

the arguments in favour of the Immaculate Conception which
were developed in the universities. The first way in which
scholastic argument influenced vernacular writers is in the
use of stylistic devices based on logical argument. Poets
defending the Immaculate Conception constantly rely on two
main stylistic devices for the purpose of demonstrating the
truth of the immaculist thesis. The first device to be
examined is the rhetorical question, which is used in two
ways.

There is an example of a rhetorical question in the
Coplas of Iñigo de Mendoça to show the untenability of
arguments advanced against the doctrine:

> ¿Que lengua osa dezilla?
> que persona divinal
> tomase carne mortal
> de la carne con manzilla. (*Coplas* 162A.7, p.384)

Rhetorical questions are, thus, a part of Cancionero
debate poetry. The rhetorical question is to be answered
negatively, and is designed to underline the fact that no-
one could believe that Christ would have taken flesh from
unclean flesh, thus, casting opprobrium on the maculist
view. The rhyme of 'osa dezilla' and 'con manzilla' bring
together the enormity of daring to hold the view that
unclean flesh could have been appropriate to the Virgin,
Mother of God. Whilst the Dominicans do not argue that the
Virgin was unclean, and this is an extreme representation of
their views, it is certainly true that the Dominicans
considered that she should be one with the rest of humanity
in the momentary contraction of original sin. It is to be
pointed out that, in the final version of the poem, the

rhetorical question, together with references to the views
of the maculists, are omitted (see above, p.55).

Certamen poets frequently use the same device. A
Catalan version of the rhetorical question used by Fray
Iñigo de Mendoça, is found in Fuster's winning entry to the
1486 Certamen:

> ¿qui porà dir de vós, excelsa dea,
> creada .n tot ab tota gentilea,
> que .n algun temps de colpa us maculassen? (I.27)

The 1486 Certamen poems are full of this use of the question
form, 'Com pot \pora dir...'. This rhetorical question form
is used by Vilaspinosa, Vinyoles, Miralles, Frare Bosch,
Arnau de Cors and Francí Johan. In all, the 1486 Certamen
includes fifty-three examples of this type of rhetorical
question, the majority using '¿qui?'. The purpose of the
questions are two-fold: firstly, they are part of a
deliberate 'inexpressibility *topos*' (Woolf, p.281).
Secondly, the rhetorical questions have the aim of
ridiculing the fact that anyone might attempt to defend the
indefensible, that anyone might seriously consider that the
Virgin might have been stained by sin.

The 1474 Certamen also affords examples. Some poems
provide several examples of rhetorical questions of the
formulaic type:

> ¿qui veu tan cech que .s prenga .n tal parança,
> puix vós, coneix, que sou tan singular,
> ne que .l Jhesús s'en volgués encarnar? (XI.19)

'¿Qui veu tan cech' is less standardized with its emphasis
on blindness than the other rhetorical question included in

the same stanza. The stanza contains yet another rhetorical

question based on the '¿qui pot dir?' formula.

> Donchs, ¿qui pot dir qu.ajau participat
> lo vil insult
> que, .n general, a tot lo món desguasta? (XI.25)

Vivot's rhetorical question about original sin 'lo vil

insult' is particularly typical of immaculist debate.

However, on occasion, the use of the question form

becomes monotonous in its repetition. One Certamen poem

written for the 1486 Certamen has an entire stanza

constructed from rhetorical questions:

> ¿Qui dubtar pot que us pot fallir centil.la?
> ¿Qui vol posar en certa cosa dubte?
> ¿Qui us pot, loant, glosar ab tal postil.la?
> ¿Qui pot fundar que .n vós haja .lgún dubte?
> ¿Qui us posà nom 'Mare de Déu' ab taca ?
> ¿Qui pot pensar que may fósseu inmunda? (XII.61)

Each question contains a postulation about the nature of

Mary and in each case the question form is intended to show

that what is postulated is untenable. The other stanzas in

the poem are structured to present four stanzas with

alternate lines beginning with the same wording, for

example, 'Filla d'Adam....\ Mare de Déu' (XII.1). The fifth

stanza is a series of statements about the Virgin, beginning

'Esmena sou'. The sixth stanza is the series of rhetorical

questions posing questions about the opponents' beliefs to

cast doubt on them. At least, in this case, the high

incidence of rhetorical questions has the merit of being a

feature of the structure of the poem. Other poems repeat the

formula without the pattern.

Another way in which rhetorical questions can be used

is to take a universally accepted tenet of faith about the Virgin or even a laudatory symbol and turn it into a question. Arnau de Cors takes the commandment 'Honour thy father and thy mother' and turns it into a question about the relationship between the Virgin and Christ, in his entry for the 1486 Certamen:

> ¿Com pot dir l'adversari
> vent que .ns manau que honrem nostre pare
> hi que manqueu fent vós tot lo contrari,
> de no honrar tan gloriós sacrari
> no preservant de tal crim vostra mare? (VIII.37)

The question of how the Virgin could be honoured, if she were not preserved from original sin, is left unanswered by Arnau but the reader is meant to conclude that, logically, she must be preserved, so that she could be honoured.

Examples of rhetorical questions span the period and are found in the early Certamen entry 'Mare de Déu':

> ¿Qui són aquels ab la pença tan vana
> que vullen dir que falliment declina
> nez algun sí en la vostre persona? (Mare.4)

Since opponents are accused of being foolish, the intention is that none would own to such a point of view. The phrasing of the question is less of a formula than the examples taken from the later Certàmens. The 1474 Certamen provides some examples, although rhetorical questions are used far less than in the later Certamen. The formula '¿qui pot dir?' is nevertheless apparent in the 1474 Certamen:

> Prenent vostra carn a si tan conjunta,
> de quant fer volgué, vos féu la senyora.
> e donchs ¿qui pot dir en tal sement tacha? (IX.53)

Another use of the question form, used frequently in

the Certamen poems, is to pose questions following an accepted premise which enables the poet to postulate a point which will then be proved or disproved in the subsequent verses. Thus, Loís Roïç, in his 1486 Certamen entry, writes: 'Donchs vós, elegida per mare divina,\ ¿Com podíeu caure en crim que .ns aterra?' (XVI.6). Mary's divine motherhood is an accepted tenet of faith and from it, the poet poses the question of whether it would be fitting for her to have contracted sin. The question form is intended to show that the premise that Mary could have contracted sin is false.

The same formula of premise followed by rhetorical question, designed to prove the premise, is found in one of the poems from the 1440 Certamen. This fact suggests that the device had a long history. Amezcua first shows how God required an honourable mother and how Eve herself was formed sinless. He then introduces the question:

> Com lo finit ab l'Enfinit relua,
> mare tenint a qui féu honor tanta
> quant aver pot [la] dona pus honrada,
> Eva, sert, fons sens peccat formada:
> ¿qui us pot negar d'aquesta mare sancta? [29]

The movement from an accepted tenet to postulating question to affirmation can be seen quite clearly in the *Espill*, where Roig proceeds from the premise: 'Contra el peccat és pugnadora' to pose the question '¿Com pecadora\ ésser podia?' (*Espill* III.2, p.158) and finally to affirm that argument is invalid:

> ...Cessen murmurs

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[29] 'Certamen en llaor de la Concepció de Nostra Dona', in Ferrando Francés, *Els certamens poètics*, p.114, Cançó.20.

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vots i arguments    contradients
..... No fon tacada
per llei de gràcia, de la desgràcia
que tots portam. (Espill III.2, p.159)
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The questioning of accepted truth is the very basis of scholastic thought and examples can be found of the use of questions in the work of all medieval theologians. The Schoolmen began by posing a question. The answer was then subdivided logically into single articles. The arguments for and against the proposition are given until they arrive at their own point of view. Thomas Aquinas includes six points of inquiry in question 27 of 'De sanctificacione beatae virginis'.[30] The use of questioning, thus, is rather different to that of the poets, however, it would seem that immaculist poets, taking the idea of questions from scholastic origins, developed their own formulaic questions, which are generally to be found in immaculist poems.

The second major stylistic device drawn from scholastic debate is the consistent reliance on verb forms such as the conditional tense and the use of subjunctives, both of which allow for a nuance of the indefinite. Arnau de Cors appeals to the emotions, using the subjunctive tense, as he shows what would happen were the Virgin to be considered to have contracted original sin in his poem submitted to the 1486 Certamen:

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[30] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Lib.III.a.27.1. The first and last of the questions are included as an example.
    Circa primum quaeruntur sex:
    Utrum beata Virgo mater Dei fuerit sanctificata ante nativitatem;
    Utrum sic fuissse sanctificata fuerit proprium sibi.

> Romp-se mon cor pensant cosa tan fera
> que sols un punt, verge, de vós se diga,
> fósseu jamés sots la taqua primera,
> que .n tal instant del Sathan presonera
> seríeu vós y de Déu inimiga. (VIII.73)

The effect of 'fósseu' is that the poet is able to distance himself from the opinion expressed, at the same time as undermining it with 'Romp-se mon cor' and 'fera', to show how he would consider the acceptance of the idea that the Virgin might have been in original sin to be personally shocking.

One final example is taken from Ramon Vivot's poem written for the 1486 Certamen, where the poet uses a conditional perfect to highlight the improbability of the Virgin being tainted by original sin. Since her Son did not allow her to commit minor sins, he would not have allowed her to be bound by '.l peccat maligne':

> E si lo Fill may permés, mare pia,
> qu.ab vós estigués peccat venial,
> qui de paradís no .ns tanca la via,
> tengud. aureu menys, o verge Maria,
> la màcula tal,
> qui .ns tanca los cels ab culpa mortal. (XI.61)

The argument takes as its origin St Augustine's exception to the universality of sin, made in the case of Mary, from *De natura et gratia*. The line of argument is very similar in its approach to Aureoli's *Tractatus de conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, where Aureoli, one of Scotus' disciples argues:

> It is certain that original sin is greater and more detestable than venial sin since the former merits God's wrath and eternal damnation which the latter does not. Ergo, if Christ detested venial sin in her who conceived and gave birth to him, *a fortiori* did he

detest original sin in her.[31]

Earlier in the same poem, Vivot uses another
conditional tense to argue from the accepted tenet of
Virginity that, if her conception were sinful, she could not
have enjoyed perpetual virginity:

> Reyna pel semblant, si fon de vós feta
> la concepció de crim en tal grau,
> virginitat vós no .uríeu perfeta. (XI.31)

The consistent usage of indefinite tenses to convey the
nuances of argument on the possibility of Mary's Immaculate
Conception or to convey the improbability of the opposing
view has antecedents in the commentaries written by
theologians defending the doctrine. Indeed, the style of
argument from postulation to defence springs from the very
nature of scholastic method. Thus, Scotus turns to
'indefinite' tenses to prove the necessity of the Virgin's
preservation from sin:

> Est etiam ibi beata Virgo mater Dei, quae numquam fuit
> inimica actualiter ratione peccati actualis, nec
> ratione peccati originalis; fuisset, tamen, si non
> fuisset praeservata. (*Opera*, Vol.7, i, III.d.18.q.
> unic., p.400)

It can be shown, furthermore, that Scholasticism
influenced not only the style of the language, but that the
very content of the poetic arguments have their antecedents
in the scholastic debate of the period. The final influence

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[31] Peter Aureoli, *Tractatus de Conceptione beatae Mariae
Virginis*, in *Quaestiones disputatae de immaculata
conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis*, Vol. 3 (Quaracchi:
Biblioteca Franciscana Scholastica Medii Aevi, 1904).
A. Di Lella, 'The Immaculate Conception' provides a summary
of the relevant question.

of Scholasticism to be noted in fifteenth-century poetry,
is, thus, the way in which the content of the arguments also
originate from scholastic thinking.

The first to be considered is the argument from
possibility, the *potuit* argument, developed by Scotus'
disciples, which revolutionized debate on the Immaculate
Conception in the early fourteenth century. The basis of the
argument is that God was able to have preserved the Virgin
from original sin, had he wished to do so. Scotus' argument
is developed as follows:

> Ita posset Deus eam in primo instanti Conceptionis
> Virginis, dando tunc gratiam delere, ne esset causa
> necessaria infectionis animae, sed gratia tollerat
> culpam in anima. (III.d.3.q.i, p.93)

Scotus' disciple, Francis de Mayronis is the first to use
the trilogy: *potuit-decuit-fecit*, which is found as a major
theme in the Certamen poems.[32]

Echoes of this argument are found consistently in
Catalan poems dealing with the debate surrounding the
Conception doctrine. Jaume Roig, for example, echoes the
Scotian argument in his defence of the doctrine:

> Déu, qui hu sabia
> tal la volgué, volent pogué
> fer-la tan neta. (*Espill* III.2., p.158)

but develops it in his own way, showing how God was capable
of suspending the Laws of Nature. In this case, *potuit* is
combined with *voluit*, the argument from God's will. God
wanted Mary to be perfect and spotless and he had the power

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[32] Brady, at p.192 n.57, quotes from Franciscus de Mayronis,
Sententiae III.d.3.q.2.

to make her free from original sin. The action of divine will in favour of Mary is a key aspect of the argument. The basis of Roig's argument recalls the Franciscan defence of the doctrine in the universities. The earliest expression of the argument *potuit-voluit-fecit* is expressed by Eadmer with reference to the chestnut, encased in a thorny exterior but milky-white and smooth inside.[33]

A similar echo is to be found in Vilaspinosa's Certamen entry, submitted to the 1486 Certamen:

> Decent fon molt no y fósseu vós compresa,
> Puix a Déu pur lo no pur es difforme.
> Volgué y pogué que may fósseu offesa
> d'aquella ley que .n los humans s'és mesa. (III.42)

The tenor of Vilaspinosa's argument is that God desired and was capable of preventing the Virgin from being dishonoured by original sin. This argument rests on over a century of scholastic proofs of the doctrine, which the poet sought to echo in his poem.

The argument from possibility, complete with the affirmative *fecit,* is used by Frare Bosch:

> fer-ho pogué la virtut infinida;
> y u féu de fet, que .1 deute lo y convida,
> e si no u fes d'Ell fóra deshonor. (VII.55)

It should be noted at this point that Scotus himself did not affirm that the Virgin had been in fact preserved from original sin. Scotus suggested the possibility of such

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[33] *Tractatus de conceptione B. Mariae Virginis,* 305D:
Si Deus castaneae confert, ut inter spinas remota concipiatur [...] non potuit haec dare humano quod ipse sibi parabat templo in quo corporaliter habitaret?[...] poutuit plane, et voluit; si igitur voluit, fecit.

a solution only and added the precaution that 'si auctoritate Ecclesiae vel auctoritate Scripturae non repugnet' (III.d.3.q.1, p.95).

Another key argument used by Scotus and his disciples is the argument from fittingness, the *decuit* argument. Scotus argued that whichever was most fitting to the Virgin Mary should be believed, 'videtur probabile quod excellentius est attribuere Mariae' (III.d.3.q.1, p.95), provided it were not contrary to accepted tenets of belief. Alfred Gontier, one of Scotus' disciples develops the argument further, holding that:

> Praeterea mater Christi debemos attribuere quidquid honoris et laudis possumus, quod non est contra fidem, licet ex Scriptura exresse non habeatur : patet de eius sanctificatione et confirmatione et assumptione in anima et corpore: sed, quod ex merito passionis Christi praevisae a Deo fuerit a peccato originali praeservata, sicut ab actuali, hoc cedit a eius non est contra dignitatem Christi, quia non habuit unde peccatum contraxerit.[34]

From this premise, Scotus' disciples argue that sanctification is less fitting for the Virgin than the Immaculate Conception, therefore, the immaculist viewpoint should be believed. This line of argumentation occurs frequently in poetry defending the Immaculate Conception. It has already become apparent in the poem entered by Frare Bosch in the words 'fóra deshonor' (1486 Certamen, VII.57).

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[34] Alfred Gontier, *Liber III Sententiarum*, fol. 130 ^{r},b. I am indebted for this reference to J. Alfaro, S.J., 'La inmaculada concepción en los escritos inéditos de un discípulo de Duns Escoto, Aufredo Gontier, *Gregorianum*, 36 (1955), 590-607, p.602.

The fittingness of the Virgin for the honours accorded her and the fittingness of honouring her are key themes in Certamen poems. Vallmanya returns consistently to the fittingness of the Virgin's preservation in his Certamen poem: 'incongru li fóra dexar gens offendre' (V.87) and 'Convenient era, puix que us abilita \ lo Fill que us afilla, siau pura dita' (V.90).

Scholastic argument in either the *potuit-voluit-fecit* or the *potuit-decuit-fecit* variation is a constant in Catalan Certamen poetry. The appropriation of scholastic arguments represents a deliberate attempt to situate the poety within the field of theological debate and to accord it *gravitas*.

2.5 CONCLUSION

Aspects of the influence of scholastic methods of teaching and learning have been examined in this chapter. The central importance of scholastic vocabulary in the Cancioneros and Certamen poems has been examined in detail. The vocabulary of *quaestio, disputatio, exercitia, prova, sentencia, dubitatio* can be found throughout the debate poetry of both Castilla and Cataluña. Particular influence was noted in the immaculist 'preguntas y respuestas' of Fray Lope del Monte and Diego Martines de Medina. In addition, an outline of the importance of scholastic vocabulary in debate poetry as a whole has been suggested. Similarly, the influence on debate vocabulary on Catalan immaculist poetry has been examined and shown to be considerable. It should be

noted that both types of debate poetry use scholastic vocabulary. Their use is broadly equivalent in this area and it was also noted that debate poetry on all subject matters, as evidenced in the *CB*, was also influenced by scholastic debate.

The second section of the chapter examined the poets' use of reference to authority to add weight to their arguments. In the *CB*, both Fray Lope del Monte and Diego Martines de Medina volley their way through references from St Bernard and St Augustine. Not every *respuesta*, but certainly two out of Fray Lope's *respuestas* and one out of Diego Martines' two *respuestas* consider references to these important authorities. St Anselm, St Dominic and Duns Scotus are also considered but in less depth. By the time of the Certàmens and the *Espill*, there has been a marked change of emphasis. Whilst on occasion the poets refer to Augustine or Scotus, they do not quote from particular texts. Furthermore, a marked change can be inferred from some allusions to authority in some of the poems. The poets argue that revelation has moved on from the time of these authorities and that the authorities themselves were not in possession of the full truth. This new argument clearly explains why Catalan debate poems do not feel impelled to explain away previous Fathers of the Church who appeared to supply negative viewpoints on the doctrine. In the Cancioneros, references to patristic authority are more developed and often refer to the specific text in question. In the Certàmens, the poets are generally

more concerned to establish the invalidity of the arguments
of opponents of the doctrine, the opponents being often
unclassified. The importance of the papal intervention, late
in the fifteenth century, means that reference to it has
more merit in the eyes of the Certamen poets than other
authorities included in the poems.

In Cataluña, there was also noted a general tendency in
the 1440 and 1486 Certamen poems to refer to the views of
opponents of the doctrine and at times to single out these
opponents as the Dominicans. The opponents are on occasion
linked with the devil and at other times described as
sinful, foolhardy or even, by implication, heretical.

The most integral influence of scholastic teaching on
the immaculist poems is in an appropriation of the
methodology of its arguments, which are then presented in
poetic terms. The method of using questioning to establish
the truth is taken over by Certamen poets particularly in
the two immaculist Certàmens. Cancionero debate poetry also
shows evidence of the use of the rhetorical question,
although Fray Iñigo de Mendoça remains one of the small
number of examples. Fray Iñigo's rhetorical question was
omitted from the revised version of the poem in which all
paraphrasing of the views of maculists were omitted.
Rhetorical questions, in both Catalan and Castilian poetry,
are used either to cast doubt on opposition to particular
statements or to establish a logical step in developing an
established tenet of faith. Scholastic influence also

reveals itself particularly in the conditional and
subjunctive verb forms chosen in imitation of the verb forms
found in scholastic treatises. These are used because the
new immaculist doctrine about the Virgin needed a great deal
of logical argument in order to establish its validity. In
addition, many of the Certamen poets imitate the arguments
of Scotus and his followers. Particularly in the 1486
Certamen, there are a number of examples of the argument
from fittingness and of the argument from possibility. This
degree of imitation of scholastic arguments is not found in
the *CB*.

Finally, whilst some of the stylistic devices
originating in scholastic debate, such as rhetorical
questions, are found in Cancionero poems, they are used with
great frequency in Certamen poems particularly in the
immaculist Certàmens of 1440 and 1486. It is only in the
Catalan debate poems, such as the *Espill* and the 1486
Certamen that the consistent use of scholastic arguments in
favour of the Conception are found. This suggests a more
didactic purpose in the 1486 Certamen as well as in the
Espill. The purpose of incorporating scholastic arguments in
favour of the doctrine, is probably that these arguments
will, thus, be brought to the attention of those who read
only the vernacular.

PART II

THEMES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

3 THE SPOTLESS VIRGIN

Pulchra es, amica mea et macula non est in te.

This chapter is dedicated to an investigation of the references to the phrase 'et macula non est in te' from the Canticum Canticorum 4.7 and its application to the Immaculate Conception. Clearly, the verse is important to any study of biblical influences on the doctrine, since it has provided the root of the word 'immaculate'. To this end, the first element of the chapter will be a brief examination of that progression from an epithet applied to the Shulamite of the Bible to an epithet applied to the Virgin Mary. The second part of the chapter will be devoted to an examination of references to Canticum 4.7 in fifteenth-century poetry. Synonyms for 'macula' will be examined in a third section of the chapter. The beauty of the Virgin in its derivation from the Canticum will next be examined. Finally, the use of Canticum allusions in castigation of opponents of the doctrine will be studied.

3.1 CANTICUM CANTICORUM: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MARIAN INTERPRETATION

First it is necessary to examine the development of the Canticum Canticorum into a Marian prefiguration. The Canticum was likely, according to modern interpreters, to have been 'at its eariest stages not a unified work at all,

but several lyric poems, each having its integrity'.[1] There

are two views about the Canticum, either that it was a cycle

of wedding songs or else a series of poems drawn from

popular oral tradition. Whichever is the true interpretation

of this biblical book, there is little reliable evidence,

according to Murphy, to explain why the book was originally

included in the corpus of Jewish canonical literature.[2]

Murphy considers it unlikely that:

> The "history" of interpretation of the Song of Songs
> began with a firm Jewish tradition of allegorizing or
> spiritual exposition, in which the Song was understood
> to celebrate the love between God and Israel' (p.12).

In other words, the Canticum was likely to have had secular

origins before it began to be interpreted in a spiritual

sense.

Origen was the first of the Christian exegetes to give

the Canticum a spiritual interpretation, analysing both the

ecclesiastical and psychic interpretations of the Bride of

the Canticum. Although most of Origen's work is lost, in the

two extant homilies on the Canticum, Origen 'develops the

declarations of love made by the Song's male and female

protagonists... into a portrait of the nuptial arrangement

between Christ and the Church' (Murphy, *Song of Songs*,p.17).

By the end of the fifth century, the spiritual

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[1] Marcia Falk, *Love Lyrics from the Bible: A Translation and Literary Study of the Song of Songs,* Bible and Literature Series, 4, ed. by David Gunn (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982), p.3.

[2] Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm., *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or The Song of Songs* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), p.12.

interpretation of the Canticum, advocated by Origen, had

become standard. It was regularly interpreted as an allegory

of the relationship between Christ and the Church. However,

in the early Church, as Marina Warner comments, 'the love

songs of Solomon and the Shulamite were predominantly

applied to the love of Christ and the consecrated virgin or

nun' (Warner, p.126).

The first 'thoroughgoing Marian exegesis' of the

Canticum was written by Rupert of Deutz, according to Murphy

(Song of Songs, p.25).[3] However, it was St Bernard who

gave greater prominence to the mystical interpretation of

the Canticum Canticorum contained in his eighty-six sermons

on it. For Bernard, 'Christ is the Lover of the Canticle,

his bride sometimes the Church, sometimes the individual

soul, sometimes the monks of Clairvaux and sometimes the

Virgin' (Murphy, p.129). Marina Warner points to the tension

between the use of erotic language drawn from the Song of

Songs and the embrace of the mystic with God (p.129). The

same tension can be highlighted in a recent commentary by

Laurentin, an eminent Catholic mariologist:

> Comment dont [sic] l'épouse adultère a-t-elle pu
> devenir une fiancée sans tache? Cela s'est réalisé en
> Marie... et dans l'Eglise dont elle est à la fois
> l'origine, le prototype et le commencement dynamique'.[4]

Laurentin explains the paradox more fully elsewhere in his

writing:

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[3] Rupert of Deutz, *Commentaria in Cantico Canticorum*, *PL*
168, 837-962.

[4] René Laurentin, 'L'Origine immaculée de Marie: dogme de
foi', *Stella maris* (May, 1993), 1-4, p.2.

> Il s'agit en effet de ce qu'il y a de plus obscur dans le mystère du salut: l'Amour de Dieu pour l'homme pécheur. Ce peuple que Dieu avait choisi comme une épouse bien-aimée selon l'enseignement des prophètes a été infidèle. Il s'est prostitué aux faux dieux. Et pourtant l'amour de Dieu ne désespère pas.... Ainsi s'esquisse une mystérieuse promesse: l'épouse adultère Dieu la reprendra dans les derniers temps comme une fiancée pure. Au terme de cette ligne, dans le *cantique des cantiques* tout le passé, tous les reproches sont effacées. L'epoux-Yahweh peut dire à sa fiancée-Israël: 'Tu es toute belle, il n'y a pas de tache en toi' (Cant.4.7). Paradoxe déconcertante (*Court traité*, p.113).

Having outlined what he considers to be the main paradox, the development of Israel into the Church, Laurentin then slips glibly over the linking of the Virgin to the Church and to the Beloved of the Canticum Canticorum. In a sense, he feels he does not have to prove the point, as the link has, by the twentieth century, a long history in the Church. He then attests that 'un resurgissement de pureté' was necessary for the change from Israel to the Church to occur. It is taken as read that this 'resurgissement' was occasioned by the Immaculate Conception accorded to the Virgin:

> C'est en elle qui commence la Sainte Eglise et c'est ainsi que dès l'origine Dieu peut lui dire, non selon une figure poétique mais en toute vérité: 'Tu es toute belle et il n'y a pas de tache en toi (Laurentin, *Court traité*, p.114).

The link between the Canticum verse and the immaculist doctrine has needed no explanation, since the promulgation of the dogma by Pius IX in 1854.

3.2 THE VIRGIN IMMACULATE IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY POETRY

The use of images of stainlessness, inspired by the

Canticum and applied to the Virgin, can be found in fifteenth-century poetry. Reference to the unblemished nature of the Virgin was traditional by the fifteenth century.[5] Images from the Canticum, including echoes of *macula non est in te* are regularly used both in the Cancioneros and Catalan Certamen poetry of the period. However, sinlessness is rarely described using the *cultismo*, 'ynmaculada' or 'immaculada' which might be expected from present-day usage.

Villasandino, in 'Generosa muy fermosa' uses the epithet in the exclamatory first line of the final stanza: 'O beata ynmaculata' (F-D 599.49). The term 'ynmaculata' is in apposition to the explanatory 'Syn error', which seems to be used as an amplification of 'ynmaculata'. Villasandino maintains 'beata ynmaculata', close to the original Latin, whilst producing the vernacularized 'desde abeniçio' (F-D 599.50) in conjunction with it.

A reference to 'inmaculada' from a Valencian poet is found in Pere de Civillar's entry to the 1474 Certamen:

Aquesta es la madre de consolación
inmaculada, del todo perfeta.
¡O buenos ditxos del rey Salamón! (XXV.21)

Civillar uses the cultismo 'inmaculada' but adds the

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[5] The description of the Virgin as without stain can be traced back to Ephraim in the fourth century:
> Thou and Thy Mother are the only ones who are perfectly beautiful in every respect; for there is no spot in Thee, nor any taint in Thy Mother.

'The Nisibis Hymn', in Paul F. Palmer, *Mary in the Documents of the Church* (London: Burns and Oates, 1953), p. 232.

parallel 'del todo perfeta' in apposition to it. Also, he
consolidates the resonance of the Canticum present in the
culto term 'inmaculada' with his reference to the 'ditxos'
of Solomon. In addition, the poet continues in the stanza
with a further image drawn from the Canticum: 'Y est. es la
fuente de quien, cierto, mana \ sabor e scientia, segund
proffetía' (XXV.27). Civillar appears to refer to the
sealed fountain of the Song of Songs (4.12), taken from the
so-called 'garden song' in the Song of Songs (Murphy, *Song
of Songs*, p.158). In the Canticum, the garden song
immediately follows the song describing the woman's beauty,
which is termed a *wasf* by Murphy. Civillar follows the same
pattern in his poem, where the reference to the fountain,
echoing the 'garden song', follows an echo of the *wasf.*

In another of the entries to the 1474 Certamen, Gaçull
uses the term 'inmaculada', linking it not to the Conception
of Mary but to the Virgin Birth. Gaçull applies the image of
purity to the Virgin Birth: 'Ans e aprés tostemps inmaculada
\verge, del part restàs neta com vori' (XXXV.5). 'Tostemps'
goes some way to giving 'inmaculada' the timeless feel
characterisic of defences of the Virgin's immaculate nature.
However, 'ans e aprés' can only refer to the Virgin Birth.
On balance, it would appear that the epithet 'immaculada'
may have been applied to the Virgin Birth as well as to the
Immaculate Conception. 'Vori' or ivory, itself suggests
purity, since it is a milky-white colour. It may also
suggest the reference to the Beloved's neck as being like
ivory (Canticum 7.4), which would have the effect of

confirming and strengthening Gaçull's use of 'inmaculada' as an echo of the Canticum verse. The rest of the poem contains a number of images which may be taken from Canticum 4. Gaçull refers in the following stanza to 'la font brollant nostre salut' (XXXV.10) which might pick up verse 4.15: 'Fons hortorum: puteus aquarum viuentium, quae fluunt impetu de Libano'. The poet does not appear to use the Canticum theme in a particularly considered way. It would seem that the importance of the role of the Virgin at the Virgin Birth, leads Gaçull to use the word 'immaculada' to refer to her, thus underlining the preparation she has undergone to equip her for the role she is to take in the economy of salvation.

In a similar way, the Incarnation inspires Ramon Vivot, as he uses the epithet 'inmaculada' in his description of the Virgin in the 1486 Certamen:

> Que l'adveniment i santificada
> incarnació d'Adam lo darrer
> havia de ser dins un. immaculada,
> mar. i verge .semps, de crim no tocada. (XI.43)

Vivot rephrases 'immaculada' as 'de crim no tocada', partially no doubt to comply with the rhyme scheme, but also partially, it would seem, to ensure that the latinate term would be understood in the vernacular. In the poem, Vivot, thus, links sinlessness with the necessity for maternal purity, because the Virgin was to bear a divine Son. Just as for Gaçull, the importance of the role of the Virgin causes the poet to look back to her origins and to use an immaculist descriptor of her. In his poem, Vivot returns a number of times to the immaculate theme. He refers to mortal

sin as a 'màcula', claiming that it would be unlikely that the Virgin would be separated from heaven by mortal sin, since she is free from venial sin, which does not separate the sinner from heaven:

> E si lo Fill may permés, mare pia,
> qu.ab vós estigués peccat venial,
> qui de paradís no .ns tanca la via,
> tengud. aureu menys, o verge Maria,
> la màcula tal
> qui .ns tanca los cels ab culpa mortal. (XI.61)

Vivot's final point is that the devil would have won the day needing only to stain such an important created being as the Virgin:

> E de l'inimich de nostra natura
> fóre stat major l'enginy reprovat
> bastant macular tan gran creatura. (XI.79)

The link between sin and 'macular' which might be translated as 'stain' or 'cause to sin' is made clear by the poet as the poem develops. 'Màcula' becomes a recurrent theme throughout the poem, defining its immaculist intentions.

A small number of poets writing for the 1486 Certamen use 'immaculada'. Jaume de Olesa, in the 'Exordi o principi', which introduces his 1486 Certamen entry, uses 'immaculada' as a term of address for the Virgin:

> En la terr. és vuy lohada
> per vós, i .n los cels pels àngels,
> aquella Immaculada
> sens tota culpa .ngendrada. (X.Exordi.11)

Olesa qualifies the epithet with 'sens tota culpa .ngendrada', thus linking his interpretation of 'immaculada' to the moment at which the Virgin was engendered as well as to the manner in which she was conceived: 'sens tota culpa'.

The word '.ngendrada' appears to have a more physical implication than 'concebida' but here is intended as a synonym for it.

The use of 'immaculada' is to be found at the end of what is described by Ferrando Francés as 'una altra lliçó teològica d'escassa vàlua poètica' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.422). The poem relies on scholastic argument to present the case in favour of the Immaculate Conception. Although the purpose of Fenollar's epithet 'immaculada' is to qualify the Virgin at the Incarnation, Fenollar, nevertheless, links the phrase also to the Conception in his 1486 Certamen entry:

> La puritat que .1 Fill ha retenguda
> prenent la carn de vós, immaculada
> mare sens par, purament concebuda,
> vós altament en la sua venguda
> fós Montjuïch que l'aveu senyalada,
> significant a Qui tot pur venia
> que per senyal respondre li devia. (XVII.85)

'Prenent la carn de vós' is thus recapitulated in 'mare sens par', whilst 'immaculada' is recapitulated in 'purament concebuda'. The poet describes the 'venguda' of Jesus and the 'coming' to which he refers is the first coming, the Incarnation rather than the second. The use of 'Montjuïch' anchors the poem within a Barcelona context. 'Fós Montjuïch' may be intended to underline Mary's link with the Jewish nation. It may be intended in the sense of a holy place, where a meeting of God and humanity can occur. In any case, the 'Tornada' provides a very weak ending to the poem. The significance of 'fós Montjuïch' tails into oblivion. After the rhyme pattern '-uda' 'retenguda; '-ada' 'immaculada';

'-uda' 'concebuda'; '-uda' 'venguda'; '-ada' 'senyalada'; the weak endings '-ia' 'venia' and 'devia' fade into insignificance, contributing to the drift at the end of the poem.

The epithet 'inmaculada', as has been noted, is found on relatively few occasions in fifteenth-century poetry. It might be concluded that the latinate term is relatively rare in the period and is frequently qualified where it does appear. It is used more frequently by the poets writing for the 1486 Certamen, being used in three of the poems; it is used on two occasions in the 1474 Certamen. It is also found in Villasandino's 'Generosa muy fermosa', which is not a dedicated Conception poem. Even though poets did not in general use the term which would be most common today in expression of the Virgin's pure nature and origins, they did, nevertheless, express the allusion to Canticum 4.7 in other terms. 'Syn mansilla' is used more frequently in Castilian than 'inmaculada' to represent the biblical *et macula non est in te*.

3.3 THE SINLESSNESS OF THE VIRGIN IN POETRY PRIOR TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

'Mansilla' has been recorded as referring to 'moral stain' from the earliest examples of Castilian writing. There is, for example, the term 'manciella' used in reference to moral blemish, although not in connection with the Virgin, in Berceo's *Milagros*:

> Dísso.1 Jesu Christo 'Peidro, el mi amado,
> bien sabes tú qé disso David en su dictado

qe éssi folgarié en el monte sagrado
qe entró sin manciella e quito de pecado (165a).

'Syn mansilla' is applied to the Virgin by Juan Ruiz,
in the *Libro de buen amor (LBA)*, together with other
biblical phrases such as 'de gracia llena cumplida' and
'gratia plena'.[6] P. Antonio Riera Estarellas has written
about literary examples of what he considers to be
immaculist literature in the Peninsula, approaching the task
from a theological point of view. Riera Estarellas considers
that these epithets constitute 'afirmaciones casi
explícitas' of the immaculist doctrine (p.254). However, in
the absence of any clear immaculist context, whether the
dedication of a stanza to the Conception Joy or the
affirmation of the doctrine or feast or a reference to the
polemic, it must be said that, although such epithets
represent an important focal point in a consideration of the
development of Marian epithet and may even represent an
implicit contribution to immaculist literature, it is
impossible to affirm such tenuous references as immaculist
in intent.

3.3.1 'Syn mansilla' or 'sens màcula'

Yakov Malkiel traces the origin of 'mansilla' and its
dialectal variants *maziella, mancilla, manzilla* to the
Vulgar Latin *macella*. Specifically, according to Malkiel
'manziella' signified '(a) stain, spot (b) moral blemish,
stigma ..... (c) insult, offense (d) wound, gash, open

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[6] Juan Ruiz, Arcipreste de Hita, *Libro de buen amor*, ed. by
Jacques Joset, 2 vols., Clásicos castellanos, 14 and 17
(Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1974).

sore'.[7] Commenting upon the metaphoric uses of *macella,*
which would be most relevant for the purpose of this study,
Malkiel notes that such metaphoric uses were common in the
pagan period. Malkiel also notes that the term 'acquired
special significance with the spread and advent to power of
Christianity, in connection with such hitherto unheard of
notions as 'immaculate conception' and the like' (p.291).

An examination of epithets used by earlier Marian poets
will allow an assessment to be made as to whether references
to sinlessness vary in any real sense from those found in
fifteenth-century writing. For example, Berceo, in his
versified *Milagros*, most frequently uses the epithets
'Sennora', 'Gloriosa' and 'Madre'; 'Gloriosa' is used on
eighty-three occasions. Berceo does make references to
purity as in 'illesa incorrupta en su entegredat' (*Milagros.*
20d) but this reference from the context is related to the
Virgin's incorruptibility in the Virgin Birth rather than
the Conception. This is made clear by the context, where the
epithet is linked to the Virgin Birth. There are no
specifically immaculist epithets used in Berceo's poetry.
Epithets referring to purity are rare and 'syn mansiella',
without stain, although used, is not found in application to
the Virgin.

Alfonso el Sabio also makes use of 'sen mazela' but,
like Berceo, anchors the adverb firmly to the Virgin Birth

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[7] Yakov Malkiel, 'A Latin-Hebrew Blend: Hispanic
"desmalazado"', *HR*, XV (1947), 272-301, p.291.

'Qual é a que sen mazela \pariu e ficou donzela?'[8] A second example of 'sen mazela' in the *CSM* is once again in the context of the Incarnation. The epithet is used within a miracle which occurs to favour Christ's 'beeyta Madre, en que el quis encarnar' (*CSM* 361.47). The fact that the birth is painfree, 'sen door' is also mentioned. In the following stanza, the nuns chant to the 'Virgen sen mazela'. The epithet is used within a stanza dedicated to the mystery of the Incarnation and makes no reference to the Conception of the Virgin. It is clear from this usage of the epithet 'sin mansiella \sen mazela' that the context must be examined carefully, since in the earlier period poets use the terminology which will be found later in reference to the Immaculate Conception. In the early references, there is no connection to the doctrine of Mary Immaculate.

In the *LBA*, many epithets referring to the stainless nature of the Virgin, which apparently parallel fifteenth-century usage, are employed by the Arcipreste, including 'sin manzilla de pecados' (*LBA*.1662a), 'sin vileza' (*LBA*.1664b) and 'santa flor non tañida' (*LBA*. 1667a). It would seem that the Arcipreste might in these cases be referring to actual sins rather than to original sin, since he at no point makes any distinction. Indeed, the use of the plural 'pecados' in *LBA*.1662a) might bear out this interpretation. It might on the other hand be argued that there is no major difference between the Arcipreste's use of

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[8] Alfonso X el Sabio, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, ed. by Walter Mettmann, 4 vols. (Coimbra: Acta Universitatis Conimbrigensis, 1959-1964), 330.10.

the terms and the use made of such epithets in the
Cancioneros, a use which will be termed immaculist on
occasion. The only differences which can be noted with
regard to the immaculist Cancionero poets, is that, at some
point, the 'sin pecado' is clarified. Nuñez (F-D 874), for
example, amplifies 'de toda limpieza llena' by the addition
of 'sin pecado original' (F-D 874.34). If this is not the
case then, on other occasions, the reading of an epithet is
tempered by the fact that the poet states his purpose in the
title of the poem. This is the case with Juan Tallante's
'Otra obra suya sobre el pecado original', where the epithet
'libre de manzilla y exemida de pecado' (F-D 1095.82) takes
on the additional layer of meaning, free from original sin,
because of its context.

An early example of an epithet relating to freedom
from original sin is to be found in a poem called 'Lirs
virginals' which may represent an early example of a Catalan
Certamen, dated 1329-1332, by Ferrando Francés (*Els
certàmens poètics*, p.69). The poet proclaims the Virgin
'sola fos d'original munda ('Lirs virginals'.29) and with
these words seems to adhere to the immaculist doctrine
recently proclaimed by Duns Scotus in Paris. Ferrando
Francés considers that the poem is 'un dels primers
testimonis poètics de les controvèrsies immaculistes' (p.74)
and points to the extraordinary influence of Ramon Lull in
Aragón as well as to the official support for the doctrine
accorded by the royal House of Aragón (p.73). The second
stanza is read by Ferrando Francés as a confirmation of

immaculist adherence in the poem:

> Veixell sagrat d'on pres carn e figura,
> figura d'om le Deus que us figura
> ffigura .l cors ez aysi l'apura,
> Si co.l soleylls le clos veyre trespasa
> e ges no .l romp ney dexa colpa ne .l maca
> aysi fonch nats, Verges, sens nulla taca,
> cel vostre cors qui tot lo mon abrasa. ('Lirs
> virginals'.9)

The stanza is interesting, since it affords an early

transfer of the image of sunlight passing through glass,

formerly an image reserved for description of the Virgin

Birth, to the moment of conferral of grace by the Holy

Spirit.[9] Ferrando Francés is fully convinced that the

immaculist viewpoint is being discussed, although in the

second stanza the poet appears to focus 'sens nulla taca'

on the Virgin's birth without sin rather than her conception

without sin.

3.4 'SYN MANSILLA' AND 'SENS MACULA' IN CANCIONERO AND CERTAMEN POEMS

In fifteenth-century poetry, the epithet 'syn mansilla'

was applied consistently, though never exclusively, to the

Virgin. Indeed, Villasandino uses 'mansilla' in a variety of

contexts. For example, in reference to the King,

Villasandino writes:

> De Castilla é syn temor
> Fuy Rrey, mas por mansilla
> El señor de Jarandilla
> Es d'esto bien sabidor. (CB 212.10)

It is also used in a 'petiçion' to Pero Lopez de Ayala for

some cast-off garment. 'Manzilla' expresses the shame

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[9] Yrjö Hirn, 'La Verrière symbole de la maternité virginale', Neuphilologische Mitteilung, 29 (1928), 33-39.

Villasandino would feel, were he to receive a well-worn garment, 'rropa desdoblada':

> E bien saben todos que vos no traedes
> Ropa ninguna que sea senzilla;
> Por ende seria á mí grant manzilla
> Sy de vos oviesse rropa desdoblada. (*CB* 102.27)

'Mansilla' on its own is frequently found expressing shame or moral blemish. However, even by the fifteenth century, it is apparent from an examination of other poems in the *CB* that 'syn mansilla' never became exclusively reserved to the Immaculate Conception nor even to the Virgin. Villasandino uses 'syn mansilla' to describe the Virgin on one occasion but he also uses the same epithet in praise of the Infante:

> Este es lyndo syn toda mansilla,
> Fijo é nieto de Rreyes notables,
> de Rreynas notadas é muy onorables
> Por partes d'España é á aun de Seçilla: (*CB* 4.9)

The existence of non-immaculist and even non-Marian usage of the term 'syn mansilla' urges once again a cautious approach to the poetry of the fifteenth century, where context is all-important.

'Syn mansilla' is found in application to the Virgin by Villasandino in his poem which begins 'Generosa muy fermosa'. Villasandino recalls the reference to Canticum 4.7, since, in the opening line of his poem, he links 'syn mansilla' with 'muy fermosa'. 'Generosa muy fermosa \syn mansilla Virgen santa' (F-D 500.1). 'Fermosa' is used to recall 'pulchra' in the Canticum. This replacement was a legitimate poetic equivalent, according to the Glosa to

Gómez Manrique's 'Loores e suplicaciones a Nuestra Senyora':

> *Pulchra.* Segunt dize Salamon enel Libro de sus cantares, capitulo primero: *Pulchra es amica mea;* que quiere dezir: *hermosa,* o *pulchra* (que todo es uno) eres, mi amiga. (F-D 416 Glosa)

Thus the author of the Glosa himself interchanges 'hermosa' and 'pulchra', showing that the poets could equally transpose the two adjectives in reference to the Canticum 4.7 verse.

3.4.1 'Syn mansilla de pecado'

The meaning of 'mansilla' as a moral blemish or sin is regularly heightened by the addition of 'de pecado'. It often appears that the addition is so closely bound up with 'syn mansilla' as to be mentally added, even where it does not appear in the text, becoming 'syn mansilla de pecado'. In Fray Lope's *desir*, in the *CB* a description of the Virgin, quoted from Santo Domingo, includes the phrase, 'El padre dixo que fuera \ Syn mansilla de pecado' (*CB* 324.71). In the same poem, quoting from 'El devoto sant Alyfonso', the Virgin is described in a later verse as 'santa syn mansilla' (*CB* 324.95). In the same series of *preguntas* and *respuestas* between Fray Lope and Diego de Medina, the epithet 'syn mansilla de pecado' is repeated by Fray Lope in a rather more complex context:

> Contades á desmesura
> Mi escriptura,
> La que ove yo notado
> A loor de la ffigura
> E fechura
> Madre de Dios encarnado,
> La qual non fué criatura
> Atan pura
> Syn mansilla de pecado,
> Commo ella es altura
> Por pyntura
> De gran don previllejado. (*CB* 328.37)

The meaning of the stanza and its structure are not very clear. The first part of the stanza appears to refer back to the *desir*, written by Diego Martines de Medina (*CB* 327) and more particularly to stanzas three and four in which Diego appears to reject a particular story related about St Bernard.

The stanza in question refers to a piece of writing attested to be in favour of the Immaculate Conception by Fray Lope, the 'frayle onrado', addressed in the first line.

> Sy por vos, frayle onrrado,
> demostrado
> Me fuere por escriptura,
> Fago me marabillado,
> Sy glosado
> Non fuere por aventura. (*CB* 327.43)

Fray Lope seemingly refers back to the declaration that the writing is not original with the words 'contades a desmesura \ mi escriptura'. The following lines begin 'La que'. This may refer to 'mi escriptura', meaning that Fray Lope had written down the reference in praise of the appearance and action of the Virgin. It may also refer to 'desmesura'. In addition, it is uncertain how the second part of the stanza, as we have it, fits to the first. Some link word appears to be missing, perhaps 'de la', although this would not fit easily with the existing metrification. The second part of the stanza, beginning 'madre de Dios encarnado', is also difficult to interpret:

> La qual non fué criatura
> atan pura
> syn mansilla de pecado. (*CB* 328.43)

These words seem to run contrary to the beliefs of Fray Lope and may be referring to the supposed beliefs of Diego

Martines. Indeed, elsewhere in the same poem, Fray Lope
claims to render the maculist viewpoint in 'Pecadora la
llamades\ mal errades' (*CB* 32.193). The final lines of the
stanza are equally unclear. It may be that the poet is
referring to a painting of the Virgin showing her in receipt
of the gift of grace.

A certain repetitive usage of the same phrase is
justifiable in Fray Lope's poem, since he purports to be
supporting his arguments with quotations from Doctors of the
Church. However, it must be indicated that the lack of
variation in the application of the epithet and its lack of
sharpness, contribute to a certain triteness for the
present-day reader.

Another of the Castilian poets, Tallante, uses 'libre
de manzilla' to balance 'exemida de pecado' in the stanza
immediately following a description of the Virgin's
Immaculate Conception:

> Fuste, Virgen, concebida
> con aquel cargo y descargo
> que traen la muerte y vida,
> con la entrada y la sallida
> delo dulce y delo amargo:
> por natura subjugada
> a culpa agena,
> y por gracia libertada
> de tal pena. (F-D 1095.73)

Tallante's description includes five aspects of life, each
balanced with their opposite: 'cargo ... descargo'; 'muerte
... vida'; 'entrada ... sallida'; 'subjugada ...
libertada'. The lines show how the Virgin is part of
humanity and yet apart from it.

> Atan libre de manzilla
> y exemida de pecado,
> que en ti, solica, senzilla,
> alli junta la quadrilla
> de todo lo preservado; (F-D 1095.82)

'Libre de mansilla' is used by Tallante as an equivalent of 'syn mansilla', and, in addition, the Canticum allusion is paralleled by 'exemida de pecado' which serves to consolidate the meaning of the 'mansilla' epithet. 'Solica, senzilla' emphasize the humanity of the Virgin and also her passivity in the face of 'lo que Dios dio'. Although the poem is very formal in language and construction, it contains one or two images which stand out for the reader because they seem at variance with that formality. 'Solica' seems to emphasize the simplicity of the youthful Mary taking up her role in the plan of salvation 'alli junta la quadrilla \ de todo lo preservado' (F-D 1095.85).

The Catalan equivalent of 'mansilla' is the more latinate 'màcula' which occurs in noun form in many Certamen poems. 'Màcula' recurs as a theme throughout the 1486 Certamen entry of Ramon Vivot. Vivot adopts an argument, based on postulation. Being subject to venial sin, the lesser evil, is compared with being subject to mortal sin. The conditional perfect verb forms links the style of argument with scholastic methodology (see above, p.91).

> E si lo Fill may permés, mare pia,
> qu .ab vós estigués peccat venial,
> qui de paradís no .ns tanca la via,
> tengud. aureu menys, o verge Maria,
> la màcula tal,
> qui .ns tanca los cels ab culpa mortal. (XI.61)

The words 'màcula tal' are placed in the stressed position within the stanza by falling within the *pie quebrado* which

emphasizes the association of 'màcula' with sin. However, in Vivot's poem 'màcula' is associated not with original sin but with mortal sin. Vivot returns to 'màcula' at a later stage in the poem to combine it with a reference to love. The emphasis of the poem is on the loving relationship between the son and the mother. The word 'màcula' is used as part of a two-part proposition. Either there was no stain in the Virgin 'o no .uria Déu tal màcula .ntesa' or there was little care for her from Christ-God 'o l'amor d'Aquell en vós no fon mesa':

> [...] Si ensemps compresa
> ab los altres fos en culpa semblant,
> o no .uria Déu tal màcula .ntesa,
> o l'amor d'Aquell en vós no fon mesa,
> de vós poch curant,
> lo que no .s déu dir, mare triumphant. (XI.73)

The very idea of such a stain ever tainting the Virgin is roundly rejected in the final line of the stanza as being unbecoming. As well as the reference to the Birth of Christ which had to take place in an Immaculate Virgin Mother, expressed using 'immaculada', references to 'màcula' or 'macular' recur on three other occasions in the poem.

Fenollar uses 'màcula' in his entry to the 1486 Certamen. The poet has compared St Elizabeth, bearing John the Baptist to St Anne, bearing the Virgin. The Virgin is described *in utero* 'digna us tengué, perquè res trist may entre \ en pura neu de màcula tan negra' (XVII.45). The verse contains an allusion to original sin, which is described in terms of a stain on the white snow of the pure intra-uterine Virgin. The poet's use of 'màcula' to describe original sin connects the term 'màcula' in the reader's mind

to Canticum 4.7.

Another use of 'màcula' in nominal form is to be found
in the Tornada of Balaguer's entry to the same Certamen:
'Filla cobrà, de màcula .partada \ començ de pau e gràcia
guanyada' (XXI.89). 'De màcula .partada' echoes *et macula
non est in te* from Canticum 4.7. Features of the new
beginning: 'començ de pau' in the New Covenant are opposed
to the Virgin's exclusion from the fruits of the Old
Covenant 'de màcula .partada'.

3.4.2 'Macular' and 'manzillar'

Some poets use the verbal 'manzillar' or the *culto* form
'macular' which also echo Canticum 4.7. The verb form
related to 'màcula' is thus found in Jerònimi Fuster's
winning entry to the 1486 Certamen:

> ¿qui porà dir de vós, excelsa dea,
> creada .n tot ab tota gentilea,
> que .n algun temps de colpa us maculassen? (1.27)

The poem transposes *et macula non est in te* into a verb and
turns it to the question form, using a scholastic rhetorical
question to show the untenability of the concept of the
Virgin with a stained nature (see above, p.87).

In addition, the nature of the stain is designated in
the question as 'culpa', the blame resulting from original
sin. The question follows an opening stanza which develops
a protracted creation image, which sets an immaculist
context for the poem (see below, p.208).

Mossén Francí de Castellví also deepens the link to the Canticum 4.7 verse in his poem submitted to the 1474 Certamen. Castellví writes:

> Amiga de Dios en el siglo creada,
> y antes que nasciesses por Dios escogida
> Nasciendo en el ventre, nuncha manzillada. (V.11)

'Amiga de Dios' is used to recall *amica mea*, echoing Canticum 4.7, whilst 'nuncha manzillada' recalls *et macula non est in te*. The purity of the Virgin is marked as a pre-birth event, 'antes que nasciesses'. The theme of sanctification is continued in the following line in 'Nasciendo en el ventre', in which the idea of rebirth, explicit baptismal imagery, represents cleansing from sin such as would occur at the pre-redemption of Mary. The poet's use of 'nuncha' ensures that there can be no possibility of reading his verses as sanctificationist, the point being that there was never any possibility of sin in this stainless Virgin. The reference to 'manzillada' is cemented with a myriad of exotic epithets inspired by the biblical poems: 'Palma, ciprés, flor,...\cedro, nardo, mirra' (V.21,23) all echo the profusion of scents and spices included in Canticum poems. Warner notes (p.99) that the Virgin, because she is sinless, 'smells ambrosial'.

In the very first line of the poem, Castellví places the Canticum stamp on his poem by referring to the Virgin as 'Del gran Redemptor madre hi esposa' (V.1). The Canticum image of the bride is picked up again in the first stanza with the image of the Lover, resting with the Beloved: 'Del muy Soberano espijada rosa\ en quien el Eterno se huelga e

reposa' (V.3) in an image now familiar in a mystical context from poetry by San Juan de la Cruz.[10] In Castellví's poem, the purpose of the image is to give a thematic unity to the poem with brush-strokes of Canticum allusions.

3.4.3 The use of synonyms to replace 'màcula' or 'mansilla'

In the Castilian poems studied, 'manzillada' or 'syn mansilla' are, on occasion, varied by the use of the synonymn 'tañida', which, in turn, becomes a standard descriptive term applied to the Virgin. Fernán Pérez de Guzmán in his 'Cient trinadas a loor de la Virgen Maria' uses tañida, adding 'de culpa' where 'pecado' is replaced by 'culpa'. 'No tañida' then conveys the sense of *et macula non est in te*:

> Concebida
> no tañida
> de culpa, mas eximida
>
> del malvado
> e grant pecado
> quel mundo a contaminado. (F-D 302.19)

Guzmán places the Virgin's Conception 'concebida' in rhyme with 'no tañida', underlining her unblemished nature and linking both to her exemption from universal, or original, sin, which has corrupted the world.

In the Catalan poems examined, there are many examples of the use of synonyms to replace 'màcula'. Jaume de Olesa

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[10] San Juan de la Cruz, 'Canciones del alma' in *Noche oscura* ed. by José Vicente Rodríguez and Federico Ruíz Salvador, 2nd. edn. (Madrid: Editorial de espiritualidad, 1991), p.43.
> En mi pecho florido,
> que entero para él solo se guardaba,
> allí quedó dormido,
> y yo le regalaba,
> y el ventalle de cedros aire daba.

in the 1486 Certamen uses 'taca' to represent original sin, affirming that the stain or sin of the old Adam was not present in the Virgin: 'Y así molt més la taca perpetrada \ del vell Adam en vós nunqu. és estada' (X.80). The line as written by Olesa appears to expand on the Canticum 4.7 phrase *et macula non est in te*: 'la taca [...] en vós nunqu. és estada', whilst using 'taca' as an alternative to 'màcula'. The reference to the sin committed by Adam immediately follows and parallels another link with the Genesis story, since Olesa first links sin to the 'sentència dada d'Eva \ pel crim' and then to the 'taca' committed by Adam.

Moreover, the stainless nature of the Virgin is, frequently, linked explicitly to reference to original sin. Jordi Centelles, in his poem submitted to the 1474 Certamen, uses 'taca' in the first stanza of his poem: 'taca no us fes peccat original' (I.9). A similar link is made by Mossén Guillem Mercader in his entry to the 1486 Certamen: 'Donchs ¿qui dirà siau en res tacada \ del crim primer?' (XXII.6), where 'crim primer' is obviously equivalent to 'peccat original'.

These uses of 'taca' to replace 'mansilla' are by no means isolated examples in the Certamen poems. 'Taca' is used also in the poem 'Sense títol' submitted to the 1486 Certamen. The poem proceeds on the basis of the question form. Early in the poem there is a reference to original sin, described as 'Comuna ley'. In conjunction with this

reference to original sin, the Virgin's differentiation from the rest of humankind is underlined in Canticum terms: 'Comuna ley vos ferà imperfeta \ y vostre fill ¿no us ha fet tota bella?' (XII.29) In this line, 'tota bella' sets up a resonance of 'tota pulchra' in the mind of the reader. By the final stanza the poet uses 'taca' to represent original sin. The question posed is how the Virgin could be given the name 'Mother of God' if she were stained. By implication, the stain referred to is the stain of original sin.

The fact that within the 1486 Certamen, 'taca' is used as a straight substitute for the word 'peccat' bears out this interpretation: 'Mas veig que pretenen original taca \ no fer-vos gens leja, puix no .s propi vici' (XVI.61). This reference to original sin using 'taca' for 'peccat' shows two points. Firstly, when poets wrote about 'stain', they, by inference, meant 'sin'. Secondly, Loís Roïç takes the opportunity to revile those opponents who claim that original sin is present in the Virgin because it is not an actual sin. The poet adds that the people who argue that original sin is present in the Virgin 'us donen escusa molt flaca' (XVI.63). To rhyme with 'flaca', the poet uses 'taca' again. The position of the word at the end of the line gives it a high profile in the stanza:

> Mas yo dich que us donen escusa molt flaca,
> que l'ànima bella, la carn si la taca
> la pena reporta de gran malefici. (XVI.63)

It is interesting to note that Roïç's poem which won the 'Joya' for which it was entered, in the view of Ferrando

Francés, shows more evidence of correctness with regard to the arguments adduced than literary merit: 'La composició de Lluís Roís no ten cap relleu poètic' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.422). Denigration of the views of maculists was of great moment to the instigator of the 1486 Certamen, Ferrando Dieç, as has been indicated in the discussion of scholastic influences (see above, p.85).

A combination of 'tacha' with another immaculist theme is found in the poem by Miqualot Pereç. Pereç unites the theme of staining to the action of the divine will. The importance of the will of God as a factor in the preservation of the Virgin from original sin was examined in the chapter exploring scholastic influences on fifteenth-century poetry (see above, p.94).

Pereç begins by openly describing the immaculate nature of the Virgin, using the epithet 'del primer crim exempta':

Vós sola sou, humil Verge Maria,
vexell perfet, del primer crim exempta.
Déu eternal, preservada us tenia,
en res en vós de tacha no volia,
puix Ell volgué de vos pendre la .mprempta. (XXIII.6)

The poet amplifies a traditional image like 'vexell perfet' by combining it with 'del primer crim exempta'. He develops the concept of the Virgin as Mother, implied in 'vexell', adding the notion of her preparation for that role, implied in del primer crim exempta'.[11] Having established the purpose of the immaculate nature of the Virgin, Pereç then

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[11] The Virgin is described as 'Veixell sagrat' in 'Lirs virginals', an entry for the possible 'Certamen en llaors de la Verge Maria', dated 1329 by Ferrando Francés.

introduces the theme of the will of God, which has a Scotist

resonance. Not only was there no stain in the Virgin, but

God himself willed it to be so, 'tacha no volia'. Finally,

the poet ends the stanza by linking the Canticum image

directly to the Incarnation: 'puix Ell volgué de vos pendre

la .mprempta'. Miqualot Pereç's poem was submitted to the

1474 Certamen.

3.4.4 <u>The use of the verbal form 'taquar'</u>

Johan Verdanxa, in his entry to the 1474 Certamen,

refers to the stain of original sin as well as tying the

freedom from such a stain to a pre-natal time:

> Ans que nasqués portàs estesa vela
> d'ús de rahó   ab encesa canela,
> y no us taquà l'original peccat. (XIII.48)

The 'estesa vela' appears to provide some sort of protection

to the Virgin from outside influences, giving the impression

of the veiled eastern lady. The image is not undermined by

the fact that it is a metaphorical veil 'd'ús de rahó' to

which the author is referring. 'Canela' is rather more

problematic. 'Canyela' usually means cinnamon, although,

according to Coromines, it can often be found with the

spelling 'canela'.[12] If 'canela' is read as 'canyela',

cinnamon, this still leaves the problem of 'encesa', bright

or shining, which does not combine readily with 'canela'.

The echo of oriental spices may underpin the Canticum

reference in the stanza. Verdanxa provides an example of the

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[12] Joan Coromines, *Diccionari etimològic i complementari de la llengua catalana*, amb la col.laboració de Josep Gulsoy i Max Cahner, 9 vols. (Barcelona: Curial Edicions Catalanes, Caixa de Pensions 'La Caixa', 1991), III, p.497.

use of the synonym 'taquà' to echo 'màcula'. 'Taquà' in verbal form is linked explicitly with 'l'original peccat' in the poem. According to the poet, the result of original sin is to stain the person affected. *Macula non est in te* is explicitly suggested by the use of 'taquà' in Verdanxa's poem.

The point could be raised as to how synonyms can echo the Canticum, if they do not use the direct translation 'màcula'. From Centelles' poem, it can be inferred that the poet has the Canticum in mind, even though he uses 'taca' rather than 'màcula'. Centelles refers to 'lo rey quant vós prés en esposa' in his 1474 entry (I.12) which echoes the nuptial flavour of the Canticum. Also the point might be made that, even as Vivot in his 1486 entry uses 'màcula' to render original sin, so Loís Roïç uses 'taca', writing 'original taca' (1486 Certamen, XVI.61). To the Valencian poets studied, the terms seem to have been interchangeable.

3.4.5 Images which imply 'sens màcula' or 'sin mansilla'

There are many variant forms which convey the sense of freedom from the stain of sin, although they may not explicitly use the words original sin. Francesc de Amezcua, in his 'Canço de la consepsio de nostra dona' uses 'sent de original compressa' in which 'compressa' is applied to original sin.

Another of the Catalan poets, Vallmanya, writing for the 1486 Certamen, has a colourful and sustained image in

replacement of 'màcula'. Having referred to the Virgin as 'nau preciosa tallada .n bon signe' (V.49), he then considers the effect of original sin as woodworm on the ship: 'hon lo mortal verme del crim tan maligne \ corcar pogué nunca' (V.52).

Moreover, the description of sin as 'verme' links to the Genesis story and the worm or serpent who caused the original Fall. Vallmanya is not the only poet to use this manner of representing corruption. Describing the divine 'mescla' of human and divine, Tallante evokes a similar image to convey the sense of corruption in the flesh, in his entry for the 1486 Certamen:

> Ca donde .l Eterno depuso la mano,
> formando la mescla d.umano y divino,
> contempla que donde tomólo tan digno
> que fue de materia do no .ntró gusano. (XIV.57)

In general, the terms used by Roig to describe sinlessness are more varied than those found in the Cancionero poets:

> Del cens e ronya
> e vectigal tan general
> sola n'és franca. (*Espill* III.2, p.155)

The words give a three-fold elaboration of the nature of original sin. 'Cens' is taken from the Latin *census* and was used from the twelfth century onwards 'en el sentit de contracte i dret que es paga' (Coromines II, p.665). 'Vectigal' also is a type of tax payment. Coromines comments on the 'qüestion que causà en el S. XV entre les nostres ciutats i el rei la imposició de vectigals regis'(Coromines, XI, p.79). The use of 'vectigals', not apparently used

elsewhere in this context, thus very succinctly sums up the conflict, as well as the debt implicit in the concept of original sin. 'Ronya' is placed between the two fiscal payments, meaning, according to Coromines, in this context 'un concepte vague i comprensiu de diverses impureses materials i morals' (VII, p.453). Roig, with his medical knowledge, may have wished to refer more specifically than allowed by Coromines to the original meaning of 'ronya' as 'sarna' or scabies. Physical impurity, which represents original sin, is placed between two types of fiscal debt, This compact image, thus, expresses not only the debt inherent in original sin but also the physical otherness, ugliness and conflict implied by original sin. The concept of illness to represent original sin is not confined to Roig's poem. Montesino too in his poem 'Reina del cielo' in his Cancionero (*CM*) refers to original sin as 'el mal pestilente'.[13] Helen Boreland, in her admirable study of Montesino's work, examines Montesino's representation of the Immaculate Virgin as conqueror of the plague.[14]

Another colourful and integrated way of expressing the purity and stainlessness of the Virgin is incorporated into Guillem Mercader's winning entry submitted for the 'Joya' of

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[13] Cancionero de Montesino, in *Romancero y cancionero sagrados: colección de poesías cristianas, morales y divinas sacadas de las obras de los mejores ingenios españoles*, ed. by Don Justo de Sancha, BAE, 35 (Madrid, Rivadeneyra, 1950), p.421.

[14] Helen Boreland, 'Two Medieval Marian Poets: Aspects of the Work of Gonzalo de Berceo and Ambrosio Montesino' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of London, 1981), p.312.

the 'carta de navegar'. Mercader uses a number of nautical images in his poem. The nautical imagery corresponds to the 'Joya' he sought to win. The third stanza begins by describing the Virgin at the Incarnation in terms of a ship: 'Vós sou la nau portant lo pa de vida' (XXII.25). The metaphor operates at various levels, since the host is normally stored in the aumbry. The aumbry is, thus, a holy place for the reservation of the host, akin to the Ark of the Covenant. It may well be the association Old Covenant-New Covenant and Ark-aumbry-ship which suggests the metaphor to Mercader. In the poem, the vessel which contains the bread becomes a ship. The nautical flavour is maintained throughout the stanza, which recalls the ship as an image of divine motherhood. The stanza ends on a nautical image: 'Lo Redemptor portàs dins vostra barca \ on falsa may tingués bala ni marca' (XXII.35). The battle scars, implied in 'bala' and 'marca', borne by the ship which has been attacked, are, therefore, used by Mercader as a figurative representation of the *macula* of Canticum 4.7.

'Sens ve' is used to replace 'sens màcula' in the *Espill*. In this instance, drawing on a traditional *Vae\Ave* Latin word-play, Roig terms the Virgin 'La sens "ve!" pura' (p.159), to link purity with the lack of *vae* or sinlessness. Roig begins with the eagle of Patmos which cried 've' (*vae*) three times; at the Annunciation, Mary is addressed 'ave'. The greeting reverses the Fall, 'capgirant Eva', and marks the Virgin as the New Eve. It also marks deliverance from 've', which can be interpreted as both sin and death. Roig

shows that 'sens ve' is linked to the Canticum verse *et macula non est in te*, by his use of 'la tota neta', 'la tota bella' and 'mare i amiga' in the three subsequent lines. Rosanna Cantavella, commenting on this part of the *Espill* notes that the *Ave\Eva\Vae* word-play was not much used in the fifteenth century, although it was common in the thirteenth.[15]

A particularly colourful image of stainlessness used by Roig is 'ver or sens lliga' (*Espill* III.2, p.159), in which the Virgin is compared to pure gold without trace elements. The image follows directly on the word-play on *vae*, and is linked to it by assonance 'sens "ve"' and 'ver or sens lliga'. Reference to unsullied precious metals is frequently found in fifteenth-century laudatory poetry.

A similar image referring to precious metals is used by Tallante in the final 'Tornada' of his poem, 'Otra obra suya sobre la libertad de Nuestra Señora del pecado original':

> Mirad que triunfo dela coronada
> que quanto mas creen taçar su metal,
> muy mas resplandece su mas essencial,
> por ser sobre liga de plata cendrada. (F-D 1082.85)

The context is a final jibe at the opponents of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception: 'Quanto mas creen taçar el metal', is used to decry the maculist preaching and writing of the period. The image thus echoes some of the insults

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[15] Rosanna Cantavella, *Els cards i el llir: una lectura de l'Espill de Jaume Roig*, Assaig (Barcelona: Quaderns Crema, 1992), p.119. Cantavella highlights usage of the word-play in *Maldit bendit* by Cerverí de Girona. Similarly, *Eva\Ave* word-play is used by Alfonso el Sabio: 'Entre Av' e Eva \gran departiment' a' (*CSM* 60.1).

regularly hurled at the maculists, who are considered to dishonour or 'taçar' the Virgin by their rejection of the doctrine. It is clear that the very term 'maculist' as the term to define the opponents of the doctrine shows that the common view was that the maculists wished to 'stain' the Virgin's purity. The very concept of maculism is highlighted by Tallante. 'Quanto mas creen taçar su metal', whether corresponding to metal work or to alchemy, is balanced by 'muy mas resplandece su mas essencial'. The paradox of the nature of the Virgin is that her true immaculate essence shines through the tarnish caused by opponents of the doctrine.

Yet another Valencian poet draws on the metalwork image as a substitute image for 'macula' in his 1486 Certamen entry. It may well be that Miquel Miralles was familiar with the work of the other poets. The *Espill* was finished in 1460 and Tallante also was a popular and rather more gifted poet whose work was likely to be known in Valencia, since he submitted an entry to the 1486 Certamen. Miralles picks up the image of gold as the purest of metals:

        Lo sol molt clar, per excel.lent noblea
        creà .ls metayls y és d'argentviu la pasta
        y en aspres lochs l'or més perfet conrea,
        lo qual, com hix,   trau tanta gentilea
        que l'aspretat no l'altera ni .1 guasta. (VI.13)

The second stanza of the poem follows an extremely ornate introductory stanza about Phoebus, which is badly undermined by the addition of a reference to creation at the very end of the stanza (see below, p.208). Miralles carries through the sun image, seemingly using the sun to represent the

Creator, perhaps seeking to draw out a comparison between the sun and the golden metal. The poet wishes to make the point that gold is a pure metal 'trau tanta gentilea' which cannot rust or spoil: 'l'aspretat no l'altera ni .1 guasta' (VI.17). However, the overall effect is clumsy with 'y és d'argentviu la pasta' followed by 'y en aspres lochs'. The poet seems to intend to refer to the raw material for producing the metals in 'd'argentviu la pasta'. As with other poets who use this alchemist description of the Virgin, the intent is to show the Virgin as a pure substance or as made of a material not prone to stain or damage. In this sense, the image is a resonance of the Canticum verse.

The contrast between gold and other metals in reference to the Virgin appears once again in Cathalà's entry to the 1486 Certamen. Cathalà moves from the idea of the different metals all being part of nature to a description of gold:

> Dels quals lo més pur   bell or se nomena,
> qui té de valer més alta la cima,
> hi resta perfet   sens ombra neguna
> d'aquell fonament   que scuredat mostra. (XIII.52)

Cathalà not only decribes gold as 'lo més pur', thus drawing out the comparison with his subject, the Virgin Mary, who is the purest because of her immaculate origins, but comments also on its value, 'té de valor més alta la cima'.

The image of the Virgin as pure gold was particularly popular with the poets of the 1486 Certamen. Jordi Centelles refers to pure gold tainted with a mixture of lead to represent the effect original sin might have had on the Virgin:

> Lo gran sacerdot sanct papa de Roma,
> de l'orde sacrat qui tal ver confessa,
> mirant que l'or net per culpa s'enploma,
> dient preservada per letra, per ploma
> nos mana digam ¡o pura deessa!
> mudant la moneda d'aquell primer cambi
> en or tostemps pur pagant lo recambi. (XX.18)

The image is monetary. The coinage, 'la moneda', is debased by the addition of base metals 's'enploma'. Money-changing is used to represent the return to grace operated in the Virgin 'mudant la moneda'. The Fall is described as 'aquell primer cambi' from which the Virgin reinstates the human race in grace 'pagant lo recambi'. By implication, this change must be through the Incarnation, although the poet does not say so precisely. The effect is to make the Virgin appear as *Redemptrix*. He also steps over the limits assigned to the Virgin by calling her 'deessa'. The preservation of the Virgin as 'or pur' is at the instigation of the Pope. The Pope in question is Sixtus IV, who recognized the feast of the Immaculate Conception. He belonged to the Franciscan Order, which the poet refers to as 'de l'orde sacrat'.

The Canticum verse 4.7 seems to be in the mind of Vallmanya in his entry to the 1486 Certamen:

> No veig ni menys trobe rahó que .m demostre,
> mirant quanta gràtia en vós fon prevista,
> aquell perfet Mestre, redemptor Déu nostre,
> per què la man dreta volgué fos loch vostre
> si ja en la squerra del crim fósseu vista. (V.42)

Using scholastic vocabulary apparent in 'rahó que .m demostre' and an indefinite tense in the scholastic mode apparent in 'fósseu', Vallmanya argues that, since God wished to reserve a place for the Virgin at his right hand, taking as the point of departure the Assumption and

Coronation of the Virgin, this would have been impossible had the Virgin ever been in sin 'si ja en la squerra del crim fósseu vista'.

It is possible to conclude from the examination of synonyms of 'màcula' that by far the most common substitute is 'taca' in nominal or verbal form. A number of the poets use an image of pure gold taken from alchemy to express the stainless nature of the Virgin. Alchemy is particularly used in the 1486 Certamen, as is the image of pure gold with the connotation of coin-minting. There are by far a majority of Canticum 4.7 references in the 1486 Certamen. There is a relative paucity of image development based on the idea of stainlessness from Cancionero poetry, whilst use of synonyms or variants on the theme of *et macula non est in te* are also less frequent in the 1474 Certamen.

3.5 BEAUTY AS A DESCRIPTOR OF THE VIRGIN AND AS A CANTICUM REFERENCE

Many of the Catalan poets include references to beauty which have resonances of the Canticum and it is clear that many of these can be taken to imply reference to the second part of the Canticum verse. One such reference is the question in the entry 'sense títol' to the 1486 Certamen. The unknown poet writes: 'Comuna ley vos ferà inperfeta \ y vostre Fill ¿no us ha fet tota bella?' (XII.29). Although the poet uses 'bella' for 'pulchra', his use of 'tota' clearly fixes the Canticum 4.7 reference.

Reference to the Glosa to Gómez Manrique's poem (F-D
416), serves to show that 'pulchra', 'bella' and 'hermosa'
were completely interchangeable. In the Glosa, the reference
'pulchra' is glossed as follows:

> *Pulchra*. Segunt dize Salamon enel libro de sus
> Cantares, capitulo primero: *Pulcra es, amica mea;*
> (p.149)

The writer of the Glosa and Gómez Manrique in his poem,
thus, connect '*pulchra*' with the Canticum Canticorum, which
is to be read, according to the Glosa, in its spiritual
meaning: 'hermosa por gracia e sin macula ni manzilla'
(p.149). According to the writer of the Glosa, Mary is
beautiful, through the infusion of grace. She is without
stain, '*pulchra* sin pecado'. Commenting on the word for
beauty, the author specifically interjects 'que todo es uno'
(F-D II, p.149). The words are interchangeable.

Whilst it would be impossible to study every reference
to beauty in the Cancioneros and Certàmens, some poets
return to allude to the Canticum throughout their poem, as
well as making close reference to verse 4.7 and it is these
poems which will be examined. The first poet to use the
Canticum in this way is Luys Cathalà writing to win the
'robí' in the 1486 Certamen. The poet returns to the theme
of beauty on several occasions through his poem. The third
stanza of the poem weaves a reference to the absence of the
stain of sin from the Virgin with the scholastic argument
from necessity 'car era mester', whilst declaring that the
Virgin is 'bella .mprempta': 'Car era mester, per ser bella
.mprempta \de taca semblant que fósseu exempta' (XIII.35).

In the following stanza, Cathalà blends 'bella' with a
creation image, 'aquell ha pogut crear-vos tan bella'
(XIII.44). Once again scholastic influence can be attested
in the use of the words 'ha pogut' which express God's
ability to undertake the necessary action on behalf of the
Virgin (see above, p.94). The fifth stanza contains the
alchemy image with its reference to 'bell or' (XIII.52). The
sixth stanza of Cathalà's poem represents how natural
objects of beauty can be created from the earth 'l'escur
element':

> L'escur element que .1 viure sustenta,
> transfforma .n crestall; y axí .ll nos presenta,
> claríssim per tot, sens propis defectes,
> ni cessa d'obrar majors maravelles,
> formant pulcrituts de tanta puxança,
> ruhins diamants hi pedres molt belles. (XIII.63)

Glass is made from earth and the earth also produces
precious stones. The implication with regard to the Virgin
is that, just as stones and materials of exceptional beauty
can be produced by the earth from unlikely ingredients, it
is possible for a woman of exceptional merits to be produced
by the 'escur element' of human parents.

Cathalà draws together all his references to beauty in
a references to Canticum 4.7, in the 'Tornada':

> Si pochs arguments offusquen la via
> hon molt satisfet mon creure reposa,
> ab cent mil rahons l'entendre .s canbia,
> seguint los acorts hi dolç. armonia,
> De vós entonant: 'Es tota formosa'. (XIII.85)

Even though the poet does not use 'pulchra' to echo the
Canticum verse, because of the use of 'tota', the allusion
to Canticum 4.7 is eminently clear. The argument for the

acceptance of synonyms to replace words closer in root to words from the Canticum is paralleled in acceptance of 'taca' to replace 'màcula' (see above, p.125).

A similar pattern of references to the Virgin's pre-eminent beauty can be discerned in Cathalà's entry to the 1474 Certamen. Cathalà combines creation imagery 'Ab plenitut eternalment creada' (XXX.11) with references to the Virgin as the bride 'Del Creador tan agradable sposa' (XXX.16). He also accords the epithet 'formosa' (XXX.19) to the Virgin. The ideas from this second stanza of his 1474 entry appear to have been reworked to form the backbone of Cathalà's entry for the later Certamen.

Reference to beauty and to the Canticum itself, as well as to the author of the Canticum, is made by Vallmanya in his entry to the 1486 Certamen: 'Vent Salamó quanta bellea us esmalta \ féu-vos la cadira tan rica y tan alta' (V.71). Vallmanya also includes a stanza dedicated to the perfect purity of the Virgin, in which he considers that she would prefer to suffer the pains of hell than to have been under the shadow of sin for even one instant. Together with the references to beauty and to the Canticum, Vallmanya provides an immaculist focus to the poem:

> Si .n temps del misteri, tan alt sens defecte,
> de vostra molt sacra concepció santa
> trobat vos haguésseu en tan gran effecte
> d'elegir les penes sens ésser infecte,
> o sols un punt d'ora l'original manta,
> en cert eligíreu l'infern, ans sens culpa
> que star sots les ales de crim gens compresa. (V.61)

The theme of beauty, central to the Canticum, is a thread woven through Fuster's winning poem. 'Bella' is used to describe the Virgin as Mother, a 'munde tabernacle' (I.23). The poem also returns consistently to the theme of the beautiful raiment accorded to the Virgin.

From the consideration of the Virgin as stainless, many poets move naturally to term her clean. Many of the poets entering the 1474 Certamen use epithets based on 'neta'. Vilalba, in his entry for the 1474 Certamen, uses the epithet, 'neta del vil peccat original' (XXXIII.10); Mestre Lorenç Diamant calls the Virgin 'Neta sens crim' (XXVI.30); Pere Alcanyiç uses the phrase 'del crim primer fós neta' (XLII.18); Luís Monyoç calls the Virgin 'neta sens taca' (XVI.24); Roig uses 'la tota neta..... la tota bella' (*Espill* III.2, p.159) in an echo of the Canticum verse 'Tota pulchra es'.

3.5.1 Tota Pulchra Es

The *Tota pulchra es* is described by O'Connor as a representation of the Immaculate Conception in which:

> The Virgin stands in the center, upon the clouds, between heaven and earth.... Symbols taken from Sacred Scripture are arranged round about her or arranged one above the other. An inscription taken from the Canticle of Canticles (4:7) specifies the doctrinal sense of the composition: *Tota pulchra es amica mea et macula non est in te.....* Hence the title given to this theme, which incidentally, borrows some of its symbols also from Solomon's poem (p.476).

The fifteen symbols traditionally associated with the *Tota pulchra es* are the sun, the moon, the star, the cedar of Lebanon, the olive tree, the rose-garden of Jericho, the lily among thorns, the rod of Jesse, the gate of Heaven, the

city of God, the tower of David, the garden enclosed, the
fountain of the gardens, the well of living waters, the
unblemished mirror. Each of the symbols is associated with
particular biblical verses (O'Connor, p.476, n.39).[16]

The earliest example of the *Tota pulchra es* dates from
1503 and occurs in the *Heures de la Vierge à l'usage de
Rome*, printed in Paris. Another example occurs in the *Heures
de la Vierge à l'usage de Rouen*, also printed in Paris in
the same year.[17] Suzanne Stratton records two examples of
the *Tota pulchra es* on altar-frontals, one in Seville, the
other in Carmona, both dating from the mid-sixteenth
century (p.24).

When fifteenth-century poetry is examined for series of
references to the *Tota pulchra es,* the following evidence is
found. There are a number of poets who use an array of
symbols in conjunction with an allusion to Canticum 4.7.

One of the 1474 Certamen poets, 'Hun Castellà sens
nom', discernibly echoes the Canticum at one point, as well
as incorporating other symbols traditionally associated with
the *Tota pulchra es*. The unknown Castilian includes a number
of biblical and hymnological quotations in Latin in his

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[16] In a note on Plate XI, which represents a Bayeux
altarpiece from the seventeenth century, O'Connor points out
that additional symbols have been incorporated into the *Tota
pulchra es*. The additional symbols are the tree of life,
Jacob's ladder, Solomon's temple and Gideon's fleece.

[17] O'Connor, at p.478, n.44 locates the Rouen Book of Hours
in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, vel.2862.

poem. Within the second and fifth stanzas, the fifth and final lines are Latin quotations, whilst, in the fourth stanza, the second and fifth to tenth lines are in Latin. These final lines are a Marian litany drawn from the Marian hymns, including the *Ave Regina coelorum* and the *Ave maris stella*. Amongst the Latin quotations, the unknown author includes 'Tota es pulchra, amica mea' (XXXII.35).

The first of the symbols, associated with the *Tota pulchra es,* occurs at the end of the first stanza:

> Madre de los peccadores,
> floresca, flor de las flores,
> 'sicut lilium inter spinas'. (XXXII.18)

The quotation is taken from the second descriptive song of Canticum 2.2, termed a *Beschreibungslied* by Murphy. According to Murphy, the statement outlines the uniqueness of the lady (*Song of Songs*, p.136). It is this resonance which is drawn upon by defenders of the Immaculate Conception, in order to underline the uniqueness of the Virgin from the moment of her conception.

The anonymous poem contains an allusion to the rod of Jesse, a potent artistic symbol:

> Esta es de quien l.Esglesia
> translada de la ley vega
> "*floruit virga Jesse*".

According to Stratton (p.13), the tree or root of Jesse was found in twelfth-century representations of the Conception of Christ. The rod of Jesse generally symbolized the genealogy of the Virgin and, by the fifteenth century,

occasionally symbolized the Immaculate Conception.[18]
Evidence in thirteenth-century literature of the use of the
symbol is provided by Berceo.[19] The shift to immaculist
overtones was a gradual process (Stratton, p.13).

In the same Certamen poem, the unknown Castilian
includes a quotation 'et *quasi mirra electa* \ *sicut cedrum
Lebani*' (XXXII.29), which relates closely to the *Tota
pulchra es*.[20] The Canticum similarly brims with references
to cedars and to Lebanon. The phrase *sicut cedrum Lebani* has
its closest source in fact in Psalm 92.12. In a note on
XXXII.20, Ferrando Francés gives the source of the
'nombroses expresiones i cites' as 'preses de Càntic

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[18] Stratton, at p.18, records a sixteenth-century example in
the Seville Cathedral. The Virgin's parents kneel before the
Virgin. Stems spring from each of their hearts, forming a
pedestal on which the Virgin stands. The immaculist
intention of the artist is confirmed by the inscription:
'Pulchra es, amica mea et macula originalis non est in
te'.

[19] Berceo uses the 'radiz de Yesse' in the *Loores* but the
genealogy is christological:
> En ti .s cumplió, Sennora, el dicho d' Isaía,
> que de radiz de Yesse una verga saldría,
> e flor que non fue vista dend se levantaría,
> spíritu con siet dones en la flor posaría.

> Madre tu fust la verga, el tu fijo la flor,
> que reviscla los muertos con süave olor; (*Loores*.8a)
Gonzalo de Berceo, *Obras completas*, ed. by Brian Dutton, 5
vols. (London: Tamesis Books, 1967-81), III: *El duelo de la
Virgen; los himnos; los loores de Nuestra Señora, los signos
del juicio final*.

[20] The quotation cannot be directly attributed to the
Canticum but the verse resonates the biblical love song. In
fact, the Canticum contains the highest number of references
to myrrh from a single book in the whole Bible, with seven
references out of a total of sixteen, as noted by Alexander
Cruden, *Cruden's Complete Concordance to the Bible*, ed. by
C.H. Irwin, M.A., D.D.; A.D. Adams, M.A. and S. A. Waters
(London: Lutterworth Press, 1980), p.447.

dels Càntics i del Llibre de la Saviesa' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.313). Apparently Ferrando Francés was misled by the closeness of this line to Canticum sources, since it does not, on closer inspection, actually appear there. Ecclesiasticus 24.13, however, contains the term 'sicut cedrum exaltata'. This is another of the Old Testament symbols, traditionally associated with the *Tota pulchra es*, and, given the reference to the '*virga Jesse*' in the same stanza, an allusion to the *Tota pulchra es* may be intended.

The final stanza of the anonymous poem consists of 'diverses invocacions preses de la lletania mariana' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.313, n.45-50). The poet includes '*Ave stella matutina*' (Ecclesiasticus 50.6-7), incorporated within a litany of other titles and antiphons of the Virgin.

The question must be posed as to whether these allusions amount to an early representation of the *Tota pulchra es* in literature. Reference to the cedar of Lebanon the rod of Jesse, the *lilium inter spinas*, and the *stella matutina*, four of the symbols commonly found surrounding the *Tota pulchra es*, creates one of the rare examples of four of the *Tota pulchra es* symbols in association and in conjunction with the verse *Tota pulchra es* itself. However, this still does not appear to constitute a systematic allusion to the *Tota pulchra es*. Similar litanies are apparent in many laudatory Marian poems, without any

reference to the Immaculate Conception.[21] The theory is tempting, given the conjunction of four elements from *Tota pulchra es* representations and the *Tota pulchra es* itself but the conclusion is far from certain. The poem is dated some twenty years before the first *Tota pulchra es* in art. The poet may merely have intended the symbols to underpin the Canticum reference and to intensify the biblical referencing of beauty in the poem.

Yet another of the 1486 Certamen poems connects Canticum references to two of the symbols surrounding the Virgin in the *Tota pulchra es*. In the case of Blay Assencí, following several allusions to the beauty of the Virgin, the poet alludes to a fountain, which may represent the *fons hortorum* from Canticum 4.15. He also alludes to a mirror, which may recall another of the immaculist symbols, the *speculum sine macula* from Wisdom 7.26.

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[21] Berceo provides an example of a litany of titles to the Virgin in his *Milagros:*

> La benedicta Virgen es estrella clamada,
> estrella de los mares, guïona deseada,
> . . . .
> Es clamada y éslo, de los cielos reína,
> tiemplo de Jesu Christo, estrella matutina,
> . . .
> Ella es vellocino qe fue de Gedeón,
> en qui vino la pluvia, una grand visïón;
> . . . .
> Ella es dicha fuent de qui todos bevemos,
> . . .
> Ella es dicha puerto a qui todos corremos,
> e la puerta por la qual entrada atendemos.
>
> Ella   es   dicha   puerta   en   sí   bien   encerrada.
> (*Milagros*.32a; 33a; 34a; 35a; 35c)

The litany is not immaculist and the doctrinal reference, providing a backcloth to the litany, is Berceo's statement about the Virgin's unblemished virginity (*Milagros*.20b).

The third stanza, for example, develops the image of the Virgin as the Beloved:

> ¿Qual és, ni fon, ni serà tan amable
> de l'Increat com vós, amada sposa?
> Si .n algun temps peccat vos féu culpable
> fóreu en hoy a Déu, mas detestable
> és lo pensar que res vos faça nosa. (XXVIII.25)

The rhyme scheme unites 'amable', 'culpable' and 'detestable', opposing the actual relationship of the Virgin with God, 'amable', with the very thought that she might have been tainted by original sin and have become separated from God: the postulated relationship with God is expressed in 'nosa'.

The position of the Virgin in the hierarchy is the purpose of a reference to beauty in the same poem: 'Donchs bé puch dir de vós, mare donzella,\ que sou per cert aprés Déu tota bella' (XXVIII.71). 'Tota bella' recalls the first part of the Canticum 4.7 verse, even though *pulchra* is rendered through 'bella'. In this poem, the beauty of the Virgin is described in direct relation to her purity, since it is in the purity of her nature that the Virgin can be considered to be 'après Deu'. In this sense, beauty is used to represent purity.

Purity, beauty and the relationship between God and the Virgin are finally recapitulated in the 'Tornada':

> La culpa greu per l'om primer comesa,
> ab la qual fan los descendents gran ligua,
> no us ha comprés, per quant no sou entesa
> en res de crim, essent font de bellesa,
> pura com l'or, de Déu mare y amigua. (XXVIII.85)

The Virgin is isolated from the descendants of Adam, 'no us

ha comprés' in that she is not included in the sin Adam committed. Assencí then uses three epithets to describe the Virgin. 'Font de bellesa' not only echoes 'tota bella' (XXVII.72) but also recalls the fountains, described in the Canticum 'garden song' (Canticum 4.12; 4.15). The alchemy image 'pura com l'or' expresses the purity of the Virgin. The allusion is completed in the use of 'Mare y amigua' which quite clearly recalls Canticum 4.7, where the young girl of the Canticum, the Shulamite, is referred to as 'amica mea'.

The seventh stanza of Blay Assencí's poem contains the fleeting reference to the 'espill e lum de resplandor eterna' (XXVIII.84). Assencí does not incorporate the idea of stainlessness into the allusion to the mirror from Wisdom 7.26 but makes the reference to the *speculum sine macula* explicit by mentioning the name of 'Salamó', author of the book (XXVIII.83). Three symbols from the *Tota pulchra es* are, thus, present in Assencí's poem but their association is far from well defined. It is interesting to consider that the same association of 'speculum' and Solomon is found in the *Espill* as well as in Assencí's poem. The title of Roig's poem may be intended as a reference to the biblical mirror symbol, since the object of the poem is an attack on 'dones' and praise of the immaculate Virgin: 'dones blasona, lo llir corona\ spines, cards crema' (*Espill* Entrada, p.24). The 'Tema', which precedes the preface to the *Espill*, echoes Canticum 2.2:

> *Sicut lilium inter spinas*
> *sic amica mea inter filias* (*Espill* Tema, p.24)

In the *Espill*, the association between the title, 'mirror', and the dedication to another of the *Tota pulchra es* symbols is deliberate and conceptual and reveals an early literary association of a few *Tota pulchra es* symbols.

Jaume Roig also uses the latinate term 'inmaculada', in the *Espill*. The adjective is glossed as 'no mai tacada' after the *caesura* (III.2, p.155). The term is linked to the image of glass or pure crystal, thus associating the term immaculate or stainless with the biblical symbol from Wisdom 7.6: 'Més que mirall e pur cristall \ inmaculada no mai tacada'. The image of the unblemished mirror follows shortly after a section of the *Espill*, which contains a series of light (lluna; stella; sol), scent (goma) and bird (voltor; coloma; fènix) images. Following a statement about the Virgin's uniqueness and her preservation from original sin by the action of God, Roig spills forth a laudatory sequence, in which the nouns and verbs recall each other through assonance. Amidst the symbols used in praise of the Virgin are: 'lluent com lluna' and 'cintil.lant stel.la'. It is possible, given the use of the biblical symbolism of the *Tota pulchra es,* elsewhere in the text, that Roig intends to deliberately evoke symbols of the *Tota pulchra es*. Before conclusions can be drawn, the fact that the symbols have a long history of application to the Virgin, outside the immaculist context of the *Tota pulchra es* representations, needs to be considered.[22] The 'espill' is, moreover, used by

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[22] The symbol of the star has a long history in application to the Virgin. Marina Warner (p.262) notes that 'stella maris' was introduced by a copyist error for 'stilla maris'.

one of the Certamen poets, Verdanxa, in the context of the
Virgin Birth: 'Vós lo parís, de vós prés la senblança\[...]
lum de les lums hi clarejant espill (XIII.18).

There are other Certamen poets who include series of
symbols in their poems which bear a relationship to the *Tota
pulchra es*. Mestre Balaguer, attempting to win the marzipan,
includes the following stanza which incorporates a litany of
Old Testament symbols, some of which became associated by
the seventeenth century with the *Tota pulchra es* (O'Connor,
plates X, XI). The symbols are intended as an illustration
of the way in which God's actions can supersede human
concept of possibility:

> Lo bon Senyor en diverses figures
> ha demostrat l'obra de gran fayço:
> de Gedeon, ple de ros lo velló,
> de Moysés e moltes escriptures,
> verga d'Aron, del sanctuari, archa,
> escala gran de Jacob luytador,
> libre tanquat, sagellat del Monarcha,
> manna del cel d'especial sabor,
> jardí plasent als invocants no cara,
> procuradiu, impetratriu encara. (XXI.27)

The sealed garden was regularly associated with the *Tota
pulchra es* in the early sixteenth century. Gideon's fleece
and Jacob's ladder later became associated with it. The
other symbols included in the litany were not associated
with it. Nor is there any association with the Canticum
verse 'Tota pulchra es' in the poem.

The antiphon *Ave maris stella* dates from the seventh or
eighth century. Berceo includes a reworking of the antiphon
into the vernacular: 'Ave Sancta María, estrella de la mar'
(*Himnos*.2.1a). It is the *stella matutina*, as a biblical text
which becomes one of the symbols associated with the
Immaculate Conception. Reference to the Virgin Mary as
'Estrela Madodinna' is found *CSM* 54.78.

An ardent defender of the Immaculate Conception, Tallante frequently uses *Tota pulchra es* symbolism. In his 'Esparsa suya a Nuestra Señora', the sealed fountain is used in an immaculist context:

> Perenal fuente sellada,
> fuente de toda limpieza [...]
> pues no te toca la cisma
> del pecado. (F-D 1096.1, 8)

In 'Otra obra suya sobre la libertad de Nuestra Señora del pecado original', the enclosed garden (Canticum 4.12) is employed as part of a defence of the Immaculate Conception.

Arnau de Cors is another of the Certamen poets to combine symbols from the *Tota pulchra es* with the quotation 'tota pulcra' (1486, VIII.92). Arnau de Cors uses the symbol of the rose as part of a scholastic argument (see above, p.92). A conditional sentence and question form allow Arnau de Cors to postulate that God was capable of doing more for the Virgin than for the rose:

> Si del roser espinós naix la rosa,
> naturalment aquella sens espina,
> ¿quant més pot fer Déu que siau exclosa
> d'infectió, prenent-vos per esposa. (VIII.61)

Arnau de Cors makes use of the Scotian argument from possibility: '¿quant més pot fer?', combining it with an oblique reference to the Canticum in 'esposa'. The 'Endreça' picks up the oblique reference and makes it explicit in 'Lir net e pur, tota pulcra Maria' (VIII.92). The poem refers obliquely to the rose, which may suggest the *plantatio rosae* (Ecclesiasticus 24.13), and also to the 'lir net e pur', echoing the *lilium inter spinas*.

The symbols are clearly associated with the Virgin and are set within an immaculist context in the poems so far considered. However, some fifteenth-century poets use the symbols in the context of the Incarnation or Virgin Birth. Fray Iñigo de Mendoça incorporates a litany of Old Testament symbols within the context of the Annunciation in his *Coplas*. The angel proves that the Incarnation can take place by comparing it in the rubric to stanza 31 'con las reuelaçiones que fueron della hechas antes a los prohetas' (*Coplas*, p.306). Amongst the symbols included by Fray Iñigo are the gate of heaven (*Coplas* 31.6); Gideon's fleece (32.1); the rod of Aaron (33.2); the sealed fountain (33.3); and the enclosed garden (33.4). Some of the symbols correspond to the *Tota pulchra es* representations but the immediate context in the *Coplas* is not immaculist.

A comparison between Balaguer's and Iñigo de Mendoça's litanies, together with the evidence from Tallante, leads to two conclusions. First, Old Testament symbols associated with the Immaculate Conception were extremely fluid in the fifteenth century and their presence alone is not clearly immaculist. Second, where elements of the *Tota pulchra es* are apparently found in conjunction, their association and intent must be rigorously examined.

In conclusion, poetic usage of *Tota pulchra es* symbols seems to be limited. The symbols appear in conjunction but also in conjunction with other unrelated figures. The symbols which do appear are not associated with each other

in a systematic manner and cannot be taken to constitute a
literary *Tota pulchra es*. For these reasons, poetic use of
Old Testament symbolism, which became associated, in mid-
sixteenth century representations, with the *Tota pulchra es*
must be considered at a developmental stage in the
transition of figures of the Virgin from representations of
the mystery of the Incarnation or Virgin Birth into
immaculist symbols.

3.6 OPPOSITION TO THE MACULISTS

As has been examined in the chapter devoted to the
Scholastics, there is great emphasis, particularly in the
1486 Certamen, on the view of opponents to the doctrine and
on the denigration of such opponents. Many of the references
to the maculist opposition, because of the name given to
opponents of the doctrine, take the opportunity to refer to
staining and dishonouring of the Virgin in terms which have
reference to the Canticum '*macula*'.

Having described the way in which gold is found 'en
aspres lochs' (VI.15), Miralles refers back to the alchemy
image later in his 1486 Certamen poem associating the
opponents of the doctrine with it:

> Hi .ls que diran contra ço rahons tristes,
> pobre prelats iran com alquimistes. (VI.83)

It is uncertain why Miralles refers to opponents of the
doctrine as alchemists. Perhaps he may mean that they are in
search of the pure metal of the truth, but only end up with
a base product, in other words with dishonouring the Virgin.

Perhaps he merely means they are wrong-headed in their approach to science.

Tallante refers, in F-D 1081, to opposition to the doctrine, and uses 'centella' to express the idea of the mark made by original sin: 'concluya confuso aquel que concede \ que te haya de culpa centella tocada' (F-D 1081.7). 'Centella', meaning spark or perhaps speck, in this context provides a variant on 'mansilla'. The emphasis is on the minuscule size of the spark. The poet appears to consider sins as sparks which could be fanned into flames. The point made by Tallante is that opponents are befuddled by their own logic 'concluya confuso'.

An earlier example of the way in which opponents of the doctrine dishonour the Virgin is to be found in a poem by Fray Lope del Monte in the *CB*:

> Por la dulçe, gloriosa
> Vyrgo, rresponde Fray Lope
> a vos que teneys vascosa
> Feryda de falso golpe: (*CB* 324.1)

Fray Lope uses the idea of wounding, with an unfair, wrong or illegal thrust to describe the way in which the opponents use fair or unfair means in their attack on the Virgin. The whole of Diego Martines de Medyna's poem, in response to this outburst, is very defensive and short in comparison to Fray Lope's poem. Diego Martines gives the impression from this point onwards that he has taken on more than he bargained for. This is strange, in a way, since, given the vehement defence of the doctrine in the period, he could have hardly expected a less than vehement response from his

opponent. It is as though Diego Martines expected a gentlemanly response and was shocked at the cut and thrust his *pregunta* brought forth. Interestingly, it is the very point of having caused the Virgin to be 'feryda de falso golpe' or dishonouring the Virgin which Diego Martines decides to reject.

In response to Fray Lope's accusation, Diego Martines rejects the idea that the Virgin is distressed by the opponents of the doctrine: 'diciendo \que malamente la tienen por ensusiada':

> Mansilla de ensusiamento
> Non ponen pedricadores
> En ella, que syn dolores
> Parió é ssyn ningun tormento; (*CB* 325.17)

The poetic debate is about what is honourable to the Virgin, thus, taking up the point raised by Scotus and his followers, that what was most honourable to the Virgin should be attributed to her. Di Lella summarizes and translates the point made by Aureoli in that: 'It is more honourable for the Virgin not to be stained by original sin, even more so than not to be reduced to dust after death'. ('The Immaculate Conception', p.153)

An interesting comparison can be made which might help the reading of the stanza quoted from Fray Lope del Monte. 'Vascosa' would seem to be a problem reading.[23] Given the uniformity of expression found in treatment of the

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[23] There is no mention of 'vascosa' in Sebastián Covarrubias y Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana*, ed. by Martin de Riquer (Barcelona: Horta, 1943).

immaculist theme, assistance in reading the stanza is forthcoming from consideration of the theme by other poets. Indeed, a comparable reference from Berenguer Cardona, in his submission to the 1474 Certamen, reads as follows:

> Levau, levau, senyor, dels hulls la bena
> perquè veureu en clar a totes parts.
> E no tingau los hulls axí .nlaçats,
> mas que guardeu, com fa .1 que .s desenbena,
> y en clar mirant de quant és graciosa
> com meresqué, Verge, per ser humil,
> per mer ésser d'aquell Déu tan gentil,
> que sol moment
> no .s pot trobar del peccat viciosa. (XI.37)

Throughout the poem, the reader has been questioned:

> ¿Qui pot dir qu.ajau participat
> lo vil insult
> que .n general a tot lo món desgasta? (XI.25)

Opponents of Cardona's views have been termed blind:

'¿Qui viu tan cech que .s prengua en tal parança' (X.19).

After the exhortation to the doubtful reader to open his eyes: 'Obriu los hulls' (XI.28) at the beginning of the stanza, the reader is then exhorted to raise his eyes and consider the truth 'en clar mirant'. The exhortation to the opponents of the doctrine to change their view is consistent with the sentiments of Fray Lope. Finally, Cardona uses the term 'viciosa' to describe the slur placed on the Virgin by opponents of the doctrine: 'que sol moment \ no .s pot trobar del peccat viciosa' (XI.44).

A more meaningful reading of the verse in Fray Lope's poem might be 'viciosa' instead of 'vascosa'. It is clearly not suggested that Fray Lope knew the Valencian poet, since the latter was writing almost one hundred years later, but

rather that, given the way in which epithets reoccur throughout the vein of immaculist writing, that the Valencian reading might suggest a solution to the problem verse in the earlier poet.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, a resonance of the Canticum verse 4.7 is regularly found in poems with an immaculist context with 'inmaculada', 'màcula' and 'mansilla' all being used to echo the *macula* of the love poem. It has become apparent that the *culto* term 'inmaculada' is confined almost exclusively to the Catalan poets, with one quotation only being found in Villasandino's poem. 'Syn mansilla' and 'sens màcula' are found in both Cancionero and Certamen poems, often in combination with further references to the Canticum. Similarly 'manzillada' is used to express the result of not honouring the Virgin by supporting the immaculist viewpoint. Opponents of the doctrine are exhorted not to stain the Virgin.

However, whilst many poets, both Castilian and Catalan, use terms directly etymologically connected with the Canticum verse, they frequently also use synonyms in such a context. This point has been confirmed by the extensive study made of the synonym 'taca'. Poets regularly use other Canticum imagery in connection with the synonym, thus anchoring the synonym within a Canticum context. Some variation on the theme of the Virgin's unblemished nature is found in the Cancioneros but most of the variants are found

in the Catalan poets. An image of alchemy or gold or silversmithing is found on a number of occasions in poets with a Valencian connection, most notably in Roig and Tallante. Both Tallante and Vallmanya use the worm as a symbol of spoiling in matter. In the Cancioneros, indeed, it is Tallante's work, with its Valencian connections, which shows evidence of developments on the theme of the stainless nature of the Virgin.

The Castilians in general devote less space to the theme of the Immaculate Conception and, thus, have less opportunity to develop variants on the theme. Since, within many of the Marian poems included in the collections, there are are litanies of epithets, it must be concluded that the poets are content to use the most recognizable titles for the Virgin, since this quickly anchors the stanza within the particular stage of the Virgin's life to which they refer. Castilian poets were more interested in making a rapid mental connection with a doctrinal point than with the development of that point, and for this reason were less concerned with variant images. On the other hand, some of the Valencian poets, particularly Fuster or Roig, who dedicate longer poems entirely to the Immaculate theme, have the space, inclination and ability to develop their terminology.

4 MUCHAS VECES SE TOMAN ENLA SANTA ESCRIPTURA UNAS
   PALABRAS POR OTRAS: THE WOMAN OF GENESIS

Among the Old Testament references to be examined in this

section of the thesis, is the theme drawn from the

momentous struggle between the serpent and the Woman,

depicted in Genesis 3:

> Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum
> et semen illius: ipsa conteret caput tuum et tu
> insidiaberis calcaneo eius. (*Biblia sacra*, p.3)

References to the Fall and contrasts between Mary and Eve

are consistently present in Marian poetry. In the fifteenth

century, references to the Fall and to the Eve-Mary

parallel also appear in designated Conception poems and also

in dedicated stanzas of general Marian poems. It is

possible that there might be some difference in usage of the

themes taken from Genesis in designated Conception poems, as

opposed to poetry which is not specifically concerned with

the Conception doctrine and it is this difference which will

be determined in this chapter. In addition, an examination

will be made of the various elements which together

constitute the theme. However, before proceeding to an

analysis of poetic renderings of the Genesis theme, it will

first be established to what extent the references to the

prophecy about events to follow the Fall, as depicted in

Genesis 3.15, can be considered Conception references.

4.1 GENESIS AND MARY

At first sight, the prophecy about the Woman, Eve, her

seed and the serpent would appear to have little to do with

the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Indeed, as

Máximo Peinador concedes in his overview of scriptural

proofs in connection with the Immaculate Conception,

theologians find no direct proof of the doctrine in the

Bible:

> Que, admitida ya por todos la falta absoluta de texto
> [bíblico] claro y explícito en pro de este dogma, los
> textos que se presenten habrán de ser forzosamente
> oscuros y necesitarán amplia explicación;[1]

Biblical proofs of the doctrine had been found and a

connection between the Genesis text and the doctrine had

been made by the time of the papal Bull of 1854, *Ineffabilis*

Deus, which, in defining the dogma of the Immaculate

Conception, refers to the mythical battle between the Woman

and the serpent.

It is interesting, therefore, in any *rapprochement* of

the Genesis theme and the Conception, to point out that

Warner highlights the reference to Genesis 3.15, as the most

important scriptural reference in the papal definition. From

Genesis 3.15, doctrinal proofs from the Bible were derived

to underpin the definition in the Bull (Warner, p.245). It

is certainly one of the two key scriptural texts used in

modern times to source the Immaculate Conception, even

though, according to John McHugh, the exegesis on which the

scriptural proof is based is tenuous and naive.[2] Jugie, in

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[1] R.P. Máximo Peinador, C.M.F., 'Estudio sintético comparativo de las pruebas de Escritura en favor de la Concepción Inmaculada de María', *Estudios marianos*, 15 (1955), 53-77, p.54.

[2] John McHugh, *The Mother of Christ in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975), xlii.

fact, considers that the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* lays more

emphasis on logical development of reflection on the passage

than on clear proof from Scripture:

> On voit cependant combien lointain est le lien qui
> rattache au texte scripturaire l'idée de la conception
> immaculée de la mère du Rédempteur. On part d'une
> interprétation patristique, où il n'est pas directement
> question de cette conception, pour en inférer cette
> doctrine par voie de conséquence logique. (*L'Immaculée
> Conception*, p.43)

In trying to pinpoint the link between the text from Genesis

3.15 and the Conception, it becomes apparent that the

majority of the early Fathers of the Church, prior to the

seventh century, did not relate the Genesis Protoevangelium

to Jesus and Mary, still less to the Immaculate Conception.[3]

This does not, however, appear to be the view of Le

Bachelet, who writes:

> Nombreux sont les Pères des premiers siècles, qui, dans
> le lignage de la femme, vainqueur du démon, ont vu
> Jésus-Christ, né de la Vierge Marie. (*DTC*, VII, p.853)

He, nevertheless, admits that the numerous references, which

he finds in the early Fathers of the Church, are often mere

allusions: 'La plupart n'ont touché au texte qu'en passant,

par voie d'allusion ou de supposition' (p.854).

In fact, the transposition of the Woman in Genesis into

Mary, although unconnected to thinking about the Immaculate

Conception, has a long tradition in Christian literature.

Certainly, evidence can be found of the Woman-Mary parallel

within the Peninsula itself. St Isidore quotes and comments

on the biblical passage in question: 'Ipsa conteret caput

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[3] *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible*, ed. by P.
Brépolis (Paris: Turnhout, 1960).

tuum et tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius, hoc de fructu Mariae qui est Christus intelligunt', commenting that 'tu' is to be understood as the fruit of Mary, in other words as Christ.[4] The interpretation St Isidore gives is christocentric, since the victory over the serpent is Christ's. Moreover, Solano in his commentary on this quotation from St Isidore explains that:

> En el *ipsa* no vuelve ya a verse directamente a María ni se insiste en la victoria sobre el pecado, sino más bien a la muerte (p.134).

Amongst the Spanish Fathers, St Ildefonsus also refers to the passage from Genesis, linking the text to the Virgin Mary, although probably not to the Immaculate Conception:

> Hanc figurae salvationis summam per gloriam Virginis signavit species mulieris, quando dictum est ad serpentem: Inimicitias ponam inter te et inter semen eius (Gen.3.15); significans malitiam diabolicae partis non posse inhaerere sacramento redemptionis, quod factum est per assumptum hominem ex utero Virginis.[5]

Jesús Solano goes on to show how St Ildefonsus regards the Virgin Birth as the high point of salvation history. For our purpose, it is enough to note that a link has been established between the Woman of Genesis and the Virgin. From the point of view of considering St Ildefonsus to be the first Hispanic defender of the Immaculate Conception, the evidence is less certain. After quoting the text of Genesis 3.15, St Ildefonsus adds: 'Hoc de Christo, qui est

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[4] *Quaestiones in vetus Testamentum*, In Genesim, c.5, n.6, *PL* 221 A-B. This reference is given by R.P. Jesus Solano, S.J., 'La Inmaculada en los padres españoles', *Estudios marianos*, 15 (1955), 129-151, p.134.

[5] St Ildefonsus, *Annotationis de cognitione baptismi*, praef. c. 8, *PL* 96, 114 C. This reference is quoted by Solano, p.143.

fructus virginalis ventris Mariae, intelligitur' (*PL* 96 114
C-D). This indicates that St Ildefonsus attributed the
victory to Christ alone. Moreover, it would appear unlikely
that early commentarists on Genesis were wishing to
attribute particular doctrines to the Virgin, although many
present-day commentators seek to prove the contrary. Solano
himself even appears to agree at one point that the 'centro
de gravedad está desplazado hacia Cristo' (p.144).

Biblical proofs were not often adduced in favour of the
Conception during the period of Dominican-Franciscan
controversy, since there were no texts which could be used
to support the doctrine directly, whilst there were plenty
of texts from the Bible to support arguments about the
universality of sin. This point is made cogently by
Peinador:

> Mirando al tiempo de la controversia inmaculista, hay
> que reconocer que los adversarios del dogma se hallaron
> en mejor posición que sus defensores con respecto al
> argumento de la Escritura (p.55).

The propugnants of the doctrine had to rely on
scholastic arguments to explain their adherence to the
immaculist viewpoint (see above, p.94).

When the connection between the eschatological battle
in Genesis 3 and the Immaculate Conception is traced forward
in time, it is apparent that, by the sixteenth century, in
the work of artists like Murillo, the connection between the
Protoevangelium and the Immaculate Conception had been made.
The serpent's struggle with Mary is regularly depicted in
paintings dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. In order

to see how the connection is made, it is necessary to consider one important textual factor.

4.2 INFLUENCE OF THE VULGATE TRANSLATION

In the fifteenth century and, indeed, even today, the main scriptural text quoted to support the doctrine was chosen on the basis of an error in the Latin translation. It is interesting, at this point, to examine the considerable influence exerted by an error in translation of this verse in the Vulgate text. For the correct translation of the Greek, *ipse conteret caput tuum,* the Vulgate version of the Bible reads *ipsa conteret caput tuum.* The incorrect translation transfers the central role in the struggle at a stroke to the Woman, away from her seed. In this way, the Vulgate version gave added weight to the role of the Woman which, in its turn, added weight to consideration of the 'special category' status of the Virgin which led ultimately to immaculist thinking about Mary. Catholic theologians, such as Jugie, continue to quote from the Vulgate text, even though fifteenth-century scholars, such as Nebrija, were already aware of the defect in the Vulgate. The error continues to be perpetuated to the present: the Bull *Ineffabilis Deus* itself quotes from the erroneous Vulgate translation.

The importance of the passage is that it sets up a parallel between the Woman\Mary and the rest of humanity, creating a contrast between those who have sinned in Adam and the Virgin Mary, who was able to stand firm and,

according to the Vulgate interpretation, crush the serpent.
Once the correction has been made, the contrast highlighted
is between the offspring of the Woman and Adam. It is
obvious that the Virgin, though having an important rôle, is
less set apart from the rest of humanity; this may explain
the endurance of the Vulgate mistranslation. To stop using
the translation, once it had become widespread, may have
been seen as a dishonour to the Virgin. Consideration of the
nature of this victory led theologians by extension to see
the Virgin as exempt from inheriting the sin of Adam and
Eve.

This brief examination of the development of
interpretations of the Genesis text with reference to Mary
has considered the linking of the figures of Adam and Eve to
the new Adam, Christ, and the new Eve, Mary. The first
linking occurred in the early Fathers, as they turned the
interpretation of the nature of the Genesis victory from the
victory over death to a victory over sin. The influence of
the Vulgate text in underlining the importance of Mary has
also been highlighted.

4.3 REFERENCES TO GENESIS IN POETRY PRIOR TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

References to Genesis 3.15 in literature will now be
examined to see whether such references fit the pattern of
christocentric victory or of Marian victory; to see whether
the nature of the victory is a victory over death or over
sin and whether such references are used in support of

arguments about the Immaculate Conception or whether they
are used in a more general way.

In the course of this chapter, it will be necessary
also to establish any differences between the use of Genesis
references in fifteenth-century Conception poems and their
use in earlier Castilian Marian poetry. For this reason,
some references to the Genesis text in key Marian texts of
an earlier period have been examined.

Berceo refers to the passage from Genesis 3.15 in his
Loores. The poet refers to the deception of Adam and Eve by
the serpent, whilst linking the event to a prophecy about
the role of the Virgin:

> Quand decibió la sierpe   los parientes primeros
> e los sacó de seso   con sermones arteros
> de ti .s temieron luego   los falsos lesongeros
> mas non fueron del tiempo   nin la ora certeros.
> (*Loores*.4)

In this verse, Berceo is showing that he considers the
Protoevangelium to be a prophecy about the Virgin. The
Genesis verse was interpreted as a prophecy about the Virgin
by the 'falsos lesongeros', who were, according to Berceo,
fearful of its implications. The definition of a group of
people as false tricksters is representative of Berceo's
anti-semitism.[6]

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[6] There are numerous anti-Jewish stanzas amongst
Berceo's works including this stanza from *El duelo de
la Virgen*:
> Judíos e paganos faciéndoli bocines,
> dando mal respendos como malos rocines,
> (*Duelo*.50a)
Also one of the *Milagros*, entitled 'Christo y los
Judíos de Toledo', contains a stanza which expresses
similar anti-Jewish sentiments to the stanza in

The contrast between Eve and Mary is also to be found in Berceo's *Loores*:

>   Madre, el tu linage mucho es enalçado,
>   si Eva falta fiço, tú lo has adobado;
>   bien paresce que Christo fue nuestro advocado,
>   por ti es tu linage, Sennora, desreptado.
>   (*Loores*.111a)

Berceo contrasts Eve and Mary through the fault committed by Eve and the reparation 'lo has adobado' on behalf of humanity, by the Virgin Mary. Berceo does not comment on the nature of the fault nor on the nature of the reparation nor does he draw any conclusion about the nature of the Virgin.

The *Milagros*, contain a contrast between the *locus amoenus*, which the author describes, and the story of the Fall. The contrast occurs in the introduction to the miracle collection. The narrator, who 'yendo en romería caecí en un prado' (*Milagros*.2b), describes the nature of the meadow in detail, linking it with the garden described in Genesis through the contrast with Adam's actions:

>   El fructo de los árbores era dulz e sabrido,
>   si don Adam oviesse de tal fructo comido
>   de tal mala manera non serié decibido
>   Nin tomarién tal danno   Eva nin so marido.
>   (*Milagros*.15a)

The fruits of the garden represent righteousness, as opposed to evil-doing. According to Berceo, if Adam had eaten the fruits from this garden, he would not have been deceived, nor would Eve.

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    question in the *Loores*:
>   Fablólis voz del Cielo, dolient e qerellosa,
>   'Oíd - dixo - christianos una estranna cosa
>   la gent de judaísmo, sorda e cegajosa
>   nunqua contra don Christo non fo mas porfidiosa'.
>   (*Milagros* 18.416a).

The essential nature of the miracle collection is that it opposes the Virgin Mary and the devil in combat over individual souls, as depicted vividly in 'El monge beodo':

> Empezóli a dar   de grandes palancadas,
> non podién las menudas escuchar las granadas,
> lazrava el león a buenas dinaradas
> non ovo en sus días   las cuestas tan sovadas.
> (*Milagros*.478a)[7]

E. Michael Gerli quite rightly concludes that the intention of the Introduction to the *Milagros* is to place in counterpoint the New Order and the Old Order:

> El poeta desea establecer la clara tipología entre el mundo de la Vieja Ley, el del pecado y el de Adán y Eva, y el de la Nueva Ley, el de la posibilidad de la salvación del Pecado Original por el medio de Cristo y el instrumento humano de su advenimiento, su madre.[8]

Gerli goes on to argue that the miracles themselves reflect the story of the Fall and the way to Redemption: 'Cada milagro de la colección repite esta idea básica, pero en miniatura, en una forma menos abstracta y más

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[7] Other references to conflict with Satan are to be found in *Loores*. 222a-223b. It is not the intention of this thesis to analyze all references to the Genesis prophecy found prior to the fifteenth century, that would constitute a further study in itself, but rather to give a picture of the general type of usage in an earlier period of Marian poetry:

> Persíguennos, Sennora, grandes enemiztades,
> contra nos es el mundo, con sus adversidades,
> ayuda.l el dïablo con muchas falsedades
> con ellos tien la carne con falsas voluntades.

> Entre tantos periglos, ¿qui podrié guarecer?
> Si nos non vales, Madre, podémosnos perder;
> (*Loores*.222a)

As can be seen, from this reference to conflict, similar to the type of conflict described in Genesis 3.15, the intention of Berceo is to show the forces ranged against mankind. On one side is the world which is aided by the devil and on the other is the Virgin, as advocate.

[8] 'La tipología bíblica y la introducción a los *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*', BHS, 62, 7-14, p.11.

particularizada' (p.13). Gerli's insight into the introduction to the *Milagros* is marred by confusion between the Virginal Conception of Christ and the Immaculate Conception of Mary (p.11). He describes, in fact, the Virginal Conception. The garden, with its multiple layers of meaning also represents the Virgin. From the Genesis images underpinning the *Milagros*, it cannot be concluded that Berceo was attempting to illustrate the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Indeed, he was probably unaware of it.

Juan Ruíz in 'Del Ave María de Santa María' in the section beginning '*Benedictus fructus*' similarly places the Virgin in active opposition to the devil:

> *Benedictus fructus*, folgura
> e salvaçión
> del linaje umanal,
> que tiraste la tristura
> e perdiçión,
> que por nuestro esquivo mal
> el dïablo, suzio tal,
> con su obra engañosa,
> en [la] cárçel peligrosa
> ya ponía. (*LBA.*1666 a)

Human nature had been incarcerated by Satan, until rescued from sorrow and perdition. The salvation and joy of the human race is seen in terms of the fruit of her womb. The contribution of the Virgin to the battle against the devil is thus the Incarnation. The oblique reference to the opposition of the devil and the Woman does not appear to be used in Juan Ruiz's poem for an immaculist purpose. It is set in the context of the Conception of Christ. Even though Juan Ruiz does refer to the Virgin as 'sancta flor non tañida' in the following stanza (1667 a), he refers to the

Virgin's sanctity and purity in terms of her being a Virgin and Mother in the context of 'Benedictus fructus'. His purpose in opposing the devil and the Virgin is to show the end of the devil's hegemony. The defeat was achieved with the co-operation of the Virgin at the Incarnation.

There are also references to the struggle between 'o demo' and the Virgin in the CSM. The whole purpose of the miracles included in Alfonso el Sabio's collection is to show the Virgin's support for mankind. Thus, within the lyric poems, a similar picture of the Virgin fighting on behalf of mankind against the devil is portrayed:

> Sempr' estás lidando
> por nos a perfia
> o dem' arrancando. (CSM 20.20)

Moreover, the Virgin's defeat of the devil is connected in the poet's mind to obtaining pardon for sinners: 'e perdon nos gaará \ e ao demo vencerá' (CSM 160.20), rather than to defeat of the devil\sin for the purpose of describing the Virgin's immaculate nature.

It is particularly noteworthy that Alfonso links the destruction of the forces of evil with the moment of the Annunciation, as can be seen in CSM 90:

> Sola fusti, senlleira,
> u Grabiel creviste,
> e ar sen conpanneira
> u a Deus concebiste
> e per esta maneira
> o demo destroiste. (CSM 90.4)[9]

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[9] The same desire to parallel the Annunciation with the actions of Eve can be seen in CSM 60. The entire poem is dedicated to the Eve-Mary parallel:
> Eva nos foi deitar

The destruction of the devil is at the moment of the Conception of Christ. The importance of the New Adam is emphasized in a way which is rarely found in fifteenth-century Marian poetry, as Christ is depicted defeating the devil: 'e veo-sse fazer \nov' Adan que britasse a cabeça do dragon' (*CSM* 270.21).

It is quite clear that Alfonso uses the contrast between the 'loucura' of Eva and the Virgin to emphasize the importance of the Incarnation, rather than to emphasize particular teaching about the nature of the Virgin:

> Salve-te Deus, ca nos disti
> [...]
> o seu Fillo que trouxisti,
> [...]
> e con el nos remiisti
> da mui gran loucura
> que fez Eva, e vencisti
> o que nos vencia. (*CSM* 40.25,27,29)

The Virgin bears Christ and co-operates in the work of redemption with her son, thus assisting in the defeat of the devil. The very way of referring to the devil: 'o que nos vencia' (*CSM* 30.32) emphasizes the Genesis battle between the descendants of the Woman and the serpent, showing how the Virgin reversed the victory, vanquishing the serpent-victor.

The focus of the references to the defeat of the devil is on the Gospel: a focus on the redemptive work of Christ, on the Annunciation and on the Incarnation. The opposition

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> do dem' en sa prijon,
> e Ave en sacar; (*CSM* 60.10)
> There is nothing in the poem to suggest an immaculist overtone to the parallel.

of the Virgin and the devil has an important practical application for Alfonso and his readers, in that they hope to be saved by the intervention of the Virgin. Writer and reader are united in their plea for advocacy to the Virgin: 'con o demo por nos peleja' (*CSM* 280.12). Examples of pre-fifteenth-century Marian literature, which refer to the parallel between Eve and the Virgin or to the conflict between the devil and the Virgin, show that the Eve-Mary parallel is not used with an immaculist resonance.

4.4 THE EVE-MARY PARALLEL IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY POETRY

In fifteenth-century poetry, there are a number of occasions on which reference to the parallel between Eve and Mary are found, without the poem having a conceptionist theme. Fernán Pérez de Guzmán contrasts Eve with the Virgin in his stanza of the 'Ave Maria trobada' entitled '*Benedicta tu in mulieribus*'. In this case, it is the motherhood of the two women which is compared:

> Ave, Virgen Gloriosa,
> bendita entre las mugeres:
> deste nombre sola eres
> digna tu, Virgen preciosa;
> porque la madre golosa
> de la fruta deuedada
> toda muger ofuscada
> dexo con pena dolorosa. (F-D 276.25)

Whilst Mary is the 'Virgen gloriosa', Eve is the 'madre golosa', who disobeyed by eating the forbidden fruit. Fernán Pérez de Guzmán draws out the uniqueness of the Virgin, implicitly referring to her sinless chosen state, whilst contrasting it with the wilful consumption of the forbidden fruit by Eve, referred to as 'madre golosa'. The result of

Eve's action has an effect on all women since 'toda muger ofuscada \ dexo con pena dolorosa'. 'Pena dolorosa' refers to the pain of childbirth, thought to have been a result of the Fall. The *Eva: Vae : Ave* triad appears to be in the author's mind. Eve is not mentioned by name but is clearly referred to by the poet; *vae* is understood in the 'pena dolorosa', whilst the poem itself is an 'Ave Maria trobada' (see above, p.133). Although the Genesis story is evoked by Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, there does not appear to be a link to the Immaculate Conception in this poem.

Similarly in Catalan poems, there are poets who do not apparently use the quotation in an immaculist context. Fenollar, for example, does not clearly link the Eve-Mary parallel to the Virgin's immaculate nature in the third stanza of his entry to the 1474 Certamen:

> Del paradís sou vós la dreta scala.
> Lo cel poblant, reparau la ruhina.
> Eva .l perdé, vós lo guanyàs per mèrits,
> Eva .ll tanchà, e vós obrís la porta. (III.21)

The loss of Paradise and the gain of Paradise, closing the door and opening the door, are parallels illustrating the Eve-Mary axis; the poet's references to the return to Paradise might be taken as indicating that the poet is referring to victory over death.

The link to Genesis is underlined by the poet, since it should be noted that the description of the population of the earth is the section of Genesis immediately following the expulsion from Eden. Fenollar, thus, refers directly to Genesis 3.16, in 'Lo cel poblant'. However, the main purpose

of the reference is to highlight the fact of Paradise regained by the merits of the Virgin, contrasting her role with the role of Eve. Like Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, Fenollar alludes to the reparation of an ancient wrong by the Virgin in 'reparau la ruhina' but the nature of 'la ruhina' is not defined, nor the manner in which it was reparation was achieved. Reference to Mary's actions predominates over any reference to her essence. It is the preoccupation with the essence of the Virgin which is characteristic of the Immaculate Conception. There does not appear to be a definite reference to the Conception doctrine in conjunction with this use of Genesis 3.15.

It must be stressed that Fenollar may intend references to Genesis 3.15 to have the effect of recalling the Conception doctrine in the mind of the reader but because it is uncertain whether the poets intend the reference to echo the doctrine or not, only the definite conceptionist references, appearing within a designated poem or stanza, can be said with certainty to have an immaculist intent. The fact that many poets, both Castilian and Catalan, use the parallel, frequently without specific reference to the Immaculate Conception, albeit in poems which may contain other references to the nascent doctrine, demands caution in the examination of this important biblical reference. As was seen in the brief examination of references to pre-fifteenth century poetry (see above, p.166), the parallel between Eve and Mary was consistently used in Marian poetry, often having no connection to

immaculist ideas, being used rather to focus on the
Annunciation. A careful approach to such references must be
taken. For this reason, the examination of Genesis allusions
in fifteenth-century poetry will take as its starting point
references which occur in an overtly immaculist context to
then discern guidelines which can be applied to allusions
elsewhere.

4.5 THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE VIRGIN AND SATAN

There are several aspects of the conflict between the
Woman and serpent of the Protoevangelium to be considered.
The first aspect to be considered is the hypothetical
situation of subjugation of the Virgin to Satan. This
subjugation would have been her lot had she not been
preserved from original sin.

4.5.1 Subjugation to Satan

Two poems containing similar references to the conflict
between the serpent and the Virgin will be considered. The
first, does not develop allusions about the conflict into an
indisputable reference to Genesis; the second poem does. The
first poem is by Arnau de Cors and is his entry to the 1486
Certamen. Arnau argues from an emotional standpoint. He uses
terms like 'romp-se mon cor' to indicate his emotional
rejection of the maculist viewpoint, termed 'cosa tan fera'.
He combines his arguments with scholastic postulation,
apparent in conditional tenses, such as 'fósseu' (see above,
p.91), to show that it would not have been fitting for the
Virgin to have been subject to Satan, even for an instant:

> Romp-se mon cor pensant cosa tan fera
> que sols un punt, verge, de vós se diga
> fósseu jamés sots la taqua primera,
> que.n tal instant del Sathan presonera
> seríeu vós y de Déu inimiga. (VIII.73)

The poet is considering the one instant, 'sols un punt', in which the Virgin would have been subject to original sin, according to the maculists. This one instant, or rather the implications of that instant, separates the maculists from the immaculists. In other words, the poet hints at the dispute which would be well known and understood in the period. From Arnau de Cors' point of view, it would not have been fitting for the Virgin to have been subject to sin for even one moment. The allusions to Genesis 3.15 are contained indirectly in the terms 'presonera' and 'inimiga'.

The term 'presonera' is used to allude to the results of battle with Satan. Using the same method of argument which scholastic thinkers used to argue against their theory, the poet indicates what would have been the outcome of the battle with Satan, had the Virgin Mary been under original sin. Normally, references to the battle of Genesis present the Virgin as victorious over Satan. In this case, the reversal of the Virgin's victory into the Virgin as 'presonera' is striking and operates as a compressed scholastic argument. 'Inimiga' is also a compressed image. It hints at the opposition between the Virgin and Satan, whilst at the same time, added to the allusion to 'taqua', it hints at the Canticum text, 'amica mea', reversing it. Amica is transposed into 'inimiga'. Arnau de Cors feels that he does not need to make his reference to Genesis more

explicit, since he has already created the link in the
audience's mind.

It is apparent, once Arnau de Cors' poem is placed with
others from the collection, that the poet wished to allude
to Genesis 3.15. Fenollar's entry to the 1486 Certamen, for
example, combines scholastic rhetorical questions with the
consideration of the implications of 'aquell instant'.
However, the subjugation of the Virgin that could have
occurred in the event of her having been subject to original
sin for that one moment is made more explicit, through
reference to the manner of the Virgin's victory over the
serpent:

> Car si us fos gens, aquell instant seríeu,
> del Fill absent, vassalla del diable.
> ¿Com se pot fer, vós sola que devíeu
> rompre.l seu cap, a vós, que tant valíeu,
> l'agués romput aquell tan detestable? (XVII.18)

Whereas Arnau de Cors used 'presonera', Fenollar uses
'vassalla' to express the condition of subjugation, giving
the postulated victory a feudal overtone. Fenollar places
'vassalla' in apposition to 'del Fill absent' which
expresses the same idea of separation from God as 'inimiga'
in Arnau de Cors' poem. However, unlike Arnau, who stops at
allusion, Fenollar makes explicit his reference, by adapting
the prophecy from the Protoevangelium: '*Ipsa conteret caput
tuum*'. Fenollar indicates that the Virgin was to have
crushed the serpent's head, but had she been in fiefdom to
Satan, as she would have been for one instant, had
sanctification been her lot, she herself would have been
crushed by Satan 'l'agués romput'. The biblical text is used

ultimately to create an argument based on reasoned
supposition in favour of the Immaculate Conception.

The emotional response to the idea that the Virgin
could have ever been in the power of Satan is adopted by
another of the 1486 Certamen poets, Ramon Vivot. Vivot
comments: 'Sol de pensar-hi, senyora molt sancta, \
tremole'm l'esforç y pert lo seny meu' (XI.25). In the
conflict with Satan, the Virgin is the standard-bearer
'nostra panonera':

> ¿Qui us gos. inculpar de nengun peccat?
> Y vós, la qual sou nostra panonera,
> que dels inimichs seguint la bandera
> may hajeu estat
> del gran Lucifer sots la potestat. (XI.20)

Military imagery such as 'panonera', 'inimichs', 'bandera'
characterize the conflict between the Virgin and Satan which
is again seen in terms of the impossibility of the Virgin's
being 'sots la potestat' of Lucifer. Vivot returns to the
same image in the following stanza, repeating, in similar
military terms, how the Virgin would have been subject to
Lucifer's power, whilst expressing his shock in the
exclamation '¡o mare de Déu!':

> que vós qui teniu senyoria tanta,
> lo príncep d'infern, qui de vós se espanta,
> sots lo poder seu
> tenguda us hagués ¡o mare de Déu! (XI.27)

Postulating, in scholastic terms, the concept of the
subjugation of the Virgin, Vivot adds the aspect of the fear
felt by Lucifer, when confronted by his assailant, the
Virgin. The serpent's fear of the Woman is not directly part
of the Genesis prophecy but seems to emerge naturally from
the crushing of the serpent's head by the Woman or her

descendants. Vivot is openly immaculist. He attests from the first stanza: 'may no tengués culp. original', and supports the statement with a variety of arguments, based on Genesis, and relying on the contrast between Eve and Adam with Mary and Christ. He blends these themes with argument based on logic.[10]

Ferrando Francés is dismissive of Vivot's poem on this account. In his view, the verses are 'remarcablement fàcils, però no fan sinó repetir els coneguts tòpics immaculistes' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.419). The repetition of well-known concepts may rather represent a desire to refer to authority in the same way that theologians and poets referred back to the Fathers in their work. It may be that Vivot repeats well-known immaculist concepts, since these carry the authority, whether scriptural, liturgical or theological, which he seeks to lend to his poem.

In fact, the structure of Vivot's poem makes it limpid and flowing, with its abaabbcdccdd rhyme pattern. The sustaining of various concepts supporting the Immaculate Conception, together with their assumption into scholastic arguments, creates a coherent whole. It is certainly true that, whilst Vivot hoped to be granted 'de nov. agudesa', he

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[10] The sixth stanza of the poem, for example, puts forward the argument that if Mary was free from venial sin, which is the lesser type of sin, then it would be logical for her to be free from mortal sin:
> Que si .l crim menor vostre Fill benigne
> de vós ha .partat qui .s tot poderós,
> més vol la rahó que .l peccat maligne,
> qui d'infern entrar a qui .l té fa digne,
> alunya's de vós. (XI.67)

himself does not consider that this sharpness of wit will manifest itself in creating new images of the Immaculate Conception, but, rather, in the way he constructs arguments to support the doctrine. The arguments in Vivot's poem remain rather static, however, when contrasted with Fuster's poem, which also uses the Genesis prophecy, but in a slightly different context.

4.5.2 The crushing of the serpent

Jerònim Fuster draws on Genesis references to flow through his entry for the 1486 Certamen, underpinning the poem's development. The poem constantly juxtaposes references to the contrast of Adam, 'el primer rebel.le', with the dignity of the Virgin:

> Si del primer rebel.le, nostre pare,
> la roba fon de terra pura y santa
> y en dignitat aquell no s'acompare
> ab vós, homil, que sou divina mare,
> y ell enemich ab supèrbia tanta,
> més excel.lent y en major grau la vostra
> devia ser. (I.37)

Having shown how the Virgin is more worthy to have been created pure than the unworthy Adam, Fuster next links the protoevangelical battle with the redemptive battle undertaken by Christ on the Cross. The Genesis 3.15 prophecy and its fulfilment in the crucifixion, which is seen in terms of the ultimate defeat of Satan by the offspring of the Woman, are united. The Woman stands alone: 'davall la creu devíeu restar sola' (I.53), alongside her Son, at the moment of the final defeat of the serpent, transposed, following a traditional interpretation, into 'lo diable':

> Fogiren tots los altres ab gran cuyta,

> car no us pogué lo diable fer guerra,
> puix lo seu cap y tota la desferra
> vós li rompés en la primera luyta. (I.55)

'La primera luyta' refers to the Protoevangelium, whilst the final battle between the serpent and the offspring of the New Eve, Mary, is being played out on the cross.

The link between the crucifixion and the Protoevangelium seems surprisingly fresh. In other poems, the nature of the struggle is not usually specified by the poets, although it may be an underlying assumption, and is not frequently linked to the Gospel events. Present-day theologians consider that there is a clear reference to Genesis by the author of the Gospel of St John, when Christ addresses his Mother as 'Woman' from the cross.[11] Even though Fuster links the defeat of sin to the action of Christ in going to the cross, the Vulgate translation is still uppermost in his mind, and causes a double-focus for him. For Fuster, the defeat of Satan in Genesis has been accomplished by the Virgin, here identified as the Woman of Genesis, 'puix lo seu cap [...] vós li rompés en la primera luyta' (I.57). 'La primera luyta' can only refer to the time of the Fall. This focussing on the Virgin, who cannot be defeated by Satan, in this poem to some extent relegates the figure on the Cross to the sidelines.

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[11] R. Brown, K. P. Donfried, J.A. Fitzmyer, J.A. Reumann, *Mary in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars* (Philadelphia: Fortress press, 1978). The seventh chapter is devoted to an exploration of the relationship between the references to Christ's mother as Woman by the author of the Johannine Gospel and the Woman of Genesis 3.15.

From this image of the Woman before the cross, Fuster progresses to decry the opponents of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, who deny her the rightful title, hers by right, because of the defeat of Satan: 'Es maldient lo ver títol que us negua \ puix que vençés del gran Satan la bregua' (I.71). It is interesting that Fuster links the reference to the defeat of Satan by the Virgin to the then current climate of non-recognition of 'lo ver títol'. It is certain from the context of the poem, within a collection of poems dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, as well as from the arguments and references adduced within the poem itself, that 'lo ver títol' can only be taken to refer to the Immaculate Conception.

Mossén Ferrando Dieç sets his references to the conflict between the Virgin and Satan firmly within the context of the economy of salvation. Dieç argues from the Virgin's role in Redemption, that there is a necessity for exemption from sin in her case:

> Per noble fer l'ome qu. era tan fràgil
> prengué la carn Jhesús, Salvador nostre.
> Donchs fon mester sa mare ser exemta
> del que féu l'om perdent los drets seus nobles,
> puix recobrats, per ella ser havien. (XXVII.31)

Because of her role as Mother of the Redeemer, Mary had to be exempt from the effects of the Fall, which caused man to lose his 'drets nobles'. Through the Virgin, the rights, once lost, were recovered. It is within the context of the reasoning behind the Virgin's freedom from original sin that the conflict between the Woman and Satan is seen:

> Rem-la son Fill que .ls tals ella no perda,
> que .n tot moment en puritat s'estengua,

        ni que .l Satan trenque sols una squerda
        d'asta semblant, tenyida ab color verde,
        rompent-li .l cap que spera .n Fill Déu prengua.
        (XXVII.36)

The Virgin was, thus, pre-redeemed and did not lose her

noble rights '.ls tals'. Satan is described as unable to

assail her in a picture of the Genesis battle which is vivid

and action-packed.

A similar but slightly more indirect approach is taken

by Johan Sent Climent, writing for the 1474 Certamen. This

poem is interesting, since it combines the Genesis

references with anti-Moorish sentiments. The effect is

somewhat akin to Berceo's anti-Jewish sentiments in the

Loores. These anti-Moorish sentiments form a backdrop to the

poem. In the first stanza, the poet asks for protection from

'aquella mala secta': 'Que .m guardeu d'aquella mala secta

\ dels peccadors, qui són ferits de verga' (XXVII.3). In a

note on the third line of the poem Ferrando Francés

indicates that Sent Climent is referring to the Moors as

'mala secta'. In fact during the course of the poem 'mala

secta' is picked up again. It is made more explicit in the

second stanza: 'Vós confoneu de Mahomet la secta'

(XXVII.14). The fourth stanza combines these references with

a reference to original sin:

        No us ha pogut fer nafrar la vostr. arma
        lo vil Satan ab sa cruel vergua,
        d'aquell peccat original, que .ls òrphens
        fels cristians són guardats del sepulcre
        de l'infern brau. (XXVII.25)

The effect of juxtaposing 'Satan' and 'nafrar' is to create

a resonance of the Genesis conflict in the reader's mind.

The 'cruel vergua' of Satan echoes the 'ferits de verga' of

the first stanza except that Satan's rod has now become explicitly identified with original sin. The wording of 'no us ha pogut fer nafrar la vostr. arma' echoes the Genesis reference. In this case, instead of bruising the heel of the Virgin, the serpent or Satan, is unable to bruise her soul. The bruising is made explicit and refers directly to bruising with original sin 'ab sa cruel vergua \ d'aquel peccat original'. The 'vergua' recalls the lance of Dieç's poem.

In turn, 'nafrar vostr. arma' echoes 'Simeon dix vos travessarà l'arma' (XXVII.24) from the end of the previous stanza. In this way, the poet links the Genesis text to the sword which Simeon prophesied would pierce the Virgin's soul in Luke 2.35. The link is indirect, due to the *encadenación* practised by the poet, but is, nevertheless, striking. The Lucan prophecy is more often linked to the crucifixion than to original sin.

In general, however, the structure of the poem creates links which are less than effective. The structure of the poem requires the repetition of part of the last line in the first line of the following stanza. The structure is clever but becomes pedestrian partly because of the ill-chosen descriptors used and partly because, whilst some of the repetitions are felicitous, others are less so. For example, 'Siau-me scut en lo que yo tan dubte \ de caure bax en l'infernal sepulcre' (XXVII.7) is followed by 'Verge sen par, d'omilitat sepulcre' (XXVII.9). It is difficult to see

how the poet could consider the Virgin to be the tomb of humility. A number of words, such as 'secta' and 'sepulcre' recur constantly in the poem. 'Sepulcre' is repeated interminably in combination with a tasteless series of descriptors. 'L'infernal sepulcre' becomes 'mal sepulcre' and even 'l'orrible sepulcre'. 'Orphens', 'arma' and 'cambra' are also repeated. Added to this, in the opinion of Ferrando Francés, the language is deliberately old-fashioned:

> L'artificiositat inherent a la sextina i la incessant repetició de les velles metàfores laudatòries marianes de la poesia trobadoresca donen a la composició de Sentcliment un marcat caràcter arcaïtzant (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.240).[12]

In the end, the poem is flawed by such juxtapositions and repetitions.

As has been the case in several of the Certamen poems, poets, such as Fuster, condemn those who doubt the victory of the Virgin. The poets care little whether the doubters are opponents of the new doctrine or, as in this poem, the infidel Moors: 'E qui dirà 'yo hu dubte' \de paradís no veurà may la cambra' (XXVII.29). It would seem that the nature of the doubt, which is not explicitly described in the poem, is intended to be interpreted as doubt of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, since this is a constant throughout the Certamen poems. The poem's preoccupation with the Moors causes the poet to give an

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[12] The poet has clearly chosen the style and language advisedly, since in the *Endreça* he refers to Troubadour poetry in the following terms: 'Jutges valents qui manteniu la cambra \ del Gay Saber, tramet vers novell d'òrphens' (XXVII.41).

additional twist. Those who do not believe the doctrine will be equivalent to those won over by the Moors: 'Aquests seran semblants dels qui la secta \ de Mahomet han tengut en lo segle' (XXVII.31). Whilst the poet's technique is less than perfect, the strength of his opinion and the poem's contribution to defence of the Immaculate Conception make it worthy of consideration.

References to the action of the Virgin in crushing the head of Satan are frequent in the 1486 Certamen, and yet another poet, Mossén Blay Assencí, quotes the verses from Genesis in his poem. The first stanza begins with a creation image, which attributes exemption from original sin explicitly to the Virgin 'exempta fós creada \ d'original peccat' (XXVIII.2), and ends on a reference to the Protoevangelium. The Genesis reference is interesting because it links the Protoevangelium to Mary and to Judith:

> [...] Tal vos contemple
> que sola sou donada per exemple
> verificant lo Fill qui us desenculpa,
> dient axí de vós Judith insigne
> 'Esta romprà lo cap de tu, maligne'. (XXVIII.8)

Judith beguiled Holofernes to cut off his own head with his own scimitar in Judith 13.4-8. However, the lines in Blay Assencí's poem are interpreted as though Judith spoke the words, 'Esta rompra lo cap de tu'. The words appear to be a quotation from the words of Judith in the form in which they appear. Close examination of the Book of Judith reveals that although there are similar phrases, such as the invocatory prayer of Judith: 'Break their pride by a woman's hand' (Judith 9.10), this apparent quotation has no exact biblical

origin.

The puzzle could be resolved by a minor adjustment in
punctuation. The lines might be punctuated: 'dient axí de
vós, Judith insigne \ "Esta rompra lo cap de tu, maligne"'.
The epithet 'Judith insigne' would then be in apposition to
'vós', whilst the words would be spoken by 'people'. Mossén
Blay Assencí, thus, sees Judith as the type of the Virgin,
addressing the Virgin as Judith, in that through her
Israel's enemies were crushed:

> Praise God! Praise him! Praise the God who has not
> withdrawn his mercy from the House of Israel but has
> shattered our enemies by my hand tonight. (Judith
> 13.14)

Blay Assencí ends each stanza of his poem on a
scriptural note, ending consecutive verses with references
to the tabernacle, the angelic salutation, Esther,
Ecclesiasticus and the Canticum. In the view of Ferrando
Francés, these biblical prefigurations of the Virgin 'son
com el *leit-motiv* que dóna una certa unitat al poema' (*Els
certàmens poètics,* p.430). In fact, the poet wishes not only
to give 'una certa unitat' but also to underpin his poem
with the authority afforded by scriptural quotations.

The linking of the prophecy of Genesis 3.15 to the
Immaculate Conception is not only found in Catalan poetry.
References are found on occasion in Cancionero poetry; for
example, in Alvarez de Villasandino's poem, 'Generosa muy
fermosa', Mary is the woman 'de quien Lucifer se espanta'
(F-D, 599.4). Villasandino's poem begins with an oblique

reference to the Immaculate Conception understood in 'fermosa' and 'syn mansilla'. The final stanza then returns to the doctrine, making it explicit in 'o *beata* ynmaculata \ syn error desde abeniçio' (F-D 599.49).

In the first stanza, Villasandino links his implicit immaculist allusion to a reference to the conflict of Genesis:

> Generosa muy fermosa
> syn mansilla Virgen santa
> virtuosa poderosa
> de quien Luçifer se espanta: (F-D 599.1)

Villasandino has made the obvious inference that the serpent is equivalent to the fallen angel, Lucifer. The battle is linked through 'syn mansilla' to the Virgin's sinlessness and, by inference, to her immaculate nature. Furthermore, the image of conflict becomes set, in retrospect, in an immaculist context, since Villasandino returns to the Canticum reference in the final stanza. The linking of the Genesis 3.15 prophecy to statements about the Virgin's immaculate nature is not, however, so explicitly developed, as has been the case in the Catalan poets considered thus far.

Nuñez also makes reference to the battle between the Woman and the serpent, in his *villancico*. There are multiple allusions to the story of the Fall in the poem, beginning with the response from the Virgin:

> Responde la Madre de Dios

> Yo soy la que merescio
> ser Madre de su excellencia,

> por reparar la dolencia
> delo que Eva perdio;
> assi que de mi nascio
> aquel Dios
> que ha saluado a mi y a uos. (F-D 874.11)

Nuñez places the role of the Virgin in the history of
salvation: by her motherhood, she takes a part in countering
the 'dolencia' of the effects of the Fall, in that God is
born from her. Two stanzas prior to a second Genesis
reference, Nuñez acclaims the Virgin as 'de toda limpieza
llena, \ sin pecado original' (F-D 874.34). Moreover, the
stanza which acclaims the Virgin as free from original sin
is separated from the new reference to Genesis only by one
reply in the dialogue between 'Nosotros' and 'Nuestra
Señora'. It is thus close enough to provide an immaculist
context for the Genesis reference.

Later in the poem, Nuñez implies the defeat of Lucifer
by the Virgin:

> Vos soys por quien fue quitado
> el poder del enemigo;
> vos soys la que soys abrigo
> del que esta desabrigado;
> por vos se quito el pecado
> delos dos
> primeros que hizo Dios. (F-D 874.46)

First, she is seen as undermining the power of the enemy,
next as a shelter for sinners. These two images of the
Virgin are firmly linked in the medieval mind. Finally,
through the Virgin, addressed as 'vos', reparation is made
for the error committed by Adam and Eve. The centre of the
stanza is concerned with the Virgin's role as protector
'abrigo' of sinners who are 'desabrigados'. There can be no
doubt that the stanza is centred on sin. The defeat of the

enemy is seen by Nuñez in terms of the overcoming of sin.
Because of the prior reference to the Virgin's immaculate
nature, it is likely that Nuñez intends the Genesis
references to be read in terms of an overcoming of original
sin; the Genesis references, thus, provide a counterpoint to
the active role of the Virgin in defending sinners.

Nuñez returns to other Genesis references on other
occasions in the *villancico*, so that these references
provide a *point de repère* within the poem. The references
have a particular focus, as is explored in the next section.

4.5.3   The bondage of the Virgin and the binding of Satan

In this section, an examination will be made of the
imagery surrounding binding and unbinding, as used by many
of the poets. The binding of Satan is a theme used on
occasion in Cancionero poetry. A harmonization of the
several references to Genesis 3.15 with the Virgin's
advocacy occurs in the eighteenth stanza of Nuñez's
villancico:

> Vos soys la que nos desata
> del poder de Lucifer,
> y la que puede hazer
> el lodo mas que la plata. (F-D 874.116)

The defeat of Lucifer is seen in terms of the rescue of
humanity from bondage by the Virgin. She also improves the
unworthy sinners so rescued, causing them to appear more
worthy. From being likened to clay, they become better than
silver under her influence. It may well be that, by
returning to the Genesis conflict, the poet wishes to show
how the Virgin's sinlessness underpins her powers to help

humanity. However, whilst there are clear affirmations of immaculism within the poem, it is not entirely certain how the poet wished the Genesis references to be read. It is certain that the poet regards the battle as depicting the defeat of sin, often the actual sins of sinful humanity; by extension, it seems to be implied that, from Nuñez's own standpoint, such a defeat can only be effected by someone who is free from sin.

Binding in its opposite sense underlies the poem submitted to the 1474 Certamen by Miqualot Pereç. On this occasion, it is Satan who must be bound. The first stanza sets the references to the celestial battle very firmly in the context of the motherhood of Mary: 'puix Ell volgué de vos pendre la .mprempta' (XXIII.10), intermingled with her care for sinners 'Dels peccadors confort, qu.a tots conforta' (XXIII.4). In addition, Miqualot Pereç links his reference to the binding of Satan to a statement about the Virgin's immaculate nature:

> Dels peccadors confort qu'a tots conforta
> ligant Satan en lo més fondo centre.
> Vós sola sou, humil verge Maria,
> vexell perfet, del primer crim exempta.
> Déu eternal preservada us tenia,
> en res en vós de tacha no volia. (XXIII.4)

The defeat of Satan, 'ligant Satan', has been developed into a chaining or binding image. The reference to Satan's defeat is opposed by a description of the nature of the Virgin as 'vexell perfet', the vessel or chalice which holds the new wine. The Virgin is exempt from the first sin, the sin of Adam and Eve, or original sin. The final lines of the stanza refer to the will of God in preserving the Virgin as part of

the divine plan, where 'volia' and 'us tenia' express the idea of such a plan. This poem does not occur within the immaculist context of a Certamen dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, nevertheless, the statement about the Virgin's preservation from the stain of sin and the use of 'exempta' allow Pereç to show his hand with regard to his views on the Immaculate Conception and, thus, create his own immaculist context within the poem.

A study of Miqualot Pereç's poem reveals further references to Genesis 3.15, as the poet returns to the Genesis story in the penultimate stanza:

> La humanal natura, desterrada
> per lo peccat de nostre primer pare,
> sobre .ls ceraffs haveu vós exalçada.
> De parahís mostrant la bella .ntrada,
> reyna dels cels, filla de Déu y mare,
> vós dels inferns haveu romput les baldes,
> dels pares sants desligant les cadenes,
> perquè, la creu portant per armes saldes,
> d'on ancillà Jhesús en vostres faldes,
> lo peccador se defén de les penes. (XXIII.31)

Pereç refers to the exile of Adam and Eve and their descendants from Eden, which is an integral part of the Genesis prophecy and condemnation. This reference is linked to the opening of Paradise through the exaltation of the Virgin. The poet returns to the confrontation between the Virgin and evil, which has its roots in the Genesis text. Ferrando Francès, in his brief introduction to this poem, refers to the Virgin's 'actiu paper en l'economia de la salvaçió' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.237), and, indeed, 'romput' is used to describe the Virgin's positive action against evil. 'Romput' is the verb often used for the crushing of the serpent's head. The echo of Genesis is

completed in 'dels inferns', recalling the satanic regions.
The defeat of the regions of Hell is seen in terms of
release of captives: 'dels pares sants desligant les
cadenes'. Binding and unbinding provide a theme which
runs through the poem. Although it must be said that the
theme is not particularly well highlighted, it seems
unlikely to have been incidental. A further interesting
point is the transferral of the role of Christ to his Mother
In the harrowing of Hell, Christ opened the gates of
Paradise through his Resurrection.

4.6 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EVE-MARY PARALLEL

Whilst not referring directly to the conflict or to
subjugation of the serpent by the Virgin, a number of poets
use the traditional Eve-Mary parallel in an immaculist
context. Such references will be examined in this section.

In the *Espill*, the contrast between Eve and Mary is an
integral part of the structure of the third book. Jaume Roig
first establishes what will become of Eve after the Fall:

> Com sa error
> no confessàs, ans la scusàs
> ab la serpent, eternalment
> fon condempnada a mort, dampnada,
> e maleïda tota la vida
> ser subjugada e bandejada
> de paraís. (*Espill* III.2, p.153)

Eve will not only be condemned to death but also placed in
subjection and turned out of Paradise. From this description
of the results of the disobedience of Eve in the Garden,
Roig develops a long diatribe about women and their
inheritance from Eve, finally returning to allusions to the

text from Genesis to complete the section on women with a
section in praise of the Virgin.

Within the section dedicated to the Virgin, Jaume Roig
weaves allusions to the Genesis text into an argument in the
scholastic style in favour of the Immaculate Conception:

> Es lo fort mur
> De la defensa contra l'ofensa
> de l'enemic, puix lo castic
> d'ella'l rebé. Esta'l vencé
> ab puritat. Contra el peccat
> és pugnadora. Com pecadora
> ésser podia? Déu, qui hu sabia,
> tal la volgué, volent pogué
> fer-la tan neta tota perfeta
> i tal prevista ans de la vista
> del nostre crim. (*Espill* III.2, p.158)

Military imagery runs through the lines, underpinned by
lexical items such as 'enemich', 'pugnadora', 'defensa' and
'ofensa'. Following the battle imagery which places in
opposition the Virgin and 'peccat', personified as
'l'enemich', Roig turns immediately to a scholastic
rhetorical question 'Com pecadora ésser podia?', in order to
counter the question with an argument in scholastic style:

> Déu qui hu sabia
> tal la volgué volent pogué
> fer-la tan neta. (*Espill* III.2, p.158)

The interweaving of scholastic argumentation, apparent
in 'volgué' and 'volent pogué' (see above p.94) also
underpins the reference to Genesis 3.15, giving it an
undeniable immaculist context. Roig, thus, skilfully
interweaves echoes of biblical and scholastic texts, to draw
together his defence of the Immaculate Conception. There can
be no doubt that Roig draws the Genesis references into his

other biblical allusions to add weight to his defence of the emergent doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Other fifteenth-century Catalan poets adapt the traditional·Eve-Mary parallel to embody the contrast sinful\sinless, and draw closer to an immaculist interpretation of the parallel. One such example can be found in Jaume de Olesa's poem, submitted to the 1486 Certamen:

> Vós no sentís la sentència dada
> d'Eva pel crim, Verge de culpa sana,
> y així molt més la taca perpetrada
> del vell Adam en vós nunqu. és estada. (X.78)

In these lines, it is the sin resulting from the Fall, which concerns Olesa. Thus, Eve has had the judgement of sin passed upon her, 'la sentèntia dada', and has contracted original sin, whilst the Virgin remains 'de culpa sana'. Furthermore, the statement, 'Vós no sentís la sentència dada\ d'Eva pel crim', may refer either to the pains of childbirth, long considered one of the results of original sin or, on the other hand, it may refer to the impulse to sin. It is indubitable that the Eve-Mary parallel has been developed in Jaume de Olesa's poem to give an explicit link between the parallel and the Virgin's sinlessness: 'Y així molt més la taca perpetrada \ del vell Adam en vós nunqu. és estada' (X.80). Also, since the poem in question appears within a collection of poems submitted in honour of the Immaculate Conception, giving the poem an immaculist context, it is a small step to conclude that the parallel is intended as an illustration of the Immaculate Conception.

A similar step can be taken with regard to another poem in the 1486 collection of Catalan poems. The poem 'Sense Títol' contrasts Adam and the Virgin explicitly with regard to their respective sinful or sinless natures. According to Ferrando Francés:

> Les quatre primeres estrofes contrasten la naturalesa pecadora de l'home, fruit de la caiguda dels nostres primers pares, i la plenitud de gràcia atorgada a Maria, en consideració a la seua maternitat divina. (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.420)

The second stanza of the poem begins each alternate line 'Adam peccant' and the alternating lines begin 'rement Jhesús' but the contrast is not only between Christ and Adam. The contrast between Adam and the Virgin, with regard to original sin, can be inferred. Moreover, the pre-redemption undertaken in the Immaculate Conception can be determined:

> Adam peccant no fós en ell compresa
> rement Jesus remés ab Ell la culpa
> Adam peccant, no fós en ell sotmesa
> rement Jhesús per vós nos desenculpa. (XII.19)

The Virgin was not imprisoned in original sin, 'no fós en ell compresa' because she was, by implication, pre-redeemed 'rement Jhesús'. The Virgin was not subject to the sin of Adam, 'no fós en ell sotmesa', since, because of the redemption, she was chosen as the vehicle to allow the restoration of humanity: 'per vós nos desenculpa'. As Ferrando Francés has stated, the poem is a veritable 'filigrana en vers a base de anàfores, paradoxes, antítesis .... combinades de molt diversa manera' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.420).

Gómez Manrique also, amongst the Castilian poets, draws

on the traditional contrast of Mary with Eve, in his poem 'Loores e suplicaciones a Nuestra Señora', in which he contrasts the liberation of the human race by Mary from the 'clausura' caused by Eve, seemingly considering that original sin is a type of bondage or imprisonment. It is Mary's place in the history of salvation, based on her role as Mother of God, which is considered important:

> O Madre de Dios, electa
> [...]
> por cuya santa mistura,
> segun la sacra Escritura
> no dudando bien aprueua,
> la vmana fue natura
> librada dela clausura
> en que fue puesta por Eva! (F-D 416.1,5)

Gómez Manrique does not contrast Mary's sinless state directly with Eve's sinful state at this point, but rather concentrates on the effect of the actions of Eve and the contrasting effect of the Virgin's *Fiat*. Gómez Manrique makes a specific reference to the 'santa mistura' in this first stanza, in other words, the joining of the human with the divine which took place at the moment of the conception of Christ in the womb of the Virgin.

The second stanza of the poem deals with the birth of Christ, referring to the Virgin as 'virgo senper yntata' (F-D 416.13). Having referred in traditional terms to the Virgin's perpetual virginity, using the age-old image: 'sana vedriera\ finca del sol traspasada' (F-D 416.16), Gómez Manrique brushes with the Genesis text again, referring in passing to the reparation of the Fall:

> Por ti lunbrosa lunbrera,
> nuestra cayda primera
> fue, Señora, reparada! (F-D 416.18)

It is not entirely certain from the poem in what terms Gómez Manrique saw the reparation of the Fall, except that, in the poet's view, the Virgin was involved in it. It might have been possible to interpret 'por' as meaning 'by' and thus as meaning that the Virgin had sole responsibility for the reparation of the Fall, had the Glosa not indicated that 'por' is to be read as meaning 'through':

> *Reparada*
> En quanto Cristo que fue el reparador tomo della la carne en que padescio. (F-D II, p.148)

In the third stanza, the poet picks up the Genesis reference again, linking it firmly to the Virgin's 'santidad'. The struggle represented is also a monumental struggle on behalf of humanity:

> O tu bendita muger,
> por la qual seran pobladas
> aquellas sacras moradas
> que despoblo Lucifer,
> curando tu santidad
> la graue deslealtad
> deste cruel aduersario
> con paciencia y humilldad,
> que toda contrariedad
> su cura por su contrario. (F-D 416.21)

The allusions to Genesis are indisputable. The role of the Woman is that, through her, the 'sacras moradas' will be repopulated. 'Pobladas', through the Virgin's action, is contrasted with 'que despoblo Lucifer'. This may be taken in this context to mean an opening of the gates of Paradise to the human race after the gates were closed through Lucifer's action. For Gómez Manrique, Mary's holiness would appear to be the remedy for the Fall which will result in a return to Eden for the rest of humanity. In addition, since Genesis 3.15 is followed in the Bible by a section on the population

of the earth by Eve, Mother of the Living (Gen. 3.20), this strengthens the allusion to the biblical text.

In the succeeding lines, 'curando tu santidad \la grave deslealtad \deste cruel aduersario' the poet opposes the enemy and the Virgin again. The lines could well be taken to mean that the holiness of the Virgin has effected reparation for the disloyal actions of the enemy, except that, turning to the *Glosa*, it can be seen that the writer of the Glosa interpreted 'santidad' christocentrically:

> *Santidad*
> Por que el hijo de Dios encarno en nuestra Señora, mediante su gran humilldat, que es la rayz e fundamento de toda santidad e virtud. (p.148)

The Glosa does not appear to fit entirely with the intention of Gómez Manrique in the poem. It is as though the author of the Glosa wished to toe the line very carefully, perhaps more carefully than is the case in the poem and, for that reason, the apparent interpretation of the stanza must be modified in a surprising way. If 'santidad' must be read as echoing the Incarnation, then the interpretation which might have been put on the lines, the link between 'holiness' and the battle of Genesis, the fore-shadowing of an immaculist text, slips away. In this case, just as with the definition of 'santificada', (see below, p.256), the writer of the Glosa hedges his bets. The caution of the Castilian poets, as opposed to the open defence of the doctrine by the Catalans, is underlined once again.

4.7 THE WOMAN OF THE APOCALYPSE

At this point, a small number of references which seem closer in nature to the vision described in the New Testament Apocalyse will be considered. Peinador, in his synthesis of scriptural proofs adduced in support of the Immaculate Conception, argues that the vision of the Apocalypse should be considered in conjunction with the Protoevangelium 'por las relaciones estrechas que con el mismo tiene' (p.70). Indeed, in the words of Peinador, 'Los incidentes de la lucha descrita y el resultado coinciden con los del Protoevangelio'.

Brown, Donfried, Fitzmyer and Reumann, in their exegesis of Apocalypse 12, recognize that:

> The dragon is identified as the ancient serpent (of Genesis 3) in Rev. 12.9. This means that the dragon's struggle with the woman and her offspring may be meant to evoke the words addressed to the serpent in Gen. 3.15. (p.229)

Lucien Cerfaux argues in favour of the dependence of the Apocalytic text on Genesis 3.15-16:

> Les personnages qui sont en jeu et leurs actions se correspondent d'une manière évidente, entre Genèse et Apocalypse. De part et d'autre s'opposent la femme et le serpent-dragon; la femme et sa descendance sont haïes par le serpent et sa descendance dans la Genèse, persecutées par le dragon et sa descendance dans l'Apocalypse... Ces ressemblances littéraires et verbales sont assez étroites et nombreuses, elles dessinent si exactement les contours essentiels du même scène que nous pouvons affirmer que Genèse III, 15-16 est au point de départ de la vision de l'Apocalypse.[13]

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[13] Lucien Cerfaux, 'La Vision de la femme et du dragon de l'Apocalypse en relation avec le Protoévangile', *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses*, 13 (1955), 21-33, p.26.

Since, as has been argued, the battle described in Revelations 12 is closely linked to the Protoevangelium, it is proposed that the mythical battle described in Revelations, should be considered in its poetic manifestations at this point.

Amongst the poets, there are relatively few who draw on the description of the conflict in Revelations in an overt way. Tallante refers to the struggle between the serpent and the Woman. In his poem dedicated to the freedom of the Virgin from original sin, Tallante writes:

> Pues, Virgen celeste, de gracias repleta,
> Si ricas defensas sostiene tu lía
> qualquier adversario que punge y porfía
> subiecto le hace su malvada setta. (F-D 1082.9)

The context of a poem about original sin sets up the apocalyptic-immaculist link in the reader's mind. This poem is included within this section, rather than the related Genesis section, largely because of the nature of the battle but also, in part, because of the epithet 'celeste' which evokes the Woman of Revelations. 'Subiecto' recalls the celestial battle between the Woman and the serpent, in which the serpent is crushed. Because of its early position in the line, emphasis seems to bring the visual image of battle to life.

However, Tallante, in his use of 'qualquier adversario', is not only referring to the serpent, but also to the opponents of the Conception doctrine. The crushing of opposition can also be applied to them. The second stanza of the poem widens the heavenly battle to the earthly battle,

raging between defenders and opponents of the doctrine, and

it is at this point that the allusion seems to be to the

Apocalyptic vision:

> Los tales combates te dan dela tierra,
> y son de conceptos que rige mal zelo;
> y tu permaneces por libre en el cielo
> y sus presupuestos fenecen en guerra: (1082.13)

The Virgin is above the level of thinking of her opponents,

thus remaining 'por libre en el cielo', untouched by their

limited view of the truth. At this point, the opponents of

the doctrine are linked even more firmly to the

'adversario', since he takes delight in their opposing views

and seeks to strengthen their unfounded opinions.

> que desque el proterbo qualquier dubda affierra
> en entricaciones de falsa opinion,
> jamas se desuia de contradicion,
> hincando las presas alli do se encierra. (1082.17)

The counter-arguments of the maculists are, thus, seen

as part of the serpent's attack on the Virgin. The closing

of the circle on maculist thinking is typical of the

Valencian school of poets and Tallante's use of the theme

reflects his connection with the Certàmens. The way in which

the poet's condemnation of opponents of the doctrine is

linked to Satan is very similar to the connection between

maculists and Satan already highlighted in Fuster's poem

(see above, p.183). Perhaps it should be remembered, at this

point, that Tallante's poem was an entry to the 1486

Certamen, appearing in Ferrando Francés' edition at XIV, and

that, for this reason, his poems often mirrored the Catalan

approach to discussion of immaculist thinking.

Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, in his poem 'O María, luz del día' (F-D 304), also uses the battle between the Woman of Revelations and the dragon to refer implicitly to the Immaculate Conception. His poem consists of a series of interwoven epithets in praise of Mary, including a Canticum reference amongst the epithets (see above, p.138): 'Señora, pulcra e decora' (F-D 304.5).

It has already been shown how Canticum references are used to refer to the Virgin's immaculate nature and the point has been made that, alone, this reference could not have definite importance in determining the poet's stance on the doctrine. The sixth stanza of Pérez de Guzmán's poem contains a combined reference to the Canticum and the battle between the Woman and her adversary, depicted as the dragon, in a description which evokes Revelations:

> Virgen santa de quien canta
> Salamon,
> de cuyo viso se espanta
> el dragon; (304.21)

The implicit reference to the Canticum in 'de quien canta Salamon' together with the reference to the victory over the serpent combine to indicate that the victory was won because of the Virgin's stainless nature. The combination of scriptural references is used to set up resonances of the Immaculate Conception in the mind of the fifteenth-century reader.

Beyond the allusions outlined above, the battle from Revelations appears not to have been used in connection with the Conception doctrine to any degree. It is the combination

of Genesis and Apocalyptic references which exercised such a powerful effect on Spanish art of the sixteenth century, influencing Veláquez and Murillo and inspiring them to produce sublime pictorial representations of Mary Immaculate. In fifteenth-century poetry, it was textual reference to Genesis 3.15 which predominated.

4.8 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, as has been seen, the theme of conflict between the Woman and serpent\dragon is extremely rich as a Conception theme and is developed in some form by most Catalan poets who refer to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and dedicate a poem or part of a poem to the doctrine. Some poets refer directly to the prophecy in Genesis about the conflict between the descendants of the Woman or the Woman herself, mirroring the words *ipsa conteret caput tuum* or creating resonances which recall the words in their poems. Other poets pick up the subjugation theme and develop it, often reversing its implications. These poets use scholastic arguments to show what would have happened had the Virgin Mary not been preserved free from original sin.

Some Catalan poets, for example, consider that, if the Virgin were not totally victorious, or in other words immaculate, then she herself must have been subjugated. Other poets take the age-old parallel between Eve and Mary and give it a new vigour, drawn from the poem as a whole,

particularly where the poem is explicitly immaculist in intent. Thus, Roig combines his contrast with a fashionable and vehement diatribe against fifteenth-century daughters of Eve, as contrasted with the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Some poets seem closer to the New Testament reworking of the Protoevangelium in the Apocalyptic vision and use it to express their immaculist views.

The Castilian poets, with the exception of Tallante, with his close connections to Cataluña, are less explicit than the Catalans in the use of reference to conflict between the Woman and the evil adversary, whether Satan, the dragon or the serpent. Indeed, as has been seen, in the case of Gómez Manrique, there seems to be a deliberate attempt to redress a reference which seems more explicit in the poem than in its explanation in the Glosa. The caution of the Castilians is again at issue. The discussion of scholastic influence also revealed a cautious approach amongst supporters of the doctrine. Fray Iñigo de Mendoça rewrote a part of his *Coplas* so as not to upset opponents. Gómez Manrique takes a more placatory line in his poem. Similarly, wholesale denunciations of opponents are not visible in Castilian poems.

Finally, the point must be made that earlier Marian poets do not use references to the Genesis conflict to underpin references to the Immaculate Conception. Even though they may draw upon the conflict between Satan and the Virgin, or to the contrast between Eve and Mary, often their

agenda is quite different, as they are referring to the perpetual virginity of Mary. On occasion, purity is referred to, but in an unspecified way. It is only in the fifteenth century that poetic references to Genesis become immaculist in intent and that such references are woven into the fabric of immaculist arguments.

5 *CREADA AB INITIO*: CREATION AND PRE-CREATION IMAGERY

This chapter will examine one aspect of the laudatory language used about Mary in fifteenth-century poetry. The study will trace the connection between the unnamed female figure of Wisdom in certain Old Testament texts and the Virgin Mary in Cancioneros and Certamen poems. The texts which are particularly used by the poets are those which connect Wisdom to creation.

5.1 DEFINITION OF CREATION IMAGERY

The description of the Virgin Mary as *ab initio creata* is found increasingly in the fifteenth century, no doubt because it became associated with the florescent interest in the Virgin's origins and her conception, which it appears to suggest. In this imagery, Mary is linked with the beginning of time *initio*. She is also linked, through association with the word *creata*, with the period when creation was begun. Such imagery, which deals with the period of creation, will be termed creation imagery and will be examined in the first section of the chapter. Other Wisdom texts, which will be examined, in their turn, associate the Virgin with the period before creation was begun and this will be termed pre-creation imagery. An examination will also be made of the related pre-Fall imagery, which associates the Virgin with the period after creation prior to sin entering the world.

5.2   WISDOM LITERATURE

In the Bible, there are several texts describing the

female figure of Wisdom. The Castilian epithet 'creada *ab*

initio' is taken from a text in Ecclesiasticus:

> Ab initio et ante saecula creata sum et usque ad
> futurum saeculum non desinam et in habitatione sancta
> coram ministraui. (Ecclesiasticus 24.14)[1]

The text is taken from the Wisdom literature books of the

Bible and, in Ecclesiasticus 24.14, Wisdom is speaking in

the first person about her origins.[2] *Ab initio creata*, is

one of six occasions in which Wisdom affirms her existence

at the time of creation.[3]

Five books of the Old Testament are normally classified

as Wisdom Literature, amongst these books are Proverbs and

Ecclesiasticus. According to Murphy, the literary forms of

Wisdom literature vary from didactic sayings, to admonitions

and prayers ('Wisdom', p.449). The connection between Wisdom

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[1] The *Biblia sacra* contains the verse at Ecclesiasticus
24.14 whilst modern Bibles contain the verse at
Ecclesiasticus 24.9. *JB* translates Ecclesiaticus 24.9,
as follows: 'From eternity, in the beginning, he
created me, and for eternity I shall remain' (p.1111).
Other translations offer 'before the ages'.

[2] Although the acceptance of certain Wisdom books is
disputed by some biblical scholars, the Wisdom genre is
generally recognized as encompassing such books as Job,
Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus (or Sirach), the
Book of Wisdom and some Psalms. Ecclesiasticus is
present as a canonical book in the Vulgate Bible but is
counted amongst apocryphal biblical literature in some
Bibles.

[3] Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm., 'Introduction to Wisdom
Literature' in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed.
by Raymond E. Brown, S.J., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J.,
and Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm. (London: Chapman, 1991),
447-452, p.450.

and creation is made explicit by the authors of the biblical texts, attributed for centuries to Solomon. According to a number of present-day theologians, 'Wisdom theology has been characterized as "creation theology". That is to say, the created world is the source of Wisdom's insights' ('Wisdom', p.449). The female figure of Wisdom emerges clearly, particularly in Proverbs where long sections of personification occur. Certain texts, drawn from the natural theology of Wisdom literature, were then applied by medieval theologians to the Virgin Mary. The transfer occurred to provide scriptural proof for developing doctrines, such as the Immaculate Conception, which were not included in the New Testament. One of the key pre-figurements of the Virgin, to which fifteenth-century literature alludes, is the figure of Wisdom in association with creation. It is interesting, however, that, in her chapter on the Immaculate Conception, Warner refers to other biblical texts which were used to support the doctrine, whilst Wisdom texts are not mentioned, even though they are consistently found in immaculist poetry.[4]

5.3 POETIC USE OF ECCLESIASTICUS REFERENCES

From amongst the fifteenth-century poets, the first to be examined will be Gómez Manrique, since his poem is followed by an explanatory Glosa, which supplies an

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[4] These texts include the Genesis Protoevangelium, the New Testament angelic salutation, the New Testament Apocalypse and even the Old Testament Book of Esther. Allusion to the Protoevangelium and to the Apocalypse are examined in chapters four and six.

important insight into this little studied biblical text.
Gómez Manrique uses one variation on 'ab initio creada' in
his 'Loores e suplicaciones a Nuestra Señora', writing 'O
fija de Dios y madre\ desde abenicio creata!' (F-D 416.11)
The Latin phrase ab initio is rendered in a vernacularized
version 'abenicio' which is then interpreted as a noun,
instead of an adverbial phrase, thus requiring the
tautological addition of 'desde' to render 'time from when'.
Even though 'abenicio' is vernacularized, Gómez Manrique
keeps 'creata' at this point to maintain the rhyme with
'yntata'. In the F-D edition of Gómez Manrique's poems, the
'Loores y suplicaciones' are followed by a Glosa. In the
Glosa, it is commented that 'desde abenicio' should be
understood as meaning 'en la sciencia e entendimiento
divino' (F-D II, p.149), in other words, that the link of
Mary to the period of creation is to be understood as
meaning her pre-destination by God. She is not physically
created at the time of the creation but mentally created at
that time. In this sense, the creation of Mary in God's
understanding expresses the predestination of Mary and
introduces the theme of predestination as a Conception
theme.

The full text of Ecclesiasticus 24.14 is also included
and fully translated in the Glosa on the poem:

> Abinicio *et ante secula creata sum, et usque ad futurum
> seculum non desinam* (p.149).

It is interesting that the Latin quotation includes the
hybrid 'abinicio', which appears to be a common fifteenth-
century rendering, since the version abounds throughout the

collection. Within the Glosa, the quotation from
Ecclesiasticus is then translated as:

> Desde el comienço et ante delos siglos soy criada, e
> ante el siglo venidero durare.

Interestingly, the chapter reference from Ecclesiasticus
24.14 (24.9) is misquoted in the Glosa as xxxiiij, although
this might be a copyist or editorial error. More
importantly, it is interesting to note that the writer of
the Glosa is aware that the text is contextually applied to
Wisdom but is nevertheless conscious of the mariological
application of the biblical verse 'por la sabiduria e el
entendimiento spiritual'. The quotation, semi-
vernacularized, is used without explanation in the poem.

On occasion, Wisdom creation images are combined with
allusions to different parts of the Bible to deepen the
Conception resonances. One image regularly used of the
Conception suggests that the poet is alluding to the
Immaculate Conception; two or more images regularly used in
connection with the Immaculate Conception confirm the
allusion. An example of combinations of immaculist themes
can be seen in one of Gómez Manrique's poems. Gómez Manrique
returns to the Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) reference later
in his 'Loores' poem (F-D 416), where the phrase undergoes
a development. On this second occasion, the 'desde abinicio
\criada' is linked to 'pulchra e decora'. Thus, the Virgin
Mary is not only created from the beginning of time, but is
created beautiful. The creation image has been linked to
another biblical theme, consistently applied to Mary to
refer to her sinless conception (see above, p.139). The poet

is combining two sets of immaculist themes. Imagery from the Canticum combines with Wisdom imagery to deepen the immaculist impact for the reader who is aware of it.

The Wisdom reference from Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) is applied to the Virgin by a number of Castilian poets, being found also in Fernán Pérez de Guzmán's *Gozos* poem, 'Hymno a los gozos de Nuestra Senyora':

> Virgen que fueste criada
> ab inicio e eterno;
> del rey diuino e superno
> elegida e consagrada; (F-D 270.1)

Pérez's reference to Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) is to be found at the very opening of his poem or hymn dedicated to the Joys of the Virgin in the stanza which is apparently dedicated to the Conception.[5] The link between the Virgin and the reference to Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) is made explicit in the opening line of the poem: 'Virgen[...] criada'. The poet links 'criada' to 'elegida e consagrada' by the rhyme scheme, abba. The past participles 'criada', 'elegida' and 'consagrada' underline the passive role of the Virgin and the active role of God, described as 'el rey diuino e superno' who choses and consecrates her. By referring to the Virgin's creation at the beginning of time,

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[5] The 'Gozos' or Joys of the Virgin were originally often seven in number, each dedicated to a different event in the life of the Virgin. Gradually the number increased and became variable so that ten or even twenty Joys might be included. Tallante's 'Obra en loor de XX excelencias de Nuestra Señora' (F-D 1081) falls within the Joys tradition as does Santillana's 'Los gozos de Nuestra Señora' (F-D 217). Santillana's poem incorporates twelve Joys. The events in the life of Mary to be included vary but often include the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Birth of Christ, the Resurrection, the Ascension and the Assumption.

the poet suggests that the Virgin has been chosen and
hallowed.

Furthermore, Fernán Pérez de Guzmán links the allusion
to Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) explicitly to the Virgin's
preservation from original sin, `de aquel vicio conseruada
\ comun e original' (270.5). The addition of `comun' to
describe original sin, `aquel vicio', has the effect of
separating the Virgin from the rest of humanity who are
involved in the universal `comun' effect of original sin.

5.4   PROVERBS REFERENCES AS PRE-CREATION ALLUSIONS

Gómez Manrique makes use of a Wisdom creation image, on
another occasion, in his `Canción ala concepçion de Nuestra
Señora', where he describes the Virgin as `antes que el
mundo criada'(F-D 373.4). At first sight this may appear an
adaptation of the Ecclesiasticus text, whereas in fact, a
different source reference has been used. The original text
is from another of the Wisdom literature sections of the Old
Testament, Proverbs 8.23:

> Dominus possedit me in initio viarum suarum, antequam
> quidquam faceret a principio. Ab aeterno ordinata sum
> et ex antiquis antequam terra fieret.[6]

Within the book of Proverbs, in the *JB* translation and
commentary, the text is sectioned and this particular
section of Proverbs is entitled `Wisdom as Creator',
revealing the importance of the creation story within the

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[6] The translation of Proverbs 8.23 reads: `From
everlasting I was firmly set, \ From the beginning,
before the earth came into being'(*JB*).

section, in the view of the Bible editors. In the case of
the Proverbs text, as with Ecclesiasticus, the original
biblical text refers to Wisdom, but has frequently been
applied to Mary. In this case, the Proverbs text refers
more specifically to the beginning of time and is linked
openly to creation and, furthermore, it is to be noted that
the moment of Wisdom\Mary's creation is placed before the
creation of the world. The pre-creation of Wisdom is clear
according to theologians. For example, according to *Peake's
Commentary*, 'As a primal creature, Wisdom is prior to the
physical world'.[7] Moreover, the commentator links the
creation described in the subsequent verses (27-31), with
the order of creation described in the Genesis creation
story. Biblical commentators are united in showing that
there is, in addition, a clear link between Ecclesiasticus
24.14 (24.9) and Proverbs 8.23. This link can be determined
from the cross-references given on the verses in *JB*. Indeed,
according to Alexander Di Lella, O.F.M., 'Ben Sira [the
author of the Ecclesiasticus text] derived the idea of
personified Wisdom from Prov. 1:20-33; 8:4-36; 9:1-6,11',
whilst the Wisdom poem in Proverbs 8 provided Ben Sira with
his model for the Ecclesiasticus poem.[8] Because of the clear
link between Proverbs 8.23 and the period before creation,

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[7] J. C. Rylaarsdam, 'Proverbs' in *Peake's Commentary on
the Bible*, ed. by Matthew Black, New Testament, and
H.H. Rowley, Old Testament (Workingham: Van Nost and
Reinhold, 1962; repr. London: Routledge, 1990), 444-
457, p.449.

[8] 'Sirach', in the *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed.
by Raymond E. Brown, S.J., Joseph A. Fizmyer, S.J. and
Roland E. Murphy, O.Carm. (London: Chapman, 1991), 496-
509, p.504.

imagery which alludes to this biblical text will be termed pre-creation imagery.

In Gómez Manrique's poem, an allusion to pre-creation is linked openly to the Conception theme. The link is made because the allusion appears in a short poem dedicated to the Conception, the 'Canción ala concepçion', and, also because the phrase 'antes que el mundo criada' is used in apposition to 'en tal noche conçebida'. 'En tal noche concebida \antes que el mundo criada' (F-D 373.3). In this allusion to Proverbs 8.23, Gómez Manrique has combined the reference with other Wisdom texts, since he maintains 'criada', alluding to Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9). *Ab initio* in the Ecclesiasticus text has merely been transposed in the poem into 'antes que el mundo'.

The same connection between immaculism and pre-creation can be established with reference to a poem by Villasandino. The epithet 'beata ynmaculata' appears in the poem in conjunction with a pre-creation image 'desde abeniçio'. The function of the pre-creation image is to add a time dimension to the term 'ynmaculata' (see above, p.106). As is noted constantly, references to the Immaculate Conception generally rest on a number of interwoven images. Villasandino's opening lines are a good example of this phenomenon, since they link a Canticum reference with a reference to Genesis (see above, p.189):

> Generosa, muy fermosa,
> syn mansilla, Virgen santa,
> [...]
> De quien Lucifer se espanta: (F-D 500.1)

The immaculist context for Villasandino's verse is found in the fact that the opening lines contain a combination of immaculist imagery and also that in the closing stanza of the poem, Villasandino returns to a reference to creation combined with a rare use of 'ynmaculata' in Cancionero poetry.

5.4.1 Pre-fifteenth century use of Proverbs 8.23

There is one isolated example from *CSM* of the use of a pre-creation image in relation to the Virgin. In his 'Loor' poem 'Vella e minya', Alfonso describes the Virgin using a reference to the Proverbs Wisdom text:

> ante do mundo foi todavia
> criada, e que nunc'á de minguar
> o seu gran ben; (*CSM* 180.15)

Alfonso does not link the Proverbs reference to a comment on original sin, but he does link it to the Virgin's preparation for motherhood, and, thus, to her role in the economy of salvation 'e porend' encarnar \ quis Deu en ela' (*CSM* 180.17). The reference to the Virgin as Wisdom though not apparently prevalent in the early period, nevertheless reveals that the Wisdom texts were already being applied to the Virgin Mary in literary circles in the thirteenth century and shows Alfonso's awareness of the special role of the Virgin.

5.4.2 Catalan references to Proverbs 8.23

Catalan poets use Proverbs 8.23 with far greater regularity. There is evidence in Gamiça's poem entered for the 1474 Certamen:

> Déu infinit ans que.l món fos creat,
> te preservà,   puríssima e santa.

> Déu infinit de tu prengué la manta
> ab què .ns quità aquell cens caregat
> del primer hom. (XVII.31)

In this reference, a link is made between the creation of the world and Mary's preservation. The context places the pre-creation reference 'ans que el món fos creat' in connection with the Virgin's preservation 'te preservà'. The inference, underlined by 'puríssima e santa', is that the Virgin was preserved from original sin. The universality of original sin, '.ns quità aquell cens caregat', is referred to in connection with the Incarnation 'Déu infinit de tu prengué la manta' two lines later. Gamiça calls original sin 'aquell cens caregat', which implies that original sin is a feudal payment to be made by a person under the jurisdiction of another (see above, p.131).

Several themes are woven together in these lines from Gamiça's poem: the Virgin's existence before creation is evoked by the partial pre-creation image 'ans que.l món fos creat', as well as the time of her preservation from sin. A third important strand is the action of 'Déu infinit' in preserving the Virgin from original sin. These three strands which hint at salvation history, the timing of involvement of the Virgin in the plan and the active role of God in salvation are key features of immaculist thought. The purpose of the Virgin's preservation from original sin, is highlighted in the next two lines since God will take flesh from the Virgin; in the poem, this is indicated in a fairly

traditional way as putting on a cloak.[9]

Mossen Jerònim Fuster also connects the pre-creation of Mary 'ans que del món creàs Déu la figura' (I.2) with her sinlessness 'vós preservà' in his winning entry for the 1486 Certamen. This poem takes the Proverbs 8.24 allusion and draws out the allusion to creation by combining it with a description of the creation story which echoes Genesis. The poem opens on the creation of the world, developing the idea of the preservation of Mary. In his opening stanza, Fuster describes the means of preservation in a poetic picture of Mary sheltered under the wings of the Creator, so that she might remain pure:

> ans que del món   creàs Déu la figura,
> vós preservà davall   les sues ales,
> perquè tractant lo primer hom les tales,
> [...] restàsseu pura. (I.2)

The scene painted is more vivid than many of the instances where pre-creation images are used. There are resonances of the Priestly Genesis creation story: 'les sues ales' recalls the Creator spirit moving over the face of the

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[9] Several poets writing for the 1474 Certamen use clothing imagery to express the mystery of the Incarnation. Luis Munyoç uses it:
> e que lo Fill de vostra carn sagrada
> tot se vestís del cap fins a la planta (XVI.11)
and also Miqualot Pereç: 'Y Déu vestí's   de l'humanal linatge' (XXIII.11).
The image is still popular in 1486, being used by Blay Assenci: 'Car Jesucrist, de Déu Fill tant com vostre, \vestint la carn de vós, divinal mare' (XXVIII.13).
Luis Cathalà refers to regal clothing: 'Per més ennoblir la virginal manta\ d'on prés Déu etern real sobrevesta' (XIII.25).

waters in Genesis I.2:[10]

> Terra autem erat inanis et vacua et tenebrae erant
> super faciem abyssi: et Spiritus Dei ferebatur super
> aquas.

The link with the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is

also clear, since the function of the pre-creation image is

to set the scene for the rest of the poem which, according

to Ferrando Francés, 'és una pura disquisició teològico-

escolàstica de la creença immaculista' (*Els certàmens*

poètics, p.412). The resurgence of 'creada' in the

rhetorical question serves to echo the opening stanza:

> ¿Qui porà dir de vós, excelsa dea,
> creada .n tot ab tota gentilea
> que .n algun temps de culpa us maculassen?

The question rekindles the concept of creation and its

immaculist sense is strengthened in combination with the

allusion to the Canticum 4.7 verse.

5.5 CONSISTENT USE OF PRE-CREATION IMAGES

In his collection of Certamen poems, Ferrando Francés

includes the anonymous poem 'Mare de Déu' which he considers

to have been an entry to the 1440 Certamen because of its

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[10] This is explained by John H. Marks, 'Introduction to
Genesis' in *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on
the Bible*, ed. by Charles M. Laymon (Nashville:
Abingdon press, 1971), 1-32. At page 1, Marks gives the
following explanation:
> A serious reading of Gen. [sic] reveals that the
> book is not the homogeneous work of a single
> author, for no writer would be guilty of
> discrepancies like those, e.g. between the
> accounts of Creation (cf. 1:26 with 2:7, 18, 19,
> 22) or of the Flood (cf. 7:1-3 with 6:18-21). The
> book is rather a compilation in which we recognize
> at least three strands of tradition.

These sources of tradition are known as 'J' (Yahwist),
'E' (Elohist), and 'P' (Priestly).

immaculist nature. Ferrando Francés explains at some length
why he considers this poem to have been a Certamen entry:

> La poesia que comença 'Mare de Déu sus los cels
> subirana' composta de deu cobles i tornada de quatre,
> de caràcter immaculista, és segur que fou tramesa a un
> certamen, segons podem deduir de les al.lusions als
> jutges expressades en la darrera cobla (*Els certàmens
> poètics*, p.61).

The poem, reproduced in Ferrando Francés' edition and
study of the Valencian Certàmens (p.62), contains an
important example of pre-creation imagery which is
introduced in the third stanza of the poem:

> Abans que fos terra ne mar creada,
> ayre ne lum, foch, cel ne cosa freda,
> ne dins lo món hagués camp ne verneda,
> ez al primer hom fos ley imposada,
> éreu ja vós per Ell mayre .legida. (Mare de Déu. 17)

The creation of the world is divided up into the separate
tasks of that creation, 'abans que fos terra ne mar creada'.
The phrase is not only amplified by the addition of the
created parts of the earth: land, sea and heavens but also
by the addition of a reference to the elements: 'ayre ne
lum, foch ne cosa freda', which is not present in the
original Proverbs Wisdom text. Elements of the creation of
the world are linked with the elements of the Ancient world.
This addition, drawing on the combination of the ancient
philosophical elements of creation and linking them to the
biblical creation story, has a Renaissance feel to it, even
though the poem was written prior to 1440. In the anonymous
poem, the creation of the world is linked with the choice of
Mary as Mother of God: 'éreu ja vós per Ell mare .legida'.
In this poem, it is the choosing of the Virgin as Mother,
rather than her creation which is placed before the creation

of the world and all its elements. The impact of this is to reinforce the primordial nature of the chosen one as well as to underline her passive role, as typified in the verb form 'éreu... vós ... .legida'.

5.5.1 Development of pre-creation imagery

One example of a reworking of a pre-creation image occurs in Miralles' poem. In his entry for the 1486 Certamen, Miralles' central theme is the preservation of Mary from sin, which he expresses in an extended nautical metaphor, hoping to win the prize of the 'carta de navegar' offered by Ferrando Dieç. The selection of this nautical theme is rather clever, giving the poem an overall unity. The nautical metaphor infiltrates the pre-creation reference, in the opening stanza of the poem:

> Ans de crear los cels, lum ni planetes
> ni fes pilars al món de quatre letres,
> Déu vos creà de parts totes perfetes,
> y en vós, sens par, majors virtuts ha fetes. (XXIV.1)

The image alludes to Proverbs in 'ans que' but also owes much of its allusions to creation to the Genesis creation story. Miralles refers to the firmament visible to the mariner, as well as what appear to be the pillars of the sea-going ancient world and the compass reference. Miralles seeks to combine the ancient with the modern, subscribing to the determination of the Catalans to see themselves on a par with the ancient world in Empire and in culture.

In the opening lines of the poem, Miralles refers to Mary's creation and to God's active role in it: 'Déu vós creà'. He underlines the perfection of the created Virgin in

the words 'de parts totes perfetes' and sets the time-scale
of the creation of the Virgin before the creation of the
world, as visible to the mariner. It is significant, in view
of later developments in the poem, that it is the heavens,
heavenly bodies and light which are the main elements of
creation mentioned by Miralles.

Later in the same poem, the pre-creation image is
extended:

> y, ans que del sol no fes la lum eterna,
> vos elegí per mare d'Ell hi Filla. (XXIV.16)

The sun, and the creation of light, now represent the
Creator's handiwork. The creation allusion of Proverbs has
been moved closer to the Genesis creation story to which it
is linked in the Bible. In the Genesis creation story, the
Sun and 'the lights in the vault of heaven' (Genesis I.15)
were created on the fourth day. Miralles, however, wishes to
set the creation of the Virgin firmly before creation of
light 'ans que del sol no fes la lum'. The choice of light
to represent creation is significant, since, particularly in
St John's Gospel, light is used to oppose the darkness of
evil. Thus, in the Gospels, Christ is the light of the
world. Miralles uses light imagery to describe the Virgin
herself 'per a sa lum us féu riqua lanterna' (XXIV.15) just
prior to introducing the pre-creation image. The pre-
creation image has a double sense. It is not only alluding
to the Genesis creation story but appears to be alluding
also to the creation of Christ, the Light of the world, due
to come into being through the motherhood of the Virgin
Mary. Miralles sets Mary in the pre-creation period through

the use of 'ans que del sol no fes la lum'. As in the
anonymous 1440 Certamen poem, Miralles' pre-creation image
is allied to Mary's selection 'vós elegí' as Mother and
Daughter. The double association of Mary with Genesis
creation and with motherhood as creation, linked by light
imagery is particularly appropriate.

Light and pre-creation also inspired Francí de Vilalba,
as he begins his Certamen poem on what is likely to be a
pre-creation allusion:

> Ans que la lum mostràs lo primer dia
> de l'Infinit per obra singular,
> vós excel.lís, sancta verge Maria,
> car del peccat que l'home fet havia
> exhemta fós sola vós sens par. (XXVI.1)

Instead of beginning the poem with a reference to Proverbs
8.23, Vilalba merely suggests the Wisdom reference and
subsumes it into allusions to creation such as 'la lum' and
'lo primer dia' which owe more to the Genesis creation
story. Vilalba uses an allusion to Proverbs 8.23 combined
again with the Genesis creation story of the first day, as
decribed in Genesis 1.3:

> God said, 'Let there be light'...and God divided light
> from darkness... Evening came and morning came: the
> first day. (JB.17)

The imagery is less profuse than in Miralles' poem, but the
pre-creation allusion has moved from mere quotation of
Proverbs 8.23 to a variant which adds other creation themes.

Vilalba links the creation of light with the Virgin's
existence before creation expressed in 'ans que el lum
mostràs lo primer dia...\vós excel.lís'. Her existence

before the Fall, and the exemption of the Virgin from sin 'exhemta fos sola vós sens par' are also inferred. 'El peccat' is clearly associated with original sin, since it is the sin 'que l'ome fet avia'. Since these lines appear at the opening of the poem, allusions to the Virgin's pre-creation existence colour the remainder of the poem with an immaculist hue. Whilst the poet does not directly quote Proverbs 8.23, 'ans que' coupled with a reference to creation sets up a pre-creation resonance in the mind of the reader, especially since the expectation from the context is of an immaculist image.

A similar effect is achieved in Luís García's poem, written for the 1474 Certamen. García does not directly use a pre-creation image, but appears to allude to the period of creation by using the word 'creada' to describe the Virgin's origins:

> Vingués en la lum del món. E creada,
> ab voler estrem, vos regonegué.
> En aquell instant, dels cels devallada
> és tota virtut en vós transportada. (XXXVI.21)

García associates the Virgin with the light of the world, as opposed to the darkness of sin. The description of her origin appears to have aspects in common with mythological deities, which may or may not be intentional. The past participle 'creada' used of the Virgin anchors this allusion to pre-creation, although it is less explicit than many other examples which have been examined. By using 'en aquell instant' the poet creates a resonance of the moment of the Virgin's conception, in order to describe the downpour of grace which prevented her from being deprived of original

justice at the moment of conception.

Miralles' entry for the 'Joya ràdix' in the 1486 Certamen is particularly colourful in its description of creation. The poem begins with an artistic description of the creation of the sun in terms of Phoebus' chariot (VI.1). There is a dramatic glimpse of God speaking over the 'aygues mortes' (V.6) beginning the work of creation. The reference to 'florides ortes' even has resonance of the Garden of Eden. Almost as an afterthought to this lengthy reference to creation, Miralles adds: 'Ans de tot, vos elegí per mare' (V.10). 'Ans de tot' thus sums up the creation reference linking it to the Proverbs reference. Hence, Mary's selection as Mother of the Redeemer is again the reason for her pre-creation, but the image has almost escaped the hands of its author and the return to the point is extremely abrupt.

Whilst considering development and variations on the Wisdom theme, Jaume Roig's use of pre-creation imagery in the *Espill* is also worthy of comment. Roig, a contributor to the 1486 Certamen, devotes a long passage in his picaresque tale to the defence of the doctrine. The passage is set within the proof of the Immaculate Conception from reason. As part of the proof, Roig argues that, if, for a human doctor, prevention is better than cure, then this is surely also the case for the 'alt metge Déu'. Within a clearly immaculist context, Roig includes an amplified version of the pre-creation theme:

> dignificada, deïficada
> ans que'l mon fos,   ell gloriós
> en l'eternal in mente, tal
> com papa fa, la reservà
> e prelegí. (*Espill* III.2, p.161)

Roig makes explicit the 'in mente', commented upon and understood by the author of the Gloss to Gómez Manrique's poem. It is noteworthy that not only does he use 'dignificada', made worthy, but also 'deïficada'. It is possible that the idea of the creation of the Virgin might be contained within the term, 'deïficada', which, given the context, might be rendered: 'made in the image of God'. In this way, it would replace the more traditional 'criada', enhancing the meaning. However, given the misogyny of Roig, expressed throughout the *Espill*, it might be that his use of the epithet 'deïficada' as a description of the Virgin was an additional way of placing her at a distance from ordinary females. Moreover, to a writer at the vanguard of doctrinal development, who connects the Lady described to a period before the creation of the world, it may have seemed a small step to place her on an equal footing with the Deity. Another possible reason might be that, because Roig was accustomed to writing in a slightly outmoded troubadouresque style, if the comments of Ferrando Francés on the 'insistència dels poetes en uns canons literaris de tradició trobadoresca els quals .... resultaven ja arcaïtzants' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.221), are to be believed, Roig may have adopted unquestioningly the troubadour theme of deification of the Lady, transposing troubadour homage to *latria* not *dulia*.

Jaume Roig in the *Espill* also uses 'amprempta' to refer
to the original creation blueprint, free from original sin.

> D'aquell'amprempta
> original, cort divinal
> ha preservat e reservat
> aquesta sola. (*Espill* III.2, p.156)

The word 'amprempta', imprint, is a frequent Catalan
image. Here it is used to rhyme with 'exempta' and also to
allow Roig to introduce his diatribe in support of the
Immaculate Conception and against opponents of the doctrine.
It is likely that Roig also had in mind the image of minting
coins.

Jerònim Fuster in his winning entry to the 1486
Certamen is able to use and develop the creation as imprint
or seal image. As a foil to 'exempta', Fuster is considering
the Incarnation as the imprint of the Son on the pure wax of
the Virgin. Because Fuster is creating a regal picture of
God, the description of the Virgin's undefiled nature as
Virgin wax, kept smooth by the rays of the sun, is
completely harmonious:

> L'eternal Rey, qui us honra d'onor vera,
> ací volgué fósseu de crims exempta
> que los seus raigs de la més alta spera,
> pura sens crim, conservaven la cera
> òn lo sagell de vostre Fill s'emprempta. (I.30)

The image is striking, amounting to a conceptual rendering
of the stainlessness of the Virgin, capturing the
imagination with its pictorial vividness. Making an imprint
on the wax seal of the Virgin, already described in the
Introit (see above, p.55), is to be found in the 1474
Certamen. The point to be made is that images considered
particularly representative of the Immaculate Conception

were echoed and reworked by later poets.

The poem which follows immediately after Fuster's in
the 1486 Certamen collection, surprisingly uses 'emprempta'
in the same stanza as Fuster:

> Si fon creat Adam de terra pura
> sens procehir en aquell algun mèrit,
> molt més, donchs, vós, per traure'l de tristura,
> devíeu ser més d'altra creatura
> del vostre Fill creada sens demèrit.
> Car d'un tal mal ab lo Fill sou exempta
> perquè .l sagell fos tal qual és l'enprempta. (II.30)

The lines unite a creation image, referring in Adam's case
to creation in original justice: 'fon creat Adam de terra
pura' and, in the Virgin's case, in a natural state
resembling original justice: 'creada sens demèrit' with a
scholastic argument. The scholastic argument, in an
indefinite tense, is based on the fittingness of the
immaculist solution: 'devíeu ser més d'altra creatura'. The
final lines of the stanza appear to place the Virgin on a
par with her son 'ab lo Fill sou exempta'. The reasoning
behind Pere d'Anyo's statement about the Virgin's exemption
from original sin, is that the seal and the imprint are
exactly the same. Pere d'Anyo does not clarify whether the
Virgin or her Son is represented by the seal.

Helen Boreland clarifies the image of the wax, in
which God's image is imprinted, commenting that the wax
image is connected with creation. According to Boreland, the
Virgin, like Adam and Christ, was conceived as a perfect
creation. Boreland notes that the image of the wax is found

in Dante's *Paradiso*.[11] She explains the image of the wax, in connection with generation: 'in a perfect creation, the reflection of the idea in the mind of God shines forth in all its brilliance from the wax' (p.323).

Catalan treatment of the pre-creation theme has many variations. Some poets from the basis of the Proverbs 8.24 text combine allusions to the Genesis creation story and to the creation of light. Miralles sets the Proverbs reference within a nautical context. Whilst the origin of pre-creation imagery can be traced to the Wisdom texts, the poets do not content themselves with merely repeating the original but attempt to exploit the potential of the poetic Proverbs text. On occasion, the variation on the Proverbs theme is not artistically successful and the development subsumes the Proverbs reference which becomes something of an afterthought.

5.5.2 Variations on a pre-creation theme

In Tallante's poem 'Otra obra suya sobre el pecado original', Mary's presence at the time of creation is rendered in the following way:

> Dios eterno, trino e uno
> antes de nombrar alguno de los tiempos, año y mes,
> te miro fragante rosa...
> por la más maravillosa
> y escogida. (F-D, 1095.39)

Two points can be made. First, that this is a more complex

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[11] Boreland quotes the following stanza (p.323):
> Se fosse a punto la cera dedutta
> e fosse il cielo in sua virtù suprema
> la luce del suggel parebbe tutta. (Canto XIII.73)

rendering of a creation or pre-creation theme than has been found so far in the Cancioneros. Second, that the theme is related to creation and can only be understood with reference to it. Read with creation in mind, the allusion becomes clear. The image is of God, not creating the land and sea, but naming the seasons. In the second biblical creation story in Genesis 2.18, Adam the created being, names the other creatures, although 'los tiempos' are not named. Nevertheless, as S. Hooke comments, the 'act of naming is a very important symbol. It has in it an element of creative activity'.[12] Thus, before time was created or named, God looked at Mary, 'te miro'. In other words, Mary existed at the moment of creation. Furthermore, in the words 'te miro' both loving and selecting the Virgin are implicit. The creation as vision image is present in a poem dedicated to original sin. Since the poet is writing about original sin, he includes the pre-creation image, which has already been termed an immaculist image, as part of his subject. The presence of this pre-creation image, in a poem explicitly dedicated to original sin, confirms pre-creation as an immaculist image.

From an examination of Tallante's poem, it can be said that, in the Cancioneros, pre-creation images are, on occasion, developed in a more poetic manner. The more developed pre-creation imagery in Tallante's poem may be

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[12] S. Hooke, 'Genesis', *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, Old Testament ed. by H.H. Rowley; New Testament ed. by Matthew Black (Workingham, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1962; repr. London: Routledge, 1992), 175-207, p.179.

accounted for, however, by the fact that this poem was an entry in the 1486 Certamen. Mossén Tallante was probably amongst the entries in one of the lost Valencian Certàmens with his 'Obra en loor de XX excellencias de Nuestra Señora'.[13] The title 'Mossén', accorded him in the rubric in F-D, reveals his Catalan connections. For this reason, the poet was able to draw on Catalan influences.

Having briefly examined creation as naming, creation as beholding must next be considered. Tallante's words 'te miro \ fragrante rosa' have already been considered as an expression of selection, however, it is likely that they also carry the allusion of creation. Vision as creation is not uncommon amongst the Certamen poets. Vallmanya dedicates the entire opening stanza of his Certamen entry to vision as creation:

> L'enteniment, mirant la presciència
> de l'Infinit ésser tan infinida,
> mirà tan alt la sua gran potència,
> mirà los cels, los àngels, la .ccel.lèntia,
> lo sol mostrant perfectió complida,
> mirà lo món y la florida terra
> pel Creador diversament brodada,
> y mirà com pogué fer que la erra
> universal en nengun temps fes guerra
> a vostra carn, que .l seu Verb s'a .justada.
> Y así us creà sens crim sobre natura,
> alta sens par, més excelent, més pura. (IX.1)

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[13] Ferrando Francés describes the lost entries to the Certamen as follows:
> L'única composició que sabem amb seguretat que fou tramesa al certamen valencià en lloança dels vint triomfs de Nostra Dona, és la...de Jaume d'Olesa, però coneixem dues composicions coetànies, semblants en el fons i en la forma a la del poeta mallorquí, que també hi podrien haver concursat. Es tracta de l'*Obra en loor de las XX excelencias de Nuestra Señora, hecha por Mossén Tallante* (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.362).

From the Glosa on Gómez Manrique's poem, in the explanation

of 'desde abinicio', it was possible to see how to the

fifteenth-century mind, the pre-creation of Mary meant that

she was pre-conceived in the mind of God:

> Entiendase, enla sciencia e entendimiento diuino en la
> qual son todas cosas figuradas e señaladas antes que
> sean sin ningunt principio. (F-D II, p.149)

Part of the creation-vision meant the preservation of the

Virgin from 'la erra\ universal'.

Vallmanya picks up the idea of divine pre-conception in

his poem in 'l'enteniment' and 'la prescièntia de

l'Infinit'. Within the idea of creation as vision, the poet

mentions the earth, the land bedecked with flowers, the sun

and the heavens, from the Genesis creation story. To this he

adds '.ls àngels', perhaps to increase the measure of

heavenly perfection. Creation and vision are closely

entwined in the priestly Genesis creation story in which,

after the creation command 'Let the earth produce

vegetation' (Gen. 1.11), God observes the created item and

approves it, 'God saw that it was good' (Gen.1.13). Within

this creation as vision, the poet finally turns to the

creation of the Virgin: 'Y así us crèà sens crim sobre

natura', so that, even though natural creation represents

'perfectió complida', the Virgin is even more perfect 'sobre

natura'. The creation of the Virgin in this case takes place

concurrently with natural creation but before the Fall, so

that sin can be avoided:

> Mirà com pogué fer que la erra
> universal en nengun temps fes guerra
> a vostra carn. (IX.8)

Once again the opening stanza develops pre-creation imagery to foster an immaculist setting for the poem as a whole. Towards the end of the same poem, Vallmanya returns to the description of creation, outlined in the opening stanza, including many ·of the same created elements:

> Però rahó veig clarament demostra,
> essent vós d'Ell y Ell de pasta vostra,
> que .n vós major esguart que .n altri .s dóna,
> y en vós açò més que en altra no fóra,
> si del peccat traure-us no merexquésseu,
> [...]
> Donchs preservà-us que .n lo crim no cayguésseu
> ans que pensàs crear los cels, los àngels,
> lo món, lo sol, ni .ls replandents archàngels.
> (IX.66,70)

The reference to creation is merged with an argument drawn from reason and a reference to the loss of spiritual well-being by Eve. In this reference, the creation of the Virgin is clearly set prior to natural and angelic creation. It should be noted that not only angels but also archangels are added to the created order. Creation of the universe and the 'alt companyia' (IX.76) are linked again in the following stanza and finally the 'Tornada' returns to the angelic reference, underlining the purpose of their inclusion in the order of creation: 'La puritat dels àngels no .s tan vera \ que gens ab vós, senyora s'acompare' (IX.85). Between creation references, Vallmanya interperses a stanza linking the Virgin Birth and motherhood to the Immaculate Conception, as well as two stanzas of laudatory epithets in honour of the Virgin. The second is in scholastic style, posing a question based on each epithet, '¿Com fós port segur, si lo maligne \ hi fos primer que .l vostre Fill insigne?' (IX.44) Comparison with natural and angelic creation surrounds the whole from the first stanza to the

'Tornada' and gives a thematic unity to the poem.

A combination of three of the biblical themes which are
used to represent immaculist thinking in fifteenth-century
poetry are to be found in Frare Bosch's entry to the 1486
Certamen. 'Bella', yet another synonym for 'pulchra' (see
above, p.138), is combined with 'màcula'. The poetic image
of God building a palace supplies the creation aspect: 'Sí
com l'obrer, prevent....\ un bell palau' (VII.13) is
sustained throughout the second stanza of the poem as Frare
Bosch then uses the allusions to stainlessness and to beauty
to echo the Canticum verse 4.7 and to express his praise of
the Virgin:

> Déu, per semblant, del món fent l'edifici,
> primera us véu mare sua .ccel.lent,
> bella per tot, condign. a son servici;
> y tal vos féu, que màcula ni vici
> vos han pogut causar defalliment. (VII.17)

The palace which is being built by the Almighty is the
edifice of the world. This creation image is linked to the
creation of the Virgin. Bosch uses a vision as creation
image 'primera us véu mare sua'. The creation image
expressed in 'del món fent l'edifici' adds weight to the
creation of the Virgin 'tal vos féu'. The allusion to the
Canticum Canticorum is clear in the introduction of 'bella
per tot' in apposition to 'mare sua .ccelent'. 'Bella per
tot', although it uses a synonym of 'pulchra', nevertheless
underlines its closeness to 'Tota pulchra es' by the
addition of 'per tot'. Creation is linked fully to the
Canticum 4.7 reference in the following line. Frare Bosch
interweaves 'tal vos féu', expressing the creation of the

Virgin by the 'Obrer', the Creator, with 'màcula ni vici \
vos han pogut causar defalliment' which underlines the
absence of sin or blemish in the Immaculate Virgin.

Whilst not directly echoing verses from Ecclesiasticus
or Proverbs, nevertheless, the creation reference in Luis
García's entry to the 1474 Certamen is clear. García blends
the creation imagery incorporated in 'Obrat ha en vós obra
tan perfeta' with an adapted reference to the corruption of
sin:

> Obrat ha en vós obra tan perfeta,
> al deute primer, vós, Verge, .n sou neta,
> lo vostre sant cors gens no y és comprés,
> preservada fós. Tingués vida pura.
> Jamés no gustàs verí de peccat. (XXXVI.12)

García underlines the perfect work of creation, 'obrat ha en
vós obra tan perfeta', undertaken in the Virgin. She is free

from original sin, termed in the poem 'deute primer', her
body is not subject to original sin 'gens no y és comprés'
indeed, she is preserved from it. Sin is described in terms
of a draught of poison 'verí' which the Virgin never tasted.

A number of poems, of varying quality, develop pre-
creation imagery, whether through light imagery or by clever
interplay with the theme of the 'Joya', such as Miralles'
nautical metaphor. The developments shown in this section
may appear repetitive to modern taste but they show that
poets were using the pre-creation concept as a constant
element within the poem. These pre-creation images suggested
the Immaculate Conception to the mind of the reader and
their function within the poetry is indeed to resonate

immaculism. Pre-creation imagery may not be solely direct allusion to the biblical verses of Proverbs or Ecclesiasticus but may be linked to allusions to other creation passages from the Bible such as to one of the Genesis stories. There are many variations on the theme.

5.5.3 Creation and the Abyss

Amongst the pre-creation Proverbs references which are used by the Certamen poets, there are examples of allusions to the succeeding verse in Proverbs: 'Nondum erant abyssi et ego iam concepta eram' (Proverbs 8.24).[14] The 1474 certamen contains an entry by 'Hun Castellà sens nom' which is paid scant attention by Ferrando Francés, being dismissed in a few lines by the editor:

> Els octosíl.labs castellans d'aquest poeta anónim castellà no fan sinó posar en vers, fins i tot en llatí, diverses profecies bíbliques i invocacions litúrgiques aplicades tradicionalment a Maria. (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.241)

The poem consists of one long introductory stanza of twenty lines, followed by three ten-line stanzas. The poet begins with the 'misterio muy profundo' (XXXII.1), the creation and the Redemption and their interdependence 'principio y fin ineffable' (XXXII.6). This overview of salvation history is followed by a digression, as the poet turns to a *captatio*.

> Porque no sé si erraré
> datme lengua con que fable
> siquiere de lo palpable
> pues que para mas no sé. (XXXII.7)

The inclusion of a *captatio* is commonplace in poetry of

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[14] The text is translated as 'the deep was not when I was born \ nor were the springs with their abounding waters' (*JB*).

the period. Examples within the 1474 Certamen abound. Johan
del Bosch includes a *captatio* or rather an invocation of the
aid of the Virgin in the opening stanza of his entry, in
order to enable him to undertake the writing of the poem,
'la mia mà la ploma .b por afferra' (XXXIV.8).[15] Berthomeu
Dimas expresses a similar lack of reliance on human powers
of reasoning.[16] The uncertainty of the unknown Castilian
seems greater. He is going to speak about the obvious, 'lo
palpable', the implication being that he is not prepared or
able to go into any deeper doctrinal issues: 'pues para mas
no sé'. Within the four lines, 'no sé' is included twice.
The unknown Castilian appears to take his lack of knowledge
further and more personally than the other poets. Having
described his lack of knowledge the poet next turns to the
image of a pilgrim 'romero'. He compares the pilgrim,
carrying a heavy pack, to the poem he is delivering:

> Como romero que prueva
> para passar algún vado
> por algún bordón que leva
> mi obra, en son de sser nueva
> será, mas cierto, translado. (XXXIV.11)

In fact, it is not entirely clear from the extended metaphor

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[15]   Flach és l'enginy si vós no m'ajudau
         mare d'Aquell qui lo món ha salvat.
         No puch errar si vós ab mi us armau
         plena de bé los hulls mi girau,
         vostre servent qui us ha tostemps amat.
         Rés en lo món a mi tant no m'aterra,
         com és en dir, Verge, vosters lahors
         La mia mà la ploma .b por aferra. (XXXIV.1)

[16]   Si m'atrevesch entrar l'escura silva,
         no sens temor, delit me dóna senda.
         Lo poch que y sé, indigne, dir no dubte,
         vença la por lohar la Mare verge,
         No ha bastat natura .b son ingeni
         l'ús de rahó ni la humana claustra,
         tanta lahor compendre .n lo seu ésser,
         que l'ignorant no puixa dir sens torçre. (XXXI.1)

whether the poet is comparing his poem to the pilgrim seeking to cross the ford, in which the poem seems to take on a personality of its own, or to himself as the pilgrim trying to carry his poem across the ford. Perhaps the poet casts a light on the proceedings at the Certamen, as he may be referring to the lack of understanding between the audience and himself as 'algún vado'. His poem will sound strange to the audience: 'en son de sser nueva'. His poem will be brought across the ford 'traslado'. In any case, the separation between himself and his ability to make himself understood, may explain the poet's desire to include well-known doctrines about the Virgin. The poem described in terms of a journey fits well with the poet's pre-creation image, expressed in the following stanza: 'aun no eran los abismos' (XXXIV.39).

After his long *captatio*, the poet declares his intention to turn to praise of the Virgin. To achieve this, he will use familiar and erudite doctrines: 'Sigamos en sus lahores \ nuestras muy savias doctrinas'. By the use of 'nuestras', the Castilian seeks to express his fellowship with the Certamen audience. The 'doctrinas' incorporated rely on a litany of scriptural and liturgical Latin phrases which are woven into the remaining stanzas. Among these is a reference to Proverbs 8.24:

> Y en los capitoles mismos
> responde el mismo profeta
> contra argumentos sophismos:
> 'Ahún no eran los abismos
> *ego jam eram concepta*. (XXXIV.36)

The Latin text from Proverbs 8.24 is incorporated directly

into the poem, following the translation into Castilian of the first part of the Proverbs text. Neither the poet nor Ferrando Francés are certain of the origin of the Proverbs 8.24 text. The poet appears to think that the reference from Proverbs is from the same section of the Bible 'en los capitoles mismos' as the Canticum reference he has just quoted, although the Proverbs were often called the Proverbs of Solomon, and it may be to the fact that the two texts were considered to have the same author that the Castilian poet is referring.[17] Ferrando Francés, in a note referring to the biblical texts incorporated into this poem, states that there are 'nombroses expresions i cites preses del *Càntic des Càntics* i del *Llibre de la Saviesa*' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.313, note on XXXIV.20). Ferrando Francés seems to show a certain licence, since, whilst the Proverbs text is one of the Wisdom literature books, it is certainly not the same book as the Book of Wisdom. As has been noted earlier, on occasion Ferrando Francés is misled by biblical inferences (see above, p.145).

There is another reference to Proverbs 8.24 which occurs in Pere Alcanyiç's poem. Alcanyic's poem, begins on an invocation for divine help.[18] The first stanza of the poem contains a statement about the Virgin's immaculate

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[17] 'Introduction to the Proverbs', *The New Jerusalem Bible*, standard edn. (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985), p.964.

[18]   Altisme Déu, Vós qui sou nostra via,
        puix lo voler tant en mi se reforça
        per mils lohar a la Verge Maria,
        flach és l'enginy e potència mia,
        guarniu-me Vós de saber e de força. (XLII.1)

nature 'del crim primer fós neta' (XLII.18), which is preceded by an allusion to the reference from Proverbs:

> L'eternal Déu no sent creat l'abisme,
> de si formant substancial concepte,
> ans de tot, véu hun fermall tan insigne. (XLII.11)

Instead of linking the pre-creation to the Virgin's birth or conception, prior to the existence of the deep, Alcanyiç shows God contemplating the beauty 'hun fermall tan insigne' of the Virgin.

The link between perception of the Virgin and the abyss is to be found in one of the entries to the 1486 Certamen. It is possible that Mossén Guillem Mercader knew Alcanyiç's poem and drew upon it:

> Ans que l'abís ¡o cremant gavarrera!
> ja vista sou per Déu pura e sancera. (XXII.11)

It is clear from the combination of the abyss and God's beholding of the Virgin that the poet wishes to use a pre-creation image, based on Proverbs 8.24. Immediately prior to the lines echoing Proverbs, the poet has used creation verbs twice in connection with the Virgin: 'tan noble creada' (XXII.9) and 'quant ser pogués per al qu. Ell vos creà' (XXII.10). The poet has, in this way, made a connection to pre-creation imagery in the reader's mind. The poet combines pre-creation with another biblical image, the burning bush.[19]

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[19] The burning bush as a Marian symbol moved from symbolizing the Virginal conception of Christ to symbolizing the Immaculate Conception. O'Connor includes plates from the Grimani breviary from the early sixteenth century and from the Spanish *Inmaculadas* by Zurbarán, Murillo and El Greco which show the *Tota pulchra es* surrounded by biblical symbols, not, however, including the burning bush

A final reference to the abyss, again from the 1486 Certamen where the allusion seems to have enjoyed a degree of popularity, is taken from Blay Assencí's poem:

> Ans de crear los cels, terra y abisme,
> vós éreu ja la mare de l'Altisme. (XXVIII.59)

Assencí combines the creation of the earth and heavens with the creation of the abyss, which is in the poem rather an adjunct to the creation process, giving a bathetic effect to the end of the stanza.

Only four examples of references to Proverbs 8.24 have been found, two of them from the 1474 Certamen and two from the 1486 Certamen, suggesting that it was in general less favoured than the reference to Proverbs 8.23 or to Ecclesiasticus.

5.5.4 Creation and the Fall

Some of the fifteenth-century poets develop pre-creation imagery in a different way, spelling out the reason why Mary is so consistently linked with creation or the beginning of time, in references to the Fall. Again, references are most often found in the Catalan poets. Tallante appears to be the sole example of a Cancionero poet linking Mary's immaculate nature to her existence before the Fall. In his stanza dedicated to the Conception, within the 'Obra en loor de XX excellencias de Nuestra Señora', Tallante describes Mary, the 'virgen benigna', as preceding all mortals, intimating her existence in the pre-sin period:

> Enantes que culpa fuese causada,

(Plates XIV, XV, XVI. XVII).

> tu,... ya yvas delante,
> tan lexos del crimen y del semejante,
> que sola quedaste de aquel libertada. (F-D 1081.1)

Amongst Catalan poets, pre-Fall imagery is found with greater regularity. Vallmanya, in his entry for the 1486 Certamen writes: 'y ans que.l primer pare ja fósseu perfeta, \abans de la tacha ja fós preeleta' (V.15). Before the stain of original sin corrupted human nature, therefore, Mary was pre-selected for her role. Thus, the implication is that her nature was like Adam's, the first father, before he fell from grace.

Another pre-Fall image occurs in Berthomeu Salvador's entry for the 1474 Certamen. The poet combines both a creation and Fall point of reference, since the sanctification of the Virgin took place before the creation of Adam and the fall of Eve: 'Per Déu eternal fós santificada\ ans no creàs l'om ni Eva peccàs' (XXVIII.29). The misogyny of Salvador is particularly striking, since Adam is referred to in his pure created state, whilst Eve is referred to in her sinful state. Salvador's poem is dismissed as 'prosaica' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.240) by Ferrando Francés who accords it only a few lines of commentary. It is interesting that Salvador uses the term 'santificada'. As has already been considered, the term did not in itself indicate the Dominican position on the doctrine of sanctification of the Virgin, in other words the cleansing of the Virgin by means of an infusion of purifying grace in her mother's womb. It cannot necessarily be opposed to the Franciscan Immaculate Conception, since

both terms were used indistinguishably.

Prescience, rather than pre-election, underpins another pre-Fall image taken from the *Espill*. A creation as vision image connected to the Fall is used to indicate that God had foreseen or envisaged the Virgin, before the first sin was committed or foreseen:

> Déu, qui hu sabia,
> tal la volgué, volent pogué
> fer-la tan neta tota perfeta
> i tal prevista ans de la vista
> del nostre crim. (*Espill* III.2, p.158)

The divine prescience is indicated in 'sabia'; the active role of the divine will is alluded to in 'volgué', and divine capability to undertake the action of creating the Virgin free from original sin is noted in 'pogué'.

Vallmanya includes a reference to a pre-Fall theme in his second entry to the 1486 Certamen. Vallmanya similarly combines divine action and pre-Fall allusion:

> Com l'alt Factor vos elegís primera
> que.l primer hom, yo per a mi declare
> ésser forçat creure sou verdadera
> obra d'Aquell qui us formà per cimera,
> pura sens crim. (IX.78)

The reference to the 'primer hom' as well as 'Factor' for the divine Creator both point to the period before the time of creation. Pre-creation and divine action is recalled a few lines later in 'obra' and 'us forma' which combine with a reference to the Virgin's sinless nature: 'obra d' Aquel qui us forma per cimera \pura sens crim'. In addition, the poem has a theme of pre-creation, with the purpose of exaltation of the Virgin above the angels, running through

it. Vallmanya uses 'cimera' to refer to the Virgin, a mythical monster, part-goat, part-lion and part-serpent, perhaps because he considers her to span the Old Testament faithful *anawim*, as well as being a member of the New Testament fellowship. It also gives him the opportunity to display his knowledge of the Ancient World.

Some pre-Fall reference may be more indirect. One such pre-Fall image by implication is found in Johan Balaguer's poem, which he submitted to the 1486 Certamen:

> Puix Déu ponint primer la serp que l'home,
> vos féu salut ans que .ns donàs la plaga. (XXV.11)

Balaguer associates the Virgin with health or salvation; health precedes sickness, just as Man lived in unity with God before the Fall. The plague represents original sin, 'plaga'. Whilst the image is both medical and salvation based, rather than creation based, Balaguer, nevertheless, indicates the Virgin Mary's existence before the Fall. Since creation occurred before the Fall, Balaguer suggests the Virgin's existence before the Fall. Balaguer's arrangement of the elements of good and evil is chiasmic. Evil is placed before good in the case of Adam 'serp':'home', and in the following line, good before evil in the case of the New Eve 'salut': 'plaga'.

Mary's existence before the Fall is underlined in yet a different way by Fenollar in his winning poem in the 1486 Certamen: 'Ja los grans rius de vostres béns corrien \ ans que .ls parents vençuts fossen en guerra' (XVII.1). The war referred to is the battle between the serpent and Adam and

Eve, leading to their defeat in the Genesis description of the Fall. The reference to 'los grans rius' seems to imply the Virgin's fullness of grace, even perhaps her role as *Mediatrix* of grace, showing her otherness from the rest of mankind which has been defeated.

A pre-Fall image is closely linked to a Conception context in another of the Catalan poems. Genís Fira, in his poem submitted to the 1474 Certamen, combines pre-Fall imagery with Mary's selection for her role, referring to her existence before the origin of sin:

> Ans que peccant, general malaltia
> pél món sembràs lo nostre primer pare,
> en lo més alt de l'alta gararxia,
> bella per tot, humil verge Maria,
> Déu infinit vos elegí per mare. (XXII.1)

Amezcua also uses and develops a pre-Fall image in his winning entry for the 1440 Certamen (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.113):

> E com obrant en eleció pura
> de tot agent la fi principal sia,
> ans fon elet l'Om qui Déu ser avia
> que tot quant fon de qualsevol natura.
> E, sens migà, la mare que fonc sua,
> aprés del Fil déc ésser preeleta,
> ans que Adam ne la ley a .quel feta.
> Per tant lo crim, de bens no la féu nua. (Amezcua.9)

The poet shows a tiered pre-creation image, underlining the primacy of Christ. First Christ was selected and 'fon elet l'Om qui Déu ser devia' and in second place the Virgin Mary was chosen 'la mare que fonc sua \ aprés del Fil déc ésser preeleta'. The pre-selection carefully places the Virgin in her correct status in the hierarchy, secondary to Christ, who did not need redemption, but above all other mortals.

This selection of Christ and his Mother took place before
the Fall 'ans que Adam ne la ley a .quel feta'.

In addition, the entire opening stanza of the poem is
a poetic picture of the Almighty contemplating the work of
creation to be carried out:

> Fermant los ulls alt en l'amor eterna,
> l'enteniment, si gràcia l'afina,
> a dir lo ver de la mare divina,
> dins lo Volum qui tot quant és guoverna,
> veurà molt clar com l'alta genitura
> per Creador l'Om exalsar devia,
> en tant qu.ab Ell un supòsit seria
> causa final de tota sa factura. (Amezcua.1)

The poet begins the poem by describing the actions of the
Creator. It is a Creator given a personal touch, in that the
creator figure undertakes a simple human action 'Fermant los
ulls', in order to better contemplate the task of creation
to be brought to perfection in the redemptive work: 'causa
final de tota sa factura'. As in the Glosa to Gómez
Manrique's poem (see above, p.233), the Virgin Mary was
present in the 'enteniment' of the Creator and was part of
the divine plan from the beginning. There was a plan as to
how human nature was to be exalted and how the Saviour was
to be generated by the procreative act of the Creator.
Ferrando Francés refers 'genitura' to the Protoevangelium
text 'Inimicitas ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum
et semen illius' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.114 n.5).

Although there is no apparent reference to Mary's
creation in these final examples, there would appear to be
an implicit connection with pre-creation imagery. It could
be argued that 'ans que', so frequently introducing the

Proverbs 8.23 Wisdom reference, would set up the resonance of the Wisdom reference without the poet needing to use it. This would be particularly likely in Cataluña where Marian poetry is so steeped in allusion to the immaculist theme. The poet is thus able to play with his readers' expectations and introduce a variation on the theme. In addition, the importance of Mary existing before the Fall has the same function as that of pre-creation images: to show Mary as unsullied. This is, after all, the reason for the use of creation or pre-creation imagery in a conceptionist context by so many poets. By referring to the creation or to the period before the Fall, poets intend to place Mary's selection before the time when sin entered the world. The original creation and humanity fell from grace, but Mary, created before the world, or before the Fall of the original created beings, is beyond the taint of the world or the flesh.

Pre-creation imagery is found throughout the period in Cataluña, as has been seen. The existence of pre-creation images in a possible entry to the 1440 Certamen shows the consistent use of the image over many years in the context of immaculist Certamen writing. At various points throughout the period, as can be seen, Catalan poets turned to the Proverbs reference to express pre-creation, so that the same pre-creation image is found towards the end of the 1480s in the second Certamen in honour of the Conception. The existence of a constant thread of imagery across the century would appear to give weight to the argument that the

Certamen poems are of little poetic interest or value, since it has been said that the language of the Conception poems is merely a reworking of tired stock phrases. Ferrando Francés comments on the 'aclaparadora monotonia' of the collection and of the 'monotonia de les variacions sobre el mateix tema' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.220) and, in some respects, the consistent use of pre-creation images serves to reinforce that view. However, it must be added that pre-creation images, although frequently present in immaculist poems, cannot be said to be merely stock phrases. In order to fully understand the purpose of the poets, it is necessary to concede that, for the poets, this recurring pre-creation image constituted one of the key biblical authorities for the doctrine and, as such, had a place within any poem with pretentions to serious readership. Also, it must be added that the theme was not used merely as a stock phrase but that it underwent some poetic development, as will be shown, although such development was not always felicitous.

5.6 PRE-CREATION: POSSIBLE ALLUSIONS

Having examined a number of pre-creation images in immaculist contexts, the question must be raised as to whether the use of a pre-creation image without explicit reference to sinlessness and without the context of an explicit reference to the Conception of Mary, constitutes a reference to the Immaculate Conception. It is this contention that will be examined with regard to some of the Cancionero poets. A case in point is Santillana, in the

eleventh stanza of 'Los goços de Nuestra Señora', where the poet uses 'desde ab iniçio creada', in a poem in which there is no apparent reference to the Conception doctrine.[20] Other *Gozos* poems of the period refer to the Conception of the Virgin.[21] Santillana does not make any reference to the Conception doctrine, even though in his version the traditional seven Joys are expanded to twelve.[22] In the eleventh stanza, where Santillana deals with the Joy of Pentecost, he uses terms which have been associated in other poets with the Conception doctrine. Thus, Mary 'consolada e favorida' by the reception of the 'resplandor santo' is described as created 'desde ab iniçio'. It is possible to assume that the use of the phrase is a shorthand way of marking out Mary's special role and her preparation for it. Since the phrase is regularly used in a Conception context in fifteenth-century Castilian and, in a more amplified form in Catalan poetry, it could perhaps be taken as an oblique reference to Mary's pre-conception within the *Gozos*. To this

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[20] Marqués de Santillana, *Canciones y decires*, ed. by Vicente García de Diego, Clásicos castellanos, 18 (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1913, repr. 1973). The poet in this case keeps *ab iniçio* close to the Latin with the addition of 'desde' to render *ab* which appears to have become unclear as a time-marker: 'goçate, de aflictos vida, \ desde ab iniçio creada', p.129.

[21] Villasandino, for example in 'Generosa muy fermosa', has an introductory stanza leading into the first *Gozo* which deals with the Annunciation. The introductory stanza refers obliquely to the Immaculate Conception, whilst the final stanza of the poem makes the references explicit.

[22] The *Gozos* refered to by Santillana are, in fact, the Conception of Christ, the Visitation, the Virgin Birth, the Epiphany, the Presentation, the Flight to Egypt, the Visit to the Temple, the Wedding at Cana, the Resurrection, the Ascension, Pentecost and the Assumption \Coronation.

oblique reference could be added two others: in the first stanza 'elegido por Dios Padre', linked consistently with creation images, as we have seen, and in the second stanza 'pulcra e decóra' are used. The theme of beauty, already examined (see above, p.138), and glossed in the Glosa on Gómez Manrique's 'Loores e suplicaciones a Nuestra Señora', is linked to the Immmaculate Conception in many poems, although on its own it is not a sufficient indicator. All these allusions are linked to the Virgin's immaculate nature in the Glosa. It might be that Santillana wished to underpin his *Gozos* poem with references to Mary's immaculate nature without assigning a stanza to the Conception itself.

There is just such a reference in Tapia's 'Salve Regina', which is a reworking of the Latin hymn. In the first stanza, Tapia writes 'ab initio estableçida \de Dios Padre elegida' (F-D 832.3). There is seemingly nothing in the context to suggest that the two verses should be interpreted as related to the Conception, however, if the verse is read in conjunction with 'casa santificada\ de mano de Dios labrada' (F-D 831.41) from the Glosa to the 'Copla esparsa', it can be seen that the building image is picked up again and amplified by the addition of 'sanctificada'. *Sanctificatio in utero* is the term used by theologians to express the purification of the Virgin from original sin in her mother's womb. The link to the Virgin's sanctification and, thus, to her sinless nature is made explicit.

A similar situation occurs in respect of Villasandino's poem 'Generosa, muy fermosa', where the poet uses 'cryada' adding 'lympia, syn error' (F-D, 599.2). Whilst neither 'lympia' nor 'syn error' alone could be taken as a clear reference to the Conception doctrine, it could be argued that, in combination with 'cryada', with its resonance of the Ecclesiasticus text, the connection could be made. In addition, in the final stanza of the poem 'syn error desde abeniçio', the pre-creation image is complete. The image is, therefore, split into two halves, each combined with 'syn error'. The repetition of the phrase enables the reader to recall and reunite the image 'cryada fuste limpia syn error ... syn error desde abeniçio'. The reconstituted phrase links creation, conception and sinlessness with a rare use of 'ynmaculata'. The juxtaposition of the two concepts seems to provide evidence of the need to interpret pre-creation imagery as conceptionist in nature. There would seem to be enough evidence to suggest that, even where other reference to the Conception doctrine is absent, the 'ab initio cryada' should in itself be read as a Conception indicator. It would appear that pre-creation imagery was so well-known that allusion to it was enough to give a shorthand immaculist theme to a poem.

There are also a number of poems which contain no direct reference to the pre-creation texts but which contain some pre-creation indicators, in other words which appear to allude to pre-creation texts or take their suppositions for granted. The linking of creation allusions to the Virgin's

role as Mother of God is frequently found in fifteenth-century poetry, and it is likely that these should be read in the light of pre-creation. Lorenç Diamant makes this connection in his entry to the 1474 Certamen: 'Ans res creàs, vos elegí per mare' (XXVI.18). Also, in the poem purportedly by the Virgin herself, her response in the 1474 Certamen, there is a reference to her pre-election as .Mother of God. 'Eternalment' combines with 'preeleta' and the purpose of pre-election in that she is to be 'mare de Déu':

> Coronada muy perfeta
> ans que el ésser meu no fos,
> eternalment preeleta
> mare de Déu poderós. (XLVI.5)

Although the pre-creation image is not explicit, being understood in 'eternalment' and 'preeleta', it is clear that the timescale is prior to her existence as a person 'ans que el ésser meu no fos'. 'Eternalment' seems to set the timescale for the pre-election at the beginning of time. Occasions on which poets use 'eternalment' are not uncommon, such as Johan Moreno's 'eternalment eleta' (1474 Certamen, XIV.18) or the more explicit 'sens peccar may eternalment creada' (1474 Certamen, XLV.20). These are what might be termed pre-creation indicators, in other words, it would appear logical to read 'eternalment' in combination with 'prevista' or 'preeleta' as a resonance of pre-creation.

Berenguer Cardona's entry to the 1474 Certamen contains the following allusion which seems to contain just such a resonance of pre-creation:

> Mare de Déu, eternalment prevista
> tal qual huy sou e per semper sereu,
> que us procrehà, segons que .ls cels se veu,

lo Déu inmens d'aquella .ternal vista. (XI.1)

'Eternalment prevista' is linked to the creative activity of

God, through 'procrehà' and also to the idea of God's

perception, which is, as has been previously considered,

regularly used·as a pre-creation variant. In this respect,

the combination of pre-creation indicators requires the

stanza to be read as alluding to the Wisdom texts.

It is possible to show, from the use of pre-creation

images in a defined conceptionist context, how another poet

may be using a reference to the Virgin's pre-creation as a

shorthand reference to the Conception doctrine. If the poet

of 'Mare de Déu', the poem which may have been one of the

missing entries to the 1440 Certamen, is considered, the

writer introduces a pre-creation image, this time using

another text to underline the concept of Mary's creation

before the world:

> E com siats   ans dels setgles prevista
> e per Déu ja   al misteri disposta. (Mare de Déu. 37)

'Ans dels segles' or *ante saecula* appears to be alluding to

Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) but instead of using the

creation imagery as in the original, the poet combines *ante*

saecula, from everlasting, with the term 'prevista',

indicating the preparation or the predestination of the

Virgin for her virginal conception 'al misteri'.

A number of poets use the *ante secula* section of

Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9) in their pre-creation imagery.

Roïç de Corella uses 'ans del segle' to convey *ante secula*

in the poem he submitted to the 1474 Certamen:

> E mostre's ver que, stant dins lo sepulcre,
> Lo vostre cors nunqu.s pogué fer cendra,
> lo qual, vivint, matava tots los vérmens,
> puys era carn d'Aquell , qui ans del segle
> vos elegí perquè li fósseu mare. (II.8)

Instead of combining 'ans del segle' with a creation image, Corella combines the reference to Mary's incorruptibility in death and to her selection from everlasting for her role as Mother of God. Christ and God are subsumed into one Being, 'Aquell', who was to take flesh from the Virgin.

The Ecclesiasticus reference may be behind Francí de Castellví's allusion to pre-creation in the 1474 Certamen: 'Amiga de Dios en el siglo creada, \ y antes que nasciesses por Dios escogida' (V.11). Castellví uses 'en el siglo' rather than 'antes de los siglos', however, given the combination with 'creada', it would appear that the poet intended an allusion to Ecclesiasticus 24.14 (24.9). Once again pre-creation is linked to selection of Mary for her role as Mother of God; it is also combined with a Canticum reference in 'amiga de Dios'. Castellví is less definitively immaculist than other entrants to the Certamen in this poem. 'Antes que nasciesses' could imply maculism rather than immaculism. The only rescuing factor moving the poet towards immaculism lies in 'en el siglo creada'. If the poet intends an Ecclesiasticus reference then the allusion would overridingly be to an immaculist viewpoint. Given the presence of a second Conception indicator in 'amiga de Dios', this seems extremely likely.

There is a parallel usage of 'ante secula', in Nuñez's

'Villancico hecho a Nuestra Señora la noche de Navidad' (F-D, 874). The poem consists of a dialogue between humanity 'nosotros' and the Virgin. The Virgin is described by 'nosotros' as 'el templo y morada \do todo nuestro bien mora' (F-D, 874.60). In the same stanza, the epithets about the Virgin include 'de *ante secula* criada' (F-D 874.63). On this occasion, preserving the original Latin from Ecclesiasticus for *ante secula* and adding the preposition 'de', the poet uses the well-known phrase to affirm the Virgin's pre-creation for her role. In the following stanza, the dialogue is taken up by 'Nuestra Señora' who in the dialogue recalls the words 'templo', affirming the image 'yo soy aquel santo templo' (1. 67) and then appears to affirm the pre-creation image in the words 'que el quiso sanctificar' (1.68). If *ab initio* and *ante secula* were used as a shorthand form of expressing belief in the Conception, then 'quiso sanctificar' is also a Conception indicator. 'Quiso' shows the divine will in action and 'sanctificar' is generally used for the anti-immaculist viewpoint, as the the Glosa, following Gómez Manrique's 'Loores e suplicaciones a Nuestra Señora', indicates in the commentary on 'santificada':

> La otra opinion dize que fue concebida en pecado original, e segun esta opinion fue santificada del para ser Madre de Dios (F-D II, p.149).

In the Manrique poem, as in the Nuñez poem, the use of 'santificar' has a clear bearing on the immaculist debate. To ears sensitized to the nuances of the debate in the period, the word sanctify could have no other meaning but the Dominican position of sanctification *in utero*. Is it

then to be concluded that Castilian poets were less well versed in doctrinal arguments than their Catalan counterparts or even that they supported the Dominican viewpoint and were maculists? It seems unlikely that this should be the case, since Berthomeu Salvador also uses 'santificada' in his entry for the 1474 Certamen (XXVIII.29). Or is it perhaps that the nuances of the debate had less relevance for the Castilians or perhaps that they sought to please all sides in the debate? To reconsider the Gloss to Gómez Manrique's poem, the author concludes, in order to avoid the contradiction of support for both sides in the debate that: 'ase de entender el santificada larga mente por preseruada' (F-D II, p.149). It would seem logical that the same conclusion might be reached with regard to the Nuñez poem. However, there is one major difference between the usage of 'ans dels segles' in the Catalan poem and 'de ante secula' in the Nuñez poem. In the Catalan example, unlike in Nuñez's *villancico*, where the reference to the immaculist theme must be inferred, the pre-creation image underpins the entire poem with its arguments in favour of the Immaculate Conception, serving to underline yet again, through its context, the close alliance between this image and the Conception doctrine.

5.7   CONCLUSION

The difference in context leads to the drawing of some conclusions about the treatment of the pre-creation theme in Castile and Cataluña. Firstly, it is immmediately apparent from the high incidence of creation and pre-creation images

in immaculist poems in both Castile and Cataluña that the
poets considered the theme to be closely allied to or
synonymous with a reference to the Virgin's immaculate
nature. This synonymous referencing has to some extent been
lost to the modern reader and the main purpose of this
chapter has been to reconstruct that referencing through the
poems.

Whilst considering the high incidence of references to
the Virgin's pre-creation, the fact that Conception poets
have been accused of using trite vocabulary and stock
phrases has had to be addressed. The Certamen poems
certainly appear at first glance to bear out that judgement,
until two points are considered. Firstly, the image is based
on one of the few scriptural supports for the doctrine of
the Immaculate Conception and as such was justifiably given
a place in any poetic rendering of the doctrine. Secondly,
in the better poems in the Certamen collections, the pre-
creation image is combined by poets with other Marian or
immaculist themes: the selection of the Virgin for her role,
her sinlessness, her motherhood, her purity. A second
conclusion to be drawn is, therefore, that, since the theme
is one of the key authoritative references for the doctrine,
its inclusion has, therefore, nothing to do with triteness
or repetition but more to do with doctrinal referencing.

From an examination of the pre-creation theme, it can
be concluded that, in Castilian poetry, the Ecclesiasticus
reference 'ab initio creada' was most frequently used, being

employed by a majority of poets in the context of the
Immaculate Conception and probably even as a shorthand
reference to it. This may go some way to explaining its
emergence in a period when there was dispute about the
doctrine and its absence from the period before the
Conception became an issue. Catalan poets, on the other
hand, favoured variations on the Proverbs Wisdom literature
reference from Proverbs 8.24, 'ans qu.el món fos creat' or
'ans que l'abís'. The text is usually amplified, and may be
linked to Mary's preservation from sin before the creation,
or to her pre-election 'preeleta' for her role in the
history of salvation.

A further conclusion springs from the difference of the
treatment of such pre-creation images in Castile and
Cataluña. It has become apparent that the Valencian
poets, broadly speaking, offer more doctrinal allusion and
combination of themes than the Castilians, probably because
they were writing for a different, overtly immaculist
purpose, in a different climate, in a country with open
clerical and royal support for the doctrine. There is a
marked difference in treatment between these overtly
immaculist poems and the poems to be found in the *CB* and the
F-D collections. An interesting tendency which may reflect
an attempt within the Castilian poems to please both views
has been uncovered. As has been noted, several poets use the
terminology of both preservation and sanctification, even,
in the case of Gómez Manrique, within the same poem. This
indefinite approach to the doctrine in the poem collections

may explain the number of poems which appear to use imagery similar to that of overtly immaculist poems. Such poems, such as Santillana's *Gozos* poem, have no overtly immaculist context either in the rubric or the poem itself. In Castile, there is a smaller body of conceptionist poems to study in any case, but if these poems are taken together with the consistent alliance of creation and pre-creation with immaculism in the Valencian collection, it is quite clear that creation and pre-creation images are closely allied to allusion to immaculist thinking.

PART III

NEW TESTAMENT THEMES

6 NEW TESTAMENT SYMBOLISM AND LITERATURE : APOCRYPHAL BIRTH NARRATIVES AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

In this chapter, an examination of the use of apocryphal nativity stories from Hispanic Marian literature prior to the fifteenth century will allow a comparison with the use of apocryphal stories in the fifteenth century.[1] This comparison will be extensive because this theme reveals a broad level of use in the period prior to the fifteenth century, which is not generally the case for immaculist themes. Since a depth of treatment of immaculist themes is rare in the pre-fifteenth-century period, for this reason, a fuller comparison can be made than is the case for other themes examined earlier. This comparison will shed light on the use of the apocryphal theme in the fifteenth century. First of all, however, a brief description of the history of apocryphal nativity stories will be followed by a summary of the main events of the stories.

6.1 APOCRYPHAL BIRTH STORIES : A BRIEF HISTORY

Very little biographical material about Mary was preserved in the Gospels, certainly not enough to satisfy popular interest and, in response to this demand, a number of apocryphal stories were soon circulating, dwelling particularly on the undocumented areas of the Virgin's life,

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[1] These apocryphal stories deal with the birth of Mary and also with the birth and childhood of Jesus. They were not approved as part of the biblical canon and for this reason are termed apocryphal.

namely, the beginning and the end. The events surrounding

Mary's birth and childhood were recorded in the

Protoevangelium of James, written in the second century.[2]

Events in the birth story of Mary had currency across

Europe in the medieval period: the name of Mary's father,

Joachim, and of her mother, Anna; the priests' rejection of

Joachim's offering at the Temple because of his wife's

barrenness; Anna's sorrow at her barrenness and her song of

sorrow in the garden at the sight of a family of sparrows;

the double Annunciation to Joachim and to Anna; the meeting

of Mary's parents at the Golden Gate; their embrace and the

conception of Mary; the dedication of Mary, a child prodigy,

to the temple. The existence of the apocryphal stories bears

witness to second-century interest in the parentage and

birth of Mary.

The apocryphal stories drew on parallels with the New

Testament nativity story of John the Baptist and his mother

Elizabeth and with the Old Testament birth narrative of

Samuel and his mother Hannah and of Isaac and his mother

Sarah. The mothers are old and past the age of childbearing.

All the mothers long for a child. Annunciations are built

into each of the stories. Indeed, the very name of Mary's

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[2] The Legend of Anne and Joachim from the Protoevangelium of James was reworked as The Legend of Anne and Joachim in the *Pseudo-Matthew* and also as the Legend of Anne and Joachim in the *Liber de nativitate Mariae*. The parts of these texts which concern the birth stories of Mary are translated by Edward O'Connor, p.513. There are minor differences of detail and elaboration between the three versions.

mother is borrowed from the name of the mother of Samuel, another biblical hero. The use of these stories meant that Mary's birth was put on a par with Old Testament figures and the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist. In fact, the stories of miraculous birth have a great deal in common with the birth of Jesus which they prefigure. Hubert Richards sums up the dependence of the Gospel narrative on the Old Testament in his commentary on the Lucan infancy stories, suggesting that the purpose is to show Israel's leaders as 'the gift of God'.[3] According to Miegge, the apocryphal story is intended to show that 'nature had, thus, departed from her ordinary course when the Mother of God was brought into the world' (Miegge, p.215). Furthermore, Miegge argues that 'the development of the story reflects the common superstition that heroes, as well as great prophets, are, from their very origin, independent of natural laws' (p.216). Finally, according to Miegge, the purpose of the story is to show that original sin, interpreted in a sexual sense, would have concerned the heroic figures less because their parents were old. It is this aspect of the special birth which the writers of the apocryphal stories wished to claim for Mary.

The apocryphal stories depict the sanctity of the Birth of the Virgin Mary, and it was this holiness at birth which was celebrated in the feast of her Nativity. Most of the saints' days, celebrated in the calendar, mark the

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[3] Hubert J.Richards, *The First Christmas: What really happened?*, 2nd edn. repr. (Glasgow: Collins Fountain, 1977), p.52.

anniversary of the death or 'birthday into heaven', of the saint.[4] Once a feast-day had been established to celebrate the birth of John the Baptist, a Gospel event, there was a pressure to establish a similar feast for Mary, since her role in the economy of salvation was greater than John's. The Nativity of Mary was established as a feast by the ninth century in the East but soon spread to the West (see above, p.18). Mary's Conception was celebrated as a feast, known as the Conception of St Anne, from the seventh century in the East (Warner, p.239).

The stories of Mary's parentage and the nature of her birth were extremely popular until the end of the fourteenth century in art. During the Middle Ages, Mary's Conception was often represented at the moment of her parents' meeting at the Golden Gate. According to Marina Warner, by the end of the fifteenth century, the stories were beginning to go out of fashion, being replaced by other symbols of Mary's origins.[5] This was because the Conception, rather than the Nativity of Mary, began to take precedence and the apocryphal images were superceded by imagery depicting the

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[4] Alfred Rush, C.S.S.R. 'Mors Mariae, vita aeterna: an Insight into New Testament Apocrypha', *American Ecclesiastical Review*, 142 (1960), 257-266, p.259.

[5] At p.214, Warner indicates the changes taking place in artistic representations of the Conception of Mary:
> The movement away from such works as the *Book of James* towards the inspired word of God began as the cult of St Anne climaxed, at the end of the fifteenth century. By then propaganda paintings commissioned for Franciscan churches began abandoning the embrace at the Golden Gate in favour of the theme of the Virgin's pre-figurement in Scripture.

Conception of Mary. It is certainly true that, once the
scholastic debate about the Immaculate Conception began to
gain currency, so great a concentration on physical
generation was felt to be incompatible with the new
thinking, which relied more on logical argument and on
scriptural proof than on a story which had little historical
veracity. Warner, in her far-reaching study, does not,
however, discuss differences in individual countries and
their usage of apocryphal imagery. Suzanne Stratton,
in her specialized study of Spanish iconography, describes
how the 'embrace at the Golden Gate, found earlier in Italy
and elsewhere in Europe, comes to Spain in the fifteenth
century where it is often given an immaculist
interpretation'.[6]

6.2 LITERATURE AND THE APOCRYPHAL STORIES: ALFONSO EL SABIO

Alfonso el Sabio includes a number of references to the
nativity stories in his *CSM*. According to Antonio Riera
Estarellas: 'Parece que a este rey toca la gloria de haber
cantado el primero en lengua vulgar el singular privilegio
de María' (p.248). By the 'singular privilegio', Riera
Estarellas is referring to the Immaculate Conception. Having
quoted at length from *CSM* 411, Riera Estarellas comments:

> En la segunda estrofa vemos claramente expresada la
> concepción de María por vía natural. En la tercera
> podemos admirar la confesión explícita de la

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[6] Stratton records examples of the 'osculatory
conception' at Vich by Ferrando Camarge; at Becerril de
Campos by Berruguete; in Valencia Cathedral by Fernando
Yáñez de la Almedina. All were undertaken at the end of
the fifteenth century (p.22).

preservación *in primo instanti* del alma de María'
(p.249).

A detailed study of the whole of the *cantiga* in question

reveals the following evidence.

First, the very title of the *cantiga* 'Esta é a

primeyra, da Nacença de Santa Maria, que cae no mes de

Setembro' (*CSM* 411.1) gives one clue to the fact that it is

the Nativity of the Virgin rather than the Conception which

concerns Alfonso el Sabio. The refrain to the *cantiga*

underlines the importance of the Nativity to the poet:

'Beeyto foi o dia e benaventurada\ a ora que a Virgen, Madre

de Dios, foi nada' (*CSM* 411.3).

Alfonso begins the poem by recording a number of

biblical prophecies about the origins of the Virgin in the

opening stanza.[7] In the third stanza, Alfonso begins to

record the apocryphal stories about the origins of the

Virgin: 'mas pero de seu padre, que Joachin chamado \ foi,

e sa madre Anna, direi-vos seu estado' (*CSM* 411.15). He

describes the way in which the holy pair give one third of

their income to the Church, one third to the temple and keep

one third for themselves. The poet then describes, with

anti-semitic relish, how Joachim was barred from the temple:

'Ruben e Symeon vedaron-ll' a entrada' (*CSM* 411.33).

Joachim, distraught, goes into the mountains, a Galician

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[7]   E d'aquesta naçença falou muit' Ysaya,
        e prophetando disse que arvor sayria
        ben de rayz de Jesse, e que tal fror faria
        que do Sant' Espirito de Deus fosse morada.
        (*CSM* 411.5)

touch of wilderness.[8] Whilst Anna is weeping, she is
comforted by an angelic visitation and an annunciation.[9]
Joachim, transposed to a Galician setting 'metudo no meogo\
duas grandes montannas' (*CSM* 411.61) also receives his
angelic visitation. It is interesting that Joachim protests
that he will be unable to return, since he is despised and
rejected by his neighbours:

> mais me val que viva
> en logar apartado, que vida mui cativa
> fazer entre mias gentes, vergonnos' e viltada. (*CSM*
> 411.81)

The poet stays close to the source material, following one
of the versions of the apocryphal Gospels. He faithfully
reproduces the details pertaining to Joachim's flight to the
mountains and also its timescale. In the *Pseudo-Matthew*,
Anna bewails the fact that her husband has been absent for
five months, whilst, in the *CSM*, the father of Mary
describes himself as absent for almost six months 'e eno mes
d'agosto \ avera ben seis meses que fiz aqui estada'
(*CSM* 411.77). This apparently has the function of ensuring
the sanctity of Mary's father, since he had abstained for
six months from sexual contact prior to returning home to
obey the angelic vision and engage in the procreation of
Mary. The poet is concerned with purifying the physical act
of conception. He is considering how to reconcile the active

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[8]   El ouve dest' embargo e vergonna tamanna
       que non foi a ssa casa, nen-no viu sa companna;
       mas fillou seus gaados e foi-ss' aa montanna,
       assi que por gran tenpo non fez ali tornada.
       (*CSM* 411.40)

[9]   Non temas, Anna, ca Deus oyda
       a ta oraçon ouve; e poren sen falida
       de teu marido filla averás. (*CSM* 411.55)

act of generation with purity rather than the passive conception in its immaculate sense. It is the active conception rather than the Immaculate Conception which is being described. The timing of Joachim's return is also interesting. Presumably, working back from the time of the Conception, the month is almost August, perhaps July. Although Joachim has to be convinced before his return, and must make the return journey from the mountains, which would have to take him a further six months.[10] The poet does not connect the moment of the generation of Mary with the feast-day of December 8. If Alfonso were aware of the existence of the Conception feast, this would seem to be a logical time-scale to have used in the poem, so that the date of the Conception of Mary would have fallen on the feast-day.

In the *cantiga*, Joachim sets off for home, but by the ministrations of the angel sees his 'companneyra' by the Golden Gate. Anna has gone to the Golden Gate, as if to her wedding 'levou seus parentes sigo, com' eu aprendo, \ ben com se ouvess' a casar outra vegada' (*CSM* 411.132). Again

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[10] Joachim 'esmorido' after the annunciation falls to the ground, his men raise him and encourage him to return '"ca se o non fezerdes, quiçay por escarmento \ vos dará Deus tal morte que será muy soada"' (*CSM* 411.112). This description of Joachim is faithful to the source material of the *Pseudo-Matthew* which describes Joachim's post-Annunciation state, as follows:

> Then Joachim fell on his face and lay there from the sixth hour of the day until evening. When his servants and the traders came, they did not know the reason for this and were terrified, thinking that he wanted to kill himself... then, spurred by their amazement, they urged him to do the angel's bidding without delay and return quickly to his wife (Reproduced by O'Connor, *The Immaculate Conception*, p.518).

the poet is concerned to show Anna in the light of a new
wife and to underline the similarity with a wedding night.
Alfonso's thoughts are with the physical act to follow the
meeting of husband and wife. This aspect is made perfectly
clear in the following stanza. After the wedding feast, the
couple steal away together:

> E pois viu seu marido, obridou seus pesares
> e con muitas saudes e muitos abraçares
> o acolleu muy leda, e pois muitos manjares
> lle guisou, e sa casa muy ben encortynnada. (411.135)

Having established the events leading up to the
procreation of the Virgin, Alfonso describes the culminating
events which are the final preparations for the conception
of the Virgin in this delightful description of her loving
parents. The *Pseudo-Matthew* remains silent on this point,
moving straight from the meeting and the thanksgiving of
Anna to the nine months of pregnancy. Having given a
personal and discreet description of the active conception,
Alfonso then gives a theological interpetation:

> E logo que foi viva no corpo de sa madre,
> foi quita do pecado que Adan, nosso padre,
> fezera per consello daquel que, pero ladre
> por nos levar consigo, a porta ll' é serrada
> do inferno. (*CSM* 411.150)

It is certain that Alfonso describes the Virgin as free from
original sin in the womb of her mother in this stanza. The
tiny Virgin is described first as alive, then 'quita do
pecado'. The question must be raised as to whether Alfonso
intends by this description to describe the Immaculate
Conception or the sanctification of Mary in her mother's
womb. Alfonso uses 'logo que', probably placing the two
events in sequence, rather than concurrently. The liberation

from sin could, thus, have taken place at any time in Mary's mother's womb, but it is likely that the poet would have placed the cleansing moment close to the moment of conception.

The final stanza of the poem is linked to the previous stanza by *encadenación*. This means that a comparison between Mary and Eve is associated with the cleansing of the Virgin from sin. However, this Eve-Mary parallel does not clarify the question as to whether Alfonso is referring to sanctification or to the Immaculate Conception, since, as shown, the cleansing could refer to any point in the womb when this occurred. The counterpoint of Mary and Eve revolves around the gain or loss of heaven for the rest of mankind, thus Mary 'abriu paraiso' (*CSM* 411.151) and Eve 'serrou' (*CSM* 411.152). The comparison of Eve and Mary in itself is not decisive in determining immaculist belief.

A further point might be made, which is Alfonso's lack of concern that the Virgin Mary was conceived without sin, in the sense of immaculate from the very first moment of her existence, although, as has been seen, he followed his sources in describing the period of abstention which preceded the act of procreation. However, he does not seem to pose the question in terms of which moment sanctification occurred or in terms of the Immaculate Conception in this poem, since, in the context of the rest of the poem, his concern is with the physical conception of the Virgin and with the holiness of her birth. Even the theologians had

only just begun to debate the question and St Bernard's
negative judgement in the twelfth century, at that time,
appeared final. On balance, it seems much more likely that
Alfonso considered that the Virgin had been sanctified in
her mother's womb in preparation for her important role.
Critics need to be aware of the danger of reading immaculist
meanings into descriptions of other events in the life of
Mary.

Riera Estarellas also examines the tenth poem (*CSM*
420) in the series of feast poems, which is dedicated to the
sister doctrine of the Assumption (410-420). The poem to
which Riera refers is dedicated: 'é no dia aa Proçession,
como as proçessioes do çeo reçeberon a Santa Maria quando
sobio aos çeos'. The procession in question would appear to
be the Assumption feast day procession on 15 August, since
the previous Assumption poem (*CSM* 419) is dedicated to the
vigil of the feast-day. The poet begins the *cantiga* by
outlining events from the childhood of the Virgin:

> Beeita es, Maria, Filla, Madr' e criada,
> de Deus, teu Padr' e Fillo, est'é cousa prouvada.
> Beeyta foi a ora en que tu geerada
> fuste e a ta alma de Deus santivigada,
> e beeyto [o dia] en que pois fuste nada
> e d'Adam o pecado quito e perdoada,
> e beeytos los panos u fust' envurullada
> e outrossi a teta que ouviste mamada,
> e beeyta a agua en que fuste bannada
> e a santa vianda de que fust'avondada,
> e beeyta a fala que ouviste falada
> e outrossi a letra de que fust' ensinada. (*CSM* 420.3)

Riera Estarellas considers that 'En el tercero y cuarto
versos [fifth and sixth in the Coimbra edition] pone como la
misma hora la de la generación y la de la santificación. En
el primero y segundo [third and fourth in the Coimbra

edition] confiesa la predestinación de María' (p.250).
Considering Riera's certainty about predestination, it is
difficult to see how he could interpret the two lines in
question so definitively as indicative of Mary's
predestination. It is certainly the case that the poet
outlines the roles which the Virgin carried out: mother,
daughter. The names given to Mary could be illustrative of
the reality of her role, accorded at the moment of taking on
those roles, at the Annunciation. Or, since the names come
at the beginning of the poem, they could indicate in an
implicit manner that the Virgin was chosen and equipped for
her role. It is likely that 'criada' should be read as
meaning handmaid, translating *ancilla* from Luke's Gospel,
thus linking the lines to the moment of the Annunciation. In
this case, the first two lines do not seem particularly
illustrative of predestination. It would seem as though, in
his enthusiasm for the subject, Riera Estarellas might be
reading into early texts the resonances which would indicate
conceptionism in later texts.

The words 'Beeyta a ora en que tu geerada \ fuste' (*CSM*
420.5) are important from the point of view of Alfonso's
contribution to immaculism in poetry, especially since the
laudatory invocation of the moment of her generation is
combined with 'e a ta alma de Deus santivigada'. However,
once these two lines are placed alongside the following two
lines, it is clear that they are ambivalent and could
equally well be looking forward to the birth rather than
backwards to the Conception: 'e beeyto o dia en que pois

fuste nada' is then combined with 'd'Adam o pecado quito e perdoada'. In other words, Alfonso seems to consider that it is only at the birth of the Redeemer's Mother that Adam's sin was pardoned. If it was only at the time of the Virgin's birth that the sin of Adam was pardoned, then the status of 'e a ta alma [...] santivigada' becomes more fluid and indefinite. It seems likely that, in line with the theological thinking of his period, Alfonso considered that the Virgin was sanctified at some time in the womb of her mother, to prepare her for her birth, which in itself would mark her as one of the leaders of the Jewish nation. Given the way in which sanctification was described in *CSM* 411, it seems likely that Alfonso el Sabio envisaged this sanctification as taking place shortly after the infusion of the soul.[11] Moreover, if there is no reference to predestination present in lines three and four, then there is no real way of clarifying the sense which Alfonso wished to give to the four lines as a whole.

Moreover, it would seem logical, that, if Alfonso were defending the Immaculate Conception, as its first defender in Spanish literature, he would surely have placed this liberation from original sin at the time of the Conception, and would have been an ardent defender of the feast-day

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[11] Riera Estarellas admits some doubt as to Alfonso's intentions in these four short lines which appeared so close to the proof for which he was searching and yet so inconclusive. For Riera Estarellas, it is only the two lines describing the predestination of Mary which 'aclara el sentido de los dos últimos versos, que a primera vista parecen poner la sanctificación de Maria en el día de su nacimiento' (p.250).

which celebrated such an event. However, from an examination
of the first poem of the series, Alfonso did not appear
aware of the Conception feast:

> Santa Egreja ordinou
> çinque festas, porque achou
> çinque letras no nome sou,
> como vos quero depa[r]tir.
>
> A primeira que M é
> mostra de com' a nossa ffe
> naçend ela, naceu e sé
> y firm' a queno comedir. (*CSM* 410.19,24)

If Alfonso were the first defender of the Conception
doctrine, it would logically follow that he would have
included the Conception feast amongst the five feasts
outlined at the beginning of the series of ten poems.

It is more likely that Alfonso did not put much
emphasis on the Conception of Mary, a feast-day unrecognized
by the Church. As has been seen from one of the other poems
in the series (see above, p.267), Alfonso considered that
the act of conception was a physical act. Had he posed
Mary's conception in different terms, then he might well
have defended it, but from the evidence provided by the *CSM*,
it is doubtful that he did.

On two further occasions, Alfonso uses 'santivigada' in
connection with the intra-uterine Virgin. The reference is
preceded by a refrain which places the emphasis on the
Virgin's Nativity:

> Muito per dev' a Reynna
> dos ceos seer loada
> de nos, ca no mundo nada
> foi ben come fror d'espynna. (*CSM* 310.2)

The flower from thorn is a powerful image of sanctity which

later will be used in connection with the Immaculate
Conception, but which, in this context, is clearly used in
connection with the birth of the Virgin. The stanza must be
read in the light of the recurrent refrain:

> Ca sempre santivigada
> foi dez que a fez seu padre
> eno corpo de sa madre,
> u jouve des pequenynna. (*CSM* 310.6)

Once again the emphasis is on the physical generation of the
Virgin by her parents. The decision on how to read the
stanza, whether sanctificationist or immaculist, depends on
'dez que'. If the conjunction means 'as soon as' or 'at the
very moment that', then the stanza might be read in an
immaculist sense. The emphasis on physical generation,
downplayed by later defenders of the doctrine, is revealing
of the interest of Alfonso in the origins of the Virgin and
in the holiness of her birth.

The final use of 'santivigada' is as ambiguous as the
others. It occurs in a *cantiga* of praise to the Virgin,
which dwells in each stanza on different events in the life
of Mary: the Annunciation, the Virgin Birth, the Incarnation
(of the Trinity), the Coronation of the Virgin and the
opening of Paradise. The first stanza refers to the Nativity
of the Virgin:

> Qual é a santivigada
> ant' e depois que foi nada?
> Madre de Deus, nostro Sennor. (*CSM* 330.2)

The poet seems to consider in these lines that
sanctification was a two-stage process occurring both before
and after the birth of the Virgin. This two-stage approach
to santification is indicative of the fluid state of the

doctrine during the thirteenth century. A description of two-stage sanctification can be found in the writing of St Thomas Aquinas.[12] The doctrine, as outlined in fifteenth-century poetry, is much more uniform in interpretation following the·period of scholastic definitions. In this stanza, it appears to be a sanctification in the womb of her mother to which the poet is referring rather than to the Immaculate Conception.

Whilst Alfonso does, on occasion, by implication appear to place the conception of the Virgin at the same time as her sanctification, none of the references is entirely definite nor, taken as a whole, consistent. Alfonso never considers a Conception feast and when he does write about the conception of Mary, he invariably emphasizes the physical act of generation.

6.3 THE APOCRYPHAL STORIES IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Whilst Alfonso el Sabio turns naturally to the apocryphal Gospels for information about pre-nativity events concerning the Virgin, in fifteenth-century poetry, in contrast, there are relatively few poets who write about the Conception in terms of the parental history and pre-birth events inspired by the Apocryphal Gospels. This is not to say that the apocryphal Gospels no longer inspired

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[12] This dual sanctification is apparent in the *Summa* of St Thomas Aquinas (Lib.III.a.3.resp.3): 'Ad tertium dicendum quod Spiritus Sanctus in beata Virgine duplicem purgationem fecit'. The first sanctification was in preparation for the conception of Christ and the second was at the conception of Christ.

literature or art in the fifteenth century, since this is patently untrue. Sor Isabel de Villena in her *Vita Christi* devotes many of the early chapters of her devotional work to meditation on the apocryphal accounts of Mary's birth and childhood.[13] The story of St Anne's conception also continues to inspire writers, artists and designers of *retablos* into the sixteenth century.[14] Roiç de Corella wrote a prose work entitled *La vida de la gloriosa santa Anna*, showing that interest in the early life of Mary was not waning in the period.[15] In poetry, too, echoes of the stories are woven into many of the poems dedicated to the Conception.

In this section of the chapter, the way in which the apocryphal stories were used in the fifteenth century to recount Mary's early life will be examined, in order to identify which aspects of the stories are most common and what the events are used to illustrate.

Jaime Roig, in the *Espill*, follows a long diatribe against women (III.2, p.148) with a laudatory, theological,

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[13] Sor Isabel de Villena, *Llibre anomenat Vita Christi ara novament publicat segons l'edició de l'any 1497*, ed. by Ramón Miquel y Planas, 3 vols. (Barcelona: Miquel-Rius, 1916-1918).

[14] Stratton, at p.22, states that 'the embrace at the Golden Gate, found earlier in Italy and elsewhere in Europe, comes to Spain in the fifteenth century, where it is often given an Immaculist interpretation. She cites examples from Becerril de Campos by Berruguete, as well as examples from Toledo, created during the immaculist reign of Cisneros by Juan de Borgoña.

[15] *Obres*, ed. by R. Miquel i Planas (Barcelona: Biblioteca Catalana, 1913).

scholastic-inspired section dedicated to the Virgin Mary and to her Immaculate Conception. This theological section (III.2, p.153) of the poem is then followed by a section which interweaves laudatory epithets and resonances of the apocryphal nativity story. An examination of the references to the birth stories will reveal whether Roig uses them for an immaculist purpose:

> [...] Puis confegí
> santificada, verga plantada
> per dar salut al món perdut,
> en mig del temps entre'ls estrems
> del món en mig, en lo config
> de la promesa terra sotsmesa
> als de Judà. Déu saludà
> en lo mig jorn lo món entorn
> tot, d'orient fins al ponent,
> ab la sabor, suau olor
> de tal canyella, sarment novella,
> de bàlsem planta, filla tant santa
> de sants parents, jutges sabents,
> patriarchals, e profetals,
> e sacerdots sancts e devots,
> e dels reals a Déu lleals. (*Espill* III.2, p.161)

Jaume Roig precedes this part of the poem with an unmistakeable reference to the Virgin's pre-election for her role:

> ans que'l món fos, ell gloriós
> en l'eternal in mente, tal
> com papa fa, la reservà
> e prelegí. (*Espill* III.2, p.161)

Through the use of the pre-creation image 'ans que'l món fos', an immaculist context for the apocryphal stories is well established (see above, p.226).

Before reference to the parentage of the Virgin, Roig then moves to an oblique reference to the Virgin as 'verga plantada'. This may well be a reference to Isaiah 11.1, a messianic poem which details the nature of the future

Messiah.[16] This biblical text contains allusions to the submission of Judah's enemies which might explain 'terra sotsmesa als de Judà' and also to the special day of the Messiah, described from Isaiah 11.6 onwards. The messianic day has a resonance in 'en mig del temps' and 'en lo mig jorn'. Roig wishes to underline the association of the Virgin to the messianic lineage, Jesse being the father of David, but also wishes to associate her with the day of the messianic coming by granting the day of her birth an heroic importance. Using Jesse's root as a reference to the Virgin is commonplace in the period (see above, p.144). For example, Pere de Civillar uses the biblical reference to the root of Jesse to refer to the Virgin in his Certamen poem: 'O reyna, senyora, vienes de la vit \ d. aquell santo Jassé, do viene David' (XXV.33). Stratton (p.13) points out that, in art, the connection between the Tree of Jesse and the Virgin Mary was made early, but that it gradually developed in meaning, until later in the sixteenth century, it came to refer to the Immaculate Conception.

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[16] The poem begins:
>   A shoot will spring from the stock of Jesse,
>   a new shoot will grow from his roots
>   On him will rest the spirit of Yahweh. (Isaiah 11.1)

Later in the same poem, there are references to the coming day of salvation:
>   That day the root of Jesse, standing as a signal for the peoples
>   will be sought out by the nations and its home will be glorious.
>   the Lord will raise his hand a second time
>   to ransom the remnant of his people.
>
>   Then Ephraim's jealousy will cease
>   and Judah's enemies will be suppressed. (Isaiah 11.10,13)

The heroic significance accorded to the moment of birth 'Déu saluda \ en lo mig jorn', which has, at the same time, biblical and literary precedents is woven into the birth story. The messianic context is recalled by the use of biblical and floral figures to represent the Virgin, scent, taste of cinnamon and balsam wood which recall the 'verga plantada' and merge into 'filla tan santa\ de sants parents'. The lineage, recalled in the reference to Isaiah 11.1, thus, merges with the Virgin's parentage, described in the noblest terms. She springs from judges, patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings.

The naming ceremony for Mary also has brief allusions to apocryphal stories:

> De fet fon nada, fon nomenada
> nom honorós, bell, graciós,
> per Déu manat, e comanat,
> pel missatger, àngel certer
> al pare prom, li posàs nom
> molt alt: 'Maria'. (*Espill* III.2, p.161)

It is on the command of God, via an angelic messenger, that the name is given. This has echoes of the apocryphal nativity story of the angelic vision and prophecy to Joachim. Also, within the apocryphal tradition of using the Old Testament and New Testament birth stories as prefigurations of Mary's Nativity, it echoes the biblical story of the naming of John the Baptist. The appointed time 'en lo mig jorn' is echoed in the meaning given to her name: 'Vol dir migdia' (p.161).

Finally, Roig turns to the apocryphal narrative more definitively for the story of Mary's childhood:

        Essent txiqueta, d'edat poqueta,
        e delicada, fon dedicada
        servir al temple on fon exemple
        de santedat. (*Espill* III.2, p.161)

Roig uses the apocryphal stories to assign a heroic

childhood to Mary. Apocryphal sources are used to describe

the fifteen steps of the temple which Mary climbed to reach

the holy place. Adaptation from the biblical story of the

youthful Christ in the Temple allows his Mother to dominate

debate like a Doctor of theology: 'doctoressa\ dels majós

mestres' (*Espill* III.2, p.162).

Thus, the apocryphal Gospel stories have been a source

of inspiration for Roig but not in connection with Mary's

immaculate nature. It seems quite clear that, at the time

that Roig was writing, the concentration in the apocryphal

nativity story on the physical side of Mary's conception

was being played down. Marina Warner attests to this

process, in her chapter dedicated to the Immaculate

Conception (p.246). Warner argues that the traditional

representation of the conception of St Anne, mother of

Mary, began to give way by the end of the fifteenth century

to a concentration on the Immaculate Conception of Mary and

to scriptural figures which represent it. Roig draws only

briefly on the apocryphal Gospel sources to decribe the

birth of the Virgin and also to describe the miraculous

childhood of the Virgin, once he has established the

Immaculate Conception through scholastic argument and

biblical allusion. In this sense, Roig's attitude to the

apocryphal nativity Gospels seems to bear out the process

noted by Warner with regard to artistic works. The lack of

use fits with the Warner theory that the fashion in art had changed. The *Espill* appears to provide literary evidence of the same shift in literary representation of the Conception. However, whilst the abandonment of the apocryphal theme in the late fifteenth century is true in Italy, the situation in Spain does not fit so neatly with the disregard for apocryphal stories in fifteenth-century poetry. As has already been noted, in Spain, the artistic representation of the parents of Mary embracing at the Golden Gate was only just tardily coming into use in the Peninsula and was in favour until the mid-sixteenth century. In prose, too the apocryphal Gospels were still frequently used as a basis for the early chapters of *vitae Christi*. The non-appearance of descriptions of the Conception in apocryphal terms, thus, remains an open question. The reason why poets do not use the theme is not so clear-cut as might appear at first sight.

The fact of regarding the apocryphal birth stories as poetic material for the Nativity of the Virgin rather than the Conception is borne out by a study of Jaume d'Olesa's poem, 'Triunphes de Nostra Dona' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.371). Olesa dedicates the first stanza to the Conception of Mary and the second stanza to the apocryphal Gospel accounts of her Nativity. The first stanza shows how the Virgin was conceived without sin:

> Vós triünphau per ésser concebuda
> sens algun crim per obra del Senyor,
> del Qual haveu tal gràcia rebuda,
> que us féu honor
> en grau tan alt, qu.aprés d'Ell sou major.
> (Triunphes.5)

Olesa establishes his view on the Immaculate Conception, which centres on 'concebuda \sens algun crim'. The Conception themes referred to involve both action on the part of God and the action of redeeming grace. The purpose of the outpouring redemptive grace is also alluded to in 'us féu honor'. Olesa then turns to the Nativity of the Virgin in the following stanza:

> Vós triünphau, que, stant dins en lo ventre
> sanctíssim de la mare sancta Anna,
> d'un saber nou rebés infusa manna,
> que.ntengués Déu de beatitut centre.
> Vós triünphau pels dons maravellosos
> que us donà .l Fill en la Nativitat,
> car a vós tots los àngels gloriosos
> han ministrat. (Triunphes.10)

The reference to the apocryphal nativity story is minimal. The poet takes from the apocryphal Gospels only the name of the Virgin's mother. To this brief context the infusion of inter-uterine knowledge is an addition, seemingly separate in the poet's mind from the 'concebuda sens crim' of the first stanza. This knowledge 'saber nou' seems to represent a second divine intervention, 'rebés infusa manna', a two-stage divine activity, firstly, ensuring the Virgin's sinless conception and, secondly, infusing knowledge.

Since the theological interpretation of sin, as described in the Bible, is an interpretation of eating from the tree of knowledge, it is possible that the poet envisaged the process of freeing the Virgin from sin as a two-stage process, a purification of the active conception and an infusion of grace, once the sentient creature came into being. The second stage of the process is described in terms of receiving sustenance 'rebés infusa manna'. Perhaps

the infusion of 'saber nou' represents the moment of the tiny Virgin receiving her soul, which the theologians thought was at about twelve days after conception. The poem marks a theological divergence from the mainstream current view of a single infusion of grace at the moment of conception. The dual process of sanctification is much closer to Aquinas' view of the process (see above, p.277). It also reveals the fluid state of mariological debate.

The second addition to the apocryphal story is the application of the 'dins lo ventre sanctíssim', originally applied to the Virgin and now applied to her mother. This is a poetic witness to the artistic tendency towards interest in the saintly life of St Anne, leading, as Warner points out (p.243), to the granting of a miraculous conception to Anne and to interest in the saintly life of Anne's mother, Esmerentia.

Several poets betray evidence of the backward spiral of imagery noted by Warner. This effect is achieved in Pere de Anyó's poem, submitted to the 1486 Certamen, where the epithet: 'eleta per mare' (XXIII.10) is applied to the mother of the Virgin: 'Entràs dins lo ventre d'aquela que ús era \ eleta per mare, beneyta sent. Ana' (XXIII.9). Both 'eleta' and 'beneyta' are regularly applied to the Virgin. Luis Cathalà's 1486 Certamen poem also applies an image, traditionally used of the Virgin, to her mother: 'pura us dexà dins maternal temple' (XIII.33). As outlined by Warner,

in these poems, the application of special status to the
mother of a hero is shown spiralling backwards in time.

There are no Catalan immaculist poems based solely on
the apocryphal nativity stories. A number of the Certamen
poets, nevertheless, refer fleetingly to names and events
from the apocryphal Gospels. The longest and most integrated
series of references are to be found in Mestre Balaguer's
poem, an entry to the 1486 Certamen. Following an
intoductory stanza, in which the poet sets out his purpose:
'dictar laors de la flor subirana' (XXI.2), Balaguer
declares that he will submit to the decision of the
competition judge: 'lexant-ho tot al jutge reverent'. The
second stanza contains the following apocryphal allusions:

> La caritat de summa presciença,
> exint de font d'eterna sapiença,
> d'excel.lents dons e dignitats insignes,
> dotà granment son temple .ntalamat,
> qual fos volgué, per àngel nunciat
> a dos parents e persones condignes.
> Anna, però, per molt temps infecunda,
> aconseguí del Pare supernal
> pel sanct prenyat que fos aprés fecunda
> e aumentàs progènia carnal. (XXI.13)

Balaguer includes references to the double angelic
annunciation and to the infertility of Anna from the
apocryphal Gospels. The role of God appears more central in
Balaguer's version. There is a long description of the
Almighty, as possessing 'summa presciençia exint de font
d'eterna sapiençia'. He wishes to shower gifts on the future
mother of Christ, 'son temple .ntalamat', culminating in the
gift of pregnancy to Anna. Without the fleeting reference to
'dos pares', the conception of Mary could almost be read as
a virginal conception by Anna. The rhyme of 'infecunda' \

'aprés fecunda' is hardly felicitous and 'aumentàs progènia carnal' as a description of Anna's pregnancy is also ill-chosen as a rhyme for 'pare supernal'.

The struggle Balaguer experiences with rhyme is underlined by the final two lines of the stanza, where 'taqua' rhymes with 'flaqua'. 'Flaqua' is introduced merely for the expediency of the rhyme: 'D'on obtengués que no fos may en taqua, \ del viure sant pagua prengués no flaqua' (XXI.23).

Balaguer returns to Anna's sterility in the sixth stanza of his poem, combining it with details from the apocryphal story of rejection by the neighbourhood, which was recounted also by Alfonso el Sabio (see above, p.267):

> Naxent aprés, gran goig e alegria,
> del bell estell per tot lo món se fia:
> àngels en cels, en limbe los sancts pares,
> en terra tots parents de Joachim,
> cognació d'Anna, segons legim,
> fembra d'onor e de costumes clares.
> L'estel delí del pare la afama.
> D'Anna renom d'esteril en comú,
> tornà tantost laor de bona fama.
> Son loch e nom recuperà cascú.
> ¿Qui porà dir la vida de infantesa
> angelical e de molt gran altesa? (XXI.61)

The birth of the Virgin allows Anna to re-establish herself in the community. A mixture of heavenly joy and earthly joy ensues. The angels, the fore-fathers of the couple in limbo and the relatives of Joachim celebrate the birth in a tableau which owes some details to the New Testament account of the birth of Christ. Certainly, the angel hosts and the 'bell estell' are borrowed from the Gospel. The stanza ends on a question which allows the poet

to introduce some features of the Virgin's childhood and character. Balaguer then devotes a whole stanza to the life of the 'infantesa', taking from the apocryphal birth narratives her dedication at the temple and embroidering it with details of her life of fasting, prayer and exemplary behaviour.[17]

Vinyoles, like Balaguer, draws on the well-known story of the barren woman, Anna, who conceives in her old age, alluding to the apocryphal birth stories in his 1486 Certamen entry. The poet has already established his adherence to the Conception doctrine in the previous stanza:

> Donchs si trobam que per vós ha remuda
> Déu infinit nostra colpa primera,
> és error gran creure sou concebuda
> en aquell crim d'on natura cayguda
> pogués pujar en la superna spera. (IV.42)

Also, the poet has shown that immaculism is necessary because of the Assumption 'pogués pujar en la superna spera'. He then introduces references to the parentage of the Virgin:

> L'estèril camp del ventre de sent. Anna,

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[17] Mestre Balaguer takes inspiration from the apocryphal Gospels with regard to the childhood of the Virgin: her dedication to the temple, her exemplary life and the visitation by angels have their origins in the apocryphal stories.
> Com de bon jest e dolç esguart, quant noble,
> affable, tant d'espant a tot lo poble,
> del bell present, offerta fet. al temple
> de gran valor, infanta volentés
> volgué complir lo vot d'ella promés,
> mostrant a tots de si molt gran exemple:
> celestial per l'alt Senyor eleta
> d'umilitat excessament sens par,
> junant, orant, en hora de completa,
> molt pacient, suau, e poch parlar,
> spiritual, en lo voler justada,
> de sancts consells, per àngels visitada. (XXI.72)

> passat lo temps per a poder concebre
> vos produy pura de carn humana
> a denotar que d'on puritat mana
> corruptió ni .s pot ni .s deu percebre. (IV.49)

The apocryphal story is used for the particular purpose of showing how the physical conception of the Virgin was achieved in purity. Just as Alfonso el Sabio used abstention to create a pure womb for Anna, so Vinyoles takes the idea of infertility and grafts on the idea of Anna's being old: 'passat lo temps per a poder concebre'. Since she is past child-bearing age, she is granted divine leave to produce a child: 'vos produy pura de carn humana'. The aged mother bearing a child is taken in conjunction with other elements of the nativity stories from Old Testament prefigurations. Both Sarah and Hannah conceived Old Testament heroes in their old age.

The question of how natural generation could have produced an immaculate child tests other Certamen poets. Miralles refers briefly to the parents of the Virgin, whilst considering other natural phenomena which support a different element in their midst:

> De la gran mar les aygües son salades,
> enmig les quals fonts d'aygua dolça troben.
> Donchs ¿qui dirà vostres carns són tacades,
> fetes per dos penses ab Déu justades,
> on Pare e Fill hi l'Esperit sant obren?
> Car si tacats los pares engendraren,
> La vostra carn en res no alteraren. (VI.18)

From the natural phenomenon of clear water springs in salt water, Miralles makes the connection between the active generation, which, though sinful, does not affect the pure flesh of the Virgin. In his view, the nature of the Virgin is pure in the same way as springs of fresh water are

untouched by the salt sea. For good measure, the poet adds
the fact that the two of them had their thoughts fixed on
God.

The theme of the dutiful response of Joachim and Anna
is outlined in another of the Certamen poems, again an entry
to the 1486 Certamen. Francí Johan's poem uses anaphora to
give a clever structure to his poem. Alternate lines are
repeated in each stanza with the repeated line changing from
stanza to stanza. One of the stanzas is dedicated entirely
to apocryphal allusions. In addition, in this stanza, Francí
Johan's poem combines apocryphal allusions very definitely
with references to the Virgin's freedom from original sin:

> No y fonch comprés peccat original
> car Joachim obeir Déu volgué.
> No y foch comprés, puix Anna féu aytal,
> axí fonch fet que Déu los sostengué. (XV.37)

The first point to be made is that the parents are obedient
to God and that God upheld them. It is not clear in what
sense 'sostengué' is to be taken. It might be an allusion to
the fact that God did not abandon them when their offerings
were refused at the Temple.

What is clear is that Mary's parents do not evince any
joy in their coming together, but merely follow the
commandment of God: 'No y fonch comprés, car féu son
manament \ e fonch axí la Verge concebuda'. The same aspect
of joyless union is present in Luís Cathalà's poem. Cathalà
also presents the active conception of the Virgin as a duty
required by God's commandment:

> Del qual poderós l'Altíssim respecte

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        pogué renovar en ells tanta força,
        que .nsemps aderint al manament recte
        uniren al part de vostre subjecte,
        trobant l'esperit mundíssima scorça
        sots cors natural, creant-vos insigne
        Aquell de qui fós  posada condigne. (XIII.18)
```

Allusions to the holiness of the parents of the Virgin and
to their old age are combined. As in Miralles' poem, the
parents are dutiful to God, 'aderint al manament recta', but
it is noticeable that, in this poem, they are apparently
even older than in Vinyoles' poem. Ludicrously, they cannot
even summon up enough strength for the act of generation.
Strength has to be given to them by God, so that they can
manage the sexual act 'pogué renovar en ells tanta força'.
The comparison with the loving preparations of Joachim and
Anna, described by Alfonso el Sabio, could not be more
striking. However, the aim of purifying the sexual act is
similar, even if taken to greater lengths by the fifteenth-
century poet.

The same desire to show the parents of Mary in an
exemplary light is shown by Ferrando Dieç in the Libell (*Els
certàmens poètics*, p.432), which is an invitation to poets
to participate in the Certamen: 'Tots los stats i lengües
qualssevulla\ loen ací la reyna tan perfeta' (Libell.13). In
the Libell, an allusion to the apocryphal stories contains
a reference to the couple being directed by God 'per
manament' and to their righteous marital state 'lo just
matrimoni':

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        Enxempta .nsemps ab lo just matrimoni,
        per manament, Joachim hi sent. Anna.
        Concebent d'ells  lo net pur patrimoni
        qu'Eva perdé, perquè sens lo dimoni
        Déu hi nodrís de gràcia la manna
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> Cobrant aquell sols la Verge Maria
> perquè .1 Déu gran d'ella s'encarnaria. (Libell.I.30)

The idea of God acting through his chosen instruments is taken further. They conceive not even a child but 'lo pur net patrimoni \qu' Eva perdé' in which God was able to nourish the manna of grace. 'Manna' is used to describe the infusion of grace in the womb of Anna, to be conferred on the Virgin alone.[18]

Other pictures of the parents of the Virgin are more fleeting. Luis Cathalà depicts Joachim as rejoicing in the birth of his daughter in a vignette which owes a great deal to the New Testament description of Zechariah: 'Lo sant Johachim ans d'ésser-vos pare \ en vós s'alegrà ab lum sempiterna' (XIII.13). Anna, his wife, foresees the Incarnation, taking on some of the qualities ascribed to her daughter in the Bible:

> hi clar percebé la molt digna mare,
> que vós migançant nos volch ésser frare
> aquell Déu inmens qui .1 món tot governa. (XIII.15)

The meeting at the Golden Gate, so often depicted in art and described in Alfonso el Sabio's *CSM* 411, figures hardly at all in Certamen poetry. Francí Johan makes a brief allusion in his poem. Perhaps the brevity of his allusion is an indication that the meeting point was so well known that he does not even need to specify it:

> ¿E sabeu com la Deïtat sagrada

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[18] The description of grace as 'manna' confirms the interpretation of 'infusa manna' as used by Jaume d'Olesa (see above, p.284) in his 'Triunphes' (*Els certàmens poètics*, p.371).

> manà .ncontrar Anna e Joachim?
> ¿E sabeu com ans sancta que .ngendrada
> fonch en lo cel la verge que legim? (XV.34)

There is certainly no suggestion that this meeting, even though occurring in response to God's command, is the moment of the Conception. The concept 'ans sancta qu. engendrada' seems at first encounter rather excessive. Placing the sanctity of the Virgin before she was even conceived would appear to be merely another way of expressing the predestination of the Virgin in the mind of God, as occurs in pre-creation imagery.

For the majority of the poets, their only reference to the apocryphal parents is in terms of Anna and, for the majority, Anna is seen purely as a womb:

> Coronada dins lo ventre
> de la mare que .m parí
> perquè yo fos digne centre
> del Qui nou meses portí. (XLVI.13)

Anna becomes the unnamed 'la mare que .m parí' in the response written by Fenollar and attributed to the Virgin herself in the 1474 Certamen. The important feature about the parent of the Virgin is her womb 'dins lo ventre'. The description of Anna in this way is by no means an isolated example. The Introit to the 1486 Certamen, written by Ferrando Dieç, expresses the same sentiments:

> Vos fa .b son Fill
> d'arbitre franch tengués l'espill
> vent lo Mesies
> closa dins Anna, fent-li vies
> que us fos espòs
> fins que dins vós seria clos. (Introit.19)

A similar effect is achieved by Genís Fira in his submission to the 1474 Certamen:

En hun instant   essent organitzada,
Verge .xcel.lent dins vostre mare casta,
vós presentàs, de complit seny dotada,
virginitat, joya tan estimada. (XXII.31)[19]

Mossén Fenollar takes the same basic idea but develops it in a comparison with Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. The use of 'en lo centre' is also of interest, since it seems to recall many of the pictures of St Anne Trinitarian, where Anna is pictured with the Virgin and Child:[20]

Y así com d'ell portant-lo dins lo ventre
Elisabet romàs tostemps alegra,
y de vós més sent. Ana que .n lo centre
digna us tengué perquè res trist may entre
en pura neu de màcula tan negra. (1486 Certamen, XVII.42)

In the poet's view, even the psychological state of the pregnant Anna might apparently have affected the purity of the Virgin within.

A variation on the same theme of Anna\womb is offered

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[19] Francí de Vilalba also refers only fleetingly to St Anne as the source of the pure flesh of the Virgin:
    Lo Pare Déu per natura humana
    tramés lo Verb. Son Fill, Déu verdader,
    prés carn de vós, de puritat fontana
    pura sens mal, carn presa de sent. Ana,
    sens lo peccat original primer. (XXVI.12)

[20]   Kathleen   Ashley   and   Pamela   Sheingorn,   ed.,
*Interpreting Cultural Symbols: St Anne in Late
Medieval Society* (Athens and London, University of
Georgia Press, 1990). At p.79, Ashley and Sheingorn
include a woodcut from the *Heures à l'usage de Rouen*,
printed by Simon Vostre, dating from the sixteenth
century, in which the Virgin and child appear encased
in the figure of St Anne. The woodcut is included in
Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. The figure
is surrounded by symbols from the *Tota pulchra es* (see
above, p.142).

by Miralles in his attempt to win the 'Carta de navegar',
except that he gives the resonance the overriding nautical
feel which has already been noted in the chapter on pre-
creation (see above, p.222):

> Quant se varà lo leny de vostra vida
> dins la gran mar de la casta sent. Ana,
> De sanctedat fós feta hi bastida. (1486 Certamen,
> XXIV.37)

Anna provides a great sea for the Virgin to sail, and is
only denoted by the epithet 'casta'.

The entire poem submitted by Centelles, with which he
is seeking to win the 'marçapà', is built around the
description of the Virgin as a sweetmeat: 'Confit inmortal
en capça molt pura' (XX.1). The Conception feast and
doctrine are also 'confits', which he calls on opponents of
the Conception doctrine to taste 'gustau un poquet' (XX.26).
When Centelles turns his attention to the manner of the
conception, he describes it in terms of a pastrycook. Amidst
the sugary allusions, the reference to the apocryphal story
is minimal:

> Mesclat ab lo ros   de çucre de manna,
> de dolçes amelles   confita la pasta:
> aquesta .s la mare del Fill de Osanna,
> Aquest és lo nét d'aquella sant. Anna
> que .n mena d'or fi   de verge s'engasta.
> Suau és lo gust qui tal confit gusta,
> puix no té peccat   lo loch hon s'ajusta. (XX.42)

The ingredients contain a number of biblical allusions:
manna, again applied to the Virgin rather than to her son;
dew, which alludes to the dewfall which dampened only
Gideon's fleece (Judges 6.38). Amidst these references,
St Anne provides only the womb where her daughter took
flesh.

In contrast with the minimal references to apocryphal stories in Catalan poems, the Castilian Cancionero poems provide an example of a Conception poem dedicated to the apocryphal birth narratives. Old age is a feature of Juan Alvárez Gato's *canción* which celebrates the conception of the Virgin by Anna. The poet terms Anna 'la santa vieja Santana' (F-D 109.3). From the apocryphal story is taken the reference to angelic annunciation: 'De la qual conçibiçion \ aquel angel fue venido' (109.5).

The *canción* has a number of interesting features. It provides a brief insight into the importance of apocryphal stories for a Castilian poet. The pregnancy of Anna is cause for rejoicing and thanksgiving, since it is the source of Redemption for the world: 'De la qual conçebiçion \ [...] vino la reparacion \del mundo' (109.5, 7). The conception of the Virgin, thus, borrows its *raison d'être* from the conception of Christ by Mary. It is also to be noted that Joachim does not feature, meaning that Anna takes on an almost virginal mantle.

The *estribillo* contains two important Marian themes: encouragement to rejoice in the conception of the Virgin by Anna, 'Alegrate, peccador' (109.1) and, in the reworked *estribillo* at the end of the poem, encouragement to thanksgiving for the existence of the Virgin, 'Da graçias al Hazedor' (109.10).

Furthermore, in comparison with the formal decasyllabic stanzas of the Catalan poems, Juan Alvarez Gato's *canción* is deceptively simple. The simplicity is enhanced by the poet in devices such as the use of 'Santana'; in the portrayal of the elderly *primagravida* as 'preñada y ufana' and by the verse form employed. On the other hand, the poet uses the latinate 'reparaçion', which describes the purpose of the conception in terms of its impact on salvation history. The simplicity is, thus, deliberate.

Finally, although the tone of the poem is celebratory, the poet does not take the opportunity to celebrate the Immaculate Conception by making a definite statement of belief in the doctrine. Alvarez Gato does not enter the muddy waters of doctrinal statement but leaves belief in the doctrine to be inferred from the fact that he is presenting Mary's Conception by Anna as worthy of rejoicing and thanksgiving.

6.4 CONCLUSION

The apocryphal references present in Alfonso el Sabio's *CSM* are fresh and vigorous and, moreover, are the vehicle for the poet's reflection on the origins of the Virgin. The poet follows the apocryphal stories closely taking the details of the story consistently into his *cantiga*. However, Alfonso does not show any awareness of the Conception feast and does not refer unambiguously to the sanctification of the Virgin at the moment of her conception.

Despite the interest in the apocryphal stories
witnessed in fifteenth-century prose, by authors such as Sor
Isabel de Villena, in the Certàmens there is relatively
little usage of the apocryphal birth narratives in the
context of the Immaculate Conception. Many of the
poets allude only to the name or names of the parents;
others refer to their saintly lifestyle and to the way in
which they are dutiful to God. The barrenness of Anna is
recorded by some poets, as a fact on to which some embroider
reasons for her infertility. Where the apocryphal stories
are used at length, this is generally in connection with the
childhood or the Nativity of the Virgin rather than her
Conception. They are found in the Nativity stanza of
Triumphes poems, and are used to refer to the Nativity of
the Virgin in the *Espill*.

There are two points to be made. An examination of the
relevant *cantigas* in the *CSM* reveals that, although Alfonso
el Sabio develops stories about the sanctification of Mary
before her birth and even shows interest in the act of
generation performed by her parents, there seems to be
little evidence to show that he was aware of the Immaculate
Conception. In fact, he seems more concerned to prove the
sanctified birth of the Virgin and it is this end that the
apocryphal narratives serve within his *CSM*. From this point
of view, it is unlikely that Alfonso was the first Castilian
to write in literary terms about the Immaculate Conception.
He is, however, witness to unbounded interest in the origins
and sanctity of the Virgin.

There is a second point which can be made in conclusion from this comparative study of poetic usage of apocryphal birth narratives. A definite shift can be discerned away from the apocryphal Gospels as a vehicle for description of the Conception of Mary in terms of the act of generation by Joachim and Anna. By the fifteenth century, even though there are examples of prose works which draw on apocryphal Gospel nativity stories in some detail, in Certamen poetry, the stories are used in terms of the nativity and childhood of the Virgin, whilst other methods are used to express her Conception. In Cancionero poetry studied, little interest has been discovered in apocryphal stories. Only Juan Alvarez Gato dedicates a *canción* to apocryphal resonances. In part, fifteenth-century poetry is indebted to scholastic disputation and logical thinking, which ultimately has more influence on description of the Immaculate Conception. In part, there is evidence that new biblical symbolism is developing and this new symbolism is beginning to make its appearance in the poetry. The new symbolism will eventually replace the traditional apocryphal images of the Conception. The fifteenth-century poets may make passing reference to the apocryphal Gospel stories concerning the Conception and birth of Mary, but their main interest begins to lie in biblical authority and in scholastic defence of the Immaculate Conception, not because the apocryphal theme was on the wane but because poets preferred to base their defence of the doctrine on argument and on biblical authority.

7 NEW TESTAMENT SYMBOLISM: THE SUN, MOON AND STARS AS IMMACULIST SYMBOLS

In chapter six, the literary representation of the Virgin, based on inspiration from the apocryphal birth narratives, was examined. These birth narratives provided inspiration to writers and artists, up until the sixteenth century. In this chapter, the theme, which, in succeeding centuries, became most typical of the Immaculate Conception, the theme taken from the Apocalypse, is to be examined.

First of all, a brief examination of the theme from Revelations 12.1, as depicted in fifteenth-century Spanish art, will provide a series of pointers from which an examination of the same theme in a literary context can be initiated. The use of Revelations imagery to depict the Virgin surrounded by the sun, moon and stars, will, subsequently, be examined in Cancionero and Certamen poetry, in order to determine to what extent the symbolism is used in an immaculist context.

7.1 THE WOMAN OF REVELATIONS AND MARY

> Et signum magnum apparuit in caelo: Mulier amicta sole, et luna sub pedibus eius et in capite eius corona stellarum duodecim: (Revelations 12.1, *Biblia sacra*, p.1135)

The description of the Woman from Revelations 12.1, robed with the sun, crowned with twelve stars and standing on the moon, inspired El Greco in his painting of the

Immaculate Conception (1609-14), Zurbarán (d.1662) in his Immaculate Conception and Murillo (d.1682) in various representations of the Immaculate Conception. The high incidence of Immaculate Virgins from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries indicates that there may be evidence of the incipient use of Revelations symbolism in the late fifteenth century.

Despite the fact that Revelations 12.1 was considered to represent the Immaculate Conception in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, modern theologians have been divided even about its application to Mary. Theological debate in the present century centres on whether a Marian interpretation of the Woman from Revelations is possible or whether the female figure so depicted should be taken to represent the Church. The main problem of Marian interpretation for present-day theologians remains rooted in the pangs of childbirth endured by the Revelations Woman, when tradition had long held that Mary gave birth without feeling any pain.[1] Even present-day exegetes, including eminent Roman Catholic theologians, such as Le Bachelet, do not consider that the text constitutes a proof from Scripture which can be applied to the Immaculate Conception. Le Bachelet considers that the Woman in Revelations may represent the Virgin in a secondary way and may represent her spiritual motherhood but that she is unlikely to represent the Virgin in her Immaculate Conception:

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[1] The Apocryphal Gospels bear witness to this belief, since they depict the Virgin giving birth without the need for midwives to attend her.

Pouvons-nous aller plus loin, jusqu'au privilège de la conception sans tache? Il semble que non, à tout le moins par voie de preuve proprement dite ou d'inférence directe. L'exaltation actuelle de Marie et sa maternité spirituelle ne sont pas, en fait, sans rapport objectif avec son immaculée conception; mais ce rapport n'est que médiat, même dans l'ordre actuel, et le texte de l'Apocalypse ne fournit pas d'éléments suffisants pour rapprocher et nouer les deux anneaux (*DTC* VII, p.869).

The image was initially, according to Adela Yarbro Collins, not even defined as a Marian image. The Woman clothed with the sun, as described in Revelations 12.1, is 'typical of high goddesses in the ancient world', and may have been originally a representation of Isis or one of the other goddesses of the pre-Christian pantheon.[2]

7.1.1 The Woman of Revelations and Art

In artistic renderings of the Revelations theme, the Apocalyptic Woman first appears as a 'narrative rather than typological or symbolic representation' (Stratton, p.48). Stratton describes how the Apocalyptic Woman was appropriated to depict the Virgin Mary, as foretold by the Sybilline prophecy, a depiction which was termed the *Aracoeli*.

Subsequently, the elements surrounding the Woman of the Apocalytic vision, the sun, the crescent moon, and the stars, became associated with the Madonna of Humility. Stratton explains in detail how an example of the Madonna of Humility, painted by Jaime Serra, a Catalan painter active between 1360 and 1375, differs in context from a Venetian

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[2] Adela Yarbro Collins, 'The Apocalypse (Revelation)' in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 996-1022, p.1008.

altarpiece of the late fourteenth century, in which smaller
panels represent scenes from the life of the Virgin and
miracles connected with the Immaculate Conception. The small
panels on Jaime Serra's altarpiece have no connection with
the Immaculate Conception. Stratton concludes that only the
Venetian altarpiece is a representation of the Immaculate
Conception, although the elements depicted are virtually
identical. This distinction shows 'how important context is
for the identification of Apocalytic imagery as immaculist'
(Stratton, p.48). It would seem appropriate that the
identification of context should be taken as a reference
point for the Apocalyptic vision in Castilian and Catalan
poetry of the fifteenth century. Furthermore, Stratton
describes how the figure of the Woman surrounded by
Revelations symbols was used in iconographical
representations of the Benediction of the Virginal Limbs
from the late fourteenth century onwards; at the end of the
fifteenth century, these pictures were often adapted,
becoming inscribed with an invocation to the Immaculate
Conception.

The Dominicans used the Apocalyptic theme to depict the
Virgin of the Rosary and also commissioned Berruguete to
produce an altar dedicated to the *Apparition of the Virgin*
for the Dominican church of Santo Tomás in Avila. As
Stratton points out, with regard to artistic renderings of
the Revelations theme:

> These apparitions of the *mulier amicta sole* in
> Dominican art, prove that the crescent moon beneath her
> feet was not then considered a symbol of the Immaculate
> Conception of the Virgin (Stratton, p.50).

It is clear that, bearing in mind the hard-line opposition of the Dominican order, the Apocalyptic vision in such pictures must represent something other than the Immaculate Conception.[3]

Stratton indicates that, in Spain, from the late fifteenth century onwards, the majority of paintings of the *mulier amicta sole* depict the Assumption. Because of the later use of the Apocalyptic Woman to depict the Immaculate Conception and because the depiction of the Assumption using the Woman of Revelations is apparently found only in Spain, 'art historians have often wrongly interpreted early depictions of the Assumption as also referring to the Immaculate Conception' (Stratton, p.52).

The same caution and analysis of context, as has been shown by Stratton with regard to artistic representations of the Apocalyptic theme, must be exercised with regard to fifteenth-century poetry. It is likely that the artistic variety of uses of the Revelations image may be mirrored in the poetry of the fifteenth century.

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[3] As has been seen elsewhere in this thesis, it is often difficult to look back, from the present state of knowledge and the ubiquitous representation of the Immaculate Conception as the Apocalyptic Woman, to see things clearly as they were at the time (see above, p.266). Misapprehensions about the Immaculate Conception seem to be a feature of the doctrine and are found amongst theologians as well as amongst literary critics.

7.2 THE *MULIER AMICTA SOLE* IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY POETRY

The first point to be made with regard to the *mulier
amicta sole* is that the imagery is not found frequently in
fifteenth-century immaculist poetry. In Cataluña, in
immaculist poetry, such as the 1486 Certamen, which is
dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, there is only one
example of the Woman crowned with stars. The two poems
extant from the 1440 Certamen in honour of the Immaculate
Conception do not contain any examples of the Virgin
described in terms of the Woman of Revelations 12.1. The
1474 Certamen, on the other hand, yields a number of
examples of the *mulier amicta sole*. These examples will now
be examined, according to how many of the Revelations
symbols are included. They are grouped according to the
context in which the description of Mary as the Apocalyptic
Woman appears. The first steps to an analysis of the use
made of Revelations symbolism in fifteenth-century poetry
will be taken.

7.2.1 <u>Single elements from Revelations 12.1</u>

Some of the poetic allusions to the Woman of the
Apocalypse retain only one of the elements of the
description from Revelations 12.1. The 1474 Certamen
contains two references to the Virgin with the moon beneath
her feet, an image taking its inspiration from Revelations
12.1. Jaume Roig included the image amidst a series of Old
Testament symbols and nautical symbols of the Church:

> Del Temple vel, de nova Sgleya barcha,
> vela, timó de la nau apostòlicha.
> Dejús sos pes té la luna catòlicha.
> Del just Noé vinya, coloma y archa. (XLIII.41)

In Roig's use of the Revelations symbol of the moon, amidst
nautical symbols, the Virgin has not only the moon under her
feet, but a moon beneath her feet which symbolizes the
Catholic Church. The nautical symbols, which Roig includes,
are the sail of the Jewish Temple, the ship of the new
Church, the rudder of the apostolic ship and the ark of
Noah. From the Old Testament story of Noah, the ark
represents the Virgin. The dove and the branch also
represent her. The branch is transposed from an olive branch
into a vine. The dove and the vine are symbols of the New
Covenant. The branch may also suggest the Tree of Jesse (see
above, p.145).

All the nautical symbols suggest movement, direction
and guidance. The moon, representing the Catholic Church,
beneath the feet of the Virgin should be interpreted as a
vessel or ship of the faithful. A poem from the 1532
Certamen, written by Pere Gomiz, 'notari, en servey de la
gloriosa Verge Maria y de la inmaculada concepció',
describes the Virgin as a ship, a vessel which bears Christ:

> Nau excel.lent, tallada .n vella luna,
> y en nova ley, perfetament armada. (XVIII.6,
> *Els certàmens poètics*, p.839)

Gomiz's poem contains a comparison of the Old Law and the
New Covenant, using the Virgin vessel to unite both, in a
manner similar to Roig's poem.

In order to establish whether the context of the
Revelations image is immaculist, in Roig's poem as in the
other poems to be considered, it is necessary to consider

the following factors: explicit statements of immaculist belief in the poem and the presence of other explicit immaculist images.

The third stanza of Roig's Certamen poem contains a reference to the Immaculate Virgin:

> Preservà Déu una de tal nequícia,
> preelegint al sant Fill sens ve mare. (XLIII.19)

The same stanza relates the immaculate nature of the Virgin to her perpetual virginity:

> Verge lo rebé e verge lo parí,
> l'Esperit sant obumbrant a Maria. (XLIII.23)

The poem, thus, contains explicit immaculist statements.

With regard to other immaculist allusions in Roig's Certamen poem, the stanza which contains the Revelations symbol of the moon also contains a number of possible *Tota pulchra es* symbols (see above, p.142). The effect of the conjunction of a single element of the *mulier amicta sole* with *Tota pulchra es* symbols requires examination:

> De David clau e scala de patriarcha
> Conca de ros era de Jedeon.
> Talem d'espós, florint vergua d'Aron.
> Lo gavarrer porta closa Maria. (XLIII.45)

Two of these symbols, Gideon's fleece (Judges 6.36) and Jacob's ladder (Genesis 28.12), became associated with the *Tota pulchra es* in the seventeenth century. Jacob's ladder is found in many of the laudatory poems and suggests Mary as a link between heaven and earth. Gideon's fleece was originally used as a symbol of *virginitas post partum*. It is not necessarily applied to the Immaculate Conception. In its fluidity as a symbol, it is similar to the burning

bush and the light passing through glass.[4]

The 'porta closa' is a conflation of the *porta coeli* (Genesis 28.17) and the *hortus conclusus* (Canticum 4.12). These last are amongst the symbols, which, from the early sixteenth century, are depicted as bordering the *Tota pulchra es*. It is interesting to postulate that this representation, combining litaneutical symbols and a suggested *mulier amicta sole*, may constitute an early representation of the Immaculate Conception in fifteenth-century poetry.

Stratton considers that the conflation of the *mulier amicta sole* and the *Tota pulchra* symbols 'only became established as the orthodox iconography of the Immaculate Conception some time after the Council of Trent' (p.58) in 1546. According to Stratton, it is the symbols from the Old

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[4] Fray Iñigo de Mendoça uses the symbol of the light passing through glass to symbolize the Virgin's Incarnation of Christ:
'Tu quedaras tan entera
de la preñez del infante
qual queda la vidriera
quando en ella reuerbera
el sol [...].' (*Coplas* 30.1)
The proof of the veracity of the angelic Annunciation is attested by two celestial symbols: the burning bush and Gideon's fleece:
En la victoria campal
que resçibio Gedeon,
esforçado en el señal
de la lluuia çelestial,
en la hera y en el vellon. (*Coplas* 32.1)
The migration of symbols, such as the Burning Bush (see above, p.238 n.19) and light passing through glass, (see above, p.115 n.10), which moved from being images of the Virgin Birth and became symbols of the Immaculate Conception, are an important feature in immaculist representation in literature.

Testament litanies of the Virgin, which are a primary means of distinguishing an Immaculate Virgin from a depiction of the Assumption from the late sixteenth century onwards. Stratton considers that the conflation of the two doctrines took place in the late sixteenth century, with one of the earliest melded images being the *Vision of St John on Patmos* by El Greco, in a painting dating from the 1580s (p.60).

Roig's depiction of the *mulier amicta sole* is associated with litaneutical symbols of the Virgin. These symbols, whilst not yet fixed as an authoritative expression of the Immaculate Conception, represent an important stepping-stone on the way to a literary *Tota pulchra es* and also to the conflation of Assumption symbolism and *Tota pulchra* symbols. In this case, Roig only uses one element of the *mulier amicta sole*, the moon as vessel, together with some symbols which relate to the *Tota pulchra es* and others which do not. It cannot be definitively concluded from this poem that Roig considered the *mulier amicta sole* to be a representation of the Immaculate Conception. He may have intended it but there is not enough evidence from the poem to confirm the intention.

The moon also appears as a vessel in the first of Castellví's poems, in which a single element of Apocalyptic imagery, the 'lun. als peus' is present:

> Fundada sou en monts florits de rama,
> la lun .als peus qu.adés cya, .dés rema,
> fènix estram. (IV.13)

The moon at the feet of the Virgin appears to be a type of vessel in which the Virgin moves or rows upstream. The suggestion seems to be a movement against the tide, combined with a renewal of life from the ashes of humanity, from 'fènix'. The phoenix is not an unusual symbol of the Virgin. Roig uses 'fènix insigne' *(Espill* III.2, p.155). Cantavella traces the comparison of the good woman to the phoenix, citing examples from Walter Map, Jean de Meung and the *Corbaccio* (p.121).

Castellví uses several of the symbols from the *Tota pulchra es* in his poem. In the second stanza, the 'arbre antich de vida' (IV.9) is depicted (see above, p.145). The Virgin is depicted as the branch bearing the Redemption fruit: 'vós sou rama\que .ns avivau, portant Déu que l'om rema'. The Tree of Life symbol reworks two floral images from the first stanza 'empelt novell florint fruyta novella' (IV.2) and 'flor sempre bella' (IV.4).

Castellví's poem contains other *Tota pulchra es* symbols. One of these symbols is the dew which fell on Gideon's fleece. The 'rosa' may also echo the *plantatio rosae* (Ecclesiaticus 24.13), although this is far from certain. In Castellví's poem, 'virginal ros' may be related to the outpouring of grace which occurred at the time of the Immaculate Conception but the adjective 'virginal' may indicate that '.n vostre clos' is intended as an expression of the virginal conception:

Virginal ros hi molt reflagant rosa
Déu ha despés per vós tan gran despesa,

que.n vostre clos més gràcia troba .nclosa,
que altri no hattés ni aprés Déu n'és pus attesa.
(IV.17)

Castellví incorporates three other possible *Tota pulchra* symbols into his poem. The mirror (Wisdom 7.26) centres on an invocation for grace from the Virgin: 'dau-nos espill de la lum que us espilla' (IV.3), occurring in the opening stanza of the poem. The fourth *Tota pulchra* symbol used by Castellví is the *fons hortorum* (Canticum 4.15). The fountain gushes forth graces: 'O clara font que de continu mana \ béns infinits' (IV.25). The immediate context is the active intervention of the Virgin on behalf of sinners: 'Vós nos salvàs de la plorosa mina' (IV.27). Finally, the Virgin is addressed as 'flor de llis' (IV.21), which Castellví may intend as an allusion to *lilium inter spinas* (Canticum 2.2).

There can be no doubt that the litaneutical symbols cascade like pearls across the poem. The rhyme scheme mirrors the cascade as Castellví experiments with assonance in alternate verses, rhyming 'rama', 'rema', 'rima', 'roma' in the second stanza and 'mana', 'mena', 'mina', 'mona' in the fourth. The verses themselves are constructed so as to cascade words and concepts across the verse. Castellví echoes the words from the first half of the stanza, recapitulating them in the second half of the stanza: 'ros' \ 'rosa'; 'despés' \ 'despesa'; 'clos'\ 'enclosa'; 'hattés'\'attesa'. As in Roig's poem (see above, p.305), several symbols soon to be incorporated in the *Tota pulchra es* are used in Castellví's poem. The symbols are, however, scattered across the poem. They appear unconnected by an

immaculist context. The references to both Jesse's rod and
the lily amongst thorns are very indirect. The intention of
the poet in his use of the *Tota pulchra es* symbols is, thus,
uncertain. The symbolism of the *mulier amicta sole* is brief.
With regard to deliberate immaculist combination of the
mulier amicta sole and the *Tota pulchra es* symbols, the
following conclusion can be drawn. The combination of the
Old Testament and New Testament symbols which, some one
hundred years later, will develop into the pictorial
encapsulation of the Immaculate Conception, nevertheless,
constitutes a preview of the way in which immaculist symbols
will continue to develop in conjunction with each other,
reliant on each other to determine the immaculist sense of
a depiction of the Virgin.

Other single element allusions to the *mulier amicta
sole* show a similar fluidity. Both of Castellví's 1474
Certamen entries refer to the Virgin described as the Woman
from Revelations. The crown of stars is a frequent choice as
single element resonance of Revelations 12.1. Francí de
Castellví mentions the Woman crowned with twelve stars in
the fourth stanza of his poem 'en lahor de la Verge Maria en
lengua castellana'. The earlier stanzas of the poem
interweave pre-creation imagery typified in 'en el siglo
creada' (V.11) and Canticum imagery, shown in 'amiga de
Dios' (V.11) and 'nuncha manzillada' (V.13). The stainless
nature of the Virgin is allied explicitly to the inter-
uterine purification of the Virgin 'Nasciendo .n el ventre'
(V.13). These references to the Virgin's conception are

contained within the first two stanzas of the poem.
Castellví refers to the Virgin in glory immediately prior to
the brief allusion to Revelations 12.1. Castellví refers to
a prophecy attributed to David, in which the interpretation
is given of the Virgin seated at the right hand of God:

> Pues bien a la dretxa de Dios te figura
> Davit, rey profeta, maguer creatura,
> viendo .l Creador que de ti nascería. (V.28)[5]

This image of the Virgin crowned in glory seems to have
suggested the idea of the crown of stars to Castellví rather
than the Conception references earlier in the poem. In any
case, Castellví provides a tantalizingly short allusion to
Revelations symbols, referring only to the twelve stars in
the Virgin's crown. It is, however, indisputable that, by
using the twelve stars, Castellví wishes to allude to the
mulier amicta sole, since he alludes to the author of the
biblical vision, 'el gran evangelista', St John:

> ¿Qué viera después el gran evangelista
> en ver tu corona de las dotze estrellas?
> ¿Qué vieron los honos? ¿Qué más vio el salmista?
> Viendo que sal.lías, aurora prevista,
> a etxar las teniebras con luç, hi vençellas. (V.31)

In its immediate context, the Revelations 12.1 allusion runs
into another biblical symbol, which must also be considered
as a possible conception symbol: 'Viendo que sal.lias,
aurora prevista', which is an allusion to Canticum 6.9:

> Quae est ista, quae progreditur quasi aurora
> consurgens, pulchra ut luna, electa ut sol, terribilis

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[5] The reference to David's pre-figuration of the Virgin
probably takes as its source the image of the queen
consort, seated at the right hand of the king in Psalm
45.9, which *JB* (p.858) terms a royal wedding song.

ut castrorum acies ordinata? (*Biblia sacra*, p.584)[6]
In the remainder of the poem, Castellví continues to
elaborate on light imagery, indicating that the Virgin is
the 'aurora prevista'. It is likely that 'prevista' is an
oblique pre-creation allusion, since it echoes 'electa' from
Canticum 6.9.

By the end of the fifteenth century, both *electa ut sol*
and *pulchra ut luna* were being used as symbols surrounding
the artistic representations of the *Tota pulchra es* (see
above, p.142). By incorporating the source reference from
the Canticum, Castellví may intend an oblique reference to
either of the symbols. There is, however, more evidence in
Castellví's poem to enable the reader to analyze the stage
of the *Tota pulchra* development. The question is whether the
Canticum verse 'electa ut sol', inferred by 'aurora
prevista' had made the transition to immaculist symbolism
before its first artistic representation. If this were the
case, the *Tota pulchra es* would be suggested by the
allusion to 'aurora prevista', and this would provide an
immaculist context for the *mulier amicta sole*.

It is certain that Castellví is interested in linking
the starry crown to light imagery surrounding the Virgin. If
it is understood that by 'etxar las teniebras', Castellví is
writing about the overcoming of sin, then it may well be

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[6] The translation from *JB* 6.10 is as follows:
    Who is·this arising like the dawn,
    fair as the moon
    resplendent as the sun
    formidable as an army?

that the Virgin, crowned with stars, is being seen as a combatant against sin. The logical step, for a fifteenth-century immaculist, might be to conclude that only by her immaculate nature could the Virgin combat sin.

Castellví does not, however, leave his 'aurora prevista' image at that point but returns to it in the following stanza. This reworking of the image will be examined, because it provides an insight into Castellví's interpretation. Castellví proceeds to interpret the 'aurora prevista' image as a symbol of the Virgin Birth. The 'aurora' or 'sol' is the Virgin. The light which is transmitted from the Virgin is the 'lucido esposo' who passes out of her body like a shaft of light:

> El sol eres tú, do fizo Dios estancia,
> de quien el esposo lucido saliera
> mas virgen dexara. (V.41)

Castellví underlines the fact that he is referring to the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mother or Virgin Bride by using the terms 'madre virgen', 'virgen donzella', 'virgen prenyada', 'virgen parida' (V.46).

There are two possible conclusions which can be drawn from Castellví's interpretation of the 'aurora prevista' image. Either, he intends to refer to the Immaculate Conception in a *Tota pulchra* allusion in stanza four and reinterprets the allusion to refer to the Virgin Birth in stanza five or he intends to refer to the Virgin Birth all along. This would mean that the 'aurora prevista' symbol had not yet become fixed as an immaculist symbol. In any case,

there is a fluidity in the *Tota pulchra* symbol which makes
it an uncertain immaculist context for the *mulier amicta .
sole* symbol.

The sole example of a *mulier amicta sole* image from the
1486 Certamen, like Castellví's poem some twelve years
earlier, uses 'aurora' and light imagery in conjunction with
the *mulier amicta sole*. The *mulier amicta sole* forms part
of a 'retaule' which the Creator\artist wished to paint and
to which he adds the colours stanza by stanza. The first
colour to be added is gold 'mostrant que .n Ell fós sempre\
hi que per Ell sou vós d'excel.lent ésser' (XXV.15). Crimson
is linked to the Immaculate Conception 'car ffós per Ell de
gràcia fecunda \ dins en l'instant que us concebé sent.
Anna' (XXV.28); 'un blanch més bell que .l de l'ermini'
(XXV.38) recalls the purity of the Virgin. In the fourth
stanza, blue is added to the mantle of the Virgin, 'mostrant
molt bé los seríeu conforme\ estant en vós lo que té .n ells
asento' (XXV.53). In the first part of the argument, the
Virgin is described as equal to the heavens. She is depicted
as enthroned in heaven. In the second part of the argument,
Balaguer shows how she is more excellent than the heavens,
since she was 'tostemps sens taqua' (XXV.58). The poem
devotes the fifth stanza to the *mulier amicta sole*, setting
it in the context of Christ as sun and the Virgin as dawn:

> Après d'aquests vingué lo gran Apol.lo,
> y ab sos cabells guarní la bella testa,
> mostrant d'açò un gest no poch alegre,
> car resplandís al món segons l'aurora,
> puix del peccat lançàs les grans tenebres
> portant-nos prest aquell eternal Phebo. (XXV.61)

Balaguer brings his poem into the pre-Renaissance era by

using classical mythology to represent the sun: Apollo and
Phoebus. Later in the poem, the moon is termed Diana
(XXV.73). In this poem, the link 'tenebres' and 'peccat' is
made explicit. The Revelations image is, thus, explicitly
linked with the overcoming of the forces of evil.

Balaguer also links his Revelations image with
regality. The Revelations symbol of the crown of stars is
set around the head of the Virgin. The stars are in
accordance with the theme of heavenly exaltation of the
Virgin. 'Corona' accords with both 'ceptre' and 'reyna' in
the stanza:

> Posaren-se lavors prest les esteles
> entorn del cap guarnint una corona,
> hi Déu pintà-y en al man dreta ceptre,
> mostrant que vós, obrant virtuts sens nombre,
> de tots creats seríeu digna reyna. (XXV.67)

In the poem, a link is made between the Virgin as queen and
her relationship with her subjects 'de tots creats'.
Balaguer gives the result of her queenship: 'd'on no portàs
lo crim del vassall nostre' (XXV.72). 'El vassall nostre'
refers to Satan, defeated by the Virgin, in an oblique
allusion to Genesis 3.15. The Revelations origin of the
crown of stars is confirmed by the presence of another
symbol, 'aquella gran Diana', included in the following
stanza:

> Seguint aprés aquella gran Diana,
> pinta.1 trespol més clar que no lo jaspís,
> als lindes peus posant-se per catiffa. (XXV.73)

Balaguer's poem, thus, provides an instance of the
linking of queenship and freedom from original sin. The

infrequency of the association of the Virgin Queen and a
dedicated immaculist context is a further indicator of the
fact that the Revelations image could be used in many ways
and was not solely a symbol of the Immaculate Conception.

Despite the example of an immaculist *mulier amicta sole*
in the 1486 Certamen, the *mulier amicta sole* is rarely found
in the context of a dedicated immaculist poem or within an
immediate context containing clear immaculist overtones.
Pero Pèreç refers to the apocryphal crown of stars in his
poem of praise to the Virgin. The purpose of the poem is to
eulogize several events in the life of the Virgin, including
her Virgin motherhood and her Immaculate Conception: 'Ni de
peccat sentir pogués ultratge,\ en tot quant fés, vós sola
meritant' (XII.11). Original sin is represented by
'ultratge'. Pèreç's poem also contains a reference to
the battle between the Virgin and the serpent, regularly
interpreted as immaculist in intent in the fifteenth
century. The allusion to the battle occurs in the first
stanza. There is a probable immaculist statement in the
second stanza in 'ans que naixqués Déu vos santiffica'
(XII.14), referring to the fact that the Virgin was
sanctified before birth. In the third stanza, following an
alliance of the Virgin with prefigurations from the Old
Testament which include Old Testament figures such as Sarah,
Judith, Esther and Abigail, Pèreç links her to a New
Testament type, the Woman from Revelations:

> ¿E què diré? De tots los sants les gestes
> vós excel.liu en gràcies deu mil,
> a dreta part de Déu, portant corona
> dels dotze stels qui sant Johan escriu. (XII.19)

The poet underlines the fact that he is alluding to
Apocalyptic symbolism, since he includes a reference to
John, whose vision was written down as the Apocalypse.

The evidence for taking this image of the Virgin, the
mulier amicta sole, to be immaculist is ambiguous, even
though the poem contains certain immaculist statements.
The image of the Virgin bearing the crown of stars
is more akin to an image of the Virgin glorified and crowned
Queen of Heaven in heaven than being linked directly to any
immaculist statement. The words 'a dreta part de Déu,
portant corona' depict the Virgin seated at the right hand
of God, crowned in heaven. The 'corona'\ dels dotze stels'
fits the context. The Virgin is addressed in the opening
stanza as 'reyna del cel', in the final stanza as
'enperadriu' and in the 'Tornada' as 'reyna .ccel.lent'. The
vision of the Virgin glorified at the heart of the poem
provides a fulcrum about which other aspects of her nature
are strung. The poem uses Apocalyptic symbolism in
the context of the glorification of the Virgin as Queen of
Heaven. The picture is, however, confused by the closeness
of the Assumption, which depends on the sinlessness of the
Virgin, to the Immaculate Conception. It might be the case
that Perèç's poem represents an early appropriation of the
imagery of Queenship to represent the Virgin Immaculate. The
Revelations symbols may, however, be intended as a symbol of
the Virgin glorified.

The crown of stars is not used purely as a symbol of

the Virgin Queen either. In a poem in the 1474 collection,
the twelve stars are combined with an Annunciation theme.
The main theme of Arcís Vinyoles' poem is the mystery of the
Incarnation, expressed in a myriad of images and biblical
symbols of maternity. Many are precious stones: 'O pur
engast de l'alt carvoncle feta' (XIX.1) or are drawn from
religious symbols, the Ark of the Covenant 'Archa de fe de
pur setim forjada' (XIX.2). The central stanza of the poem
describes the Annunciation to the Virgin:

> L'àngel vos dix: 'Ave flor de donzelles',
> al qual parlar los cels s'agenollaren
> [...]
> Súbitament, prenyada gloriosa,
> Déu vos tramés del cel riques estrenes
> de dotze stels, que us feren luminosa. (XIX.21, 26)

At the moment of assent and of reception of the Holy Spirit,
the crown of stars is accorded to the Virgin as a symbol of
her *Fiat*. The twelve stars are not even described as a
crown by Vinyolés, however, their purpose is to illuminate
the Virgin. This image is visually focussed and may
correspond to an Annunciation picture in which the Virgin is
surrounded by a stream of heavenly light.

The radiance illuminating the Virgin, emanating from
the twelve stars, is a common theme of Catalan poetry.
Matheu Esteve's Certamen entry uses light in connection with
the Apocalyptic stars. The stars are not described as
forming a crown but they rest on the head of the Virgin like
an aureole:

> Y en lo cap aquella resplandor
> que, transendent, hix de les dotze steles,
> dins nostre cor nos dóna tal claror. (XLI.36)

Esteve's poem emphasizes the radiance from the stars, as

they illuminate the rest of humanity: 'nos dóna tal claror'.
Esteve also incorporates the sun into his Annunciation
picture, not as the mantle of the Virgin, but as a source of
light entering into the Virgin's body: 'lo sol com hix los
raygs prenen posada' (XLI.22).[7]

The poem contains an explicit statement about the
Virgin's immaculate nature, which comes at the end of the
fifth stanza, immediately before the 'Tornada' and, thus, in
a position of emphasis within the poem:

> Mare de Déu per gran virginitat,
> que may en vós pogué ser vista falta,
> ni de viltat vostra pensa malalta,
> ni menys se veu original peccat. (XLI.47)

Esteve's statement about the Virgin's immaculate nature
springs naturally from a consideration of her immunity from
actual sins, from her virginity and from her role as Mother
of God.

The poet's assent to the Immaculate Conception, though
important, may, nevertheless, not constitute the main focus
of the poem. In order to determine the focus of the poem,
Ferrando Francés comments on the abundance of 'vocables
aristocràtics - linatge, noble, regina, emperadriu' (Els
certàmens poètics, p.244) and these words, underlining the
nobility and queenly nature of the Virgin, are woven into
the first four stanzas of the poem. The fourth stanza, in

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[7] This image may echo the traditional explanation of the
Virgin Birth in terms of the rays of the sun, passing
through glass (see above, p.116, n.9). In this case,
the rays of the sun are interpreted as effecting the
Incarnation.

which the Revelations 12.1 allusion is contained, begins by addressing the Virgin as 'Emperadriu'. It would appear that the ennoblement of the Virgin is central to the poem and that the image of the Virgin crowned with stars should be read in the context of the Virgin as crowned Queen. The queen shows magnanimity towards her subjects, acting as a mythological figure, Charon, boatman of Hades, to row them to heaven, rather than to Hades. As boatman, the Virgin provides a lynchpin between Heaven and Hell. The same idea of linking heaven and hell is expressed in the ladder of Jacob (see above, p.307). She takes an active role in protecting her loyal subjects and finds them a place in Heaven: 'nos donà loch prop de vós per a siure\ dexant l'infern amarch més que la fel' (XLI.19). She enlightens her subjects with the light from her crown: 'dins nostra cor, nos dóna tal claror' (XLI.38). The mediatory role of the Virgin is one of her regal attributes.

A similar plea for prayers from the Virgin, on behalf of the poet and humanity in general, is to be found in Sobrevero's poem: 'Puix teniu corona de tants béns guarnida, \ pregau per nosaltres, car sou-nos parenta' (XX.49). The resonance of Revelations 12.1 is more tenuous but its relationship with other descriptions of the Virgin in Apocalytic terms is indisputable. The crown worn by the Virgin has been transposed from a crown of stars to a crown garnished with blessings. Moreover, the movement upwards and mention of God's right hand recall the movement and position of the Virgin in other poems so far examined in this

section: 'Al qual ab trihumpho, passant d'esta vida, \ pujàs a la dextra de Déu, molt contenta' (XX.46). Sobrevero is describing the Assumption in this fragment. The link to Revelations is more tenuous and, because of this fact, the allusion cannot be taken as conclusive evidence that Sobrevero considers the Apocalyptic Woman to be an Assumption symbol. There is, however, further evidence, as a following study shows, to confirm this supposition.

7.2.2 <u>Two or more elements taken from Revelations 12.1</u>

Gaçull's poem situates the Revelations 12.1 allusion between an Assumption allusion and a possible immaculist context. The poem contains several elements of the *Tota pulchra es*: 'la font brollant nostra salut' (XXXV.9); 'de paradís porta sou divinal' (XXXV.16); 'vós sou castell molt fort, inexpugnable' (XXXV.21) but, as has been the case in other poems where these symbols are in evidence, they are mixed with other Old Testament allusions which are unconnected with the *Tota pulchra es*.

In Gaçull's poem, the description of the Virgin in terms of the Apocalyptic Woman is well defined, since more than one element of Revelations description is present:

> De dotze stels ornada vostra testa,
> als cristians és maniffesta cosa,
> tenint lo sol per bella sobrevesta,
> per drap de peus a vós la luna .s posa. (XXXV.37)

The elements of the Revelations vision are complete in Gaçull's poem. The twelve stars surround and decorate the Virgin's head; she is clothed in a mantle of the sun and her feet are covered with the moon 'per drap de peus'. The

positioning of the moon seems to suggest a down-turned moon arching over the feet of the Virgin.[8] The positioning of the Apocalyptic description at the end of the fifth stanza of the poem, immediately before the 'Endreça', gives emphasis to the depiction of the Virgin as the *mulier amicta sole* and shows its importance in the eyes of the poet.

The vision, positioned in the final stanza, naturally leads into the 'Endreça' which celebrates the Assumption of the Virgin:

> Verge sens par, los cels feren tots festa
> com en aquells entràs, pura com rosa.
> Per ço, lohant, homil, yo us faç requesta
> vós me pugeu hon tot lo bé reposa. (XXXV.41)

The aspects emphasized by the poet are the praises accorded by the angels; the movement of the Virgin as she enters the heavens; her purity 'pura com rosa' and the supplication to the Virgin for personal aid. Gaçull clearly uses the Revelations description as an image of the Virgin assumed into heaven.

The Assumption theme in alliance with the Apocalyptic vision can be discerned on another occasion in a 1474 Certamen poem. Berthomeu Salvador centres his poem on the praise accorded the Virgin by the heavenly hosts. A brief synopsis of the Gospel role of the Virgin is presented in the third stanza. Giving birth to the Saviour in humility and carrying the child for nine months are praised by

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[8] This positioning of the moon, rare in later centuries is used in art. Stratton's book offers an altarpiece of the early sixteenth century which depicts a figure of the Virgin on a down-turned moon (p.47, fig. 28).

Salvador. The importance of her role as Mother has led to the coronation of the Virgin and underpins her role as Advocate:

> Mirant bé us està, prenint per lo bras
> lo gran Camarlench qui us ha coronada. (XXVIII.31)

The Virgin has been crowned by Christ and, for this reason, is able to stay his arm. The second stanza describes how the Virgin was assumed into heaven. The Assumption is described using the Revelations vision:

> Enmig dels ceraffs fós molt favorida
> d'archàngels e trons, virtuts e planetes.
> La luna y .1 sol, estels e cometes
> pujant, excel.lent, vos han circuïda. (XXVIII.9)

The three elements surrounding the Woman of Revelations are present but are not clearly anchored to the biblical description. Salvador uses the sun, moon and stars but they are not placed around the Virgin in any particular way. In addition, a further two heavenly bodies 'cometes' and 'planetes' take their place in the scene. Salvador also includes the ranks of heavenly host. Nevertheless, the poet's use of sun, stars and moon, surrounding the Virgin, recalls Revelations 12.1. The scene appears to resemble a *retablo* which Salvador has seen. It may be coincidental but Salvador mentions the 'omilitat gran' shown by the Virgin at the moment of birth, which may be intended to signal the use of the *mulier amicta sole* in the context of a Virgin of Humility.

A two-part representation of the Apocalyptic description is offered by Verdanxa in his entry to the 1474 Certamen. Verdanxa also allies his description of the Virgin

to humility (XXIX.5), which might give an indication of his interpretation of the symbols from Revelations 12.1:

> A vós, descriu lo gran Apocalipsi,
> cobrí lo sol, tenint als peus la luna.
> Tant ha pujat d'omil la vostra planta,
> que transpassant dels cels totes les portes,
> [...]
> portant al món lo Redemptor de colpes. (XXIX.3, 8)

The Virgin's role, mediating between heaven and earth, as bearer of the Redeemer is emphasized.

The second stanza of Verdanxa's poem begins with a four-line *captatio* and, from the fifth line onwards, the Virgin is addressed in terms of two Old Testament symbols, which are likely to be dedicated to the Immaculate Conception:

> Del gran David vós sou torre guarnida,
> y de Moysés foguejant gavarrera.
> De Sathan partís lo cap en peçes. (XXIX.3)

The tower of David (Canticum 4.4) was one of the *Tota pulchra* symbols (see above p.142) and is probably intended to have an immaculist meaning, since it appears in conjunction with reference to Genesis 3.15. The burning bush, a symbol which floats between the Virgin Birth and the Immaculate Conception in the fifteenth century, is also given an immaculist context (see above, p.241 n.19). The 'planta' appears to symbolize the Tree of Jesse, an image of the genealogy of Christ and Mary. The other stanzas celebrate other aspects of the Virgin's life. For example, the third stanza praises the Virgin's virginity and her continence. The fourth stanza celebrates her constancy at the cross, when Christ was deserted by all the disciples. The final stanza celebrates the Assumption.

The poem, thus, celebrates some of the main characteristics of the Virgin as well as some of the main events in her life. Whilst there are allusions to the Immaculate Conception in the poem, there is no explicit statement of belief and the imagery incorporated does not appear to be the main focus of the poem. The *mulier amicta sole* image may be more closely allied in this case to a representation of the Virgin Mother of Humility.

There is another description of the Virgin seated in glory, from the 1474 Certamen which is worthy of note. Barçeló depicts two of the Revelations elements in his poem: the sun and the stars. However, he embroiders the picture by including additional elements:

> Dalt en lo cel està seyta .n l'estrado,
> qu.és de per si en quarta jerarchia,
> aquella qu.és Mare de Déu hi verge.
> Més alt, son Fill. Los sants prop de ses faldes.
> Per mantell, sol, la luna, per catiffa.
> Recolzadors, evangelistes quatre.
> Vestida d'or, d'esteles gran corona,
> Varietats de dignitats per sercle. (VI.9)

The scene is extremely visual: the ranks of heaven are massed for the reader's eye. Christ, the saints, the four evangelists and other heavenly dignitaries are present in the scene. Instead of being clothed in the sun, the Virgin's mantle is the sun 'per mantell, sol' and her dress is of gold 'vestida d'or'. Instead of standing on the moon, the moon is her sceptre: 'la luna, per catiffa'. She is crowned with stars of an unspecified number. Clearly, the Virgin is not standing on the moon, because the scene is static 'està seyta .n l'estrado'. However, Barçeló's poem provides yet another example of a description of the glorified Virgin

which uses imagery from Revelations to underpin it.[9]

Evidence of the popularity of depictions of the Virgin's glorification in Catalan poetry is underlined by consideration of other poems. Luis Cathalà's poem shows some connection with poems which use Apocalyptic imagery in description of the glorified Virgin:

> Sola sens par, dels cels la més insigne,
> de puritat teniu ornat vestir,
> al que valeu la corona condigne,
> lo loch pus alt, la cadira més digne,
> que maternal se pogués elegir.
> De castedat teniu blanca divisa,
> daurat cinyel de luminosa fe,
> y de set goigs brodada cortapisa. (XXX.41)

As in Moreno's poem, Cathalà does not use the sun, moon and stars in their appropriate Apocalyptic positions but there is again a clear concern with the symbolic dress of the Virgin. The poet mentions her 'ornat vestir', her 'daurat cinyel de luminosa fe' her 'brodada cortapisa'. Some of the words used to describe the apparel of the Virgin 'daurat' and 'luminosa' may recall the depiction of the woman clothed with the sun but the resonance is uncertain. Rather the clothing of Cathalà's Virgin has its own symbolism, clothed

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[9] The close resemblance between this description of the Virgin's Assumption and Moreno's description of her Assumption is immediately apparent. The Virgin depicted in glory is the theme of Moreno's poem entered for the 1474 Certamen:

> No .s pot comptar, com fós al cel rebuda,
> Déu e los sants quants us feren la festa.
> Més que la neu teniu la sobrevesta
> molt resplandent, la corona deguda. (XIV.33)

The Virgin is clothed in pure snow-white, as opposed to being clothed in the sun. This image does not utilize Apocalytic imagery, it serves as a reinforcement of the poets' interest in the description of the Virgin's reception into heaven which is favoured by many of the 1474 poets.

in faith, dressed in the seven joys. Cathalà's poem suggests a poetic concern with the rich and symbolic clothing accorded the Virgin, whether this has a biblical or typological origin or is representative of her many virtues is less important to him.

It is apparent that these pictorial representations of the Virgin have a great deal in common. A clue may be revealed in the work of yet another of the 1474 Certamen poets, providing an explanation of the static representation of the Revelations Woman in many of the Catalan poems. Pere de Civillar describes the Virgin in the following terms in his entry to the Certamen:

> fue aparecida la Virgen honesta
> en un carro triunfante, mutxo bien puesta,
> cercada de ángeles e de cerafines, (XXV.13)

The poem does not contain any explicitly Revelations symbolism but the relationship of the extract to other Certamen poems is clear. The angels and seraphim surround the Virgin as they do, for example, in Barçeló's description of the glorification of the Virgin. However, Pere de Civillar provides a clue to the origin of the description. 'En un carro mutxo bien puesta' (XXV.14) appears to allude to tableaux from dramatic representations or tableaux in which the Virgin sits surrounded by heavenly figures.[10]

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[10] It is significant to note at this point that the third immaculist Certamen, in 1532, contains one reference to the Apocalyptic vision. The reference is in the 'triumpho y sentençia' which follows the series of poems. The reference to the Apocalyptic vision is brief. It follows an allusion to Revelations 8 and to the fire which burns up the earth:
> Hoint tal excelència
> en aquel lloch,

The reference to tableaux is not an isolated example, since Arcís Vinyoles' poem appears to refer to an Annunciation tableau.[11]

Since the Revelations image of the Virgin proves so difficult to interpret, it is a relief that Lançol in his poem declares that he will explain the symbolism 'significant lo que diré, cascuna' (XXI.10). The first stanza of the poem contains the encircling heavenly host, the figure of the Virgin, clothed with the sun and feet placed upon the moon. The crown is unusual in that it is of gold and surrounded by the stars:

> hon nos cremà lo cremant foch
> d'ambició,
> prest viu venir gran procesó
> de tanta gent,
> que .1 meu finit enteniment
> no u pot narrar,
> y, entr. ells, la gran reyna sens par,
> sols sens eclipsi
> del modo que .n l'Apocalipsi
> Johan la pinta. ('Triumpho y sentèntia'.169, *Els certàmens poètics*, 1532 Certamen, p.854)

The description is limited to referring to the Virgin 'del modo que .n l'Apocalipsi \Johan la pinta'. 'Sols sens eclipsi' connects the sun to the description of the Virgin. It is also noteworthy that the immediate context is a procession, perhaps of the type which took place on 15 August (see *CSM*.420) 'é no dia aa Proçession, como as proçessioes do çeo reçeberon a Santa Maria quando sobio as çeos'. Apart from this, the Revelations allusion is not developed in the context of a dedicated immaculist poem.

[11] The Virgin is described as prostrate upon a carpet of lilies. The representation may recall a painting or a dramatic representation of the scene witnessed by the author:
> Mare de Déu, no seyta, mas prostada,
> sobre .1 tapit dels purs virginals liris.
> Accompanyat de multitut de ciris,
> Sant Gabriel vos trobà .n la posada; (XXXVIII.41)

Warner notes that in 'pictures of the Annunciation, Gabriel greets her with a lily staff [...] symbolizing her incorruptibility' (p.99).

> Alt, en lo cel, la geraxia canta
> moltes lahors de vós, senyora pura,
> entre les quals, mon voler se decanta
> aquelles dir, que l'Escripture santa
> de vós escriu. Ab tal noble figura,
> que sou del sol molt ricament vestida,
> hi .ls vostres peus teniu sobre la luna.
> Corona d'or portau, tota guarnida,
> ab dotze grans esteles circuïda.(XXI.1)

The rich apparel, culminating in the golden crown, attest to the nobility of the Virgin in the description.

The second stanza of the poem gives the following explanation of the Apocalyptic vision:

> Fós en lo món sobre les santes una
> que no pogué peccar may en sa vida.
> Los sants tostemps corrien tal fortuna,
> que si jamés no feren falta .lguna
> porie's fer la fessen ben complida.
> Ni may aquests en qualsevol fahena,
> axí com vós obrant, mèrit guanyaren,
> car no visqué algú d'ells sens esmena
> sinó vós sols, que prengués per estrena
> gran puritat, de la qual vos loharen. (XXI.11)

The explanation begins with a description of the unique status of the Virgin in comparison with the other saints. This was due to not being capable of sin. Using 'no pogué peccar', the poet refers to actual sin. This reference is confirmed in 'may en sa vida' which begins to intimate incorruptibility in terms of life-long action, rather than as an initial gift of grace. This allusion is further confirmed later in the stanza by 'car no visqué algú d'ells sens esmena \ sinó vós sols'. The poet indicates that the Virgin was accorded praise because of her blameless life. The third stanza continues the paeon of praise by the virgins and seraphim, whilst also referring to the queenly status of the Virgin: 'vós huy regnau' (XXI.26). The stanza alludes to a possible *Tota pulchra es* symbol: 'font de tot

bé, d'on tota virtut mana' (XXI.26) may be an oblique
reference to the *fons hortorum*; another Marian figure
included is the 'tremuntana' with a long history of poetic
usage. The fourth stanza shows the Virgin intervening on
behalf of the 'pares sants', the Patriarchs and saving them
from 'la preso maligna'. Significantly, there are no other
key immaculist symbols used in combination with the *mulier
amicta sole* nor any overt statements of immaculist belief.

A conclusive use of the *mulier amicta sole* in an
Assumption context is to be found in the *Espill*. It is quite
clear that, in the *Espill*, Roig shows himself an ardent
defender of the Immaculate Conception. In the *Espill*, Roig
does not make use of Apocalyptic imagery in an immaculist
context. However, in the part of the 'Lliçió de Salamó'
dedicated to events in the life of Mary, he includes the
mulier amicta sole in connection with both the Glorification
and the Coronation of the Virgin:

> De l'alt estatge
> inenarrable, no recitable
> maravellós e gloriós
> pres son merir; sols referir
> s'en pot en poc. Es lo seu lloc
> alt als cels, sobre lo sol la cobre,
> tota l'abriga, lluna calciga,
> obté repòs l'arma ab lo cos
> glorificat, de goig dotat
> perpetual. (*Espill* III.2, p.170)

Roig's connection of the Revelations vision with the end of
the Virgin's life is explicit: 'pres son merir'. Roig refers
to the repose of her body and soul 'glorificat'. The
Coronation of the Virgin is also described in Apocalyptic
terms:

> Esta priora mare senyora,

```
        stant a la dreta, reïna feta
        celestial, ceptre real
        té e corona al cap, redona,
        de dotze esteles. (Espill, p.170)
```

Revelations symbolism is completed by the addition of the
crown of twelve stars. As in Certamen poems, the position of
the Virgin 'a la dreta' is emphasized, as is the regalia.
Roig's deliberate choice to exclude the *mulier amicta sole*
from the deliberations and proofs of the Immaculate
Conception, whilst including it in reference to the
Assumption, provides further evidence that the image was not
conclusively immaculist in the fifteenth century.

In conclusion to the examination of poems, mainly from
the 1474 Certamen, which contain allusions to the *mulier
amicta sole*, it can be noted that each of the poems examined
contains an allusion to the Conception doctrine. Many do
not, however, explicitly link the Revelations vision to the
Conception. Some of the poems contain allusions to the *Tota
pulchra es*. The symbols used vary, they are not in clear
association with each other and do not provide a definitive
immaculist context for the *mulier amicta sole* symbols. The
poems contain many other biblical and litaneutical symbols
which have no connection to the *Tota pulchra es*. These
symbols may form part of a Marian litany and they may or may
not be intended as immaculist. In this respect, the
combination of images represents a first step towards the
conflation of Revelations and *Tota pulchra es* symbolism,
which became the standard post-Tridentine indicators of the
doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in art. From the poems
examined, the description of the *mulier amicta sole* is used

in a variety of contexts. It is found in such contexts as
the Assumption, the Coronation and the Glorification
of the Virgin in the Certàmens. It is allied to various
Marian themes which emphasize the ultimate triumph of the
Virgin.

Most of the poems also contain immaculist statements
and, if the *Tota pulchra es* images are taken to be
immaculist, then they may underpin the immaculist context.
The 1486 Certamen which is dedicated to the Immaculate
Conception contains only one example of the *mulier amicta
sole* in an immaculist context. However, it is significant in
that it contains an example of the Virgin crowned queen,
surrounded by Apocalyptic symbolism and in an explicitly
immaculist context. The 1440 Certamen does not use the
mulier amicta sole. The dearth of evidence from the
immaculist Certàmens points to the fact that the *mulier
amicta sole* was not seen as a definitive immaculist image in
the fifteenth century. The supposition is confirmed by the
fact that a devoted immaculist, Jaume Roig, employs the
image in the context of the Assumption.

7.2.3 <u>Castilian representation of the *mulier amicta sole*</u>

Amongst the Castilian Cancioneros, there are few
examples of any reference to the Woman of the Apocalypse.
Santillana is one of the few Cancionero poets to employ the
mulier amicta sole. The features of the scene in 'Los goços
de Nuestra Señora' bear a great deal of relationship to the
Certamen poems. The Virgin is 'asentada \ a la diestra'
(p.130) and she is connected with a single element of

Revelations imagery 'de estrellas coronada'. The context of
the *mulier amicta sole* is the Assumption, since Santillana
incorporates the scene in the final *gozo* 'por graçia de Dios
assumpta' (p.129). Santillana, like Roig, provides a clear
Assumption context for the *mulier amicta sole*.

A particularly interesting example of a poem dedicated
to Apocalyptic symbolism is to be found in F-D, where
Fray Pedro de Colunga requests an explanation of the
Apocalyptic vision from Villasandino: 'rrogandole que le
declarase algunas figuras escuras del Apocalipsi' (F-D 673).
Fray Pedro describes the vision seen by St John:

> Dixo que viera muger en persona
> uestida del sol, so sus pies la luna,
> y vyo en su cabeça una sobre fortuna
> de doze estrellas preçiosa corona: (F-D 673.9)

The Dominican adds the second part of the vision, complete
with the Woman's birth-pangs 'clamava de parto' and the male
child who 'todas las gentes avye de regyr\con verga de
fierro' (F-D 673.12). The fact of citing the pangs of labour
is unusual. Immaculist poets use the symbols surrounding the
Apocalyptic Woman, giving them a Marian interpretation, but
never continue the biblical text. There is very real
difficulty in interpreting the birth-pangs of the Woman in
a Marian context (see above, p.301). The birth-pangs
certainly accord badly with the Virgin immaculate, since
they suggest a painful labour and, thus, suggest one of the
effects of original sin.

The poem is unusual in that it has its own humorous
exposition of the *mulier amicta sole*, despite being based on

a biblical text. The humour lies mainly in the detailing of
the Woman's characteristics taken to extremes. The
description of the Woman is to be explained in the most
minute detail:

> Vos declaradme el rrostro, las çejas,
> nariçes e ojos, los pechos e manos,
> los cabellos ruuios, o prietos o canos
> sus dientes, quixadas, su boca y orejas; (F-D 673.25)

Fray Pedro requests an explanation of each of the
Revelations symbols in turn. In the fifth stanza, Pedro de
Colunga requests an explanation of who can make a gown from
the sun. The question posed centres on how the sun can be
sewn:

> o qual fue el xastre bastant a natura
> quel sol pudiesse tajar nin coser,
> mangas e cuerpo e frunzas fazer
> que en esto yo tengo la mi dubda escura. (F-D 673.37)

Fray Pedro requests the composition of the crown of stars
and 'de que guyssa fueron assy engastonadas, \sy en plata o
en oro o piedras preçiadas' (F-D 673.54). The composition of
the moon provokes Fray Pedro to speculate that it might be
'tapete o guadamezil\ [...] almadraqueja o algund escañil'
or even 'almofada de seda labrada' (F-D 673.42).

Whether the intention is to parody some of the serious
preguntas y respuestas or merely to have some fun at
Villasandino's expense, the light-hearted tone is unusual in
connection with Marian poems.[12] It goes without saying that

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[12] According to Alan Joseph Stegmayer, 'Villasandino: an
Introduction to the Cancioneros (unpublished doctoral
thesis, Indiana University, 1986), at p.10,
Villasandino's education equipped him badly for the
fashionable practice of debating theological questions,
such as predestination, or philosophical topics.

Fray Pedro, a Dominican, does not interpret the Apocalyptic Woman as an immaculist image. Pedro de Colunga does not consider immaculist interpretation of the Revelations image.

Villasandino begins his interpretation of the symbols of the Apocalyptic Woman with a humorous interpretation of the Woman: 'Non fue esta muger la grant amazona' (F-D 673.81). The remainder of the poem does not maintain the humorous approach. Villasandino begins by underlining his lack of learning:

> Ffray Pedro, señor, aqueste respeto,
> todas las cossas yryan una via
> sy yo, ynorante, tomare ossadia
> de vos responder segunt el efecto:
> pues enel latyn yo non me entremeto
> como queredes que mi discreçion
> bastase a fazer tal declaraçion?
> (F-D 673.73).

He does not refer explicitly to the garment made of the sun, but interprets the garment as representing the clothing of flesh made by the Virgin for her son: 'la qual fue saya mejor que destopa \para su buen Fijo syn toda costura' (673.107). Clothing of the intra-uterine Christ in a pure garment is a standard image of the Incarnation (see above p.219 n.9). The clothing is explained in the fifth stanza, corresponding to Fray Pedro's question about the sun as mantle. Villasandino interprets the moon as the Church, in the sixth stanza of his poem to correspond to the sixth stanza of Pedro de Colunga's poem. The interpretation corresponds to Jaume Roig's association of the moon and the Church in his Certamen entry (see above, p.305):

> La fermossa luna asy inclynada

     so los pies daquesta Señora gentyl,
     sera la Yglesia muy rryca y sotyl. (637.113)

Finally, the crown of stars is interpreted in the stanza
corresponding to Pedro de Colunga's seventh stanza.
Villasandino interprets the stars as the witnesses to
Christ's resurrection:

     La ryca corona asy reluziente
     non puedo entender que sea otra cosa
     sy non los testigos [...]
     que vieron al Jhesu syn ser meresçiente. (637.121)

Villasandino's interpretation has no connection with the
Immaculate Conception. He does not allude to the Immaculate
Conception at all and the poem has no immaculist statements.
Villasandino's interpretation of each of the Revelations
symbols has its own logic. At least one of the
interpretations appears to have a tradition: the moon
as a vessel, symbolizing the Church, is found in conjunction
in other poems. At least in the early part of the fifteenth
century, the Revelations symbols were not used to depict the
Immaculate Conception.

In order to cast further light on the tensions between
the *mulier amicta sole* and the twin doctrines of the
Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, a brief
examination has been made of a small number of poems from
the work of Montesino, a poet whose work falls at the very
threshhold of the sixteenth century. Fray Ambrosio de
Montesino in his *CM*, written at the end of the fifteenth
century, uses the *mulier amicta sole* on two occasions. The
full image of the Woman clothed with the sun is used in the
invocatory opening stanza of his poem 'Reina del cielo':

```
        Reina del cielo,
        del mundo señora,
        sey mi valedora;
        Del sol revestida,
        De estrellas cercada,
        De luna crescida,
        Chapines calzada
        En la eterna vida
        Estás laureada,
        Noble Emperadora. (CM Reina del cielo.1)
```

The opening invocation and the first of the seven-line *coplas*, which constitute the poem, address the Virgin as the Apocalyptic Woman or 'reina del cielo'. All the features of the Revelations Woman are attributed to the Virgin. She is clothed in the sun. She is not crowned by the stars but is surrounded by them. The crescent moon is at her feet. Her feet are shod in 'chapines', shoes in fashion in the fifteenth-century (Covarrubias y Orozco, p.432). The immediate context of the Revelations image in the first stanza is the Virgin as Queen of heaven, 'valedora' of those who call upon her.

The description of the Virgin is certainly an allusion to the Woman of Revelations but the question remains as to the extent that Ambrosio Montesino intended the Revelations symbols, either in the first stanza or in the poem as a whole, as a depiction of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Michel Darbord, in his commentary on the four Marian poems from Montesino's Cancionero, does not commit himself to the purpose of the Apocalyptic imagery, contenting himself with noting the biblical origins of the image in 'Reina del cielo':

Enfin c'est de l'Apocalypse de saint Jean que vient la vision de la femme vêtue de soleil, entourée d'étoiles et la lune à ses pieds, également familière à l'iconographie et à la littérature religieuse.[13]

Helen Boreland, in her detailed study of Berceo and Montesino, discusses at length how the poem was revised, before being included in the *CM*. Boreland emphasizes that:

In the earlier version of the poem (fols d.1 [r-v]) the Virgin is presented in a military and feudal light and is described variously as *reyna..*, *señora...*, *enperadora...*, *real defensora...*, and *princesa...* (p.303)

Boreland shows how this military imagery is diluted in the later version of the poem 'owing to increased attention to the theme of the Immaculate Conception, to the Virgin's praiseworthiness and to Christ' (p.305). Boreland notes how in the earlier version the theme of hierarchical power is sustained through the use of 'asentada', suggesting royal enthronement, whilst in the revised version the replacement participle 'laureada' introduces the theme of praise and tempers the feudal image of the Virgin as Queen (p.306).

Boreland is clearly correct in concluding that there is more immaculist reference in the later version of the poem. Given the poet's Franciscan background, it is logical that a poem in praise of the Virgin, as noted in the rubric 'en gloria de la Virgin', should contain some statements about her immaculate nature. In fact, the first

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[13] Michel Darbord, *La poésie religieuse espagnole des Rois Catholiques à Philippe II*, Thèses, mémoires et travaux, dir. by Charles V. Aubrun (Paris: Centre de recherches de l'Institut d'études hispaniques, 1965), p.169.

overt statement about the Virgin's immaculate nature occurs

in the fifth stanza:

> Tú tienes la llave
> De su gran potencia,
> O vena suave
> de toda clemencia,
> Y en tí solo cabe
> Por suma excelencia
> No ser pecadora. (*CM* Reina del cielo.34)

Montesino indicates that the Virgin has been accorded a

unique privilege, in that there is no sin in her: 'en tí

solo cabe...\ no ser pecadora'. Montesino could be referring

to the Virgin's freedom from actual sins, venial or mortal,

but it is likely that, as a Franciscan, he is referring to

her sinless conception.

In fact, the words 'o vena suave' recall the

description of Wisdom taken from the book of Job:

> Habet argentum, venarum suarum principia:
> et auro locus est in quo conflatur. (Job 28.1, *Biblia
> sacra*, p.467)

The main idea developed in the first section of the Wisdom

poem, and to which Montesino alludes, is the inaccessiblity

of Wisdom. Precious metals, like gold and silver, though

buried deep in the earth, can be mined by man. Wisdom,

equally precious to man, cannot be so easily found. Although

humans explore the interior of the earth, they are unable to

find the 'vein' of Wisdom.[14] It is worth noting, at this

point, that *JB* links the Wisdom poem explicitly, in a note

on Job 28.1, to Proverbs 8.22 (p.787a). The Proverbs Wisdom

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[14] R.A.F. McKenzie, S.J., and Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm., 'Job' in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. by Raymond E. Brown, S.S, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J. and Roland E. Murphy, O.Carm. (London: Chapman, 1991), p.466-488.

text (8.24), which is a laudatory description of the attributes of Wisdom, has already been defined as immaculist in intent in the period in which Montesino was writing (see above, p.214). It is likely that Montesino was drawing on the Wisdom analogy to complete the allusion to the Immaculate Conception in 'no ser pecadora'. It is certain that the fifth stanza has an immaculist intent. The next step is to examine whether the poem as a whole has an immaculist focus.

In determining the focus of the poem, there is a small and, at first sight, insignificant point which Boreland does not consider. Montesino had already chosen to include the depiction of the Virgin as the Apocalyptic Woman in the earlier poem, which, according to Boreland, had less of an immaculist focus. As has been noted, the earlier version depicts the Virgin as 'asentada', enthroned in glory. The association of the image with the Coronation of the Virgin parallels the usage frequently made of the *mulier amicta sole* in Cataluña. Montesino did not introduce the Revelations imagery as part of his revised poem with its heightened immaculist focus, for it was already there. The logical conclusion is that the image was associated, by Montesino, with the glorified Virgin, the Queen of Heaven, with the focus of the earlier poem. When Montesino revised the poem, he kept the Apocalyptic image. This is because the poem remains dedicated 'en gloria de nuestra Señora' and would, thus, appropriately begin by depicting the Virgin in glory. The description of the Virgin as the *mulier amicta*

sole with the intention of representing the glorification of the Virgin appears to be confirmed by the epithet 'noble enperadora' which the poet writes immediately after his description of the Virgin as the *mulier amicta sole*. 'En la eterna vida \estás laureada', similarly is appropriate to her glorification by the heavenly hosts.

Montesino also kept many of the feudal terms used in the earlier version of the poem: 'Reina'(*CM* Reina.1); Noble Enperadora (*CM* Reina.10); 'real defensora' (*CM* Reina.66); 'Princesa' (*CM* Reina.110), although, as Boreland indicates, Montesino does not increase the terms in ratio to the increased length of the poem. The theme of queenship is, thus, preserved throughout the poem to accord with the title. There is evidence to suggest that Montesino wished to preserve the imagery of the Virgin as Queen of heaven, underlining the fact that the Revelations imagery may not be intended as immaculist. Indeed, the very fact that, even though a Franciscan, Montesino included little explicit immaculism in his early version of the *coplas* 'Reina del cielo' is surprising, given that 'Reina del cielo' was written shortly after Catalan poems dedicated to the defence of the Immaculate Conception.

The 'Reina del cielo' also contains a high incidence of epithets indicating defence and protection: 'Tu eres mi muro' (*CM* Reina.61); 'rëal defensora' (*CM* Reina.66); 'diestra guiadora' (*CM* Reina.73). This theme celebrates the role of the Virgin as protector of mankind.

Furthermore, the references to Wisdom literature and to
the Virgin's sinlessness occur in the fifth stanza. These
references are separated from the *mulier amicta sole* of the
first stanza by the 'inexpressibility *topos*' of the second
stanza (Boreland, p.306) and by the expression of divine
motherhood of the third stanza. Boreland considers that the
inexpressibility *topos* develops the Revelations imagery,
through reference to the natural world: 'The imagery of the
universe - sun, stars and moon - is carried over into the
second stanza through the medium of sun, sea and summer'
(p.306):

> Si el mar Océano
> fuese la tinta,
> y el sol escribano,
> que el verano pinta,
> no puede ni mano
> de pluma distinta
> loarte, Señora. (*CM* Reina del cielo.11)

The bridge which connects the overt immaculist statement of
the fifth stanza with the first stanza, which Boreland also
reads as immaculist, is, thus, in place in Boreland's view.

In fact, the inexpressibility *topos*, far from being
added to extend the natural imagery of the Revelations
depiction of the Virgin, is rendered in a similar fashion to
an appearance of the same *topos* in other poems. In the *CSM,*
Alfonso expresses his inadequacy in similar terms:

> Se purgameo foss' o ceo estrelado
> e o mar todo tinta, que grand' é provado
> e viviesse por sempr' un ome enssinado
> de scrivar, ficar-ll-ía a mayor partida. (*CSM* 110.14)

The similarity between the inexpressibility *topos* of Alfonso
and Montesino undoubtedly suggests a traditional means of
expressing a writer's inadequacy, when faced with the task

of praising the Virgin. The traditional nature of the *topos* used does not entirely invalidate Boreland's point that the second stanza serves as a transition between the depiction of the *mulier amicta sole* of the first stanza and the third stanza, in which Christ, as Son of God and child of Mary, is able to offer her praise. However, it weakens the point she makes with regard to the immaculist reading of the first stanza.

Boreland equates the sixth stanza also with a representation of the Virgin as the *Madonna della peste*, protecting sufferers from 'el mal pestilente' (p.312). Boreland associates a fourteenth-century English psalter miniature of the *Madonna della peste* with Montesino's description of the Virgin *Mediatrix*. This may be a valid point with regard to England, but the point has already been made that Spain differed from other countries with regard to its iconography of the Conception. The apocryphal stories were coming into vogue in Spain just as they went out of fashion elsewhere. Boreland does not take account of the fact that the feast of the Conception in Spain began to be celebrated many centuries later than in England and that its iconography was different to English iconography.

Moreover, Stratton does not record any examples of the *Madonna della peste* used in an immaculist context in her wide-ranging study of the Immaculate Conception in Spanish art. O'Connor, in fact, casts doubt on Levi d'Ancona's interpretation of immaculist symbolism dating from the

twelfth century (p.473). It is not until the first years of

the fifteenth century in Italy that the first image of the

Immaculate Virgin trampling on the head of the serpent and

crowned with the stars is found (p.471). The point is made

that only images found in combination can be considered to

be immaculist.[15]

Boreland also does not take account of the fact that

the equation of sin with the plague is an age-old

interpretation. A miniature is found in the *Chants Royaux* of

Rouen, and is noted by O'Connor. The miniature depicts

the Virgin triumphant, the only woman freed from the

necessity of sitting on the *'chaire de la peste'*. The throne

of the plague is shown with women being forced to sit on it

by Satan, armed with a club. The *'peste'* is interpreted as

a metaphor for original sin by O'Connor.[16]

Montesino may include the image for another purpose.

The stanza in question depicts the Virgin staying the bow of

justice, so that humanity can been saved, despite its

terminal sickness:

> Afloja la cuerda
> Del arco occidente,
> Porque no se pierda
> Del mal pestilente
> La gente que espera

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[15] A representation of only one of the major
symbolic images of the Virgin: the *Tota pulchra es*, the
mulier amicta sole; or the Woman crushing the head of
the serpent is not considered to be a definitively
immaculist rendering (O'Connor, p.470 n.26).

[16] O'Connor, at p.473, describes the miniature, noting
the original in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms.
fr.1537, f.54.

        Salud excelente
        Por ti cada hora. (*CSM* Reina del cielo.39)

One of the Psalms unites the image of Yahweh as protector,

sheltering his followers under his wings, shielding them

from the arrow that flies by day and from the plague (Psalm

91.2). This image may have inspired Montesino to appropriate

the image to the Virgin. It is likely that the poet wished

to add vigour to the description of sin, a difficult concept

to grasp, by describing it in terms of plague. The

precedents for describing sin as plague or sickness are

present from Old Testament times. The conflation of sin and

sickness may, indeed, have been suggested by the reference

to the book of Job, apparent in 'vena suave', since it

occurs in the sixth stanza immediately after 'vena'.

        Moreover, salvation and 'salud' are frequently

correlated, as in the Catalan poem submitted to the 1486

Certamen by Ferrando Dieç.[17] 'El mal pestilente' and 'salud'

are, thus, stock ways of representing sin and redemption.

As Boreland herself admits (p.313), a concrete

interpretation of the stanza is possible, but the disease is

more likely to represent spiritual uncleanness.

        Indeed, Ana María Alvarez Pellitero discusses the

fact that 'con especial énfasis destaca Fray Ambrosio en su

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        [17] Dieç develops the image of Christ as medicine to cure
    the sickness of the world in his 1486 Certamen poem:
            Per reparar lo crim qu. era .n nosaltres
            és Déu vengut, naxent de pura dona,
            perquè curàs lo crim ab son contrari.
            Hi del món féu la dolça medicina
            que lo malalt fós prompte .n acceptar-la.
        (XXVII.91)

poesía la doctrina de la mediación universal de María'.[18] In
the stanza where the Virgin is shown slackening the bow,
this key strand of Montesino's mariological thought is
expressed. The Virgin is represented as protectress of
mankind.

There is another point which can be made from a careful
reading of the poem. At the point where Montesino
recapitulates the 'del sol revestida' in the stanza of the
poem addressed to the Virgin as *mater dolorosa*, the
Apocalyptic vision is recalled and transformed in contrast
with the Virgin's vigil at the cross later in the poem.
'Del sol revestida' becomes 'te vestías \ Con el sol de
luto' (*CM* Reina del cielo.102). It should be noted that in
'Alli te vestías\ Del sol de luto', a past tense is used
'vestías'. The tense of 'vestías' contrasts with the present
tenses of the opening stanza 'sey mi valedora' and 'estás
laureada' which imply that the present is the time of the
glorification of the Virgin and the past is the suffering
that she has endured, rather than the past being her
Immaculate Conception and the future being the suffering to
be faced. A second point can be made in respect of the
reworking of the Apocalyptic symbolism in Montesino's
depiction of the Virgin at the Crucifixion. Montesino's
reference to 'el gran fruto \Que la cruz transflora' reworks
the reference to Christ in the angelic greeting: 'benedictus
fructus ventris' (Luke 1.42). The Virgin at the cross is not

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[18] *La obra lingüística y literaria de Fray Ambrosio de
Montesino* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid,
1976), p.124.

only linked to the Immaculate Virgin through the words 'sola guardaste su fe' (*CM* 'Reina del cielo'.99) which is a reprieve of 'en tí solo cabe \no ser pecadora', as Boreland has rightly affirmed (p.319), but also to the mystery of the divine motherhood, described in the third stanza: 'Y en tu vientre vino' (*CM* Reina del cielo.21). Again the focus of the poem can be seen to be wider than the immaculist focus accorded the *Mater dolorosa* at the Crucifixion by Boreland.

On balance, it would appear that, for Montesino, the 'Reina..\del sol revestida' is an image of the glorified Virgin in this poem. This glorification is achieved by a celebration of a range of images of the Virgin amongst which reference to the immaculate nature of the Virgin appears. Reference to the Virgin Immaculate and to her other features are used in conjunction to express her glory and praiseworthiness, the main purpose of the poem.

Montesino uses the Revelations 12 image in another of his Marian poems. The poem 'A las doce estrellas' refers to Revelations 12.1 in the rubric: 'A las doce estrellas de la corona de la Reina del Cielo, hizo fray Ambrosio Montesino la doce coplas que se siguen' (*CM* A las doce estrellas). The twelve stanzas of the poem represent the stars in the crown of the Virgin and the twelve stanzas are composed of a litany of epithets dedicated to the Virgin.

Many of the epithets used by Montesino have an immaculist resonance. The second stanza contains the image

of clothing the Son of God, familiar from many of the

Catalan poems:

> Tu de tal fino cendal
> Al Rey del Cielo vestiste,
> Que en el vientre maternal
> De la culpa original
> Todo tiempo careciste. (*CM* A las doce estrellas.6)[19]

The necessity of providing the fleshly covering for her Son,

is directly connected in the poet's mind with a need for a

total absence of original sin, here termed 'culpa original',

in the mother.

There is one other important symbol which suggests the

immaculate nature of the Virgin. This symbol has undergone

its migration and appears fully integrated as an immaculist

symbol:

> Tú, señora, eres aquella
> zarza que no se quemó,
> De cuya viva centella
> quedó muerta la querella
> Del primero que pecó. (*CM* A las doce estrellas.66)

Boreland rightly notes (p.309) that Montesino makes the

immaculist context explicit for the reader, explaining the

burning bush symbol in relation to the sin of Adam 'el

primero que pecó' (see above, p.241 n.19).

Different aspects of the Virgin are cause for praise.

The first stanza praises her immaculate origin; the second

her sanctified birth:

> Nascida sola, sin par
> para sanar y soldar
> La caida del pecado. (*CM* A las doce estrellas.18)

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[19] Luis Cathalà uses the image in his entry for the 1486
Certamen (XIII.25). See above, p.219 n.9.

The epithet links the Virgin's birth to a reversal of the Fall. The image is of repair and healing 'sanar y soldar'. Montesino incorporates superlatives within the Nativity stanza, which emphasize the Virgin's uniqueness:

> Tu mejor de las mejores
> De la Trinidad electa,
> Para prima de primores,
> Para licor de licores,
> La mas pura y perfecta. (CM A las doce estrellas.11)

In addition, one of the epithets used by Montesino refers to the election of the Virgin for her role, which is a theme regularly used by poets writing in defence of the Immaculate Conception: 'De la Trinidad electa' (CM A las doce estrellas.11).

Not all the images of the Virgin used by Montesino are immaculist in his 'A las doce estrellas'. The relationship between 'en el vientre maternal' and various recipients or religious vessels provides Montesino with another series of images of the Virgin 'odífero incensario' (CM A las doce estrellas.23); 'purísimo relicario' (CM A las doce estrellas.24). The proliferation of ecclesiastical vessels used in Montesino's poetry has been noted by Boreland (p.322), Darbord (p.169) and Alvarez Pellitero (p.120). In addition, Boreland (p.322) and Darbord (p.168) note that the 'fuente' is a figure of the Immaculate Conception. However, the ecclesiastical vessels and the 'fuente de santa humildad' all appear within the immediate context of perpetual virginity: 'purísimo relicario de entera virginidad' (CM A las doce estrellas) and may be intended to represent the Virgin as the receptacle of the divine. The

symbol cannot be taken to represent the Immaculate
Conception, unless there are other immaculist symbols
present to confirm that the doctrine is being represented in
the immediate context.

To return to the rubric itself, it can be noted that
the twelve stars encircle the head of the 'Reina del cielo'
and form a 'corona'. The focus of the rubric itself would,
thus, seem to point towards a celebration of the
glorification of the Virgin, in which all facets of her
life, including her immaculate nature are worthy of
celebration. If the rubric to the poem is meant to
encapsulate immaculism then the poem disappoints the reader,
since the focus of the poem is not the Immaculate
Conception. However, if the rubric is meant to celebrate the
glorification of the Virgin, then the new focus allows the
assertion of the immaculist doctrine to run as a thread
through the poem without being necessarily its main subject
matter. The distinction is fine but the resultant focus of
the poem is more satisfying to the reader.

7.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the first point that must be made is
that only the poets of the 1474 Certamen show any consistent
use of this biblical image of the *mulier amicta sole* from
Revelations, later to become such a standard representation
of the Immaculate Conception. It is particularly noticeable
that the 1440 Certamen and, more surprisingly, the 1486
Certamen make little use of the *mulier amicta sole*. Even the

later 1532 Certamen uses the image only once. This fact is
particularly to be noted in the context of the 1486
Certamen, following so soon after the 1474 Certamen. Given
the fact that images were used consistently across the
century for purposes of biblical authority, it is, at the
least, unusual that more Revelations images are not found in
the 1440 or 1486 Certàmens. It could, of course, be a mere
coincidence that poets did not choose to use Revelations
imagery in the dedicated immaculist poems, yet, many
of the same poets were represented in the 1474 and 1486
Certàmens. Since the 1440 and 1486 Certàmens are dedicated
specifically to the Immaculate Conception and, since they do
not use the allusion to Revelations 12.1 extensively, it is
but a small step to conclude that, in the late fifteenth
century, the text from Revelations 12.1 had not become
specifically allied to the Immaculate Conception. This
conclusion is, moreover, in line with the evidence from
artistic representations of the doctrine.

A study of each example of poetic use of Revelations
imagery from the 1474 Certamen revealed that, on occasions,
poems developed an immaculist theme as well as referring to
the *mulier amicta sole*; on occasions, the immediate context
of the allusion to the *mulier amicta sole* contained a focus
on the Assumption; and, on occasions, the focus was on the
Glorification and Coronation of the Virgin. None of the
poems in the 1474 Certamen is specifically dedicated to
the Immaculate Conception. The 1486 Certamen, containing
poems dedicated solely to the Immaculate Conception, used

the *mulier amicta sole* on only one occasion.

It can, therefore, be concluded that the use of the Revelations image is not definitively immaculist in the fifteenth century and that, just as the image is used in art in a variety of contexts, it is also used in poetry in a variety of contexts. The text of Revelations 12.1 was consistently allied in the fifteenth century to a variety of images of the Virgin rather than solely to her Immaculate Conception. The images of the Virgin as Queen of heaven predominate and these images may or may not be intended to be immaculist. All the other immaculist types, such as the Woman of Genesis or the Bride of the Canticum, are used in combination with each other, in order to signal the Conception doctrine. The lack of combination, occurring in the case of the *mulier amicta sole* and the lack of evidence from definitive immaculist sources suggests that the *mulier amicta sole* was not a favoured immaculist symbol in the period.

CONCLUSION

Study of the small number of dedicated Conception poems from the Castilian Cancioneros and of the poems from the fifteenth-century immaculist Catalan Certàmens reveals that the lively debate about the Immaculate Conception in the fifteenth century had an influence on the poetry of both Castile and Cataluña. This debate caused the Immaculate Conception to be a prime theme in Marian poetry in the fifteenth century. Six principal strands of immaculist representation in poetry have been identified in the course of this study.

In both Castilian and Catalan debate poetry about the Immaculate Conception, a close relationship exists between university methodology and the way in which poems were structured. Castilian poets used scholastic vocabulary in their discussion of the Conception theme. Certamen debate poetry also uses scholastic vocabulary to argue in favour of the Immaculate Conception. Another influence of Scholasticism is that Castilian poets refer to important theologians of the Patristic period and to their work, in order to comment on the contribution of authorities such as St Augustine and St Bernard to the immaculist debate. Catalan poets also appeal to authority in their poems. The main difference between the Catalan poets and the Castilians is that the Catalans show more interest in authorities of a contemporary nature to support their arguments, such as the

papal institution of the feast of the Conception. The Certamen poets disregard traditional authorities whose opposition was difficult to explain away. Because the theologians, writing in favour of the doctrine, were relatively recent to the fifteenth century, none earlier than the fourteenth century, conceptionists in Cataluña show little interest in more traditional authorities.

A final aspect of scholastic influence is that Catalan poets even seek to mirror scholastic theologians in the structure of the arguments they use to defend the doctrine. The high number of indefinite verb forms used by the Catalans closely relate to postulative arguments used by university teachers. The arguments poets use pick up on key arguments used by immaculists in the universities from the time of Scotus onwards. The Castilian poets did not generally make use of such arguments. Their defence of the Conception was more laudatory.

In addition to the scholastic theme, five major scriptural or apocryphal themes regularly used by poets were discerned and the extent of their usage to express the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception explored. The biblical themes included the beautiful and stainless Beloved of the Canticum; the Woman in opposition to the serpent from Genesis; feminine Wisdom and her existence at the time of Creation; the story of the active conception of the Virgin by her apocryphal parents Joachim and Anna; the Apocalyptic Woman clothed with the sun.

The poems studied show that both Castilian and Catalan poets regularly relied on the Canticum theme to describe the perfect beauty of the Virgin and her stainless nature. Whilst the *culto* term 'inmaculada' was found in only a small number of instances, mainly in Catalan poems, 'sin mansilla' and 'sens màcula' and the corresponding verb forms 'mansillar' and 'màcular' are more familiar. Synonyms to replace 'sin mansilla' such as 'sin tacha' or the Catalan 'sens taca' also find favour with poets.

Many images based on the idea of the Virgin's unblemished nature are found in Catalan poems as a variant way of expressing her stainless nature. The poets frequently use the image from alchemy or minting of pure gold without trace elements to express stainlessness. The Catalans are more imaginative in their development of the idea of stainlessness than the Castilians. The Catalans devote more poems and more space within each poem to the Immaculate Conception in general and this gives them greater opportunity to develop variants.

References to the battle between the Woman and the serpent from Genesis were used to indicate the opposition between the Virgin and original sin, and between the old creation, represented by Adam and Eve, and the new creation, represented by Christ and Mary. References to the battle are developed in some form in most poems which refer to the Immaculate Conception. Even in their use of this theme, the Castilians are more cautious than the Catalans. Sometimes it

is difficult to determine whether the Castilians intend a Genesis reference to be immaculist. As the Catalan poems are more overtly immaculist, there is no such ambivalence.

Biblical references with resonances of creation or pre-creation from Proverbs or Ecclesiasticus provide a little-recognized link factor in any consideration of immaculist images. These references provide the necessary focus on salvation history, linking the Virgin to the beginning of time, with special reference to the time before the Fall, when human beings were created without sin. Such references provide an opportunity for writers to show the economy of salvation in operation. By placing the Virgin in creation from the very beginning, poets allude to her unique role in the history of salvation and depict her as clothed in the original justice of which the rest of humanity was deprived. A particular feature of the study of the creation and pre-creation theme is the way in which Catalan poets focus on Proverbs Wisdom references and Castilians focus on Ecclesiasticus. Creation imagery is an essential factor in the fifteenth century in determining whether a reference to the Virgin is intended to be immaculist or not.

In Italian art, the number of artists painting the meeting of Anna and Joachim at the Golden Gate was in decline by the end of the fifteenth century. Stratton's study of Spanish art, however, revealed an increase in interest in depicting scenes from the apocryphal Gospels, which reflects an increase in interest in the Conception of

Mary. It seemed possible that this flurry of artistic works, using apocryphal stories to describe Mary's Conception, might be reflected in immaculist poetry. This supposition was not borne out by study of the poems. Interest in the apocryphal pre-birth and nativity events of the Virgin's life was not mirrored by a parallel focussing on non-scriptural events in Castilian or Catalan poetry in the fifteenth century. Alfonso el Sabio, in the thirteenth century, uses the stories from the apocryphal Gospels to focus on Mary's parentage, sanctity and active conception without relating them to the Immaculate Conception, whilst, by the fifteenth century, the apocryphal Gospel stories are used to refer to the Nativity and infancy of the Virgin. Alfonso X, from the *CSM* evidence, shows no awareness of the Conception feast and uses the stories as evidence of the inter-uterine sanctification of the Virgin, in order to prove her sanctified birth. A clear distinction between the Conception and the Nativity events has been made by the fifteenth century. In Catalan poetic allusions, by the fifteenth century, the apocryphal nativity stories appear to be considered inappropriate to discussion of the Immaculate Conception.

In examining the theme of the Immaculate Conception, expectations about the way in which the doctrine would be expressed by poets were consistently overturned. This was especially true of the *mulier amicta sole* image from Revelations, which by the late sixteenth century became the principal way of depicting the Conception doctrine. From

evidence gathered from the Catalan poems, it is apparent that poets did not regularly use the *mulier amicta sole* to allude to the Immaculate Conception but rather to the Glorification or to the Assumption of the Virgin. The distinction, although fine, provides an important insight into the development of immaculist images, since, at a later stage, the image of Mary in terms of the Woman of the Apocalypse becomes inseparable from depiction of the Conception doctrine in art. The insight into the gradual development of the New Testament vision of the Woman, clothed with the sun and standing on the moon, into the most common artistic representation of the Immaculate Conception by the seventeenth century reveals an area of Conception history which would merit further study.

Conception images were in the process of being developed out of Marian images which had been in use with reference to other events in the life of the Virgin. Typological images were thus in a state of fluidity and for this reason careful examination of the individual context of each possible immaculist reference has been required.

A thematic study of the Conception doctrine cannot fail to highlight the fact that biblical allusions are rarely used in isolation. Once the apocryphal stories had fallen from favour as an illustration of the Conception of the Virgin, there was a *lacuna* to be filled in respect of portrayal of this aspect of the Virgin's life. There was a certain reluctance to portray the active conception of the

Virgin by the apocryphal parents, as described in the

apocryphal Gospels. Poets wanted a more subtle means

of portraying the doctrine which would allow them to

demonstrate their understanding of the theological

discussions. It is by combining a number of biblical

references that poets sought to portray the difficult

concept of Mary Immaculate. The biblical references they

chose were references which had been applied to the Virgin

for centuries but which began to take on new meanings in the

period. The biblical typology from the Canticum or from

Genesis was not in any sense new but represented an

adaptation of typological representations of the Virgin

which had been in use for many centuries. The combination of

a series of biblical types of the Virgin alert the reader to

the fact that the images are being used in an immaculist

sense, particularly where the poets add pre-creation imagery

and present their arguments using scholastic concepts and

language.

There are important differences in the way in which

these combinations are made. In the case of the Catalan

poets, combinations of images from the Canticum, from

Genesis and from Proverbs are often used in conjunction with

borrowings from the scholastic methods of presenting an

argument. The poetry, whilst presenting arguments in support

of the doctrine, shows a high degree of lyric imagery. The

imagery used builds on basic Old Testament typological

parallels, developing them. The imagery used, as has been

shown, frequently centres on a small number of typological

references. However, this does not mean that the poetry is
always repetitive and uninspired, although at its worst it
can be. The poets' purpose in re-employing the same imagery
is to claim for their poem the authority of the traditional
images in scholastic style. Moreover, poets can make the
briefest of references to the traditional biblical types,
secure in the fact that such references will be recognized
and interpreted as immaculist, when taken in conjunction
with the remainder of the poem.

The combination of debate and lyric poem on an
immaculist theme is not a frequent feature of the Castilian
poems. The series of poems exchanged between Fray Lope and
Diego Martines centre solely on arguments drawn from the
great Scholastics and Fathers of the Church with specific
references to theological authorities and to the treatises
or sermons of Fathers of the Church, whilst poets choosing
a more lyric vein do not show any sign of combining their
lyric writing with scholastic arguments. Laudatory and
debate poems are closer to being independent genres in
Castilian poetry. The close correlation between Cancionero
debate poetry, about the Immaculate Conception but also
about all manner of subjects, and university debating
techniques provides a fascinating insight into this
important feature of debate poetry which, while peripheral
to this study, would yet merit further investigation.

One of the most interesting findings in this comparison
has been the discernment of the difference between the

aggressive pro-immaculist writing of the Catalans and the Castilian approach. Castilian poets take a generally more soft-toned approach to the Immaculate Conception. Castilian poets are consequently more often ambivalent about their position in the debate. A poet such as Fray Iñigo de Mendoça, in revision of his *Coplas,* omits a series of arguments in favour of the doctrine, although he is a Franciscan: 'por no hazer cosquillas a nadie'. The gloss on Gómez Manrique's poem, 'Loores e suplicaciones a Nuestra Señora', admits the ambivalence. The poem is written so as to allow either sanctification or preservation from original sin to be read into the lines, whilst the author 'no se determino'. There is a major difference between the rampant support of the Catalans, dedicated to campaigning for the Immaculate Conception, and the low-key allusions to the doctrine afforded by the Castilians, even amongst Franciscans. It is likely that political support for the doctrine in Cataluña played a key role in determining the level of immaculism amongst the nobility and bourgeoisie who embraced the doctrine wholeheartedly.

Another interesting finding which requires highlighting is the dearth of poems which attack the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In Castilian poetry, the poems of Diego Martines de Medina are exceptional because they are rare examples of poems which attack the doctrine. It is probable that the series of poems including Diego Martines' non-immaculist poems is preserved because each poem is counter-attacked in its turn by the vehement Fray Lope. In

Aragón and Valencia, given the official support for the
immaculist viewpoint, it is hardly surprising that no non-
immaculist poems survive. Certainly, any such poems were not
welcome at the Certàmens and would not have been favourably
regarded by the ruling élite. It is interesting to speculate
whether any Catalan anti-immaculist poetry was written and
whether it merely did not survive. It might well be that
maculists kept a low profile on the Immaculate Conception,
emphasizing other scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary
and merely refrained from mentioning the Immaculate
Conception in their poems.

What is certain is that in theology, as in literature,
the fifteenth century represents a consolidation of support
for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception with a large
number of poems, particularly in Cataluña, written in its
favour. Even in Cataluña, evidence from the poems shows,
however, that attack on the doctrine continues from the
pulpit. Secular priests still refused to celebrate the
Conception feast in Cataluña, even after its institution by
Pope Sixtus. Vituperation continues in Castile also, causing
even avowed immaculists, like Fray Iñigo de Mendoça, to
tread warily. The consolidation of support for the doctrine
during the fifteenth century focussed attention on the
Immaculate Conception and led poets to combine scriptural
allusions and to turn to supporting arguments from reason,
in order to attempt to express the new Marian perspective
which had no historical basis in the Bible.

A final point is that, whilst this thesis limits its remit to the fifteenth century and to works of poetry only, now that the themes pertaining to the Immaculate Conception have been uncovered, they can be applied to works of prose in the period and will contribute to a greater understanding not only of Marian literature but also to deeper knowledge of a subject which inspired so many poets and artists in Spain from the fifteenth century onwards.

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GLOSSARY
THEOLOGICAL TERMS[1]

Animation	The moment of creation of the soul within the foetus in its mother's womb. Today theologians generally agree that the spiritual soul is created at the very moment when the sperm and egg fuse. In the medieval period, animation was thought to take place several weeks after conception.
Anawim	The poor of Israel, the faithful remnant awaiting the Messiah
Apocalyptic	The unveiling of what is covered or hidden; genre of literature covering the last things and the end of the world; more widely revelatory literature concerned with eschatology, often containing dreams, allegories and elaborate symbolism. The New Testament Apocalyptic literature is called Revelations.
Apocrypha	Books which are not canonical, in other words they are not accepted by the Church as forming part of the inspired books of the Bible. There is some disagreement about whether some books, such as Ecclesiasticus, are part of the Canon or not. Both Old Testament and New Testament apocryphal literature is encountered: apocryphal Wisdom literature (Old Testament) and apocryphal Gospels (New Testament).
Augustinian	Relating to St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) bishop, theologian and saint.
Conception, active	The procreative act, the 'informing' of the matter provided by the woman by the semen provided by the man.
Conception, Immaculate	The belief and doctrine that the Virgin Mary is the unique exception to the law of original sin. Grace is believed to have intervened at the very instant at which life began, preventing sin from touching her in any way and making her holy and immaculate or sinless from the moment of her conception.

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[1] Reference is acknowledged to David F. Ford, ed., *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989, repr. 1990).

Conception, passive	The coming into existence of a newly created being. Many Medieval theologians did not consider that passive creation was complete until animation was complete.
Conception, virginal	The conception of Christ by the Virgin Mary, who remained a Virgin *in partu* and *post partum*.
Christocentric	Thought or theology which makes Christ central.
Divine economy	God's plan for salvation, incorporating the whole universe.
Doctrine	A teaching which is laid down as true within the Church.
Dogma	A doctrine which has been defined as a truth and authoritatively stated. In order for a doctrine to become an official dogma of the Church it must have been revealed by God and handed down from the Apostles.
Dominican	Of or relating to the religious order of preaching friars, founded by St Dominic (1170-1221).
Election	Doctrine which holds that God chooses people for salvation.
Eschatology	Doctrine of the *eschaton*, or ultimate destiny of the world.
Franciscan	Of or relating to the religious order of Friars Minor, founded by St Francis of Assisi.
Immaculist	Those who supported the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.
Incarnation	The event of God becoming a human being.
Maculist	Those who held that the Virgin was conceived in original sin in common with all humanity but that she was sanctified immediately after her animation.
Mariology	Branch of theology concerning Mary, the Mother of Christ.
Original Sin	Doctrine of the radical corruption of all humanity through the sin of Adam and Eve, receiving its classical formulation from Augustine. Present-day theologians interpret original sin as the absence of grace, transmitted by the fact of sharing in human

nature. Augustine considered original sin to be transmitted by concupiscence from parent to child.

Patristic Referring to the Fathers of the Church, usually covering the first five centuries A.D.

Predestination Doctrine of the eternal decision and knowledge of God with respect to the destiny of human beings as regards salvation or damnation (sometimes called the doctrine of election and rejection). The term of Mary's predestination is the Divine Motherhood; others are predestined to beatitude or to the eternal possession of God.

Pre-redemption Prior to the general redemption of humanity by Christ on the Cross, his Mother was redeemed, as befitted her role, in a special way.

Prevenient Usually referring to God's grace as having initiative in relation to human action, and being its prior cause or condition.

Redemption Literally, buying back (relating originally to slave-buying or ransom payments) for atonement, reconciliation or salvation; the act or process by which liberation from bondage (described variously as sin, death, the law, the devil) takes place.

Revelation Disclosure of what was previously unknown; in theology the disclosure to human beings by God of his nature, salvation or will.

Salvation history
Those events which the Bible relates as revealing God's action for the salvation of the world.

Sanctification Process of being brought to a state of holiness.

Scholasticism \ Scholastic theology
Education, methods and theology of the thirteenth century Christian thinkers, often called medieval Schoolmen and of their followers in later times, notable especially for their application of logic to theology as for their systematic attempts to reconcile faith and reason.

Thomism Term for the theology of, and the schools of thought stemming from, Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274).

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