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Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century in Aragon: Reassessing a Panorama of Fragmentary Sources

Abstract: This essay takes a further step in identifying the patterns of provenance of the Aragonese fragments of *ars nova* polyphony, thus recalibrating the way we think about the connection between the original manuscripts and local institutions and individuals. Most of the manuscripts' provenances curiously coincide with court itineraries in royal cities such as Barcelona, Gerona and Vilafranca del Penedès, while a number of fragments were recovered from parish archives in small villages within the area between the Royal Monastery of Poblet and city of Cervera. While none of the surviving fragments can be securely identified with the polyphonic books commissioned by kings John I (b. 1350, r. 1387–1396) and Martin I (r. 1396–1410), archival evidence suggests that the royal court was indeed a major force behind the dissemination of *ars nova* polyphony in late medieval Catalonia.

Modern understanding of late medieval music history owes much to the publication of the monumental series *Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century* (hereinafter *PMFC*).¹ Carefully organised in twenty-four volumes, the edition not only made available the contents of a large number of sources, but also shaped a largescale picture of the polyphonic styles that arose in fourteenth-century Europe. Volume *PMFC 23, French Sacred Music*, thus contributed to consolidating the notion of a 'French repertory' of liturgical polyphony.² Its main sources are the well-known codices Ivrea, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS 115 (Iv 115) and Apt,

1 Schrade *et al.* (eds) 1956–1991.

2 In general lines, *PMFC* classified these repertoires according to three main areas of provenance: French, Italian and English. The notion of a 'French repertory' had already been established in Stäblein-Harder 1962a and 1962b. The idea that most of this repertory emanated from papal Avignon has its origins in the early twentieth century. See Besseler 1925.

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Cathédrale Sainte-Anne, Trésor, 16bis (Apt 16bis), as well as a large number of fragmentary manuscripts preserved in libraries and archives of Catalonia – formerly a territory of the Crown of Aragon. Although the very idea of a ‘central French tradition’ needs to be nuanced or even challenged, the fact is that *PMFC 23* provides a stylistically consistent body of repertory, to which the Aragonese sources contribute substantially. No fewer than one third of the 130 pieces edited in *PMFC 23* are transmitted in Aragonese manuscripts.

In contrast with other regions of modern-day France and Spain, Catalonia presents an extraordinary panorama of sources of *ars nova* polyphony; a dozen manuscripts datable roughly between the late 1370s and the 1420s come from historical archives within this relatively small area. The great majority of these manuscripts have survived fragmentarily.³ The most substantial codices were dismembered in the sixteenth century, some of their parchment leaves being reused as wrappers for documents that happened to survive in ecclesiastical archives. Most of these fragments were discovered by Higiní Anglès between the 1910s and the early 1930s, and six of them were brought to the Biblioteca de Catalunya in Barcelona by Anglès himself, who was appointed the library’s Head of the Music Department in 1917.⁴ Unfortunately, with only one exception, Anglès did not provide the library with information on the fragments’ provenance. His scholarly writings offer a few clues, but given that some of the fragments remained unpublished during Anglès’ lifetime, crucial information on their provenance was lost with his death in 1969. This essay traces back the patterns of provenance of the Aragonese fragments of *ars nova* polyphony, and provides new insights into the nature of the original manuscripts as well as the mechanisms of dissemination of the repertory.⁵

3 Ironically, the only two Aragonese collections of *ars nova* polyphony that have been preserved intact are not codices, but small booklets. The famous *Llibre vermell* of the Abbey of Montserrat (Mo 1) constitutes an exception. The manuscript originally consisted of 172 folios (around 36 were lost in the nineteenth century), of which six contain music (21r–26v; only a few musical folios are lost, see Anglès 1955, 45). This manuscript was preserved because of the literary value of the compilation of miracles it contains.

4 For a Anglès’ biography, see Dolç 1988.

5 Reproductions and inventories of the manuscripts are available at <diamm.ac.uk>. For reference to the cities’ and villages’ locations, see the map in Fig. 13 below. The documents from the Arxiu de la Conona d’Aragó (ACA) cited in this article are available in the database *Ministrers i música a la Corona d’Aragó medieval (MiMus DB)*, in progress at <mimus.ub.edu>.

1 Barcelona

1.1 Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, M. 853 (Ba 853)

Ba 853 consists of a fragmentary bifolio containing three Mass movements – all of them *unica* – and possibly three motets, including [*Apollinis*]/*Zodiacum* and *Zolomina*/[*Nazarea*].⁶ Anglès never specified where exactly he found Ba 853.⁷ In 1941, however, he felt safe in stating that ‘this fragment comes, without any doubt, from the Chapel Royal in Barcelona’.⁸ Since then, the fragment’s origin has never been questioned. Anglès’ categorical statement might have lead readers to assume that his conclusion was based on the fragment’s actual ‘provenance’, that is, the place where it was discovered. Anglès had indeed long studied the rich archives of the Crown of Aragon, marvelling at the wealth of references to singers and books of polyphony in royal letters and documents.⁹ However, while there are good reasons for believing that Anglès found Ba 853 somewhere in Barcelona, evidence suggests that the fragment was not discovered in royal archives.

Ba 853 was used as a wrapper for a booklet whose contents were recorded by a hand from the middle or second half of the sixteenth century, writing: ‘Llibre de albarans de la Senyora Francina Corneta’ (‘Book of invoices of Lady Francina Corneta’; see Fig. 1).¹⁰

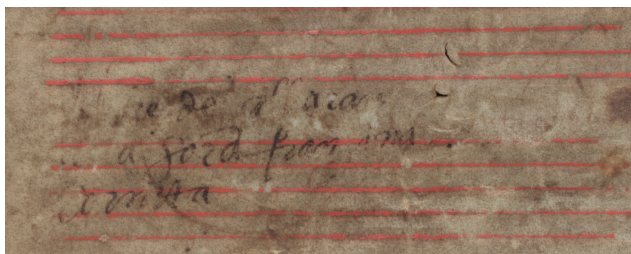
6 The possible identification of a third motet is discussed below in this section. The bifolio was not the centre of a gathering; most of the pieces are incomplete because of the missing facing pages.

7 The fragment was described for the first time by Bessler (1925, 200–201), whom Anglès had provided with photographic reproductions.

8 Anglès 1941, 26: ‘Este fragmento procede, sin duda, de la Capilla Real de Barcelona’. Anglès insisted on this idea when he referred to ‘algunos códices fragmentarios, procedentes de la antigua Capilla Real de Barcelona’, Anglès 1948, 21.

9 See especially Bessler 1925, 200, and Anglès 1925a, 1925b, 1930 and 1957.

10 My warmest thanks to Daniel Villarubias for helping to decipher this inscription. For reference in future research, the booklet of documents measured around 215 × 155 mm. The inscription (current f. 2v) was written over an erasure, which indicates that the fragment had previously been used to cover other documents. Current f. 1r contains pen trials with Latin phrases and traditional proverbs in Catalan: ‘*Dominus Domino meo sede a dextris meis / poca consciència, molta diligència / poca vergonya, molta [...] e paga ab bossa*’.



UV

Fig. 1: Ba 853, f. 2v (inscription: ‘Llibre de albarans de la S[en]yora Francina Corneta’); © Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya.

The Cornets were a well-known family of merchants in Barcelona.¹¹ Berenguer Cornet was a member of the City Council and founded an ecclesiastical benefice at the Cathedral.¹² A document dated August 1534 records the name of his widow, ‘Francina Corneta’, due to her involvement in the sale of a large house in Barcelona.¹³ Although tracing the archival history of Francina’s book of invoices will require further research, the connection between the Cornet family and Barcelona Cathedral invites us to entertain an alternative hypothesis on the

¹¹ Obradors 2015, 109–110. See also Marimon 2002.

¹² A benefice which, in 1573, was granted to his grandson, Pau Cornet Franquesa, doctor in theology. Marimon 2002, 276. The Cathedral archives attest to further interesting connections between the Cornet family and the Cathedral throughout the sixteenth century (Carbonell 2000). For Berenguer’s involvement in the City Council, see Carreras 1912, 45.

¹³ Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, Arxiu Històric, Perg. 310 (Registre 20940). Francina is referred to as the widow of Berenguer Cornet, merchant of Barcelona. The name ‘Francina Corneta’ appears in the last line of the document. Thus far, this is the only Francina Corneta that I was able to find in documents preserved at the Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona, Arxiu Municipal de Barcelona, and Arxiu Històric of the Biblioteca de Catalunya. As for Berenguer Cornet’s death, a supplication to the City Council dated August 1533 states that he was elderly and had an incurable illness (Carreras 1912, 146).

origins of Ba 853 by shifting the focus from the Royal Palace to the building standing next to it.

Polyphonic music had been cultivated at Barcelona Cathedral since at least the thirteenth century. A late medieval inventory records a substantial book of polyphony displaying all the features typical of an *ars antiqua* manuscript such as the famous codex Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteus 29.1 (manuscript F). The inventory describes a small-sized book of old counterpoint, which began with the organum *Viderunt omnes* (also the opening piece in manuscript F) and ended with the word *Samsonis* on the last folio (this might be the end of *Vite perditte*, a two-part conductus of which manuscript F copies only the first strophe on f. 356r).¹⁴ Moreover, the cathedral archives still preserve a practical treatise on mensural notation and *ars nova* theory that can be dated to the 1330s, thus suggesting that the *ars nova* was already being explored in Barcelona prior to the arrival of the first French singers at the royal chapel in 1347.¹⁵ The cathedral school of Barcelona was a major learning hub which attracted clerics and cantors from all over the Principality of Catalonia, especially Vilafranca del Penedès, Gerona, Tarragona, Vic, and Urgell.¹⁶ Barcelona Cathedral, therefore, acted not only as a training centre but also as an important dissemination point for polyphonic music in fourteenth-century Catalonia.

When considering the possible origins of Ba 853, we should also bear in mind that the cathedral was one of the main providers of old parchment in sixteenth-century Barcelona. Like the royal singers, cathedral priests and canons owned their own personal manuscripts, which, after the owner's death, were legated to other fellows or to the cathedral chapter to be sold in public auctions. At least eight different manuscripts of polyphony are unambiguously recorded in inventories of books that had belonged to cathedral priests and

¹⁴ 'Item alium librum parvum, cohoptum de corio rubeo laborato, de contrapuncto antiquo; habet in primo folio scriptum *Viderunt* et finit ultimo *Samsonis*'. Arxiu Diocesà de Barcelona, *Visites Pastorals*, XII, recording the visit of the bishop-patriarch of Barcelona Francesc Climent Saperà on 13 March 1421. For further insights into the standardization of thirteenth-century Parisian books of polyphony, see Bevilacqua/Catalunya/Torres 2018. The recent discovery of a new fragment in the library of an antiquarian in Barcelona represents the first example matching this type of *ars antiqua* manuscript found in Catalan archives (see my forthcoming study: 'New Fragments of a Thirteenth-century *liber organi*: A Note of Discovery').

¹⁵ Catalunya 2018. On the hiring of French singers at the royal chapel, see Gómez 1979, 83–85.

¹⁶ The lay cathedral school taught the full liberal arts curriculum and awarded the degree of Master of Arts. It reached its peak with 562 students enrolled in 1345 (Murall 2012).

canons deceased between 1436 and 1470.¹⁷ Some of these polyphonic books are described as old (*antich*) and could date from the fourteenth century or c.1400. Obsolete manuscripts of little value (*poch valor*) were then sold as scrap parchment to notaries and bookbinders.

The extremely close ties between the cathedral and the royal palace in Barcelona, however, also need to be considered here. The cathedral was certainly a major platform for the communication of royal power. Historians have long argued that the cathedral functioned in many respects as an extension of the royal palace.¹⁸ Since only a very narrow street separated the two buildings, King Martin I built a bridge with a passageway that enabled him to attend the cathedral Offices privately from the palace. Unsurprisingly, the monarchy took great care to ensure the solemnity of the cathedral liturgy. In 1385, for example, when repairs were commenced on the Barcelona Cathedral organ, King Peter IV immediately ordered one of the organs in the chapel of the royal palace to be moved to the cathedral, because ‘it would not be good for the see to remain without an organ’.¹⁹ The intensive cultivation of *ars nova* polyphony fostered by John I and his French singers at the Royal Palace obviously had an important impact on the cathedral’s musical life. We can assume with confidence that cathedral cantors copied or acquired polyphonic manuscripts originating in the context of the royal chapel.

But even assuming the possibility that a book from the royal chapel could potentially have ended up at the cathedral library, one reason for casting doubt on the ‘royal’ origins of Ba 853 – at least as a formal commission – is the manuscript’s moderate scribal quality. Most notably, the initial letters remained incomplete, and the fact that the staves lack indentation to accommodate these initials suggests that there was no intention to execute refined decorative work. Close palaeographical analysis, moreover, reveals the manuscript’s informal nature. The bifolio’s content results from the work of three different scribes (see Fig. 2):

¹⁷ Iglesias 1996, nos 184.68; 218.8 (=219.19); 223.10,11; 288.1,3,7; 323.19 (=324.18).

¹⁸ See Sobrino 2013, and Carrero 2014.

¹⁹ Gómez 1979, doc. 222. The same instrument was lent to the cathedral again in 1390, this time referred to as the ‘orgens menors’ of King John I (Baucells 1988, 64–65). This implies that the Chapel Royal was provided with two organs: a large, fixed instrument, and a smaller, positive organ. For insights into the connection between the organ and the cultivation of polyphony in Iberian cathedrals see Catalunya 2017 and 2020.

- Scribe A copied the duplum *Zodiacum* (f. 1r, lines 1–5), the tenor *In omnem terram* (f. 1r, line 5) and the beginning of an untexted additional triplum²⁰ for the motet [*Apollinis*]/*Zodiacum* (f. 1r, line 6), as well as the triplum of the motet *Zolomina*/[*Nazarea*] (f. 1v). His textual script is an inelegant *cursiva formata cancelleresca*.²¹ This script is more typical of episcopal documents than of high-standard codices. Scribe A's hand can be dated approximately to around 1395 or 1400.
- Scribe B copied the three Mass movements on f. 2r–v, as well as the continuation of the untexted additional triplum for the motet [*Apollinis*]/*Zodiacum* on f. 1r, of which Scribe A copied only the beginning. Scribe B combined two kinds of textual scripts; a *textualis formata (libraria)* for the Gloria's upper voice on f. 2r, and an angular *cursiva* for the textual incipits of the lower voices. The textual incipits of the Gloria on f. 2v, however, are written in *textualis* script. This inconsistency in the use of different kinds of scripts, even by the same scribe, is indicative of the informal status of the original codex. Scribe B's musical hand appears in the additional triplum for [*Apollinis*]/*Zodiacum* (f. 1r, line 6) from the eleventh note onwards.²² The use of different forms of custodes at the end of lines confirms that the music Scribes A and B are different persons.²³ Scribe A's custodes consist of a curl with a short wavy ending, while Scribe B draws his custodes with a simpler hook ending with a long stroke.
- Scribe C copied the contratenor labelled *Per sanctam civitatem* on the eleventh staff of f. 1r. The pens he used for text and music are slightly thicker than those of Scribes A and B. Subtle distinctive features in the textual script are also noticeable. Moreover, Scribe C used yet a third form of custos: a square notehead-like pen stroke with upward and downward tails.²⁴


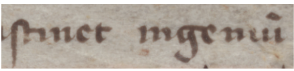
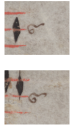

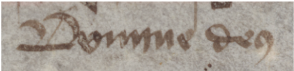
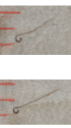

20 This added triplum is an *unicum* in Ba 853; it was not reported in PMFC 5, no. 9, but is transcribed in Gómez 1985c. For new transcriptions of all the added parts for this motet, see Bent 2021 (forthcoming).

21 In this article, I use script nomenclatures according to the Liefinck system, as used in Derolez 2003.

22 Evidence of this shift in hands is the change in the ink and in the size of the diamond-shaped note heads.

23 In her study of Dominican music scribes, Eleanor Giraud shows how variations in elements such as clefs and custodes are often better indicators of the presence of different hands than the square components of notation (Giraud 2013).

24 Here the custos is meant to clarify the repetition of the talea. The same form of custos is found in other manuscripts, such as Ba 853c/d (see below).

	cursive textualis	cursive	custos
Scribe A			
Scribe B			
			

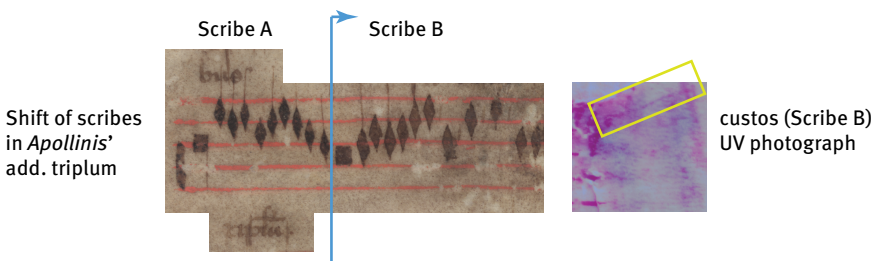


Fig. 2: Ba 853, scribal hands; manuscript reproduction © Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya.

It has been claimed that Ba 853 transmits a five-part version of the motet *Apollinis/Zodiacum*, the contratenor labelled *Per sanctam civitatem* being inter-

preted as its fifth voice.²⁵ While this claim has long persisted without criticism in musicological literature, a close look at Gómez Muntané's proposed transcription reveals some considerable issues.²⁶ In order to force the contratenor to fit the piece, Gómez Muntané introduced a great deal of rhythmic 'modification'.²⁷ Even so, the resulting polyphony is dissonant to the extent that it should be considered unviable; the emended contratenor collides with the original duplum and triplum on at least twelve occasions. Having now established that this contratenor was copied by a secondary scribe, it would seem more likely that Scribe C notated the contratenor of another, now lost motet, one of whose upper voices began with the words *Per sanctam civitatem*.²⁸ According to the reconstructed layout of the motet [*Apollinis*]/*Zodiacum* in Fig. 3, the missing facing page of current f. 1r would have left little space to accommodate the tenor and duplum of this additional motet. Scribe C must have added this motet elsewhere on spare staves and did not have enough space to copy the entire piece in one single manuscript opening. The labelling of the untexted contratenor was thus necessary in order to identify the piece to which it belonged.

²⁵ *RISM* (1969), 89; Gómez 1985c.

²⁶ I thank Margaret Bent for calling my attention to the problems raised by this contratenor. In an unpublished paper on the 'musician motets' circulated to participants in the Novacella conference 2013, she stated that the contratenor *Per sanctam civitatem* does not fit the motet *Apollinis/Zodiacum*. This work will appear in revised form as a chapter in her new book on the late medieval motet (Bent 2021, forthcoming).

²⁷ Gómez 1985c, 25.

²⁸ No plainchant containing these words has been identified. The labelling of untexted tenor lines, such as *In omnem terram*, served to identify the plainchant melody from which the tenor was excerpted, which was usually chosen by the composer for its symbolic meaning relevant to the topic of the motet's text. In the case of the motet *Apollinis/Zodiacum*, the tenor line *In omnem terram* is taken from an Offertory for the common of apostles, whose full text is eloquently suited to a motet exalting famous musicians and singers: *In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum, et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum* ('Their voice has gone out through all the earth, their words to the end of the world').

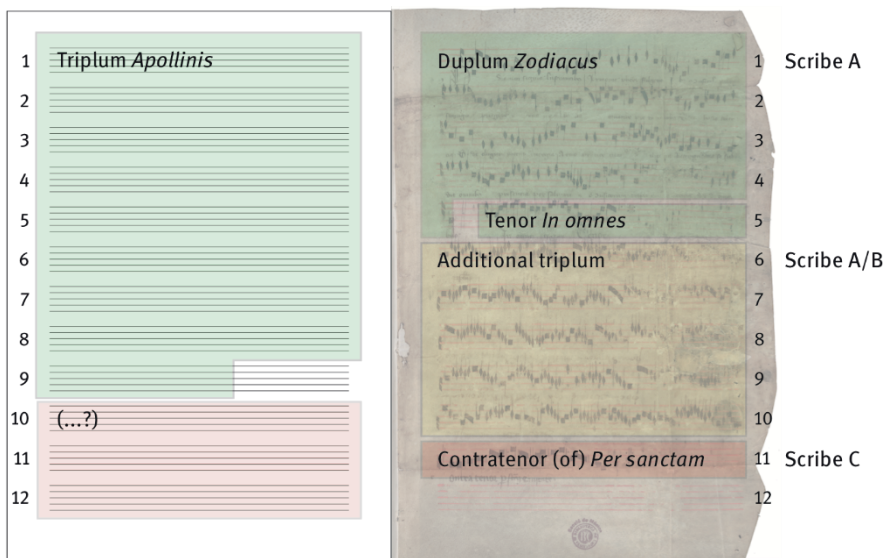


Fig. 3: Ba 853, page layout of the motet *Apollinis/Zodiacus*; manuscript reproduction © Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya.

The identification of a new, now-lost motet highlights the uniqueness of Ba 853's repertory; four out of six fragmentarily surviving pieces are *unica*, while the widely-spread motet *Apollinis/Zodiacum* was provided with a new triplum. The original manuscript possibly passed through various hands before it was dismembered, yet, in any case, it does not seem to have originated as a royal commission. While the scribal quality reveals the collection's informal character, the fact that motets and Mass movements were copied in the same gathering by different scribes suggests some degree of randomness in the compilation process. These scribes were possibly a group of learned clerics or professional singers copying music in a 'working document'.²⁹

²⁹ See the parallels with the codex Iv 115, which Kügle describes as a 'working document' (Kügle 2019, 19).

1.2 Barcelona, Biblioteca de l'Orfeó Català, Ms 2 (Orf 2)

Orf 2 is a single-quire booklet of eight folios, which has survived nearly intact.³⁰ It contains four pieces, all of them Mass movements: one troped Gloria, one Agnus Dei, one Credo, and one troped Kyrie. Only ff. 1v–5r are filled with music, while the remaining pages contain empty staves. Modern scholarship has often remarked on the informal character of the compilation, which would seem 'more typical of an amateur than a professional musician'.³¹ Tomasello distinguished the hands of three different scribes who worked in close collaboration, and suggested a dating of c.1430 for the compilation of the manuscript.³² As in Ba 853, various scribes were involved in the copying of one single piece. Orf 2 thus features all the elements typical of a personal collection of a small circle of aficionados, who held informal performances or copied music for reference and study.

The booklet's last verso contains an annotation, likely written by a later owner of the manuscript, recording a short list of books: a juridical treatise, a sermon for Good Friday, and a short treatise on sexual encounters between clerics and women.³³ While this annotation offers us an idea of the intellectual milieu of the manuscript's owner, the historical archives of Barcelona provide us with evidence of various individuals who would have been interested in consulting all these books, including a music booklet such as Orf 2. The case of Guillem Rovira (d. 1436) is one of the most fitting. Rovira was priest who held an ecclesiastical benefice linked to the altar of Saint Thecla at Barcelona Cathedral. A document dated 1425 mentions his name as an administrator of the cathedral school, where he also taught.³⁴ The inventory of goods found in his private house reveals an impressive personal library consisting of no fewer than 110 volumes.³⁵ While most of Rovira's books were treatises of logic and grammar – the subjects he taught at the cathedral school – he also owned other manuscripts covering topics related to Orf 2's list, such as Llull's *Ars iuris* and Ovid's *De remedio amoris*.³⁶ As a cathedral cleric, Rovira also possessed liturgical manu-

30 A portion of f. 7 was excised.

31 Besseler 1925, 205. See also Schrade 1956, 147, and Gómez 1993, 13.

32 Tomasello 1995, 100–105.

33 This seems to be a list of books to be consulted, acquired or loaned. The annotation is transcribed and analysed in Tomasello 1995, 101.

34 Document published in Hernando 2001, 44–45, doc. 5. See also Hernando 2001, 34, n. 79.

35 The full inventory is published in Iglesias 1996, no. 184.

36 Although the list in Orf 2 does not reveal any interest in Classical literature, Ovid's *De arte amandi et de remedio amoris* relates to the clerics' sexuality insofar as Ovid discusses rules for erotic love and also advises on how to rid oneself of an unwanted passion.

scripts, some of which were described as containing musical notation; his collection of musical manuscripts included a ‘llibret de cant d’orga’ (‘one booklet of polyphonic music’).³⁷ Some of these manuscripts were sold in a public auction after Rovira’s death.³⁸ Although it would be naïve to claim that Guillem Rovira was Orf 2’s owner, his profile clearly matches that of a cultivated cleric whose main occupation did not revolve around the performance of polyphonic music but who could have been, nevertheless, interested in acquiring a booklet similar to Orf 2.

The Biblioteca de l’Orfeó Català does not preserve any record of the provenance of this manuscript. Anglès was one of the first to see Orf 2 shortly after its discovery; he then sent photographs to Friedrich Ludwig and Heinrich Bessler, who published the first descriptions of the manuscript in 1924 and 1925.³⁹ In 1958, however, Anglès alluded to a source of fourteenth-century polyphony from the Church of Santa Maria del Mar in Barcelona.⁴⁰ Given that the provenance of all other Catalan sources of *ars nova* polyphony has now been established (see Fig. 13 below), Anglès’ allusion to a manuscript from Santa Maria del Mar can only be taken to refer to Orf 2.⁴¹ The Church of Santa Maria del Mar is one of the most magnificent buildings of the Catalan Gothic architecture.⁴² The history of this parish church serves as another example of the complex cultural network flourishing between different institutions in late medieval Barcelona. The building’s foundation stone was laid by King Alfonso of Aragon in March

37 On the Iberian Peninsula, *cant d’orga* (*cant d’orgue*, *canto de órgano*, *cantu organico*) was the standard term for mensural, composed polyphony until the seventeenth century. *Llibret* is the diminutive form for *llibre* (book).

38 Iglesias 1996, 251 and 255.

39 Ludwig 1924, 236. Bessler 1925, 205.

40 Anglès 1958, 9–10 [7–8]: ‘la música [polifónica] sagrada y la profana fue muy practicada en las capillas y casas reales de la Península, en algunos monasterios y también en las catedrales principales’; *ibidem*, n. 28: ‘otros fragmentos demuestran que la catedral de Gerona, Santa María del Mar en Barcelona y indicios que tenemos de iglesias castellanas son otros testimonios de lo que venimos diciendo’.

41 Anglès’ biography gives full credibility to this hypothesis. In a letter addressed to the bishop of Barcelona (preserved in Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà, Correspondència Anglès, 6 November 1926), Anglès stated that in 1918 he worked at the archive of Santa Maria del Mar and at the Biblioteca de l’Orfeó Català. He photographed the works of Josep Reig and Joan Pau Pujol before the archive of Santa Maria del Mar was burned during the 1936 war. Moreover, Anglès was friend with Lluís Millet, the founder of the Orfeó Català, who acquired the thirteenth-century MS 1 of the Orfeó Català from the cardinal Francesc d’Assís Vidal (Biblioteca Orfeó Català, registre del MS 1; Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà, Correspondència Anglès, 30 March 1927; 16 July 1927). The Biblioteca del Orfeó Català is only 800 meters away from Santa Maria del Mar.

42 See Domenge/Vidal 2018, and Español 2002, 131–142.

1329; the last vault boss was placed in November 1383, and in August 1384 the church was consecrated by the bishop of Barcelona. Barely ten years later (1393), the construction of an organ for the new building was commissioned from Bernat Ponç, a French cleric who was also a singer in the Aragonese royal chapel.⁴³ Moreover, there is evidence of the circulation of musical books between the parish church and the cathedral. In 1441, for example, a priest of Santa Maria del Mar acquired various books from a deceased priest of Barcelona Cathedral, including a treatise of music theory and a book of polyphony.⁴⁴ These records of book trade show the difficulty of tracing back the precise origins of manuscripts such as Orf 2 and Ba 853, which feature themselves as personal collections that might have passed through various hands.

2 Vilafranca del Penedès

Another polyphonic booklet that has survived intact is Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, M. 971 (Ba 971). It consists of a single quire of twelve folios containing nine pieces: five consecutive Mass movements known as the Barcelona Mass, two additional Mass movements, and two motets. Anglès found this manuscript in Vilafranca del Penedès, although he never specified in which archive.⁴⁵ For him, its specific provenance was merely a secondary issue. In Anglès' view, the most important aspect of Ba 971 was that it transmitted the kind of polyphony that was performed at the Chapel Royal 'in Barcelona'.⁴⁶ Gómez Muntané, following Anglès' intuition regarding the royal connection, claimed that Vilafranca could in no way be the manuscript's place of origin, since there was no musical centre in Vilafranca in the fourteenth century that could justify the presence of a manuscript like Ba 971. She argued, instead, that Ba 971 was most likely commissioned and owned by the Royal House of Aragon, and suggested that the manuscript reached Vilafranca merely by chance,

⁴³ Baldelló 1962, 232. In another document, dated on 26 July 1393, Bernat Ponç is referred to as both 'magister organorum' and 'xantre domini regis'. He held an ecclesiastical benefice in a church in Narbonne. The royal archives in Barcelona record payments to 'Bernat Ponç, xantre de la Capella del senyor rey' from 1393 to 1397; see *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1964, f. 47v).

⁴⁴ Iglesias 1996, nos 218.8 and 219.19.

⁴⁵ Ba 971's acquisition register at the Biblioteca de Catalunya is dated in November 1926.

⁴⁶ Anglès 1941, 26: 'Esta polifonía es la que se ejecutaba en la capilla de los reyes de Cataluña-Aragón en Barcelona' (Ba 971 here referred to as M. 946; includes photographic reproduction).

possibly after the royal belongings were dispersed.⁴⁷ However, both codicological and archival pieces of evidence challenge Gómez Muntané's hypothesis.

In the first place, the manuscript's typology quite clearly corresponds to that of a personal booklet compiled with limited resources. The strikingly irregular quality of Ba 971's parchment seems unsuitable for a royal commission. The manuscript's compiler, perhaps unable to acquire a homogeneous batch of parchment sheets, appears to have used spare material from different origins. He combined three different kinds of parchment ranging from the highest to the lowest quality, as shown in Fig. 4.

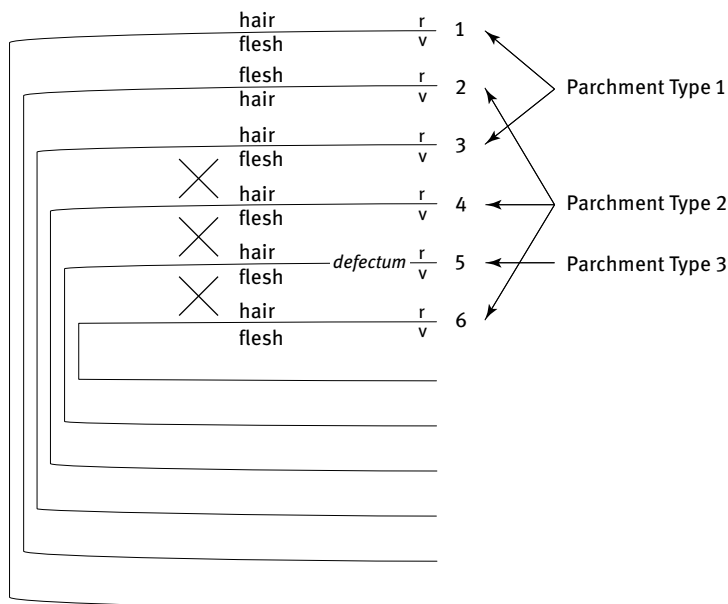


Fig. 4: Ba 971, codicological structure.

Parchment Type 1 is of the highest quality and is characterized by its thinness, light brown tone and the distinction between the skin's hair and flesh sides. Parchment Type 2 is also of good quality, albeit clearly of a different origin; its fabrication involved chemical treatment in order to whitening it, which make it hard to distinguish between the skin's hair and flesh sides. Parchment Type 3 is

⁴⁷ Gómez 1989, 6 and 24. See also Gómez 1985b, 177, and Gómez 1984, 79.

of the poorest quality; it has a yellowish colour, greasy texture, and an irregular, defective edge. Although the compiler made an effort to optimise the quire's appearance by arranging the order of the bifolios, the parchment's heterogeneity was so great that he did not consider it necessary to follow the customary practice of collating parchment leaves so that hair-side faces hair-side, and flesh-side faces flesh-side (Gregory's rule).

Moreover, the style of Ba 971's pen-flourish decoration is not consistent with that of royal manuscripts from the same period, which usually involve a much higher degree of refinement in the penwork filigrees (see a comparative example in Fig. 5).



Fig. 5: Ba 971, f. 3v (left) and Pa 5264, f. 35r, from the Chapel of Martin I of Aragon, 1409 (right); © Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The compiler not only seems to have had difficulties finding good parchment, but was also apparently unable to afford the costly blue ink – instead, he used less

expensive green ink.⁴⁸ While the use of green ink in penwork decoration is certainly atypical in royal manuscripts, this feature is not entirely uncommon in fragments recovered from parish archives in the Archdiocese of Tarragona and elsewhere.

Finally, Ba 971's copying process suggests that the manuscript's contents were not all planned as a unitary project. The five consecutive Mass movements and the motet *Degentis vita/Cum vix* (ff. 1r–9r) were copied in an initial compilation stage by the principal scribe (Scribe A). The Kyrie and the Gloria on ff. 9v–11r were copied by the same scribe in a second compilation stage; the use of a different ink and the variation in the script's module suggest some chronological distance between these two compilation stages. The motet *Apollinis/Zodiacum* on ff. 11v–12r was copied even later by a secondary scribe (Scribe B).⁴⁹ Such a cumulative compilation process would seem atypical for a commissioned manuscript. In fact, although Scribe A was a professional scribe who produced a beautiful, formal script, he does not seem to have been very much at home with copying polyphonic music. He made many mistakes, often involving rhythmic notational issues, and struggled in calculating the coordination of the parts within the page layout so that the polyphony would be complete in each opening of the manuscript. The pieces occupying more than one opening contain massive erasures of text and music, while the contratenor of the Sanctus was left incomplete because it did not fit the space reserved for it.⁵⁰ Despite the copy's low quality, a few corrections introduced by Scribe B suggest that the manuscript was, after all, used.⁵¹

In the light of the foregoing evidence, we should consider the hypothesis of a local origin of Ba 971 in Vilafranca. If, like Orf 2, Ba 971 features itself as an amateur's collection, it is still tempting to associate it with the influence of the court on the musical life of this city. Vilafranca had been a royal city since the thirteenth century, and the court spent long periods there, staying both at the city's royal palace and at the Monastery of Saint Francis.⁵² King John I used to travel with his chapel of singers and minstrels, and there is ample evidence that he took charge of musical affairs during his long stays in Vilafranca. The Archives of the Crown offer us a glimpse into the interaction of court musicians with local institutions in Vilafranca. In a letter dated in November 1387, for example, John I

⁴⁸ On ink costs, see Clarke 2001.

⁴⁹ Here the chronological distance is suggested by the fact that Scribe B worked after the manuscript had been decorated.

⁵⁰ Although these erasures clearly detract from the manuscript's appearance, they seem to have remained unnoticed in modern scholarship. See ff. 2r, 3v, 4r, 5r.

⁵¹ See ff. 2v (line 3) and 4r (line 1).

⁵² For an overview of the city's history, see Arnabat/Vidal 2008.

requested the presence of the organist Nicolau dels orguens at Vilafranca, and only a few days later, he asked his chamberlain to bring a strung keyboard instrument called *exaquier* (checker) to the same city.⁵³ Apparently, the checker was used in the performance of liturgical music, possibly as a replacement for the organ when it was not available.⁵⁴ This instrument must have travelled back and forth between Vilafranca and Barcelona on more than one occasion. In February 1392, John I ordered the checker and its wooden bench to be sent back to Barcelona, after the instrument had remained at the Monastery of Saint Francis in Vilafranca, where the king had been staying.⁵⁵ The circulation of courtly manuscripts in Vilafranca is also evidenced in the archives. In October 1391, Violant de Bar – John’s queen – asked to have her ‘cançoner gros’ (‘large chansonnier’) brought to Vilafranca.⁵⁶ Barely two months later (December 1391), John acknowledged the arrival at court in Vilafranca of two new minstrels from Avignon.

Although Anglès did not specify where exactly he found Ba 971, it is not difficult to guess which archive he visited in Vilafranca. The richest musical archive in the city is that of the Church of Saint Mary. It preserves a large collection of manuscript sources from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries.⁵⁷ Moreover, the library of the Monastery of Saint Francis was dispersed in 1835, and part of its music collection ended up at Saint Mary.⁵⁸ In a letter addressed to the bishop of Barcelona in November 1926, Anglès stated that in 1918 he had classified the musical sources in Vilafranca with the aim of preparing a cata-

53 *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1954, f. 22r; f. 27v). Nicolau dels orguens is often referred to as a ‘ministrer de corda’ (‘string minstrel’), for which reason it must have been he who played on the checker at Vilafranca. On the instrument called checker, see Page 1979.

54 In an earlier letter (1379) John speaks of both the organ and the *exaquier* in connection with the daily performance of sung Mass (Gómez 1979, doc. 227). There is also evidence that the Chapel Royal of John I kept other string instruments such as the lute, see *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 2343, f. 13v). The customary involvement of instrumentalists in the performance of sacred music is further suggested by the reference to a ‘jutglar de kíries’ in a document from 1356, see *MiMus DB* (ACA, Reial Patrimoni, MR, reg. 880, f. 77v). Tellingly, some of the court minstrels were commanded to obey the orders of the chief singer of the royal chapel, Jean Armer or Armetis. The ACA preserves numerous documents about this cantor since 1387, see *MiMus DB* (for example, ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1963, f. 163r).

55 *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1963, f. 31r).

56 *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 2054, ff. 118v–119r).

57 Cuscó 1997.

58 The musical archive of Saint Mary, including the Fons Musical de Sant Francesc, was transferred to the Vinseum in the 1940s. More recently, the Fons Musical de Sant Francesc was moved to the Arxiu Comarcal de l’Alt Penedès. I thank Joan Cuscó, director of the Musical Archives of the Vinseum, for clarifying the archival history of this collection.

logue of Spanish music up to the eighteenth century; the Church of Saint Mary was practically the only place where such a task would have made sense. As a tentative hypothesis, I suggest that Ba 971 could have originated at the Monastery of Saint Francis in Vilafranca or at the Church of Saint Mary in the same city. The possible connection with the community of Saint Francis would seem obvious; the monks must have been charmed by the polyphonic performances they witnessed while John I stayed at the monastery with some of his musicians, and may have wanted to compile a small token of the repertory. As for the Church of Saint Mary, it is not difficult to imagine that the clerics of the city's main church also developed an interest in emulating the splendour of royal liturgy, as Barcelona Cathedral did.⁵⁹ The local clergy of Vilafranca might have been less experienced in polyphonic music than the royal singers, but would nonetheless have had no difficulty in accessing manuscript exemplars.

3 Gerona

Like Barcelona and Vilafranca, Gerona was another royal city in which the presence of the court left remarkable imprints. Gerona Cathedral was one of the largest and richest sees in the Principality of Catalonia. The magnificence of its medieval liturgy is well known in modern scholarship thanks to a celebrated customary dated to 1360.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, while this customary prescribes polyphonic performances *cum triplo* of responsories and alleluias on major feast days such as Holy Innocents, it does not reflect the practice of the kind of repertory transmitted in *ars nova* sources – namely Mass movements and motets. Manuscript evidence discussed below suggests that the cultivation of *ars nova* polyphony was fostered at Gerona Cathedral – at least with greater intensity – in the times of John I, who was also the duke of Gerona. A good example of the direct influence of the court ceremonial in royal cities is found in a 1395 mandate of John I addressed to his officials in Gerona, commanding them to have the Feast of the Immaculate Conception solemnised with trumpet processions and Divine Offices in the church the same way as this was done ‘at court’.⁶¹ As a

⁵⁹ For an overview of the history of this church, see Miret 1987. The choir school is documented since 1314; the church had been provided with an organ probably in the late fourteenth century. See also Cuscó 2013.

⁶⁰ Gerona, Arxiu Capitular, MS 9. This customary exhibits pen-flourish decoration worthy of a royal manuscript. For a selected bibliography on this customary, see Sureda 2014, 43–44.

⁶¹ *MiMus DB* (ACA, Reial Patrimoni, MR, reg. 397, f. 166v).

royal city, Gerona hosted the court on numerous occasions. In December 1381, for example, John asked his entire chapel to move to Gerona, as he had decided to celebrate Christmas there.⁶² John visited the city again in June 1390 and asked to have his checker brought to Gerona.⁶³ At least one singer in his royal chapel was also a priest in Gerona.⁶⁴

Around 1930, Anglès brought to the Biblioteca de Catalunya a fragment from a beautiful manuscript of *ars nova* polyphony that he had discovered in the archives of Gerona Cathedral, and attached it as an appendix to Ba 971. In 1956 Hana Harder and Bruno Stäblein discovered a second bifolio from the same manuscript at Gerona Cathedral. This second bifolio, Ge 33/I, is still kept in Gerona together with yet another *ars nova* fragment from the same cathedral, Ge 33/II.⁶⁵ The two bifolios Ba 971b-Ge 33/I contain five fragmentary pieces: one Gloria, three Credos, and one motet in the Provençal language.⁶⁶ This fragment can be dated, on palaeographic grounds, in the last quarter of the fourteenth century or c.1400. Because the surviving leaves preserve original foliation, we can partially reconstruct the original manuscript's gathering structure (Fig. 6; includes Ge 33/II, discussed below).

Unlike the sources discussed above, Ba 971b-Ge 33/I epitomises the highest standards of manuscript production and shares features with royal commissions such as Pa 5264 (Fig. 7).⁶⁷ The parchment is of top quality, the script extremely refined and legible, and the copying process sophisticated and laborious. The staves were rastroed after the text had been written in order to accommodate the many beautiful initial letters placed in the middle of the lines with indentations.⁶⁸ The initials were further highlighted with a yellow pigment, which has faded due to the fragment's deterioration, but which is still clearly noticeable under certain light conditions, especially UV radiation. The manuscript's original appearance must therefore have been much more luminous than it is today.

62 *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1665, f. 74r). Gómez 1979, doc. 236.

63 *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1873, f. 67v). Gómez 1979, doc. 191.

64 'a l'amat nostre en Pere Banyut, prevere de Gerona, lo qual per xantre ha servit en nostra Capella', *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1889, f. 142r).

65 Harder/Stäblein 1957.

66 See the comments on the motet's language in PMFC 5, Supplement, 32, texts of motet 34.

67 Manuscript Pa 5264 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 5264), was commissioned by John I's successor, Martin I. See Avril *et al.* 1983, 110, no. 121.

68 This practice was abandoned in f. xxiii r–v, where the pages were rastroed throughout, before the text was written, although the initials are just as elaborate as those on the other folios. It is not uncommon in large collections for some pages to follow slightly different copying processes. The same occurs in the royal manuscript Pa 5264 cited above.

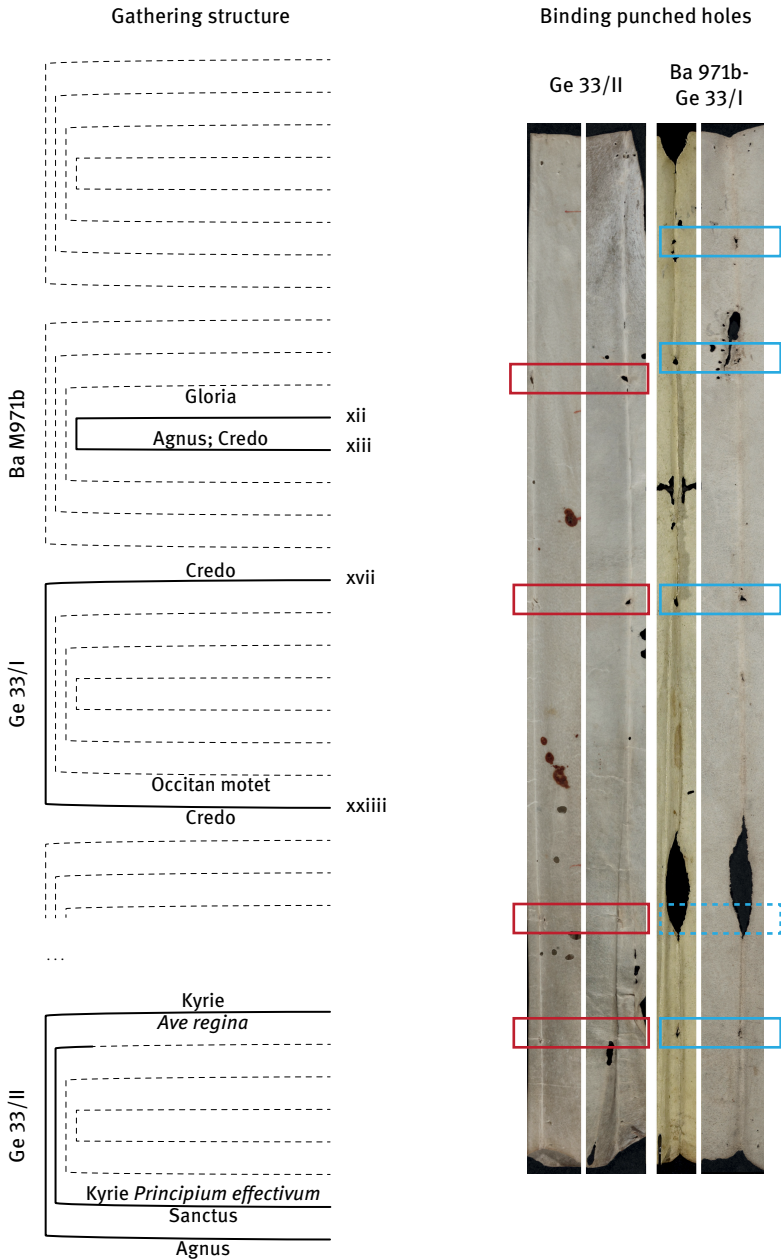


Fig. 6: Ba 971b, Ge 33/I and Ge 33/II, codicological structure.



Fig. 7: Ba 971b, f. xiir (above) and Pa 5264, f. 28v (below); © Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The second Gerona fragment, Ge 33/II, consists of one bifolio and one folio containing two Kyries, one *Ave regina* setting, one Sanctus, and one Agnus dei. This fragment was written by a different scribe and is much more modest than Ba 971b-Ge 33/I in terms of manuscript production. Yet, interestingly, the dimensions of both fragments, Ba 971b-Ge 33/I and Ge 33/II, are suspiciously identical (292 × 202 mm), so much so that the two manuscript sections would seem to have been trimmed together. This raises the question of whether Ge 33/II was part of an extension to the manuscript to which Ba 971b-Ge 33/I belonged. The analysis of the binding punched holes on the bifolios' folds is not absolutely conclusive, but sufficiently suggestive; three of the holes seems to align, while a fourth hole is close enough to its counterpart (see Fig. 6). The fact that a hole is missing in Ge 33/II, thus breaking the usual symmetry in the

position of the binding threads along the book's spine, suggests that, in any case, the bookbinder did not perform his task very carefully. Available evidence, therefore, allows for the assumption that Ba 971b-Ge 33/I and Ge 33/II were bound together in a composite codex, which I will refer to as Ba 971b-Ge 33.⁶⁹ It is tempting to speculate whether, at least the most luxurious section of the codex, had its origins in a royal commission.

4 Poblet

The most notorious example of musical exchange between the court and an ecclesiastical institution in the Crown of Aragon involves the Cistercian Monastery of Poblet. Located in the countryside at some 10 km from the royal city of Montblanc, Poblet was one of the largest and most important monasteries in the Principality of Catalonia, reaching its apex in the fourteenth century, when it became a royal monastery under the patronage of the House of Aragon.⁷⁰ In 1340 King Peter the Ceremonious founded a dynastic mausoleum in the abbey church of Poblet and, thenceforth, the Aragonese monarchy promoted important construction work, including a royal palace built inside the monastic complex.⁷¹ The abbot of Poblet held the office of royal almoner, which implied important duties within the king's household beyond merely administrating the charity funds; he joined the itinerant court, acted as a confessor and a counselor of the king, and officiated the Divine Offices and other courtly rituals together with the clerics of the royal chapel.⁷²

Although John I did not stay in Poblet for long periods, the abbot's presence at court must have sparked his interest in polyphonic music. Monastic records bear witness that a singer of the royal chapel, the French cleric Colinet le Forestier, had lent Fra Vicenç Ferrer, abbot of Poblet, a book of motets and bal-

⁶⁹ European libraries preserve various examples of similar composite codices. One of the most illustrative cases is the well-known codex Modena, Biblioteca Estense, *α.M.5.24* (Mod A), which comprises a luxurious manuscript core section that was supplemented with a later, inexpensive extension of the codex. See Stone 2005; Stoessel 2014. Another pertinent example is Apt 16bis (Tomasello 1982).

⁷⁰ For a history of Poblet, see Altisent 1974.

⁷¹ Altisent 1974, 261–336.

⁷² Monclús 2005, 161.

lades.⁷³ The document alludes to the close relationship between the abbot and the singer, who served John I from 1391.⁷⁴ After John I's death in 1396, Colinet passed to serve Charles III of Navarre and, later, the duke of Burgundy. When the news of Colinet's death reached Barcelona in 1408, two fellow singers of the royal chapel went to Poblet and asked for Colinet's book.⁷⁵ Since the abbot was absent, the book was handed over to the two singers only after they swore an oath before a monk that they would return the book were the abbot to claim his right to inherit it. This clearly shows that the monks of Poblet had access to Colinet's manuscript, and we might suppose that they copied some of its contents.⁷⁶

At least three dismembered manuscripts of *ars nova* polyphony were used as wrappers for notarial documents in villages that were under the jurisdiction of the Monastery of Poblet. The new identification of Verdú and Fullede as the provenance of these fragments, now preserved in Barcelona and Tarragona, reveals a pattern of dispersion of obsolete manuscripts possibly originating in Poblet. None of these fragments, however, transmits ballades, but Mass movements and motets.

4.1 Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, M. 853c/d (Ba 853c/d)

Ba 853c/d is a very substantial fragmentary manuscript consisting of four bifolios and one folio from a relatively large-format codex (350 × 240 mm). The surviving leaves contain ten polyphonic compositions for the Ordinary of the Mass, five of which are *unica*. The fact that seven of ten pieces include two equal-range upper parts suggests that the manuscript's repertory fulfilled the needs of a specific chapel or group of singers. Ba 853c/d was initially classified and described as two different fragments, 853c and 853d.⁷⁷ However, while these two manuscript sections were copied by different scribes, codicological evidence

⁷³ Document published in Anglès 1930 and Gómez 1989, doc. 29. For further manuscript exchanges between Abbot Vicenç Ferrer and the monarchy, see Altisent 1974, 244–245 and 367–368.

⁷⁴ Colinet had been in the service of Gaston Phébus until the count's death in August 1391. In September of that same year, John I referred to Colinet as 'feul chantrre de la nostra Capella' ('trusty singer of our chapel', *MiMus DB* [ACA, Cancellaria, reg. 1878, f. 168v]). The Poblet document mentions the abbot's friendship with the singer.

⁷⁵ In the singers' words, 'quia nos desideramus multum habere dictum librum' ('as we would very much like to have the said book').

⁷⁶ The community's commitment to increase the solemnity of the monastic liturgy is reflected in the commission of an organ around 1422 (Altisent 1974, 368).

⁷⁷ Gómez 1978, 211–215.

leaves no doubt that 853c and 853d belonged to the same codex.⁷⁸ Whereas the two sections share the same page-layout and display similar decoration for the capital letters, the punched holes on the bifolios' folds confirm that they were originally bound together (Fig. 8). Even though the manuscript has no original foliation, the fact that some bifolios present the same pattern of damage at the fold's bottom suggests that the gatherings to which these damaged bifolios belonged were originally bound next to each other. Fig. 8 shows a reconstruction of the manuscript's surviving, fragmentary gatherings.

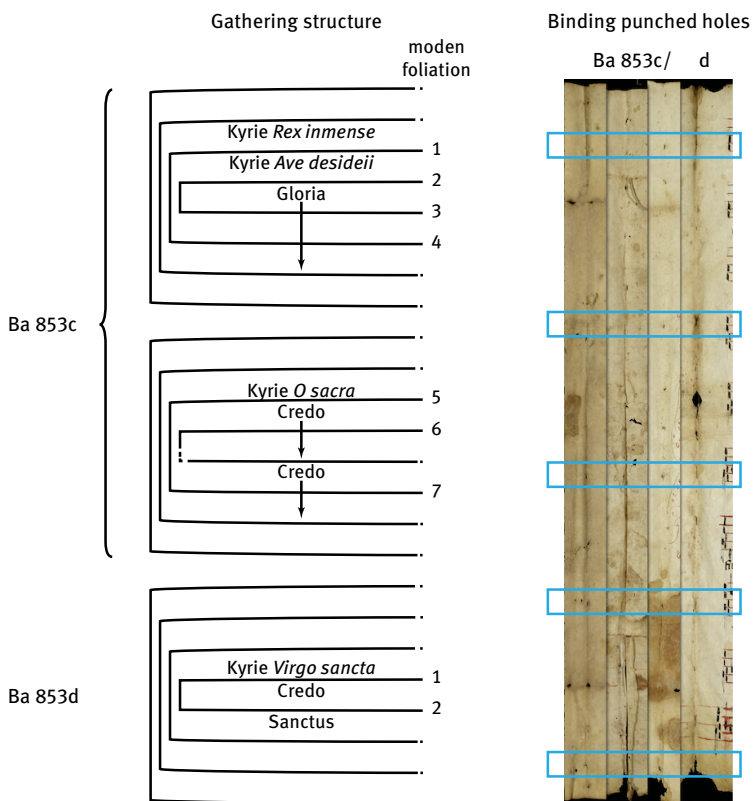


Fig. 8: Ba 853c/d, codicological structure.

⁷⁸ Tomasello 1995, 110–112.

Ba 853c/d remained unpublished during Anglès' lifetime, and the library records in Barcelona preserved no information about the provenance of this particular fragment. The identification of the fragment's provenance, however, was made possible by examining the annotations that were written on its leaves while they were used to cover notarial documents.⁷⁹ One of these annotations (f. 6r, bottom right corner) reveals that Ba 853c/d was used at the parish archive of Verdú, a small town that belonged to the Monastery of Poblet.⁸⁰ The annotation in question records that the community of priests of Verdú had been disturbed by someone called mestre Johan Fistch.⁸¹ The Verdú provenance of Ba 853c/d indeed matches Anglès' veiled allusions in two of his publications to the existence of polyphonic sources from Verdú. In his 1935 book *La música a Catalunya fins al segle XIII*, Anglès mentions 'the finding of different fragmentary codices with polyphony from the second half of the fourteenth century in Barcelona, Gerona, Vilafranca and Verdú'.⁸² In the same book, Anglès describes seven fragments of plainchant from the parish archive of Verdú that are preserved at the Biblioteca de Catalunya under the shelfmark M. 1451/1–7, which he believed originated in Poblet.⁸³ Therefore, Anglès must have referred to Ba 853c/d and Ba 853b (see below) when he alluded to two fragmentary codices of polyphony from Poblet.⁸⁴

79 I thank Daniel Vilarrubias and Manel Fuentes for their help in deciphering these annotations in March 2012. The Curator and Head of the Manuscripts Department of the Biblioteca de Catalunya, Anna Gudayol, came to the same conclusion about the fragment's provenance independently; see Gudayol 2014.

80 On the connection between Poblet and Verdú, see Piquer 1968.

81 The beginning of annotation reads: 'A notícia de la venerable comunitat de preveres de Verdú és previnguda estada intimada per mestre Johan Fistch de dita villa, per en Johan Rialb, beneficiat de dita villa, per manament de mossèn Luis de Seda, balle de dita villa'. Ba 853c, f. 6r, bottom right corner.

82 Anglès 1935, 265.

83 Anglès 1935, 178. Gudayol 2014 has identified the entire collection of Verdú fragments acquired by Anglès in 1934. For further information on the Verdú fragments, see Salis 2009 and 2013.

84 Anglès 1935, 263, and Anglès 1957, 8. In 1959, however, Anglès commented on a 1930 publication and noted that 'por detalles conocidos posteriormente puedo añadir que la iglesia de Verdú (Lérida), como filial de Poblet, practicó también la polifonía durante el siglo XIV' ('because of details that I became aware of at a later time, I can add that the church of Verdú, as a filial of Poblet, also practiced polyphony during the fourteenth century'). Anglès 1958, 9 n. 27 (commenting on Anglès 1930).

4.2 Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, M. 853b (Ba 853b)

Ba 853b consists of four fragmentary bifolios in small format (226 × 162 mm), which transmit eight polyphonic Mass movements and one *Ave regina* setting. These four bifolios have been described as having belonged to one single-quire manuscript of six bifolios.⁸⁵ However, the bifolio bearing modern foliation 5r–8v presents a different page layout, and the punched holes on the inner fold – which still preserve the original binding threads – indicate that this bifolio formed part of another collection (see Fig. 9). This suggests that Ba 853b's four surviving bifolios originally belonged, not to one, but to two independent single-quire booklets compiled by the same scribe. The manuscripts' single-quire feature is suggested by the fact that the outer folios of one quire are blank (modern foliation 1r–12v).

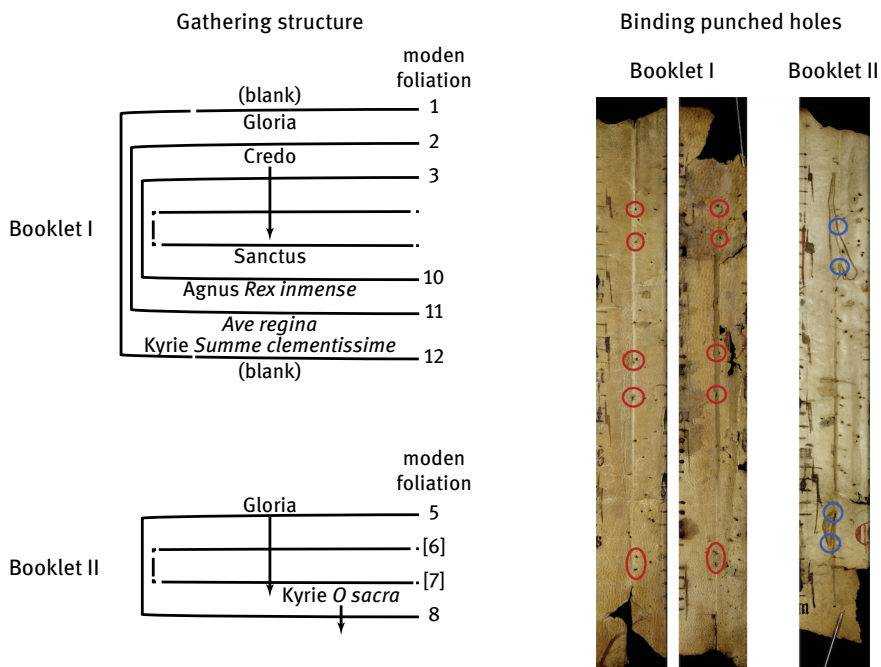


Fig. 9: Ba 853b, codicological structure.

⁸⁵ Gómez 1978, 208.

Ba 853b contains many annotations written on its leaves while it was used to cover notarial documents; most of these annotations are in the same hand as those in Ba 853c/d,⁸⁶ from which it clearly follows that Ba 853b, too, comes from the parish archive of Verdú. Yet unlike the repertory contained in Ba 853c/d, the eight compositions for the Ordinary of the Mass transmitted in both of Ba 853b's quires include only one upper voice, which indicates that its repertory fulfilled the needs of a different group of singers. The notoriously large size of the writing, in combination with the manuscript's small format, which made it suitable to be held in the hand, suggests that these quires were intended for practical use in performance. Similar types of small-format single-quire manuscripts were also used to perform plainchant, as witnessed by an exemplar preserved in the archives of Barcelona Cathedral – which even presents the same kind of binding technique as that of Ba 853b's second quire.⁸⁷

4.3 Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà, Frags. 2 and 3 (Ta 2 and Ta 3)

Ta 2 and Ta 3 were described for the first time by Gómez Munané in 1981 and, since then, have always been treated as fragments from two different manuscripts – in fact, that is what they look like at first glance; they were copied by different scribes, and they come from different parish archives.⁸⁸ Nonetheless,

86 See, for example, the annotations in Ba 853b, f. 2r and Ba 853c, f. 5r. Gudayol and I came to the same conclusion independently; see Gudayol 2014.

87 Barcelona, Arxiu de la Catedral, Miscel·lànea 23-5. It contains two monophonic Glorias.

88 The Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà de Tarragona was founded in 1920 for the purpose of centralizing all parish archives of the archdiocese in the ecclesiastical capital of the province. Most of the documents (mostly notarial protocols) arrived in Tarragona between 1921 and 1924. According to the archival policy established by the first director, Sanç Capdevila, any document bound with parchment from medieval codices was to be detached from its cover, and the parchment covers were archived separately in a collection called *Fragments de pergami*. At the time of their detachment, each fragment was systematically marked with a pencil annotation recording its provenance – that is, the parish archives where it was found serving as a cover. Currently this collection consists of over 400 fragments dating from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, including sacramentaries, Bibles, calendars, theological treatises, philosophical commentaries, and an enormous number of plainchant manuscripts. Partially studied by Capdevila (1930), Janini/Ricomà (1965), Companys/Virgili (1995), and Garrigosa (2003), the collection is still not fully inventoried and catalogued. Three folios containing *ars nova* polyphony were discovered within the Tarragona collection *Fragments de pergami*. These three fragments, archived with the signatures MS Fragments 1, 2 and 3 (Ta 1, Ta 2 and Ta 3), became

here I will suggest that these two fragments belonged to the same codex, possibly originating in the Monastery of Poblet.

Ta 2 consists of one folio in large quarto format containing two fragmentary motets, [*Apollinis*]/*Zodiacum* and *Colla iugo*/[*Bona condit*]; each motet occupied a manuscript opening, with the triplum on the verso side and the duplum and tenor on the recto side. The folios of this manuscript section were ruled at a preparatory stage with eight pairs of heavily drawn guiding lines for the text, but the staves were rastrated after the text had been entered in order to allow staff indentations to accommodate initial letters. This fragment comes from the parish archives of Passanant, a very small, rural village in central Catalonia, more precisely, near the area of Poblet's fief, although the village itself was not the property of the monastery.⁸⁹ The parish archives of Passanant made use of parchment from other medieval codices, some of which display Cistercian features and can be linked to the Monastery of Poblet with some certainty.⁹⁰

Ta 3 consists of a very damaged folio in large quarto format containing two fragmentary, three-part Glorias, both *unica*. The Gloria on the verso side is attributed to a certain Guido.⁹¹ Examples 1 and 2 provide new transcriptions of the surviving musical segments based on UV photographs. Unlike Ta 2, the folios of Ta 3's manuscript section were ruled with nine staves, and the guiding lines for the text were drawn so subtly that they are practically invisible even in the best-preserved areas of the fragment's surface. Yet, like Ta 2, the staves were rastrated after the text had been entered, in order to leave room for large initial letters. Ta 3 comes from the parish archives of Fullea – not Fullola, as Gómez Muntané mistakenly reported. Fullea was a small, rural village, which belonged to the Monastery of Poblet.⁹²

known to modern scholarship through the 1981 publication of Gómez Muntané. The collection also includes a fragment of fifteenth-century polyphony (Ta 4) worthy of mention here.

89 For an overview of the village's history, see *GEC*.

90 Especially fragment 21.14 of the *Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà de Tarragona*; see Companys/Virgili 1995, 191 and 194 note 3; Janini/Ricomá 1965, 8.

91 This could be the same Guido, author of two pieces transmitted in the codex Chantilly, Bibliothèque du château, MS 564, f. 25r–v, *Dieu gart* and *Or voit*.

92 Poblet had long had possessions in Fullea, and finally acquired full jurisdiction over the village in 1367 with the mediation of Peter III. Poblet's lordship over Fullea was confirmed by John I in 1392 along with other lordships near the abbey, which persisted until 1841. Altisent 1974, 389–390 and elsewhere. See also *GEC*.

Ct  [D]omine Deus



Ct  Qui tollis

T  Qui tollis





 Amen

Amen





Example 1: Ta 3, recto, end of a Gloria (only tenor and contratenor).

C
Et in ter-ra pax ho-mi-ni-bus bonae vo-lun-ta-tis. Lau-da-mus te.

T

Be-ne-dicimus te. Ad-o-ra-mus te. Glo-ri-fi-ca-mus te. Gra-ti-as a-gi-mus ti-bi

pro-pter mag-nam glo-ri-am tu-am. Do-mi-ne De-us Rex cae-le-stis, De-us

Pa-ter om-ni-po-tens. Do-mi-ne Fi-li-un-ni-ge-ni-te. Je-su Chri-ste.

Do-mi-ne De-us Agnus De-i, Fi-li-us Pa-tris. Qui tol-lis pec-cat-a mundi,

mi-se-re-re no-bis. Qui tol-lis pec-ca-ta mun-di, su-sci-pe de pre-

ca-ti-onem no-stram. Qui se-des ad dex-te-ram Pa-tris. Mise-re-re no-bis.

Quo-ni-am tu so-lus san-ctus. Tu so-lus Domi-nus. Tu so-lus Al-tis-

si-mus, Je-su Chri-ste. Cum San-cto Spi-ri-tu, in glo-ri-a De-

i Pa-tris. A-men.

Example 2: Ta 3, verso, beginning of a Gloria attributed to Guido.

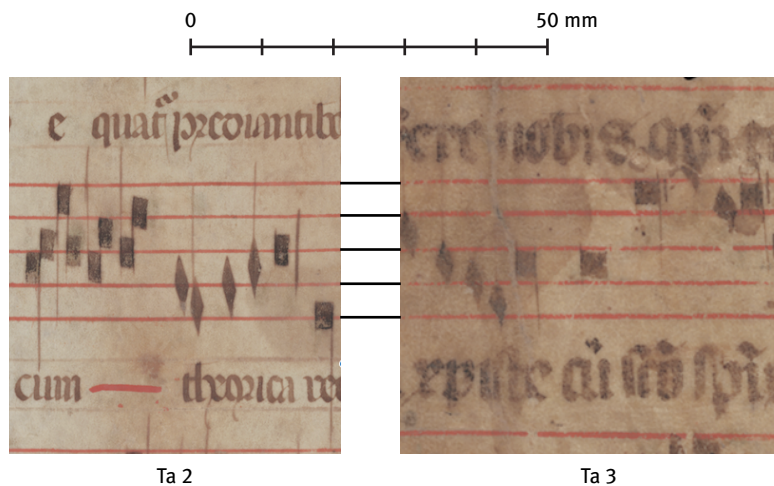


Fig. 10: Ta 2 and Ta 3, rastrum; © Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà.

As surprising as it might seem, Ta 2 and Ta 3 share the same rastrum (Fig. 10). Both fragments have staves that are 18.95 mm high and are characterised by a slight irregularity in their inter-linear spacing, the first space (counting from above) being the smallest, and the second space the largest. The first and second spaces differ from each other by 0.42 mm; the third and fourth, by 0.26 mm. In both fragments and in each staff, these features remain constant, leaving no doubt that the two manuscript sections were rastrated with the same tool by different scribes.

Despite the divergences in the number of ruled staves per page, the size of the manuscripts' writing frame (287 × 192 mm in Ta 2; 282 × 200 mm in Ta 3; see Fig. 11) is similar enough to assume that the two fragments formed part of the same codex.⁹³

⁹³ To give a well-known comparative example, codex Iv 115 also involved various scribes, and presents variations in the writing frame ranging from a minimum of 250 × 175 mm to a maximum of 292 × 184 mm. See Kügle 2019.

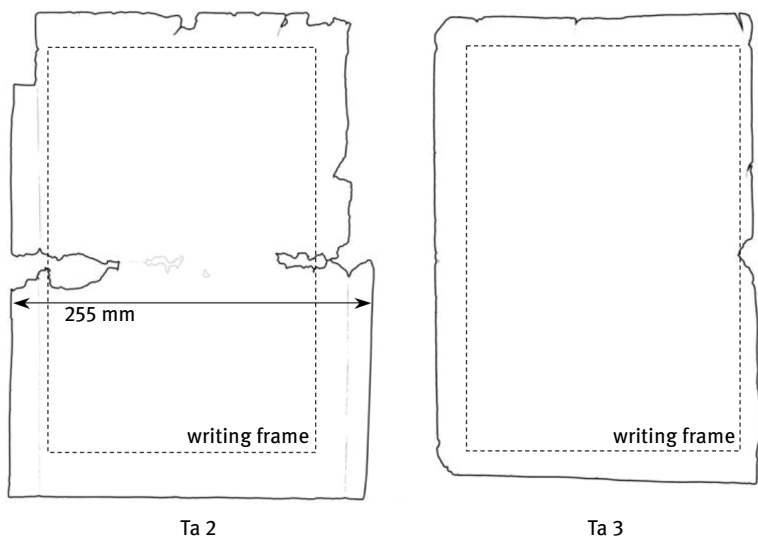


Fig. 11: Ta 2 and Ta 3, format.

There are other cases of dismembered manuscripts whose fragments were dispersed among various institutions in the Poblet area.⁹⁴ In the light of the foregoing evidence, I suggest that Ta 2 and Ta 3 must be treated as one source. The original codex could have been kept at the library of Poblet until it was dismembered and its parchment was sold as recycling material to parish churches within the monastic fief and neighbouring villages.

4.4 Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà, Frag. 4 (Ta 4)

Although Ta 4 transmits a repertory that is slightly younger than that analysed in this study, this fragment sheds further light on the pattern in which presumably monastic manuscripts were dismembered and dispersed among parishes neighbouring Poblet's feudal properties. Ta 4 consists of two fragmentary folios from a fifteenth-century paper manuscript, which served as a wrapper for

⁹⁴ Codex 13 of the Monastery of Poblet preserves fifteen folios from a twelfth-century Commentary on the Psalms; two further folios from the same manuscript were used to cover documents at the Monastery of Santes Creus. These fragments from Santes Creus are now kept at Tarragona. Janini/Ricomá 1965, 3 (Ms 18.6), Janini 1966, 218 (Còdex 13), Companys 1994, 193.

notarial documents at the parish archive of Sant Martí de Maldà, a small, rural village situated midway between Verdú and Fullede.⁹⁵ The fragment contains two polyphonic songs, one of them attributed to Johannes Cornago, and two fragmentary settings of the *Lamentationes Ieremiae* possibly dating from the middle or second half of the fifteenth century.⁹⁶ Marginal annotations written in Italian by the manuscript's main scribe, as well as the paper's watermark (Fig. 12), could suggest that the manuscript was produced in Italy, either within the realm of the Neapolitan court of Alfonso the Magnanimous, king of Aragon and Naples (r. 1416–1458), or, most likely, within that of his son Ferdinand I of Naples (r. 1458–1494).⁹⁷ Given the location of Sant Martí de Maldà, adjoining the

95 This village is now called Sant Martí de Riucorb. For an overview of the village's history, see *GEC*.

96 Ta 4 was (partially) published in Escalas 2005. For the polyphonic songs and their concordances, see Fallows 1999, 434–435 (contrafactum of *Elend du hast* with the text *Madamme helas*) and 621–622 (*Non gusto; An gusto* in Ta 4). The two *Lamentation* settings are not reported in Escalas 2005. The text corresponds to Lam 3.26–28 (recto, tenor part); Lam 5.1–5 (verso, upper part). While these texts are not the most familiar sections set from the *Lamentations* (especially Lam 3; see Scott 2004, 42–43, Table 2.02), Ta 4 has musical concordances with Petrucci's *Lamentationum Jeremie* I (8 April 1506) and II (29 May 1506). The music – but not the text – corresponds to the anonymous three-part setting in Petrucci (I) between Ycart and Agricola, possibly also by Ycart if the attribution continues. Given that Ta 4 sets different *Lamentations* texts to adaptations of the same music, it is possible that Ta 4's segments belonged to a longer setting of which only the opening sections are in Petrucci. The fragment's mise en page suggests that Ta 4's copy is in only two parts; the (inessential) *bassus* was either removed in Ta 4 or added in Petrucci. I thank Margaret Bent for sharing her views on this material.

97 F. lx r, bottom: 'Senza [?]a moranza'; f. lx v, bottom: 'affe[?]i e lamoranza' (i.e. either *l'amoranza* or *la moranza*). *Moranza* is an earlier Italian word meaning *stanza* (in the sense of room) or *dimora* (dwelling place); *amoranza* is a noun derived from *amore* (love). The inscriptions' meaning in this context, however, remains unclear. The phrase 'Senza moranza' on f. lx r does not seem to be a song incipit, as the verso of the folio contains a different piece. I thank Bonnie Blackburn and Leofranc Holford-Strevens for sharing their views on these inscriptions. As for the watermark, Briquet 1907 classifies scissors watermarks as exclusively Italian, although similar watermarks are found in Iberian manuscripts due to the trade of Italian paper on the Iberian Peninsula (Carvajal 2011, 295). Johannes Cornago served in Alfonso's royal chapel in Naples from at least 1453. After Alfonso's death in 1458, Cornago worked for Ferdinand I of Naples, and in 1475 returned to Spain and entered the service of Ferdinand the Catholic in Aragon. The well-known MS 871 of the Montecassino Abbey, dated around 1480, transmits musical repertory associated with the Aragonese court in Naples (including songs by Cornago and a now-lost setting of the *Lamentationes Ieremiae*), although the manuscript itself is thought to have originated within a monastic setting. Interestingly, the Montecassino manuscript contains a watermark similar to that of Ta 4 (see a reproduction in Pope/Kanazawa 1978, 265–266). See also Atlas 1985, and Knighton 2019, esp. 242–244.

area of Poblet's fief (Verdú and Fullede), and considering the strong connections between the monastery and the royal court, the Monastery of Poblet emerges as the most likely provenance of the fragment before it reached Sant Martí.

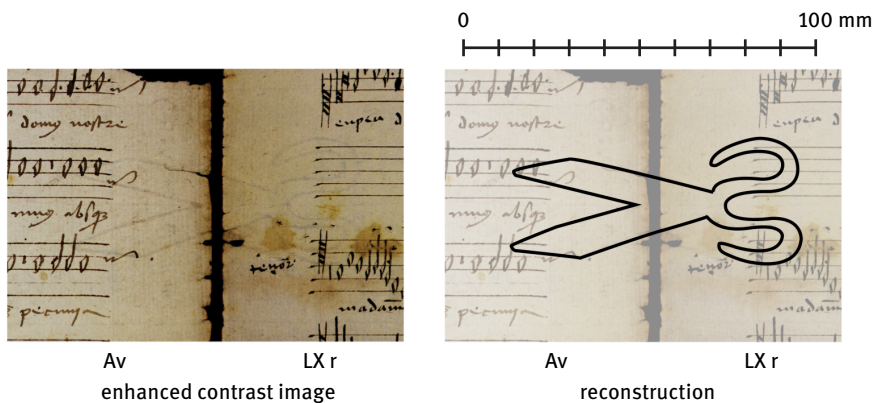


Fig. 12: Ta 4, watermark; © Tarragona, Arxiu Històric Arxidiocesà.

Poblet kept close ties with the Aragonese royal chapel throughout the entire fifteenth century, even when the court had moved to Naples. Alfonso's court included two monks from Poblet among the royal chaplains, and the king maintained ongoing correspondence with the monastery throughout his reign.⁹⁸ This tradition continued during the reign of Alfonso's successor in Aragon, John II, whose chapel also included two monks from Poblet.⁹⁹ Ferdinand I of Naples also had close connections with Poblet and was buried there in the royal mausoleum at the abbey church. Musical exchanges between the monastery and the royal chapel persisted further into the times of the Catholic Monarchs, Isabel of Castile and Fernando of Aragon; in 1493 Isabel and Fernando attended a pontifical office at the Abbey Church of Poblet, after which the queen asked for a copy of the Credo performed by the monks, in order to have it sung by the royal chapel.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ See Anglès 1961, 90–91, and De Diego 2001.

⁹⁹ Anglès 1961, 92–93.

¹⁰⁰ Altisent 1979, 369, citing Finestres 1753, IV, 71.

5 Cervera

Finally, a key piece in this provenance puzzle of *ars nova* fragments involves the small village of Granyena and its neighbour city Cervera. The sixteenth-century notaries of Granyena made use of a large number of medieval fragments to bind their notarial manuals, including a bifolio removed from a collection of *ars nova* polyphony now preserved in the Diocesan Archives of Solsona under the shelf-mark Còdex 109 (Sol 109).¹⁰¹ Sol 109 contains four fragmentary pieces: three Glorias and one Credo.¹⁰² The manuscript fits the typology of a practical, inexpensive volume in large quarto format (originally some 335 × 240 mm) possibly dating from c.1400. Sol 109 was compiled by a skilled music scribe who produced a copy practically free of errors, although the poorly drawn initial letters detract from the manuscript's appearance.

The village of Granyena was officially incorporated into the neighbourhood of Cervera in 1462, and thus began to be called Granyena de Cervera.¹⁰³ The sixteenth-century notaries of Granyena, therefore, could easily have acquired old parchment from the many religious institutions in Cervera, including the city's main church and various notable monasteries.¹⁰⁴ With this respect, it is worth having a closer look at the Church of Saint Mary in Cervera, where the practice of polyphonic music seems to have responded to the demands for an increasingly elaborate liturgy that was in accordance with the importance of the building.

The Church of Saint Mary in Cervera constitutes a remarkable example of Catalan Gothic architecture. Its structure comprises three wide naves with

101 The Bishopric of Solsona was created in 1595; before that, the churches of Granyena and Cervera had belonged to the Bishopric of Vic.

102 Gómez 1985b, 177–179; Gómez 1993, 17–19.

103 Cervera had enjoyed the status of royal town since 1275, which led many nearby villages to join its neighbourhood in order to take advantage of its special rights and privileges. In the fourteenth century, it was considered the eighth most important city in the Principality of Catalonia. Its strong commercial and industrial activity gave rise to an incipient bourgeois class. For an overview of the history of Cervera, see *GEC*.

104 The collection of fragments recovered from the parish archive of Granyena is very interesting in itself. An earlier fourteenth-century fragment that includes non-mensural two-part settings of liturgical chants attests to a certain tradition of polyphonic singing in the area (Gómez 1985a). Other liturgical fragments with plainchant date from the twelfth to the fifteenth century; the earlier fragments are described in Garrigosa 2003, 207–208. Another fragment used at the same parish archive contains a fifteenth-century copy of Dante's *Inferno* with Catalan glosses. Sabaté (2016, 90–91) connects this fragment with the fact that, in this period, wealthy merchants began to send their sons to study in Italy.

lateral chapels and a polygonal apse with an ambulatory and eight radial chapels.¹⁰⁵ The project of this cathedral-like structure began to take shape in the early fourteenth century, when King James II proposed Cervera as the seat of a new bishopric. Although James' plan for a restructuring of the Catalan ecclesiastical map was finally frustrated, the City Council of Cervera brought together the necessary capital to move the monumental project forward. The active participation of local guilds is most evident, given the presence of their emblems on the pillars that separate the ambulatory from the main chapel. Merchants, citizens and officials assumed the cost of the radial and lateral chapels and turned them into family mausoleums.¹⁰⁶ The prosperity of this emerging bourgeois class in Cervera is clearly reflected in the sumptuousness of their tombs.

One sign of the citizens' interest in the musical solemnization of the church's liturgy was their financial contribution to the construction of an organ at Saint Mary of Cervera in the early fifteenth century.¹⁰⁷ In 1408 the community of priests took the initiative and commissioned a large instrument from a young organ builder who was visiting the city.¹⁰⁸ Because the community alone was not able to pay the full amount, they asked the City Council for help; the Council made no objection to the commission, but resolved that it had to be paid directly by the town's citizens and that no Council funds could be spent. The fundraising was extremely successful and, by late 1413, the new organ was being decorated with paintings by the same French glassmaker who made the church's beautiful stained-glass windows.¹⁰⁹ Cervera's community of priests also had occasional contacts with the royal court in Barcelona. In 1419 they bought a second, smaller organ (*orguens menors*) from the reputed organ builder Pere Granyena, one of the most beloved courtiers of King Alfonso the Magnanimous.¹¹⁰

105 By 1344, many of the secondary chapels were in place; in 1358 the high altar was consecrated, and five years later the presbytery was completed. For more information on this church, see the especial issue of *Miscel·lània Cerverina* 16 (2003), in particular Verdés 2003, and Beseran 2003.

106 Indeed, the Church of Saint Mary of Cervera preserves the largest group of tombs of medieval merchants in the entire Principality of Catalonia (Español 2002, 147–150).

107 The participation of Cervera's citizens and corporations in the finances of the church was constant throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. See Verdés 2003.

108 Arxiu Històric Comarcal de Cervera, Fons Municipal, Consells 1408, f. 64r–v. See Miró 2003, 229–230.

109 Barral/Mundó 2014, 50, 51, 53. The original stained-glass windows are still preserved.

110 This small organ cost 30 gold florins. Later documents suggest that this instrument was carried in Corpus Christi processions (Miró 2003, 230). For more on the organ builder Pere

The inventory of books drafted by the episcopal notary on the occasion of a pastoral visitation by the bishop of Vic in 1425 attests to the fact that the choir of the church in Cervera was provided with, not just one, but three books of polyphony.¹¹¹ The bishop was content with what he saw, and ordered that the books be attached with chains to the new lecterns. While no direct evidence of a music teacher in Cervera prior to the late fifteenth century has survived, some of the church organists could potentially have acted as teachers of music, including polyphony, as occurred in other Iberian churches.¹¹² The first organists at Cervera were generally priests of the church, although lists of payments also record occasional appearances of other organists, such as a student at Cervera (1419), a Franciscan friar (1422), and a Dominican monk (1429).¹¹³

The case of Cervera shows the extent to which the sophistication of church music mirrored the aspirations for prestige of the city's emerging bourgeois society. The integration of the Church of Saint Mary in the heart of Cervera's urban life therefore suggests that, by the turn of the century, polyphonic music had begun to have a certain social impact in Central Catalonia. The cultivation of *ars nova* polyphony might have been seen as an important element of the liturgy in big cathedrals. In this respect, the connection between the church of Cervera and Vic Cathedral is highly suggestive, as the cathedral archives of Vic preserve the fragment of yet another volume of *ars nova* polyphony.¹¹⁴

Granyena, see Anglès 1940 [1975], 944; Baldelló 1966, 132, and Gómez 1979, docs. 264, 278, 279, 281, 282. See also *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 2609, f. 116r–v).

111 'Item [...] tres libros de cant d'orgue'. There was a total of nineteen books in the choir, including six psalters. Another group of nine books had been legated by a deceased priest. The document of the pastoral visitation is published in Junyent 1967, 226–227; the list of books is further reproduced in Miró 2003, 246.

112 On the involvement of organists in music teaching and polyphonic performance around 1400, see Catalunya 2020.

113 See Miró 2002 and Miró 2003, 236–237.

114 Vic, Arxiu i Biblioteca Episcopal, Fragment V/60 (Vic 60). It consists of a fragmentary folio, of which only the lower half has survived, containing a Credo (*unicum*). The original manuscript was a volume in large format measuring around 400 × 270 mm. Although the monarchs did not visit the city very often during the second half of the fourteenth century, there is evidence that Prince John was in Vic with his entire chapel of singers and minstrels in 1385 (Gómez 1979, doc. 240). The main stream of cultural exchange at Vic, however, seems to have involved other big cathedrals, especially those of Tarragona, Barcelona and Gerona.

6 Coda: Mapping the Dissemination of *ars nova* Polyphony in Aragon

King John I of Aragon was an enthusiast music lover. His reign is characterised by a chronic administrative disorder that plunged the kingdom into political chaos, while he emptied the royal coffers towards the creation and maintenance of a flamboyant court. Over 460 letters and documents preserved in the royal archives in Barcelona attest to John I's compulsive, obsessive attitude towards bringing the best and most demanded singers and minstrels to his service. The formation of his musical chapel took place in 1379, when he was still a prince, with the hiring of Avignonese singers and the commissioning of a book of polyphony from French singers.¹¹⁵ John ascended to the throne in January 1387 and, barely one year later, he convened the first assembly of the General Courts of the Crown of Aragon of his reign.¹¹⁶ The meeting lasted more than one full year (from November 1388 to December 1389) and served as a stage for the exhibition of the court's wealth before the representatives of the kingdoms' cities and the noble and ecclesiastical factions. John's hiring of foreign musicians increased exponentially during precisely this period, as his marriage to Violant de Bar ensured fluent connections with the French aristocracy.¹¹⁷ The letters issued during this General Courts meeting show the extent to which the royal couple, John and Violant, intensified the musical exchanges with the Duke of Burgundy, the Count of Foix, the Duke of Berry, the King of France, and the papal chapel in Avignon. As a result of these exchanges, not only musicians, but also books of polyphonic music, including the famous Machaut manuscript Vg,

115 Gómez 1979, doc. 223. This manuscript cost eleven gold florins, which were paid to the French singer Ambrós Porcellet (Gómez 1979, doc. 232). While this was not an especially expensive manuscript, it probably reached the scribal quality standards shown in the Trém fragment (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, nouv. acq. fr. 23190, *olim* Angers, Château de Serrant, Duchesse de la Trémoille), a polyphonic manuscript copied in 1371 by a chaplain of the royal chapel of King Charles V of France for the use of the chapel (see Droz/Tibault 1926). The Trém fragment features a formal *libraria textualis* script, red and blue initials letters, and professional pen-work decoration. For the documents concerning the formation of Prince John's musical chapel, see Gómez 1979, docs 223–234.

116 The meeting took place at Monzón Cathedral and brought together simultaneously the Courts of the Principality of Catalonia and of the Kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia and Mallorca.

117 Queen Violant de Bar is an extremely interesting character in this story; her involvement in political affairs and musical and artistic patronage deserves a study of its own.

reached Aragon during the 1389 assembly.¹¹⁸ In May of that year, John commissioned a second book of motets from the singers of the pope in Avignon.¹¹⁹ John I even presented himself as an amateur composer of polyphonic music when he stated that he had ‘made a rondeau notated with its tenor, contratenor and cantus’ with the help of some of his singers.¹²⁰

Surviving manuscript evidence suggests that the court’s new musical fashion had an extraordinary impact on Catalan churches. While many ecclesiastical archives throughout the Iberian geography preserve thousands of fragments from medieval plainchant codices, the archives in the region of the Principality of Catalonia present an exceptional concentration of fragments of *ars nova* polyphony (see Fig. 13). Most of these polyphonic fragments come from churches and cathedrals and in those royal cities where John I’s court had a particularly strong influence (Barcelona, Vilafranca, Gerona). Barcelona Cathedral, closely tied to the Royal Palace, also emerges as an important dissemination centre for polyphonic music, thanks to which this musical practice reached other Cathedrals (Vic, Tarragona). Finally, a third pattern of provenances of *ars nova* fragments involves parish churches in small, rural villages, where this kind of complex polyphony is indeed rather unlikely to have been practiced (Granyena, Fullea, Passanant, Sant Martí de Maldà, Granyena, Verdú).¹²¹ Most of these villages, however, fall into the area situated between the Royal Monastery of Poblet and the city of Cervera, where the existence of polyphonic manuscripts in the period c.1390–1425 is attested to in historical documents and inventories.

118 On the Vg manuscript (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library, Ferrell MS 1, the Ferrell-Vogüé Machaut Manuscript), see Alberni 2012, 94, Alberni 2018, and Earp 2014, esp. 47–55.

119 *MiMus DB* (ACA, Cancelleria, reg. 1956, f. 73r–v); Gómez 1979, doc. 243. The only *ars nova* fragment that comes from this region of Aragon is Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, M971c (Ba 971c). It consists of one folio in quarto format containing two fragmentary troped Kyries. Although Anglès never mentioned this source in any of his scholarly writings, his handwriting can be identified in a pencil annotation written in Catalan in the fragment’s margin, stating: ‘Coberta d’un libre provi- / nent d’Aragó’ (‘Cover of a book that comes from Aragon’). Whereas the lack of further information does not allow us to trace the fragment’s specific provenance, the cathedrals and monasteries in Zaragoza, Monzón, Roda de Isábena and Huesca come easily to mind. In terms of manuscript production, this and the Gerona fragments are definitely the most refined *ars nova* sources that have survived in the territories of the Crown of Aragon. Somewhat ironically, however, Ba 971c’s possible connection with the royal court has never been suggested.

120 Gómez 1979, doc. 229.

121 The Verdú scenario, however, is rather complex and deserves especial consideration in a future study.

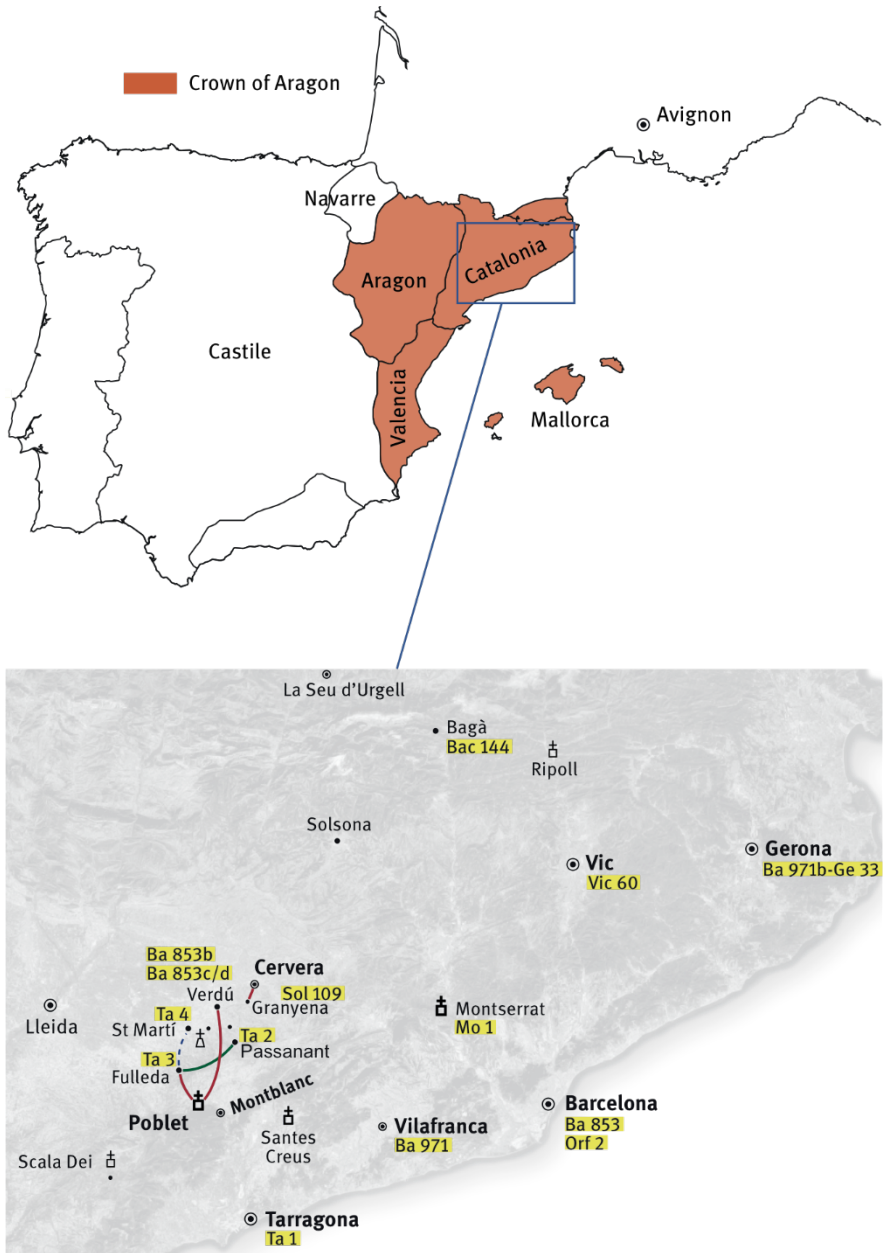


Fig. 13: Provenances of the Aragonese sources of *ars nova* polyphony.

The presence of further Cistercian fragments in some of these parish archives confirms a pattern of dispersion and reuse of parchment originating in nearby institutions such as Poblet.

Despite these highly suggestive patterns of provenance, the fragmentary folio reused as a wrapper for notarial documents in the church of Bagà (a small village in northern Catalonia) is a good example of how the trade of medieval books and fragments does not always fit any expected path.¹²² Thus far, no obvious connection of this *ars nova* manuscript to any institution or individual can be established; the village of Bagà seems to be too far away from the main urban, political and ecclesiastical centres. At the present stage of research, the only statement can be made about the origins of this manuscript is that it does not fit the context of a small village like Bagà.

If John I's court emerges as a major force behind the introduction and dissemination of *ars nova* polyphony in Catalonia, by 1400 the new musical fashion had filtered down into popular culture. The famous *Llibre Vermell* of Montserrat (Mo 1), dating from the late fourteenth century, provides a remarkable example of this. As is well known, the Benedictine Abbey of Montserrat was a major pilgrimage site. The *Llibre Vermell* contains a compilation of miracles performed by the Virgin Mary of Montserrat, and includes a few pieces in a less sophisticated style of *ars nova* polyphony.¹²³ The manuscript compiler noted that:

Because the pilgrims wish to sing and dance while they keep watch at night in the Church of the Blessed Mary of Montserrat [...] these songs that appear here have been written. And these should be used modestly, without disturbing those who keep watch in prayer and contemplation.¹²⁴

122 Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS frag. 144 (Bac 144), published in Gómez 1978, 216. The Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó preserves not only the historical archives of the Royal House of Aragon, but also documents from a number of ecclesiastical institutions, whose archives were confiscated in the nineteenth century. Bac 144 contains a troped Kyrie, unique to this source. The original manuscript seems to have been an ambitious project that remained unfinished; both the text and music scripts were carefully produced, and the staff indentation comprises the first two lines, leaving space for a large decorated initial letter. For an overview of the history of village of Bagà, see *GEC*.

123 On the *Llibre Vermell*, see Anglès 1955, Altés 1989, Gómez 1990, and Lannutti 2012. Lannutti is currently preparing a more detailed study of the *Llibre Vermell*.

124 Abadia de Monserrat, MS 1, f. 22r: 'Quia interdum peregrini quando vigilant in ecclesia Beate Marie de Monte Serrato volunt cantare et trepudiare, et etiam in platea de die, et ibi non debeant nisi honestas ac devotas cantilenas cantare, idcirco superius et inferius aliquae sunt scriptae. Et de hoc uti debent honeste et parce, ne perturbent perseverantes in orationibus et devotis contemplationibus'.

The manuscript sources of *ars nova* polyphony, the vast majority of which survive only in fragmentary form, thus offer us a fascinating glimpse, not only into the topography, but also the sociology of this musical style in Catalonia. Probably because it was intensively cultivated at the royal court, this musical practice became fashionable also among cathedral clerics, church priests and monks, and increasingly appreciated by citizens and pilgrims. The wide dissemination of *ars nova* polyphony in Catalonia is well reflected in a variety of manuscript typologies, which range from the relatively luxurious codex to the amateur's inexpensive booklet.

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Abbreviations

ACA	Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó.
GEC	<i>Gran Enciclopedia Catalana</i> < https://www.enciclopedia.cat/gran-enciclopedia-catalana >.
MiMus DB	Database <i>Ministres i música a la Corona d'Aragó medieval</i> < http://mimus.ub.edu >.
PMFC	<i>Polyphonic Music of the Fourteenth Century</i> , see Schrade <i>et al.</i> (eds), 1956–1991.
RISM	Gilbert Reaney (ed.), <i>Répertoire International des Sources Musicales</i> , Series B, vol. IV/2: <i>Manuscripts of Polyphonic Music (c.1320–1400)</i> , Munich: G. Henle Verlag, 1969.

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