

# DESIGNING SATISFACTION: [HIDDEN] TECHNOLOGY IN THE «CANTIGAS» OF PERO MEOGO

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper examines the relationships between cognition and the design of verses, strophes, poems and an entire sequence in the *cantigas d'amigo* of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Galician poet Pero Meogo. The brain rewards itself for correctly predicting phenomena. Tension is greatest when a surprise delays a predicted event. In the ninth and last *cantiga* of Meogo we find unique virtuosity in the handling of *leixa-pren* and a unique change in rhyme-scheme just before the end of the poem and the sequence. There is, moreover, an extraordinary correspondence between Meogo 9 and a mother-daughter dialogue in a Serbian ballad transcribed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**KEYWORDS:** Galician-Portuguese lyric; *cantigas d'amigo*; strophic design; *leixa-pren*; cognition.

## DISSENYANT LA SATISFACCIÓ. LA TECNOLOGIA [OCULTA] A LES CANTIGUES DE PERO MEOGO

**RESUM:** Aquest treball examina la relació entre la cognició i el disseny de versos, estrofes, poemes i una seqüència completa a les *cantigas d'amigo* del poeta galleg del segle XIII Pero Meogo. El cervell es recompensa a si mateix per predir correctament els fenòmens. La tensió és màxima quan una sorpresa retarda un esdeveniment previst. A la novena i última cantiga de Meogo hi trobem un virtuosisme únic en la utilització del *leixa-pren* i un canvi d'esquema rítmic singular, tot just abans del final del poema i de la seqüència. D'altra banda, existeix una extraordinària correspondència entre Meogo 9 i un diàleg mare-filla en una balada sèrbia transcrita a principis del segle XVIII.

**PARAULES CLAU:** lírica gallegoportuguesa; *cantigas d'amigo*; disseny estròfic; *leixa-pren*; cognició.

Form, language and action in the Galician-Portuguese *cantigas d'amigo* are full of fascinating features.<sup>1</sup> We find evidence for the development of rhymed strophic poetry in the Romance languages: the five varieties of the general form aaB reflect a historical development that took place centuries earlier (Cohen 2016: 34). In the language we find a conservative and restricted lexicon, with—among other things—a precise rhetoric of repetition with variation called *leixa-pren*. The personae (those that can speak or be spoken to) are a girl, her mother, a boy, and the girl's girlfriend(s), and they perform a limited yet varied set of speech-actions — which reflect custom and are material for social history. The 500 *cantigas* with these characteristics provide a dream-come-true laboratory for philological research. We feel we are examining, at an archaic stratum, the basic materials that poetry is made of. The *cantigas d'amigo* beg an important question that goes beyond the traditional bounds of philology: why were these songs popular? What was it that audiences found pleasing? Here I will try to show how, in songs by Pero Meogo, the text creates and satisfies expectation. This has to do with the way things end.

Rhyme, for instance, ends a verse. The historical origin of rhyme in Romance languages is still debated. But leaving aside that problem, we can ask: why should there be rhyme at all? A few years ago a linguist said to me: “You could explain the origin of rhyme as a successive tightening of right edge marking”. He added: “Even in non-rhyming verse there are consistent features applying at the right edge to mark the line end”. However it arose, verse-end rhyme is common to early Romance poetry. And with or without rhyme, the final part of a verse tends to be more rule-governed than the rest, and therefore more predictable. Ac-

<sup>1</sup> This is a slightly revised version of a keynote address given (virtually) at the Università di Roma, La Sapienza, in a colloquium entitled *Parola al testo: percorsi interdisciplinari di teoria e critica del testo* (Convegno dottorale organizzato dal dottorato Scienze del Testo dal Medioevo alla Modernità), on 15 June 2021. I am grateful to the organizing committee for the kind invitation. Numbering of the *cantigas d'amigo* follows that in Cohen (2003).

According to one theory, this predictability saves time in the working memory. What the brain can foresee requires less work, and ease of cognitive processing is perceived by the brain as pleasurable. This, in brief, is the theory of linguist Nigel Fabb (2014, 2015; cf. Cohen 2013). David Huron, a musicologist, articulates a broader view, a theory of expectation, based on biology and culture (Huron 2006). He sees five kinds of response to an event: *imagination response*, *tension response*, *prediction response*, *reaction response*, and *appraisal response*. I will concentrate on the prediction response. The basic idea is that the brain gets a positive buzz when its predictions prove true; but the brain misattributes this positive valence, as though it were caused by the event we predicted, instead of by the success of our prediction. Thus, at the end of a movement in a classical sonata-allegro form, pleasure is not caused by the chord of the final cadence, but by the fact that our brain correctly predicted that chord. It is not the signal itself that affords pleasure, but the brain congratulating itself that it knew that chord was coming. And repetition, which is all-pervasive in the *cantigas d'amigo*, helps the brain predict. Huron (2006: 141) says, “all other things being equal, predictability, by itself, will be experienced as pleasant. The easiest path to predictability is through repetition”.

In nearly 90% of the *cantigas d'amigo* a refrain caps the strophe, so that (after the first strophe) the refrain is fully predictable. If there is no *fiinda*, the last place where new *thematic* material can be added is the verse before the refrain in the last stanza, a position I dubbed Rv-1 (Cohen 1996: 8; cf. Cohen 2003: 47). At Rv-1 there is a metrical quirk, which, though limited to a few poems, was apparently deliberate: a hypermetric verse is permitted there. I also noticed a tendency, in poems with a dose of insult, for a harsh word to be located at Rv-1: *traedor* or *perjurado*. We can see this technique even more clearly in an aaB *cantiga de maldizer*, where an obscene word appears in that position (the speaker addresses his rival): *Veedes m' andar morrendo | e vós jazedes fofendo | vossa molher* (Johan Garcia de Guilhade, CEM 207).

So the end of a unit (verse, strophe, *cantiga*) tends to be distinguished by one or more features of form, language or action. Some of

these features can be predicted with certainty, for instance rhyme and the refrain. And the technique of *leixa-pren* allows the listener to predict much of the text after the first strophe.

Now let's look at four poems which stand out among the nine of Pero Meogo. First, No. 5, where we can see the workings of *leixa-pren*, a concatenation of strictly determined verbal repetition that proceeds by pairs of strophes.

PERO MEOGO 5

aaB (×6): 11' [5'+5']

i-a // a-a || çda *cobras alternantes*

<Levou s' aa alva>, | levou s' a velida,  
vai lavar cabelos | na fontana fria,  
*leda dos amores*, | *dos amores leda*.

5 <Levou s' aa alva>, | levou s' a louçana,  
vai lavar cabelos | na fria fontana,  
*leda dos amores*, | *dos <amores leda>*.

Vai lavar cabelos | na fontana fria;  
passou seu amigo, | que lhi ben queria;  
*leda dos <amores*, | *dos amores leda>*.

10 Vai lavar cabelos | na fria fontana;  
passa seu amigo, | que <a> muit' a<ma>va;  
*leda dos a<mores*, | *dos amores leda>*.

15 Passa seu amigo, | que lhi ben queria;  
o cervo do monte | a agua volvia;  
*leda dos a<mores*, | *dos amores leda>*.

Passa seu amigo | que a muit' amava;  
o cervo do monte | volvia <a> agua;  
*leda <dos amores*, | *dos amores leda>*.

B 1188 ff. 252v-253r V 793 ff. 124v-125r  
 1, 4 *the first hemistich is missing in BV* <Levou s' aa alva> Cohen (*ex Dinis*  
*17, v. 2 levantou s' <aa> alva*) 1 <Levou-se mui cedo> Michaëlis <Lev-  
 ou-s'a louçana> Nunes <Leda dos amores> Bell uelida B : uenda V  
 4 <Levou-s'a velida> Nunes <Dos amores leda> Bell 8 *passa Nunes*  
*(probante Cunha) : passou BV* 10-12 *copied at the end of the text in BV*  
 11 <a> Nunes mui't a<ma>va Monaci (*cf. v. 16*) : muytaua B : muytaug  
 V 14, 17 *agua Cohen (2014) : augua BV, editores* 15 dos a] d9 a V : do a B  
 16-18 *om.* V 16 amana B 17 volvia] noluya B <a> *cf. v. 14*

In the sequence of nine songs by Pero Meogo, this text stands in the numerical center. A narrative voice that we cannot identify tells of an encounter between girl and boy. Yet no female speech is included, and this is unusual. (There are a dozen songs in this genre with an outside narrator; but only two do not cite a girl's speech: this one and Dinis 17). The meeting is laden with the symbolism of a ritual: it takes place at a natural spring or fountain, after the girl has washed her hair. The symbolic language is evidently erotic but it is not easy to determine exactly what it means. If the tryst is really a ritual, is that ritual prenuptial (*vai lavar cabelos*) or simply nuptial (*o cervo do monte a agua volvia*)?

Here I should briefly explain the supplement in the first two strophes (originally in Cohen 1996: 45, note 41; see Cohen 2014a: 44-45). In the manuscripts the first half of the first verse is missing, with no sign of a lacuna. Carolina Michaëlis (1904: 11, 60) thought the hemistich would have begun like the second half: *Levou-se*; and this waking up would have been early; so she proposed *Levou-se mui cedo*. When I was preparing a critical edition of all the *cantigas d'amigo*, the text of Dinis 17, beginning *levantou-s' a velida*, posed difficulties in metrics and grammar. I decided that the second verse in that poem, which reads *Levantoussalva* in the manuscripts, should read: *levantou-s' <aa> alva*, with a preposition and an article: "at dawn" or "in the dawn" (Cohen 2003: 602; cf. Parkinson 2006: 32-34). Although the interpretation of Dinis 17 has been the subject of much debate (Cohen 2006), it is generally agreed that Dinis modelled his poem on Meogo 5.

Then it dawned on me that this missing half-verse in Pero Meogo might be *Levou-s' aa alva*. Dinis divided Meogo's long verse into two short verses, switched the order of clauses, and used *levantar* instead of the older *levar*. Thus, Meogo's first hemistich <*Levou s' aa alva*> became the second verse in Dinis *levantou s' <aa> alva*; and Meogo's second hemistich *levou s' a velida* became *Levantou s' a velida* in Dinis.

The mention of dawn has implications for our reading of this song and the whole sequence. The dawn setting probably applies to the other three poems I am going to consider here. In Meogo 6 the girl washes her hair at dawn, as here; in Meogo 8 the dance took place at dawn; and in Meogo 9 the girl went to the fountain at dawn. Likewise, the references to spring in Meogo 6 (*verdes ervas* and *verdes prados*) probably apply to the other three, so the basic scenario in all four texts is the same: spring, dawn, at the fountain. These specifications suggest a ritual that must be performed at a given time of year, at a given time of day, and in a given place.

What about the image? For now I will just observe that the last two strophes of No. 5 introduce the stag that stirs up the water, an image that appears only here and in No. 9 (I should stress that in this genre images are rare. In this respect, the songs of Pero Meogo are exceptional).

I cannot help mentioning that there is a sequence of four *a* vowels at the end of the first hemistich, in *aa alva*, and again at the end of the song, in *volvia a agua*, although in the first case this belongs to my supplement and in the second case it is due partly to the correction of *auga* to *agua*—for which I also take responsibility (Cohen 2014b). But let's assume for the moment that the supplement and the correction are right. Is there, then, a cryptic connection here, whereby the sun (star of the dawn) shines on the water?

To see how a combination of formal and verbal features can distinguish the end of a poem, let's look now at the next *cantiga*.

PERO MEOGO 6

aaB (×8): 5'/5 || 3'

e-as a-os elos e-as ei ara ei a-a || igo *cobras alternantes v-viii*

Enas verdes ervas  
vi anda-las cervas,  
*meu amigo.*

5 Enos verdes prados  
vi os cervos bravos,  
*meu amigo.*

E con sabor delos  
lavei meus cabelos,  
*meu amigo.*

10 E con sabor delas  
lavei mhas garcetas,  
*meu amigo.*

15 Des que los lavei,  
d' ouro los liei,  
*meu amigo.*

Des que las lavara,  
d' ouro las liara,  
*meu amigo.*

20 D' ouro los liei  
e vos aspereí,  
*meu amigo.*

D' ouro las liara  
e vos asperava,  
*meu amigo.*

B 1189 f. 253r V 794 f. 125r

7-12 copied at the end of the text and in reverse order in V 7 delh9 B : delhos V 8 Lauey B : auey V 9, 18, 24 amigo om. B 10 delhas BV 13 que los] q'(u)l9 ? B : q'u9 V 15 amigo] a B 16 lavara Braga : lauera B : laura V 19, 22 Douro B : Doutro V 21 ami B 23 asperaua B : aspaua V : asperara Nunes

The second half of this text is marked by rhetorical, metrical, para-metrical, and syntactic features. Strophes v-viii feature regular *leixa-pren*; an interstrophic alternation between verses of five syllables with masculine cadence (v, vii) and verses of six syllables with feminine cadence (vi, viii) and a complete coincidence between strong positions and stressed syllables. Strophes v-vi are the only ones that contain a complex sentence (subordinate and main clause), and the last two strophes are the only ones with two independent clauses (*liei* |...*asperei*; *liara* |...*asperava*). Now let's move on to the penultimate poem in the set.

PERO MEOGO 8

aaBBB (×4): I-II: 8 [3'+4]; III-IV: 9 [3'+5] || 6 [3'+2] 9 [3'+5] 6 [3'+2]  
ar/al ir al/ar ir/in || en *cobras alternantes*

Fostes, filha, eno bailar  
e rompestes i o brial,  
*poilo cervo i ven*  
*esta fonte seguide a ben*  
5 *poilo cervo i ven.*

Fostes, filha, eno loir  
e rompestes i o vestir,  
*poilo cervo i ven*  
<*esta fonte seguide a ben*  
15 *poilo cervo i ven*>.



E rompestes i o brial,  
 que fezeastes ao meu pesar,  
*poilo cervo i ven*  
 <esta fonte seguide a ben  
 15 *poilo cervo i ven*>.

E rompestes i o vestir,  
 que fezeastes a pesar de min,  
*poilo cervo i ven*  
 <esta fonte seguide a ben  
 20 *poilo cervo i ven*>.

B 1191 f. 253v V 796 f. 125r

3, 5 *poilo cervo Nunes* (ex vv. 8, 13, 18) : poys ona morado B : poys o namorado V 6 loyr BV *hapax legomenon* 12 ao V : no B : a *Michaëlis, probante Lapa* 13 ceruo B : ceruo V 17 pesar de mi *Lapa* (a *deleto*)

I should say that *loir*, apparently from *ludere*, is a *hapax* and probably means something like “festivity”, synonymous with *bailar*, “dance”, and I think *seguide* here means “watch carefully”, “be wary of”, an otherwise unattested sense of the verb (Cohen 2014a: 63-64).

Here we have one of a dozen refrains in the form aaBBB where the third verse repeats the first (Cohen 2016: 38). If a refrain, by being predictable, satisfies the brain, a refrain that repeats a verse should be doubly satisfying. I want to call your attention to the hypermetric verses in the last two strophes, where the cola *ao meu pesar* (III.2) and *a pesar de min* (IV.2) scan a syllable longer than the corresponding cola in the first two strophes. External responson is observed here by pairs of strophes—a phenomenon found in roughly a dozen *cantigas d'amigo* (Cohen 2018). And the hypermetric verses before the refrain create a slight delay just before a climax.

Tension due to delay is strongest when the expected event is most predictable (Huron 2006: 325). In such cases the brain experiences first a negative limbic response to the delay, then an increased positive limbic response to the expected event. The climax of a composition in Western classical music is bound to be more dramatic than a refrain in a *cantiga*

*d'amigo* preceded by a hypermetric verse, but the principle is the same. The audience would have felt a similar kind of satisfaction. The grand finale of the set comes in the ninth poem:

PERO MEOGO – 9

aaB (×6) 10' [4'+5'] || 5

i-a // a-a (I-IV); i-o // a-o (V-VI) || ei *cobras alternantes I-IV*

— Digades, filha, | mha filha velida,  
por que tardastes | na fontana fria?  
(— *Os amores ei*).

5 — Digades, filha, | mha filha louçana,  
por que tardastes | na fria fontana?  
(— *Os amores ei*).

Tardei, mha madre, | na fontana fria,  
cervos do monte | a agua volv<i>an;  
(*Os amores ei*).

10 Tardei, mha madre, | na fria fontana,  
cervos do monte | volv<i>an a agua;  
(*Os amores <ei>*).

15 — Mentir, mha filha, | mentir por amigo,  
nunca vi cervo | que volvesse\_o rio;  
(— *Os amores ei*).

— Mentir, mha filha, | mentir por amado,  
nunca vi cervo | que volves' o alto;  
(— *Os amores ei*).

B 1192 f. 253v V 797 f. 125r-v

1 uelida B : ne naa V 8 do monte a augua *Varnhagen* : do monte a augua do môte BV 8, 11 agua *Cohen* (2014; iam *Braga in v. 11*) : augua BV, editores volv<i>am *Varnhagen* : uoluã BV 9 amores ey V : om. B

The mother greets her daughter with an accusation and rejects the girl's excuse for returning so late. This text and No. 5 are linked by numerous elements: the length (six strophes); the use of *cobras alternantes* with *leixa-pren*; the appearance of *velida* in the first verse; the rhyme-pair *fontana fria / fria fontana*; the repetition of a verb at the beginning of the second colon (*Levou s'* in 5; *mentir* in 9); the image of a stag (or stags) stirring up the water, and the word *amores* in the refrain.

This poem displays a non-mechanical *leixa-pren* (Cohen 2014a: 68-69). There is a change of speaker in the second pair of strophes and again in the last pair; and neither time does the second verse in one pair of strophes become the first verse in the next, as usually happens with *leixa-pren*. But key lexical items, including rhyme words, are picked up from one pair of strophes and repeated in the next in a methodical way.

The shift in rhyme-scheme, from *cobras alternantes* with *i-a a-a* in the first four strophes to *i-o a-o* in the last two, is unique in Galician-Portuguese lyric.<sup>2</sup> This is what Huron calls a *dynamic surprise*. He writes (2006: 278): "In a dynamic surprise, the music is constructed so that the work itself sets up some work specific expectation that is then violated". This change in the rhyme-scheme precludes the repetition in strophes v-vi of rhyme words from iii-iv but *leixa-pren* is maintained.

This display of formal and rhetorical virtuosity marks the end of the set. Now, what happens at the end of the last verse before the refrain? The audience expects, first of all, the end of the verse. Second, the rhyme sound will be *a-o*, the second half of the pair *i-o, a-o*. Third, since the rhyme-word in the corresponding verse in strophe v was *rio*, the audience can predict that the rhyme-word will now be *alto*, since *rio/alto* form a dyad, a traditional pair of rhyme words (Cohen 2012: 8-9; cf. Fabb 2015: 141). Fourth, the audience knows the refrain will follow; hence, the end of the strophe. Fifth, after the refrain, it expects the end of the poem (*cantigas* with more than six strophes are quite rare in this genre). Sixth, the audience probably understands that this poem is the

<sup>2</sup> But compare Solaz 2 and see Cohen 2014a: 7 note 29.

long awaited climax, and therefore anticipates the end of the set. *End of verse, rhyme-sound, rhyme-word, refrain*; and therefore *end of strophe, end of poem, end of set*.

When all these predictions prove accurate, the audience would feel a climax, thanks to a complex design in multiple dimensions that was meant to provide satisfaction. Huron (2006:326) says, “The climax may represent the epitome of contrastive valence in music making. The psychological result sometimes borders on the euphoric”. And this climax is multi-modal, in Huron’s terms, since it has a visual component (albeit made of words): the image of the stag and the spring returns in the last pair of strophes in the last text.

With the conclusion of the set, the appraisal response comes into play. As writes Huron (2007: 15), “Appraisal responses can involve conscious thought that often draws on complex social and contextual factors”. At the end of the sequence the audience would have been able to evaluate the whole lyric drama.

Let us turn now to what was, for me, a gigantic surprise from an unexpected source: Serbian oral literature. In a doctoral thesis and a series of articles, Djordjina Trubarac Matić, (2010, 2011, 2016, 2018a, 2018b), a Serbian philologist and ethnographer, brought to light the astonishing correspondence between Meogo 9 and a Serbian ballad transcribed in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Trubarac argues that the image of a stag stirring up spring-water, used by a girl as a *transparent* excuse in a dialog with her mother, derives from an ancient stratum of European ritual and song. Here is an English version of the dialog in the ballad (Cohen 2014a: 73).

“You bitch, no daughter of mine,  
 What were you doing at the cold water  
 35 From midnight until noon?”

“Don’t scold me, my dear mother.  
 The stag was standing at the cold water,  
 With his horn he was stirring the freezing water.

40 With his horn he stirred it, with his eyes he made it clear;  
I waited until it got clear”.

“Don’t lie, bitch, no daughter of mine,  
You bitch, that wasn’t the stag of the hills,  
45 It was a stout man from the fort”.

Here, as in Meogo 9: (1) a mother greets her daughter and asks why she is returning so late; (2) the daughter says she took a long time because a stag stirred up the water; (3) the mother accuses the girl of lying, saying it was a man, not a deer, that delayed her.<sup>3</sup> Trubarac Matić (2018: 8) writes: “The dialogues belong to the same symbolic, semantic and pragmatic script”.

There is a vast distance in time, geography and language between these two texts, but the pragmatic match is perfect: a mother/daughter dialog in three corresponding parts; and so too is the rhetorical match: the daughter speaking to her mother, uses a stag stirring spring water as an excuse for an erotic tryst. These common elements certainly do seem to point to a shared model, or *proto-model*.

Trubarac shows that the dialog in the ballad is related to a ritual song which forms part of a spring custom called *ranilo*. At the beginning of spring, nubile girls get up around midnight, go to a water source (usually), stay there until dawn, draw water, and go home. Dance and song are the focus of *ranilo*, whose objective is to propitiate a cosmic solar power (associated with springtime) that promotes fertility and growth in the human community and the fields. Here is the English translation of Trubarac (2018b: 29; I omit the refrain, “*Yela le, Yela, good maiden*”, which occurs after every verse).

Early arose the maidens  
Early arose [to go] to the water,

<sup>3</sup> We find the plural *cervos* in Meogo 9, strophes III-IV, but the singular *cervo* in 9, strophes VI-VI and Meogo 5, strophes V-VI.

By the water, there was a young stag,  
 Stirring the water with his horn,  
 Clearing it up with his eyes.

In *raniolo* this mythical image is rooted in the solar symbolism of the stag. The image might suggest a female figure kidnapped by a solar deity, since in the ballad this imagery refers to a marriage by kidnap (with the girl’s consent, as often in the Hispanic *rapto nupcial*). The symbol system in the songs of Meogo probably does not invoke a myth of cosmic marriage. Yet the symbolic language seems to come from ritual, nuptial and prenuptial. After all, this is a girl who arises at dawn, goes to a spring, washes her hair, binds it with gold, dances with a stag, and comes back with her clothes torn. Trubarac (2018: 28) thinks Meogo 5 and 9 may be from a “ritual dramatic script”.

The form and meaning of a myth are variable. Myths are adapted to different purposes—ritual, magical, religious, political, literary. And although the words, acts and symbols of a ritual may linger on long after they have been detached from a myth, over time their meaning will alter or fade. But at least two songs of Meogo seem to be rooted in a rite linked to a myth and use ritual language.

In assessing the organization of the sequence of nine *cantigas* by Pero Meogo, we should look at the distribution—in relation to the whole set and to the form of each *cantiga* in which it occurs—of the

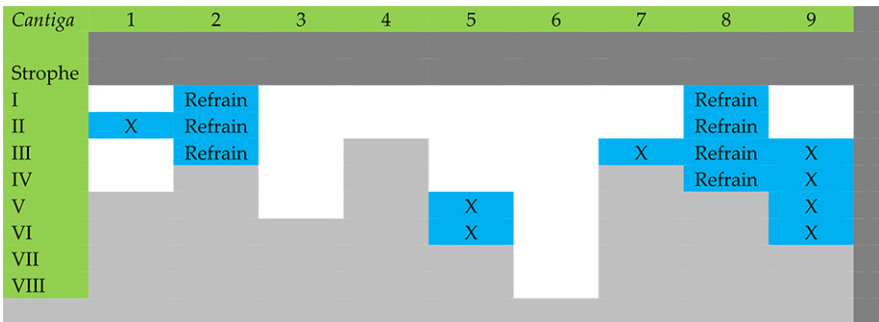


Figure 1: *Distribution of the Image of the Stag at the Fountain* (Cohen 2014a: 78).

image of the stag at the fountain. I believe that this distribution provides evidence of an overall design.

The image marks the beginning, middle, and end of the set, and in the last poem it is found in *each of the last four strophes*. As an image or symbol system created by language, the stag at the fountain belongs to rhetoric. Since it represents activity, it also belongs to pragmatics. The distribution of this image in the set is part of an overall architecture of form, language and action. And in Meogo 9 the image appears in a final climax within that architecture.

The ability to recognize a rhythmic pattern in the sound made by an approaching predator must have saved our ancestors from becoming food. So the ability to predict a pattern of beats was a biological necessity, not an aesthetic luxury. Huron says that the best example of a predictable outcome in Western classical music is the final cadence. And if that cadence is delayed by a surprise, there is a moment of maximum tension followed by the pleasure of an accurate prediction. Our brain attributes the sense of euphoria to the signal, in this case the final note or chord, but in reality it is the quick succession of expectation, interruption and fulfillment that produces a highly positive valence.

Form, rhetoric and pragmatics in the *cantigas d'amigo* are kinds of technology. The aaB strophe and kindred forms are a technology that must have evolved over a long stretch of time—through replication, variation and selection—to serve as a vehicle in the transmission of linguistic and social competence. The most basic human technology is language and poetic language is high tech. Rhetorical techniques in the *cantigas d'amigo* are carefully placed in the form of the song, to *weave a spell* (as it were) with repetition and variation. A pragmatic script constitutes technology too: the design of action within a form. The mind perceives this hidden technology of action and rhetoric, as a kind of magic (Gell 1995) in the art-form we call the *cantiga d'amigo*. The architecture of Meogo's sequence adds another level of technology.

*Digades, filha, mha filha velida* is the last song of the sequence and qualifies as a climax: among other things, the three-part dialog between mother and daughter displays unparalleled virtuosity in the handling of

*leixa-pren*; and the image, in each of the last four strophes, of the stag stirring the water of the spring, echoes the use of this same image in the final strophes of Meogo 5, the central song. This image packs the energy of an ancient ritual, replete with the sexual symbols of a myth. In Meogo 9, the last two strophes mark a climax within a climax: the unique change of rhyme-scheme would have startled the audience, creating a tension response. But then, after that surprise, the fulfillment of six predictions together would be starkly pleasurable. There are three levels of climax here and all three come to a head at Rv-1: the last verse ends; the moving now of the text glides, after a pause, into the refrain; and the refrain concludes, at a stroke, the strophe, the *cantiga*, and the whole sequence.

By design, I believe, the audience should have felt a fair measure of satisfaction.

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