The dazzling culture of the troubadours – the virtuosity of their songs, the subtlety of their exploration of love, and the glamorous international careers some troubadours enjoyed – fascinated contemporaries and had a lasting influence on European life and literature. Apart from the refined love songs for which the troubadours are renowned, the tradition includes political and satirical poetry, devotional lyrics and bawdy or zany poems. It is also in the troubadour song-books that the only substantial collection of medieval lyrics by women is preserved. This book offers a general introduction to the troubadours. Its sixteen newly commissioned essays, written by leading scholars from Britain, the US, France, Italy and Spain, trace the historical development and setting of troubadour song, engage with the main trends in troubadour criticism, and examine the reception of troubadour poetry. Appendices offer an invaluable guide to the troubadours, to technical vocabulary, to research tools and to surviving manuscripts.

Simon Gaunt is Professor of French Language and Literature at King’s College London.

Sarah Kay is Reader in Medieval French and Occitan at the University of Cambridge.
THE TROUBADOURS

An Introduction

EDITED BY

SIMON GAUNT

AND

SARAH KAY
Contents

List of contributors vii
Preface xi
Map of Occitania and neighbouring Catalonia xiii

Introduction
Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay 1

1 Courtly culture in medieval Occitania
Ruth Harvey 8

2 Fin’amor and the development of the courtly canso
Linda Paterson 28

3 Moral and satirical poetry
Catherine Léglu 47

4 The early troubadours: Guilhem IX to Bernart de Ventadorn
Stephen G. Nichols 66

5 The classical period: from Raimbaut d’Aurenga to Arnaut Daniel
Gérard Gouiran 83

6 The later troubadours
Michael Routledge 99

7 The trobairitz
Tilde Sankovitch 113

8 Italian and Catalán troubadours
Miriam Cabré 127
## Contents

9 Music and versification  
*Margaret Switten*  
141

10 Rhetoric and hermeneutics  
*Sarah Spence*  
164

11 Intertextuality and dialogism in the troubadours  
*Maria Luisa Meneghetti*  
181

12 The troubadours at play: irony, parody and burlesque  
*Don A. Monson*  
197

13 Desire and subjectivity  
*Sarah Kay*  
212

14 Orality and writing: the text of the troubadour poem  
*Simon Gaunt*  
228

15 The *chansonniers* as books  
*William Burgwinkle*  
246

16 Troubadour lyric and Old French narrative  
*Sylvia Huot*  
263

Appendix 1 Major troubadours  
*Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay*  
279

Appendix 2 Occitan terms  
292

Appendix 3 Research tools and reference works  
*Catherine Léglu*  
295

Appendix 4 The *chansonniers*  
303

*Bibliography*  
306

*Index*  
325


WILLIAM BURGWINKLE is a Professor of French at the University of Hawai‘i Manoa in Honolulu. His most recent publication on the troubadours is *Love for Sale: Materialist Readings of the Troubadour Razos*. He is currently working on constructions of masculinity and homophobic discourse in twelfth- and thirteenth-century French texts.

MIRIAM CABRÉ is a former graduate student of Cambridge University and currently holds a research fellowship at the University of Girona. She is the author of various publications on the troubadour Cerverí, including the monograph *Cerverí de Girona and his Poetic Traditions*. Her major research area is the culture of Medieval Catalonia.

SIMON GAUNT is Professor of French Language and Literature at King’s College London. He has worked extensively on Medieval Occitan and French literature and is the author of *Troubadours and Irony and Gender and Genre in Medieval French Literature*. Together with Ruth Harvey and Linda Paterson he is one of the editors of the forthcoming critical edition of the poetry of Marcabru.

GÉRARD GOUIRAN is Professor of Romance Linguistics and Occitan at the University of Montpellier III. He works widely on medieval Occitan literature and has published editions of the poetry of the troubadours (the songs of Bertran de Born and of Falquet de Romans); *chanson de geste* (*Le Roland occitan*); romance (*Guilhem de la Barra*); and non-literary texts (*Le Livre Potentia des états de Provence*).

RUTH HARVEY is Senior Lecturer in French at Royal Holloway University of London. Her major research interests are twelfth-century court society and court literature and she is the author of numerous articles on the early troubadours and of the only
monograph in English on Marcabru, *The Troubadour Marcabru and Love*. She is also one of the collaborators, together with Simon Gaunt and Linda Paterson, on the forthcoming critical edition of the poetry of Marcabru.

**SYLVIA HUOT** is University Lecturer in French and Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge. She is the author of *From Song to Book, The ‘Romance of the Rose’ and its Medieval Readers and Allegorical Play in the Old French Motet*, and co-editor with Kevin Brownlee of *Rethinking the ‘Romance of the Rose’*.

**SARAH KAY** is Reader in French and Occitan Literature at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Girton College. She is the author of, among other things, *Subjectivity in Troubadour Poetry* and *The Chansons de geste in the Age of Romance*. Her current work is on the contradictions of courtly literature.

**CATHERINE LE GLU** is a lecturer in French at the University of Bristol. She is the author of several articles on aspects of satirical poetry in the troubadour corpus.

**MARIA LUISA MENEGHETTI** is Professor of Romance Philology at the University of Siena. She works particularly on courtly romance, medieval romance lyric, and literary iconography. Her publications include *Il romanzo, Il pubblico dei trovatori, and Storia delle letterature medievali romanze*, vol. I, *Le origini*.

**DON A. MONSON** is Professor of French at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. He works on twelfth- and thirteenth-century courtly literature in Occitan, French and Latin. He has published a book on the Occitan *ensenhamens* and various articles.

**STEPHEN G. NICHOLS** is the James M. Beall Professor of French and Humanities and Chair of the French Department at Johns Hopkins University. He is Director and a Senior Fellow of the School of Criticism and Theory at Cornell University and a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America. Among the more recent books he has published are *Medievalism and the Modernist Temper* (with R. Howard Bloch), and *The Whole Book* (with Siegfried Wenzel).
List of Contributors

LINDA PATERSON is Reader in French at the University of Warwick. She specialises in medieval Occitan history and literature. Her major publications are Troubadours and Eloquence and The World of the Troubadours: Medieval Occitan Society c. 1100 – c. 1300.

MICHAEL ROUTLEDGE is Senior Lecturer in French and Director of European Studies at Royal Holloway University of London. His research interests include urban poets of the Middle Ages and Occitan writing on the crusades. He has published editions of the songs of the Monk of Montaudon and the works of Bertran Carbonel.

TILDE SANKOVITCH is Professor of French at Northwestern University. Her research and publications focus on French literature of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and she is particularly interested in the work of early women writers. Her books include an edition (with W. D. Paden and P. Stäblein) of the songs of Bertran de Born and French Women Writers and the Book: Myths of Access and Desire.

SARAH SPENCE is Professor of Classics at the University of Georgia and editor of Literary Imagination, The Review of the Association of Literary Scholars and Critics. She has published widely on classical Latin and medieval literature with a particular focus on rhetoric, notably Rhetorics of Reason and Desire: Vergil, Augustine and the Troubadours and Texts and the Self in the Twelfth Century.

MARGARET SWATEN is Class of 1926 Professor of French, Mount Holyoke College. She specialises in the music and poetry of the Middle Ages, specifically the songs of the troubadours. In addition to numerous articles, her publications include The Cansos of Raimon de Miraval: A Study of Poems and Melodies and Music and Poetry in the Middle Ages: A Guide to Research on French and Occitan Song 1100–1400.
Preface

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is both a collection of self-contained essays and a textbook. The first three chapters offer an introduction to the historical context of the troubadour lyric, and then to the two main genres of the troubadour tradition, the *canso* and *sirventes*. The next five are broadly speaking literary-historical and offer an overview of the troubadours with chapters on the three main periods of troubadour production, on the women troubadours, and on Spanish and Italian troubadours, the aim being to show how the tradition evolved both in Occitania and abroad. The following five chapters give an account of the critical preoccupations of recent troubadour scholarship. The final three chapters deal, albeit selectively, with medieval reception. Each chapter gives a selective account of past scholarship, but also makes an original contribution to the field.

All references are keyed either to the bibliography or to Appendices 1 and 3. Unless otherwise stated troubadours are cited from the editions given in Appendix 1. The Appendices are intended both for reference and as tools for further research. Appendix 1 offers thumb-nail sketches of what is known of the lives and work of some fifty-six troubadours and includes references to the best available editions. Appendix 2 offers a glossary of Occitan terms. Appendix 3 is a critical introduction to research tools. Appendix 4 is a list of extant *chansonniers*.

We hope that *The Troubadours: An Introduction* can profitably be read as a book, but you may wish to consult it more selectively either by reading chapters on particular themes or issues, or by consulting the index of troubadours and their songs. Complete comprehensiveness has not, of course, been possible, but our aim
Preface

has been to ensure coverage of non-canonical as well as canonical poets and to give a sense of the richness of the troubadour tradition beyond the dazzling, but nonetheless somewhat limited parameters of the twelfth-century *canso*. 