French 15: Preparatory Reading
Updated 2019

We encourage students to explore the material over the summer. It is also particularly important to begin studying the Occitan language, using the resources indicated below.

You should commence your search for books in the library or a local bookshop. If the books in question are not available there, you should know that Blackwell's online offers some of these texts. Beyond that, we encourage students to explore, for French-language books, chapitre.com, which offers good prices. Books are searchable by author, title, or ISBN number (EAN13).

Recordings

The best way to start studying the troubadours is by listening to the music. Many albums (of very different production quality) are available. We recommend that students try a couple of the following:

Sequentia, *Dante and the Troubadours* (BMG, 1995)

Medieval Texts

The lyric texts are most easily accessible in:


Students will also find a small selection of lyric texts of graduated difficulty, with notes and translation, in Paden, *An Introduction to Old Occitan* (below). Additional lyric texts will be provided during the year, along with a complete list of the lyrics to be covered by the examination.

The non-lyric set texts will include the following, which have student editions still in print:

Occitan Language

For an introduction to the Occitan language, see Parts 1 and 4 of:


The lyric readings appended to each chapter (including the chapters in parts 2 and 3) offer an ideal self-tutorial for reading Old Occitan, and we encourage students to work through them over the summer, though we will also provide some language instruction during the year.

Do not be overwhelmed by the linguistic material covered in parts 2 and 3! This historical approach to the language constitutes a distinguished branch of linguistics as a discipline, but it is not a component of FR15.

Introductory and Contextual Material

For a brief, accessible literary history, see:


For chapters on different aspects of the troubadour tradition, including origins, rhetoric, topoi, versification, music, manuscript transmission, and posterity, see:


For critical interpretation of the lyric, students may begin with one of the following:


For the special topic, students may begin with one or more of the following:


Students particularly interested in the music or the historical context may consult the following:
