

**The Other France :
Troubadours and
the Politics of Cultural Heritage**
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The program of this seminar was prepared by Marisa Galvez and Gérard Zuchetto

The Troubadours after the Troubadours.

The Troubadouric art may linger until the 15th century with Toulouse Jocs Florals, but for all practical purposes, its great period is over as soon as the end of the 13th century. That does not mean the memory of Troubadours disappears totally.

In Italy, they remain known of any reader of Dante's or Petrarques's works. And in France, some provincial historians in Provence and Languedoc may evocate – rather summarily-their existence all along the 16th, and 17th centuries. Between the end of the 18th and the beginning of the next, they are gradually rediscovered. If the mainstream of french literary studies puts them aside as soon as it becomes obvious their language is not the proper french one, in Southern France, where occitan still lives, those who start a literary vernacular « renaissance » with Mistral and his followers claim the old medieval poets as their true ancestors, and the proof of the dignity of those « patois » loathed by official culture. At the same time, romanistic studies in France, Germany, Italy... permit a better knowledge of the reality of troubadouric poetry, even if this knowledge is limited to a small community of specialists. Therefore, Troubadours today continue being an object of scholarly studies for the happy few, while for the average people, in northern as in southern France, « Troubadour » is wether a mere word reminding of pintoresque stereotyps (the singer with his luth and his feathered cap) or the central element of an identitary occitan mythology, aside with their (far less musical) contemporaries, the cathars. It is this history of knowledge and/or representations we will try to explore.

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