Occitan is *THE* Poetic Language [*]

A secondary, critical source presents us with a useful approach to *trobar*: Occitan poetics treatises. Most of these are from the late 13th – early 14th c., and thus considerably later than most of the corpus of Occitan lyric poetry (if its supposed date of composition is accepted). While the Occitan lyric "golden age" may stretch into the early 1200s, the Albigensian Crusade impacts poetic production from the second decade of the 13th c. onwards, and may have had an effect on manuscript production, preservation, and transmission. Through the 13th c., those poems that *do* remain move away from the *canso*; more of them are in a variety of other lyric forms, especially in satirical and polemical forms such as the political *sirventes*.

Most of the treatises we have, from around the end of the century, are thus at least two generations distant from the "golden age," and with the extra distance of exile. This helps to explain a focus on instructing the reader in the Occitan language, particularly grammar. The language is falling out of use, falling into misuse, is in danger of dying, and meanwhile prospective poets and appreciators of poetry wish to learn it the better to understand, work with, and continue the composition of Occitan lyric poetry. Yet these features of linguistic

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[*] This is an excerpt from "*Trobar*" - part of section 1.2, "Poetics: the *canso*, *and clus/cortes* as lyric imprisonment" - from Chapter 1, "Contexts erotic and poetic: *trobar amor clusa e cortesa*." In Trobar Cor(s*): Erotics and Poetics in* Flamenca (Juliet O'Brien, Diss. Princeton U 2006): 96- 115 Pagination and footnoting are identical to the full text at Dissertation Abstracts International, except for formatting changes, the addition of this extra footnote, and the removal of intertextual references to the rest of the chapter and dissertation.
The preceding part of section 1.2 has looked at how Occitan poets use *trobar, trobador*, etc.; the next part looks at and redefines *trobar clus*. The *trobar* material in Chapter 1 as a whole argues - from first principles and supported by close readings - for a new view of Occitan poetics that dovetails with Jakobson, Agamben, and Heller-Roazen on "poetic language" and what makes poetry poetry. This argument subsequently leads to a new explanation of what the **** the late 13th c. Occitan *Romance of Flamenca* is playing at.

and cultural preservation are already present in the earliest extant treatise, that of Raimon Vidal de Besalú, dated between 1190 and 1213. If that date is pushed towards 1213, we can see how the earliest French southwards incursions are already having a dramatic cultural effect, and appreciate the treatise's prescient awareness of the Crusade's full destructive potential.

The treatises use examples drawn from real (poetic) usage – thus already functioning as a didactic sort of anthology. They may be punctuated with longer extracts, or whole poems, or followed by a collection of poems: thus functioning as a guided reader – *raisonné*, poems surrounded by their *razos* – or indeed a full anthology. These treatises, laudably didactic as they may be, are also literary works as they participate in a general movement of formal experimentation which may be seen to characterise the 13th century, including the *chansonnier*-anthologies; romances including embedded lyric pieces (such as Jean Renart's works); and *Flamenca*, which, as I show elsewhere, is a romance which merges the allusive anthology with the strongly lyrical romance.

The later of these treatises would have been intended for foreign audiences and for others less linguistically cognizant of the generations after the Albigensian crusade and dispersal (particularly of the more literate population and their patrons). An example of this potential audience is offered in the shape of the last *vida* in Boutière-Schutz: that of Ferrari de Ferrara, a Lombard – foreign - master of the language who made a "book" (now lost) containing "extracts" and "sentences." The way to learn this language is through its poetry: both through reading the extant poetry, and writing poetry oneself. And the language is

inextricable from the poetry. This is the first of a series of indications I have found in the treatises to show a contemporary perception of Occitan[56] as a fundamentally poetic language, and one in which *trobar* is a key term.

> Maistre Ferari fo de Feirara. E fo giullar et intendez meill de trobar proensal che negus om che fos mai[s] en Lombardia e meill entendet la lenga proensal. E sap molt be letras, e scrivet meil ch'om del mond e feis de molt bos libres e de beill[s]. […] E [quan] li giullar li vinian che s'entendean de la lenga proensal, anavan tuit ab lui e[.l] clamavan lor ma[i]stre; e s'alcus li.n venia che s'entendes miel che i altri e che fes questios de son trobar o d'autrui, e maistre Ferari li respondea ades […] E fe[s] un estrat de tutas las cançços de bos trobador[s] del mon; e de chadaunas cançços o serventes tras .I. cobla o .II. o .III., aqelas che portan la[s] sentenças de las cançços e o son tu[i]t li mot triat. Et aqest estrat e scrit isi denan; et en aqest estrat non vol meter nullas de las soas coblas; mais [a]qel de cui es lo libre li.n fes scriure, per che fos recordament de lui.[57]

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[56] "Occitan" is a modern neologism, referring to the linguistic group from the geographical Languedoc, that includes but is not limited to Provençal. "Old Provençal" was the older, 19th through earlier 20th century, term for the same language; but that could appear not to include Gascon, Limousin, Auvergnat, Quercinois/Carcinòl, and the Alpine variant. *Trobadors* and other contemporary writers often leave the language's identity ambiguous. In the event of clearer identification, what the language is called varies, as does the perception of what kind of linguistic things it is. Here in this (late 13th-early 14th century) *vida*, the language is called *la lenga proensal*. In Raimon Vidal de Besalú's treatise (about a century earlier), it is *la parladura de Lemosin*, in which he includes *proensa* as well as Auvergnat and Carcinòl, and it is mutually inter-comprehensible with French. Jofre de Foixà (late 13th-early 14th century again) will refer to the whole linguistic group as *romanç.* This in turn recalls a very early naming of the language as *romans* (and contrasted, like in Jofre's treatise, with Latin – *lati*) by the first known *trobador*, Guilhem de Peitieus, in *Pos de chanter m'es pres talenz* (late 11th-early 12th century)*.*
[57] Boutière-Schutz 581.

Master Ferari was from Ferrara. And he was a *joglar* and understood Provençal *trobar* and the Provençal tongue better than anyone else in Lombardy ever. And he knew his letters well, and wrote better than anyone in the world, and made many good and beautiful books. And when *joglars* came there who understood the Provençal language, they all went to be with him and called him their master; if some came there who understood better than the others and who asked questions about his *trobar* or that of others, Master Ferari would always reply to them. And he made a collection of the songs of the good *trobadors* in the world; and he excerpted one or two or three stanzas from them, which bore the main message of the songs, and where all the words are carefully selected. And this collection is written down here; and he did not want to put any of his own stanzas in this collection; but he whose book this is had some written [down here anyway], that there might be a record/memory of him.

Raimon Vidal de Besalú's *Razos de trobar* (c. 1190-1213; manuscript B version) opens:

> Per so qar ieu Raimonz Vidals ai vist et conegut qe pauc d'omes sabon ni an saubuda la dreicha maniera de trobar, voill eu far aqest libre per far conoisser et saber qals dels trobadors an mielz trobat et mielz ensenhat, ad aqelz qe.l volran aprenre, con devon segre la dreicha maniera de trobar. […] Tota genz cristianas, iusieuas et sarazinas, emperador, princeps, rei, duc, conte vesconte, contor, valvasor, clergue, borgues, vilans, paucs et grantz, meton totz iorns lor entendiment en trobar et en chantar, […] Et tuit le mal e.l ben del mont son mes en remembransa per

trobadors. Et ia non trobares mot [ben] ni mal dig, po[s] trobaires l'a mes en rima, ge tot iorns [non sia] en remembranza, […]. En aqest saber de trobar son enganat li trobador […] Ni non crezas qe neguns hom n'aia istat maistres ni perfaig; car tant e cars et fins le sabers qe hanc nuls homs non se donet garda del tot: so conoissera totz homs prims et entendenz qe ben esgard aqest libre. Ni eu non dic ges qe sia maistres ni parfaitz; mas tan dirai segon mon sen en aqest libre, qe totz homs qe l'entendra ni aia bon cor de trobar poira far sos chantars ses tota vergoigna.[58]

Because I, Raimon Vidal, have seen and known that few men know nor have known the right way to find, I want to make this book so as to make known which *trobadors* composed and taught the best, and from whom those who wish to learn may follow the right way to find. […] All people – Christian, Jewish and Saracen, emperor, prince, king, duke, viscount, count, vavasour, cleric, burgher, peasant, small and mighty – constantly dedicate themselves to composing and singing […] And all the bad and the good in the world are placed in remembrance by *trobadors*. And you will find never find an idea, whether it be well or badly expressed, that will not be remembered for ever once a *trobador* has set it to rhyme […] And the *trobadors* are skilled in this science of composition. […] Do not believe of anyone that he has been a past master of it, for this science is so rare and so refined that no one had command of the whole of it: anyone who is subtle and judicious will recognise this when they read this book. Nor do I say

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[58] Marshall 1970: 2-4. I see Raimon Vidal's *aia bon cor de trobar* as an expression of the internal and intuitive aspect of poetry, akin to the *cor noble* elsewhere in his works, and discuss this further in Chapter Three in relation to *trobar / amor corals*. All translations from Marshall's edition are my own. I must thank Sarah Kay for her help in correcting my errors, particularly in this passage.

anything that is masterly or perfect; but I shall speak in this book according to my understanding so that everyone who heeds it or has the heart inclined to become a *trobador* will be able to compose songs without incurring shame.

We have here a clear definition of the *trobador*'s activity: an "art of finding." Much of what follows runs in circles: so as to "find" properly, one must *entendre* - "hear" and/or "understand." Infuriatingly, *entendre* is also what precedes *trobar* - "intention." So it is also what precedes finding itself, in a continuous closed loop. Only the true adept can break through. *Trobar* could, by definition, be a *trobar clus*.

The cognitive leap into full knowledge, and its hermeneutic, hermetically sealed nature also has a spiritual aspect. It belongs to the same group of active and engaged reading processes as does exegesis; and it recalls a similar apparent lexical doubling, again with looping and hermeneutic aspects: *quia videntes non vident, et audientes non audiunt neque intelligunt* (Matt. 13.13).[59] Later, there is a curious and circuitous discussion of taste. The bulk of the treatise concerns grammar, as one must be able to use the language properly in order to compose well: "finding the right word"; a cardinal theme in *Flamenca*, indeed a significant plot device, recurring as it does in protagonists' thoughts, words, and actions; and present in the *vidas* and *razos*. Choosing the right words, from the greatest possible knowledge of words available, is at the heart of

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[59] I use the *Vulgate* to draw attention to the use of *intellego*, which is close to *entendre* in its inclusion of conscious activity, thinking, and internality. These two words are discussed in greater detail in Chapters Three and Four of my dissertation. King James translation: "[Therefore speak I to them in parables:] because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand."

the "art of finding." This coincides with the *imaginatio* part of the rhetorical art. One must also know the *right* language for poetic composition – certain languages are appropriate for certain genres – and the words should be appropriate and proper.[60]

Totz hom qe vol trobar ni entendre deu primierament saber qe neguna parladura non es naturals ni drecha del nostre lingage, mais acella de Franza e de Proensa e d'Alvergna e de Caersin. Per qe ieu vos dic qe, qant ieu parlarai de "Lemosy", qe totas estas terras entendas et totas lor vezinas et totas cellas qe son entre ellas. Et tot l'ome qe en aquellas terras son nat ni norit an la parladura natural et drecha. Mas cant uns d'els [es] eiciz de la parladura per una rima qe i aura mestier o per autra causa, miels o conois cels qe a la parladura reconeguda; et non cuian tan mal far con fan cant la iettan de sa natura, anz se cuian qe lors la[n]gages sia. Per q'ieu vuell far aqest libre per far conoisser la parladura a cels qe la sabon drecha et per ensennar a cels qe no la sabon.

La parladura francesca val mais et [es] plus avinenz a far romanz et pasturellas, mas cella de Lemosin val mais per far vers et cansons et serventes. Et per totas las terras de nostre lengage son de maior autoritat li cantar de la lenga lemosina qe de neguna autra parladura; per q'ieu vos en parlerai primeramen.

[…] Per q'ieu vos dic qe totz hom qe vuella trobar ni entendre deu aver fort privada la parladura de Lemosin. Et apres deu saber alqes de la

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[60] This appropriateness, its aesthetic quality, and "reasoned" or "reasonable" usage is discussed further in my dissertation, as an example of *mezura*, and as linked to *saber*, a key word repeated throughout and structuring the *Razos* (themselves, literally, "reasons").

natura de la gramatica, si fort primamenz vol trobar ni ente[n]dre car tota la parladura de Lemosyn se parla naturalmenz et per cas et per [nombres et per] generes et per temps et per personas et per motz, aisi com poretz auzir si ben o escoutas.[61]

All men who want to "find" and understand must first know that no speech is are natural or right in our language, except those of France, Provence, the Auvergne, and the Quercy. I tell you this because, when I shall speak of "Limousin," you should understand all these lands, and all their neighbours, and all those that are between them. And any man born and bred in these lands has the natural and right speech.[62] [...some still make mistakes...] And so I want to make this book so as to make this language known to those who know it rightly, and to teach it to those who do not know it.

The French language is well worthy and is the most suited to making romances and pastorals, but that of the Limousin is the best for making moral poems, love songs, and satirical songs. And for all the lands of our language, the Limousin-speaking singers have greater authority than those of any other language; and so I shall speak to you of them first.

[...] And so I tell you that any man who wants to "find" and understand must be very intimate with the Limousin tongue. And next, you must know something of the nature of grammar, if you really want to "find' and understand, because all the Limousin tongue is spoken naturally, and by case, [number,] gender, tense, person/voice, and by words: as you can hear well if you listen.

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[61] Marshall 4-6. I translate *lingage* as "language" as the other ms (Marshall's edition reproduces both, on facing pages) has *lengatge* which is clearly "language" rather than "lineage."
[62] Or: "native and proper."

This passage presages Dante's comments in *De Vulgari eloquentia* on the three Romance vernaculars - *oïl*, *oc*, and *si* – constituting his *ydioma triphario*: *Pro se vero argumentatur alia, scilicet oc, quod vulgares eloquentes in ea primitus poetati sunt tanquam in perfectiori dulciorique loquela, ut puta Petrus de Alvernia et alii antiquiores doctores.* ("The second part, the language of *oc*, argues in its own favour that eloquent writers in the vernacular first composed poems in this sweeter and more perfect language: they include Peire d'Alvernhe and other ancient masters.")[63]

The other three treatises are later – late 13th - early 14th c. - and may be contemporaneous with *Flamenca*, partly as most of their poetic citations are from the same late 12th-early 13th c. corpus that *Flamenca* draws on, from a "golden age" of Occitan lyric. This poetic corpus serves as a "classical" and nostalgic model for a poetic "renaissance" after a cultural decline and fall (the Albigensian Crusade and subsequent exile). These texts, like what Ferari de Ferrara's *vida* suggests of his book, show a didactic intent of returning to the language at its highest point, mention commemoration, use some deliberately antiquated forms, attempt to formally fix the language, and to renew it and its usage. These

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[63] Dante, *De Vulgari eloquentia*, ed. and trans. Stephen Botterill (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), book I, sections viii-x, particularly I.x paragraph 2: 22-23. I have used Botterill's translations throughout. My idea is hinted at very briefly by Marshall in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism. Volume 2: The Middle Ages*, ed. Alastair Minnis and Ian Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005): 485: "A distinct foreshadowing of Dante's *vulgare illustre* is perceptible here", though he does not read the two texts together closely. Instead, he continues his single-sentence comment along a different line: "in that it is the existence of an esteemed literary tradition which confers on certain forms of the vernacular an 'authority' analogous to that conferred on Latin by the classical *auctores*." This statement fits Occitan poetics neatly within the larger Western literary criticism that is the general subject of the surrounding book and the whole *Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* series.

linguistic objectives resemble Dante's ones for Italian in the (roughly contemporaneous) *De Vulgari eloquentia*.

Occitan poetry continues through the 14th century in Italy, and also has a strong influence on Italian lyric from the first half of the 13th century onwards. But these treatises, and their efforts for an Occitan cultural renaissance in exile, seem not to have had the grand results intended. Occitan, as a *lingua franca* or *koine*, would have been a political irrelevance in a time of growing nationalism. Dante's contributions to the development of Florentine as the main literary vernacular in Italy were a major spanner in the works. On the first and third parts of the *ydioma triphario*, he declares:

> Allegat ergo pro se lingua *oïl* quod propter sui faciliorem ac delectabiliorem vulgaritatem quicquid redactum est sive inventum ad vulgare prosaycum, suum est: videlicet Biblia cum Troianorum Romanurumque gestibus compilata et Arturi regis ambages pulcerrime et quamplures alie ystorie ac doctrine. […] Tertia quoque, <que> Latinorum est, se duobus privilegiis actestatur preesse: primo quidem quod qui dulcius subtiliusque poetati vulgariter sunt, hii familiares et domestici sunt […]; secundo quia magis videntur initi gramatice que comunis est, quod rationabiliter inspicientibus gravissimum argumentum.

Thus the language of *oïl* adduces on its own behalf the fact that, because of the greater facility and pleasing quality of its vernacular style, everything that is recounted or invented in vernacular prose belongs to it: such as compilations from the Bible and the histories of Troy and Rome, and the beautiful tales of King

Arthur, and many other works of history and doctrine. […] Finally, the third part, which belongs to the Italians, declares itself to be superior because it enjoys a twofold privilege: first, because those who have written vernacular poetry more sweetly and subtly […]; and second, because they seem to be in the closest contact with the *gramatica* which is shared by all – and this, to those who consider the matter rationally, will appear a very weighty argument.

Italian has taken over poetry from Occitan. Furthermore, in the paragraph immediately before this one, Dante hesitates to order the three languages hierarchically, though reckoning that the Italian use of *si* shows its closer affinity to *sic*, and thus its pre-eminence via grammarians' *auctoritas*. Indeed, he uses that very word (in the *auctoritatem* form) for this linguistic superiority.

This period between the end of the 12th and the start of the 14th centuries seems to have featured a version of political events in the outside world, in a battle for linguistic dominance in the Romance vernaculars, through literature. The territory is carved out cleanly between French (prose) and Italian (verse);[64] despite the Occitan treatises' best efforts, Occitan is no longer relevant in the arena of language politics. Our treatises, and indeed the *Romance of Flamenca* itself, are judged by history as the last gasps of a dying civilization; more positively, perhaps, as a rare glimmer of hope. Part of my argument for the inclusion of *Flamenca* in a late Occitan literary corpus – not just a freak – is its place, along with these treatises, in a group of summa works constituting a coherent textual family and a literary style or form, and an associated broader

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[64] Dante, I.x.2 again..

cultural movement (of possible Aristotelian bent). Some of these works –
Flamenca and the treatises – suffer more from the vagaries of history than
others: namely, the *chansonniers*. Perhaps the latter's survival and popularity
may be attributed to their use as material for Italian lyric. This cultural imperialism
– literally, as a fusion of *translatio imperium* and *translatio studii* – is a curious
twist, as the *chansonniers* are usually perceived as a repository to preserve
trobador lyric, and related to the treatises' didactic intent for second language
acquisition.

Terramagnino da Pisa's *Doctrina d'Acort* is supposed to date from the late
13th century. Poetic and erotic arts are firmly intertwined in its intent and intended
readership, as outlined in the preface (*proemi*): *fauc mon* Acort *per.ls amadors /
ques amon saber ab drechura* (Marshall 29, lines 4-5: "I made my *Accord* for
lovers / who love knowledge and right"). This is expanded as *… que vuoil
sapchatz, amador / qui desiratz haver valor,/ […] totas paraulas bonas* (Marshall
30, ll. 55-57: "those who would know, lovers who desire to have value, [in] good
words"). The Limousin is identified as the ideal language (Marshall 30, lines 31-
34: *parladura lemoyzina / es mays avinenz e fina / quar il quays se razona / con
la grammatica bona*). The treatise is, essentially, a grammar in verse, but with
some poetic merit, such as a delightful erotic allusion in the section on the gender
of nouns, which all should know – *ben devetz tuyt saber ara* – just as they should
be capable of such fine discernment and understanding, not just grammatically:
celui qu'entendimen fin / ha de mascolin e de feminin (Marshall 33, lines 161-64).
Trobar proper appears later, in a section associating "finding" with

"understanding," *entendre*, which I discuss elsewhere in relation to the extension of *trobar* to include rewriting, reading, and rereading as parts of a seamless literary whole object.

The *Doctrina de compondre dictats*[65] consists for the most part of a (rather vague) definition of poetic forms. Its opening and closing paragraphs, however, concern the art of *trobar.* Raimon Vidal uses *entendre* in the senses of "to hear," "to listen," and "to understand," thus representing two or three stages in the cognitive process. This polysemy is picked up later in his text in the superficially redundant *conoisser/saber*, *trobar/entendre*, and *auzir/escotar*. It is echoed here in - again – *saber/conexer*, and in *sgardar/vezer*.

> Aço es manera de doctrina, per la qual poras saber e conexer que es canço, vers, [...*list of other verse forms...*]; per la qual raho, per les rasons desus dites quez eu t'ay mostrades, poras venir a perfeccio de fer aquestes sens errad, ses reprendimen, com fer ne volrras. E axi son complides les dites regles ordenades per doctrina en trobar, per la qual doctrina cascus qui be les sgart e les veia, si es subtils d'entencio, pora leugerament venir a perfeccio de la art de trobar.

Thanks to this teaching, you will be able to know what poems, songs, [... and list of other verse forms...] are; for which reason, for the reasons below that which I have shown you, you may come to make these perfectly without error or reproach, as you want to make them. And here are the complete rules ordered by

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[65] Marshall 96-97. He considers this as being by Jofre, and the concluding part to his *Regles de trobar.*

the "doctrine of finding," by which each one who looks at and sees them well, if he is subtle in understanding, may lightly/easily come to perfection in the art of finding.

The first of the two anonymous treatises in manuscript Ripoll 129 (last decade of 13th c.-first half of the 14th) ends in similar vein: *… qui […] se enten en la art de trobar ço es gint parlar e cortesia* (Marshall 103: "who understand/are adepts in the art of finding, that is, gentle speech and courtesy"). The second treatise, on acceptable rhymes, indicates most usefully the contemporary perception of the older Occitan poets, and illustrates their "classical" nature with respect to a present "renaissance": *los entichs trobadors* (Marshall 105: "the antique *trobadors*").

Jofre de Foixà's *Regles de trobar* (1286-91) proposes itself as a more user-friendly rewriting of Raimon Vidal's treatise:

> Co En Ramons de Besuldu, en art de trobar savis e entendens, veses motz dels trobadors fallir, per no saber, en llurs trobars, a donar a ells e als alters qui res no sabien doctrina e ensenyamen, per que poguesson venire a perfeccio de aquella art, dictet e fe un libre qui es appellat *Regles de trobar*. Mas com aquell libre nulls homs no puga perfetament entendre ses saber la art de gramatica, e trobars sia causa que p[er]tenga a l'emperador e a reys, a comtes, a duchs, a marques, a princes, a barons, a cavallers, a burzeses, encara a alters homs laichs, li plusor dels quals no sabon gramatica, eu En Iaufres de Fuxa,[…] qui en trobar pensa e.s adelita grantment, studiey e pessey a dar, segons lo

meu saber, alcuna manera de doctrina en romanç; per que cells qui no.s

entenden en gramatica, mas estiers han sobtil e clar engyn, pusquen mils

conexer e apendre lo saber de trobar.[66]

Raimon of Besalú, who was wise and knowing in the art of composing poetry,

saw poets' words [= usage] fall into error in their compositions from lack of

knowledge. So as to give teaching and instruction to them and others who knew

nothing, and so that they might attain perfection in this art, he said/dictated and

made a book which is called *The Rules of Finding*. But [even] with this book no-

one can understand[67] perfectly, without knowing the art of *gramatica*, and the art

of composing poetry is the reason why it is relevant to the emperor and to kings,

counts, dukes, marquises, princes, barons, knights, burghers, and also to other

laymen, most of whom do not know *gramatica*. [And so] I, Jofre of Foix, […] who

think and delight greatly in composition, studied and thought to give, following my

own knowledge, some manner of *doctrina* in *romanç*; so that those who have no

understanding of *gramatica*, but otherwise possess subtlety and clear ingenuity,

may know and learn better the knowledge of composition*.*

Raimon Vidal's own terms are thrown back at him, but with the religious variation

included in "all people" - *cristianas, iusieuas et sarazinas* – omitted, and replaced

by *alters homs laichs* at the end of the list: a reflection on changes in attitude

over the century that lies between the two works. Also, by this stage, the idea of

this language has become fixed, perhaps as it is dying in exile; there is no long

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[66] Marshall 56.
[67] I use "understand" throughout, although the word includes a sense of hermeneutic knowledge, "cognizance of this special subject."

excursus on the nature of Limousin, and its constituent sub-parts, and the language is called *romanç.* He calls it "Provençal" (*proençal*) in a later passage stipulating the requirement to stay within the same language when composing poetry, without mixing in any others. [68]

Gramatica is usually used with reference to Latin – for instance, in the *De Vulgari eloquentia*[69] - as I think it is here, linked here to its contrary, when someone is untaught or unschooled, such as laymen who do not know it, presumably through their lack of clerical training. *Gramatica* is pulled very close to *trobar* as both are described as arts: *art de trobar*, *art de gramatica.* Both are associated with *saber* ("knowledge") and *entendemen* ("understanding"), and the whole introductory passage is framed by the opening and closing focus on *trobar*: *en art de trobar savis e entendens*, *no…entendre ses saber la art de gramatica*, *no sabon gramatica*, *no.s entenden en gramatica*, *conexer… lo saber de trobar*. *Doctrina* and *ensenyamen* are usually linked to Latin-based formal, clerical schooling (*doctus* being a level attainable at the Sorbonne, for instance), and are thus part of the same linguistic mode as *gramatica*. *Doctrina en romanç*, however, pulls *romanç* – Occitan – into this Latin-centred sphere, marking *romanç* as the inheritor of Latin, Dante's "first" or "mother" tongue. *Doctrina* and *trobar* are also brought together, thus placing poetics on an equal footing with

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[68] Marshall 64. Not that Occitan linguistics and poetics thus do not reject the possibility of a word being in one language *and* in another, and thus of having a double identity; and the acceptance of using the language creatively…
[69] Book I section i.

other higher knowledge: *en art de trobar savis e entendens*, *no sabien doctrina e ensenyamen*, *pusquen mils conexer e apendre lo saber de trobar*.[70]

The Occitan language is thus brought on a par with Latin, not only "classical" – as seen previously - but of the same, formally fixed ("grammar-possessing") status as Latin: whether that is interpreted as death or immortality. And Occitan is the true inheritor – as opposed, again, to Florentine Italian - of Latin. The fact that Jofre's commission for his treatise is from his patron, James II of Sicily, is not irrelevant. Occitan is not only pitted against Florentine, but between two forms of Italian (and two emerging poetic schools). Jofre's discussion of language is in some communication with Dante's and both (or the one following the other) continue Raimon Vidal's points about the poetic nature of Occitan.[71]

In a later passage of the *Regles*, however, Jofre extends the appropriate languages for poetry to include French, Sicilian, and Galician, and some "others."

> Lengatge fay a gardar, car si tu vols far un cantar en frances, no.s tayn que.y mescles proençal ne cicilia ne gallego ne altre lengatge que sia strayn a aquell; ne ayten be, si.l faç proençal, no.s tayn que.y mescles frances ne altre lengatge sino d'aquell.[72]

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[70] This poetic use of *doctrina* recurs in the titles of Terramagnino da Pisa's *Doctrina d'acort* and the *Doctrina de compondre dictates.* Like the *regles* of his title (recalling Raimon Vidal's *dreicha maniera de trobar*) and like *ensenyamen*, it may have a parodic aspect.
[71] I shall not hazard a guess as to which preceded the other. The fact that there is intertextual communication, a communication of debate, seems to me to be the important issue for present purposes.
[72] Marshall 64. "Provençal" is not "the language of Provence." It is defined in Jofre's next sentence as meaning "the languages of Provence, Vienne, Auvergne, and the Limousin, and other lands that are close to them ..." (E sapies que en trobar proensales se enten lengatges de Proença, de Vianes, d'Alvernya, e de Lemosi, e d'altres terres qui llur son de pres).

You should keep the same language, because if you want to compose a song in French, it is not fitting that you mix in Provençal or Sicilian or Galician or an other language that be foreign to that one [being used]; just as, if you compose in Provençal, it is not fitting that you mix in French or any other language except that one.

Not only are languages other than Occitan also appropriate for poetry; initially, they seem to be placed here on an equal footing. Two languages are used in the explanation, French and Occitan: they thus acquire greater rhetorical weight. Occitan maintains its superior status, however: it concludes the sentence and its thought, and is then discussed further in the rest of this section (and is, indeed, the subject of the whole treatise). In the next part of the passage, Jofre gives a nice description of linguistic inter-comprehensibility, extended to include words shared with neighbouring languages:

> Empero, si tu trobes en cantar proençals alcun mot qui sia frances o catalanesch, pus hom aquell mot diga en Proença o en una de aquelles terres qui han lengatge covinent, les quals lor sont pres, aquells motz potz pausar o metre en ton trobar o en ton cantar; e si ayso fas, no potz dir per axo que sia fals.E dels damunt ditz motz potz pendre eximpli per aquestz: / *païs, va, sus,* e d'altres motz qui son frances e lemozi; axi com *dona* o *castell, saber, haver,* e motz qui son catalans e proençals; mes en los cantars son mes proençals que altres.

If you find in a Provençal song any word that be French or Catalan; and if people say that word in Provence or in one of those lands that have neighbouring languages and are close to them; then you may use that word in your composition or your song. And if you do so, it cannot be said that it is an error. The following may be used as examples of the abovementioned kinds of words: *païs* ["country"], *va* ["go"], *sus* ["under"], and other words that are French and Limousin; and also like *dona* ["lady"] or *castell* ["castle"], *saber* ["to know"], *haver* ["to have"], and [other] words that are Catalan and Provençal. But there are more Provençal words in singing than [words from] other [languages].

Usually, one should not mix languages in poetry. The only foreign borrowings permitted in composition are those words which are the same in both languages, and which the composer has already found in another, pre-existing, *Occitan* poem. So the one kind of linguistic mixing that *is* permitted is a poetic one, and it is one that allows the foreign language to acquire a poetic character. While linguistic inter-communication is recognized as a characteristic Occitan shares with other languages, this does *not* give them an equal status: there is more Occitan in song than any other language.

Whether the Occitan language is dead or alive at the time the treatises are written, and especially later ones such as Jofre's, one thing is clear: Occitan is the language of *trobar*, and *trobar* must be in this language. Poetic art and knowledge of this language – the twin subjects of *entendemen* - are one and the same thing: poetic language.