

## EXPLANATION 1.6: THE MUSIC OF THE TROUVÈRES

### 1. THE TROUVÈRES

The music of the troubadours of the south of France spread very quickly to other countries due to two main factors:

- The minstrels, who went from town to town, or accompanying troubadours from castle to castle seeking the financial help of noble or royal patrons, as was the Queen of France Leonor of Aquitaine.
- The fighting in the Crusades, that transferred people from the north to the south (zone of troubadours) and back again to the northern territories.

Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine was a great enthusiast of troubadour music as her father, William IX, had been a troubadour. He conveyed this interest to his daughters Marie and Aelis (Alix) and with them the trouvère (troubadours) song flourishes in the last third of the 12<sup>th</sup> century in the north of France, in the region of Champagne and Blois where they were countess respectively. There, in northern France, people spoke L'angue d'Oeil language, predecessor of the current French. This is the language of the northern troubadours and of Thibaut (Teobaldo I of Navarre), grandson of Marie, the most important troubadour from the north. The troubadours of the north are called trouvères to distinguish them from those of the southern France which sang in L'angue d'Oc.

The music of the trouvères began in the aristocratic milieu but shifted to the bourgeoisie who had grown in prosperity in the 13<sup>th</sup> century with the power of the cities. Guilds of musicians were organized, presided over by a leader, called "prince", whose assemblies, called "puy", chose the best songs.

### 2. KNOWN TROUVÈRES

Some aristocratic trouvères of the first half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century were:

- Hugues de Lusignan (Count of the Marche)
- Jehan Le Roux (Count of Brittany)
- Thibaut de Champagne (King Teobaldo I of Navarre)

Trouvères of the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century from bourgeois milieu in Arras were:

- Jehan Bretel ("Prince" of the puy of the city of Arras)
- Jehan Erart (known for his pastourelles, from the city of Arras)
- Adam of the Halle (called the last trouvère, also of Arras)

The music of the trouvères has come to us in 2400 poems and 1700 melodies. The last great trouvère was Adam de la Halle who died in 1288. The secular song continued to develop but is framed in the study of polyphony.

### 3. COMPREHENSION TEXT QUESTIONS:

1. **What activity did the minstrels do?**
2. **What influence had The Crusades on the music of troubadours?**
3. **Which queen helped the trouvères spread their music?**
4. **In what years does the troubadour song flourish in the north of France?**
5. **What language did trouvères use?**
6. **Who is the most important trouvère of the time?**
7. **What is the fundamental difference between troubadours and trouvères?**
8. **Explain the transfer of trouvères music in relation to social classes?**
9. **What were puy and how were their presidents called?**
10. **Name one aristocratic and one bourgeois trouvère of the city of Arras.**
11. **How many poems and melodies of the trouvères have been preserved to this day?**