

## HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE HER? TROBAIRITZ DESCRIPTIONS IN THE *VIDAS* AND *RAZOS*

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### Resum

El present article reflexiona sobre la representació de les trobairitz o trobadores en les *vidas* i *razos* occitanes, tot centrant-se en allò que fa aquestes descripcions diferents de les dels seus homòlegs masculins, els trobadors. Aquesta anàlisi eleva l'estatus de Na Tibors, abaixa el de Na Castelloza i suggereix la necessitat d'un nou reconeixement per a la compositora anònima que va col·laborar amb Guilhem Rainol d'Apt.

**Paraules clau:** trobairitz, *vidas*, *razos*, biografia, Na Tibors, Guilhem Rainol d'Apt, Na Castelloza

### Abstract

The present paper discusses the portrayal of the trobairitz, female lyricists, in the Occitan *vidas* and *razos*, with a focus on what makes these descriptions different from those of their male counterparts, the troubadours. This analysis elevates the status of Na Tibors, depreciates that of Na Castelloza, and suggests a new appreciation of the anonymous songstress who associated with Guilhem Rainol d'Apt.

**Key Words:** trobairitz, *vidas*, *razos*, biography, Na Tibors, Guilhem Rainol d'Apt, Na Castelloza

The medieval *vidas* serve as mini-biographies of Occitan authors, ranging in length from two sentences to several paragraphs long, composed on the model of the Latin *accessus*. Their purpose seems to be to give the audience a sense of the author and his place in the world. The *razos* are of a different nature—they seek to explain individual lyrics, providing historic or compositional context. These medieval metatexts are found in conjunction with some, but not all, medieval Occitan lyrics in manuscripts. Both genres use Occitan songs themselves as their source material, the *razos* especially, so a circularity of argument can be expected: the *razos* take “data” found in the lyrics to explain the narrative of the lyrics. We know, though, that there is sometimes sufficient historical accuracy in the *vidas* so that they have been used as the basis of modern scholars’ creation of troubadour biographies.

The *vidas* and *razos* are not all by the same author, though the current scholarly consensus is that a good number of the *vidas* were composed by Uc de Saint Circ, a troubadour himself, who flourished in the first half of the thirteenth century. Uc appears to have conducted research for his biographical work, speaking with family members and with those who had known the singers, and thus was able to provide a fairly accurate portrait, even if he was not a contemporary of the poet described (see GUIDA 1996: 75-144).<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, at least one *vida* was signed by an author—that of Peire Cardenal is by Miquel de la Tor (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 335)— and two *vidas* appear to be autobiographical, that for Ferrari de Ferrara (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 581-582), along with that for Uc de Saint Circ himself.<sup>2</sup> We have *vidas* for troubadours from the beginning of the twelfth century until the end of the thirteenth, including poets who lived after Uc de Saint Circ had died (Bertolome Zorzi, for one). Clearly, these later *vidas* were by different authors, who used Uc’s work as their model.

This article considers how the trobairitz, women troubadours, are described in the Occitan *vidas* and *razos*. It builds on a recent article on negative descriptions in the *vidas* (PFEFFER 2020) and a forthcoming article on positive descriptions (PFEFFER, in press b) in those same texts.

In these pages, I limit my analysis to the trobairitz, seeking to consider specifically how they are described in these narrative texts. It is intriguing that we have 101 *vidas* (as numbered by BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973), describing 109 of the roughly 450 Occitan lyricists enumerated by Pillet and Carstens (1933), a mini-biography for roughly one-quarter of the composers and performers in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Occitan-speaking world. As Pfeffer noted (PFEFFER 2020: 329), in this corpus,

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<sup>1</sup> Frédérique Le Nan suggests that Uc was not the author of most of the *vidas*; she attributes to him *vidas* for Bernart de Ventadorn, Saveric de Mauleon and, by implication, his own. Le Nan implies he may have written the *vida* for Clara d’Anduza (LE NAN 2021: 40).

<sup>2</sup> Uc’s own *vida* is unsigned, composed in a neutral third person, and is long and remarkably detailed (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 244-250).

Women are proportionally more represented —there are *vidas* for eight trobairitz, with a ninth, Caudarenga (PC 169) described in the *vida* of her troubadour partner [Raimon de Miraval (PC 406)], such that 42% of the women have something of a *vida*, a significantly higher percentage than for the men (Paden counts twenty-one named trobairitz).

Having recently checked Pfeffer's data, it would appear that eleven trobairitz, not nine, are described in the *vidas* and *razos* (PFEFFER 2020 did not include the *razos*), to wit: Almuc de Castelnuo (PC 20), Azalais de Porcairagues (PC 43), Comtessa de Dia (PC 46), Na Castelloza (PC 109), Clara d'Anduza (PC 115), Caudairenga/Gaudairenca (PC 169), Comtessa Garsenda de Proensa (PC 187), Iseut de Capiro (PC 253), Na Lombarda (PC 288), Maria de Ventadorn (PC 295), and Na Tibors (PC 440), raising the percentage of named trobairitz for whom we have information in the *vidas* and *razos* to 52%, a percentage more than twice as high as for the men.

Scholars have long noted the formulaic nature of the *vidas*. Frédérique Le Nan's recent, somewhat denigrating description of them is typical, «au fil des lectures, on perçoit la répétition, le schéma, la recette, le plan narratif préétabli d'une rubrique à l'autre» (LE NAN 2021: 73). Le Nan continues «Le texte suit un canevas narratif très similaire, correspondant à trois temps distincts: a. origine et naissance, état dans la société (noblesse ou condition subalterne), alliance ou non par le mariage (les femmes le sont toujours), b. qualités remarquables, non seulement la beauté de la poétesse, mais aussi l'instruction, l'éducation, c. la situation affective» (LE NAN 2020: 73).<sup>3</sup> I understand the repetitions as inherent to the genre. Importantly, precisely because of the repetitions, where there are points of difference, we may find information of note.

What can we learn about the trobairitz from a careful reading of the *vidas* and *razos*? First, as already mentioned, not all the poets merited equal or any mention in these texts. Azalais de Porcairagues, the Comtessa de Dia, Na Castelloza, and Na Tibors all merit true mini-biographies, following the form for the genre. Clara d'Anduza, Gaudairenga, the Comtessa Garsenda de Proensa, and Maria de Ventadorn appear in *razos* and do not have *vidas* of their own. Then there are Almuc de Castelnuo, Iseut de Capiro, and Na Lombarda, whose *vidas* are more *razo* than biography.

Considering simply how they are discussed in both the *vidas* and the *razos*, we find that they are regularly described as educated (Azalais, Na Castelloza, Clara d'Anduza, Na Lombarda, Na Tibors), often called *gentils* (Azalais, Na Castelloza, Na Lombarda) and/or pretty (the Comtessa de Dia, Na Castelloza, Clara d'Anduza, Gaudairenca, Na Lombarda, Maria de Ventadorn, Na Tibors). Sometimes, the *vida* authors describe the compositions of the women, «fez mantas bonas cansos» or *coblas* (Azalais, the Comtessa de Dia, Na Lombarda); they knew how to compose, «sabia ben trobar» (Azalais de Porcairagues, Gaudairenca, Na Lombarda, Na Tibors); sometimes

<sup>3</sup> There is no acknowledgement by Le Nan of the work of Elizabeth Wilson Poe here, though Le Nan does cite Poe 1993 later in her volume, specifically with reference to Azalais d'Altier

we are given no descriptions at all, neither of their person nor of their verse, as is the case with Almuç de Castelnou and Iseut de Capiro.

Wendy Pfeffer (in press b) suggested that “negative differentiation” might be a useful theoretical approach to the *vidas*. Psychologists have observed something they have dubbed “negative differentiation”, that negative descriptors tend to be more numerous than positive descriptors. Paul Rozin, Loren Berman, and Edward Royzman state as fact that «a wider range of terms is used to describe negative states (e.g., emotions) than positive states» (ROZIN, BERMAN, ROYZMAN 2010: 537). Paul Rozin and Edward Royzman have observed that «there is a general bias ... to give greater weight to negative entities (e.g. events, objects, personal traits) » (ROZIN, ROYZMAN 2001: 296). Dan Jurafsky adds «The existence of more types of words, with more differentiated meanings, for describing negative opinions than positive ones occurs across many languages and for many kinds of words» (JURAFSKY 2014: 98). This “negativity bias” may explain the limited variety and restricted lexicographical breadth of positive adjectives in the troubadour *vidas* (see PFEFFER in press b), suggesting that medieval Occitan is no exception to these rules, with little distinction between genders.

Given “negativity bias”, and the more limited word hoard for positive descriptions, it is perhaps remarkable that the women, when discussed, are described in uniformly positive fashion, which might speak to the more positive view of women in Occitan culture than was true in medieval northern France, for example. The mysogyny associated with the Middle Ages in general does not seem present in this case study.

An example of this positive portrayal in the *vidas* may be seen by considering its opposite. Following Angelica Rieger (1991: 660–661) and Jacques Gourc (1994), Pfeffer has argued that an anonymous woman composed the *coblas doblas* that begin “Cant me donet l’anel daurat” (PC 461, 203a) (see PFEFFER in press a).<sup>4</sup> This work is hard to understand on the surface, but Pfeffer is convinced that Gourc’s interpretation resolved the difficulties, allowing us to see a capable woman in a less than admirable situation. The song’s difficult allusions relate to the obscene nature

<sup>4</sup> Here is the text, as found in RICKETTS 2005:

Cant me donet l’anel daurat  
eu era dos’ e pauca res  
et fu greu a encortinar;  
s’audis Michel caramellar  
aissi de guerra com remes  
se no l’anes devant grimar.

Segner, l’autrer mi fo contat  
qued a talan de Vianes  
nos cuiderant tuit albergar,  
e los audi Frances parlar;  
ia non genser homes non verres  
e tot gardin de long la mar.

of the language used, heavy in sexual innuendo.<sup>5</sup> The text merits inclusion in Pierre Bec's *Burlesque et obscenité chez les troubadours* (1984), though he did not use it; it was also omitted by Matilda Bruckner, Laurie Shepard, and Sarah White from *Songs of the Women Troubadours* (1995).<sup>6</sup>

Gourc concludes that “Cant me donet l’anel” was composed by the anonymous lady of Guilhem Rainol d’Apt and presented to an audience familiar with a dispute between Guilhem Rainol and Guilhem Magret (GOURC 1994: 108), two troubadours for whom we have a *vida* (Guilhem Rainol d’Apt, BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 495; Guilhem Magret, BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 493). The details in the two prose texts<sup>7</sup> speak to some research on the part of the *vida* author (the reference to Roiz Peire dels Gambiros, i.e. Rui Diaz de Cameros [fl. 1215], for example), though Saverio Guida and Gerardo Larghi read Guilhem Magret’s *vida* as drawn from the troubadour’s compositions, rather than from any other source (GUIDA, LARGHI 2014: 259). It may be that Uc was not familiar with Guilhem Magret’s *coblas* in which he reports that Guilhem Rainol left the cloister (see BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 496) nor with “Cant me donet l’anel”.

To my point, Uc makes no mention of a woman associated with either man in either *vida*, a lacuna for which we can only offer hypotheses: perhaps because the context in which he might evoke her was unseemly; perhaps because he deemed her poetry unworthy.

Guilhem Rainol composed two debates with a *domna*; Frank Chambers argued that in both of these works Guilhem’s interlocutor was fictive (CHAMBERS 1989: 56–58).<sup>8</sup> Chambers describes “Quant aug chantar lo gal sus el erbos” (PC 231, 4) as «a domestic quarrel between husband and wife ..., on a barnyard level» (CHAMBERS 1989: 56)<sup>9</sup>; he says that the lady’s remarks in “Auzir

<sup>5</sup> If one accepts the obscene interpretation, an English-language translation would read something like this: When he presented [his] lovely ass to me, I was sweet and innocent but not easy to fuck, so you heard Michel jack off and thus our fight ended, and you’re not going to cry. Sir, the other day I heard that the guy from Vienne [Guilhem Magret] wanted to house the three of us, and he heard the French talking about it. You’ll never see a finer man on land or on sea.

<sup>6</sup> The lines have been frequently published, starting in 1863 by Wilhelm GRÜZMACHER (378-379), then by Cesare de LOLLIS (1886: 81), Carol Jane NAPPOLZ (1994: 72), and Angelica RIEGER (1991: 657).

<sup>7</sup> Guilhem Rainol d’Apt’s *vida* reads as follows: «Guillems Rainols d’At si fo uns cavaliers de la ciutat d’At, la quals ciutat es el comtat de Folqualquier. Bons trobare fo de sirventes de las rasos que corien en Proensa entre·l rei d’Arragon e·l comte de Tolosa; e si fez a toz sos sirventes sons nous. Fort fo tempsuz per totz los baros, per los cosens sirventes qu’el fasia» (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 495). The *vida* for Guilhem Magret equally brief: «Guillems Magretz si fo uns joglars de Vianes, jogaire e taverniers. E fez bonas cansos e bons sirventes e bonas coblas. E fo ben volgut et onratz; mas anc mais non anet en arnes, que tot qant gazaingnava el jogava e despendia malamen en taverna. Pois si rendet en un hospital en Espaingna, en la terra d’En Roiz Peire dels Gambiros» (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 493)

<sup>8</sup> Chambers is not the first to deny reality to the *domna*. Rieger, who agrees with him (1991: 351), cites Erich Köhler (1979: 8), inter alia. Paterson reminds us that the male voice in this debate is never named; she believes Guilhem to have been the sole author (PATERSON 2010: 4 and 4n).

<sup>9</sup> Here is the text of the first conversation (PATERSON 2010):

*Man* Quant aug chantar lo gal sus el erbos  
e·l pic e·l jai e·l merl’e·l coaros,  
e·l rossignols se languis el perier,  
farai un vers ces prec e ses somos.  
Ma dompn’es tan bel’e cortez’e pros  
qe·m fai loirar plus que falco lanier.

cugei lo chant e.l crit e.l glat” (PC 231,1) «are on a far lower level than those of courtly ladies» (CHAMBERS 1989: 58).<sup>10</sup> I prefer to see one talented woman, with a strong comic streak, as a real-life

*Woman* Seingner, tan m’es mals e contrarios  
cen vez ai cor qe mi parta de vos:  
mais anc non vi home tan placentier!  
Mas d’una ren es ben aventuros:  
cant cent venir esterles orgoillos,  
ades m’escont en granj’o en sellier.

*Man* Dompna, tostemp vos ai mon cor celat  
per qe n’aves de mi lauzor e grat  
cant non amest cusson ni fatonier,  
anz lo fugist—com eu tornei rengat,  
c’anc no i foi pueis pos m’o aguest vedat:  
mais am flauzons e sopas en sabrier!

*Woman* Seingner, tostemp vos aurai prezicat  
que vendesem so maior porc faissat,  
e vestissem Miquel, so berbeguir:  
fezessem li blizaut fendut trepat.  
Tant a gen cors e bella magestat,  
cent vez er pres a lei de cavalier!

*Man* Dompna, Miquels volria fos penduz,  
qe tant l’amas qu’ie-n son per fols tengutz—  
so bacalar tracher mesoneguier—  
que ar vos jur encontra sans vertuz  
que ja Miquels ni sos aver lanuz  
non estara ab nos un an entier.

<sup>10</sup> Here is the text of the second conversation (RIEGER 1991: 331-332):

*Man* Auzir cugei lo chant e.l crit e.l glat  
que fan l’auzel, qan son vert li plaissat.  
Aital fer’ eu, mas per sa voluntat  
ma domna m dis car de lleis cambiat,  
quar anc creziei moiller de son vezin.  
Ja Dieus non sal Don Rainier l’afillat,  
s’anc l’en menti, pois fo en s’amistat.  
Enanz l’am mais que peis en romanin.

*Woman* Seingner, son nas volri’ agues taillat  
qui vos a dig que us aia enantat;  
c’aissi fos solt’ e monda de peccat  
con sui de cel, de cui es adalbat,  
si tot port’ arc e coutel barbarin.  
Pens e repens e quant n’ai ben pensat  
puosca saber don si’ espermentat  
mas, sa putan color de Sarrazin.

*Man* Domna, tostemp vos aurai castiat,  
non disseses follia ni viutat.  
Aqest’ es ric’ e de gran parentat  
et a marrit bon vassal estrunat,  
qu’eu li ai vist caval outramarin;  
et es saubut en feir’ o en mercat:  
genser de lleis non debana fillat,  
e met vos i Cavelc e Venaissin.



participant with Guilhem Rainol and as author of the scatological *coblas doblas*.

“Quant aug chantar” is transmitted by four manuscripts, *D<sup>a</sup>*, *H*, *I*, and *K*; all four attribute the song to Guilhem Rainol; the latter two provide his *vida*. Despite the inherent formal quality of her scabrous verses (see PFEFFER in press, a) and perhaps because the overall tone of her poetry was not sufficiently courtly (see Linda Paterson’s summation of “Quant aug chantar lo gal sus el erbos”: «The man and woman are indeed a married couple, living on a farm», PATERSON 2010: 11), we have no recognition of this woman in the *vidas* and *razos* of either of the two men with whom she apparently interacted. For all the scholarly discussion of “Quant aug chantar”,<sup>11</sup> no one has noticed this lacuna to date. One explanation, admittedly imperfect, is that the *vida* author thought it was better to say nothing than to say something bad. Not “negativity bias”, but definitely a hesitancy to speak.

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*Woman* Seingner, per Dieu, be n’ai mon cor irat,  
 quar a·l sieu ling contra·l mieu azesmat,  
 qu’eu sui plus ric’ e de maior barnat  
 et ai trop mais de lan’ o de fillat  
 e pois ai bon cavallier a pairin;  
 e no·us tengatz ges a regastenat,  
 que·us ai cubert en lansol bugadat,  
 que era totz ces estandier de lin.

*Man* Domna, ben sai qu’e·us er guizardonat  
 que non es mes en bassac pertussat.  
 Si malgoires m’aguesson aiudat,  
 espeil n’agues e bon correi pinsat  
 e quabeillier ab que·us tengessa crin.  
 Pois disseran tuit li plus envezat:  
 “Quals es aquist?” qant vos vengras d’orat.  
 Ben vos plevisc, bella, m’est sobrefin.

*Woman* Seingner, tostemps ai dig en mon orat  
 que vengesses quant er escudelat.  
 Qu’eu er’ ensencha, c’avi’ encargat;  
 quant enpugiei sus el bari merlat  
 et en cazic malaut’ en un coizin,  
 e conuc ben con n’avia peccat  
 e fui dolent’ ab vos. Per amistat  
 aqui mezeis fis vos en bona fin.

*Man* Domna, ben fon saubut et azalbat  
 lo luns mati com fes la caritat,  
 quant portes guans e borsa de sendat,  
 a las meillors aguest lor pretz baissat,  
 que tot un iorn n’esteron al latin.  
 Si fossetz lai, on vos fon destinat,  
 foratz al bois part Sancta-Trinitat,  
 al port de Sorc, en terra de Sanguin.

<sup>11</sup> Paterson (2010) reports critical editions by Adolf KOLSEN (1916-1919: 61-66), Arno KRISPIN (1993: 234-236); Martín de RIQUER (1975: III: 1240-1242), Angelica RIEGER (1991: 341-348), and Rossella BONAUGURIO 2003.

Another form of silence vis-à-vis women in the *vidas* occurs when we have a biography for a given woman, but with no description included. Almuc de Castelnau and Iseut de Capio, for example, are joined in a *vida* by Boutière and Schultz (see BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: number LXII) that the editors recognize as a *razo* to “Dompna N’Almueis, si.us plages” (PC 253,1) and to “Dompna N’Iseuz, s’ieu sabes” (PC 20,2) (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 422–423):

N’Iseuz de Capieu si preget ma dompna Almueis de Castelnou q’ela perdones a-N Gigo de Tornen, q’era sos cavaliers et avia faich vas ella gran faillimen e non s’en pentia ni non demandava perdon:

Dompna N’Almueis, si.us plages,  
 be.us volgra prejar d’aitan:  
 qe l’ira e-l mal talan  
 vos fezes fenir merces  
 de lui, qe sospir’ e plaing  
 e muor languen e-s complaing  
 e qier perdon humilmen;  
 qe.us fatz per lui sacramen,  
 si tot li voletz fenir,  
 q’el si gart meils de faillir.

E ma dompna N’Almueis, la cals volia ben a-N Gigo de Torna, si era mout dolenta, car el non demandava perdon del faillimen; e respondet a ma dompna N’Iseuz si com diç aqesta cobla:

Dompna N’Iseuz, s’ieu saubes  
 q’el se pentis del engan  
 q’el a fait vas mi tan gran,  
 ben fora dreichz q’eu n’agues  
 merces; mas a mi no·s taing,  
 pos qe del tort no s’afraing  
 ni·s pentis del faillimen,  
 qe n’aia mais chausimen;  
 mas si vos faitz lui pentir,  
 leu podes mi convertir.  
 (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 422–423)

The two *razos* attempt to create a context for the two *coblas* cited, with no description of the women at all, neither personally nor as lyricists. In truth, in the *coblas* and in the *razos*, we learn more about Gui de Tournon, the man at the center of the story, than about anyone else.

Na Castelloza offers a related example. The trobairitz warrants a legitimate *vida*, following the expected format of name, origin, social and marital status, and sometimes a few words about the verses. But for Castelloza, a gentlewoman who was gay and educated and beautiful, we are given no evaluation of her lyrics, which makes her exceptional, albeit not unique, in the *vida* corpus:

Na Casteloza si fo d’Alvergne, gentils domna, moillier del Turc de Mairona. Et ama N’Arman de Breon e fez de lui sas cansos. Et era domna mout gaia e mout enseingnada e mout bella. Et aqui son escriptas de las soas cansos. (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 333)



We are told she composed her songs for her lover Arman de Breon, rather than for her husband Turc de Mairona, but no more than that, truly a “scarno communicato” as *vidas* go (GUIDA, LARGHI 2014: s.v. Castelloza 144), though one whose information suggests the *vida* author looked further than the lyrics themselves for information, especially as none of Castelloza’s songs mentions either of these men by name (see GUIDA, LARGHI 2014: s.v. Castelloza).

One trobairitz whose *vida* stands out is Na Tibors (PC 440), because she is the only trobairitz described with the adjective *maïstra*, relating to “magisterial” (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 498). When this term is used to describe troubadours, it often refers to their compositional talents. With reference to Maria de Ventadorn, it is connected to her physical appearance, «Et onret la Deus de bel plazen cors avinen, ses maestria» (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 212).<sup>12</sup> In the case of Na Tibors, however, the term describes her musical talent: «Cortesa fo et enseignada, avinens e fort maïstra; e saup trobar» (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 440).<sup>13</sup> As Pfeffer has written (in press b),

In one tight sentence, we have a description of her education, her physical appearance, her character, her musical talent. *Maïstra* seems to refer here more to her skill than to the “artifices” of beauty, the punctuation of the edition notwithstanding (Cluzel translates the line as “Elle fut courtoise et instruite, avenante et fort savante, et sut ‘trouver’” [Cluzel in BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ 1973: 499]).

“Cortesa fo et enseignada, avinens; e fort maïstra e saup trobar” would be my suggested punctuation, corresponding to Cluzel’s translation and putting *maïstra* closer to *trobar*.

The use of an adjective that translates as ‘magisterial, masterful’ to describe the woman’s talents puts her in rarefied company, for *maestr\** or *maistr\** are found only seventeen times in the word count of the *vidas* and *razos* as published by Boutière and Schutz (1973). Of these iterations, fully eight can be discounted because the term is used as a title or rank rather than as a descriptor: “Maestre Peire de Corbiac”, for example (BOUTIÈRE, SCHUTZ, 1973: 255). The other poets whose skill or works are described as magisterial are: Guiraut de Bornelh, Guiraut de Calanson, Gaucelm Faidit, Peire d’Alverna, and Lanfranc Cigala! By use of the same descriptive term, Uc de Saint Circ has put Tibors at the same level as these men (see PFEFFER in press a, for a longer discussion of *maestria* as a positive in the *vidas*).

These observations regarding the *vidas* and *razos* are based on a limited analysis, conducted with the benefit of the *Trésor manuscrit de l’ancien occitan* (TMAO), which makes it possible to search the entire text easily. My studies to date have shown that there is much to be gleaned from these generally short texts. We may not be able to assign a specific author to many of the mini-biographies, but we can certainly learn the opinions of the authors vis-à-vis their near contemporaries and reconsider the critical reception of the trobairitz, in particular.

<sup>12</sup> “And God honored her with a very pleasing body, without artificiality”.

<sup>13</sup> “She was courteous and educated, pleasing and very masterful, and she knew how to compose”.

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