

What the Middle Ages knew

Part III

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What the Middle Ages knew

- Epics
 - "Beowulf" (900, Britain)
 - "Edda" (1100, Scandinavia)
 - "Cantar del Cid" (Spain, 1140)
 - Chretien de Troyes (1177, France): "Perceval" (1175)
 - "Slovo o Ploku Igoreve" (1185, Russia)
 - "Nibelungen" (1205, Germany)
 - "Chanson de Roland" (1200, France)
 - Gottfried von Strassburg: "Tristan" (1209, Germany)
 - Wolfram Von Eschenbach (1170, Germany): "Parzival" (1210)

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Poetry**
 - **"Manyoshu" (760, Japan)**
 - **Bilhana (850, India): "Fifty Stanzas of Secret Love" (900)**
 - **Hakim Ferdowsi (932, Persia): "Shah Nameh" (1010)**
 - **"Genji Monogatari" (1000, Japan)**
 - **Yusuf Balasaghun (1069, Kashgar): "The Wisdom Of Royal Glory" (1069)**
 - **Omar Khayyam (1050, Persia): "Rubaiyat" (1120)**
 - **Chu Hsi (1130, China)**
 - **Dante Alighieri (1265, Italy): "Commedia" (1300)**
 - **Kenko Hoshi (1283, Japan)**

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Amour courtois**
 - **How love for God turned into love for the woman (similarity with the transition from gospel music to soul music)**
 - **Love of the Virgin Mary**
 - **Love-based ethics of the knights**
 - **San Franciscan love of the world**
 - **Love as the main force of the world**
 - **Love as the meaning of life**
 - **Note: most often love between knight and mistress, but not between husband and wife**

What the Middle Ages knew

- Vernacular literature
 - Guillaume de Lorris (11##): "Roman de la Rose" (123#)
 - Divine Comedy
 - Addressed to everybody, not only the Church
 - Compendiums of knowledge
 - Artists at the service of men, not of God alone
 - Narrative

What the Middle Ages knew

- Vernacular literature
 - Autobiography: birth of personal identity
 - Biographies not of legendary saints but of contemporary people

What the Middle Ages knew

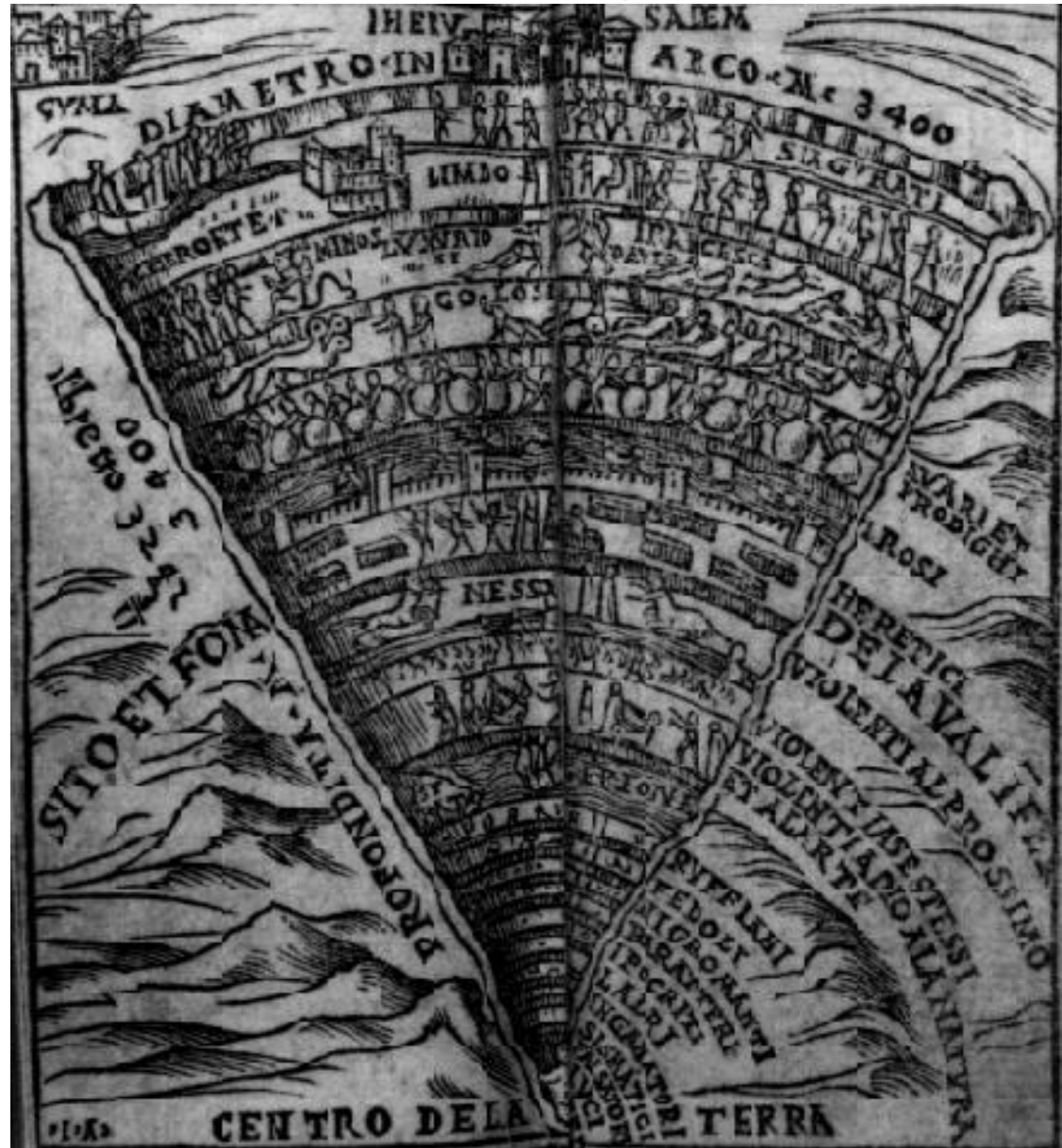
- Poetry
 - Hafez (1324, Persia): "Divan"
 - Francesco Petrarca (1304, Italy): "Canti" (1374)
 - Geoffrey Chaucer (1340, Britain): "Canterbury Tales" (1400): comedy of ordinary people
 - Inigo Santillana (1398, Spain): "Cancionero" (1449)
 - Francois de Villon (1431, France): "Testament" (1462)
 - Luigi Pulci (1432): "Morgante" (1483)
 - Matteo Maria Boiardo (1441): "Orlando Innamorato" (1494)

What the Middle Ages knew

- Italian Humanism
 - Dante
 - Petrarca
 - Boccaccio
 - Cultural leadership shifts from France to Italy
 - Shift from feudal themes (reflecting French feudal society) to bourgeois themes (reflecting Italy's capitalistic society)
 - Rejection of Germanic values and restoration of Roman-Greek values

What the Middle Ages knew

Dante (1300)



What the Middle Ages knew

Dante (1300)

An odyssey of the poet's soul

Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita mi ritrovai per
una selva oscura, ch  la diritta via era smarrita
(Inferno, I)

O superbi cristian, miseri lassi, che, de la vista de la
mente infermi, fidanza avete ne' retrosi passi, non
v'accorgete voi che noi siam vermi nati a formar
l'angelica farfalla, che vola a la giustizia senza
schermi? (Purgatorio, X)

l'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle (Paradise,
XXXIII)

What the Middle Ages knew

- Dante (1300)
 - O you proud Christians, wretched souls and small
 - Who by the dim lights of your twisted minds

What the Middle Ages knew

- Boccaccio's "Decameron" (1353)
 - Realism
 - Nor heroes or aristocrats but the bourgeoisie
 - Humor
 - Glorification of physical pleasure
 - Indifference towards religious dogmas
 - Collective subconscious of medieval society

What the Middle Ages knew

The press

Cecco d'Ascoli: "Liber acerbe etatis", a poem on science and religion in five volumes (1327)
<https://www.scaruffi.com/monument/italy/roth422.jpg>



Francesco Petrarca: "I Trionfi" (Firenze, meta' sec. XV)
<https://www.scaruffi.com/monument/italy/roth421.jpg>



What the Middle Ages knew

- Music
 - Boethius' textbook on music (505)
 - *Musica mundana* - music of the spheres/world
 - *Musica humana* - harmony of human body and spiritual harmony
 - *Musica instrumentalis* - instrumental music (incl. human voice)

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Music**
 - **Ambrosius (Milano, 4th c)**
 - **Music for church festivals in Latin**
 - **Jewish-style antiphonal singing of the Psalms (dialogue between two choruses)**
 - **Christian hymn (four-line stanzas of iambic dimeter)**

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Music**
 - **Gregorius (6th c):**
 - **Gregorian chant for the Mass (monophonic music in Latin with a single melodic line)**
 - **Neumatic chant: clusters of notes per each syllable**
 - **Melismatic chant: multiple notes per vowel**
 - **The Church forbids instruments**
 - **Monophonic because it makes no sense to recite two words of the scriptures simultaneously**

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Music**
 - **Organ used at Charlemagne's court**
 - **Organ in churches in the 9th c**
 -

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Music**
 - **Northern France (10th c): organum (limited polyphony)**
 - **France (11th c): free organum**
 - **Limoges (12th): melismatic organum (“tenor” sustains a note until the other singers have completed their series of notes)**
 - **Notre Dame (13th c): multi-melodic polyphonic motet**
 -

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Secular music (12th c)**
 - **Troubadours: monophonic love songs in the Provencale language**
 - **Minnesinger in Germany**
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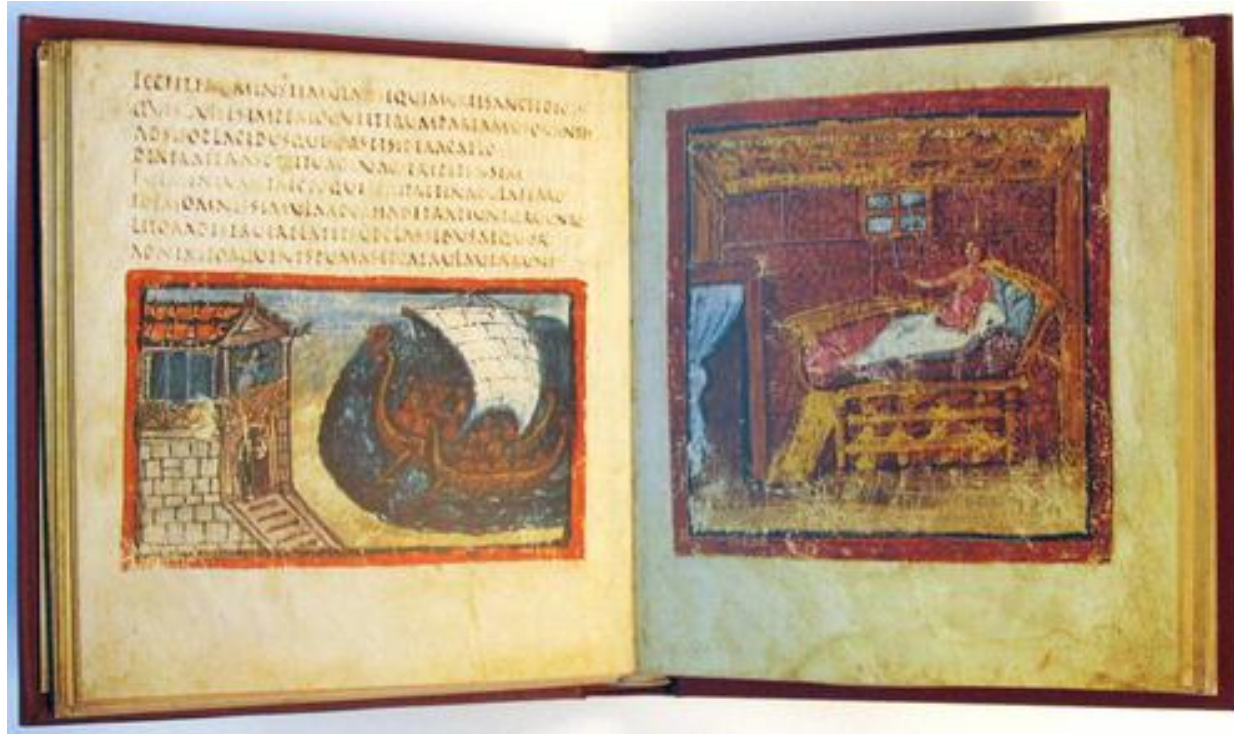
What the Middle Ages knew

- **Books**

Manuscript production was costly and time-consuming. Parchment or vellum took hours to prepare, and a large book might require the skins of three hundred sheep. Black ink for lettering was prepared from fine soot or lampblack. Gum and water were mixed with sanguine or red chalk to produce a red ink for headings and paragraph marks. A brown ink was formulated from iron gall, a mixture of iron sulfate and oak apples, which are oak galls caused by wasp larvae. Colors were created from a variety of mineral, animal, and vegetable matter. A vibrant, deep blue was made from lapis lazuli, a precious mineral mined only in Afghanistan that found its way to monasteries as far away as Ireland. Gold (and, less frequently, silver) was applied in two ways: sometimes it was ground into a powder and mixed into a gold paint, but this left a slightly grainy surface, so the preferred application method was hammering the gold into a fine sheet of gold leaf and applying it over an adhesive ground. Burnishing for texture, punching, and tooling with metalworking tools were often used on gold leaf for design effects. Books were bound between wooden boards usually covered with leather. Decorative patterns were applied by tooling the leather, and important liturgical manuscripts often had precious jewels, gold- and silverwork, enameled designs, or ivory carving on their covers.

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts: Late Roman**



Vatican Vergil (4th c AD)

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts**
 - "eluminures", or illuminations, or miniatures
 - invented in Egypt during the Hellenistic age
 - exported to Europe by monks
 - adapted to Gothic taste in northern Europe
 - perfected by Irish monks

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts**
 - + the "Calendar" of **Furius Dionisius Philocalus (354 AD)**: first mention of the celebration of the nativity of Jesus on the 25th of december
 - the universal Coptic chronicle on papyrus of the **Goleniscev collection (392)**
 - the "Virgil" of the **Vatican Library (42x)**
 - the "Iliad" of the **Ambrosian Library, Milan (48x)**
 - the **Bible of Quedlinburg**, most ancient Christian miniatures (48x)
 - the "Dioscorides" of **Vienna for Juliana (512)**
 - the **Genesis of the Imperial Library of Vienna (6th c)**



Quedlinburg (48x),
most ancient Christian
miniatures (Berlin)



"Iliad" (48x)
(Biblioteca
Ambrosiana,
Milano)



Genesis (6th c)
(Imperial Library, Wien)

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts: gospels**
 - **+ the Syriac Evangeliary of the monastery of Zagba (Mesopotamia) by monk Rabula (586 AD): first full-fledged portrayal of the crucifixion**
 - **the evangeliary of Etschmiadzin, Armenia (989, but copied from a 6th c manuscript)**
 - **the Evangeliarium of Rossano (6th c)**
 - **the Gospel of St Matthew from Sinope (6th c)**



Rabula gospels (586)
First full-fledged portrayal
of the crucifixion
(Biblioteca Laurentiana,
Firenze)



Etschmiadzin, Armenia (989)

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts: Celtic**
 - Celtic tradition of intricate abstract decorative patterns
 - Ireland relatively unscarred by Barbarian invasions that devastate the Roman Empire
 - 795: Vikings invade Ireland and destroy monasteries (Lindisfarne and Iona)

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts: Celtic**
 - the "Homilies of St Avitus", Burgundy (6th c)
 - the Book of Durrow Abbey, Ireland (675)
 - the Apostle of the Frisians, Ireland (693)
 - the "Lindisfarne Gospel", Ireland (698)
 - the Bible of St Gatien at Tours (7th c)
 - "Book of Kells" (800)

What the Middle Ages knew

- Illuminated manuscripts: Celtic
 - “Book of Kells” (800): The Chi-Rho page



Christ in Greek

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts: Carolingian**
 - **Charlemagne assembles scribes in Aachen to revive literary traditions**
 - **Birth of the “minuscule” alphabet (lower case) that is easier to write**

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts: Carolingian**
 - the **Evangelary of Godescalc for Charlemagne (783)**
 - the **Bibles of Theodulf, Orleans, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Evangelary of Charlemagne, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Bibles of Alcuin, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Bibles of Charles the Bald, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Sacramentary of Drogo, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Sacramentary of Gellone, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Evangelary of Lothaire, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Bible of St Martial of Limoges, France (Carolingian)**
 - the **Evangelary of Cividale, Italy (Carolingian)**
 - the **Codex Egberti, Reichenau, France (980)**

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Illuminated manuscripts**
 - **the evangeliary of Queen Mlke, Armenia (902)**
 - **+ the Joshua Roll (95x): 11m long!**
 - **Benedictional of St Aethelwold (97x)**
 - **the Topography of Cosmas (10th c)**
 - **the Psalter of Paris (10th c)**
 - **+ the Chloudov Psalter of Moscow (83x)**
 - **the Psalter of Vatopedi, Russia (10th c)**
 - **the "Homilies" of Gregory of Nazienzus (9th c)**
 - **+ the "Menologion of emperor Basil II" (100x)**
 - **"Homilies on the Virgin" by James of Coxynobaphos (1162)**
 - **John Skylitzes' "Synopsis Historion" (12th c) (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional): only surviving non-religious illuminated manuscript**
 - **St Louis Psalter (13th c, Paris), inspired by stained glass**



Chludov Psalter (83x)



Basil II Menologion (100x)
(Roma, Biblioteca Vaticana)



Skylitzes' "Synopsis
Historion" (12th c)

Cosma's
Christian Topography (10th c)
(Firenze, Biblioteca Laurentiana)



Joshua Roll (95x)
(Roma, Biblioteca Vaticana)



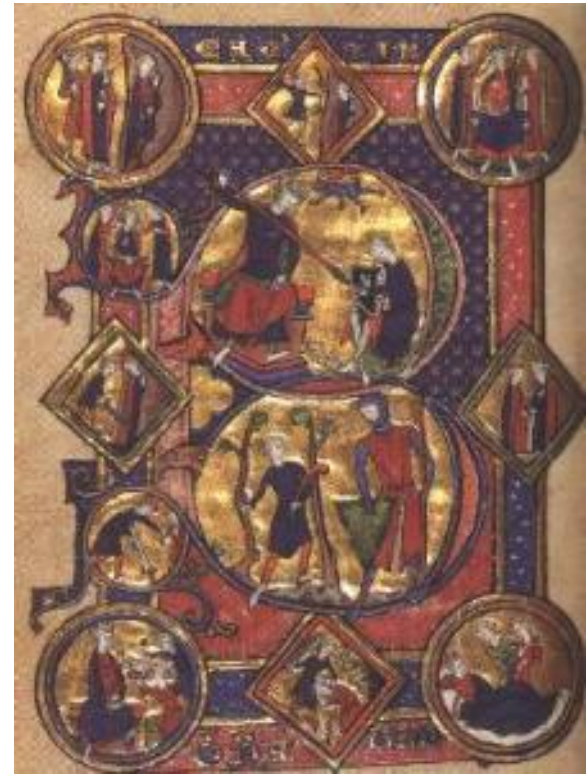
What the Middle Ages knew

- **Art**
 - **Illuminated manuscripts**

A “C” from “Conditor Alme Siderum”,
Monastery of Montecassino, 1153
(Getty Museum)



A “B” from “Beatus vir”,
Paris, 125x
(Getty Museum)



What the Middle Ages knew

- **Icons**
 - **Origins**
 - **Egyptian Mummy portraits**
 - **Portraits of the emperor**
 - **Images of pagan deities**
 - **Most of the earliest icons were destroyed during the iconoclasm (726-843)**



Icon from Mt Sinai, 6th c AD

What the Middle Ages knew

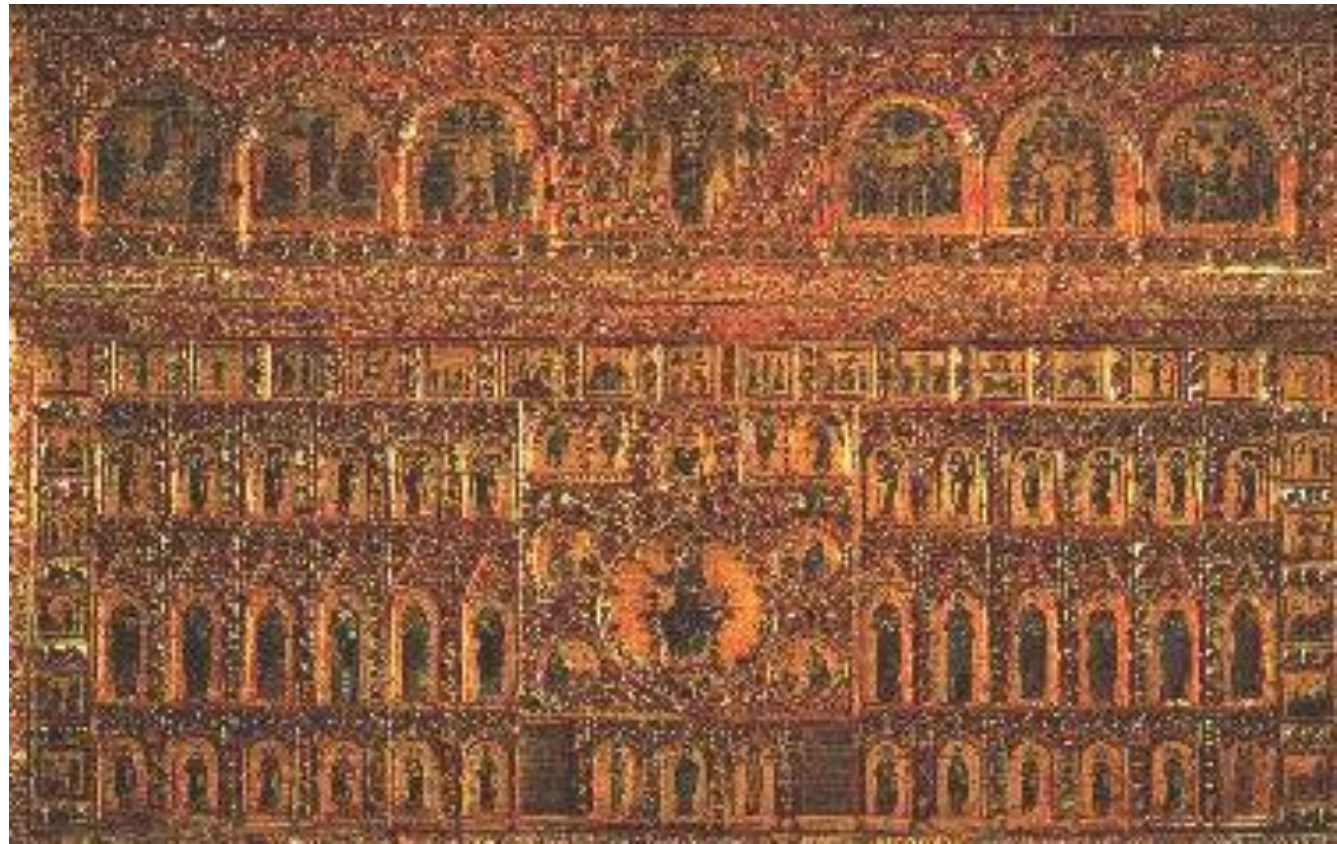
- Icons



Painting of the Virgin Mary,
Monastery of Jasna Gora,
Czestochowa, Poland,
attributed to apostle Luke
probably painted in Byzantium 6th to 9th c

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Byzantine craftsmanship: the Pala d'Oro (Venezia)**
 - Mid-14th-century golden altar piece for San Marco that uses Byzantine enamels from the 10th and 11th centuries (originating from the pillage of Byzantium in 1204)



What the Middle Ages knew

- **Painting**
 - **Naturalistic school of Rome**
 - **Pietro Cavallini (1259, Italy): Frescoes of the Basilica di San Paolo fuori le Mura (1285, destroyed by fire) and “Ultimo Giudizio” in Santa Cecilia in Trastevere (1293)**



Basilica di San Paolo fuori le Mura

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Painting**
 - **Florentine school**
 - **Cimabue (124x, Italy): Frescoes of the Upper Church of Assis (1280s)**
 - **Giotto (1267, Italy): “Cappella degli Scrovegni” (1305)**
 - **Sienese school**
 - **Duccio di Boninsegna (12xx, Italy): “Maesta” (1311)**
 - **Simone Martini (128x, Italy): “Angel And Annunciation” (1333)**
 - **Ambrogio Lorenzetti (12xx, Italy): “Allegoria” (1339)**

What the Middle Ages knew

Assisi: “Legend of St Francis” (Cimabue?)



Painting

Simone Martini

Predella of the altar of St Louis of
Toulouse (1317)



“Guidoriccio” (1330)
Palazzo Pubblico di Siena



What the Middle Ages knew

Simone Martini



42

“Angel And Annunciation” (1333) - with a book

What the Middle Ages knew

- **Giotto (1267, Italy): “Cappella degli Scrovegni” (1305)**
 - Art as realism, art as representation of nature
 - Renewed interest in the material world, decline of metaphysical Byzantine art



What the Middle Ages knew

- Giotto (1267, Italy): “Cappella degli Scrovegni” (1305)



What the Middle Ages knew

Giotto: “Cappella degli Scrovegni” (1305) - Padova



What the Middle Ages knew

Giotto: “Cappella degli Scrovegni” (1305) - Padova



Giotto: "Cappella degli
Arena" (1306) -
Firenze

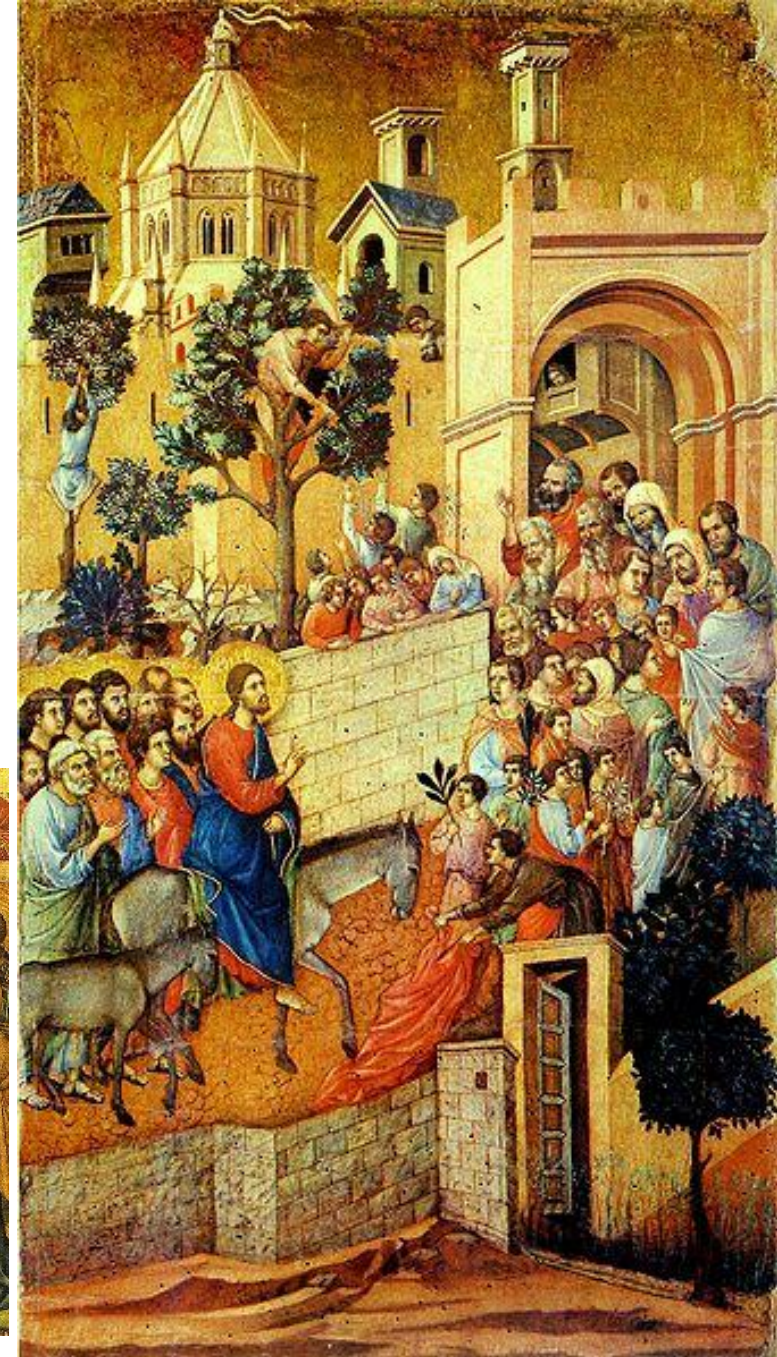


Marriage of Cana

- Painting
 - Duccio di Boninsegna (12xx, Italy): “Maesta`” (1311)



- Painting
 - Duccio di Boninsegna (12xx, Italy): “Maesta” (1311)



Entry into Jerusalem



Lorenzetti: Allegory of Good Government (1339)
Palazzo Pubblico di Siena

What the Middle Ages knew

- Painting
 - “Trionfo della Morte” (1350, Camposanto di Pisa)



What the Middle Ages knew

- Painting
 - Pacino di Bonaguida:
"L'Albero della Vita"
(1315)

The subject matter is inspired by a poetic composition by Bonaventure of Bagnoregio titled "Lignum Vitae" (The Tree of Life). This work references a verse from the Book of Revelation (22:2), according to which the Tree of Life yields twelve harvests a year and bestows God's gifts upon humanity. Jesus Christ is depicted crucified upon a tree with twelve branches, from which hang roundels symbolizing the fruits. At the base of the tree, scenes from Genesis are depicted—ranging from the Creation of Adam and Eve to their Expulsion from the Garden of Eden—serving as a reminder that Christ died on the cross to save mankind from eternal death. In the register immediately above, four figures are portrayed: Moses, Saint Francis, Saint Clare (the patroness of the Monticelli convent), and Saint John the Evangelist. The medallions adorning the branches illustrate numerous episodes from the life of Christ, encompassing his Passion and his Glory. In the pinnacle, the Virgin Mary and Christ are seen seated in glory amidst a multitude of angels, saints, and the blessed. Beneath them—flanked by the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel—a pelican tearing open its breast to feed its young symbolizes the love of Christ, who died for the salvation of humanity.



What the Middle Ages knew

- Painting
 - Italy: the creation of space as a rational order of mathematical relationships
 - Northern Europe: hyper-realism and light

What the Middle Ages knew

- Matteo Giovanetti
 - Room of the Cerfs at Avignon (1343)



What the Middle Ages knew

- Painting
 - Gentile da Fabriano (137x): “Adorazione dei Magi” (1423)
 - Paolo Uccello (1397, Italy): “Battaglia di San Romano” (1456)
 - Masaccio (1401, Italy): “Trinity” (1427), Cappella Brancacci (1428)
 - Piero della Francesca (1420, Italy): “Sacra Conversazione” (1474)

What the Middle Ages knew

- Flemish Art
 - Reflects the new scientific world view and the new individualism
 - Emphasis on realistic representation of human life
 - Emphasis on the middle class
 - Loss of the Italian sense of unity and order: reality is just a mass of objects, each made of infinite details

What the Middle Ages knew

- Flemish Art
 - Jan Van Eyck (1390, Holland): “The Ghent Altarpiece, or Adoration of the Mystic Lamb” (1432), the first major oil painting and marks the transition from Medieval to Renaissance art
 - Jan Van Eyck (1390, Holland): “The Virgin of the Chancellor Rolin” (1436)
 - Jan Van Eyck (1390, Holland): “The Ghent Altarpiece” (1432)
 - Jan Van Eyck (1390, Holland): “The Arnolfini Marriage” (1434)
 - Rogier Van der Weyden (1400, Holland): “Portrait of a Lady” (1460)



What the Middle Ages knew

- **Flemish Art**
 - **Rogier Van der Weyden (1400, Holland):**
“Portrait of a Lady” (1460)



What the Middle Ages knew

Gentile da Fabriano: “Adoration of the Magi” (1423)



What the Middle Ages knew

- **Paolo Uccello (1397, Italy): Firenze but still gothic**

"The Flood" (1445)

Santa Maria Novella, Firenze



What the Middle Ages knew

- Paolo Uccello (1397, Italy)

Battaglia di San Romano/Part III (1456)

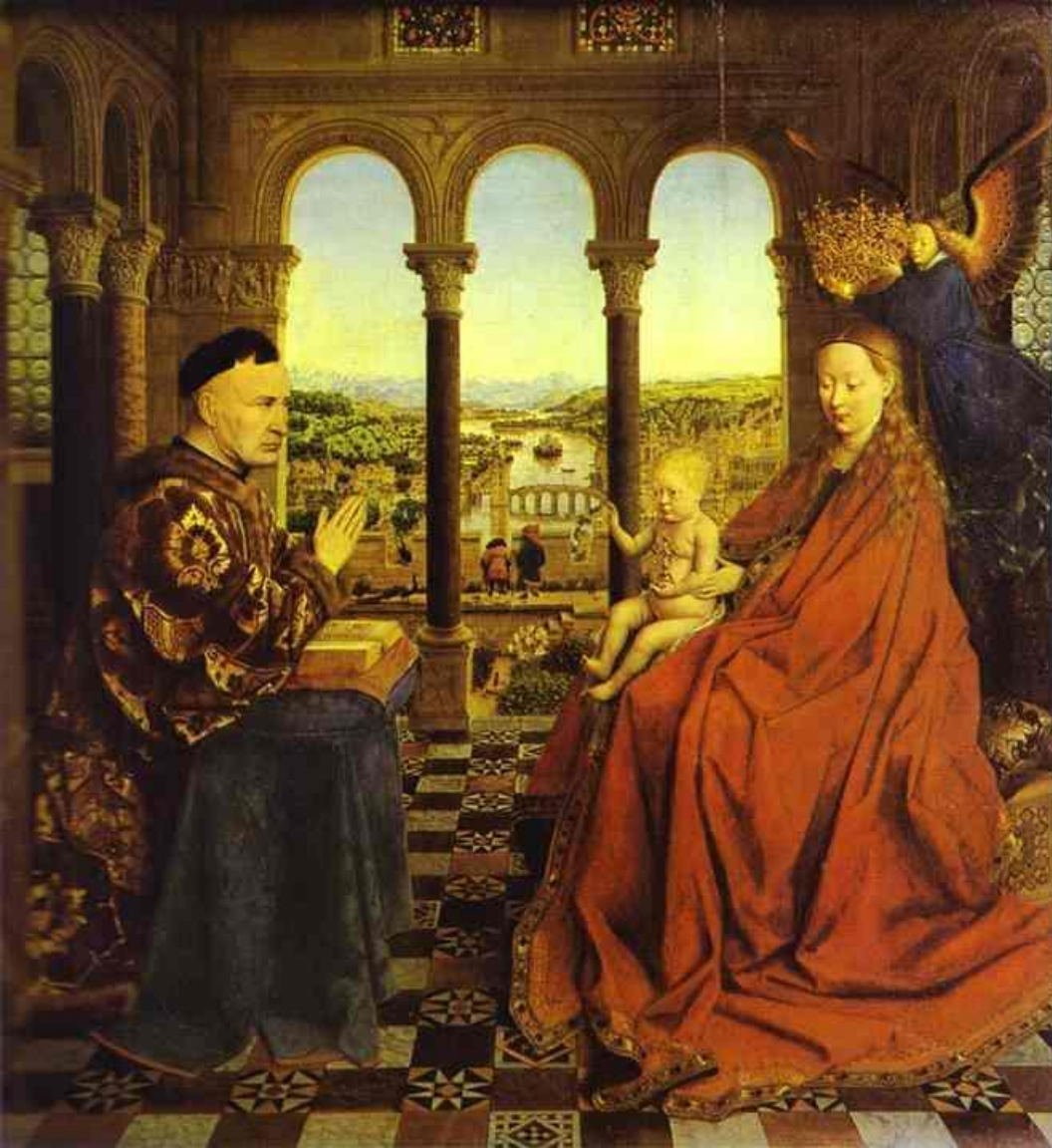


What the Middle Ages knew

Paolo Uccello (1397, Italy)

"The Hunt" (1470)





- Jan Van Eyck (1390, Holland):
 - The Virgin of the Chancellor Rolin. (1436)
 - The Arnolfini Marriage (1434)



- Jan Van Eyck (1390, Holland):
– The Ghent Altarpiece (1432)

What the Modern Age knew

Tapestry

La Dame a la Licorne/ The Lady and the Unicorn (14th c)



(Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris)

What the Modern Age knew



(Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris)

What the Modern Age knew

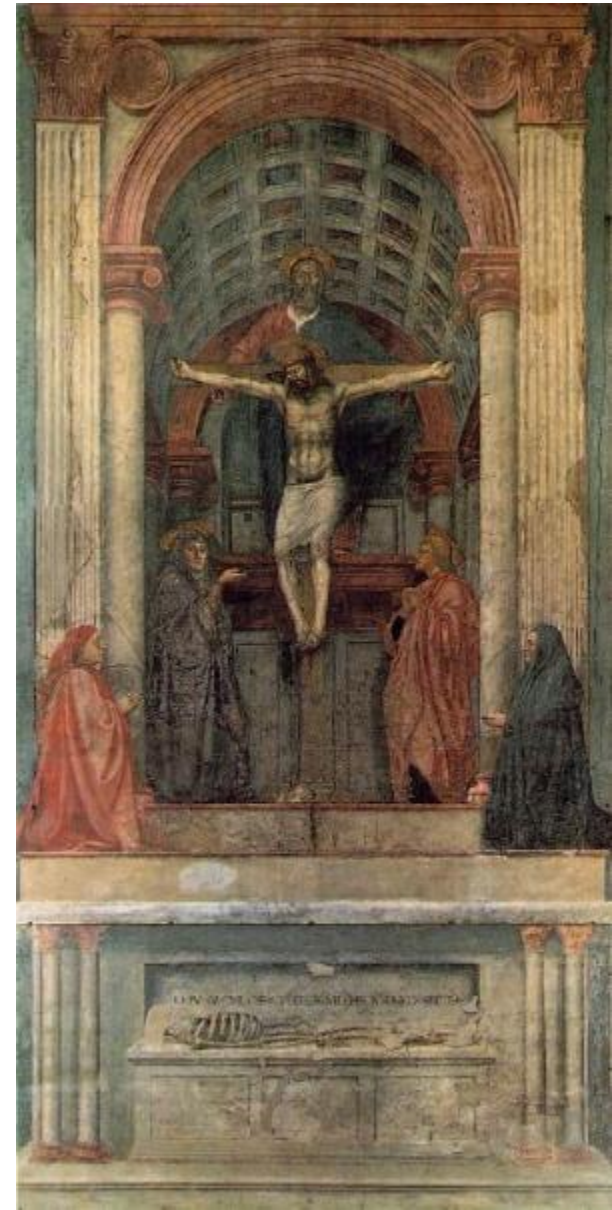


(Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris)



What the Modern Age knew

- Painting
 - Masaccio
 - Trinity (1427)



What the Modern Age knew

- Painting
 - Masaccio
 - Brancacci Chapel (1427)



What the Modern Age knew

- Brancacci Chapel (1427)

Masolino: “The Healing of the Cripple and The Raising of Tabitha”



Masaccio: “Tribute Money”



What the Modern Age knew

- Tommaso “Masolino” Fini (1383, Italy)

“Pala Colonna/ Madonna of the Snow” (1420)



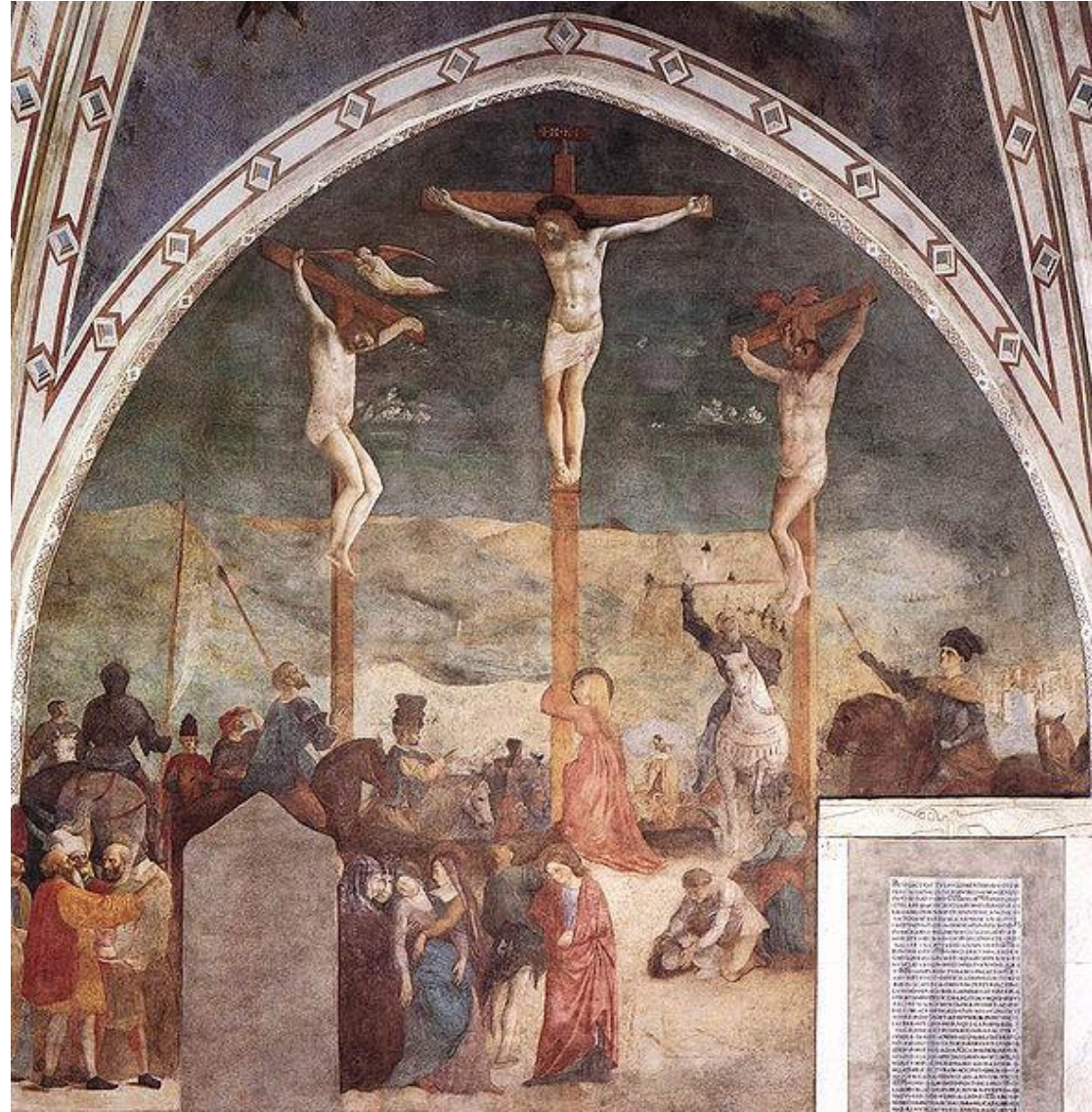
“Banquet of Herod” (1435)

Baptistry of Castiglione Olona



What the Modern Age knew

- Tommaso “Masolino” Fini (1383, Italy)



Crucifixion (1428)
Basilica di San Clemente

What the Modern Age knew

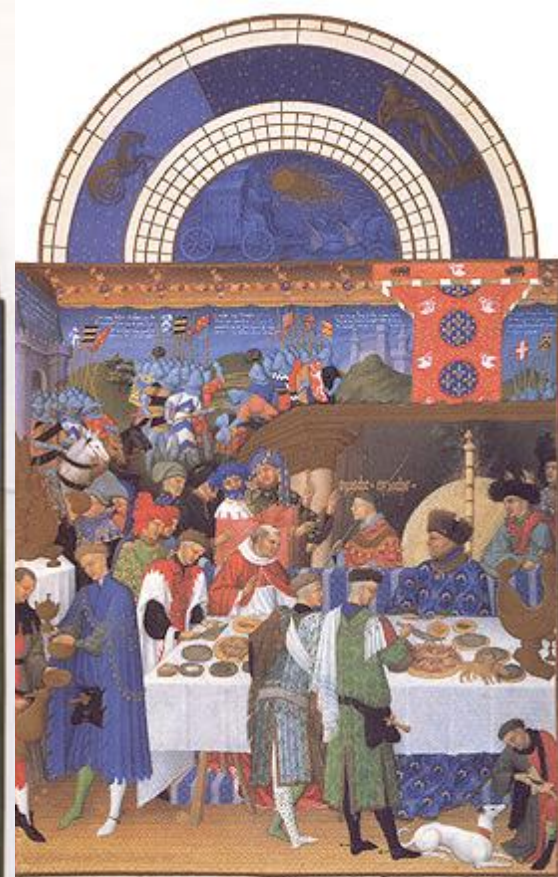
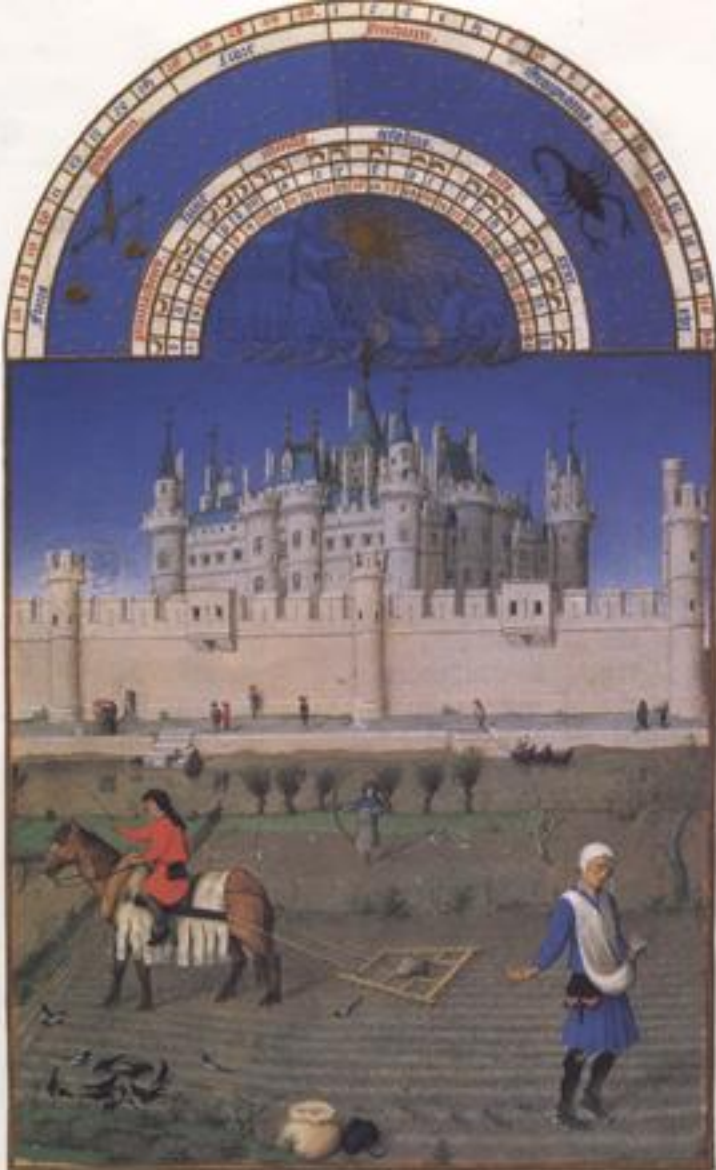
- **Painting**
 - **Andrej Rublev (1360, Russia): “Trinity” (1427)**



What the Modern Age knew

- Illuminated manuscripts of the Gothic age
 - “Douce Apocalypse” (1270, France)
 - “Ormesby Psalter” (14th c, England)





Limbourg Brothers: "Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry" (1416): two hundred paintings for an illuminated manuscript

What the Modern Age knew



Grandes Heures de Rohan (1418-25): Death

What the Modern Age knew

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