

MEDIEVAL MINDED



Galopperend terug naar de donkere tijden

Galloping back to the dark ages

medieval minded

June 1st medieval minded @stig-
tervandoesburg with: @cather-
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I was wery, forwandred, and wente me to reste

Undur a brod banke bi a bourne side;
And as I lay and leonede and lokede on the wafres,
I slumbrede in a slepyng, hit swyged so murie.
Thenne gon I meeten a meruelous sweven,
That I was in a wildernesse, wuste I never where;
And as I beheold into the est an heigh to the sonne,
I sauh a tour on a toft, fryelyche i-maket;
A deop dale bineothe, a dungun ther-inne,
With deop dich and derk and dredful of sighte.
A feir feld full of folk fond I ther bitwene,
Of alle maner of men, the mene and the riche,
Worthinge and wandringe as the world asketh.

Thanne Scriptare scorned me and a skile tolde,
And lakked me in latyn and light by me sette,
And seide, "Multi multa sciunt et seipsos nesciunt."
Tho wepte I for wo andwrathe of hir speche
And in a wykyng w[o]rth kil I [weex] aslepe.

A merueillous metels mette me thanne.
For I was rauysshed right there--for Fortune me fette
And into the lond of longyng and love she me brougte,
And in a mirour that highte Middelerte she made me to biholde.
Sithen she seide to me, "Here myghtow se wondres,
And knowe that thow coueitest, and come therto, perauunter."
Thanne hadde Fortune folwyng hire two faire damyseles:
Concupiscencia Carnis men called the elder mayde,
And Coueifise of Eighes ycalled was that oother.
Pride of Parfit Lyvyng pursued hem bothe,
And bad me for my contenaunce acounten Clergie lighte.
Concupiscencia Carnis colled me aboute the nekke
And seide, "Thow art yong and yep and hast yeres ynowe
For to lyve longe and ladies to louye;
And in this mirour thow might se myrthes ful manye
That leden thee wole to likyng al thi lif tyme."
The secounde seide the same: "I shal sewe thi wille;
Til thow be a lord and have lond, leten thee I nelle
That I ne shal folwe thi felawship, if Fortune it like."
"He shal fynde me his frend," quod Fortune thereafter;
"The freke that folwede my wille failled nevere blisse."
Thanne was ther oon that highte Elde, that hevy was of chere,
"Man," quod he, "if I mete with thee, by Marie of hevene
Thow shalt fynde Fortune thee faille at thi mooste nede,
And Concupiscencia Carnis clene thee forsake.
Bittrely shallow banne thanne, bothe dayes and nyghtes,
Coueifise of Eighes, that evere thow hir knewe;
And Pride of Parfit Lyvyng to mucche peril thee bryng."
"Ye? Recche thee nevere!" quod Rechelesnesse, stood forth in raggede clothes
"Folwe forth that Fortune wole--thow has wel fer kil Elde.
A man may stoupe tyme ynogh whan he shal tyne the crowne







A man named Will goes to sleep and has a vision of a tower set upon a hill and a fortress dungeon in a deep valley; between these symbols of heaven and hell is a 'fair field full of folk'. Scripture complains about Will's lack of self-knowledge. Angered, Will, who is already dreaming, goes to sleep and has a dream-within-a-dream in which he meets Fortune. He serves her into old age, but she abandons him. Will learns about salvation and the power of love. Kynde shows Will the world. Will has an argument with Reason. Reason, Will concludes, does not do enough to keep people from sin; but Reason disagrees. Will awakes from the dream-within-a-dream. He now meets Imaginativa...

“THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A HAPPY OCCASION! LET’S NOT BICKER AND ARGUE OVER WHO KILLED WHO.”

Looking to our medieval ancestors for help in understanding current shifts towards the growing dominance of the visual in communication would seem to be a backward step. Those were the days, we think, of supernatural forces intervening in human affairs, and with views of medicine, biology and psychology that strike the modern intellectual as primitive and unsatisfyingly pre-scientific. However a progressive view of human knowledge should also consider that the concept we have of the so-called dark ages are most likely not our own at all, rather ideas imposed on us by a growing Capitalist empire that needed to build a fervent belief in the dawn of a modern age and create a dark past from which we could emerge. To enter the state of mind of a distant epoch requires a great shift of belief systems.

In crossing a river, one gathered the clay and, engrossed in thought, began to mold it.

Imagining an image. Pause, and imagine an era, itself a huge span of time [from the late classical period to the 15th century] where every single physical rendering of an image was made by an artist. Most likely one would only rarely encounter a material image, and this rare image would have without a doubt been produced by a tradesman whose craft was visual communication. Today we encounter thousands of images daily, images made by everyone, made by marketing firms, made by your grandmother and her Azuri Samsung Galaxy J6, we see a hundred scrolling images for each bowel movement. No doubt our minds are a very different place. Could we now be experiencing a revival of an era where illiteracy was the norm, where we read in images rather than abstract symbols [letters], right brain over left.

The Middle Ages saw considerable engagement with questions of mind, body and affect, and the development of sophisticated thinking about psychology. What we would now call cognition was understood as a two-part process, with physiological mechanisms in the brain mirrored by processes within the rational soul/mind, and with neither reducible to the other. The phantasmas that resulted from this multi-stage process were no mere abstract concepts: they dripped with sensory qualities and emotional charge. The mind-brain complex was an integrated, dynamic system, with the creative power of the imaginativa having the potential to sway and deceive the rational processes of the estimativa.

I have heard of great beasts. My favorite is called the lion. It is a giant man eating cat. I once saw a book, the words and letters were a mystery to me, but inside I could see the lion, it is real.

Now back to the mud.

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