



MEDIEVAL CONCEPTION

A UNITARIAN MENTALITY



'The Wilton Diptych', about 1395-9
Copyright © The National Gallery, London. All rights reserved.

A UNITARIAN MENTALITY

- Medieval culture fostered the formation of an attitude characterized by an authentic religious sense determined by an image of God as the totalizing horizon of every human action

THE GUILDS



THE GUILDS

- One of the most remarkable features of **medieval guild** life was the way in which it combined **secular** and **religious** activities in the same social complex:
- the guild **chantry**

THE GUILDS

- the provision of **prayers** and **masses** for the dead
- the performances of **pageants** and **mystery plays** on the great feasts were no less a **function** of the **guild** than

THE GUILDS

- the common **banquet**
- the regulation of **work** and **wages**
- the giving of **assistance** to fellow guild-men in sickness or misfortune
- the right to participate in the **government** of the city

FOR

THE GUILDS

‘IT WAS IN **THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH** AND THE EXTENSION OF THE **LITURGY** INTO **COMMON LIFE** BY **ART** AND **PAGEANTRY** THAT THE **COMMUNITY-LIFE** OF THE MEDIEVAL CITY FOUND ITS **FULLEST EXPRESSION**’ (Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*)

THE CATHEDRAL



THE CATHEDRAL

The incarnate **symbol** of this **unity** was the **miracle** of the

CATHEDRAL, the unsurpassed symbol of

- **unity**
- **fraternity**
- **equality**

in which all converge :
friends and foes,
those near and far

THE CATHEDRAL

All men are **equal** in the sight of
the infinite, ultimate **ideal** ,

to whose judgement they all feel
subject and

for which they all **yearn**

THE CATHEDRAL

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GROW UP WITHIN A
CULTURE IN WHICH **GOD** IS TRULY **GOD**?

IT MEANS THAT **GOD** IS A LIVING PRESENCE AND
HAS TO DO WITH EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN LIFE

THE PILGRIMAGE



THE PILGRIMAGE

When in sweet showers fall
And pierce the drought of March to the root, and all
The veins are bathed in liquor of such power
As brings about the engendering of the flower,
5 When also Zephyrus with his sweet breath
Exhales an air in every grove and heath
Upon the tender shoots, and the young sun
His half-course in the sign of the Ram has run,
And the small fowl are making melody
10 That sleep away the night with open eye
(So nature pricks them and their heart engages)
Then people *long* to go on *pilgrimages*
And palmers long to seek the stranger strands
Of far-off saints, hallowed in sundry lands,
15 And specially, from every shire's end
Of England, down to Canterbury they wend
To seek the holy blissful martyr, quick
To give his help to them when they were sick. (G. Chaucer, *The Canterbury*

Tales)

THE PILGRIMAGE

- Quando in Aprile cadono le dolci piogge
È penetrano la siccità di Marzo alle radici, e tutte
Le vene sono bagnate nel liquore di un potere tale
Che genera i fiori
Quando anche Zeffiro con il suo dolce soffio
Esala una brezza in ogni bosco e brughiera
Sui teneri germogli, e il giovane sole
Ha compiuto il suo mezzo corso nel segno dell'Ariete,
Ed i piccoli uccelli stanno cantando una melodia
Che spazza via la notte con l'occhio aperto
(Così la natura li punge e stimola i loro cuori)
allora la gente *desidera* andare in *pellegrinaggio*
ed i palmieri desiderano cercare i lidi forestieri
dei santi lontani venerati in diversi posti,
e specialmente, al confine di ogni contea
dell'Inghilterra, giù verso Canterbury si dirigono
per cercare il santa beato martire, pronto
a dar loro il suo aiuto quando erano malati. (G.Chaucer ,The Canterbury Tales)



- **Paola Mongelli**
- paola.mongelli@teletu.it
- Liceo Artistico Caravaggio -Milano