**Irish Illuminations and Romanesque Art**

The art of this period of the Middle Ages can be characterized as barbaric. The barbarian incursions into Europe eventually toppled the Roman Empire and brought to Europe elements of their culture and others they had picked up along the way. Christianity spread rapidly through Europe with the help of monastic orders, the building of monasteries and the conquest of the Crusades, and it took root in the population, which connected its culture based on the Latin tradition with its traditional culture. Art was not only the prerogative of rich princes, but also of the poor, it multiplied by imitation, lost its quality, became crude, took on a primitive, narrative character. The main means of expression was ornament, but Western art did not abandon the human figure. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, empires were created in Europe imitating the former empire not so much in size, but in the powerful position of the king, where the Roman administration was replaced by groups of rich aristocrats. They were the Ottonian, Frankish empires and a number of principalities in the territories of France, Germany and Italy, which competed with each other for power and land. There was the development of pilgrimage and transport (wheeled carts and Viking ships). Monks came from Rome, Coptic Egypt, Byzantium, England and, finally, France, bringing new teachings in the form of words, or bringing art objects and craftsmen, building monasteries and maintaining relations with the countries of their origin through the following trade relations. They created a stage of transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages, connecting the cultures of the East, West, North and South.

The vanguard of this process was the territory of Ireland, Scotland and northern England, where in the 5th century, with the arrival of St. Patrick was created by monasteries that developed Irish art into a beautiful decorative style with a tendency towards lyrical expression. These unimaginable conditions of development were caused by the location of the countries, as the cruel wave of migration of peoples did not intervene there for a long time, only in the 8th-9th century. desk a wave of Viking raids destroyed Irish culture. Her sense of decorativeness and ornamentation in general was given by the original Celtic population and their talent for masterfully processing metal. A talent that fancifully connected thanks to expanding contacts with elements of other cultures, Anglo-Saxon, Coptic, Scandinavian and Oriental. All of them expressed themselves abstractly using the belt ornament, a motif originating from antiquity, expressing the dynamic movement that accompanied and characterized their existence. Irish illuminations reached their peak in the richness of interlacing ornamentation complemented by the heads of monsters and animals, and became a major inspirational element for other types of art in Europe as well. This synthesis of Celtic, Coptic, Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, Scandinavian elements was manifested in architecture, in the decoration of column capitals, in wall paintings, in European illuminations, in goldsmith's work and metalwork, in embroideries. With the end of the existence of Irish monasteries and the leaning of Pope Gregory the Great to the Benedictine order, a return to the Latin tradition with the signs of the new Romanesque art began to be asserted in Europe. Decorativeness continued, but there was an increasing interest in the human figure, which was the bearer of biblical stories - narratives, which also led to an interest in the weight of form, which began to develop as a result and continued its development in the following century by leaning towards nature. A special region was created in Spain, where a certain isolation from the 8th century. caused by the Moorish occupation, with a feeling of fear and anxiety, led to the apocalyptic character of art being accentuated, both in content and formal abstraction, to strong color-contrasting symbolism, to expression in hidden, mystical symbols and gestures, and finally in oriental ornamentation.

Architecture – Romanesque buildings stand out for their weight and express their appearance as a defensive structure, but later decorative elements in the form of arches, columns, columns, arched friezes, capitals decorated with ornaments and figures, and portals with reliefs and sculptures growing out of the wall appear. The vaults, a legacy of antiquity, used barrel vaults, later cross vaults. The arches are Romanesque, they created a system of modeled related arches /under windows, friezes, doors and p/. Itinerant monks of the Cistercian and Benedictine orders built monasteries /places of purification, paradise, harmony/ all over Europe.

It began to be built from stone - the flourishing of stonework led to a richer perception and connection of various materials and techniques, e.g. painting, textiles, stained glass, etc. Stone churches of the basilica type had either domes or towers in the crossing of the naves, portals with a tympanum depicted Christ and motifs from the Apocalypse of St. John, especially the Last Judgment. The bodies initially adapted to the stylizing decorativeness, were deformed and linearly decorated. The columns multiplied into bundle pillars and had the meaning of a visual representation of the logic of order. The capitals of the columns were enlivened with either ornamental motifs or figures.

For defense reasons, castles and fortresses were mostly built on elevated and commanding places.

Paintings – The Catalan paintings in the Museum of Catalan Art in Barcelona and in the Vichy Museum are the most striking. They decorated small churches in the Pyrenees and were preserved thanks to oblivion.

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