1 # Ch. 14 Early Medieval Art in Europe

Art History 1

2 ## In this Chapter you will...

- Investigate how barbarian ornamental styles became the basis for illustrating Christian manuscripts in Ireland and Northumbria, and learn how how these manuscripts were made and used.

3 ## In the chapter you will...

- Assess the Carolingian revival of Roman artistic traditions in relation to the political position of the rulers as emperors sanctioned by the pope.

4 ## In this chapter you will...

- Appreciate and understand the variety of styles used to illustrate early medieval sacred books.

5 ## In this chapter you will...

- Discover the distinctive style of manuscript painting developed by Christian artists in Spain.

6 ## In this chapter you will...

- Analyze the planning and function of monasteries in the early Middle Ages.

7 ## Defining the "Middle Ages"

- The roughly 1,000 years of European history between the dissolution of the Western Roman Empire during the 5th century and the Florentine Renaissance in the 15th century are generally referred to as the Middle Ages, or the medieval period.

8 ## The Early Middle Ages

- As the Roman Empire declined in the 4th century and came to end in the 5th, its authority was supplanted by "barbarians," people from outside the empire who could only "barble" Greek or Latin.

9

- But who were these people living outside the Mediterranean orbit?

10

- The Celts controlled most of Europe, and the Germanic people- Goths and others- lived around the Baltic Sea.

11

- The Visigoths (Western Goths) ended their wanderings in Spain.
- The Burgundians settled in Switzerland and eastern France; the Franks in Germany, France, and Belgium.

12 # The Church: Patron to the Arts

13 ## The Merovingians

- One of the barbarian groups that moved into the Western Roman world during the 5th century were the Franks, who migrated westward from what is now Belgium and settled in the northern part of Roman Gaul (modern France).

14 ## Jewelry of Queen Arnegunde

- Our knowledge of Merovingian art is based primarily on the jewelry that has been uncovered in the graves of kings, queens, and aristocrats, indicating that both men and women expressed their wealth by wearing earrings, necklaces, finger rings, bracelets, and weighty leather belts, from which they suspended even more ornamental metalwork.

15 ## The Art of People Outside the Roman Sphere of Influence

- In Scandinavia (present-day Denmark, Norway, and Sweden), which was never part of the Roman Empire, people spoke variants of the Norse language and shared a rich mythology with other Germanic peoples.

16 ## **The Norse**

- Scandinavian artists had exhibited a fondness for abstract patterning from early prehistoric times.
- The artists incorporated the solar disks and stylized animals on these objects into their already rich artistic vocabulary.

17 **Gummersmark Brooch**

- By the 5th century CE, the so-called **animal style** dominated the arts, displaying an impressive array of serpents, four-legged beasts, and squat human figures, as can be seen in their metalwork.

18

- An eye-and-beak motif frames the rectangular panel

19

- A man is compressed between dragons just below the bow; and a pair of monster heads and crouching dogs with spiraling tongues frame the covering of the catch.

20 ## The Celts and Anglo-Saxons

- After the Romans departed, Angles and Saxons from Germany and the Low Lands and Jutes from Denmark crossed the sea to occupy southeast Britain

21 The Sutton Hoo Burial Ship

- Such a burial site was discovered near the North Sea coast in Suffolk at a site called Sutton Hoo.
- The grave's occupant had been buried in a ship whose traces in the earth were recovered by the careful excavators.

22 Hinged Clasp, From the Sutton Hoo Burial Ship

- One of the most exquisite finds was a clasp of pure gold that once secured over the shoulder the leather body armor of its distinguished owner.
- The two sides were connected by a long gold pin, attached to one by a delicate gold chain.

23 The Coming of Christianity to the British Isles

- Although the Anglo-Saxons who settled in Britain had their own gods and myths, Christianity survived the pagan onslaught.

24 Illustrated Books

- Among the richest surviving artworks of the period were the beautifully written, illustrated, and bound manuscripts, especially the Gospel books.

25 Gopsel Book of Durrow, 7th century

- The colorful checkered patterning resembles the glass inlays of the Sutton Hoo treasures and forms his rectangular, armless body.

26 *The Book of Kells*, late 8th or early 9th century CE

- The Gospel book known as the *Book of Kells* is one of the most beautiful, original, and inventive of the surviving Hiberno-Saxon Gospel books.

27

- In this detail we see two cats pounce on a pair of mice nibbling the Eucharistic wafer, & two more mice torment the vigilant cats.

28 Irish High Crosses

- Metalwork's influence is seen not only in manuscripts, but also in the monumental stone crosses erected in Ireland during the 8th century.

29 The Muslim Challenge in Spain

- In 711 CE, Islamic invaders conquered Spain, ending Visigothic rule.
- The invaders brought a new art as well as a new religion and government into Spain.

30 Mozarabic Art

- The Iberian Peninsula became a melting pot of cultures in which Muslims, Christians, and Jews

lived and worked together, all the while officially and firmly separated.

- The conquest resulted in a rich exchange of artistic influences between the Islamic and Christian communities, creating a unique, colorful new style known as *Mozarabic*.

31 Beatus Manuscripts

- One of the most influential books of the 8th century was the *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, compiled by Beatus, abbot of the Monastery of San Martin at Liebana.

32 Colophon Page, July 27, 970 CE

- The images have been rendered in cross-section that reveals the interior / exterior simultaneously.

33 The Viking Era

- In the 8th century seafaring bands of Norse seamen known as Vikings descended on the rest of Europe.

34 The Oseberg Ship

- Since prehistoric times Northerners had represented their ships as sleek sea serpents, and as we saw at Sutton Hoo they used them for burials as well as sea journeys.

35 Detail of Oseberg Ship

- Bands of interlaced animals carved in low relief run along the ship's bow and stern.
- Viking beasts are broad-bodied creatures that clutch each other with sharp claws and are known as "gripping beasts".

36 Royal Rune Stones

37 Timber Architecture

- The vast forests of Scandinavia provided the materials for timber buildings of many kinds.
- Two forms of timber construction evolved: one that stacked horizontal logs, notched at the ends, to form a rectangular building (log cabin); and the other that stood the wood on end to form a palisade or vertical plank wall, with timbers set directly in the ground or into a sill.

38 The Carolingian Empire

- During the second half of the 8th century, while Christians and Muslims were creating a rich multicultural art in Spain, a new force emerged in Continental Europe.
- Charlemagne established a dynasty and an empire known today as "Carolingian."

39 Carolingian Architecture

- Functional plans inspired by Roman and Early Christian architecture were widely adopted by the Carolingian builders.

40 Carolingian Architecture: The Palace Chapel at Aachen

- Directly across from the royal audience hall of Charlemagne's palace complex stood the Palace Chapel.

41 Westwork, Abbey Church of Corvey

- This westwork designed Abbey Church shows one of the hallmarks of Carolingian architecture.
- This is a broad and imposing block masonry construction that has a strong symmetrical arrangement of towers.

42 The Saint Gall Plan

- Monastic life centered on prayer and work, and since it also demanded seclusion, it required a special type of architectural planning.

43 The Scriptorium & Illustrated Books

- Books played a central role in the efforts of Carolingian rulers to promote learning, propagate Christianity, and standardize Church law and practice.

44 Saint Matthew the Evangelist, Coronation Gospels

45 Matthew the Evangelist, Ebbo Gospels

46 Carolingian Goldsmith Work

- The magnificent illustrated manuscripts of the medieval period represented an enormous investment in time, talent, and materials, so it's no surprise they were often produced with equally magnificent covers.

47 (Detail)Crucifixion with Angels and Mourning Figures

- The Cross and the Crucifixion were common themes for medieval book covers.

48 The End of the Carolingian Empire

- In 843 CE, the Carolingian empire was divided into three parts, ruled by three grandsons of Charlemagne.
- Although a few monasteries and secular courts continued to patronize the arts, intellectual & artistic activity slowed.