Western Civilization (in Adria)

Core Cultures

To Europe or not to Europe?

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INTRODUCTION

There seems to be some rather heated debates and controversy about whether Adria should restrict the cultures it "allows" people to portray. This debate extends to what we supposedly already do, and whether any new restrictions or guidelines would be contrary to current practice.

In an effort to get to the bottom of this "controversy" once and for all, I set about trying to figure out where we already stand in our stated mission and purpose. Do we already have a stance on European and non-European cultures? Are the efforts to restrict certain cultures truly a effort to ostracize, or merely an effort to adhere to what already exists?

My first step was to find out what we have already legislated. What's in our bylaws? What's in our manuals and guides?

My second step was to do some research and find the common definitions for our own stated terminology. The two terms that we use are "Age of Chivalry" and "Western Civilization." In our Judging Guidelines we specifically reference "Europe" but since it's merely a guide, and doesn't rise to the level of law, then I have used it only for confirmation of what we are already doing.

CURRENT LEGISLATION

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION, 1992:

Article IV, Character of Affairs: Generally, to engage in research and promote education in the field of Western Culture between 1150 A.D. and 1550 A.D…

ADRIAN BYLAWS

Article I, General, A. Statement of Purpose: "We endeavor to enlighten our communities by providing a mechanism to explore the lifestyles and societies of the period of history commonly referred to as The Age of Chivalry."

Article I, General, C. Operating Principles: "Promote research, education, and publication relevant to those cultures falling within the influence of Western Civilization within our period of history."

ARTS JUDGING GUIDELINES, 2002 (AND 1998)

This does not rise to the level of law, but reflect the judging criteria. (Note that Section 1 is also contained the 1998 version of this manual and is not new)

Section I, Judging in General: "As a judge, you will be looking at entries submitted by predominantly non-professional artisans. These entries would be examples of art forms from the Adrian period of recreation as stated in the Bylaws. Pieces would be examples of art that were made by or available to Europeans during this time; Just because you are a member does not mean creations or ideas are period. Just because they are used by an Adrian or are about an Adrian subject does not mean they are period. (Artisans occasionally bring Middle Eastern art along trade routes. For these art forms to be allowed, the artisan only needs to prove that they were indeed in Europe during the Adrian Era.)"

Section IV, Documentation: "The main purpose of documentation is to prove that an entry is an example from the Adrian era, and that it was an appropriate art or science in Europe during that time. "

Section VII. Scoring an Entry, B. Authenticity: "First the following criteria must be met: Is the general concept for the entry appropriate to the Adrian context? Would it have been found in Europe during the time period of 1066-1603?"

MANUAL OF COMBAT, 2000

This rises to the level of law, and demonstrates that items not within Western Europe are currently not allowed.

Section IV, Banned Weapons List, B. Butt-mauls on Pole Arms: "Authenticity: The use of a mace head on the back of a pole weapon is undocumentable in Western Europe within our period."

HERALDRY MANUAL, RULES FOR REGISTRATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Adopted November 1999 and rises to the level of law.

Section III, Armorial Style, C. Animals, Plants, Trademarks, Etc.: "Charges of animals, plants, or artifacts that were not known in Europe during the Adrian period (1066 - 1603) will not be permitted."

Glossary: "Period - The Adrian period, defined as being from 1066 to 1603. Defining something as "period" means that it was known in Europe during that time."

NEW MEMBERS GUIDE, 1999

This is only informational and does not rise to any level of law.

Time Frame and Setting: "The Adrian Empire is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to the study and recreation of Western European culture between the years 1150 and 1603. Our members work to recreate the arts and skills of this era. We have also begun to include other cultures that interacted with the Western Europeans during our time frame. This exciting development means there is now even more rich history, culture, and tradition to explore!"

AGE OF CHIVALRY

"I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever." - Edmund Burke, philosopher, statesman, in Reflections on the Revolution in France (1790) referring to Marie Antoinette.[1]

Sir Arthur Bryant gave to his brilliant description of the hundred years that followed the accession in 1272 of King Edward I of England the title of "The Age of Chivalry". It was the period most associated in the popular mind with the principal features of chivalry as they are remembered from schooldays ~ the Crusades, cavalry charges, Bannockburn and the Anglo-Scottish wars, Crécy and the Anglo-French wars, Wallace and the Bruce, the Black Prince and the blind King John of Bohemia, and, of course, the flowering of heraldry.[2]

BOOKS ON THE TOPIC

Bulfinch's Mythology, by Thomas Bulfinch. The Age of Chivalry (1858), which contains King Arthur and His Knights, The Mabinogeon, and The Knights of English History. About the author: "Thomas Bulfinch, in his day job, was a clerk in the Merchant's Bank of Boston, an undemanding position that afforded him ample leisure time in which to pursue his other interests. In addition to serving as secretary of the Boston Society of Natural History, he thoroughly researched the myths and legends and copiously cross-referenced them with literature and art. As such, the myths are an indispensable guide to the cultural values of the nineteenth century; however, it is the vigor of the stories themselves that returns generation after generation to Bulfinch."[3]

Age of Chivalry: Art and Society in Late Medieval England, Edited by Nigel Saul. "In this collection of essays, medieval historians appreciate the artefacts of the chivalric age and explore the nature of the society in which they were produced, the patrons who commissioned them and the ideals, both secular and religious, which inspired them." About the author: He also edited The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval England, and The National

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[1] Bartleby's Quotations

[2] "Classical Heraldry." The Baronage Press and Pegasus Associates, 2000, http://www.baronage.co.uk/classic1/herart07.html

[3] The Literature Network, http://www.online-literature.com/bulfinch/

Trust Historical Atlas of Britain: Prehistoric and Medieval. Professor Saul is Reader in Medieval History at Royal Holloway College, University of London.

Chronicles of the Age of Chivalry, by Elizabeth Hallam (Editor), Hugh Trevor-Roper (Preface). "The writings of monks from 1216 to 1377 are translated into modern English. They describe the English court of the period and what was happening throughout Europe." About the authors: Elizabeth Hallam, who has a Ph.D. from London University, is a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and the Society of Antiquaries of London. She is the author of two major books: Capetian France 987-1328 and Domesday Book through Nine Centuries. Hugh Trevor-Roper, a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor and a former professor of history at Oxford University, is the celebrated author of many books on European history in the Christian era. His best-known publications include Renaissance Essays, From Counter-Revolution to Glorious Reformation, and The Rise of Christian Europe.

The Age of Chivalry, by Diana Cooke. "The knight's costume, code of conduct, and tournaments, with 15th century woodcuts."

The Age of Chivalry, by Joseph Vella, explores the Knights of Malta, formerly known as the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem.

The Age of Chivalry: English Society, 1200-1400, by Sylvia Wright. This book places the timeline early in Adrian period, and squarely in England.

The Age of Chivalry; Manners and Morals, 1000-1450, by Charles T. Wood. This book places the timeline in very early period.

The Archaeology of Weapons: Arms and Armour from Prehistory to the Age of Chivalry, by R. Ewart Oakeshott, describes this as "the work of a noted authority on medieval arms in Europe."

ARTICLES ON THE TOPIC

"Tournaments at the Dawn of the Age of Chivalry", by Craig Levin, defines the Age of Chivalry as "the era stretching from William the Bastard to Richard the Lion-Hearted" and limits his discussion specifically to European tournaments. About the author: Craig Levin is a librarian para-professional, and holds degrees in history and in mediaeval and Byzantine studies.

COLLEGE COURSES

The University of Leeds (one of the top ten universities for research in the UK) offers a course entitled the Age of Chivalry, in its Department of German Studies. This course (Germ 1080) is defined as covering "general aspects of culture and society in Germany c.1200 AD and also the development of the German language. The tutorials will support the lectures and will provide opportunities for individual translation work and language analysis, concentrating on the Nibelungenlied âventiure XIV as printed in M.O'C.Walshe, A Middle High German Reader, pp.137-149. Aims: To give participants (a) an understanding of medieval German culture and society by contrast with that of modern Germany; (b) an overview of Germany's medieval literary masterpieces approximating to what an educated German could be expected to know; and (c) an introduction to the discipline of historical philology ('evolution of the German language').[4]

The University of Tasmania (ranked in Australia among the top ten for research) offers a course entitled "The German Age of Chivalry". This course (HEG305) "begins with the Proto-Indo-European Languages and traces the development of the German language with regard to lexis and syntax from Old High German, Middle High German, New High German to contemporary German."[5]

Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia (founded in 1835) is commonly considered one of the best private liberal arts colleges in the country. Their course on "The Age of Chivalry" (HIS210) is taught by William Bradford Smith, Associate Professor of History. Its syllabus includes the description "This course will cover the High and Later Middle Ages, from the later Carolingian period through the crises of the fourteenth century. The main focus will be on the evolution of state and society in northern and western Europe during these periods.

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[4] "The Age of Chivalry," University of Leeds
[5] "The German Age of Chivalry," University of Tasmania

Special attention will be given to such events as the rise of feudal monarchies, the Investiture Contest, the Norman Conquests, and the Crusades. In addition, one of the goals of this course will be to introduce students to the historiography of Medieval Europe by reading a selection of works which are broadly representative of general trends in medieval history."[6]

The University of Sheffield offers "The Age of Chivalry: Europe in the Central Middle Ages". This course (HST221) and is described as examining "one of the most formative periods in European history, the 'High' or 'Central' Middle Ages. This was an era of intense activity and energetic development, during which Western European society expanded both internally, through the foundation of new villages and towns, and externally, through expansion into Muslim, Byzantine and pagan territories. Successive waves of religious fervour produced the reform of the Roman Church, the construction of the great cathedrals and the foundation of new monastic and preaching orders; at the same time a flourishing court culture fostered chivalry and romance literature. But the enthusiasm of the age had a darker side which fomented the Crusades and the persecution of heretics and outcasts. The course will concentrate upon the lands which nurtured this adventurous and turbulent society, especially France, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Western Mediterranean, in order to understand their contribution to the history of Europe as a whole. The theme pervading the course will be the place of the warrior elites within European society, epitomised in the emergence of the ideal of chivalry." This course is taught by Dr. Daniel Powers and is required for students seeking a Master's degree in Historical Research.[7]

DEFINITIONS (DICTIONARY AND ENCYCLOPEDIA)

The term "chivalry" comes from the Middle French, thus taking its origins to France in about the 14th century, and includes the definition "the system, spirit, or customs of medieval knighthood."[8]
The Catholic Encyclopedia[9] defines the Age of Chivalry as having four distinct periods. The first period is during the Crusades "the golden age of chivalry, and the crusader was the pattern of the perfect knight." The second period includes the military orders, and mentions Bouillon, Normandy and France. The third period is "secular chivalry" and mentions England and France. The fourth and final period of chivalry is "court chivalry" and again speaks extensively of England and France.

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines chivalry as "the knightly class of feudal times. The primary sense of the term in the European Middle Ages is "knights," or "fully armed and mounted fighting men." Thence the term came to mean the gallantry and honour expected of knights. Lastly, the word came to be used in its general sense of "courtesy.""[10]

The Encyclopedia of World History mentions the age of chivalry in its references to poetry from the High German Period (specifically 1268).[11]

The American Heritage Dictionary places the Age of Chivalry as being medieval, and in France and England.[12]

The Columbia Encyclopedia defines chivalry as being a "system of ethical ideals that arose from feudalism and had its highest development in the 12th and 13th cent. Chivalric ethics originated chiefly in France and Spain and spread rapidly to the rest of the Continent and to England."[13] The Columbia Encyclopedia also refers to England and France in its entry on Agincourt and the obsolescence of the methods of warfare of the age of chivalry,"[14] and again in its description of an attack on Sir John Coventry in England, describing it as "not uncommon in the age of chivalry."[15] Further, this same tome has the age of chivalry waning by the 14th century.[16]

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[6] "The Age of Chivalry," Oglethorpe University

[7] "The Age of Chivalry: Europe in the Central Middle Ages," University of Sheffield

[8] "Chivalry," Mirriam-Webster Dictionary

[9] "Chivalry," Catholic Encyclopedia

[10] "Chivalry," Encyclopedia Brittanica

[11] "1268", The Encyclopedia of World History

[12] "Chivalry," The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

[13] "Chivalry," The Columbia Encyclopedia

[14] "Agincourt," The Columbia Encyclopedia

[15] "Rose Sunday," Columbia Encyclopedia

[16] "Dutch and Flemish literature", The Columbia Encyclopedia

The Cambridge History of English Literature refers specifically to Chaucer (and thus England and the lands Chaucer wrote of, which were all European, or from the Crusades) when mentioning the age of chivalry.[17] But they go a step further and say that "a full account of the romances in which they were embodied and enriched during the age of chivalry belongs to the history of French and German, rather than to that of English, literature."[18] This trend is reiterated consistently throughout the 18 volumes.

POPULAR CULTURE

The Age of Chivalry Webring defines itself as "… for sites that feature Medieval themes, Renaissance, Arthurian legends, chivalry, Avalon, Grail Mysteries or related interests."[19]

The Age of Chivalry Renn Faire in Las Vegas sets its time as 1512 with German, Italian, Ottoman/Turk, French, Celtic and British Military units.[20]

The Age of Chivalry role-playing game is very much fantasy and very much European-based.[21]

Virtual greeting cards with a selection of 8 graphics, all of which carry the Victorian ideal of a knight in shining armor type of card.[22]

A CD "Music of The Age of Chivalry" contains music from the 13th /14th centuries, mostly France, England.[23]

Martha and Marianne Fine Art has created a line of fine porcelain dolls from the Age of Chivalry, all of whom are medieval and renaissance European characters.[24]

"The Age Of Chivalry is a Middle ages history and shopping portal. We supply forums and email as well as loads of middle ages goods such as clothing and armor and jewelry and more to the middle ages and renaissance enthusiasts of the world."[25]

Chivalry, by Raphael Sabatini, written in 1935: a novel has as its protagonist a pre-Renaissance Italian mercenary.

Age of Chivalry clothing lines describes itself as "Renaissance clothing, including an assortment of leather doublets, leather bodices and Elizabethan ball gowns."[26]

NON-EUROPEAN CULTURES

The only reference I could find to a non-European age of chivalry was this: "In the pre-Islamic Middle East tradition of chivalry, chevaliers had consideration for others; self-sacrifice; devotion; the helping of the unfortunate and unprotected; kindness towards all created beings, keeping one's word and self-effacement. They were committed to a particular code of etiquette and conventions. The chivaliers were absorbed into Islam on it's arrival and it's spiritual focus on divine love." This describes the Sufi (Muslim mystic) culture in particular.[27]

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[17] "V. The Rossettis, William Morris, Swinburne, and Others. 4. The Earthly Paradise" The Cambridge History of English and American Literature in 18 Volumes (1907–21). Volume XIII. The Victorian Age, Part One

[18] "XII. The Arthurian Legend, 11. Subsidiary Legends." The Cambridge History of English and American Literature in 18 Volumes (1907–21). Volume I. From the Beginnings to the Cycles of Romance

[19] The Age of Chivalry Net Ring

[20] Las Vegas Rennassaince Faire

[21] Age of Chivalry Door Game

[22] The Wizard's Quest

[23] Music of The Age of Chivalry

[24] The Age of Chivalry porcelain dolls

[25] Age of Chivalry online community

[26] Age of Chivalry clothing line

[27] "The Way of Sufi Chivalry", The Heart

WESTERN CIVILIZATION

North Park University (Chicago, Illinois) defines this as being "Medieval Europe"[28] The Encyclopedia Britannica's entries that reference Western Civilization all pertain to European history.[29] Some college indexes also include Byzantium in their curriculums on Western Civilizations.[30]

SUMMARY

Western Civilization in its most basic form does not include these cultures. In its most lenient definition, it does not include them, either. Thus, if I stick strictly to this reference, any cultures outside mainstream Europe would be disallowed in Adria. However, by our reference of the Age of Chivalry in our Bylaws, I feel we are further defining what is allowable and what is not. It was based on this assumption that I put most of my efforts into researching and defining the Age of Chivalry.

Popular culture does not really play into my research, but serves as a back-up. Does popular culture, and modern references enforce what historical references seem to say? I think so, only even it emphasizes the Victorian aspects, which are even more Euro-centric.

The Age of Chivalry seems be early period, and pretty much limited to France, England, and Germany, and the Crusades were very much a part of the Age of Chivalry. The cultures of Europe during the Middle Ages and Renaissance obviously interacted with and were influenced by peripheral cultures (for example northern Africa, the Middle East, Western Asia, and eastern Europe).

Early in our Period (1066 to 1603) there was, of course, less interaction with other cultures than later in period. Until the Crusades there really was no interaction with cultures other than your own. Very late in our Period there was the beginnings of the Age of Discovery. During this Age, many products and artifacts were brought back to Europe, but not much of the cultures, or the people.

CONCLUSION

The controversy seems to center on whether specific cultures should be allowed into Adria. These cultures are the Middle East, the Eastern Europeans, and the Far East (specifically Japan). I do not think anyone would argue with this interpretation of the situation. It would be next to impossible to have a black-and-white policy on cultures within Adria. It would depend on what era your persona would be portraying. Early period personas would have little to no reason to portray peripheral cultures, or to use products (such as silk, tomatoes, etc.) from peripheral cultures. Later period portrayals, however, would have had much more access, more interaction, and more reason to use such products. (However, certain cultures, such as the Japanese, are not significant to Europe at any time.

The currently-used statement of policy has been substantiated by my research: **Those cultures which were, or had significant influence and impact on, Western Europe during 1066-1603.** Further, the Articles of Incorporation, which have been on file since February, 1992, specify **Western Culture.** The standard Adrian policy is: Mundane law trumps Adrian law. The Articles of Incorporation are as mundane as it gets.

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[28] "Western Civilization Chronology," North Park University
[29] Encyclopedia Brittanica
[30] Western New England College, Boise State University, Index for Online College Courses

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