

Describe trs riches
heures du duc de
berry in detail and
state why you chose
it a...



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Canterbury Tales “TrÃ’s riches heures du Duc de Berry” is a depiction of peasants at work outside the palace. There are about four separate fields that may be seen, all in various stages of ploughing and harvesting. On one field, a man is tilling the ground manually, by driving a brown and black cow. On the adjoining field, three other peasants are gathering together the hay into bundles and tying them up, while on the third field, sacks are being filled by a peasant using the contents of the field. The fourth field has already been ploughed and a tree with bare branches may be seen right at the centre of the field, with a smaller tree along one of the borders. At the central point where all the four fields meet, there is a building that looks like a small lighthouse, bordering two of the fields that have been fenced off with a wall. Two of the fields, i. e., one where the hay is being harvested and tied into bundles and the other which is bare, are surrounded by these walls. In the case of the former, there is an archway for entry into the field and a small watch tower at one end. In the latter field, there is a small house with a roof covered with orange/red tiles, which appears to be a watchman or overseer’s home. Adjoining the palace and bordering the field where hay is being harvested, there is a long stretch of rolling meadow covered with green grass, covered with several cows. A rider on a horse, aided by a dog, is rounding up these cows and obviously leading them on the place where they will be housed for the night. These green fields arise in sharp contrast to the fields in various stages of harvesting, because the four fields described earlier are brown.

The palace present near the fields is notable; it is surrounded by a high, stone wall. There is a large stretch of plain ground just outside the wall,

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which could perhaps have been used for jousting purposes. There is a narrow stretch of green lawn on the outskirts of the wall surrounding the harvested field with the tree, leading on into the palace grounds through a gap in the wall. The outer wall continues down into a set of stone edifices which appear to have served perhaps as viewing posts, or seating areas where jousting and sword fighting events could have been witnessed by the hoi polloi.

Behind the wall, the palace stretches out over a vast distance in the background. Towards the right side, a large tower is visible, with the edifice of a large bird perched on top of it, wings outstretched. At a lower level, patches of blue indicate the seating areas for the royalty and knights, from which events on the palace grounds would have been witnessed.

This pictorial representation is reminiscent of the times of the Canterbury tales, specifically indicated by the large areas of palace grounds that are bare and enclosed within, suggesting they are some kind of area where games and events are played out. In the “ knight’s tale”, jousting events take place wherein opponents approach each other from either side of a low lying wall of the kind present in this picture. The presence of the peasants appears significant yin this context, because the knight’s tale deals with a peasant who pretends to be a knight in order top participate in the jousting and sword fighting events. The wall around the palace, and the separation of the viewing areas, i. e., grand and blue for the wealthier sections of the population and sitting perched on the wall for the gentry, is symbolic of the class distinctions that existed during this period. Similarly, the story in the Woman of Bath’s tale also deals with the manner in which a peasant is able to move upwards in society by providing a correct answer to the Lady

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Genevieve. Thus, in many ways, this picture appears to represent the same era when the Canterbury tales were written.