

The growth and development of civilization

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The growth and development of civilization is always an interesting and unique process to observe. Within different cultures and within different regions of the globe, this process takes on many different forms and incorporates many different aspects; some of which take place more rapidly than others and impact upon the development and growth of society and culture in unique ways. Specifically, with regards to this brief analysis, the author will focus upon the significance of the 12th century renaissance in terms of architecture, the rise of universities, codes of chivalry, and courtly love – all seen in the romances of King Arthur. Firstly, it must be noted that the significance of architecture, although perhaps disregarded by many analysts, is perhaps the most important single determinant of the representation of the 12th century renaissance. This is due to the fact that architecture is one of the few aspects of human knowledge and representation that can instill and a level of awe in the subject and constrain/define behavior on the part of the societal stakeholder in a certain manner. Further, as a direct result of the increase in knowledge and the thirst for further understanding that could be gained with regards to the many subjects that came to be represented during the 12th century, the rise of the University was a further defining element through which this renaissance came to be reflected.

Of all the information that is been put forward thus far, little emphasis has been placed with regards to the interpersonal levels of societal growth and evolution. Whereas architecture can instill a level of respect and pride in the society and the growth of science and technology that is able to represent such structures, these are ultimately impersonal aspects. By much the same

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token, the University experience and the acquisition of knowledge is something that, although it directly benefit society and the individual, is not necessarily engage with interpersonal interaction nor promote a broader societal consciousness. However, as is definitively represented within the legends of King Arthur, an emphasis upon the codes of chivalry, romance, and courtly love is a prime element for the manner in which these stories are told and understood by the reader (Rydstrøm-Poulsen 799). The ultimate significance of the institution of chivalry and the process of courtly love was not only as a means of providing a formalized structure through which interpersonal relations could take place; rather, it was a means of providing a level of culture to a society and world that had previously been one step away from hedonism. In such a manner, rather than viewing the process of courtly love and/or chivalry as an undue constraint upon human behavior, it should instead be viewed as a natural outgrowth and response to the fact that many different cultures that espouse a litany of different points of view came to realize that the only mechanism through which a singularity could be represented in the form of a society was to adopt strict and stringent norms of behavior. In many ways, these norms of behavior have continued up even until the current era.

Work Cited

Rydstrøm-Poulsen, Aage. " The Twelfth-Century Renaissance." *Speculum* 88. 3 (2013): 798-800. Academic Search Complete. Web. 12 Dec. 2013.