



# Spotlight on the Middle Ages



# The Splendour of Burgundy

**L**a tresnoble  
 et bien-heuree  
 Loenge et ma-  
 gnificence de nre  
 sauveur Jesu crist et de sa  
 tresglorieuse mere qui sont  
 cause et mouuement de tou-  
 te bonne operation et sainte  
 lesquelz nulz biens ne peuent  
 estre encommencez ne acheuez  
 Et aussi pour ce que la memo-  
 re des homes deffault et pas-  
 se par termination de vie  
 et que toutes choses se de-





Herald Toison d'Or writing the *Livre des Faits de Jacques de Lalaing*, author portrait attributed to Simon Bening, Bruges, c. 1520.

Illuminated manuscript recently acquired from us by the Getty Museum, Los Angeles.



Duke Philip the Good and behind him Charles the Bold





Jacques de Lalaing, a young Burgundian knight and famous tournament fighter, travelled throughout Europe to challenge foreign knights to compete with Burgundy in tournaments. Here he is with the King of France and the King of Spain.





Tournaments, chivalry, the finest costumes and courtly love: all Burgundian courtly society stood for is painted in this book in exquisite miniatures.

Trumpeting heralds announce a joust: Jacques de Lalaing rides in full armor and greets the King and Queen of France.

Also present are the duchess of Orleans and the duchess of Calabria, both secret lovers of the hero.



The white veil on Jacques' helmet and the golden band adorned with gems around his arm are tokens from both duchesses, who are unaware they share his love.





However, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century the world of knights was quickly disappearing. The rich towns wished more independence and the ways of warfare – with gunpowder and canons – had changed radically.





Jacques de Lalaing, the hero of this lavishly illustrated manuscript, died in the Revolt of Ghent in 1453, when he was hit by a cannonball – depicted here as it was just about to happen.





Martin Le Franc, *Livre de L'estrif de fortune et de vertu*, manuscript written in 1482

Southern Netherlands, illuminated on vellum with three large miniatures in Valenciennes/Cambrai, c. 1510s

336 x 230 mm, 193 leaves





About 1448 the author presented his book to the duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good (d. 1469). The young man to the right might be the duke's son, Charles the Bold (d. 1477).

In 1519 this manuscript was bought by Charles de Lalaing, chamberlain of Maximilian, Philip the Fair and Charles V. The duke, knight of the Golden Fleece, has Hapsburg features.



The text describes not a tournament of knights, but a debating joust between women: Lady Virtue disputes with Lady Fortune, blindfolded and dressed as a queen, her bodice adorned with ermine. Lady Reason, on a throne in the middle, is referee.





The Lady Reason has given her verdict, Virtue wins the debate and tramples Fortune's wheel until it is broken, Lady Fortune shamefully turns away, defeated. Her dress is now without ermine decoration, but she still wears her crown.





Many times victorious, Charles the Bold of Burgundy saw himself as a 'new Alexander', shown here in:

Conrad Pfetisheim, *Geschichte Peter Hagenbachs*, a rhymed chronicle on the Burgundian wars, printed in Strasbourg by Heinrich Knobloch, in 1477.

286 x 208 mm, 10 ff. , paper with 8 full-page woodcuts by the Strasbourg Monogrammist B.

Only copy with striking contemporary wash-colouring; from the famous library of Donaueschingen.





Yet, **Burgundian Splendour** received a severe blow:

In 1477 the tide turned for the duke of Burgundy and poets immediately reacted to his defeat:

Conrad Pfettisheim wrote a rhymed chronicle on the Burgundian wars, that had devastated many towns in the Alsace, Schwarzwald and Switzerland.

The story begins when the duke's hated governor Peter of Hagenbach was brought to trial and put to death in 1474.



vstandē  
nden  
ser frist  
n ist  
über müt  
ner güt  
osse sach  
enbach  
sem land  
sse schād  
t; on Er

Desz gleichen man kum findet mer  
Er wonet in burgund ein zyt  
Vnd meint die wyl er wer so wpt  
Solt man sin desten e vergessen  
Oit hochmüt w; sin hertz v messē

Vn fragt die stat vnd so guldē guldē vñ müssē ym stin  
re yñ Gerufft die fünf stat die ym verpfend woz ad  
wider potencia cori t mlt ncz i nemis t c Et pluuie  
erat colla c d p q i l p ma feta c pnd t ystare

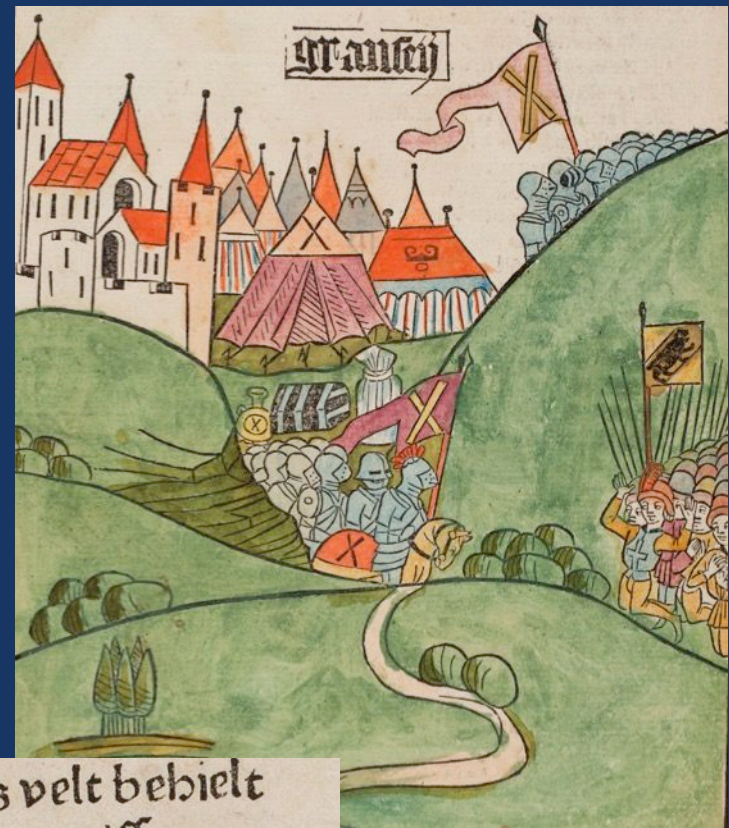
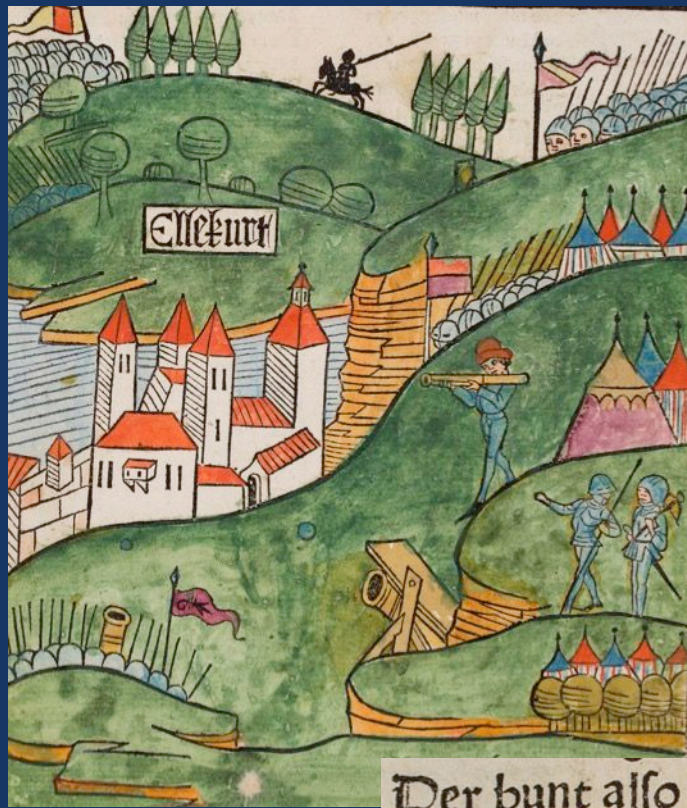
Zu brpsach vnd zu danne  
Den bösen pfennig wolt er han  
Vnd fing vil nūwer schaczung an  
Der brot trouff jm/in pfanne  
Zum Ersten kund er kratzen lpsē  
Oit senfftikeit zu glicher wpsē  
Als wer es jm/im hertzen  
Do er das grass; hergriffen hat  
Er herstbt zu brpsach in der stat  
Die burger litten smertzen

Yf Be dz die gestalt bestant  
in dem selbe, soe w; ncz lpsē  
mich müssē zu danne  
i de soe do mā zalt d; c  
lpsē i oetā feta d; d; t  
tan velt d; d; b; d; d; c  
müssē in d; d; d; i c d; d; loco

Peter of Hagenbach had committed atrocities against the people of the Alsace and the Swiss.

Soon after 1477 this book was in the hands of a 'Lesemeyster' in Thann (near Hagenbach) who was an eyewitness and added notes.





Der bunt also das velt behielt  
 Jens her das was zerrissen  
 Do fand man silber vnde golt  
 Sin sigel ouch do lygenn  
 Vñ w3 er heymlichs pflegē wolt

Still successful at Héricourt, the duke was beaten at Grandson. The Confederates forced the Burgundians into flight and made rich booty: silver and gold, also the duke's seal!.





During the siege of Nancy  
Charles the Bold's army was  
destroyed – the duke fell from  
his horse and was killed by a  
Confederate





Pfettisheim's text ends with a procession carrying sculptures and relics around Strasbourg cathedral, depicted here for the first time in print.

Conrad Pfettisheim, *Geschichte Peter Hagenbachs*, Strasbourg, Heinrich Knoblochzer, 1477. - With 8 full-page woodcuts by the Strasbourg Monogrammist B.





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