**Dante’s Inferno**

**The Middle Ages**

* 400-1300ad
* Christianity all important in Italy
* Breakdown of Language – Church no longer uses Latin
* Pope = head of Cath. Church by end of R.E.
* Pop. Poetic forms = courtly love poetry, epics
* Char. By:
  + Clash of cultures
    - Rich vs. Poor
    - Church vs. Secular World
  + Alternating faith & doubt
  + Questioning role of church

**Why did Christianity spread so rapidly (relatively speaking)?**

* Paul
* Pax-Romana
* Inclusive
* Appealed to the poor
* Reward

**Dante Alighieri** (Florence 1265-1321)

* Well-educated
* Betrothed at 12
* Very religious
* Beatrice (love of his life)
* Involved in politics
  + 2 Factions – White / Black
  + Dante opposed to papal interference in secular affairs & church corruption
    - Hated Pope Boniface VIII
      * Exiled in 1301, died in exile

***The Divine Comedy***

* Set in 1300, written in 1308
* Influenced by Virgil and The Aeneid
* Written in Italian
* Epic in 3 Parts
  + Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso
* Preoccupation with #3
  + 3 Parts
  + 33 Cantos (each part, 1st has 34 bc #1 on Earth)
  + Terza Rima (3 line verses)
  + 3 Day Journey
* Allegory
  + Beatrice = just the start