

# What the Middle Ages knew Gothic Art

Piero Scaruffi

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# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture**
  - **Economic prosperity**
  - **Growing independence of towns from feudal lords**
  - **Intellectual fervor of cathedral schools and scholastics**
  - **Birth of the French nation-state**

# What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic architecture
  - Pointed arch (creative freedom in designing bays)
  - Rib vault
  - Flying buttress

(St Denis, Paris)



(Chartres, France)



(Suger's choir, St Denis, Paris)



# What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic architecture
  - Consequences:
    - High naves
    - Campaniles, towers, spires: vertical ascent
    - Large windows (walls not needed for support)
    - Stained glass windows
    - Light

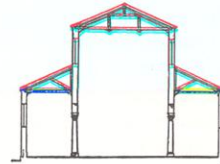
# What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic architecture
  - Consequences:
    - The painting (and its biblical iconography) moves from the church walls to the glass windows

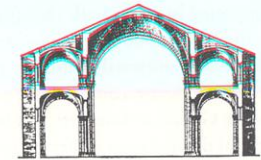
# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Architectural styles of the Middle Ages**

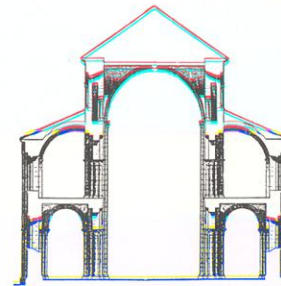
*The Medieval Cultural Achievement* [295]



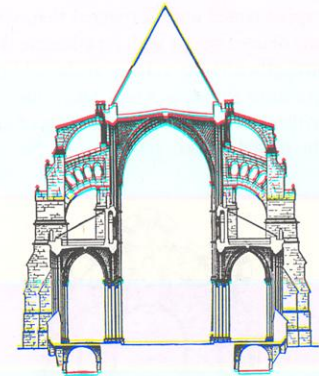
1. SANT'APOLLINARE IN CLASSE, RAVENNA. *Early Christian*



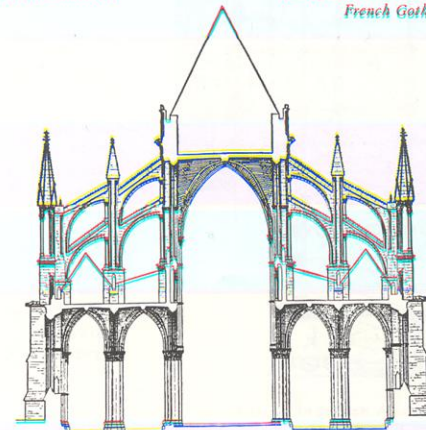
2. SANT'AMBROGIO, MILAN. *Italian Romanesque*



3. ABBAYE-AUX-HOMMES, CAEN. *French Romanesque*



4. CHARTRES CATHEDRAL. *French Gothic*

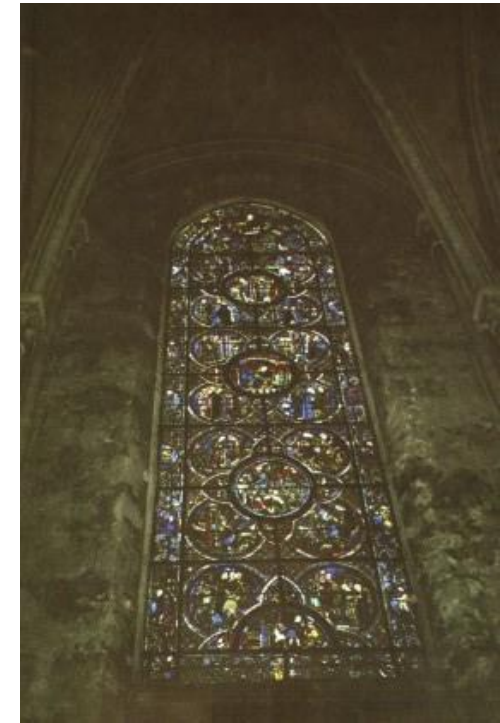
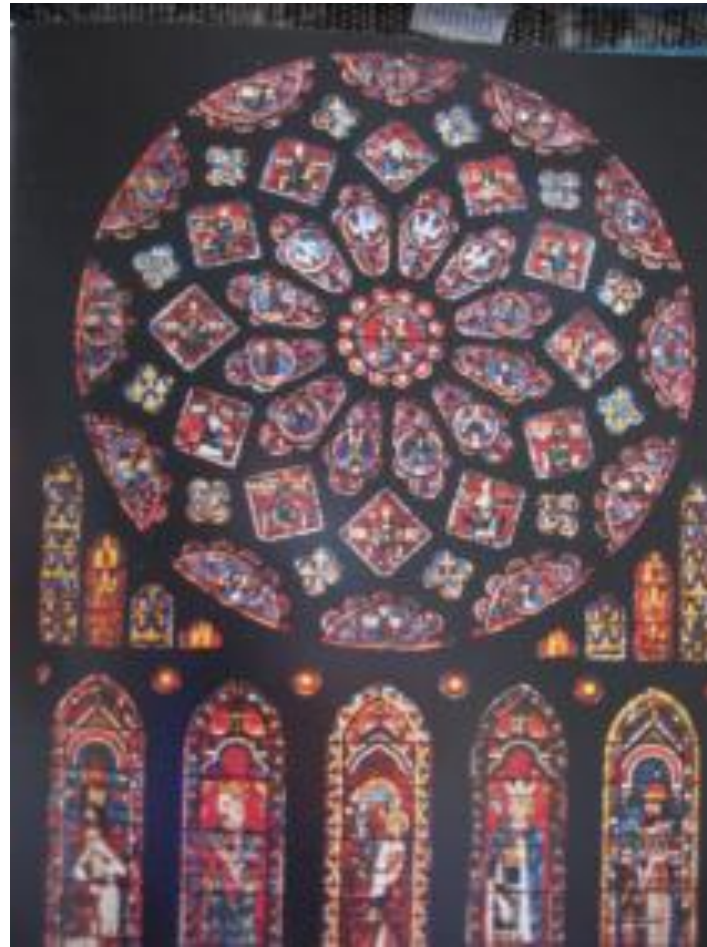


5. REIMS CATHEDRAL. *French Gothic*



# What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic architecture
  - Consequences:
    - Stained glass windows



(Chartres, France)



# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic**
  - **1130: the most royal church is a monastery (St Denis), not a cathedral**
  - **Suger redesigns it on theological bases (St Denis preserved the mystical manuscript attributed to Dionysus the Aeropagite)**
  - **St Denis built at the peak of excitement for the conquest of Jerusalem (focus on Jesus, the one of the three persons that most mattered to the crusaders)**
  - **St Denis built on geometry and arithmetics (influence of Arab science) not only on empirical knowledge**



# What the Middle Ages knew

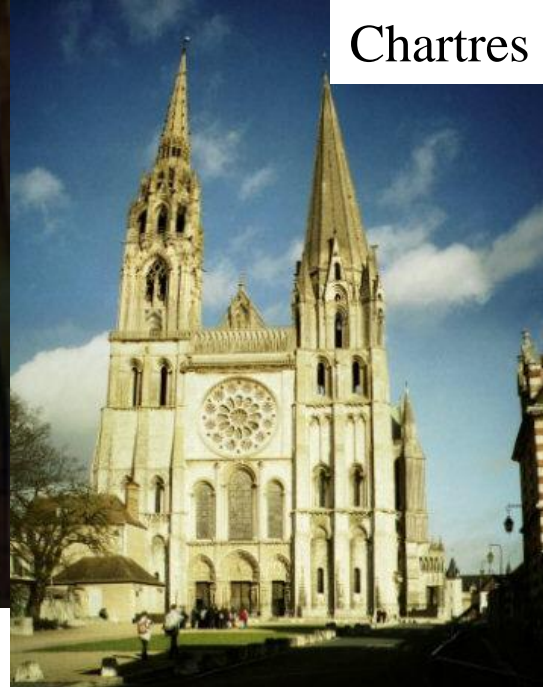
- **Gothic**
  - **Gothic cathedrals as scholastic theology**
  - **Romanesque gloom (the apocalypse) vs Gothic light (what comes after the apocalypse)**

# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in France**
  - **St Denis abbey (1134-44)**
  - Sens cathedral (1143), Noyon (1145)
  - **Chartres cathedral (1146-94)**
  - **Laon cathedral (1160)**
  - **Notre Dame (1163): flying buttress**
  - Bourges (1192)
  - **Reims (1211-25)**
  - **Sainte-Chapelle (1242)**
  - Chartreuse de Champmol (1385)
  - **Strasbourg cathedral (1439)**
  - **Amiens cathedral (1220-66)**
  - Mont-St-Michel, Coutances (1235), Beauvais (1247), St Urban at Troyes (1262)
  - **Palace of the Popes, Avignon (1334)**



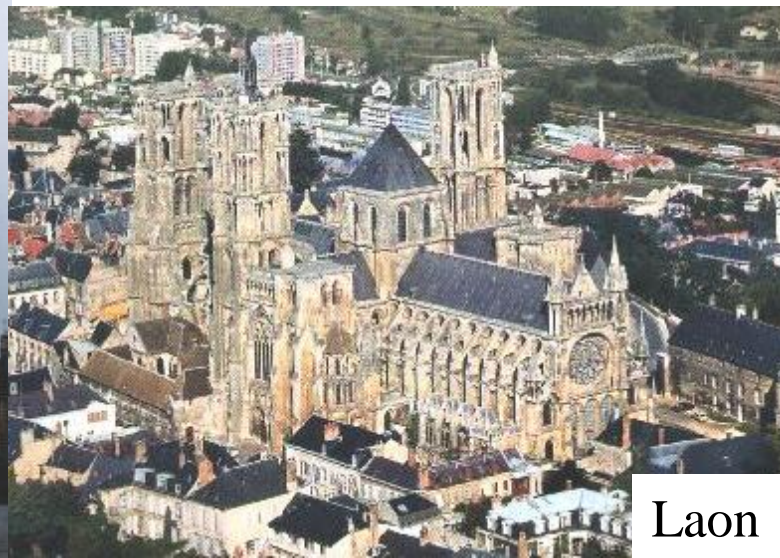
St Denis



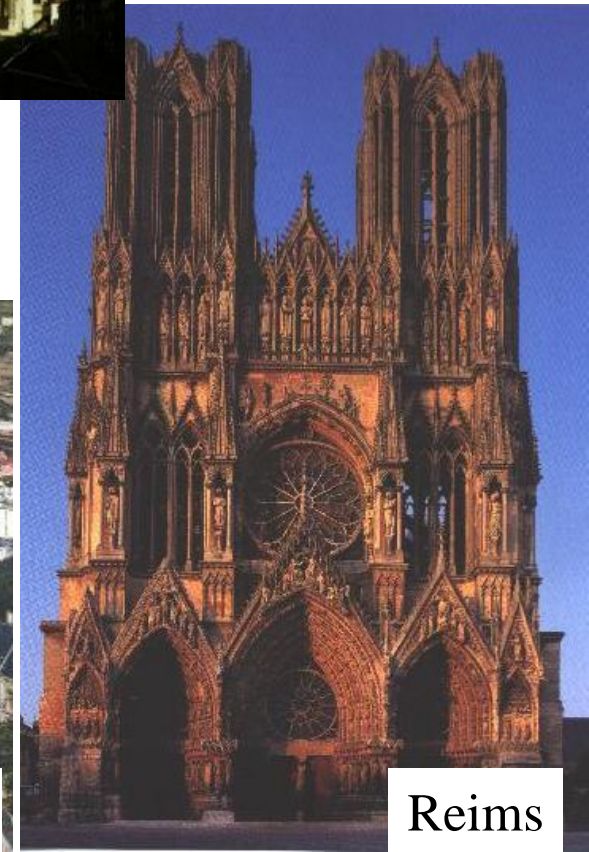
Chartres



Notre Dame



Laon



Reims

# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Paris: Louvre (1360s)**



# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in Germany**
  - **Bamberg cathedral (1225)**
  - **Naumburg cathedral (1255)**
  - **St Elizabeth, Marburg (1257)**
  - **St Stephen, Vienna (1300)**
  - **St Vitus, Prague (1356-78)**
  - **St Sebald, Nuremberg (1361)**
  - **Ulm cathedral (1377)**
  - **Cologne cathedral (1248)**
  - **Limburg cathedral (1235)**
  - **Luebeck cathedral (1260)**
  - **Regensburg cathedral (1270)**



# What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic architecture in England
  - Gloucester cathedral (1100)



← Influence of the longbow  
on the arches





# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in England**
  - **Canterbury cathedral (1174-1379, Guillaume de Sens' gothic chancel of 1184)**
  - **Wells (1180)**
  - **Lincoln (1282)**
  - **York (12th-14th c)**
  - **+Salisbury (1220)**
  - **Westminster Abbey (1246-1503)**
  - **Albi (1282)**
  - **Bristol (1306)**
  - **Lichfield (1325)**
  - **Exeter (1275-1328)**
  - **Ely (1321-49)**

# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in Italy**
  - **Proto-gothic: new abbey church at Montecassino (1071): pointed arches and ribbed vaults**
  - **Duomo, Siena (1200-89)**
  - **Castel del Monte (1240)**
  - **SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venezia (1260)**
  - **Santa Maria Novella, Firenze (1268)**
  - **Palazzo Vecchio, Firenze (1299)**
  - **Duomo, Firenze (1334)**
  - **Palazzo dei Dogi, Venezia (1343)**
  - **Duomo di Milano (1385-1965)**
  - **Ca d'Oro, Venezia (1423)**

# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in Italy**
  - **Duomo di Milano (1385-1965)**
    - **Drums over the capitals of the pillars**



# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in Italy**
  - **Palazzo dei Dogi, Venezia (1343)**
  - **Ca d'Oro, Venezia (1423)**



# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture in Spain**
  - Toledo cathedral (1226)
  - Leon cathedral (1255)
  - Palma de Mallorca cathedral (1306)
  - Sevilla cathedral (1402-1518)
  - Alcazar, Segovia (1410-55)
  - Burgos cathedral (1440)



# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic architecture**
  - **Krak de Chevaliers, Syria (XIII)**
  - **Marienburg/Malbork castle, Poland (1309-1457)**
  - **New Kremlin (1485-1516)**
- **Flanders**
  - **Utrecht cathedral (1265)**
  - **Antwerp cathedral (1352)**



# What the Middle Ages knew



Vizelay



Autun

# What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic sculpture



# What the Middle Ages knew

- **Gothic sculpture**



(West portal, Chartres, France)

What the Middle Ages knew

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