

18-1 Rose window and lancets, north transept, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1220. Stained glass, rose window 43' in diameter.

The use of flying buttresses in Gothic cathedrals made possible the replacement of stone walls with immense stained-glass windows, which transformed natural sunlight into Abbot Suger's divine *lux nova*.

GOTHIC EUROPE

In 1550, Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), the “father of art history,” first used *Gothic* as a term of ridicule to describe late medieval art and architecture, which he attributed to the Goths and regarded as “monstrous and barbarous.”¹ With the publication in that year of his influential *Introduction to the Three Arts of Design*, Vasari codified for all time the notion the early Renaissance artist Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378–1455) had already advanced in his *Commentarii*, namely, that the Middle Ages was a period of decline. The humanists of the Italian Renaissance, who placed Greco-Roman art on a pedestal, believed that the uncouth Goths were responsible for both the downfall of Rome and the destruction of the classical style in art and architecture. They regarded “Gothic” art with contempt and considered it ugly and crude. In the 13th and 14th centuries, however, when the Gothic style was the rage in most of Europe, contemporaries admired Gothic buildings as *opus modernum* (“modern work”). The clergy and the lay public alike recognized that the great cathedrals towering over their towns displayed an exciting new style. For them, Gothic cathedrals were not distortions of the classical style but images of the City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, which they were privileged to build on earth.

As in the Romanesque period, the great artistic innovations of the Gothic age were in part the outgrowth of widespread prosperity, but the era was also a time of turmoil in Europe (MAP 18-1). In 1337 the Hundred Years’ War began, shattering the peace between France and England. In the 14th century, a great plague, the Black Death, swept over western Europe and killed at least a quarter of its people. From 1378 to 1417, opposing popes resided in Rome and in Avignon in southern France during the political-religious crisis known as the Great Schism (see “The Great Schism,” Chapter 19, page 501). Above all, the Gothic age was a time of profound change in European society. The focus of both intellectual and religious life shifted definitively from monasteries in the countryside to rapidly expanding secular cities. In these new Gothic urban centers, prosperous merchants made their homes and *guilds* (professional associations) of scholars founded the first modern universities. Although the papacy was at the height of its power, and knights throughout Europe still gathered to wage Crusades against the Muslims, the independent secular nations of modern Europe were beginning to take shape. Foremost among them was France.



MAP 18-1 Europe around 1200.

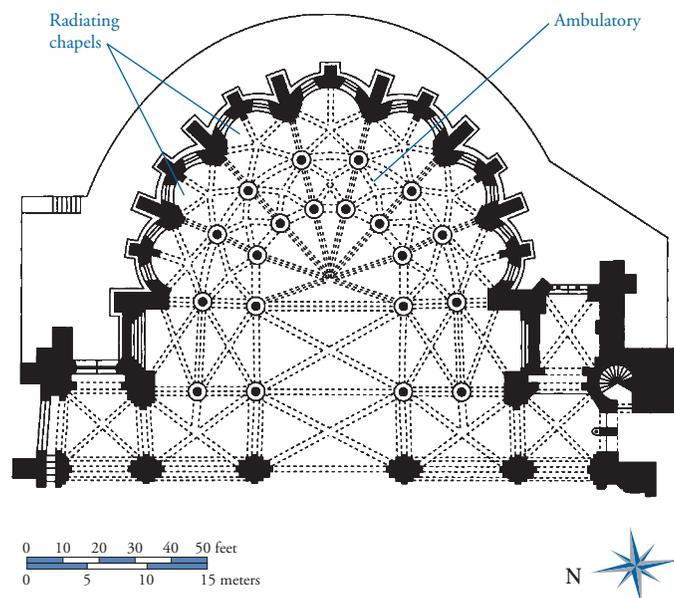
FRENCH GOTHIC

The Gothic style first appeared in northern France around 1140, and some late medieval writers called Gothic art in general *opus francigenum* (“French work”). By the 13th century, the opus modernum of the region around Paris had spread throughout western Europe, and in the next century it expanded still farther. Saint Vitus Cathedral in Prague (Czech Republic), for example, begun in 1344, closely emulates French Gothic architecture. Today, Gothic architecture lives on in the chapels, academic buildings, and dormitories of college campuses throughout North America. But although the Gothic style achieved international acclaim, it was a regional phenomenon. To the east and south of Europe, the Byzantine and Islamic styles still held sway. And many regional variants existed within European Gothic, just as distinct regional styles characterized the Romanesque period.

Architecture and Architectural Decoration

Art historians generally agree that the birthplace of Gothic architecture was at Saint-Denis, a few miles north of Paris. Saint Dionysius (Denis in French) was the apostle who brought Christianity to Gaul and who died a martyr’s death there in the third century. The Benedictine order founded the abbey at Saint-Denis in the seventh century on the site of the saint’s burial. In the ninth century, the monks constructed a basilica at Saint-Denis, which housed the saint’s tomb and those of almost all of the French kings dating back to the sixth century, as well as the crimson military banner said to have belonged to Charlemagne. The Carolingian basilica became France’s royal church, the very symbol of the monarchy (just as Speyer Cathedral, FIG. 17-19, was the burial place of the German rulers of the Holy Roman Empire).

SUGER AND SAINT-DENIS By 1122, when a monk named Suger became abbot of Saint-Denis, the old church was in disrepair and had become too small to accommodate the growing number of pilgrims. Suger also believed the basilica was of insufficient grandeur to serve as the official church of the French kings (see “Abbot Suger



18-2 Plan of the east end, abbey church, Saint-Denis, France, 1140–1144 (after Sumner Crosby).

The innovative plan of the east end of Saint-Denis dates to Abbot Suger’s lifetime. By using lightweight rib vaults, the builders were able to eliminate the walls between the radiating chapels.

Abbot Suger and the Rebuilding of Saint-Denis



18-2A West facade, Saint-Denis, 1135–1140.

Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis (1081–1151) rose from humble parentage to become the right-hand man of both Louis VI (r. 1108–1137) and Louis VII (r. 1137–1180). When the latter, accompanied by his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, left to join the Second Crusade (1147–1149), Suger served as regent of France. From his youth, Suger wrote, he had dreamed of the possibility of embellishing the church in which most French monarchs had been buried for nearly 500 years. Within 15 years of becoming abbot of Saint-Denis, Suger began rebuilding its Carolingian basilica. In Suger's time, the power of the French kings, except for scattered holdings, extended over an area not much larger than the Île-de-France, the region centered on Paris. But the kings had pretensions to rule all of France. Suger aimed to increase the prestige both of his abbey and of the monarchy by rebuilding France's royal church in grand fashion.

Suger wrote three detailed treatises about his activities as abbot of Saint-Denis. He recorded that he summoned masons and artists

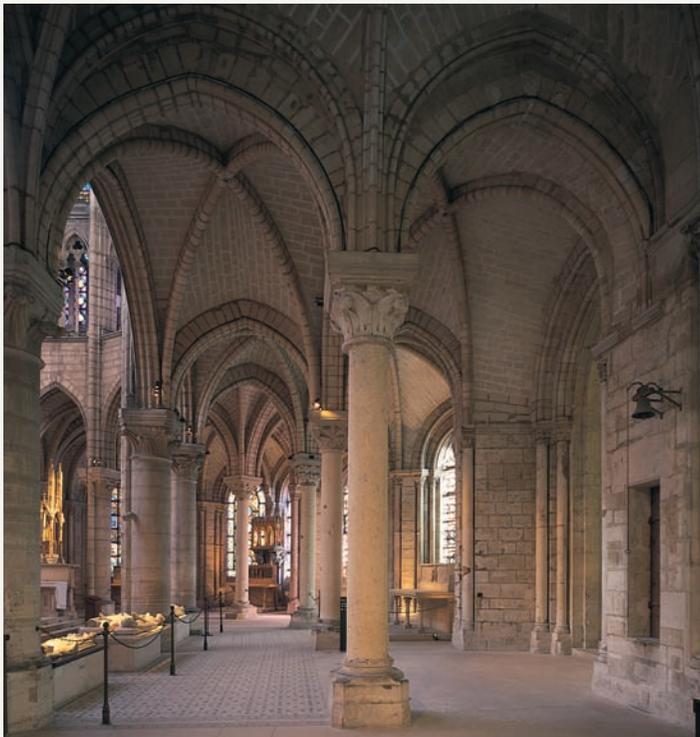
from many regions to help design and construct his new church. In one important passage, he described the special qualities of the new east end (FIGS. 18-2 and 18-3) dedicated in 1144:

[I]t was cunningly provided that—through the upper columns and central arches which were to be placed upon the lower ones built in the crypt—the central nave of the old [Carolingian church] should be equalized, by means of geometrical and arithmetical instruments, with the central nave of the new addition; and, likewise, that the dimensions of the old side-aisles should be equalized with the dimensions of the new side-aisles, except for that elegant and praiseworthy extension in [the form of] a circular string of chapels, by virtue of which the whole [church] would shine with the wonderful and uninterrupted light of most sacred windows, pervading the interior beauty.*

The abbot's brief discussion of Saint Denis's new ambulatory and chapels is key to the understanding of Early Gothic architecture. But he wrote at much greater length about his church's glorious golden and gem-studded furnishings. Here, for example, is Suger's description of the *altar frontal* (the decorative panel on the front of the altar) in the choir:

Into this panel, which stands in front of [Saint Denis's] most sacred body, we have put . . . about forty-two marks of gold [and] a multifarious wealth of precious gems, hyacinths, rubies, sapphires, emeralds and topazes, and also an array of different large pearls.†

The costly furnishings and the light-filled space caused Suger to “delight in the beauty of the house of God” and “called [him] away from external cares.” The new church made him feel as if he were “dwelling . . . in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven.” In Suger's eyes, then, his splendid new church, permeated with light and outfitted with gold and precious gems, was a way station on the road to Paradise, which “transported [him] from this inferior to that higher world.”‡ He regarded a lavish investment in art as a spiritual aid, not as an undesirable distraction for the pious monk, as did Bernard of Clairvaux (see “Bernard of Clairvaux,” Chapter 17, page 438). Suger's forceful justification of art in the church set the stage for the proliferation of costly stained-glass windows and sculptures in the cathedrals of the Gothic age.



18-3 Ambulatory and radiating chapels, abbey church, Saint-Denis, France, 1140–1144.

Abbot Suger's remodeling of Saint-Denis marked the beginning of Gothic architecture. Rib vaults with pointed arches spring from slender columns. The radiating chapels have stained-glass windows.

* Translated by Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of Saint-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, 2d ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 101.

† *Ibid.*, 55.

‡ *Ibid.*, 65.

and the Rebuilding of Saint-Denis,” above). Thus, Suger began to rebuild the church in 1135 by erecting a new west facade with sculptured portals. In 1140 work began on the east end (FIGS. 18-2 and 18-3). Suger died before he could remodel the nave, but he attended the dedication of the new choir, ambulatory, and radiating

chapels on June 11, 1144. Also in attendance were King Louis VII of France, Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, and five archbishops.

Because the French considered the old church a relic in its own right, the new east end had to conform to the dimensions of the crypt below it. Nevertheless, the remodeled portion of Saint-Denis

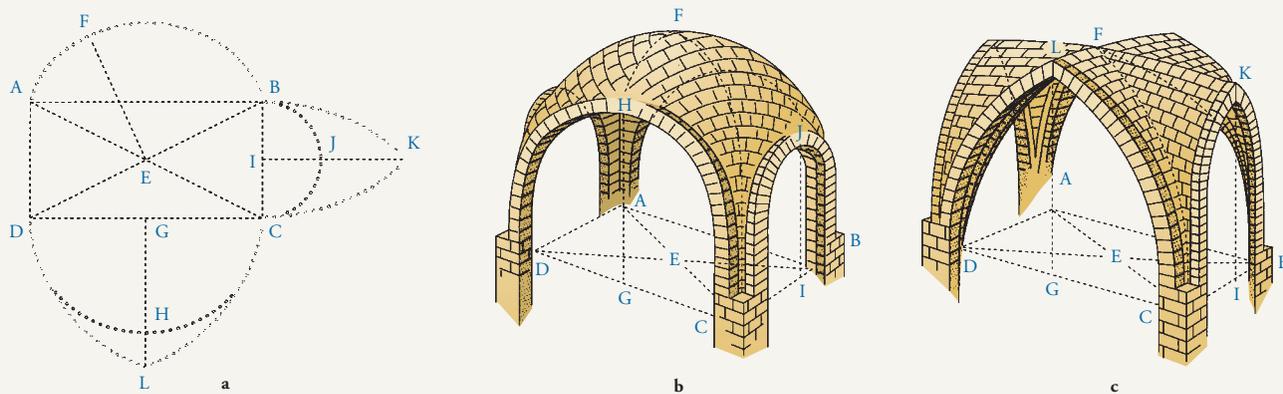
The Gothic Rib Vault

The ancestors of the Gothic *rib vault* are the Romanesque vaults found at Caen (FIG. 17-31), Durham (FIG. 17-33), and elsewhere. The rib vault's distinguishing feature is the crossed, or diagonal, arches under its groins, as seen in the Saint-Denis ambulatory and chapels (FIG. 18-3; compare FIG. 18-20). These arches form the *armature*, or skeletal framework, for constructing the vault. Gothic vaults generally have more thinly vaulted *webs* (the masonry between the ribs) than found in Romanesque vaults. But the chief difference between the two styles of rib vaults is the *pointed arch*, an integral part of the Gothic skeletal armature. The first wide use of pointed arches was in Sasanian architecture (FIG. 2-27), and Islamic builders later adopted them. French Romanesque architects (FIGS. 17-1 and 17-14) borrowed the form from Muslim Spain and passed it to their Gothic successors. Pointed arches allowed Gothic builders to make the crowns of all the vault's arches approximately the same level, regardless of the space to be vaulted. The Romanesque architects could not achieve this with their semicircular arches.

The drawings here (FIG. 18-4) illustrate this key difference. In FIG. 18-4a, the rectangle *ABCD* is an oblong nave bay to be vaulted. *AC* and *DB* are the diagonal ribs; *AB* and *DC*, the transverse arches; and *AD* and *BC*, the nave arcade's arches. If the architect uses semi-

circular arches (*AFB*, *BJC*, and *DHC*), their radii and, therefore, their heights (*EF*, *IJ*, and *GH*) will be different, because the width of a semicircular arch determines its height. The result will be a vault (FIG. 18-4b) with higher transverse arches (*DHC*) than the arcade's arches (*CJB*). The vault's crown (*F*) will be still higher. If the builder uses pointed arches (FIG. 18-4c), the transverse (*DLC*) and arcade (*BKC*) arches can have the same heights (*GL* and *IK* in FIG. 18-4a). The result will be a Gothic rib vault where the points of the arches (*L* and *K*) are at the same level as the vault's crown (*F*).

A major advantage of the Gothic vault is its flexibility, which permits the vaulting of compartments of varying shapes, as may be seen at Saint-Denis (FIG. 18-2). Pointed arches also channel the weight of the vaults more directly downward than do semicircular arches. The vaults therefore require less buttressing to hold them in place, in turn permitting builders to open up the walls and place large windows beneath the arches. Because pointed arches also lead the eye upward, they make the vaults appear taller than they are. In FIG. 18-4, the crown (*F*) of both the Romanesque (*b*) and Gothic (*c*) vaults is the same height from the pavement, but the Gothic vault seems taller. Both the physical and visual properties of rib vaults with pointed arches aided Gothic builders in their quest for soaring height in church interiors.

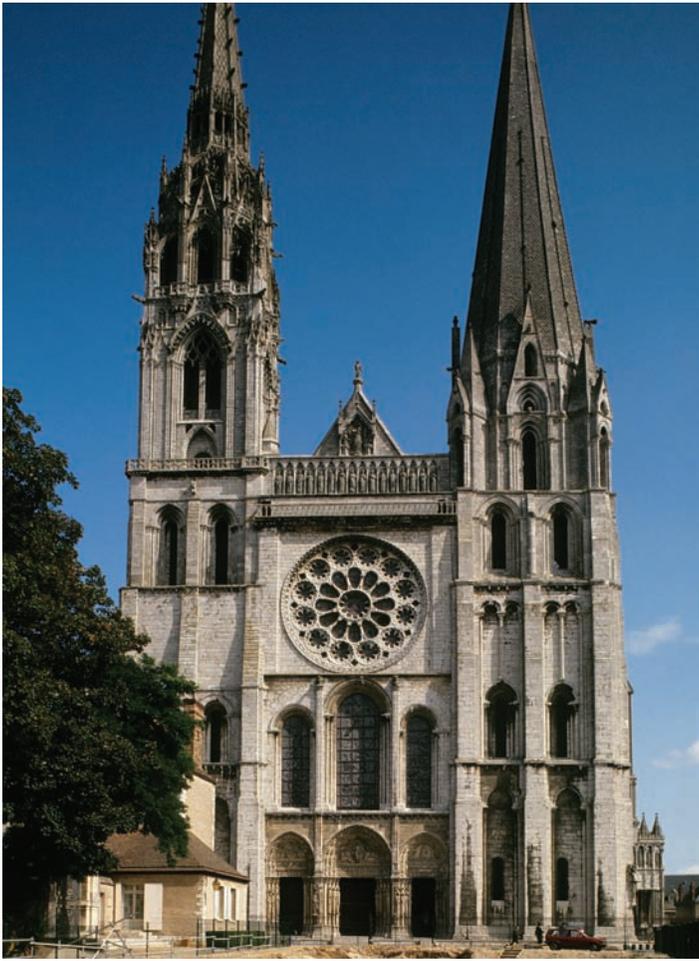


18-4 Diagram (a) and drawings of rib vaults with semicircular (b) and pointed (c) arches.

Pointed arches channel the weight of the rib vaults more directly downward than do semicircular arches, requiring less buttressing. Pointed arches also make the vaults appear taller than they are.

represented a sharp break from past practice. Innovative rib vaults resting on pointed, or *ogival*, arches (see “The Gothic Rib Vault,” above, and FIG. 18-4) cover the ambulatory and chapels (FIG. 18-3). These pioneering, exceptionally lightweight vaults spring from slender columns in the ambulatory and from the thin masonry walls framing the chapels. The lightness of the vaults enabled the builders to eliminate the walls between the chapels (FIG. 18-2) and open up the outer walls and fill them with stained-glass windows (see “Stained-Glass Windows,” page 472). Suger and his contemporaries marveled at the “wonderful and uninterrupted light” that poured in through the “most sacred windows.” The abbot called the colored light *lux nova*, “new light.” The multicolored rays coming through the windows shone on the walls and columns, almost dissolving them. Both the new type of vaulting and the use of stained glass became hallmarks of French Gothic architecture.

Saint-Denis is also the key monument of Early Gothic sculpture. Little of the sculpture that Suger commissioned for the west facade of the abbey church survived the French Revolution of the late 18th century (see Chapter 29), but much of the mid-12th-century structure is intact. It consists of a double-tower westwork, as at Saint-Étienne (FIG. 17-30) at Caen, and has massive walls in the Romanesque tradition. A restored large central *rose window* (a circular stained-glass window), a new feature that became standard in French Gothic architecture, punctuates the facade's upper story. For the three portals, Suger imported sculptors to carry on the rich Romanesque heritage of southern France (see Chapter 17). But at Saint-Denis, the sculptors introduced statues of Old Testament kings, queens, and prophets attached to columns, which screened the jambs of all three doorways.



18-5 West facade, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1145–1155. ◀

The Early Gothic west facade was all that remained of Chartres Cathedral after the fire of 1194. The design still has much in common with Romanesque facades. The rose window is an example of plate tracery.

ROYAL PORTAL, CHARTRES This innovative treatment of the portals of Suger’s church appeared immediately afterward at Chartres, also in the Île-de-France, in the new cathedral dedicated to Notre Dame (“Our Lady,” that is, the Virgin Mary). Work on the west facade (FIG. 18-5) began around 1145. The lower parts of the massive west towers at Chartres and the portals between them are all that remain of the cathedral destroyed by fire in 1194 before it had been completed. Reconstruction of the church began immediately but in the High Gothic style (discussed later). The west entrance, the Royal Portal (FIG. 18-6; so named because of the statue-columns of kings and queens flanking its three doorways) constitutes the most complete surviving ensemble of Early Gothic sculpture. Thierry of Chartres, chancellor of the Cathedral School of Chartres from 1141 until his death 10 years later, may have conceived the complex iconographical program. The archivolts of the right portal, for example, depict the seven female Liberal Arts and their male champions. The figures represent the core of medieval learning and symbolize human knowledge, which Thierry and other “Schoolmen” believed led to true faith (see “Scholasticism and Gothic Art and Architecture,” page 466).

The sculptures of the Royal Portal (FIG. 18-6) proclaim the majesty and power of Christ. To unite the three doorways iconographically and visually, the sculptors carved episodes from Christ’s life on the capitals, which form a kind of frieze linking one entrance to the next. In the tympanum of the right portal, Christ appears in the lap of the Virgin Mary (Notre Dame). Scenes of his birth and early life fill the lintel below. The tympanum’s theme and composition recall Byzantine representations of the Theotokos (FIGS. 12-18 and 12-19), as well as the Romanesque Throne of Wisdom (FIG. 17-18). But Mary’s prominence on the Chartres facade has no parallel in the decoration of Romanesque church portals. At Chartres the designers gave her a central role in the sculptural program, a position she maintained throughout the Gothic period. The cult of the Virgin Mary reached a high point in the Gothic age. As the Mother of Christ, she stood compassionately between the Last Judge and the horrors of Hell, interceding for all her faithful. Worshipers in the later 12th and 13th centuries



18-6 Royal Portal, west facade, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1145–1155. ◀

The sculptures of the Royal Portal proclaim the majesty and power of Christ. The tympana depict, from left to right, Christ’s Ascension, the Second Coming, and Jesus in the lap of the Virgin Mary.

Scholasticism and Gothic Art and Architecture

A few years before the formal consecration of the church altar at Notre-Dame (FIG. 18-11) in Paris, Philip II Augustus (r. 1180–1223) succeeded to the French throne. Philip brought the feudal barons under his control and expanded the royal domains to include Normandy in the north and most of Languedoc in the south, laying the foundations for the modern nation of France. Renowned as “the maker of Paris,” he gave the city its walls, paved its streets, and built the palace of the Louvre (now one of the world’s great museums) to house the royal family. Although Rome remained the religious center of Western Christendom, Paris became its intellectual capital. The University of Paris attracted the best minds from all over Europe. Virtually every thinker of note in the Gothic world at some point studied or taught at Paris.

Even in the Romanesque period, Paris was a center of learning. Its Cathedral School professors, known as Schoolmen, developed the philosophy called *Scholasticism*. The greatest of the early Schoolmen was Peter Abelard (1079–1142), a champion of logical reasoning. Abelard and his contemporaries had been introduced to the writings of the Greek philosopher Aristotle through the Arabic scholars of Islamic Spain. Abelard applied Aristotle’s system of rational inquiry to the interpretation of religious belief. Until the 12th century, both clergy and laymen considered truth the exclusive property of divine revelation as given in the Holy Scriptures. But the Schoolmen, using Aristotle’s method, sought to demonstrate that reason alone could lead to certain truths. Their goal was to prove the central articles of Christian faith by argument (*disputatio*). A person using Scholastic argument first states a possibility, then cites an authoritative view in objection, next reconciles the positions, and, finally, offers a reply to each of the rejected original arguments.

One of Abelard’s greatest critics was Bernard of Clairvaux (see “Bernard of Clairvaux,” Chapter 17, page 438), who believed Scholas-

ticism was equivalent to questioning Christian dogma. Although Bernard succeeded in 1140 in having the Catholic Church officially condemn Abelard’s doctrines, the Schoolmen’s philosophy developed systematically until it became the dominant Western philosophy of the late Middle Ages. By the 13th century, the Schoolmen of Paris already had organized as a professional guild of master scholars, separate from the numerous Church schools the bishop of Paris oversaw. The structure of the Parisian guild served as the model for many other European universities.

The greatest exponent of Abelard’s Scholasticism was Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), an Italian monk who became a saint in 1323. Aquinas settled in Paris in 1244. There, the German theologian Albertus Magnus instructed him in Aristotelian philosophy. Aquinas went on to become an influential teacher at the University of Paris. His most famous work, *Summa Theologica* (left unfinished at his death), is a model of the Scholastic approach to knowledge. Aquinas divided his treatise into books, the books into questions, the questions into articles, each article into objections with contradictions and responses, and, finally, answers to the objections. He set forth five ways to prove the existence of God by rational argument. Aquinas’s work remains the foundation of contemporary Catholic teaching.

The earliest manifestations of the Gothic spirit in art and architecture—the sculptured portals and vaulted east end of Suger’s Saint-Denis (FIGS. 18-2 and 18-3)—appeared concurrently with the first stages of Scholastic philosophy. Both originated in Paris and its environs. Many art historians have noted the parallels between them—how the logical thrust and counterthrust of Gothic construction, the geometric relationships of building parts, and the systematic organization of the iconographical programs of Gothic church portals coincide with Scholastic principles and methods. No documents exist, however, linking the scholars, builders, and sculptors.

sang hymns to her, put her image everywhere, and dedicated great cathedrals to her. Soldiers carried the Virgin’s image into battle on banners, and her name joined that of Saint Denis as part of the French king’s battle cry. Mary became the spiritual lady of chivalry, and the Christian knight dedicated his life to her. The severity of Romanesque themes stressing the Last Judgment yielded to the gentleness of Gothic art, in which Mary is the kindly Queen of Heaven.

Christ’s Ascension into Heaven appears in the tympanum of the left portal. All around, in the archivolt, are the signs of the zodiac and scenes representing the various labors of the months of the year. They are symbols of the cosmic and earthly worlds. The Second Coming is the subject of the central tympanum. The signs of the four evangelists, the 24 elders of the Apocalypse, and the 12 apostles appear around Christ or on the lintel. The Second Coming—in essence, the Last Judgment theme—was still of central importance, as it was in Romanesque portals. But at Early Gothic Chartres, the theme became a symbol of salvation rather than damnation.

Statues of Old Testament kings and queens decorate the jambs flanking each doorway of the Royal Portal (FIGS. 18-6 and 18-7). They are the royal ancestors of Christ and, both figuratively and literally, support the New Testament figures above the doorways. They wear 12th-century clothes, and medieval observers also regarded

them as images of the kings and queens of France. (This was the motivation for vandalizing the comparable figures at Saint-Denis during the French Revolution.) The figures stand rigidly upright with their elbows held close against their hips. The linear folds of their garments—inherited from the Romanesque style, along with the elongated proportions—generally echo the vertical lines of the columns behind them. (In this respect, Gothic jamb statues differ significantly from classical caryatids; FIG. 5-54. The Gothic figures are *attached* to columns; the classical statues *replaced* the columns.) And yet, within and despite this architectural straitjacket, the statues display the first signs of a new naturalism. The sculptors conceived and treated the figures as three-dimensional volumes, not reliefs, and they stand out from the plane of the wall. As was true of all stone sculpture on church facades, artists originally painted the Royal Portal statues in vivid colors, enhancing their lifelike appearance. The new naturalism is noticeable particularly in the statues’ heads, where kindly human faces replace the masklike features of most Romanesque figures. At Chartres, a personalization of appearance began that led first to idealized portraits of the perfect Christian and finally, by 1400, into the portraiture of specific individuals. The sculptors of the Royal Portal statues initiated an era of artistic concern with personality and individuality.



18-7 Old Testament kings and queen, jamb statues, central doorway of Royal Portal, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1145–1155.

The biblical kings and queens of the Royal Portal are the royal ancestors of Christ. These Early Gothic statue-columns display the first signs of a new naturalism in European sculpture.



18-8 West facade of Laon Cathedral, Laon, France, begun ca. 1190.

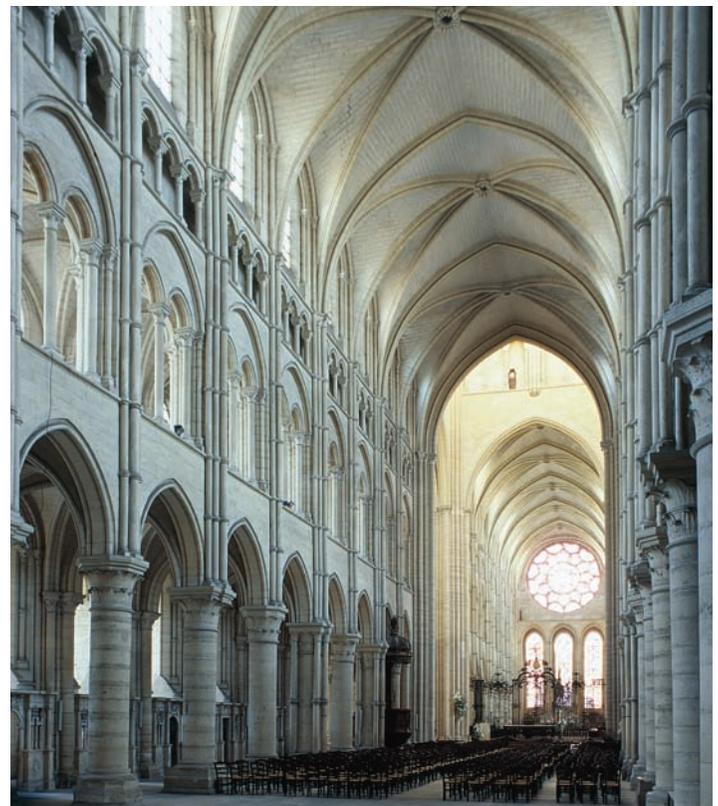
The huge central rose window, the deep porches in front of the doorways, and the open structure of the towers distinguish Laon's Early Gothic facade from Romanesque church facades.

LAON CATHEDRAL Both Chartres Cathedral and the abbey church of Saint-Denis had long construction histories, and only small portions of the structures date to the Early Gothic period. Laon Cathedral (FIGS. 18-8 and 18-9), however, completed shortly after 1200, provides a comprehensive picture of French church architecture of the second half of the 12th century. Although the Laon builders retained many Romanesque features in their design, they combined them with the rib vault resting on pointed arches, the essential element of Early Gothic architecture.

Among the Laon plan's Romanesque features are the nave bays with their large sexpartite rib vaults, flanked by two small groin-vaulted squares in each aisle. The vaulting system (except for the pointed arches), as well as the vaulted gallery above the aisles, derived from Norman Romanesque churches such as Saint-Étienne (FIG. 17-31) at Caen. The Laon architect also employed the Romanesque alternate-support system of compound and simple piers in the nave arcade. Above, alternating bundles of three and five shafts frame the aisle bays. A new feature found in the Laon interior, however, is the *triforium*, the band of arcades below the clerestory

18-9 Interior of Laon Cathedral (looking northeast), Laon, France, begun ca. 1190.

The insertion of a triforium at Laon broke up the nave wall and produced the characteristic four-story Early Gothic interior elevation: nave arcade, vaulted gallery, triforium, and clerestory.



18-10 Nave elevations of four French Gothic cathedrals at the same scale (after Louis Grodecki).

Gothic nave designs evolved from the Early Gothic four-story elevation to the High Gothic three-story elevation (arcade, triforium, and clerestory). The height of the vaults also increased from 80 to 144 feet.

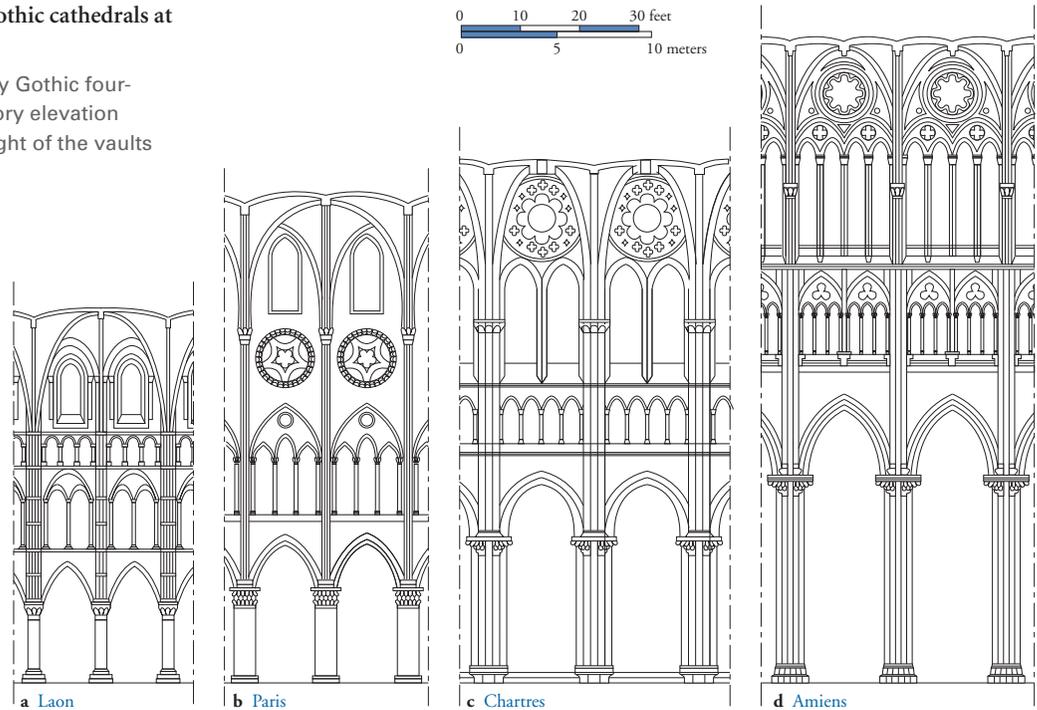
(FIGS. 18-9 and 18-10a). The triforium occupies the space corresponding to the exterior strip of wall covered by the sloping timber roof above the galleries. The insertion of the triforium into the Romanesque three-story nave elevation reflected a growing desire to break up all continuous wall surfaces. The new horizontal zone produced the characteristic four-story Early Gothic interior elevation: nave arcade, vaulted gallery, triforium, and clerestory with single lancets (tall, narrow windows ending in pointed arches). Shown in FIG. 18-10 is a comparison of the Laon nave elevation with that of another four-story Early Gothic cathedral (FIG. 18-10b) and with elevations of two three-story High Gothic cathedrals (FIGS. 18-10c and 18-10d).

Laon Cathedral's west facade (FIG. 18-8) signals an even more pronounced departure from the Romanesque style still lingering at Saint-Denis and the Chartres Royal Portal. Typically Gothic are the huge central rose window, the deep porches in front of the doorways, and the open structure of the towers. A comparison of the facades of Laon Cathedral and Saint-Étienne (FIG. 17-30) at Caen reveals a much deeper penetration of the wall mass in the later building. At Laon, as in Gothic architecture generally, the guiding principle was to reduce sheer mass and replace it with intricately framed voids.

NOTRE-DAME, PARIS About 1130, Louis VI moved his official residence to Paris, spurring much commercial activity and a great building boom. Paris soon became the leading city of France, indeed of all northern Europe, making a new cathedral a necessity. Notre-Dame (FIG. 18-11) occupies a picturesque site on an island in the Seine River called the Île-de-la-Cité. The Gothic church, which replaced a large Merovingian basilica, has a complicated building history. The choir and transept were completed by 1182, the nave by about 1225, and the facade not until around 1250–1260. Sexpartite vaults cover the nave, as at Laon. The original elevation (the builders modified the design as work progressed) had four stories, but the scheme (FIG. 18-10b) differed from Laon's (FIG. 18-10a). In place of the triforium over the gallery, stained-glass *oculi* (singular *oculus*, a small round window) open up the wall below the clerestory lancets. As a result, windows fill two of the four stories, further reducing the

18-11 Notre-Dame (looking north), Paris, France, begun 1163; nave and flying buttresses, ca. 1180–1200; remodeled after 1225.

Architects first used flying buttresses on a grand scale in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris. The buttresses countered the outward thrust of the nave vaults and held up the towering nave walls.



masonry area. (This four-story nave elevation can be seen in only one bay in FIG. 18-11, immediately to the right of the south transept and partially hidden by it.)

To hold the much thinner—and taller (compare FIGS. 18-10a and 18-10b)—walls of Notre-Dame in place, the unknown architect introduced *flying buttresses*, exterior arches that spring from the lower roofs over the aisles and ambulatory (FIG. 18-11) and counter the outward thrust of the nave vaults. Gothic builders employed flying buttresses as early as 1150 in a few smaller churches, but at Notre-Dame in Paris they circle a great urban cathedral. At Durham, the internal quadrant arches (FIG. 17-33, right) beneath the aisle roofs, also employed at Laon, perform a similar function and may be regarded as precedents for exposed Gothic flying buttresses. The combination of precisely positioned flying buttresses and rib vaults with pointed arches was the ideal solution to the problem of constructing towering naves with huge windows. The flying buttresses, like slender extended fingers holding up the walls, are key components of the distinctive “look” of Gothic cathedrals (see “The Gothic Cathedral,” page 469, and FIG. 18-12).



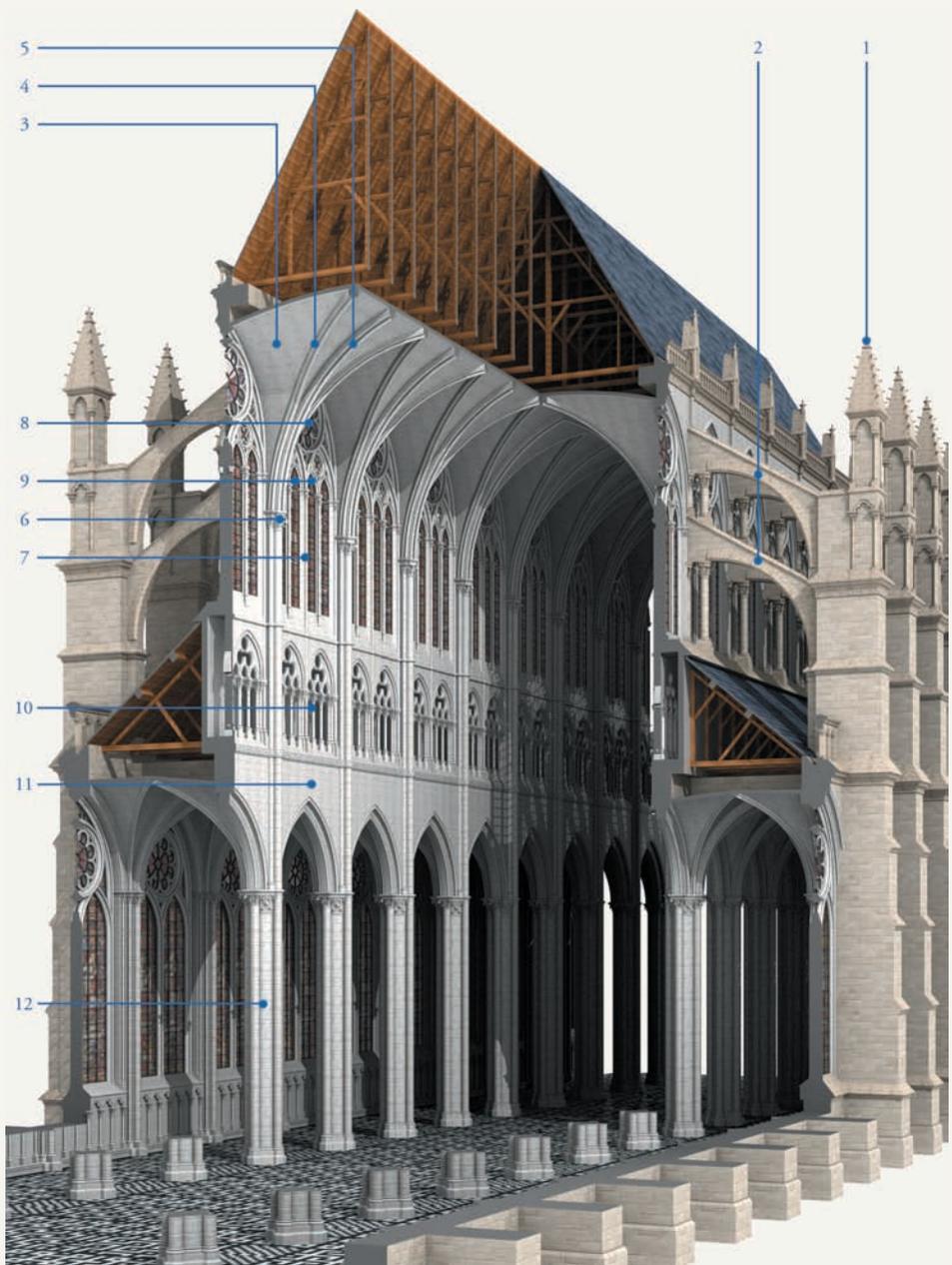
The Gothic Cathedral

The great cathedrals erected throughout Europe in the later 12th and 13th centuries are the enduring symbols of the Gothic age. These towering structures are eloquent testimonies to the extraordinary skill of the architects, engineers, carpenters, masons, sculptors, glassworkers, and metalsmiths who constructed and decorated the buildings. Most of the architectural components of Gothic cathedrals appeared in earlier structures, but the way Gothic architects combined the elements made the buildings unique expressions of medieval faith. The essential ingredients of the Gothic “recipe” were rib vaults with pointed arches (see “The Gothic Rib Vault,” page 464), flying buttresses, and huge colored-glass windows (see “Stained-Glass Windows,” page 472). These and the other important Gothic architectural terms listed here are illustrated in FIG. 18-12.

- **Pinnacle** A sharply pointed ornament capping the piers or flying buttresses; also used on cathedral facades.
- **Flying buttresses** Masonry struts that transfer the thrust of the nave vaults across the roofs of the side aisles and ambulatory to a tall pier rising above the church’s exterior wall. (Compare FIG. 1-18, right.)
- **Vaulting web** The masonry blocks that fill the area between the ribs of a groin vault.
- **Diagonal rib** In plan, one of the ribs that form the X of a groin vault. In FIG. 18-4, the diagonal ribs are the lines AC and DB.
- **Transverse rib** A rib that crosses the nave or aisle at a 90-degree angle (lines AB and DC in FIG. 18-4).
- **Springing** The lowest stone of an arch; in Gothic vaulting, the lowest stone of a diagonal or transverse rib.
- **Clerestory** The windows below the vaults that form the nave elevation’s uppermost level. By using flying buttresses and rib vaults on pointed arches, Gothic architects could build huge clerestory windows and

fill them with *stained glass* held in place by ornamental stonework called *tracery*.

- **Oculus** A small round window.
- **Lancet** A tall, narrow window crowned by a pointed arch.
- **Triforium** The story in the nave elevation consisting of arcades, usually *blind arcades* (FIG. 18-9), but occasionally filled with stained glass (FIG. 1-2).
- **Nave arcade** The series of arches supported by piers separating the nave from the side aisles.
- **Compound pier with shafts (responds)** Also called the *cluster pier*, a pier with a group, or cluster, of attached shafts, or *responds*, extending to the springing of the vaults.



18-12 Cutaway view of a typical French Gothic cathedral (John Burge). (1) pinnacle, (2) flying buttress, (3) vaulting web, (4) diagonal rib, (5) transverse rib, (6) springing, (7) clerestory, (8) oculus, (9) lancet, (10) triforium, (11) nave arcade, (12) compound pier with responds. ■◀

Rib vaults with pointed arches, flying buttresses, and stained-glass windows are the major ingredients in the “recipe” for constructing Gothic cathedrals, but other elements also contributed to the distinctive “look” of these churches.



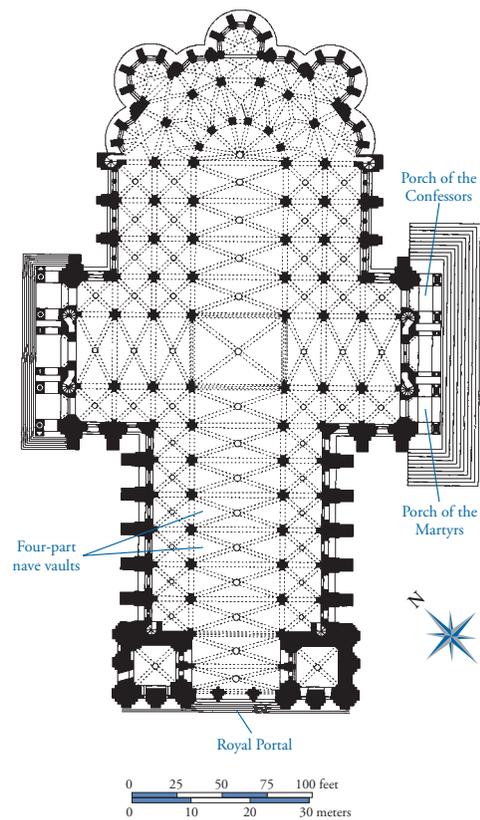
18-13 Aerial view of Chartres Cathedral (looking north), Chartres, France, as rebuilt after 1194.

Architectural historians consider the rebuilt Chartres Cathedral the first great monument of High Gothic architecture. It is the first church to have been planned from the beginning with flying buttresses.

CHARTRES AFTER 1194 Churches burned frequently in the Middle Ages (see “Timber Roofs,” Chapter 17, page 435), and church officials often had to raise money suddenly for new building campaigns. In contrast to monastic churches, which usually were small and completed fairly quickly, construction of urban cathedrals often extended over decades and sometimes over centuries. Their financing depended largely on collections and public contributions (not always voluntary), and a lack of funds often interrupted building programs. Unforeseen events, such as wars, famines, or plagues, or friction between the town and cathedral authorities would often stop construction, which then might not resume for years. At Reims (FIG. 18-23), the clergy offered *indulgences* (pardons for sins committed) to those who helped underwrite the enormous cost of erecting the cathedral. The rebuilding of Chartres Cathedral (FIG. 18-13) after the devastating fire of 1194 took a relatively short 27 years, but at one point the townspeople revolted against the prospect of a heavier tax burden. They stormed the bishop’s residence and drove him into exile for four years.

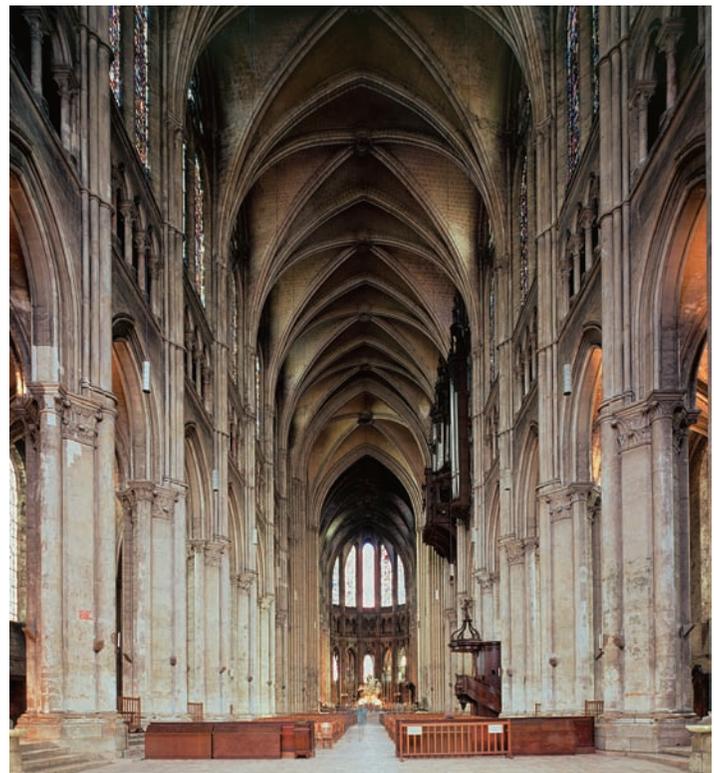
Chartres Cathedral’s mid-12th-century west facade (FIG. 18-5) and the masonry of the crypt to the east were the only sections left standing after the 1194 conflagration. The crypt housed the most precious relic of Chartres—the mantle of the Virgin, which miraculously survived the fire. For reasons of piety and economy, the builders used the crypt for the foundation of the new structure. The retention of the crypt and west facade determined the new church’s dimensions, but not its plan or elevation. Architectural historians usually consider the post-1194 Chartres Cathedral the first High Gothic building.

The Chartres plan (FIG. 18-14) reveals a new kind of organization. Rectangular nave bays replaced the square bays with sexpartite vaults and the alternate-support system, still present in Early Gothic churches such as Laon Cathedral (FIG. 18-9). The new system, in which a single square in each aisle (rather than two, as before) flanks a single rectangular unit in the nave, became the High Gothic norm.



18-14 Plan of Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, as rebuilt after 1194 (after Paul Frankl).

The Chartres plan, in which a single square in each aisle (rather than two squares) flanks a single rectangular unit in the nave with a four-part vault, became the norm for High Gothic church architecture.



18-15 Interior of Chartres Cathedral (looking east), Chartres, France, begun 1194.

Chartres Cathedral became the model for High Gothic churches also in its tripartite elevation consisting of nave arcade, triforium, and clerestory with stained-glass windows almost as tall as the main arcade.

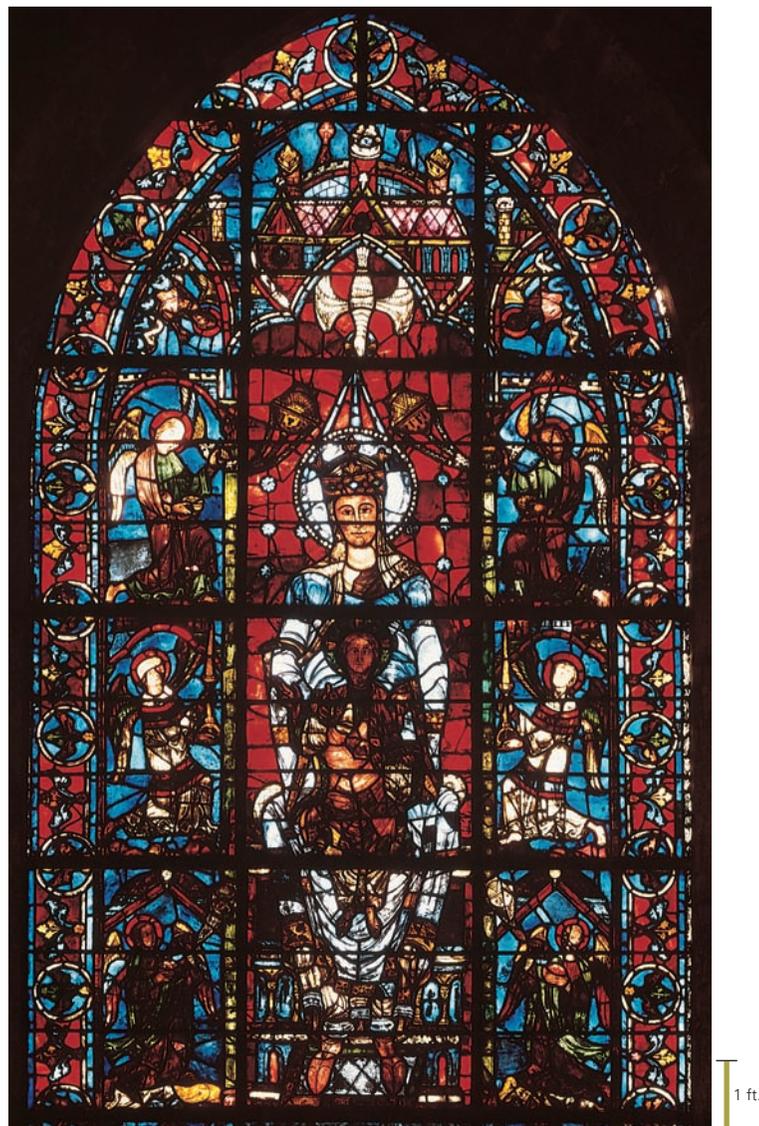
A change in vault design and the abandonment of the alternate-support system usually accompanied this new bay arrangement. The High Gothic nave vault, which covered just one bay and therefore could be braced more easily than its Early Gothic predecessor, had only four parts. The visual effect of these changes was to unify the interior (FIG. 18-15). The High Gothic architect aligned identical units so that viewers saw them in too rapid a sequence to perceive them as individual volumes of space. The level crowns of the successive nave vaults, which pointed arches made possible, enhanced this effect. The nave became a vast, continuous hall.

The 1194 Chartres Cathedral was also the first church to have been planned from the beginning with flying buttresses, another key High Gothic feature. The flying buttresses allowed the builders to eliminate the tribune above the aisle, which had partially braced Romanesque and Early Gothic naves (compare FIG. 18-10c with FIGS. 18-10a and 18-10b). The new High Gothic tripartite nave elevation consisted of arcade, triforium, and clerestory with greatly enlarged windows. The Chartres windows are almost as tall as the main arcade and consist of double lancets with a single crowning oculus. The strategic placement of flying buttresses permitted the construction of nave walls with so many voids that heavy masonry played a minor role.

CHARTRES STAINED GLASS Despite the vastly increased size of the clerestory windows, the Chartres nave (FIG. 18-15) is relatively dark. The explanation for this seeming contradiction is that light-suppressing colored glass fills the windows. The purpose of these windows was not to illuminate the interior with bright sunlight but to transform natural light into Suger's mystical *lux nova* (see "Stained-Glass Windows," page 472). Chartres retains almost the full complement of its original stained glass, which, although it has a dimming effect, transforms the character of the interior in dramatic fashion. Gothic churches that have lost their original stained-glass windows give a false impression of what their designers intended.

One Chartres window that survived the fire of 1194 and was subsequently reused in the High Gothic cathedral is the tall single lancet the French call *Notre Dame de la Belle Verrière* (Our Lady of the Beautiful Window, FIG. 18-16). The central section, depicting against a red background the Virgin Mary enthroned with the Christ Child in her lap, dates to about 1170. Glaziers added the framing angels seen against a blue ground when they reinstalled the window in the 13th-century choir. The frontal composition is traditional, but Mary is now the beautiful, young, rather worldly Queen of Heaven, haloed, crowned, and accompanied by the dove of the Holy Spirit. Comparing this Virgin and Child with the Theotokos and Child (FIG. 12-19) of Hagia Sophia highlights not only the greater severity and aloofness of the Byzantine image but also the sharp difference between the light-reflecting mosaic medium and Gothic light-filtering stained glass. Gothic and Byzantine builders used light to transform the material world into the spiritual, but in opposite ways. In Gothic architecture, light entered from outside the building through a screen of stone-set colored glass. In Byzantine architecture, light reflected off myriad glass tesserae set into the thick masonry wall.

Chartres's 13th-century Gothic windows are even more spectacular than the *Belle Verrière* because, thanks to the introduction of flying buttresses, the builders could plan from the outset to fill entire walls with stained glass. The immense rose window (approximately 43 feet in diameter) and tall lancets of Chartres Cathedral's north transept (FIG. 18-1) were the gift of the French queen Blanche of Castile, around 1220. The royal motifs of yellow castles on a red ground and yellow *fleurs-de-lis*—three-petaled iris flowers—on a blue ground fill the eight narrow windows in the rose's lower spandrels. The iconography is also fitting for a queen. The enthroned Virgin and Child appear in the



18-16 Virgin and Child and angels (*Notre Dame de la Belle Verrière*), detail of a window in the choir of Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1170, with 13th-century side panels. Stained glass, full height 16'.

This stained-glass window miraculously survived the devastating Chartres fire of 1194. It has an armature of iron bands that forms a grid over the whole design, an Early Gothic characteristic.

roundel at the center of the rose, which resembles a gem-studded book cover or cloisonné brooch. Around her are four doves of the Holy Spirit and eight angels. Twelve square panels contain images of Old Testament kings, including David and Solomon (at the 12 and 1 o'clock positions respectively). These are the royal ancestors of Christ. Isaiah (11:1–3) had prophesied that the Messiah would come from the family of the patriarch Jesse, father of David. The genealogical "tree of Jesse" is a familiar motif in medieval art. Below, in the lancets, are Saint Anne and the baby Virgin. Flanking them are four of Christ's Old Testament ancestors, Melchizedek, David, Solomon, and Aaron, echoing the royal genealogy of the rose but at a larger scale. Many Gothic stained-glass windows also present narrative scenes, and their iconographical programs are sometimes as complex as those of the sculptured church portals.

The rose and lancets change in hue and intensity with the hours, turning solid architecture into a floating vision of the celestial heavens. Almost the entire mass of wall opens up into stained glass, held in place by an intricate stone armature of bar tracery. Here, the

Stained-Glass Windows

Although not a Gothic invention, *stained-glass* windows are almost synonymous with Gothic architecture. No other age produced windows of such rich color and beauty. The technology of manufacturing colored glass is very old, however. Egyptian artists excelled at fashioning colorful glass objects for both home and tomb, and archaeologists have also uncovered thousands of colored-glass artifacts at classical sites. But Gothic artists used stained glass in new ways. In earlier eras, the clergy introduced color and religious iconography into church interiors with mural paintings and mosaics, often with magnificent effect. Stained-glass windows differ from those techniques in one all-important respect. They do not conceal walls. They replace them. And they transmit rather than reflect light, filtering and transforming the natural sunlight.

Abbot Suger called this colored light *lux nova* (see “Abbot Suger,” page 463). Suger’s contemporary, Hugh of Saint-Victor (1096–1142), a prominent Parisian theologian, also commented on the special mystical quality of stained-glass windows: “Stained-glass windows are the Holy Scriptures . . . and since their brilliance lets the splendor of the True Light pass into the church, they enlighten those inside.”* William Durandus, bishop of Mende, expressed a similar sentiment at the end of the 13th century: “The glass windows in a church are Holy Scriptures, which expel the wind and the rain, that is, all things hurtful, but transmit the light of the True Sun, that is, God, into the hearts of the faithful.”† As early as the fourth century, architects used colored glass for church windows, and the stained-glass windows of Saint-Denis (FIG. 18-3) already show a high degree of skill. According to Suger, they were “painted by the exquisite hands of many masters from different regions,”‡ proving that the art was well established at that time. In fact, several fine Romanesque examples survive.

The manufacture of stained-glass windows was costly and labor-intensive. A Benedictine monk named Theophilus recorded the full process around 1100. First, the master designer drew the exact composition of the planned window on a wooden panel, indicating all the linear details and noting the colors for each section. Glassblowers provided flat sheets of glass of different colors to *glaziers* (glassworkers), who cut the windowpanes to the required size and shape with special iron shears. Glaziers produced an even greater range of colors by *flashing* (fusing one layer of colored glass to another). Next, painters added details such as faces, hands, hair, and clothing in enamel by tracing the master design on the wood panel through the colored glass. Then they heated the painted glass to fuse the enamel to the surface. At that point, the glaziers “leaded” the various fragments of glass—that is, they joined them by strips of lead called *comes*. The *leading* not only held the pieces together but also separated the colors to heighten the effect of the design as a whole. The



Detail of stained-glass rose window, north transept Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1220 (see FIG. 18-1).

distinctive character of Gothic stained-glass windows is largely the result of this combination of fine linear details with broad flat expanses of color framed by black lead. Finally, the glassworkers strengthened the completed window with an armature of iron bands, which in the 12th century formed a grid over the whole design (FIG. 18-16). In the 13th century, the bands followed the outlines of the medallions and of the surrounding areas (FIGS. 18-1 and 18-25).

The form of the stone frames for the stained-glass windows also evolved. On Chartres Cathedral’s 12th-century west facade (FIG. 18-5), *plate tracery* holds the rose window in place. The glass fills only the “punched holes” in the heavy ornamental stonework. *Bar tracery*, a later development, is much more slender. The 13th-century stained-glass windows (FIG. 18-1) of the Chartres transepts fill almost the entire opening, and the stonework is unobtrusive, more like delicate leading than masonry wall.

* Hugh of Saint-Victor, *Speculum de mysteriis ecclesiae*, Sermon 2.

† William Durandus, *Rationale divinarum officiorum*, 1.1.24. Translated by John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments* (Leeds: T. W. Green, 1843), 28.

‡ Translated by Erwin Panofsky, *Abbot Suger*, 73.

Gothic passion for luminous colored light led to a most daring and successful attempt to subtract all superfluous material bulk just short of destabilizing the structure. That this vast, complex fabric of stone-set glass has maintained its structural integrity for almost 800 years attests to the Gothic builders’ engineering genius.

CHARTRES SOUTH TRANSEPT The sculptures adorning the portals of the two new Chartres transepts erected after the 1194

fire are also prime examples of the new High Gothic spirit. As at Laon (FIG. 18-8) and Paris (FIG. 18-11), the Chartres transept portals project more forcefully from the church than do the Early Gothic portals of its west facade (compare FIGS. 18-5 and 18-13). Similarly, the statues of saints on the portal jambs are more independent of the architectural framework. Three figures (FIG. 18-17) from the Porch of the Confessors in the south transept reveal the great changes Gothic sculpture underwent since the Royal Portal statues (FIG. 18-7) of the



18-17 Saints Martin, Jerome, and Gregory, jamb statues, Porch of the Confessors (right doorway), south transept, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1220–1230.

In contrast to the Royal Portal statues (FIG. 18-7), the south-transept statues have individual personalities and turn slightly to left or right, breaking the rigid vertical lines of their 12th-century predecessors.

mid-12th century. These changes recall in many ways the revolutionary developments in ancient Greek sculpture during the transition from the Archaic to the Classical style (see Chapter 5). The south-transept statues date from 1220 to 1230 and represent Saints Martin, Jerome, and Gregory. Although the figures are still attached to columns, the architectural setting does not determine their poses as much as it did on the west portals. The saints communicate quietly with one another, like waiting dignitaries. They turn slightly toward and away from each other, breaking the rigid vertical lines that fix the Royal Portal figures immovably. The drapery folds are not stiff and shallow vertical accents, as on the west facade. The fabric falls and laps over the bodies in soft, if still regular, folds.

The treatment of the faces is even more remarkable. The sculptor gave the figures individualized features and distinctive personalities and clothed them in the period's liturgical costumes. Saint Martin is a tall, intense priest with gaunt features (compare the spiritually moved but not particularized face of the Moissac prophet in FIG. 17-11). Saint Jerome appears as a kindly, practical administrator-scholar, holding his copy of the Scriptures. At the right, the introspective Saint Gregory seems lost in thought as he listens to the dove



18-18 Saint Theodore, jamb statue, Porch of the Martyrs (left doorway), south transept, Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, ca. 1230.

Although the statue of Theodore is still attached to a column, the setting no longer determines its pose. The High Gothic sculptor portrayed the saint swinging out one hip, as in Greek statuary (FIG. 5-40).

of the Holy Ghost on his shoulder. Thus, the sculptor did not contrast the three men simply in terms of their poses, gestures, and attributes but as persons. Personality, revealed in human faces, makes the profound difference.

The south-transept figure of Saint Theodore (FIG. 18-18), the martyred warrior on the Porch of the Martyrs, presents an even sharper contrast with Early Gothic jamb statues. The sculptor portrayed Theodore as the ideal Christian knight and clothed him in the cloak and chain-mail armor of Gothic Crusaders. The handsome, long-haired youth holds his spear firmly in his right hand and rests his left hand on his shield. He turns his head to the left and swings out his hip to the right. The body's resulting torsion and pronounced sway call to mind Greek statuary, especially the contrapposto stance of Polykleitos's *Spear Bearer* (FIG. 5-40). The changes that occurred in 13th-century Gothic sculpture could appropriately be labeled a second "Classical revolution."

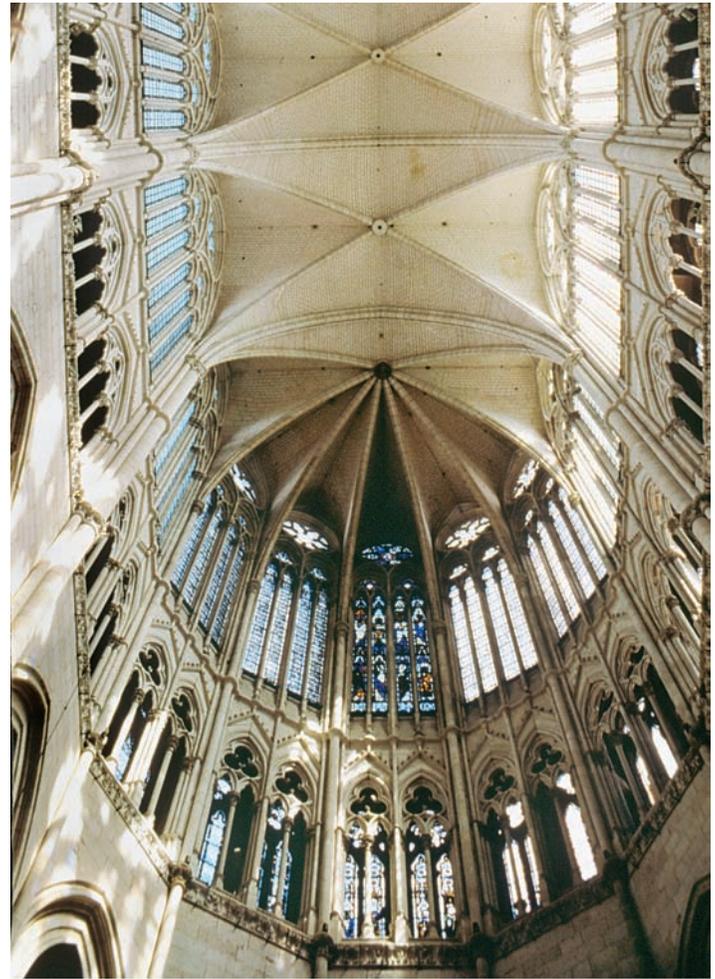


18-19 ROBERT DE LUZARCHES, THOMAS DE CORMONT, and RENAUD DE CORMONT, interior of Amiens Cathedral (looking east), Amiens, France, begun 1220. ■◀

The concept of a self-sustaining skeletal architecture reached full maturity at Amiens Cathedral. The four-part High Gothic vaults of pointed arches rise an astounding 144 feet above the nave floor.

AMIENS CATHEDRAL Chartres Cathedral was one of the most influential buildings in the history of architecture. Its builders set a pattern that many other Gothic architects followed, even if they refined the details. Construction of Amiens Cathedral (FIGS. 18-19 to 18-21) began in 1220, while work was still in progress at Chartres. The architects were ROBERT DE LUZARCHES, THOMAS DE CORMONT, and RENAUD DE CORMONT. The builders finished the nave by 1236 and the radiating chapels by 1247, but work on the choir continued until almost 1270. The Amiens elevation (FIGS. 18-10*d* and 18-19) derived from the High Gothic formula of Chartres (FIGS. 18-10*c* and 18-15). But Amiens Cathedral's proportions are even more elegant, and the number and complexity of the lancet windows in both its clerestory and triforium are even greater. The whole design reflects the builders' confident use of the complete High Gothic structural vocabulary: the rectangular-bay system, the four-part rib vault, and a buttressing system that permitted almost complete dissolution of heavy masses and thick weight-bearing walls. At Amiens, the concept of a self-sustaining skeletal architecture reached full maturity. The remaining stretches of wall seem to serve no purpose other than to provide a weather screen for the interior (FIG. 18-20).

Amiens Cathedral is one of the most impressive examples of the French Gothic obsession with constructing ever taller churches. Using

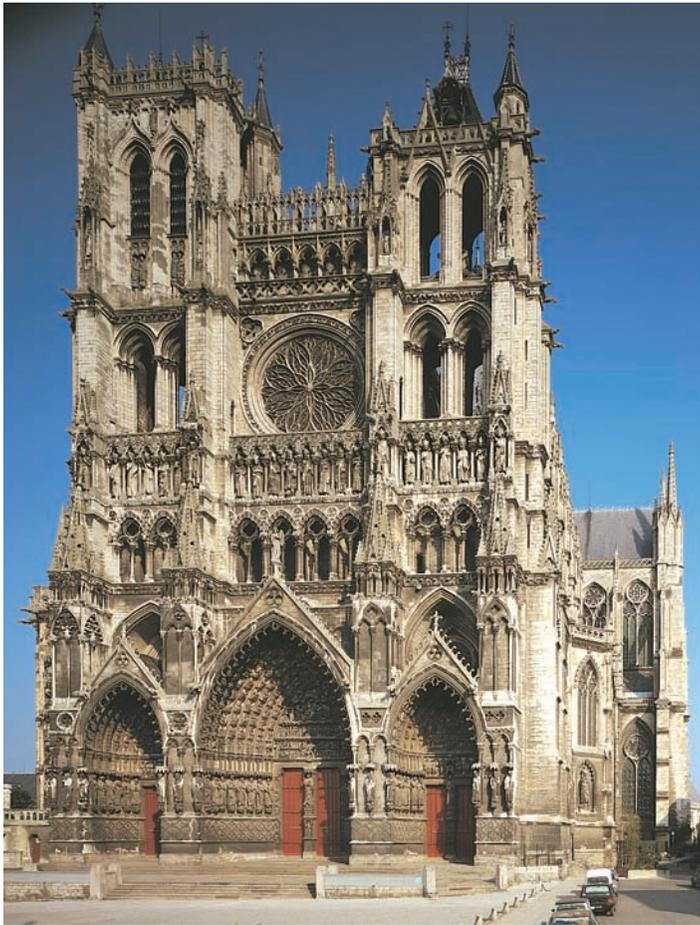


18-20 ROBERT DE LUZARCHES, THOMAS DE CORMONT, and RENAUD DE CORMONT, vaults, clerestory, and triforium of the choir of Amiens Cathedral, Amiens, France, begun 1220.

The Amiens choir vaults resemble a canopy suspended from bundled masts. The sunlight entering from the clerestory creates the effect of a buoyant lightness not normally associated with stone architecture.

their new skeletal frames of stone, French builders attempted goals almost beyond limit, pushing to new heights with increasingly slender supports. The nave vaults at Laon rise to a height of about 80 feet, at Paris 107 feet, and at Chartres 118 feet. Those at Amiens are 144 feet above the floor (FIG. 18-10). The tense, strong lines of the Amiens vault ribs converge at the colonnettes and speed down the shell-like walls to the compound piers. Almost every part of the superstructure has its corresponding element below. The overall effect is of effortless strength, of a buoyant lightness not normally associated with stone architecture. Viewed directly from below, the choir vaults (FIG. 18-20) seem like a canopy, tentlike and suspended from bundled masts. The light flooding in from the clerestory makes the vaults seem even more insubstantial. The effect recalls another great building, one utterly different from Amiens but where light also plays a defining role: Hagia Sophia (FIG. 12-4) in Constantinople. Once again, the designers reduced the building's physical mass by structural ingenuity and daring, and light further dematerializes what remains. If Hagia Sophia is the perfect expression of Byzantine spirituality in architecture, Amiens, with its soaring vaults and giant windows admitting divine colored light, is its Gothic counterpart.

Work began on the Amiens west facade (FIG. 18-21) at the same time as the nave (1220). Its lower parts reflect the influence of Laon



18-21 ROBERT DE LUZARCHES, THOMAS DE CORMONT, and RENAUD DE CORMONT, west facade of Amiens Cathedral, Amiens, France, begun 1220.

The deep piercing of the Amiens facade left few surfaces for decoration, but sculptors covered the remaining ones with colonnettes, pinnacles, and rosettes that nearly dissolve the structure's solid core.

Cathedral (FIG. 18-8) in the spacing of the funnel-like and gable-covered portals. But the Amiens builders punctured the upper parts of the facade to an even greater degree than did the Laon designer. The deep piercing of walls and towers at Amiens left few surfaces for decoration, but sculptors covered the ones that remained with a network of colonnettes, arches, pinnacles, rosettes, and other decorative stonework that visually screens and nearly dissolves the structure's solid core. Sculpture also extends to the areas above the portals, especially the band of statues (the so-called kings' gallery) running the full width of the facade directly below the rose window (with 15th-century tracery). The uneven towers were later additions. The shorter one dates from the 14th century, the taller one from the 15th century.

BEAU DIEU The most prominent statue on the Amiens facade is the *Beau Dieu* (Beautiful God; FIG. 18-22) on the central doorway's trumeau. The sculptor fully modeled Christ's figure, enveloping his body with massive drapery folds cascading from his waist. The statue stands freely and is as independent of its architectural setting as any Gothic facade statue ever was. Nonetheless, the sculptor still placed an architectural canopy over Christ's head. It is in the latest Gothic style, mimicking the east end of a 13th-century cathedral having a series of radiating chapels with elegant lancet windows. Above the canopy is the great central tympanum with the representation of Christ as Last Judge. The *Beau Dieu*, however, is a handsome, kindly



18-22 Christ (*Beau Dieu*), trumeau statue of central doorway, west facade, Amiens Cathedral, Amiens, France, ca. 1220–1235.

The *Beau Dieu* is a kindly figure who blesses all who enter Amiens Cathedral. He tramples a lion and dragon symbolizing the evil forces in the world. The Gothic Christ gives humankind hope in salvation.

figure who does not strike terror into sinners. Instead he blesses those who enter the church and tramples a lion and a dragon symbolizing the evil forces in the world. This image of Christ gives humankind hope in salvation. The *Beau Dieu* epitomizes the bearded, benevolent Gothic image of Christ that replaced the youthful Early Christian Christ (FIG. 11-8) and the stern Byzantine Pantokrator (FIGS. 12-1 and 12-25) as the preferred representation of the Savior in later European art. The figure's quiet grace and grandeur also contrast sharply with the emotional intensity of the twisting Romanesque prophet (FIG. 17-11) carved in relief on the Moissac trumeau.

18-23 West facade of Reims Cathedral, Reims, France, ca. 1225–1290.

The facade of Reims Cathedral displays the High Gothic architect's desire to reduce sheer mass and replace it with intricately framed voids. Stained-glass windows, not stone reliefs, fill the tympana.

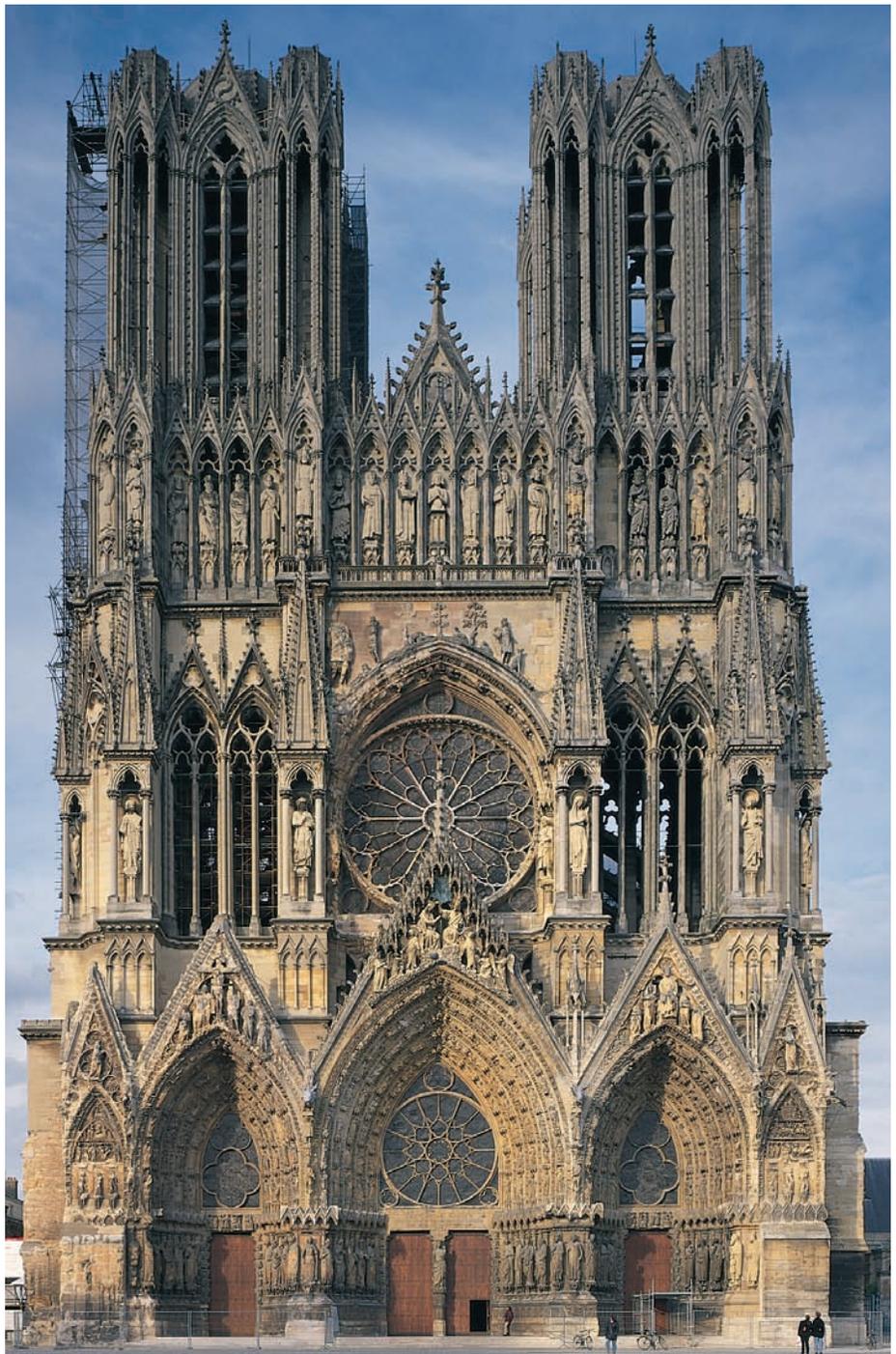


18-23A Nave, Reims Cathedral, begun 1211.

REIMS CATHEDRAL Construction of Reims Cathedral (FIG. 18-23), where the coronations of the kings of France took place, began only a few years after work commenced at Amiens. The Reims builders carried the High Gothic style of the Amiens west facade still further, both architecturally and sculpturally. The two facades, although similar, display some significant differences. The kings' gallery of statues at Reims is above the great rose window, and the figures stand in taller and more ornate frames. In fact, the designer "stretched" every detail of the facade. The openings in the towers and those to the left and right of the rose window are taller, narrower, and more intricately decorated, and they more closely resemble the elegant lancets of the clerestory within. A pointed arch also frames the rose window itself, and the pinnacles over the portals are taller and more elaborate than those at Amiens. Most striking, however, is the treatment of the tympana over the doorways, where stained-glass windows replaced the stone relief sculpture of earlier facades. The contrast with Romanesque heavy masonry construction (FIG. 17-30) is extreme. But no less noteworthy is the rapid transformation of the Gothic facade since the 12th-century designs of Saint-Denis and Chartres (FIG. 18-5) and even Laon (FIG. 18-8).

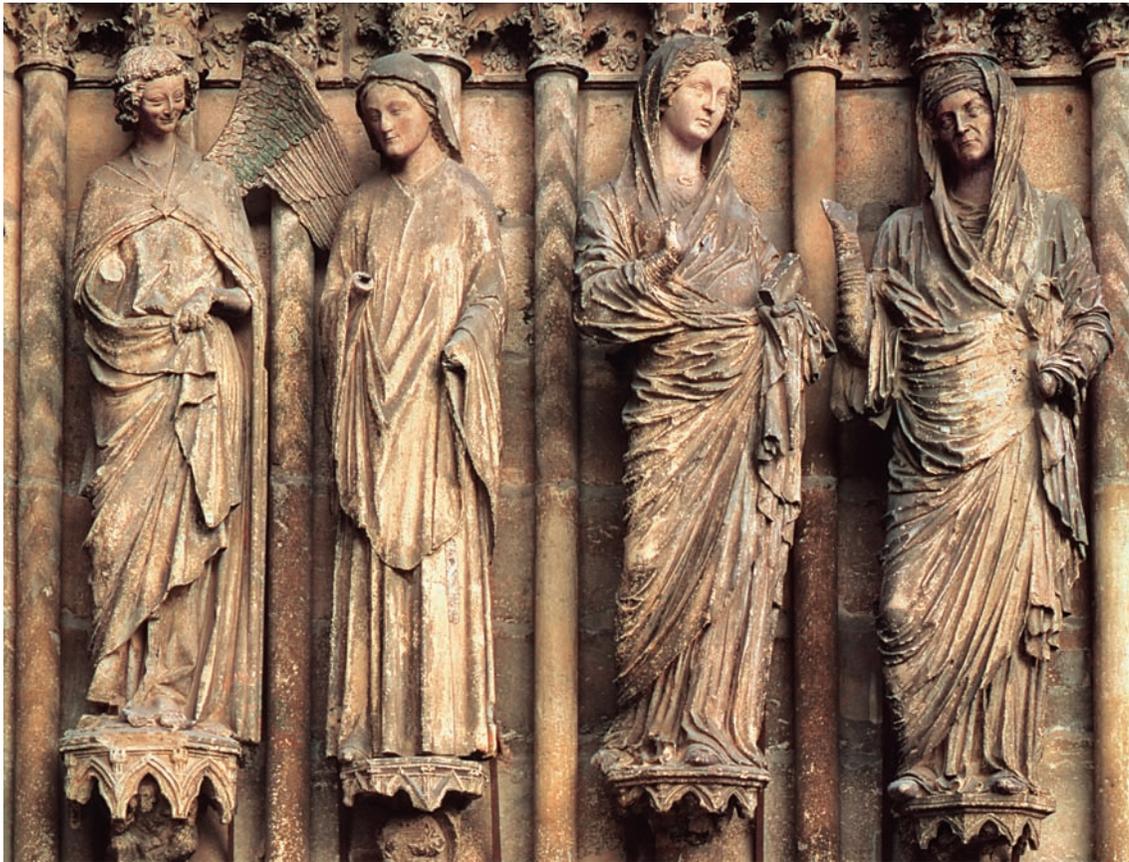
Reims Cathedral is also a prime example of the High Gothic style in sculpture. The statues and reliefs of the west facade celebrate the Virgin Mary. Above the central gable, Mary is crowned as Queen of Heaven. On the trumeau, she appears in her role as the New Eve above reliefs depicting the Original Sin. The jamb statues relate episodes from the Infancy cycle (see "The Life of Jesus in Art," Chapter 11, pages 296–297), including the *Annunciation* and *Visitation* (FIG. 18-24). All four illustrated statues appear to be completely detached from their architectural background. The sculptors shrank the supporting columns into insignificance so that they in no way restrict the free and easy movements of the full-bodied figures. These 13th-century statue-columns contrast strikingly with those of the Early Gothic Royal Portal (FIG. 18-7), where the background columns occupy a volume equal to that of the figures.

The Reims statues also vividly illustrate that the sculptural ornamentation of Gothic cathedrals took decades to complete and required many sculptors often working in diverse styles. Art historians



believe that three different sculptors carved the four statues in FIG. 18-24 at different times during the quarter century from 1230 to 1255. The *Visitation* group (FIG. 18-24, right) is the work of an artist who probably studied classical statuary. Reims was an ancient Roman city, and the heads of both Mary and Saint Elizabeth resemble Roman portraits. The Gothic statues are astonishing approximations of the classical naturalistic style and incorporate contrapposto postures that go far beyond the stance of the Chartres Saint Theodore (FIG. 18-18). The swaying of the hips is much more pronounced. The right legs bend, and the knees press through the rippling folds of the garments. The sculptor also set the figures' arms in motion. Mary and Elizabeth turn their faces toward each other, and they converse through gestures. In the Reims *Visitation* group, the formerly isolated Gothic jamb statues became actors in a biblical narrative.

The *Annunciation* group (FIG. 18-24, left) also features statues liberated from their architectural setting, but they are products of



18-24 *Annunciation and Visitation*, jamb statues of central doorway, west facade, Reims Cathedral, Reims, France, ca. 1230–1255.

Different sculptors working in diverse styles carved the Reims jamb statues, but all detached their figures from the columns and set the bodies and arms in motion. The figures converse through gestures.

different workshops and one—the angel Gabriel—was first set in the left portal and then moved to its present location, which explains the stylistic dichotomy of the pair. Mary is a slender figure with severe drapery. The artist preferred broad expanses of fabric to the multiplicity of folds of the *Visitation* Mary. Gabriel, the latest of the four statues, has a much more elongated body and is far more animated. He exhibits the elegant style of the Parisian court at the middle of the 13th century. He pivots gracefully, almost as if dancing, and smiles broadly. Like a courtier, he exudes charm. Mary, in contrast, is serious and introspective and does not respond overtly to the news the angel has brought.

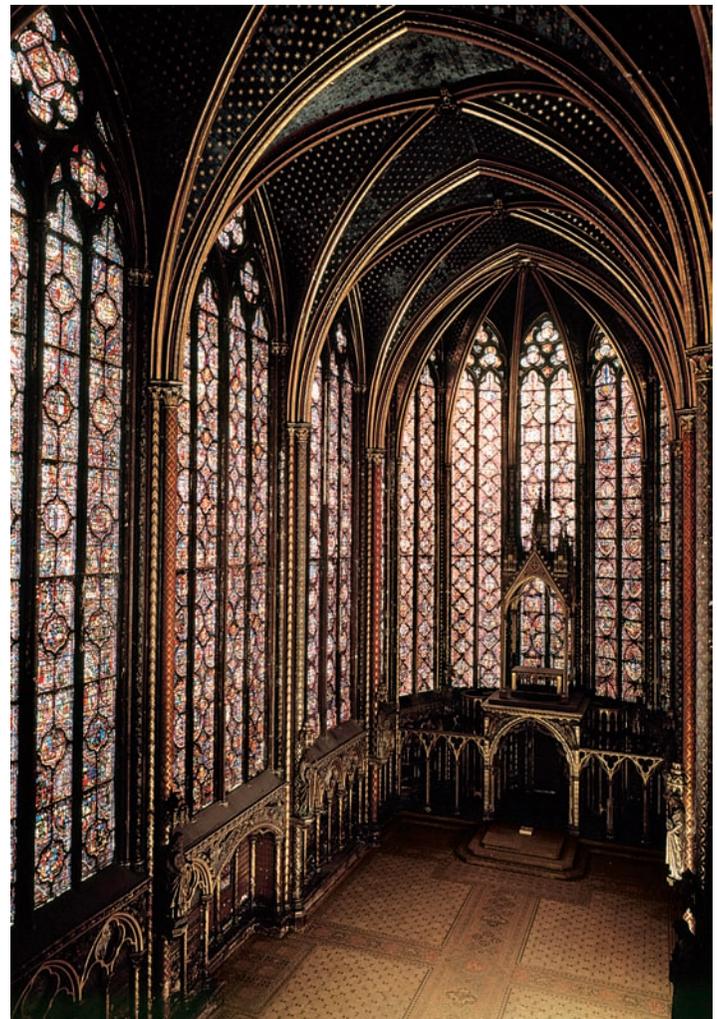


18-25A Santa María, León, begun 1254.

SAINTE-CHAPELLE, PARIS The stained-glass windows inserted into the portal tympana of Reims Cathedral exemplify the wall-dissolving High Gothic architectural style. The architect of Sainte-Chapelle (FIG. 18-25) in Paris extended this style to an entire building. Louis IX built Sainte-Chapelle, joined to the royal palace, as a repository for the crown of thorns and other relics of Christ's Passion he had purchased in 1239 from his cousin Baldwin II (r. 1228–1261), the last Latin emperor of Constantinople. The chapel is a masterpiece of the so-called *Rayonnant* (radiant) style of the High Gothic age, which dominated the second half of the century. It was the preferred style of the royal Parisian court of Saint Louis (see “Louis IX, the Saintly King,” page 482). Sainte-Chapelle's architect carried the dissolution of walls and the reduction of the bulk of the supports to the point that some 6,450 square feet of stained glass make up more

18-25 Interior of the upper chapel (looking northeast), Sainte-Chapelle, Paris, France, 1243–1248. ■

At Louis IX's Sainte-Chapelle, the architect succeeded in dissolving the walls to such an extent that 6,450 square feet of stained glass account for more than three-quarters of the Rayonnant Gothic structure.



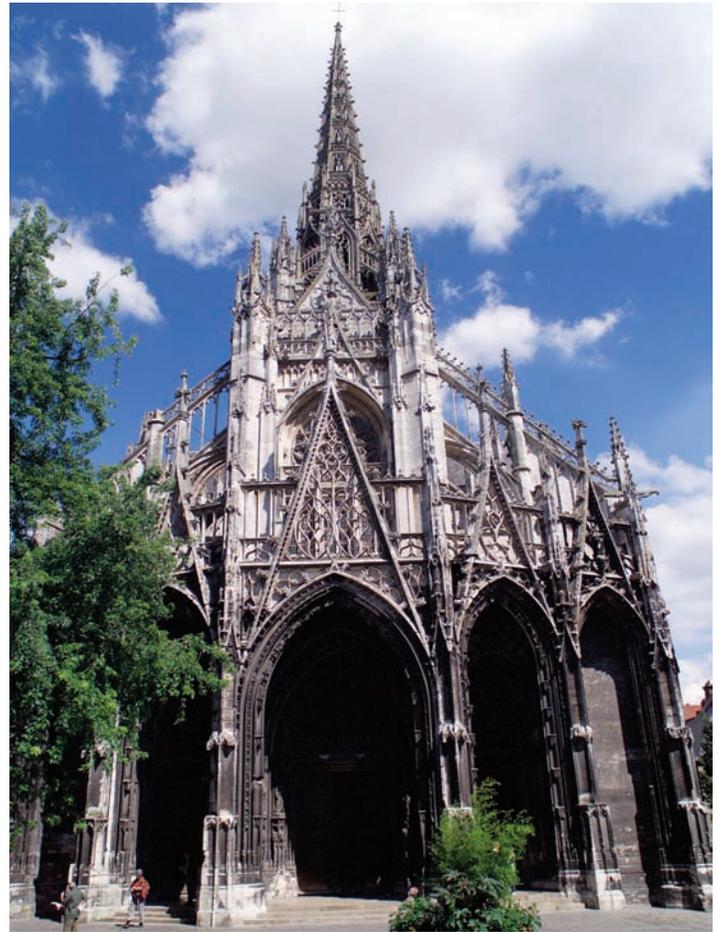


18-26 Virgin and Child (*Virgin of Paris*), Notre-Dame, Paris, France, early 14th century.

Late Gothic sculpture is elegant and mannered. Here, the solemnity of Early and High Gothic religious figures gave way to a tender and anecdotal portrayal of Mary and Jesus as royal mother and son.

than three-quarters of the structure. The supporting elements are hardly more than large *mullions*, or vertical stone bars. The emphasis is on the extreme slenderness of the architectural forms and on linearity in general. Although the chapel required restoration in the 19th century (after suffering damage during the French Revolution), it retains most of its original 13th-century stained glass. Sainte-Chapelle's enormous windows filter the light and fill the interior with an unearthly rose-violet atmosphere. Approximately 49 feet high and 15 feet wide, they were the largest designed up to their time.

VIRGIN OF PARIS The “court style” of Sainte-Chapelle has its pictorial parallel in the mannered elegance of the roughly contemporaneous Gabriel of the Reims *Annunciation* group (FIG. 18-24, left), but the style long outlived Saint Louis and his royal artists and architects. The best example of the court style in Late Gothic sculpture is the early-14th-century statue nicknamed the *Virgin of Paris* (FIG. 18-26) because of its location in Paris at Notre-Dame. The sculptor portrayed Mary in an exaggerated S-curve posture typical of Late Gothic sculpture. She is a worldly queen, decked out in royal garments and wearing



18-27 West facade of Saint-Maclou, Rouen, France, ca. 1500–1514.

Saint-Maclou is the masterpiece of Late Gothic Flamboyant architecture. Its ornate tracery features curves and countercurves that form brittle decorative webs masking the building's structure.

a heavy gem-encrusted crown. The Christ Child is equally richly attired and is very much the infant prince in the arms of his young mother. The tender, anecdotal characterization of mother and son represents a further humanization of the portrayal of religious figures in Gothic sculpture. Late Gothic statuary is very different in tone from the solemnity of most High Gothic figures, just as Late Classical Greek statues of the Olympian gods (compare FIG. 18-26 with FIG. 5-63) differ from High Classical depictions.

SAINT-MACLOU, ROUEN Late French Gothic architecture also represents a departure from the norms of High Gothic. The change from Rayonnant architecture to the so-called *Flamboyant* style (named for the flamelike appearance of its pointed bar tracery) occurred in the 14th century. The style reached its florid maturity nearly a century later in Normandy in the church of Saint-Maclou (FIG. 18-27) in Rouen, its capital. The church is tiny (only about 75 feet high and 180 feet long) compared with the cathedrals of the High Gothic age. Its facade breaks sharply from the High Gothic style (FIGS. 18-21 and 18-23) of the 13th century. The five portals (two of them false doors) bend outward in an arc. Ornate gables crown the doorways, pierced through and filled with wiry, “flickering” Flamboyant tracery made up of curves and countercurves that form brittle decorative webs and mask the building's structure. The transparency of the pinnacles over the doorways permits visitors to see the central rose window and the flying buttresses, even though they are set well back from the facade. The overlapping of all features, pierced as they are, confuses the structural lines and produces



18-28 Aerial view of the fortified town of Carcassonne, France. Bastions and towers, 12th–13th centuries, restored by EUGÈNE VIOLLET-LE-DUC in the 19th century.

Carcassonne provides a rare glimpse of what was once a familiar sight in Gothic France: a tight complex of castle, cathedral, and town with a crenellated and towered wall circuit for defense.

a bewildering complexity of views that is the hallmark of the Flamboyant style.

CARCASSONNE The Gothic period has been called “the age of great cathedrals,” but people, of course, also needed and architects also built secular structures such as town halls, palaces, and private residences. In an age of frequent warfare, the feudal barons often constructed fortified castles in places enemies could not easily reach. Sometimes thick defensive wall circuits, or *ramparts*, enclosed entire towns. In time, however, purely defensive wars became obsolete due to the invention of artillery and improvements in siege craft. The fortress era gradually passed, and throughout Europe once-mighty ramparts fell into ruin.

One of the most famous Gothic fortified towns is Carcassonne (FIG. 18-28) in Languedoc in southern France. It was the regional center of resistance to the northern forces of royal France. Built on a hill bounded by the Aude River, Carcassonne had been fortified since Roman times. It had Visigothic walls dating from the 6th century, but in the 12th century masons reinforced them. *Battlements* (low parapets) with *crenellations* (composed of alternating solid *merlons* and open *crenels*) protected guards patrolling the stone ring surrounding the town. Carcassonne might be forced to surrender but could not easily be taken by storm. Within the town’s double walls was a fortified castle (FIG. 18-28, *left*) with a massive attached *keep*, a secure tower that could serve as a place of last refuge. Balancing that center of secular power was the bishop’s seat, the Cathedral of Saint-Nazaire (FIG. 18-28, *right*). The small church, built between 1269 and 1329, may have been the work of an architect brought in from northern France. In any case, Saint-Nazaire’s builders were certainly familiar with the latest developments in architecture in the Île-de-France. Today, Carcassonne—as restored in the 19th century by EUGÈNE VIOLLET-LE-DUC (1814–1879)—provides a rare glimpse of what was once a familiar sight in Gothic France: a tightly contained complex of castle, cathedral, and town within towered walls.

18-29 Hall of the cloth guild, Bruges, Belgium, begun 1230.

The Bruges cloth guild’s meeting hall is an early example of a new type of secular architecture in the late Middle Ages. Its lofty tower competed for attention with the towers of the city’s cathedral.

GUILD HALL, BRUGES One of the many signs of the growing secularization of urban life in the late Middle Ages was the erection of monumental meeting halls and warehouses for the increasing number of craft guilds being formed throughout Europe. An early example is the imposing market and guild hall (FIG. 18-29) of the



18-30 House of Jacques Coeur, Bourges, France, 1443–1451.

The house of the immensely wealthy Bourges financier Jacques Coeur is both a splendid example of Late Gothic architecture with elaborate tracery and a symbol of the period's new secular spirit.



clothmakers of Bruges, begun in 1230. Situated in the city's major square, it testifies to the important role of artisans and merchants in Gothic Europe. The design combines features of military (the corner "watchtowers" with their crenellations) and church (lancet windows with crowning oculi) architecture. The uppermost, octagonal portion of the tower with its flying buttresses and pinnacles dates to the 15th century, but even the original two-story tower is taller than the rest of the hall. Lofty towers were a common feature of late medieval guild and town halls, designed to compete for attention and prestige with the towers of city cathedrals.

HOUSE OF JACQUES COEUR The fortunes of the new class of wealthy merchants who rose to prominence throughout Europe in the late Middle Ages may not have equaled those of the hereditary royalty, but their power and influence were still enormous. The career of the French financier Jacques Coeur (1395–1456) illustrates how enterprising private citizens could win—and quickly lose—wealth and power. Coeur had banking houses in every city of France and many cities abroad. He employed more than 300 agents and competed with the great trading republics of Italy. His merchant ships filled the Mediterranean, and with the papacy's permission, he imported spices and textiles from the Muslim Near East. He was the treasurer of King Charles VII (r. 1422–1461) of France and a friend of Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447–1455). In 1451, however, his enemies framed him on an absurd charge of having poisoned Agnes Sorel, the king's mistress. The judges who sentenced Coeur to prison and confiscated his vast wealth and property were among those who

owed him money. Coeur escaped in 1454 and made his way to Rome, where the pope warmly received him. He died of fever while leading a fleet of papal war galleys in the eastern Mediterranean.

Jacques Coeur's great town house still stands in his native city of Bourges. Built between 1443 and 1451 (with special permission to encroach upon the town ramparts), it is the best-preserved example of Late Gothic domestic architecture. The house's plan is irregular, with the units arranged around an open courtyard (FIG. 18-30). The service areas (maintenance shops, storage rooms, servants' quarters, and baths—a rare luxury in Gothic Europe) occupy the ground level. The upper stories house the great hall and auxiliary rooms used for offices and family living rooms. Over the main entrance is a private chapel. One of the towers served as a treasury. The exterior and interior facades have very steep pyramidal roofs of different heights. The decorative details include Flamboyant tracery and large pointed-arch stained-glass windows. An elegant canopied niche facing the street once housed a royal equestrian statue. A comparable statue of Coeur on horseback dominated the facade opening onto the interior courtyard. Jacques Coeur's house is both a splendid example of Late Gothic architecture and a monumental symbol of the period's new secular spirit.

Book Illumination and Luxury Arts

Paris's claim as the intellectual center of Gothic Europe (see "Scholasticism," page 466) did not rest solely on the stature of its university faculty and on the reputation of its architects, masons, sculptors, and stained-glass makers. The city was also a renowned center for the production of fine books. The famous Florentine poet Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), in fact, referred to Paris in his *Divine Comedy* of about 1310–1320 as the city famed for the art of illumination.² During the Gothic period, book manufacture shifted from monastic scriptoria shut off from the world to urban workshops of professional artists—and Paris had the most and best workshops. The owners of these new, for-profit secular businesses sold their products to the royal family, scholars, and prosperous merchants. The Parisian shops were the forerunners of modern publishing houses.

VILLARD DE HONNECOURT One of the most intriguing Parisian manuscripts preserved today was not, however, a book for sale but a personal sketchbook. Compiled by VILLARD DE HONNECOURT, an early-13th-century master mason, its pages contain details of buildings, plans of choirs with radiating chapels, church towers, lifting devices, a sawmill, stained-glass windows, and other subjects of obvious interest to architects and masons. But also sprinkled liberally

throughout the pages are drawings depicting religious and worldly figures, as well as animals, some realistic and others purely fantastic. On the page reproduced here (FIG. 18-31), Villard demonstrated the value of the *ars de geometria* ("art of geometry") to artists. He showed that both natural forms and buildings are based on simple geometric shapes such as the square, circle, and triangle. Even where he claimed to have drawn his animals from nature, he composed his figures around a skeleton not of bones but of abstract geometric forms. Geometry was, in Villard's words, "strong help in drawing figures."

GOD AS ARCHITECT Geometry also played a symbolic role in Gothic art and architecture. Gothic artists, architects, and theologians alike thought the triangle, for example, embodied the idea of the Trinity of God the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The circle, which has neither a beginning nor an end, symbolized the eternity of the one God. When Gothic architects based their designs on the art of geometry, building their forms out of abstract shapes laden with symbolic meaning, they believed they were working according to the divinely established laws of nature.

A vivid illustration of this concept appears as the frontispiece (FIG. 18-32) of a moralized Bible produced in Paris during the



18-31 VILLARD DE HONNECOURT, figures based on geometric shapes, folio 18 verso of a sketchbook, from Paris, France, ca. 1220–1235. Ink on vellum, $9\frac{1}{4}'' \times 6''$. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

On this page from his private sketchbook, the master mason Villard de Honnecourt sought to demonstrate that simple geometric shapes are the basis of both natural forms and buildings.



18-32 God as architect of the world, folio 1 verso of a moralized Bible, from Paris, France, ca. 1220–1230. Ink, tempera, and gold leaf on vellum, $1' 1\frac{1}{2}'' \times 8\frac{1}{4}''$. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna.

Paris was the intellectual capital of Europe and the center of production of fine books. This artist portrayed God as an industrious architect creating the universe using the same tools as Gothic builders.

Louis IX, the Saintly King

The royal patron behind the Parisian Rayonnant “court style” of Gothic art and architecture was King Louis IX (1214–1270; r. 1226–1270), grandson of Philip Augustus. Louis inherited the throne when he was only 12 years old, so until he reached adulthood six years later, his mother, Blanche of Castile (FIG. 18-33), granddaughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine (see “Romanesque Countesses, Queens, and Nuns,” Chapter 17, page 448), served as France’s regent.

The French regarded Louis as the ideal king, and 27 years after Louis’s death, in 1297, Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294–1303) declared him a saint. In his own time, Louis was revered for his piety, justice, truthfulness, and charity. His almsgiving and his donations to religious foundations were extravagant. He especially favored the *mendicant* (begging) orders, the Dominicans and Franciscans. He admired their poverty, piety, and self-sacrificing disregard of material things.

Louis launched two unsuccessful Crusades, the Seventh (1248–1254, when, in her son’s absence, Blanche was again French regent) and the Eighth (1270). He died in Tunisia during the latter. As a crusading knight who lost his life in the service of the Church, Louis personified the chivalric virtues of courage, loyalty, and self-sacrifice. Saint Louis united in his person the best qualities of the Christian knight, the benevolent monarch, and the holy man. He became the model of medieval Christian kingship.

Louis’s political accomplishments were also noteworthy. He subdued the unruly French barons, and between 1243 and 1314 no one seriously challenged the crown. He negotiated a treaty with Henry III, king of France’s traditional enemy, England. Such was his reputation for integrity and just dealing that he served as arbiter in at least a dozen international disputes. So successful was he as peacekeeper

18-33 Blanche of Castile, Louis IX, and two monks, dedication page (folio 8 recto) of a moralized Bible, from Paris, France, 1226–1234. Ink, tempera, and gold leaf on vellum, 1' 3" × 10 1/2". Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

The costly gold-leaf dedication page of this royal book depicts Saint Louis, his mother Blanche of Castile, and two monks. The younger monk is at work on the paired illustrations of a moralized Bible.



that despite civil wars through most of the 13th century, international peace prevailed. Under Saint Louis, medieval France was at its most prosperous, and its art and architecture were admired and imitated throughout Europe.

1220s. *Moralized Bibles* are heavily illustrated, each page pairing paintings of Old and New Testament episodes with explanations of their moral significance. (The page reproduced here does not conform to this formula because it is the introduction to all that follows.) Above the illustration, the scribe wrote (in French rather than Latin): “Here God creates heaven and earth, the sun and moon, and all the elements.” God appears as the architect of the world, shaping the universe with the aid of a compass. Within the perfect circle already created are the spherical sun and moon and the unformed matter that will become the earth once God applies the same geometric principles to it. In contrast to the biblical account of Creation, in which God created the sun, moon, and stars after the earth had been formed, and made the world by sheer force of will and a simple “Let there be” command, on this page the Gothic artist portrayed God as an industrious architect, creating the universe with some of the same tools mortal builders used.

BLANCHE OF CASTILE Not surprisingly, most of the finest Gothic books known today belonged to the French monarchy. Saint Louis in particular was an avid collector of both secular and religious books. The vast library he and his royal predecessors and successors formed eventually became the core of France’s national library, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*. One of the books the royal family commissioned is a moralized Bible now in the collection of New York’s Pierpont Morgan Library. Louis’s mother, Blanche of Castile, ordered the Bible during her regency (1226–1234) for her teenage son. The dedication page (FIG. 18-33) has a costly gold background and depicts Blanche and Louis enthroned beneath triple-lobed arches and miniature cityscapes. The latter are comparable to the architectural canopies above the heads of contemporaneous French portal statues (FIG. 18-22). Below, in similar architectural frames, are a monk and a scribe. The older clergyman dictates a sacred text to



18-34 Abraham and the three angels, folio 7 verso of the *Psalter of Saint Louis*, from Paris, France, 1253–1270. Ink, tempera, and gold leaf on vellum, 5" × 3½". Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

The architectural settings in the *Psalter of Saint Louis* reflect the screenlike lightness and transparency of royal buildings such as Sainte-Chapelle (FIG. 18-25). The colors emulate those of stained glass.

can add initials and signs of division. Still another can arrange the leaves and attach the binding. Another of you can prepare the covers, the leather, the buckles and clasps. All sorts of assistance can be offered the scribe to help him pursue his work without interruption. He needs many things which can be prepared by others: parchment cut, flattened and ruled for script, ready ink and pens. You will always find something with which to help the scribe.³

The preparation of the illuminated pages also involved several hands. Some artists, for example, specialized in painting borders or initials. Only the workshop head or one of the most advanced assistants would paint the main figural scenes. Given this division of labor and the assembly-line nature of Gothic book production, it is astonishing how uniform the style is on a single page, as well as from page to page, in most illuminated manuscripts.

his young apprentice. The scribe already has divided his page into two columns of four roundels each, a format often used for the paired illustrations of moralized Bibles. The inspirations for such designs were probably the roundels of Gothic stained-glass windows (compare the borders of the *Belle Verrière* window, FIG. 18-16, at Chartres and the windows of Louis's own, later Sainte-Chapelle, FIG. 18-25).

The dedication page of Blanche of Castile's moralized Bible presents a very abbreviated portrayal of Gothic book production, similar to the view of a monastic scriptorium discussed earlier (FIG. 16-11). The manufacturing process used in the workshops of 13th-century Paris did not differ significantly from that of 10th-century Tábara. It involved many steps and numerous specialized artists, scribes, and assistants of varying skill levels. The Benedictine abbot Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516) described the way books were still made in his day in his treatise *In Praise of Scribes*:

If you do not know how to write, you still can assist the scribes in various ways. One of you can correct what another has written. Another can add the rubrics [headings] to the corrected text. A third

PSALTER OF SAINT LOUIS The golden background of Blanche's Bible is unusual and has no parallel in Gothic windows. But the radiance of stained glass probably inspired the glowing color of other 13th-century Parisian illuminated manuscripts. In some cases, masters in the same urban workshop produced both glass and books. Many art historians believe that the *Psalter of Saint Louis* (FIG. 18-34) is one of several books produced in Paris for Louis IX by artists associated with those who made the stained glass for his Sainte-Chapelle. Certainly, the painted architectural setting in Louis's book of Psalms reflects the pierced screenlike lightness and transparency of royal Rayonnant buildings such as Sainte-Chapelle. The intense colors, especially the blues, emulate stained glass. The lines in the borders resemble leading. And the gables, pierced by rose windows with bar tracery, are standard Rayonnant architectural features.

The page from the *Psalter of Saint Louis* shown here (FIG. 18-34) represents Abraham and the three angels, the Old Testament story believed to prefigure the Christian Trinity (see "Jewish Subjects in Christian Art," Chapter 11, page 293). The Gothic artist included two episodes on the same page, separated by the tree of Mamre mentioned in the Bible. At the left, Abraham greets the three angels. In

the other scene, he entertains them while his wife Sarah peers at them from a tent. The figures' delicate features and the linear wavy strands of their hair have parallels in Blanche of Castile's moralized Bible, as well as in Parisian stained glass. The elegant proportions, facial expressions, theatrical gestures, and swaying poses are characteristic of the Parisian court style admired throughout Europe. Compare, for example, the angel in the left foreground with the Gabriel statue (FIG. 18-24, left) of the Reims *Annunciation* group.

BREVIARY OF PHILIPPE LE BEL As in the Romanesque period, some Gothic manuscript illuminators signed their work. The names of others appear in royal accounts of payments made and similar official documents. One artist who produced books for the French court was MASTER HONORÉ, whose Parisian workshop was on the street known today as rue Boutebrie. Honoré illuminated a breviary (see "Medieval Books," Chapter 16, page 411) for Philippe le Bel (Philip the Fair, r. 1285–1314) in 1296. The page illustrated here (FIG. 18-35) features two Old Testament scenes involving David. In the upper panel, Samuel anoints the youthful David. Below, while King Saul looks on, David prepares to aim his slingshot at his most famous opponent, the giant Goliath (who already touches the wound on his forehead). Immediately to the right, David slays Goliath with his sword.

Master Honoré's linear treatment of hair, his figures' delicate hands and gestures, and their elegant swaying postures are typical of Parisian painting of the time. But this painter was much more interested than most of his colleagues in giving his figures sculptural volume and showing the play of light on their bodies. Honoré was not concerned with locating his figures in space, however. The Goliath panel in the *Breviary of Philippe le Bel* has a textilelike decorative background, and the feet of Honoré's figures frequently overlap the border. Compared with his contemporaries, Master Honoré pioneered naturalism in figure painting. But he still approached the art of book illumination as a decorator of two-dimensional pages. He did not embrace the classical notion that a painting should be an illusionistic window into a three-dimensional world.

BELLEVILLE BREVIARY David and Saul also are the subjects of a miniature painting at the top left of an elaborately decorated text page (FIG. 18-36) in the *Belleville Breviary*, which JEAN PUCELLE of Paris painted around 1325. Pucelle far exceeded Honoré and other French artists by placing his fully modeled figures in three-dimensional architectural settings rendered in convincing perspective. For example, he painted Saul as a weighty figure seated on a throne seen in a three-quarter view, and he meticulously depicted the receding coffers of the barrel vault over the young David's head. Such "stage sets" already had become commonplace in Italian painting, and scholars think Pucelle visited Italy and studied Duccio's work (FIGS. 19-10 and 19-11) in Siena. Pucelle's (or an assistant's) renditions of plants, a bird, butterflies, a dragonfly, a fish, a snail, and a monkey also reveal a keen interest in and close observation of the natural world. Nonetheless, in the *Belleville Breviary*, the text still dominates the figures, and the artist (and his patron) delighted in ornamental flourishes, fancy initial letters, and abstract patterns. In that respect, comparisons with monumental panel paintings are inappropriate. Pucelle's breviary remains firmly in the tradition of book illumination.

The *Belleville Breviary* is of special interest because Pucelle's name and those of some of his assistants appear at the end of the book, in a memorandum recording the payment they received for their work. Inscriptions in other Gothic illuminated books regularly state the production costs—the prices paid for materials, especially gold, and for the execution of initials, figures, flowery script, and



18-35 MASTER HONORÉ, David anointed by Samuel and battle of David and Goliath, folio 7 verso of the *Breviary of Philippe le Bel*, from Paris, France, 1296. Ink and tempera on vellum, $7\frac{7}{8}'' \times 4\frac{7}{8}''$. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Master Honoré was one of the Parisian secular artists who produced books for the French monarchy. Notably, he gave his figures sculptural volume and showed the play of light on their bodies.

other embellishments. By this time, illuminators were professional guild members, and their personal reputation, as with modern "brand names," guaranteed the quality of their work. Although the cost of materials was still the major factor determining a book's price, individual skill and reputation increasingly decided the value of the illuminator's services. The centuries-old monopoly of the Christian Church in book production had ended.

VIRGIN OF JEANNE D'EVREUX The royal family also patronized goldsmiths, silversmiths, and other artists specializing in the production of luxury works in metal and enamel for churches, palaces, and private homes. Especially popular were statuettes of sacred figures, which the wealthy purchased either for private devotion or as gifts to churches. The Virgin Mary was a favored subject, reflecting her new prominence in the iconography of Gothic portal sculpture.



18-36A PUCELLE, Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux, ca. 1325–1328.

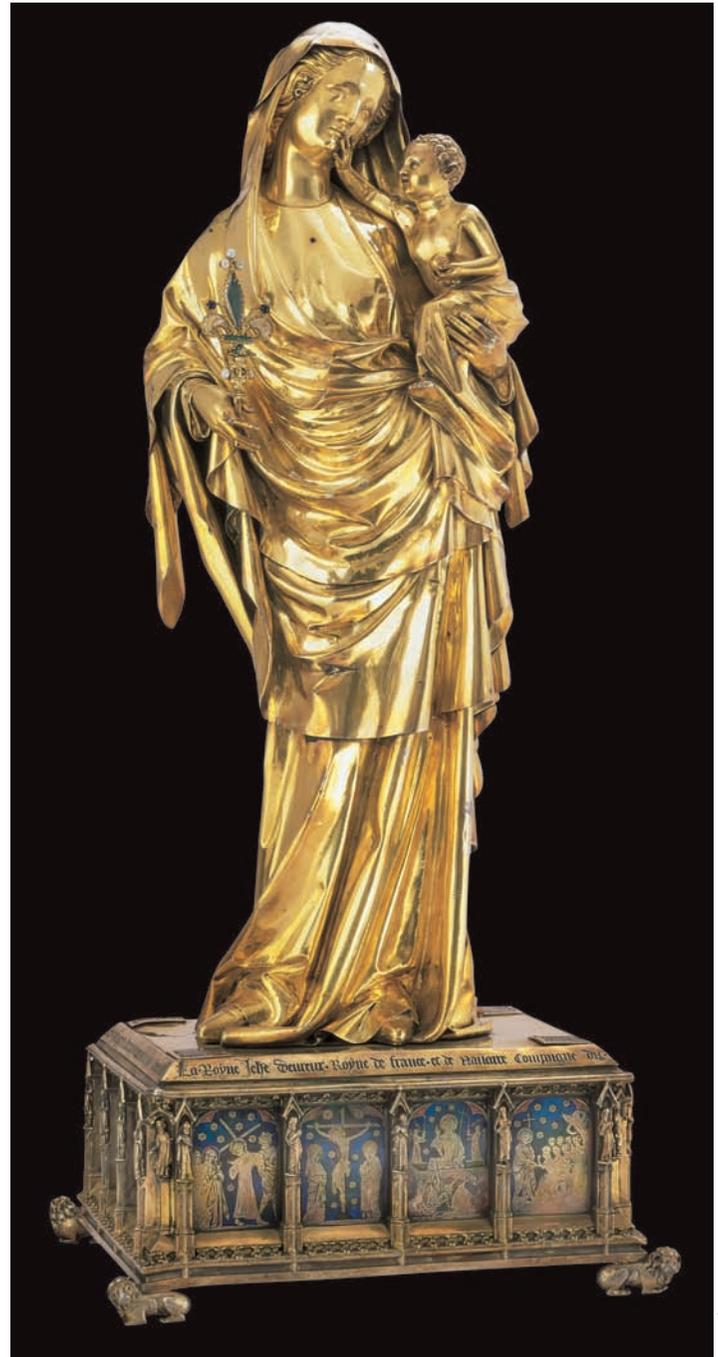


1 in.

18-36 JEAN PUCELLE, David before Saul, folio 24 verso of the *Belleville Breviary*, from Paris, France, ca. 1325. Ink and tempera on vellum, $9\frac{1}{2}'' \times 6\frac{3}{4}''$. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Jean Pucelle's fully modeled figures in architectural settings rendered in convincing perspective reveal his study of contemporary painting in Italy. He was also a close observer of plants and fauna.

Perhaps the finest of these costly statuettes is the large silver-gilt figurine known as the *Virgin of Jeanne d'Evreux* (FIG. 18-37). The queen, wife of Charles IV (r. 1322–1328), donated the image of the Virgin and Child to the royal abbey church of Saint-Denis in 1339. Mary stands on a rectangular base decorated with enamel scenes of Christ's Passion. (Some art historians think the enamels are Jean Pucelle's work.) But no hint of grief appears in the beautiful young Mary's face. The Christ Child, also without a care in the world, playfully reaches for his mother. The elegant proportions of the two figures, Mary's emphatic swaying posture, the heavy drapery folds, and the intimate human characterization of mother and son are also features of the roughly contemporary *Virgin of Paris* (FIG. 18-26). The sculptor of large stone statues and the royal silversmith working at small scale approached the representation of the Virgin and Child in a similar fashion. In the *Virgin of Jeanne d'Evreux*, as in the *Virgin of Paris*, Mary appears not only as the Mother of Christ but also as the Queen of Heaven. The Saint-Denis Mary also originally had a crown on her head, and the scepter she holds is in the form of the fleur-de-lis, the French monarchy's floral emblem. The statuette also served



1 in.

18-37 *Virgin of Jeanne d'Evreux*, from the abbey church of Saint-Denis, France, 1339. Silver gilt and enamel, $2' 3\frac{1}{2}''$ high. Louvre, Paris. ■◀

Queen Jeanne d'Evreux donated this luxurious reliquary-statuette to the royal abbey church of Saint-Denis. The intimate human characterization of the holy figures recalls that of the *Virgin of Paris* (FIG. 18-26).

as a reliquary. The Virgin's scepter contained hairs believed to come from Mary's head.

THE CASTLE OF LOVE Gothic artists produced luxurious objects for secular as well as religious contexts. Sometimes they decorated these costly pieces with stories of courtly love inspired by the romantic literature of the day, such as the famous story of Lancelot and Queen Guinevere, wife of King Arthur of Camelot. The French poet Chrétien de Troyes recorded their love affair in the late 12th century.



18-38 The Castle of Love and knights jousting, lid of a jewelry casket, from Paris, France, ca. 1330–1350. Ivory and iron, $4\frac{1}{2}'' \times 9\frac{3}{4}''$. Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

French Gothic artists also produced luxurious objects for secular use. This jewelry casket features ivory reliefs inspired by the romantic literature of the day in which knights joust and storm the Castle of Love.

One of the most interesting objects of this type is a woman's jewelry box adorned with ivory relief panels. The theme of the panel illustrated here (FIG. 18-38) is related to the allegorical poem *Romance of the Rose* by Guillaume de Lorris, written about 1225–1235 and completed by Jean de Meung between 1275 and 1280. At the left the sculptor carved the allegory of the siege of the Castle of Love. Gothic knights attempt to capture love's fortress by shooting flowers from their bows and hurling baskets of roses over the walls from catapults. Among the castle's defenders is Cupid, who aims his arrow at one of the knights while a comrade scales the walls on a ladder. In the lid's two central sections, two knights joust on horseback. Several maidens survey the contest from a balcony and cheer the knights on, as trumpets blare. A youth in the crowd holds a hunting falcon. The sport was a favorite pastime of the leisure class in the late Middle Ages. At the right, the victorious knight receives his prize (a bouquet of roses) from a chastely dressed maiden on horseback. The scenes on the sides of the box include the famous medieval allegory of female virtue, the legend of the unicorn, a white horse with a single ivory horn. Only a virgin could attract the rare animal, and any woman who could do so thereby also demonstrated her moral purity. Religious themes may have monopolized artistic production for churches in the Gothic age, but secular themes figured prominently in private contexts. Unfortunately, very few examples of the latter survive.

GOTHIC OUTSIDE OF FRANCE

In 1269 the prior (deputy abbot) of the church of Saint Peter at Wimpfen-im-Tal in the German Rhineland hired "a very experienced architect who had recently come from the city of Paris" to

rebuild his monastery church.⁴ The architect reconstructed the church *opere francigeno* ("in the French manner")—that is, in the Gothic style, the *opus modernum* of the Île-de-France. The Parisian Gothic style had begun to spread even earlier, but in the second half of the 13th century, the new style became dominant throughout western Europe. European architecture did not turn Gothic all at once or even uniformly. Almost everywhere, patrons and builders modified the Rayonnant court style of the Île-de-France according to local preferences. Because the old Romanesque traditions lingered on in many places, each area, marrying its local Romanesque design to the new style, developed its own brand of Gothic architecture.

England

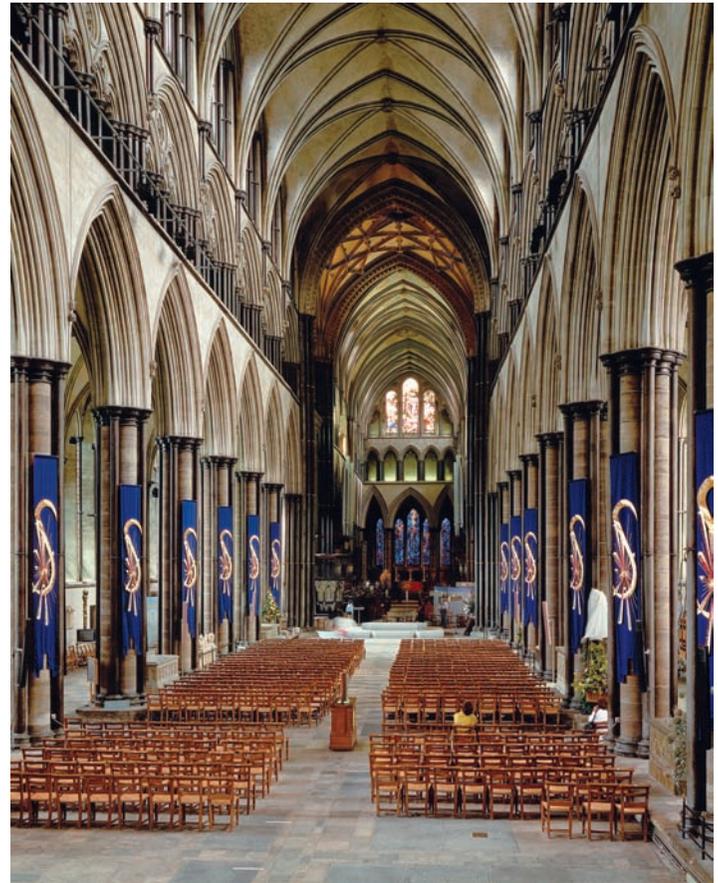
Beginning with the Norman conquest in 1066 (see Chapter 17), French architectural styles quickly made an impact in England, but in the Gothic period, as in the Romanesque, no one could have mistaken an English church for a French one.

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL Salisbury Cathedral (FIGS. 18-39 to 18-41) embodies the essential characteristics of the English Gothic style. Begun in 1220, the same year work started on Amiens Cathedral (FIGS. 18-19 to 18-21), construction of Salisbury Cathedral required about 40 years. The two cathedrals are therefore almost exactly contemporaneous, and the differences between them are very instructive. Although Salisbury's facade has lancet windows and blind arcades with pointed arches, as well as statuary, it presents a striking contrast to French High Gothic designs (FIGS. 18-21 and 18-23). The English facade is a squat screen in front of the nave, wider than the building behind it. The soaring height of the French facades is absent. The Salisbury facade also does not correspond to



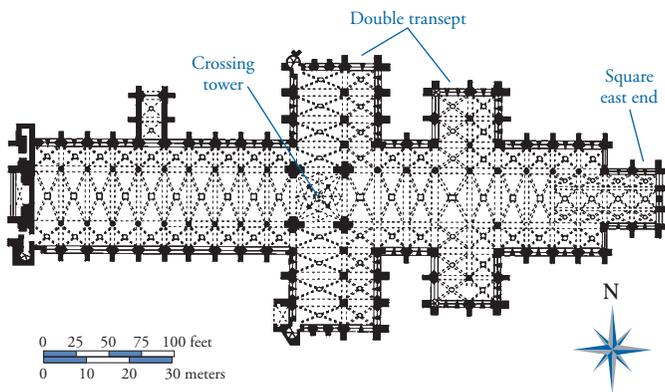
18-39 Aerial view of Salisbury Cathedral, Salisbury, England, 1220–1258; west facade completed 1265; spire ca. 1320–1330. ◀

Exhibiting the distinctive regional features of English Gothic architecture, Salisbury Cathedral has a squat facade that is wider than the building behind it. The architects used flying buttresses sparingly.



18-41 Interior of Salisbury Cathedral (looking east), Salisbury, England, 1220–1258.

Salisbury Cathedral's interior differs from contemporaneous French Gothic designs in the strong horizontal emphasis of its three-story elevation and the use of dark Purbeck marble for moldings.



18-40 Plan of Salisbury Cathedral, Salisbury, England, 1220–1258.

The long rectilinear plan of Salisbury Cathedral, with its double transept and flat eastern end, is typically English. The four-part rib vaults of the nave follow the Chartres model (FIG. 18-14).

the three-part division of the interior (nave and two aisles). Different too is the emphasis on the great crossing tower (added about 1320–1330), which dominates the silhouette. Salisbury's height is modest compared with that of Amiens and Reims. And because height is not a decisive factor in the English building, the architect used the flying buttress sparingly and as a rigid prop, rather than as

an integral part of the vaulting system within the church. In short, the English builders adopted some of the superficial motifs of French Gothic architecture but did not embrace its structural logic or emphasis on height.

Equally distinctive is the long rectilinear plan (FIG. 18-40) with its double transept and flat eastern end. The latter feature was characteristic of Cistercian (FIG. 17-14) and English churches since Romanesque times. The interior (FIG. 18-41), although Gothic in its three-story elevation, pointed arches, four-part rib vaults, compound piers, and the tracery of the triforium, conspicuously departs from the French Gothic style. The pier colonnettes stop at the springing of the nave arches and do not connect with the vault ribs (compare FIGS. 18-19 and 18-20). Instead, the vault ribs rise from corbels in the triforium, producing a strong horizontal emphasis. Underscoring this horizontality is the rich color contrast between the light stone of the walls and vaults and the dark Purbeck marble used for the triforium moldings and corbels, compound pier responds, and other details.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL Early on, English architecture found its native language in the elaboration of architectural pattern for its own sake (for example, the decorative patterning of the Romanesque piers of Durham Cathedral; FIG. 17-33, left). The pier, wall, and vault elements, still relatively simple at Salisbury, became increasingly complex and decorative in the 14th century, culminating in what architectural historians call the *Perpendicular* style. This



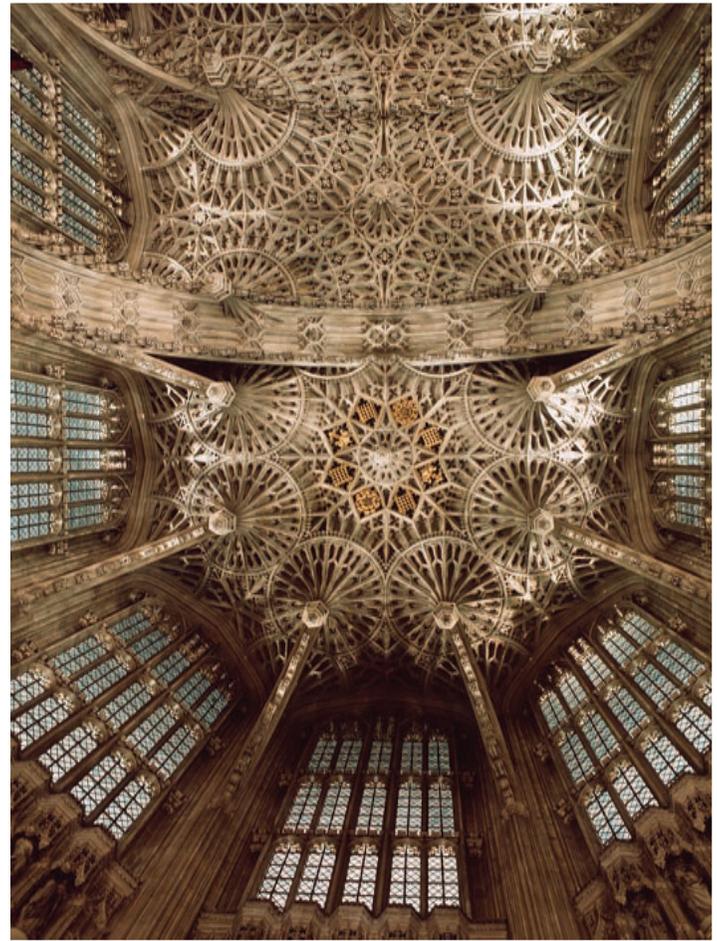
18-42 Choir of Gloucester Cathedral (looking east), Gloucester, England, 1332–1357.

The Perpendicular style of English Late Gothic architecture takes its name from the pronounced verticality of its decorative details. The multiplication of ribs in the vaults is also a characteristic feature.

late English Gothic style is on display in the choir (FIG. 18-42) of Gloucester Cathedral, remodeled about a century after Salisbury. The Perpendicular style takes its name from the pronounced verticality of its decorative details, in contrast to the horizontal emphasis of Salisbury and Early English Gothic.

A single enormous window divided into tiers of small windows of like shape and proportion fills the characteristically flat east end of Gloucester Cathedral. At the top, two slender lancets flank a wider central section that also ends in a pointed arch. The design has much in common with the screen facade of Salisbury, but the proportions are different. Vertical, as opposed to horizontal, lines dominate. In the choir wall, the architect also erased Salisbury's strong horizontal accents, as the vertical wall elements lift directly from the floor to the vaulting, unifying the walls with the vaults in the French manner. The vault ribs, which designers had begun to multiply soon after Salisbury, are at Gloucester a dense thicket of entirely ornamental strands serving no structural purpose. The choir, in fact, does not have any rib vaults at all but a continuous Romanesque barrel vault with applied Gothic ornament. In the Gloucester choir, the taste for decorative surfaces triumphed over structural clarity.

CHAPEL OF HENRY VII The structure-disguising and decorative qualities of the Perpendicular style became even more pronounced in its late phases. A primary example is the early-16th-century ceiling (FIG. 18-43) of the chapel of Henry VII (r. 1485–1509) adjoining Westminster Abbey in London. Here, ROBERT and WILLIAM VERTUE turned the earlier English linear play of ribs into a kind of ar-



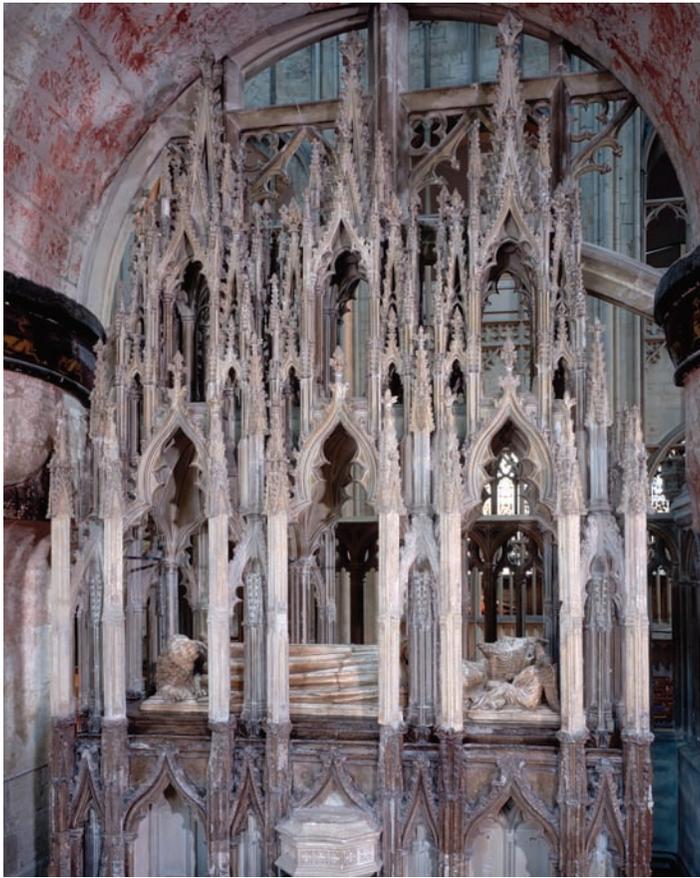
18-43 ROBERT and WILLIAM VERTUE, fan vaults of the chapel of Henry VII, Westminster Abbey, London, England, 1503–1519. ◀

The chapel of Henry VII epitomizes the decorative and structure-disguising qualities of the Perpendicular style in the use of fan vaults with lacelike tracery and hanging pendants resembling stalactites.

chitectural embroidery. The architects pulled the ribs into uniquely English *fan vaults* (vaults with radiating ribs forming a fanlike pattern) with large hanging *pendants* resembling stalactites. The vault looks as if it had been some organic mass that hardened in the process of melting. Intricate tracery recalling lace overwhelms the cones hanging from the ceiling. The chapel represents the dissolution of structural Gothic into decorative fancy. The architects released the Gothic style's original lines from their function and multiplied them into the uninhibited architectural virtuosity and theatrics of the Perpendicular style. A contemporaneous phenomenon in France is the Flamboyant style of Saint-Maclou (FIG. 18-27) at Rouen.

ROYAL TOMBS Henry VII's chapel also houses the king's tomb in the form of a large stone coffin with sculpted portraits of Henry and his queen, Elizabeth of York, lying on their backs. This type of tomb is a familiar feature of the churches of Late Gothic England—indeed, of Late Gothic Europe. Though not strictly part of the architectural fabric, as are tombs set into niches in the church walls, freestanding tombs with recumbent images of the deceased are permanent and immovable units of church furniture. They preserve both the remains and the memory of the person entombed and testify to the deceased's piety as well as prominence.

Services for the dead were a vital part of the Christian liturgy. The Christian hope for salvation in the hereafter prompted the dying faithful to request masses sung, sometimes in perpetuity, for



18-44 Tomb of Edward II, Gloucester Cathedral, Gloucester, England, ca. 1330–1335.

Edward II's tomb resembles a miniature Perpendicular English Gothic chapel with its forest of gables, ogee arches, and pinnacles. The shrinelike form suggests that the deceased is worthy of veneration.

the eternal repose of their souls. Toward that end, the highborn and wealthy endowed whole chapels for the chanting of masses (*chantries*), and made rich bequests of treasure and property to the Church. Many also required that their tombs be as near as possible to the choir or some other important location in the church. Sometimes, patrons built a chapel especially designed and endowed to house their tombs, such as Henry's chapel at Westminster Abbey. Freestanding tombs, accessible to church visitors, had a moral as well as a sepulchral and memorial purpose. The silent image of the deceased, cold and still, was a solemn reminder of human mortality, all the more effective because the remains of the person depicted were directly below the portrait. The tomb of an illustrious person could bring distinction, pilgrims, and patronage to a church, just as relics of saints attracted pilgrims from far and wide (see "Pilgrimages," Chapter 17, page 432).

An elaborate example of a freestanding tomb (FIG. 18-44) is that of Edward II (r. 1307–1327), installed in Gloucester Cathedral several years after the king's murder. Edward III (r. 1327–1357) paid for the memorial to his father, who reposes in regal robes with his crown on his head. The sculptor portrayed the dead king as an idealized Christlike figure (compare FIG. 18-22). On each side of Edward's head is an attentive angel tenderly touching his hair. At his feet is a guardian lion, emblem also of the king's strength and valor. An intricate Perpendicular Gothic canopy encases the coffin, forming a kind of miniature chapel protecting the deceased. It is a fine example of the English manner with its forest of delicate alabaster and



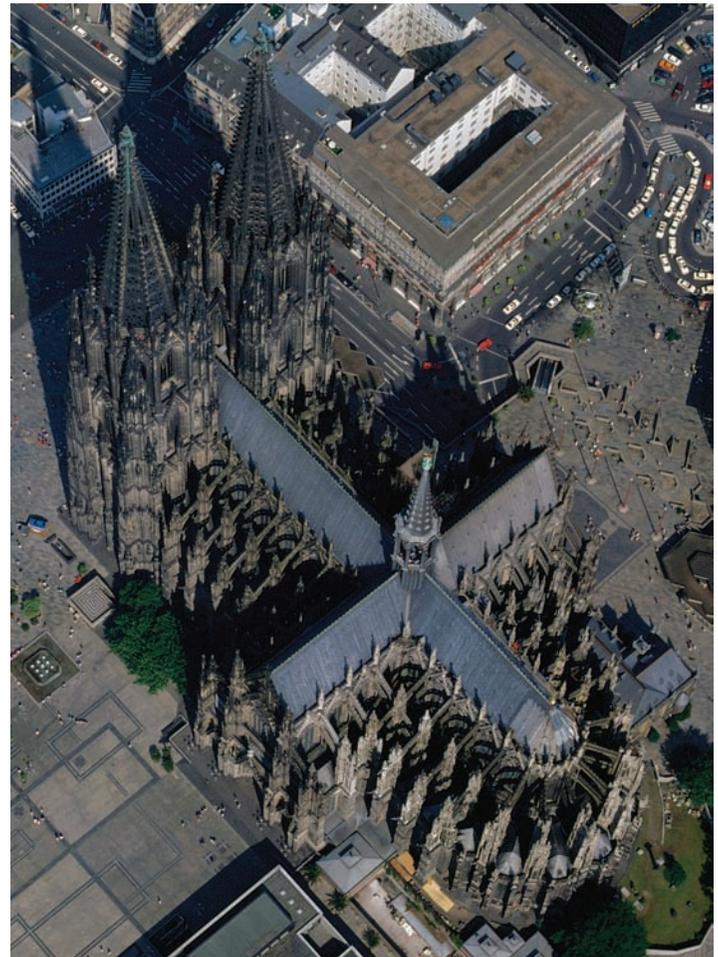
18-44A
Mappamundi
of Henry III,
ca. 1277–1289.

Purbeck marble gables, buttresses, and pinnacles. A distinctive feature is the use of *ogee arches* (arches made up of two double-curved lines meeting at a point), a characteristic Late Gothic form. Art historians often have compared tombs like Edward's to reliquaries. Indeed, the shrinelike frame and the church setting transform the deceased into a kind of saintly relic worthy of veneration.

Holy Roman Empire

The architecture of the Holy Roman Empire remained conservatively Romanesque well into the 13th century. In many German churches, the only Gothic feature was the rib vault, buttressed solely by the heavy masonry of the walls. By midcentury, though, the French Gothic style began to make a profound impact.

COLOGNE CATHEDRAL Cologne Cathedral (FIG. 18-45), begun in 1248 under the direction of GERHARD OF COLOGNE, was not completed until more than 600 years later, making it one of the longest building projects on record. Work halted entirely from the mid-16th to the mid-19th centuries, when the 14th-century design for the facade was unexpectedly found. Gothic Revival architects (see Chapter 30) then completed the building according to the Gothic plans, adding the nave, towers, and facade to the east end that had stood alone for several centuries. The Gothic/Gothic

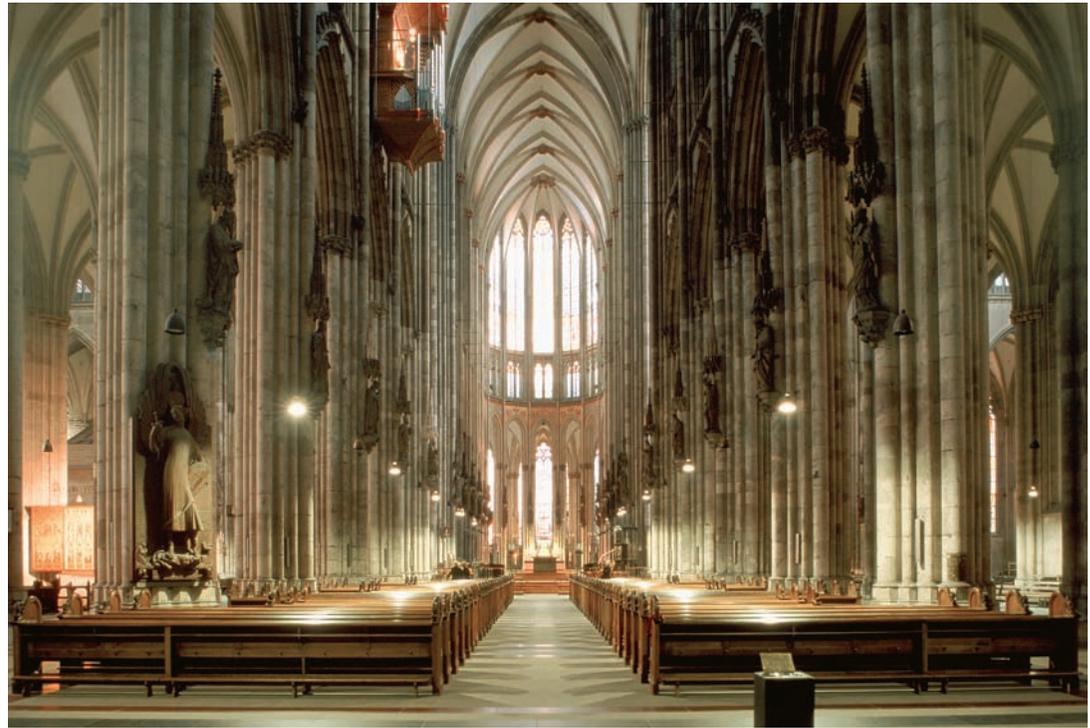


18-45 GERHARD OF COLOGNE, aerial view of Cologne Cathedral (looking northwest), Cologne, Germany, begun 1248; nave, facade, and towers completed 1880.

Cologne Cathedral, the largest church in northern Europe, took more than 600 years to build. Only the east end dates to the 13th century. The 19th-century portions follow the original Gothic plans.

18-46 GERHARD OF COLOGNE, interior of Cologne Cathedral (looking east), Cologne, Germany, choir completed 1322.

The nave of Cologne Cathedral is 422 feet long. The 150-foot-high choir, a taller variation on the Amiens Cathedral choir (FIG. 18-20), is a prime example of Gothic architects' quest for height.



Revival structure is the largest cathedral in northern Europe and boasts a giant (422-foot-long) nave (FIG. 18-46) with two aisles on each side.

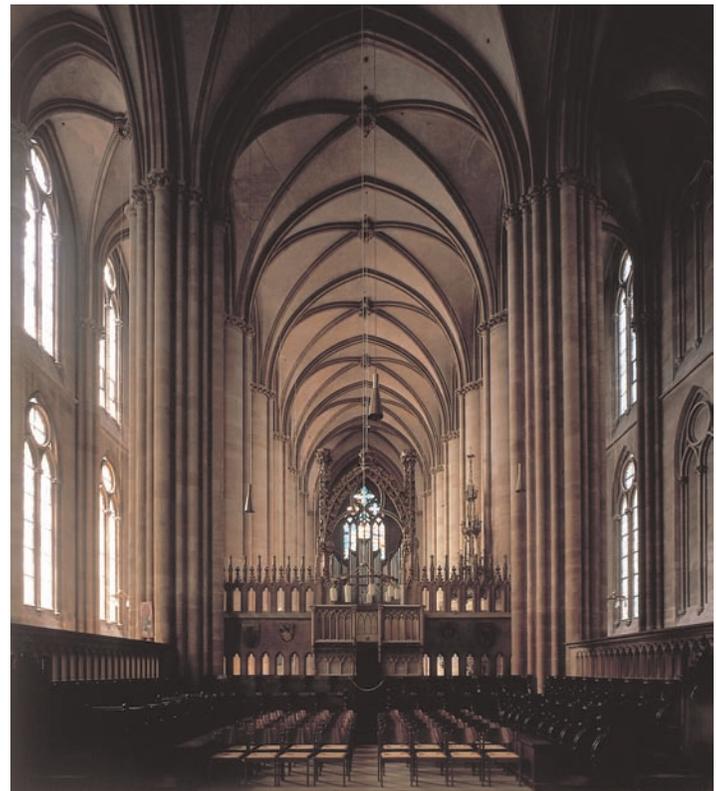
The 150-foot-high 14th-century choir is a skillful variation of the Amiens Cathedral choir (FIGS. 18-19 and 18-20) design, with double lancets in the triforium and tall, slender single windows in the clerestory above and choir arcade below. Completed four decades after Gerhard's death but according to his plans, the choir expresses the Gothic quest for height even more emphatically than many French Gothic buildings. Despite the cathedral's seeming lack of substance, proof of its stability came during World War II, when the city of Cologne sustained extremely heavy aerial bombardments. The church survived the war by virtue of its Gothic skeletal design. Once the first few bomb blasts blew out all of its windows, subsequent explosions had no adverse effects, and the skeleton remained intact and structurally sound.



18-47A Heiligkreuzkirche, Schwäbisch Gmünd, begun 1351.

SAINT ELIZABETH, MARBURG A different type of design, also probably of French origin (FIG. 17-16, left) but developed especially in Germany, is the *Hallenkirche*, in which the aisles are the same height as the nave. Hall churches, consequently, have no tribune, triforium, or clerestory. An early German example of this type is the church of Saint Elizabeth (FIG. 18-47) at Marburg, built between 1235 and 1283. It incorporates French-inspired rib vaults with pointed arches and tall lancet windows. The facade has two spire-capped towers in the French manner but no tracery arcades or portal sculpture. Because the aisles provide much of the bracing for the nave vaults, the exterior of Saint Elizabeth is without the dramatic parade of flying buttresses that typically circles French Gothic churches. But the German interior, lighted by double rows of tall windows in the aisle walls, is more unified and free flowing, less narrow and divided, and more brightly illuminated than the interiors of French and English Gothic churches.

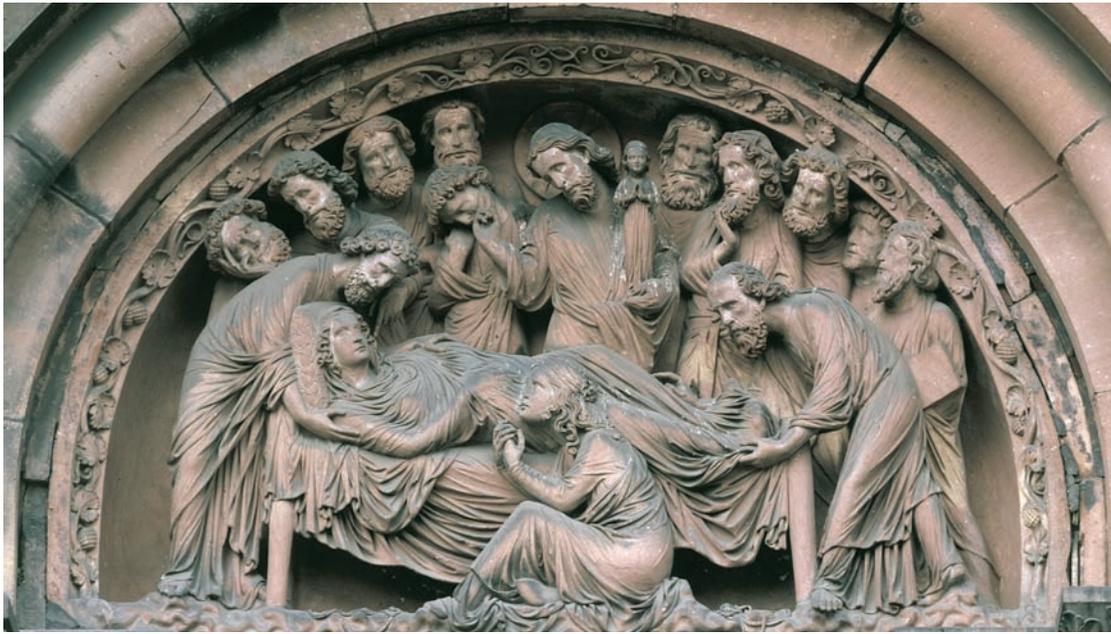
STRASBOURG CATHEDRAL In the German Rhineland, which the successors of the Carolingian and Ottonian emperors still ruled, work began in 1176 on a new cathedral for Strasbourg, today a French city. The apse, choir, and transepts were in place by around 1240. Stylistically, these sections of the new church are Romanesque. But the reliefs of the two south-transept portals are fully Gothic and reveal the impact of contemporary French sculpture, especially that of Reims.



18-47 Interior of Saint Elizabeth (looking west), Marburg, Germany, 1235–1283.

This German church is an early example of a *Hallenkirche*, in which the aisles are the same height as the nave. Because of the tall windows in the aisle walls, sunlight brightly illuminates the interior.

The subject of the left tympanum (FIG. 18-48) is the death of the Virgin Mary. A comparison of the Strasbourg Mary on her deathbed with the Mary of the Reims *Visitation* group (FIG. 18-24, right) suggests that the German master had studied the recently installed French jamb statues. The 12 apostles gather around the



18-48 Death of the Virgin, tympanum of left doorway, south transept, Strasbourg Cathedral, Strasbourg, France, ca. 1230.

Stylistically akin to the *Visitation* group (FIG. 18-24, right) of Reims Cathedral, the figures in Strasbourg's south-transept tympanum express profound sorrow through dramatic poses and gestures.

Virgin, forming an arc of mourners well suited to the semicircular frame. The sculptor adjusted the heights of the figures to fit the available space (the apostles at the right are the shortest), and, as in many depictions of crowds throughout history, some of the figures have no legs or feet. At the center, Christ receives his mother's soul (the doll-like figure he holds in his left hand). Mary Magdalene, wringing her hands in grief, crouches beside the deathbed. The sorrowing figures express emotion in varying degrees of intensity, from serene resignation to gesturing agitation. The sculptor organized the group by dramatic pose and gesture but also by the rippling flow of deeply incised drapery that passes among the figures like a rhythmic electric pulse. The sculptor's objective was to imbue the sacred figures with human emotions and to stir emotional responses in observers. In Gothic France, as already noted, art became increasingly humanized and natural. In Gothic Germany, artists carried this humanizing trend even further by emphasizing passionate drama.

EKKEHARD AND UTA The Strasbourg style, with its feverish emotionalism, was particularly appropriate for narrating dramatic events in relief. The sculptor entrusted with the decoration of the west choir of Naumburg Cathedral faced a very different challenge. The task was to carve statues of the 12 benefactors of the original 11th-century church on the occasion of a new fundraising campaign. The vivid gestures and agitated faces in the Strasbourg tympanum contrast with the quiet solemnity of the Naumburg statues. Two of the figures (FIG. 18-49) stand out from the group because of their exceptional quality. They represent the margrave (military governor) Ekkehard II of Meissen and his wife Uta. The statues are attached to columns and stand beneath architectural canopies, following the pattern of French Gothic portal statuary. Their location indoors accounts for the preservation of much of the original paint. Ekkehard and Uta suggest the original appearance of the facade and transept sculptures of Gothic cathedrals.

18-49 Ekkehard and Uta, statues in the west choir, Naumburg Cathedral, Naumburg, Germany, ca. 1249–1255. Painted limestone, Ekkehard 6' 2" high.

The period costumes and individualized features of these donor portraits give the impression that Ekkehard and Uta posed for their statues, but they lived long before the Naumburg sculptor's time.



18-49A West choir screen, Naumburg Cathedral, ca. 1249–1255.

18-50 Equestrian portrait (*Bamberg Rider*), statue in the east choir, Bamberg Cathedral, Germany, ca. 1235–1240. Sandstone, 7' 9" high.

Probably a portrait of a German emperor, perhaps Frederick II, the *Bamberg Rider* revives the imagery of the Carolingian Empire. The French-style architectural canopy cannot contain the entire statue.

The period costumes and the individualized features and personalities of the margrave and his wife give the impression that they posed for their own portraits, although the subjects lived well before the sculptor's time. Ekkehard, the intense knight, contrasts with the beautiful and aloof Uta. With a wonderfully graceful gesture, she draws the collar of her gown partly across her face while she gathers up a soft fold of drapery with a jeweled, delicate hand. The sculptor subtly revealed the shape of Uta's right arm beneath her cloak and rendered the fall of drapery folds with an accuracy that indicates the use of a model. The two statues are arresting images of real people, even if they bear the names of aristocrats the artist never met. By the mid-13th century, in the Holy Roman Empire as well as in England (FIG. 18-44) and elsewhere, life-size images of secular personages had found their way into churches.

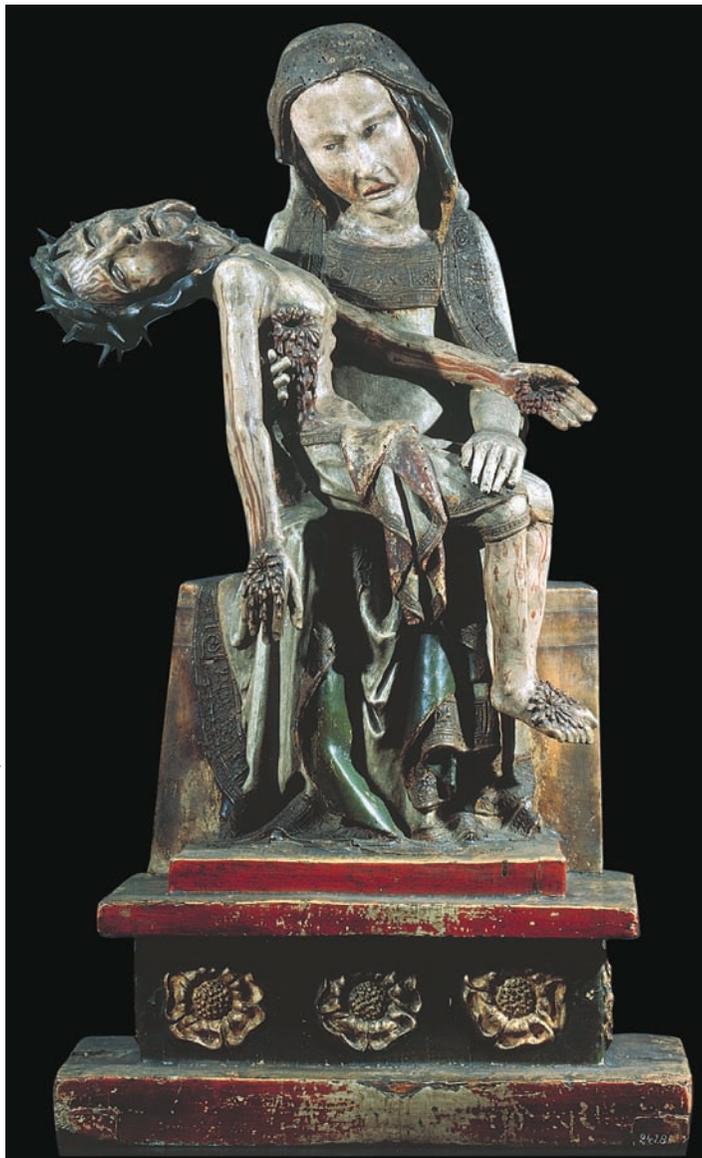
BAMBERG RIDER Somewhat earlier in date than the Naumburg "portraits" is the equestrian statue known as the *Bamberg Rider* (FIG. 18-50). For centuries this statue has been mounted against a pier in Bamberg Cathedral beneath an architectural canopy that frames the rider's body but not his horse. Scholars debate whether the statue was made for this location or moved there, perhaps from the church's exterior. Whatever the statue's original location, it revives the imagery of the Carolingian Empire (FIG. 16-12), derived in turn from that of ancient Rome (FIG. 10-59).

Like Ekkehard and Uta, the *Bamberg Rider* seems to be a true portrait. Some believe it represents a Holy Roman emperor, perhaps Frederick II (r. 1220–1250), who was a benefactor of Bamberg Cathedral. The many other identifications include Saint George and one of the three magi, but a historical personality is most likely the subject. The presence of a Holy Roman emperor in the cathedral would have underscored the unity of church and state in 13th-century Germany. The artist carefully represented the rider's costume, the high saddle, and the horse's trappings. The proportions of horse and rider are correct, although the sculptor did not quite understand the animal's anatomy, so its shape is rather stiffly schematic. The rider turns toward the observer, as if presiding at a review of troops. The torsion of this figure seems to reflect the same impatience with subordination to architecture found in the Reims portal statues (FIG. 18-24).

RÖTTGEN PIETÀ The confident 13th-century figures at Naumburg and Bamberg stand in marked contrast to a haunting 14th-century German painted wooden statuette (FIG. 18-51) of the Virgin



Mary holding the dead Christ in her lap. The widespread troubles of the 14th century—war, plague, famine, and social strife—brought on an ever more acute awareness of suffering. This sensibility found its way readily into religious art. The Dance of Death, Christ as the Man of Sorrow, and the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin Mary became favorite themes. A fevered and fearful piety sought comfort and reassurance in the reflection that Christ and the Virgin Mother shared humanity's woes. To represent this, artists emphasized the traits of human suffering in powerful, expressive exaggeration. In the illustrated group, a *Pietà* ("pity" or "compassion" in Italian), the sculptor portrayed Christ as a stunted, distorted human wreck, stiffened in death and covered with streams of blood gushing from a huge wound. The Virgin Mother, who cradles him like a child in her lap, is the very image of maternal anguish, her oversized face twisted in an expression of unbearable grief. This statue expresses nothing of the serenity of Romanesque and earlier Gothic depictions of Mary (FIGS. 17-18 and 18-16). Nor does the *Röttgen Pietà* (named after a collector) have anything in common with the aloof, iconic images of the Theotokos with the infant Jesus in her lap common in Byzantine art (FIGS. 12-18 and 12-19). Here the artist forcibly confronts the devout with an appalling icon of agony, death, and sorrow that humanizes, almost to the point of heresy, the sacred personages. The work calls out to the horrified believer, "What is your suffering compared to this?"



1 ft.

18-51 Virgin with the Dead Christ (*Röttgen Pietà*), from the Rhineland, Germany, ca. 1300–1325. Painted wood, 2' 10½" high. Rheinisches Landmuseum, Bonn. ◀

This statuette of the Virgin grieving over the distorted dead body of Christ in her lap reflects the widespread troubles of the 14th century and the German interest in emotional imagery.

Throughout Europe, the humanizing of religious themes and religious images accelerated steadily from the 12th century. By the 14th century, art addressed the private person (often in a private place) in a direct appeal to the emotions. The expression of feeling accompanied the representation of the human body in motion. As the figures of the church portals began to twist on their columns, then move within their niches, and then stand independently, their details became more outwardly related to the human audience as expressions of recognizable human emotions.

NICHOLAS OF VERDUN As part of his plan to make his new church at Saint-Denis an earthly introduction to the splendors of Paradise (see “Abbot Suger,” page 463), Suger selected artists from the Meuse River valley to fashion a magnificent crucifix for the choir. This region long had been famous for the quality of its metalworkers and enamellers (FIGS. 17-23 and 17-24). Suger described the Saint-Denis cross as standing on a sumptuous base decorated with 68



1 in.

18-52 NICHOLAS OF VERDUN, sacrifice of Isaac, detail of the *Klosterneuburg Altar*, from the abbey church at Klosterneuburg, Austria, 1181. Gilded copper and enamel, 5½" high. Stifftsmuseum, Klosterneuburg.

Nicholas of Verdun was the leading artist of the Meuse valley region, renowned for its metal- and enamelwork. His emotionally charged gold figures stand out vividly from the blue enamel background.

enamel scenes pairing Old and New Testament episodes. The enamel work of the leading Meuse valley artist of the late 12th and early 13th centuries, NICHOLAS OF VERDUN, suggests the appearance of the biblical enamels on Suger’s lost crucifix.

In 1181, Nicholas completed work on a gilded-copper and enamel *ambo* (a pulpit for biblical readings) for the Benedictine abbey church at Klosterneuburg, near Vienna in Austria. After a fire damaged the pulpit in 1330, the church hired artists to convert the pulpit into an *altarpiece* (a decorative panel above and behind the altar). The pulpit’s sides became the wings of a *triptych* (three-part altarpiece). The 14th-century artists also added six scenes to Nicholas’s original 45. The *Klosterneuburg Altar* in its final form has a central row of enamels depicting New Testament episodes, beginning with the Annunciation, and bearing the label *sub gracia*, or the world “under grace,” that is, after the coming of Christ. The upper and lower registers contain Old Testament scenes labeled, respectively, *ante legem*, “before the law” Moses received on Mount Sinai, and *sub lege*, “under the law” of the Ten Commandments. In this scheme, prophetic Old Testament events appear above and below the New Testament episodes they prefigure. For example, framing the Annunciation to Mary of the coming birth of Jesus are enamels of angels announcing the births of Isaac and Samson. In the central section of the triptych, the Old Testament counterpart of Christ’s Crucifixion is Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac (FIG. 18-52), a parallel already established in Early Christian times in both art (FIG. 11-7)



18-52A *Klosterneuburg Altar*, refashioned after 1330.



18-53 NICHOLAS OF VERDUN, *Shrine of the Three Kings*, from Cologne Cathedral, Cologne, Germany, begun ca. 1190. Silver, bronze, enamel, and gemstones, 5' 8" × 6' × 3' 8". Cathedral Treasury, Cologne.

Cologne's archbishop commissioned this huge reliquary in the shape of a church to house relics of the three magi. The figures are sculpted versions of those on the *Klosterneuburg Altar* (FIG. 18-52).

and literature (see "Jewish Subjects in Christian Art," Chapter 11, page 293). Nicholas of Verdun's gold figures stand out vividly from the blue enamel background. The biblical actors twist and turn, make emphatic gestures, and wear garments that are almost overwhelmed by the intricate linear patterns of their folds. In the Abraham and Isaac panel, the angel flies in at the very last moment to grab the blade of Abraham's sword before he can kill the bound Isaac on the altar. The intense emotionalism of the representation and the linear complexity of the garments foreshadowed the tone and style of the Strasbourg tympanum depicting the death of the Virgin (FIG. 18-48).

Sculpted versions of the Klosterneuburg figures appear on the *Shrine of the Three Kings* (FIG. 18-53) in Cologne Cathedral. Nicholas of Verdun probably began work on the huge reliquary (six feet long and almost as tall) in 1190. Philip von Heinsberg, archbishop of Cologne from 1167 to 1191, commissioned the shrine to contain relics of the three magi. The Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa acquired them in the conquest of Milan in 1164 and

donated them to the German cathedral. Possession of the magi's relics gave the Cologne archbishops the right to crown German kings. Nicholas's reliquary, made of silver and bronze with ornamentation in enamel and gemstones, is one of the most luxurious ever fashioned, especially considering its size. The shape resembles that of a basilican church. Repoussé figures of the Virgin Mary, the three magi, Old Testament prophets, and New Testament apostles in arcuated frames are variations of those on the Klosterneuburg pulpit. The deep channels and tight bunches of the drapery folds are hallmarks of Nicholas's style.

Nicholas of Verdun's *Klosterneuburg Altar* and his *Shrine of the Three Kings*, together with Suger's treatises on the furnishings of Saint-Denis, are welcome reminders of how magnificently outfitted medieval church interiors were. The so-called minor arts played a defining role in creating a special otherworldly atmosphere for Christian ritual. These Gothic examples continued a tradition that dates to the Roman emperor Constantine and the first imperial patronage of Christianity (see Chapter 11).

GOTHIC EUROPE

FRANCE

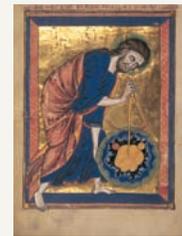
- The birthplace of Gothic art and architecture was Saint-Denis, where Abbot Suger used rib vaults with pointed arches and stained-glass windows to rebuild the Carolingian royal church. The west facade of Suger's church also introduced statue-columns on the portal jambs, which appeared shortly later on the Royal Portal of Chartres Cathedral. Laon Cathedral is another important example of Early Gothic (1140–1194) architecture.
- After a fire in 1194, Chartres Cathedral was rebuilt with flying buttresses, four-part nave vaults, and a three-story elevation of nave arcade, triforium, and clerestory, setting the pattern for High Gothic (1194–1300) cathedrals, including Amiens with its 144-foot-high vaults.
- Flying buttresses made possible huge stained-glass windows. High Gothic windows employ delicate lead comes and bar tracery. The divine colored light (*lux nova*) they admitted transformed the character of church interiors.
- High Gothic statue-columns broke out of the architectural straitjacket of their Early Gothic predecessors. At Chartres, Reims, and elsewhere, the sculpted figures move freely and sometimes converse with their neighbors.
- The High Gothic Rayonnant court style of Louis IX gave way in the Late Gothic (1300–1500) period to the Flamboyant style seen at Saint-Maclou at Rouen.
- Several important examples of secular architecture survive from the Gothic period, including the bastions and towers of Carcassonne, the hall of the cloth guild in Bruges, and the house of Jacques Coeur in Bourges.
- In the 13th century, Paris was the center of production of costly moralized Bibles and other illuminated manuscripts in urban workshops of professional artists, which usurped the role of monastic scriptoria.



Royal Portal, Chartres Cathedral,
ca. 1145–1155



Amiens Cathedral, begun 1220



God as architect of the world,
ca. 1220–1230

ENGLAND

- The Parisian Gothic style became the rage in most of Europe during the 13th century, but many regional styles developed, as in the Romanesque period. English Gothic churches like Salisbury Cathedral differ from their French counterparts in their wider and shorter facades, flat east ends, double transepts, and sparing use of flying buttresses.
- Especially characteristic of English Gothic architecture is the elaboration of architectural patterns, which often disguise the underlying structure of the buildings. Constructed in the Late Gothic Perpendicular style, the fan vaults of the chapel of Henry VII transform the logical rib vaults of French buildings into decorative fancy.



Salisbury Cathedral, Salisbury,
1220–1258

HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

- German architects eagerly embraced the French Gothic architectural style at Cologne Cathedral and elsewhere. German originality manifested itself most clearly in the Gothic period in sculpture, which often features emotionally charged figures in dramatic poses.
- Statues of secular historical figures decorate the interiors of Naumburg and Bamberg cathedrals, signaling a revival of interest in the art of portraiture.
- Nicholas of Verdun was the leading artist of the Meuse River valley, an area renowned for metal- and enamelwork. Nicholas's altars and shrines provide an idea of how sumptuous were the furnishings of Gothic churches.



Nicholas of Verdun,
Shrine of the Three Kings, ca. 1190