

9.2 The Great Gothic Cathedrals and the urban settings for them, c 1150-1350

- 1) *Great cities* begin to develop: Paris, Bruges, Cologne, e.g.
  - Population booms - better farming means and methods - higher life expectancies
  - Commerce develops in cities
  - Cities offered more freedom. People shifted from being serfs of feudal lords to being taxpaying citizens of cities
  - Resurgence of civic architecture: cathedrals, hospitals, markets
  - **Faubourg** - French word meaning settlement area - suburb (fooh-boorgh)
  - City walls expanded
- 2) Bruges examples of **architectural urban fabric**
  - **Belfry** (tall tower), **Cloth Hall** (covered market), **Waterhalle** (covered port-like area of the canal where goods could be unloaded directly into merchants' stalls) About **1280**.
- 3) **St. Urbain** in Troyes (**1262**)
  - Cleric from here was elected **Pope Urban IV**
  - Cathedral built in **Gothic** style - increasing height, reducing wall-to-window ratio, switching round-arched windows and barrel vaults to pointed arch windows and ribbed vaults. Switch from buttresses to flying-buttresses, and other changes.
- 4) **Carcassonne** in southern France (**1240**) (CAR-cass-onne)
  - Walled city captured by King Louis IX (Saint Louis) in 1240 from the Cathars, who were renegade Christians.
  - Louis IX rebuilt Carcassonne as a fortified bastion, extending French rule into the south
  - Planned town
  - Drawbridge to the **donjon** (known as a **castle keep** in English castles). The **donjon** was the last refuge and the fortified domicile within the castle. In the Japanese architecture this fortified domicile element is called the **tenshu**.
- 5) **bastides** - the word for new towns built all over Gascony in the south of France (**1250-1300**)
  - French and English competed to gain control of Gascony by building new towns
  - Towns based on a grid survey and urban lots of 16' x 32' based on the length of timber.
  - Called **Gothic Lots** and selected by lottery
  - Market near the center of town, and a space nearby for a church.
  - **New towns increased freedom of movement of people, accessibility to markets, and a greater social order. Freer towns decreased intimidating control of feudal lords over people.**
- 6) The **Gothic Cathedral** is the crown of the city
  - The building boom across Europe nurtured church building in the new **Gothic Style**
  - Gothic marked by increasingly taller, thinner structure to emphasize **heavenly light** in the interior. The **heavenly light** called **lux nova**.
  - Key features: **ribbed vaulting, bigger clerestories, flying buttresses, pointed arches**
  - Structure a direct response to the purpose of the building - a sense of greater spirituality
- 7) **Abbot Suger** (su-GHAY) **1081-1151** and **Saint-Denis of Paris** (san-day-KNEE)
  - Rebuilt portions of **Saint-Denis** to achieve **lux nova (the new light)**
  - Suger added round window (**1130**) between towers of the **westworks** symbolizing either the **wheel of fortune**, or, later thought to be the **rose** of the Virgin Mary (Rose Window)
  - Call it a **wheel window** or **rose window**
  - Suger added a **chevet** of seven chapels at St Denis
  - Suger's works influenced later French cathedrals to a great degree
  - Because of Abbot Suger's close connection with crusaders **Louis VI** (1108-1137) and **Louis VII** (1137-1180), Suger rules as regent while Louis VII is away in Palestine on Second Crusade. **Henceforth, Saint-Denis becomes the burial church of most of the subsequent Kings of France.**
- 8) Gothic becomes a **French national style** - other Cathedrals following **Saint-Denis**
  - **Spiritual effect increases with height, verticality, lightness**
  - **Amiens - Rouen - Troyes - Reims - Chartres - Laon** (lon) - **Notre Dame of Paris**
  - Kings of France crowned at **Reims**
  - **Notre Dame at Laon** - example of early Gothic finished **1215**
  - **Chartres** - clear progression from heavier to lighter
  - More work on **Saint-Denis** by **Jean de Chelles** and **Pierre de Montreuil**
- 9) **Notre Dame of Paris** complete about **1260**
  - a very clear **tripartite construction** of three horizontal and three vertical ranges
  - towers disintegrated with deep carvings and fenestration
  - tall spire at **crossing**

- gargoyles, crockets, flying buttresses
- a near-perfect textbook example of a *Gothic Cathedral*
- When Victor Hugo wrote about the church in ***Notre Dame of Paris (1830)***, it created great reinterest in the building and its poor state of repair - ***it led to the first national preservation movement*** - and it happened in France - the first national-scale preservation movement