What the Middle Ages knew
Gothic Art

Piero Scaruffi
Copyright 2018
http://www.scaruffi.com/ know
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic architecture
  – Economic prosperity
  – Growing independence of towns from feudal lords
  – Intellectual fervor of cathedral schools and scholastics
  – Birth of the French nation-state
What the Middle Ages knew

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

(Suger’s choir, St Denis, Paris)

(Chartres, France)
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic architecture
  – Consequences:
    • High naves
    • Campaniles, towers, spires: vertical ascent
    • Large windows (walls not needed for support)
    • Stained glass windows
    • Light
What the Middle Ages knew

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

• Architectural styles of the Middle Ages
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic architecture
  – Consequences:
    • Stained glass windows

(Chartres, France)
What the Middle Ages knew

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

• Gothic
  – Gothic cathedrals as scholastic theology
  – Romanesque gloom (the apocalypse) vs Gothic light (what comes after the apocalypse)
What the Middle Ages knew

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

- St Denis
- Notre Dame
- Chartres
- Laon
- Reims
What the Middle Ages knew

- Paris: Louvre (1360s)

Source: Heures du Duc de Berry
What the Middle Ages knew

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

- Gothic architecture in England
  - Gloucester cathedral (1100)

Influence of the longbow on the arches
What the Middle Ages knew

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

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

- Gothic architecture in Italy
  - Duomo di Milano (1385-1965)
    - Drums over the capitals of the pillars
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic architecture in Italy
  – Palazzo dei Dogi, Venezia (1343)
  – Ca d’Oro, Venezia (1423)
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic architecture in Spain
  – Toledo cathedral (1226)
  – Leon cathedral (1255)
  – Palma de Mallorca cathedral (1306)
  – Sevilla cathedral (1402-1518)
  – Alcazar, Segovia (1410-55)
  – Burgos cathedral (1440)
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic architecture
  – Krak de Chevaliers, Syria (XIII)
  – Marienburg/Malbork castle, Poland (1309-1457)
  – New Kremlin (1485-1516)

• Flanders
  – Utrecht cathedral (1265)
  – Antwerp cathedral (1352)
What the Middle Ages knew

Vizelay

Autun
What the Middle Ages knew

• Gothic sculpture

15th century tomb of Philippe Pot of Burgundy, Louvre
What the Middle Ages knew

- Gothic sculpture

(West portal, Chartres, France)