UNIT 5

INTO THE AGE OF INQUIRY

THE GOTHIC WORLD

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1) OUTLINE THE IDEAS, TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS, AND STYLISTIC DEVELOPMENTS THAT DISTINGUISH THE GOTHIC STYLE IN FRANCE.

2) DISCUSS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND THE VARIOUS METHODOLOGIES OF THE VARIOUS MEDIEVAL INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING.

3) EXAMINE THE SPREAD OF A VERNACULAR LITERARY STYLE IN EUROPEAN CULTURE.

4) EXAMINE THE OUTBREAK OF THE BUBONIC PLAGUE, AND HOW IT AFFECTED EUROPE FOR CENTURIES AFTERWARD.
SAINT-DENIS: THE ORIGINS OF THE GOTHIC STYLE

- The archiform that came to be known as Gothic originated with the construction of the Abbey of Saint-Denis, just north of Paris.
- The building was the work of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis.
- Abbot Suger wanted the Île-de-France region to gain in prominence by creating a form of architecture that surpassed all others in beauty and grandeur.
- As was common, other builders wanted to outdo Saint-Denis, and thus it wasn’t long before many other cathedral buildings were built in the style, in France and eventually other countries.
SAINT-DENIS AND THE GOTHIC CATHEDRAL

- Abbot Suger was inspired by church writings that interpreted light as the physical and material manifestation of the divine spirit.
- The church's beauty was designed to elevate the soul to the realm of God, in that heaven is above, and therefore to see God one must look up.

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

- A key innovation was rib vaulting.
- Rib vaulting made it possible to replace the massive Romanesque stonework with thinner columns and patterns of ribs and windows.
- All architectural elements lead the eye upwards like a gravity-defying crescendo that carries the viewer’s gaze toward the heavens.

Gothic Vaults
STAINED GLASS IN THE GOTHIC

- One of the "side effects" of the structural design of Gothic buildings is that the walls were opened up and became less bulky, allowing for much more window area.
- The windows then became a form of "messaging."
- The purpose of the stained-glass programs in all Gothic cathedrals was to tell the stories of the Bible to an audience that was largely illiterate.

INTERIOR OF THE BASILICA OF SAINT-DENIS. C. 1144 CE.

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE, GERMANY. CONSTRUCTION BEGUN 1208 CE.
STAINED GLASS

- Windows were used to relate the story of the church, so their designs became more complex.
- There are two basic methods used to make stained glass: MOSAIC & VITRIOLIC.
- The ROSE WINDOW, or a round window with MULLIONS and TRACERY extending outward from its center, in the NORTHERN TRANSEPT at CHARTRES symbolizes the VIRGIN MARY in her role as the MYSTIC ROSE.
GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

» As buildings were becoming taller and "thinner," a new means of support was needed.

» Structurally, the Gothic style was a challenge to builders and architects.

» The **Flying Buttress** was developed to help spread the weight of the outward push of the walls and vaults over more supporting stone, allowing the walls to be thinner.

FLYING BUTTRESS

FLYING BUTTRESS, CATHEDRAL OF NOTRE-DAME, PARIS, FRANCE, c. 1175-1225 CE.
THE RISE OF THE UNIVERSITY

- The University of Bologna, founded in 1158, quickly established itself as a center for the study of law.
- Proficiency in Latin was mandatory, and students studied Latin in all courses of their first four years of study.
- The University of Paris was chartered in 1200, and soon after came Oxford University and Cambridge University, both in England.

THE RISE OF THE UNIVERSITY

- The Quadrivium was a branch of the regular liberal arts curriculum associated with music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.
- In contrast, the Trivium was composed of the language arts including grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic.

ABELARD AND THE DIALECTIC METHOD

- The quality of the teaching at the University of Paris distinguished it from other universities.
- The school’s most renowned lecturer was Peter Abelard, who taught by the Dialectic Method.
- The Dialectic Method is a question and answer discussion between two differing viewpoints, in the search for a common truth, and for understanding.
THOMAS AQUINAS AND SCHOLASTICISM

- Thomas Aquinas adopted Abelard’s dialectical method to his own method, called Scholasticism.
- The medieval Summa was an authoritative summary of all that was known on a traditional subject, and it was the ultimate aim of every highly educated man to produce one.
- Aquinas built “articles of faith” to build upon his rational demonstrations in the Summa Theologica.
- Christians never fully accepted Aquinas’ writings, but his influence on theology was profound.

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

- There were some exceptions to the rule of women not allowed to attend universities existed.
  - One of the most well known was Novella D’Andrea. She was a distinguished lecturer on philosophy and canon law at the University of Bologna.
  - She was the daughter of Giovanni D’Andrea, professor in canon law at the University of Bologna. She was educated by her father and took over his lectures at the university after his death. According to Christine de Pisan, she lectured students from behind a curtain so they would not be distracted by her beauty.
THE RADIANT STYLE AND THE COURT OF LOUIS IX

By the middle of the thirteenth century, the Gothic style in France had been elaborated into increasingly flamboyant patterns of repeated traceries and ornament, which is referred to as Rayonnant or Radiant Style.

In France, this style was closely associated with the Court of Louis IX (r. 1226–1270).

One of his most important contributions to the Church, and to the history of Gothic architecture, is the Royal Chapel of Sainte-Chapelle on the Île de la Cité in Paris.

It is a Palatine Chapel, or palace chapel, on the model of Charlemagne, which connects Louis with his great predecessor.
SIENA AND FLORENCE

➢ The governments of both cities were controlled by arti, or guilds, associations or groups of people with like-minded, often occupation-based interests. Nearly every profession had a guild in most larger cities.

➢ By the end of the thirteenth century, the pope, fearing their economic power, retaliated against Siena, stripping them of some of their economic strength, making Florence the principal power in Tuscany. This helped set the stage for the beginning of the Renaissance.
SIENA AND FLORENCE: COMMUNE AND REPUBLIC

- SIENA ESTABLISHED ITSELF IN 1125 AS A FREE COMMUNE (A COLLECTIVE OF PEOPLE GATHERED TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD).
- THIS PROSPECT OF FREEDOM ATTRACTED AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PEOPLE TO SIENA, WHICH BROUGHT PROSPERITY TO THE TOWN.
- LIKE SIENA, FLORENCE WAS EXTREMELY WEALTHY, AND ITS WEALTH WAS BASED ON TRADE.
- AS IN SIENA, IT WAS THE FLORENCE’S BANKERS AND MONEYLENDERS WHO MADE THE CITY A VITAL PLAYER IN WORLD TRADE.

INVESTIGATING THE ARTS

- FRESCO IS THE TECHNIQUE OF PAINTING ON WET PLASTER WITH TEMPERA (PAINT MADE FROM EGG YOLK).
- WHEN THE UNDERCOAT IS DRY, A FULL-SIZE DRAWING OF THE WORK, OR CARTOON, WOULD BE APPLIED TO THE WALL.
- SINCE THE PAINT HAD TO BE APPLIED ON A WET WALL, SMALL SECTIONS, OR GIORNATA (LITERALLY “DAY’S WORK”) WERE MADE WITH SEAMS AT THE CONTOURS OF MAJOR FIGURES AND OBJECTS.

GIOVANNI DI BARTOLO (C. 1305–1375-80). THE LIFE OF CHRIST AND THE VIRGIN FRESCOES. 1305–06. SCROVEGNI CHAPEL, PADUA.
THE SPREAD OF VERNACULAR LITERATURE IN EUROPE

- In the early twelfth century, authors across Europe began to write in the vernacular, the language spoken in the streets.
- One of the greatest medieval Italian vernacular poets was Dante Alighieri (1265–1321).

DANTE’S DIVINE COMEDY

- The Divine Comedy records the travels of the Christian soul from hell to purgatory and finally to salvation in three books—The Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso.
- The rhyme scheme of the Divine Comedy is terza rima—an interlocking three-line pattern invented by Dante that goes A/B/A, B/C/B, C/D/C, and so on.
THE BLACK DEATH AND ITS AFTERMATH

- In December 1347, the bubonic plague arrived in Sicily, from China. It came on merchant ships.
- Within months, the disease spread quickly northward throughout Europe.
- In Tuscany, the death rate in the cities ran about 60 percent.
- The frank treatment of reality found in the visual arts carried over into literature.
- The direct language of the vernacular proved an especially appropriate vehicle for rendering truth.
LITERATURE AFTER THE BLACK DEATH: BOCCACCIO’S DECAMERON

- One of the most remarkable accounts of the plague can be found in the *Decameron* (“Work of Ten Days”) by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375), who had survived the Black Death.
- The Florentine writer presents 100 stories as told by young noblemen and women who survived plague-ridden Florence, by escaping the city for the countryside.

CHAUCER’S CANTERBURY TALES

- The first Englishman to write about the plague was the middle-class civil servant and diplomat Geoffrey Chaucer (ca. 1342–1400).
- Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* are modeled on Boccaccio’s *Decameron*.
- The *Canterbury Tales* is a framed collection of stories told by a group of pilgrims traveling from London to the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, on a religious pilgrimage.

CONTINUITY & CHANGE

- Humanism can be described as the recovery, study, and spread of the art and literature of Greece and Rome, and the application of their principles to education, politics, social life, and the arts in general.
- This concept would come to define the coming Renaissance period in the two centuries following the Gothic era.
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