

Syllabus

Age of Cathedrals—French S304, HUMS S268, LITR S177

July 12–August 14, 2021

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This course aims to develop an understanding of the intellectual and visual culture of the High Middle Ages via the study of the Gothic cathedrals of the Parisian region. In each of our five weeks together, we shall focus upon a particular cathedral—the architectural and technical elements of structure; the iconography of sculptural and stained glass programs; the influences of Old and New Testaments alongside biblical apocrypha; the secular literature surrounding construction as well as the ways in which local history, social and economic life, political and legal institutions coincide in the making and meaning of these great religious, municipal, and national monuments. Finally, we shall study the history of Gothic cathedrals as they have been maimed, maintained, restored, and renovated over the centuries since their original construction.

Please Note: You should do the reading for each week before our Tuesday meetings, when worksheets are due, with the exception of Week 5 when there is no worksheet. You should also each week before class explore the particular indicated website of Mapping Gothic France:

<http://mappinggothic.org/>

*Indicates that reading is available on Canvas.

Week I Saint-Denis

Reading: *Abbot Suger, *What was Done under his Administration; The Consecration of the Church of Saint-Denis*. *Pseudo-Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchies*; *James of Voragine, "Genealogy of Christ," "Saint Denis." Explore Mapping Gothic, Saint-Denis:

<http://mappinggothic.org/building/1182#/>

July 13, **Introduction.** Discussion of the difference between romanesque and gothic, the structural elements of medieval

cathedrals, history of the abbey of Saint-Denis and its relation to the crown, the sculpture of the western façade.

July 15, Worksheet #1 due. Suger's doctrine of holiness and light, of materiality and the senses to spirituality, "anagogic uplifting," the role and power of relics.

Week II Notre-Dame

Reading: *Abelard, *History of my Misfortunes* in the personal Letters of Abelard and Heloise, *Rutebeuf, "Miracle of Théophile," *Marie de France, *selected Fables, *Adam d'Arras, *"The Play of Madness," *Selected fabliaux; *James of Voragine, "Nativity of Mary."

Explore Mapping Gothic, Notre-Dame Paris:

<http://mappinggothic.org/building/1164>

July 20, Worksheet #2 due. The building of Notre-Dame, sculptures of the west façade and northern and southern portals, stained glass of the great rose windows, devastation and damage at the time of the French Revolution, restoration in the nineteenth century (Viollet-le-Duc), and recent fire and rebuilding.

July 22, The intellectual life of twelfth-and thirteenth-century Paris, the rise of the university, Abelard and Heloise, scholasticism, the cult of Mary, Saint Stephen, the Marian miracle of Theophilus.

Week III Chartres

Reading: *Jehan le Marchand, "Miracles of Our Lady of Chartres," **The Song of Roland*, **The Pilgrimage of Charlemagne*, **Pseudo Turpin*, *Marie de France, "Prologue" to the *Lais* and the lai of "Lanval."

Explore Mapping Gothic, Chartres:

<http://mappinggothic.org/building/1107>

July 27, Worksheet #3 due. History, architecture, sculpture, and stained glass of Chartres, Platonism and the School of Chartres, the liberal arts.

July 29, The legend of Charlemagne and the Charlemagne window, the warrior saints of the north portals, pilgrimage and crusade, the trades of medieval Chartres and the donor windows.

Week IV Sainte-Chapelle

Reading: *Joinville, *Life of Saint-Louis*, *selected poetry of the troubadours and of Thibaut de Champagne.

Explore Mapping Gothic, Sainte-Chapelle:

<http://mappinggothic.org/building/1168>

August 3, Worksheet #4 due. The upper and lower chapels, the stained glass and sculptural programs of the Sainte-Chapelle, the role of relics and the transport of relics from the Middle East to Paris.

August 5, Crusade against the Albigensians and in the Middle East, sainthood and kingship, expansion of the royal domain, the growth of the judicial state and parliament in the thirteenth century.

N.B. Proposals for final papers are due at the end of Week IV, at which time we will conduct one-on-one Zoom conferences to hone your topics and prepare the terrain for you to succeed in your final paper.

Week V Amiens

Reading:

An exploration of Amiens Cathedral through the Columbia website devoted to Amiens. Read thoroughly Stephen Murray's Introduction, Passing Through Layfolk, Presence of the Clergy, Production: Artisans. Exploration of the portals, choir stalls. No worksheet this week during which time you will be working on your papers. Main reference:

<http://projects.mcah.columbia.edu/amiens-arthum/>

August 10, The architecture and sculpture of Amiens. The relic of relics and the voyage of the head of John the Baptist from Constantinople to Amiens.

August 12 **Conclusion.**

Saturday, August 13, Papers due electronically via Canvas by 12:00 noon, Paris time.

Format:

Class will consist of mini-lectures by the instructor, discussion, and virtual cathedral tours.

Requirements:

- Class participation (20%).
- Weekly worksheets based on the reading, due before class (30%).
- One-on-one paper consult to develop paper topic (end of fourth week) (10%).
- Final paper (10-12 pages) (40%).

Reading List:

The reading list below is divided between works available on Canvas, indicated by * , and those to purchase. When purchasing, please try to obtain the edition below so that we can easily and quickly be on the same page.

Canvas:

- *Adam d'Arras, "Play of Madness."
- *James of Voragine, "Genealogy of Christ."
- *Marie de France, *Fables*; "Prologue" to the *Lais* and the lai of "Lanval."
- *Pseudo-Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchies*.
- **Pseudo-Turpin*.
- **Pilgrimage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem*.
- *Rutebeuf, "Miracle of Théophile."
- *Jean le Marchand, "Miracles of Notre-Dame de Chartres."
- *Thibaut de Champagne, selected lyrics.
- *Selected fabliaux.

To purchase, but also on Canvas:

-Abbot Suger, *What was Done under his Administration, The Consecration of the Church of Saint-Denis*, ed. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton University Press).

-Abelard, *History of my Misfortunes, Abelard and Heloise, Personal Letters*, ed. Betty Radice (Penguin Classics).

-Joinville, *The Life of Saint-Louis in Chronicles of the Crusades*, ed. Caroline Smith (Penguin Classic).

Statement on Academic Conduct

"You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain numbers, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, ask! Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. Fortunately, it is also easy to avoid and if you are the least bit careful about giving credit where credit is due you should not run into any problems."

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