



## *Philosophy and Aesthetics of architecture*



Erasmus+

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# PHILOSOPHY AND AESTHETICS OF ARCHITECTURE

## 2. PHILOSOPHY AND ART IN THE MIDDLE AGES



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SECOND LESSON:  
PHILOSOPHY AND AESTHETICS OF ARCHITECTURE

*Philosophy and Art in the Middle Ages*

# Philosophy and Aesthetics of Architecture

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES		CONTACT HOURS	
		LECTURES	EXERCISE
1	Introduction. The concept of aesthetics. Philosophy and art from antiquity to the Middle Ages	3	3
2	Philosophy and art in the Middle Ages	2	
3	Philosophy and Humanism. The aesthetic appreciation of architecture in the Renaissance	2	3
4	The study of the ancient, the architectural treatises	2	
5	Philosophy, aesthetics and architectural research between the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries	2	2
6	Neoclassicism. The beauty, the sublime	2	
7	The aesthetics of the ruins. German idealism and art	2	2
8	Romanticism and Impressionism	2	
9	Eclecticism, Art Nouveau and new architectural trends. The study of cities	2	2
10	Positivism, Late positivism and restoration of monuments	2	
11	Neo-idealist aesthetics and subsequent developments. The reflection of Cesare Brandi	2	3
12	Attention to the landscape and contemporary trends	2	
		<b>25</b>	<b>15</b>

## *F. M. Aurelio Cassiodoro (480-575)*

Mathematical concept of beauty essential to all the arts

- *Retorica*
- *De artibus et disciplinis liberalium artium*

The three functions of art:  
*ut doleat, moveat, delectat*

Distinction between CREATING and DOING



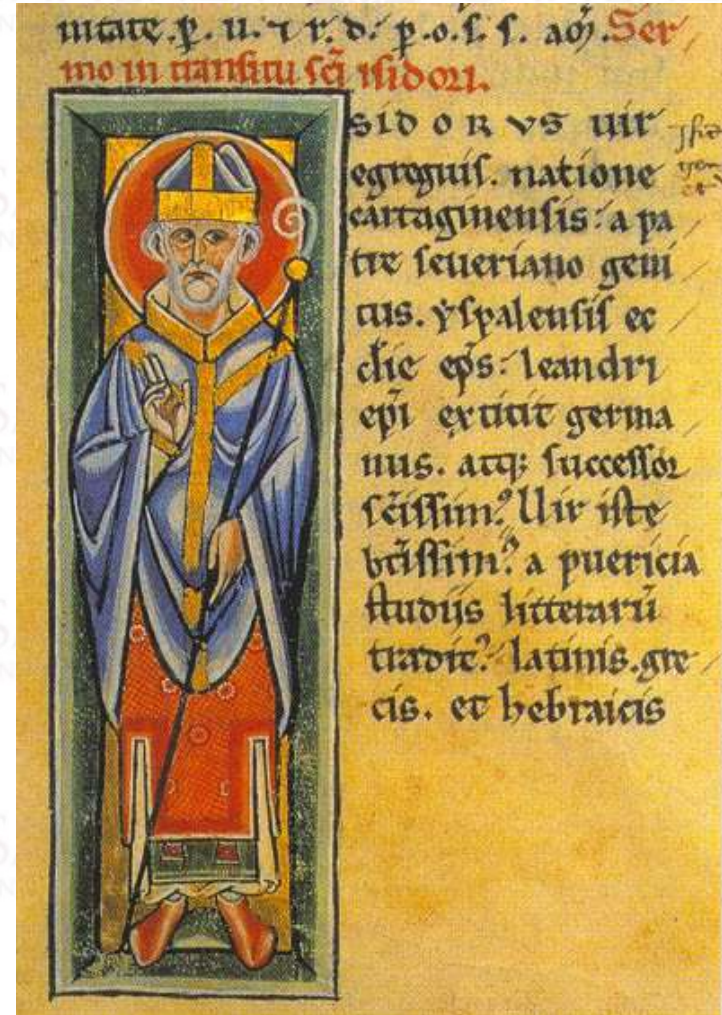
(image from:  
<https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassiodoro>)



## Isidoro di Siviglia (560-639)

Distinction between CREATING and DOING  
*Pulchrum e Aptum*, or formal beauty and  
beauty consequent to the result (*Specious*  
artistico)

(*Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*)



(Image from:  
<https://combonianum.org/2018/04/04/santo-del-giorno-isidoro-di-siviglia/>)

## *Medieval thought. Re-contextualizations*

The re-use and re-contextualization of ancient fragments gives a new iconographic meaning and new ideological values to the recovered piece.

Attention to the past and the intent to transfer it to the present.



Anagni (Frosinone), Cathedral, detail of the facade.

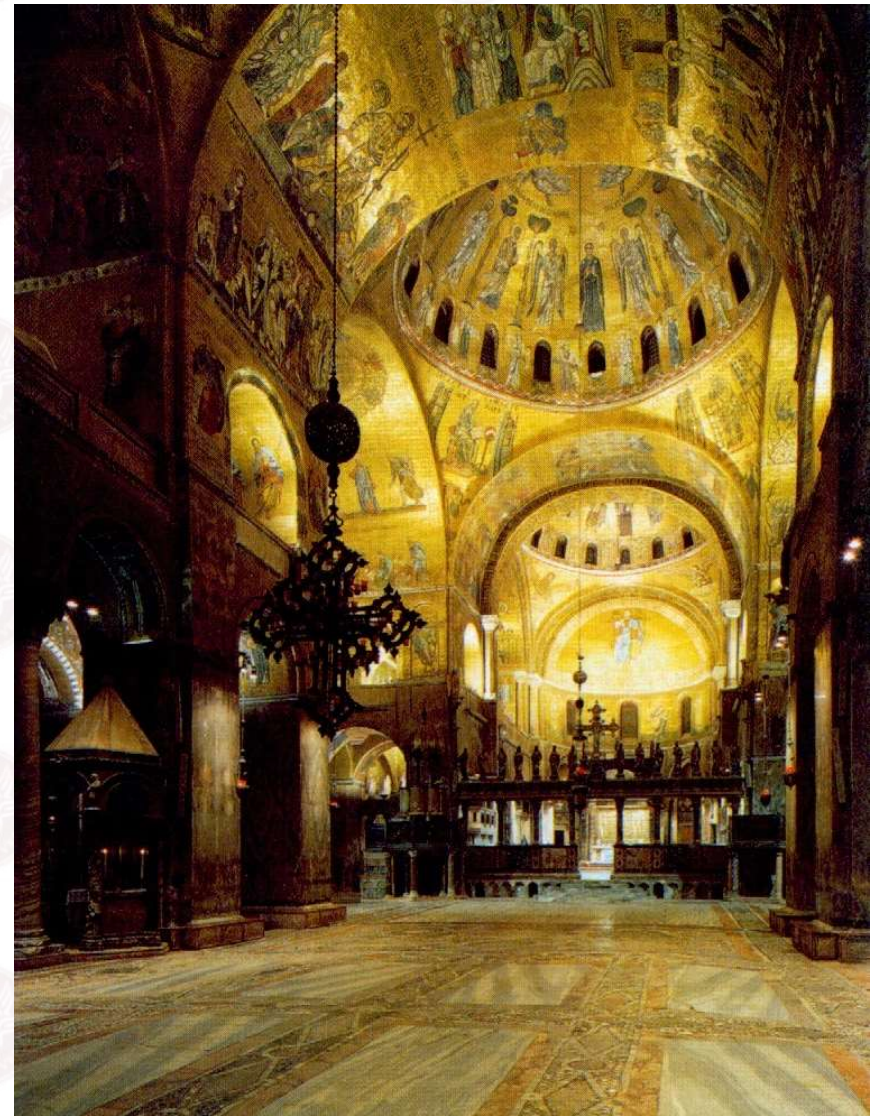
(photo by S. D'Avino)



## *Medieval thought. Reuse of ancient materials*

The desire to "bring back the strength and the glory of the old" into the new buildings is evident.  
(R. Assunto 1961)

Venezia, Patriarchal basilica of S. Marco  
(photo by S. D'Avino)





## *Medieval thought*

In the Middle Ages it is scholastic philosophy (...) that clearly distinguishes between the metaphysics of beauty ("beauty as an attribute of God") and the theory of art.

After the fall of the Western Roman Empire (476) there was a long dark period of ancient classical culture; the culture was predominantly the ecclesiastical one.

## *Medieval thought*

Carlo Magno (742-814), due to the increasing spread of Islamic influences, founded *scriptoria*, institutions aimed at refounding a Christian and artistic culture.



(image from: <http://www.romeandart.eu/it/arte-scriptoria.html>)



## *Medieval thought*

Church frescoes became the *Bibbia pauperum*, instruments for the spread of religion.  
In the council of Arras (1023), iconoclasm is defeated: art is recognized as a teaching.

Giotto, *Stories of Jesus* (Padua, Scrovegni Chapel)



(Image from: [http://www.bollettinodarte.beniculturali.it/opencms/export/BollettinoArteIt/sito-BollettinoArteIt/MenuServizio/Immagine/index.html\\_472221741.html](http://www.bollettinodarte.beniculturali.it/opencms/export/BollettinoArteIt/sito-BollettinoArteIt/MenuServizio/Immagine/index.html_472221741.html))

## Medieval thought

Regarding Architecture, the diffusion of the Vitruvian *De Architectura* and manuals is fundamental



Manuscript of Vitruvius; parchment dating from about 1390; the Wolbert H.M. Vroom Collection, Amsterdam (on exhibition in Brussels); (image from: [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/De\\_architectura](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_architectura))



*Medieval thought*

Notebook of Villard de Honnecourt, beginning of the 13th century

(image from:  
[https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villard\\_de\\_Honnecourt#/media/File:Villard\\_de\\_honnecourt\\_skizze\\_turm.gif](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villard_de_Honnecourt#/media/File:Villard_de_honnecourt_skizze_turm.gif))



## *Medieval thought*

The cathedral is the artistic synthesis of medieval art: in it are concentrated grandeur, brightness, excellent technical and proportional workmanship.

An aesthetics based on the 'pure purity necessary', typical of Cistercian monasteries, is affirmed.



Chiusdino (Siena), San Galgano abbey

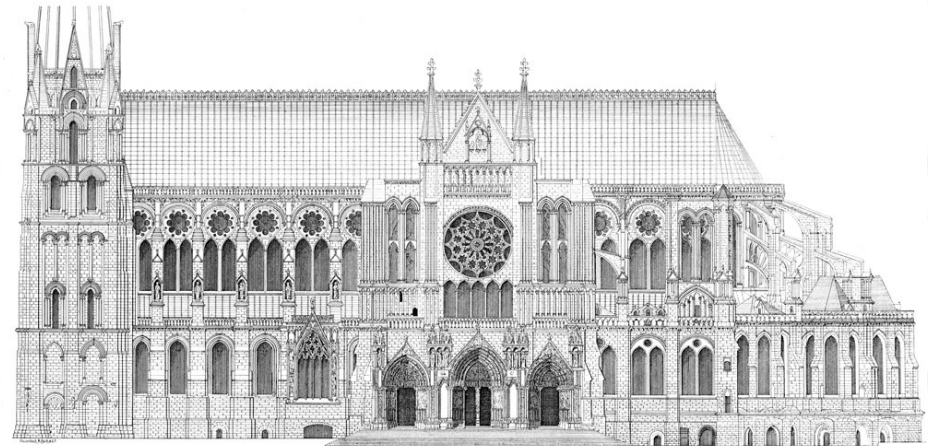
(image from:  
[https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbazia\\_di\\_San\\_Galgano](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbazia_di_San_Galgano))



## *Medieval thought*

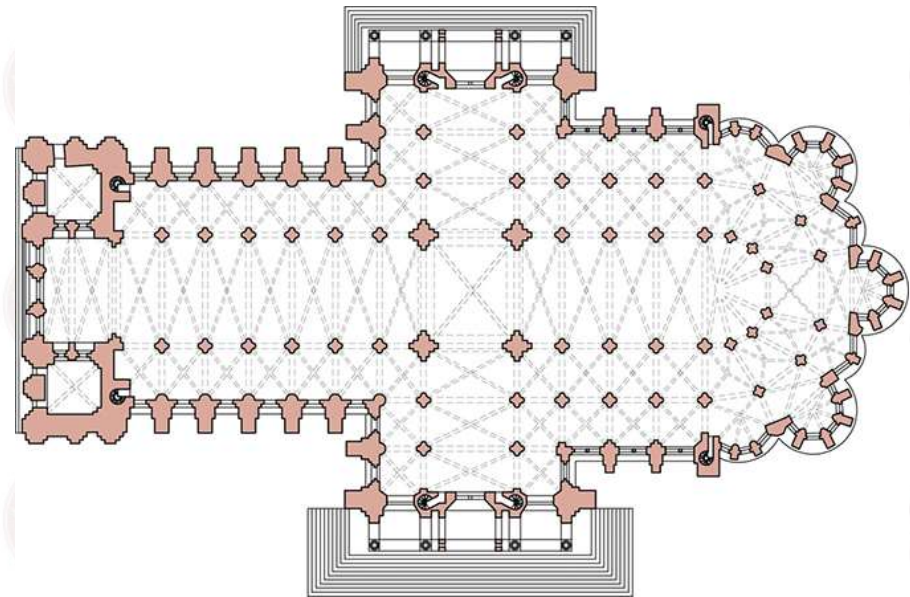
Art consists of the proportion that the artist proposes in his works, in a vision that is not only contemplative but also active.

Chartres cathedral



3. CHARTRES: KATHEDRALE. 1:400.

(image from: <http://aeteres.com/en/fig-2-cattedrale-chartres-2/>)



(image from: <http://arteimmagine.annibalepinotti.it/index.php/gotico-qr>)



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