

Yes or no, medieval gothic churches were a complete break with greek and roman de...

[Design](#), [Architecture](#)



Medieval Gothic churches design Gothic architecture evolved from the previous Romanesque architectural genre and thrived during the mid and late medieval period. It was not a clean break with the Greek and Roman designs, but rather a gradual evolution until it was later succeeded by the Renaissance architecture in the early 15th century, marking the revival of the Classical styles (Scott 14). This paper will point out the fundamental Christian ideas that influenced the architecture of the Gothic, medieval churches.

Historically, the first inhabitants of the Greek peninsula lived in small rectangular single room houses with one entrance at one of the smaller ends. Settlers later constructed larger houses with multiple rooms separated by columns. The architectural characteristics that are most directly related with the Greeks, columns and stairs, began developing in this era (Scott 19). Three orders developed distinctive patterns for the columns on their temples, with the Corinthian column style having the most elaborate and decorative columns, hence the rarest. The Doric style used by the Spartans was the simplest. Ionic columns were slender compared to the Doric and twice the height. The Romans, like the Greeks, used Doric, Corinthian and Ionic column styles. However, the Romans discovered the structural and artistic worth of arches and domes. They used arches because they could sustain enormous weights, enabling them to construct larger and more decorative structures (Bony 33).

The Gothic cathedrals were representations of the universe in miniature scale. Each architectural concept, including the loftiness and enormous

dimensions of the structure, were meant to put across theological significance; the great glory of God just as he was viewed by the Christians. The geometrical and mathematical natures of the buildings were influenced by the Christians' view of an orderly universe, in which can be perceived an underlying logic and rationality (Scott 39). The murals, statues, stained glass and sculptural decoration integrate the spirit of creation in portrayals of the Zodiac, Labors of the Months, Lives of the Saints and referring to eternity in the Last Judgment and Coronation of the Virgin (Bony 12). Many churches had rich, decorative patterns usually depicting biblical stories, emphasizing visual links between Old Testament prophecies and the New Testament. The front elevation of a large church or cathedral, frequently referred to as the West Front, is designed to impact upon an approaching worshipper a powerful impression of the might of God, and equally the might of the establishment that it represents (Giles 70). An example of such a representation is the Notre Dame of Paris. Then came the Goths, who were a migrating Germanic tribe. They were among the early barbarian armies who attacked the Roman Empire. The Goths survived and lived into the middle ages and helped take Roman architecture to other parts of Europe. Gothic architecture had its basis on the Roman style. Just like the Romans, they used arches and domes to support towering buildings, mostly Christian cathedrals. However, unlike the Romans, theirs differed because the peaks of the arches and domes were built higher (Giles 74).

In the medieval ages, Gothic designs were the most popular for church buildings. Since their domes were taller than Roman domes, they allowed for

taller Greek inspired columns. Gothic styles were popular in designing Cathedrals because the central hall draws the gaze upward towards the high ceiling, symbolically toward God (Giles 63).

In conclusion, medieval, Gothic churches were not a complete break with Greek and Roman designs. Although they had their own different styles they borrowed from both the Greek and Germans and developed them into their own unique designs.

Works Cited

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