A Masterpiece of Early Gothic: Laon Cathedral
The Aisne region: wine and wheat
And war…… the Chemin des Dames
Environ de Laon - Abbaye de VAUCLERC
La Grange (Côté Nord)

Mille ans à Bouhet
The Abbey of Vauclair on the Chemin des Dames
Tournai Cathedral
The transept towers.
Rounded transepts
dated usually
ca. 1150-70
Cliquez sur un itinéraire pour afficher son descriptif
Diocese of Laon created in 497 by Saint Remi, Archbishop of Reims, dedicated to the Virgin (Notre Dame)

Also a royal residence with a palace

Seigneurial authority concentrated in the hands of the Bishop; a peer of France, participated in the coronation of kings by carrying the Holy Ampulla, the sacred oil used in anointing kings

In the later 12th century Louis VII made great efforts to establish himself as protector of the people of Laon as the arbiter in conflicts with the bishop and canons
Feudal sources of income (available to king or bishop, depending on who has the rights):
1. *tonlieu*: tax on all merchandise sold
2. *rouage*: tax on all carts that carry goods
3. tax on money changing
4. *jaugeage*: right to regulate weights and measures
5. *jolonee*: right to take from market fruits and vegetables at no cost
6. right to buy animals and meat at price set by bishop
7. and other rights: justice, tolls on rivers ports, etc.
Bishop Gaudry, appointed 1106: issued heavy taxes with severe punishments for those who could not pay: avaricious and brutal

In 1110 Gérard de Quierzy, a critic of the bishop, murdered in the cathedral by the bishop’s men, including Bishop’s brother

The Bishop’s agents sell the right to a Commune to townspeople; in 1112 Gaudry dissolved the commune by paying the king to annul the charter
April 25, 1112: a riot in the city, the bishop dragged from the cathedral and beheaded

Houses of nobles and canons sacked and burned; cathedral also damaged in the fire

Old cathedral repaired and rededicated 1114

Louis VI 1128 in return for annual payment grants the city a communal charter

Permanent suppression of the commune in 1331
1175 Bishop Roger de Rozoy organized an armed force and attacked the makeshift army of the commune

The king seized the bishop’s domains – restored only in 1179 after a lengthy juridical process

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The Chapter: one of the largest and wealthiest in France; exempt from lay and ecclesiastical control; huge prebends from agricultural terrains; exercised the rights of justice immune from royal or ecclesiastical control
King
His interests are in receiving cash payments and loyalty of townspeople

Commune (townspeople)
Seeks rights to self-government, fewer taxes

Bishop-
17 villages
Interests are in protecting his normal sources of income and power

Canons (chapter)
24 villages: have primary responsibility for physical plant of cath.
LAON CATHEDRAL
BEGUN C. 1153

Rounded apse; no radiating chapels, strong projecting transept arms with towers
The “U” shaped plan: typical of archdiocese of Sens?
Laon Cathedral, before and after extension and additions, 1205 +
Laon, original
External massing
reconstructed
Tournai Cathedral transept towers.
dated ca. 1150-70
Laon Cathedral: view of the nave and detail of the nave elevation
Laon, east arm of the north transept with wall passage
Noyon, the rounded transepts
Paris, before restoration
and at present