Chapter 16: Early Medieval Europe
Sites of the Carolingian Empire
(at the death of Charlemagne in 814)
Early medieval art – combination of abstract interlace ornaments with animal motifs

Fig. 16-3. Purse cover, from the Sutton Hoo ship burial in Suffolk, England, ca. 625. Gold, glass, and cloisonne garnets, 7.5” long.
Hiberno-Saxon art – Christian imagery was represented with the animal-interlace style of early medieval art.

Fig. 16-1. Cross-inscribed carpet page, folio 26 verso of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, from Northumbria, England, ca. 698-721. Tempera on vellum, 1’ 1.5” X 9.25”.
This author portrait of Saint Matthew resembles images of philosophers from ancient art.
Carolingian Art

Coronation Gospels

Fig. 16-13. Saint Matthew, folio 15 recto of the Coronation Gospels (Gospel Book of Charlemagne), from Aachen, Germany, ca. 800-810. Ink and tempera on vellum, 1’ 0.75” X 10”.

Classical influence – use of light, shade, and perspective to create an illusionistic 3D space.
The painter worked in the northern linear tradition but was influenced by classical illusionism.

Fig. 16-14. Saint Matthew, folio 18 verso of the Ebbo Gospels (Gospel Book of Archbishop Ebbo of Reims), from Hautvillers (near Reims), France, ca. 816-835. Ink and tempera on vellum, 10.25” X 8.75”.
Carolimgian architects looked to structures from Ravenna and Early Christian Rome for models. Charlemagne’s Palatine Chapel at Aachen resembles San Vitale of Ravenna (Fig. 12.7).
The *alternate-support system* was introduced into architecture during the Ottonian period. With the system, alternating support systems (piers, columns, compound piers) stand in the nave.

Fig. 16-23. Longitudinal section (top) and plan (bottom) of the abbey church of Saint Michael’s, Hildesheim, Germany, 1001-1031.
The Gero crucifix represents the return of monumental sculpture in the Middle Ages.

The sculptor represented the agony of Christ, which served to evoke an emotional response.

Fig. 16-26. Crucifix commissioned by Archbishop Gero for Cologne Cathedral, Cologne, Germany, ca. 970. Painted wood, height of figure 6’ 2”.