Gothic Barbarism or Golden Age? The Medieval Architecture of Utrecht and Paris through the Eyes of Arnoldus Buchelius

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In the first decades of the seventeenth century, north Netherlandish artists like Hercules Seghers, Willem Buytewech and Pieter Saenredam introduced new directions to the traditional genre of architectural painting and printmaking, as it was practised in the Low Countries. While the followers of Hans Vredeman de Vries had been, and continued to be, occupied with the depiction of fantasy architecture, these other figures now turned to the medieval castles, churches and town halls of their native Dutch Republic **(fig. 35)**. Ironically, however, their innovations coincided with growing local embarrassment over the style of the nation's old architecture. In 1631, Salomon de Bray published the first original architectural treatise in the Dutch language, the *Architectura Moderna, ofte bouwinge van onsen tyt*.[1] It is, in part, a manifesto for the reform of Dutch architectural practice after the rule of Vitruvius, and de Bray justifies this by a lament of the local cityscape. He tells us that, 'nu't is gantsch bekend dat onlangs voor onse Eeuwe:'t welck wy vollerhands uyt alle oude gestichten bemercken, al-omme in dese Landen een seer Barbarische wyse van Bouwen is in gebruyck geweest; den welcken van de *Gotthen*, en *VVandalen*… is herkomen'.[2] Thus, while the monarchs of enemy Spain and economic rival England were modernizing their capitols in a new *all'antica* fashion inspired by Palladio, the skyline of the United Provinces was still seen to be dominated by the architecture of the Goths, the legendary corruptors of Roman design. As one critic complains in a 1628 pamphlet on the state of Dutch painting and architecture, 'nochtans in dese vermaerde Stadt van Amsterdam soo veel geconsumeert wert, en[de] men ter nauwer noot geen thien huysen en vint die met goede Simmeterije ghemaeckt zijn (volgens de schoone Antiquen)'.[3]

1 S. de Bray, *Architectura Moderna, or the Building of Our Time* (Amsterdam: Cornelis Danckerts Van Seevenhoven, 1631).

2 'Shortly before our century which we amply observe in all old edifices, a very barbaric way of building was everywhere in use in this country; which came from the Goths or Vandals' (De Bray, *Architectura Moderna*, 5). All translations of primary texts in this essay are our own, unless indicated otherwise.

3 'Even now in this famed city of Amsterdam, one barely finds ten houses made with good symmetry (after the beautiful Antique)' (J. de Ville, *T' Samen-spreekinghe betreffende de Architectuur ende Schilder-const* [Gouda: Pieter Rammezeyn, 1628], 9).

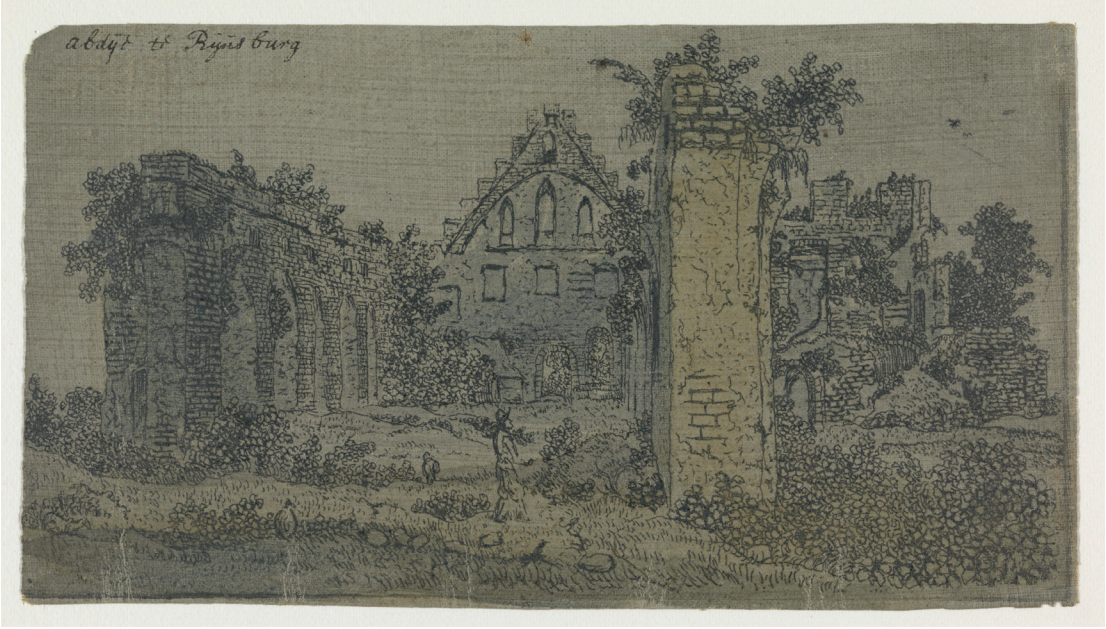

Fig. 35. Hercules Seghers, *Ruins of the Abbey of Rijnsburg (Small Version)*, *c.* 1618–22, etching on linen with blue and yellow paint, 9.6 × 17.5 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-OB-860

Fig. 36. Pieter Saenredam, *Nave of the Bavokerk, Haarlem, from West to East*, in Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende Lof der Stadt Haerlem in Holland* (1628), etching and engraving, 13.9 × 23 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-OB-15.522

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Outside of this prescriptive, theoretical discourse, however, a counter-discourse on Dutch architectural history was running through the flourishing genre of topographical literature.[4] Here, medieval architecture was not seen as the mark of a barbarian culture, but rather as the remains of a Golden Age. The rise of popular topography in the Republic was catalysed by the States General who, from the start of the Revolt, sought to glorify the nation by commissioning geographic-historical accounts of its centre of political might, the county of Holland.[5] The first and most influential of these was Hadrianus Junius's *Batavia*, begun in 1565 and published in 1588.[6] It inspired, in turn, a number of independent descriptions of Holland's principle cities, among the earliest Amsterdam (1612, 1614), Leiden (1614), and Haarlem (1616, 1621, 1628).

In these civic topographies, the past is framed as a time of prosperity, and is often celebrated by meditation on old architecture. These buildings are thus presented as 'monuments', objects of remembrance that embody the ancient institutions of a city, testify to its economic successes, and demonstrate the enduring virtues that are inherited by the present citizenry.

City descriptions are also often illustrated by woodcuts, etchings, or engravings, which amplify the praise of architecture. These also helped to stimulate experimentation in independent pictorial topography. Saenredam's first perspective of a church interior, for example, was one of many designs that he made for Samuel Ampzing's *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* **(fig. 36)**.[7] However, as the historian Nico de Glas has recently noted, Junius himself is ambivalent about the style of medieval monuments in the *Batavia*.[8] In his description of Gouda, for instance, he lauds the recently completed *all'antica* porch of the city's famed town hall, but says nothing about the richly ornamented Gothic gable that rises up behind it.[9] Thus, even in his foundational text, in which the local Middle Ages are otherwise held up as a flourishing time, there is a certain shame about the country's architectural heritage. How is it, then, that the next generation of topographical authors came to embrace the appearance of Gothic buildings? Ultimately, how do they come to be seen as the index of a Golden Age?

These questions cannot be answered here in full, but we will begin to address them in this essay by considering how alternative, positive attitudes toward medieval Dutch architecture were taking shape in the northern Netherlands at the close of the sixteenth century. We will focus here on one case study, the Utrecht lawyer, diarist and antiquarian Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641). Buchelius began his study of law in Leiden, but was occupied there at once with antiquarian and philological research under the guidance of

4 On the early development of civic topography in the Republic, see E. O. G. Haitsma Mulier, 'De eerste Hollandse stadsbeschrijvingen uit de zeventiende eeuw', *De zeventiende eeuw*, 9 (1993), 97–116; E. Verbaen, *De woonplaats van de fam. Grondslagen van de stadsbeschrijving in de zeventiende-eeuwse Republiek* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011).

5 N. de Glas, *Holland is een eiland. De Batavia van Hadrianus Junius (1511–1575)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011), 18–20.

6 For the importance of Junius' to the first civic topographers, see Haitsma Mulier, 'De eerste Hollandse stadsbeschrijvingen uit de zeventiende eeuw', 102.

7 Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende lof der stad Haerlem in Holland* (Haarlem: Adriaen Rooman, 1628).

8 De Glas, *Holland is een eiland*, 14–15.

9 For the brief passage on the town hall of Gouda, see De Glas, *Holland is een eiland*, 344.

Justus Lipsius. These pursuits would continue in tension for the course of his life, as he found himself torn between the need to earn money and his fascination with history.[10]

Though his writings went largely unpublished in his lifetime, he collected them in a number of still extant manuscripts. The most studied of these is the *Comentarius rerum quotidianarum*, a partial account of his early life, and a diary of the travels that he combined with antiquarian work.[11] Buchelius began to compile the journal in 1588 from a series of smaller logs, and he continued it up to 1600. It opens with a long description and historical narrative of his native Utrecht. He then recounts his childhood, his time as a student in Leiden, Louvain and Paris, his further stays in Cologne and Rome, and his resettlement in the Republic. He had also produced a number of manuscripts dedicated solely to architecture. Among the best known is his description of Utrecht's medieval churches, the *Monumenta passim in templis ac monasteriis Trajectinae Urbis atque agri inventa*, which he had likely started preparing around 1587.[12]

Buchelius died in 1641, and so his life spanned a period that included nearly the full course of the Revolt, the economic transformation of the Dutch Republic, and the turn to the Reformed faith as state religion. As such, his journals have been read for insight into this transition period. The early twentieth-century historian Samuel Muller posits him as witness to the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern era,[13] and the historian Judith Pollman has more recently used his writings to understand how the Reformation was experienced from one day to the next.[14] Despite Muller's positioning, Buchelius himself regards the medieval as a bygone era, and his attention to old architecture in the journals can arguably help us see how the buildings of that time came to be valued in the seventeenth-century Republic.

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10 For an intellectual biography of Buchelius, see S. Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht. Oudheidkunde in de Goude Eeuw: Arnoldus Buchelius en Petrus Scriverius* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 2001).

11 *Comentarius rerum quotidianarum, in quo, praetor itinera diversarum regionum, urbium oppidorumque situs, antiquitates, principes, instituta, mores, multa eorum quae tam inter publicos quam privatos contingere solent, occurunt exempla. Lectoribus pro cuiusque ingenio vel utilia vel saltem non iniucunda futura* (*Besides journeys through several countries, the situation of cities and towns, antiquities, rulers, institutions and customs, there appear many examples of things that are wont to happen in both private and public affairs, which will be either useful, or at least entertaining to the reader*). See Utrecht University Library, MSS 798, 2r. A heavily abridged edition of the manuscript is available as the *Diarium van Arend van Buchell*, ed. by G. Brom & L. A. van Langeraad (Amsterdam: J. Müller, 1907). The manuscript itself has been scanned, partially transcribed, and partially translated into Dutch on the library website: http://www.utrechtsekronieken.nl/zoeken?mivast = 3005&mizig = 336&miadt = 39&miaet = 54&micode = Kroniekhss_UB_Utrecht.4&minr = 32617067&milang = nl&misort = brn%7Cdesc&mif1 = Historische%20aantekeningen%20over%20de%20stad%20Utrecht&miview = ldt.

12 *Monuments of Churches and Monasteries Found in and around Utrecht* (Utrecht Municipal Archives, MSS XXVIII L 1). As with the *Diarium*, the manuscript of the *Monumenta* is scanned, partially transcribed, and partially translated into Dutch on the archives website: https://hetutrechtsarchief.nl/onderzoek/resultaten/archieven?mivast = 39&mizig = 210&miadt = 39&micode = Hss_Van_Buchel_Monumenta&miview = inv2#inv3t1.

13 S. Muller Fz., 'Fin de Siècle', in *Schetsen uit de Middeleeuwen*, *Nieuwe bundle* (Amsterdam: Van Looy, 1914), 369–462.

14 J. Pollman, *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: The Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

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The Latin manuscript of the *Monumenta* is remarkable for what is, to the best of our knowledge, the first use of a cognate for 'Gothic' in Dutch architectural discourse. In the description of Utrecht Cathedral that opens the work, Buchelius relates that 'the structure is called barbaric, and Gothic or German'.[15] He thus demonstrates his awareness of the current negative assessment of the style, as it was popularized in Italian art theory, but he goes on to describe the building with praise. To begin to understand his judgement, we will first consider the current historiography of the term 'Gothic' in the northern Netherlands; we will then explore Buchelius's own understanding of the style. During his time in Paris, he found work surveying the city's historic buildings. It is a task that he documents carefully in the *Commentarius*, and we will examine what is revealed there through his confrontation with the city's medieval monuments. We will then turn to a fuller exegesis of his description of Utrecht Cathedral.

A brief historiography of the Gothic in the Dutch Republic

The reception of the Gothic in the early modern Dutch Republic, as a rubric of contemporary historiography, was pioneered by Eddy de Jongh in his 1973 essay '"'t Gotsche krulligh mall": De houding tegenover de gotiek in het zeventiende-eeuwse Holland'.[16] His point of departure is the earliest use of 'Gothic' strictly in the Dutch language, which occurs in a poem by the polymath statesman Constantijn Huygens. In *Vitaulium. Hofwyck.* (1653), the verse description of his *all'antica* country house outside The Hague, Huygens declares that its designer, Jacob van Campen, 'De vuijle Gotsche schell te hebben afgelicht', from, ''tblinde Nederlands mis-bouwende gesicht'.[17] Van Campen introduced a stringent Vitruvian classicism to the northern Netherlands, and Huygens further underscores this in his 1658 epitaph for the architect. Here, he proclaims that van Campen 't Gotsche krulligh mall met staetigh Roomsch vermanden, / En dreef ouw' Ketterij voor ouder Waerheit heen'.[18]

This line inspires the title of de Jongh's work, and the author sets out to place Huygens's apparently negative perception of the Gothic in the context of the broader dialogue on medieval Dutch architecture in the seventeenth century. But he cautions that 'aangezien de positie van de gotiek in deze periode er één was met vele en zelfs tegenstrijdheden – een historische vanzelfsprekendheid, in feite – zal dit overzicht er niet op kunnen bogen een gaaf, monolitisch beeld op te leveren'.[19] De Jongh notes, for example, that Huygens owned paintings

15 'Structura est barbarica, quam goticam vel alemannicam vocant' (Buchelius, *Monumenta*, 4v).

16 E. de Jongh, '"'t Gotsche krulligh mall": de houding tegenover de gotiek in het zeven-tiende-eeuwse Holland', *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek*, 24 (1973), 85–145.

17 He 'knocked the foul Gothic scales', from, 'the blind Dutch mis-building sight' (C. Huygens, *Hofwijck. Band I*, ed. by T. van Strien [Amsterdam: KNAW Press, 2008], 42).

18 He 'masculinized the Gothic curling model with the stately Roman/ and drove back old Heresy for older Truth' (C. Huygens, 'Op het graf vanden heer Iacob van Campen', in C. Huygens, *De Gedichten van Constantijn Huygens, naar zijn handschrift uitgegeven. Deel VI: 1656–1661*, ed. by J. A. Worp [Groningen: J. R. Wolters, 1896], 247.

19 'Since the position of the Gothic in this period was one with many sides and even contradictions – a historical given, in fact – this overview will not be able to boast a consistent, monolithic image' (De Jongh, '"'t Gotsche krulligh mall"', 86).

of Gothic churches by Saenredam, and so concludes that 'he was not always offended by what his friend Wotton would call the "imbecility of the pointed arch"'.[20] Huygens's former music teacher, the English diplomat Henry Wotton, had published a book entitled *The Elements of Architecture* in 1624. He defines pointed arches here as characteristically negative features of Gothic buildings, and they indeed appear at the centre of a 1641 painting by Saenredam that came out of Huygens's home in The Hague.[21]

De Jongh's survey was published over 45 years ago, but a sustained effort to further his work has only come of late. In their recent book *Ambitious Antiquities, Famous Forebears. Constructions of a Glorious Past in the Early Modern Netherlands and in Europe*, Karl Enenkel and Konrad Ottenheym have examined the way in which connections to antiquity and the medieval past were established as a source of authority in early modern Europe. They focus primarily on the Dutch Republic, however, and one chapter considers how the principle cities of Holland demonstrated the age of their foundations, and thus their prestige, by retaining and framing the old fabric of their town halls through seventeenth-century renovations.[22] Much of this material would have been unmistakable to Huygens as Gothic. The previously mentioned fifteenth-century town hall of Gouda, for instance, features tracery that recalls the 'curling' apparently corrected by van Campen; and at Delft, a preserved thirteenth-century stone tower rises at the centre of Hendrick de Keyser's 1620 post-fire rebuilding, displaying pointed arches high above the round-headed, Roman niches in the later gable below. Enenkel and Ottenheym have also broadened de Jongh's initially narrow geographic scope of the province of Holland, looking at the way in which the seventeenth-century nobility of Utrecht affirmed their own status through the retention of medieval features in their family keeps. They further show how these castles were imitated in new constructions by aspirational burgers, and note that even Huygens purchased an old pile that afforded him the title of Lord. The authors thus continue to demonstrate that the perception of the country's medieval architecture was not wholly negative at the time.

These accounts post-date Buchelius's description of the Utrecht Dom by several decades, however, and the descriptors used to identify the style of the church point to an influence from beyond the Republic. In the *Vite*, Vasari gives what was probably the most influential account of the decline of architecture after the fall of Rome. Following his discussion of the classical orders in the second, 1568 edition, he adds that, 'ecci un'altra specie di lavori che si chiamano Tedeschi, I quali sono di ornamenti e di proporzione molto differenti dagli antichi e da' moderni; né oggi s'usano per gli eccellenti, ma son fuggiti da loro come mostruosi e barbari, dimenticando ogni lor cosa di ordine'. He continues, relating that, 'questa maniera fu trovata dai Gotti che, per aver ruinate le fabriche antiche e morti gli architetti per le guerre, fecero dopo, coloro che rimasero, le fabriche di questa maniera le quali girarono le volte con

20 From the English summery at the end of the essay, see De Jongh, '"'t Gotsche krulligh mall"', 132.

21 He says that pointed arches, 'both for the naturall imbecility of the sharpe *Angle* it selfe, and likewise for their very *Vncomelinesse*, ought to bee exiled from judicious eyes, and left to their first inuentors, the *Gothes* or *Lumbards*' (H. Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture* [London: John Bill], 51). The painting, of Utrecht's lost Mariakerk, is now in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

22 K. Enenkel & K. Ottenheym, *Ambitious Antiquities, Famous Forebears. Constructions of a Glorious Past in the Early Modern Netherlands and in Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 311–47.

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quarti acuti, e riempierono tutta Italia di questa maledizione di fabriche'.[23] Vasari thus gathers here all the terms employed by Buchelius – German, Barbarian, Gothic – and we know that he had read the *Vite* as early as 1585.[24] But as the architectural historian Anne-Marie Sankovitch has recently demonstrated, Vasari never securely locates the 'German' manner of the Goths in time, nor does he give a coherent definition of its characteristics as a style.[25] Moreover, his judgement of it is not uniformly negative. He notes that Giotto's Campanile 'fu di quella maniera tedesca che in quell tempo s'usava… Il quale campanile fu di maniera murato che non possono commettersi pietre con piu diligenza, né farsi piu bella torre per ornamento, per spese e per disegno'.[26]

Thus, there was no more consensus on the Gothic, or 'German', when Buchelius was writing than in the seventeenth century, and what we will demonstrate in the following sections is that this ambivalence is reflected in his own understanding of the history of architecture, as it emerges through the record of his travels in the *Commentarius*. As stated above, however, we will confine our attention to his time in Paris. He documents his subsequent stay in Cologne, but makes surprisingly few remarks on its renowned churches. And while he comments extensively on the buildings of Rome, the city is notoriously bereft of buildings that we would now define as Gothic. Paris and its environs, on the other hand, are marked by a full range of architectural styles, from the antique Roman, through the early and late medieval, to the *all'antica* of the Renaissance, and it thus provides better insight into his later judgement of the thirteenth-century Utrecht Cathedral.

Buchelius's estimation of the Gothic in France

Though Buchelius's early education had been fragmented and rocky, he showed promise and went on to study law at Leiden in 1583. But he found the subject dry, by his own later admission, and gravitated toward the lectures of the classical philologist, Justus Lipsius.[27]

23 'There is another type of work called German, which in their ornaments and proportions are very different from the antique and the modern. Today they are not used by the most gifted architects, who instead flee from them as monstrous and barbarous and forsaken of all that comprises order… This manner was invented by the Goths who, having ruined the ancient buildings and after the death of the architects in the wars, afterwards made – those who were left – buildings in this manner: they turned the vaults with pointed segments, and filled all of Italy with this malediction of buildings' (G. Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori et scultori italiani* [Florence: Giunti, 1568], 67–68). This translation comes from Anne-Marie Sankovitch, 'The Myth of the "Myth of the Medieval". Gothic Architecture in Vasari's *rinascita* and Panofsky's Renaissance', *RES*, 40, 2001, 34.

24 Buchelius cites Vasari at the beginning of the so-called 'Pictorum Catalogus', a small bundle of notes on artists that is dated by internal evidence to 1585–90. It sits within the *Res Pictoriae*, Utrecht University Library Ms 1781 (A. Buchelius, *'Res Pictoriae.' Aantekening over kunstenaars en kunstwerken in zijn Diarium, Res Pictoriae, Notae Quotidianae en Descriptio Urbis Ultratrajectinae [1583–1639]* [The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1928], 29.

25 Sankovitch, 'The Myth of the "Myth of the Medieval"', 29–50.

26 It 'was in that German manner which was used at the time', but states that it was 'built in such a manner that it is not possible that stones could be joined with greater diligence, or that a more beautiful tower, for its ornament, expense, or design, could be made' (Vasari, *Le Vite*, 215, trans. by Sankovitch, 'The Myth of the "Myth of the Medieval"', 37).

27 For Buchelius' time in Leiden, and his relationship with Lipsius, see Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 66–69.

Lipsius engendered his interest in antiquarian research, and in the *Commentarius* we see Buchelius travelling with his classmates to Woerden, Wassenaar and Katwijk, in search of the remains of old Roman settlements.[28] This interest continued to flourish in Paris, where he went in June of 1585, ostensibly to further his legal education.

Within days of his arrival, however, he came into the service of a scholar from Louvain, Philips van Winghe (1560–92).[29] Van Winghe, also latinized as Vingius, was involved in the preparation of a new edition of Gilles Corrozet's *Antiquitez croniques et singularitez de Paris*, an extensive guidebook of the city's monuments.[30] On 1 July, Buchelius reports in the *Commentarius* that 'Philippus Vingius et moi nous avons visité ces ruines [the baths of Cluny], convaincus tous deux de leur antiquité, cherchant, pour l'imprimeur Nicolas Bonfons, des renseignements qu'il désire imprimer. Il a, en effet, déjà publié plusieurs éditions augmentées de Corrozet et veut mettre, dans la prochaine, des additions dont les éléments ont été fournis tant par nous'.[31]

Corrozet's *Antiquitez* was the first book of its kind on the French capital. It enjoyed great popularity, and was reprinted fourteen times between 1550 and 1612, often with new material.[32] Instead of the preoccupation with style that is the common focus of architectural treatises, the book is concerned with the monumentality of buildings, as in later Dutch topographical writing. In the French context, this was linked to the excellence of kings who cultivated their reigns as 'Golden Ages', with the latest kings as the *primi inter pares* emulating the achievements of previous distinguished rulers. A handful of authors have already looked at the relationship between history, identity and space in the *Antiquitez*, but no study has examined the later augmented editions, let alone in a scope beyond the French kingdom.[33] As we will later demonstrate, the two scholars from the Low Countries made substantial additions to the book through their close analysis of the city's historic foundations. Of immediate interest, however, is the way in which this confrontation with architecture helps to reveal Buchelius's understanding of medieval buildings.

To be sure, architecture was, for him, mainly an object of antiquarian interest. In their recent article on his description of the Pantheon from the *Commentarius*, Jan L. de Jong and Sjef Kemper assert that 'van Buchel was in the first place an historian, who approached

28 Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 134r.

29 On Philips van Winghe, see G. J. Hoogewerff, 'Philips van Winghe', *Mededelingen van het Nederlandsch Historisch Instituut te Rome*, 7 (1927), 59–82.

30 This would result in following edition: Gilles Corrozet, *Les Antiquitez croniques et singularitez de Paris* (Paris: Nicolas Bonfons, 1586).

31 Much of the *Diarium* covering Buchelius' time in Paris is not transcribed in the 1907 abridgement by Brom and Langeraad, and so we work here from an earlier French translation. The original Latin can be consulted in the manuscript itself through the Utrecht University Library link above, though it is not always perfectly legible. 'Van Winghe and I visited these ruins, both convinced of their antiquity, seeking information for the publisher Nicolas Bonfons, which he desires to have printed. He has indeed already published several augmented editions of Corrozet and wants to include, in the next, elements that were provided by us' (A. Buchelius, *Description de Paris [1585-1586]*, ed. & trans. by Alexandre-Charles-Philipp Vidier [Paris: Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France, 1902], 71).

32 C. Skenazi, *Le Poète architecte en France. Construction d'un imaginaire monarchique* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003), 139.

33 E. Hodges, 'Representing Place in Corrozet's *Antiquitez de Paris*', *French Studies*, 62, 2 (2008), 135–49; C. Liaroutzos, *Le Pays et la mémoire. Pratiques et représentations de l'espace français dans les œuvres de Gilles Corrozet et Charles Estienne* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998); Skenazi, *Le Poète architecte*, chap. 3.

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the monuments of Rome as "illustrations of history" and not as works of art or architecture in their own right'.[34] Indeed, he saw churches as storehouses of inscriptions that could attest to a region's past, and his manuscripts are filled with transcribed epitaphs and dedications. But there is no doubt that he also held an aesthetic appreciation for buildings, and that it was informed by theory.

In his entry in the *Commentarius* for 9 September 1585, he travels outside of Paris, where he visits Catherine de' Medici's château de Saint-Maur. While he records inscriptions at the building, he reports that 'la construction, dans le goût italien, est fort belle'.[35] He then gives a lengthy description of the house itself, including the shape of the ground plan, and the quality of the surrounding environment. These are ultimately Vitruvian prerogatives, and he affirms his familiarity with the author in the entry of 27 September, when he arrives at the basilica of St Denis. At the tomb of Henry II, then on the grounds of the church, he remarks that

> dans le cimitière au nord de l'église on a commencé, il y a quelques années, le superbe mausolée de Henri II et de ses fils; il dépasserait en beauté toutes les constructions de notre temps si l'emploi d'une pierre trop tendre n'inspirait des craintes pour sa durée à venir. L'édifice est de forme circulaire comme un amphithéâtre; le plan est conforme aux préceptes de Vitruve; le style est corinthien.[36]

Nonetheless, he does not reserve judgement for modern work alone. When he encounters the cathedral of Amiens on 30 June, while still on the road to Paris, he reports that it is 'une église marveilleuse, dont la beauté architecturale est connue dans tous les pays'.[37] Built in the thirteenth century, it could have easily been identified with Vasari's 'German manner' by the pointed arches of its three grand portals, but Buchelius's praise is so general that it is impossible to understand how exactly he values the building.

But comments made at another church, two weeks later, may shed some light on the passage. On 9 July, he and Van Winghe visit the now-destroyed abbey of Saint-Victor, which had been founded in 1113 and rebuilt in the Gothic style in the fourteenth century. Buchelius relates that 'ce monastère, même aux époques barbares, a produit des hommes savants, par exemple Hugues de Saint-Victor'.[38] The twelfth-century scholar is, for Buchelius, an exception that proves the rule of ignorance and decline in that era. At the same site, he reports that

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34 J. L. de Jong & S. Kemper, '"Where the gate drips near the Vipsanian Columns". Aernout van Buchel Gathering Information on the Culture and History of Rome: The Pantheon', *Fragmenta. Journal of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome*, 5 (2011), 70. See also Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, for an extensive account of Buchelius' antiquarian engagement with buildings.

35 'The construction, in the Italian taste, is very pretty' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 114).

36 'In the cemetery north of the church was begun, a few years prior, the superb mausoleum; it would exceed in beauty all the structures of our time if the use of a very soft stone did not inspire fear for its durability. The edifice is circular in shape like an amphitheater, the plan is in accordance with the precepts of Vitruvius, the style is Corinthian' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 132–33).

37 'a marvellous church, and its beauty is known throughout France' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 68).

38 'This monastery, even in barbaric times, produced learned men, for example Hughes of Saint Victor' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 80).

> sur le sol, une inscription en lettres gothiques nous a conservé le souvenir d'un homme très humble; d'où resort soit le zèle excessif des gens du temps, soit plutôt la negligence barbare de nos contemporains, qui ne font aucun cas des monuments élevés à la mémoire des grands hommes que leur réputation et leur science ont immortalisés. Nos ancêtres ici ont livré à la postérité, en le gravant sur la pierre, le nom d'un homme du peuple des plus ordinaires.[39]

He thus figures modernity as uncivilized, but he does so by ironic comparison to the past, which is itself considered barbaric. For Buchelius, it is characterized by a certain mania.

In absence of a date on the tomb, he is able to locate this mania in time by identifying the style of the inscription. This skill can be traced back to his education in Leiden. In a later letter to the topographical author Samuel Ampzing, Buchelius fondly recalls Lipsius and relays a fundamental lesson of his teaching, that 'singulae aetates suos mores, ritus, sacra imo et fata habuerunt, adeoque scripturam characters et stilum; in quibus discernendis qui caecutiunt, veritati tenebras offundere, necesse est'.[40] He is warning Ampzing to be alert to anachronisms in vocabulary or letter forms that might betray a manuscript source as a forgery, but he at once summarizes the principle that had, in part, shaped his practice as antiquarian: that style is an index of the age of an object, be it building or manuscript, and of the values of the community that produced it.[41] The Gothic style, which Buchelius registers through script at Saint-Victor, is for him a mark of an almost barbaric zeal. And perhaps this obviated any need for comment on the church's architecture, as he says nothing about the structure itself. But his comment on the grave is in fact ambivalent, and the zeal of the past becomes a kind of piety for Buchelius, when contrasted with the barbarity of his own time. It is thus possible that he refrains from commenting on the church because its humble dimensions did not match the devotion that he tentatively recognizes in the period that he aligns here with the Gothic. Indeed, while the church had a tower, it barely rose above the nave, and was almost certainly more modest than what Buchelius knew from the Dom of Utrecht.

This would seem to be confirmed in the entry of 14 August, when he comes to the church of Notre-Dame. It is the first time that he explicitly comments on the appearance of a medieval building in Paris itself, and he does so on the basis of scale. He tells us that, 'il y a deux tours que Corrozet vante, je ne sais pourquoi; il fait là preuve de bien mauvais goût, en même temps que de parti pris d'adulation envers son pays, car elles ne sont pas très grosses et leur hauteur est médiocre'.[42] Indeed, at roughly 70 meters, the towers are nowhere near as tall as the cathedrals of Amiens or Buchelius's native Utrecht, both of which rise to approximately 113 meters. Thus, it is indeed a *deficit* of zeal in the spirit of medieval architecture that troubles him, rather than excess.

39 'On the floor, an inscription in Gothic letters has preserved the memory of a very humble man; hence the excessive zeal of the people of the time, or rather the barbarous negligence of our contemporaries, who disregard monuments raised to the memory of great men immortalized by their reputation and their science' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 80).

40 'Every era has its mores, its rituals, its rites, and its fate, and so too its script, its letters, and its style' (letter of Arnoldus Buchelius to Samuel Ampzing, 25 December 1630, Utrecht University Library, MSS 1053).

41 The letter is discussed in Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 67.

42 'There are two towers that Corrozet praises, I don't know why; he shows very bad taste, and at the same time a biased adulation toward his country, because they are not very large, and their height is mediocre' (Buchelius.

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Finally, at the end of his trip, we see Buchelius employ scale in the positive estimation of a medieval building. In April of 1586, he visits the church of Notre-Dame at Rouen. It was constructed between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries, wholly in variations on the Gothic. Buchelius relates that it 'a trois tours d'une architecture excellente, celle du milieu est dite de Saint-Roman, la seconde est dite de beurre'[43] He gives no explicit account of what constitutes their excellence, but goes on to report that 'dans la tour de beurre se trouve une cloche de bronze de 36,000 livres. […] Elle a 9 pieds de diamètre, autant de hauteur et 36 pieds de circonférence'.[44] By carefully listing the bell's dimensions, he underscores the impressive size of the structure that houses it, but as at Amiens and Notre-Dame in Paris, he makes no explicit mention of the church's style. The tower was built, he tells us, 'avec de petites pièces de monnaie données par le peuple, afin d'obtenir la permission de se servir de beurre pendant le jeûne du Carême', and so the grand proportions of the building are indeed an expression of the kind of noble piety that Buchelius recognized at Saint-Victor.[45] As such, the Gothic is arguably recognized by Buchelius, though tentatively here, perhaps, as a kind of Golden Age, if not in the style of its buildings, then in the devotion with which they were constructed. In the following section, we will explore this idea further by returning to his description of the Basilica of Saint-Denis.

Buchelius on Saint-Denis

A crucial moment in Buchelius's increasing awareness of Gothic churches and abbeys as 'monuments' of previous periods of devoutness and excellence was reached when he and Van Winghe visited Saint-Denis on 27 September 1585. As we have seen, he lauds the *all'antica* mausoleum of Henry II, but such explicit references to architectural style cannot be found in relation to the famous twelfth-century renovation of the basilica under abbot Suger (*c.* 1080–1151), which nowadays architectural historians put forward as the decisive moment in the emergence of the Gothic style.[46]

In his *Description de Paris* he observes that, 'devant l'autel … est la croix d'or, haute environ de six pieds, dont parle Corrozet; sur la base, les vers suivants ont été gravés en caractères gothiques par les soins de Suger, ancien abbé et restaurateur de cette maison'.[47] So while Buchelius does not remark on the architecture, the sight of Gothic script no longer prompts negative comment on the past. However, Suger's work is not seen as the moment where a new style is developed for

43 The church 'has three towers of excellent architecture; the middle is called Saint-Roman, the second is called Butter' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 182).

44 'In the Butter Tower is a 36,000-pound bronze bell. […] It is 9 feet in diameter, just as high, and 36 [feet] in circumference' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 182).

45 It was built with 'money given by the people in order to obtain permission to serve butter during the fast of Lent' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 182).

46 See for example *Abbot Suger: On the Abbey Church of St-Denis and its Art Treasures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946).

47 'In front of the altar […] is the golden cross, about six feet high, which is mentioned by Corrozet; on the base, the following verses were engraved in Gothic characters by the care of Suger, former abbot and restorer of this house' (Buchelius, *Description de Paris*, 128–29).

the very first time in the history of architecture, but as a 're-novation' in the literal sense of 'making new again'. Following the cyclical logic, the idea is given central emphasis that Suger has brought the church back to its old glory. In this conservative logic of re-novation, the emergence of an entirely new style could not be observed – it was simply not thinkable yet.

To clarify this, we can shift away from Buchelius's diary to the 1586 edition of Corrozet's *Antiquitez*. We just saw that Buchelius wrote that book printer Nicolas Bonfons commissioned Van Winghe and him to visit historical buildings. In the adaptions in the 1586 edition this field work was joined with the study of medieval texts, for Saint-Denis these were Suger's writings. Whereas the seven previous editions printed between 1550 till 1581 do not even mention the abbot's name, they most probably have looked at his writings too, e.g. his *De consecration ecclesiae Sancti Dionysii* has striking similarities with the discussion of the divinely inspired foundation of the church by king Dagobert in the *Antiquitez*.[48] In contrast with these previous editions, the edition of 1586 does give Suger full credit thanks to an addition of two full pages describing the exceptional role of the abbot in the excellent renovation of the church, as well as by mentioning his writings explicitly.

Readers of the *Antiquitez* had to wait till the 1586 edition to read that 'celle [église] qui ce voit maintenant, n'est la mesme qui fut fondee par Dagobert, quoy que sois en une mesme place, d'autant que l'autre estoit beaucoup plus petite que cette cy. (…) Celle fut rebastie du temps de Louys le ieune par l'Abbé Sugger environ l'an mil cent quarente & un'.[49] This edition continues by expressing the wondrous energy behind the construction works. Suger was able to 'rebuild' (*rebâtir*) the Basilica in only three years and three months. It is put forward as being 'impossible que en si peu de temps on eut mis à fin une piece si excellente, & de laquelle on ne voit rien deffaillir'.[50] This is explained by the fact that the abbot as a prominent royal consort was rich and powerful, as well as by the fact that the need to rebuild was extremely high. The church was so crowded that an enlargement could not wait for very long. However, besides these earthly arguments, divine arguments are taken into account as well. Here, the 1586 edition follows Suger's *The Consecration* closely and even explicitly refers to the manuscript, then preserved in the abbey of Saint-Victor that, as we just saw, Buchelius and Van Winghe had visited few months before. In the description of Saint-Victor from his journal, Buchelius indeed mentions its collection of ancient books and manuscripts. The 1586 edition puts that the wondrous speed of building was

> ce que aucuns revoque en doute comme chose impossible, ainsi que luy mesme tesmoingne en cette sorte. Lequel excellent edifice combine il à esté aide & secouru par la main divine, coustumiere de maintenir tells entreprises, il se voit parce qu'en trois ans trois moys, il fut accomply.[51]

48 See the introduction of *Selected Works of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis*, ed. & trans. by Richard Cusimano & Eric Whitmore (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2018), esp. 16.

49 'This [church] which is now visible, is not the same as the one founded by Dagobert, although it is on the same place, as much as the previous one was far smaller than this one. […] The latter was rebuild in the time of Louis the Young [Louis VII] by Abbot Suger around the year 1141' (Corrozet, *Les Antiquitez*, 22v–23r).

50 'impossible that in such a short time one could bring to a successful conclusion such an excellent work and of which one could see nothing failing' (Corrozet, *Les Antiquitez*, 23v).

51 'something impossible, which no one contradicts, even the abbot himself testifies in this way. How much he was helped [with the construction of] this excellent edifice and led by God's hand, used to maintain such enterprises, is clearly visible because of the three years and three months in which the construction was accomplished' (Corrozet, *Les Antiquitez*, 23r).

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This quote clarifies that the writings of Suger were explicitly used for the addition to the description of Saint-Denis in 1586. By referring to the abbot's discussion of the divinely inspired building process, the new edition perfectly renders the keen interest of Suger in God's wonders. (A modern translator of his work describes Suger as 'never one to shy away from the recitation of a miracle'.[52]) However, more important for us is that the 1586 edition corresponds closely with the abbot's writings due to the fact that the abbot's work on the church is not described as the introduction of a brand new style, but as a splendid re-novation. Just as Suger does in *The Consecration*, this edition points to the fact that the original church of Dagobert is brought back to its old magnificence and in doing so even surpassed it in largeness. All is expressed with caution: the old church 'estoit beaucoup plus petite que cette cy, bien que fut magnificque au possible, & si riche qu'on peut estimer'.[53] So two Golden Ages are carefully related to each other.

The closest the 1586 edition comes to an aesthetic appreciation is when it describes how 'le Bastiment soit diversifié par un grand nombre d'arcs, & de belles colonnes'.[54] This must have been influenced by Suger, who praises in *The Consecration* Dagobert's construction for its 'amazing variety of marble columns'.[55] Thus neither the abbot nor the 1586 edition of *Antiquitez* mention the unprecedented style developed in Suger's renovation. The abbot goes even further in this neglect by writing that he 'was primarily concerned about the harmony and coherence of the old and new work'.[56] He describes sending men to the most remote places to find marble columns of equal quality as the ones used in the old building. Luckily, columns from Roman antiquity could be transported to Saint-Denis with huge efforts from, among other places, the palace of Diocletian. Thus, antique, seventh-century and twelfth-century endeavors led to the assemblage of a harmonious whole.

The role that Buchelius played in the 1586 edition cannot be defined into the details. However, we do know that he and Van Winghe visited Saint-Denis, and that only when they got involved in the augmentation of Corrozet's *Antiquitez* was the importance of Suger's renovation given attention. So together with Van Winghe Buchelius must have played a role in giving the abbot a place he deserves in the building history of Saint-Denis. Moreover, the addition on Suger in the 1586 edition makes explicit that the writings of the abbot were consulted. Therefore, we can assume that Buchelius was familiar with *The Consecration*, where architectural history was seen as a cyclical process of monumental renovations thanks to the various Golden Ages. Roman architecture was certainly a highlight, but the impressive monuments of later periods clearly indicated that Roman antiquity was not entirely swept aside by centuries and centuries of pure barbarity. Since cultural flowering was believed to follow a cyclical pattern, the concept of the Golden Age was right at its place.

52 *Selected Works of Abbot Suger*, 15.

53 'was far smaller than the new one, although as magnificent as one can imagine' (Corrozet, *Les Antiquitez*, 22v).

54 'The Building is diversified by a large number of arches and beautiful columns' (Corrozet, *Les Antiquitez*, 23r).

55 *Selected Works of Abbot Suger*, 36.

56 *Selected Works of Abbot Suger*, 38.

Buchelius's description of the Utrecht Dom

Finally, we see this neglect of difference, and the positing of medieval architecture as the mark of a golden age, carried over in Buchelius's later descriptions of the Dom of Utrecht. When Buchelius returned home in 1586, he continued the antiquarian work that had occupied him in Paris. This resulted both in the book-length topographical account of Utrecht that opens the *Commentarius*, and with the *Monumenta*, his manuscript dedicated solely to the description of the city's churches. Both were completed around 1590.

'A summo igitur templo … exordiar', he tells us in the *Monumenta*, by which he means the Dom.[57] 'Structura est barbarica, quam goticam vel alemannicam vocant', he says.[58] It is the first time that Buchelius explicitly recognizes 'Gothic' as a manner of architecture, and not only script, in his surviving writings, and perhaps the first time that the term is used anywhere in Dutch architectural discourse to describe a specific building. And while Buchelius thus acknowledges the low esteem in which the style was held among his contemporaries, he remarks that the church is 'firma tamen et satis ornata'.[59] Moreover, 'ea vero est amplitudine simul et pulcritudine, ut paucis in Europa sit postponendum'.[60] As at Saint-Denis, the specific characteristics of Gothic style are not registered here; rather, the monumentality of the building is emphasized. The quantity of decoration is highlighted, as well as the size, and the firmness of the construction.

In the *Commentarius*, reference to Gothic style is omitted entirely. His description of the city's churches extends only to the five collegiate foundations, but Buchelius begins again with the Dom. Once more, he emphasizes the scale of the structure: 'Hoc vero templum tantae est amplitudinis ac molis, ut pauca cum hoc comparanda censeam in tota Belgia, ne dicam et verius Europa'.[61] There is perhaps some reference to style, however, in the description of the tower: 'Turris etiam miranda, tam architecturae quam molis ac altitudinis ratione, de qua meritissimo illud dixeris elogio. Existit turris longe pulcherrima mundi,/ dinumeranda inter Creticis spectacula septem'.[62]

While the rest of his description is original, Buchelius co-opts this verse from Cornelius Kempius's description of the Martinikerk tower in Groningen, in his *De origine, situ, qualitate et quantitate Frisia*.[63] It is an expression of civic rivalry, certainly, as the Martinikerk rises nearly to the height of the Utrecht Dom. But this competitiveness of course only underscores the fact that Buchelius valued his own church for its size.

57 'I begin with the most important church' (Buchelius, *Monumenta*, 4v).

58 'The structure is called barbaric, and Gothic or German' (Buchelius, *Monumenta*, 4v).

59 'durable nonetheless, and sufficiently decorated' (Buchelius, *Monumenta*, 4v).

60 'It is so large and likewise so beautiful, that it is inferior to few churches in Europe' (Buchelius, *Monumenta*, 4v).

61 'The church is truly so spacious and grand, that there are few that can be compared to it in the Netherlands, I think, let alone in all of Europe' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 13r).

62 'The tower is also astounding, in the architecture as well as in the size and height, about which this laudatory poem rightly says: the tower is far and away the most beautiful in the whole world, and must be reckoned among the seven world wonders' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 13r).

63 'Exisit turris longescitißima mundi,/ Dinumeranda inter Creticis spectacula septem' (C. Kempius, *De origine, situ, qualitate et quantitate Frisia, et rebus a Frisiis olim praeclare gestis* [Cologne: Gosuinus Cholinus, 1588], 141.

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Fig. 37. Daniel Specklin, *Strasbourg Cathedral*, 1587, engraving, 21.3 × 15.4 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-1957–171

Fig. 38. Herman Saftleven, *View of Utrecht (detail of the Dom)*, 1648, engraving, 30 × 13.9 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-1884-A-7795B

That said, he subtly parses architecture as such from scale in his description of the tower. This implies some concern with the form of the building, but it does not occasion any mention of 'Gothic' characteristics of style. He elaborates as he continues, reporting that some admire the tower of Strasbourg Cathedral, 'et orbis quasi miraculum suspiciant; subtilior haec forsan et artificiosior, inferior tamen meo quidem iuditio aequalitate et commoditate'.[64] It is uncertain which aspect of the structure he describes in his use of 'artificiosior', but he likely points to the ornamental features of the design, as the tower at Strasbourg **(fig. 37)** is indeed more elaborately decorated than the tower of the Dom **(fig. 38)**. However, he makes no attempt to describe

64 'and proclaim it a world wonder; it is perhaps more refined and artful, but by my judgment less balanced' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 13v).

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the specific type of ornament and, as in the *Monumenta*, only the relative amount of decoration appears to concern him.

The meaning of 'aequalitate' is not wholly clear either, but 'equal' or 'balanced' in the sense of symmetrical is probable, as only the left spire of the Strasbourg façade was constructed, while Utrecht features a single, central tower. Buchelius's comparison of the two churches thus invokes something of the classic dichotomy between ornament and overall form in the Renaissance discourse on good antique and *all'antica* design. But both buildings, which he surely recognized as so-called 'Gothic' or 'Barbaric' architecture, are favourably accommodated within this framework, which suggests that he did not see the style of the buildings as an aberration or a mark of decline.

It is fitting, then, that he describes the process of addition and continuity with the past at the site of the Utrecht Dom. Every important step in the building process was taken by a ruler who cultivated his own Golden Age. And each iteration of the building can be rooted in the Golden Age from which Saint-Denis originated, as Buchelius emphasizes that the Dom is a renovation of the first foundation. The original church had been founded by Dagobert in 642, and 'in ruinis primum (ut dixi) templi divi Thomae extructum', he tells us.[65] Then, 'post reditum in urbem Baldericus Clivus magnificentius aedificari iussit', which transpired in the year 966, so he reports.[66] Finally, the church 'ab Adelboldo in maius auctum, ea fere, qua nunc videtur forma, idque anno Christiano MXV'.[67] There is thus a sense of the continuous enlargement of a single building, seen as a monumental renovation rather than a completely new foundation, and the current shape of the church is described as the result of a process of organic growth originating in, and continuing through, an ostensibly barbaric time. At the conclusion of the description and history of Utrecht in the *Commentarius*, this time is rather celebrated as one of great piety and growth. It both gives rise to, and is fed by, the city's churches. Buchelius proclaims that,

> Templa a maioribus condita, caeremoniae institutae, bona celebrantibus sacra attributa, ordines discreti, idque pietatis non frigida opinione; tempore accreverunt singula. Templorum iam maior numerus, arae constit[ut] ae, caeremoniae caeremoniis additae, piorum memoriae celebratae, nec quicquam in religione nimium esse putabatur, si modo religiosum.[68]

The alleged negative view of the medieval past in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, certainly north of the Alps, was in fact much more nuanced than commonly thought. Writers and artists did not unanimously present the Middle Ages as a period of pure standstill, let alone of complete decline. Their view on Gothic architecture illustrates that the medieval

65 'The first church was built on the ruins of the church of St Thomas' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 13v).

66 'After Balderic of Cleves returned to the city, he had the church magnificently rebuilt' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 13v).

67 It 'was later expanded by Adelbold, in 1015, roughly to its current form' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 13v).

68 'Churches built by our ancestors, worship services instituted, sacred goods assigned to priests, distinct orders, and all of that without a cold opinion of piety; they have grown piece by piece over time. The number of churches was already larger, altars were erected, solemnity piled up, memorials for pious people were celebrated, and nothing was too much in religion as long as it was religious' (Buchelius, *Commentarius*, 44r).

period was closely related to their own period, and that they experienced no radical break between antiquity and the present. In this historiographical view, antique ruins, medieval piles and more recent buildings are all seen as monuments memorializing previous Golden Ages.

The writings on architecture by Buchelius offer a privileged insight into how the idea of the Middle Ages as a dark age was confronted with the Middle Ages as a flourishing time. Buchelius developed his appreciation for medieval architecture during his work on the 1586 edition of Corrozet's *Antiquitez*. A crucial moment was reached when augmenting the description of Saint-Denis, where for the first time the role of Suger in the renovation of the church is recognized. There, Buchelius echoes the abbot's own vision of his renovation. That vision focuses in the first instance on a return of the church to its old glory. The 1586 edition follows Suger by neglecting the proposition of a totally new style, rather seeing a harmonious unity between successive building phases in prosperous times. And Buchelius in turn appropriates this idea to discuss the medieval churches in his native town of Utrecht, with the Dom as the most prominent example.

As the economic prosperity of the Republic accelerated at a rate then unknown in Dutch history, Buchelius's idea of a medieval Golden Age came to influence a new generation of topographic writers and artists who could proudly look back to the past as a natural precedent for their own fortunate period, their own Golden Age. While his antiquarian research was never published in his lifetime, from around 1600, he maintained a robust correspondence with this younger generation, as we have already glimpsed in his letter to Samuel Ampzing. A 1636 letter from a representative of the States General, Adriaen Ploos van Amstel, requests information from Buchelius about the organizational principle of his antiquarian journals, showing that their reputation had spread by the end of his life, and that their content was almost certainly known to a wider circle.[69]

However, the most important factor for the spread of his ideas was probably his friendship with the antiquarian Petrus Scriverius (1576–1660). Like Buchelius, Scriverius had been trained in classical philology at Leiden, though under Lipsius's successor, Joseph Justus Scaliger.[70] Scriverius's historical interest lay initially with the Roman and Batavian past of the Republic, which came to first fruition in his *Oudt Batavien nu ghenaemt Holland. Hoe, ende in wat manieren, ende wien Hollandt, Zeelandt ende Vrieslandt eerst bewoont is gheweest*.[71] This was published in 1606, but by around 1610 he had come into contact with Buchelius, and their correspondence over the next decades touched many of those early civic topographers for whom the medieval past was of greatest importance. Indeed, their joint biographer, the historian Sandra Langereis, has characterized the work of the two men almost as a single, indistinguishable effort.[72]

69 For this exchange between Ploos and Buchelius, see Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 94–97.

70 On Scriverius' education at Leiden and the influence of Scaliger, see Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 110–12.

71 Under the pseudonym Saxo Grammaticus, *Old Batavia Now Called Holland. How, and in what Manner, and by whom Holland, Zeeland, and Friesland Were First Settled* (Leiden: Andries Clouck, 1606).

72 Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 155–202.

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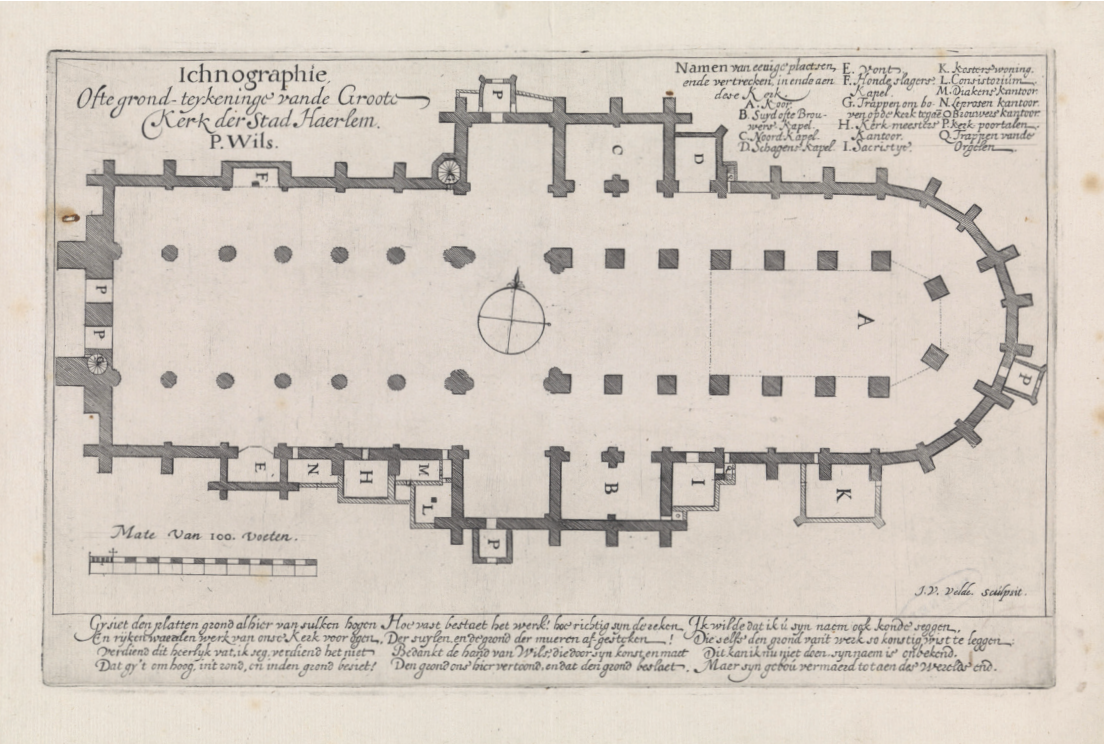

Fig. 39. Jan van de Velde after Pieter Wils, *Groundplan of the St Bavokerk, Haarlem*, in Samuel Ampzing, *Beschryvinge ende Lof der Stadt Haerlem in Holland* (1628), engraving, 24.5 × 15.5 cm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. RP-P-OB-66.542

Thus while Buchelius did not come into contact with Ampzing personally until the letters of 1630, his influence can likely be seen already in the 1628 *Description and Praise* of Haarlem, through the earlier intervention of Scriverius. Ampzing's book appeared in editions of 1616, 1621 and 1628, and Scriverius's involvement can be dated to the second edition, where his opinions on the city's medieval history are credited in the margins. His contributions to the third edition are far more robust, however, as he wrote an entire appendix on the legend of the invention of printing in Haarlem by Laurens Jansz. Coster. And as Langereis has argued, he likely gave Ampzing access to his personal collection of medieval manuscripts as an aid in constructing the main body of the text.[73]

The 1628 edition is remarkable in that it contains a ground plan of the Gothic Bavokerk, as accompaniment to the perspective interior by Saenredam. It is the first measured plan of any medieval Dutch church to appear in print **(fig. 39)**. Its only precedent in any medium is, to the best of our knowledge, Buchelius's representation of the Utrecht Salvatorkerk in the *Monumenta*, a building that had been demolished in 1587, soon after his return from Paris **(fig. 40)**.[74] It is thus plausible that Buchelius's antiquarian practice may have influenced the creation and publication of the Bavokerk plan, via Scriverius's work with Ampzing. What we see in both of the designs is a wholly abstract geometric figure, one that reveals a symmetry that was thought to be the exclusive prerogative of architects in Antiquity. Indeed, at the head of the plan of the Bavokerk, we find the label 'Ichnographie',

73 In the preface of the *Lof*, Ampzing thanks Scriverius for his 'comments, and thoughts, regarding the history of our father city'. On the argument for Ampzing's use of his archive, see Langereis, *Geschiedenis als ambacht*, 190.

74 Buchelius, *Monumenta*, 33r.

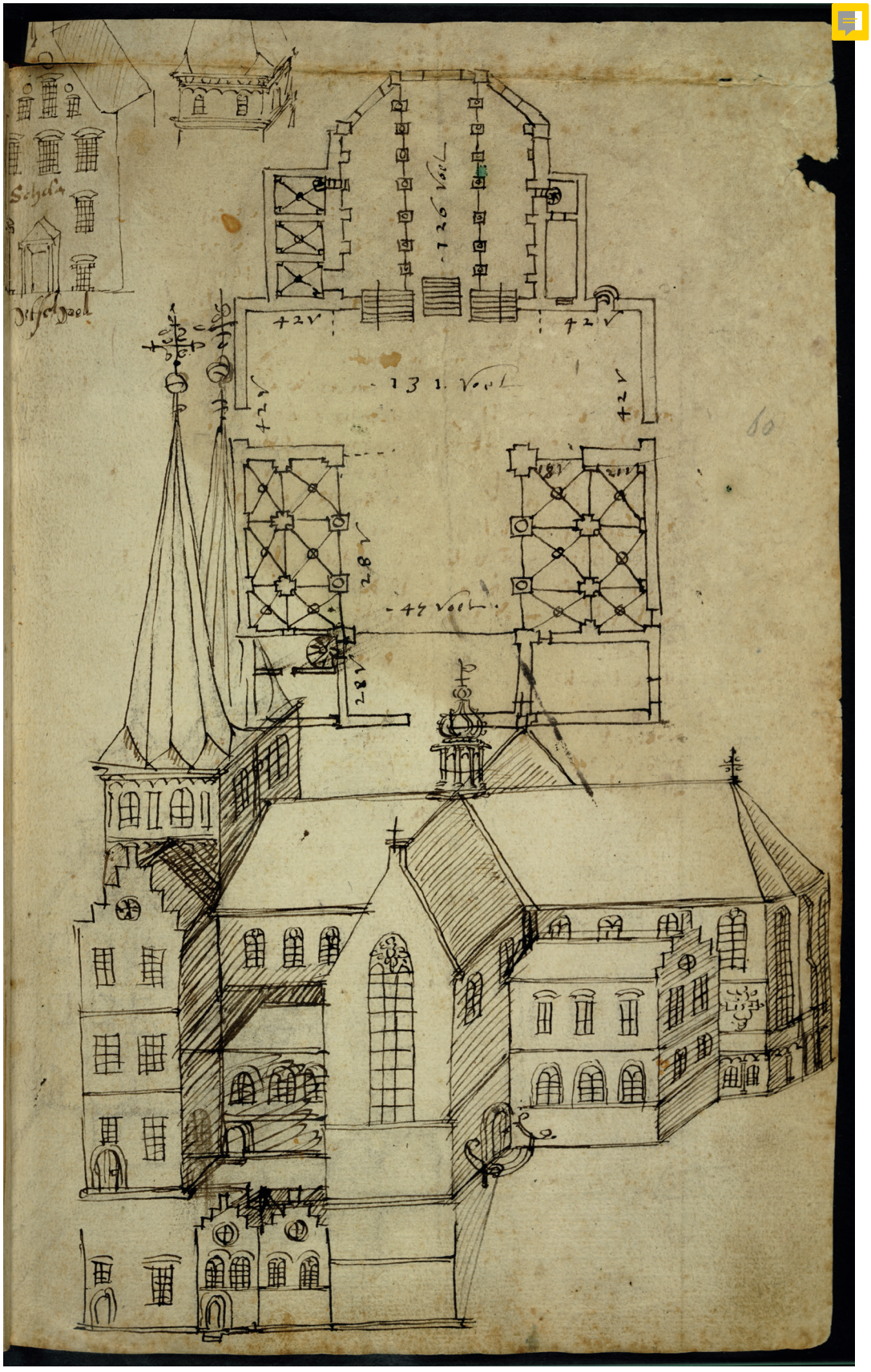

Fig. 40. Arnoldus Buchelius, *Elevation and Ground of the Salvatorkerk*, *c.* 1578, ink on parchment, Utrecht, Het Utrechts Archief, inv. MSS XXVIII L 1

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Fig. 41. Simon Vouet, *Abbot Suger of St Denis*, 1632–34, oil on wood, 21.3 × 13.5 cm, Nantes, Musée d'Arts

the Latin name that Vitruvius gives to the ground plan in his description of the three species of architectural drawing in *De Architectura*.[75] In this way, the representation may be an attempt to assert continuity between the Gothic and the Golden Age of the monumental antique, much as Buchelius had done in his description of the Utrecht Dom. Indeed, Ampzing's text similarly presents the Bavokerk as a testament to Haarlem's own prosperous history.

Buchelius's antiquarian work had not only influenced his compatriots, however, but the French as well. For a large number of readers, the 1586 edition had connected Suger to the magnificence of Saint-Denis and saw the renovation of the church as proof of a Golden Age under an excellent ruler. The connection between Suger and Saint-Denis would be firmly consolidated in the decades to follow, and the abbot would be increasingly linked to a period of flowering in French history. An interesting example is Richelieu's *Galerie des hommes illustres* which was created by Philippe de Champaigne and Simon Vouet in the 1630s (but dismantled in 1727).[76] Visitors of the *Palais Cardinal* saw illustrious men and women from French history with the emphasis on those who had loyally stood by their king, among whom diverse medieval constables and cardinals, as well as women like Joan of Arc. The series ended with Richelieu himself, but actually began with Suger. His portrait by Vouet had a most prominent place in the gallery **(fig. 41)**. It not only opened the historiographical discourse, it directly faced Champaigne's portrait of Richelieu, and was thus given a place of honour.

75 Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, ed. and trans. by Ingrid D. Rowland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 24. The engraving after Wils is only the second instance in which any Gothic church is published in this way, following Cesare Cesariano, who used the ground of Milan cathedral to illustrate the definition of ichnography in his 1521 Italian translation of Vitruvius. See C. Cesariano, *Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de architectura libri dece* (Como: G. da Ponte, 1521).

76 B. Dorival, 'Art et politique en France au XVII[e] siècle: la galerie des hommes illustres du Palais Cardinal', *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français* (1973), 43–60; S. Laveissière & B. Sarrazin, 'Un tableau provenant de la "galerie des Hommes Illustres"', *La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France*, 5/6 (1989), 372–73; S. Laveissière, 'Le conseil et le courage: la galerie des hommes illustres au Palais-Cardinal, un autoportrait de Richelieu', in H. T. Goldfarb (ed.), *Richelieu. L'art et le pouvoir* (Montréal: Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, 2002), 64–103; P. Rosenberg, 'La participation du Vouet à la galerie des hommes illustres du Palais Cardinal', *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français* (1974), 21–23.

Fig. 42. Justus van Egmont, *Suger Oversees the Rebuilding of St Denis*, 1635, oil on wood, 59 × 51 cm, Nantes, Musée d'arts, inv. 753

Champaigne and Vouet were assisted by Justus van Egmont, a painter born in Leiden who started working in Rubens's workshop in 1621, at the age of 20.[77] A year later, he accompanied his master to Paris to assist him in painting the Marie de' Medici cycle. When Rubens returned to Antwerp in 1624, Van Egmont stayed in Paris and started a successful career as *peintre de la Chambre du Roi*.[78] At the end of the 1630s and the start of the 1640s, he contributed to Richelieu's gallery by visualizing crucial events throughout half a millennium that were related to the memorable figures portrayed.

Van Egmont painted Suger's renovation of Saint-Denis **(fig. 42)**. This depiction is extraordinary, as it closely corresponds with the ideas regarding Suger's work as described by the abbot himself, and it was widely dispersed thanks to the 1586 edition of Corrozet's *Antiquitez*. Van Egmont shows Suger discussing the renovation with the builders. On the foreground, the presence of two stone cutters emphasizes that the works are in full action. However, the architectural background is the most revealing. There, the viewer sees decorations and constructions that modern architectural historians would never link to the renovation of Suger, since the style is (what we would now call) a mix of Roman, Romanesque and *all'antica* elements, seen for example in the round arches and windows, the frontons, and

77 M. Rooses, *Rubens' leven en werken* (Antwerp: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1901), 440–41. Cf. A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 3 vols (Amsterdam: Arnold Houbraken, 1718–21), 223.

78 In 1648, Van Egmont even became one of the twelve founding members of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture of Louis XIV.

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Fig. 43. Peter Paul Rubens, *The Coronation of Marie de' Medici*, 1624, oil on canvas, 394 × 627 cm, Paris, musée du Louvre, inv. 1778

Corinthian capitals. The painter shows Saint-Denis in a ruinous state that urgently needs to be renovated. However, nothing in the visualization of the actions of renovation points at the revolution that this renovation would bring along thanks to the introduction of a new architectural style.

Van Egmont is certainly not the only painter neglecting the birth of the Gothic in Suger's Saint-Denis. In his related portrait of the abbot, Vouet prominently places a round arch in the background. Rubens, when depicting the coronation of Marie de' Medici, comes closest to showing the Gothic style in Saint-Denis **(fig. 43)**. However, Van Egmont's master does not give it full attention, since he cuts the most prominent Gothic window in his painting in such a way that the pointed arch is not visible – nor is anything of the rib vaults. In the foreground, moreover, the *all'antica* bases of the columns, and the richly coloured marble of the columns themselves, parallel Suger's account of the effort to bring ancient Roman building materials to Saint-Denis, and thus to create harmony between the old church and the renovation.

While artists in the Dutch Republic like Visscher, Seghers and Saenredam put emphasis on the Gothic as an architectural style, in paintings by French artists or ordered by French patrons the attention was primarily on the continuous survival of the ancient tradition, even if Suger's renovation of Saint-Denis is visualized as an important moment in French history. However, the visualization of the abbot's renovation by van Egmont, Vouet, and Rubens does not entirely contrast with the works of the Dutch artists, as they too visualize a continuum in the building process of the most prominent Gothic churches.

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