Reconsidering the Tribune in Early Gothic Architecture
of Twelfth-Century Northern France

Nicole C. Griggs

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the
Requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
2017
Reconsidering the Tribune in Early Gothic Architecture of Twelfth-Century Northern France

Nicole C. Griggs

This work reconsiders the tribune, its functional and symbolic importance in Gothic style architecture of twelfth-century France. Three case studies, the cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis and the priory church of Saint-Leu at Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, serve as a means to examine the origins, function and medieval conceptions of this enigmatic second story. An analysis of the cathedral fabric, together with the episcopal palace and chapel, in conjunction with an examination of the sociological and political context are undertaken in an effort to start a new dialogue regarding this architectural entity, long neglected in the discourse of Gothic architecture. The outlier in this study is the Cluniac priory of Saint-Leu, constructed with a tribune-like elevation yet lacking a proper tribune; the priory serves as a foil with which to test the assumptions surrounding the cathedral case studies. The careful examination of evidence reveals a nuanced understanding of this architectural entity, undermining the traditional narrative that holds it to be purely a constructional device used by medieval builders in the race for taller, more spacious churches. This new perspective situates the tribune in the broader context of the episcopal complex as an architectural entity physically and symbolically linking the different buildings of the cathedral, episcopal chapel and palace. Finding its roots in royal and imperial architectural complexes of the Byzantine and medieval empires the tribunes of Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis express propriety befitting the stature of the bishop and his cathedral, while this second story as a space of devotion confirms its spiritual supremacy. Notably, the use of this architectural form at this time occurs when bishops sought to reassert their authority, following a period of institutional weakness.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................................... ii

Chapter I: *The Tribune: A Historiography of Form* ................................................................. 1

Chapter II: *Notre-Dame of Noyon* ......................................................................................... 64

Chapter III: *Notre-Dame of Senlis* ......................................................................................... 119

Chapter IV: *Saint-Leu at Saint-Leu-d’Esserent* ................................................................. 166

Chapter V: Conclusion ................................................................................................................. 209

Bibliography of cited works ........................................................................................................ 214

Appendix ...................................................................................................................................... 235
Acknowledgements

I would first like to convey my deepest gratitude to Stephen Murray for his insight, patience and encouragement. I would like to thank those people and institutions who helped me gain access to my case study churches and archives: the Mairie de Noyon, Marie-Christine Robert and the staff of the Mairie de Senlis, the Marie of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, Yannick Nexon and the staff of the Bibliothèque Saint-Geneviève, the helpful and friendly staff at the Archives départementales de l’Oise, Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Bibliothèque nationale de France François Mitterrand and the Richelieu département des manuscrits, the staff at the Bibliothèque Mazarine, Avery Library and to James Conlon, Caleb Smith, Stefaan Van Liefferinge and the staff of the Columbia University Media Center. Finally, I would like to extend a very special thank you to Arnaud Timbert and Diane Daussy for their friendship and help in numerous ways.

To my colleagues and friends whose input, advice and assistance helped refine this work. I am grateful to: Risham Majeed, Rory O’Neill, Kris Tanton, Susan Boynton, Lindy Grant, Hannah Miller, Abbie Raikes, Bernard Zirnheld, Katherine Brennan, Subhashini Galota, Mathieu Lejeune and Kristy Johnson. A special thank you goes to Andrew Tallon and Scott Edwards for their sage advice and invaluable editing skills; to Kenneth Frampton for his friendship and Holger Klein for his insight and understanding. I am especially grateful to those members of my committee, Stephen Murray (director), Kenneth Frampton, Robert Harrist, Holger Klein and Andrew Tallon.

Finally, I would like to express my profound gratitude to my parents Theodore and Josephine, my sisters Meredith and Samantha and their families (Bryan, Liam, Mike, Owen and Roland) who were all there from the start with unwavering love and support throughout this lengthy process. To Patrick and his children (Charles, Alix and Arthur) for their love, encouragement and humor.
For My Parents & Patrick
“Whoever visits the *tribunes*, if she goes up sad, after having seen the perfect beauty of this temple, she will be made happy and joyful.”

—Liber Peregrinationis

Codex Calixintus, Iter pro peregrinis ad Compostella

Book 5
Chapter I

The Tribune: A Historiography of Form

Part I:

What’s in a Name? Defining the Early Gothic Tribune

What exactly is a tribune? While a seemingly straightforward question a survey of tribunes in medieval church architecture reveals great variety in the form, articulation and ornamentation used in the construction of these spaces. In the 1920s the German scholar Paul Rave was among the first to conduct a comprehensive survey of tribunes in early Christian and medieval architecture. Based on formal criteria Rave identifies six distinct types, ranging from a “Blendgeschoß” or a blind or false story, to the fully conceived *Echte Empore (ausgebautes Obergeschoß)* or full-tribune featuring a developed floor (figure 1-1). To understand this architectural plurality and the role of a tribune in twelfth century architecture necessitates an examination of words and terms historically used to describe and define this upper story. A foundation in the etymology of the word tribune provides a useful definition that speaks to the tribunes featured in this study.

---

1 Paul Rave, *Der Emporenbau in romanischer und frühgotischer Zeit* (Bonn: Kurt Schroeder, 1924), 16.
Nomenclature in the Middle Ages

Authors in the Middle Ages used a variety of words and terms to represent the tribune. We might assume that multiplicity in nomenclature reflects the different tribune types outlined in Rave’s survey. Yet as research reveals this was not entirely the case. For example the medieval Latin tribuna or tribunal, first used in reference to ninth-century architecture, or the French trébune of the fifteenth century, did not necessarily point to one of the tribune types in Rave’s survey. More frequently medieval authors reference the chapels and altars housed in tribunes, not the architecture of tribune itself. Word choice more often reflects a combination of author intent, audience and

---

document type (liturgical, narrative and administrative). The location of a tribune within a particular
church also plays an important role in the choice of nomenclature. Careful examination of the
variety and seeming imprecision of medieval naming practices reveals patterns, making
consideration of nomenclature and its etymology instructive in the study of tribunes. An analysis of
the different names and words, even ambiguity, provides insight into the ways in which medieval
people regarded and used tribunes.

Arnold Klukas, whose work on tribunes conducted in the late 1970s stands among the rare
treatments of the subject, attributes the ambiguity in nomenclature in part to the first-century
Roman author/architect Vitruvius who failed to provide a specific word for a tribune in De
architectura, a central source on architecture in the Middle Ages. These authors often mirror Vitruvius’s nonspecific ‘supra ambulationes’ above the ambulatories, or ‘supra basilicae’ above the basilica. Similar indexical words such as sursum, superus/superiora, up, on high, above and higher are commonly used by medieval authors. The Abbot Suger of the abbey of Saint-Denis refers to one of the upper chapels in his newly constructed western frontispiece and narthex (c. 1130s) as superius oratorium or upper oratory (figures 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5). Once housed in these chapels, which today are three spacious connected rooms located over the nave and both aisles, were altars dedicated to the Virgin Mary, Saint Michael, ‘All the Angels’ and Saint Romanus. At the cathedral of Notre-Dame of Noyon, a fifteenth-century building account notes the placement of an important altar dedicated to Saint Michael as ‘audessus du cuer,’ or above the choir. Indexical words were often paired with architectural elements, such as towers and vaults. At Laon Cathedral, the author of a late-twelfth-early-thirteenth-century ordinal specifies a liturgical procession, which includes stations at the chapels of Saint Thomas and Saint Lawrence, in the tower, ‘in turri.’ According to Alexander Sturgis, the expression indicated the polygonal, east facing chapels at tribune level of the


4 Ibid.

5 These types of indexical terms were not limited to the tribune, but also referenced raised spaces such as Abbot Suger’s choir at Saint-Denis, which he describes as “superiorius ecclesie pars capitalis.” See Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St-Denis and its Art Treasures, ed., trans., and annotated by Erwin Panofsky (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), 134.

6 Ibid., 99. While these second story chapels were arguably a different type of space to a tribune, the Abbot Suger’s choice of nomenclature indicates a hierarchical conception of space in which medieval people assign importance to raised and elevated spaces in church architecture.

7 Ibid.


transepts (figure 1-6). The author of a thirteenth-century obituary from the cathedral of Notre-Dame of Senlis uses ‘in voltis’ or in the vaults to indicate the location of a processional station in the chapel of Saint Michael once situated in an extension of the tribune. This word use orients the reader, guiding her up to the chapels located in the tribune and similar elevated spaces.

Underlying the placement of chapels and altars in elevated spaces and second stories is a medieval hierarchic conception of space. Medieval builders often dedicated the chapels and altars in these upper levels to holy and celestial beings, in particular angels.

Speaking about his new choir at the abbey church of Saint-Denis, the Abbot Suger stresses the

Figure 1-6. Laon, Laon Cathedral, northern transept, tribune, eastern oriented chapel. Photograph by Andrew Tallon. http://mappinggothic.org/image/31515.

10 Ibid. Sturgis uses the term gallery instead of tribune.


12 Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias,” trans. Jay Miskowiec, Diacritics, vol. 16, no.1 (Spring, 1986): 22-27. In the history of space, Foucault argues the medieval concept of space was “an hierarchic ensemble of place: sacred places and profane places; protected places open, exposed places…” these places or spaces “concern the life of men.”

13 On the cult of Saint Michael, see Philippe Faure, “L’ange du haut moyen âge occidental (IVe–IXe siècles): création ou tradition?” Médiévales, vol. 15 (1988): 31-49. During the Middle Ages chapels dedicated to the angel Michael were frequently located in elevated spaces or second stories and often found in the western portion of a church.
importance and propriety of a raised emplacement in the following passage: “Since it seemed proper to place the most sacred bodies of our patron saints in the upper vaults (in volta superior) as nobly as we could…”\textsuperscript{14} These last four words “nobly as we could” assigns grandeur and significance to elevated spaces, while simultaneously underscoring its appropriateness or decorum as a space befitting the “most sacred” relics. Further distinguishing the second story chapels of his western frontispiece, Suger writes: “Those who serve God there as if, even as they sacrifice, they dwell at least partly in heaven.”\textsuperscript{15} It was here in the second story where man and celestial entities communed.\textsuperscript{16} In \textit{Libellus de consecratione ecclesiae S. Dionysii} Suger, when describing these same chapels as the “…most beautiful and worthy to be the dwelling place of angels,” Suger underscores an anagogical or mystical significance.\textsuperscript{17} These texts outline medieval conceptions of a spatial hierarchy in which upper stories marked a transition from the profane to the sacred, a liminal space between heaven and earth.\textsuperscript{18}

While common in both medieval Latin and Old French texts, in fact these indexical words represent one variant. The medieval Latin \textit{solarium} and \textit{secretum solarium} defined in the \textit{Niermeyer mediae latinitatis lexicon minimus} (Niermeyer) as a loft, upper room or gallery, with the addition of \textit{secretum}, a hidden type of sanctuary placed in the upper stories of a church, were two common references to tribunes.\textsuperscript{19} According to Klukas, \textit{solarium} was the most widely used reference to a

\textsuperscript{14} Suger, \textit{Abbot Suger}, 54-5. I argue that the upper or elevated spaces of devotion, functioning spaces, bore a similar importance or meaning to tribunes, thus transcending architectural form.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 99.

\textsuperscript{16} Yves Cattin and Philippe Faure, \textit{Les anges et leur image au moyen âge} (Saint-Léger-Vauban, Zodiaque, 1999), 21. It was thought that angels were the metaphoric embodiment of both Man and God, thus represented the conduit between man and the celestial.

\textsuperscript{17} Suger, \textit{Abbot Suger}, 63-5, 99. See also Suger, \textit{Abt Suger von Saint-Denis, Ausgewählte Schriften: Ordinatio; De Consecratione; De Administratione}, eds. Andreas Speer and Günter Binding (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005), 221.

\textsuperscript{18} Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias,” 22-27.

tribune in the Middle Ages. Galbert of Bruges, the chronicler of the life and death of Charles the Good the Count of Flanders, notes how the count together with his retinue would visit the tribunes in the Church of Saint Donatian of Bruges daily to pray and participate in the Mass “...consulem in solarium ecclesiae conscendisse cum paucis.” In 1127, the count was murdered in the tribune while attending Mass, an event met with significant outcry and political consequence.

The specific use of nomenclature also reveals the practical and symbolic function or purpose of the tribune, the ways in which the clergy and congregation conceived of and used these second-story spaces. Most often these terms reflect chapel dedications, evoking the devotional practices associated with particular saints such as observances for the dead. As noted, altars and chapels dedicated to angels, most notably the archangel Michael, were customarily situated in second stories. As the twelfth-century theologian and liturgist Jean Beleth writes in Divinorum officiorum

---


21 Galbert de Bruges, Galbertus Notraius Brugensis: De Multro, Traditio, et Occisione Gloriosi Karoli Comitis Flandriarum, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio, vol. 131 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1994), 28-9. In his definition of the tribune, Viollet-le-Duc locates the tribune of Saint-Donatian in the western frontispiece, under the tower. Yet he draws his conclusions based on the work of Henri Pirenne of 1890. This work did not take into account the more comprehensive Bruges manuscript. In fact the medieval builders of Saint-Donatian drew inspiration from the Palatine Chapel at Aachen, an octagonal building encircled by a tribune. Two staircases granted access to the tribune at Saint-Donatian, as noted in the account. See Galbert de Bruges, The Murder of Charles the Good, trans. James Bruce Ross (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), xliii.

22 Galbert de Bruges, Galbertus Notraius, 129.

23 Matronea or gynaecia, meaning women’s place, are two additional words defining the tribune in the early Christian and medieval periods, used in association buildings located south of the Alps, notably in Italy and Constantinople. Yet these terms are not consistently applied as the term hyperea, a general term for tribunes, was also used interchangeably. The term gynaecia was also more frequently used in a general sense, applied to space for both men and women not only catechumens. See Hiltje F.H. Zomer, “The So-Called Women’s Gallery in the Medieval Church: An Import from Byzantium,” The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium, ed. Adelbert Davids, (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 209-306; Valerio Ascani, Il Trecento disegnato: Le basi progettuali dell’architettura gotica in Italia (Roma: Edizioni Viella,1997). Ascani contends a gynaecia was a space for both men and women who did not wish to enter the church; and Procopius, “On Buildings,” Loeb Classical Library 343, vol. 7, eds. Dewing, H. B. and Glanville Downey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

explicatio, Saint Michael himself stressed his placement ‘high and above.’ Devotional practices and nomenclature confirm the desire of medieval people to fulfil Saint Michael’s predilection, as we will explore in the chapters to come. A large fresco of the archangel Michael adorns the tribune of the tenth-century cathedral of Le Puy-en-Velay. As mentioned, both the cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis had chapels dedicated to the archangel located in the area of the choir tribune. Yet second stories were not the sole domain of Saint Michael, but rather all angels. Medieval authors commonly use angelorum or ‘of the angels’ in reference to those tribunes housing these chapels. At Strasbourg Cathedral the tribune-chapels once flanking the eleventh-century choir were called locum angelorum or ‘place/location of the angels.’ In the Westwerke, a type of narthex, of Saint-Godehard of Hildesheim and Saint-Riquier of Centula medieval authors refer to the second-story chapels dedicated to angels as chorus angelorum, or ‘choir of the angels.’ These appellations recall Suger’s statement in which he describes his chapels as “…the dwelling place of angels.”

25 “In caelum conscendam, supra astra caeli exaltabo solium meum, sedebo in monte Testamenti, in lateribus aquilonis.” (I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven, I will sit on the mount of the congregation, in the uttermost parts of the north.) See Jean Beleth, SS. Ecclesiae rituum divinorumque officiorum explicatio, ed. Philippus Zazzera (Rome: Salomoniana, 1784), 520; and Jean Valléry-Radot “Note sur les chapelles hautes dédiées à Saint Michel,” 453-78. During the Carolingian period monumental multi-storied structures located at the western entrance of a church or in German a Westwerk housed popular Saint Michael cults in the upper chambers. The placement of these cults, altars and chapels dedicated to Saint Michael and angels continued to flourish in the Gothic period, as mentioned in the churches of Saint-Denis, Noyon and Senlis. However the placement of these chapels was not restricted to the west.


29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Suger, Abbot Suger, 63-65, 99.
The importance of angels to medieval people should not be underestimated. Angels were a significant focus of interest for theologians in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, serving as models for monastic and religious communities and the role they played in the eschatological drama and purgatory, as reflected in the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor. 

Finally, we consider the nomenclature used in the twelfth-century *Pilgrim’s Guide to Santiago of Compostela*, a type of travel guide for pilgrims in the Middle Ages. This text provides further insight into medieval conceptions of the tribune. Curiously, the author of the *Guide* uses two distinct words *nave* and *palace* in reference to the cathedral’s tribune. Describing the cathedral the author writes: “Ecclesia vero eadem novem naves habet inferius, et sex superius...” “The church has, in truth, nine naves below and six above (figure 1-7).” Here the author universally applies *navis* or nave in

---

32 Dominique Poirel, “L’ange gothique,” *L’architecture gothique au service de la liturgie: Actes du colloque organisé à la Fondation Singer-Polignac (Paris) le jeudi 24 octobre 2002* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 130-37. According to Poirel, Hugh of Saint Victor incorporated a Dionysian concept of angels in this celestial hierarchy during the twelfth century. The Dionysian image of an angel was sacerdotal, and played an important role as mediator. This marked a shift away from the monastic conceptions put forth by Pope Gregory the Great. Alternatively, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux drew from the concepts laid out by Gregory in his comparison between angels and monks.

reference to the tribune and other architectural elements such as ‘aisle’ and ‘transept.’

Why might the author use only this term when other commonly-used words and terms existed for all three architectural entities? A nave, “the main part or body of a church building, intended to accommodate most of the congregation,” evokes grandeur in scale and volume. “It is a space big enough to welcome the crowds of the faithful.” Alison Stones posits the ‘anomalous’ yet ‘innovative’ use of nave was a topos, a rhetorical literary device, intended to emphasize the congreunte or harmony of the cathedral architecture. The objective of any travel guide is to persuade and entice visitors to a given location. Despite the incomplete state of the church at the time the Guide was written in the 1130’s only five to six bays of both nave and tribune were complete, the author sought to persuade the reader of its harmonious beauty and splendour. Regardless, this intentional use of nomenclature implies both nave and tribune were comparable, sharing affinities in architectural form. According to the author not only did both stories look alike, but shared similar function housing principal altars on both levels.

However, while both nave and tribune were “like” entities, the author was also careful to make a distinction between the two. In the final descriptive paragraphs dedicated to the cathedral the author shifts from navis to the words ‘palacio’ and ‘palatium’ or palace to indicate the tribune: “Sex navicule quae superius in palacio (palatio) aecclesie habentur...” (“The six small naves, which are


36 Ibid.


38 Ibid., 11. See also James D’Emilio, “The Building and the Pilgrim’s Guide,” The Codex Calixtinus and the Shrine of St. James, 187. See also Serafin Moralejo, “The Codex Calixtinus,” 215. Presumably, the author of the Guide could have equally drawn from existing churches as a model. The majority of the so-called ‘Pilgrimage Road churches’ were constructed with full tribunes, among these churches are Saint-Sernin of Toulouse, Saint-Martin of Tours and Sainte-Foy of Conques.

above in the [tribune of the] church…”). Scholars attribute this shift in nomenclature to the architectural relationship between the cathedral tribune and the adjacent episcopal palace. Kenneth Conant describes the palace of the archbishop at Compostela, constructed in the 1120s, as a lavish structure “two stories with halls above and below…” physically linked to the church via the tribune in two locations (as early as the 1130s). This architectural linkage allowed movement between the two structures. The use of the word ‘palace’ for both tribune and palace reifies this architectural connection, while simultaneously blurring the distinction between the two entities. The cathedral by its linkage via the tribune was considered an extension of the palace. Use of the word ‘palace’ to indicate a tribune further imbued the cathedral with the same qualities of architectural prestige and grandeur typically attributed to a royal palace.

In truth in this church no fissure or fault is found; it is admirably constructed, grand, spacious, bright, of proper magnitude, harmonious in width, length and height, of admirable and ineffable workmanship, built in two stories, just like a royal palace.

Cathedral as palace: the author of the Guide thus describes a royal aesthetic in which the tribune was a fundamental element. The tribune described as a nave conveys the perfected harmony of the cathedral; yet described as a palace the tribune imbues the cathedral with magisterial (royal or imperial) splendour, while also bringing to mind the architecture of the episcopal complex as a whole. Within this framework of the pilgrimage church the author assigns further significance


41 Kenneth John Conant, The Early Architectural History of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926), 40. Conant notes the archbishop’s palace was “located as to continue the line of the church façade.” See also The Pilgrim’s Guide to Santiago de Compostela: A Critical Edition, 201, note 45. Drawing from the work of Conant, the authors note that perhaps the tribune was considered a part of the palace and hence the use of palatium.

42 The Pilgrim’s Guide to Santiago de Compostela: A Critical Edition, 201. “Its plan was a great T, with the transverse arm containing handsome… halls on two levels, and so located as to continue the line of the church façade… the long member, parallel to the nave, had a communication (now replaced by…one of the later construction), which led to the gallery of the cathedral; there is… now a door leading to the cathedral…”

43 Ibid., 68-69.
noting the tribune activated the senses of the visitor, triggering a phenomenological or anagogic experience, “[f]or indeed, whoever visits the naves of the gallery, if he goes up sad, after having seen the perfect beauty of this temple, he will be made happy and joyful.” This sentence implies that in certain churches access to the upper space was at times possible for a larger audience of laity.

_Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc and Nineteenth-Century Thought_

The issue of semantic choice persisted through the Middle Ages into the nineteenth century albeit simplified. Choice lay between two words: ‘tribune’ and ‘gallery.’ What I call the “tribune,” English authors generally call the “gallery.” Alternatively, French authors use “tribune,” even though the equivalent galerie exists in French. We might ask if one is more appropriate than the other? Despite fundamental differences between the two languages, both ‘tribune’ and ‘gallery’ are defined similarly and share common etymological roots. This proximity between ‘tribune’ and ‘gallery’ complicates choice of the most appropriate term or word. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc’s _Dictionnaire raisonné de l’architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle_, entry on religious architecture best expresses this situation:

_Dans le domaine royal, à la fin du XIIe siècle, pour peu que les églises eussent d’importance, le bas côté était surmonté d’une galerie voûtée en arcs d’ogives, c’était une tribune longitudinale qui permettait, les jours solennels, d’admettre un grand concours de fidèles dans l’enceinte des églises; car par ce moyen la superficie des collatéraux se trouvait doublée._

According to Viollet-le-Duc a tribune, oriented longitudinally, and a gallery were nearly the same entity. Yet he presents a nuanced idea of the tribune, at the center of which lies the question of the

---

44 Ibid., 70-71.

45 Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, “architecture religieuse,” _Dictionnaire raisonné de l’architecture française du XI au XVI siècle_ (Paris: Édition Bance Morel, 1854-68), vol.1, 192. “In the royal domain, at the end of the twelfth century, in the case of important churches, above the aisles was a vaulted gallery with rib vaults; it was a longitudinal tribune that, during the holy days, provided space inside the church for great crowds of the faithful, by means of the doubled space of the side aisles.”
form/function relationship. Viollet-le-Duc states that the longitudinal arrangement of the gallery determines its function. In the form of an elevated platform of varying dimensions and configurations medieval builders designed the tribune to accommodate people, according to Viollet-le-Duc. The entries for both tribune and gallery in the *Dictionnaire raisonné* provide further clarity.

As noted in the *Dictionnaire raisonné* a gallery is a “monumental covered passage situated on either the interior or exterior of a building.”⁴⁶ A gallery functioned as type of corridor allowing people to

---

⁴⁶ Ibid., “galerie,” vol. 6, 8.
circulate throughout a building (figures 1-8, 1-9).”

Alternatively, “a tribune was any part of a church elevated above the ground floor supported by either columns, an arcade or corbels,” this platform was “sometimes reserved for the privileged among the faithful…and also a way to double the surface area for the faithful in small churches, and in certain cases housed oratories (figures

---

47 According to Viollet-le-Duc service passageways were also galleries. Ibid., “galerie,” vol. 6, 8. “Passage couvert, de plain-pied, donnant à l’intérieur ou à l’extérieur, servant de communication d’un lieu à un autre, de circulation, aux différents étages d’un édifice; c’est plutôt l’aspect monumental que le plus ou moins de largeur et de hauteur qui fait donner le nom de galerie à un passage. La dénomination de galerie entraîne avec elle l’idée d’un promenoir étroit relativement à sa longueur, mais décoré avec une certaine richesse. On donne aussi le nom de galerie à tout passage de service, très-étroit d’ailleurs, mais très-apparent et faisant partie de l’architecture d’un édifice.” (“Covered walk-through passageway, opening to the interior or exterior, for communication from one place to another, for access to different floors of a building; it is rather the monumental aspect more or less in width and height which gives the name ‘gallery’ to a passage. ‘Gallery’ carries with it the idea of a walkway, narrow in respect to its length, but decorated with a certain richness. We also call a gallery any service passage, very narrow indeed, but quite visible and integral to the architecture of a building.”).
If one adheres to the rather indiscriminate use of nomenclature laid out by Viollet-le-Duc the upper stories of the twelfth-century churches of Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis are galleries in their architectural form and proportion, but are also tribunes in their purpose and even architectural disposition. Arguably, this ambiguity is linked to Viollet-le-Duc’s conception of these spaces as corridor-like, a purpose secondary to its structural function.

Contemporary Definitions

Today this issue of tribune versus gallery persists. First used in the sixteenth century the English word ‘gallery’ stemmed from the fourteenth-century French galerie, a type of porch. Etymologically the French galerie was formed from the medieval Latin galeria and the variant galilaea. While the origin of the medieval Latin galeria remains unknown, a galilaea, first mentioned in the Liber tramitis a Cluniac customary (c. 1027), was a two-storied narthex or porch-like structure incorporated in western entrance of the church found at the monastery of Cluny II and certain priory churches, as seen at Saint-Leu of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (figures 1-12, 4-16, 4-17, 4-18). A galilaea housed religious observances and chapels on both lower and upper stories.

Although first associated with Cluniac observances this type of narthex structure was not unique to

---

48 Ibid., “tribune,” vol. 9, 263. “On donna le nom de tribune, dans l’église, à toute partie élevée au-dessus du sol, soit sur des colonnes et des arcs, soit sur des encorbellements, parfois aussi des tribunes particulières réservées à quelques fidèles privilégiés, à de grands personnages, aux familles des fondateurs, etc. Les tribunes étaient encore un moyen d’augmenter les surfaces données aux fidèles dans de petites églises. Si cette pièce servait de tribune, c’est-à-dire d’oratoire élevé au-dessus du sol de l’église, elle n’avait point la forme tout exceptionnelle que nous attachons aujourd’hui à cette partie de l’édifice religieux.” ("We call a tribune, in the church, an elevated part above ground or on columns and arches or on cantilevers, sometimes also special forums reserved for the few privileged faithful and for great personages, the families of founders, etc. The tribunes were a way to increase the area given to the faithful in small churches. If this room was used as a forum, that is to say as a high oratory above the floor of the church, it did not have the outstanding form that we now attach to this part of the religious building.")


50 Ibid.

Cluniac traditions.

Gallery as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) reads, “A covered space for walking in, partly open at the side, or having the roof supported by pillars; a piazza, portico or colonnade.”\textsuperscript{52}

The French dictionary Le grand Robert (LGR) presents a similar definition, qualifying a galerie as dimensionally ‘longer than wide.’\textsuperscript{53} Both English and French definitions reflect the concepts of Viollet-le-Duc. However, the OED states a gallery was a “platform, supported by columns or brackets…designed to provide additional space for an audience,” in its entry on galleries, found in the subsection on church architecture.\textsuperscript{54} This echoes Viollet-le-Duc’s concept of a tribune. An equivalent definition in the LGR states “[i]n a church, a type of tribune encircling the

\textsuperscript{52} “gallery,” OED Online.

\textsuperscript{53} “galerie,” Le grand Robert version électronique, no. 4, http://gr.bvdep.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/. “Lieu de passage ou de promenade, couvert, beaucoup plus long que large, ménagé à l'extérieur ou à l'intérieur d'un édifice ou d'une salle. Dans une église, sorte de tribune continue sur le pourtour intérieur.” (“Place of passage or covered walkway that is longer than it is wide, arranged outside or inside a building or a room. In a church, a sort of platform continues around the inside.”)

\textsuperscript{54} “gallery,” OED Online, no. 3b, http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/view/Entry/76266?rskey=1kYws8&result=1&isAdvanced=false&eid. “platform, supported by columns or brackets, projecting from the interior wall of a building, and serving e.g. to provide additional room for an audience.”
interior.”

As mentioned, the Old French trébune of the fifteenth century, defined as an elevated space where the clergy read aloud/sung the Gospels, is among the first uses of ‘tribune’ in the Middle Ages.\footnote{Frédéric Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l’ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle, ed. P. Godefroy (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1881-1902; Vaduz: Kraus Reprint, 1961), vol. 78, 808. The cérémonie des consuls à Montpellier of 1409 provides the first reference.} Etymologically the word “tribune” derives from the medieval Latin tribuna/tribunal, a seat (a dais or platform) of power for magistrates or judges, a place of authority where decisions are effected.\footnote{J.F. Niermeyer, “Tribunal,” Mediae latinitatis lexicon, 1042.} In Niermeyer the two entries pertaining to architecture defines tribunal as an elevated place where Scriptures were read and a type of ‘high-level sanctuary.’\footnote{Ibid., The ninth-century text De ecclesiasticis officis by Amalarius of Metz presents the first usage and the Ordo Romanus VI is the source for the second entry.} These etymological roots

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Figure 1-15. Noyon, Notre-Dame, choir tribune, view looking southeast. Photograph by Andrew Tallon. http://mappinggothic.org/image/32105.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Figure 1-16. Senlis, Notre-Dame, choir tribune, view looking northwest. Photograph by Andrew Tallon. http://mappinggothic.org/image/44300.}
\end{figure}
situate the tribune centrally in the sanctuary where liturgical performance, devotion, singing and speaking took place. The OED defines the tribune as “A raised and seated area or gallery, esp. in a church,” while simplified the definition reflects its etymological roots.\(^{59}\) Similarly, the LGR defines a tribune as an “elevated and reserved space in a church, a gallery located above the aisles, or the platform of a jubé, the French for choir screen.”\(^{60}\)

The etymology of both gallery and tribune reflect the inherent ambiguity in which neither term accurately encapsulates the architectural entity featured in this study. In his entry on religious architecture, Viollet-le-Duc’s use of longitudinal tribune was most precise. Despite this ambiguity in meaning the usage of ‘tribune’ proves appropriate, as it not only describes architectural form, but also carries meaning as a place of authority and power in addition to its function as a place for altars and oratories.

Yet a nuanced definition reflecting the choir tribunes of the twelfth-century cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Senlis and Noyon is necessary. Place, time and context play a crucial role in the appearance of these tribunes. The full tribunes at Noyon and Senlis have vaulted ceilings and paved floors.\(^{61}\) Dimensionally, in width and square footage, the tribune approximates the aisles below. It is a generous space with ample room for numerous people to circulate unencumbered, providing space for altars and chapels (figures 1-13, 1-14). The building superstructure forms the outer wall of the tribune. Windows punctuate this outer wall, once complete with stained glass, illuminating the


\(^{61}\) Paul Rave, Der Emporenbau, 16. Not all tribunes of early Gothic architecture of the twelfth century were paved, most notably Saint-Remi at Reims.
An arcade of open archways defined by combination of slender monolithic columns and compound piers form the interior wall, separating the interior space of the tribune from the choir, transept and nave (figures 1-15, 1-16). Standing approximately in the mid-point and up to the interior wall of the tribune (at Noyon or Senlis) the arcade frames vistas allowing the visitor to see into the church, its choir, transept and nave (figure 1-16). Yet standing towards the outer wall the visitor can no longer see the floor level of the choir and the altar(s).

---

62 Stained-glass windows are no longer found in the tribunes of Noyon and Senlis. Studies conducted at Notre-Dame of Noyon demonstrate that a program of figural depictions of saints once adorned the windows of the choir tribune. See Evelyn Staudinger Lane, “Images Lost/Texts Found: The Original Glazing Program at Notre-Dame de Noyon,” The Four Modes of Seeing: Approaches to Medieval Imagery in Honor of Madeline Harrison Caviness, eds. Evelyn Staudinger Lane, Elizabeth Carson Pastan and Ellen Shortell (Farnham, England, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009): 133-48. Lane draws her conclusions from a fifteenth-century document (Beauvais: Archives départementales de l’Oise, MS G 1357), which notes the windows depicting scenes from the life of Saint-Pantaléon, now located in the radiating chapels, were originally placed in the choir tribune. See also Paris: Médiathèque de l’architecture et du patrimoine, l’Oise, Noyon, dossier 81.61.9561, Daniel Ramée, devis, custom 4 (1837-80).
below. This orientation suggests viewing the Eucharist and Mass held below in the choir was not the primary function of the tribune, medieval builders did not conceive the tribune as a viewing platform. At ground level of either the nave or crossing space looking up the visitor standing in the tribune remains largely visible, suggesting it was more important for a visitor to be seen within the tribune rather than see into cathedral (figures 1-17, 1-18). Sculptural details ornate capitals, slender en délit shafts, moldings and figural depictions articulate the tribunes, which also remain discernible from the ground level (figure 1-18). As mentioned, tribunes echo the ground plan of the side aisles, running the length of the building. However, more frequently interruptions in the spatial and architectural continuity create a visual and often physical divide between the tribunes of the choir
Arguably this rupture in the architectural fabric impacted functionality, evidenced by the frequent construction of two independent sets of staircases, granting access to the choir and nave tribunes. Finally, this definition must also address the issue of function. As mentioned, the tribune was an active site of religious worship and devotion, most notably housing chapels dedicated to angels and saints. Vestiges of altars can be found in certain tribunes, like at Notre-Dame of Noyon (figure 1-13). Charged with meaning tribunes functioned symbolically as these spaces held hierarchical importance as a liminal threshold between earth and the celestial, yet they also reflected a prestigious aristocratic architectural language. The broader context of architectural history defines

63 These breaks in the tribune are typically changes in the width of passage, for example a transition from the width of the tribune to a narrow triforium space, roughly the large enough a single person. The cause for such architectural breaks are diverse, like changes in the architectural plan and the presence of a transept (sometimes added later).
more clearly the purpose and functionality of the tribune medieval church architecture history.

Part II:

A Brief History of the Tribune

The tribune has long appeared in church architecture with its roots stretching back to classical antiquity. Among the first buildings to feature tribunes were sacred and secular monuments of ancient Rome and include the basilicas Julia (c. 46 B.C.E.), Aemilia (179 B.C.E.) and Ulpia (113 C.E.) of Rome and Leptis Magna in Libya (c. third century C.E.).

Vitruvius the tribune was a constituent element in his notion of the archetypal basilica, presented in De architectura. Tribunes enter church architecture in the fourth century with imperial Roman acceptance of Christianity during the reign of Constantine (r. 306-337 C.E.). This period marked a shift away from the intimate scale of the house-church, as found at Dura-Europos (c. 233-56), towards the monumental


65 Vitruvius, The Ten Books on Architecture, 131-37; and John Bryan Ward-Perkins, “Constantine,” 72-77. The Vitruvian-designed basilica at Fanum (c. 27 B.C.E.) reflects his ideal: “rectangular building, consisting of a lofty central hall, surrounded on all four sides by an internal portico and tribune, and lit by a clerestory; a rectangular projection with an apse contained the tribunal, the seat of the presiding magistrate, and which served at the same time as a shrine for the imperial cult, aedes Augusti.”

66 Christianity did not become the official religion of the empire until the reign of Theodosius I (c. 379-95).
Map Legend: Known Churches with Full Tribunes

- Green: 4th-7th centuries
- Blue: 8th-10th centuries
- Red: 11th century
- Yellow: 12th and 13th centuries

Figure 1-19. Map of known churches with tribunes, Image by Author using ZeeMaps.
architecture of the basilica and centrally planned structures. While not prerequisite, tribunes appeared in both architectural types. Among the early Christian and medieval churches, the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem (c. 326), the Hagia Sophia of Constantinople (c. 532), Old Saint-Peter’s in Rome (c. fourth century) and the Palatine Chapel of Aachen (c. 792-805), paradigmatic buildings for medieval builders. Only Old Saint Peter’s in Rome did not feature tribunes.

Mapping churches with full tribunes, dating from the fourth to the thirteenth centuries, locates them scattered throughout the Middle East, Northern Africa and continental Europe (figure 1-19). This map not only demonstrates prevalence of tribunes in architectural history, but reveals these architectural units did not conform to particular geographical boundaries or time. In France, buildings with tribunes are spread broadly across the country with large concentrations around the Île-de-France, in the north and Normandy (figure 1-20). Many of these churches date to the twelfth century, so-called Gothic style of architecture, including the cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis featured in this study. These patterns raise important questions. How can we account for the use of tribunes in

---


68 The churches located on the map are primarily those with full tribunes. While this map is largely complete including now demolished buildings like Saint-Lucien of Beauvais, missing are those buildings in which we are no longer certain of the interior elevation. Churches in Spain are also largely omitted.
certain buildings and not in others? What influenced architectural choice? Scholars of medieval architecture provide a variety of theories to these questions. Seeking to understand the concentration of Gothic churches with tribunes in northern France scholars (Robert Branner, Jean Bony, Eric Carlson, etc.) ascribe this particular group to a “Northern School” of architecture, reflecting local building traditions. These scholars contend that medieval builders of the “Northern School” favored a four-story elevation with a tribune as the means to construct more lofty buildings in the quest for height, as seen in architectural production of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries (figure 1-20).69 Underlying these assumptions is the prevailing understanding of the tribune in Gothic architecture as purely a constructional device designed to support the upper walls and vaults. Yet in sharp contrast, our understanding of the tribune in the broader context of medieval architectural history reveals diverse purpose and function. Examination of both the churches and related scholarship of tribune elevations in early Christian and medieval architecture is instructive, revealing patterns or themes linking different architectural types and religious institutions through space and time. Among the widespread patterns of tribune use can be linked to imperial or royal patronage, religious reform, pilgrimage and the notion of medieval architectural quotation put forth by art historian Richard Krautheimer. Considering these patterns we can then reconsider the tribune as it appears church architecture of the twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries.

Tribunes and Imperial Architecture

Perhaps the largest number of churches with tribunes on the map can be linked to imperial or royal patronage. These buildings are neither confined to a particular region nor a period in time. The roots of imperial association with basilicas date back to the Late Republican (c. 120-27 B.C.E.) and Early

Imperial Roman (25 B.C.E.-197 C.E.) periods when such structures increasingly housed the shrine of the imperial cult. In church architecture imperial or royal-sponsored buildings were often more than a gift of funds, but rather an expression of the monarch’s identity that in turn reified their power. Churches and chapels with imperial and royal linkages were also frequently part of larger palatine complexes in which the tribune was a point of entry into the church and served as a type of semi-private space for the monarch and his retinue. Yet early Christian and medieval builders constructed various types of imperial or royal church architecture. Both basilican and domed structures equally served as imperially-sponsored churches. Despite this difference in architectural types the tribune remained a principal element in what might be called an imperial or royal architectural language. Arguably the three most iconic imperial sponsored early Christian and medieval churches with tribunes are the Holy Sepulcher (c. 326) of Constantine, Hagia Sophia (c. 537) of Justinian and the Palatine Chapel of Aachen of Charlemagne (c. 798-805).

Constantine and the Holy Sepulcher

Perhaps the most important building in Christendom was the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, built by the Emperor Constantine and his mother Helena. The structure of the church was in fact two architectural entities, a basilica called the Martyrion which adjoined a rotunda called the Anastasis, both most-likely constructed with tribunes (figure 1-21). Located on what was believed to be Mount Golgotha, the site of the Crucifixion, Entombment and Resurrection of Christ, the church was both a “witness” to the martyrdom of Christ, and a memorial.


commemorating these important moments in Christianity. The Holy Sepulcher was not only monumental commemorative shrine, but also an imperial building. Drawing from the writing of Eusebius (c. 263-339), the chronicler of the life of Constantine, Paul Binski argues the architecture commemorating these important moments in Christianity. The Holy Sepulcher was not only monumental commemorative shrine, but also an imperial building. Drawing from the writing of Eusebius (c. 263-339), the chronicler of the life of Constantine, Paul Binski argues the architecture

---

72 Ibid., Book 3, Chapter 33, http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/vita-constantine.asp. Eusebius describes the building as a memorial charged with memory and meaning. This notion of the memorial was also reflected in the naming of both the Martyrion and Anastasis. The Martyrion being a place of memory and commemoration of the death of a martyr, and Anastasis, Greek for resurrection. Eusebius also mentions how the building was a witness to the Resurrection.


74 Ibid., Book 3, Chapter 33, http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/vita-constantine.asp. Eusebius describes the building as a memorial charged with memory and meaning. This notion of the memorial was also reflected in the naming of both the Martyrion and Anastasis. The Martyrion being a place of memory and commemoration of the death of a martyr, and Anastasis, Greek for resurrection. Eusebius also mentions how the building was a witness to the Resurrection.

and ornament of the church affirmed an imperial aesthetic conceived by the emperor.\textsuperscript{76} The ‘impressiveness’ of the building evident in its scale and materiality, colossal in both height and breadth, together with a lavish ornamentation expressed these imperial associations.\textsuperscript{77} According to Binski, Eusebius reinforces the notion of this aesthetic through his choice of language. Repeated throughout the \textit{Life of Constantine} are phrases describing the buildings as having a ‘royal’ and ‘imperial’ magnificence.\textsuperscript{78}

While Binski admits his thesis was general, by adding the appearance of the tribune in imperial church architecture to the list of elements amplifies this notion of an imperial aesthetic. According to Richard Krautheimer, the church of the Holy Sepulcher, more specifically the Anastasis, was also one of the most copied of all Christian churches.\textsuperscript{79} While the tribune was not a feature in all ‘copy’ buildings, in the fourth and fifth centuries imperial construction commonly followed the model of the Holy Sepulcher. The church of Saint-Menas in Abu Mina, Egypt, c. 412, is one such example.\textsuperscript{80} Certain fourth-century imperial churches in the Rhineland also followed Constantinian models. According to Krautheimer, this architectural appropriation served as a means to forge political and religious linkages in the capital cities of the empire, such as the cathedral of

\textsuperscript{76} Paul Binski, “The Heroic Age of Gothic and the Metaphors of Modernism,” \textit{Gesta}, vol. 52, no. 1 (2013): 3-19. The imperial aesthetic fits into a larger argument Binski makes regarding the notion of the heroic and the sublime that focuses on the “great deeds and accomplishments” of builders. It would appear the appropriation of the basilican form for the martyrion, represented the appropriation of the secular basilicas of classical antiquity that housed the cult of the emperor, although Binski does not mention this aspect. According to Richard Krautheimer, the image of the emperor in the flesh or in effigy became increasingly predominant in ‘any’ basilica. See also Richard Krautheimer, \textit{Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture}, 145.

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 4.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., See also Eusebius of Caesarea, \textit{The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine}, Book 3, Chapter 40, \url{http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/vita-constantine.asp}. “This temple, then, the emperor erected as a conspicuous monument of the Saviour's resurrection, and embellished it throughout on an imperial scale of magnificence.”


\textsuperscript{80} See Peter Grossmann, \textit{Abū Mīnā} (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016).
Trier, rebuilt in the 380s with tribunes. In the early-eleventh century the Constantinian church of the Holy Sepulcher was destroyed. In the wake of this destruction only the rotunda of the Anastasis was rebuilt (c. 1048), again with tribunes, financed by the Byzantine empire further serving as a model of imperial church architecture.

Emperor Justinian and the Hagia Sophia

In the weeks following the Nika uprising of 532 that left the earlier basilican church in ruins, the Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora started construction on the new Hagia Sophia, a colossal,

---

81 Richard Krautheimer, Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture, 60. Trier was an important city, housing an imperial residence and the aula or audience hall of Constantine from the fourth century. See also Heinz Heinen, Trier und das Trevererland in römerischer Zeit (Trier: Spee-Verlag, 1985); Warren Sanderson, “Monastic Architecture and the Gorze Reforms Reconsidered,” The White Mantle of Churches, 81-90. Sanderson notes the important religious reform movements in Trier, later in the tenth century, underscoring its significance as a religious center.

sumptuously-ornamented, domed church designed by architects Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus. The new Hagia Sophia expressed a triumphant imperial aesthetic, confirming imperial power following the Nika uprising that challenged the authority of the emperor (figures 1-22, 1-23).\textsuperscript{83} The church left contemporaries like the sixth-century author Procopius in awe. Procopius echoes Eusebius in his use of descriptive language in the \textit{Buildings I}, in which he notes “...the church has become a spectacle of marvelous beauty, overwhelming to those who see it, but to those who know it by hearsay altogether incredible...it exults in an indescribable beauty.”\textsuperscript{84} He also underscores the emperor’s involvement in the construction “It was by many skilful devices that the Emperor Justinian and the master-builder(s) Anthemius and Isidorus secured the stability of the

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Istanbul, Hagia Sophia, view of upper gallery.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{83} Idem, “The Sanctity of Place and the Sanctity of Buildings: Jerusalem versus Constantinople,” 287. Ousterhout notes the Hagia Sophia was “more than anything a symbol of the rule of Emperor Justinian, and its construction came at a critical point in his reign.” See also Procopius, “On Buildings,” 9-11.

church, hanging, as it does, in mid-air.” 85 For Procopius the tribunes are a transcendent magnificence defying description. 86

The southern tribune of the Hagia Sophia once served as an area designated for the emperor, empress, the patriarch (the highest ranking bishop in the Eastern Orthodox Church) and their respective retinues. Once linked architecturally to the imperial palace via the tribune, the emperor and empress could pass directly from one building into another. 87 Imperial portraiture, mosaics dating from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, adorn the walls of the tribune further distinguishing this space as imperial. This visual genealogy expressed in the multiple portraits constructed a collective imperial identity, serving to confirm and legitimate

85 Ibid., 23.

86 Ibid., 27. Procopius writes: “But who could fittingly describe the galleries (hyperôa) of the women’s side (gynaikonitis), or enumerate the many colonnades and the colonnaded aisles (peristyloai aulai) by means of which the church is surrounded?” According to Procopius one side of the gallery or tribune was dedicated for women and the other for men.


88 John Freely and Ahmet S. Cakmak mention the “…palace would have extended along the southern side of the church near its southwest corner…All that remains of the palace are two rooms above the Vestibule of Warriors…In the southeastern section of the Hagia Sophia a ramp provided access to the western tribunes, and it was here in the tribunes that the patriarch could access the palace.” Ibid., Byzantine Monuments in Istanbul, 105, 121. This architectural relationship of palace to church tribune recalls a similar arrangement at the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. At Compostela the passage allowed the archbishop to access both the church and his chapel located in the tribune. See The Pilgrim’s Guide to Santiago De Compostela: A Critical Edition, 199, note 56.
each ruler depicted in or visiting the tribunes (figure 1-24).\textsuperscript{89}

The Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora were prolific builders funding the construction of approximately thirty-three churches throughout the empire. While tribunes did not appear in every building this architectural form was included in a group of monuments located in the capital cities of Constantinople and Ravenna. Among these churches were Saints Sergius and Bacchus (c. 527-36), the Hagia Eirene (c. 532-37) and the reconstruction of the church of the Holy Apostles (c. 536-50) all situated in Constantinople (figures 1-25, 1-26, 1-27).\textsuperscript{90} De Ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, a book compiled in the tenth century featuring imperial ceremonies, provides a window into the function of the tribune in an imperial

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., Byzantine Monuments in Istanbul, 214-26. Among the imperial portraits are those of Emperor Alexander (r. 912-13), the Empress Zoe and her husband Constantine IX Monomachus (r. 1042-55) flanking an enthroned Christ, and the Emperor John II Comnenus (r. 1118-43) together with the Empress Eirene and Prince Alexius flank the Virgin and Child. The prince reigned briefly as co-emperor with his father. Also found in the tribune was tomb of Dandolo the Doge of Venice (c. 1205).

context of the church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus. The text gives account of an imperial ceremonial procession from the palace into tribunes of the church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus, where the emperor would receive communion in a loge or a type of private box (figures 1-26, 1-27). In the Blachernae palace, the suburban imperial palace of Byzantine emperors in

---


Constantinople, we find a similar architectural arrangement and ceremonial processions. Drawing from a mid-fourteenth century account by the Pseudo-Kodinos, Ruth Macrides describes how on Palm Sunday the emperor processed along an elevated walkway joining the emperor’s private apartments and the church of Saint-Mary. The duplication of these architectural relationships (palace and tribuned church) and similar ceremonies, reifies the imperial presence and associations with the tribune.

**Charlemagne and the Palatine Chapel at Aachen**

The Palatine Chapel of Aachen built by the emperor Charlemagne (c. 798-805) further demonstrates how the tribune expressed an imperial agenda or aesthetic. Dedicated to the Virgin, the Palatine Chapel is a domed structure with an octagonal core, divided on the interior into a three-story elevation of an arcade, tribune and clerestory (figure 1-28). The interior decoration at Aachen was

---


Not only did Charlemagne use spoliated materials to adorn the interior of the chapel, but based his imperial architectural complex of the \textit{aula-camera-capella} (audience hall-private chambers-chapel) on Byzantine and early Christian models.\footnote{Judith Ley, “Aquis palatium: Spätantiker Palast oder frühmittelalterliche Pfalz? Architekturhistorische Überlegungen zur Ikonographie de Aachener Pfalz,” \textit{The Emperor’s House: Palaces from Augustus to the Age of Absolutism}, eds. Michael Featherstone, Jean-Michel Spieser, Gülru Tanman and Ulrike Wulf-Rheidt (Boston: De Gruyter, 2015): 127-46. Ley argues that Charlemagne drew from early Christian palatine models in an effort to make Aachen, a second Rome. See also Annie Renoux, “Du palais impérial aux palais royaux et prinçiers en Francie occidentale (c. 843-1100),” \textit{The Emperor’s House: Palaces from Augustus to the Age of Absolutism}, 93-106.} While the imperial apartments and \textit{aula} or the great hall were not immediately adjacent to the chapel, as found at the Hagia Sophia, archeological evidence reveals the presence of a double-storied walkway linking the palace to an atrium, located in front of the chapel (figure 1-29).\footnote{Ibid., 127-29.} Two rectangular buildings, each with two-story narthexes, located on the western façade of the chapel, provided the emperor access into the chapel and its tribunes (figures 1-28, 1-29).\footnote{Annie Renoux, “Du palais impérial aux palais royaux et prinçiers en Francie occidentale (c. 843-1100),” 93-95.}

Arguably, the palatine complex at Aachen, including the tribunes in the church, served as a standard model in later medieval imperial and royal palace construction.\footnote{Ibid., 112.} In France, royal palaces
in the cities of Compiègne (ninth century), Senlis (c. 1120), Saint-Germain-en-Laye (c. 1124), Laon
(built by Louis VII r. 1137-80) and the Palais de la Cité of Paris, featuring four chapels prior to the
construction of the Sainte-Chapelle by Louis IX in the thirteenth century, are four such examples of
similar royal complexes in France. Interestingly, this royal and imperial palatine arrangement was
also found in the twelfth-century episcopal complexes of the cathedrals of Amiens, Beauvais, Laon,
Noyon, Paris, Reims and Santiago de Compostela, among others.

The Palatine Chapel of Aachen also served as an architectural prototype, inspiring the
medieval builders of Germigny-des-Près (c. 798-818), Saint Donatian of Zadar (c. 830), Thionville
(c. 830-40), Saint Donatian of Bruges (c. 960), Saint John of Liège (c. 900), Saint Mary of Mettlach
(985-93), Cologne-Deutz Abbey (c. 1020), Saint Nicolas of Nijmegen (c. 1030s), Saint Martin of
Groningen (1040-50), Saint Ulrich of Georgenberg (Goslar) (c. 1030), Saint Mary of Ottermarsheim
(c. 1049), Saint Peter of Leuven (c. 1050), and Saint Mary of Compiègne (dedication 877).

Accounting for the copy buildings in Flanders Charles McClendon notes the Count Arnulf of
Flanders (918-64) “…sought to model the splinter kingdom after the Carolingians with Bruges as
their capital.” While not all of the Flemish churches were copies of Aachen many had tribunes,

100 Meredith Cohen, The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy: Royal Architecture in Thirteenth-
château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye au moyen-âge: histoire et évolution architecturale d'un résidence royale XIIe-XIVe siècles
(Paris: Les Presses Franciliennes, 2008), 68-69. Archeological evidence found that the chapel and aula at the
medieval palace complex at Saint-Germain-en-Laye were adjacent with a walkway connecting the two. See also Annie
Renoux, “Du palais impérial aux palais royaux et princiers en Francie occidentale (c.843-1100),” 93-106.

101 Not all of the cathedrals listed featured tribunes, notably Amiens, Beauvais and Reims. See Thierry Crepin-Leblond,
“Le palais épiscopal de Noyon et ses liens avec la construction de la cathédrale au XII ème siècle,” L'art gothique dans
L'Oise et ses environs (XIIème-XIVème siècle), Actes du colloque de Beauvais, 10–11 oct. 1998 (Beauvais: GEMOB,

102 W. Eugene Kleinbauer, “Charlemagne’s Palace Chapel at Aachen and Its Copies,” 2-11, note 34, 8. See also: Carol
Heitz, L'architecture religieuse carolingienne, 79-86; Charles McClendon, The Origins of Medieval Architecture,
130-31, 139, 197-200; Meredith Cohen, The Sainte-Chapelle, 125; Galbert de Bruges, La vie de Charles le Bon: Comte de Flandres, Sources de l'histoire de France, trans. François Guizot (Clermont Ferrand: Paleao, 2004), 85. The thirteenth
century Flemish writer Jacob van Maerlant also notes the Palatine Chapel inspired Saint Donatian; and Annie Renoux,
“Du palais impérial aux palais royaux et princiers en Francie occidentale (c. 843-1100),” 93-110.

103 Charles B. McClendon, The Origins of Medieval Architecture, 97-200. See also Paul Rolland, “La première église
Saint-Donatien à Bruges, quelques remarques,” Revue Belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art/Belgisch tijdschrift voor
among which were the abbey of Saint Bavo of Ghent (c. 947-1067), Saint Vincent of Soignies of the eleventh century, Saint-Feuillien of Fosses of the tenth century and the cathedral of Tournai (c. 1110-65).\textsuperscript{104} The history of Tournai reached further back in time as the former capital city of the Merovingian empire. In the Norman duchy many of the churches constructed with tribunes were also linked to royal patronage including the abbey church of Jumièges (c. 1040-67), William the Conqueror's church of Saint-Étienne of Caen (c. 1060), a building serving as his burial place and a

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 97-200. See also Arnold Klukas, “Altaria Superioria,” 87-88. Klukas views these buildings in terms of their relationship to the churches of the Champagne region. He notes that Saint Bavo was an early bishop of Reims.
repository of the royal regalia, and Saint-Vigor of Cerisy-la-Forêt (c. 1088).\textsuperscript{105} Arnold Klukas describes the church of Saint-Étienne of Caen as following the model of the “great church” (figure 1-30).\textsuperscript{106} Following the end of the Carolingian dynasty, the new Ottonian emperors appropriated and adapted the Palatine Chapel at Aachen to meet the needs of the new monarchy. The coronation of Otto I in 962 held in the chapel gave new meaning to the architecture as a site of imperial coronation, functioning as such until the sixteenth century. The act of coronation in the Palatine Chapel served to legitimize and confirm the authority of the new monarch and dynasty. The symbolic resonance of the Palatine Chapel transcended gender. Saint Cyriacus of Gernrode (c. 961) had a long history of imperial Ottonian support from Otto I, its first abbess Hathui, cousin of Otto I and Empress Theophano, wife of Otto II.\textsuperscript{107} Hiltje F.H. Zomer posits that Theophano, active in the construction of Saint Cyriacus, employed the architecture of the tribuned church as a means of placing herself within the larger tradition of

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure1-30.png}
\caption{Caen, Saint-Étienne, view into the nave tribune. Photograph by Andrew Tallon. http://mappinggothic.org/image/35665.}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{106} Arnold Klukas, “Altaria Superioria,” 30.

\textsuperscript{107} Hiltje F.H. Zomer, “The So-Called Women’s Gallery in the Medieval Church: An Import from Byzantium,” 299-302.
Byzantine royalty, notably Helena the mother of Constantine. Through architectural appropriation the abbess expressed both her imperial heritage reaching back to Carolingian and Byzantine royalty and her temporal and spiritual authority.

Tribune and Religious Reform

Normandy is the second largest region with a concentration of churches with tribunes in France (figure 1-20). For certain scholars (like Marcel Anfray, Jean Bony, Eric Carlson, Arnold Klukas), these buildings serve as structural prototypes for the early Gothic churches like as Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis. In his dissertation “Altaria Superioria: the Function and Significance of the Tribune-Chapel in Anglo-Norman Romanesque” Klukas considers the impact of religious reform movements on both the appearance and purpose of tribunes. Klukas seeks to make sense of this large concentration of Anglo-Norman architecture (dating to the tenth and eleventh centuries) in one of the first studies dedicated to the functionality of the tribune in medieval architecture. Establishing linkages with Norman churches, Klukas identifies at least forty churches constructed with some type of tribune serving a devotional purpose in post-Conquest England (figure 1-31). Using the term ‘tribune-chapel’ in place of ‘tribune,’ Klukas distinguishes the tribunes in these reform churches as

---

108 Ibid., 303-04.


111 Arnold Klukas, “Altaria Superioria,” 204-15. Klukas presents the most extensive research to date on the use of tribunes in medieval architecture. His work remains commonly cited among authors working on tribunes.
spaces for private devotion and prayer designated for the monastic community. Reform movements of the tenth century, spearheaded at the abbeys of Borgne in Belgium and Gorze in northeastern France, were the impetus for the construction of tribune-chapels. Drawing from the teachings of Benedict of Aniane as outlined in his *Capitula* and disseminated at the Council of Aachen of 816, the tenets of the Borgne-Gorze reforms stipulated the need for a space for private devotion. A group of the early reformed churches with tribune-chapels can be found in the territories of Louis the Pious (b. 778-840), notably Lotharingia located in present-day northeastern France, Flanders and Germany. Klukas identifies the churches of Saint Ursula of Cologne (1150), Saint Bavo of Ghent (1148),

---

112 Ibid., 204-15. Most generally these spaces would be reserved for the monastic community. It remains unclear if the lay community, notably the aristocracy, had access to these spaces.

113 See also Warren Sanderson, “Monastic Architecture and the Gorze Reforms Reconsidered,” *The White Mantle of Churches*, 81-90. Sanderson nuances the distinctions of the reform movements of the period, noting reforms efforts in Trier during the same period and the linkage to Gorze.

114 Ibid., 32, 191, 175, 425. Another tenet is the location of altars dedicated to angels placed in the upper stories of the church including tribunes and towers. The abbeys of Brogne (in Belgium) or Gorze (near Metz) were monastic houses that enacted reforms based on the teaching of Saint Benedict. Klukas notes that by the year 1100, one hundred and fifty churches could be tied to the Brogne-Gorze reform movement. Concurrent yet different reform movements also adhering to the Rule of Saint Benedict took place at the abbey of Cluny during this period.

115 Ibid., 30. Arnold Klukas notes how these churches were subjected to either the Brogne or Gorze reform movements. See also Nigel Hiscock, “The Ottonian Revival,” *The White Mantle of Churches*, 11. The Gorze reform movement also received imperial support from Otto I.
Montier-en-Der (c. 980), Soignies (1100) and Saint-Remi of Reims (c. 1049) in France, as products of these reforms. Yet the primary focus of Klukas’s study is the tribune-chapel of Anglo-Norman architecture in post-Conquest England. Among the Norman buildings with tribune-chapels subjected to reform were the tenth-century cathedral of Rouen, the cathedrals of Bayeux, Coutances and Avranches and the abbeys of Jumièges, Saint-Wandrille, Cerisy-la-Forêt and Boscherville. Klukas situates this group of Norman Brogne-Groze structures in opposition to the so-called Bec group (of Lessay, Saint-Étienne of Caen and its parish church of Saint-Nicolas) churches linked to the austere abbey of Bec, which did not have tribunes, also located in Normandy. Yet in the Bec group the church of Saint-Étienne of Caen, constructed by William the Conqueror (c. 1028-87), has full tribunes throughout. As noted, Klukas attributes this anomaly to the patronage of William the Conqueror noting Saint-Étienne's adherence to the notion of ‘great church’ with royal connotations (figure 1-30). In the context of Saint-Étienne of Caen the tribune took on new meaning determined by its ducal/royal foundation.

The medieval builders of post-Conquest churches in England looked to this group of Brogne-Groze of Norman buildings for prototypes. Written by Bishop Ethelwold for the Council of Winchester in 970, the Regularis Concordia stipulated similar liturgical requirements to those of the Borgne-Gorze reform. No less than three tenets of this text call for architectural spaces similar to the tribune. Among these tenets is the need for a “second choir” where additional offices could be held, a private space for devotion or a secretis oratorii locis “integrated into the interior space of the church” and “the ritual choir to be flanked by upper-chapels from which antiphonal
responses could be sung.”

In eleventh-century England tribune-chapels were found in the churches of Bury Saint Edmunds, Burton-on-Trent, Canterbury II, Ely (abbey), Peterborough, Winchester, Worcester, among others (figure 1-31). The tribune-chapels in France and England were integral to the architectural envelope, designed to house liturgies and private devotion suggesting that religious observances were the impetus for the construction of tribunes in these buildings, as identified by Klukas.

Drawing from the work of Arnold Klukas, Stephen Gardner reexamines nave tribunes at Durham Cathedral in England, a building long held by scholars (John Bilson, Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Marcel Aubert, Ernst Gall and Henri Focillon) as proto-Gothic. Gardner presents an alternative narrative, arguing the work of the second master builder at Durham (1110-30) created a new type of space in the nave tribunes, a “gabled-gallery” designed to support and enhance the function of the interior through an increase in light and space (figure 1-32). While Durham Cathedral was not linked to the reforms of the Regularis Concordia, for Gardner the articulation of space and dimensions of the nave tribune demonstrates the intention of the medieval builder to design a functional space dedicated to religious observances and devotion. Underscoring his point, Gardner contrasts the open, light-filled space of the nave tribune with the darker, compressed

121 Ibid., 197-217, 426-29. Arnold Klukas describes the second choir as typically placed in the upper stories in the west of the church. Here the offices of the Matins and Vespers in honor of All Saints and the dead were held. The secretis oratorii locis “secret places of the oratory” provided space for private prayer and low masses, typically held in tribune-chapels.

122 Ibid., 200, 425-35.

123 Stephen Gardner, “The Nave Galleries of Durham Cathedral,” Art Bulletin, vol. 64, no. 4 (1982), 564-65. At Durham the arrangement of the quadrant arches in the nave gallery was considered a forerunner to the flying buttress. John Bilson was among the first to state the quadrant arches in the gallery were proto-flyers. See John Bilson, “The Beginnings of Gothic Architecture in England,” Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 3rd series, vol. 6 (1899), 259-69, 289-319.

124 Ibid., 564-79. Stephen Gardner coined the term “gabled-gallery” in reference to the architectural arrangement that included dormer windows in the construction of the nave tribune.

125 Ibid., 575-77, 575 note 37. For Gardner it was the sum of the architectural forms in the nave tribunes: the gabled roof, dormer window, the pitch of the wooden roof, the dimensions of the outer wall and use of quadrant arches which suggests the second builder designed the tribune to be spacious and luminous to support the needs of the religious community as a space of devotion.
space of the choir tribune constructed by the first builder.\textsuperscript{126} Comparison of formal attributes of the nave tribune to similar functional spaces found in the churches of Cerisy-la-Forêt in Normandy, Saint-Lucien of Beauvais, Gloucester and Norwich both in England further demonstrates for Gardner the desire of the second builder at Durham Cathedral to improve the usability of the space.

The tribunes in Norman churches have attracted the attention of scholars since the eighteenth century. While not all of these studies assign function to these spaces many do in fact recognize the possibility. For Louis Grodecki tribunes in Norman churches appear to provide a means of circulation for those processions associated with religious observances relating to the cult of the saints, originating in Ottonian architecture of tenth- and eleventh-century Germany.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., 575-77.

Examining the Brogne-Gorze group of buildings in Normandy, Pierre Héliot postulates medieval builders intended the tribunes found in transept arms to function as platforms for choristers. For Héliot these buildings were the inheritors of Carolingian traditions of polyphonic singing, placing choristers in the upper chambers of Westwerke and narthexes found notably at the abbeys of Saint-Riquier and Fleury, both located in France. Héliot attributes the dearth of tribune construction in the course of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries in part to the proliferation of jubés or choir screens, as these new architectural enclosures rendered the need for tribunes obsolete. This reasoning evokes the Old French trébune that referenced a type of jubé from which the Gospels were sung. Yet Héliot’s study lacks sufficient evidence to support his claims, undermining the validity of his inquiry.

A Note on the Westwerk

Carol Heitz reconsiders the monumental, multi-storied, partially independent towered western entrance found in monastic church architecture of the late eighth through ninth centuries of the so-called Carolingian period. Internally, the central body of the structure featured aisles and tribunes housing chapels and altars, with external stair-turrets providing access to the upper stories. These structures were found in France and Germany alike. Once referred to as a type of narthex, in French ‘église-porche’ or ‘antéglise,’ or more commonly in German ‘Vollwestwerk’ or full western

---


129 Ibid., 8-10. Pierre Héliot draws his evidence from the formal aspects of the architecture paired with the religious observance held at the Bayeux Cathedral, called the “Bâton,” which situated choristers in the four corners of the church, including its tribunes. He also cites a document that specified the singing of the Gospels and Graduals in the transept tribune of the church at Saint-Remi of Béze.

130 Ibid., 18-19.

131 Frédéric Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l’ancienne langue française, vol. 78, 808.

132 As Pierre Héliot notes he merely sought to present the hypothesis which others would test and validate. See Pierre Héliot, “L’emplacement des choristes et les tribunes,” 19-20.

133 I omitted from the map those churches with a tribune in a Westwerk.
frontispiece, Heitz seeks to distinguish this structure using the term ‘Westwerk.’

With nomenclature Heitz proposes a new understanding of the Westwerk as an expression of a Christological agenda, a sanctuary dedicated to the cult of the Savior that played an important role in the Easter liturgies. For Heitz the paradigmatic church with a Westwerk was the abbey Church of Saint-Riquier (c. 790-99), in Centula, Picardy. According to Heitz, the Westwerk at Saint-Riquier expresses an architectural and liturgical resonance with the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

The importance of Saint-Riquier lay also in the close relationship between its abbot, Angilbert, and the Emperor Charlemagne. Heitz attributes the presence of the cult of the Savior at this place and time to a linkage with the cult of the emperor, the imperium constantinien, propagated by Charlemagne. While each element of his thesis neatly dovetails, the evidence on which Heitz bases his claims remain problematic. The eighth-century church of Saint-Riquier is no longer extant, and our understanding of the structure derives in part from copies of the Chronicon Centulense (c. 1088) written by the monk Hariulf that includes the Libellus Angilberti, a contemporary description.

---


136 At Saint-Riquier the altar dedicated to the Savior was located in the second story of the Westwerk, which communicated with the body of the church. Carol Heitz, L’architecture religieuse carolingienne, 77. See also David Parsons, “The Pre-Romanesque Church of St-Riquier: The Documentary Evidence,” Journal of the British Archaeological Association, vol. 130 (1977), 46.

137 Ibid., 221. Heitz compared Arculf’s building schema of the Holy Sepulcher to that of a reconstructed, arguably hypothetical plan of Saint-Riquier depicting the round towers dedicated to Saint-Savior and Saint-Riquier, and a rotunda dedicated to Saint-Marie. See also Carol Heitz, Recherches sur les rapports, 123-28.

138 See David Parsons, “The Pre-Romanesque Church of St-Riquier,” 48-50. Parson outlines the problems with Heitz’s work, focusing on his interpretation of the liturgical practices at Saint-Riquier. Parsons holds that Heitz assigned “disproportionate” importance to the altar of Saint-Savior in the Westwerk, and that “…Easter Day Mass was not celebrated at Saint-Saviour.” According to Parsons these services were held in the main church, with some people (monks, choirboys and laity) observing these services in the western gallery or Westwerk. During Easter Day services this western gallery served as a dual site for communion, which addressed the needs of the vast population taking communion at this time.
of the church in the eighth-century held to be written by the Abbot Angilbert. The connection to the Holy Sepulcher and the liturgical claims are also tenuous. While the evidence for Saint-Riquier remains problematic, the abbey church at Corvey in Westphalia (c. 885), also with ties to Charlemagne, remains an approximation of the Westwerk found at Saint-Riquier (figure 1-33).

Irmingard Achter sought to recreate the internal tribune arrangement at Saint-Riquier looking forward in time to the tribuned churches of the tenth and eleventh centuries of Normandy, as well as the so-called Pilgrimage Roads churches, some of which are thought to have been inspired by the eighth-century abbey. Achter divides the churches into three groups based on tribune type and orientation of the staircases, which she argues reflects different typologies. It was the third group of Norman buildings, including the abbey of Jumièges and Bayeux Cathedral, which for Achter most closely replicated the arrangement once found at Saint-

---

139 Carol Heitz, *L’architecture religieuse carolingienne*, 130-36. Having examined the liturgical rites found in the *Institutio de diversitate officiorum*, together with Gallican rites, Heitz determines that Jerusalem, specifically the Holy Sepulcher, was the inspiration of the liturgies at Angilbert’s church and not the Roman rites. He looks to an ordinal from Essen, the *Liber ordinarius* dating to the fourteenth century, to further re-create these Easter liturgies at eighth-century Centula.

140 Irmingard Achter, “Zur Rekonstruktion der karolingischen Klosterkirche Centula,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 19 (1956): 133-54. The first group was the Pilgrimage Roads churches, which she immediately discards as having no relationship to Saint-Riquier. For more on these buildings see below. The first group of Norman churches of Saint-Étienne and Saint Nicolas of Caen, Cerisy-la-Forêt (c. 1088), Saint-Ouen of Rouen, Saint-Vigor of Bayeux, Saint-Georges de Boscherville and Winchester Cathedral in England was based upon the north-south orientation of the tribunes, which did not match those at Centula.
The architectural forms of this third group were contrary to the artistic trends of the period, characterized by a centralized organizing matrix formulated around a great central crossing tower creating a light center. For Achter the focus on the eastern transept tribunes at Jumièges and Bayeux reflects Carolingian architectural thought and could be considered an adaptation of the Carolingian system of a transept gallery, demonstrating the widespread impact of Carolingian architectural form, including the appearance of tribunes in the transepts at Centula.

*Burgundy and the Tribune*

Curiously, in the region of Burgundy, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, churches featuring tribunes were rare. Saint-Bénigne of Dijon, built around the year 1000, is one such example. This dearth of tribunes presents questions. How might one account for this lack of tribunes? Klukas attributes this phenomenon in Burgundian architecture to its location outside Lotharingia. We might ask if the abbey of Cluny played a role in this absence of tribuned buildings? Cluniac traditions dominating the region during this period did not specify the need for tribunes in liturgy or private devotion, as dictated by the Borgne-Gorze reforms. Yet the monk William of Volpiano, active in the construction of Saint-Bénigne, was in fact a Cluniac. In scholarship (Kenneth Conant and Carol Heitz), the church of Saint-Bénigne, a structure that was both a rotunda and a basilica, was held to be a “copy” of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem (figure 1-34). However, Carolyn Malone presents an alternative reading arguing Saint-Bénigne operated as a cultural sign reflecting

---

141 Ibid., 145. Here the staircase towers were placed at an angle between the transept and the choir corresponded to those at Centula.

142 Ibid., 145-46.

143 The duchy and comté of Burgundy were formed following the collapse of the Carolingian empire. The duchy and comté stood adjacent, with the duchy occupying the western region of Burgundy. The comté was under the aegis of the Holy Roman Empire (known today as the Franche Comté), while the duchy was a fief of the French kings. Dijon was under the auspices of the duchy. See Arnold Klukas, “Altaria Superioria,” 43-45.

both a political and religious agenda. Built in collaboration with Brun de Roucy, the powerful bishop-count of Langres, the rotunda politically expressed an alliance with Rome and the Holy Roman Empire. The rotunda form shared likeness with the Pantheon (then dedicated to Santa Maria ad Martyres), while the medieval builders also drew from the local Carolingian building traditions of an outer crypt. These associations sought to affirm and validate the Burgundian seat of power at a moment when the Capetian monarchs posed a considerable and legitimate threat, according to Malone. Shortly following the dedication of the church the Capetians annexed the Burgundian duchy in 1016, substantiating this political threat. Malone also argues William of Volpiano designed Saint-Bénigne to express a theological and liturgical program of intercession. In this program the architecture of the rotunda, a three-story elevation with tribune, communicated a ‘hierarchy of intercession’ in which the building operated as an intermediary between the community of monks

---


146 Idem, *Saint-Bénigne de Dijon en l’an mil, “totius Galliae basilicis mirabilior”*: *Interprétation politique, liturgique et théologique* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 241-59. Malone identifies the Burgundian architectural traditions in the decades around Charlemagne’s reign (Carolingian architecture) notably the outer crypt found in ninth-century churches like Saint-Germain of Auxerre and Saint-Pierre of Flavigny as a type of architectural model and also a model for both altar and chapel dedications. Like the outer crypt of Burgundian architectural traditions the parallel dedications to both the Virgin Mary and martyrs also provided a linkage of the Pantheon to Saint-Bénigne. She notes that these models are not to be read as copies, but represent an eclectic borrowing in which architectural elements were recombined and altered resulting in an individual architectural expression. See also Carolyn Malone, “The Rotunda of Sancta Maria in Dijon,” 285-317.
and the celestial. The corresponding chapel dedications located at the various levels in the church formed a physical pathway to salvation, culminating with altars dedicated to the Trinity and Saint Michael on the third story. On special feast days, particularly those pertaining to the Virgin and the Nativity, monks would process through the tribunes of the rotunda. While the degree of access to the tribunes granted to pilgrims remains unknown, Malone notes that for the community of monks restrictions depended on their status, with limitations placed on the circulation of novices. Malone’s study outlines how tribunes could express political alliances through architectural quotation while also functioning to support and house liturgical services.

Pilgrimage, Martyrdom and Tribunes

In 1893 the Abbott Bouillet identified a group of like buildings sharing similar chronologies, located along the medieval pilgrimage roads leading to the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain (c. 1070-1102, dedicated 1124). Commonly referred to as the churches of the Pilgrimage Roads or Pilgrimage Road churches, as each church was a stop along way to Santiago de Compostela, this group of monuments included Sainte-Foy of Conques (c. 1050s-1130s), Saint-Sernin of Toulouse (c. 1080), Saint-Martin of Tours (rebuilt c. 1050), Saint-Martial of Limoges (c. 1095), Saint-Sauveur of Figeac (c. second-half of the eleventh century) and the cathedral of

---


148 Idem., “The Rotunda of Sancta Maria in Dijon,” 286-87. The path to salvation started at the crypt level with altars dedicated to martyrs and confessors followed by the principal story with altars dedicated to the Apostles and culminated in the tribunes with the Trinity and Saint Michael, with separate altars dedicated to Saints Michael and Paul. Completing this programatic hierarchy of intercession was the dedication of the axial chapels with Saint John the Baptist in the crypt, the Virgin Mary on the main level and Saint Michael in the tribune. See also Carolyn Malone, *Saint-Bénigne de Dijon en l’an mil*, 17, 278-79.


Santiago of Compostela. On the map these churches appear in a vertical swath, located in the southwest region of France (figure 1-20). The striking resemblance among the ground plans, a longitudinal basilica intersected by a transept and terminated with a hemicycle and radiating chapels, was the principal feature linking these buildings (figure 1-35). In elevation a tribune encircling the entire building was equally a common feature in this group.

Our understanding of the appearance of tribunes in these buildings varies, despite such uniformity in architecture. For Achter these tribunes served as an upper church, a “self-contained” architectural unit facilitating the religious observances for monks.

---


and layfolk. Rave attributes the appearance of these tribunes to transmission of architectural form along trade routes connecting France to the eastern Mediterranean rim. The earliest churches constructed with tribunes in France appeared in the fifth century. In fact, these trade routes were the same roads used by pilgrims traveling to the Holy Lands. Among the fifth-century basilican churches constructed with tribunes were Saint-Pierre of Vienne (c. 400s), Saint-Namace Clermont-Ferrand (c. 470) and Saint-Martin of Tours I (c. 472). For Rave these prototypical churches informed the use of tribunes in the region of Auvergne, in the churches of Saint-Nectaire (c. 1080), Saint-Paul, Issoire (c. 1130-50) Notre-Dame-du-Port de Clermont of the early twelfth century, Saint-Étienne of Nevers (c. 1083-1097), in the churches of the Pilgrimage Roads and Normandy.

John Williams presents a nuanced reading ascribing the similar features of these buildings and their function as a type of funerary basilica dedicated to martyrs, with apostolic connections linking back to the Holy Sepulcher. In these churches of the Pilgrimage Roads Williams posits that tribunes functioned as a space for overflowing crowds.

The Tribune and the Medieval Copy

In 1942, Richard Krautheimer published his essay “Iconography of Medieval Architecture,” in which he examines the notions of meaning in medieval architectural form. In this essay, which remains highly influential, Krautheimer approaches the issue of the architectural copy or

---

153 Irmingard Achter, “Zur Rekonstruktion der karolingischen Klosterkirche,” 145. Curiously Achter includes Saint-Remi of Reims among the group of Pilgrimage Road and also includes the old cathedral of Orléans. She notes that based on tribune type the Pilgrimage Road churches did not match those at Centula.

154 Paul Rave, Der Emporenbau, 30.

155 Ibid., See also Arthur Kingsley-Porter, Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads, 182, 194. Porter notes the connection of Compostela to the Holy Land.

156 Paul Rave, Der Emporenbau, 30. See also Kenneth Conant, Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture, 174-76. Conant places this group of Auvergnat buildings in a subgroup of those in the Languedoc. He links arrangement of Notre-Dame-du-Port back to Aléaume’s Clermont Cathedral of 946.

157 The Codex Calixtinus and the Shrine of St. James, xi-1.

158 Ibid.
For the medieval builder the relationship between the original and the copy was not necessarily mimetic, as we might expect. Rather this relationship reflects what he calls a “vibratory” aspect in which medieval builders dissected the original, then “selectively transferred” and even reshuffled architectural elements as they saw fit. While the copied building might not resemble the ‘prototype,’ for medieval people it still held significance regardless of its mimetic proximity. Krautheimer tests his assumption using the church of the Holy Sepulcher (the Anastasis), which he holds as one of the most copied of all Christian churches, with known copies found throughout Europe spanning from the fifth to the seventeenth centuries. Yet among this large corpus of architectural copies only a few included tribunes, such as Saint Michael of Fulda in Germany of the ninth and eleventh centuries, the Holy Sepulcher of Cambridge in England (around the first-quarter of the twelfth century), Santo Stefano of Bologna of the twelfth century, Neuvy-Saint-Sépulchre in France where the tribunes date to the first quarter of the twelfth century and the Baptistery of Pisa c. 1153 in Italy. Yet this group of copy churches with tribunes provides little in the way of evidence as to why these medieval builders chose to include tribunes. While compelling, Krautheimer’s model does not provide sufficient information to address the question of the tribune in medieval architecture.

---


160 Richard Krautheimer, “An Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture,” 14-15. Krautheimer did not rule out the Anastasis (a rotunda) as a source for tribunes in certain buildings. Round or polygonal buildings often stood as mausolea, thus were associated with death. Even baptisteries, frequently round or polygonal in shape, were linked to the “cycle of resurrection and ultimately death for medieval people.” He notes the Anastasis, as site of commemoration of the Resurrection, was “symbolically linked to baptism. He drew from Hilarius of Poitiers who stated baptism was a sacrament of regeneration and of Resurrection of the Lord…” Churches and chapels dedicated to Saint Michael were not only located in upper stories, but often in round structures, underscoring this symbolic linkage.

161 Ibid., 26-29. For Richard Krautheimer the shape of a building, its dedication and numerology held significance for medieval builders and most commonly the subject of the copy/prototype relationship.

162 Ibid., 3.

163 Ibid., 3-5.
The Tribune in Gothic Architecture

In its long history the tribune appeared in different types of architecture and served a variety of functions, which were often determined by context and patron, as discussed. Yet in the framework of Gothic architecture our understanding of the tribune remains a single interpretation rooted in its role as a structural device. According to this narrative medieval builders engaged in a type of height race employing tribunes in construction as a solution to achieve taller, more spacious buildings. Yet certain scholars of Gothic architecture such as Dieter Kimpel and Robert Suckale recognize the “true” use of the tribune remains to be considered. In their study Die gotische Architektur in Frankreich 1130-1270 the authors consider the architectural forms and ornamentation of the tribunes at Notre-Dame of Noyon, Laon and Paris, which they argue display a richness in material production (in the capitals, rib-vaulted ceilings, keystones, etc.), more lavish than at ground level. Kimpel and Suckale question this attention to detail and expense, suggesting an alternative reading. Despite such appeals for further study a lacuna in scholarship devoted to tribunes persists, and the structural paradigm remains the norm. Such persistence raises important questions. Why is the current understanding of the tribune so entrenched in Gothic scholarship? What makes the structural paradigm such a convincing argument? To answer these questions necessitates scrutiny of the common assumptions or topoi influencing the study of Gothic architecture. This examination is instructive as it not only reveals how the traditional conception became entrenched, but

164 Dieter Kimpel and Robert Suckale, L'architecture gothique en France 1130-1270 (Paris: Flammarion, 1990), 126. “Les historiens de l'art ont toujours défendu la thèse selon laquelle les tribunes n’auraient d'utiité que pour la construction: la ceinture qu'elles forment autour de l'édifice et leurs toitures servant à contrebuter les poussées des voûtes du vaisseau central. On n'a pas vraiment saisi - et donc pas étudié - la véritable utilité.” (“Art historians have always defended the thesis in which the tribunes are only used for construction: they form a belt around the building and roofing to buttress pressure from the vaults of the central vessel. We have not really grasped - and therefore not studied - the real usefulness of the tribune.”)

165 Ibid., 126. “Et pourtant, même un observateur profane ne peut qu'être frappé dans les tribunes de Noyon (ou des cathédrales comme Laon et Paris) par la délicatesse, la richesse avec laquelle ces espaces sont décorées vers l'intérieur, c'est-à-dire pour l'observateur qui s'y trouve. Les chapiteaux sont travaillés avec une très grande finesse, les voûtes d'ogive sont décorées de clefs et de fastueux ornements, plus somptueux que dans le déambulatoire du rez-de-chaussé.” (“And yet even a layman observer is struck in the tribunes of Noyon (or the cathedrals of Laon and Paris) by the delicacy and richness with which the spaces are decorated on the interior, that is, for the observer therein. The capitals are crafted with great finesse, the arched vaults are decorated with keystone and lavish ornaments, more sumptuous than in the ambulatory of the ground floor.”).
demonstrates alternative ways in which to consider the appearance of the tribune in Gothic architecture. This section of the research begins by tracing the nascent formation of the discipline in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, while considering pertinent studies through to today.

The Study of Gothic Architecture

The study of French Gothic architecture began in earnest in the nineteenth century, which was borne out of the work of earlier antiquarians, archaeologists and encyclopedists who began the process of identification and examination of medieval art and architecture.166 These scholars (Arcisse de Caumont, Anthyme Saint-Paul, Jules Quicherat, Robert de Lasteyrie and Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc), many of whom worked within the intellectual framework of natural scientists Carl Linnaeus and Georges Cuvier, sought to present a coherent notion of Gothic architecture. With this approach came the creation of a systematic architectural taxonomy based on structural and stylistic criteria. Through a process of dissection and fragmentation of architectural form, the criteria emerged. The salient visual characteristics such as the pointed arch, flying buttress, rib-vaulted ceilings and large stained-glass windows came to define Gothic architecture.167 The sum of these elements still serve as a type of checklist to determine whether or not a building is Gothic and present a powerful teaching tool in the classroom. This taxonomic process of dissection engendered a focus on the constructional logic of the Gothic structural system. Viollet-le-Duc was among the first to theorize that Gothic architecture was a rational structural system in which each architectural

166 The work of Dom Michel Félibien and Bernard de Montfaucon, among others resulted in encyclopedic texts such as Bernard de Montfaucon Les monumens de la monarchie française and Félibien's Histoire de l'abbaye royale de saint-denis en france of 1706. This work served and still serves today as a valuable source for the study of medieval art and architecture. See Dom Michel Félibien, Histoire de l’abbaye royale de Saint-Denis en France contenant la vie des abbes qui l’ont gouvernée depuis onze cens ans: les hommes illustres qu’elle a donné à l’église et à l’état: les privileges accordez par les souverains pontifes & par les évêques: les dons des rois, des princes & des autres bienfacteurs. Avec la description de l’église ... Le tout justifié par des titres authentiques & enrichi de plans, de figures & d’une carte topographique (Paris: Frederic Leonard, 1706); and Bernard de Monfaucon, Les monumens de la monarchie française: qui comprennent l’histoire de France avec les figures de chaque règne que l’injure des tems a épargnées... par le R.P. Dom Bernard de Montfaucon. (Paris: J.-M. Gandouin et P.-F. Giffart, 1792).

member functioned as part of the larger architectural whole, playing a role in structural stability. While scholars such as Pol Abraham challenged these assumptions, the core of Viollet-le-Duc’s theory remains influential, most particularly in the case of the tribune. Stephen Murray refers to this moment as the first approach to the study of Gothic architecture, the “assessment of the product.”

With the systematic classification, constructed and rooted in these salient features, came the development of a historical framework within which scholars arranged monuments chronologically. Art historian and archeologist Arcisse de Caumont was among the first to present a chronological ordering of French medieval monuments. He arranged Gothic buildings into three subcategories based on formal properties: *primordial* (from the end of the twelfth to the first half of the thirteenth centuries), *secondaire* (the second half of the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries) and *tertiaire* (the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). This idea Gothic architectural production was teleological, in that the inevitable trajectory of the Gothic style was observable from its nascent ‘*primordial*’ beginning through its decline in the ‘*tertiaire*,’ was not unique to Arcisse de Caumont. This thinking reflected the dominant trend in art historical thought at this time. To make sense of the diversity in the twelfth-century architecture, which defies the constraints of periodization, scholars (Arcisse de Caumont, Anthyme Saint-Paul, Robert de Lasteyrie and Paul Frankl) apply the term ‘transition’ to

---


171 Arcisse de Caumont, *Essai sur l'architecture religieuse du moyen âge, principalement en Normandie* (Caen: Chalopin fils, 1825), 3-4, 54-61. Caumont remains an important figure in the study of Gothic architecture as the founder of the Société française d'archéologie pour la conservation des monuments historiques in 1823, along with its two scholarly journals the Congrès archéologique and Bulletin monumental which remain important publications today.

172 Ibid., 3-4, 54-61. Caumont divides medieval architecture in France into three major period types, ‘roman,’ from the expulsion of the Romans from Gaul to the tenth century; ‘transition,’ from the end of the tenth to the eleventh centuries and Gothic.
monuments featuring both Romanesque rounded arches together with Gothic pointed arches, among other features. Through the course of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries a distilled set of chronologies emerged compartmentalizing Gothic into early, high and late periods spanning the mid-twelfth through the mid-sixteenth centuries. This chronology remains the convention used today. This simplification of architectural form cleaved a division between what is considered “Romanesque” and “Gothic” styles of architecture, conditioning scholars to find differences upon juxtaposition of these buildings from the two periods, despite similarities including the tribune.

Like the term ‘transition,’ the use of word ‘early’ implies the architecture of this period was in its formative stages of stylistic development. Following this logic these architectural forms were then subjected to an evolutionary process culminating in the ‘perfected’ monuments of High Gothic of the thirteenth century. This teleology hinges on the invention of the flying buttress, an architectural entity designed to support the weight of the vaulted ceilings that helped to achieve the soaring heights and massive stained-glass windows found in the iconic Gothic cathedrals of Amiens, Bourges, Chartres, Reims, etc.

The abbey Church of Saint-Germer-de-Fly (c. 1133-45), located in Picardy was a pivotal building in the structurally based narrative. Using a four-story elevation of arcade, tribune, triforium

---

173 Ibid., 54-61. Today the architecture considered Gothic dates from 1140 through the sixteenth century in France. For Caumont the conception of Gothic starts later towards the end of the twelfth century. See also Anthyme Saint-Paul “La transition,” Revue de l'art chrétien, 4e série, 12 (1894): 470-82; Robert de Lasteyrie, L'architecture religieuse en France à l'époque gothique, Ouvrage posthume publié par les soins de M. Marcel Aubert, vol. 2 (Paris: Auguste Picard, 1927), 5-6; and Paul Frankl, Gothic Architecture, The Yale University Pelican History of Art. rev. ed. (New Haven Conn: Yale University Press, 2000), 70. Frankl recognizes both the usefulness and inherent subjectivity present in both terms ‘transitional’ and ‘early.’


and clerestory, the medieval builders of Saint-Germer-de-Fly did not employ flying buttresses.\textsuperscript{176} Here the use of quadrant arches above the tribune vaults is thought by some scholars to be a precursor to the flying buttress.\textsuperscript{177} Again the quadrant arches in the nave tribunes at Durham Cathedral (completion date c. 1133) are another frequently-cited example.\textsuperscript{178} Early buildings such as Saint-Germer-de-Fly, Saint-Lucien of Beauvais and Durham Cathedral in England, focused attention on the constructional role of the tribune. Robert Branner assigns importance to the interior elevation of Gothic structures, which he holds was the locus of experimentation giving rise to innovations in ‘plastic effects, structure and light.’\textsuperscript{179} Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, Robert Lasteyrie, Marcel Anfray, Otto Von Simson, Louis Grodecki, Marcel Aubert, Jean Bony, William Clark, Robert Mark suggest the tribune was a stackable volume helping stabilize upper walls and vaulted ceilings against lateral thrust and wind vibration.\textsuperscript{180} For Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc and John Fitchen the tribune also holds a secondary function as a type of stone scaffolding facilitating both the construction and repairs.\textsuperscript{181} Viollet-le-Duc further rationalizes the vast space of


\textsuperscript{177} See: Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, “arc boutant,” Dictionnaire raisonné, vol. 1, 60; Jean Bony, French Gothic Architecture, 32, 40-41; and Jacques Henriet, “Un edifice de la première génération gothique, l'abbatiale de S-Germer-de-Fly,” 118.


\textsuperscript{179} Robert Branner, Gothic Architecture, 24.


the tribune also housed overflowing crowds on major feast days and/or served as a temporary refuge for pilgrims.  

To account for the concentration of tribuned churches of the twelfth century in the regions of the Île-de-France and northern France, Branner, Bony and Carlson reason that these tribune elevations were a regional response to structural experimentation characteristic of the period. A product of this experimentation was the invention of the flying buttress. For those scholars adhering to the structural narrative the appearance of the flying buttress renders the tribune outmoded and eventually discarded by medieval builders. In the course of the thirteenth century there was indeed a decline in the use of tribunes, supporting the notion of the structural paradigm. Yet scholars continue to debate the genesis of the flying buttress and seek to identify the first building(s) in which the flying buttress was thought to appear. Such uncertainty in the history of the flying buttress, together with the examples of tribune functionality in early medieval architecture and the material production Kimpel and Suckale mention, generates questions and invites further study.

Why might the medieval builder of Notre-Dame of Paris (c. 1160) conceive the church with both flying buttresses and a generously wide tribune, of which the buttressing system made structurally redundant? Was the medieval builder overly cautious? Or might the tribune present another

182 Ibid., “tribune,” Dictionnaire raisonné, vol. 9, 262-64. For Viollet-le-Duc this function was only a product of the structural form and subordinate to its role as a structural device. See also Marcel Anfray, L’architecture en Normandie, 98.

183 Marcel Anfray, L’architecture en Normandie, 100.


functionality beyond a structural role, purpose(s) charged with spiritual significance or reflecting local particular agendas?186

A Note on Early Gothic Scholarship

As scholars formulated a coherent narrative rooted in architectural sameness a canon of monuments emerged. The canon of early Gothic monuments centered around what scholars (James Dallaway and George Whittington) identify as the “first” Gothic monument, the abbey of Saint Denis located in the Île-de-France.187 More precisely it was the choir (c. 1140-44), constructed under the aegis of the Abbot Suger that clearly expressed the architectural language of Gothic. Since its identification as the “first” Gothic building, Saint-Denis and its patron the Abbot Suger have become a locus for theories on Gothic architecture. Branner describes the choir at Saint-Denis as a “crucible of originality,” inspiring subsequent church construction.188 Abbot Suger not only writes about the construction of the building, but he embodies the qualities of a charismatic figure. Scholars credit the abbot with playing “a decisive role in the consolidation of royal power” as advisor to both Kings Louis VI (1108-37) and Louis VII (1137-80) and reigning briefly as regent.189 Most notably for Erwin Panofsky and Otto Von Simson the architecture of the choir of Saint-Denis expresses platonic

---

186 In the chapters to come we will explore these alternative readings of the cathedrals of Noyon and Senlis, and the priory of Saint-Leu.


188 Robert Branner, Gothic Architecture and its Romanesque Sources, 92. The consecration of the building brought together bishops and abbots throughout the region who are thought to have been inspired by what they saw in the new architecture.

theories of light of the Pseudo-Dionysius. However, historic realities and chronologies do not always support the extent of these claims.

The choir of Saint-Denis is the standard by which scholars (Paul Frankl, Louis Grodecki, Otto Von Simson, Jean Bony and Thomas Polk) measure all other early Gothic monuments of the canon. Among the canonic churches are Saint-Germain-des-Prés of Paris (begun c. 1145), Saint-Maclou (begun c. 1145) and Saint-Martin of Pontoise (mid-twelfth century), the cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Noyon (begun 1145-50s) Senlis (begun early 1150s) and Saint-Leu of Saint-Leu d’Esserent (choir c. 1150s). These monuments, including Saint-Denis, share geographic proximity and similar chronologies, all dating after the completion of the choir of Saint-Denis. Many of these dates are approximate remaining disputed by scholars due to a lack of sufficient documentary evidence necessary to affix precise chronologies. Yet the construction of these six buildings occurred within a relatively small window of time, at times overlapping. At stake in the assessment of building chronologies is the primacy of Saint-Denis and the traditional narrative of architectural production around the mid-twelfth-century France. An example of the potential problems with this traditional narrative can be found in the work of Thomas Polk on Notre-Dame of Noyon. In his comparative study of choirs at Noyon and Saint-Denis, he looked to stylistic evidence arguing the primitive architectural and decorative forms at Noyon suggested an earlier date of construction. However, Polk’s visual comparison sets up a negative relationship underscored by his use of the pejorative “primitive” to describe the architecture of Noyon. Rather than upset the traditional understanding of Gothic architectural production with his earlier dating of Noyon, Polk confirms it with his insistence on the primitive nature of sculptural and architectural forms. In this model Saint-Denis remains architecturally sophisticated in relationship to the primitive or retardataire forms of Noyon,

---


and other buildings of the period.\textsuperscript{192}

Polk’s study reflects the larger issues present in the study of canonic early Gothic buildings in which the search for sameness, coupled with a desire to demonstrate visual proximity to the choir plan of Saint-Denis, remain central. Today, our eyes are trained to see the similarities among these canonic buildings, most specifically focusing on the choir plan. Yet arguably formal diversity is a characteristic of architectural production during the twelfth century. The repetition from study to study of the Gothic etiology communicates an overwhelming sense of sameness among these early canonic buildings. The use of photography, photographic illustrations in books and articles helps to reify this false sense of sameness. As Susan Sontag states “photographs furnish evidence,” “photography is a powerful tool in the arsenal of the art historian, as it provides the illusion of verisimilitude.”\textsuperscript{193} A study of the early Gothic cathedral of Senlis by Dominique Vermand provides one such example of the ways in which this focus on sameness became entrenched in Gothic scholarship. In his study Vermand arranges a comparison of the following canonic churches: Saint-Denis, Notre-Dame of Senlis, Saint-Leu of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, Saint-Germain-des-Prés of Paris, Notre-Dame of Noyon and Saint-Martin of Pontoise (the choir no longer extant).\textsuperscript{194} His agenda is clear: Vermand places Saint-Denis adjacent to Notre-Dame of Senlis (figure 1-36). This juxtaposition gives agency to Senlis, the subject of his study. His comparison of the other ‘like’ canonic buildings continues on the following pages receiving a similar treatment, yet here we find the images are smaller, appearing tightly grouped in a row one after the other (figure 1-37).

Vermand constructs his comparisons juxtaposing black and white photography of interior and

\textsuperscript{192} Visual characteristics, such as the particular form of column capitals, bases, molding profiles, etc. provide another key way to determine the dating of a building. See British scholar Frederick Apthorp Paley’s \textit{A Manual of Gothic Moldings: With Directions for Copying Them and Determining Their Dates} (London, J. Van Voorst, 1877). This approach is not without its problems. With these uncertain building chronologies came further ordering of the architectural corpus with the sequential arrangement of monuments in an unfolding linear progression.

\textsuperscript{193} Susan Sontag, \textit{On Photography} (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 156: Sontag also states “any photograph -- seems to have a more innocent, and therefore more accurate, relation to visible reality than do other mimetic objects.”

\textsuperscript{194} Dominique Vermand, \textit{La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis}, 68-75.
exterior shots of the choir together with drawings of ground plans. The tonality of the black and white photography creates a duality in which the graphic quality of the image is juxtaposed to the photographic. Yet the veracity of the photograph remains. The uniformity in framing of the image helps to create adjacency, underscoring formal proximity or sameness among the different churches confirming the validity of the comparison. The stable, static viewpoints and the perspectival repetition further cements this notion of sameness.\(^{195}\) Vermand replicates what is known, his work is only one example of many conditioning the viewer to see the similarities among this collection of monuments. However, the overwhelming difference and diversity in architectural form and ornamentation is quickly apparent to the visitor. Still today, the traditional understanding of Gothic

\(^{195}\) Susan Sontag. *On Photography*, 150. “…a photograph can be treated as a narrowly selective transparency. But despite the presumption of veracity that gives all photographs authority, interest and seductiveness, the work that photographer is no generic exception to the usually shady commerce between art and truth.”
does not provide an adequate means to explain such difference. Websites like mappinggothic.org provide the student and scholars of Gothic architecture a systematic compendium of photographs of multiple perspectives, drawings of plans and elevations and historic engravings that provide a corpus of diverse imagery necessary to start deconstructing these long standing assumptions. Through platforms such as this, we can begin to reconsider the tribune beyond its structural narrative.
Chapter II

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame of Noyon

Part I:

Introduction: Notre-Dame of Noyon

Noyon is situated approximately sixty miles northeast of Paris at a strategic juncture between the royal domain of the Île-de-France to the south, Flanders to the north, the market of Champagne to the east and Picardy to the west.¹⁹⁶ Noyon’s Latin name, Noviomensis or Noviomagus or “new market,” as it appeared in a second-century Antonine itinerary, reflects the origins of the city as a Gallo-Roman castellum, a type of fortress or fortified market.

¹⁹⁶ According to seventeenth-century author Jacques Levasseur, Noyon was neither a major industrial nor agricultural center, but profited from its natural resources and the production of wheat, grains and wine. See Jacques Levasseur, Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon, jadis dite de Vermand, avec une description et notice sommaire de l’une et l’autre ville, pour avant-œuvre, le tout parsemé des plus rares recherches tant des vies des évêques, qu’autres monumens du diocese, & lieux circonvoisins (Paris: Robert Sara, 1633), vol.1, 73-74. Abel Jules Lefranc describes Noyon as a “city of clerics and monks, all the people from churches and convents…,” see Abel-Jules Lefranc, L’histoire de la ville de Noyon et de ses institutions jusqu’à la fin du XIIᵉ siècle (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1887), 36.
A substantial defensive wall once encircled Noyon, a structure comparable to the nearby cities of Amiens, Beauvais and Senlis. Used defensively until the twelfth century, the wall gave way to an expansive new monumental twotowered cathedral (c. 1150s-60s) (figures 2-1, 2-2). The twelfthcentury cathedral, a longitudinal three-aisled basilica intersected by a transept with rounded ends and terminated by a hemicycle with five radiating chapels, lay between the claustral buildings of the chapter to the north, and the episcopal residence and chapel to the south (figures 2-1, 2-3). This cathedral was not constructed on terra nova or untouched land, but replaced an earlier medieval structure.

---


The subject of numerous studies, dating back to the seventeenth century, Notre-Dame of Noyon is one of the more meticulously-studied monuments in twelfth-century France. Despite such attention questions rooted in chronology dominate the discourse about the cathedral, often to the exclusion of architectural elements like the tribune. The dating of Noyon Cathedral, more specifically its choir, is the focal point of many monographic studies (Louis Vitet, Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Charles Seymour and Thomas Polk). Certain scholars posit a range of dates for the start of the construction of Noyon, c. 1145-50 (Charles Seymour), to c. 1150-85 (Jean Bony, Louis Vitet) and c. 1148 (Paul Frankl). Yet others, Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Dieter Kimpel and Robert Suckale, place the construction of the Noyon choir quickly following a

199 Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 41-54. See Louis Vitet and Daniel Ramée, Monographie de l’église Notre-Dame de Noyon (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1845), 108-09. Vitet’s chronology fits into his larger conception of Gothic in which the appearance of round and pointed arches together, what he calls the “second” and “third” periods of Gothic (1150s-1170s), signifies a period of “transition” from so-called Romanesque to Gothic architecture. See also Jean Bony, French Gothic Architecture, 124; and Paul Frankl, Gothic Architecture, 70.
fire in 1131 (c. 1135-57), predating the commonly held chronology of the choir of abbey of Saint-Denis (c. 1140-44).\textsuperscript{200} In scholarship the 1131 fire together with a second fire in 1152 stand at the center of a debate regarding the construction chronology of Notre-Dame of Noyon.\textsuperscript{201} At present, the prevailing chronology largely remains that of Charles Seymour, outlined in his monograph \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon in the Twelfth Century}, first published in 1939.\textsuperscript{202} Seymour posits a start date of c. 1145-50s, with the design of the ground plan and work on the radiating chapels of the choir.\textsuperscript{203} This chronology places the design and first phase of construction during the tenure of Bishops Simon and Baudoin II, two powerful aristocrats with a penchant for grandeur and opulence. The architecture of the episcopal palace, constructed during the tenure of Bishop Simon (c. 1122-25), expressed such opulence.\textsuperscript{204} According to Seymour it was in the second and third phases of the cathedral construction (c. 1155-85) in which the church took form. Thierry Crepin-Leblond reconfigures the chronology of the second phase making better use of the most recent evidence.

Crepin-Leblond argues for a start date of c. 1170 on the episcopal chapel, with its completion c. 1174.\textsuperscript{205} Based on architectural affinities shared between the episcopal chapel and transept,


\textsuperscript{201} For the fire of 1131, see Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 42-43. Seymour argues the fire only warranted repair of the earlier church, allowing bishop and chapter time gather funds for the new construction. Drawing from the work of Camille Enlart who examines similar medieval accounts regarding fires, Seymour posits the destruction wrought by the fire in 1131 was in fact exaggerated. Seymour agrees with Vitet’s notion that the earlier preexisting church was restored. See also Louis Vitet and Daniel Ramée, \textit{Monographie de l’église de Notre-Dame de Noyon}, 108-09; Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, \textit{Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon}, 10; and Thomas Polk, “The Early Gothic Chevets,” 105-05. Polk’s claim that Noyon was begun before Saint-Denis is rooted in stylistic evidence.

\textsuperscript{202} The work of Charles Seymour draws from the excavation and restoration work conducted by André Collin from 1921-23, and republished in \textit{La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Noyon: cinq années de recherches}, eds. Arnaud Timbert and Stéphanie Daussy (Noyon: Société historique, archéologique et scientifique de Noyon, 2011), 68-104.


\textsuperscript{204} Ibid., 54-65.

construction on this portion of the cathedral occurred within a similar time frame (c. 1170s) (figure 2-4). Following work on the episcopal chapel, construction continued westerly and upwards, bringing to completion the choir, transept and treasury.\textsuperscript{206}

In scholarship, the cathedral of Noyon is a key monument in the canon of early Gothic churches, primarily for its comparable architectural forms; notably its choir plan, long considered part of “Saint-Denis School” of architecture, as noted in Chapter I (figure 1-37). In respect to its ground plan, which forms a trefoil or triconch shape composed of three rounded termini of the choir and

\textsuperscript{206} Ibid, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 54-65. According to Seymour construction on the cathedral proceeded in three additional phases, terminating in the west with the upper portions of the towers (c. 1235). Seymour places the terminus of phase three (c. 1185), to which he ties the consecration of the episcopal chapel. Given the Crepin-Leblond analysis this date occurred c. 1177.
transept, scholars (Jean Bony, Kenneth Conant, Charles Seymour) situate Notre-Dame of Noyon in the so-called “Northern School,” churches located in the region of northern France, Belgium and Germany (figure 2-5). Grouped as such are the churches of Saint-Lucien of Beauvais (start c. 1089-1095, choir completed c. 1109, no longer extant), the abbey of Chaalis (c. 1200), Notre-Dame-la-Grande of Valenciennes (c. 1171), the cathedrals of Arras (transept, c. 1190), Cambrai (transept, 1175-1200), Soissons (south transept arm 1177-85), Tournai (c. 1100-55, thirteenth century) and Germany Saint-Mary in Capitol (dedication, 1065) and Cologne-Gross Saint-Martin (1185).207 Alternatively, the presence of a four-story elevation (an arcade, tribune, triforium and clerestory) prompts scholars (Jean Bony, Robert Branner and Eric Carlson) to group Noyon together with another collection of churches, including the abbey of Saint-Remi of Reims, the cathedrals of Laon (start date c. 1140).207

![Figure 2-5. Ground plans of “Northern Group.”](image)

Jean Bony, *French Gothic Architecture*, 132, fig. 126.

207 For the dating of Saint-Lucien, see Stephen Gardner, “Sources for the Façade of Saint-Lucien in Beauvais,” *Gesta*, vol. 25.1 (1986): 93-100. See also Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 122-26. Seymour argues Saint-Lucien of Beauvais and the cathedrals of Tournai and Noyon are derivatives of Saint-Mary in Capitol (c. 1065); Kenneth John Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture*, 264-66. Conant also looks to Saint-Mary in Capitol (consecration c. 1069) as the pivotal church, first inspiring the medieval builders of Tournai Cathedral. He also makes a connection between the façade of Saint-Mary and the Palatine Chapel of Aachen, in which the Palatine Chapel was a prototype for Saint-Mary. See also Jean Bony, *French Gothic Architecture*, 133-35. Bony attributes this interest in the trefoil plan in northern France to Saint-Lucien of Beauvais; and Laurent Deléhouzé, Jeroen Westerman, Tournai, “La cathédrale Notre-Dame aux XII et XIII siècles: histoire de la construction,” *Congrès archéologique*, vol. 169 (2013): 178-202. The upper portion of the transept façades and towers date to the following decades of 1160s-70s.
1155-60), Paris (start date c. 1160), Soissons (as found in the south transept arm) and Tournai, Saint-Donatian of Bruges and the churches of Essen and Münster (c. 1039-51) another so-called “Northern School,” in this case churches linked to earlier Romanesque models. Categorizing monuments according to architectural similarities is reasonable, even useful, however the designation of “schools” relies on stylistic criteria that often results in periodization. While focusing on buildings chronology, questions of significance and purpose for architectural forms, like the tribune, are overlooked.

To understand the appearance of tribune in the choir of Notre-Dame of Noyon necessitates careful study of the tribune itself, its architectural form and sculpture, together with consideration of its placement within the choir, and relationship to the cathedral and the episcopal complex as a whole. Analysis of these architectural relationships, both structural and stylistic, of the various buildings in the episcopal complex is also important as it provides clues to the function and medieval reception of the tribune at Noyon. Yet people build cathedrals. A study of the tribune would not be complete without first establishing an understanding of the medieval people who participated in the construction of the episcopal complex, notably the bishops of Noyon. Examination of the administration and lives of the five principal bishops of Noyon contextualizes the construction of the cathedral and episcopal complex. Knowledge of the historical context of the architectural complex and the existing social and political conditions is instructive, helping to further locate the tribune at Noyon in the broader framework of an architectural history of tribunes, while offering insight into its function.

Part II investigates the relevant history of the diocese and its bishops. Included in this study is consideration of the cathedral chapter, the local castellan and commune or municipal authority, focusing on their respective relationships with each bishop. Part III explores in depth the

---

architecture and ornament of the tribune, situating it within the cathedral and larger episcopal complex.

Part II:

The Diocese of Noyon

The word *castellum*, a type of fortified market-town, also referenced fortified episcopal cities. Noyon earned this designation in the sixth century when the bishop of Vermandois, Saint Médard, moved the bishopric to the city (c. 511-31). The city wall, described by the eighteenth-century antiquarian Claude Sézille as an “impenetrable fortress,” played a role in the construction of the choir. Following this move Bishop Médard became the head of the newly-expanded diocese of Noyon and Tournai. The Noyon-Tournai joint-diocese occupied a vast noncontiguous territory

---

209 Jan Frederik Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus*, entry 3, 156. See also Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 1; and *Le livre rouge, cartulaire de la ville de Noyon, publié par le Comité archéologique de Noyon*, reprint (Chauny: A. Baticle, 1932), vol. 1, 6-8. The word “castellanus” was used in the charter of 1181 (the reconfirmation of the communal charter of Noyon).


211 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 27. See also C.A. Moët de la Forte-Maison, *Antiquités de Noyon: études historique et géographique, archéologique et philologique des documents que fournit cette ville à l’histoire des cités gallo-romaines et féodales de France* (Rennes: Vannier, 1845), 245. Moët de la Forte-Maison also stresses the importance of Gallo-Roman wall at Noyon.

stretching from the city of Noyon into Flanders.\textsuperscript{213} Within its borders were the northern cities of Bruges, Ghent and Lille. From its inception until its division in the mid-twelfth century the diocese was among the largest in the region, bringing with it prestige, wealth, rights and privilege.\textsuperscript{214} While the two cathedrals of Noyon and Tournai were administratively independent, each with its own chapter and clergy, a single bishop headed the joint-diocese, dividing his time between each city.

Problems arose in the eleventh century when the bishop increasingly turned his attention towards Noyon. In response to the ensuing neglect the chapter of Tournai actively sought independence in a series of contentious disputes over the course of eighty-seven years.\textsuperscript{215} Appealing to the pope, the clergy of Tournai targeted their petitions at moments of vulnerability and even instability.\textsuperscript{216} Capitalizing on the recent disgrace of Bishop Simon four years earlier, Pope Eugene III granted the chapter of Tournai the right to secede.\textsuperscript{217} With the dismantling of the joint-diocese the diocese of Noyon was reduced to a mere one hundred and eighty miles in circumference, making it one of the smallest dioceses in the archbishopric of Reims, only Senlis was smaller (figure 3-3).\textsuperscript{218} This diminution was not only territorial, but also presented financial and political losses for Noyon and its bishop, as will be discussed further.\textsuperscript{219} The years around 1146 were pivotal

\textsuperscript{213} The Cambrai-Arras joint-diocese separated the dioceses of Noyon and Tournai. Cambrai was accorded its independence from Arras in 1095. See Claude Sézille, \textit{Nouvelles annales}, 91-92.

\textsuperscript{214} Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 5. Only the archbishopric of Reims, to which the bishop of Noyon-Tournai was a suffragan, was comparable in landmass. See also Stephen Murray, “The Choir of the Church of St-Pierre, Cathedral of Beauvais: A Study of Gothic Architectural Planning and Constructional Chronology in Its Historical Context,” \textit{The Art Bulletin}, vol. 62, no. 4 (1980), 535, note 6. Fourteenth-century tax records show Noyon received 5,393 \textit{livres tournois}, the local currency, whereas Tournai received 8,324. These figures demonstrate Tournai’s economic advantage, a financial dynamic which presented losses for Noyon following the dissolution of the union.

\textsuperscript{215} The Tournai clergy first appeal to the Pope 1059. See Claude Sézille, \textit{Nouvelles annales}, 84-85.

\textsuperscript{216} Ibid., 84-110.

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid., 107-10. The pope suspended Bishop Simon along with the bishops of Laon and Senlis for their role in the approval of the second marriage of Count Raoul of Vermandois, brother of Simon. Count Raoul was excommunicated. See also Georges Duby, \textit{France in the Middle Ages, 987–1460}, trans. Juliet Vale (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 185.

\textsuperscript{218} Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 5.

for Noyon, as work on the cathedral was in its nascent stages. What impact might the collapse of the joint-diocese have had on the design of the cathedral? The architectural and sculptural details of the choir are lavish suggesting a great expenditure of resources, and while these details equally convey a sense of strength and power. Might the particular choice of the choir plan and elevation be, in part, a reaction to this defeat, an attempt to reaffirm stature of the diocese? These aspects are further discussed in Part III.

*The Bishop of Noyon*

In the history of the bishopric many illustrious men held the post of bishop beginning with Saint Médard (d. 545) and Saint Éloi (c. 641-660). Endowed with comital status by Emperor Otto I, in the second half of the tenth century, situated the bishop-count of Noyon within the feudal hierarchy among the Dukes of Normandy, Aquitaine and the Counts of Champagne, Flanders and Toulouse. The bishop-count of Noyon participated in the coronation of French kings, and sat in judgment in the feudal courts. As count, the bishop of Noyon controlled territory in the Noyonnais and held

---

220 Both bishops served as counselors to Merovingian kings and queens. According to Médard’s hagiography, King Clotaire transported Médard’s body to the city of Soissons for burial (c. 545). Prior to his election to the post of bishop in 641 Saint Éloi was the financier and consul in the administrations of Clotaire II and his son King Dagobert. Éloi also served as consul for Queen Bathilde, an Anglo-Saxon and wife of Clovis II, when she reigned as regent. As bishop, Éloi was also credited with having evangelized much of Flanders (c. 644), including the regions of Tournaï, Brabant and Zeeland. See “Saint Éloi” and “Saint Médard,” *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints Online*; and Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, *Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon*, 3.


secular jurisdiction in the city. Yet the bishop-count of Noyon shared secular power with the châtelain or castellan, a governor of a castle, once the castle-keeper of French kings. Seymour describes the castellan as imposing “restraint upon the autonomy of the bishop…” However, during cathedral construction the relationship between the bishop and castellan was at times inhospitable, as the castellan frequently aligned himself with the commune of Noyon, a collective civic authority made-up of local landed bourgeoisie created by means of a royal charter in 1108. The founding of the commune restructured the political landscape of Noyon with the communiers frequently challenging the authority of the bishop and chapter, as seen at Senlis. Not only did the communiers present a rather negative force, but they failed to provide funding for the construction

223 Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 3, 7. The territory of the comté conformed to the Carolingian comté of the Noyonnais. According to Seymour this domain included fiefs, but not the castellan of Chauny, Choisy and Thourotte, all dependents of the Count of Vermandois. The commune, castellan of Noyon and lords of Varennes, Béhéricourt, Beaurain and Reneval paid homage to the bishop-count. The bishop controlled high, middle and low justice. Criminal cases were reserved for the échevins, chosen by the bishop together with the prévot (officer of the castellan). However, the bishop held the right to arrest, place in prison and judge both visitors and inhabitants of Noyon accused of infractions and crimes. Revenue from landholdings, fiefs, taxation from the annual fair, a canal at Pont-l’Éveque and a major highway (“rega strata”) running through the city provided the bishop with a substantial income. The bishop also held the right to mint money and controlled the annual fair. It was not until the tenure of Bishop Stephen of Nemours (1188-1221) that the royal currency—the parisis—appeared alongside the local currency of Noyon, minted by the bishop. See also Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 115-16; L. Mazière, “Le comté-pairie: le domaine de Noyon,” *Comité*, vol. 11 (1894): 179-249; Abel-Jules Lefranc, *L’histoire de la ville de Noyon*, 91, 95; and Olivier Guytojeannin, *Episcopus et comes*, 183 and 188.

224 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 81, 136. The castellan drew additional power from his exclusive rights over the production of grain and flour. In 1027, Bishop Harduin I ordered the demolition of the towered fortress of King Robert II, the residence of the castellan once located adjacent to the episcopal palace. See also Abel-Jules Lefranc, *L’histoire de la ville de Noyon*, 105, 170.

225 Abel-Jules Lefranc, *L’histoire de la ville de Noyon*, 43, 47, 91, 121 and 161. *Le livre rouge cartulaire de la ville de Noyon*, II, 12-14. “Omnes qui in civitate domos habent, preter clericos ac milites, debent excubias et adjutorium civitatis et consuetudines communionis,” (“All who have houses in the city, except clerics and knights, must take night watch and help and adhere to the customs of the city.”). The communal charter of Noyon was reconfirmed by Louis VII (1140) and Philip Augustus (1181). The commune was a vassal of the bishop and a new type of landed aristocracy.


of the cathedral in the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{228} The sections to follow examine the relationship between individual bishops and both castellan and commune, with a focus on the impact these agents played in the construction of the cathedral.

As the head of a cathedral, an episcopal institution, the bishop held the power of sacred jurisdiction in the city. Yet both the bishop and cathedral chapter held authority over all churches within the diocese. The cathedral chapter, paid clergy who form the corporate body of the church, working with the bishop was responsible for the cathedral fabric, overseeing the construction and restoration of the church.\textsuperscript{229} Appointed by the chapter, two canons served in the retinue of the bishop, facilitating regular communication between the two offices.\textsuperscript{230} The relationship between the bishop and cathedral chapter was a complex dynamic of interdependence: a balanced tension generally characterized by mutual respect. Yet moments of tension challenged this dynamic in the course of the twelfth century. What might the relationship and apparent tensions between the bishop and chapter reveal about the construction of the cathedral? A closer look at the relation between the chapter and individual bishops will be explored in the sections to follow.

\textsuperscript{228} Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 19-20. Drawing from the work of Abel-Jules Lefranc Seymour attributes the lack of involvement by the commune in the construction of the cathedral to lack of a distinct industry at Noyon. Echoing Lefranc, Seymour notes Noyon was primarily a city of religious clerics. See also Abel-Jules Lefranc, \textit{L'histoire de la ville de Noyon}, 190; and Claude Sézille, \textit{Nouvelles annales}, 121.

\textsuperscript{229} In return for their services the canons received a prebend, a type of stipend derived from the regular revenue of the chapter. At Noyon the chapter held rights and entitlements (protection from taxation, immunity from justice) and large holdings, diverse forms of revenues which formed the basis of its power placing it on a par with the bishop. Secured through charters that granted these rights and privileges, first accorded by Frankish kings including Charlemagne, the Noyon chapter held considerable power and wealth. Among the rights accorded the chapter were the protection of all officers, attendants and clerics of the choir who worked on behalf of the chapter, while also safeguarding their property and holdings. Among its possessions were mills, forests, local villages, rural and urban property in the Vermandois (around Compiègne and Laon) and two of the five abbeys in located Noyon (Saint-Godeberthe and Saint-Maurice). See Abel-Jules Lefranc, \textit{L'histoire de la ville de Noyon}, 127-28, 186-88; pièce justificative no. I “Confirmation par Charles le Chauve au chapitre de Noyon, à la demande de l’évêque Immon, de l’immunité concédée par ses prédécesseurs Pepin le Bref, Charlemagne et Louis le Pieux,” dated 842, 177-78. The charter of Charles the Bald placed him in line with his predecessors including his father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Louis the Pious, Charlemagne and Pepin le Bref. See also Olivier Guyotjeannin, \textit{Episcopus et comes}, 34, 40; Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 22. Revenues from these properties served as income for the individual canons in the form of a prebend with additional funds allocated for administrative and similar fees. Money to fund the upkeep and construction of the church might be drawn, in part, from these resources; Bruno Desachy, \textit{Travaux du service archéologique de la ville de Noyon}, 6; Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, \textit{Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon}, 5; and Claude Sézille, \textit{Nouvelles annales}, 52-3.

\textsuperscript{230} Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 21.
Bishops of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

The construction of the new twelfth century episcopal complex, including the cathedral, episcopal palace and chapel took place during the tenure of roughly six different bishops. Five bishops, Simon of Vermandois (c. 1123-46), Baudoin II (1147-1167), Baudoin III (1167-74), Renaud (1174-88) and Stephen of Nemours (1188-1221), are relevant to this study.

The first bishop associated with the work on the cathedral is Simon of Vermandois, elected to the post c. 1123. Simon was a builder who immediately started construction on the episcopal palace (c. 1122-25), known by contemporaries for its opulence. In 1139, Simon founded the Cistercian abbey of Ourscamp, which would become the episcopal necropolis of the bishops of Noyon. The early work on the cathedral, in the 1140s, its design and the laying of the foundation, are attributed to Simon, a man familiar with churches featuring tribunes. Not only was the cathedral of Tournai constructed with tribunes (c. 1100-1155), but he also traveled to Bruges, in 1127, to reconsecrate Saint-Donatian following the assassination of his relative Charles the Good,
the Count of Flanders, murdered in the tribune while praying. Simon hailed from prestigious aristocratic stock, his father Hugh the Great was the king’s brother and his mother Adelaïde, the Count and Countess of Valois and Vermandois, boasted Carolingian ancestry. His imperial lineage undoubtedly influenced the young bishop as he presided over the cathedral, the site of Charlemagne’s coronation. Yet despite Bishop Simon’s privileged heritage and abilities, he faced serious challenges during his administration. Protests by the *communiers* erupted during a papal visit in 1130, which was followed a year later by a devastating fire requiring financial assistance to repair the damage to the city and its cathedral. The chronicler Sigebert of Gembloux stated this fire was divine retribution for the maltreatment of the pontiff by the commune. Yet the exact source of this conflict remains unknown. What might have prompted this violence by the members of the commune? Were the *communiers* reacting to the opulence of the episcopal palace, or the office of the bishop itself? Nearly a decade later, Simon drew the ire of the cathedral chapter over negotiations regarding the split of the joint-diocese in which the bishop was to personally receive favorable financial terms. Coinciding with this conflict was the start of construction on the cathedral. While still in its nascent stages, the foundation of the cathedral would have indicated its

---

235 Laurent Deléhouzé, Jeroen Westerman, “Tournai,” “La cathédrale Notre-Dame aux XII et XIII siècles: histoire de la construction,” 178-202. See also R.C. Van Caenegem, “Law and Power in Twelfth Century Flanders,” *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth Century Europe*, 150-51. Disgruntled by the attempts of Charles the Good to reduce the power accumulated by the family (through their work for the count) the Erembald clan resorted to murder as a means to maintain control. See also Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 102. The body of Charles was brought back to the church for veneration by the faithful. Bishop Simon was the count's brother-in-law.

236 Elizabeth M. Hallam, *Capetian France*, 43. Simon was the nephew of King Philip I, cousin of King Louis VI and the younger brother of Count Raoul I of Vermandois. It was through Adelaïde’s father Herbert IV, the Count of Vermandois that the family claimed their Carolingian lineage.

237 Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 10. Seymour describes Simon as an able politician and “virile” administrator.


239 Ibid. 844; and Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, *Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon*, 11. Lefèvre-Pontalis counters this history noting the itinerary of Pope Innocent II did not include Noyon. However, the pope was staying in the nearby city of Compiègne, suggesting the visit was indeed plausible.

240 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 107-10. Simon quickly retracted this agreement, appeasing the chapter.
monumental scale. Could the grandeur of the rising cathedral, in part, be a defiant response to the struggle over Noyon-Tournai diocese? Dismantling of the joint-diocese left Simon marginalized. Following this defeat he left the city joining King Louis VII on the Second Crusade. Before departing, Bishop Simon donated revenue from ten parish churches, and a vineyard as payment for his remembrance in anniversary services to be held at the cathedral. He died two years later (c. 1148) while on Crusade, and was buried at the abbey of Ourscamp, inaugurating the abbey as the necropolis for the bishops of Noyon. Given the stature of Simon and the circumstances surrounding his administration the choice of a tribune appears logical, however, the extent of Simon’s involvement in the design of upper stories remains uncertain.

Baudoin II (c. 1148-1167) or Baudoin of Boulogne, the former abbot of Châtillon, located in the diocese of Langres, succeeded Simon as bishop. Scholars (Jacques Levasseur, Abel-Jules Lefranc and Charles Seymour) suggest Baudoin II was of aristocratic heritage, related to the Counts of Flanders. Like Simon before him, grandeur and opulence characterized the episcopate during his tenure. In a letter written to the provost of the cathedral (c. 1155) the Cistercian novice Peter of

241 Ibid., 110. See also Elizabeth M. Hallam, *Capetian France*, 158.

242 Ibid., 111. Simon also made donations to other churches, including those at Cappy, Crépy and Saint-Barthélemy of Noyon. See also Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, note 14, 46.

243 Ibid., 111.

244 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 111-112. The bishop-count of Langres was one of the ecclesiastical peers of France. Abbot Suger, acting as regent, confirmed this election. See also Jacques Levasseur, *Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon*, 886-87. Like Simon before him, Baudoin II had close ties to Bernard of Clairvaux and the Abbot Suger. In 1149 the Abbot Suger reformed the abbey of Saint-Corneille in Compiègne, seeking to oust the regular canons. Bishop Baudoin II ordained the new abbot in the face of an angry crowd of canons, hurling insults, threatening the bishop while trying to impede the celebration of Mass. As a result both the abbot and Bishop Baudoin II wrote to Pope Eugene explaining these events. See also Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 11. Peter of Celles, abbot and builder of Saint-Remi in Reims, was also linked to Baudoin II. For the linkage to Peter of Celles, of the abbey of Saint-Remi of Reims, see Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 113.

Roy describes the lavishness of the episcopal palace under Baudoin II.\footnote{Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 114. Taken from Bernard of Clairvaux, *Oeuvres de Saint-Bernard*, vol.1, 393, epistle 441.} Several years later, a complaint lodged in 1162 by the canons of the collegiate church of Saint-Quentin to Pope Alexander III states Baudoin II’s retinue was so large it created a financial burden for the collegiate church during visits.\footnote{Ibid., 115.} Baudoin II’s administration presents a continuum with that of Simon in which he maintained and even expanded the prestige and aristocratic leanings of the episcopate, despite the reduced stature of the diocese.

Early in his tenure Baudoin II demonstrated political tenacity seeking to preserve his existing rights and privileges, while augmenting his holdings and authority. In 1149, the bishop came into conflict with Raoul I, the Count of Vermandois over property and control of the comté.\footnote{Olivier Guyotjeannin, *Episcopus et comes*, 179. During this period Count Raoul I, brother of Bishop Simon, was acting as regent, together with Abbot Suger.} As arbitrator in this case, Archbishop Samson of Reims awarded Baudoin II a tower at Lassigny and restored lost temporal powers.\footnote{These powers were initially given to the count by Bishop Simon. In 1167 Raoul II (son of Raoul I) appealed to the king in an effort to recover these losses. See Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 112; and Olivier Guyotjeannin, *Episcopus et comes*, 180, note 48.} In the following year Baudoin II reasserted his authority over the rebellious Gerald, the Count of Quierzy.\footnote{Ibid., 180, note 45. Baudoin II argued his case in an audience with the king.} These power struggles reached beyond the city walls, as he sought to limit the power of the castellan Guy at Crisolles and Raimbeaucourt, located in the Noyonnais.\footnote{Ibid., 115.}

Baudoin II was also active in his role as builder, with the cathedral architecture taking shape during his tenure. In 1157, he conducted the translation of the relics of Saint Éloi, a ceremony in which the remains of the saint were moved into a new reliquary, marking a significant moment in
the construction of the choir. This ceremony also served to re-authenticate these important relics, central to the identity of the episcopate as an important place of pilgrimage. While the status of the completion of the choir remains unknown at this time, presumably the tribunes were taking shape. During this period (c. 1160s), relations with the commune were once again strained. A lawsuit between the bishop and commune intensified into a heated conflict requiring royal intervention. In a letter addressed to King Louis VII (c. 1164) the bishop asked for assistance in this matter, stating he was afraid of the people, *timeo enim multitudinem populi*. The subsequent granting of rights to make repairs to the canal and port of Pont-l’Évêque and the construction of a new road through the city in 1164, suggests Baudoin II was still negotiating his relationship with the commune. Might there be a correlation between the progress on the construction of the episcopal complex and the anger of the *communiers*? Did Baudoin II, his opulent, aristocratic administration, exasperate the members of the commune? Like Simon before him, Baudoin II surrounded himself with luxuries befitting the rank of a bishop-count, while he also actively engaged in the development of the episcopal complex. In addition to the choir Baudoin II started construction on the episcopal chapel, an important structure for the office of the bishop and a pivotal building in the episcopal complex (see Part III for further discussion). Buried at the abbey of Ourscamp, Baudoin II was a savvy leader who strengthened the episcopate, while bolstering the position of bishop-count.

252 Jacques Levasseur, *Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon*, 891; Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 114; Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, *Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon*, 9; and Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 55-56, 67. For Seymour this does not mark the completion of the choir, but was merely a fundraising effort following the fire of 1152. The prior translation had occurred in 1066, by his namesake Baudoin I.

253 Ibid., 891.


255 Ibid., 101, 191, pièce justificative 11, Baudoin II requested a royal envoy, the *bouteiller* or butler, to settle this dispute with the commune. The letter, while perhaps dramatized, expresses the bishop’s fear of potential violent reprisals by the *communiers*.

Unlike his predecessors Baudoin III (1167-74) was not of noble birth, rather he rose from within the ranks of the cathedral as the former dean. Charles Seymour characterizes him as “a careerist working his way up the clerical hierarchy.” However, Baudoin III was more than a careerist, more precisely he was an intellectual who shared the same vision for the episcopate held by his predecessors. Baudoin III was on good terms with the chapter, confirming its previous rights and privileges, while he expanded its power, freeing up the rights of excommunication and absolution for both chapter and bishop. In his short tenure as bishop, Baudoin III oversaw the construction of the episcopal chapel, while work on the choir neared completion and the transept took shape. After taking office, Baudoin III conducted the translation ceremony for the relics of Saint Godeberthe (c. 640-700) and the early bishop-saints of Noyon Mummolin (c. 685) and Eunuce (c. 744). These three saints played a role in the institutional history of the cathedral. Upon his death, Baudoin bequeathed the cathedral a modest revenue of tithes from the parish churches of Viry and Martensville.

While nothing is known about the background of Bishop Renaud (c. 1174-88), Baudoin III’s successor, his actions reveal a dynamic, ambitious reformer actively engaged in the work on the episcopal complex. Like Baudoin II and Simon, Renaud sought to expand and protect his

---

257 Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 12. Yet the brevity of his tenure as bishop coupled with a dearth of archival material renders it difficult to accurately define the nature of his leadership. See Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 118

258 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 118. Contrary to Charles Seymour's characterization, Baudoin III employed his authority in the international political arena. Together with archbishop of Sens and the bishops of Paris, Troyes and Auxerre, Baudoin III wrote to the pope accusing the bishop of London of arranging the murder of Thomas Becket.

259 Ibid.


262 Ibid., 116.

263 Ibid., 118-24.
authority and resources. Construction on the episcopal chapel came to completion during his tenure, while work continued on the transept, advancing westerly into the nave. The 1170s-1180s were a dynamic period for Renaud. In 1179, he reformed the *Hôtel-Dieu*, the town hospital, restructuring its management and arranging for the construction of a new building and attended the Third Lateran Council 1179-80. In the 1180s Noyon became a royal town, making the king the principal seigneur of the city, reducing the temporal authority of the bishop-count and related benefits from the local economy. This period was equally marked by discord, with Bishop Renaud encroaching on the territory of the cathedral chapter. Numerous appeals by Bishop Renaud to the pope pertained to issues of jurisdiction, rights and privileges. A longer period of struggle (c. 1180-85), over similar issues also involved the commune, which called for a boycott in an attempt to coerce the townsfolk into refusing to sell, donate or bequeath anything of value to the

---

264 Ibid., 118-24. During Renaud’s tenure he sat in judgment at various trials, while he actively sought to channel revenue and goods for his benefit. With the Gerald, the lord of Canny, Bishop Renaud forged an agreement concerning rights of the château of Quierzy. Further expanding the wealth of the bishopric, Renaud acquired papal support to return the revenue of certain tithes in the possession of Saint-Vaast in Arras, Molens and Ernomenil and the fief of Fresne to the episcopate. Renaud also secured the revenue from a toll at Pontoise for his own benefit, once allocated for the cathedral treasury (c. 1184). The archbishop of Reims confirmed this transfer.

265 Ibid., 119; Jacques Levasseur, *Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon*, 902-05. Renaud endowed a priest named Henry with the power to construct a new building for the hospital; and Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 118-21. Renaud received financial compensation for this work at the Lateran Council, as noted in a papal bull of 1179.


268 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 123. These disputes were over rights of excommunication, absolution, the divine office (the ability to end these observances), prebends and justice. Among the witnesses to the charter that restored relations was the bishop’s chaplain. Appeals were made to the pope and not the king.
The resulting stalemate required the mediation by Pope Alexander III who, siding with the chapter, reaffirmed its rights and possessions. The inception of this boycott appears to be a direct response to the construction of the episcopal complex. Generally, the papacy appears to have played a more prominent role in the affairs at Noyon despite the new designation of a royal city. The strengthening of his alliance can be seen in the choice of dedication for the episcopal chapel, as further discussed in Part III. In keeping with his predecessors, Renaud was buried at the abbey of Ourscamp.

Bishop Stephen of Nemours (1188-1221) was an aristocrat; his father Gautier de Villebéon was the royal chamberlain, and his brothers the bishops of Meaux and Paris. During his tenure work proceeded on the enlargement of the episcopal palace, and the near-completion of the cathedral. Bishop Stephen was an energetic leader engaged in developing the episcopal see through the acquisition of revenue streams, the creation of religious foundations and building construction. The significance of his administration lies not only in his building activities, but the importance he placed on the early, Merovingian and Carolingian, history of Noyon. Bishop Stephen re-activated the presence of the legendary Saint Éloi within the cathedral. He created a fund establishing a large candle to burn day and night in front of the saint’s reliquary, located behind the choir. This commemorative gesture illuminated the chapel, creating a visual focus in the choir that underscored

---


270 Ibid., pièce justificative no.13, “Recommandation envoyé au pape Alexandre III par Geoffroy Foucher, maître des commanderies du Temple de la région d’Occident, en faveur du chapitre de Noyon, au sujet d’un procès pendant entre ce dernier et la commune,” 192-93: “Recommandation sent to Pope Alexander III by Geoffrey Foucher, master commander of the Temple of the region of the West (the Knights Templar), for the chapter of Noyon, regarding a trial between it and the town.” See also Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 119-20; Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 21-22.

271 Claude Sézille, *Nouvelles annales*, 126-27
the importance of the saint to the cathedral. In 1197, Stephen further endowed feast day services of the saint, held twice a year in winter and summer. He also established an additional feast day to commemorate the first translation of the relics of Saint Éloi by Bishop Baudoin I in 1066, when the relics were first authenticated in an official charter. This event recalled the first translation of the body of the saint made by Bishop-Saint Mummolin together with Queen Bathilde (649-680). Was Stephen executing and enriching a revivalist program already in place? Or did his work represent a new initiative? Such questions will be explored in the section to follow. In keeping with his predecessors, Stephen was buried at the abbey of Ourscamp.

Part III:

The Episcopal Complex of Noyon: An Architectural Study

Located in the northeastern sector of the city, abutting the Gallo-Roman wall, the episcopal complex dominated the urban fabric in the Middle Ages, much as it does today (figure 2-1, 2-3). The cathedral stood between the buildings of the chapter, and those of the bishop (figure 2-3). The buildings of the chapter included a cloister, chapter house and treasury all located on the northern side of the cathedral. The chapter lived communally until c. 1176, when communal habitation ceased, heralding its secularization. The individual medieval canons' houses, post c. 1176, framed the cathedral, following the perimeter of the Gallo-Roman wall to form a semicircle to the north,

---

272 Ibid., 126-27

273 Ibid.

274 Ibid.

275 See Bruno Desachy, *Travaux du service archéologique de la ville de Noyon*, 7. See also Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 21. Seymour notes this date of 1176 was impossible to fix with certainty.
west and southwest of the episcopal complex (figure 2-1, 2-3). The episcopal palace and chapel
located on the southern side of the cathedral were the buildings of the bishop.

The Episcopal Palace

Construction of the episcopal palace first began in twelfth-century during the tenure of Bishop
Simon (c. 1122-25). While this structure was most likely damaged in the fire of 1131, its status
following these events remains unknown. The twelfth-century reconstruction or construction of
the episcopal palace occurred during the administration of Bishop Renaud (1174-88). Though the
structure is no longer extant, archeological studies carried out in the 1970s and 80s, together with
vestiges, provide enough details to understand the overall disposition of the palace. In
relationship to the cathedral, the palace stood on the southern flank roughly perpendicular and
approximately in alignment with the transept, as if it were an extension of the cathedral itself
(figures 2-3, 2-6). Monumental in its scale, the palace was approximately ninety-eight feet in
length. The Gallo-Roman wall, approximately nine to thirteen feet thick, served as the outer wall
of this structure, as similarly found at episcopal palaces of Beauvais, Paris, Reims and Senlis.
Two structures linked together formed the body of the palace (figure 2-6). The structure standing
adjacent to the chapel and cathedral was rectangular in form. Scholars (Bruno Desachy, M.C.

276 Bruno Desachy and M.C. Lacroix, “La chapelle épiscopale Saint-Nicolas: quelques données historiques et
archéologiques,” La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Noyon cinq années de recherches, 236-38.

277 Ibid., 236.


280 Ibid., 239.

281 Thierry Crepin-Leblond, “Le palais épiscopal de Noyon,” 55-56. This relationship of Gallo-Roman wall to episcopal
palace, where the wall formed part of the architecture of the palace could also be seen at for example the cathedrals of
Amiens, Beauvais, Paris, Reims and Senlis. The episcopal complex of Noyon, its cathedral, palace and chapel shared a
similar arrangement to Notre-Dame of Paris, built in the 1160s under Bishop Maurice of Sully. However, according to
Crepin-Leblond Noyon shared more affinities with the palace of the archbishop of Reims called the “Palais de Tau,”
built between 1138-48. With further research, other churches could be added to this list and more linkages made. A
hindrance to this research is the current state of many of these palaces, which like Noyon few vestiges remain.
Lacroix and Thierry Crepin-Leblond) posit an interior arrangement of two stories, on the upper level an *aula* or great hall and a lower story of which little is known. From this upper story the bishop and his retinue could directly access the episcopal chapel.\textsuperscript{282} The second structure, a square tower, the so-called Tour de Roland, named for Roland the military leader under Charlemagne, glorified in the *Chansons de geste*, built in the twelfth century, adjoined this rectangular building of the *aula*.\textsuperscript{283} It was one of two towers of the same name owned by the bishop: the other was located in the town of Lassigny. The tower of Roland, of the episcopal complex, was three stories, on each level a single room measuring approximately twenty-

\textsuperscript{282} Bruno Desachy and M.C. Lacroix, “La chapelle épiscopale Saint-Nicolas,” 240.

\textsuperscript{283} Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 15.
two by sixteen feet, with a room at the top floor measuring larger.284 The private apartments of the bishop were located in this tower. The architectural vestiges of the *aula* hint at an opulence evident in the costly ashlar masonry construction, complex hood moldings, large lancet windows, engaged columns, capitals, etc. (figures 2-7, 2-9). These elements, similarly found in the episcopal chapel and cathedral, unify the different buildings of the episcopal complex, linking the three structures. The various bishops of Noyon, their retinue and visitors accessed the palace through a portal located on the western of the palace or via the episcopal chapel.285 During the tenure of Bishop Stephen the palace underwent transformation again. Around 1195, the bishop acquired two houses adjacent to

---

284 Thierry Crepin-Leblond, “Le palais épiscopal de Noyon,” 58. See also Bruno Desachy and M.C. Lacroix,“La chapelle épiscopale Saint-Nicolas,” 236. A portion of the twelfth-century tower remains, which reveals the three stories of the original structure.

285 There were no known points of access located along the Gallo-Roman wall, the eastern face of the palace structure.
the episcopal palace situated along its southern face, significantly expanding the structure.286

Further to the south on the opposite side of the street is where the warehouse and audience hall of the castellan once stood. Bishop Stephen acquired these buildings converting them into an episcopal seat of justice.287

The attention given to the palace, its building and rebuilding, by approximately three bishops underscores its importance. While a residence, the palace also housed official functions pertaining to the episcopal see. Prior to the development of an independent structure dedicated to justice (c. 1195) cases were adjudicated in the palace and adjoining chapel. The architectural disposition of the palace with the aula and the apartments located in the tower, all situated on the second story or piano nobile was in keeping with seigneurial examples. The architectural linkage between the upper chapel and the aula, allowing the bishop and his retinue to pass easily from one structure to another, was also commonly found in royal and imperial palatine complexes, as discussed in Chapter I.288

The architectural arrangement of the episcopal palace, together with its monumentality and lavish adornment, clearly expressed the importance and authority of the bishop-count as both spiritual and temporal leader of Noyon. Yet the episcopal palace only represented one element in a much larger complex.


287 Ibid., 165.

The Episcopal Chapel

Situated between the cathedral and episcopal palace stands the ruins of the bishop’s chapel, c. 1170-77. The appointment of Jean de Nesle and Henri de Beauvais as chaplains to the chapel in 1177 signaled its completion. By 1180, the bishop of Noyon arbitrated a dispute between the clergy of the church at Péronne and clergy of Saint-Quentin of Beauvais in the chapel, affirming this earlier chronology. Partially demolished towards the end of the nineteenth century, this single-vessel chapel was once monumental in scale (figure 2-8). Archeological studies confirmed the interior arrangement of three levels: a subterranean cellar, a ground level chapel dedicated to Charles Seymour,

Figure 2-8. Noyon, reconstruction drawings of the episcopal chapel, of Saint-Nicolas. http://mappinggothic.org/image/32329.

---


Saint Nicolas and an upper story chapel also dedicated to the same saint (figures 2-8, 2-9). The location of the chapel held particular significance, not only because of its position adjacent to both cathedral and palace, but because the medieval clergy of Noyon held this to be the location of the oratory dedicated to Saint Benoit, a structure held to have been built in the Carolingian era.

According to legend, Bishop Heidilon transferred the relics of Saint Éloi, in 881, from their original location at the abbey of Saint-Leu or Loup outside of the city walls to the oratory of Saint-Benoit.

---


for safe keeping during the Norman raids. In the twelfth-century bishops appropriated this semi-sacred space together with its potent historical narrative for the location of the new episcopal chapel. Appropriating the location of the oratory the placement of the chapel situated the current bishops in line with their early predecessors as rightful inheritors of the sacred authority held by the bishops of Noyon.

The elevation of the upper chapel, a blind dado arcade of rounded arches grouped in pairs, and upper lancets composed of long slender gently pointed-arched lancets also grouped in pairs, surmounted by an oculus, is still visible today (figures 2-4, 2-10, 2-11). According to Thierry Crepin-Leblond the architectural volume of the upper chapel matched a similar chapel at the

Figure 2-10. Noyon, view from the east, including the choir, episcopal palace and Salle de Tresor, as it stood in 1880. Bruno Desachy and M.C. Lacroix, “La chapelle épiscopale Saint-Nicolas,” 233, fig. 1.

293 Claude Sézille, Nouvelles annales, 68. See also C.A. Moët de la Forte-Maison, Antiquités de Noyon, 70-71. The oratory was described as adjacent to the cathedral, abutting the Gallo-Roman wall and in the area of the episcopal palace. See also Bruno Desachy and M.C. Lacroix, “La chapelle épiscopale Saint-Nicolas,” 234.
The architectural vestiges of the adjoining episcopal palace of Noyon embodied sumptuous ornamentation seen in the attention to detail in the extant moldings and capitals. Yet there is difference in the treatment of the upper lancets of the chapel, which are exceptionally refined in their slender, elongated proportions (figures 2-4, 2-10, 2-11). The architectural forms of cathedral transept echo the delicate treatment of the chapel, found in the similar handling of the dado arcade, hood moldings, slender colonnettes, dividing each lancet window together with the proportions of windows in the third and fourth stories (figures 2-4, 2-11, 2-12). These architectural similarities found in the cathedral and chapel again unify the entire complex, presenting a coherent program. Together these architectural entities express the grandeur of the episcopal see of Noyon.

A plan diagram published by Charles Seymour, based on the archaeological work of Andre Collins, reveals the means of access from the upper level of chapel into the cathedral, its transept arm and choir tribune (figure 2-13). The plan indicates a lighted, circular stairwell adjoining the two structures, providing access from the chapel into tribune (figure 2-13). Visible in a photograph of 1880, prior to the partial destruction of the episcopal chapel, is a structure connecting the chapel to the second story of transept arm where this stairwell once stood according to the diagram (figure 2-10). An architectural plan, c. 1872, indicates the architectural connection between the two structures, yet does not include a staircase (figure 2-14). The connection between chapel and cathedral is also evident in an early photograph, c. 1888, taken during the demolition of the episcopal chapel (figure 2-15). Today, this portion of the transept arm shows signs of restoration (figures 2-16, 2-17). This architectural linkage of church, palace and chapel draws from a larger tradition in both episcopal, royal and imperial complexes, as noted in Chapter I. As mentioned, a similar arrangement was found at Santiago de Compostela in which the archbishop’s palace linked architecturally to the cathedral at the level of the tribune.

Figure 2-13. Noyon, Notre-Dame, plan of transept, episcopal chapel, prior to the restoration in the nineteenth century. Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 63, fig. 12.

295 Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 62-63. Seymour argues this architectural linkage proved these two units were conceived together. See also Bruno Desachy and M.C. Lacroix, “La chapelle épiscopale Saint-Nicolas,” 233-34, and Thierry Crepin-Leblond, “Le palais épiscopal de Noyon,” 64.
The choice of Saint Nicolas for the dedication of the bishop’s chapel reflects a larger trend among bishops and archbishops alike in the twelfth century. Dedications to the saint appeared in the episcopal chapels of Laon, Meaux and the archbishopric at Reims, all situated in the upper or second story. At the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela the chapel of Saint Nicolas was located in the tribune of the church. The bishop’s chapel at the cathedral of Meaux, like Noyon, also featured a double dedication to the saint. According to Maureen Miller, Pope Calixtus II was the first to dedicate his chapel of San Niccolo in the Lateran (c. 1122) to the saint, heralding the fourth-century bishop as the patron saint of the reform movement. The historical Saint Nicolas was a strong individual, a man who was not afraid to speak his mind. A legendary tale in the hagiography of the saint recounts when Nicolas stood up to Emperor Constantine, berating the emperor.

296 Ibid., 61-62.

297 Ibid.


299 Maureen Miller, *The Bishop’s Palace*, 235. The triumph for Calixtus II came with the Concordat of Worms, marking a victory of the papacy over the emperor, bringing to an end the Investiture Controversy that limited the role the emperor could play in the appointment of ecclesiastics. Miller’s study examines the appearance of both episcopal palaces and chapels in Italy during the twelfth century. While there are little architectural similarities between the Italian and French chapels, and the political landscape was different, yet parallels are still apparent, and merit further study.

300 Ibid., 235, See also Charles W. Jones, *Saint Nicholas of Myra, Bari, and Manhattan: Biography of a Legend* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1978), 29-36. Nicolas threatened the emperor stating he would “stir up uncontrollable revolt against you, and hand over your carcass and entrails to the wild beasts for food.”
argues Saint Nicolas embodied power and strength in the face of secular authority. This mindful choice in chapel dedication is significant as it aligns Noyon with the papacy and more importantly with reform movements, while bearing the message of strength, notably in opposition to royal power. The episcopal chapel was designed and constructed during the tenure of Bishops Baudoin III and Renaud, both aligned with the papacy. It was at this time that Noyon also became a royal city, challenging the temporal authority of the bishop.

The construction of the multi-storied structure of the episcopal chapel of Noyon coincided with a larger trend among bishops and archbishops. The episcopal chapels of Angers, Le Mans, Laon, Meaux, Paris and Reims are examples other two-storied chapels constructed in the second half of

---

301 Ibid., 235.
the twelfth century. Like the episcopal palace, the episcopal chapel of Noyon belongs to a clearly-established type. Scholars (Inge Hacker-Sück and Meredith Cohen) link the typological roots of the episcopal chapel back to the Carolingian *Doppelkapellen*, double or two storied chapels. The construction type together with the dedication strongly point to the desires of the medieval builders to align themselves with this larger movement in France, but more importantly with Rome and the reform movements of this period. Yet again bishop’s chapel was one part of a larger episcopal complex including its cathedral.

---


The Cathedral

While today the cathedral is dedicated to Notre-Dame, the Virgin Mary, in the twelfth century the church held a dual dedication to Saint Médard and the Virgin Mary. The inclusion of Saint Médard in the dedication expresses, in part, the role the early foundational history played in the identity of the episcopate and its cathedral. The bodily relics of the Merovingian Bishop-Saint Éloi, in the possession of the cathedral, attracted pilgrims throughout Europe. Two similar pilgrimage badges found in London depict Saint Éloi at left with a hammer in hand working on his anvil, at right a devotee with hands raised and a horse in the foreground (figures 2-18, 2-19). Hundreds of similar badges were found in Paris, Rouen and in the area of the mouth of the Rhine (North Sea), attesting to prominence of the cult of Saint Éloi in medieval Europe. His cult appealed to aristocrats, as the saint was a model of the courtly man together with his association with horses and


305 These two badges date from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

gold, according to Jean-Christophe Masmonteil.\textsuperscript{307} In the chapel dedicated to Saint Éloi, located in the choir, the heart and entrails of Ferdinand the Count of Flanders, son of the King of Portugal, were buried in the thirteenth century, a testament to the popularity of the saint among members of the aristocracy.\textsuperscript{308} A cycle of tapestries depicting the miracles of Saint Éloi once hung in the choir, a gift given by the former archdeacon Adrien de Lamet in the fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{309} As noted earlier, in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries Bishop Stephen further developed the cult of the saint in the choir.

Noyon equally held significance as a prominent historical site for the Carolingians. The coronation of Charlemagne occurred at the cathedral in the autumn of 768, marking perhaps the most significant event in the history of Noyon.\textsuperscript{310} The legacy of Charlemagne echoed throughout the physical structure of the cathedral. A legal proceeding in 1385 brought by the inhabitants of Noyon against the bishop and chapter reveals that the clergy claimed the Gothic cathedral was built by Charlemagne himself, on the foundations of the château of Roland.\textsuperscript{311} The tower of Roland, the

\textsuperscript{307} Ibid., 15-18, 41-46.

\textsuperscript{308} Jacques Levasseur, \textit{Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon}, 940; Claude Sézille, \textit{Nouvelles annales}, 114. Ferdinand was taken prisoner by Philip Augustus at the Battle of Bouvines and placed in the Louvre palace prison. He was released during the reign of Louis IX in 1266. Upon his death he wished to be buried at Noyon in the cathedral. See also Jacques Duquesne, \textit{Saint Éloi}, (Fayard, 1985); and Jean-Christophe Masmonteil, \textit{Iconographie et culte de saint Éloi dans l’Occident médiéval} (Recontre avec le Patrimoine religieux, 2012).

\textsuperscript{309} According to Étienne Poncelet, tapestries depicting the life of Noah replaced those of Saint Éloi in 1648. See Étienne Poncelet, “Noyon, cathédrale de Noyon, étude préalable à l'aménagement liturgique” (1997), part 1; and Paris: Médiathèque de l’architecture et du patrimoine, Fonds de Mérimée: PA 00114789.

\textsuperscript{310} As king of the Franks, Charlemagne ruled Austrasia, and a portion of Aquitaine. On the same day at Soissons Charlemagne’s brother, Carloman became King of Burgundy, Provence, Gothie, Alsace and the other half of Aquitaine. Following Carloman’s death in 771 Charlemagne became king of these combined territories, starting his ascent to the position of emperor. The coronation Hugh Capet, the first king of the Capetian dynasty, took place at Noyon on June 1, 987. See Claude Sézille, \textit{Nouvelles annales}, 45. See also Charles Seymour, \textit{Notre-Dame of Noyon}, 34. Seymour posits this Carolingian building was the one later destroyed in the first of the Norman invasions of 859; Jacques Levasseur, \textit{Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon}, 105, 130. Levasseur suggests Charlemagne in turn donated funds to the construction of the cathedral’s nave, yet documentation for this gift is no longer extant, if that was indeed the case. See also Richer, “The Election of Hugh Capet,” Frederic Austin Ogg, ed. \textit{A Source Book of Mediaeval History: Documents Illustrative of European Life and Institutions from the German Invasions to the Renaissance} (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1972), 178-80; and Georges Duby, \textit{France in the Middle Ages}, 19.

\textsuperscript{311} Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, \textit{Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon}, 34. Lefèvre-Pontalis draws this information from a document in Paris: Archives nationales, vol. 10 1472, fol. 301 v. See also Jacques Levasseur, \textit{Annales de l’église cathédrale de Noyon}, 130. No documentary evidence remains to support these claims that Charlemagne donated objects, money, deeds etc., to the church. Levasseur also claims Charlemagne donated funds to the construction of the nave.
apartments of the episcopal palace, also evoked this legend. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries medieval builders called a pier and flyer (a flying buttress) “Charlemagne,” which was in need of repair following a fire between 1293 and 1316. A portrait of Charlemagne once hung in the chapel of Saint Éloi, situated behind the choir, as noted in archival documents dating to the fifteenth century. In 1468, King Louis XI ordered the portrait to be restored and embellished, along with a copy made for his collection.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Notre-Dame of Noyon was uniquely positioned to capitalize on the widespread cult of Charlemagne, popular with the Capetian kings. While Charles Seymour characterized the city of Noyon as “...a shrine of royal sentiment, memories and glories,” these potent royal and imperial historical roots did not translate into significant financial contributions by the twelfth century kings of France towards the cathedral fabric. Rather the Merovingian saints, Charlemagne and his chief Roland served as models for the bishop and more generally the cathedral itself, as expressed in the architecture and adornment of the episcopal complex.

This study does not necessitate an examination of the entire cathedral, but rather a focused analysis of the choir (figure 2-20). During the period under consideration, the canons of Noyon

312 Ibid., 43. Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis suggests this “arc-boutant” or flying buttress was located around the choir tribune. It was during this fire that the radiating chapels and roofing of the tribune required repair.

313 Ibid., 163, folio 16. On his first visit to the city in August of 1468 Louis XI ordered the restoration and copy of the portrait. He received the results upon his return on September 2nd of the same year. See also Claude Sézille, Nouvelles annales, 220; Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 15; and Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon, 55. Lefèvre-Pontalis notes a document dating to 1517 attests to the continued presence of the portrait of Charlemagne in the cathedral.

315 The legend of Charlemagne came alive through the popular Chansons de geste, epic poems of his life and exploits as emperor and proto-crusader. Written in the late eleventh or early twelfth century the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle, a work of propaganda, was held to be historic truth for the following three centuries. See Robert Morrissey, Charlemagne & France: A Thousand Years of Mythology (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 47, 49; Elizabeth M. Hallam, Capetian France, 242; and Georgia Wright, “A Royal Tomb Program in the Reign of St. Louis,” 241.

316 Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 14.
numbered approximately sixty. As a point of comparison neighboring Laon Cathedral, with eighty-four canons, was the largest in the region. The cathedral chapter of Beauvais, where there was a bishop-count as at Laon, numbered around forty to fifty; making the Noyon chapter a substantial population in comparison. The cathedral choir had to accommodate this sizable chapter, its officers, the bishop and his retinue, which were numerous as noted previously.

**Choir Exterior**

Medieval builders started construction in the east with the choir (c. 1145-50), during the tenure of Bishop Baudoin II. Work on the hemicycle and radiating chapels started outside the Gallo-Roman wall, and continued in a westerly direction towards the

---


319 See Charles Seymour, *Notre-Dame of Noyon*, 54. As noted earlier the foundations were laid out during the administration of Simon.
wall and earlier church that lay within its perimeter. Despite centuries of renovation and restoration the exterior of the choir retains aspects of its twelfth century configuration. The broad mass of the choir rises in three distinguishable stories, each level incrementally recessed in a conical arrangement (figures 2-10, 2-21).  

Robert Louis Stevenson likened it to a “poop of great old battle ship,” an impression accentuated by forms of the eighteenth-century flying buttresses. The sculptural treatment of the exterior is opulent, which some might describe as baroque. The projecting buttresses frame each of the five radiating chapels accentuating the curvature of the architecture, which appears to bulge outwards. Yet the single engaged column protruding from a central point on each chapel interrupts the line of this curvature and draws our attention towards the windows. Framing each lancet window are elaborate deep-cut hood moldings found at each level. The play of light and shadow on the convex and concave forms accentuates the ornamentation, creating a sense of sculptural depth around the windows that carries across the entire surface of the choir exterior. The architecture of the exterior conveys a sense of...
solidity in its massing that appears to diminish in each successive story. In the twelfth century the cathedral cemetery stood in the east directly behind the choir (figure 2-3). Two portals located in the north and south arm of the transept provided the only means of access into the church from this eastern sector of the city, during the period under consideration. The episcopal complex roughly followed the imprint of the Gallo-Roman wall, obstructing passage from the area behind the choir, episcopal palace and chapel, treasury (Salle de Trésor) and claustral buildings to primary entrance located within the monumental western frontispiece (figures 2-9, 2-15). The façade of the episcopal complex formed a screen-like arrangement, dominating this sector of the city (figures 2-6, 2-10). The rega strata, a highway constructed c. 1164, situated just south of the episcopal palace, adjacent to the Tour Roland, provided a means to access the portals of the western frontispiece.

In the Middle Ages the laity accessed the cathedral from the east through two portals in the arms of the transept. Located in the southern arm of the transept is the portal of Saint Eutrope (c. 1160-70s), known in the fifteenth century as the portail des merciers (figures 2-16, 2-22, 2-23).322

322 Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 19-20.
Today, a short staircase leads up to a shallow gabled portal and into the cathedral. Stripped of all of its sculpture in 1795, the tympanum and voussoirs of the portal are now bare and the niche spaces of the embrasures, once housing statuary, are empty. Charles Little identifies five limestone sculptures, now in museum and private collections, which he argues once adorned this portal.

Sculptures of the Virgin Mary and Child, Moses together with figures identified as Aaron, Saint John the Baptist and an unidentified prophet holding a scroll, were once situated in the niche spaces of the embrasures forming a Marian program.

Completing this triumphant Marian program was a Coronation of the Virgin in the tympanum, as Little argues. The Virgin expressed a message of redemption and salvation, made possible through her powers of intercession. With the codification of the system of purgatory during

---

323 The portal including its gable was heavily restored in the eighteenth century.

324 Charles Little, “Resurrexit: A Rediscovered Monumental Sculptural Program” The Cloisters Studies in Honor of the Fiftieth Anniversary, eds. Elizabeth Parker and Mary Shepard (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 235. Little argues these five statues were once part of the same ensemble, basing his claims on similarities found in the stylistic, dimensional, proportional, and orientation relationships of the figures. Each figure sits on the same bench-like arrangement, shares similar petrographic analysis and drill holes and several figures have similar iron attachments. A Swedish art historian, Johnny Roosval first made these linkages in 1921. Little also draws from the pre-Revolutionary watercolor by Tavernier des Jonquieres as evidence of their placement in this portal.

325 Ibid., 250-51. These figures are large, at forty-nine inches in length. The figure of the Virgin Mary and Child is now located in dépôt lapidaire of Noyon Cathedral, the bearded Moses displaying the Tablets of the Law and the veiled figure of “Aaron” are both at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York city. The torso fragment held to be Saint John the Baptist is in the collection of Duke University. The unidentified prophet holding a scroll is housed in the collection of the Baron von-Thyssen-Bornemisza in Lugano, Italy.

326 Ibid., 250-51. Little claims that stylistically the tympanum would have resembled the sculpture of the western frontispiece at Senlis. While a Coronation scene remains debatable, the portal was most likely dedicated to the Virgin Mary.
this period of the mid-twelfth century, as discussed in Chapter IV, this message grew potent for the medieval audience. The pendant Saint Eutrope portal was the *portail de Saint Pierre* or the portal of Saint Peter (c. 1160-70s), located on the northern side of the cathedral embedded in the arm of the transept. This portal received its name not from its iconographic program, but from the parish church once located in the east, opposite the cathedral. Unlike the accompanying portal on the southern flank, the portal of Saint Peter is deeply recessed, set within the structure of the treasury building, creating a porch-like entry (figure 2-24). Lavish foliate capitals and molding profiles of the twelfth-century program are still visible, whereas the remaining sculptural program was destroyed during the French Revolution. However, it is still possible to see vestiges of a figural program in the tympanum, voussoirs and lintel. Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis posits the original iconographic program was Christological, representing Christ flanked by two angels in the tympanum. Accepting these assumptions, the two portal ensemble expressed a powerful soteriological message to the medieval people passing through these doors. The physical relationship of the two portals, linking the interior of the choir to its cemetery located *ex-muros* or outside the walls and just beyond the choir, coupled with the iconographic program presents a coherent message addressing death and salvation. The

---


cathedral and the spiritual leadership of its bishop and clergy made salvation accessible to the
medieval laity. Thierry Crepin-Leblond suggests the orientation of the portals facing the cemetery
facilitated ceremonies linked to the outside.\textsuperscript{329} Building on Crepin-Leblond’s argument, the
iconographic program of the portals together with the placement of the cemetery suggests these
were burial ceremonies and observances for the dead. Consideration of the interior of the choir and
its tribune reveals a more complete iconographic program.

\textbf{Choir Interior}

Three round-ended spaces are generated from the central crossing, creating a trefoiled ground plan
(figure 2-2). At this juncture, the broad nave tribunes give way to a slender glazed triforium-like
passage in the transept. This reduction in space renders passage for liturgical processions between
the tribunes of the nave and choir difficult, if not impossible, breaking the spatial continuum of
tribune (figure 2-25). The architectural treatment of the transept, its double shelled construction, the

\textsuperscript{329} Thierry Crepin-Leblond “Le palais épiscopal de Noyon,” 64.
delicate proportions of the colonnettes and three stories of slender lancet windows emphasize this caesura between nave and choir. Yet the transept shares with the choir a similar opulence in the surface treatment highlighting the play of light and shadow.

Eight separate portals or doorways located in each arm of the transept area provide points of access, allowing passage from interior to exterior, from first to second story and among the various buildings of the episcopal complex. Two of these doorways provide access to staircases leading up to the choir tribune, which are situated between those portals leading outside and the arched entryways of the choir ambulatory (figures 2-26, 2-27). A fourth doorway was once located axially in the rounded terminus of the southern transept, linking transept to the courtyard of the episcopal palace (figure 2-13). This doorway provided the bishop direct access to his throne next to the main altar. A similar doorway, providing access to the treasury, remains in the northern arm of the transept. Both tribune staircase doorways are framed by a decorative hood-molding and engaged columns with simple water leaf capitals, though smaller in scale, share a similar architectural language with the monumental arched entryways of ambulatory of the choir. Yet these tribune portals are more detailed, featuring traces of polychromy that draw the gaze of the visitor and emphasizes their importance. The staircases leading up to the tribunes are notable for their spaciousness (figure 2-28). Rather than the steep, narrow spiral staircases typically found

330 This transept arm was altered by the architect Selmersheim in 1884.
in medieval towers, at Noyon the stairs are uncommonly wide: approximately three feet throughout and set within a generously high rounded archway. The low riser and broad tread of each step, approximately a 1:3 ratio, gives the staircase a ramp-like quality making the climb up to the tribune easy. The dimensions of both tribune staircases recall a similar arrangement found in the narthex or galilaea staircase at the priory of Saint-Leu, as discussed in Chapter IV. At Saint-Leu, a Cluniac priory, the staircase provided access to a second-story chapel in which monks held their daily masses for the dead and care of the souls. The architectural disposition of the Noyon staircases and the presence of altars in the choir tribune suggest, like at Saint-Leu, the clergy of Noyon used these

331 Similar staircases at Chartres and Amiens are narrow, slightly larger than the width of a man.
steps for processions. With the large retinue of the bishop and sizeable chapter easy and quick access would have been essential.

*Choir Tribune*

In the first bay of the second-story choir tribune, on the northern aisle, two broad round arched openings provide visual access down into the choir, transept arm and nave below allowing the visitor to see throughout the church (figure 2-29). The sizeable compound piers defining the four corners of this first bay project into the space. Moving eastward, the compound piers in each bay reduce in girth creating a sense of spaciousness. In the second bay of the tribune (again on the northern flank), embedded in the spandrel of the interior wall is a sculpture depicting a winged angel holding a banderole with traces of polychromy (figure 2-30, 2-31). With his feet astride two cloud tufts, his right foot placed slightly higher than his left, the angel appears to shift towards the viewer. Holding a banderole in his right hand, his arm stretches across his body accentuating the dynamic movement as he greets the visitor with a message. We are directed forward through the tribune by the diagonal ‘z’ shape, created with the

---

332 For more on polychromy see Géraldine Victoir, “La polychromie et son commanditaire: un essai de mise en couleur dans la tribune sud de la cathédrale de Noyon,” *La cathédrale de Noyon: Cinq années de recherches*, 143-58.
position of his other hand grabbing his mantel. Our angel was once brightly painted: traces of red and blue paint remain visible on his wings, face and clothing. His almond-shaped eyes, large pupils, pursed lips and stylized curly hair foreshadow the sculptural figures found in the adjacent bays. Stars decorate his mantle evoking the celestial realm. The delicate beaded hems of his garment echo the beading located in the cornice below the clerestory windows and in the sculptural rings of the engaged columns framing the axial bay in the choir of the main vessel of the choir (figure 2-32). The similarity in the ornamental detail, like the beading, links the angel to the architecture of the cathedral. This visual coherence, coupled with the active position of the angel, suggests a program in which the angel operated as a type of guide, moving the visitor through space towards the axial chapel. A similar angel-like sculpture also appears in the third bay on the south side of the tribune (figure 2-33). Unfortunately, only vestiges remain, rendering a more concise programmatic analysis difficult. Yet the placement of even a single angel in the tribune evokes the words of the Abbot
Suger: as he characterized the upper chapels in his narthex as the “dwelling place of angels...,” for those who prayed in these spaces were “at least partly in heaven...” For Abbot Suger, elevated spaces, like the tribune at Noyon, were liminal spaces situated between heaven and earth, a place in which the celestial and terrestrial could commune, a common theme as noted in Chapter I. Moreover, this angel announced the presence of Saint Michael, who was present in the form of an altar dedicated to the archangel once located in the axial bay of choir tribune.

Yet these two angels were not the only sculptural details in the choir tribune. Surrounding the keystone of the adjacent bay, at the apex of the vault, situated between the ribs, we find four sculpted human-like heads (figures 2-34, 2-35, 4-15). These heads share similar facial features to the angel, the almond-shaped eyes, large pupils, pursed lips and stylized treatment of the hair. Yet a subtle diversity in the size of each head, individual treatment of the facial features and the presence of some bearded figures emphasize their

---

333 Suger, Abbot Suger, 54-5.

334 Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon, 33, 84. Lefèvre-Pontalis also confirms altars placed in the tribunes, citing a papal bull, of Pope Clement VI, of 1348 that cited the presence of thirty-nine chapels in the church, which included those dedicated to Saint Nicaise and Saint Michel in the tribune. It is difficult to know where the altar of Saint Nicaise might have been located, given there is only one piscina and aumbry. See also Étienne Poncelet, “Noyon, cathédrale de Noyon, étude préalable à l'aménagement liturgique” (1997), part 1.

335 Describing these heads as ‘masks,’ Charles Seymour posits the heads were a “novel” treatment of a similar type found in other churches of the Île-de-France, including those at Saint-Leu at Saint-Leu-d’Esserent. See Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon, 172.
The clarity of their features, their placement and size make them visible, even readable, when standing below in the choir. This group of individual heads face downward, as if they were once witnesses to/or participants in the religious services taking place below them in this choir tribune. A similar grouping can be found in every other bay of the tribune, each treated with the same attention to individuality (figure 2-35). The Noyon heads are all male figures, a contrast to sculpted head of the priory church of Saint-Leu, which feature two females, as discussed in Chapter IV. The gender of Noyon group, in conjunction with their placement and visual similarity to the angel suggests these figures are also angelic. Yet the humanness of their treatment, their individuality, equally implies these figures could represent the clergy. Was this a visual representation of angels as an embodiment of both man and god, as defined by medieval theologians? Or was the sculptor seeking to create a type of visual elision of clergy and angels, associations once reserved for the monastic communities?

Set within the transverse arches, defining the individual bay units, is a band of smaller sculpted heads, wedged in the channel running between the two rolls of arch (figures 2-36, 2-37). This

---

336 Ibid., 172. According to Charles Seymour the sculptors of these heads “drew inspiration from nature, marking a new humanism in artistic production.”

arrangement repeats in those bays containing the angelic heads in the vaulting. Framed by cloud-like motifs, these heads of the transverse arches appear to be both human and otherworldly, perhaps even angelic. Traces of thick paint coupled with surface abrasion make deciphering the expressions of the faces difficult. Yet considerable diversity is observable. This collection of sculpture, the angel, the heads in the vaulting and figures in the transverse arches, present a unified program, announcing to the visitor the presence of an altar and the celebration of religious observances once held in this space. As a group, these figures equally demarcate the space of choir tribune as sacred. The axial bay, once the location of an altar, is slightly taller than the adjacent

Charles Seymour, "Têtes gothiques de la cathédrale de Noyon," Gazette des Beaux-Arts, vol. 140 (Dec, 1937): 138-42. Seymour confirms that despite the fire of 1293 and subsequent restorations the vaulting, the heads, remained untouched and original. He dates the heads c. 1165-85 in keeping with the style found in the portal of Senlis.

The cloud motif reflects the same characteristics as those of the angel composition.

Pitor Skubiszewski, “Du décor peint des absides romanes, aux clefs de voûte sculptées des église gothiques: l'exemple de la cathédrale de Noyon.” Wiener Jahrbuch für kunstgeschichte, 45/47- vol 2. (46/47) (1993/1994): 689-98. Skubiszewski argues these heads were not part of an iconographic program. Instead he focuses on the keystone figures of the seated Christ, King David and John the Evangelist in the lower level of the choir ambulatory together Lamb of God located in the upper vault of the choir, which he argues represents Christ in Majesty, and not an apocalyptic iconography as commonly held.
bays, by a height of one and one-half feet. The expansion in height places visual emphasis on the axial chapel, giving the visitor the ability to see and be seen within this space of the tribune. This dramatic sculpted platform announces the tribune as a space of devotion, and underscores the significance of this upper story as between the terrestrial and celestial realms.

In the axial bay of the tribune, situated in the lower portion of the outer wall are two square niched spaces (figures 2-38, 2-39). On the right, the niche contains a basin or piscina complete with a drainage system (figure 2-39). The niche on the left most likely served as an ambry, a type of recessed space used for holding vessels for the sacraments. Commonly located near altars both piscinas for washing and aumbries for storage helped facilitate liturgical services. Carved dragons adorning the capitals in the turning bays adjacent to these niche spaces seem to announce the

---

341 I measured the apex of each vault from west to east. There is a compressive effect leading towards the axial bay on the north with the first bay measuring 5.50, 5.41, 5.33, 5.30, 5.38, and differed on the south (from east to west) 5.43, 5.41, 5.42, 5.39, 5.37. The flooring was changed in these last two bays skewing somewhat the measurements.

342 As noted in Chapter I, standing towards the outer wall of the tribune the visitor cannot watch services held at the altar located directly below on the lower level.
The dedication of the altar that once stood in the area (figure 2-40). While an altar dedicated to Saint Nicaise was also situated in the tribunes, the triumphant image of Saint Michael battling the dragon taken from the Book of Revelation 12:7-9, was a familiar attribute of the archangel. A fifteenth-century building account placed the altar of Saint Michael as ‘audessus du cuer,’ or above the choir. During this period, like the Virgin Mary, Saint Michael was also a primary intercessory figure so powerful it was thought he could rescue souls from hell. The mission of Saint Michael was, in part, eschatological. The placement of an altar dedicated to Saint Michael in the eastern sector of the church broke with tradition; these chapels were normally housed in the west, as found at both the abbey

The Holy Bible, “Book of Revelation,” 12:7-9, New International Version. “Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the world astray. He was hurled to earth, and his angels with him.” See also Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Histoire de la cathédrale de Noyon, 33-35.

Beauvais: Archives départementales de l’Oise, MS Series G, 1356. See also Charles Seymour, Notre-Dame of Noyon 109.

Saint-Denis and Cluny III.\textsuperscript{346}\ Here at Noyon context determined altar placement. This axial placement situated the Saint Michael altar in alignment with the major altar located below in the choir and a sculptural depiction of the Last Judgment in the tympanum of central portal of the western frontispiece (no longer extant). Perhaps more potent is the relationship of the altar of Saint Michael to the cemetery, once situated outside to the east of the choir. This arrangement in tandem with the iconographic program of the two transept portals affirms a powerful message of salvation, which places both the cathedral and its clergy as central agents.

Yet Saint Michael was a multifaceted saint rooted both in heaven and on earth. Saint Michael held special resonance for the imperial leaders of the Holy Roman Empire like Charlemagne and Byzantine emperors dating back to Constantine.\textsuperscript{347}\ During the reign of Charlemagne and in the Byzantine empire the political dimensions of Saint Michael was emphasized. He was considered the protector of the city, the defender of city walls and a link to the people. As mentioned, the episcopal complex

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image}
\caption{Noyon, Notre-Dame, choir tribune, view looking east, with niched spaces of the piscina and amby. Photograph by Stephen Murray. http://mappinggothic.org/image/32224.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{346}\ For more on the location of chapels dedicated to Saint Michael see Daniel Callahan, “The Cult of Saint Michael the Archangel,” 181-204 and Jean Vallery-Radot, “Note sur les chapelles hautes dédiées à saint Michel, 453-80.

\textsuperscript{347}\ Ibid., 182.
at Noyon was a series of connected buildings forming a type of screen or wall-like façade. These buildings, the cathedral, episcopal palace, chapel and treasury, supplanted the Gallo-Roman wall, symbolically appropriating its role as a physical protector of the city. Might the presence of an altar dedicated to Saint Michael here in the east suggest a dual reading? According to Henry Adams, Saint Michael represented “a militant Church and State,” able to martial considerable strength to defend his people.\(^{348}\) Like the dedication of the episcopal chapel to the feisty Saint Nicolas, here in the tribune the bishop-count of Noyon associated himself with the powerful figure of Saint Michael as the militant Church. Saint Michael was also the protector of Christian souls, “the angelic master of the \textit{cura animarumm} who played a central role in the Last Judgement.”\(^{349}\) While we do not know the exact location of the altar dedicated to Saint Nicaise, a bishop of Reims martyred by the invading barbarians at the city gates while defending his people, the presence of this saint here in the eastern choir tribune affirms my interpretation of the cathedral as symbolic replacement of the Gallo-Roman wall.\(^{350}\)


\(^{349}\) David Callahan, “The Cult of St. Michael the Archangel,” 182.

Conclusion

The choir tribune at Notre-Dame of Noyon was an integral unit, not just within the framework of the choir, but in the architectural program of the episcopal complex, as a whole. In one aspect the tribune presented a type of architectural pathway or continuum in which the bishop could walk from the cathedral into his chapel and palace. In this aspect it was a type of *piano nobile* fitting the prestige and authority of the bishop-count of Noyon. From the administration of Simon through that of Renaud, the various bishops actively sought to bolster authority and prestige of the episcopacy. Borrowed from imperial and royal palatine prototypes the arrangement of the two-storied episcopal complex affirmed the bishop’s temporal authority. Yet the tribune also functioned as an important unit in an iconographic program, rooted in part in the care of the souls. The presence of Saint Michael in the axial chapel of the tribune was the apex of a programmatic path to salvation linking the religious observances performed in the interior of the cathedral to those held in the cemetery.
The angelic sculptural program in the tribune reinforces these associations, while it further underscores the celestial aspects of the upper story space, as closer to heaven. This liminal space between the terrestrial and the celestial was in fact the domain of the bishop, thus affirming his spiritual authority. In the mid-twelfth century, the newly reformed cathedral and its bishops sought to establish themselves as the leading intercessors helping the medieval laity navigate purgatory. The choice of altar dedications of Saints Nicaise, Nicolas and Michael in the episcopal chapel and tribune, in turn, further reified the sacral authority of the bishop, while strengthening alliances with the papacy. At Noyon the multifaceted nature of the tribune reveals itself not as an isolated feature, but part of broader political and religious currents present in the twelfth century.
Chapter III

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame of Senlis

Part I:

Introduction: Notre-Dame of Senlis

Situated on a hill, the city of Senlis or Silvanectensis, its name in the Middle Ages, sits between two tributaries of the Oise, the Nonette and Aunette. The twinned-towered cathedral of Notre-Dame dominates the urban topography, as it has done so since the Middle Ages (figures 3-1, 3-2). Only two days by foot from Paris (roughly thirty miles north), Senlis was in close proximity to the burgeoning capital and the “lendit” fair, an important annual market located near the abbey church of Saint-Denis. Four Gallo-Roman roads,
linked our city to Beauvais, Meaux, Paris and Soissons.\footnote{351} Despite its strategic placement, Senlis was neither a major industrial nor agricultural center, and its population was among the smallest of neighboring cities.\footnote{352} The diocese was also the smallest within the archdiocese of Reims (figure 3-3).\footnote{353} Its diminutive size notwithstanding, Senlis was a ville du cour – city of the royal court – a center of power and wealth centrally located within the royal domain.\footnote{354} This was a royal city, the


\footnote{352} Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 19, 70, note 151, and 72. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, during times of war, Senlis was required to provide one hundred men, while the neighboring city of Noyon was required to provide one hundred and fifty, Laon three hundred men, Compiègne two hundred men and five hundred men at Beauvais. See also Eugène Müller, *Monographie des rues, places et monuments de Senlis* (Senlis: Payen, 1880), 297-303 and 702. The mining of metals and artisanal cloth production were among the industries, and wheat, wine and iron were some of the commodities traded in city. Mills powered by the Aunette and Nonette were another source fuelling the local economy.

\footnote{353} There were only sixty-three parish churches within the diocese of Senlis. See Jacques and Anne Fontaine, *Senlis berceau de la France* (Senlis: La-Pierre-qui Vire, ed. du Zodiaque, 1985), 14. See also Dominique Vermand, *La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 1.

birthplace of the Capetian dynasty and the preferred the residence of many French kings, including Charles the Bald.\footnote{Gregory of Tours, Histoire des Francs, book 9, chap. 20. Gregory of Tours notes the importance of the city to fifth and sixth-century kings such as Clovis and Childebert I; and Eugène Müller, Monographie des rues, 96-98. See also Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 2. With the support of Adalbéron the archbishop of Reims, Hugh Capet was nominated king of the Franks, on June 1st, 987 at Senlis. His coronation took place at Noyon, linking the two cities historically.}

In the Middle Ages the kings of France, members of the royal court and nobles seeking favor with the king and his court populated the city. The twelfth century royal palace, constructed by Louis VI, now a ruin, was located inside the city walls in the northern sector of the city (figure 3-4). Abutting and adjoining the city wall, this royal palace stood, opposite, facing the western façade of the cathedral.

The strategic importance of Senlis or Augustomagus, its Roman name, dates back to the third century when the city was a significant Gallo-Roman castellum encircled by a defensive wall, with an arena and amphitheater.\footnote{See Michel Robin, “Cités ou citadelles? Les enceintes romaines du Bas-Empire d’après l’exemple de Senlis,” Revue des études anciennes, vol. 67, no. 3 (1965): 368-91. These structures date to the third century.} Oval in shape, the dimensions of the Gallo-Roman wall were considerable. While the wall was less than three thousand feet in circumference, it was twenty-three
feet in height and between ten and thirteen feet thick. Twenty-eight towers punctuated its circumference, of which nineteen remain extant. Defining the city the Gallo-Roman wall remained an important structure in the medieval urban topography (figure 3-4). In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, medieval builders repurposed the wall and its towers incorporating these structures into important episcopal and royal monuments in the city (figures 3-1, 3-4).

In the mid-twelfth century (c. 1153) work started on the monumental cathedral, a three-aisled, longitudinal basilica terminated by a horseshoe-shaped hemicycle crowned by five contiguous,

---

357 R. Jarry, “L’enceinte gallo-romaine de Senlis,” Bulletins de la société d’histoire et d’archéologie de Senlis (1952), 2-3. The wall at Senlis was of typical Gallo-Roman construction with petit-appareil, or small field stones, used together with bands of flat earthen bricks and mortar.

358 Beauvais: Archives départementales de l’Oise, Archives privées de Chauvel, M. Herpe, “Proposition de classement parmi les Monuments historiques de l’enceinte gallo-romaine” (October 14th, 1949), carton no. 23, dossier 41.

359 As the city grew in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a second wall was constructed during the reign of Philip Augustus (1180-1223).
shallow, radiating chapels (figure 3-5). In the original twelfth-century ground plan, the medieval builders designed the cathedral without a transept, creating a continuous envelope (figure 3-5). In its elevation the cathedral rises in three distinct stories, an arcade, tribune and clerestory (figure 3-6).

Predating the twelfth-century cathedral was a group of smaller churches, commonly referred to as a cathedral group (figure 3-7). While little is known of its architecture, the cathedral group of churches at Senlis consisted of a baptistery, a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary (Notre-Dame) and an oratory (c. 1000) dedicated to the second-century Milanese protomartyrs Saints Gervase and Protase (figure 3-7). The twelfth-century builders incorporated the two-storied octagonal oratory of Saints Gervase and Protase into the structure of the cathedral.

---


361 There were “vestibules” of two bays located on either side. Marcel Aubert refers to them as a “faux-croisillons” or false crossing space, while Dominique Vermand calls them vestibules. See Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, 77-78; and Dominique Vermand, *La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 17.


together with a portion of the Gallo-Roman wall and tower (figures 3-5, 3-7, 3-8). These structures, including the buildings of the chapter, framed the cathedral in the twelfth century (figure 3-7). While initially designed without a transept, builders in the thirteenth century started work on one, though little is known of this construction. Damage resulting from a fire in 1504 precipitated the dramatic restructuring of the cathedral in the area of the crossing space, the first three easternmost bays of the nave aisles, north and south transept portals, the upper levels including the clerestory and high vaults (figure 3-9). The flamboyant tracery patterns distinguish this post-fire construction, as seen in the star vaulting patterns on the current ground plan (figure 3-9). Today, the

---

cathedral architecture is a mix of accretions dating from the medieval period to the nineteenth century.

The rich layers of cultural and architectural history at Senlis make the cathedral an alluring subject for scholars. Notre-Dame of Senlis entered into antiquarian scholarship as early as the seventeenth century with the work of Charles Jaulnay. Jaulnay, the dean Saint-Rieul of Senlis, was among the first to trace the history of the cathedral from the early cathedral group of churches through to the twelfth century (figure 3-7). Antiquarians, Charles-François Afforty in the eighteenth century and Abbé Blond, Abbé Abel-Jules Lefranc and Abbé Eugène Müller in the

---

365 Charles Jaulnay, La vie et les miracles de S. Rieule, premier évêque et patron de la ville de Senlis, avec une histoire des choses les plus remarquables arrivées depuis plus de 1500 ans sous l'épiscopat de chacun évêque d'icelle, au nombre de 88 (Paris: Jean Paslé, 1642). See also Charles Jaulnay, Recueil de plusieurs discours, titres & pièces authentiques, servans d'apologie pour la défense de Monsieur Jaulnay,... sur ce qu'il a mis en avant dans son histoire & antiquitez de la ville de Senlis, touchant l'ancienne dignité de l'église dudit S. Rieule (Paris: Jean Paslé, 1653).
nineteenth-century, further expanded our understanding of the medieval city and the different architectural iterations of its cathedral.\textsuperscript{366} Scholars (Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Marcel Aubert, Paul Frankl, Jean Bony, Dominique Vermand, Diane Brouillette and Delphine Christophe) confirm the place of the cathedral of Senlis in the canon of early Gothic architecture, notably due to its sculptural program, featuring a Coronation of the Virgin scene, in the western portal and the ground plan of the choir.\textsuperscript{367}

Focusing on the fabric of early Gothic church, Abbé Blond was among the first to recognize the cathedral was originally constructed without a projecting transept.\textsuperscript{368} Ten years following the work of Blond, Anythme Saint-Paul posited the construction of the first transept took place in the

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3-8.png}
\caption{Senlis, Notre-Dame, ground plan demonstrating the relationship between the wall and cathedral. Dominique Vermand, \textit{La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis}, 126.}
\end{figure}


thirteenth century. Vestiges of this earlier work can still be seen today in the north arm of the transept. With the absence of a projecting transept in the twelfth century, scholars (Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, Marcel Aubert, Paul Frankl and Jean Bony) place Notre-Dame of Senlis in a group of buildings referencing the cathedral of Sens, sometimes called the Sens group (figure 3-10). While this type of grouping can be instructive, at Senlis the absence of a projecting transept could in fact be due to topological constraints, notably the presence of the claustral buildings of the chapter on the northern


370 See Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, “transept,” Dictionnaire raisonné, vol. 9, 222-24. Viollet-le-Duc includes the cathedrals of Bourges, Paris and Meaux, and the collegiate church of Mantes-la-Jolie in this group; Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, “Senlis,” 95-96; Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 53-54; Paul Frankl, Gothic Architecture, 75; and Jean Bony, French Gothic Architecture, 121-23. Marcel Aubert and Jean Bony expand this group of monuments to include parish churches such as Gonesse, Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre in Paris, Saint-Père in Chartres, the priory church of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent and the cathedral at Poitiers.
flank and the chapel of Saints Gervase and Protase to the south, as Dominique Vermand suggests (figure 3-7).  

Traditionally, in scholarship the cathedral of Senlis is inextricably linked to the French monarchy. The choir ground plan resembles that of the abbey church of Saint-Denis, as discussed in Chapter I. Based on sameness in the architectural forms of the hemicycle, the contiguous shallow radiating chapels and the use of slender monolithic columns scholars such as Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, Marcel Aubert, Paul Frankl, Dominique Vermand and Delphine Christophe look to the influence of the Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis for the architectural choices made at Senlis. Dominique Vermand and Delphine Christophe focus on the role of King Louis VI and VII, frequent residents of Senlis, to explain this strong linkage to Saint-Denis. The sculpture of the western frontispiece, carved c.

---


1165-70, provides another connection to Saint-Denis, this time to its sculptural workshop. While instructive, the emphasis on the stylistic similarities often diverts scholarly attention from a more comprehensive understanding of a monument like Senlis, an understanding taking into consideration the entirety cathedral and its relationship to episcopal complex, as discussed in Chapters I and II.

At Senlis, examination of the tribune offers a means to look beyond the traditional narrative and reconcile the architectural difference that make the cathedral a discrete entity. In his monographic study, Marcel Aubert recognizes the monumentality of the tribunes. For Aubert, the origins of the choir tribunes can be traced to older churches in the region, including Saint-Étienne of Beauvais, Saint-Évremond of Creil and Saint Germer-de-Fly. In turn, according to Aubert, the tribuned churches of Normandy inspired these regional churches. Yet Aubert’s thesis formulates merely the beginning of what could be a more comprehensive understanding of the presence of a tribune at Senlis and in architecture of the period. Aubert fails to consider what might have inspired medieval builders to include this costly second-story space. Did royalty or the royal presence inform architectural choice here? To answer these questions necessitates reexamination of the episcopate, its bishops and the relevant social and historical circumstances present during the cathedral construction, as found in Part II. Part III examines the architecture of the cathedral and its relationship to the larger episcopal complex, important primary resources. Consideration is also given to the neighboring urban royal palaces, which shared similar configurations and chronologies. Local circumstances provide important points of comparison to Notre-Dame of Noyon from which a more complete assessment of the choir tribune can be made.

374 Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 502-03. Brouillette posits the sculptors of the Valois portal at the abbey church of Saint-Denis, located on the northern flank of the church, were from the same workshop, who in turn worked at Senlis, Mantes and Notre-Dame-en-Vaux of Châlons-sur-Marne.

375 Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 64. See also Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, “Senlis,” 93. Lefèvre-Pontalis also notes the similarities between the tribunes of Senlis and those of Saint-Étienne de Beauvais.

376 Ibid.
Part II:

Senlis: An Episcopal Institution

Senlis was an important royal diocese, renowned as an early Christian site in France. In the third century, Saint Rieul evangelized the Gallo-Roman *castellum*, marking the foundation of the episcopate.\(^{377}\) Sent to Gaul by Pope Clement III, Saint Rieul traveled with his companions Saint Denis, Rusticus and Eleutherius to northern France.\(^{378}\) This historic connection to Saint Denis, the patron saint of France, accorded the episcopate prestige. According to Saint Rieul’s hagiography, upon arriving to the city the saint constructed a church located outside the walls dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul, and an altar dedicated to the Virgin Mary within the city walls.\(^{379}\) In the sixth century, the Merovingian King Clovis (456-511), the first Christian king of the Franks, aided in the construction of a new church dedicated to Saint Rieul and participated in the translation of the saint’s body, an act conferring further importance upon the episcopate.\(^{380}\)

From the election of Hugh Capet through the Restoration Monarchy of the Charles X, Senlis held importance for the kings of France. Gregory of Tours reveals the significance of the city for the fifth and sixth-century kings Clovis and Childebert I.\(^{381}\) Numerous charters written in the city establish Charles the Bald as a frequent resident.\(^{382}\) An election held here, June 1, 987, nominated

---


\(^{378}\) Ibid., 19-21. According to Jaulnay the two saints evangelized the city of Arles, in the south of France, together before moving north to Paris and Senlis.

\(^{379}\) Ibid., 45, 102-12. See also Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, 2-4; and Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 35-36. Bishop Rieul was a miracle-working saint, held to cure paralysis, the possessed and people near death. See also Charles Jaulnay, *La vie et les miracles de S. Rieule*, 102-11.

\(^{380}\) Ibid., 111-12.


\(^{382}\) Ibid; and Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, 7. In an act of confidence, Charles the Bald moved his treasury to the city and put his daughter in the care of the bishop.
Hugh Capet king of the Franks, the first Capetian king. With the construction of a royal palace in
the twelfth century the city remained an important residence to subsequent kings through the
thirteenth century.

Given the frequency of a royal presence in our city during the twelfth century, a large segment
of the population included members of the royal court and ancillary staff members. At the center
of the court were the king’s officers, his councilors, who occupied four different posts in the royal
household: chancellor, seneschal (steward), buteiller (butler) and chamberlain. Dynastic
families of nobles and castellans competed for these posts, attracted by the influence these positions
afforded. The De la Tour family, most likely the former castellan, were long time occupant of the
post of buteiller. Until the second half of the thirteenth century, the buteiller held considerable
authority and was arguably the most powerful person after the king. While there was no count of
Senlis, the post had remained vacant since the tenth century, Guy le Bouteiller held power
equivalent to a local count. Among the canons of the cathedral chapter were members of these
powerful families. Stephen Bouteiller rose to the position dean of the chapter, an influential position
in terms of the cathedral construction, which was well under way during this period (c.

383 Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 2. The election and coronation of Hugh Capet at
Senlis and Noyon both distinguished and linked the two cities at this pivotal moment in the history of the French
monarchy.

384 Ibid., 1-4. Members of religious institutions formed another large segment of the population. See also Georges
Duby, France in the Middle Ages, 118-19. A shift in the organization of the royal court during the reign of Philip I
significantly impacted the city. Most notably the royal court withdrew into a more domestic and familial sphere, a
structure that would remain in place until the fourteenth century.

385 Georges Duby, France in the Middle Ages, 119. Each officer was responsible for a different aspect of the king’s life
and his role as monarch, from the management of ceremonies, documents, military affairs, carving the king’s meat, the
royal wine cellar, royal treasury, and private affairs. The chancellor in charge of ceremonies, the chapel and documents
was often a cleric, while the seneschal in charge of military exploits and carving the king’s meat was most often a
knight.

386 Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 3. See also Le livre rouge, cartulaire de la ville
de Noyon, 1. S. Guidonis, buticulaire, or Guy de Senlis, the buteiller of Philip Augustus was among the signers of the
communal charter of Noyon in 1181.

387 Ibid., 1-3. One Bernard (c. 946-48) was the last man to hold the title of Count of Senlis. Following his death the
Capetian kings absorbed the comté into their landholdings.
1160s-70s).\textsuperscript{388} The cathedral chapter, responsible for the management of cathedral construction, was a powerful entity as it owned significant landholdings within the city and the surrounding *faubourgs* or suburbs in the twelfth century, controlling sixty-three parish churches and holding rights and privileges in some thirty-three villages in the diocese.\textsuperscript{389} Two papal bulls written by Pope Alexander III in 1160 and Pope Lucius III in 1182 confirmed its possessions.\textsuperscript{390}

*The Bishops of Senlis*

While the bishops did not hold the position of count, as at Noyon, they did possess significant local temporal authority, including vassals and landholdings.\textsuperscript{391} Equally, the bishop held the right of *mainmorte* – the control over the property of serfs upon their death. In addition, the bishop controlled the right of *grand tonlieu*, enabling him to levy local taxes on commodities entering the city and offer the same for sale at the local market, providing considerable revenue.\textsuperscript{392} Within the city walls the bishop owned the property adjacent to the cathedral, which included the episcopal palace and garden. Outside the city walls he owned a mill in the suburb of Vitel and the rural domaine of Mons or Monts, located approximately two miles southeast of the city on the road to

\textsuperscript{388} Ibid., XXIII, 27-28.


\textsuperscript{391} Ibid., *La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 10. See also Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 11; and Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 38, 62. The bishops of Senlis had both vassals and arrière-vassals or a rear-vassals (a vassal’s vassal).

\textsuperscript{392} Dominique Vermand, *La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 61-62.
Meaux. King Louis VI confirmed the property at Mons, later known Mont l’Évêque, among the possessions of the bishop in c. 1134-44, during the administration of Bishop Pierre. In the course of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries the bishops of Senlis developed the fortified villa at Mons into a proper château. As a château Mons became the primary residence of the bishops. The temporal authority, revenue and property held by bishops placed them on par with the seigneurial families of the royal court, like the Bouteillers, yielding tremendous power in the city in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Bishops of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

The construction of the cathedral in twelfth and thirteenth centuries occurred during the administration of six different bishops: Bishop Pierre (1134-50), Thibault (c. 1150-55), Amaury (1156-67), Henry (1167-85) and Jeffrey (1185-1213). While included in this list, the exact nature of Bishop Pierre’s involvement in design and construction of the cathedral remains unknown. Dominique Vermand describes the period during cathedral construction as a veritable “golden age,” marked by amicable relations between the episcopate and French kings. While Louis VI and VII made donations and concessions providing help for the construction of the episcopal palace and cathedral, as reflected in the cartulary, these construction projects were not royal foundations.


395 Ibid.

396 Ibid.


Present at the consecration ceremonies for the abbey church of Saint-Denis, Bishop Pierre conducted the dedication ceremony in the chapel of Saint Nicolas, located in the upper story chapel of the narthex, and the altar of Saint Osmanne in the choir. Only two years prior, c. 1142 Bishop Pierre presided over the consecration ceremony of Louis VI’s new chapel dedicated to Saint Denis, in the royal palace of Senlis (figure 3-11). Housed in a tower of the Gallo-Roman wall the chapel of Saint-Denis was part of the royal palace, for more on the chapel see Part III.

Prior to assuming the post of bishop Pierre was a canon regular at the abbey of Sainte-Geneviève of Paris where he was active in its reform. Entries in the cathedral cartulary record a very brief account of Bishop Pierre’s administration. While there are only four charters, these documents suggest an amicable relationship between Pierre, kings Louis VI and VII and the chapter. While Pierre’s involvement in the cathedral construction remains a mystery, as noted, he was present at the consecration ceremonies in the upper story chapel of the abbey of Saint Denis and the second story chapel of Saint-Denis in the royal palace.

Construction of the twelfth-century cathedral began in earnest under Pierre’s successor Bishop Thibault (1150-55). Thibault was elected from within the ranks of the secular clergy of Senlis, and was the only canon to achieve this promotion between 1134 and 1185. As a canon under Pierre might Thibault have been familiar with the also upper chapels at the abbey of Saint-

399 Suger, Abbot of Saint-Denis, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St-Denis and its Art Treasures*, 96.


401 Ibid. See also Delphine Christophe, *Notre-Dame of Senlis*, 54


403 Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” X bis (1130), 16; XI, after 1131, 16; XIII (1138 or 1139), 17-18; and XIII bis (1139), 18. Pierre confirmed the rights of the chapter, demonstrating his support for the abbey of Saint-Vincent of Senlis, an important royal foundation. See also Charles Afforty, *Le manuscrit Afforty*, vol. 1, 243; and Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 13. The early years of the reign of Louis VII were marked by “...frustrated political ventures, the disillusionment of Crusade, the divorce of Eleanor of Aquitaine in 1151.”

Denis and the royal palace and chapel? Thibault’s cohort included the Abbot Suger and the charismatic Bishop of Noyon, Baudoin II. During Thibault’s time in office Baudoin II was active in the construction of the choir of Noyon Cathedral. As his friend it is reasonable to assume Thibault was aware of the construction program at Noyon. Bishop Thibault was also present at the consecration of the new choir at Saint-Martin of Pontoise in 1153, a church situated in the canon of the early Gothic churches, which shares formal similarities with the choir plan of Notre-Dame of Senlis, as discussed in Chapter I.

Thibault was active in his role as bishop, albeit his administration was a brief five years. The cartulary contains only two charters generated by the bishop, c. 1152 and 1154. In the charter of c. 1152 Thibault established the post of sub-cantor and an assistant for the daily services benefiting the chapter, indicating a positive relationship between the two entities. In 1154, Thibault intervened in a dispute between the powerful Guy le Bouteiller and the Cluniac monks of the neighboring priory of Saint-Leu. In addition to the two charters, an undated letter signed by Louis VII presented Thibault with the king’s support in the bishop’s fundraising efforts for the cathedral fabric. The letter instructed archbishops, bishops, abbots and clerics to “honorablemente receive” the canons of Senlis as they traveled the region with the cathedral’s relics gathering alms or donations.

405 Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 16. Like Pierre before him Thibault was friends with Abbot Suger. Bishops Thibault and Baudoin II of Noyon were both called to the abbot’s deathbed in 1152.

406 Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 12.


408 Idem., Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, 69, LXIX. This document was in fact a letter from Peter the Venerable to Thibault regarding his involvement in dispute between Guy le Bouteiller and the clergy. Thibault presided over this dispute despite the priory’s location in the diocese of Beauvais.

for the cathedral construction then in its nascent stages.\textsuperscript{410} This letter underscores an amicable relationship between Thibault and Louis VII, as shared by Pierre before him.\textsuperscript{411}

In 1157, Amaury (1156-68), the former abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Chaalis, located in close proximity to Senlis, succeeded Thibault.\textsuperscript{412} The abbey of Chaalis was a royal foundation (c. 1136) established by Louis VI, with financial support from the Bouteiller and other prominent families from Senlis.\textsuperscript{413} Bishop Amaury cultivated an important relationship between the cathedral and Chaalis, as the abbey served as the necropolis for the bishops through the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{414}

Like his predecessors, Amaury saw firsthand the construction and completion of important canonic early Gothic buildings during his administration. As a member of Pope Alexander III’s retinue during the pope’s exile in France (1162-65), Amaury was present at the consecration ceremony at the abbey church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés of Paris in 1163.\textsuperscript{415} Like his predecessor, Amaury engaged in the cathedral construction as work on the choir drew to a close, while he launched the construction on the nave and western frontispiece.\textsuperscript{416} Amaury received the support of Louis VII, who created an annual fair in 1157, the revenues of which benefited the cathedral.\textsuperscript{417} Like his

\textsuperscript{410} Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” XVII, 21. The cathedral possessed a diverse collection of unspecified relics.

\textsuperscript{411} Ibid., XVI bis, 21. In 1154 at the request of Louis VII and Samson the archbishop of Reims in 1154 Thibault gave to Baudoin the abbot of Saint-Vincent control of Saint-Félicité at Montagny.

\textsuperscript{412} Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” XVI bis, 21. A charter issued by Bishop Thibault in 1154, mentions Amaury, Thibault’s successor, as abbot of Chaalis.

\textsuperscript{413} Ibid., 20.

\textsuperscript{414} For burial records at Senlis, see Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 17045, folios 41, 43, 47, 49, 51, 57, 61, 63, 65-87; and Eugène Müller, Monographie des rues, 210.


\textsuperscript{416} Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 12

\textsuperscript{417} Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” 21, XVII. See also Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, pièce justificative II, 158-60.
predecessors, Amaury appears to have had a good relationship with the chapter. Confirming revenues for the canon’s refectory during Easter, with assistance from the both the chapter and Guy le Bouteiller, Bishop Amaury also augmented the resources for the local leper community (c. 1162).

Bishop Henry (1168-85), Amaury’s successor, was also former a canon regular of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris, as was Pierre before him. During his tenure as a canon of the Augustinian abbey of Saint-Quentin in Beauvais, Henry encountered the younger brother of Louis VII, Henry of France, who went on to hold the post of archbishop of Reims. Active in the political landscape of Senlis, Bishop Henry demonstrated intelligence and had a tenacious character. Work on the western frontispiece and nave were well underway during Henry’s administration. In 1170, Louis VII, donated a lamp to the cathedral. While this donation underscores an amicable relationship between king and the episcopate only three years later, in 1173, Louis VII signed a charter founding the Senlis commune. The formation of the commune and terms of its charter jeopardized relations, generating problems for the episcopate and cathedral fabric. The communal charter accorded privileges to Guy le Bouteiller and other local seigneurs, in effect the charter was an

418 Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” 22, XIX and 25 XXI.

419 Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 59. Henry of France rose to the post of archbishop of Reims in 1161, a position he held until 1175. See also Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 12.

420 See Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 12.

421 Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” 27-28, XXIII.

422 Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 164-65, pièce justificative III, “Louis le Jeune énumère les droits qu’il entend réserver au bouteiller de Senlis, malgré la concession de la charte des communes”; and Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 60. See also Earle Wilbur Dow, “Some French Communes,” 641-56. In the broader history of communes in northern France this first charter of Senlis came relatively late. It followed some twenty years after foundation of the commune at Compiègne, a similar royal city. The Noyon communal charter dates to 1108, Laon 1109, Amiens 1113 and Beauvais 1144. Philip Augustus later reconfirms the charter of Senlis in 1202. Both communal charters of Senlis and Compiègne in turn drew from the acts laid out in the charters of Beauvais (1144) and Soissons. The acts laid out in the communal charter of Senlis closely followed those of the Compiègne charter of 1153.

exchange of money for rights and power. Unlike Noyon, where the commune was restricted to house owners, at Senlis members of the commune were all inhabitants “universi homines” of the city and faubourgs or suburbs, regardless of home ownership. Objecting to its terms both the bishop and chapter initially boycotted signing the communal charter, refusing to acknowledge or validate the commune. During this period, Louis VII also shifted control of the local fair to the commune, including rights and revenues that the king had previously given to the bishop and chapter in 1157. Bishop Henry adamantly opposed this change, as it presented in addition to the terms of the communal charter yet another loss of revenue. In response to formation of the commune, the bishop and chapter closely aligned. A charter dating to 1174 marks an accord between the two regarding the management of churches in the diocese. Presumably in the search for alternative funding for the cathedral fabric, the chapter created the post of chaplain in charge of

---

424 Members of the commune signed an accord with the local seigneurial families and members of the royal court granting them an annual payment. Among the names of nobles listed are Guillaume de Garlande, Renaud de Gonesse, an unnamed vidame, Raoul le Queux, Pierre de Gonesse, Pierre li Eschans, Eudes de Fosses, Archambault of Senlis and Raoul Choisel. The sum of the annual payments or rents varied from family to family. Guillaume de Garlande received seven livres, while Raoul le Queux received four livres and fifteen sous. It was stipulated that the annual rent or payments, were to extend into perpetuity, extending to the descendants of the members of the commune. See Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions, 165-66, pièce justificative IV, “Accord des bourgeois de Senlis avec les divers seigneurs de la ville sur les conséquences de la charte de commune,” and 164-65, pièce justificative III, “Louis le Jeune énumère les droits qu’il entend réserver au bouteiller de Senlis, malgré la concession de la charte des communes.” In the same year the king created a separate charter that confirmed the additional rights reserved for the “bouteiller of Senlis,” reaching beyond the terms of the charter. See also Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 51.

425 The members of the commune were later referred to as “jurati.” Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions, 4-6, 158-61, pièce justificative II, “praetera concessimus et praeeripimus quod universi homines infra muros civitatis et extra manentes, in cujuscumque terra morentur, communiam jurent. Cui vero jurare noluerit, illi qui juraverunt de domo ipius et de pecunia justitiam facient.” Those people who refused to agree to the terms of the commune risked the confiscation of property and goods.

426 Both bishop and chapter objected to the terms. The fifth act in the charter identified the archdeacon, the representative of the bishop, as head of the tribunal court, placing certain law cases in the hands of the bishop and cathedral chapter. See Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 158-60, pièce justificative II; and Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 79. Approval for marriage fell under the jurisdiction of the nobles.

427 Ibid., Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, pièce justificative II, 158-60. See also Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 12.

428 Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” 24, XXV, 33, XXIX, and 42, XXXVII. In 1184, Henry augmented rights of cathedral chapter to excommunication.

429 Ibid., 29, XXV.
masses of the dead to be held three times per week, c. 1176.\footnote{Ibid., 32, XXVII.} These masses helped to fuel donations, facilitating the construction of the cathedral. One year later Bishop Henry capitulated, signing an agreement acknowledging the validity of the communal charter; however, he did not sign the charter itself.\footnote{Louis Carolus-Barré, “Les origines de la commune de Senlis,” 60. Henry reserved his rights to the ost and chevauchée.} A shrewd negotiator, Henry arranged favorable terms in which he ceded some rights in exchange for others.\footnote{Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 166-67, pièce justificative V, “Transaction entre le chapitre Notre-Dame et la commune de Senlis, modifiant l’accord intervenu en 1177 entre ladite commune et l’évêque Henri, sur l’accensement du grand tonlieu, du moulin de la rue de Paris et de la plupart des droits de l’évêché dans la ville.” This document dates to 1215. Bishop Henry took into account the devaluation of money, making adjustments accordingly, and he also specified rent be paid monthly rather than in annuities.} Yet the chapter waited thirty-one years after the creation of the initial charter and two years after the second charter issued by Philip Augustus to finally acknowledge the commune in 1204.\footnote{Ibid., 158-60, pièce justificative VIII, “Accord entre le chapitre de l’église Notre-Dame de Senlis et la commune sur les droits de justice de la dite commune dans la terre du chapitre et sur l’accensement du moulin de la rue de Paris.” This date is well beyond the consecration of the cathedral which took place on June 16, 1191, yet work on the cathedral was not complete. The archbishop of Reims called for donations to aid in the completion of the building. Delphine Christophe cites the following document: Beauvais: Archives départementales de l’Oise, G2710. See Delphine Christophe, Notre-Dame of Senlis, 52; and Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 14-17. Charters dating to 1204, 1215, 1239 and 1243 sought to manage the relationship of the cathedral chapter with the commune on diverse subjects such as chapter-owned property, rents (surcens), the sale of objects on cathedral property, the tonlieu and justice. See Jules Flammermont, Histoire des institutions municipales de Senlis, 171-72, pièce justificative VII (1204), “Accord entre le chapitre de l’église de Notre-Dame de Senlis et la commune sur les droits de justice de la dite commune dans la terre du chapitre et sur l’accensement du moulin de la rue de Paris”; 166-67, pièce justificative V (1215), “Transaction entre le chapitre Notre-Dame et la commune de Senlis, modifiant l’accord intervenus en 1177 entre ladite commune et l’évêque Henri, sur l’accensement du grand tonlieu, du moulin de la rue de Paris et de la plupart des droits de l’évêché dans la ville”; 178-79, pièce justificative XII (1239), “Accord entre le chapitre de l’église de Notre-Dame de Senlis et la commune sur les surcens”; and 182-83, pièce justificative XIII (1243). “Accord entre le chapitre de l’église de Notre-Dame de Senlis et la commune sur le droit d’épave dans la terre du chapitre et sur la vente sur place de Notre-Dame des objets soumis au tonlieu.”} Following suit, other local religious institutions boycotted the communal charter, including the abbey of Saint-Vincent and the canons of Saint-Rieul.\footnote{Ibid., 3-4. The abbey of Saint-Vincent ceded rights to the commune as late as 1208, with the terms finalized in 1288. The canons of Saint-Rieul never recognized the original communal charters of Louis VII and Philip Augustus, yet they signed an alternative document in 1225. Unfortunately, documentation does not reveal the nature of their opposition to the commune. Yet as religious institutions, it is possible they aligned with the bishop and chapter and their objections were similar.} This unified rejection of the commune by the local religious institutions confirms the negative impact the newly-formed commune had on these local religious communities, most notably the episcopate which was engaged in a major building campaign. The boycott and losses in revenue and authority
for the bishop and chapter undoubtedly strained relationships between the episcopate, royalty, nobles and *communiers*. Following the signing of the charter in 1204, the relationship between the chapter and commune ameliorated. In 1215, Pierre Villain, the communal mayor, made a donation to the cathedral, endowing a chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene.435 Yet the history of the commune at Senlis, as at Noyon, was relatively short. A parliamentary ruling, made at the request of the inhabitants of Senlis, dissolved the commune in 1319, long after the initial cathedral construction was complete.436

Major work on the cathedral concluded during the tenure of Bishop Jeffery (1185-1213), Henry’s successor.437 In 1191, the archbishop of Reims, Guillaume aux Blanches Mains, along with the bishops of Soissons, Laon, Noyon and Meaux gathered for the dedication of the cathedral.438 Like Henry before him, Jeffery maintained good relations with the cathedral chapter, confirming its rights and privileges in 1186.439 Relations with the French king and local nobles had also ameliorated. In 1187 and 1188 Guy the Great, the royal bouteiller, donated an annual sum of twenty sols in remembrance of his wife and father, while prior to the consecration ceremony Philip Augustus, in 1190, founded three chapels for his deceased wife Elizabeth, a value of approximately ten sols.440

---


437 See Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 22. Brouillette argues the cathedral was probably completed under Bishop Henry.

438 Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, 190, pièce justificative no. 8.

439 Eugène Müller, “Analyse du cartulaire,” 43, XXXIX.

440 Ibid., 44, XLI, 45, XLII, and 46-47, XLV.
Part III

The Urban Landscape of Medieval Senlis

The construction of monumental architectural programs both inside and outside the city walls transformed the urban topography of twelfth-century Senlis. Three major structures, episcopal and royal, were clustered together in the northern sector of the city, all abutting and adjoining the Gallo-Roman wall (figure 3-4). A fourth municipal structure was situated outside the Gallo-Roman wall (figure 3-4). The two royal structures, the royal palace and Hôtel de Vermandois, constructed during the first half of the twelfth century, shared similar architectural arrangements. Built by Louis VI, the royal palace situated along the Gallo-Roman wall, in the northwestern sector of the city, was arguably the earliest of the three structures (figures 3-11, 3-12, 3-13, 3-14).\footnote{Eugène Müller, Monographie des rues; J.F. Broisse, Recherches historiques sur la ville de Senlis (Senlis: Imprimerie de Desmaret, 1835), 242. While uncertain, the palace of Louis VI replaced the early palace structure. This twelfth century structure was later altered by kings Charles V and François I.} Abutting the city wall, medieval builders incorporated a tower in the structure of the palace (figures 3-12, 3-13). The

Figure 3-11. Senlis, vestige of the royal palace, at left the chapel of Saint-Denis.
Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 7, fig. 3.
aula, chapel and
apartments of the king
formed the body of the
palatine complex, a
common architectural
configuration found in
early Christian, Byzantine,
medieval royal and
imperial palatine
complexes, as discussed in
Chapter I.\textsuperscript{442} The chapel of
Saint-Denis, consecrated in
1120, was a structure of two
bays terminated by a
semicircular apse (figure
3-11). The king accessed the
chapel via the \textit{aula} and the
royal apartments, all on the
second-story.\textsuperscript{443}

Situated between the
royal palace and cathedral
was the Hôtel de Vermandois, another important monumental royal residence of Senlis (figures 3-4,

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3-12.jpg}
\caption{Senlis, Royal palace, kitchen, and sales marchaux, indicated by arrows. Photograph by Alec and/or Marlene Hartill, The Hartill Archive of Architecture and Allied Arts.}
\end{figure}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3-13.jpg}
\caption{Senlis, Royal palace, view from outside the Gallo-Roman wall. Photograph by P. Poschadel}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{442} Meredith Cohen, \textit{The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy}, 126.

\textsuperscript{443} Ibid.
3-15). Constructed by Raoul I the Count of Vermandois, the cousin and seneschal of Louis VI and brother of Simon of Vermandois the bishop of Noyon, between c. 1137 and 1152, the Hôtel de Vermandois was smaller than the royal palace, yet comparable in size to the episcopal palace. Rectangular in shape, the two-story building both abutted and adjoined the Gallo-Roman wall, incorporating a wall tower into its construction (figures 3-16, 3-17). The architecture of the Hôtel de Vermandois mirrored the royal palace in the dimensions of its aula and use of similar architectural details, including molding profiles and column capitals. Thierry Crépin-Leblond describes the Hôtel de Vermandois as having two great rooms, one at ground level measuring forty-four feet by twenty-one feet and another second-story room measuring fifty-four feet by twenty-two feet. An exterior passage, located along the Gallo-Roman wall, provided the Count Raoul access from the Hôtel de Vermandois into the royal palace. Presumably this passage or walkway also provided access to and from the cathedral and one of the city gates.

444 Construction of the Hôtel de Vermandois predates the twelfth century cathedral.


446 Ibid.


448 Thierry Crépin-Leblond, “Travaux de restauration au coeur de Senlis,” 175-76. This exterior passage crossed over one of the city gates.
episcopal palace. Following the consecration of the cathedral a charter confirmed the gift of the Hôtel de Vermandois to the chapter of Senlis in 1194.449

Located outside of the Gallo-Roman wall, in the southeastern sector of the city, stood the belfry or bell tower, an expression of municipal power during this period of intense urban construction.450 The belfry was an imposing structure standing approximately eighty-feet high. Eugène Müller described it as square in form, “robust like a citadelle” (figure 3-4).451 Dating c. 1160s, this structure predated the communal charter of 1173, the formal recognition of the commune. The construction of this tower indicates that the communiers coalesced into a municipal entity in the early 1160s or late 1150s. Earliest mention of the belfry dates to c. 1170 when the religious order of Saint-Jean-de-Jerusalem established a presence in front of the tower.452 Hence, being situated outside the city wall, on the opposite side of town from the cathedral and royal palaces, the tower’s monumental scale defined this urban sector as that of the townsfolk –

449 Ibid.

450 Eugène Müller, Monographie des rues, 48-49. The belfry was located at the Place de la Halle, at the corner of rue Saint-Jean, located near the Gallo-Roman wall and demolished in 1802.

451 Ibid., 48-49 and 96-101. “Voyez-vous par l’imagination cet édifice carré, robuste comme une citadelle... haut de 80 pieds?” “You can imagine in this square building robust as a citadel 80 feet high...” The twelfth-century town hall also stood outside the city walls on the rue de Paris.

452 The exact date of construction of the belfry remains unknown. See Eugène Müller, Monographie des rues, 49.
communiers. Might the communiers have constructed a tower in a response to the rising towers of the cathedral and the concentrated architectural presence of royal and episcopal power?

The Episcopal Complex of Senlis: An Architectural Study

Located in the northern sector of the city, the episcopal complex both abutted and adjoined the Gallo-Roman wall (figures 3-4, 3-5, 3-7, 3-8). The western frontispiece of the cathedral stood adjacent to the Hôtel de Vermandois and facing the royal palace, while the nave and choir ran alongside and connected to the Gallo-Roman wall (figures 3-4, 3-7). The episcopal palace was situated east of the choir, incorporating the city wall into its structure (figures 3-1, 3-2, 3-18). Claustral buildings, including the fourteenth-century chapter house and library (still extant), were situated along the northern flank of the cathedral (figures 3-7, 3-16).  

While monumental in its architectural form and ornament, the cathedral is in fact modest in scale. During the course of the Middle Ages the chapter was small – with approximately thirty-six canons – in keeping with the

453 Delphine Christophe, Notre-Dame de Senlis, 27-30; and Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 146-50.
size of the diocese. In the course of the twelfth century the chapter ceased living communally, shifting instead to individually owned homes. Located outside the Gallo-Roman wall, today these homes define the periphery of the cathedral, along its northern flank.

The Episcopal Palace

The medieval episcopal palace is an amalgam of different architectural campaigns, reconstructions and later additions, which today form the body of the archeological museum (figures 3-1, 3-2, 3-18). Construction on the episcopal palace started prior to construction on the cathedral in the first half of the twelfth century. A charter issued by Louis VI (c. 1120) granted the bishop the

---


455 Delphine Christophe, Notre-Dame de Senlis, 104.

456 Eugène Müller, Monographie des rues, 198-99. By 1425 the building had fallen into disrepair and partially dismantled.

457 Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 20.
right to construct a residence within the city walls. This charter coincided with the consecration of the royal chapel Saint-Denis conducted by Bishop Pierre. First mention of an episcopal “domus” or house appears in the cartulary of Saint-Remi de Senlis in 1163, however the precise chronology of the building remains unknown. While the exact disposition of the twelfth-century structure remains uncertain, the palace included an aula and chapel. In the second half of the twelfth century, these spaces were semi-public used in judicial cases and for the ceremonial signing of acts and charters pertaining to the episcopate. The palace aula was used for a judicial case in 1180, while in 1188 and 1190 the episcopal chapel was a site for the passage of acts and charters.

Leaving the Gallo-Roman wall intact between the episcopal palace and cathedral the medieval builders maintained an impenetrable façade extending along the entire length of northern side of the episcopal complex (figures 3-1, 3-7). In the twelfth and early-thirteenth centuries, visitors wishing to access either the cathedral or episcopal palace from the northern sector of the city entered via the city gates located at the former rue Saint-Antoine (figure 3-7). Yet the bishop and his retinue could access the cathedral from the episcopal palace, walking approximately the twenty-two feet along a wall passage. As noted, this architectural configuration, the repurposing

---


459 Ibid. See also Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Latin 11002, folio, 15 v., 19 v.; and Jean Dufour, Recueil des actes de Louis VI (1081-1137), vol. 1, 332.

460 Presumably this palace structure included apartments following similar models at Laon, Noyon and Reims.

461 Thierry Crépin-Leblond, “Le palais épiscopal de Senlis au moyen âge: étude historique et monumentale,” 202-03. The aula was frequently used in judicial cases.

462 In 1188 Guy de la Tour makes a donation to the chapter for his and in 1190 Bishop Jeffrey and the abbot of Chaalis sign an agreement. See Thierry Crépin-Leblond, “Le palais épiscopal de Senlis au moyen âge: étude historique et monumentale,” 202-03; Marc Durand, “Les structures des jardins de l’évêché,” 202; and Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, pièce justificative 7, 189.

463 Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 20. The bishop could enter the cathedral through the wall tower and into the tribune through a system of staircases, which are no longer extant, yet vestiges remain. See also Marie-Antoinette Menier, “Le chapitre cathédral de Senlis,” 37.
of a passage embedded in the city wall once linking the various structures of the episcopal complex, was also found in the royal palace and Hôtel de Vermandois. The *aula*-chapel-apartment plan type, repeated in these same monuments, was also used in other episcopal and royal complexes in France (c. 1120s-60s) and recalls its broader use in the imperial complexes at Aachen and Hagia Sophia, as discussed in Chapter I. Did the royal palace at Senlis serve as inspiration for the episcopal palace? Or did the medieval builders draw inspiration from a more universal trend prevalent in the construction of episcopal complexes at this time?

Work on the episcopal complex continued in the thirteenth century during the administration of Bishop Guérin (c. 1221-23), one of Philip Augustus’s principal councilors. Bishop Guérin extended the palace complex adding a chapel dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul in which Mass was held for church officers on Saturdays, located southeast of the cathedral along the former rue de Mello (figure 3-4). During the same period Bishop Guérin established a similar chapel at the episcopal villa at Mons, then the primary residence of the bishop.

*The Cathedral*

In the 1150s, work on the cathedral started in the east during the administration of Thibault, as noted in Part II. As mentioned earlier, the urban topography and pre-existing structures, including an octagonal chapel, the buildings of the cathedral chapter (c. eleventh century) and the Gallo-

---

464 Ibid., 202.

465 Ibid., 198-99. See also Charles Afforty, *Le manuscrit Afforty*, vol. 7, 3859. This structure now forms the entrance to the archaeological museum.

Roman wall formed the boundaries of the construction site (figures 3-7, 3-8). Yet these structures presented the medieval builders with the possibility to create architectural linkages, formulating a coherent episcopal complex.

In the course of the 1150s and 60s, work on the choir continued upwards, moving westerly during the administration of bishops Thibault, Amaury and Henry and dean of the chapter Stephen Bouteiller. Diane Brouillette argues for a completion date of the choir c. 1167 coinciding with the donation of a lamp by Louis VII. Medieval builders started construction on the monumental western frontispiece in the 1160s and 70s (figures 3-19, 3-20).

Situated face to face, the western frontispiece of the cathedral appears to be in dialogue with the royal palace. While there is more distance between Notre-Dame of Paris and the royal palace of the Île de la Cité and a difference in alignment, the arrangement is reminiscent to that of Senlis (figures 3-20, 3-35).

---

467 The buildings of the chapter were mentioned in charter by Philip 1, in 1068. See Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, pièce justificative 1. See also Marc Durand, “Les structures des jardins de l’évêché,” 202, 119-226. Marc Durand found traces of the Gallo-Roman tower foundation. According to Dominique Vermand the octagonal building was once a baptistry, see Dominique Vermand, *La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 25-27. See also Craig Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris, 500-1550*, and Delphine Christophe, *Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 47. Christophe cites an act issued by Charles the Bald between 840-867 attesting to the presence of a church dedicated to Saints Gervase and Protase and a church dedicated to Notre-Dame.


470 Ibid., 55-66.
completion, the dedication of the cathedral followed approximately forty years later on June 16, 1191. Upon its completion the episcopal complex dominated the medieval cityscape of Senlis, surpassing the neighboring royal palace and Hôtel de Vermandois (figures 3-1, 3-2).

Choir Exterior

The elevation of the cathedral choir rises in three distinct stories (figure 3-21). Following the fire of 1504, the sixteenth-century intervention is evident in the pronounced architectural difference between the lower and upper stories. The flamboyant tracery patterns in the clerestory windows and the two ornamental balustrades are products of the later sixteenth-century reconstruction. The elongated clerestory windows replaced smaller windows of the twelfth-century elevation (figures 3-22, 3-23). The simple forms of the windows in the radiating chapels and at tribune level reflect the twelfth-century campaign of construction. Visible from the vantage point of the archeological

---

museum are two of the five shallow radiating chapels each separated by a buttress pier and featuring a large centrally placed lancet window (figure 3-21). A projecting axial chapel from the mid-nineteenth century, by the architect Daniel Ramée, together with the adjacent medieval episcopal palace renders circulation around the eastern end of the choir impossible (figure 3-9).472

From the perspective of the street on the northern side of the cathedral the two remaining medieval radiating chapels are visible (figure 3-24).473 The radiating chapels on this northern flank feature slender lancet windows. This difference in fenestration between the northern and southern sides reflects renovations made in the nineteenth century following the dismantling of the Gallo-Roman wall that once enveloped the choir at this juncture (figure 3-5).474

---

472 J. Guérin, “Notre-Dame de Senlis, La chapelle de la vierge,” Comité archéologique de Senlis (1863), 105-21.

473 Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 34-38. The molding profiles of these northern radiating chapels are largely nineteenth century.

474 Ibid., La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 34-38. According to Vermand these lancet windows are largely modern. See also Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 80. The architecture Duthoit restored the first chapel on the northeastern flank in 1885.
In the twelfth century, these two radiating chapels were partially built into the wall. In the earlier configuration each chapel had one large lancet window situated towards the outer edge, with two additional smaller windows placed above the height of the wall that allowed light to penetrate the chapel and choir. In 1671, the dean of chapter, Jean Deslyons, added a chapel of two misshapen bays adjacent to the straight bays of the choir on the northern side, dedicated to the Saints Gervase and Protase (figure 3-9). The construction of this chapel and the dismantling of the Gallo-Roman wall and tower altered the architectural envelope of the choir, drastically impacting the network of

---

475 Ibid., 61-62.

476 Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, 35-36. Aubert argues the dedication of this chapel was to Saints Gervase and Protase. See also *Gallia Christiana*, vol. 10, 1464.
staircases once providing access between the tribune and wall tower.\textsuperscript{477}

\textit{Choir Interior}

Since the eleventh century the large parvis located on the southern side of the cathedral has been the property of the chapter (figure 3-25).\textsuperscript{478} Today, the sixteenth-century portals situated in the transept façades provide access into the cathedral.\textsuperscript{479} In the twelfth century, prior to the construction of the first transept, the three portals of the western frontispiece and possibly a doorway situated on the southern flank of the nave provided access into the cathedral. Inside the cathedral, the choir extends eastward beyond the expansive crossing space, rising three stories. The hemicycle is brightly illuminated by a crown of

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image324}
\caption{Senlis, Notre-Dame, view of choir from the northeast. Photograph by Andrew Tallon.}\url{http://mappinggothic.org/image/33458.}
\end{figure}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{477} Dominique Vermand, \textit{La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis}, 32-35. See also Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 42, note 2.
\item \textsuperscript{478} Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 43.
\item \textsuperscript{479} In the twelfth century two portals, of the south transept and the western façade, were available to the medieval laity. In the sixteenth century, medieval builders established a portal in the northern arm of the transept made accessible to the laity with the partial demolition of the Gallo-Roman wall.
\end{itemize}
The lancet windows (figure 3-26). The three-story elevation (an arcade, tribune and clerestory) distinguishes Senlis from other churches constructed with tribunes during this period, notably Notre-Dame of Laon, Noyon and Paris, each originally constructed with a four-story elevation. Yet the horseshoe shape of the choir ground plan is in keeping with similar plans found at the tribuned cathedrals of Noyon and Paris and the collegiate church of Notre-Dame of Mantes-la-Jolie. Each of these churches, including Senlis, featured sexpartite vaulting in the straight bays of the choir. Might there be a link between the appearance of tribunes, the horseshoe shaped ground plan and sexpartite vaulting? If so what might be the advantage of combining these architectural entities? At ground level, the horseshoe shape appears to emphasize the circular form of the sanctuary. Standing centrally in the choir, again at ground level, the circularity of the architectural envelope coupled with the slender columns increases the viewer’s ability to see throughout the choir with little obstruction (figures 3-26, 3-27, 3-28). In contrast to the nave this space is more intimate, enveloping the visitor. From this same central location in the choir the visitor has a partial view up into the space of the tribune. Yet the

480 As noted above the lancet windows of the clerestory reflect a later, sixteenth-century, intervention.

481 See Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 73-74.
two stories differ in articulation and ornament, with thicker compound piers framing the arched openings at tribune level, reducing our ability to see in and out of this upper story from this perspective (figure 3-27). Visitors in the tribune remain visible to those people standing in the nave. The horseshoe shape accentuates visibility, while the circularity of the structure creates an intimate space found at both ground level and the tribune. Might the circularity of its form imply a larger symbolic meaning? Was it intended to recall a martyrium?482

Today, staircases framed by sixteenth-century decorative motifs, found in the first straight bays of the choir and the transept arms, provide access to the tribunes.483 While the extent of the changes made in the area of the crossing space and transept of the thirteenth century remains unknown, Dominique Vermand suggests both choir and nave tribunes were initially continuous.484 Work carried out in the later Middle Ages of the sixteenth century

482 See Richard Krautheimer “An Introduction to an Iconography of Medieval Architecture,” 14-15. According to Krautheimer round or polygonal buildings often stood as mausolea, thus were associated with death for medieval people.

483 Today, on this southern side two staircases lead up to the choir tribunes.

484 Dominique Vermand., La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 61-62.
further altered this space, which included the construction of the broad transept with additional side aisles, the two monumental portals and the heightening and rebuilding of the vaulting and clerestory (figures 3-7, 3-9). The system of staircases providing access to the tribunes and the Gallo-Roman tower were changed in the various reconstructions and renovations, as noted earlier.

Archaeological excavations conducted by Marc Durand, Diane Brouillette and Dominique Vermand reveal vestiges of the Gallo-Roman tower staircase in the area of northern choir tribune, evident in the masonry coursing found in the roof area of the chapel of Sainte-Genèvieve. Located in the roofing area of the seventeenth-century chapel of Saints Gervase and Protase (on the northern side) is a doorway with a vestige of a sill, which now opens out into the empty space of the chapel roof (figure 3-30). The orientation of this doorway suggests it once connected to the Gallo-Roman wall. Here, the bishop and clergy could access the wall.

Figure 3-27. Senlis, Notre-Dame, view of the choir and radiating chapels. Photograph by Stephen Murray. http://mappinggothic.org/image/33487.

---


487 Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 84; and Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 33-34, 46-47, 61-62.
tower, tribune and the ground level of the choir through a system of staircases.\textsuperscript{488} This point of entry, leading from palace to cathedral via the tribune, recalls similar arrangements found in the cathedral Santiago of Compostela and near-by Notre-Dame of Noyon, as discussed in Chapters I and II.

\textit{Choir Tribune}

In the choir tribune on the northern flank of the cathedral in the first westernmost bay adjacent to the crossing space shows signs of the later medieval interventions most apparent in the sharpness of the molding profiles in the vaulting. These changes are also reflected in the westernmost bay on the southern side. Yet the dimensions of this first bay, both north and south, remain largely as they were in the twelfth century. Proceeding easterly along the northern side of the tribune, the visitor passes amidst a rhythmic play of alternating major and minor piers of the inner wall of each bay (figure

\textsuperscript{488} Marc Durand and Diane Brouillette, “Rapport concernant la fouille effectuée à l’Hôtel de Vermandois et dans le jardin de l’Évêché,” 1-92. See also Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 52, note 12; and Dominique Vermand,, \textit{La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis}, 33-34, 46.
In the first turning bay of the choir, on each side, is a more complex arcade of two lancet openings separated by a single slender monolithic column, defining the bay (figure 3-29). This arrangement contrasts with the single arched openings found throughout the choir tribune. Was this architectural change intended to distinguish the hemicycle of choir tribune, signalling the presence of an important altar? Absent at Senlis is a sculptural program that might help further complete our understanding of this space, as found at Noyon. Elegant acanthus and simple waterleaf motifs adorn many of the capitals found in the tribune, missing are historiated or figurative capitals. Yet an altar dedicated to Saint Michael in voltis or “in the vaults” was present in the upper stories at the cathedral of Senlis, as noted in Chapter I.489 Today in the axial bay of the tribune an alteration in the lower wall changed its medieval configuration (figure 3-32).

Marcel Aubert places the altar dedicated to Saint Michael in the tribune, drawing in part from the

489 In the eleventh century (c. 1094-95) Bishop Hugh acquired the abbey of Saint-Michael, which was later confirmed by Louis VI in 1111. See Charles Jaulnay, *Recueil de plusieurs discours*, 2; Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Latin 17049, 435-38. This document confirms the acquisition in the eleventh century; and Marcel Aubert, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis*, 8-9.
thirteenth-century obituary mentioning the altar in voltis together with what he vaguely cites as vestiges of an altar. Dominique Vermand repositions the altar in a repurposed wall tower once linked to the cathedral via the tribunes basing his theory on archeological evidence (figure 3-8). According to Vermand, the tribune functioned as an access point to adjacent rooms located in the first and second bays on both north and south flanks of the cathedral. The placement of the altar dedicated to Saint Michael within the tower presents a seductive possibility, activating the role of the archangel as protector of city walls. Saint Michael also played an important role in salvation and care for the souls, as discussed in Chapters II and IV. At Senlis, the cathedral profited from the prominence of its altar dedicated to the archangel and the rapidly expanding need for the care of the souls, with the development of purgatory. In 1190, one year before the consecration of the church, Guillaume le Loup, brother of Guy le Bouteiller endowed the

---


491 Dominique Vermand, La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis, 31-32.

492 Ibid., 61.

493 See Chapter IV for more on the role of purgatory in the economy of salvation.
church with one-hundred and twenty livres for two priests for the altar of Saint Michael. Later in 1380, the archdeacon Robert of Roquemont further augmented the funding for this same altar and its related observances.

A Note on the Western Frontispiece

Today the western frontispiece (c. 1160s-70s) remains an imposing two-towered structure (figure 3-19). The solidity of the architectural mass and projecting buttressing of the western frontispiece gives the impression of a narthex similar to that of the abbey of Saint-Denis and the priory Saint-

494 Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Fonds Dom Grenier, 258, fol. 184. See also Marcel Aubert, Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis, 152.

Leu, while this arrangement also recalls the abbey of Saint-Étienne at Caen, the church of William the Conqueror, a building constructed with tribunes. The iconographic sculptural program of the central portal, the most decorated of the three entryways, has long attracted the attention of scholars. At the apex of the tympanum is a Coronation of the Virgin scene depicting a seated Virgin Mary holding an open book at left and Christ with his arms raised, flanking the couple are two sets of angels (figure 3-34). The figures of Mary and Christ appear seated on what looks like a two-storied church. Adding to the drama of the scene are traces of polychromy of blues and reds. In the lintels below are scenes from the life of the Virgin, at right her Dormition and at left her Assumption. Diane Brouillette, in her persuasive doctoral thesis, posits a convincing allegorical reading of the programmatic ensemble of Coronation, Dormition and Assumption scenes, which are featured together with the references to the Christ’s Crucifixion and Exaltation of the Cross in the jamb statues.\textsuperscript{496} Brouillette argues the iconographic program expresses the Church Triumphant and the Exaltation of “Mary-Ecclesia.”\textsuperscript{497}

\textsuperscript{496} Diane Brouillette, “The early Gothic sculpture of Senlis cathedral,” 502-06.

\textsuperscript{497} Ibid.
This iconographic program of the triumphant Church paired with the monumentality of the cathedral and episcopal complex presents a powerful message to the residents of the royal palace, located just on the other side of the parvis. A similar dynamic was present in Paris on the Île de la Cité in which the sculptural program of the western frontispiece of Notre-Dame, the Sainte-Anne portal, bears a message for the residents of the royal palace located on the opposite end of the island (figure 3-35).498 The Sainte-Anne portal, to the south of the western frontispiece, depicts a crowned figure or a king kneeling before the Virgin Mary and Child. A standing bishop on the other side also holds a contract: this arrangement expresses the socio-religious hierarchy according the Church, confirmed through the presence of the contract (figures 3-36, 3-37).499 Was the iconographic and

---


architectural program at Senlis designed to affirm the power of the Church and its bishop as a reminder to the resident royals and nobles, as seen at the cathedral of Paris?

Conclusion

Notre-Dame of Senlis provides numerous avenues to examine the significance of tribunes in Gothic architecture. Most notably its role within the episcopal complex is clearly expressed here, defined by its architectural linkages among the different buildings. As at Noyon, the tribune at Senlis connects the cathedral and palace providing a point of entry for the bishop and his clergy. This architectural entity situated the bishop and clergy in the piano nobile, above ground level, a fitting placement for both the bishop and cathedral canons of Senlis, who counted nobles among their ranks. The presence of similar architectural arrangements in both the royal palace and Hôtel de Vermandois confirms the widespread use of this palatine type configuration, which incorporated the city wall. We might ask if the medieval builders of Notre-Dame of Senlis appropriated this palatine complex arrangement from these local examples? While this might be the case evidence suggests the appearance of this complex type was part of a more universal tendency among French bishops and archbishops adopting this plan. In turn its model or inspiration lies in earlier medieval and
Byzantine sources, discussed in Chapters I and II. The monumentality of the cathedral architecture coupled with the iconographic program of the western frontispiece, the Church Triumphant, expresses the desire of the bishop and his clergy to assert their spiritual authority. This would have been a potent message for the king, living only a few yards away. Evidence demonstrates the cathedral fabric was not a royal foundation, in fact the king removed an important revenue stream in the 1170s, impacting its financing. Not only did the tribune affirm the temporal power of the bishop and his clergy, but it played a role in confirming their spiritual authority. The appearance of Saint Michael in the chapel located within the adjacent wall tower, linked to the cathedral via the tribune, echoed a similar soteriological program found at Noyon. The various donations made to Notre-Dame of Senlis for the care of the souls hints to the success of such a program. Embedded in the city wall, the placement of this chapel magnifies the role of archangel – by association the bishop and clergy – as the defender of the city and its people, similarly found at Noyon. These reoccurring themes and architectural arrangements in which the tribune played a central role at both Senlis and Noyon point to the efforts of the bishop and his clergy to reaffirm the temporal and spiritual power of the
Church. In tandem with reform movements launched by the papacy, the twelfth-century bishops of Senlis actively reshaped their identity through architectural form.
Chapter IV

Saint-Leu: A Cluniac Priory

Part I:

Introduction: Saint-Leu at Saint-Leu-d’Esserent

Viewed from a distance the church of Saint-Leu presents an imposing silhouette, sitting at the edge of the Thiverny plateau, overlooking the Oise river valley (figure 4-1). The choir appears to blend into the retaining wall, giving the impression of great height (figure 4-2). In the eleventh century Herscerent or Estrecent was the rural domain of the powerful Counts of Dammartin. Its close proximity to important highways provided economic benefit for its count and inhabitants. Situated on the border of the royal domain, Saint-Leu-d’Esserent held strategic significance for the French monarchy, aristocracy and the abbey of Cluny during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The church of Saint-Leu enters into art historical literature on account of its architectural features, notably its ground plan: a hemicycle terminated with five contiguous shallow radiating chapels. The ground plan resembles the canonic early Gothic buildings of the abbeys of Saint-Denis

---


and Saint-Germain-des-Prés in Paris and the cathedrals of both Noyon and Senlis, as noted in Chapter I (figures 4-3, 1-37).\textsuperscript{502} Certain scholars (Robert Branner, Dieter Kimpel, Robert Suckale, Dominique Vermand, Arnaud Timbert, Delphine Hanquiez) attribute the shared characteristics of this group of choir plans to socio-political forces, arguing the agents of style were the Capetian kings of France, Louis VI and VII. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, Émile Lambin, Eugène Müller, Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis and Delphine Hanquiez further consider the visual resemblances in the material production of the choir, its monolithic piers and foliate capitals, to affirm the linkage of Saint-Leu to another group of churches, including the collegiate church of Mantes-la-Jolie, the cathedrals at Laon, Noyon, Paris and Senlis, churches held to have

\textsuperscript{502} Per the discussion in Chapter I, included in this grouping are the ground plans of Saint-Maclou and Saint-Martin at Pontoise and Saint-Germer-de-Fly.
drawn inspiration from the abbey church of Saint-Denis. Many of these same scholars also group the priory church, conceived without a transept, with the cathedrals of Paris, Senlis and Sens along with the collegiate church of Mantes-la-Jolie, all similarly designed with a continuous architectural envelope.

Jean Bony labels this particular group the “Parisian School” of architecture, which he suggests was a stylistic contrast to the trefoil plan of the “Northern School,” buildings like Notre-Dame of Noyon.

In its elevation, three stories composed of an arcade, triforium and clerestory, Saint-Leu shares characteristics with a number of near-contemporary churches (figure 4-4). However, the tall triforium of Saint-Leu, resembling a tribune proves less common. Viollet-le-Duc, echoed later by Eugène Müller, categorizes this tall triforium as a product of the architectural schools of Notre-Dame of Paris, Mantes-la-Jolie and Saint-Remi of Reims (figures).

---

Figure 4-3. Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, priory of Saint-Leu, ground plan. Congrès archéologique de France: séances générales tenues en 1905 (Beauvais: A. Picard, 1906), 122.

---


504 See also Kenneth Severens, “The Continuous Plan of Sens Cathedral,” 198-207.

505 Jean Bony, French Gothic Architecture, 122-134. Bony argues this “simplified” ground plan constructed without a transept originates at the cathedral of Sens.
Yet these three churches have tribunes and represent a diverse collection of institutional types (a cathedral, collegiate church and monastery). Jean Bony describes the nave elevation of Saint-Leu as “preserving the pattern of the tribune elevation” at Notre-Dame of Paris, expressed in the height of the triforium, coupled with an enclosing arch in each bay unit (figures 4-8, 4-9). Based on this criterion, Bony groups Saint-Leu with another set of “like” churches that include Brie-Comte-Robert, Cormeilles-en-Vexin, Moret-sur-Loing, and Saint-Séverin in Paris, which he collectively dates to the 1200-1220s. While Louis Gonse in *L’art gothique* characterizes the triforium at Saint-Leu as a “simulacrum” of a tribune in which the large triforium at Saint-Leu presents a compromise between the tribune of the twelfth century and a blind triforium of the

---

506 Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-Le-Duc, “triforium,” *Dictionnaire raisonné*, vol. 9, 281-82. Viollet-Le-Duc notes the parti developed at the three churches preserve this arrangement. See also Eugène Müller, *Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent*, 17-19.

507 Jean Bony, *French Gothic Architecture*, 325-28. While Gonse does not appear in Bony’s bibliography, Bony makes similar observations. Bony’s argument was one part of his thesis on the dominance of the Chartrain model.

508 Ibid. Both Moret-sur-Loing and Saint-Séverin feature lean-to-roofs lending functionality to these spaces beyond that of storage, made difficult given the reduction in overhead space. Bony notes the resemblances of the churches of Saint-Séverin and Brie-Comte-Robert to Sens Cathedral. This list might also include the churches of Moret-sur-Loing (constructed with non-vaulted tribunes), Brie-Comte-Robert, the western bays at Saint-Séverin in Paris, Cormeilles-en-Vexin and the choir of Bayeux Cathedral.
thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{509} Most recently, Andrew Tallon reconsidered these similarities arguing the medieval builders chose stylistic and structural elements from Notre-Dame of Paris for the nave elevation of Saint-Leu.\textsuperscript{510}

The narthex of the priory church, a monumental entryway located in the west, is another architectural element illustrating for scholars similitude among certain canonic early Gothic churches (Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis and Anne Prache). Based on stylistic affinities, these same scholars compare the narthex of Saint-Leu to the narthex of Saint-Denis.\textsuperscript{511} Eugène Woillez and Paul Selmersheim define the Saint-Leu narthex as an architecture of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{509} Louis Gonse, \textit{L’art gothique: l’architecture, la peinture, la sculpture, le décor} (Paris: Librairie-Imprimerie Réunie, 1890).
\item \textsuperscript{511} Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, “Église de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 126; and Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, “porche,” \textit{Dictionnaire raisonné}, vol. 7, 504. Viollet-le-Duc includes Saint-Leu as an example of \textit{contrefort} and the buttressing found in the narthex. He also includes a comparative reference to Saint-Martin at Laon. See Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, \textit{“contrefort,” Dictionnaire raisonné}, vol. 4, 290-91.
\end{itemize}
“transition” situated between Romanesque and Gothic, categorizing it as an evolution in architectural form.\textsuperscript{512}

Yet though there are points of resemblance and similar chronologies and geographical proximity shared with the other case study buildings, Saint-Leu is the only church constructed without tribunes and the only monastic institution. Located in a village community, the priory was not subjected to the same urban conditions facing the medieval builders of the cathedrals of Noyon and Senlis. It is this difference or absence that makes an examination of Saint-Leu instructive, as it provides useful points of comparison with the two cathedrals. As a Cluniac priory, Saint-Leu presents the means to examine the contrast between monastic and episcopal institutions and

consider the possible role an institution played in architectural choice. Understanding Cluny’s role in the early history of the priory, and more broadly in northern France, is a critical element in this analysis. The cartulary of Saint-Leu, first published by Eugène Müller in 1900, records donations given to the priory that reveal the underlying social dynamic between the patron (the founding seigneur) and the religious institution. Part II explores the broader role of a monastic institution in twelfth-century medieval France, focusing on the order of Cluny. This section ends with an examination of the priory of Saint-Leu as an aristocratic necropolis. Part III turns to consider the architectural and sculptural features of the priory.

**Part II:**

*The Power of the Monastic Institution*

Successive reform movements during the tenth and eleventh centuries accorded monastic institutions necessary legitimacy, enabling them to assert claims of spiritual superiority. In contrast, the ecclesiastic reform of cathedrals or episcopal institutions was not addressed until 1123 in the First Lateran Council. Medieval theologians and exegetes argue monks were the true inheritors of the *vita apostolica* or apostolic life or rule, a parallel underscoring their primacy. The monastic notion of a brotherhood, made manifest in their vows of chastity, the communal and cloistered life, the uniformity in their clothing and the architecture of the monastery (notably the


515 Reforming efforts continued through the Third Lateran Council of 1179. See Anne J. Duggan, “Conciliar Law 1123-1215.”

cloister itself) reinforced this correlation to the Apostles.\textsuperscript{517}

Medieval monks were also held to be analogous to celestial angels. Again, the requirements of monastic life, vows of poverty, chastity and obedience offered a parallel to angels, who were considered in “eternal contemplation and worship of the divine and perfect obedience to the will of God.”\textsuperscript{518} For Bernard of Clairvaux the angelic condition of chastity, temperance and the renouncement of riches and temporal goods was best imitated in the life of a monk.\textsuperscript{519} The Franciscan monk Bonaventure (b. 1221-74) affirmed that prayer activated this relationship: “[I]n prayer we speak to God, hear Him, and converse with the angels as if we were living an angelic life.”\textsuperscript{520} The architecture of the church and cloister, together with the religious rituals performed within these spaces, further reified these associations. The use of language and nomenclature reinforced this correlation between monk and angel. At the church of Cluny III (begun in 1088) the monks called the hemicycle \textit{deambulatorium angelorum} or ambulatory of the angels (figure 4-9).\textsuperscript{521}

While Rodulfus Glaber described the celebration of the mass at Cluny as “more angelic than human” (\textit{magnis angelica quam humana}).\textsuperscript{522}

\textsuperscript{517} This correlation is expressed in the sculptural program of the cloister at the abbey of Moissac, in which medieval builders situated a relief sculpture depicting the Abbot Durandus (1047-71), reformer of the abbey, together with the Apostles. Each figure, both Abbot and Apostles, received similar sculptural treatment and are similarly located on the major piers of the cloister. See Ilene Forsyth, “The ‘Vita Apostolica’ and Romanesque Sculpture: Some Preliminary Observations,” \textit{Gesta}, vol. 25, no. 1 (1986): 75-82. See also Henri de Lubac, \textit{Medieval Exegesis}, 147-48; Georges Duby, \textit{France in the Middle Ages}, 91-94; Mary W. Helms, “Sacred Landscape and the Early Medieval European Cloister: Unity, Paradise, and the Cosmic Mountain,” \textit{Anthropos}, vol. 97, no. 2 (2002): 435-53; and Paul Meyvaert, “The Medieval Monastic Claustrum,” \textit{Gesta}, vol. 12, no. 1/2 (1973): 53-59. For the differences between monks and canons regular see Margot Fassler, \textit{Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in twelfth-century Paris} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 190-91. Fassler notes “although frequently living similar lives, regular canons and monks understood in very different ways the significance of what they did and the responsibilities entrusted to them… Canons were focused on teaching through both word and example.”

\textsuperscript{518} David Keck, \textit{Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages} (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 117-20. Angels were the object of study by medieval theologians, most notably Anselm of Canterbury, Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor in Paris. These scholars sought to define the role angels played and the hierarchical structure of the differing angel types. See also Dominique Poirel, “L’ange gothique,” 125.

\textsuperscript{519} Dominique Poirel, “L’ange gothique,” 125.

\textsuperscript{520} David Keck, \textit{Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages}, 169. In his \textit{Legenda Maior}, Bonaventure echoes the teachings of Bernard of Clairvaux.


Construction of an apostolic and angelic identity cemented the legitimacy of monks, placing monastic communities in an intercessory role, linking man to God through prayer and ritualized observances. This preeminence situated the monks of Cluny as the leading intermediaries for penitents in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries. During this period, Cluniac monks held their abbey to be an *asylum poenitentium* or a shelter for penitents. In this intermediary role monks served a critical need for penitents seeking redemption or absolution. Heightening this need was the codification of the system of purgatory, rapidly developing at this time. With this metamorphosis in the conception of the afterlife the need for intercessors helping navigate purgation through prayer grew more important for both the living and dead. Purgatory gave rise to powerful economic engines of salvation. In response to this need, the abbots of Cluny were among the first to create and develop a systematic program of observances.

---


525 See Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, 154-55. The word “purgatory” first appeared in the mid-twelfth century, while the concept was formulated in the early Middle Ages.

526 Ibid. See also Megan McLaughlin, * Consorting with Saints: Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). McLaughlin discusses the ways in which monastic institutions increasingly used the saints and hagiographies to enhance monastic intercession.
and rituals institutionalizing death and the care of the souls in the afterlife. H. E. J. Cowdrey characterizes these innovations as “spiritual inventiveness.” The Liber tramitis, a Cluniac customary, serving as a type of manual for the priory of Farfa in Italy, produced under the Abbot Odilo between 1027-48, presents “the most detailed description of monastic death rituals of any customary up to that time,” according to Frederick S. Paxton. The Abbot Odilo (994-1048) also established All Souls Day, a comprehensive liturgical celebration observed on November 2nd to commemorate all of the dead, including those who were not saints. In addition to these annual observances Cluniac monks created memorial books or necrologies, the systematic listing of the deceased read during the daily offices of the dead.

In the eleventh century, Cluny had no peer. The efficacy of the Cluniac program of observances for the dead garnered authority and prestige. Episcopal institutions began to adopt some of these observances, notably the All Souls Day observances, a testament to the strength of monastic institutions. The Cluniac liturgical practice proved highly desirable, attracting laity and members of the clergy alike. The formation of confraternities provided people outside the Order, those privileged members of society including bishops, access to Cluniac services. According to Barbara Rosenwein, these confraternities “gave (laity) a vicarious part in the observances and

527 For more on the particular rites and rituals observed by the Cluniac monks see Frederick S. Paxton, “Death by Customary at Eleventh-Century Cluny,” From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny, eds. Susan Boynton and Isabelle Cochelin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005): 297-319.


529 Frederick Paxton, “Death by Customary at Eleventh-Century Cluny,” 298. According to Paxton, the “Liber tramitis went beyond the particulars of the divine office and the liturgical year to give detailed information, for the first time, about life and death at Cluny.” See also Frederick S. Paxton, The Death Ritual at Cluny in the Central Middle Ages / Le rituel de la mort à Cluny au moyen âge central, ed. Isabelle Cochelin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). In addition to the Liber tramitis are the Cluniac customaries of Ulrich and Bern.

530 Jacques Le Goff, The Birth of Purgatory, 125. Celebrated today, All Souls Day was later adopted by the Church.


532 Barbara Rosenwein, Rhinoceros Bound, 107-08. Rooted in Carolingian traditions, the confraternities developed in the course of the eleventh century.
prayers of the monks, linking them both to the monastic community and the community of saints.”

As leaders in sacred authority, monastic institutions and the monks who ran them translated their spiritual power into the temporal realm. Abbots like Hugh of Semur and Peter the Venerable of Cluny, Bernard of Clairvaux and Suger of Saint-Denis, wielded tremendous influence in the secular arena of nobles and kings. Their impact on the French political landscape was considerable, as these abbots vied to garner and maintain influence. The expansion of monastic communities’ extensive building and burial programs attest to this competitive atmosphere at this time. In contrast, bishops sought to maintain their sacred and secular authority. Georges Duby notes that during the reign of King Philip I and in the early years under Louis VI, “…the witness lists of royal charters show bishops and lay magnates gradually replaced by the king’s relatives and knights garrisoned in royal castles or towns…” At the turn of the twelfth century Cluny was uniquely poised to capitalize on its strong position and expand into northern France and the royal domain.

Cluny: An Expansionist Agenda

Prior to the mid-eleventh century the Cluniac presence in northern France was negligible. Hugh of Semur, the abbot of Cluny (1049-1109), sought to change these circumstances fostering an agenda

533 Ibid.

534 For more on the power of monasteries prior to the twelfth century see Georges Duby, France in the Middle Ages, 94; David Knowles, Christian Monasticism; and Giles Constable, Medieval Monasticism: A Select Bibliography (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

535 Georges Duby, France in the Middle Ages, 119.

536 Kings Henry I of England, Alphonso VI of Léon and Stephen of Blois were patrons of Cluny. See Barbara Rosenwein, Rhinoceros Bound; and Ernst Sackur, Die Cluniacenser in ihrer kirchlichen und allgemeingeschichtlichen Wirksamkeit bis zur Mitte des elften Jahrhunderts (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965). Cluniacs were well situated at this time with the support of Pope Urban II (1088-99), a Cluniac, and the confraternities, which counted kings and lords as members.
of monastic imperialism, further enriching and strengthening the Order. Capitalizing on the weakened state of the monarchy under Philip I, characterized by shifting alliances and unrest among nobles, Abbot Hugh targeted expansion in the area of the royal domain. Fueled by economic support of local lords, approximately forty-eight Cluniac priories were established in the region between c. 1029-1150. Of the forty-eight priories, twelve were within the dioceses of Beauvais and Senlis, the heart of the royal domain. The majority of these foundations occurred towards the end of the eleventh century, during this critical point of instability.

Among the first lords to engage with Abbot Hugh was Thibault, the Count of Champagne, with the foundation of the priories of Cointcy in 1072 and later Binson in 1096. During this period Hugh, the Count of Dammartin, founded the priory of Saint-Leu (c. 1081). A few years earlier, in 1079, King Philip I established the Order at the church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs in Paris, a church linked to his father, Henry I and the Merovingian King Childebert II before him. Philip I’s choice of Cluny was politically shrewd, serving to co-opt the growing power of the Order in the region and the seigneurial families of the confraternities, a lay brotherhood of the Cluniac order.

As an elder daughter house Saint-Martin-des-Champs directly controlled seventeen dependencies,

537 The foundational charter of Cluny (c. 910), established by William I, the Count of Auvergne, endowed its abbots and monks with unprecedented privileges and immunities. In the organizational hierarchy of the Order its abbots circumvented all authority, including archbishops, bishops, kings and nobles. These rights and safeguards applied to the entire Order and its system of daughter houses or priories.


540 Laurent-Henri Cottineau, *Répertoire topo-bibliographique des abbayes et prieurés, A-L*, 384 and 829. In the organizational structure of Cluny, daughter houses were subordinate to either one of the six 'elder daughter' houses of Souvigny, La Charité-sur-Loire, Sauxillanges, Saint-Martin-des-Champs in Paris, Lewes and Sussex both in England, the mother house of Cluny located in Burgundy or another local priory as at Cointcy, which had a number of dependencies located in the dioceses of Reims and Soissons including the priory of Binson. The powerful Counts of Champagne were among a group of lords with a wavering conflictual relationship with the French monarchy during this period.


enjoying the privileges of such a position. At the foundation of Saint-Leu (c. 1081) Hugh, the Count of Dammartin, was the third generation of a young yet powerful family of counts. Accumulating land scattered throughout the regions of the Île-de-France, Champagne and Beauvais, Manassès, the grandfather of Hugh, was the first to attain the title of count. Despite the complications of managing and protecting non-contiguous landholdings, the location of these parcels in three different regions was of strategic importance, affording the Dammartin family considerable power. The family château at Dammartin-en-Goële, the seat of the comté, stood on the frontier of the royal domain and Hugh controlled one-fourth of

---


544 Ibid. Among the seven priory churches were: Saint-Pierre of Abbeville, Dompierre-sur-Authie, Lihon-en-Santerre and Montdidier in the diocese of Amiens, Élincourt in the diocese of Beauvais, Coincy in the diocese of Soissons and Saint-Arnoul at Crépy.

545 Ibid.

546 Georges Duby, France in the Middle Ages, 129-30. The terms of the agreement stipulated Louis VI would only intervene when called to do so by the Order. Yet this agreement allowed Louis VI to occupy Cluniac-owned fortifications.


548 Ibid. The territory of the champenois was held jointly with their cousins of Ramerupt-Roucy family. The territory located in the Île-de-France included territories in the dioceses of Meaux, Paris and Senlis. Apart from the lands at Esserent and Bulle, there is little documentation regarding these holdings.
all routes granting access to the royal domain. The relationship between Hugh and the French monarchy vacillated. King Philip I, together with his powerful brother Hugh of Crépy and Hugh’s wife Adèle, were witnesses to the foundational charter of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, legitimizing the young Dammartin family. While only years prior, the Dammartin family was in conflict with King Philip, the chapter of Notre-Dame of Paris and Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis.

Upon the death of Hugh (c. 1105), his son Peter assumed the title of count. In 1102 Louis VI, not yet king, waged war against Eble, the Count of Roucy, which resulted in the humiliation of Eble. The defeat of Eble, sparked Peter (Elbe’s cousin) to align himself with Thibault IV, the Count of Champagne, against Louis VI. At the Battle of Gournay, in 1106, Peter was mortally wounded. Upon his death Louis VI took possession of the château at Dammartin-en-Goële and the seat of the comté, by proxy. At this moment the House of Dammartin split into three lines. The various charters dating through the thirteenth century reflect how the members of the Dammartin

549 Ibid., 108.


551 Ibid., 107-08. This conflict with the chapter of Notre-Dame of Paris resulted in the excommunication of Hugh. King Philip constructed a château at Montmélian facing the château of Dammartin-en-Goële offering strategic protection from Hugh. See also Gautier Poupéau, “La famille Dammartin,” 97.

552 There is no documentation in the cartulary to confirm the death of Hugh. The first mention of Peter as count comes in 1104. See Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, “Emptio cuiusdam vinee apud Domnumartimum de consensu Petri comitis, (1104),” IV, 7-8.

553 Georges Duby, France in the Middle Ages, 125. Abbot Suger described Eble as a “tyrant.”

554 Ibid. In the years leading up to and following the death of King Philip, certain vassals, including territorial princes and counts, challenged the ascent of Louis VI to the throne.

555 While King Louis lacked the necessary power to usurp the comté outright, through the creation of political marriages and alliances he was able to control the former Dammartin comté. King Louis arranged the marriage of Peter’s son, already stripped of his title, to Clémence of Bar, the daughter of Renaud I of Bar-le-Duc. Clémence later married Renaud of Clermont, an ally of the king, a union effectuating the merger of one branch of the Dammartin family with the Counts of Clermont. Lancelin of Beauvais, the husband of Adélaïde, Peter’s sister, served as the king’s surrogate. Gautier Poupéau, “La famille Dammartin,” 110-11. See Léopold Delisle, Recherches sur les comtes de Dammartin au XIIIe siècle (Nogent-le-Rotrou: impr. de A. Gouverneur, 1869).

556 Ibid. See also Léopold Delisle, Recherches sur les comtes de Dammartin au XIIIe siècle.
and Clermont families featured prominently in the priory.557

The Priory of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent

The foundational charter gifted a church, an altar, atrium and revenue from the church dîme or tithe (ecclesiam de hescerent, et altare, et atrium et decimam) to Guy the Bishop of Beauvais (1063-85) on the condition he found a Cluniac priory (figure 4-10).558 The opening lines of the charter, together with the larger collection of charters of the cartulary reveal the essence of Hugh’s motivation.559 The 1081 text mentions his (Hugh’s) countless sins (innumerabilia peccata mea) that necessitated redemption.560 With continual prayer (sine intermissione orarent) these sins will be erased (juxta scripture autoritatem, omnino ea extinguerent), according to the text.561 As both penitent and aristocrat, Hugh was the ideal candidate and member of the Cluniac confraternity. His motivation to invest in Saint-Leu was also timely, serving to further legitimize his authority and

557 Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Collection Baluze, vol. 46, fol. 52 v.; and Léopold Delisle, Recherches sur les comtes de Dammartin au XIIIe siècle, appendix 3, 55. A charter of 1128 records the gift of ten livres parisisii to the priory on behalf of the Count of Boulogne and Mortain, given by Philip, the Count of Dammartin and Boulogne together with his wife Matilda in memory of Renaud of Dammartin. Renaud, like Hugh and Peter before him, was involved in a heated conflict with Philip Augustus in the years leading up to the battle of Bouvines. See also Stephen Murray, Beauvais Cathedral, 35.

558 Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, “Carta fundationis surpradicti Prioratus ab Hugone comite de Domno Martino,” I-II, note 5. This charter has been dated to both 1080 and 1081. The foundation included the fiefs of Guy de la Roche and Roger of Nanteuil. According to Müller, Bishop Guy retired to Cluny, further serving to cement the relationship between the bishop and Cluny. See also Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise): analyse architecturale et archéologique” Ph.D. diss., Université des Sciences Humaines et Sociales Charles de Gaulle, Lille 3, 2008, 25. Hanquiez notes the donation of the church at Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, owned by the Count of Dammartin, was part of a larger campaign to reform and recuperate churches in the hands of the laity. Bishop Guy of Beauvais was active in this cause.

559 A story, to which scholars (Émile Lambin, Eugène Woillez and Eugène Müller) frequently refer, credits the inspiration for the creation of Saint-Leu to Hugh’s rescue by a small Benedictine monastery, who paid for the release of the ransomed count, then on pilgrimage to the Holy Lands. Yet the foundational charter made no mention of this story. According to Gautier Pouppeau, this story was nonexistent prior to 1828. This foundational myth, creating a benevolent and pious image of Hugh, appears at a moment when the church was in need of restoration funds in the nineteenth century. From 1855-1912 the church underwent restoration conducted by the architects Aymar Verdier and Paul Selmersheim. See Paris: Médiathèque de l’architecture et du patrimoine, carton 1984, église de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise). See also Gautier Pouppeau, “La famille Dammartin,” 105. Pouppeau argues the lack of documentation coupled with Hugh’s activity between 1060-80, reflected in donations and charters, allowed little time for such a pilgrimage.; and Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, 15-16.


561 Ibid.
affect the sacralization of his power. As a necropolis, Saint-Leu served as an important repository of aristocratic identity for the relatively young Dammartin family, expressing its dynastic heritage.

According to Delphine Hanquiez, Hugh structured Saint-Leu-d’Esserent as a type of lordship in which he maintained control of the land, yet with the revenues profiting the priory. To ensure its long-term fiscal success the count freed his vassals to donate to the priory, enabling them to benefit from the services of commemoration of the souls and burial. This accessibility further affirmed Hugh’s authority and reinforced his legacy as the benevolent, noble founder.

---

562 Eliana Magnani Soares-Christen, *Monastères et aristocratie en Provence*. Interesting parallels exist between the expansion of Cluny in the area of Haute-Provence and the north of France, in which seigneurial families sought to confirm both temporal and sacral power through the act of foundations.

563 Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 22. Hanquiez draws evidence from the cartulary entries that clearly support this idea.

564 Eugène Müller, *Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire*, XXIX, XXXIV, LX, LXI, and XXXIV. Among the donations to the priory in the eleventh century several originated with seigneurial families such as Raoul I (knight of Esserent), Hugh Bouvier of Pontoise, Mathias of Senlis, Eudes Sanglier, John of Creil, Mello, Gournay, Mouchy, Guy the Chambrier and Guy de la Tour of Senlis (the bouteiller). See also Eliana Magnani Soares-Christen, *Monastères et aristocratie en Provence*. 

---

Figure 4-10. Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, the priory of Saint-Leu, plan of archaeological site, drawing by Pierre Durvin, Isabelle Gant and Jean-Louis Bernard. Philippe Racinet “Observations sur l’implantation et sur l’agencement du prieuré clunisien de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise),” *Revue archéologique de Picardie*, no. 1/2 (1989), 161, fig. 7.
Saint-Leu as Necropolis: Burial and Observances for the Dead

As a necropolis for the Counts of Dammartin and Clermont commemoration of the souls and burial were an important function of the priory. Despite the prohibition of burial inside churches by medieval canon law burial in churches did occur, an honor reserved more frequently for elite members of society and members of the clergy.\textsuperscript{565} Arguably, in the course of the thirteenth century, at which point canon law changed, entombment in the interior of a church was generally the domain of monastic institutions.\textsuperscript{566} In exchange for donations members of the Cluniac confraternities benefited from the liturgical observances, particularly the commemoration of the souls and burial.

The primary burial sites for both the bishops of Noyon and Senlis were Cistercian monasteries (Ourscamp and Chaalis), institutions closely affiliated with each cathedral.\textsuperscript{567} Saint-Leu was the necropolis for the Counts of Dammartin and Clermont, the founding members of the priory and their vassals. The death of Peter provides a window into the role the priory played as a necropolis.

Peter specified, in a charter, his burial should be within the church, alongside his parents (\textit{juxta patrem suum atque fratrem [matrem] apud Sanctum Lupum de Escerente habere sepulturam meretur}).\textsuperscript{568} Although heavily mutilated in 1793 the \textit{gisant} tomb of founder Count Hugh is located in the northern nave aisle of the priory church (figure 4-11). It is still possible to see him depicted as a knight dressed in chainmail.\textsuperscript{569} Among the various charters in the cartulary dating from the early

\textsuperscript{565} For more on canonic law see: Anne Duggan, “Conciliar Law, 1123-1215: The Legislation of the Four Lateran Councils,” 318-66.

\textsuperscript{566} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{567} The first episcopal burial at Noyon was not until well after the 1220s, while the bishops of Senlis continued to use the abbey of Chaalis as a place of burial through the thirteenth century. For burial records at Noyon see Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Latin 17038, \textit{Nombreux dessins d'après monuments et objets divers} (1869); and Abbé M. Magne, “Mémoire sur les pierres tombales.” For burial records at Senlis, see Eugène Müller, \textit{Monographie des rues}, 210. The vast majority of the bishops of Senlis (from the second half of the twelfth century) were buried at the Cistercian abbey of Chaalis, founded by Louis VI.

\textsuperscript{568} Eugène Müller, \textit{Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire}, “Carta Domini Petri de Domno Martino comite qui redit quatuor morios frumenti in molendino de Hermenaldi Villa,” XI11, 16-17. Peter bequeathed a portion of the proceeds from a mill at Ermenonville and a field at Bulles as payment for his burial at the priory.

\textsuperscript{569} Emmanuel Woillez, \textit{Répertoire archéologique du département de l’Oise}, 170.
twelfth to the early thirteenth century
roughly eight specify burial within the church for couples and individuals of the Dammartin and Clermont families and their vassals. 570

In keeping with the Cluniac paradigm, Saint-Leu also functioned as a site for the commemoration of the dead. Seven charters in the cartulary (not including those stipulating burial) specifically request annual remembrances. 571 Carrying considerable monetary value, equivalent to burial services, these donations emphasize the importance placed by lay community at Saint-Leu on

570 Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, “Carta Durban de Tiverniaco de parties in porerna Montis Tharoe sitis,” X, 15. Durand of Tiverny and his wife Adélaïde, daughter of a man named Hugh (c. 1107), gave a portion of the Montataire meadow on the condition they could be buried at the priory. Tiverny and Montataire are located in the canton of Creil, department of the Oise; “Carta Fulconis de vineis apud Buxeium et de terra de Habevalle,” XVII, 21. This charter names Foulques, son of Aszoise and Robert of Dammartin, who bequeathed a vineyard at Boissy in exchange for burial.; “Testamentum Domine Maragaritae de Gerborepio pra anniversario suo faciendo.” XXXI, 34-35. Marguerite of Gerberoy was among the first of the Clermont family buried at Saint-Leu. Her husband Gérard and son Renaud the Count of Clermont founded an annual remembrance of her birthday and requested her burial at the priory (c. 1136); CX, 111, Philip of Boulogne and Dammartin and the Countess Mathilde (his wife) donated ten livres for the salvation and burial of Renaud the Count of Boulogne.; “Carta Symonis comitis de Pontieux qui concessit decem millia alecium,” CXII, 113. In 1230-31, Simon the Count of Ponthieu and Montreuil-sur-Mer together with his wife donated revenue on behalf of their parents Renaud the Count of Boulogne.

571 Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, “de anniversario dne Hadalaidis de Claromonte,” XL, 44. Adélaïde, the daughter of Hugh of Clermont and wife of Gislebert of England, donated revenues for the annual remembrance of her mother and father (c. 1130). These were revenues were in the form of tithes from the churches at Thorigny, Avrigny, Précy and Bencehin; “Carta Hugonis Gornacensis Dni de renta manselli apud Caufiniacum,” XLVI, 48-49. Hugh, the lord of Gournay-en-Bray, together with his son, contributed revenues (c. 1144) for prayer for his first wife Béatrix, the sister of Raoul I of Vermandois; “Carta Berneri militis de novo molendino pro suo anniversario,” LXXVII, 79. Around 1150s-60s an unnamed knight of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent and his wife Roaide donated their new mill and associated rights, together with all of their possessions at Villers-sous-Saint-Leu for their annual remembrance; “Quomodo comes Radulflus Claromontis concessit ecclesiam beati Ebremundi de Credulio,” LXXIX, 81-82. Raoul of Clermont gave the church of Saint-Evremond at Creil for the salvation of his ancestors buried at the priory, February 24, 1176. Prior Renaud was among the witnesses of the charter; “Carta alia Theobaldi Episcopi Ambianensis de duodecim modiis bladi a Symone de Alliaco concessis,” LXXXV, 90. With the death of Raoul at Saint-Jean-d’Acre in 1191, his wife Mathilde and their sons Raoul and Guy made a donation to the church for the protection of his soul; “Lettre de John of Poissy essuyer pour de certains prez scis en la noe,” XCI (December, 1201), 95. In 1202, in return for annual revenue, John of Poissy requests observances for the salvation of his soul, along with those of his ancestors; and “Carta Dnae Catharinae comitissae de eleemosyna Hugonis de Pratis,” XCIX, 101-02. Hugh of Pres and his wife Mazilie offered money for the salvation of their son, Raoul, confirmed by Countess Catherine in 1208.
such observances. Notably, these donations also coincide with important moments in the construction of the church, such as the completion of the narthex (c. 1140s), work on the choir (1150s-70s) and the start of nave and upper stories (1170s-1180s and into thirteenth century). This concentrated giving is a testament to the success of the Cluniac program for the commemoration of the dead not just at Saint-Leu, but for the Order in general. Suffering from its popularity, the necrologies and services grew unwieldy requiring the Order to place limits on lay participation in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

\[572\]

Priors of Saint-Leu and the Construction of the Church

The cartulary remains the only source of information regarding the priors of Saint-Leu. Construction of the church started in the west with the narthex under Prior Aimar I (c. 1104-1134), most likely the first prior of Saint-Leu (figures 4-3, 4-12). Through the various stages of the narthex construction (1130s-1140s), leadership changed from Aimar I to Renaud I (c. 1135-1138) to Aimar II (c. 1139-58). Work on the choir began under Aimar II (c. 1139-58) and continued during the tenure of Renaud II (c. 1171-83). A charter dating to 1176 notes Renaud II, "Rainaldo de Alta Petra" (Renaud of Haut-Pierre), the cousin of Raoul of Clermont, held the titles of prior of Saint-Leu and sub-prior of Cluny. Before his appointment Renaud II served as sub-prior of Saint-Leu (c.

\[573\]

\[574\]

\[575\]

\[576\]
Renaud II is an important figure as both a member of the aristocratic family of Clermont and witness to much of the construction of the church. Construction drew to a close with the vaulting of the ceilings and completion of the nave (c. 1190s-1200), during the administration of Prior Nicolas.

Part III:

Saint-Leu at Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: An Architectural Study

Constructed to house a community of approximately twenty-five monks, whose numbers remained relatively constant through the eighteenth century, the monastic complex of Saint-Leu was made up of a church, claustral

576 Eugène Müller, *Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire*, LVII, 57, note 352, 78, note 296. Renaud II was a witness as sub-prior of Saint-Leu. According to Müller, ‘Haut-Pierre’ is a reference to a town in the canton of Vereel in Doubs. Müller seems skeptical that Renaud was the cousin of the Count of Clermont, despite having been identified as such in the charter of 1176. In the same volume, see “Carta Dni Rainaldi comitis de Claromonte qua confirmat quod Albericus de Mello dedit monachis Sti Lupi,” LXIII, 64; “Quomodo comes Radulfus Claromontis concessit ecclesiam beati Ebremundi de Credulio,” LXXIX, 81-82 (this charter references Renaud as sub-prior of Cluny, dated February 24, 1176); and LXXX, 83-86. See also *L’inventaire sommaire des archives départementales*, vol. II, 346. Also dated February 24, this document refers to Renaud as prior of Saint-Leu; Delphine Hanquiez, “Le chevet de l’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 149.

577 See Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 148-49 and 224-226. Hanquiez notes a distinct style difference between each of these architectural phases most evident between the hemicycle and the straight bays. She is posits the change in the straight bays could be due to the former presence of an altar or choir stalls. Looking at the masonry joints and beds of stone, she surmises the medieval builders worked in horizontal bands. Yet the break from the choir to nave is vertical suggesting an alternative reading of masonry in which contradicts Hanquiez’s reading. Given the progression of the construction, vertically east to west, this difference suggests a change in the campaign of construction.
buildings and a cemetery (figure 4-13).\textsuperscript{578} Our understanding of the claustral buildings and cemetery is dependent on the few accessible vestiges and archeological excavations conducted in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.\textsuperscript{579} The complex sits on a parcel of land defined in part by the Thiverny plateau. The abrupt terminus of the plateau, forming a cliff, defines the perimeter to the east where the foundation of the radiating chapels forms part of the retaining wall (figures 4-1, 4-2). Today, on the southern side of the church is an enclosed garden after which the terrain slopes down towards the village of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (figures 4-13, 4-14). A drawing of the complex by Paul Selmersheim situates the claustral buildings on the north side of the church (figures 4-13). The

\textsuperscript{578} Maryse Bideault and Claudine Lautier, “Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: Prieuré Saint-Leu,” 318. Based on archeological evidence, Philippe Racinet dates this earlier church shortly before 1081, described as a three-aisled longitudinal basilica terminated with three apses échelonnés or staggered. Racinet argues this earlier building was not a pre-existing structure, but constructed for the priory. See Philippe Racinet, “Observations sur l’implantation et sur l’agencement du prieuré clunisien de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise),” Revue archéologique de Picardie, vol. 1, no. 1 (1989), 135. Racinet bases his conclusions on the archeological findings of Durvin in the 1950s. See also Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, “Église de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 121-22. Lefèvre-Pontalis indicates a similarly designed church with a transept. He draws from the archeological findings of Paul Selmersheim, which are more limited than those of Durvin.

\textsuperscript{579} Paris: Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, carton 1984, église de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise), 1873. See also Albert Fossard, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent. Fossard once owned the property to the north where the claustral buildings were located. Today this property remains in private hands and has not been studied since the work of Fossard.
cloister, of which vestiges remain running alongside the church, once stood in this area (figure 4-15). A door on the northern flank of the church, located in the nave aisle just before the choir hemicycle, once provided the community of monks access from the cloister and claustral buildings into the church. Albert Fossard locates the former cemetery in the parvis, the area in front of the church, which at a later date was moved to the garden on the southern side of the church (figure 4-13). Among the requests for burial by the vassals of the Counts of Dammartin and Clermont in the cartulary, one stipulated the location of the aitre or cemetery for Aveline Aiguillon, mother of John and Peter (c. 1130s-40s). As a necropolis, the cemetery of Saint-Leu played an important role in the complex, however, despite the archeological findings, our understanding of the claustral buildings and cemetery remains limited.

---

580 Ibid., Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, 94. See also Jean-Louis Bernard, “Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise): une réinterprétation du site après les fouilles de 1998,” Revue archéologique de Picardie, vol. 3, no. 1 (2000): 167-69. The 1998 study is inconclusive in its findings regarding the cemetery. Human remains were discovered in the garden enclosure, but revealed little as to the nature and date of these burials.

581 Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, “Carta fratrum Stimulorum de justitia apud Cramisiacum,” XXXVII, 41. “…Avelinae defuncte et in atrio beati Lupi honorifice sepulte…” (the deceased Avelinae buried in the atrio or porch of Saint-Leu).
Through architecture and liturgy the Cluniac order sought to reify its position as the rightful heir to the *vita apostolica*. The monks of Cluny called their monumental two-towered entryway or narthex at Cluny II (d. 981) a *galilaea*, as discussed in Chapter I (figure 1-12). Galilaea referenced Galilee where Christ predicted he would see the Apostles following His Resurrection, described in Matthew 28:16-22. The Cluniac customary, *Liber tramitis*, records the *galilaea* as functioning in part as a processional station each Sunday and at Easter. At these moments, within the framework of the porch of the *galilaea*, Cluniac monks would symbolically re-enact the meeting of Christ and the

---

*582 Liber tramitis aei Odilonis abbatis*, ed. Peter Dinter, Corpus Consuetudinum Monasticarum 10 (Siegburg: Franz Schmitt, 1980), 204. The following description appears in the *Liber tramitis*: “Galilea longitudinis sexaginta et quinque pedes et duae turrae sunt ipsius galilaea in fronte constitute et subter ipsas atrium est ubi laici stant, ut non impediant processionem. A porta mediana usque ad portam aquilonarium pedes ducenti octoginta” (“The *galilaea* is one hundred and sixty feet long with two towers. The laity stood in front of the porch (atrium/forecourt) as not to impede the processions. From the middle (or southern) to the northern portal measures two hundred and eighty feet.”).

*Kristina Krüger, “Architecture and Liturgical Practice: The Cluniac *Galilaea*,” 138-59. According to Krüger this nomenclature was broadly applied to priory churches and other churches reformed by Cluny. Krüger sites Matthew 28:16-22. See also Matthew 28:16-20, *The Holy Bible* (New York: American Bible Society, 1881): “Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go... Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age’.” Yet the reference to Galilee might also refer to Jesus’s encounter with the Apostles in Matthew 4:18-19. See *The Holy Bible*: And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And saith unto them Follow me, and I will make you fisher of men. See also: “gallery,” *OED Online*; Galilee might also refer to Acts 1:11. “Men of Galilee, they said, why do you stand here looking into the sky? The same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back to you in the same way....” http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/view/Entry/76266?rskey=1kYws8&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid

Apostles. With this important religious drama witnessed by the laity, the active participation of the Cluniac monks affirmed their spiritual authority as the new Apostles, while it imbued the architecture with religious significance.

At Saint-Leu, construction on the present church began in the west c. 1130s-1140s with the narthex or *galileae* during the leadership of Aimar I and Renaud I (figures, 4-3, 4-12, 4-16). This chronology, presented by Hanquiez, situates this construction in a comparable timeframe to the narthex at Saint-Denis (early 1130s). While the two structures share architectural affinities they are in fact quite different. The narthex at Saint-Leu features a porch with three contiguous bays at ground level, and a second story also of three bays form a space for chapels (figures 4-17, 4-18, 4-19). In contrast the Saint-Denis narthex is a solid structure, its three portals open onto interior of narthex, leading directly through to the nave (figures 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5). The upper rooms at Saint-Denis lie adjacent to each other, but are not contiguous. The architecture of the Saint-Leu narthex rather expresses affinities with other Cluniac examples. Twelve charters (c. 1144-45) mark a

---

585 Ibid., “Monastic Customs and Liturgy,” 204-05.
concentration of gift giving suggesting construction of the Saint-Leu narthex was nearing completion or in fact complete. This concentrated giving further substantiates the 1130s-40s chronology, which includes charters requesting burial and commemoration services of family members of the Counts of Clermont and their vassals. 588 During this period donor confidence in the priory is evident in the number of donations, suggesting donors were poised to take advantage of the Cluniac services for the dead housed in the upper story of the narthex (figures 4-18, 4-19). 589

A two-storied structure surmounted by one complete tower on its southern side and vestiges of a second tower on the north side, the

---

588 The following charters in Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent: cartulaire, date from 1144: “De anniversario Dne Hadalaidis de Claromonte” XL, 44 (Adélaide daughter of Hugh of Clermont and Marguerite gives revenue from several churches for the care of their souls); “Carta de transit points de Credulio,” XLI, 45 (a gift from Renaud II the Count of Clermont); “Carta Adonis Belvacensis Episcopi confirmantis donum comitis Rainalde de tertia parte pontis de Credulio.” XLII, 45; “Littera comitis Claromentensis ad Remensium archiepiscopal pro confermando sum done facto Deco et monachi Sti Lupi Ascerente,” XLII, 46 (here the Count of Clermont encourages Samson, the archbishop of Reims, to donate funds); “Carta Regis Ludovici pro transverso pontis Credulii et pro usagio in uis nemoribus.” XLIV, 47 (this charter confirms gifts made by Renaud the Count of Clermont and usage of the royal forest by priory signed by Louis VII, first accorded by Louis VI); and “Facultas concessa Priori et conventui beati Lupi per dominum Episcopum Belvacensem de revocandis decimis ab injuste possidentibus,” XLV, 48. In this last charter, the bishop of Beauvais confirms tithes initially taken from the priory as noted in “Carta Hugonis Gornacensis Dni de renta manselli apud Caufiniacum,” XLVI, 48. Hugh the Count of Gournay-en-Bray together with his son donated revenue from Cauvigny for the soul of his first wife Béatrix. See also XLVII 49; XLVIII, 50; and the following from 1145: XLIX, 50; L, 51; and LI, 52. There are several acts that follow in the cartulary that do not have dates.

589 As noted, Eugène Müller and Delphine Hanquiez argue that based on stylistic evidence and Cluniac affiliation, the narthex at Saint-Leu followed these traditions. See Eugène Müller, Le prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent, 9-10; and Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 169-71.
narthex was the principal entry used by the laity (figures 4-12, 4-16). Monumental in its scale and mass, the narthex or *galilaea* projects forward from the body of the church (figures 4-3, 4-20, 4-21).\(^{590}\) Its architectural language differs from the body of the church in its block-like solidity, massing that recalls Carolingian *Westwerke* and similar Cluniac examples found at Paray-le-Monial, Moissac and Tournus (figures 4-22, 4-23, 4-24).\(^ {591}\) Not only is the architecture different: it does not align with the body of the church (figure 4-3). While perhaps conceived as an independent unit, the narthex does communicate with the nave. The pilaster-like buttresses dividing the façade into three bays create continuity with the nave, announcing the interior ground plan of both *galilaea* and the body of the church (a central vessel flanked by two aisles). Internally divided in two stories the ground level of the narthex is a deep porch of three bays arranged longitudinally, the second story replicates this ground plan with similar dimensions (figure 4-20). A total of nine windows, framed by ornate hood moldings, illuminate this upper space. Grouped in sets of two, the upper windows run the length of the western and northern façades, with one single window found on the southern wall. The two centrally-placed windows are

---


\(^{591}\) Regionally, the churches of Morienval, Notre-Dame at Etampes and Saint-Loup-de-Naud also have porches of similar portion and massing, but diverge in overall appearance.
larger than the others. Situated centrally on the eastern wall of this upper space is a large aperture, framed by a pointed arch, opening on to the interior of the nave (figure 4-25).

It should be noted, much of the narthex, particularly the western façade and porch, was subjected to later interventions. The work of Emmanuel Woillez (1849), conducted prior to the restoration, helps distinguish those elements which are a product of rebuilding and restoration (figure 4-12). Noticeably, the pointed-arch window openings at ground-level and a large part of the “beauvaisine” cornice (an ornamental molding of interlocking arches with the corbelled heads situated between these arches, located below the roofline and typically found in the region around Beauvais) are products of restoration. While subjected to restoration the ornamental forms framing the central portal, on the exterior wall of the façade, the elaborate registers of molding profiles and the gable strip-molding of the arch adhere to the medieval program (figures 4-12, 4-16). During the

---

592 Emmanuel Woillez, *Archéologie des monuments religieux de l'ancien Beauvoisis pendant la métamorphose romane*, pl. 3. This illustration was later re-drawn and published in the following article: Maurice Graves, “Église et couvent de Saint-Leu-d’Ésserent,” *Congrès archéologique*, vol. 32 (1866): 154-67.
course of the Middle Ages and again in the nineteenth century builders and restorers conducted extensive reconstruction and restoration on the porch interior (figure 4-17). It does, however, remain possible to understand the general medieval configuration of the narthex porch. Today, flanking the central bay of the porch, massive compound piers and transverse arches project into the space. The original configuration was less encumbered by these later, bulky additions. Four doors, once found in each of the cardinal directions, opened into the porch (figure 4-17). Portals located on axis, on the western façade and interior eastern walls of the porch provide access into interior of the church. A portal situated along the southern wall of the porch offered access for the clergy during processions on Sundays and at Easter, in keeping with Cluniac liturgical traditions, as noted above. During these times within the framework of the porch Cluniac monks would symbolically re-enact the meeting of Christ and the Apostles, as noted. Now shuttered, what appears to be a door situated on the northern wall of


A description of the *galilaea* at Cluny II found in the *Liber tramitis* “*A porta mediana usque ad portam aquilonarium pedes ducenti octoginta,*” “From the middle (southern) to the northern portal measures two hundred and eighty feet,” specifying such a door in this location suggests this portal at Saint-Leu was indeed part of the original medieval construction as Woillez posits. The remaining elements, such as the vaulting and sculpted heads, are products of the nineteenth-century restoration, on this lower level. While also subjected to restoration the upper space of the narthex, unlike the porch, remains largely in its original state (figures 4-18, 4-19). A designated staircase tower located in the western wall of the south nave aisle provides entry to this second story space. The staircase itself is approximately three feet wide.

---

595 Emmanuel Woillez, *Archéologie des monuments religieux*, 23. Woillez suggests this portal was of modern construction, having replaced an early version contemporary with the narthex. See also Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 110. Hanquiez notes perhaps this door dates to the sixteenth century.


597 Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 110. The original disposition of the vaulting remains unknown. Emmanuel Woillez suggests the central bay was originally rib-vaulted. See also Paris: Médiathèque de l'architecture et du patrimoine, dossier 0081/060/0159, a *devis* by Corbel et Chervet, dated 1875.
comparable in width to the tribune staircase towers at Notre-Dame of Noyon. Medieval builders designed these rather uncommon, relatively spacious staircases for the ease of daily use. All Souls Day observances included processional stations to the altar of the archangel Saint Michael in the second story chapel of the narthex at Cluny III. Considered the protector of Christian souls and serving an active role in the Last Judgment, the archangel Michael was a central figure in eschatological drama and salvation of the souls. Ritualized death for the Cluniac order involved

---

598 All measurement are my own, done with a hand-held laser measure. See Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 98. Drawing from archaeological evidence, she notes the original entrance to the staircase tower would have been on the exterior of the original Romanesque nave. See also Jean-Louis Bernard, “Le Prieuré de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent (Oise),” 160-63, fig. 7.

masses at the time of death and the observance of subsequent anniversaries. These masses took place in the second story chapel of the *galilaea*, adding another layer of meaning to this architectural form. With the celebration of the triumph over death expressed in the reenactment of the Resurrection drama held below in the porch, each Sunday and at Easter, coupled with intercessory prayers and daily masses for the dead performed in the chapel above, the *galilaea* played an important role in the salvation of souls. Approximating the dimensions of the porch at ground level, as noted, the three bays of the second story form a rectangle, roughly forty-five feet length by sixteen feet wide. Natural light floods the space through the nine windows (figures 4-18, 4-19). The large aperture on the eastern face of the chapel, defined by a broad pointed arch which frames the two centrally placed second-story windows, provides visual access to the interior of the church and vice versa (figures 4-25, 4-26). Viewed from the nave this upper space appears tribune-like in its dimensions. Sumptuously decorated, this upper space features lavish ornamentation and sculptural details punctuating each of the three bays. The accordion-like appearance of the ribs, a thick central torus framed by two ribs of a zigzag pattern on either side, defines the quadripartite vaulting in each bay.

---

600 Kristina Krüger, “Architecture and Liturgical Practice: The Cluniac *Galilaea*,” 151-52. According to Krüger, following the death of a monk at Cluny or any of its dependencies a mass was held each day for the following thirty days. With the growth of the Order came an exponentially increasing number of masses. The need to limit these observances became pressing in the early twelfth century.

(figure 4-27). Hanquiez argues the staccato rhythm of the capital heights, upon which these ribs rest, is purely aesthetic (figure 4-28).

However, taking into consideration the narthex of Saint-Denis, as one such example, we might reach an alternative reading (figure 4-29). Medieval builders appeared to face constructional obstacles due to the complexity of the vaulting structure resulting in various attempts to coordinate the juncture between the ribs and the transverse arch. Arguably, at both churches, medieval builders sought a workable solution for the heights of the capitals.

The overall decorative details and ornamentation provides an instructive point of comparison with the choir tribune at Notre-Dame of Noyon. At Saint-Leu, located in the central bay

602 This type of vaulting can be seen at the church of Saint-Denis at Foulanguens, the narthex at the abbey church of Saint-Denis, the choir of Saint-Germer-de-Fly, etc. Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis characterizes this vaulting as “primitive,” dating it to the 1140s. See Eugène Lefèvre-Pontalis, “Église de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 121-29. See also Delphine Hanquiez, “L’église prieurale de Saint-Leu-d’Esserent,” 113. Hanquiez mentions this type of arrangement was also used in Norman churches.

surrounding the keystone of the vaulting are five sculptural heads looking down at the viewer (figure 4-30). Four of these heads adorn the spandrels, defined by each rib. A fifth image adorns the keystone itself. Three of the sculptural heads, situated in the spandrels, clearly depict bearded men with short-cropped hair. The fourth figure in this group and the fifth keystone figure are women, both lacking beards, featuring long striated hair and some semblance of a neckline. The four figures of the spandrels are carved in high-relief and appear to be nearly in the round. The fifth figure, carved in bas-relief, conforms to the shape of the keystone. Despite these distinctions the sculptural treatment of each figure is uniform. Broad flat noses, treatment of the hair, bulging almond shaped eyes with notable drill work on the pupils are among the defining features of the Saint-Leu group.

A comparison with the heads found in the tribunes of Noyon reveals similarities in both their placement in the spandrels of second-story vaulting and the general sculptural treatment of the head,
face, and hair (figure 4-31). At both churches, the ensemble of heads appear to form an audience, figures who once observed the services held in the space directly below. Both groups display a similar desire to convey naturalism evident in the facial features and inclusion of pupils. However, the Noyon group, carved approximately thirty years after those at Saint-Leu, presents a sharp contrast in the formal details. The Noyon heads express variety and individuality, as seen in the facial structure, hairstyles and treatment of the facial features. While at Saint-Leu there is uniformity in the treatment of the figures, in that both the men and women resemble one another. This treatment suggests these figures present a standardized or symbolic representation, perhaps indicating a family grouping, rather than individual figures. Notably, there are no identifiable women in the Noyon group. The inclusion of women in the framework of a monastic institution like

---

604 See Charles Seymour, “Têtes gothique de la cathédrale de Noyon,” 137-42. Similar heads are found in certain churches in the region like in the choir aisles at Notre-Dame d’Etampes, and the churches of Chons, Quesony, Crouettes and Dhuziel. Yet at Noyon and Saint-Leu these figures are found in second story spaces, like the tribune and narthex of the two churches.

Saint-Leu (a community restricted to males), and not in the more public realm of the cathedral is curious. Based upon their adjacency within the architectural framework together with the formal similarities shared between the men and women figures we may surmise that these female figures are not negative symbols warning the community of monks against temptation or lust, as frequently encountered in depictions of women in monastic sculpture. Rather these women, like their male counterparts, are witnesses to the religious observances once held in the space below. The uniformity of sculptural treatment conveys a sense of a collective group of people, expressing the notion of a dynastic family, more specifically the founding family of Counts of Dammartin and Clermont. The charters in the cartulary demonstrate the high frequency in which women requested burial and services for the dead. Women, wives and daughters, including the Countesses of Dammartin and Clermont, were actively involved in the priory, figuring prominently as donors and witnesses in the charters of the cartulary, including the foundation charter of 1081. Like their brothers, husbands and sons these women were also buried within the interior of the church; indeed, their names figured equally among the necrologies, meriting a

---

606 It is unclear whether women would have had access to this upper chapel. See Kristine Tanton, “The Marking of Monastic Space: Inscribed Language on Romanesque Capitals,” Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2013.
sculptural presence in the spandrels of this monastic setting. Like the *gisant* tomb statue in the nave, the presence of the Dammartin and Clermont families echoes throughout the church.

As found in the sculptural program at Noyon, the sculpture at Saint-Leu aids visitors as they move through the space, a space once housing chapels. Animating this second-story are two faces adorning a capital located centrally on the western wall and situated between two windows (figure 4-32). These twin curly-haired, bearded men with bulging eyes, one with his mouth open and the other with his mouth shut, share stylistic similarity to those found in the apex of the vault. The capital appears to be a Janus type, a two-faced male figure with two differing expressions that looks both forward and backward at the same time. The Roman god Janus was a protector of doorways. At Saint-Leu, the placement of the Janus figure might have intended to protect the religious observances and prayer performed in this space. With his mouth open towards the entrance and his twin’s mouth closed towards the two southern bays, the Janus capital also appears to announce the transition from activity and speech to the solemn observance of the masses.
for the dead. Situated in the western wall of the third, most southern bay of the second-story narthex is a niche space, perhaps, once serving as an ambry (a small recessed space for storage of liturgical objects) or piscina (a stone basin used during masses), as found at Noyon in the choir tribune. The presence of this niche coupled with the Janus capital strongly suggests the presence of a chapel here. A single figure, nearly identical to the sculptural treatment of the Janus, with a protruding tongue or an object in his mouth adorns a capital set within the northern arm of the transverse arch, defining the opening between this upper chapel and nave (figure 4-33). This figure, like the Janus capital on the western wall, appears to mark the transition between the more private space of the narthex and the public space of the nave. As a *galilaea*, the upper space of the narthex was a site for observances related to death and the commemoration of the souls in the Cluniac tradition. The relationship of the observances taking place in the bays of the second-story with the re-enactment of the Resurrection drama held below in the porch on Sundays and at Easter placed a powerful, coherent message of salvation in the hands of the Cluniac monks of Saint-Leu.

---

The Choir and Nave

The work on the retaining wall of the choir began shortly after the completion of the narthex (1140-50s) (figure 4-2). With the completion of this necessary structural foundation the medieval builders began construction on the choir (c. 1150-60s). After a pause in construction, work started again on the hemicycle, including the radiating chapels and first two straight bays of the choir (c. 1170-80s). Following a stoppage in construction, was a concentrated period of gift-giving. However, the priory still faced challenges in the second half of the twelfth century. This campaign of construction was funded, in part, by donations that included the gift of a fair at near-by Creil given by Raoul de Sully, the abbot of Cluny. A charter (c. 1176), created at the behest of Abbot Renaud II, granted Raoul I, the Count of Clermont, the right to construct a residence (without a tower) on the property of the monastery. The terms of the charter also granted Raoul I local judicial rights, placing

609 Ibid., 224-69.


considerable authority in the hands of the count. It appears the monks of Saint-Leu needed their seigneurial patrons, the Counts of Dammartin and Clermont, to reinvest in the priory and re-identify with the institution they founded, at this time. Granting Raoul I the ability to construct a residence with judicial rights seemingly replicates the original founding terms created by Hugh of Dammartin.

Delphine Hanquiez posits the adoption of the hemicycle plan by medieval builders of the choirs of the abbey church of Saint-Denis and Notre-Dame of Senlis, which she calls “Ludovician,” a reference to Kings Louis VI and VII, is evidence of the royal aspirations of Abbot Renaud II. Yet according to Kristina Krüger, logistical problems and economic strain plaguing the unwieldy Cluniac system of commemoration of the dead had grown exponentially, weakening the Order. The Order, having reached its zenith, was in decline during the second half of the twelfth century. Changes in the architecture of Cluny III ushered in a diminished role of the narthex. The choice of choir ground plan at Saint-Leu was not necessarily contingent on royal aspirations, but rather the desire to adopt a successful model in the region of the Île-de-France found in the neighboring churches at Notre-Dame of Senlis and Noyon: a decision inspired, in part, by institutional instability.

The Question of the Triforium

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, it is architectural and institutional difference that makes Saint-Leu important to consider in a study on tribunes. Architecturally, the three-story elevation of the priory church lacking a tribune yet with tribune-like triforium presents questions regarding

---

613 Ibid.

614 Ibid., 346-47.

615 Kristina Krüger, “Architecture and Liturgical Practice: The Cluny Galilaea,” 153. Krüger notes Peter the Venerable limited the number of anniversaries for the dead, as the system of care for the souls grew unwieldy. Cistercians, aware of these problems, placed a limit on the number of anniversaries observed and listed in necrologies.

616 Ibid. Krüger notes the subsequent construction of Cluniac priories that drew from Cluny III as a model greatly reduced the scale of the galilaea, which often shrunk to a single room.

204
nature of a tribune in architectural production during this period. For Gonse the triforium was a “simulacrum” of the tribune (figures 4-4, 4-8). However, this notion of a simulacrum, an imitation of a tribune remains problematic as it conjures a negative connotation. In one sense, the notion of imitation or copy strips agency from the medieval builders of Saint-Leu. In a nuanced perspective, Andrew Tallon argues the “highly visible technology” of the flying buttress of the tribune elevation at Notre-Dame of Paris captivated the medieval builders of Saint-Leu. According to Tallon, the constructional modifications jettisoning the original roof covering at the triforium level and insertion of flying buttresses was an act of both structural and stylistic appropriation, in fact a homage to the Parisian cathedral.617

What does the appearance of tribune-like triforium at Saint-Leu tell us about the nature of the tribune in church architecture at this time? Why did the medieval builders of Saint-Leu decide not to construct a full tribune, as found at Notre-Dame of Paris or even the neighboring cathedrals at Senlis or Noyon, when it appears they desired at least the look of a tribune? Applying the Krautheimerian notion of an architectural “copy,” in which the relationship between the original and copy building was not necessarily mimetic, but instead featured a “selective transfer” of architectural elements, it is plausible to conclude constructing the full tribune was unnecessary in order to evoke the prestige of Notre-Dame of Paris.618 The cathedrals at Senlis and Noyon, already available tribune prototypes at this time, may also have served as models in both elevation and ground plan.

As a Cluniac institution, Saint-Leu did not necessarily require a functioning tribune as tribunes were not featured in Cluniac practices, despite the great diversity in Cluniac church types. Moreover, the construction of tribunes presented considerable cost in both labor and materials,


perhaps inducing the builders of the priory to abandon this expense.\textsuperscript{619} The Cluniac order was in decline as work continued on upper stories of the choir and nave at Saint-Leu (c. 1190-1200). Undoubtedly, Cluniac priories confronted new financial burdens during this period. It was at this time that Cistercian monasteries took the lead in the commemoration of the souls and burial, further undermining Cluniac authority and resources. It was also during this period that episcopal institutions, bishops and their cathedrals regained much of the authority eroded in the eleventh and first half of the twelfth century.

Above the choir, we find a second story axial chapel constructed approximately in tandem with the triforium in the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries (figures 4-34, 4-35). It is possible to see the formal affinities this upper space shares with the choir tribunes of the cathedrals

\textsuperscript{619} This notion of replicating the look of the tribune was not unique to Saint-Leu. The false tribunes which lack a floor, as seen at the cathedrals of Rouen and Meaux and the church of Saint-Laurent of Eu convey this look without functionality.
of Laon, Noyon, Paris and Senlis (figures 1-6, 1-15, 4-8, 1-17). The architectural form of the chapel, its spaciousness, luminosity and visibility from within and below appears to mimic the look of choir tribunes, a vaulted space complete with lancet windows. The dedication or any liturgical documentation that might shed light on this enigmatic chapel remains obscure. Yet the expenditure on this construction implies a need or desire by the monastic community of Saint-Leu for such a space. Might this space represent a type of a fiscal compromise, a stand-in for full tribunes?

But we still have not addressed the question of why medieval builders might have sought to reference a tribune with its large triforium. What did the tribune represent for medieval people at in the twelfth century? Perhaps the answer lies in part in the phenomenon of architectural appropriation. Appropriation implies *habitus*, a “durable and transposable disposition” in which the tribune expressed the authority and strength the monks desired to co-opt at a critical moment of institutional weakness.\(^{620}\) The tribune-like triforium in concert with the second-story axial chapel strongly suggests the medieval builders of Saint-Leu desired or appropriated the look of the

---

cathedrals in the region, seeking to reestablish their local authority in the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{621}

\textit{Conclusion}

As the only church in this study without tribunes, yet with a tribune-like elevation and second-story axial chapel, the priory of Saint-Leu allows us to consider the role of architectural choice and constraint in this institution, while also providing a better understanding of the tribune in an early Gothic framework. It is notable that the construction of the tall triforium comes at a moment of flux for the priory; the Cluniac Order was facing challenges in the form of new competition in the realm of care of the dead, once their domain. The particular circumstances at Saint-Leu also necessitated a response reaffirming the spiritual authority of its monks. The profile of the lay community also was changing; they were no longer the young dynasty of the Counts of Dammartin, but the Counts of Clermont and Dammartin. Yet their relationships with the kings of France still vacillated.

While it is difficult to know to what extent the need to economize played, it is clear the community at Saint-Leu desired to convey the impression of a tribune. The tribune-like second-story chapel above choir echoes this reading. These considerations suggest an alternative narrative in which the builders of Saint-Leu-d’Esserent chose an architectural elevation resembling a tribune, in an effort to affirm their authority, as bishops had done only decades prior.

\textsuperscript{621} The medieval builders of Saint-Leu could have also drawn inspiration from the church of Saint-Germer-de-Fly, which, while not a Cluniac priory, was a monastic institution constructed with tribunes.
Focusing on choir tribunes of the cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis, this study has attempted to situate this long neglected architectural entity within a larger framework of the socio-political dynamics that shaped architectural production in twelfth-century France. Traditionally in Gothic scholarship the tribune is held as purely a constructional or structural feature designed to stabilize the vaults of the central vessel, an element eventually discarded by medieval builders in the course of the thirteenth century with the widespread use of flying buttresses. Yet careful study of the evidence suggests tribunes functioned, both physically and symbolically, in ways reaching beyond that of a simple structural prop. Documentation and architectural vestiges place chapels and altars in this context, not only at Notre-Dame of Noyon and Senlis, but also at the cathedrals of Laon, Santiago de Compostela and Tournai among other examples, confirming its use historically as a space of devotion. The chronicler Galbert of Bruges recounts the daily routine of Count Charles the Good in which he climbed the stairs to the tribunes of Saint-Donatian to participate in masses and pray.622 Despite these examples we still might question whether or not this space was constructed specifically to house devotion or if this function was merely subordinate to its structural purpose, simply making use of the empty space? Analysis of the episcopal complexes, the architecture of the palace, chapel and cathedral, at Noyon and Senlis demonstrates the tribune was in fact conceived as an integral element within this larger grouping. In this framework it was an architectural element

622 Galbert de Bruges, The Murder of Charles the Good, xliii.
providing the bishop and his clergy a means to access the various buildings. Drawing from a palatine complex type, commonly found in medieval and Byzantine royal palaces, the bishops of our cathedrals appropriated the *aula*-chapel-apartment formula for their palace and cathedral complexes. Such palatine types were well-known, used in various royal and episcopal complexes in twelfth-century France, notably at Senlis itself.\(^{623}\) The use of the tribune in an episcopal context as a type of *piano nobile*, an aristocratic second-story, was appropriate for the bishop as it confirmed his temporal authority and his lofty position in the medieval social hierarchy. Yet this space was not merely a passage or a type of platform, but held symbolic significance and functioned as a space of devotion. Chapels dedicated to Saint Michael in these upper spaces expressed a soteriological program that sought to establish the care of the souls in the domain of the bishop and his clergy. At Noyon, such observances were linked to burial rites held in the cemetery located just outside, behind the choir. Here a sculptural program in the tribune defines this space as devoted to angels and religious observances. At Senlis, the placement of a chapel dedicated to the archangel in an appropriated city wall tower capitalized on the role of Saint Michael as the defender of cities and their people, here again the bishop and clergy were situated as the primary intermediaries.\(^{624}\) The elevated placement of these spaces underscored medieval notions of a spatial hierarchy in which the tribune was an appropriate place for celestial beings.\(^{625}\) It was a liminal space located between heaven and earth. As the domain of the bishop and clergy the tribune affirmed their spiritual authority, placing them in the primary position as intercessors.

Consideration of the socio-political dynamics in the early twelfth century demonstrates how bishops faced an erosion of both their temporal and spiritual authority. Monastic institutions, like the Cluniac priory of Saint-Leu at Saint-Leu-d’Ésserent, had taken the lead in care for the souls,

\(^{623}\) For more on palatine complexes in France see Meredith Cohen, *The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy*, 125-31.

\(^{624}\) Dominique Vermand, *La cathédrale Notre-Dame de Senlis*, 31-32.

\(^{625}\) Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias,” 22-27.
capitalizing on the newly formed concept of purgatory.\textsuperscript{626} Within the city precinct the founding of
communes, a municipal organization of townsfolk, presented a negative force further undermining
the temporal authority of the bishops. While these bishops were on amicable terms with the kings of
France, the cathedrals of Noyon
and Senlis were not royal
foundations and did not receive
significant royal endowments.
During this period bishops were
no longer included among the
councillors of the kings, a break in
councillors of the kings, a break in
earlier medieval tradition.\textsuperscript{627} This
study suggests the medieval
builders of Noyon and Senlis
employed the tribune, embedded
with symbolic significance, to
reaffirm spiritual and temporal
authority of the episcopate in the
face of these inroads. The success of this program can be read in the case-study of priory of Saint-Leu. Here the tribune-like triforium suggests the builders of Saint-Leu, lacking funds, appropriated the look of this successful elevation.

Although the evidence suggests the tribune was the domain of the bishop and his clergy the
scant existing documentation fails to reveal exactly who had access to this upper story. It is

\textsuperscript{626} See Jacques Le Goff, \textit{The Birth of Purgatory}.

\textsuperscript{627} Georges Duby, \textit{France in the Middle Ages}, 118-19.
reasonable to assume laity accessed this upper space. The author of the *Guide* speaks to a wide audience when he says “[f]or indeed, whoever visits the naves of the gallery, if she goes up sad, after having seen the perfect beauty of this temple, she will be made happy and joyful.” The horseshoe ground plan heightened the visitor’s awareness of the people standing in the tribune, engendering the desires expressed by the *Guide* author. Yet does this question of access change meaning or intent? It would seem the tribune could symbolically express the authority even supremacy of the bishop and his cathedral, yet be a place of privilege for the laity.

While this study focused on the two cathedral case studies and employed the priory church as a type of foil, future research must expand to include other canonical twelfth-century monuments with tribunes, most notably the cathedrals of Notre-Dame of Laon and Paris, the collegiate church of Mantes-la-Jolie and the abbey church of Saint-Remi of Reims (figures 5-1, 5-2, 5-3). Were the builders of these churches facing the same socio-political conditions in the twelfth century? With

---

an examination of these buildings we can start to consider whether the symbolic function of the
tribune was local or more universal. In the case of the cathedrals of Laon and Paris it is possible to further test the assumptions presented in this study regarding the episcopal complex type (figure 5-1). As at Noyon and Senlis, reestablishing these architectural relationships remains challenging due to changes in the architectural fabric, yet still possible. Study of the collegiate church of Mantes-la-Jolie and Saint-Remi of Reims provide the means to further test the assumptions regarding the role of the institution – was the tribune only used by bishops? Did tribunes function similarly in monasteries? Not only should we examine these churches of the twelfth century, but reconsider the earlier monuments like Saint-Étienne at Caen to see what connections, if any, can be made. No longer is it acceptable to consider the tribune as a one-dimensional structural element intended only as a structural prop, yet further study remains necessary to fully understand this architectural entity as it appears in twelfth century architecture in France.
Bibliography of Cited Works

Primary Sources


Beauvais: Archives départementales de l’Oise, MS Series G 2710.

Herpe, M, Archives privées Chauvel, d’Oise “Proposition de classement parmi les Monuments Historiques de l'enceinte gallo-romaine,” (October 14th, 1949) carton no. 23, dossier 4l.


Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Latin, 17038, Nombreux dessins d'après monuments et objets divers (1869).


Secondary Sources


Aubert, Marcel, *Monographie de la cathédrale de Senlis* (Senlis: Eugène Dufresne: Comité Archéologique, 1910).


— *Oeuvres de Saint Bernard*, epistle 441, trans. M. Armand Ravelet (Bar-le-Duc: Louis Guérin, 1870), 393.


Cousin, Jean, Histoire de Tournay le troisième livre: des chroniques, annales, ou démonstrations du christianisme de l’évesché de Tournay (Douay: Marc Wyon, 1620).


de Saint-Amour, Amédée de Caix, Mémoire sur l’origine de la ville et du nom de Senlis (Senlis: Duriez, 1863).


Duquesne, Jacques, *Saint Éloi* (Fayard, 1985).


Fortunatus, Venantius Honorius Clementianus, *Venantii Honorii Clementiani Fortunati, presbyteri italicij deinde episcopi pictaviensis. Opera omnia quae extant vel quae ejus nomine circumferuntur post Browerianam editionem nunc recens ad mss. codices vaticanos, nec non ad veteres editiones collata & novis additamentis, variiisque lectionibus aucta, notis & scholiis illustrata, nova ejusdem Fortunati vita... : Opera et studio D. Michaelis Angeli Luchi, monachi benedictini e congregatione casinensi...* (Rome, 1787), vol. 2.


— *Recueil de plusieurs discours, titres & pièces authentiques, servans d'apologie pour la défense de Monsieur Jaulnay,... sur ce qu'il a mis en avant dans son histoire & antiquitez de la ville de Senlis, touchant l'ancienne dignité de l'église dudit S. Rieule* (Paris: Jean Paslé, 1653).


Le livre rouge cartulaire de la ville de Noyon, reprint (Chauny: A. Baticle, 1932).


Magne, Abbé, Mémoire sur les pierres tombales de la cathédrale de Noyon (Oise) (Caen: A. Hardel, 1844).


Masmonteil, Jean-Christophe, Iconographie et culte de saint Éloi dans l’Occident médiéval (Rencontre avec le Patrimoine religieux, 2012).


Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary Online (Chicago, IL: Britannica Online, 1994).


Moët de la Forte-Maison, C.A., Antiquités de Noyon ou étude historique et géographique, archéologique et philologique des documents que fournit cette ville à l'histoire des cités gallo-romaines et féodales de france (Rennes: Vannier, 1845).


Müller, Eugène, *Monographie des rues, places et monuments de Senlis* (Senlis: Payen, 1880).

— *Découvertes archéologiques à la cathédrale de Senlis* (Senlis: Payen, 1887).


—*The Death Ritual at Cluny in the Central Middle Ages / Le rituel de la mort à Cluny au moyen âge central*, ed. Isabelle Cochelin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).


*Oeuvres de Saint Bernard*, Epistola (Bar-le-Duc: Louis Guérin, 1870).


Rave, Paul, *Der Emporenbau in romanischer und frühgotischer Zeit* (Bonn: Kurt Schroeder, 1924).


— Abt Suger Von Saint-Denis Ausgewählte Schriften: Ordinatio; De Consecratione; De Administratione, eds. Andreas Speer and Günther Binding (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005).


Appendix

List of Churches Located on ZeeMaps: Organized alphabetically by country:

Chapter One, figures 1-18, 1-19, 1-30.

Building Chronology

- **Fourth to Seventh Centuries**
- **Eight to Tenth Centuries**
- **Eleventh Century**
- **Twelfth Century**
- **Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries**

**Belgium**
- Bruges, Saint-Donatian
- Ghent, Saint-Bavo
- Liège, Saint-Lambert (Saints Cosmas and Damien)
- Saint-Vincent, Soignies
- Tournai, Notre-Dame

**Croatia**
- Saint-Donatian of Zadar

**Egypt**
- Abu Mena, Saint-Mina
England

Burton-upon-Trent, Abbey
Bury Saint Edmunds Abbey
Cambridge, Holy Sepulcher
Canterbury Cathedral
Chichester Cathedral
Christchurch (Twyneham) Priory
Durham Cathedral
Ely Abbey
Gloucester Abbey
Hereford Cathedral
London, Saint-Bartholomew
Norwich Cathedral
Pershore Abbey
Peterborough, Saint-Peters
Rochester, Rochester II
Southwell Minster
Tewkesbury Abbey
Winchester, New Minster
Worcester Cathedral
York, Saint-Marys

France

Arras, Notre-Dame-de-la-Cité
Bayeux Cathedral
Bayeux, Saint-Vincent
Beauvais, Saint-Lucien
Caen, Saint-Etienne
Cambrai, Notre-Dame
Cerisy-la-Forêt, Abbey
Chars, Saint-Sulpice
Clermont-Ferrand, Saint-Namace
Clermont-Ferrand, Notre-Dame du Port
Compiègne, Notre-Dame
Conques, Sainte-Foy Abbey
Coutances Cathedral
Creil, Saint-Évremond
Dijon, Saint-Bénigne
Eu, Saint-Laurence
Figeac, Saint-Sauveur
Fosses-la-Ville, Saint-Feuillen
Jumièges, Abbey
Issoire, Saint-Paul
Laon Cathedral
Limoges, Saint-Martial
Mantes-la-Jolie, Notre-Dame
Montier-en-Der, Saints Peter and Paul
Mouzon, Notre-Dame
Nevers, Saint-Étienne
Noyon Cathedral
Orléans Cathedral
Orléans, Saint-Aigan
Ottmarsheim, Notre-Dame
Paris Cathedral
Le Puy-en-Velay Cathedral
Reims, Saint-Remi
Rimaucourt, Saints Peter and Paul
Rouen Cathedral
Saint-Ouen, Rouen
Germigny-des-Prés, Oratory
Saint-Germer-de-Fly, Saint-Germer
Saint-Nectaire, Saint-Nectaire
Neuvy-Saint-Sépulcher
Senlis Cathedral
Italy

Altamura Cathedral
Bari, San Nicolas
Bologna, San Stefano
Milan, Basilica San Lorenzo Maggiore
Modena Cathedral
Parma Cathedral
Pisa, Baptistery
Pavia, San Michele
Rome, San Lorenzo, outside the walls
Ravenna, San Vitale
Verona, San Lorenzo
Rome, San Agnese

Israel

Jerusalem, Church of the Holy Sepulcher

Spain

Santiago de Compostela Cathedral

Switzerland

Basel Cathedral
Turkey
- Ephesus, Saint-John
- Istanbul, Hagia Eirene
- Istanbul, Hagia Sophia
- Istanbul, Saints Sergius & Bacchus
- Istanbul, Saint John Stoudios
- Antioch, The Golden Octagon