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**JANTZEN AND SEDLMAYR OR THE MAGIC OF THE DIAPHANOUS.  
ON SEVERAL SOURCES FOR MODERN CONCEPTS  
OF LITURGICAL SPACE<sup>1</sup>**

I.

Hans Jantzen's 1927 paper 'On Gothic Church Space',<sup>2</sup> epoch-making in its conscious combination of gestalt psychology and phenomenology, continues to excite the imagination today, particularly since the text's history includes a by no means unimportant meeting with Hans Sedlmayr and his ambitious project to construct a new architectural history and theory, the monumental *The Origins of the Cathedral* (1951).<sup>3</sup> The logic behind the interaction of what seem to be but two versions of almost identical conceptual constructs reveals, among other things, the ability of a single word – in this case *diaphane* or *diaphany* – to indicate two different conceptual configurations that coincide almost nowhere. We shall seek to demonstrate that diaphany, in its applied form as used to describe the concept of 'diaphanous structure' (Hans Jantzen's own terminological invention), can be an almost universal aspect within a wide variety of contexts, a genuine and productive foundation for many modern theories and practices in the liturgical space.

One gets the impression that diaphany as a concept is permeable, open to any intellectual 'interpolations', even while its own true meaning is far from being transparent, as is evidenced by its very history, rooted deep within Aristotelian thought, where two key texts come to the fore, *De Anima* and *De Sensu*. The first of these (Chapter II) is particularly important for bringing the concept of 'transparency' (*diaphanes*), already familiar thanks to Pindar and Plato, into almost metaphysical circulation, moreover for doing

<sup>1</sup> The text is translated by Catherine Phillips.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Jantzen, 'Über den gotischen Kirchenraum', *Freiburger Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft*, Heft 15, Freiburg in Breisgau, 1928; re-issued in: Hans Jantzen, *Über den gotischen Kirchenraum und andere Aufsätze*, Berlin: Mann, 2000: 7–34.

<sup>3</sup> Hans Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale*, Munich: Anlantis-Verlag, 1951; 3rd edn, Freiburg: Herder, 1976.

this through sight and optics. According to Aristotle, diaphany was a quality within things that made them visible. The question is, are there degrees of diaphany and should light be understood as a condition for sight? An even more specific question is the link between diaphany and colour, the only thing subject to sight. In the wake of a number of commentators (starting with Alexander of Aphrodisias, who clarified that diaphanous was by no means the same as 'transparent') we must recognise that diaphany is in part linked to surface (i.e. to the permeable or reflective potential of a substance with regard to light). This is already found in the writings of Aristotle (remember that famous place in *De Sensu* (439): 'colour is the limit [Gr. *eschaton*] of diaphany'), for whom it was important that diaphany makes possible the 'presence' of light in an object (light being above all fire and 'presence' the existence of some active quality, the famous *Parousia*, which meant that the mystical implications of diaphany became obligatory). And vice versa: 'Light is the actuality of diaphanousness' (*De Anima* II 418). Capital letter importance was the filled distance (the intermediary environment and, simultaneously, the medium, or *metaxu*), in which light can only be manifested: for if we place something coloured on the eye then, as the philosopher of Stagira rightly noted, you do not see the colour (*De Anima* II 419).

The Christian reception of diaphany immediately proved eschatological and architectonic, for the sole use of the word in the New Testament (rendered in standard English translations as 'transparent') is the celebrated description of the Heavenly Jerusalem (*Revelations*, xxi:21: 'And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass'). Bearing in mind that 'gold' in this passage indicates not material but colour, the optics of diaphany – both physical and metaphysical – becomes clear. The medieval reception of diaphany lies in its Latin morphological transposition, *transparentia* (used in the twelfth-century Latin translation of Aristotle by Burgundio da Pisa). Thomas Aquinas particularly emphasised that transparency was the equivalent of diaphany, moreover that it was mediality.<sup>1</sup>

If we add to diaphany's mediality its possible link not only with colour but with darkness (opacity or impenetrability to light does not mean lack of all visibility), we immediately start to understand the undoubtedly complementary nature of 'transparency/opacity' and their link with the perception of, among other things, artistic creation, something which in its substance (materiality) can be penetrated by the gaze (including the knowing gaze that looks through the object to the ideal) but can also insist on its own corporeality and madeness. Very early on transparency became the condition for all penetration, infiltration and mastery, which made it possible in the Renaissance period to identify it with *perspectiva* (the neologism of Boethius, as is well known), and that painted image with the 'open window' (Alberti) or with 'transparent glass' (Leonardo da Vinci).

<sup>1</sup> 'Huiusmodi corpora proprie dicuntur perspicua sive transparentia, vel diaphana. Phanon enim in Graeco idem est quod visibile...' Thomas Aquinas, *Sentencia libri De Sensu et sensatur*, Lect. 6.

Thanks to Joyce and *Ulysses* (1922), the ‘diaphane’ mentioned by Stephen Dedalus becomes a concept that indicates either emblematics or the hieroglyphics of creation,<sup>1</sup> while in *Le Milieu Divin* (1926–1927; published 1957)<sup>2</sup> Teilhard de Chardin gave diaphany back its mystical-anagogical context.<sup>3</sup>

The most important thing we wish to convey through our remarks is the circumstance, not always remarked, that when strong concepts come into contact with no less forceful contra-concepts (particularly if their contradictory nature is unconscious), this can influence the discourse of which they

<sup>1</sup> ‘Limits of the diaphane. But he adds: in bodies. Then he was aware of them bodies before of them coloured... Limit of the diaphane in. Why in? Diaphane, adiaphane.’ The phrase ‘maestro di color che sanno’ in this section is also a reference to Aristotle, but as he appears in Dante’s *Inferno* (IV 131).

<sup>2</sup> We should note that although it was published considerably later, *Le Milieu Divin* was written at the same time as Jantzen’s text.

<sup>3</sup> XVII.4.3: ‘Like those translucent materials which a light within them can illuminate as a whole, the world appears to the Christian mystic bathed in an inward light which intensifies its relief, its structure and its depth. This light is not the superficial glimmer which can be realised in coarse enjoyment. Nor is it the violent flash which destroys objects and blinds our eyes. It is the calm and powerful radiance engendered by the synthesis of all the elements of the world in Jesus. The more fulfilled, according to their nature, are the beings in whom it comes to play, the closer and more sensible this radiance appears: and the more sensible it becomes, the more the objects which it bathes become distinct in contour and remote in substance. If we may slightly alter a hallowed expression, we could say that the great mystery of Christianity is not exactly the appearance, but the transparence, of God in the universe. *Yes, Lord, not only the ray that strikes the surface, but the ray that penetrates, not only your Epiphany, Jesus, but your diaphany.* Nothing is more consistent or more fleeting – more fused with things or at the same time more separable from them – than a ray of light. If the divine *milieu* reveals itself to us as an incandescence of the inward layers of being, who is to guarantee us the persistence of this vision? No-one other than the ray of light itself. The diaphany... No power in the world can prevent us from savouring its joys because it happens at a level deeper than any power; and no power in the world – for the same reason – can compel it to appear.’ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu. An Essay on the Interior Life*, ed. Bernard Wall, New York: Harper & Row, 1960, edn. 2001: 130–131. See the following commentary on this passage: ‘Für den geistlichen Menschen, der sich diese innere Quelle erschlossen hat, werden die Dinge transparent auf das Göttliche hin, der Kosmos wird durchlichtet vom Lichte des Logos, Welt wird zur “Diaphanie” Gottes. Zugleich breitet sich für den um die tiefere Erkenntnis und Liebe zu Gott ringenden Menschen in den Dingen immer mehr dieses durchdringende Licht Gottes aus; es entsteht geradezu eine neue Dimension in den Dingen und dem Menschen: das göttliche Milieu’; Adolf Haas SJ, ‘Darstellung und Deutung der geistlichen Lehre bei Teilhard de Chardin’, *Geist und Leben* 37, Munich, 1964: 284, 286. And Jantzen himself includes a quotation from Teilhard: Hans Jantzen, *Die Gotik des Abendlandes. Idee und Wandel*, Cologne: N. DuMont Schauberg, 1962; edn Cologne: DuMont, 1997: 40. But such diaphany is more typical of Neo-Platonism (particularly medieval) than of Aristotelianism. Compare, therefore: ‘...Luminosity can be described as a theophany of light (lux), which penetrates the world and moves hierarchically through the different levels of reality’; Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004: 116.

are, in theory, part. Such forceful and mutually reversible interactions, particularly if their participants – for instance their authors or begetters – are not aware of them, lead to serious distortions and transformations not only within one discourse or another relating to architecture (and indeed to everything else), but outside, in architecture itself, and not only in Gothic or even sacred (church) architecture. To put it very briefly, there are not only different diaphanies,<sup>1</sup> but different Gothics<sup>2</sup> linked with or resulting from them. All this presupposes different architectures, different spaces, and simply different worlds.<sup>3</sup>

We must sort out this situation, in which to discuss, and particularly to experience, diaphany, to have anything to do with it at all, is not the same thing as is encompassed by the words ‘transparency’,<sup>4</sup> or even

<sup>1</sup> There are many utterly trivial uses of the term ‘diaphanous’, particularly in the nineteenth century. For instance, it was (is) used for glass imitating stained glass (especially in Germany, where Grimme & Hempel of Leipzig called their products Diaphanies). We might recall ‘The Diaphane’ rice powder advertised by Sarah Bernhardt. Entomology also has its ‘diaphanies’ in the cucumber moth (*Diaphania Indica* etc.), and medicine too, which until very recently made use of diaphanosopes.

<sup>2</sup> Nille called Sedlmayr’s book ‘Panoptikum an verschiedenen Aspekten der Kathedrale’; Christian Nille, *Mittelalterliche Sakralarchitektur Interpretieren. Eine Einführung*, Darmstadt: WBG, 2013: 31. This definition is quite justified with regard to Gothic as a whole, if we look at it not optico-ontologically but existent-phenomenologically.

<sup>3</sup> A full and extremely precise history of the concept is set out in: Renate Maas, *Diaphan und gedichtet: Der künstlerische Raum bei Martin Heidegger und Hans Jantzen*, Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2015: 124ff. (particularly the relationship between Aristotle on one hand and Heidegger and Jantzen on the other, covering the various implications and individuals involved).

<sup>4</sup> We shall call the sight which is primarily and as a whole related to existence *transparency*. We choose this term to designate correctly understood “self-knowledge” in order to indicate that it is not a matter here of perceptually finding and gazing at a point which is the self, but of grasping and understanding the full disclosedness of being-in-the-world *throughout all* (durchsichtig) its essential constitutive factors”; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time. A Translation of Sein und Zeit*, tr. Joan Stambaugh, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1966: 137. We should recall that the Latin *transparentis*, equivalent to the Greek *to diaphanēs*, emerged in the twelfth century (1160). Later the term *transparentia* came to mean the negation of the sensual; *Metzler Lexikon der Kunstwissenschaft*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Stuttgart–Weimar: J.B. Metzler Verlag, Stuttgart–Weimar, 2011: 446. Thus, for instance, the German translation of Aristotle’s concept, *Durchdringlichkeit* or ‘permeability’ (see following note) does not seem to be very suitable. The better term would be *das Durchscheinendes* or ‘translucency’; Maas, Op. cit.: 125 note 509. It is telling that two whole pages of the German translation of von Simson’s book are devoted to the diaphanous – Otto von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale. Beiträge zu ihrer Entstehung und Bedeutung*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968: 286–287 – but there is nothing about it in the original English version: *The Gothic Cathedral. Origins of Gothic Architecture and the Medieval Concept of Order*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edn, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974 (original edition 1956): 204–205. There (and also on p. 50) we find ‘luminosity’, while in the German version there are two words, the first, *das Diaphanes*, the second *das Durchleuchtete!* One term in English, two in German, and when added together this means that the final effect is the product of two phenom-

‘permeability’.<sup>1</sup> If, as we shall soon be convinced, these are not simply qualities but structural, even pre-structural, states of consciousness prompted by the impact of a particular space, then our states too – their form at least partially shaped by the two authors mentioned in the discourse on Gothic – also depend on such changes in our existence, which is in essence changeable.

Running a little ahead of ourselves, we note that diaphany presupposes transcendentalism, but with regard to what? Jantzen’s answer is space, Sedlmayr proposes corporeality. Their differences are fundamental: for Jantzen the relationships of body / ground are immutable, while Sedlmayr seeks to reduce the figurative, replacing it with the baldachin (canopy), a not entirely comprehensible phenomenon if seen as something structural.

But nor is Jantzen that straightforward: in the middle of what he calls his *Zweischalensystem* (double shell system) is something that seems totally alien, *das kultische Geschehen* or ‘liturgical event’ (worship), that presupposes its own active and passive participants. But also transformation: for this is the transubstantiation – admittedly of that same flesh – of the Easter Lamb. In this regard we might say that Jantzen’s concept describes spatial-corporeal states and relationships up to the moment of transubstantiation, while Sedlmayr is in this sense more eschatological: all relationships are radically altered. Now the vertical, the weightlessness (the baldachino enters the church space from above), the relationships are *not optical*, in which the *originale Bedingungen* or ‘original conditions’ are light (for Jantzen), but rather they are *hypnotic*, utterly kinesthetic, if not hallucinatory, since the baldachino’s pointing to the Heavenly Jerusalem is not merely referential (this is, after all, what the church is all about) but structural: the architectonic facilitation and equipping of real, active processes, direct Revelation, directly and openly capturing the visual and specifically symbolic as the *Abbild*.

For Sedlmayr, moreover, there is nothing positive about the *Abbild* situation. It is sufficient to look at the situation in which ‘diaphany’ is used to mean permeability or penetration within, for instance, consciousness. Although the replication of diaphany entails reproduction, the representation of gestalt relationships: but then diaphany-I (Jantzen) becomes transparency

ena. And thus ‘luminosity’ is colour as such, as a borderline phenomenon, as what Aristotle called *to eschaton*. But that boundary is not simply a contour but a surface (or so von Simson has it). And then *das Raumlose* or ‘spacelessness’ as understood by Jantzen is something two-dimensional (i.e. not transparent, but opaque – *das Opake!*).

<sup>1</sup> Permeability means above all vision and thus ‘perspectiva’. The perspectival type of vision implies ‘ein bestimmtes Raumkonzept, das eine prinzipielle Kontinuität zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits des Bildträgers postuliert’; Metzler Lexikon, Op. cit.: 446. Thus such perspectival permeability means ‘die Negierung der Materialität der Leinwand’ (Ibid.) when applied to painting, or of the support or base when applied to a relief. Such permeability is thus not diaphanous in Jantzen’s use of the word. It nonetheless seems to us that the transitional nature of the conceptual composition of the term ‘diaphanous’ is key: it is itself transparent and permeable, open to a whole complex of layers of meaning.

and transitiveness. *Sedlmayr unavoidably unmasks the metaphorical nature of 'diaphanous structure'* (and thus we have diaphany-II). He was obliged to carry out a reduction of 'structure', which thus could not be the bearer of diaphany, that bearer being for him the wall, essentially deprived of its corporeality, and diaphany as a structural principle within Gothic disappears (according to 'the first wall system', i.e. according to Sedlmayer there is maximum diaphany in Justinian architecture).

In any case, the fate of 'diaphany', both its reception and its undoubted apperception, was determined by the meaningful, promising and multi-layered concluding formulations of Jantzen's text. As will be shown, that text is not entirely open to straightforward reading and, or so it seems to us, the semantic tendency and ambiguity it contains proved to be the very design task out of which Hans Sedlmayr's 'church' – both as building and as knowledge – emerged. This is Jantzen's text; this is how a new science (regardless of whether it really is new or a science) can come.

'Mit den bis hierher gegebenen Ausführungen ist die gotische Raumgrenze nur nach einem bestimmten *formalen* Prinzip analysiert, und es bleibt die Frage: Welche besondere Ausdrucksbedeutung für die Raumwirkung kommt der diaphanen Wandstruktur zu? Darauf wäre zu antworten, daß sie – neben andern hier nicht zu erörternden Momenten – das wirkungsvollste Mittel zu jener kultischen Verzauberung der Herzen darstellt, die das Erlebnis des gotischen Steilraumes charakterisiert. Ein Festes wird durch ein Unkörperliches der Wirkungsweise der natürlichen Umwelt entrückt, der Schwere entkleidet und zum Aufstieg gebracht. So schafft das christliche Mittelalter sich mit diesem Raum für das kultische Geschehen eine völlig neue Symbolform, die aus einer in ihren Quellen uns verborgenen Frömmigkeit erwächst. Eine Untersuchung aber, die das Prinzip des "Diaphanen" aus dem Kern des kultischen Vorgangs selbst zu deuten sucht, hätte die Überschrift zu tragen: Der Raum als Symbol eines Raumlosen.'<sup>2</sup>

The most important thing here is undoubtedly the promise of different perspectives, horizontality set by liberation from space, in which states connected with its disappearance or loss become possible: this is 'das Raumlose'.<sup>3</sup> But it is even more significant that these states are also achieved by overcoming the formal and, most importantly, they are linked to the enchanting effect on the heart exerted through worship, which is, we must recall, at the centre of all relationships within the church and which is the Mass.<sup>4</sup> This poetic 'sorcery' is like Sedlmayr's 'poetic roots of architecture' (on which more below),

<sup>2</sup> Jantzen, *Über den gotischen Kirchenraum*, Op. cit.: 32–33.

<sup>3</sup> Cf.: 'In der Polarisierung von Körpern und Licht wird der Raum zum Symbol des Raumlosen'; Willibald Sauerländer, 'Hans Jantzen als Deuter des gotischen Kirchenraumes. Versuch eines Nachworts', in: Jantzen, *Die Gotik des Abendlandes*, Op. cit.: 213. Moreover: 'Der horizontale Charakter der Grenze zeigt Parallelen zur horizontale, lebensweltlichen Orientierung des Menschen'; Maas, Op. cit.: 152.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. von Simson: 'Diese Art der Vergegenwärtigung der heiligen Ereignisse... ist von der Religionsgeschichte mit recht an die Idee des Zaubers geknüpft werden'; Otto von Simson, *Von der Macht der Bilder im Mittelalters. Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kunst des Mittelalters*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1995: 15.

but most importantly *it is the indubitable reaction of one who read this formula as an instruction or even as an ostensive expression (whether mantra or incantation)*: one can get rid of space and material and one can rise up if one's heart is subject to and open to influence. Meanwhile space is allotted a symbolic function, capable of opening up conceptual perspectives of which Jantzen perhaps never even dreamed...

In other words, our hypothesis is that one of Jantzen's most attentive readers was responsible for carrying out his will. Though in this Jantzen himself was but a medium, for it is the Liturgy which is the source and simultaneously the object of the 'testament', if we are to believe (for instance) Otto von Simson in his text 'Das Abendländische Vermächtnis der Liturgie', published in around the same year as Sedlmayr's concept (1945).<sup>1</sup> The Mass itself, understood in the medieval synthetic-syncretic spirit (if we can call it that) as the most active kind of theophany, as a direct discovery of the Sacred, has that 'power of the image' which we ceased to feel and perceive in the modern age, or rather in the post-Tridentine age (and this, by the way, affects the writings of all three authors dealt with here: we should make clear their place in time, before the Second Vatican Council, with its extremely fundamental – but by no means fundamentalist – liturgical reforms).<sup>2</sup>

The subtitle of Sedlmayr's *The Origins of the Cathedral* could easily have been the formula cited with regard to *das Raumlose*. We should also note that the 'symbolic form' of the 'liturgical event' (worship) is a suitably constructed space. As an event it presupposes participation and the impossibility of evasion or detachment, hence the acceptance of this kind of space as its own state. And if it is a symbol then it is also a means of transcending and emerging from the given space, and if we take account of the fact that we are talking of symbolic form, i.e. of space as 'the experiencing of boundaries', then it becomes clear that the inevitable, surmounting and transforming interpretation-reaction to any such formula-formulation is that same overcoming of preset boundary-screens. Jantzen must have known that the expected *Raumlose* could also take on the form of the 'baldachin', like any tabernacle-canopy sheltering and preserving within all with which it comes into contact. Although there is of course a separate and important question, as to whether anything can have form outside space.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Otto von Simson, 'Das Abendländische Vermächtnis der Liturgie', in: *Ibid.*: 11–54.

<sup>2</sup> Of the almost endless literature on this subject see the following recent publications: Godfried Danneels, Paul F. Bradshaw, Patrick Prétot, *Nobile simplicità. Liturgia arte e architettura del Vaticano II*, Bose: Edizioni Qiqajon, 2014; Hans-Jürgen Feulner, Andreas Bieringer, Benjamin Leven, eds, *Erbe und Erneuerung. Die Liturgiekonstitution des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils und ihre Folge*, Vienna: LIT-Verlag, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Sedlmayr's critical comments regarding the *Raumlose* in Anhang III ('Jantzens Theorie des gotischen Kirchenraums') of *Die Entstehung...*: 'Diese Auffassung scheint mir... teils doch romanisch... teils sozusagen schon protestantisch... Im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert ist der sichtbare Raum nicht Symbol eines Raumlosen, sondern Abbild eines objektiven unsichtbaren Raums, zu dem er im Verhältnis einer realen Analogie gedacht wird'; Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 526.

In any case, such super-formal and deformalising 'magic' requires means. And the arsenal of conceptual formulations such as 'baldachin', 'all-embracing structure', 'diaphanous walls' (not 'structures'!) etc. introduced by Sedlmayer under the heading, take note, of 'Die Phänomene der Kathedrale', *are like the instruments of the magus and sorcerer, the 'polymath' and enchanter*, taking up his stance fully armed to face a challenge, if not a threat, from a comrade-rival very like himself. Or are these simply cautionary measures? Is not Jantzen, who regularly refers to 'magic', 'sorcery' and such like, at once too mystical and magical for Sedlmayer?<sup>1</sup>

## II.

Before the answer – a set of key concepts – we shall look first at Jantzen, then at Sedlmayer. We are immediately struck by the bundling of *das Fest – das Festes*: festival and firmness, unshakably united in their determination, their aim for the heavens, which is, however, according to the nonetheless earthbound reference points and ideological findings of Jantzen, an upwards aim. Thus emerges Sedlmayer's baldachin;<sup>2</sup> it literally descends from the skies, as should any Celestial City (even Swift's Laputa).<sup>3</sup>

Such is Sedlmayer's conviction and postulate: *the cathedral is, on the phenomenal level, not merely the reproduction of a vision, seen and recorded, of the Celestial City, but in its very structure recreates each time the very situation of seeing and meeting*. The cathedral is this City, for both are, above all and in essence, a vision.

But this happens because the cathedral as gestalt is simultaneously the *Abbild* and leaves nothing else for its viewer and visitor. On one condition, however: that the viewer be not only viewer and not only visitor, but also a participant in that same festivity, that 'worship', the composition of which includes relevant theophany, in the form of the Bloodless Sacrifice, before which all kinds of visual mysticism recedes but does not disappear, being filled with bare reality, mysticism which is thus relieved of the burden

<sup>1</sup> Only von Simson does not lag behind him in this. But both of them, in their 'occult-paranormal' interpretation of Gothic, undoubtedly hark back to Rudolf Otto (*Das Heilige. Über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen*, Breslau: Trewendt & Granier, 1917) and thus to his direct source, Wilhelm Worringer (*Formprobleme der Gotik*, Munich: Piper, 1911).

<sup>2</sup> Obviously the relationship between the baldachin and the sky has both physical and metaphysical meaning: in *Peri psyches* Aristotle mentions the 'everlasting empyrean essence' and the 'upper substance of the heavens' (II, 7), which does not necessarily mean the ether, even if that is its traditional reading.

<sup>3</sup> Sedlmayer himself refers to G.K. Chesterton, who in his treatise on Thomas Aquinas compared the effect of the Gothic cathedral's original polychromy with the 'startling' effect on his own contemporaries of 'flying-ships'; Sedlmayer, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 28–29.

of verticalism: Christ is in the middle, amongst those who have gathered in His name.<sup>1</sup>

We should note that Sedlmayr himself sets this behavioural pattern for his reader, who, it is suggested, should accept the conceptual conditions of what we might call gestalt phenomenology, and should trust the author of the text on the emergence of the cathedral, in order to become co-author of, as it were, its co-emergence, if we can thus express it. For Sedlmayr takes seriously Jantzen's proposal-supposition as to those same charms in worship and expands the magic of the constitution of reality...

But how does it all begin? What are the postulates guiding Jantzen? These are they:

1. A phenomenological orientation on the analysis of experience itself, of the realisation of the set situation with all its semantic content, both factuality and eventfulness.

2. The indubitable use of gestalt methodology and frank modelling of the reality under study (the space of the Gothic cathedral) according to the body / ground principle. Jantzen's conceptual innovation lies in identifying ground with space deprived of its fundamental perceptive qualities, of accessibility and distance. Jantzen postulates such 'absence of space' as the nearest horizon of analysis and in a later text (1957) speaks not of the aspect of *das Raumlose*, but of a separate essence, a specific substance, something approaching *der Unraum*,<sup>2</sup> which is compared to the golden backgrounds of medieval painting ('diaphanous, intangible, luminous'). Drawing analogies with medieval philosophy, we can say that the definition of space in possession of the qualities necessary for the role of 'ground' makes it, in gestalt terms, into actual material, while everything which, by very definition, opposes it in the role of the other pole, i.e. as 'bodies', becomes form. If we were dealing with space as container, we could contrast with it the body (even a statue, which is what, partly in spite of himself, Jantzen does). But since it is something substantial – although flowing, streaming, more like a field (such is the 'ground' in gestalt philosophy, particularly in the writings of Kurt Lewin) – one wants

<sup>1</sup> Sedlmayr is relatively restrained in 'activating' the liturgical paradigm while Otto von Simson, for instance, sees the basis of his concept – not so much of Gothic as of all sacred architecture – in the drama of the liturgy, which acts (among other things) as an instrument of interpretation, since it is only within the ritual enacted, i.e. performatively, that one can master the meaning. And then the sacred structure will be 'a sacred stage' for the sacraments, and the liturgical space itself a means for the de facto constitution of meaning. See: 'The church is, mystically and liturgically, an image of Heaven' (von Simson, *The Gothic Cathedral*, Op. cit.: 8). Compare that differentiation of terms in the German version of the text: '...mystisches Abbild des ewigen Tempels im himmlischen Jerusalem'; von Simson *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 22. It is notable that von Simson uses *Abbild* in its everyday sense, while for Sedlmayr it is something specific, just like diaphany (see below) when compared with Jantzen.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Hamburg: Rowohlt-Verlag, 1957: 69; Eng. edn: *High Gothic. The Classic Cathedral of Chartres, Reims, Amiens*, tr. James Palmes, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984: 71.

to correlate it to subjectness and to wonder if such space is not replaced with something more like time? Further: are not binary relationships, all kind of subject–object relationships, abrogated inside the cathedral?<sup>1</sup>

3. Such a direct address to optical phenomena represents an unconditional assumption that Gothic, and the experiencing of architectural space in general, is a matter of visual experience, organised accordingly, in which the most important thing is the impact on the consciousness of those optical effects – above all light – that are being experienced. Although it is not only about optics, but about empathy, with a physical content (our own body – or rather its experience – is subject to projection). Thus diaphany is an optical effect linked to relief, or more simply to the plasticity of the wall, not projecting above the material mass as in classic reliefs since Antiquity, but hanging above the space. This is not yet fully sculpture in the round but it is no longer mere relief; it is plasticity squeezed between ‘spatial shells’, it is a spatial boundary, one that is forever intersecting itself, overcoming and transposing itself, seeking self-liquidation, as with Sedlmayr’s baldachin or, even more so, as with von Simson’s ‘diaphanous architecture’.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We should recall that for Hegel, space as ‘an impersonal multiplicity’ of points is abrogated through the interaction of points (i.e. movement) and through its negation of negation becomes time. Compare the relevant analysis in Heidegger’s *Being and Time* (§ 82).

<sup>2</sup> Once again we must recall von Simson, since his broad, almost default use of ‘diaphanous’, although with some reference to Jantzen, in fact is utterly out of keeping with Jantzen’s own use (which he does not hide: von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 287; Eng.: 4). His diaphany (a most productive term; *Ibid.*) is transparency, a quality of the environment, a light quality. It is essentially a synonym for penetrability. If von Simson speaks of ‘diaphanous architecture’ (*Ibid.*) he means its transparency, since it consists of ‘membrane-thin surfaces’, which translate ‘tectonic functions... into a basically graphic system’ through a ‘cosmos of forces’; *Ibid.*: 7. The building is not an independent body but a system of partitions and screens, like a set for that same mysterial drama that remained operative in the Gothic. And von Simson’s criticism of Sedlmayr’s ‘illusionism’ (von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 23), understood as naturalism (according to Max Dvořák and not Sedlmayr) turns into something even more radical: if we take account of the thesis regarding the almost hypnotic effect of the mysterial drama, then true – authentic – illusionism will be something akin to hallucinations. But that is Sedlmayr, just as he is the one who see the intentional experience of the *Abbild.* To us it seems that von Simson has something more important and more original in mind: the simplification of the diaphanous concept and de facto elimination of the diaphanous phenomenon through the abolition of corporeality. For von Simson, Gothic is geometrical, graphic and flat. This is the Gothic not of construction but of design; not of the effect that arises when contemplating and experiencing the finished work (above all its space), but rather of the affect residing within the foundations of creativity itself, that which inspires and feeds the architect, that which underlies the act of birth. So, to continue the metaphor, we might say that the Gothic of Jantzen, and particularly of Sedlmayr, lies on the verge of rebirth within the interpreter’s own consciousness. ‘Beautiful patterns of lines ordered according to geometrical principles’ (*Ibid.*: 13:) as a means of presenting an idea, literally a sketch. And the graphic is diagrammatical. A question: what is the meaning of this need to rough out a sketch and visualise it? For suffice it to allow that this visualisation is at least in part unconscious, and the cathedral immediately

4. The cathedral is perceived as liturgical – or simply religious – reality: its essential semantic content is the ongoing mysterial happening, in which there can be no outside observers, since such is its specific nature that it embraces and encompasses all, claiming totality of the experience of life at this moment, in this place. We should point out immediately that the performance of the Eucharist (and again this is an extrapolation we owe to von Simson) is transformative on all levels, including the semantic, and is thus openly hermeneutic.

5. It is impossible to ignore the strategy that suffuses the whole of Jantzen's text, which aims to seek out 'original conditions', towards which he directs all his efforts to overcome everyday experience, including everyday space as a container. In Jantzen's text, space is limited and represents a place of interaction, which determines the text's key conceptual effect: 'diaphanous structure' is the relationship between permeability, accessibility not to the observer of optical and visual effects (then it would be a matter of transparency, like

becomes a couch... Hence it is so important for von Simson to repeatedly emphasise Gothic rationalism, which lies in the conscious articulation of components that are utterly irrational when viewed separately: the mysticism of light and aesthetic ascesis. But since both *Abbild* and symbol come together in the cathedral, the latter becomes an instrument – or rather a 'model' – 'designed in an attempt to reproduce the structure of the universe' (Ibid.: 35). Hence the importance that the cathedral be 'theologically transparent': this was the demand for reportability, verifiability, the ability to present some kind of precise documentation, intended in essence for the modern experimenter but de facto for the interpreter. Since essentially the cathedral is 'the intimation of ineffable truth' (Ibid.), with no need, strictly speaking, for precise conditions, whether stylistic or methodological, for its revelation. Essentially, i.e. liturgically, it is not a matter of creation as equivalent (analogous) to embodiment but of embodiment as equivalent to resurrection, i.e. salvation, and so more precisely to creation–erection of the cathedral as an image of mystical corporeality (von Simson emphasises that in the period in question – and not only then, we should add – the mystical Body of Christ was not a metaphor, unlike Its likeness, for instance a cornerstone). Gothic architecture is not only and not so much music in stone, however heavenly, as it is the Liturgy itself, with all its semantic structure, containing downright mysterial layers and memorative layers, but also indirectly exegetical layers. Most importantly, there are mimetic-symbolic layers, since the erection (or rather the design) of the cathedral is an imitation of the creation of the world, which is built according to laws of numerical and mystical harmony and consonance. This is the 'cosmos of forces' that makes the cathedral isomorphous with regard both to the universe as macrocosmos and to man as microcosmos (its construction is a repetition of both the act of creation and the act of salvation). As a monumental, all-embracing and universal liturgical vessel (monstrance), the Gothic cathedral is not only isomorphous but what we might call iso-logical with regard to 'the last things' in this world. And this is only because it is iso-graphic: again we repeat, it represents the opportunity, as during the liturgical drama, to give shape to all the semantic and generally affective potential it contains. Thus the cathedral, at once both liturgical instrument and hermeneutic instruction, is intended to be applied in successive structures, not only – and not so much – material structures. This is particularly noticeable and essential in Sedlmayr who, as we have said, built his own Gothic, his own cathedral, his own science, out of the concept-elements of his predecessors.

stained glass), but to these or some other states—affects within that same observer, who forms the corporeal equivalent of space, enclosed between ‘foils’ (*die Folie*) of light. Just as the wall is prefaced with spatial underpinning, not only in the form of light as shining but of light as darkness (as its own absence), so the observer finds himself in a forcefield of clearly manifested theophany, experiencing himself – as a figurative-plastic dimension of that same space – that same boundary. Jantzen speaks directly of ‘fantastisch-visionären Wirkungen in diesem Monumentalbau’,<sup>1</sup> indicating the whole range of aspects in which there is imagination, dream and monumentality, total impact on the mind. But if the wall is squeezed between spatial ‘shells’ and immersed in optical streams, the question arises – now for analytical purposes – as to what we might call the firmer corporeality of the interpreter. Probably in order to avoid ‘subjectivity’, Sedlmayer replaces that corporeality with something more reliable and objective, the baldachin, assembling all aspects of space as such. And it is within this space, utterly ‘authentic’ and reliable – since it is independent of the observer and housed in a monstrosity – that any event (not only liturgical but hermeneutic) takes place.

6. The only thing that might disturb us in this scheme is the presence of tectonics and thus of the horizontal view (with which it all begins). Jantzen quite unobtrusively defines a purely phenomenological horizontality of perception, while Sedlmayer, fulfilling his desire to talk about that which is deprived of space (*das Raumlose*), or so it seems to him, in fact sets the vertical for the canopy-baldachin, for the ostensory, intended for the preservation and revelation of the Inconceivable. Incorporeality and spacelessness are understood as atectonicity, as the absence of mass, as irrationality.<sup>2</sup> But, we repeat, everything is described from the viewpoint of the impact effects from which no observer can ever be free. Moreover, according to Jantzen, it is towards this that the whole system of spacial impact is directed: as he was to put it in his later text, it was diaphanous structure that allowed for the creation of the effect of floating without completely dematerialising it.<sup>3</sup> But for Sedlmayer, the observer must be standing on the ground in order to

<sup>1</sup> Jantzen, *Über den gotischen Kirchenraum*, Op. cit.: 32.

<sup>2</sup> Thus von Simson, for whom diaphany is an almost universal quality of the universe (there is no way of getting away without a reference to Dante and his *Paradise*, where divine light suffuses the cosmos: von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 80 Eng: 52), so easily finds it even in the zone of the triforium (von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 287), which would be impossible for Jantzen, since this is a zone of pure optics, already freed of all somatics. Again: Jantzen’s diaphanous structure is a gestalt–structure, by very definition including the horizon of the viewer’s corporal experience, since his own corporeality is part of the structure, while for von Simson the essence of Gothic was the flat surface pierced by light and defined by supporting linear values; *Ibid.*: 288.

<sup>3</sup> Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 71–72; Eng. edn: 73. In this book so much space is devoted to diaphanous structure, so much is said about it in comparison with Jantzen’s 1927 paper, that it might be seen as a direct commentary on the earlier work. But more shall be said on this in the concluding remarks.

feel the transcendent impact of the atectonic and heavenly: in his fleshly embodiment, the observer is not a representative but a reproductive 'con-  
trivance', something rather like a light-sensitive plate or even a pellicular  
screen, a 'film', to which early cinematography compared itself. He is a mem-  
brane and thus von Simson is not quite so far off in bringing the whole situ-  
ation back to two-dimensional graphic qualities, although this can of course  
be directed (one might say) eschatologically, towards incipient generative  
forces, towards that which was lacking when the sacred structure was born,  
when it was built, even when it functioned.<sup>1</sup>

7. Lastly, the horizon of hermeneutics as such (according to Jantzen's ter-  
minology, particularly in his later texts, this is 'iconology'<sup>2</sup>) is set by the  
multidimensional and heteronomous 'layered' quality of the phenomenal  
picture that is the cathedral (predominantly in its internal arrangement).  
We can – and should – speak of semantic diaphany, of the semi-transparent  
layers of consciousness itself, with its potential emergence to the groundwa-  
ters (if not the intrauterine-primordial waters) of original conditions, some-  
thing taken up with particular zeal by Sedlmayr, who with four-part figura-  
tive meaning made the connection between the typology (or modality) not  
only of images as such but of states and moods, from mystical-metaphysical  
to moral-methodological. We can hardly argue with this: if one postulates  
that the main function of space is its impact on the consciousness, it be-  
comes clear that the consciousness, its internal architectonics, is formatted  
according to spatial structures that, at the same time, liquidate it each time  
a new interpretative force – based on unceasing, inalienable and irremovable  
historicity, and on a succession of deconstructions and amplification, simply  
reloading that very same consciousness – comes into play.

But before we dig deeper into the diaphany of meaning, we shall cite Sedl-  
mayr, who provides us with a ready-made interpretation of Jantzen's theory:  
'Diese "Gitterwand" des Hochschiffs ist nun in verschiedener Schichtung  
mit einem durchgehenden "optischen" Raumgrund – und zwar einem op-  
tischen Dunkelgrund oder einem farbigen Lichtgrund – unterlegt, wie es zu-  
erst H. Jantzen in seiner bahnbrechenden schönen Arbeit über den gotischen  
Kirchenraum dargelegt hat. Er nennt diese Form der "raumunterfütterten"  
Wand die "*diaphane*" Wand. Im gotischen Triforium (dem Laufgang) haben  
wir das Prinzip dieser diaphanen Wand gleichsam in reiner Form vor uns.  
Aber ebenso wie in der Zone des Triforiums der flache Raum des Laufgangs  
als Raumfolie hinter der Wand wirkt, ebenso wirken in den klassischen Kath-  
edralen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts (welche die Seitenschiff-kapellen noch

<sup>1</sup> And again, as the background, we come to von Simson, who saw the design activities behind Gothic  
structures as an experiment, in which the cathedral is a model in the broadest sense of the word,  
if not simply a three-dimensional 'construction-instruction', a handbook not only for the building  
itself but for the consciousness that is included and activated within. And at this point Panofsky  
comes into play, particularly as interpreted by Bourdieu (in the text of key interest to us, the fore-  
word to *Architecture gothique et pensée scholastique*). See: Nille, Op. cit.: 65.

<sup>2</sup> We should point out that von Simson too 'evolves' towards 'iconology'. See: Nille, Op. cit.: 46.

nicht kennen) die Seitenschiffe. Sie werden zu schmalen Raumschalen für das Hochhaus. Sie laufen *deshalb* in der reifen Kathedral immer auch an den Querhausarmen entlang... Für die Wirkung der Diaphanie ist es gleich, ob der raumhafte Grund wie im Triforium als eine Schattenzone erscheint, oder ob dieser Grund wie in den Seitenschiffen und Emporen mit farbig glühendem Licht durch setzt wird. Die Fensterregion ordnet sich der diaphanen Wand mit verschiedenartigen Lösungen ein. Entweder fällt die optische Zone mit dem farbigen Lichtgrund der Fenster zusammen; das heißt: Tiefraum wird gleichsam in die Fläche gepreßt – wie es die Wahrnehmungslehre an den sogenannten “Verdichtungsflächen” beschreibt (Oberfläche des Schnees). Gerade das unterscheidet die tiefe Wirkung alter Fenster von der plattner Flächigkeit moderner, die “wie ein durchsichtiges Linoleum aussehen”. “Oder auch die Fensterregion wird zweischalig wie das Triforium gestaltet, eine Lösung wie sie für die gotischen Bauten der Normandie charakteristisch bleibt” (Beispiel Coutances, Bayeux).<sup>1</sup>

So which effects grow out of a different kind of eventfulness, not so much religious but far harsher, and how are they linked with the situation in which, as we showed earlier, Sedlmayr was left with the fruits of a very radical reduction? Jantzen’s diaphany – we shall say right off – turns into Sedlmayr’s diagrammatics,<sup>2</sup> although we might argue about who was the author, just as we can argue about Jantzen’s discovery of diaphany: we have before us the overt logic of reception and reproduction of a concept that was current throughout the nineteenth century, when it was used to indicate something quite uncomplicated and unpretentious.

The revelation of the optical depths of Jantzen’s diaphany was only the beginning; Sedlmayr’s kinesthetic play on the same diaphany is but a continuation, in which experiments with a tachistoscope, perhaps even with a tachyscope, were still very much in line with Baroque experiments in the context of Athanasius Kircher’s *magiae-naturalis*,<sup>3</sup> carried through in cinematography; a large, capacious *camera obscura* transformed into a theatre in which the viewer – within...

Such allusions are extremely close to Sedlmayr’s thought, in which they were linked to specific liturgics, filled with criticism of the medieval experience (such is the main spirit of the German ‘liturgical renaissance’).

<sup>1</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 52.

<sup>2</sup> On diagrammatics see: Matthias Bauer, Christoph Ernst, *Diagrammatik: Einführung in ein kultur- und medienwissenschaftliches Forschungsfeld*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2010; Dietrich Boschung, Julian Jachmann, eds, *Diagrammatik der Architektur*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2013; Birgit Schneider, Christoph Ernst, Jan Wöpking, eds, *Diagrammatik-Reader: Grundlegende Texte aus Theorie und Geschichte*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016; Astrit Schmidt-Burkhardt, *Die Kunst der Diagrammatik: Perspektiven eines neuen bildwissenschaftlichen Paradigmas*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2017; Sybille Krämer, *Figuration, Anschauung, Erkenntnis: Grundlinien einer Diagrammatologie*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> See: Nicole Gronemeyer, *Optische Magie. Zur Geschichte der visuellen Medien in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2004.

In the relevant chapters he speaks, without sacrilege, of the theatricalisation of the Mass, points out its choregetic nature, not without reference to Abbot Suger, who compared the service to a dance performance.<sup>1</sup> As we shall see, these postulates were intended to play a fundamental role but these and many other (quite daring, unusual and emphatically provocative) observations on Gothic were set out in the very first chapter, frankly entitled 'Die ergänzte Kathedrale', which was conceived as a true Gesamtkunstwerk utterly in the spirit of Wagner. It deals with the main function of historical reconstruction: the latter can also be intended as straightforward construction, completion or development of something for which there was no time in the era itself, or which earlier scholarship dared not do.<sup>2</sup>

Such procedures are like the actions of an architect in giving graphic form to his concept using ideographical configurations, preparing his design like a scenario for subsequent actions to be performed by others playing the role of, perhaps, the 'builders' of the Gothic cathedral or, for instance, the 'priests' carrying out some religious ritual, or even 'interpreters' of relevant texts or relevant experiences, in accordance with particular spatial states.<sup>3</sup>

### III.

Our task is thus to trace carefully how the direct, clear desire to put into effect Jantzen's ideas about the symbolic aspects of diaphany gave birth to Sedlmayr's radically new theory, pregnant with extreme consequences for scholarship, Sedlmayer using Jantzen (but by no means him alone) for his own ends, which included – among other things – establishing architectural theory as an apparatus for permanent and real transcendence, built – which is undoubtedly substantial and essential – out of architecture's representative resources, that architecture containing an endless epiphany (if not a sequence of theophanies, in which diaphany is a complement to epiphany, as per Teilhard de Chardin) with its characteristic visual-mysterical implications (and the potential for departing from any kind of method – according to Gadamer).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sedlmayr assembled these and many other incisive, unusual and provocative observations on Gothic in the first chapter of his book, entitled 'Die ergänzte Kathedrale'.

<sup>2</sup> Recall the spirit of Sedlmayr's pre-war texts regarding 'strict science' in the arts, where the leitmotiv is 'non-Euclidian' methodology, although applied to Baroque material, which is nonetheless not so far removed from Gothic. See, for instance: Hans Sedlmayr, *Die Architektur Borrominis*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Munich: Piper, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> On 'mystischer Konnotationen der Methode' (axonometric projection as a form of presence) see: Kari Jormakka, *Geschichte der Architekturtheorie*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Vienna: Luftschacht, 2006: 205.

<sup>4</sup> Cf.: 'Gadamer will nicht eine Methodenlehre entwickeln, mit deren Hilfe wir eine "richtige" Interpretation oder Auslegung vornehmen können, sondern auf die – transzendentalen – Elemente hinweisen, die in jeder Interpretation vorausgesetzt sind, gleichgültig ob es uns gefällt oder nicht'; Anton Hügli, Paul Lübcke, *Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert*, I, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2002: 209.

For us there is a problem in the attempt to found such an important project on the phenomenology not of visual experience (as with Jantzen) but of design–constructive activity. Sedlmayer intended to resurrect *the very order and process of the architectonic and at the same time of, as it were, prophetic creativity*, with the viewer and user assigned the role of *performer of the sacramental act*, although we should not forget for a moment He Who is, was and shall be its Creator... The architect becomes something along the lines of a choregos and theurge.

In general, overall, the transformed concept of ‘diaphany’ becomes the definitive and decisive point in establishing that presence in the church is the same as presence at revelation, not only apocalyptical and eschatological but utterly without time, whether eternal or – most particularly – real. Thus revelation is founded, if we may be permitted to put it this way, on the *mysterical concept of the Abbild*: the church can itself be a monumental sacramental, like a monsternostensory and baldachin–aedicule, housing within itself and being itself sacred and saved and illuminated and salvational.<sup>1</sup>

Sedlmayer starts by postulating the incontrovertible ‘depictive’ (*abbildende*) nature of the Gothic cathedral, which acts as an individual instance of ‘depictive architecture’ in general, to which is contrasted ‘symbolic’ architecture. The difference between them lies in the degree of realism of that which is represented by the architecture. Pictorial reality is present at the same level as architecture, while symbolic reality (as is right for a referential relationship) is present beyond the bounds of architecture. In this context the decisive moment is indubitably an understanding of the meaning of *Abbild*.

For Sedlmayer<sup>2</sup> *Abbild* is notable for its direct concordance, even accordance, of both signifier and signified: this is far from simply being *Bild* (which is too general a concept), nor is it a symbol; rather it is, to use the correct terms (which are not, alas, part of Sedlmayer’s repertoire), a direct signal. The sensory blends with the suprasensory. This is a revelatory situation not merely of Revelation but rather of visual hallucination: the role of faith in the wider (value-system) meaning of the word is important here, a recognition of the direct link between (even identity of) the senses and the suprasensory. Sedlmayer puts it quite elegantly:

‘Dazu verdient noch der Hinweis Beachtung, daß gerade dort, wo also Grenzfall das Bild mit dem Abgebildeten gleichgesetzt wird, solches Bild der äußeren “Ähnlichkeit” am wenigsten bedarf (Kurz und Kris<sup>3</sup>). Erst “wo jener Glaube an die Identität von Bild und Abgebildetem in Schwinden begriffen ist, tritt ein neues Band auf, um beide zu verbinden: die *Ähnlichkeit*.” Wenn

<sup>1</sup> A superb example of the universal reading of the aedicule motif (using Gothic as an example) is John Summerson’s essay ‘Heavenly Mansions’; John Summerson, *Heavenly Mansions and Other Essays on Architecture*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1963).

<sup>2</sup> Sedlmayer, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 103.

<sup>3</sup> A reference to: Ernst Kris, Otto Kurz, *Die Legende vom Künstler: Ein geschichtlicher Versuch*, Vienna: Krystall, 1934.

aber das Sinnbild als irgendwie ähnlich mit dem Übersinnlichen angenommen wird, gewinnt das "sinnliche" Bild außerordentlich an Wert.'

In the text cited we note firstly that mention of the 'borderline case' which for Jantzen, we recall, is in essence where diaphany makes its appearance: diaphany comes through at the spatial boundary, or rather, space itself is the boundary.<sup>1</sup> Thus, hidden within this quotation from Sedlmayr is reference to that same diaphany as transparency which makes the image and that which depicts it mutually penetrable.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, of course, we note the indication of places of similarity, something not required in the case of the *Abbild* which is reinforced, or more correctly arranged or constituted by faith. Thirdly and lastly, it is not difficult to see the attempt to identify (almost at the level of wordplay) meaning and sense: the sensory takes on the meaning or significance (and in effect value) of the manifested suprasensory, the sensory proves meaningful, and the ideogram (*Sinnbild*) becomes a true symbol.

Such reflections are important to Sedlmayr and become his *idée fixe* since his prime purpose is to show how the cathedral becomes and is experienced as the Celestial City, when looked at in a very specific way (we might describe it as assuring discretion and experience of the suprasensory as the sole unifying reality, on a sensual – not only visual – level). The cathedral is not the condition for or means of re-experiencing Revelation (both as

<sup>1</sup> One might say that the term 'diaphany' literally leads to a 'terminal' state. Diaphany can disappear (in 'lateinische Gotik' with its 'terminierter taktiler Raum'; see: Sauerländer, Op. cit.: 216. Even more importantly, diaphanous structure disappears in Sedlmayr's texts, the author persistently emphasising, for instance, that 'Diaphan im Sinne des Restes der Jantzenschen Definition sind auch manche justinianische und romanische Wandformen'; Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 525. In his opinion, 'Körper, die mitten im Raum stehen, wesentlich', is the balchachin; Ibid. But Jantzen has an asymmetrical response to this, later but not too late: 'Für die Raumanalyse der Hagia Sophia lässt sich gerade der Baldachinbegriff im Sinne Sedlmayrs nicht verwenden'; Hans Jantzen, *Die Hagia Sophia des Kaisers Justinian in Konstantinopel*, Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1967: 36. We might add that there is an analogous notional logic with regard to pre-Gothic sculpture. Terminological transference of this kind is undertaken by Wilhelm Messerer (a direct follower of Jantzen and direct heir to Sedlmayr in Salzburg!). According to Lorenz Dittmann, it was he who defined space (*Raum*) as 'Dimension des Transzendierens wie der Transzendenz' and stated that 'Raum in dieser Qualität ist für das Relief der "Grund"'. It is key that 'Mit der Durchdringung des Grundes (i.e. diaphany – SV), seiner Einbeziehung in die immanenten Zusammenhänge des Werks geht seine Aufspaltung Hand in Hand' and that 'eber aus dem Riß das Daseins aber traten... die göttlichen Kräfte unvergleichlich und bindend hervor'. Lorenz Dittman, 'Einführung', in: Wilhelm Messerer, *Von Anschaulichen Ausgehen. Schriften zu Fragen der Kunstgeschichte*, eds Stefan Koja et al, Vienna, Böhlau, 1992: 16.

<sup>2</sup> See Wittgenstein: '2.16 Die Tatsache muss um Bild zu sein, etwas mit dem Abgebildeten gemeinsam haben. 2.171 Das Bild kann jede Wirklichkeit abbilden, deren Form es hat. *Das räumliche Bild alles Räumliche, das farbige alles Farbige etc*' (2.16 In order to be a picture a fact must have something in common with what it pictures. 2.171 The picture, however, cannot represent its form of representation; it shows it forth'); Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, tr. by C.G. Ogden, pub. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd, 1922.

apocalypse and as epiphany), but is itself the situation of epiphany–theophany. Suffice it to say that this situation is liturgical and eucharistic, presuming both Presence and communion with the Presence. Sedlmayr is quite open here (chapter 27 and after). It is important for him to apply maximum method and methodology to justify what we have already called religious–mysterious experience, to show that this is a matter not of metaphor but of reality. To be absolutely precise, Sedlmayr’s task is to resurrect the experience (both mystical and architectonic) of those responsible for creating the cathedrals, and having resurrected it perhaps to repeat it. Even though that experience does not seem to him to be entirely unquestioned (as becomes clear at the end of the book, after some five hundred pages of text, when he also allows for a negative experience of the cathedral as a need for visualisation, for the search for and acquisition of means of imitating or reproducing mysterial experience through the senses, i.e. sensorics etc).

We wish to demonstrate that his (Sedlmayr’s) conceptual equipment (phenomenology and gestalt theory) allowed him to do this: one can, again almost on a sensory level, make clear, comprehensible and acceptable the idea that the true *Abbild* is capable of many things, one of which is that it facilitates the unquestioned intentional unity of earthly and Heavenly, by very reason of architecture’s involvement.<sup>1</sup>

Such a conceptual form-factor is facilitated by diaphany in the sense given it by Jantzen. Architecture as such – or its space – is diaphanous, and its extremes and polar opposites come through. They come through, come together and unite for the sake of something new, something which might be that very same boundary, or it might be tensions, dissonance and disruption: *diaphany* can sound like diaphony, for Gestalt laws of grouping within the psyche also offers a group of pre-mimetic and pre-figurative states that are, essentially, moods (*Stimmungen*).<sup>2</sup>

It is important to understand that the very relationships between these concepts and their authors are diaphanous: Jantzen is the ‘ground’ for Sedlmayr’s new figurativity but he also pervades it. Whole theoretical systems and books are capable of being symbolic form’, not only of the spaceless (most probably *das Unräumliches*) but also that deprived of space (which is Jantzen’s *das Raumlose*).

<sup>1</sup> And simply ‘Kathedrale als monumentale Mysterium’, which we find in Jantzen (see: Mass, Op. cit.: 151), who ‘hat... das Mysterium des gotischen Raumes phänomologisch erfaßt’; Sauerländer, Op. cit.: 213. The ‘revealed’ is also a mystery understood as ‘die Dauer in der unbeschränkten Zeit der Aion’; Luisa Paumann, *Vom Offenen in der Architektur*, Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2010: 111 (with reference to Deleuze). Compare further: ‘Was durch die Form hindurchleuchtet ist die inspirative, virtuelle Seite der Realität’; Ibid.: 112. But we must always recall the danger of fetishisation of architecture as such; Ibid.: 62–64.

<sup>2</sup> Once again the methodological poetics and metaphors of von Simson, who emphasised the role of music as the practice of harmony in the widest sense of the world; von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 38ff.; Eng: 15ff.

The question and (extremely productive) collision lie in that gestalt relationships of body / ground are for Jantzen like a relief, when figurativity – as a quality of its relations to that which is perceived – emerges and grows within uncertainty (this is both hidden space and – in diaphany – manifested space): if we perceive and experience diaphany then that which is incomprehensible but ready to manifest itself becomes the ground against which our rationality emerges, our likeness to our consciousness and its potentialities, our rash and transient identity.<sup>1</sup>

How can that deprived of space, that free of our sensory perception, become an object of representation? Perhaps new light needs to be thrown upon it, there needs to be a new sacramentalisation of the renewed mystery? Or we need to move into other spheres and discourses, notably epistemological? This is the tactic – unconsciously, it seems to us – chosen by Sedlmayr. For there was surely a good reason why the illumination of the church became such an obligatory element at a very particular point in liturgical development. Sedlmayr was forced to turn to this ritual, this religious action–ceremony, to explain his intuition regarding the means for, or rather the quality of, the presence of the Heavenly Jerusalem. That same logic lies within the desire to affirm ‘depictiveness’ through references to the word, to literacy, to poetic texts: these are not simply verifiable ‘written sources’, it is not a matter of documentalisation, but of textualisation and writing: it is not simply the recording of speech but its essential clarity, free of representation, something close to expression in its similarly essential import and significance as an unmediated stamp or trace, the *Abbild*, evident and physiognomical, as a reciprocal impulse, a reaction to impact and impression (*Eindruck–Ausdruck*). And the act of writing is that same gesticulation and ostensivity, although deprived of the precision of the dot: it is, rather, a spot (*macchia*) or *punctum*, a touch, whether of the gaze or the finger (the latter comes to our aid when the first comes across its own blind spot).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For Sauerländer, for instance, it was important to draw attention to the fact that ‘Jantzen hat so die dunkle Ahnung der Romantiker von der Überweltlichkeit des gotischen Kirchenraumes mit der modernen Optik der die Bauformen vergleichenden Kunstgeschichte verschmolzen’; Sauerländer, *Op. cit.*: 218. These ‘dunkle Ahnung’ (‘dark forebodings’) and ‘moderne Optik’ (‘modern optics’) are undoubtedly ground and body and thus also something diaphanous, which means they are ‘epistemological’, with ‘ground’ presupposing an implication such as ‘dark’ and an expansion (deepening!) such as ‘depth’, right through to the very ‘choir’. This is not a matter of space and boundary but of place, edge and hiatus (now following not Meister Eckhart and Heidegger but Kristeva and Derrida). And what then of body and gestalt, and particularly of depiction? This is no longer a living body, living flesh, but membrane and veil or fold (on the application of this to Gothic sculpture as *Gewändearchitektur*, as ‘column figures’ that were for Jantzen ‘closely and fundamentally related to architecture’ see: Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, *Op. cit.*: 116; Eng. edn: 118, 128). Thus ‘diaphanous structure’ is a multiple-layered, transitional structure that leads into the depths, into gloom, to existence, to nothingness. And to God!

<sup>2</sup> On ‘*macchia*’ as one of the fundamental concepts in Sedlmayr’s system of views (but not only his – see also, for instance, Joseph Gantner and his ‘prefiguration’) see: Stepan S. Vaneyan, ‘Брейгель–Зедльмайр–Имдаль: слепое пятно интерпретации’ [Brueghel–Sedlmayr–Imdahl:

## IV.

Proof of all that has been said, or a symptom of all not said, comes in a later (1976) afterword (simultaneously a foreword) by Sedlmayr himself to *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale*. In this context 'diaphany' is mentioned and explained again and again, on a far greater scale than in the main text and, which is even more symptomatic, in far greater volume than 'baldachin', even though the latter was Sedlmayr's own invention. But we do need to dig further into the nature of 'diaphany' and, most importantly, to expand it.

First things first. Sedlmayr introduces the concept of the 'generative principle' (*erzeugende Prinzip*), intended to define the essence of this particular architectural phenomenon. Rejecting in turn all previous definitions of the cathedral, Sedlmayr becomes convinced that this generative principle or, more simply, generative grammar (in the terminology of Noam Chomsky and Pierre Bourdieu<sup>1</sup>), is 'a new attitude to light' ('ein neues Verhältnis zum Licht'). Sedlmayr reminds us that this was first mentioned by Panofsky and von Simson,<sup>2</sup> that he himself spoke about it almost at the same time, but at the beginning

The Blind Spot of Interpretation], in: Ekaterina A. Bobrinskaya, Anna S. Korndorf, eds, *Память как объект и инструмент искусствознания* [Memory as Object and Instrument in Understanding Art], Moscow: GII, 2016: 86–99. We should recall the fundamental and at the same monumental pre-history of 'spots', not just optical but haptic: Alois Riegl with his idea of 'haptic form' as the result of primal tactile experience (touching a surface 'with the tips of the fingers' and shaping our understanding of two-dimensionality, which thus unfolds in space as the sum of many dots), and August Schmarsow, with his key correction to Riegl's idea, asserting the impossibility of drawing tactile or bodily experience from 'dotted touch' alone, offering in place of it the experience of the whole kinesthetic experienced somatics, of the whole, complete and living body. See: August Schmarsow, *Die Kunstwissenschaftliche Grundbegriffe. Am Übergang vom Altertum zum Mittelalter* [1905], Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verl., 1998: 42.

<sup>1</sup> Cf.: Nille, Op. cit.: 65. We should note Bourdieu's extremely negative attitude to all kinds of German terminology: he put both 'the diaphanous wall' and 'floating' on the same level as 'the baldachin system', seeing them as absolutely equivalent 'intuitivist' 'phenomena' whose sole significance derives from the fact that different authors (Sedlmayr in particular) 'discovered' their meanings or simply 'gave them names'; see: Pierre Bourdieu, *Zur Soziologie der symbolischen Formen*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974: 126 (with reference to Louis Grodecki). An indisputable and characteristic example of the enforced competition between the French sociologist's 'structuralism' and the German art historian's 'structural analysis'.

<sup>2</sup> On this see: John Gage, 'Gothic Glass – Two Aspects of Dionysian Aesthetics', *Art History* 5, 1982: 36–85; Peter Kidson, 'Panofsky, Suger and St. Denis', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 50, 1987: 1–17. These two texts set out an essential revision of the question of the metaphysics of light: 'die Ableitung des Lichts im gotischen Kirchenraum aus der Lichtspekulation des christlichen Neuplatonismus einer kritischen Überprüfung nicht standhält'; Sauerländer, Op. cit.: 214. And thus Jantzen's analysis of space 'hat auch im Abstand von sechzig Jahren ihre hermeneutische Bedeutung... bewahrt'; Ibid. We can move 'über Sedlmayr und Panofsky hinweg auf Jantzens'; Ulrich Kuder, 'Jantzens kunstgeschichtliche Begriffe', in: Jantzen, *Über den gotischen Kirchenraum*, Op. cit: 177 note 17.

there was of course Jantzen, although for him light was but the frame for the diaphanous wall,<sup>1</sup> while according to Sedlmayr the truth was that the diaphanous wall itself was a typical product of *Lichtdrang* – the urge towards light.

For Sedlmayr, we begin to understand, the diaphanous wall is a disappearing wall, reduced and replaced by the window, not simply transparent and intended to let in ‘daylight’ (*alltägliche Licht*) as in ‘our modern glass buildings’,<sup>2</sup> but seeming as though it is itself the source of light (*Es scheint gleichsam nicht von außen zu kommen, sondern von den Fenstern selbst auszustrahlen...*), which allows for the bringing out of its anagogical nature (*seine anagogische Qualität mit einzubeziehen*).<sup>3</sup> A wall of this kind is literally a ‘most sacred window’ as described by Suger (for him this *sacratissime vitrae* was the true – unearthly – altar or communion table). Behind this is a new fullness of light, a new filling of the building with light. Sedlmayr gladly uses Panofsky’s expression, ‘an orgy of neo-Platonic light metaphysics’ (*eine wahre Orgie neuplatonischer Lichtmetaphysik*), emphasising that it is the anagogical quality, *the involvement in the transformative process of all presence within the building*, that is the true root of the cathedral (and it is not particularly important, or even particularly productive, to note that Suger had an incorrect, simplified understanding of the Areopagite). The building is the *Vehikel*, that same *materialia* that acts as the *Abbild (imago)*, which takes the observer into an ‘intermediate land’ (*Zwischenreich*), where there is no longer any Earth but there is as yet no Heaven. This is a world of some sort of *artistic purgatory* and an obligatory – because it is purifying – delay on the road towards true light and its source.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 598. But Jantzen is dealing with structure and not the wall! Thus this incorrect correction on the part of Sedlmayr is symptomatic of the whole idea and intention behind *Die Entstehung der Kathedrale*.

<sup>2</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 599. Cf.: ‘Die gotische Kathedrale ist kein Skelettbau wie die Glaseisenarchitektur des 19. Jahrhunderts’; Sauerländer, Op. cit.: 213. Cf. Scheerbar and Bruno Taut: ‘Die Idee der Transparenz, Transformation und Bewegung sollet durch Glasbauten... verwirklicht werden’; Jormakka, Op. cit.: 206. More ‘diaphanisch’ indicates ‘der fundamentale Grundsatz der Funktionalismus’. These are the words of Le Corbusier, who had in mind that the architectural design indicates ‘from the inside out’; Ibid.: 204. See also the ‘essentialistische Ontologie, die dem Aristotelismus und Thomismus nahe kommt...’; Ibid.: 203.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Rudolf Steiner (1923): ‘Wenn die lebendige Wand sich aufhebt, wird sie durchsichtig’; cited in: Mike Shuyt, Joost Elffers, Peter Ferger, *Rudolf Steiner und seine Architektur*, Cologne: DuMont, 1980: 47. Further: ‘Es muss... die bloße Lichthelligkeit transparent werden lassen für die Geistigkeit, die sich in ihr verbirgt. Sie zeichnet sich ein wie in Lichtspuren in den farbigen Grund. Hülle-Bilden und Enthüllen, diese Urpolarität im Gestalten und Erkennen, die aller menschlichen Existenz zugrunde liegt, wenn man an das Leib-Bilden und Leib-Auflösen denkt, über die Grenzen von Geburt und Tod hinausführt, wird hier künstlerisch zum Verhältnis von Wand und Fenster’; Ibid.: 48. For Jantzen himself, in his later writings, the ‘diaphanous structure’ is transformed into a stained-glass *Antiponderose* (the rose window in the cathedral’s west wall), an essential concept for all things transcendental, on which see: Kuder, Op. cit.: 176.

<sup>4</sup> See: Paumann, Op. cit.: 107ff.

But behind this almost orgiastic experience of light is the need to visualise the Mystery, to see It, to approach It through ‘the mediality of the eye’.<sup>1</sup> In fact, however, that approach is distancing, for vision requires distance, when the ‘communion’ of the consecrated Host *in visu* is like contemplating, for instance, the Holy Grail, when it is enough simply to feel at a distance how the *Wunderkraft* flows forth from the chalice.<sup>2</sup>

It is this optics of translucence, of transparency, of allowing transmission through oneself, that characterises, according to Sedlmayr, the western part of Suger’s building and it is here that the ‘very traces’ of true diaphany are missing, for the meaning of true diaphany is not in translucence but in radiance, not in peering through – in one’s mind – at what is behind, what is hidden, but in the direct perception and intentional experience, at a corporeal level, of the oncoming unity of earthly and heavenly, i.e. the material and the immaterial.

Diaphany is an instrument for the achievement of a genuine state of ‘trance’, the essence of which is in the ‘transportation’ (that same *Vehikel*<sup>3</sup>) of the observer into that same ‘intermediate land’ (*Zwischenreich*).<sup>4</sup> This is achieved firstly because the observed is a very particular substance, ‘the material of light’, and secondly through the involvement in the process of the viewer

<sup>1</sup> Cf: von Simson on how the window represents ‘translucent membranes’; von Simson, *Die Gotische Kathedrale*, Op. cit.: 284 note 60; Eng.p. 205 note 62. We might recall, among others, an author from the Bauhaus circle, Siegfried Ebeling, and his *Der Raum als Membran* (1926), in which space itself is conceived of as a membrane between flesh and ‘atmosphere’; see: Stephan Günzel, *Lexikon der Raumphilosophie*, Darmstadt: WBG, 2012: 252–253. In general, if diaphany – now according to Aristotle – is *metaxu* (a substantial medium) then it is both active and a medium (which is how Thomas Aquinas translated *metaxu*). For Descartes this medium is the ether, on which see further: Günzel, Op. cit.: 250–251, and Maas, Op. cit.: 126–128 (which deals with a ‘unmaterielles medium’). So diaphany is an almost magical and mysterical instrument for all kinds of transformative processes (see below and the following note). In Jantzen’s late works we find such ideas, particularly that of architecture’s transition, through the means of light, into a different overall state; Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 68; Eng. edn: 69–70. And this new state implies new (other) kinds of visual art – sculpture and painting, which present innately more primary links and unities, but which nonetheless prove close to colour; on which see the penultimate section here. We find absolutely the same thing in Aristotle, for whom colour was something ‘primarily visible’. And in the very broadest of views, see: ‘Les choses créées ont pour essence d’être des intermédiaires... Elles sont des intermédiaires vers Dieu’; Simone Weil, *La pesanteur et la grâce*, Paris: Plon, 1948, p. 166 (in the chapter ‘Metaxu’).

<sup>2</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 602.

<sup>3</sup> We should remember that in German this word was first used in the realms of pharmacology and medicine, to describe a liquid which ensures the medicine reaches and is absorbed by the organism.

<sup>4</sup> Sedlmayr speaks most clearly of the viewer, that he is ‘beim Anschauen dieser Lichtmaterien in eine Art Trance versetzt wird’; Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 603. But compare Sauerländer’s observations: ‘Darin gründet sich die immer noch anhaltende Suggestivität seiner Sicht der Gotik wie ihre verführerische Einseitigkeit und ihre spiritualisierende Mystifikation’; Sauerländer, Op. cit.: 218.

as a whole, since the instrument of this transformation is the cathedral itself, experienced as a particular kind of artefact–vessel, in truth as a tabernacle–monstrance, ‘through the eyes of its builders’. We should mention in passing that we have before us a whole series of transgressions, including the trans-temporal, notably historical transitions: after all, Sedlmayr stipulates that the point of view he offers us is not modern but an aspect of the consciousness of the age in which the cathedral emerged.<sup>1</sup> This is not epoch but epoché, not a reduction but an abduction as understood by Charles Peirce, an abduction which involves not the viewer of the building but the reader of the text, not only Suger but Sedlmayr himself..

Behind such a new attitude to light is a new – previously unseen and unheard of – closeness between the sensory and suprasensory, or even something else: closeness, almost accordance, ‘between verbal meaning, the sensual visible shape of light and the spiritual meaning that lies behind it, the *lux vera*’ (*Es ist ein neues Verhältnis zwischen dem wörtlichen Sinn, der sinnlich schaubaren Lichtgestalt, und dem dahinter liegenden geistigen Sinn, der lux vera*). This is, to us, the most important formulation: ‘the spiritual light reveals itself quite directly through the sensual light (*im sinnlichen Licht offenbart sich ganz unmittelbar das geistige Licht*).<sup>2</sup> This presupposes that there is no longer any symbol, only the *Abbild*–depiction (*imago*). And that presupposes ‘a new materiality’ (not *Sachlichkeit* but *Stofflichkeit*), a new level of perfection in the material: from lack of transparency (*Undurchsichtigkeit*) to luminosity (*Lichthaftigkeit*), with, in the middle, transparency or permeability (*Durchsichtigkeit*). The latter is ‘a feature of intermediary bodies’ (*eine Eigenschaft intermediärer Körper*; i.e. fire, the ether, crystal, glass), which ‘*partim lucida, partim diaphana*’ (the words of Suger). In effect, diaphany is, ‘in a different meaning than that given it by Jantzen’, a property of an ‘intermediate zone’ (*Zwischenbereich*). Moreover, ‘the Gothic cathedral itself is, thanks to its new materiality, just such an intermediate land’ (*Die gotische Kathedrale selbst ist schon durch ihre neue Stofflichkeit ein solches Zwischenreich*).

But just how far does Jantzen’s meaning differ to that of Sedlmayr? For if intermediality is diaphany, then it is a medium for, among other things, ‘the magic of worship’, that which is most important for Jantzen. Transparency is only part of diaphany. Its other component is its medial instrumentality. Sedlmayr simply expands Jantzen, perhaps in part even despite himself, and he does it not so much through light as through the *Abbild*, which is not a symbol in the sense that it is not a reference but a direct stimulus, an index in the meaning given it by Peirce,<sup>3</sup> an impression of the situation, filled

<sup>1</sup> We should undoubtedly mention here that this mode of temporality reduces the question itself to historical reconstruction: this is plucking out of past time, it is time set within the very discourse on the cathedral...

<sup>2</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 604.

<sup>3</sup> Strictly speaking, and following Charles Peirce, ‘the real existing building’ can be defined as a ‘disci-indexical-sensual symbol’, a judgment, situationally addressed to the recipient’s sensorics; Winfried Nöth, *Handbuch der Semiotik*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Stuttgart–Weimar; Metzler-Verlag, 2000: 446.

with 'mood' (*Stimmung*) and thus open to experience. In effect, in Sedlmayr's writing the whole structural phenomenology of the cathedral is directed towards exposition of the thesis that the cathedral is 'the image (*Abbild*) of the Heavenly Jerusalem'. Whole chapters of the book (27–48) are devoted to this, the subject passing through all possible semantic registers, from the theme of direct visual theophany (the Book of Revelation of John the Divine) to the exhaustion, fading and loss of the theme and the phenomenon itself (Huizinga's *Waning of the Middle Ages*).

Thus the 'symbolism of the church building' is 'not just something retrospectively added in by theologians but something operating within the builders of the cathedral themselves' (*nicht nur etwas nachträglich von Theologen Hinzugedachtes, sondern in den Erbauern der Kathedrale selbst Wirkendes gewesen ist*).<sup>1</sup> The very act of erection is itself symbolic and operative, it is a symbolic act and active ('live' in Jungian terminology) symbol. It is printed on the consciousness, although it is from the consciousness that it emerges. To be more precise, it leaves its mark on the consciousness, being what we might call a transcending stigma.

And so, to its builders the church building is beautiful in as far as it makes them participants in a higher reality which is 'superessential light', the higher it is the more light within. It is a substance, the nature of which is to penetrate and suffuse, giving of itself and communicating itself, through itself transposing, transcending and simply transubstantiating the believers gathered

Moreover, in situational language use the representation of space is always indexical, which is also manifested in spatial perspective; *Ibid.*: 284. But for Sedlmayr's theory of depiction the following propositions from Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* are of no less fundamental importance: '2.141 Das Bild ist eine Tatsache. 2.15 ... Die Zusammenhang der Elemente des Bildes heie seine Struktur und ihre Mglichkeit seine Form der Abbildung... 2.1514 Die Abbildende Beziehung besteht aus den Zuordnungen der Elemente, mit denen das Bild die Wirklichkeit berhrt' ('2.141 The Picture is a fact. 2.15 That the elements of the picture are combined with one another in a definite way, represents that the things are so combined with one another. 2.1514 The representing relation consists of the co-ordination of the elements of the picture and the things'). And most importantly here: '2.172 Seine Form der Abbildung aber, kann das Bild nicht abbilden; es weist sie auf' ('The picture, however, cannot represent its form of representation; it shows it forth'); Wittgenstein, *Op. cit.* In other words, the form of the depiction does not itself depict the image, simply indicating it through gesture, by its own presence, as it were, its even-tiveness and factual nature. It is clear what the consequences are for architecture: entering the architectural picture (*Bild*), we cannot leave it since it exists and functions as an image or depiction (*Abbild*), itself setting the rules, i.e. the form of any activity – including sensory and thereafter cognitive activity. In the case of architecture, such consequences are radical solely because it is itself an openly indicative (ostensive) means of symbolisation. We might then say that that which is the prototype for the image becomes the same as the image at the moment it is perceived and absorbed. Architecture finds itself, as it were, a purified, free, liberated depiction literally by virtue of its existence as a material phenomenon! This is pure magical instrumentalism in the form of 'depiction'.

<sup>1</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, *Op. cit.*: 605.

in the earthly church. And this happens in direct proportion to (*im Maße*) the holding of the Mass (*die Messe*)! The baldachin itself creates a specific corporeality, taking into itself transcendently, creating the conditions for the eucharistic meeting of the flesh of the Lamb and the flesh of the Liturgy's participants. It is no longer light but corporeality itself that is the foil (*die Folie*) for worship.<sup>1</sup> Therefore such an unambiguous instrumentalisation – liturgicisation of diaphany as an aspect of the church building and space makes that diaphany an aspect of the observer of / participant in the action taking place with and within it, if we take into account the observer-participant's fleshly corporeality (*Leiblichkeit*), which cannot be diaphanous in any of the kinesthetic acts innate to the flesh. This is the immanent diaphany of the Mass observed from within, where there is not only the 'intermediate land' (*Zwischenreich*) but the very 'Kingdom of God' (*Gottesreich*).<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, when Sedlmayr says that 'from Chartres flowed a stream of light metaphysics' (*ein Strom der Lichtmetaphysik*),<sup>3</sup> we can go on: this was an outflow of all possible frames and paradigms, not only of styles or forms of piety, but also of cognitivity, including the scientific.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, when Sedlmayr asserts that his task is relatively modest, to reconstruct the meaning of the cathedral as it was 'in the eyes of its builders',<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> But compare: 'Das Licht der Kathedrale "umkreiste" dabei wie die Lichtung als eine lichtende Mitte... Im architektonischen Raum wären die Gläubigen auf das "Raumlose" bezogen wie die Körper der diaphanen Wandstruktur'; Maas, Op. cit.: 151. We might say that such a 'Mitte' was not enough for Sedlmayr... Even more important for an understanding of what we might call corporeal diaphany might be Jantzen's concept of 'style entelechy'. For Jantzen, 'so ist es nicht die Linie... sondern ein imaginäres Sphäroid mit Zentrum und Peripherie, in das die Zeit als Achse eingeht'; Jantzen, *Die Gotik des Abendlandes*, Op. cit.: 40. 'In diesem Sphäroid herrscht Zielstrebigkeit im Sinne der Entfaltung einer geschichtlich neuen Formidee von der Peripherie her zum Erfüllungszentrum'; Ibid. But this temporal axis is also important for optical perception and for all following experiences, but approaching the centre which is the mystery of the act of creation. But where time is, there is space, and thus body and flesh with all their boundaries... For a totally eschatological transition of light and flesh see Messerer: 'wie die Apokalypse sagt: die Stadt, das Himmlische Jerusalem, bedarf weder der Sonne noch es Mondes, denn ihre Leuchte ist das Lamm'; Wilhelm Messerer, 'Sakralbauten' [1984], in: Messerer, Op. cit.: 279.

<sup>2</sup> Cf.: 'Der Mensch wird in der Liturgie und in der inneren Liturgie der Seele zum wahren Priester der Welt'; Messerer, Op. cit.: 276 (with direct reference to Hans Urs von Balthasar!).

<sup>3</sup> Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 609.

<sup>4</sup> The transparency of a work of art, like its visibility, is reduced to simple readability and in the end to straightforward impenetrability of its 'objective existence as such'. Although this opposition – semiotic transparency / objective opacity – is also the object of criticism from the position of mediality theory (Nöth, Op. cit.: 448), and so – we add – from the position of diaphany!

<sup>5</sup> Jantzen himself has something similar in mind when he speaks of how 'das Ergebnis unablässiger Bemühung einer Reihe genialer Meister des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts, die unsere Ahnung von erlebbarer Überweltlichkeit durch Architektur eine Form gegeben haben. ES IST DIE *Baukunst*, die solche Macht ausJantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 156; Eng edn: 181.

we are obliged to see in this expression a very ambitious programme for the construction of an adequate, renewed discipline, in the context of which the author looks at builders not only of the cathedral but, for instance, of method and science, underpinning which is the *'principe générateur'*, at work in that same cathedral which is understood above all as a 'work' (*Werk*). This is the principle of the act which gives birth to meaning, of constructing and constituting significance.

And this is a task of *reconstructing* the architectonic structures of the (artistic) consciousness, the consciousness that produces meaning, that determines the means, forms and methods both of its apprehension and, therefore, interpretation within the *construction* of the interpreter's consciousness. Behind such a consciousness lie not technical or aesthetic but purely wilful acts, creating out of the church building an 'instrument for the soul'. In any case the architecture is transformed, it is built as a vehicle that is purely spiritual, activating and acting in all spheres of reality and activity, as is the way of the spirit. At the same time this is an emphatically visual activity, although the 'eyes' may be those not only of the cathedral's builders but of those who look upon it, those who describe it or write about it, even its poets, since the roots of the cathedral are 'poetic', since the consciousness is poetic.

Thus Sedlmayr's almost-expressed idea is that science and learning, not only the cathedral, have 'poetic roots',<sup>1</sup> that science has its own poetics for it is the creation of meaning when it is free of space as container overall and as container, for instance, of natural light, and equally of space as the locus and condition for that same 'natural setting', and when it is directed towards 'supernatural' light and to the transcendentality of the world.

<sup>1</sup> See: Stepan Vaneyan, 'Искусствознание – наука и поэзия' [Art History – Science and Poetry], *Российский исторический вестник* [Russian Historical Bulletin], vol. 3, 2000: 9–27. of fundamental relevance here is Baumgarten's idea, set out in his proposal of 'aesthetics' as a new science, in which the method would be equivalent to its subject, that subject being depicted nature which is, in turn, also an active instance, depicting and imagining. No less clear is the link with Schelling's ideas on 'the philosophy of unity'. See: Regine Prange, *Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte. Philosophische Ästhetik und empirische Wissenschaft*, Cologne Deubner-Verlag, 2004: 37–70. Lastly we should note that the unbroken cognitive-metaphorical path from Sedlmayr's 'poetic roots' (defining a 'neue Sphäre der dichtenden und erdichtenden Phantasie' – Sedlmayr, *Die Entstehung*, Op. cit.: 477), through his 'endothymen Grund' (Hans Sedlmayr, *Epochen und Werke. Gesammelte Schriften zur Kunstgeschichte*, vol. I, Munich, Mäander, 1985: 324) of artistic creation (with the non-objective visual form called *macchia* – the patch or spot of colour imbued with emotion; *Ibid.*: 275) straight on to Gantner's *l'immagini del cuor* (i.e. 'internal' artistic practice: 'die Zone der prefiguralen Phantasie', Joseph Gantner, "*Das Bild des Herzens.*" *Über Vollendung und Un-Vollendung in der Kunst*, Berlin, Gebr. Mann, 1979: 111, 117, 119). We should also mention Bächtmann's pitiless criticism of all these ideas: Oskar Bächtmann, *Einführung in die kunstgeschichtliche Hermeneutik*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn, Darmstadt: WBG, 2009: 27–30.

V.

In conclusion – or rather, emphasising the most important point, which is the hermeneutic aspect of the transition from diaphany-I to diaphany-II, in which Sedlmayr's twice-repeated phase 'Ich komme zum Schluss' ('I am coming to the end') is of the essence. Temporality is perhaps the most decisive – eschatological – instrument in interpreting diaphany. This ending or conclusion is like some exclusion–enclosure, exhaustion and completion of the world's structurality, being the same transition from picture (*Bild*) to depiction (*Abbild*), from sight (*Sehen*) to hearing (*Hören*) and from diaphany (*Diaphanie*) to diaphony (*Diaphonie*). This forces us to listen to the voice (*Stimme*), and through mood (*Stimmung*) move on to definition (*Bestimmung*).<sup>1</sup>

And thus as conclusion we have some very rapid observations on yet another, almost mirror-image version of depictiveness, in the late texts of Jantzen, where a reverse 'optics' is at work, in the form of direct impressions of Sedlmayr, but also of von Simson and Frankl. Just how far does Jantzen remain true to his own diaphany when he comes up against a not entirely transparent reading of himself?

Jantzen's response was self-commentary: he adhered strictly to his own version of diaphany, which is natural, since he was its author. But the way he defends it makes clear that he was in fact defending phenomenological diaphany, of which we should speak separately. The most important thing here, as has been said, is the underlying identification with corporeality and thus with subjectivity which, as we shall see, allows us most directly to bring together the structural and semantic aspects of a phenomenon such as Gothic, and to be more precise, the specifically Gothic kinesthetic experience.

It is absolutely key that Jantzen always talks of the 'spatial boundary', for only thus does space manifest itself in phenomenal terms. Here we have, undoubtedly, an echo of the tactile, haptic underpinning of space, particularly when space is not container but substance (on which see above).<sup>2</sup> It still remains space, it does not turn into 'unspace' (*Unraum*), because it 'remains a space through which one can pass'.<sup>3</sup> This kinesthetic space

<sup>1</sup> Cf. for instance: 'Die Stimme... ist nämlich die Artikulation leiblicher Anwesenheit'; Gernot Böhme, *Atmosphäre: Essays zur neuen Ästhetik* 7, Berlin: Aufl. Suhrkamp, 1995: 146. And, undoubtedly, Jacques Derrida, who in *Speech and Phenomenon* spoke, among other things, of (here citing the German translation) 'Instanz der Stimme und ihrer befremdlichen Autoirrität'; Jaques Derrida, *Die Stimme und das Phänomen. Einführung in das Problem des Zeichens in der Phänomenologie Husserls*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2015, Chapter 'Die Stimme, die das Schweigen wahrht: 95–96; English edn: *Speech and Phenomenon and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*, tr. David B. Allison, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, in the chapter 'The Voice that Keeps Silence'.

<sup>2</sup> But compare the boundless and somewhat alternative question of 'optical and haptic form' (Alois Riegl), of 'close and distance vision' (Adolf von Hildebrand), that derives from Konrad Fiedler and August Schmarsow: Prange, Op. cit.: 190ff.

<sup>3</sup> Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 69; Eng. edn: 71 (where *Unraum* is rendered as 'spacelessness').

is constituted – we repeat – corporeally and once again is experienced an impact. All the more important therefore is a quality such as verticality (not proportion!): it performs the function, literally before our eyes, i.e. visually, of ‘removing any impression of heaviness’,<sup>1</sup> any sense of weight and so on. We should take into consideration that these effects are due not to space overall but to the wall, once again a ‘boundary’ spirit or essence, the unreality of which us supported by this very effect of the absence of internal buttresses. Visually, the ‘technical means of support’ remains unseen.

And all such paradoxical phenomenology comes to its climax in ‘diaphanous structure’, for the understanding of which that concept and phenomenon of ‘spatial boundary’ is vital. For Gothic, it is key that spatial effect is wrought by the whole of the central nave: in terms of ‘dissemination’ it acts like one large – mobile – body, one which cannot be without surface borders. Most importantly, that disseminating body – a *Kernraum* or ‘cardinal space’ surrounded by another space, the *Anraum* or ‘subsidiary spaces’ – is in another ‘aggregate state’ with other qualities, the main one of which is the ability to ‘envelop the upper nave wall in a mantle of space’.<sup>2</sup> It is the relationships the result of which is called ‘diaphanous structure’.

‘In the “diaphanous structure” of the Gothic system of enclosing space we are concerned with a visual relationship between the plastically modelled wall and the “subsidiary spaces” behind it. We must recognise as well that this relationship does not apply to every kind of wall opening and that it does not depend on the fortuitous size of the opening... The Gothic nave wall is not distinguished from its Romanesque counterpart by having more openings, but by a visually different relationship to the “subsidiary spaces”. It rejects the characteristic of continuous mass, to the extent that it is entirely composed of plastically modelled, cylindrical elements... In short, the architecture of the Gothic wall cannot be understood as continuous mass, but as plastic modelling.’<sup>3</sup>

We should here clarify an important point: these are not just the relationships with the ‘subsidiary spaces’ but with the ‘multifarious layers of space lying behind’.<sup>4</sup> The concept of diaphanous structure emphasises that ‘the modelling of the wall’ becomes ‘a form of architectural relief projecting from a background of space’, which only serves to determine ‘the Gothic character of this method of space-containment’.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the Gothic wall simply cannot be perceived without a spatial background acting as a foil, and only thus does it take on its impactive significance for the whole of the cathedral space. ‘The wall becomes Gothic as soon as the “round” modelling of the wall framework creates the character of a foil in the spatial elements lying behind it.’<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.: 70; Eng. edn: 77.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.: 72; Eng. edn: 74.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.: 73; Eng. edn: 74–75.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.: Eng. edn: 76.

Again: the presence beyond not simply of a ground but of 'different degrees of significance and relationship' (*Bedeutung- und Beziehungsschichten*), the importance of which lies in their significance, which in turn lies in the ability not only to affect the 'perceiver' but to shape some kind of image of action. So diaphanous structure determines 'the character of the space', of specifically Gothic space. And where we have space and character we find the relevant processes: both perception and behaviour, along with all kinds of other forms of activity, including those that are meaning-formative (filling with meaning and performing meaning). But all such habituality – against the background or on the basis of these layers and degrees, degrees that are directly and primarily set, that form the 'modelling basis', since the wall itself is both already a modelled form and those very layers – hide and envelop the body of the central nave, along with everything and everyone inside it or simply with it.

And the main impact of the 'diaphanous structural principle' lies in the reduction of the earth's heaviness, to which is added the departure from stability and permanence, from fixed relationships, when there are not only many background layers but those layers are varied and contrasting in their alternation (from darkness into light zones and back again). Projected vertically, which is to say purely optically, such layers become levels, now marked by the precision and definition of increasing light effects.<sup>1</sup> Jantzen particularly emphasised – rebutting the ideas of Paul Frankl – that Gothic space cannot by any means be perceived or interpreted as 'an endeavour to achieve a merging of very element of space', nor can the Gothic structural principle be understood as combining all the separate original elements into a monotonous mass, uniting them into something indivisible. According to Jantzen, the wall, as something unified and continuous, dissolves and the spatial boundary of the central nave is a 'self-contained and self-complete lattice screen', which can be understood almost in technical photographic terms as a kind of 'raster'. Those things that lie beyond never become part of the same space, being 'mere shells', an 'optical foil', always articulated in layers, creating 'a layer of space acting as a foil to the nave wall'. This and this alone is the diaphanous structure or principle, which – we repeat once more – is a principle that creates, models and acts, including in the space of, for instance, the experiencing consciousness, which is in turn not without its own layers, with levels and transitions between them.

It is important to see how the universalism of 'diaphanous structure' continues and is confirmed in the analysis of, above all, Gothic sculpture, and secondly and most importantly, of painting, or rather of stained glass images. The latter (as understood by Jantzen) can be of particular use to us since, as we recall, diaphany is tied to colour: the latter, one might say, owes its existence to the former (colour is evidence of *diaphanes*, even if unseen). For Jantzen, coloured glass windows were 'not only... a means of translating the architecture into luminous space' but were the decisive aspect, supplying 'a

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.: 75; Eng. edn: 77.

decisive share of that sublime majesty characteristic of Gothic interior design'.<sup>1</sup> The reason lies in the figurative element of the glass. It was those figures depicted that brought 'into direct experience the feeling of transcendence'.<sup>2</sup>

So why stained glass figures (Gestalt) and not three-dimensional figures? Why is it that they manifest themselves as 'immaterial creatures of light, set like magically glowing symbols in the frontiers of space?'<sup>3</sup> In fact, similar characteristics mark Gothic sculpture, the key quality of which ('bearing visible witness') is that of 'silent corporeality' since what we have before us is *Gewändearchitektur*.<sup>4</sup> These sculptures lack their own existential centre and exist within architecture, belonging to its surfaces, but most importantly 'they have an air of belonging to another world'. They are participants in the drama of the divine epiphany, showing 'evident humanity of expression': 'in their faces shines the magic of personality.'<sup>5</sup>

But the power of diaphanous structure manifests itself 'within bounds' (almost literally 'terminally'). And this is the sphere of stained glass, for since that boundary is coloured, its action is 'more embracing', including and transforming not only corporeal but visual experience, accompanying the cathedral in its continuous spread, as an integral sacred space that draws in all corporeality, not only that of the statues. Particularly since the glass figures form part of narratives. So that those looking upon the whole are engaged not only purely visually and purely kinesthetically but hermeneutically. For the subject does not only reveal him/herself within the spatial layer, he/she exists not only on the border of the seen and the unseen, he/she experiences not only the de-materialisation of his/her earthly flesh under the influence of light energy, but he/she perceives and experiences, he/she reads, following the figurative (and figural) sequences, and thus interprets. If the cathedral 'as a work of art' is a system of layers – both meanings and relationships (of which Jantzen speaks in that very part of his book where he introduces the concept of diaphany) – it becomes clear that these layers are absolutely and determinedly significant to the perceiver, who experiences their impact as a method of behaviour,<sup>6</sup> as his/her habitus,

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 139.; Eng. edn: 156.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; Eng. edn: 157.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.: 116; Eng. edn: 128. *Gewändearchitektur* – rendered in the English translation simply as 'column figures' – might be understood as the architectonics of drapery folds or as architecture itself, which in its very essence can be seen as the plastic draping of space (according first to Semper and then to Schmarsow). With Gothic, the accent on graphism is important (this is the path taken by von Simson), but Jantzen also speaks of the 'drawing' common to sculpture and architecture, which unites the two.

<sup>5</sup> All quotations: Ibid.: 112–114; Eng. edn: 125. Another example of phenomenological metaphors is the description of the sculptures at Chartres as 'free of earthly limitations, a brotherhood present in body, but born of the spirit'; Ibid.: 117; Eng. edn: 128.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.: 73; Eng. edn: 75.

touching on mental and thus cognitive layers.<sup>1</sup> And diaphany acts as a continuous principle, penetrating the layer of wall (surface) and the layer of volume (sculpture) and indeed space itself, culminating in a meeting with those light-emitting essences which then enter on communicative (and more specifically narrative) relations with those making contact. And the role of colour here, as both purely optical effect and sensory affect (i.e. as percept), lies in a kind of 'desomatisation' of the subject being perceived. This is the condition for its subsequent semanticisation.<sup>2</sup>

So, colour is the crown of the built cathedral (*ecclesia materialis*), this part of the book ending with stained glass; the author then goes on to deal with the conceived, or rather 'interpreted' *ecclesia spiritualis*, but the interpretation is the result of constructive and arranging efforts that then transition into efforts which are symbolic, inevitably and directly diaphanous.

This chapter, 'Ecclesia spiritualis' (unlike the previous chapter, 'Ecclesia materialis') is modest in length but its size – above all conceptually – is both telling and precise. We must remember that Jantzen's text was a rounding up of all the great Gothic-interpretation texts that went before, from Panofsky through Sedlmayr to von Simson. If we exclude Frankl,<sup>3</sup> then Jantzen was the last in this series. And this short chapter is a fundamentally diaphanous and emphatically semantic synthesis, although, as we are seeking to show, at its basis lies gestalt analysis constructed according to the universal dichotomous principle of the interaction of opposites.

The borderline nature of the diaphanous is manifested not only on the level of built space: in the sphere of conceived space (which is, as we shall see,

<sup>1</sup> According to Jantzen, it was Gothic that 'discovered and brought to light the whole emotional range of the human soul'; *Ibid.*: 118; Eng. edn: 30. The end of the phrase looks on one hand like a phraseological turn of speech but on the other like an epistemological or even phenomenological turn of thought, constituting optics or the rhetoric of affect, of an 'expression of the soul' (*Regung der Seele*), including of a transcendencing kind. Once more we note the complex conceptual fate of 'habitus' (or *modus operandi*), in which an inherently phenomenological term is transformed in part into a Neo-Kantian one (an operation conducted by Panofsky, who saw in it *Denkschemata* or thinking patterns that then transitioned into creative patterns), and then – thanks to Bourdieu – into a structural invariant, homologically and iconologically present at all levels of human existence, from the inner recesses of the individual consciousness, through the collective consciousness to purely socio-symbolic institutions with an important accent on a variety of canonical-schematic regulator-catalysers, of reading and writing (the celebrated lectio/meditatio/contemplatio, multiplied by Chomsky's same generative grammar). And this all determines the essential means of producing meaning (even further, the 'systematic construction of facts', beyond which lies the production of culture itself). See: Bourdieu, *Op. cit.*: 132, 137, 139, 141–143, 151–153.

<sup>2</sup> As one commentator on Jantzen rightly put it, 'Der sichtbare Raum ist das Gefäß einer Spezifischen Spirtualität'; Sauerländer, *Op. cit.*: 217: just as the perceiving subject is the content of that same vessel, which is utterly transparent and thus (because of the absence of any border walls) connected to the cathedral itself and everything that takes place there. But there is further movement – see the text of Jantzen himself and all other similar and potential texts...

<sup>3</sup> Paul Frankl, *Gothic Architecture. Pelican History of Art*, Penguin Books: Baltimore, 1965.

also built, although by different means) the boundary passes between the two states of the Church. “The visibility of the “ecclesia materialis” was a token of the invisibility of the “ecclesia spiritualis””.<sup>1</sup> Thus the act of indicating and interpreting is responsible for forming the symbol, or rather, the symbolic situation, a situation of symbolisation or symbolism. Just as the act of looking reveals the transitive nature of and correlation between the spatial background–skin and the plastic and corporeal ‘grille’ (over time the ‘raster’ becomes ‘text’), so, firstly, the discrepancy between the material and the spiritual and, secondly, the lack of correlation between stylistic changes in the material, i.e. in the ‘church building’ with persistence in the very fact of Revelation (above all in the Gospels!), gives us on the next (historical) level a discrepancy between the permanent and changing ‘layers’ (!) in the *ecclesia spiritualis* itself. ‘The mysteries of the faith can be received in a variety of forms which reflect historical changes in the requirements of church services.’<sup>2</sup> In this liturgical functionality the Christian religious building (which is what the Gothic cathedral is by nature) can be understood as ‘the framework for worship’.<sup>3</sup> The cathedral performs the role of framework, forming a boundary–facet, proving to be one of the layers, revealed as such only in correlation with another pole: this is not just the eventfulness of the Liturgy but of Revelation itself – in Christ, the meeting with Whom is of permanent magnitude for faith but of changing magnitude for piety as ‘religious requirement’ where, amidst the wealth of ‘truths’, different aspects are differently emphasised or revealed at different moments in ‘the flowing of history’.

In the end, the most important thing in this succession of historical changes, advancing with time (Jantzen starts with Early Christianity and ends with the Baroque), is the meeting of God and Man in Christ: ‘Divine Truths in Visible Proximity’ – in this lies the meaning behind the very existence of Western religious art. Christ the individual is but one more boundary–facet within the Church and the church building: this is his ‘theandric nature’.<sup>4</sup> The brevity

<sup>1</sup> Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 147; Eng. edn: 169.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.: 148; Eng. edn: 170.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.: 148; Eng. edn. 171. This idea runs through the whole, not just through Jantzen’s concept but indeed through the history of art: on this see the concluding sections of a small text on Mantegna, whose greatness lay in that ‘aus der die Erscheinung subjektivisierenden Darstellung heraus neue Ausdruckswerte für das Passionsthema schöpft’; Hans Jantzen, ‘Mantegnas Cristo in scurto’ [1927]), *Stephaniskop, Ernst Fabricius zum 6.9.1927*, Freiburg, 1927: 11 ff; reprinted in: Jantzen, *Über den gotischen Kirchenraum*, Op. cit.: 79. For according to Jantzen: ‘Denn was der Christus durch Aufhebung der “Distanz” an repräsentativem Wert einbüßt, gewinnt er dadurch, daß er menschlicher Erlebnissphäre “nahegebracht” wird. Er rückt in die nächste Umgebung des Betrachters, dorthin, wo der Tod und der Ausdruck überstandener Qual am intensivsten erlebt wird. Gerade diese Erlebarkeit des Erlösertodes unmittelbar unter den Augen des Zuschauers ist ein Wert, den hier der Renaissance künstler der mittelalterlichen Auffassung positiv entgegenzusetzen hatte. Der Transzendentalismus des Mittelalters wird aufgegeben zu Gunsten einer den Sinnen greifbareren Auffassung des Erlösertodes.’ Jantzen, *Über den gotischen Kirchenraum*, Op. cit.: 79.

and succinctness – and restraint in the use of terms – in this brief section devoted to the christological dimension of the ‘conceived and understood’ cathedral forces us to see this subject as the true heart of Hans Jantzen’s whole conceptual construct.

In effect the text tells us that Christ’s theandric nature contains the potential for change in believers’ spiritual attitude to the next world, that it is possible – from one era to the next – to pick out the Divine or the Human. Gothic is the age and the cathedral the stage for an event that might be characterised as when ‘Christ’s... human side began to emerge for the first time’,<sup>1</sup> when He was benign, when He suffered for mankind, when He was visibly and sensibly recognisable and near, when He was ‘a man amongst men’.<sup>2</sup> The result was the expansion of the language of the fine arts itself, when symbolism and allegory were added to the existing familiar imagery that was readily and directly accessible to the senses, opening up a far greater field of action or application, opening up yet more relationships beyond each relationship of meaning. And at the same time this is the language of Holy Writ itself, particularly the Gospels, where the parables come from the mouth of Christ.

Thus it becomes possible to significantly expand the application of depiction: to create visual equivalents in nearly all fields, including – as Jantzen points out separately – in the sphere of theological speculation. Thus was born a system of semantic interweavings, including (for instance) those in the sequence of events – past, present, future, beginning and end, in which the existence of the world is understood as a path towards Christ, connected with the accumulation of new truths, with the very potential for varied, variational and (we should add) generative interpretation, when exegesis is bound up in the very method, in the allegorical and symbolical presentation of meaning. The very ‘multiplicity of exegetic possibilities’ proves key, assuming the system of multiplicity of meanings which had been traditional since Antiquity and which – and this is essential for Jantzen, who refers directly to Sauer – does not belong to any specific architectural style. In its ‘general nature’ this multiplicity of layers is a common quality, not so much of the church building itself but of Church exegesis as part of the same tradition. The same is true of methods of meaning personification, and equally of all kinds of anthropomorphism.

This is where the main question of the ‘conceived church’ arises: can one pick out a specifically Gothic type of meaning-formation, as we identify Gothic form-formation? Jantzen’s answer is in the spirit of ‘the iconography of architecture’, by this time worked out and worked up at the very least on a conceptual level: meaning takes on historic specificity if we can tie it to a specific individual responsible for that meaning (as is the case with architectural invention, which always has an ‘author’).<sup>3</sup> In the case of Gothic such

<sup>1</sup> Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 149; Eng. edn: 171.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See: Stepan S. Vaneyan, *Архитектура и иконография. ‘Тело символа’ в зеркале классической методологии* [Architecture and Iconography. ‘The Body of the Symbol’ in the Mirror of Classic Methodology], Moscow: Progress-Tradition, 2010.

a possibility exists: Gothic is doubly fortunate in that we can tie both its form and its meaning to a specific individual. Incredibly, to one and the same individual, Suger, who, unlike Durandus – whose experience of layers of meaning was ‘limited to the level of his desk’ – truly ‘saw something’. In the identity of Suger, and those builders and architects with whom he was in some accord, we can sense ‘the survival of symbolism’.<sup>1</sup>

And then this living experience should be expressed through relevant forms, which does not exclude – indeed, on the contrary, it only exacerbates – the question of the logic and structure underpinning this accordance of form and meaning. A question that is, on the one hand, as old as that same philosophy, and on the other, one that takes on more concrete shape if we formulate it (in the wake of Bandmann) as a question of ‘bearers of meaning’, of the potential situation in which, to repeat Bandmann’s own question, ‘Can the allegorical interpretation have consequences to form?’<sup>2</sup> Put even more specifically it looks like this: is allegory capable or not both of emphasising or uttering individual architectural form-elements, and of picking out only those things which should be reproduced? That would be, according to Bandmann, ‘consequences to/for form’, both expressive and depictive.

Jantzen sets out a similar, apparently utterly acceptable, scheme in a quite unequivocal tone: on the one hand he accepts as indubitable truth that medieval theologians applied some meaning to the church building *post factum*, on the other he emphasises that original meaning (not additional or symbolic, but primary and literal, and quite definitely architectural) should be sought in the process and structure of concept and planning. As a creative and intuitive process, this latter always responds to numerous preconditions, not one of which in the period in question was ever declared directly and clearly. No one ever said anything explicitly to explain the origins of the desire to erect just such a building in just such a fashion.

‘In the formulation of a great plan, an architectural and spatial conception linked with tradition, and the symbolic reasoning behind it, may combine and complement one another in the architect and the client, without our being able to separate the individual factors.’<sup>3</sup>

Bandmann, quoted directly by Jantzen, expresses himself carefully and cautiously: he says that while meaning itself may be incapable of having an impact on form, this does not deprive form of the potential to transform itself (*umgestalten*) into a depiction (*Abbild*) of meaning, which is used as a kind of base (*unterschobene Bedeutung*). This is something like semantic diaphany: the elements do not subordinate each other but leave a place – ‘a spatial boundary’ – of mutual freedom and lack of definition, they can be seen through each other, almost in the meaning of Wittkower (and at the same

<sup>1</sup> Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 153; Eng. edn: 175–176.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*; Eng. edn: 176.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*; Eng. edn: 177.

time of Karl Bühler).<sup>1</sup> But this is now an exegetic situation: this is how a meaning starts to behave when it has just been subject to the interpreter's gaze (the latter in effect converts it, literally transforming its gestalt).

This position requires its own interpretation, one that is also multilayered, although its literal meaning indicates that we can only speak of the equivalence of any particular architectural form if we can assert that the very structure of the meaning already contains indications of architecture, if the meaning is clearly constructed, for instance set into a base, underpinned, or on the contrary imposed upon, set up against, united to; if it contains frame, ground, characterising itself plastically, as grille, wing etc. In other words, if we can point to the cognitive and building activity of the consciousness, particularly if we can describe it in plastic and spatial (corporeal!) terms, then acts that are obviously meaning-creating, will automatically be – at the depictive level, at the level of a print or stamp or direct concordance – form-creating acts; the form of such cognitive activity will be architecture. It is important that this activity, this equivalency, can be shown from the start and not proved subsequently. So that the interpreter – in the wake of Suger and any creator-originator of interpretive creations – can see something specific, so that one can with clear conscience set out to interpret something that is truly seen, since it is isomorphic and isological to the thing itself.

This, it seems to us, is the epistemological core of that pairing, 'the built church and the conceived church'. Such totality of accordance is possible, to Jantzen's mind, under very specific circumstances: there must be a common environment, a mutually reversible space of forms and their meanings, as is the case with architecture, since the urban environment is communicative. Hence 'The Whole Building seen as the City of Heaven'.<sup>2</sup> And this meaning will be anagogical, leading onwards, up to a new level. And here – now with reference to Sauer, contemporary theologian and interpreter of interpreters – Jantzen comes close to the very essence of what proves to be his carefully conceived programme. It is not only the situation of vision that is key, but of apocalyptic vision, and thus this situation is unique, for it is final, completed and finished, and its reproduction-representation only reinforces the level of reality, just as happens in the Liturgy. In this sense, as Sauer quite rightly points out, the ceremony of consecration of a newly-built church makes it – through the reproduction of those same parts of Revelation – not a copy, not an image and even less an illustration, but a coinciding depiction, or rather a manifestation of the one true church of the New Testament as revealed in John's vision. The essence of this church lies in what happens there: the full and thus authentic Presence of God amidst His people, mankind, the saved.

In this state of vision and presence the ideal and material interact without absorbing each other, yet absorbing the very statics of contradistinction, the potential for one to exclude the other.

<sup>1</sup> See: Rudolf Wittkower, 'The Interpretation of Visual Symbols [1954]', in: Rudolf Wittkower, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1977: 173–188.

<sup>2</sup> Jantzen, *Die Kunst der Gotik*, Op. cit.: 154; Eng. edn: 178.

And purely logically it becomes necessary to point out the situation in which the co-presence of the different, the diverse, the disparate, of variety itself, proves to be the original source moment, even though it is also that which is sought. It is the *Abbild*, to use Sedlmayr's term, or the *Kunstwerk*, if we follow Jantzen himself. A play on both the use and rejection of *Abbild* by Jantzen makes up the last 'scenes' of this whole conceptual drama we have just reproduced. We shall linger on this, as the inevitable retardation that prepares for and ensures our perception of the final apotheosis (never forget that for Jantzen true Western religious art culminates in the Baroque).

From Jantzen's point of view, 'in pursuing the symbolic meaning of the church as a building' it was Sedlmayr who went furthest, seeing it not as an anagogical image but as 'a visible, tangible image of the City of God'... for the purpose of transplanting the visitor... "really" into the City of God'.<sup>1</sup> Whilst admitting that 'the majestic floating space of the interior produced by its weightlessness, towering verticality and diaphanous structure' makes a truly 'overwhelming' impression, that the 'poetical conception' is 'exquisitely contrived', Jantzen nonetheless states – and this is probably what we should highlight as his most important theme – that 'the Gothic cathedral as a work of art... cannot have derived from the mind of a poet the wonderful structural logic with which it was erected...' We have to 'lay aside the "imagery"' in the face of art in order to nonetheless recognise the 'high symbolic power' that 'gave material form to our conception of a supramundane world which could be seen and felt'.<sup>2</sup> And this was the sole responsibility of 'the art of building': it is this that brings out the very power that mysteriously makes the master, the author of the architectural design, into something like the Creator of all being.

Jantzen does not see in 'depiction' the equivalent of presence, although he recognises the experience of the closeness of the Divine as being the Gothic cathedral's main quality. He sees the total creative nature of Gothic, but at the same time wishes to identify only construction as that organising and realising authority which has an effect, including an effect on consciousness. That which happens to those within the cathedral happens thanks to architectonic creativity. And that which actually happens is an alteration in the state of mind and heart. A question: how does that alteration take place and what does it consist of? How is this effect of transition from the everyday state to the sublime created? To say that our master-architect 'gives form to our presentiments' is undoubtedly insufficient, since this reference to the creative act must be literal: it 'mysteriously' touches on changes in state and mood. It is no matter of chance that in his programmatic text on Brueghel Sedlmayr speaks of the *Abbild* after the anagogical level: this is tropology, tropism of the senses, tied to the topology of space. But for Jantzen the *Abbild* is replaced by the 'work of art', thereby emphasising the moment of creation and thus of irrationality, a moment in which the interpreter is 'complicit'.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.: 156; Eng. edn: 180.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.; Eng. edn: 181.

In fact this is the leitmotiv of Jantzen's whole book, his whole concept, and because of the great closeness in their intentions, it is important to draw the lines separating him from Sedlmayr. If we compare the Gothic designer with the author of the biblical Wisdom of Solomon, which in its turn compared the Creator with an architect-builder; if in Jantzen's wake we allow that both of them might have thought in a similar manner, one in design, the other in text; if we believe Jantzen that it is sufficient for us to recall (*vergegenwärtigen*) in order for us to feel Gothic's 'symbolic force'; then what prevents us from admitting that any text on 'creative activity' has the same potential for activating a similar force? When Sedlmayr read Jantzen's text it was evoked in him *вместо* it evoked it in him; and when Jantzen read Sedlmayr's text (inspired by him, Jantzen), it activated in the author the concept of 'diaphanous structure'.

But the main problem, the specific nature of this state of affairs, lies in that in writing our own texts and in reading theirs we find ourselves in the same situation.