

## CHAPTER 11

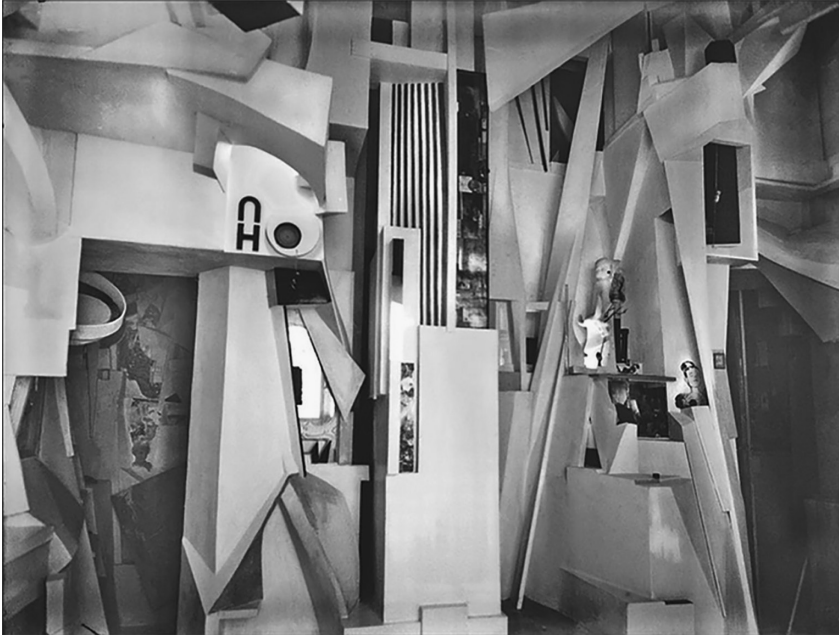
### ANAGOGICAL THEMES IN SCHWITTERS' *KATHEDRALE DES EROTISCHEN ELENDS*

Matthew Mindrup

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#### Introduction

Begun in 1923, the German artist and amateur architect Kurt Schwitters' *Kathedrale des erotischen Elends* (The Cathedral of Erotic Misery) is an important contribution to the early-twentieth-century German avant-garde that provides a unique point of entry into a critical contact between the sacred and modern in architecture (Figure 11.1). Early musings about a conflation between these two concepts emerged from Bruno Taut during 1919 wherein he encouraged his fellow architects in his essay 'Eine Notwendigkeit' (A Necessity) to emulate German Expressionist painters' emphasis on the 'construction' of a painting in the construction of architecture.<sup>1</sup> As the Russian born, German Expressionist artist Wassily Kandinsky explained, this art was the result of the painter discovering an 'internal necessity' in the composition of forms and colours. For his abstract assemblies of found objects in two and three dimensions called Merz, Schwitters employed a similar interpretive strategy in his own selection and rejection of found materials depending upon how well they contribute to an ineffable *Ausdruck* (expression). Similar to Aristotle's hylomorphic conception of material and immaterial form, Schwitters' *Ausdruck* was contingent upon a process of transubstantiation by which a found object must be able to *Entmaterialisieren* (dematerialize) an immaterial identity or purpose he called its *Eigengift* (inner poison) and take on a new one in a work of Merz art or architecture. In this way, Schwitters' Merz came to embody the concept of modernity which Charles Baudelaire's posed in his 1864 essay 'The Painter of Modern Life' as an exploitation of the ephemeral, transitory nature of meanings in contemporary life in order to gauge and appreciate that which is perpetual – things themselves and a human imagination that continues to find meanings in them.<sup>2</sup> Like his peers in the Arbeitsrat für Kunst (Working Council for Art), the ideal paradigm for Schwitters' architecture was the Gothic cathedral not merely as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (Total work of Art), but because of the anagogical function of its materials – leading the mind from the world of appearances to the contemplation of final causes. This chapter explores Schwitters' sublimation of anagogical themes into the construction of his *Kathedrale des erotischen Elends* (KdeE), as a model for a new architecture whose final cause would emerge from the creative mind of the modern architect.



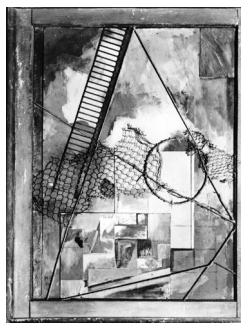
**Figure 11.1** Kurt Schwitters, *Kathedrale des erotischen Elends* (1933).  
 Source: © Kurt Schwitters/VG Bild-Kunst. Copyright Agency, 2019.

### Merz and the Merz cathedrals

Schwitters began to develop his Merz art and architecture shortly after the end of the First World War as a method for assembling found materials into art that he called 'MERZ' – a term coined after a word fragment in his first collage, *Das Merzbild* (The Merz Picture) from 1919 (Figure 11.2).<sup>3</sup> With the exception of a few collages from the same period, Schwitters' Merz works were made from discarded objects, including torn and cut pieces of printed matter, and pasted onto canvases in various angles or directions not so that they would 'be used logically in their objective relationships, but only within the logic of the work of art.'<sup>4</sup> It was a method Schwitters would continue to apply like a brand name to all of his activities, including architecture.

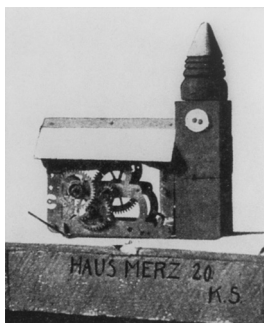
In his article 'Die Bedeutung des Merzgedankens in der Welt' (The Meaning of Merz-Thought in the World) from 1923, Schwitters compared the transformation of found objects in a Merz work to the assemblage and reassemblage of words in a piece of prose or poetry, since 'In poetry, words are torn from their former context, they are *entformelt* and brought into a new artistic context, they become formal parts of the poem.'<sup>5</sup> The term '*entformelt*' is a neologism that Schwitters invented, roughly translating as 'disassociation of form(s)'.<sup>6</sup> Schwitters' use of the term to describe the making of a poem is an elaboration of a conception he held about the assemblage of materials in a Merz work – that in the 'artistic evaluation' of found objects, 'essential is only the *Formen* (forming)'.<sup>7</sup> The application of these two concepts is demonstrated most clearly in *Pornographisches*

## Modern Architecture and the Sacred



**Figure 11.2** Kurt Schwitters, *Das Merzbild* (1919).

Source: © Kurt Schwitters/VG Bild-Kunst. Copyright Agency, 2019.



**Figure 11.3** Kurt Schwitters, *Haus Merz* (1920).

Source: © Kurt Schwitters/VG Bild-Kunst. Copyright Agency, 2019.

*i-Gedicht* (Pornographic i Poem) from 1923, where Schwitters cut the printed pages of a children's story in half, and in doing so relocated the words into new contexts giving them new associations that are potentially pornographic.

The founding principle behind Schwitters' *Formung* and *Entformung* of found objects in a Merz work was based upon a conception of all materials as having a transitory invisible 'individual character' he called their '*Eigengift*'.<sup>8</sup> For Schwitters, in order for a found object to become useful as material for a Merz work, this *Eigengift* had to be *entmaterialisiert* in the *Entformung* of the object.<sup>9</sup> That is to say that in order for a found object to be used as material for making art, its *Eigengift* had to be forgotten through a mental process by which its identity or purpose changed even as the physical appearance of the thing remained unaltered. Yet, Schwitters' Merz art was not a random assemblage of objects denuded of their original purposes but rather compositions that were the result of a correspondence between the lines, colours and forms in a work of art he described as its '*Ausdruck*'.<sup>10</sup> For Schwitters, this expression was not brought to the work *a priori* but 'comes into being through the artistic evaluation of its elements. I know only how I do it, I know only my materials, from which I take, I know not to what *Zwecke* (ends/purposes)'.<sup>11</sup> Because 'every combination of lines, colours, and forms had a definite expression that cannot be put into words', it follows that the *Zweck* for Schwitters' Merz works consisted of the sensuous manifestation of an invisible content that both determined, and was determined by, the unique arrangement of found objects as art.

Shortly after the first exhibition of his Merz art in July 1919 at Der Sturm gallery in Berlin, Schwitters began experimenting with his Merz use of found materials to create Merz sculpture and architecture.<sup>12</sup> As he explained in his article 'Merz', this expansion into three dimensions meant to *modellieren* (to sculpt or model).<sup>13</sup> In the text that followed, Schwitters introduced *Haus Merz* (House Merz) as his 'first piece of Merz architecture' and included a quote from his friend, the art critic Christof Spengemann, who identified the small assemblage in his article 'Merz: Die offizielle Kunst' (Merz: The Official Art) as *die Kathedrale* (the Cathedral) (Figure 11.3).<sup>14</sup> Simultaneous to these

events, Schwitters also began to explore the cathedral theme in a small book of eight lithographs from 1920 entitled *Die Kathedrale* (The Cathedral). It is interesting that despite its title, Schwitters did not include a religious edifice on its cover, but rather a hastily drawn flat-roofed industrial mill. The conflation of cathedral and the mill is most succinctly noted by the presence of gears in both *Haus Merz* and the lithograph drawings and watercolours he created to describe the Merz transformation of found materials into art or architecture as a kind of milling.<sup>15</sup>

It was during this early phase of Schwitters' Merz architecture that he began to construct another structure called a *Säule* (column) that became the model and starting point for a full-size architectural environment he referred to as a 'cathedral'. Based on an account from Richard Huelsenbeck, Schwitters started constructing the first of three columns as early as December of 1918 when he claimed it was 'all crap' – a depository for unused objects in his *Merzbilder* (Merz pictures).<sup>16</sup> Later, in the spring of 1920, Max Ernst also visited Schwitters and reported that he referred to it as a '*colonne de merz*' (Merz-column).<sup>17</sup> By 1923, Schwitters had altered the first *Merz-column* and included his collage *Der erste Tag* (The First Day) from 1918–19 on its base. The title can be considered a designation that, along with a statement from his son Ernst, implies it may have been the initial point of Schwitters' inspiration for the construction of the what he initially described as a *Merzbau*:

His pictures would decorate the walls, his sculptures standing along the walls. As anybody who has ever hung a picture knows, an interrelation between the pictures results. Kurt Schwitters, with his particular interest in the interaction of the components of his works, quite naturally reacted to this. He started by tying strings to emphasize this interaction. Eventually they became wires, then were replaced with wooden structures, which, in turn were joined with plaster of Paris. This structure grew and grew and eventually filled several rooms on various floors of our home, resembling a huge, abstract grotto.<sup>18</sup>

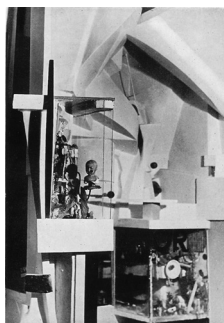
In 1931, Schwitters claims the existence of ten columns including a third 'great column' in his article 'Myself and My Aims', which he now referred to as the *Kathedrale des Erotischen Elends*, or KdeE for short. Although no photographic record remains of this 'great column', the 1923 photo referred to as *Der erste Tag Merz-säule* (The First Day Merz-column) is the date that Schwitters claims his *Merzbau* began (Figure 11.4).<sup>19</sup> It can be inferred from Schwitters' statement that the *Merz-säule* was one of the ten columns that his son Ernst believes were sublimated into the *Merzbau* as a kind of a model.

As Schwitters' KdeE evolved, it took on a unique role in his own oeuvre as a type of sacred structure. Although now destroyed, we know from accounts given by fellow artists and his own son Ernst Schwitters that the KdeE included numerous '*Grotten* (grottoes)', '*Höhlen* (holes, caves)' and '*Zimmer* (rooms) – designated as such by Schwitters himself – as well as containers in which materials for future *Merzbiler* and Merz constructions were kept'. Recalling his Hannover *Merzbau* in a letter he wrote in 1946, Schwitters states that his 'Merz tower was not confined to a single room, but spread over the whole house

## Modern Architecture and the Sacred



**Figure 11.4** Kurt Schwitters, *Der erste Tag Merz-säule* (1923).  
Source: © Kurt Schwitters/VG Bild-Kunst. Copyright Agency, 2019.



**Figure 11.5** Kurt Schwitters, *Gold Grotto* (1925).  
Source: © Kurt Schwitters/VG Bild-Kunst. Copyright Agency, 2019.

... parts of it were in the adjoining rooms, on the balcony, in two rooms of the cellar, on the second floor, in the attic' (Figure 11.5).<sup>20</sup> Similar to his collages, the different areas of Schwitters' *KdeE* were named after specific objects which contained or made reference to specific events in his cultural world. In published accounts of the *Merzbau*, there are at least forty different grottoes, rooms and caves.<sup>21</sup> The *Zimmer* referred to geographical regions, styles and mythological or historical figures in German history and culture. Conversely, the *Höhlen* are containers for objects and artefacts that were elicited – or in some cases pilfered – from the representative individuals themselves such as Sophie Täuber-Arps' cave which contained her bra, while Mies van der Rohe's cave contained a pencil Schwitters may (or may not) have been poached from Mies' drafting table. Like a Gothic cathedral reliquary, the objects in these *Höhlen* were physical evidence of the artist and their important contributions to Schwitters' cultural world.

### *Zukunftskathedrale*

That Schwitters drew and assembled works he associated with cathedrals in Germany during the early 1920s is not to be understood as the promotion of a religious belief but rather the reinforcement of a cultural idea to inspire the development of a new German architecture. As early as 1914, Bruno Taut had proposed the Gothic cathedral as a potent paradigm for a modern unification of the arts.<sup>22</sup> Following Germany's defeat in the First World War, many architects sought to join with the socialists in Berlin as the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst* (Working Council for Art) to help forge a new German Republic.<sup>23</sup> Taut revived this idea of synthesizing the arts as a major component of the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst's* founding manifesto '*Ein Architektur-Programm*' (An Architecture Program) from March 1919, which promoted a faith in the power of architecture to create a better future, a clear commitment to breaking down the artificial divisions between the arts that had occurred following the Gothic period, and argued that the architect should

have the overarching responsibility for the final design.<sup>24</sup> When Walter Gropius later took over as director of the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst*, he again used the image of a cathedral in the pamphlet for the April 1919 *Ausstellung für unbekannte Architekten* (Exhibition of Unknown Architects)<sup>25</sup> in Berlin and echoed Taut's original call for 'architects, sculptors and painters' to break down the barriers between the arts and be unified by the 'architect' whose work, he explained, would create a *Gesamtkunstwerk* as the *Zukunftskathedrale* (Cathedral of the future) – a crystalline expression of a spiritual idea that would metaphorically radiate its light into the design of objects for everyday life. It was this conception of the *Zukunftskathedrale* that Lyonel Feininger synthesized into his famous woodcut for the cover of the 1919 *Bauhaus Manifesto*.

Shortly after the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst*'s acceptance of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* as the model for a new German architecture, Schwitters identified a comparable aim underlying his own work claiming, 'My aim is the *Merzgesamtkunstwerk* that embraces all branches of art in an artistic unity.'<sup>26</sup> Notwithstanding their similarities, Schwitters was not a member of the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst* nor can it be certain that he had any familiarity with its members or Gropius' *Zukunftskathedrale* when he invented Merz in December 1918. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine that Schwitters' sudden identification of the cathedral and *Gesamtkunstwerk* as important themes in his Merz oeuvre in 1920 was merely a coincidence. During the opening of his first Merz exhibition at Der Sturm gallery, Schwitters would have become familiar with members of the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst* and Gropius' newly founded Bauhaus school. Der Sturm was a gallery where Taut and Behne had been leading members since 1914 and Gropius had recruited many of its artists to join his new Bauhaus faculty in Weimar. Two months before writing an article on *Haus Merz*, Spengemann published a review of Taut's book, *Die Stadtkrone* (The City Crown) from 1919. The review is probably where Schwitters became familiar with Taut and his work in the *Arbeitsrat für Kunst*. Later, Taut himself must have recognized the resonance between Schwitters' Merz architecture to his own aims since he invited Schwitters to contribute a short article about his architectural modelling method '*Schloss und Kathedrale mit Hofbrunnen*' (Castle and Cathedral with Courtyard Well) to the spring 1922 issue of his architectural journal *Frühlicht*.<sup>27</sup> That Schwitters created *Haus Merz* and began to construct his KdeE during this period of time is understandable when one considers his familiarity with the members of the Der Sturm gallery who embraced the Gothic cathedral of Taut and Gropius as a prototype for the construction of a new post-war German *Gesamtkunstwerk*. As the *Grotten*, *Höhlen* and *Zimmer* of Schwitters' KdeE indicate, he employed the motif of a religious structure to demonstrate his conception of architecture in a more emphatic way than Taut or Gropius. In doing so, Schwitters connected his Merz method of making art and architecture with the anagogical purpose of the Gothic cathedral.

### Anagogical themes in the Gothic cathedral and in Merz

It can be asserted that no concept is more important to the design of religious experience in both the Gothic cathedral and Schwitters' KdeE than *anagoge*. Typically associated

## Modern Architecture and the Sacred

with the reading of a religious text, the term 'anagoge' refers to the interpretation of a word or passage of text as having a spiritual or mystical sense over and above its literal meaning. During the twelfth century, the French abbot Suger gave one of the most celebrated explanations of the anagogic function of the precious metals and gems in religious objects. He stated that they were to cause one to 'reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial' and to be 'transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner'.<sup>28</sup> This perception of art and architecture essentially derived from a dictum attributed to the early Christian theologian Origen of Alexandria, who said that 'the visible world contains images of heavenly things in order that by means of these lower objects we may rise to that which is beyond'.<sup>29</sup> Much in the same way as his peers who were practising Expressionist and Dada art, Schwitters interpreted the materials that he used as having an ineffable content contributing to the making of his Merz art and architecture.

The mystical interpretation of material components in art was a popular concept of the German avant-garde during the early twentieth century. One of the primary proponents of a spiritual concept of art was Wassily Kandinsky, who outlined a theory of artistic composition based upon his concept of an 'inner necessity' in his 1912 essay 'Über das Geistige in der Kunst' (Concerning the Spiritual in Art). Herein Kandinsky argued that the juxtaposition of 'colouristic and linear forms that have an independent existence', along with musical 'dissonance', 'ugly sounds' and 'unbeautiful dance movements' could be considered beautiful, provided they were borne from an invisible determining content he referred to as an 'internal necessity'.<sup>30</sup> A handful of the Zürich Dadaists during this time also viewed their work as an interpenetration of material with spiritual content in order to provide an explanation for the possibility of making sense of the apparent nonsense of the fluctuating material world.<sup>31</sup> For one of the founders of Dada, Hugo Ball, the process by which Dada art and poetry incited the imagination to make connections between absurd and misshapen assemblies of literary and visual fragments had a precedent in the anagogic interpretation of Christian art.<sup>32</sup> Even when Ball first encountered the name 'Dada', he recognized a connection between it and mysticism. He wrote about this connection in his diary on 18 June 1921, explaining that 'when I met the word "Dada", I was twice called from Dionysius. D.A.-D.A. (H---k [Huelsenbeck] wrote about this mystical birth; I did too in earlier notes. At that time, I was interested in the alchemy of letters and words)'.<sup>33</sup> The dating of this remark is important, because Ball made it at a time when he was working on a biography of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite for his book, *Byzantinisches Christentum* (Byzantine Christianity).<sup>34</sup>

The Christian apologetic philosopher, Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite was an important early-fifth-century theologian responsible for developing the anagogical framework that influenced the design of the Gothic cathedral. In his *Celestial Hierarchy*, the Pseudo-Areopagite built upon Plotinus's theory of the One to propose an invisible source for physical things as the 'Father of lights' or God.<sup>35</sup> The Pseudo-Areopagite sought to use the Christian conception of creation as a metaphor to describe how one could interpret an invisible order for all things beyond the veil of visible reality.

While today the term 'anagoge' is overshadowed by its use to name a form of religious experience, contemporary dictionaries define anagoge as 'the elevation of the mind [or the adept] to divinity' in early Greek philosophy and the 'interpretation [or explanation] of texts as having [or by inserting] a higher sense, e.g. the interpretation that seeks to give a symbolic relationship to biblical words'.<sup>36</sup> Both the German word 'anagoge' and the English word 'anagogy' derive from the Late Greek word ἀναγωγή (anagoge) as an elevation (mystical or ecstatic) and ultimately from the early Greek word ἀναγεῖν (*anagein*) meaning 'to lead', and 'to elevate'.<sup>37</sup> The ancient Greek use of the word *anagein* to describe the elevation of something 'physically' was expanded to include the elevation of something 'intellectually' and later by extension, 'mystically' with Plato, who used a word with the same stem 'ana' as *anagein* to describe the epistemological ascent (*anabasis*) from a contemplation of physical particulars to their higher invisible archetypes or *eidos*.<sup>38</sup> As an example, following Aristotle's distinction, to interpret the how and why of a house was to *agagein* or to elevate an understanding of it intellectually.

The close connection between the term *anagogy* in early Greek philosophy and its later development in Christian exegesis is best revealed by Saint Thomas Aquinas, who used Aristotle's concept of causality in his *Summae Theologica* to describe Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite's 'God' or 'Father of Light' as the 'final cause'.<sup>39</sup> Here, Aquinas used Aristotle's notion of a final cause to posit God as the 'ultimate cause'.<sup>40</sup> Aquinas' contemporary, Saint Bonaventure, also saw an application of the four causes in Christian theology by applying them to the four forms of biblical exegesis. For Bonaventure, the four levels of the 'book of Scripture' – the literal, tropological, allegorical and anagogical – could likewise be applied to interpreting nature as a 'book of creation' having material, formal, efficient and final causes.<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps nowhere does an anagogical perspective of materials reappear during the twentieth century more vigorously than in the making and reception of Schwitters' Merz art and architecture. In the modern era, the term 'anagogy' has maintained a use consistent with Schwitters' Merz interpretation of found objects: to describe the elevation of the mind from a perception of visible particulars to an interpretation of the invisible content that they hold in common. In 1923, Schwitters certainly saw a connection between his work, Dada and spiritual experience when he claimed that 'Dada is the Christian spirit in the realm of art'.<sup>42</sup> And later, in 1944, he connected this 'Christian spirit' with his own work when he wrote to Herbert Read thanking him for describing his Merz work as having 'a mystical justification for taking up the stones which the builders rejected and making something of them'.<sup>43</sup> Schwitters' references to the spiritual in these instances suggest that his interest was in the anagogical role of Merz. All this aside, Schwitters never used the German term for 'anagoge' (anagogy) to describe his Merz use of found objects.

For Schwitters however, KdeE was not envisioned as a form of religious experience but a demonstration of his conception of architecture. Constructed as a representation of the Heavenly Jerusalem on earth, the primary function of geometry, the emphasis on light and use of precious materials in making a Gothic cathedral was intended to lead the mind of its user to anagogically contemplate ineffable truths about the creation of all



## Modern Architecture and the Sacred

things by a Christian god. However, Schwitters' Merz was not a religion. In his description of *Haus Merz*, Spengemann suggested that *Haus Merz* is 'not the church building' in the literal sense, but rather the 'expression of a truly spiritual intuition, of the kind that raises us to the infinite: absolute art'.<sup>44</sup> Like the Gothic cathedral, this anagogic reading of *Haus Merz* compares it to a church reliquary as a model for how Merz architecture should be imagined, while the *Merzbau* is likened to a prototype for how it could be constructed. Similar to the shrines and reliquaries of a Gothic cathedral the intention of Schwitters' *Merzbau* was to venerate particular individuals and events that were significant to the Merz approach towards the use of found materials to make art and architecture.

## Conclusion

If there are structures that demonstrate the profound change of the sacred during the early twentieth century, Schwitters' KdeE must certainly be included among them. When Schwitters began to develop the KdeE, German Expressionist artists and architects were still exploring new approaches to the construction of art and architecture that would embrace what they perceived as the ephemeral, transitory nature of meanings in contemporary life. In this context, the Gothic cathedral's construction as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* became an ideal model for the avant-garde. It served to loosen the boundaries between the arts in order that designers might conceive and experiment with new approaches to architecture. Schwitters' sublimation of the terminology and aims of the Arbeitsrat für Kunst demonstrate that he saw Merz as an ideal method for achieving these aims and his KdeE was an attempt to make manifest and validate his ideas in physical form. Yet, only shortly after Schwitters claimed to have begun his KdeE, the Bauhaus pedagogue Mies van der Rohe, claimed in his 1924 article 'Baukunst und Zeitwille' that it was no longer time to 'build cathedrals' and called upon artists and architects to embrace 'reason and realism' as expression of the time to create structures as a 'perfect functional expression'.<sup>45</sup> Schwitters however, kept working on his KdeE until 1937 when he was forced to flee Nazi Germany. Although it was demolished by an Allied bombing raid in 1943, the photographs of Schwitters' KdeE persist in the cultural memory of German modernity. Never complete and continually changing, it was the celebration of modern art and architecture – the non-objective sublimation of the physical and metaphysical articles of the everyday into a representation of a modern sacred structure.

## Notes

1. Bruno Taut, 'Eine Notwendigkeit', *Der Sturm* 4, nos. 196–7 (February 1914): 174–5.
2. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1964), 12–15.
3. Kurt Schwitters' explanation that the word 'Merz' came from an advertisement for 'KOMMERZ UND PRIVATBANK' is found in an autobiographical text in an issue of *Merz*

- titled 'Katalog' Kurt Schwitters, 'Katalog', *Merz*, no. 20 (1927): 99–100. Reproduced in Kurt Schwitters, *Das literarische Werk*, ed. Friedrich Lach, vol. 5 (Cologne: DuMont Buchverlag, 1981), 250–4. Hereafter references made to Lach's compendium of Schwitters' writings are abbreviated as follows: *LW*, followed by a volume number and pagination.
4. Schwitters, 'Merz', *Der Ararat* 2, no. 1 (January 1921): 3–9. Reproduced in *LW*, vol. 5, 74–82. This English translation is by Ralph Manheim in *LW*, vol. 5, 404.
  5. Schwitters, 'Die Bedeutung des Merzgedankens in der Welt', *Merz: Holland Dada*, no. 1 (January 1923): 8–11. Reproduced in *LW*, vol. 5, 133–54. See specifically, 134. This English translation by John Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 43.
  6. *Ibid.* This English translation by Elizabeth Burns Gamard in Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), 26.
  7. Elderfield gives both senses to the translation of 'Entformung'. Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 237. For Schwitters' use of the term *Formen*, see: Schwitters, 'Merz', in *LW*, vol. 5, 76.
  8. *Entformelt* is the term Schwitters uses to describe the disassociation of words and objects from their original contexts and purposes. Elderfield explains the relationship between *Formung* and *Entformung* in Schwitters' work at length in: Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 237–8.
  9. Schwitters, 'Die Bedeutung des Merzgedankens in der Welt', 134. With my inclusion of *Eigengift* and *Entmaterialisiert* from the original German text, this English translation by Werner Schmalenbach, *Kurt Schwitters* (Cologne: Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, 1967), 94.
  10. *Ibid.*, 76. With my inclusion of the original German word *Ausdruck*, this English translation by Ralph Manheim in *LW*, vol. 5, 406.
  11. 'Das Kunstwerk entsteht durch künstlerisches Abwerten seiner Elemente. Ich weiss nur, wie ich es mache, ich kenne nur mein Material, von dem ich nehme, ich weiss nicht, zu welchem Zwecke'. *Ibid.*
  12. Kurt Schwitters, 'Die Merzmalerei', *Der Sturm* X, no. 4 (July 1919): 61. Reproduced in Kurt Schwitters, *LW*, vol. 5, 37.
  13. Schwitters, 'Merz', 6.
  14. Christof Spengemann, 'Merz – die offizielle Kunst', *Der Zweemann* 1, nos. 8–10 (June–August 1920): 40–1.
  15. Matthew Mindrup, 'The Merz Mill and The Cathedral of the Future', *Interstices* 14 (November 2013): 49–58.
  16. Richard Huelsenbeck, *Memoirs of a Dada Drummer*, ed. Hans J. Kleinschmidt, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 66.
  17. In the spring of 1920, Max Ernst visited Schwitters at his studio and claimed that Schwitters referred to it as a 'Merz-column'. Patrick Waldberg, *Max Ernst* (Paris: Pauvert, cop., 1958), 162–3 after Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 146, n. 10.
  18. *Kurt Schwitters* (Tokyo: Seibu Museum of Art and Museum of Modern Art, 1983), 142. An exhibition catalogue.
  19. Schwitters, 'Ich und meine Ziele', *Merz 21: erstes Veilchenheft*, no. 21 (Hannover, 1931): 113–17. Reproduced with partial English translation by Eugène Jolas in: Kurt Schwitters, *LW*, vol. 5, 340–8 and 423–4 specifically, 345 and 424. See also: Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau*, 87–94.
  20. After Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau*, 95, n. 24.
  21. After *Ibid.*, 98, n. 30.
  22. Taut, 'Eine Notwendigkeit', 174–5.

## Modern Architecture and the Sacred

23. J. Weinstein, *The End of Expressionism; Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918-19* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 1–25; I. K. Rigby, 'Critics, Artists and the Revolution', in *German Expressionism, Documents from the End of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism*, ed. R. Washton Long (New York: G.K. Hall; Toronto [etc.]: Maxwell Macmillan, cop., 1993), 173–4; Ian Boyd Whyte, *Bruno Taut and the Architecture of Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 95–102.
24. Bruno Taut, 'Ein Architektur-Programm', *Mitteilungen des deutschen Werkbundes* 4 (1918): 16–19.
25. Marcel Franciscono, *Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar* (Urbana, Chicago, London: The University of Illinois Press, 1971), 146–7.
26. Schwitters, 'Merz', 7. This English translation by R. Manheim in *LW*, vol. 5, 407.
27. Schwitters, 'Schloss und Kathedrale mit Hofbrunnen', *Frühlicht* 1, no. 3 (1922): 87.
28. Abbot Suger, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St.-Denis and Its Art Treasures*, ed. Erwin Panofsky (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, (2 edn)), 46–9 and 64–5.
29. Origen, *On First Principles*, trans. G.W. Butterworth (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1973), 278–9.
30. Wassily Kandinsky, 'On the Spiritual in Art and Painting in Particular', in Wassily Kandinsky, *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, trans. Peter Vergo (Da Capo Press, 1994), 193, 202–4.
31. Richard Shepard suggests that a number of Dadaists came to Zürich with the same question for which they had two different perspectives: 'Was a dynamic principle of order discernible within its contradictions and fluctuation or was it, in the end, just chaos?' For those who took the position of the former Shepard included Tristen Tzara, Raoul Hausmann, Hans Arp, Richard Huelsenbeck, Johannes Baader, Emmy Hennings and Hugo Ball. See: Richard Shepard, 'Dada and Mysticism: Influences and Affinities', in *Dada Spectrum: The Dialectics of Revolt*, ed. Stephen C. Foster and Rudolph E. Kuenzli (Maddison: Coda Press, 1979), 98–104 and 111–13.
32. Hans Richter, *Dada Art and Anti-Art*, trans. David Britt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 51.
33. Hugo Ball, *Flight Out of Time*, ed. John Elderfield, trans. Ann Raimés (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 210. For a discussion of Ball's interpretation, see: *Ibid.*, 248–51.
34. Ball, *Byzantinisches Christentum: Drei Heiligenleben* (Munich and Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1923).
35. Dionysius Areopagita, *Des heiligen Dionysius Areopagita angebliche Schriften über die beiden Hierarchien*, trans. Josef Stiglmayr (Kempten and Munich: Kösel, 1911), 3; This English translation in *Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite*, 145–6.
36. With my inclusion of 'or the adept', 'or explanation' and 'or by inserting' into the second and third definitions of 'anagoge' in the *Brockhaus-Wahrig* dictionary to make it correspond with the *Duden* definition. *Duden: Das grosse Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (Manheim, Leipzig, Wein and Zürich: Dudenverlag, 1999), 193, s.v. 'Anagogy'; Compared to the German dictionaries, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) limits its definition and examples for the word 'anagogy' to a description of the interpretation of Scriptures as a 'spiritual elevation or enlightenment, especially to understand mysteries' and a 'mystical interpretation, hidden "spiritual" sense of words'. See: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). s.v. 'Anagogy'.
37. *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, ed. C. T. Onions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), s.v. 'Anagogy'.

38. For Plato, the mind that moves from a contemplation of visible things to knowledge of their intelligible Ideas is an 'ascent' (*anabasis*). Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1969), 109–29.
39. For this passage in the *Summa Theologica*, see: Saint Thomas Aquinas, 'Question V: Of the Good in General', in *The Summa Theologica of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, rev. Daniel J. Sullivan, vol. 1 (Chicago: William Benton, 1952), Part I, Question V, Article II, Objection I, 24. Aquinas' Commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics* have been translated into English. See Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*, trans. R. J. Blackwell, R. J. Spath and W. E. Thirkel (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963); Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, trans. and intro. P. Rowan (Indiana: Dumb Ox Books, 1961).
40. Aquinas argued that God is the 'ultimate cause' in Part I, Question I, Article III of the *Summa Theologica*. See: Saint Thomas Aquinas, 'Question II: Whether God Exists', in Saint Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Part I, Question II, Article III, 13.
41. Saint Bonaventure, 'Prologue', in *Breviloquium*, IV, 1 et 5; ed. min. 20–23; In *Hexaemeron*, II, 15–18, and XIII, 11–33, t. v, 338–9 and 389–92; *De reductione atrium*, 5, t. v, 321, et ed min., 372 after Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of Saint Bonaventure*, trans. Frank J. Sheed and Dom Illtyd Trethowan (Patterson: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965), 208, n. 38–9.
42. 'Dada ist der christliche Geist auf dem Gebiete der Kunst'. Kurt Schwitters, 'Tran 35, Dada ist eine Hypothese', *Der Sturm* 15, no. 1 (March 1924): 29–32. Reproduced in *LW*, vol. 5, 172–5. See specifically 174.
43. Schwitters to Herbert Read, 1 November 1944. Reproduced in Kurt Schwitters, *Wir Spielen, bis uns Tod abholt: Briefe aus fünf Jahrzehnten*, ed. Ernst Nündel (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1974), 177 and Herbert Read, London 1944, n.p. after Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, 93, n. 73–4.
44. Spengeman, 'Merz – die offizielle Kunst', 40–1.
45. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 'Baukunst und Zeitwille', *Der Querschnitt* 4 (1924): 31–2.