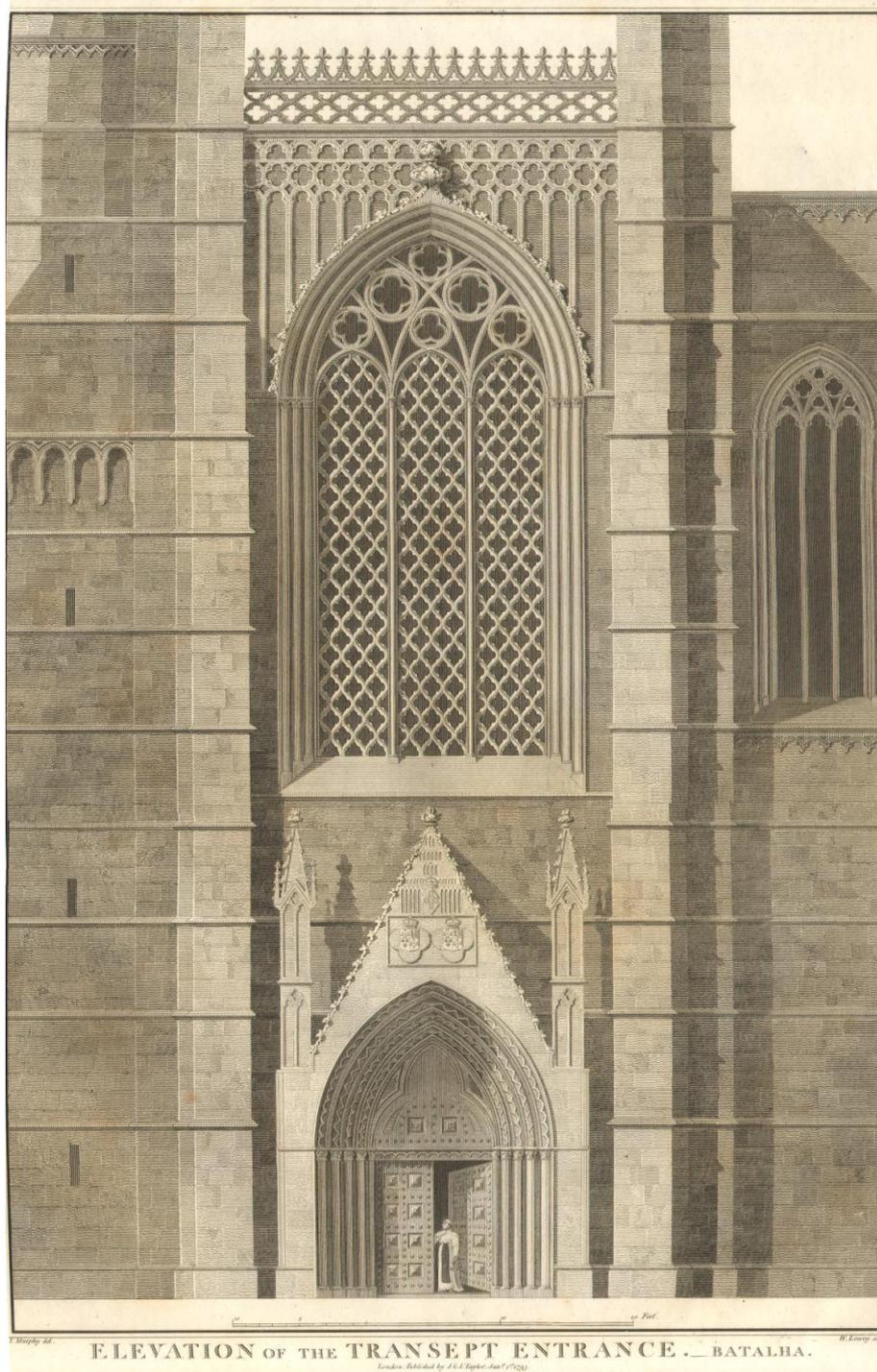


Brief glossary of terminology used



Pequeno glossário de termos usados:

Altar – Table (or slab) for the Mass Sacristy. It comes in the shape of a table because it was during the Last Supper that Christ spoke of the sacrifice awaiting him.

Altarpiece – A feature made of various materials, placed behind or at the back end of the altar, or on top. It may or may not be fixed and depicts painted scenes and/or sculptures.

Apse – The most extreme part of the central nave of the church (on the cruciform floor plan, corresponding to the top of the cross where the head of Jesus rested).

Archivolt – An ornamental grouping of sculptural and framing elements which grace the upper and lower contours of an arch.

Armillary sphere – A sphere representing the celestial sphere. The armillaries are the circles equivalent to the parallel and elliptical meridians.

Arm of the transept (cross) – each side of the transept, from the cross to its furthest point.

Baldechins – A fixed construction, placed above an effigy, often used for kings and saints.

Buttress – A protruding structure or pillar built against a wall for support or reinforcement.

Choir – The place where the canons or singers assemble during religious ceremonies. This was the part of the church reserved for the clerics and was normally situated next to the main altar, in the apse of the church.

Clearstory – a grouping of large or small windows intended for lighting the central nave of a church.

Corbel – a feature jutting out from a vertical surface (wall, pillar etc.) of various shapes and uses, normally small and used for supporting arches, balconies, statues etc.

Counter-curved, double or ogee arch – An arch composed of two equal and opposite parts, each with two inflecting curves. The concave curve below, the convex above.

Croquets – Ornamentation that ends in a leafy flourish, protruding like curved vegetation.

Common in the Gothic style.

Crossing – Part of the church where the central nave is intercepted by the transept or transversal nave.

Cross of Christ – The Cross of the Military Order of the Knights of Christ

Evangelist – The authors of the four Gospels. Their symbols or attributes are: Saint Matthew, the angel; Saint Mark, the winged lion; Saint Luke, the winged bull; Saint John, the eagle.

Fleur-de-Lys – A stylised lily flower. Emblem of the kings of France, since the times of King

Louis. Often used as a decorative motif in Gothic architecture. Flying buttress – Arch in which the lines are horizontal and parallel, but at different heights (one higher, the other lower), extending from an exterior buttress on which it supports itself. It holds the weight of the vault at its higher point.

Gargoyle – A protruding drain down which rainwater runs, set on the edges or tops of the cornices. Characteristically it is carved in the form of mythical creatures, caricatural figures, human masks, animal heads etc.

Jambs – Columns serving as shoulder pieces or backing onto them, on the inside or outside of the frame of a door or window.

Main chapel – The part of the church, where the main altar is found. Normally it is the largest chapel.

Mausoleum – An architecturally sumptuous and sculptured monumental tomb.

Memorial stone – A stone slab with an inscription.

Monastery – A group of buildings, excluding the church, where monks or friars live (dormitory, refectory, kitchen, chapter house etc.).

Nave – the longitudinal part of a church, from the main façade to the main chapel. Churches may have one or various naves.

Nervure – a frame which may be decorative or functional, forming protruding ridges on the inside edge of ogive cross vaults or domes.

Ogive cross vault – Each section is composed of a framework consisting of two diagonally crossing nervures (veins), two forward nervures alongside the wall and two lateral nervures.

Pediment – A decorative element formed by the triangular section of wall finishing the upper part of the archivolts of doors, windows and other openings in the church.

(Elegant) Pinnacle – Final detailing in the triangular shape of a turret or steeple.

Pinnacle – The finishing detail of a buttress or vertical support, more or less ornate, ending in a cone or pyramid.

Pointed ogive arch – A pointed arch consisting of two circular intersecting arches.

Portal – A monumental entrance to a church, integrated into the façade.

Portico – A covered gallery, held up by columns, arcades or pillars, on the interior or exterior of a building, situated on the ground floor. May act as a shelter or be purely decorative.

Pulpit – A rostrum made of various materials, intending for preaching within a church. In convent refectories, pulpits are used for 'holding chapter'. Ribs (liernes) – auxiliary nervures that extend out from the edges and meet at the keystone, forming a kind of cross.

Rib vault – A fundamental element of the Gothic vault, formed by the criss-cross of two arches or nervures, thus forming a section over which are laid the vaulted segments.

Rose window – A grand circular decorative opening in church façades for letting light in, generally above the doorways of the main façade or at the extremities of the transept arms. To maximise their impact and decorative value, they almost always were in stained glass, fitted to the contours of insignia in finely-worked stone.

Round arch – The most common. Uniformly semicircular.

Section – Part of the vault between two supports (pillars, columns etc.).

Stained glass – A group of panels comprising of small pieces of coloured glass, arranged as a mosaic in an iron framework. They are set in a lead gutter thus sealing an opening (window, rose window, insignia, etc.).

Tetramorph – A grouping of symbols of the four Evangelists surrounding Christ in majesty.

Transept – Transversal nave or short arm of a church with a Latin cross floor plan. Each part of the transept found either side of the crossing is called the arm.

Tympanum – A triangular space forming the interior of a pediment that can be decorated in various ways.

Vault – An arched construction of worked stone set between two parallel walls. The exterior of the vault is called the topside ('upper camber') and the interior 'underside ('lower camber').

There are simple vaults and composite vaults (formed by various simple vaults).

Vaulted arches – Arches found on the underside of the vault intended for decorative or supportive purposes.

Vaulted keystone – a stone placed at the highest point of the vault, the last to be placed in order to seal it. Often carved or painted.

Washroom – Place for ablutions, centrally-located or in the cloister. Often characterized by a washbasin which water runs into from various taps.