It is no surprise to find Athanasius a little over a hundred years later describing Antony emerging from twenty years isolation as coming "forth as from a kind of sanctuary, initiated into the mysteries [memystagogoumenos] and borne up by God" (91). The temple imagery is clear and, as I shall note briefly in connection with St. Ephrem of Syria, it has roots in a way of speaking about asceticism that had been drawing on the same sources as the language of martyrdom, and for just as long. Antony, furthermore, is presented as the perfect Christian. He is whole, transfigured, "fully natural" -- as Athanasius remarks in the same passage describing his debut -- and a worker of wonders, a counselor revealing God's intentions for others, the "physician of Egypt" (92). In sum, he is the full realization of the temple of God, its concrete realization.

This leads me back to the tension I noted was clear in Origen. If the lone ascetic or holy man is in fact the realized temple, then what is the role of the ekklesia, the society of the Messiah and of its mysteries, the sacraments? Athanasius, a bishop be it noted, takes care to underline Antony's respect for the Christian hierarchy (93), but that he troubles to do so at all indicates - to me at least - that there were some in the monastic movement who failed to see much need for the ecclesiastical apparatus of public rites and clergy. Thus the Syrian Christian movement (if "movement" is really the right word) of the "praying ones", messalians, appears to have denied the necessity of liturgy and sacrament for the reception of the Spirit (94). These people turn up in the Egyptian desert, too (95). I shall turn to the native, Syrian reply to these shortly. For now, though, let me begin by sketching the thought of one of the most important of the fourth century's ascetic writers and a disciple of Origen:

2a. Evagrius Ponticus (+ 399)

A dweller in the Egytian desert for some fifteen years prior to his death, Evagrius was perhaps the theoretician of Eastern Christian, monastic spirituality. His analysis of the psyche confronted by temptations, his categorization of the "eight evil thoughts", together with his treatise, Chapters on Prayer, marked forever the literature of Byzantine and all Eastern monks (96). The whole effort, however, was set within the framework of a system which provoked controveries so bitter and divisive that they led to Evagrius' posthumous condemnation in 553. In the case of some the men whom I shall consider below, especially Dionysius the Areopagite (ca.500) and Maximus Confessor (+ 662), much energy will be devoted to replying to some of the difficulties that Evagrius raised. These lay chiefly in his understanding of the human being and the cosmos, together thus with the lack of a real place (though Evagrius himself seems never to have seen it this way) for the Church. Yet he did have important things to say regarding the matter of mystical experience, and he expressed himself on this issue in a way that made use of the language of temple and liturgy.

Evagrius followed Origen while drawing on the latter's contemporary, Plotinus (97). Like Origen, he read the present world of matter and embodied existence as the result both of a fall from an original universe of created spirits, and as the result of divine providence exercised on behalf of the fallen (98). The universe thus emerges as a giant schoolbook or lesson plan and, more than that, in the last analysis as a sacrament. The fallen spirits are called on to do their lessons by ascending the stages of the ascetic life: first by mastering the passions of the body and soul, then by contemplating the divine plan inscribed in the worlds, and finally, stripped of every concern for the body and distraction of the intellect, by receiving as sanctified vessels the uncreated light of the Trinity (99). One is able, however, to read the "lesson plan" and ascend through it to God exactly because that plan is also and at the same time the map of one's own self. Here is the legacy of Plotinus. Like the philosopher, Evagrius understands the human being as the mirror of the cosmos and, vice-versa, the universe as the human being writ large. The ascent through the levels of meaning in the cosmos - from matter through soul and intellect to the divine - is at the same time a journey inwards, and Evagrius thus feels free to borrow Plotinus' lovely image of attendance on the sudden "dawning" of the divine light within (100).

It is at this point, the vision of the triune God within the intellect, that Evagrius does something quite important, and to my knowledge he is the first to do so (101). He reaches for the imagery of Sinai, of Zion, and of the temple. I will limit myself to two passages, first:

> If by God's grace the intellect...puts off the old man, then it will also see its own constitution at the time of prayer like a sapphire or with the color of heaven. This also recalls what the scriptures call the place of God [that was] seen by the elders on Mt. Sinai [Ex.24:10]. Scripture calls this the place and vision of peace by means of which one sees in himself that peace which surpasses every intellect. [cf.Ps.75:3, a play on Jerusalem, "peace", and

Zion] For it is another heaven that is imprinted on a pure heart. (102)

This is a deliberate internalization of the theophany in the Exodus account of Sinai. The manifestation of God is now something that happens, or should happen, within the nous (intellect). This is also, of course, quite in accord with Origen's interiorization of Israel's sacred history, and equally in harmony with Plotinus' witness to the One within. Moreover, it exploits to the full the philosopher's ambiguity about the precise relationship between the One and everything else (103). Evagrius' "light of the Trinity" is clearly grace, a gift, and not simply conatural with the soul. The "spiritual mountain" or inner Sinai is "the knowledge of the Holy Trinity" (104), but, once having attained the summit, one is still obliged to wait upon the descent of the glory. In the same spirit, and here follows my second quotation, Evagrius draws on St. Paul in I Cor.3 and 6 in order to affirm that every Christian is properly the temple and altar of the presence:

> The intelligible temple is the pure intellect which now possesses in itself the Wisdom of God, full of variety; the temple of God is he who is a beholder of the sacred unity, and the altar of God is the contemplation of the Holy Trinity. (105)

The liturgy of the individual Christian, the offering that he or she brings as priest for sacrifice at this inner temple and altar, stripped of the idols of the intellect, is the incense of "pure prayer" (106).

There is an obvious difficulty with Evagrius. His thought focuses entirely on the microcosm of the soul and intellect. This is scarcely surprising in view of his debt to Origen. Like Origen, his understanding of salvation is ultimately disincarnational, and this had to have consequences for his understanding of Christ and the Church. Regarding the former, Evagrius seems to have held that Jesus was the one created spirit who did not fall, but remained united to the divine Logos. The savior's function is therefore to lead his fellow spirits back and up to their original union with the Trinity. With respect to the Church, it is not unfair to say that the cosmos of the ecclesial assembly effectively disappears. The heavenly liturgy is sited entirely within the intellect. Evagrius has nothing to say about the ecclesiastical microcosm mirroring the angels' worship in the temple of heaven, such as we find in Cyril of Jerusalem a few years before him (107), or in Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa whom he had known while a deacon in Constantinople (108), or in Theodore of Mopsuestia writing at about the same time and afterwards (109). I do not myself believe that this silence necessarily proves that Evagrius, a desert hermit after all and not a bishop, intentionally ignored the corporeal and societal aspects of the Christian experience of God (110), but it is the case that there were others in the ascetic movement who did ignore it. At the hands of some of the latter , the ecclesial side of Christianity was programmatically swallowed up by the mystical.

Quite naturally, these monastic extremists fell under the shadow of episcopal disapproval. Councils of bishops were summoned and synods convoked in the East from the 350's to the middle 1300's - fully a millenium of nervous concern - to deal, in whole or in part, with issues and apparent problems raised by the ascetics (111). These problems came with several labels: Origenists, Messalians, Manichees, Paulicians, Bogomils, and Hesychasts - to name the most prominent. While some of the groups were genuinely heretical, and others fully orthodox, all of them at one time or another worried the authorities of church and state. But hierarchical dismay and even the anathemas that were often launched seldom had their desired effect, at least not until they came accompanied by a rationale which could satisfactorily reply to these groups and accommodate their insights. As it happened, it was the ascetics themselves who would provide the theological framework reconciling the interior liturgy with the worship of the Church, and this framework was already beginning to appear at just about the same time as Evagrius himself was writing. For that response, at least in its origins, I shall be obliged to travel first to Mesopotamia and the Syriac-speaking branch of the Eastern Church, to someone who was its most famous representative as well as to a writer whose name remains unknown.

2b. The Syrians: Ephrem and the Liber Graduum

St. Ephrem of Nisibis (+ 373) was neither a bishop or ordained cleric, nor - at least technically speaking - a monk. He was not really a layman either, but rather the representative of a peculiarly Syrian Christian institution whose roots possibly extend back to the beginnings of Christianity, and even into inter-testamental Judaism: the consecrated

celibate. The Syrian word for Ephrem's calling was ihidaya, literally a "single" or "only one". Such persons belonged to a class -- or better, an "order" -- of people within the Syrian Church called the "sons" or "daughters of the covenant", the bnai [or bnat] qeiama (112). This meant that Ephrem was pledged to an ascetic way of life, but one that would not be practiced in isolation from the life of his local, urban church. He was thus, to be sure, set apart for his ascetic vocation, but not physically removed, off alone in the desert like an Antony or an Evagrius, nor part of a self-sufficient community of ascetics like the early monasteries of St. Pachomius in upper Egypt. His situation in the midst of the life of his city church goes some way toward explaining the balance of his thought, though nothing save genius and inspiration can account for its depth and luminous spirituality. He was a poet and teacher, a composer of hymns, and the subject of his poetry was always the mystery of Christ's incarnation, the love of the Father who willed it, and the fire of the Spirit given through it. Ephrem wrote his poetry for the Church, specifically for his local congregation at Nisibis and later, in the last ten years of his life, at Edessa (modern Urfa). His hymns and poems were often composed expressly for use in communal worship, and their balance between, on the one hand, ascetic and mystical fervor and, on the other hand, sacramental realism already goes some way toward providing a reply to those extreme tendencies in Christian asceticism that I have been discussing. It also helped that he was being translated into Greek and acquiring an admiring readership in Greek-speaking territory during his lifetime.

There is one particular set of Ephrem's poems, the Hymns on Paradise (113), that I would like to bring up as providing the beginnings of a reply to the dilemma I sketched in Evagrius' thought. It is not that Ephrem even knew of, let alone pondered, the problems posed by his younger contemporary, but he was certainly intrigued all his life by the relationship between (to borrow from St. Paul) the outer and inner man, letter and spirit, the visible sign or symbol and the unseen reality so signified. His vocabulary for sign and symbol included a dozen or more terms, all of them roughly equivalent (114). All the world, and a fortiori all of Scripture, he read as "mysteries", razeh in Syriac, of God's presence, summed up in the one great mystery, razah: the Word who clothed himself with our humanity (115). This approach spilled over into his reflection on the Church's public worship, in particular the latter's razeh or sacraments. Ephrem's Paradise Hymns drew on the Old and New Testaments in order to present the Eden of Genesis 2-3 as both a mountain and a series of concentric circles (116). Each level of the paradise mountain, each circle, represented, in turn: 1) a different degree of beatitude corresponding to the Church's division into "penitents", the "just" (i.e., the baptized and virtuous), and the "victorious" (ascetics) (117); 2) one of the three components of the human being: body, soul, and created spirit (Ephrem's equivalent to Evagrius' nous) (118); 3) stages of the ascent up Sinai as portrayed in Exodus 19 and 24, with the presence of God at the summit, Moses on the heights, Aaron and the priests on the slopes, and the people at the base (119); and 4) at least the implication of the "geography" of the church building via the Hymns' allusions to the structure of the Jerusalem temple. Thus the innermost shrine of paradise, the Tree of Life, corresponds to the holy of holies, while the Tree of Knowledge answers to the veil or curtain dividing the innermost shrine of the Ark from the holy place (equivalent to the church nave) (120). I would venture to add that, by implication, one could thus read the middle and lower slopes of Ephrem's mountain as corresponding, respectively, to the nave as the place of the "just" and to the narthex or church porch as reserved for the penitents and those not yet baptized. In addition, and most importantly, the peak of the mountain and center of the innermost circle are simultaneously the presence of Christ. It is Christ's cross (the Tree of Life) and his glory (the actuality of the world to come) that inform both the Church and the individual Christian (121).

These different levels of meaning and of application may be said to meet or coalesce for Ephrem in the eucharistic presence. "The body was the veil of your glory", he writes elsewhere, "and the bread is the veil of the fire that indwells it" (122). Holy communion is the moment when the believer recognizes the divine indwelling. Writing in the Paradise Hymns on the disciples' experience at Emmaus in Luke 24, Ephrem observes that "bread...was the key whereby their eyes were opened to recognize the all-knowing" (123). It is the bread of communion, he notes elsewhere, which "tears the veil" between the believers and their perception of the Lord who dwells within (124), and with whom they had all along been "clothed" at their baptism (125).

Ephrem's understanding of Christianity is thus fully sacramental and deeply mystical. Furthermore, it pulls the ascetic "solitary" and the worshipping assembly together, and it does so by means of the same scriptural sources and themes that I have been dealing with throughout this essay: Sinai, temple, Christ, and Eucharist. What is remarkable is that Ephrem appears to be unaware of any controversy. The "polarities" of the mystical and the liturgical do not seem to exist for him, but are rather two facets of one and the same experience. For the poet of Nisibis, the mystery of the altar

and the encounter within the heart cannot but be one and the same Christ, the "Lord of symbols" (126).

Yet if Ephrem seems to have written without the air of controversy (at least regarding the subject of this essay), this was not the case for a Syriac work that was composed sometime toward the end of the fourth century, which is to say at about the time that extreme tendencies among the ascetics had begun to alarm many eastern bishops. While the Liber Graduum (Book of Steps) was never translated into Greek, and only in this century appeared in Latin translation (127), I bring it up as an instance of the conscious application of a corrective, from within the ascetic community of northern Mesopotamia, to the extreme positions that were being charted by many. The Liber's twelfth discourse in particular provides a reply to certain people who despise "this church, altar, and baptism which can be seen by the body's eye" (128). These visible institutions, the writer insists, were established by the Lord Jesus in order that,

> ...by starting from these visible things, and provided that our bodies become temples and our hearts altars, we might find ourselves in their heavenly counterparts...migrating there and entering in while we are still in this visible church. (129)

The earthly church and sacraments embody their heavenly originals, and mediate the latter's presence to the believer. These "three churches", whose ministry is a single life and whose minister is the same Holy Spirit (130), exist in a way that is parallel and coordinated. One abides throughout this life in the visible church. There is no transcending it on this side of the eschaton. But its sacraments enable the believer to discover in his or her heart the presence of the heavenly liturgy and to "migrate there" even while still in this life. The "migration" in question is clearly what other writers would and did refer to as the vision of God: "The heavenly church and the spiritual altar will be revealed to us" (131). This vision, the writer concludes, is the "mountain of the Lord" where "the light of his countenance shines" (132). As in Evagrius (and perhaps Ephrem), the traditions of Sinai, Zion, and the "glory" have been interiorized, but the Liber is careful, unlike Evagrius, to stress that this experience may only come about through the ministry of the "visible church", since it is the latter that serves as the pattern of the "churches" of the heart and of heaven (133). It is perhaps of interest that Syrian monks seemed to have picked up on the Liber's potential for correcting lacunae in Evagrius by occasionally crediting the latter with its authorship (134). At about the same time, another product of the Syrian Christian tradition, and likewise anonymous, wrote for the Greek-speaking world on a very similar set of themes.

2c. The Macarian Homilies

Although the Homilies come down to us under the name of Macarius the Great of Scete in Egypt, they are the work of an unknown from northern Mesopotamia whose views, until quite recently and quite like the Liber, were characterized as "Messalian". Once more like the Liber, the truth is the very opposite (135). "Macarius" is likewise concerned about establishing the ties between heart and altar via the liturgy. Indeed, he is even more concerned than the Liber, for he returns again and again to the themes of Christ, the Church, the soul and, together with the latter, the notes of Sinai and Tabor, temple and glory.

In Christ all the images of God's dwelling with Israel find their summation. He is the Christian's "true world and living bread, and fruit-bearing vine, and bread of life, and living water" (136). For his saints Christ has become "their house and tabernacle and city" (137), their heavenly Jerusalem (138). This community which joins heaven and earth is the Church, the body of Christ, who is "the head of the Church as the soul is in all its body" (139). Christ's presence among and in his holy ones is the same glory as shone from him at Tabor, and that Moses encountered on Sinai. Now the glory is hidden within the bodies of the saints, but then, at the eschaton, it will be manifested openly (140). The aim of the Christian is thus to seek out the glory that indwells him or her, and come to know it consciously even in this life - "from the present moment", as Macarius often puts it.

The Macarian focus is therefore fixed throughout on the soul. This leads him to something very interesting. He internalizes Ezekiel's vision of the merkabah (Ezk.1:4-28) in much the same way that Evagrius treats Sinai. It is the soul, says Macarius, that is the true "throne of God", the chariot and place of the glory which is Christ's (141). The intellect or heart, the "inner man", is therefore capable of embracing heaven. The heart is the site of the heavenly Jerusalem where Christ dwells, together with the angels and the saints (142). Here one also finds the same parallel between the soul and the Church that I pointed out in the Liber Graduum. Macarius' language in discussing the ministry

(diakonia) of the soul (143), together with his calling on it to "gather" (synago) its thoughts and actions (144) in order to be transformed or changed (metablethenai) (145), deliberately echoes the terminology of the eucharistic assembly and worship. Diakonia, synaxis, and metabole for the eucharistic change were all of them technical terms employed by Christian writers of the fourth century and earlier for liturgical action (146). Macarius supports his conscious transfer of "public language" concerning prayer to the sphere of interior prayer with an explicit appeal to the idea of the microcosm:

> "Church" is therefore said with regard both to the many and to the single soul. For the soul which gathers all its thoughts is also the Church of God...and [so] this term applies both in the case of many [people] and of one [person]. (147)

He was therefore obliged to explain how the microcosm of the soul was related to the ecclesial macrocosm, and his explanation bears a striking resemblance to the Liber's twelfth discourse.

The most important discussion of the relationship between the Church and the soul occurs in Homily 52 of the larger and, unfortunately, less well known collection of the Homilies. Its intentions are clear from the start:

> The whole visible arrangement of the Church of God came to pass for the sake of the living and intelligent being of the rational soul that was made according to the image of God, and that is the living and true Church of God...For the Church of Christ and temple of God and true altar and living sacrifice is the man of God. (148)

This recalls not only Origen and Clement, but also the meaning of the Christian martyr. It is not Macarius' intention to denigrate the visible Church and its Eucharist - as he seems in fact to have been accused of doing (149). Like the Liber, he insists that the Holy Spirit is fully as present in the visible assembly and "in all the liturgy of the holy Church of God" as in heaven (150). But the Church's form in this world is not its permanent one. Rather, that form or shape serves as the indicator of the eschatological reality which informs it:

> The whole formation of the icon of the Church [is] that the intelligent beings of faithful souls might...be made again and renewed and, having accepted transformation [note metabole again], be enabled to inherit life everlasting. (151)

The presence of the Spirit known and recognized in the Eucharist must find a corresponding presence in the heart of the believer: "because all the present arrangement will pass away [at the eschaton], but hearts alive in the Spirit will abide" (152). As I noted in discussing the sacraments in the New Testament, the consecration of the bread and wine at the Church's altar is in anticipation of the eschatological transformation of the assembled believers and of the world. Macarius' point is that this transformation is already open to experience now, in this life, both at the altar and within the heart. Heart and altar carry the same presence. The altar indicates its visible or objective truth, while the heart is the place of its inner and subjective validation.

The homily's second half explores these parallels, and sets out two important correlations between the eucharistic liturgy and the inner life:

> The sequence [akolouthia] is a type of the rational and hidden matters of the inner man, [and]...the manifest arrangement [oikonomia]...of the Church [is] an pattern [hypodeigma] of what is at work in the soul by grace. (153)

By "sequence" Macarius means the division of the liturgy into two halves: the "liturgy of the word", or synaxis, that embraces the reading and elucidation of the scriptures, and the eucharist proper, the offertory, consecration, and communion. He declares this division an illustration of the mutual interdependence between the cultivation of the virtues, ascesis, and the grace of the Spirit (154). By "arrangement", on the other hand, he means the structure of the church building and the ordering within it of the faithful: penitents and catechumens in the narthex, lay believers in the nave, and clergy in the sanctuary. He then sets out the devout believer as progressing from the narthex (literally, "from some outer place") through ordination to the sanctuary, in order to end up standing around the bishop's throne with the other celebrants. This, he says, is an image of the progress which is potentially every Christian's: from the struggle to achieve the virtues to inscription "in the Kingdom among the perfect workers and with the blameless ministers and

assistants [literally: "ones who are beside the throne", i.e., the angels] of Christ" (155). Both temporally and spatially, therefore, the liturgy on earth is the icon of the heavenly Church and the perfected soul.

I would be tempted to call this treatment of Christian worship allegorical were it not for the unfortunate associations moderns have too often attached to "allegory", especially the view that sees it as the forced imposition of meanings onto - and divorced from - a text's original sense. Macarius is not trying to read alien meanings into something fundamentally unrelated to his concerns. In describing both his experience of Christ within the heart and his adoration of him at the altar, he brings into play the same associations from the Old and New Testaments that I have been dealing with all along. Heart and altar proclaim the same reality, Christ. The corporate expression of the Church is the necessary and validating guide to - and confirmation of - an experience which is properly subjective, mystical. This "allegorical" or "symbolical" reading of the liturgy as both the icon of and touchstone for the mystical encounter brings me to another and even more influential figure in the history of Christian spirituality - and one, I might add, who is at least as misunderstood in modern times as Macarius: the mysterious author of the Corpus Areopagiticum.

C. Byzantine Spiritual Writers

1. Dionysius the Areopagite

According to Acts 17, Dionysius the Areopagite was one of the few prizes won on the occasion of St. Paul's unsucessful attempt at converting the learned pagans of Athens. Sometime around 500 A.D., and coming from the area of Syria-Palestine, a body of writings appeared that purported to be the work of the scriptural Dionysius. Whoever the real writer was (now our third anonymous author), he was someone trained late Neoplatonism. The language of Proclus Diadochus (+ 486) and other late pagan philosphers is unmistakeable. These two facts, the pseudonym and the heavy impress of late Platonism, have led many learned students of the Areopagitica to dismiss them as the work of a writer who was only very marginally Christian, at best (156). When coupled with the long-held view that "Dionysius" was the "father of Christian mysticism" (an astonishingly erroneous position), the whole enterprise of Christian mystical literature has also often come under suspicion, a conclusion that has suited some scholars, especially those of the Lutheran and Reformed traditions, very well indeed (157). Both Dionysius'mysticism and his Platonism need instead to be considered against the background I have been sketching. Some of this consideration has already seen print, particularly with respect to the Alexandrian writers (158), but next to no one has as yet explored the matter of Dionysius' Syrian Christian roots (159), nor presented him as in continuity with the currents of ascetic and "Christian gnostic" literature this essay has been following. I am therefore rather alone in maintaining that Dionysius does belong to these streams, so let the reader take warning.

It is in the light of the two, preceding works that I would like to take up what is perhaps the problem regarding Dionysian thought: how do his works on the hierarchies (a word, by the way, that he invented (160)) mesh with his description of the ascent to mystical union with God discussed in his little treatise, the Mystical Theology? To put briefly a reply that I have sketched at some length in other studies (161), the mystical ascent is the concluding stage of a journey that begins in the opening chapter of the first of Dionysius' treatises, the Celestial Hierarchy. This book and its companion, the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, lay out an apparently rigid scheme of mediation. Divine grace descends "in due measure and order" from the highest angels around God through the lower orders to the Christian bishop and his clergy, and then from them in turn to the assembled faithful. Dionysius is nothing if not insistent on the importance of this descending sequence. He even dedicates a long "Epistle" toward the end of his corpus, number VIII, "To Demophilus, a monk", chastizing an ascetic who had dared upset the order ordained by God in order to take upon himself functions belonging properly to the clergy - in this instance, absolution for sins and care of the consecrated, eucharistic elements (162). It is difficult not to see in this scenario a deliberate attempt to address some of the difficulties associated with the monastic movement. Dionysius wants to support the authority of the clergy and the structures of the institutional church, in particular the validity and inviolability of the order of worship.

Thus the second book of the Dionysian corpus is devoted to what the author calls "our hierarchy" (163), which means, simply, the Church. The sacraments are dealt with in chapters two through four, while the final three chapters address, respectively, the ordination of the clergy, monastic tonsure, and Christian burial. One point about this sequence is important and deserves attention. The treatise is centered, literally, on chapter four, the sacrament of the chrism, by

which Dionysius does not mean post-baptismal annointing (already covered in chapter two), but the confection and consecration of the fragrant oil used both for that annointing and for the consecration of church altars. This allows him to focus the chapter exclusively on the altar within the curtained sanctuary where the prayers take place. After dwelling on the clergy gathered around the holy table, and then turning to the highest order of angels, Seraphim and Cherubim, whom the clergy represent (164), he moves to consider the altar itself. "Our most divine altar", he states, is "Jesus...in whom we, according to Scripture, once having been consecrated and mystically consumed, have access [to God]" (165). Christ is the center, again literally, of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The whole Church, its sacraments and its ordered clergy and faithful, represents and embodies Christ, in whom the believer encounters God. The Church is theophany.

So far this accords with half my essay's concern, the Christian experience of God as liturgical. But where is the personal, the mystical? Dionysius replies with the brief treatise, The Mystical Theology, which offers his account of the mystical ascent and union with God in the "darkness of unknowing" (166). A good many critics have read this little work, so immensely influential for subsequent Christian literature (167), as having first of all nothing to do with the firm articulations of the hierarchies, but rather as focused exclusively on the lonely encounter of the mind with divinity, the "alone to the Alone" of Plotinus (168). Thus, secondly, the hierarchies (and with them the sacraments, Church, and Christ himself) are simply bypassed in favor of a mysticism and even a "metaphysics of the first principle whose roots are deeply embedded in Neoplatonism" (169). Put bluntly, the Mystical Theology, with its emphasis on the way of negation (apophasis and aphairesis) shows up the mysterious Dionysius as a Platonist wolf in Christian sheep's clothing. Or else, more charitably, the (apparent) gulf between this treatise and those on the hierarchies proves the fundamental incompatibility between subjective experience and ecclesiastical machinery, or, as might be said in America, between personal and institutional religion.

There is in fact no such dichotomy in Dionysius (170). To demonstrate this, let me begin with the image that the Areopagite chooses to illustrate the ascent in Mystical Theology I,3. It is none other than Moses climbing up Mt. Sinai:

> The divine Moses is bidden first of all to purify him-self...and, after all purification, he hears the many-voiced trumpets, he beholds many lights lightening with pure and many streaming rays. Then, when he has separated from the many and from the chosen priests [cf. Ex.24:10ff], he attains to the summit of the divine ascents. And yet in these he still meets not with God, for he sees not him...but the place where he dwells...and then...he enters into the truly secret darkness of unknowing...united by the cessation of all knowledge to him who is wholly unknowable. (171)

Given my discussion of Sinai earlier, and its continued resonance in the New Testament and later Christian tradition, it does not appear to me farfetched to argue that Dionysius expected his readers to catch the liturgical and ecclesial echoes in this passage. Moses is certainly a "type" of the Christian bishop, just as Sinai as a whole - purified people at the base, priests part way up, Moses on the height (does the reader recall Ephrem?) - is a "type" of the Church. But where is the personal appropriation? Where is the connection between Sinai as image of the Church, and as icon of the little church of the soul?

To find that link I would like, first, to return to the literary structure of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, second, to a few lines from the Epistle to Demophilus, in order the conclude, third, with that opening chapter of the Celestial Hierarchy which, as I said earlier, marks the beginning of the Dionysian journey that finishes with Moses' ascent. To begin with the treatise on "our hierarchy": while chapter four on "Jesus our most divine altar" comes at the center of the book, chapters II and VII deal with death and rebirth, specfically the death-rebirth of Baptism and the death-rebirth of Christian burial in hope of the resurrection (172). The whole of human life is therefore encompassed by the Church. Chapters III, V and VI explore, respectively, the Eucharist, clerical ordination, and monastic tonsure. The book's first three chapters thus feature a movement as it were "up" to the altar, while the last three progress "down" from it. This is particularly clear in chapters five through seven where there is a clear spatial progression: from the consecration of the bishop and clergy before the altar table, to the tonsure of the monk immediately in front of the entrance to the sanctuary, and finally to the body of the deceased being carried outside the doors of the church building on its way to the graveyard. Macarius' use of the spatial arrangement of clergy and laity comes clearly to mind, and I believe that Dionsyius' point is the same: the church as a whole, the structure of both the building itself and of the ordering of the ecclesial assembly,

serves as the image of the individual Christian writ large. Thus Moses' ascent of Sinai corresponds exactly to each believer's climb up the "mountain of the heart" - or entry into the inner temple of the intellect - in order to stand before the presence of God and be "mystically consumed" on the altar which is Christ (173). The "holocaust" of chapter IV, and the "access" which, in Jesus, is thus opened to God, correspond to Moses' surrender of active knowing and his entry into the divine darkness.

My reading of "our hierarchy" in relation to the Mystical Theology is seconded by a remark Dionysius makes to Demophilus. He has just finished telling the unruly monk that only the clergy have the right to enter the sanctuary. Monks belong outside the gates of the altar area (174). It is rather, Dionysius' continues, Demophilus' task to establish order (taxis) in his own house, and that means finding the proper place for the faculties of the soul - appetite, emotion, and reason. Once he has done so, then indeed he might be given authority over others (175). The well ordered Church, the taxis of "our hierarchy" in Dionysius' language (176), is there to provide Demophilus with the image of what he ought to be doing - indeed, of what he ought to be. The right ordering of the sanctified soul is mirrored in the divinely established articulation of the Church. In concert therefore with Macarius and the Liber Graduum, Dionysius sees the ecclesiastical taxis as having been arranged in such a way as to bring the soul into communion with the heavenly reality which the earthly church also reflects.

I arrive thus at my third witness, the opening chapter, paragraph three, of the Celestial Hierarchy:

> It would be impossible for the human intellect to be ordered with that immaterial imitation of the heavenly hierarchies unless it were to use the material guide that is proper to it [i.e., the liturgy, thus:] reckoning the visible beauties as reflections of the invisible splendor, the perceptible fragrances as impressions of the intelligible distribution, the material lights an icon of the immaterial gift of light, the sacred and extensive teaching [of the scriptures as reflections] of the mind's intelligible fulfillment, the exterior ranks of the clergy [a type] of the harmonious and ordered habit [of the intellect] that is set in order for divine things, and [our partaking] of the most divine Eucharist [an icon] of our participation in Jesus. (177)

Here are exactly the same elements as were at work in the Syrian writers. The earthly liturgy reflects the heavenly worship and, at the same time, mirrors the soul. It is the liturgy of the visible church which thus provides the soul with the means and, so to speak, the education necessary for it to achieve its communion with heaven. In the very first of his treatises, therefore, Dionysius has set out the framework within which he will place the ascent of Moses in the Mystical Theology. Here, in this life, the Christian may know Christ and know him directly. That knowledge and meeting take place within the intellect, the nous, but only through the Church's altar which thus binds the two, heaven and the soul, together.

The encounter with Christ, in this life, must necessarily be brief. It is "sudden", as Dionysius writes in his Epistle III, in an allusion to both New Testament and Platonist traditions of divine epiphany (178). Moreover, as he says in a uniquely personal testimony, its context is also liturgical and eucharistic: "It was this sacrament [the Eucharist] which first gave me to see and, through its ruling light, be led up in light to the vision of the other sacred things" (179). The greater and open vision of Christ in glory awaits the eschaton (180). The eschatological awareness that suffuses the Dionysian corpus is underlined by the fact that its concluding passage takes the form of a letter, Epistle X, addressed to the author of the book of Revelation in exile on Patmos (181). Dionysius, in sum, touches all the bases that I have dwelt on in this essay. He merits thus his place as the last patristic witness whom I shall explore in detail.

3b. From Maximus the Confessor (+662) to Nicholas Cabasilas (+1390)

With Dionysius the main lines of the Eastern Christian reply to the problem - and biblical tradition - of the personal and collective experience of God take on what has remained their basic shape to the present day. For perhaps the most profound theologian of the Byzantine era and a great authority on the life of prayer, Maximus Confessor, it is unquestionably Dionysius' understanding of the "little church" and spiritual Sinai that guides the Confessor in his composition of a brief but immensely influential commentary on the Church's liturgy, The Mystagogy (182). Maximus presents the church building as a series of icons that represents, in the following order: God, the created universe, the

human being as soul and body, and finally the soul itself. Everything meets at the single mystery of the altar, Christ, where the believer discovers in himself or herself the anticipation of the Resurrection (183). The key to Maximus' account is, once more, his assumption that the liturgy of the earthly church serves as the image of heaven and of the soul, and that it mediates between them.

Three and a half centuries later one finds exactly the same understanding of the relationship between the liturgy of the Church and of the "inner man" in the great Byzantine mystic, Symeon the New Theologian (+1022). There can be no question of either Symeon's mystical credentials or of his fervent, sacramental devotion (184). That which binds personal experience and liturgy together for him is again the notion of microcosm and macrocosm. The Church for Symeon is the new creation, the heavenly Jerusalem and spiritual paradise (185). At the same time, the sanctified believer is also "the great world" in whom Paradise is restored and communion with God reestablished (186). Linking the two together is the worship on earth celebrating with "types" and "symbols". Symeon brings this out most clearly in his XIVth Ethical Discourse, where in a sequence that he seems to have taken from Celestial Hierarchy I.3, quoted above, he suggests that the lights, incense, choirs, crowds in attendance, and the refreshments of a solemn feast served in the monastery church should signify, respectively, the lamps of the soul's virtues, the fragrance of the Holy Spirit, the angels, the company of the saints, and the living bread of the Eucharist (187). Given this interior realization, he adds in addressing his interlocutor: "Then... you are celebrating a spiritual feast and concelebrating with the heavenly powers of the angels" (188), that is, joining together heaven and earth.

Symeon's ideas, or rather the continuum to which he lent further expression, appear again yet more clearly in his disciple, Nicetas Stethatos (+ca.1090) (189). Nor, in spite of a certain reaction on the part of church and state authorities to the free-ranging and occasionally problematical sanctity that a holy man such as Symeon represented to the bishops of his day and thereafter (190), does the line die out with Nicetas. It is present in the the Hesychast movement of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries whose champion, Gregory Palamas (+1359), successfully defended a spirituality centered on the "Jesus prayer" and the expectation - or at least the ever present and eagerly sought possibility - of direct, personal contact with the risen Christ in the light of Tabor (191). Perhaps more important still, the fourteenth century also provided a writer whose appeal was not to the monastic element, but deliberately addressed to the ordinary Christian. One does not have to become a monk, writes Nicholas Cabasilas (+ca.1390) in his remarkable book, On the Life in Christ, in order to experience God. One may do so simply by obeying the commandments and participating in the sacramental life of the Church where all grace is present (192). Nicholas is not, though, advocating an "attend the church of your choice" sort of spirituality, coupled with pious moralisms. He understands the sacraments as communicating both a genuine experience and a presence. For him the visible church at worship is first of all the "portrayl of a single body, which is the work of the Savior" (193), and it is Christ who is the one true priest, altar, and sacrifice (194). Christ is temple and the Church is temple, in other words. Nicholas arrives at the third element, the Christian as temple, while discussing the service of a church's consecration. The bishop approaching the altar in the service of the latter's annointing is, he remarks, "a vested type and image of the altar which is man himself...The ceremonies are signs of these things...[and the bishop] exhibits the altar in himself" (195). It is the human being, in short, who is alone "truly capable of becoming a temple of God and an altar" (196). In the words of a modern student of Nicholas, the latter united "that interior Eucharist which is the uninterrupted invocation of the Name [of Jesus], with the frequent partaking of the heavenly Bread which is the sacramental root of the presence of Christ in the believer's heart...the 'real presence' of Christ both by invocation of the name and by communion" (197).

Conclusions

Let me return to the hermit whose puzzle I invoked at the beginning of this essay. Given what has come between, I hope it has become clear why my solitary ascetic, living much as his predecessors did a millenium and a half ago in Egypt's deserts (or in Palestinian caves, or on Syrian mountain tops), does not today feel a jolt of dissonance or alienation on walking into a church building gorgeous with the heritage of imperial Christendom, or balk at being asked to merge his devotions with forms laid down by the emperor's court at Constantinople. He does not react in either of these ways because, first of all, he feels himself to be part of a continuum of experience and testimony that reaches back to the origins of the Christian Church, and of Israel before. Sinai, Horeb, and Zion are the landmarks of his spiritual geography as much as are Bethelehem, Tabor, and Golgotha, and their common witness he understands as continued in the "high places" of the Church's past, which is to say, both in the martyrs, ascetics, apostles, and teachers whose lives

have revealed the Spirit who moved the prophets and who was poured out "on all flesh" through Christ Jesus, and in the rites and hymns which "re-present" the history of the revelation, whose aim and accumulated meaning he recognizes in the paschal salutation, "Christ is risen!" The "heavenly bread" of the Eucharist is real for him, and he finds in the Church's altar the peak of the mount of revelation and throne of the presence behind the sanctuary veil. Yet, secondly, this very act of recognition, within the community and in the context of the liturgy, is the product of a personal and intimate process of appropriation whose careful mapping-out was the work of those generations of men and women of prayer whose contributions I have touched on so lightly in the preceding pages. Thus my hermit's round of solitary prayer and fasting, the night vigils in his cell or cave, the poverty and renunciation, the close watch of his heart's turnings and the probings of its secret darknesses, are all of them in quest of the same mountain and throne, the "place" of the divine glory and abiding that he discovers already present at the Church's altar. He therefore comes to the church and its liturgy in order to be assured and renewed in his vocation, to feed on its realization and accomplishment in Christ, and so be enabled to continue assisting at its coming to birth within his own heart. He knows, just as well as the great third century bishop, Cyprian of Carthage, that "one Christian is no Christian", that he is part of an organism drawing its life from a living stream which spans the millenia, "the river of life that flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev.22:1).

By way of an afterward, I will admit that my hermit is obviously not a typical representative of Orthodox Christian experience, at least in the sense of being a kind of norm. He is an extreme case, and his vocation very rare. On the other hand, and just exactly because he sits on the very furthest point of whatever bell curve of Eastern Orthodoxy one might wish to graph, he is most representative of the larger community. In the very person and (may I be forgiven the expression) "lifestyle" where one would expect to find an advocacy of "personal religion", of "mysticism" as the solvent of community and institution - of liturgy in short - one finds instead the latter's affirmation. My hermit is the exception who not only proves the rule, but who lives and embodies it, though his way of doing so may seem very strange and paradoxical (at best) to our late twentieth century, American sensibilities. Perhaps, though, the fact that he does appear so odd, and the coincidence of opposites in him so extraordinary (or pathological), might serve as a kind of admonition, or even judgement, regarding those sensibilities and their assumptions. He is a reminder that religion in general, and Christianity in particular, is a strange, wild growth whose roots go deep, indeed, and whose branches stretch out to the limits of human experience and even, so my hermit would say, infinitely beyond. And if this plant, this simultaneously earthly and unearthly tree of life, is not recognized, let alone welcomed, inside the walls of a suburban congregation, or else within the safely sceptical confines of a faculty club - well then, whose fault might that be?

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Notes

1. See M.Eliade, Sacred and Profane (NY:1959).
2. See, for example, Apuleius' account of his initiation into the cult of Isis in book II of The Golden Ass, exerpted by M.W.Meyer in The Ancient Mysteries: a Sourcebook (SF: 1987) 177-196.
3. The idea of "imageless prayer" seems to have begun with Evagrius of Pontus (see below). It stresses the importance of not impressing any form or concept of one's own on God, but rather making a kind of "space", as it were, allowing God to reveal himself as he is. See Evagrius' De oratione in The Praktikos and Chapters on Prayer, ed. and trans. J.E. Bamberger (Kalamazoo:1981), esp. chapters 36, 56-57, 60-74, and 113-116, pp. 61, 64-67, and 74.
4. Bernard McGinn, The Foundations of Christian Mysticism (NY: 1991) 64-65.
5. See M.Noth, Exodus, a Commentary (Phil.: 1962) 11-17, and R.E.Clements, God and Temple (Phil.: 1965) 22 note 3, and 113-120.
6. See the discussion of the O.T. "glory" theology by T.N.D. Mettinger, The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies (Lund: 1982), esp. 80-115 for Ezekiel and the "Priestly" tradition in the Penteteuch, and 116-123 for sources in the pre-monarchic worship of Israel.
7. For still the best introduction to merkabah mysticism, see G.Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (Jerusalem:

1973 rep.) 40-79. More recently, see also I.Gruenewald, Apocalyptic and Merkabah Mysticism (Leiden: 1980), and D. Halperin, The Faces of the Chariot (Tuebingen: 1988).

8. Ibid. 79. For the Homilies, see the translation by G.Maloney, Pseudo-Macarius: the Fifty Homilies and the Great Letter (NY: 1992) 37 (translating Homily I:2).

9. See A.Guillaumont, "A propos du celibat des Esseniens", rep. in the collection of his articles, Aux origines du monachisme chretien (Bellefontaine: 1979)13-23, esp. 17-22 in relation to Ex.19.

10. Leviticus 17-24.

11. See, for example, Lev.19:9-18,29-37; and 25:23-55.

12. See Lev.19:2 and the "curses" in 26:14-45.

13. I am thinking of the article by G.E.Mendenhall, "Covenant", in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (NY/Nashville: 1962) Vol.I:714-723.

14. See again Eliade, Sacred and Profane.

15. See also Joshua 24 for the possible instance of a covenant renewal ceremony, and note the "choose today" of verse 15.

16. See, for example, Psalms 105-106 and 135-136 on the Exodus, and 119 on the Torah.

17. See A.R.Johnson, The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel (Cardiff,UK: 1962), esp.60-75.

18. Note the parallels in Mark between the accounts of Christ's Baptism (1:9-11), the Transfiguration (9:2ff) and the Crucifixion (15:21-39): the two hills, Tabor and Golgotha, in the latter two together with the two figures flanking him in both accounts (Moses/Elijah, the thieves), and in all three the witness to him as "Son of God".

19. See Hebrews 12:18-29, cited below.

20. See Acts 2:40,46; 20:7,11; and 27:3-5, together with Luke 24:30 and 35 discussed below.21. See Acts 9:1ff and parallels in 22 and 26 for Saul's conversion, and 10:1-43 (esp.10-16) for Peter's vision directing him to the mission to the Gentiles.

22. Note also verse 9: "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation", which paraphrases Exodus 19:5-6, and see also the interesting variant of this verse in the Syriac Peshitta where, instead of "royal priesthood", the reading is "to act as priest(s) for the Kingdom". Likewise, v.5 in Syriac reads: "And you are temples and consecrated priests". For comment on this pericope, see S.Brock, "The Priesthood of the Baptized: Some Syriac Perspectives", Sobornost/Eastern Churches Review 9:2 (1987) 14-22.

23. See also I Cor. 3:16-17 and 6:19-20 cited below, and again Brock, op.cit.. For the important use of temple imagery in inter-testamental literature and apocalyptic generally, see M.Himmelfarb, Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses (NY/Oxford: 1993), esp.9-46.

24. See E.Petersen, The Angels and the Liturgy tr. Walls (1964) esp. ix-x and 1-12, and more generally, P. Prigent, Apocalypse et Liturgie (Neuchatel: 1964), esp.14-45.

25. See Rev.22:20, I Cor.16:22, and for the explicit eucharistic connection, the Didache 10:6, English version in Early Christian Fathers ed. C.Richardson (Phil: 1970) 176.

26. See again Prigent, Apocalypse et Liturgie 35.

27. See, for example, Cyril of Jerusalem, Lectures on the Christian Sacraments 1:3, tr. R.W. Church (Crestwood NY: 1977 rep.) 54 for the fourth century, and Origen, On First Principles IV.3.12 tr. Butterworth (NY: 1966) 307 for the third.

28. See the article on pentecostes in The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (ed. G.Kittel), tr. G.W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: 1968) Vol.VI: 48-49.

29. See John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:7-10 and 13-15.

30. In addition to Mettinger, cited note 6 above, see also the article on doxa by G. Kittel in The Theological Dict. of the N.T. III: 233-253.

31. For the importance of the "glory" in Paul, see esp. the recent study by A.Segal, Paul the Convert: Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee (New Haven: 1990), esp. 9-11, 58-64, and 152-157.

32. See also I Cor.6:19-20, and note 22 above.

33. Hence the play in later writers comparing the mustard seed, leaven, lost coin, etc. of the Gospel parables with the "seed" of the divine Word and spiritual conception. On this theme in the Syrian tradition, see S. Brock, "Mary and the Eucharist", Sobornost/ECR 1:2 (1979) 50-59, and in eleventh century Byzantium, Symeon the New Theologian in Traites theologiques et ethiques, ed. J.Darrouzes for Sources chretinnes 122, pp. 241-271.

34. See the article on martys/martyreo in Theological Dict. of the N.T. IV:474-508, esp. 495 ff.

35. See W.H.C. Frend, Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church (Garden City, NY: 1967) 22-57.

36. See esp. Rev.1:2, together with 6:9,12; 17:2; and 19:10.

37. Especially Hebrews 7:21-10:18.

38. Epistle to the Magnesians 7, tr. J.B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers (Grand Rapids: 1980 rep.) 70.

39. Epistle to the Ephesians 9 (Lightfoot 65).

40. Ibid. 15 (67).

41. Ibid. 22 (68).

42. Ibid. 5 (64).

43. Epistle to the Phillipians 4 (Lightfoot 80).

44. Epistle to the Romans 2 (Lightfoot 76).

45. Ibid. 4 (77).

46. Ibid. 7 (78). For the "speaking water", see also The Odes of Solomon 11:6. Ed. and tr. J.H. Charlesworth (Chico, CA: 1977) 50. These may be contemporary to Ignatius, although the date of Odes is notoriously uncertain.

47. Epistle of the Smyrneans, in Lightfoot 109-117.

48. Ibid. 14 (114).

49. Ibid. 15.

50. The origins of Gnosticism are hotly debated. For a recent,and to me convincing attempt to place the movement in the context of Jewish/Samaritan thought, see J.Fossum, The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord (Tuebingen: 1985).

51. I take this phrase from R.P.C.Hanson's study of Origen's exegesis, Allegory and Event (London: 1955) 277. I do not,however, use it in the sharply critical way Hanson does.

52. For Hellenistic use of allegory, see again Hanson, Allegory and, more recently, D.Dawson, Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revisionism in Ancient Alexandria (Berkeley: 1992), and the study of Philo in relation to Christian writers by D.T.Runia, Philo in Early Christian Literature (Fortress: 1993).

53. On this issue, see the works of P. Brown, esp. his Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity (Berkeley: 1982) and, more recently, The Body and Society (NY/Oxford: 1988). See also D. Burton-Christie's remarks linking Christian asceticism to the trend toward "interiorization" in the latter's book, The Word in the Desert (Oxford/NY: 1993), esp.49-62.

54. For Plotinus' system, see J.M.Rist, Plotinus: the Road to Reality (Cambridge: 1967).

55. See Enneads V,3,7 and 5,7; and VI,7,36.

56. Ibid. V,5,8.

57. See the "Chadogya Upanishad" in The Upanishads, tr.J.Mancaro (NY: 1965) 117-118.

58. For a study of the language of transcendence and "negative theology" in mid- and late Platonism, see R. Mortley, From Word to Silence II: The Way of Negation Christian and Greek (Bonn: 1986).

59. See again M. Himmelfarb, Ascent to Heaven, esp. 69-71 for the stress on transcendence, and on intermediaries, Fossum, Name of God 332-338.

60. See Clement's Stromateis V,11 (GCS 71:2-3).

61. Clement's Stromateis VII presents his picture of the "Christian gnostic". For translation, see H. Chadwick's in Alexandrian Christianity (Phil: 1954) 93-165.

62. For, inter alia, Clement's importance for the ideal monk of early monasticism, see G. Bunge, "Origenismus-Gnostizismus: zum geistesgeschictlichen Standort des Evagrios Pontikos", Vigiliae Christianae 40 (1986) 24-54. It was and continues to be a long-lived influence. The portrait of the elder, Zosima, in Dostoyevsky's Brothers Karamazov owes something to Clement on the Christian gnostic.

63. The Pedagogue V, text from Sources chretiennes 70, pp.22:3 -23:1.

64. Ibid. VI, SC 27:2. Cf. also Clement's Excerpta ex Theodoto 4:1-3 and 5:3 (text in SC 23).

65. Stromateis V,6 (GCS 40:1).

66. Ibid. VII,13 (GCS 58:25-59:5).

67. Noted by Eusebius of Caesarea, Ecclesiastical History VI.xix.6-11 (Loeb ed., vol.II:59).

68. For Origen's interiorization of the history of Israel, see On First Principles II.1.3 and IV.3.9-12 (Butterworth 78 and 301-9).

69. See, for example, his Commentary on John 2:3 and 2:19 (SC 120) for the relation of all the reason-endowed, logikoi, to the Logos.

70. On disincarnation, see esp. On First Principles II.3.2-3 (Butterworth 84-7), and for studies on the definitive reply by Maximus Confessor to Origen on this issue, see P.Sherwood, The Earlier Ambigua of Maximus Confessor and his Refutation of Origenism (Rome:1955), and H.U. von Balthasar, Kosmische Liturgie (Einsiedeln: 1961 2nd. ed.).

71. See again McGinn, Foundations,

72. See on this Hanson, Allegory, 188 and 193.

73. See again On First Principles IV.3.9-12 (Butterworth 301-9).

74. Ibid., Preface 2-4 (Butterworth 1-4).

75. See again Eusebius, EH VI.xxiii (Loeb 71).

76. In Mattheum Comm., Patrologia Graeca 13:161 BC, cited by I. Hausherr, Spiritual Direction in the Early Christian East, tr. A.Gythiel (Kalamazoo: 1990) 22.

77. See, for example, Eusebius on the dedication of the church at Tyre in EH X.iv.2-71 (Loeb II:398-445), esp. iv.37 (420).

78. See the studies by A.M. Schneider, "Liturgie und Kirchenbauim Syrien", NAG (1949) 56-68, and T.F. Matthews, Early Churches of Constantinople (Penn State: 1971) esp.162-171.

79. For example, A. von Harnack, History of Dogma IV, tr.E.F. Speirs and J. Millar (London: 1897/8) 166-167, and H. Leitz-mann, A History of the Early Church IV, tr. B.L.Woolf (London: 1961) 109.

80. See Clements, God and Temple 65-77.

81. Note again Eusebius on the church in Tyre, EH X.iv.22-26 (Loeb 410-415), and already in early sixth century Syria, K. McVey, "The Domed Church as Microcosm: Literary Roots of an Architectural Symbol", Dumbarton Oaks Papers 39 (1983) 91-121.

82. On the Byzantine church and liturgy, see also H.-J.Schulz, The Byzantine Liturgy, tr.M.J. O'Connell (NY: 1986) 33, and R. Taft, "The Spirit of Eastern Christian Worship", Diakonia XII (1977) 103-120.

83. Eusebius himself is a good example, thus his rapturous account of Constantine's triumph in EH X.viii-ix (II:464-481), as well as the privileges Constantine grants the clergy, listed in X.vi-vii (II:460-465).

84. See the article, "Caesaropapism", in The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium (Oxford:1991) I:364-365.

85. See the articles by J. Meyendorff, "The Holy Spirit as God" and "St. Basil, the Church, and Charismatic Leadership", reprinted in Meyendorff's The Byzantine Legacy in the Orthodox Church (Crestwood NY: 1982) 153-165 and 197-215, together with his Byzantine Theology (Fordham Press: 1974) 66-78.

86. J. Hussey touches on these issues in medieval Byzantium. See her Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire (London: 1937) 158-100, and see more recently, J. Magdalinos, "The Byzantine Holy Man in the Twelfth Century", in The Byzantine Saint, ed. S.Hackel (London: 1980) 51-66. See also J. Gouillard, "Quatre proces de mystique a Byzance", Revuedes etudes byzantins 19 (1961) 5-81.

87. The language of the "arena" suffuses the early and later monastic literature, thus for example the often cited logion of Abba Longinus, "Give blood, receive the Spirit", Longinus 5, English tr. by B. Ward, The Desert Christian (NY: 1980) 123.

88. I am myself guilty of this in my "Anarchy versus hierarchy? Dionysius Areopagita, Symeon the New Theologian, Nicetas Stethatos, and their common roots in ascetical tradition", St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 38:2 (1994) 171. I have Susan Asbrooke Harvey to thank for correcting this impression, in particular her point that asceticism's use of the sort of language this essay is interested in predates the experience of martyrdom in the Syriac-speaking East. See her article, "The Edessan Martyrs and Ascetic Tradition", V Symposium Syriacum 1988, ed. R. Lavenant (Rome:1990) 195-206, esp.196-201.

89. See note 62 above.

90. Fragments on I Corinthians, ed. C.Jenkins in Journal of Theological Studies 9 (1907/8) 29. Cited by P.Brown, The Body and Society 175.

91. Vita Antonii 14 (PG 26:865C).

92. Ibid. 87 (965A) for "physician of Egypt"; for Antony's healings see 57 (925B), 60 (929AB), and also 86 (964AB) for his clairvoyance.

93. Ibid. 67-69 (937C-41B).

94. For a review of the much-vexed question of Messalianism, see C. Stewart, "Working the Earth of the Heart" (Oxford/NY: 1991) 12-69.

95. For early monastic doubts about the Eucharist, see the Apophthegmata Pateron, esp. Daniel 7 (PG 65:156D-60A, tr.Ward 53-54) and Mark the Egyptian 1 (304A-C, Ward.151).

96. See the brief sketch in J. Meyendorff's St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality, tr. A. Fiske (Crestwood, NY:1974) 20-29. For Evagrius' Chapters on Prayer, see the excellent text and introduction by Bamberger, note 3 above.

97. On Evagrius' borrowing from Plotinus for the vision of light within, see A. Guillaumont, "La vision de l'intellect par lui-meme dans la mystique evagrienne", in Melanges de l'Universite de St. Joseph LI:1-2 (Beirut: 1984) 255-262.98. For the definitive monograph on Evagrius and Origenism, see A. Guillaumont, Les "Kephalaia Gnostica d'Evagre le Pontique (Paris: 1962).

99. See Evagrius' Kephalaia Gnostica III.6 and 15; IV.18; V.60 and 77-88; and esp. VI.10. The edition to be consulted is Guillaumont's edition of the second Syriac text in Patrologia Orientalis 28. See also W. Frankenberg's edition, Evagrius Ponticus (Berlin: 1912), esp. the Supplementary Chapters 4, page 427.

100. Frankenberg, Chp.26, p. 450; and see again Guillaumont's "Lavision".

101. Evagrius' internalization of Sinai and continuity with Aramaic and Syriac traditions was first pointed out by N.S'ed, "La Shekinta et ses amis arameens", Cahiers d'Orientalisme XX (1988) 133-142.

102. Letter 39, in Frankenberg 593.

103. On the ambiguities in Plotinus' understanding of the One's relationship to everything else, see A.H. Armstrong, "Escape of the One", Studia Patristica 13 (1973) 77-89, and his "Negative Theology", Downside Review 93 (1977) 176-189.

104. Evagrius, Letter 58, in Frankenberg 609.

105. Kephalaia Gnostica V.84.

106. See the Chapters on Prayer 66-72 and 114-117 (Bamberger 66-67 and 74-75).

107. See Cyril's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments V.6 (Cross tr. 73-74).

108. Gregory of Nazianzus, Theological Oration III.31, tr. E.R. Hardy, in the latter's Christology of the Later Fathers (Phil: 1954) 158-159. Gregory of Nyssa, The Life of Moses 169-188, tr. A.J. Malherbe and E. Ferguson (NY: 1978) 96-103.

109. See Theodore's Commentary on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist V, tr. A.Mingana, Woodbrooke Studies 6 (Cambridge: 1933) 79.

110. But on his deathbed, he requests communion in the sacrament that he seems never to have disparaged. See Palladius' account in the latter's Lausiac History 38:13, tr. R.T. Meyer for Ancient Christian Writers 34 (NY: 1964) 114.

111. See again Stewart, "Working" 12-69, and E. Clark, The Origenist Controversy (Princeton: 1992) for fourth and fifth century reactions. together with Guillaumont, Les "Kephalaia Gnostica for the sixth. See Gouillard, "Quatre proces", for tenth through twelfth century Byzantium, and Gregory Palamas, Tomos Hagioreticus (PG 150:1225 ff.), responding in the fourteenth century to accusations of Messalianism. Still a useful account of Eastern charismaticism in tension with hierarchic authority is K.

Holl's Enthusiasmus und Buss-gewalt beim griechischen Moenchtum (Leipzig: 1898), esp. 220-330, spanning the fourth century to the fifteenth.

112. For a recent introduction to the ihidaya, see S. Griffith, "Monks, 'Singles', and Sons of the Covenant: Reflections on Syriac Ascetic Terminology" in Eulogema: Studies in Honor of R. Taft, S.J. (Rome: 1993) 141-160.

113. For Syriac, Hymni de paradiso, ed. E. Beck in Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium 174; and for English, The Paradise Hymns of St. Ephrem, tr. S.Brock (Crestwood: 1990).

114. See the article by Dom E. Beck, "Zur Terminologie von Ephraems Bildtheologie", in Typus, Symbol, Allegorie bei den oestlichen Vaetern und ihren Parallelen im Mittelalter, ed. M. Schmidt and C.F. Geyer (Regensburg: 1982) 239-277.

115. See the articles by I.Dalmais, "Raza et sacrament", in Rituels: Melanges offerts a Pierre-Marie Guy, O.P. (Paris:1990) 173-182, and E. Beck, "Symbolum-Mysterium bei Aphraatund Ephraem", Oriens Christianus 42 (1958) 19-40.

116. For Ephrem's sources, see Brock's "Introduction" to The Paradise Hymns, esp. 39-73, and N.S'ed, "Les Hymnes sur le Paradis de saint Ephrem, et les traditions juives", Le Museon (1968) 455-501. For what follows, see also Brock'schart, "Introduction" 53.

117. De paradiso 2.11 (CSCO 7, Brock 88-89).

118. Ibid. 9.20 (CSCO 40, Brock 143).

119. Ibid. 2:12 (CSCO 8, Brock 89).

120. Ibid. 3.5 and 14 (CSCO 9 and 11, Brock 92 and 95).

121. Ibid. 4.4-5; 6.7-8 and 23; 7.1-2 and 8.1-2 (CSCO 13-14, 21, 24, 25-6, 33; Brock 98-9, 111, 117, 119, and 131-132).

122. Hymni de fide 19.2-3, CSCO 154:21. Cited by F.Graffin, "L'Eucharistie chez St. Ephrem", Parole d'Orient IV.1-2(1973) 104.

123. De paradiso 15.3 (CSCO 64, Brock 183).

124. De virginitate 36.21. Translation K. McVey, Ephrem of Syria: Hymns (NY: 1989) 421.

125. For the importance of clothing metaphors in the Syrian tradition, see S.Brock, "Clothing metaphors as a means of theological expression in the Syrian tradition", in Typus, Symbol, Allegorie 11-38.

126. See de virginitate 20, 9.210, and 20.11 (McVey 348-9, 302,and 348).

127. Edited by M. Kmosko, Patrologia Syriaca III (Paris: 1926). S. Brock has supplied an English tr. of Discourse XII in The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life (Kalamazoo: 1987) 45-53.

128. PS III, 288:23-289:1 (Brock 46).

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid. 294:23-24 (Brock 49).

131. Ibid. 289:8 (Brock 47).

132. Ibid. 301:15 ff. (Brock 53).

133. See Discourse X:7-8, Ibid. 261, on denial of the visible church as a evil thought.

134. As noted by A.Voobus, A History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, Vol.I: The Origins of Asceticism. Early Monasticism in Persia (Louvain: 1958) 184 note 31.

135. H.Doerries, Symeon von Mesopotamien. Die Ueberlieferung des messalianischen Makarios-Schriften (Leipzig: 1941), did much to establish the Messalian label, but he reversed himself on
the Messalian character of "Macarius" in his final work, Die Theologie des Makarios/Symeon (Goettingen: 1978), esp.11-13 and 445-455.

136. Die 50 geistliche Homilien des Makarios [henceforth, II], ed. E. Klostermann and H. Doerries (Berlin: 1964), Homily 34.1 page 260. English in Maloney, Pseudo-Macarius: the Fifty Spiritual Homilies 303.

137. Ibid.

138. II.38.3 (Doerries 272, Maloney 212).

139. II.52.1, Homily no.2 in Macarii Anecdota: Seven Unpublished Homilies of Macarius, ed. G.L. Marriott, Harvard Theological Studies 5 (Camb. MA: 1918) 26.

140. For the Transfiguration, see, for example, II.15.38 (Doerries 149-150, Maloney 122-123), and, in G.Berthold's edition of Collection I, Makarios/Symeon, Reden und Briefen: Die Sammlung des Vaticanus Graecus 694 (B) (Berlin: 1973), Homily 10.3.1 (p.138:4ff.). For Moses, see II.5.10-11 (Doerries 60-62, Maloney 74); 12.14 (Doer.114, Mal.102), and 38.2 (Doer.222, Mal.212).

141. II.1.2 (Doer.1-2, Mal.37-38). On this as the interiorization of the Merkabah, see G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism 79.

142. II.44.4 (Doer.303, Mal.224).

143. Ibid.

144. For example, I.4.7.1 (48:27ff.)

145. See esp. II.44.1-4 (Doer.291-293, Mal.223-224).

146. See G.W.H. Lampe ed., A Patristic Greek Lexicon (Camb: 1963), 351 for diakonia, 848-9 for metaballo/metabole, 1302-3 for synaxis.

147. II.12.15 (Doer.115-116, Mal.103); cf. 37.8-9 (Doer.268-9, Mal.209-10).

148. I.52.1 (138:1-8).

149. Ibid. 3 (138:18-32). For a modern criticism of Macarius as turning the Eucharist into a mere symbol, see H.V.

Beyer,"Die Lichtlehre der Moenchen des vierzehnten und des vierten Jahrhunderts", Acten I:2, XVI Internationaler Byzantinisten-kongress, Jahrbuch des oesterreichischen Byzantinistik 31.1(1981) 473-512, esp. 504 and 509.

150. Ibid. (139:7-9).

151. Ibid. (139:40-140:2).

152. Ibid. (139:27-29).

153. Ibid. (140:3-8).

154. Ibid. (140:8-141:2).

155. Ibid. (141:13-142:16).

156. Examples are legion. One of the better known is Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, tr. P.S.Watson (Phil: 1953, rev.ed.) 576-593, esp. 576: Dionysius' Christianity is "an exceedingly thin veneer" over his bedrock Platonism.

157. Thus again Nygren, Agape, and from more recent scholars ofthe Lutheran tradition, B. Brons' Gott und die Seienden (Goettingen: 1976) and P. Rorem's Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary (Oxford/NY: 1993), and an elegant contribution from the Reformed, J.P. Hornus' "Quelques reflections a propos du Pseudo-Denys l'Areopagite et la mystique chretienne en general", Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religeuse 27(1947) 37-63.

158. Some of the most prominent include: V.N.Lossky, "La notiondes 'Analogies' chez Denys le pseudo-Areopagite", Archives d'histoire doctinale et litterature du Moyen Age V (1931) 279-309; H.U. von Balthasar, Herrlichkeit: eine theologische Aesthetik II (Einsiedeln: 1962) 147-214; W. Voelker, Kontemplation und Extase bei Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita (Wiesbaden: 1958); and L. Bouyer, The Spirituality of the New Testament and the Fathers (London: 1960) 383-389.

159. There is one exceptional monograph on Dionysius and the Syrian tradition, W. Strothmann, Die Sakrament des Myron-weihe in der Schrift De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia (Wiesbaden:1978), together with some suggestions in the Syrian direction in A. Louth's Denys the Areopagite (Wilton,CT: 1989)63-4, 69-70, and 78ff.

160. See the article by J. Stiglmayr, "Ueber die Termini Hierarchund Hierarchia", Zeitschrift fuer katholische Theologie 22(1898) 180-187.

161. At great length in Et introibo ad altare Dei: the Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita (Thessalonica: 1994), and much more briefly in "The Mysticism of Dionysius Areopagita", Mystics Quarterly XIX.3 (1993) 98-114.

162. "Epistle VIII: to Demophilus, a monk", in PG 3:1065A-1120A, crit. text in Corpus Dionysiacum II (Berlin:1991), ed. H. Ritter and G. Heil, 156-210, and English tr. by P.Roremand C. Liubheid, Pseudo-Dionysius: the Complete Works (NY:1987) 269-280.

163. See P. Rorem, Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary 91-92, for the title, Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, having been given the treatise by an editor.

164. Ecclesiastical Hierarchy IV.3.5-10, 480B-484B (Ritter/Heil99-102, Rorem/Liubheid 229-231).

165. Ibid. 3.12, 484D (R/H 103:4-7, R/L 232).

166. The text of the Mystical Theology is in PG III:997-1048B (Ritter/Heil 141-150, and Rorem/Liubheid 134-141). For the "darkness of unknowing", see I.3, 1001A (R/H 144:10, R/L 137).

167. For essays on the influence of Dionysius, see A. Rayez, "Influence du Pseudo-Denys en Orient", Dictionnaire de spiritualite (Paris: 1957) III:286-313; A. Louth, "The Influence of Dionysius the Areopagite on Eastern and Western Spirituality in the Fourteenth Century", Sobornost/ECR 4 (1982) 185-200; and P. Rorem, Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary 214-225 esp.

168. For the expression, "alone to the alone", in Plotinus, see Enneads VI.7.38. The phrase is older than he is, however, since it can be found in Clement, who in turn took it probably from Philo.

169. J.Vanneste, Le mystere de Dieu (Brussels: 1959) 182. Much the same can be found in Rorem, see his "The Uplifting Spirituality of Pseudo-Dionysius", in Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century, ed. B. McGinn, J. Meyendorff,J. LeClercq (NY: 1988) 132-144, esp.144.

170. P. Rorem's first monograph, Biblical and Liturgical Symbols in the Pseudo-Dionysian Synthesis (Toronto: 1984), is helpful for indicating ways in which the Corpus Dionysiacum holds together, see esp. 3-9 and 126-131.

171. MT I.3, 1000C-1A (R/H 143:18-144:15, R/L 136-137). The translation here is my own.

172. For Baptism as rebirth, anagennesis, see EH II.1, 392BC(R/H 67ff, R/L 201), and as a death, II.3.7, 404BC (R/H 77:24-78:10, R/L 207-208). For Christian burial and the Resurrection as rebirth, paliggenesia, see VII.1.1 and 3, 553Aand 556B (R/H 120:23 and 123:15, R/L 249 and 251).

173. EH IV.3.12, 484D (R/H 176:12-177:8, R/L 232).

174. Epistle VIII, 1088D-9A (R/H 182:6-183:11, R/L 272-3).

175. Ibid. 1093A-C (R/H 182:6-183:11, R/L 275-6).

176. On taxis as a defining term of hierarchy, see R.Roques, L'Univers dionysien (Paris: 1954) 36-131, and more briefly my Introibo 121-130.

177. Celestian Hierarchy I.3, 121C-124A (R/H 8:18-9:6, R/L 146).

178. Epistle III 1069B (R/H 159, R/L 264). The translation is mine, and for comment see Introibo 222-229.

179. EH III.1, 425AB (R/H 79:20-80:4, R/L 210). Translation mine.

180. Divine Names I.4, 592BC. Critical text by B.M. Suchla, Corpus Dionysiacum I (Berlin: 1990) 114:11-115:5, English in Rorem/Liubheid 52-53. This translation is again my own, however, and for a criticism of the Rorem/Liubheid rendering see my "On the Other Hand", St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly 34.4 (1990) esp. 310-316.

181. Epistle X, 1117A-1120A (R/H 208-9, R/L 288-9). Note esp. Dionysius' reference to "those who have experienced these things already", 1117B (R/H 208:12-209:4).

182. The Greek text of the Mystagogia is in PG 91:657-717, and an English translation is available in G.Berthold's edition for Paulist Press, Maximus Confessor: Selected Texts (NY: 1985) 186-214.

183. Mystagogy 7 (PG 685BC, Berthold 197).

184. For an assessment of Symeon's thought and mysticism, together with an impressive assortment of texts, see B.Krivocheine's In the Light of Christ: St. Symeon the New Theologian, tr. A. Gythiel (Crestwood,NY: 1986), esp. 103-123, 141-8, and 163-7. See also my "Anarchy vs. hierarchy?" esp. 142-150 for the argument following concerning Symeon and Nicetas.

185. See esp. his Ethical Discourses, text in Traites theologiques et ethiques, ed. J.Darrouzes (Sourceschretiennes 122, Paris: 1966) 172-195 and 206-271. For an English tr., see St. Symeon the New Theologian: On the Mystical Life, Vol.I: On the Church and the Last Things, forthcoming SVS Press.

186. See Discourse IV, text in Darrouzes' edition, Sources chretiennes 129 (Paris: 1967) 64, lines 799-801; and see also Symeon's Theological Chapters III.72, text ed. by Darrouzes, Chapitres theologiques, gnostiques, et ethiques in SC 51 (Paris: 1957), English tr. by P. McGuckin, Symeon the New Theogian: Theological Discourses and Chapters (Kalamazoo:1992)

187. Discourse XIV, Darrouzes 428 and 430.

188. Ibid., Darrouzes 429.

189. For the edition of Nicetas' works, see Nicetas Stethatos: Opuscules et lettres, ed. J. Darrouzes (SC 81, Paris: 1961), esp. On the Soul III.4 (SC 76-78), On Paradise II.19 (SC 176), On Hierarchy IV.38-39 (SC 338-342), and Epistle VIII 6-7 (SC 288), and for the citation and discussion of these passages, my "Anarchy vs. Hierarchy?" 142-145.

190. See again the article by J.Gouillard, "Quatre proces".

191. For Palamas on Tabor, esp. related to Dionysius, see his Defense des saints hesychastes, text and tr. J. Meyendorff (Louvain: 1959) I.3.35 (185-9) and 43 (205-7); II.3.20(429), 23 (433), 25 (437), and 32 (451-3); and, in reference to the saint as temple of God, III.1.31 (617-19) and 38-40 (633-9). For the interior liturgy expressed in impressively Dionysian language, see Gregory of Sinai, one of the architects of Byzantine hesychasm, in the latter's Profitable Chapters 43, Philokalia ton hieron neptikon ed. Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain (Athens, 1961 rep.) IV:51, and our citation of this text in "Anarchy" 169.

192. Nicholas Cabasilas, On the Life in Christ I, tr. C.J. deCatanzaro, "Introduction" by B. Bobrinskoy (Crestwood NY: 1983 rep.) 43-63. For the critical text, La vie en Christ, Sources chretiennes 355 (Bk.s I-IV) and 361 (V-VII), ed. M.-H. Congordeau (Paris: 1989/90).

193. Cabasilas, Commentary on the Divine Liturgy, tr. J. Hussey and P.A. McNulty (London: 1983 rep.) 27. For the critical text, Explication de la divine liturgie, ed. S.Salaville for Sources chretiennes 46 bis (Paris: 1967).

194. Life in Christ III (SC 218, deCatanzaro 96).

195. Ibid. V (SC 18, deCatanzaro 151).

196. Ibid. (SC 20, deCatanzaro 152).

197. Ibid., "Introduction" 33.