"Private" Liturgy in Byzantine Architecture : Toward a Re-appraisal

by Thomas F. MATHEWS

The liturgy is defined as the official public worship of the Christian community, conducted by the appointed ministers of the church on behalf of all the faithful. The symbolism of this ritual remained fairly constant, apart from certain nuances, from beginning to end of Byzantine history; the commentators all understood the identity of the Eucharist with Christ's own offering of himself in his death on the cross and all were conscious of the universal efficacy of this offering[1]. Yet while the symbolism of the ritual remained constant its external and visible shape underwent considerable evolution. The question is to what extent can one explain the development of medieval Byzantine architecture as a molding of the architectural shell to fit the ceremonial it housed.

The evolution of Byzantine church building from early to medieval times can be described in the most general terms as an evolution from open to closed forms. The early basilica consisted of a succession of expansive spaces opening into one another and lighted from all sides : atrium, aisles, galleries, and nave. By contrast, the medieval church was compact and introverted. Whether cruciform, square or octagonal, its focus was the well of light in the middle of the building created by the central dome. Accessibility of space tended to be noticeably restricted. The fifth century Stoudios basilica, for example, was accessible from all sides, even through entrances at the east to the right and left of the sanctuary; the medieval church, on the other hand, tended to be far more restrictive, often with entrances only on the west. Most significant of all were the changes in the layout of the sanctuary. While in the early Byzantine church the sanctuary extended forward from the apse into the nave in a π-shaped plan, with an *ambo* projecting further into the center of the church, the medieval sanctuary retreated from the nave. The sacred area was organized instead in three bays in the eastern end of the church, and the templon barrier that separated the zone of the clergy from the world of the laity ran in a straight north-south line.

Alongside these changes in planning there occurred a sometimes dramatic change in scale; for example, the worshipper entering the nave of the grand Lechaion basilica outside of Corinth would have found himself over 100 meters from the bishop's throne in the apse; in none of the medieval churches of Kastoria can one find a span as great as ten meters from entrance to apse[2]. This phenomenon of "miniaturization" of church design was by no means universal in medieval Byzantium, yet it is common enough to require some explanation. How the change in scale relates to the change in plan is a question that has never been examined. These changes deserve to be examined together for both can be tied to similar developments in the evolution of the Byzantine liturgy. The evidence is far from complete, and it is perhaps unwarranted to speak of the liturgical changes as "causing" the architectural changes. Still, architecture and liturgy in some aspects present parallels so close that one must be said to somehow "explain" the other; in other aspects the connections are at least suggestive of areas needing further research.

EVOLUTION OF CHURCH PLANNING.

The early Byzantine liturgy was very markedly a liturgy of processions. It is clear that the First Entrance was originally a ceremony in which all the faithful took part; it was the solemn entrance of the public into the church under the leadership of the bishop and other clergy[3]. It began with the reception and acclamation of the bishop in the atrium[4], and it ended with the placement of the Gospel on the altar and the enthronement of the bishop in his place in the apse. Similarly, the second, or Great Entrance, which marked the start of the liturgy of the faithful, was also a true entry, for it was a carrying in of the bread and wine from a sacristy (or *skeuophylakion*) located somewhere outside of the church[5]. The deacons carried in the holy elements with incense and candles, and the faithful prostrated themselves, until they

delivered their burden to the celebrating priest at the altar. Further processional action was involved in the readings, in the reception of Communion, and in the recessional or exit of the bishop.

By the tenth century all of these processions had been sharply curtailed. The liturgy no longer opened with the procession of the First Entrance but with a litany that had been prefixed to the entire ceremony. At the end of the litany the clergy made an appearance, emerging from the sanctuary to show themselves and the Gospel, and returning back to their place in the sanctuary[6]. By the fourteenth century the commentator Nicholas Cabasilas no longer even referred to this ceremony as an "entrance" but called it simply a "showing of the Gospel" (ἀνάδειξις τοῦ Ἁγίου Εὐαγγελίου)[7]. A similar abbreviation took place in the evolution of the Great Entrance. The preparation of the bread and wine no longer took place outside the church but in a *prothesis* chamber immediately to the left of the *bema*. Accordingly the Great Entrance, though still performed with considerable solemnity, was reduced to a transference of the elements from the north bay of the triple sanctuary to the center bay[8]. The exact course followed by the ministers in transferring the elements from the *prothesis* chamber to the altar is not documented in literary sources, but given the design of Middle Byzantine churches it probably followed a "U" course out to the center of the nave and back to the sanctuary.

The transformation of the processional entries into "showings" neatly parallels the abandonment of the processional lines of early Byzantine architecture in favor of the compact, introspective plans of medieval Byzantine architecture. The focus of attention in the architecture shifted dramatically. The linear design of the Early Byzantine basilica focused one's attention with compelling force on the apse, the place of the bishop and the altar in front of him; the medieval church with its central plan and central lighting focused attention on the door to the sanctuary and the area immediately in front of it, the place of the medieval liturgical appearances. The re-organization of the sanctuary was designed to suit the restricted movement of the medieval liturgy, and the architect, freed from the necessity of planning his structure around a series of parades, turned his attention to problems in the formal geometry of symmetrical designs.

Closely linked to this re-focusing of the church plan was the development of an opaque chancel barrier. Present evidence now indicates that, contrary to earlier beliefs, the sanctuary of the Early Byzantine church, whether enclosed by a low chancel barrier or by a colonnaded templon, was perfectly visible to the laity in the church[9]. With the passage of time the barrier between clergy and laity became increasingly opaque eventually evolving into the solid icon-screen, a process which took place more slowly than is usually imagined[10]. Curtains too were introduced relatively late. The earliest reference, in the *Protheoria* of Nicholas of Andida (1054-1067), describes the shutting of the sanctuary door with a curtain as a monastic practice; a second reference later in the eleventh century by Nichetas the Chartophylax describes the enclosing of the sanctuary with a curtain as a non-Constantinopolitan custom[11].

But if the practice was just gaining ground in the late eleventh century, the mentality that produced the closed sanctuary was already being promoted. As R. Taft has pointed out, Nicetas Stethatos of Stoudios proposed that the laity should avert their gaze during the *anaphora* and not cast their "unsanctified glance" on the mystery which the clergy are performing in the sanctuary[12]. In this instance the change in attitude toward the liturgy clearly preceded the change in architecture; the notion that the mystery was too holy for the laity to behold prompted the closing of the chancel screen. What had earlier been a public action taking place visibly in the midst of the congregation became now strictly the business of the clergy shut off in the eastern end of the church, and as far as its visible shape was concerned the emphasis now fell on a series of apparitions as the clergy emerged from and returned to their closed precinct in the eastern end of the church.

Closely associated with this re-design of the sanctuary is the disappearance of the elevated *synthronon*. In the Early Byzantine church the clergy occupied seats in the apse on top a stepped amphitheatre with the throne of the bishop in the center. Archeological evidence in Constantinople witnesses to this arrangement at the Stoudios basilica, Hag. Eirēnē and Hag. Euphēmia, and literary sources describe a seven-step amphitheatre topped with a *synthronon* of silver at Hagia Sophia[13]. In Middle Byzantine churches the *synthronon* is brought down to the level of the sanctuary. In the Pantocrator, an exceptionally large foundation of the twelfth century, it was raised one step above the level of the sanctuary, but elsewhere it was reduced even further[14]. The only *synthronon* in the rock-cut churches of Cappadocia, at the tenth century Tokali Kilise, is mer-

ely a pseudo-*synthronon* consisting of a kind of shelf about 15 cm. deep (fig. 12). Clearly this was not intended for sitting; instead, seating for two presbyters was provided in carved arm-chairs at the right and left corners of the apse (fig. 10). The reduction of the *synthronon* to two seats at Tokali obviously involves a decline in the number of presbyters concelebrating the liturgy[15]. On the other hand the general reduced importance of the bishop's throne in Middle Byzantine architecture has its liturgical parallel in the reduced importance of preaching.

In Early Byzantine times the throne, besides being the symbol of the bishop's position of authority, was the usual place from which he taught the faithful[16]. As Krumbacher pointed out, sermons played a much smaller role in medieval Byzantine literature than they did in early times, and their character generally changed from the earlier homiletic mode of day-by-day commentary on the scriptural readings to eulogies and encomia for special occasions[17]. The decline of spontaneous preaching must be linked to the introduction of the "read" sermon. The Quinisext Council (692) provided impetus for this custom, for while it reminded the presiding cleric of his responsibility in instructing the faithful, it urged him that this duty could best be fulfilled by reading from the Fathers of the Church[18].

At the same time, the ceremonies of reading from Scripture and the physical furnishings for the readings underwent a parallel evolution. The Early Byzantine arrangement called for an *ambo* erected prominently toward the center of the nave and connected to the sanctuary by a *solea* or reserved passageway[19]. The successive readings of Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel were accomplished with successive processions of the readers along the *solea*, and the clamor with which the people surged around the *solea* to touch the Gospel after the deacon had finished reading reminded Paul the Silentiary of the waves of the ocean pounding on a peninsula[20]. Again the medieval Byzantine liturgy transformed the processions into appearances. The *ambo* disappeared entirely and instead the readings were done on the step, which was now named the *solea*, before the royal door of the sanctuary. The book was placed on a portable wooden lectern[21].

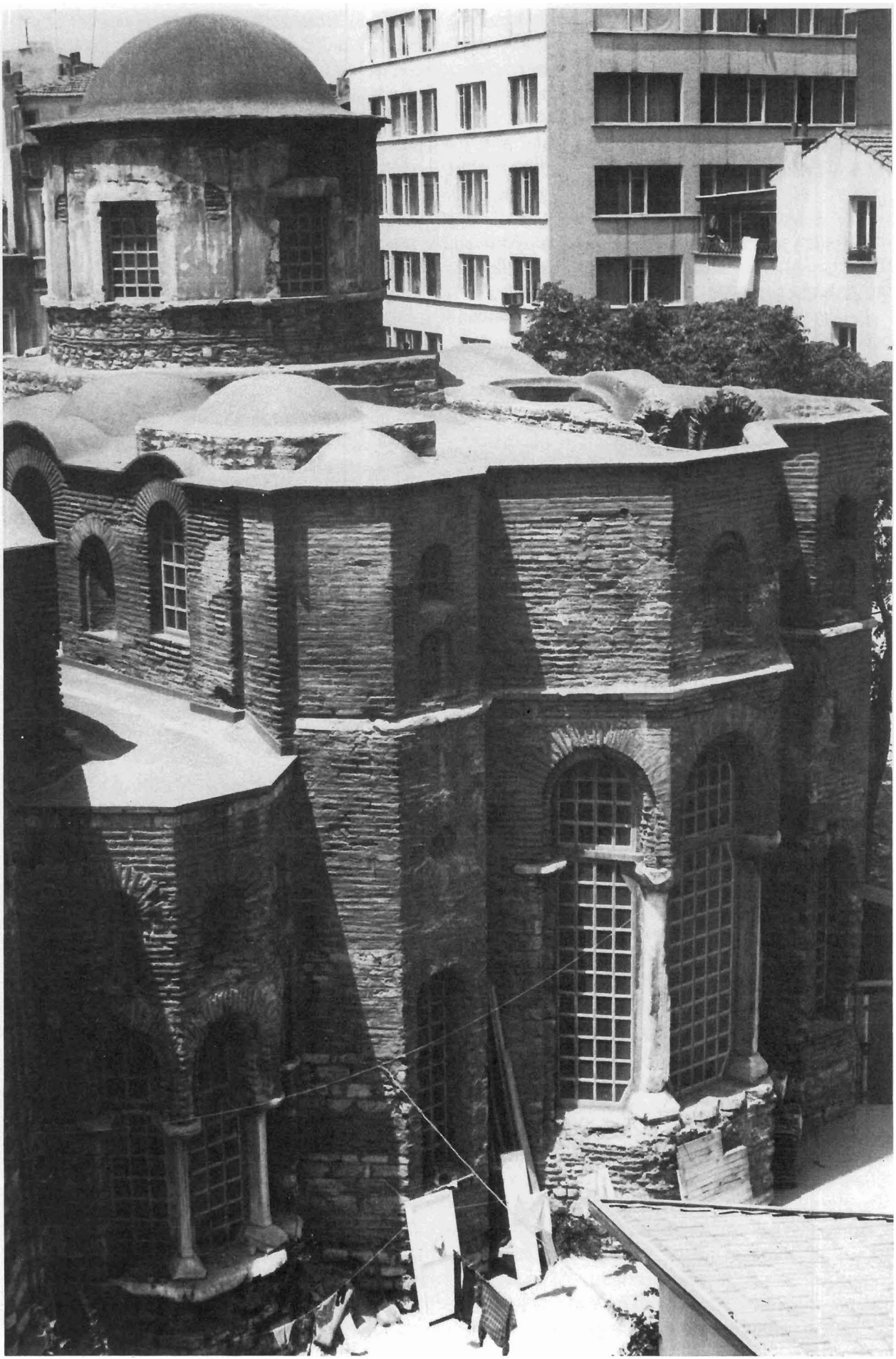
All of these phenomena point to a general withdrawal of liturgical action from the nave and its consolidation within the sanctuary. The liturgy became more and more a performance of the clergy; lay participation tended to be restricted to response in song, since even the reception of Communion was common only two or three times a year. The liturgy was gradually made ever more remote, untouchable, inaccessible, invisible. At the same time something else is happening that in a way may be a counter-balance to this developing chasm between laity and liturgy, and that is the new intimacy in the dimensions of the church building itself.

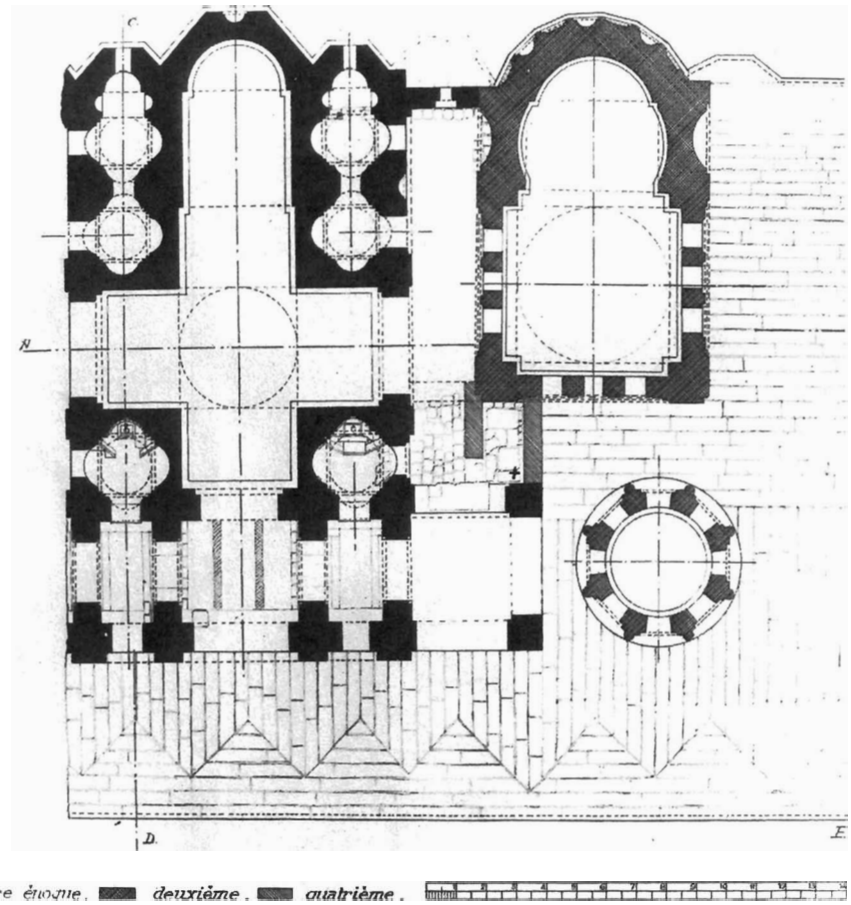
Reduction in Scale and Tendencies toward "Private" Liturgy.

The general diminution, and at times "miniaturization" of medieval church design takes us into an area of interaction between liturgy and architecture that remains for the most part unexplored. The reduced scale was clearly not a feature of the gross decline in population; a town like medieval Kastoria, with its dozens of tiny churches, certainly had a total population large enough to justify one or two churches of decent size, but this solution was not chosen. Krautheimer and Mango have both attributed the phenomenon of smaller medieval churches to monasticism, and this is probably basically correct[22]; most innovation in church practice in Byzantium came out of monasticism. The question is the mechanism by which this change took place.

One aspect of this problem, the multiplication of side chapels in medieval Byzantine architecture, has received some attention from Babič[23]. Unfortunately Babič limited her attention to the mortuary functions of such chapels, whether as martyria, as chapels for the burial of distinguished founders, or as chapels with other funerary associations. While such uses account for the dedication of a certain number of side chapels they tell us little about the actual functioning of the chapels, which are often equipped in standard fashion for the celebration of the Eucharist. Moreover a great many side chapels have no discernible mortuary associations.

The church of the Mother-of-God of Constantine Lips in Constantinople (907) is an important case in point. At the east end of the church to the north and south of the standard triple sanctuary arrangement archeology has confirmed the existence of two extra side chapels (fig. 1)[24]. Unfortunately their original furnishings were not preserved. On the gallery level, however, where burials would have been impossible, four more diminutive chapels survive, three of which preserved portions of the chancel stylo-

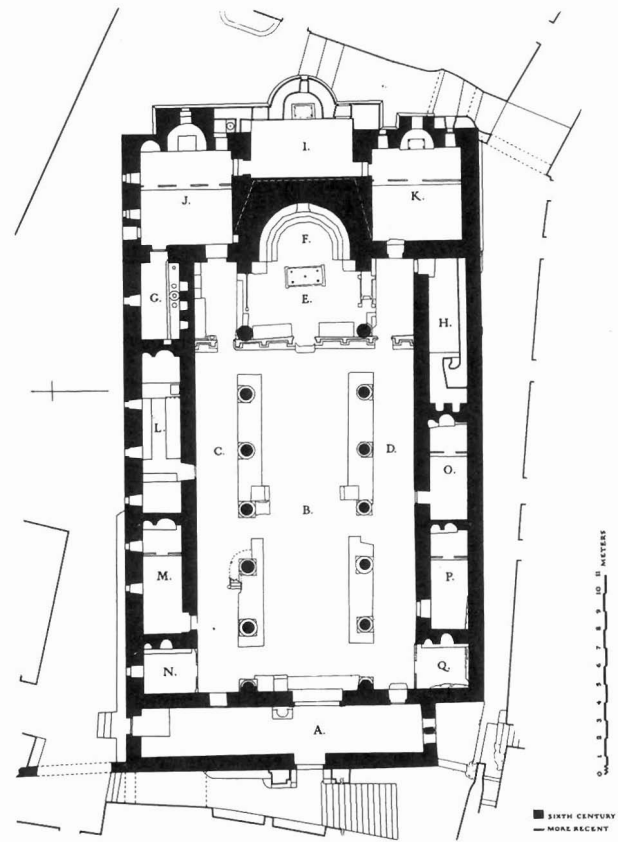




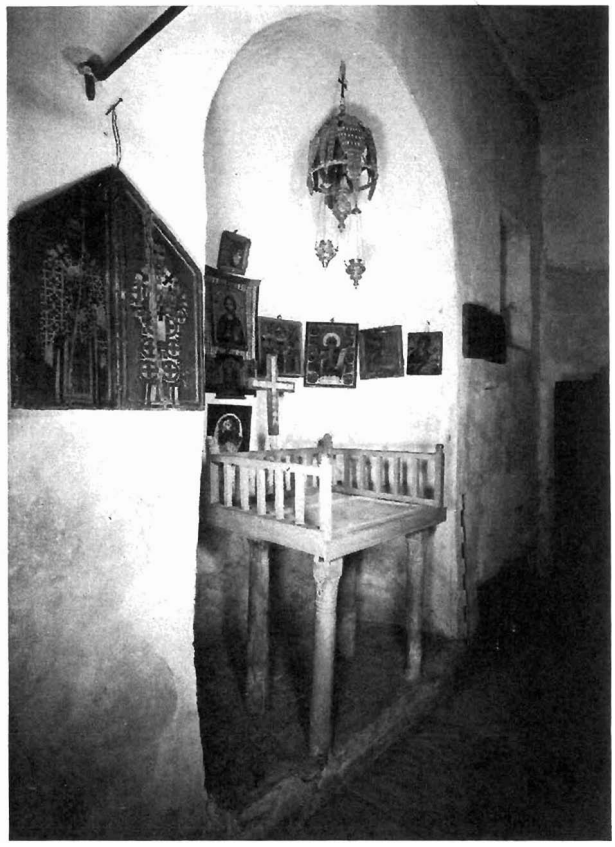
1. Church of the Mother-of-God of Lips, Constantinople. Side chapel to the south and gallery chapels. Photo Mathews.

2. Church of the Mother-of-God of Lips, Constantinople. Gallery plan by E. Mamboury. Courtesy Dumbarton Oaks.

3. Church of the Mother-of-God of Lips, Constantinople. Southeast gallery chapel. Courtesy Dumbarton Oaks Field Committee.



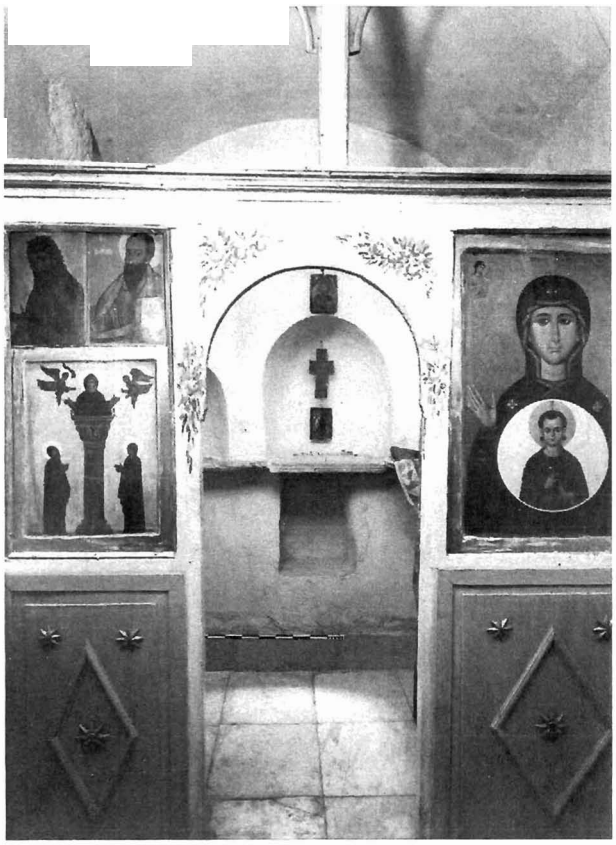
4. Church of St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai. Plan. Courtesy G.H. Forsyth.



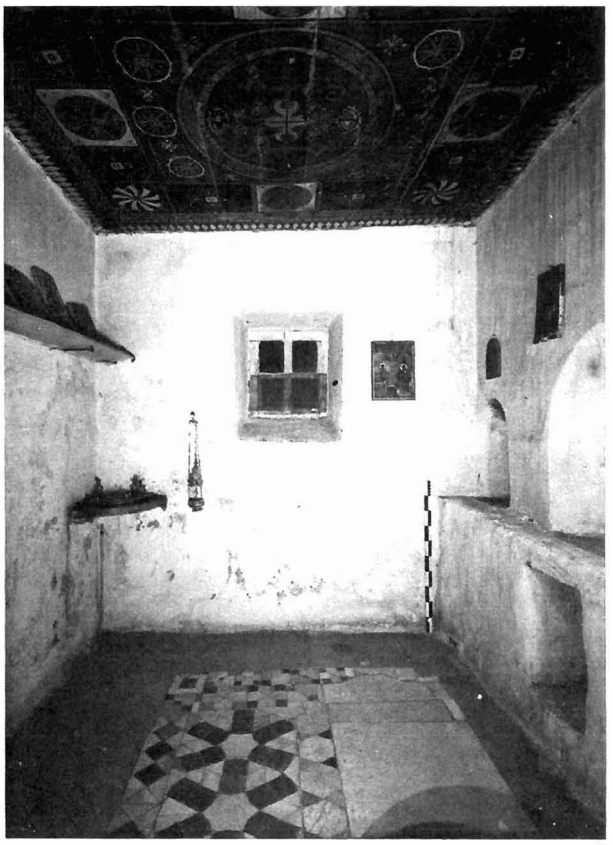
5. Church of St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai. Chapel K. Courtesy G.H. Forsyth.

bates, and two the altar emplacements against the apse with cruciform reliquary settings in the wall (fig. 2-3)[25]. Two of these chapels were located in the western corner bays where they could be reached from the gallery over the narthex, but the other two, in the eastern end of the church, could be reached only through some sort of catwalk along the side of the church. Their limited access and their extremely limited dimensions seem to make them hardly suitable for the conduct of the liturgy, which by its nature is meant to be a "public" action. Yet they contained in miniature the two most essential elements of the regular celebration of the liturgy, namely a barrier setting aside the sacred area and an altar. The archeology raises the question whether a kind of "private" liturgy — a common phenomenon in the West — may have had a role in the Byzantine rite as well.

The phenomenon observed at the Lips church, namely the multiplication of diminutive chapels with the minimal furnishings necessary for the celebration of the liturgy of the Eucharist, can be traced at least as far back as the sixth century. At the monastery of St. Catherine's, Mt. Sinai, 548-560, the church follows a common Early Christian basilica plan with the notable addition of a series of chapels around the periphery (fig. 4)[26]. Structurally all of these belong to the original fabric of the Justinianic church[27]. Chambers G and H, furnished with cabinet niches, Forsyth has identified as sacristies; the others, however, all have the essential and minimal furnishings for the celebration of the divine liturgy. In chapels J and K the altar is free-standing in a small apse while in the other chapels the altar simply consists of a shelf built into a niche (fig. 5-7)[28]. In each chapel another niche immediately to the left of the altar is provided for the *prothesis* ceremony. The finish of the masonry guarantees the sixth-century date of these altar and *prothesis* niches, for since the building's masonry is dressed only on the surface one could not make a subsequent cut into it without exposing the rubble core[29]. In each chapel a step indicates the probable location of a chancel barrier (in N and Q the step is to the side, from the aisle). The largest, namely chapels J and K flanking the main apse, are about 5 m square; those that flank the aisles are a bare 2 m wide, though of varying lengths. In other words, although they are furnished for the celebration of the divine liturgy none is large enough to accommodate a celebration that one could call "public" or even a celebration that would involve any



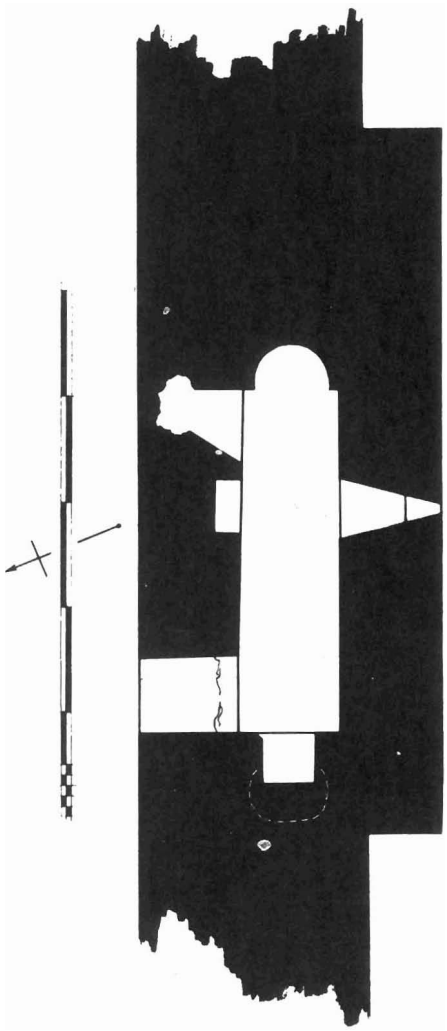
6. Church of St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai. Chapel P. Courtesy G.H. Forsyth.

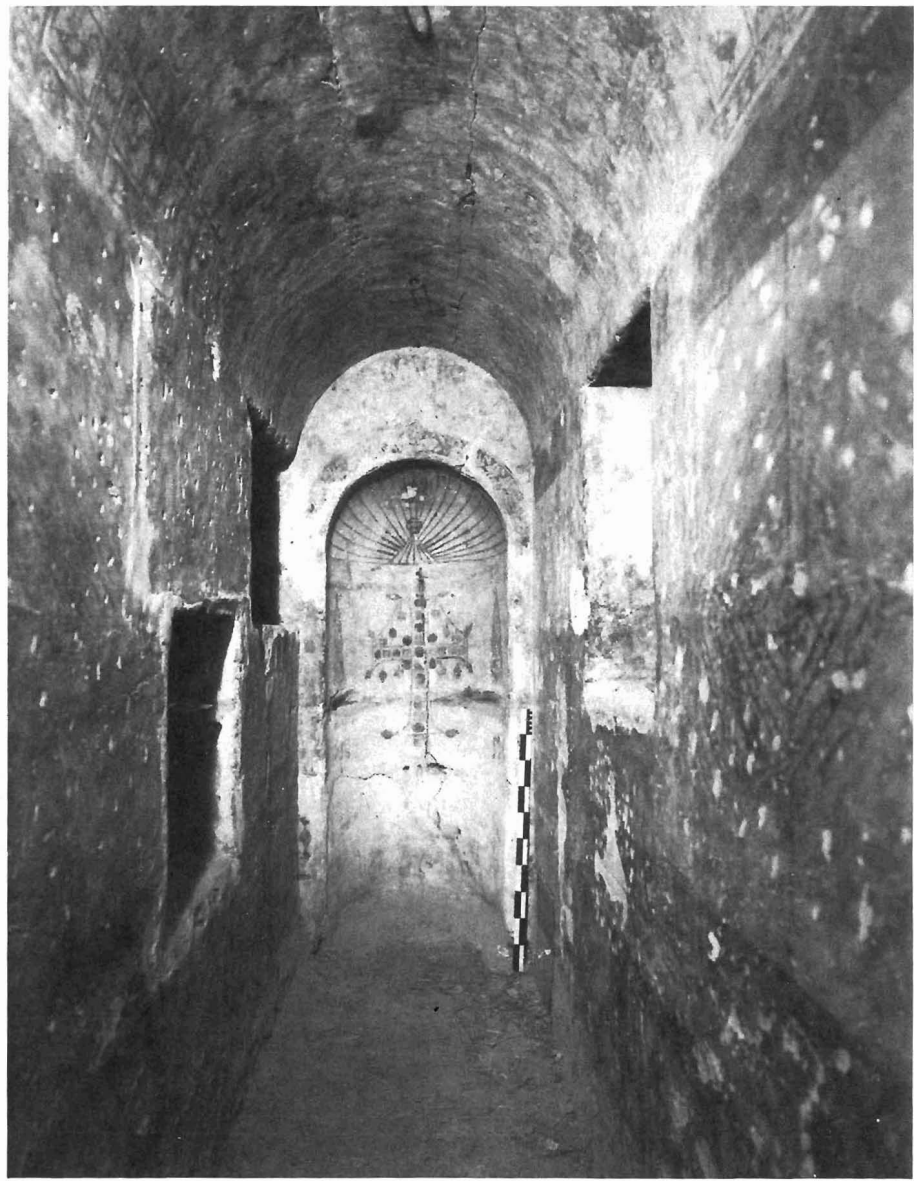


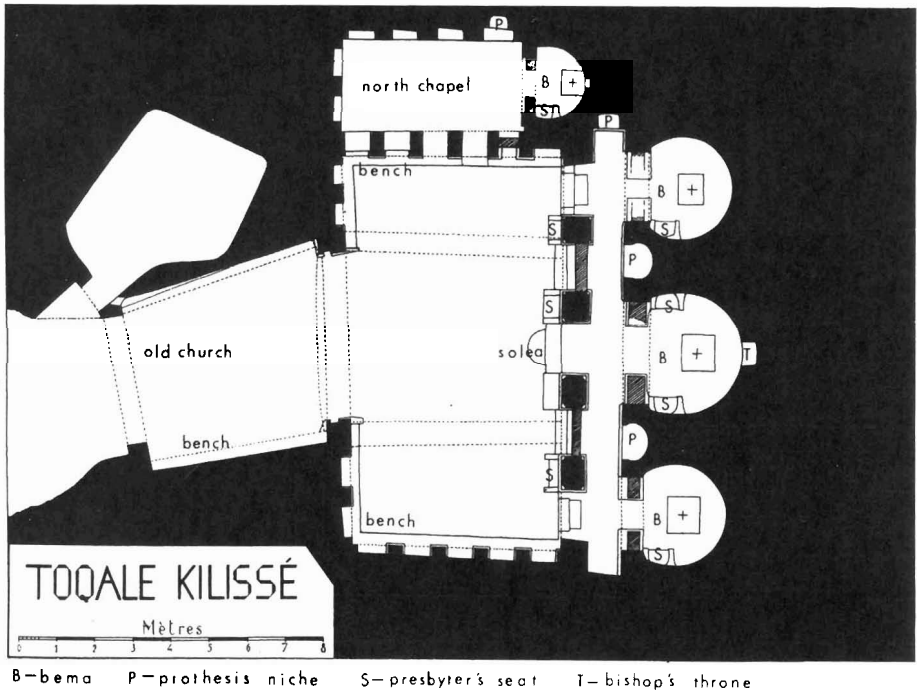
7. Church of St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai. Chapel N. Courtesy G.H. Forsyth.

significant percentage of the monastic community. One other chapel at Sinai deserves to be mentioned in this connection, an even more diminutive chapel located in the center bay of the southwest wall (fig. 8-9)[30]. Slightly less than a meter in width and 3.7 m in length, the chapel was handsomely frescoed throughout. The altar is missing, but the un-frescoed area beneath the cross in the apse probably indicates its location directly against the apse wall. Two niches are found in the left wall, the second one placed at a height suitable for use for *prothesis*. The erection of modern accommodations for the monks along the inside of this wall makes it purely speculative what relationship this chapel might have borne to the rest of the monastery plan; its separation from the main church and its miniature dimensions are significant, however.

We have some evidence, therefore, both at Sinai and at the Lips church pointing toward a "privatization" of the Byzantine liturgy. The development seems to have been fairly widespread in medieval times. Much valuable evidence for the shape of the medieval Byzantine liturgy is still contained in the rock-cut churches of Cappadocia, though in their search for frescoes scholars have overlooked the liturgical evidence. We have already cited the seating arrangement in the main apse at the Tokali Kilise. The arrangement in the side apses is even more significant for our investigation. Both the north and south apse are identical in furnishings, containing an altar in the center and a seat for the presbyter to the right (fig. 10). But it should be noted that while the *prothesis* ceremony requires a table of some sort it has no use for a seat, for there are no scriptural readings; on the other hand, in a *diaconicon,* defined as a place for vessels and for vesting, neither altar nor seat would have any place. Historians have tended automatically to label the three sanctuary chambers, wherever they occur, as *prothesis, bema* and *diaconicon;* the archeology suggests, however, that what we have at Tokali is not a single *bema* with its auxiliary chambers but three *bemas* side by side, each fully equipped for the celebration of mass. For each *bema* a *prothesis* niche was provided just to the left of each apse in the corridor of space immediately in front of the apses (fig. 10 and 11). A slightly different arrangement maintains in the chapel just to the north of the main church of Tokali. Here the chapel has but a single apse. The altar and the presbyter's seat to the right are arranged as in the apses of the main church, but the *prothesis* niche is

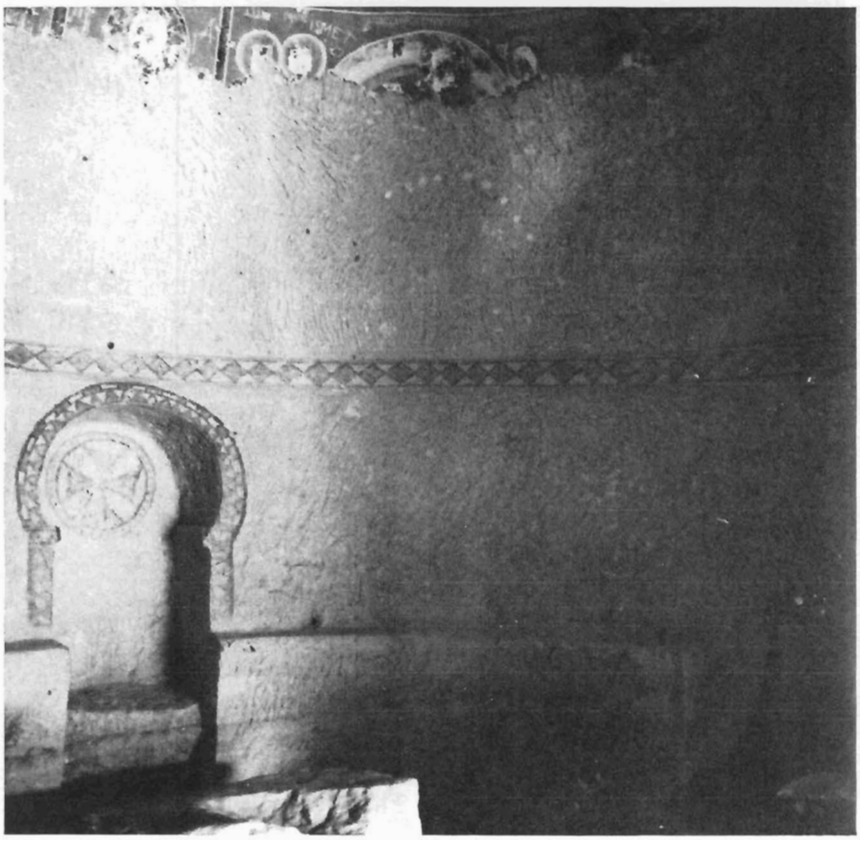






B—bema P—prothesis niche S—presbyter's seat T—bishop's throne

8. *Southwest wall chapel, St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai. Plan. Courtesy G.H. Forsyth.*
9. *Southwest wall chapel, St. Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai. View toward the apse. Courtesy G.H. Forsyth.*
10. *Tokali Kilise, Göreme. Plan. From G. de Jerphanion,* Les églises rupestres, *I, 2, plate 61.*



11. Tokali Kilise, Göreme. Interior, showing alternation of apses (bemas) *and* prothesis *niches. Photo Mathews.*

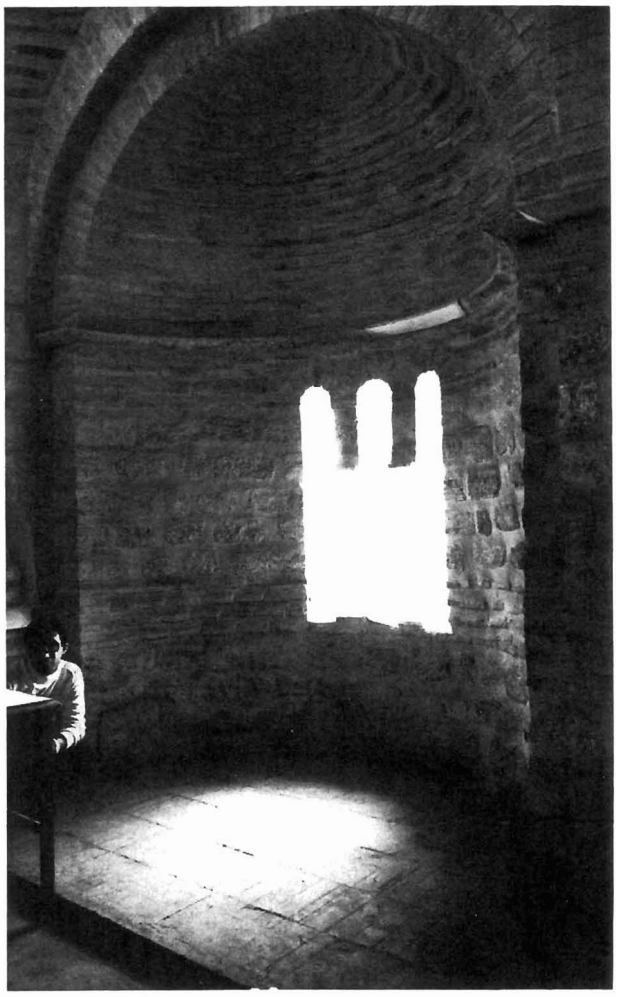
12. Tokali Kilise, Göreme. Center apse, showing bishop's throne, pseudo-synthronon, *and presbyter's chair. Photo Mathews.*

13. Church of Christ of Chōra, Constantinople. Apse and flanking chapels. Photo Mathews.

outside of the chancel barrier to the left, in the first bay of the nave.

Both of these arrangements, with minor variations, are standard throughout Cappadocia. Where the church has but a single apse the *protehesis* is usually in the nave immediately to the left of the sanctuary; where the church has three apses, each apse is a *bema* with its own altar and presbyter's seat. The commonest variation is in the placement of the *prothesis* niche; if the church is less spaciously laid out than the Tokali a small *prothesis* niche is generally placed within the *bema* itself, to the left, opposite the presbyter's seat.

These Cappadocian phenomena cannot be dismissed as provincial monastic practices; for although many of the furnishings are missing, the same arrangements seem to have been in use in Constantinople. Churches with a single-apsed sanctuary are not uncommon; one can cite, for example, the Toklu dede Mescidi, the Bogdan Sarayi, and the Theotokos Panagiotissa (Mougliotissa)[31]. All of these are diminutive churches with a nave and sanctuary spanning less than 10 m. The two former must have accommodated the *prothesis* in the niche just left of the apse within the chancel barrier; the third church, which was a quatrefoil plan with three niches in each apse, may have accommodated the *prothesis* either in the left niche of the main apse, or somewhere in the north conch. The three-*bema* arrangement of Cappadocia also appears in Constantinople at the famous church of Christ of Chōra (fig. 13-14). Here the main apse has a niche off-center to the left, evidently for the *prothesis*[32], while each of the flanking chapels is equipped with apse and niche. The fact that the south flanking chapel does not communicate with the main apse bears out its independence as a separate *bema;* on the other hand the fact that the north flanking chapel does not communicate with the nave underlines its unsuitability for *prothesis* functions in relation to the main apse. Beyond the Lips church, there-



14. Church of Christ of Chōra, Constantinople. South flanking chapel, showing apse and prothesis *niche. Photo Mathews.*

fore, there is considerable evidence in Constantinople that the liturgy was being celebrated on a reduced, private scale, whether in churches of miniature size or in small chapels annexed to larger churches. Further monuments to be considered in the same category might be the gallery-level chapels of Hag. Eirēnē and the Gül Camii, and the multiplied east-end chapels on the ground level at Theotokos Pammakaristos, the Kalenderhane Camii, and the Vefa Kilise Camii.

Literary evidence for the privatization of the Byzantine liturgy is still scarce, but it is hoped that by drawing attention to some of the documents further sources can be brought to light. Curiously enough, the earliest literary evidence comes from Sinai's patriarchal see of Alexandria, only a generation or two after Justinian's church. The evidence is found in the life of St. John the Almsgiver, appointed by Heraclius in 610 as the orthodox, i.e. Chalcedonian, bishop of Alexandria. The saint's biographer and contemporary, Leontius of Neapolis, narrates the manner in which St. John sought to correct a government official who could not be persuaded to be reconciled with a personal enemy.

"One day the Saint sent and had him fetched on the pretext of some public business, and as soon as he had come the Patriarch held a service in his oratory, no one else being present save his syncellus. After the Patriarch had said the prayer of consecration and had pronounced the opening words of the Lord's Prayer, the three of them began to repeat the Prayer. When they got to the sentence : 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,' the Patriarch made a sign to the syncellus to stop, and he himself stopped, too, and the magistrate commenced saying all by himself 'Forgive us as we forgive[33].'"

The situation could not be clearer. We are dealing with a personal oratory (the text says ἐν τῷ εὐκτηρίῳ αὐτοῦ), probably located within the episcopal residence (for reasons we will see in the next passage), and the bishop is celebrating the divine liturgy with only his secretary (in the role of deacon, one presumes) and the magistrate. Beyond this we can also assume, and this is significant, that we are dealing with a weekday celebration, since on Sundays and holidays the bishop would have been expected to celebrate publicly for his parishioners.

A second reference to the private celebration of the liturgy is found in a passage where the Saint deals with certain parishioners who were in the habit of leaving the public, cathedral liturgy after the Gospel to stand outside and talk.

"Directly after the Gospel had been read in the church, (the Saint) slipped away and came out himself and sat down outside with the crowd. And when everybody was amazed, the just man said to them : 'Children, where the sheep are, there also the shepherd must be. Come inside and I will come in ; or stay here and I will stay, too. For I come down to the Holy Church for your sakes, since I could hold the service for myself in the bishop's house[34].'"

Clearly the bishop had an oratory within his own residence (ἐν τῷ ἐπισκοπείῳ) for his private use. Moreover, while the bishop was most anxious that as large a public as possible should attend the cathedral liturgy, he takes the extraordinary position that the congregation is entirely dispensible as far as the essential function of the liturgy is concerned. Evidently when the duties of caring for his flock did not require a public celebration he felt free to celebrate privately.

One might assume from these two texts that we

are dealing with an episcopal privilege, but a third text speaks of monastic priests celebrating in the privacy of their cells.

He collected two bodies of holy monks, arranged "that all their needs should be supplied from the lands belonging to him in his native city, built cells for them and appointed them to the two oratories, the one of our Lady, the holy Mother of God, and the other of St. John, which he had rebuilt from the foundations. Then he spake to the monks beloved of God and said : 'I myself – after God – will take thought for your bodily needs, but you must make the salvation of my soul your care, so that your evening and night vigils may be set to my credit with God. But if you celebrate the liturgy in our cells, your own souls will gain the benefit[35].'"

Here we are dealing with a kind of spiritual profit-sharing plan. Each of the two monasteries was given a communal oratory in which the monks could gather for the chanting of the divine office. The plan required that in the chanting of the office (the text refers to ἡ λυχνικὴ καὶ ἡ νυκτερίνη ἀγρυπνία) the monks should pray for the bishop. At the same time each monastery had individual cells for the monks, and, according to the bishop's plan, if a monk celebrates the liturgy in his cell he may do so for his own personal benefit (εἴ τινα δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἡμέτεροις κελλίοις λειτουργίαν ποιήσητε, ὑπὲρ τῶν ὑμετέρων ἔσται ψυχῶν). Strange as it sounds, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the monks customarily gathered in their common church for the chanting of the divine office, but that for the divine liturgy they were allowed to go to their separate cells. Yet the situation is understandable if one assumes that it is again the weekday liturgy that is in question. The Early Christian practice, which was continued far into the Middle Ages in many places, restricted the public liturgy to Saturday and Sunday; if we assume that the monks were expected to attend the Saturday and Sunday liturgy in common we must assume that they were permitted to celebrate for their own devotion on other days in private.

The *Life of St. John the Almsgiver* informs us that in Alexandria a private liturgy was known both in a monastic setting and in the episcopal residence at the beginning of the seventh century. Evidence from Constantinople later in the century points in a similar direction. In the *Patria* we are informed that the Patriarch Sergius (610-638) "established all the oratories of Hagia Sophia in the *katēchoumena* (i.e., galleries), donating to them many gold and silver vessels and purple linens interwoven with gold and treasures in abundance[36]." Even allowing for the author's tendency to exaggerate, the casual reference is valuable information, for it not only documents the existence of oratories in the galleries of Hagia Sophia, but the mention of the gifts of vessels and linens clearly indicates that the oratories were equipped for the celebration of the divine liturgy. As in Alexandria we are probably dealing with chapels intended for a weekday liturgy for those whose devotion was not satisfied with a liturgy restricted to weekends and holy days. But by the end of the century the practice received a conciliar endorsement that seems to embrace the private domestic celebration of the liturgy regardless of the day. Canon 31 of the Quinisextum Council reads : "We decree that those clerics who happen to be celebrating the liturgy or baptizing in domestic oratories in homes should do so with the knowledge of the bishop of the place[37]." The canon contains no hint of disapproval of the practice, but only insists that it belongs under the jurisdiction of the local ecclesiastical authority. The reference to baptism implies that the domestic oratory was being used for the full range of liturgical services for the household to which it was attached. It would seem, therefore, that by this time the practice of a private liturgy had gained wide popularity, whether celebrated in monastic cells, in the bishop's residence, or in a family chapel. It is in this light that one must view the multiplication of little chapels – sometimes adjoining a larger church and sometimes separate – in Sinai, in Cappadocia and in Constantinople. What was probably a monastic practice in origin paved the way eventually for the family chapel which radically altered the pattern of "churching" the population in medieval Byzantium.

Byzantine law provided for and promoted the founding of these private churches (εὐκτήριοι οἶκοι), and this aspect of the sources has been extensively researched by E. Herman[38]. Not only great landowners, but anyone who could afford to express his piety in this fashion could erect a church or chapel. Such a church remained the property of the founder who could sell, lease, or bequeath it, though he was enjoined from alienating it from religious purposes once established. The founder could appoint the priest, subject to episcopal approval, but with this right went the obligation usually of providing for the priest's livelihood and the services in the church. Monastic churches too legally fell within the same category of εὐκτήριοι οἶκοι, and monas-

tic property was also generally in the hands of a lay owner, the χαριστικάριος[39]. As a result "catholic" churches, that is churches immediately dependent on the bishop, became an ever smaller minority of the total number of churhes; in 15th century Constantinople only eight churches were counted "catholic" against over two hundred privates churches[40].

Of course, churches that were private legally did not have to be private or miniature in scale. Yet in fact this was the direction which the evolution took. The church became a family or neighborhood possession, and while the liturgy in its performance became ever more remote and invisible to the laity, in its physical dimension it became ever more intimate and domesticated.

Present evidence for the privatization of the Byzantine liturgy points to a number of areas of possible research. From the point of view of archeology much data has gone unobserved simply due to an a priori presumption against the existence of a private liturgy in Byzantium. A more objective review of the material should uncover considerable new evidence of the functioning of Byzantine architecture. Among literary sources the lives of the saints deserve new attention from this point of view, especially since the usual liturgical sources of *typica* and commentaries are by their nature concerned generally with the public and official conduct of worship. In medieval villages one would like to know a great deal more about the patterns of family patronage in relation to church building. In places like Kastoria and Mani it seems clear that the extended family was the unit for churching, but the evidence has never been systematically examined[41]. Finally, in the monastic celebration of the liturgy one would like to know more about the day-to-day calendar of liturgical observance. In post-medieval times one reads of the practice of a rotating liturgy moving daily from chapel to chapel. In the eighteenth century Allatios tells us,

"In some monasteries there are as many parecclesia as there are days in the week. In these, except on Sundays and on the feast-days of saints when it is required of all monks to attend the services, one of the monks to whom the duty falls, and who is called the ἑβδομαδάριος, celebrates the rite — one day in one parecclesium, the next day in another. In this way by the time a week has passed he has celebrated in as many parecclesia[42]."

On the other hand a sixteenth century Russian traveller in Sinai reported, "Le couvent du Sinai possède en tout vingt-cinq églises et chapelles; l'office divin est célébré dans chacune d'elles[43]." To what extent such practices reflect medieval observances has yet to be investigated.

Thomas F. MATHEWS.

NOTES

1. On the literature of the commentaries on the Byzantine liturgy see René Bornert, *Les Commentaires byzantins de la divine liturgie du VII^e au XV^e siècle,* Paris, 1966.

2. On the Lechaion Basilica see R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture,* Baltimore, 1965, pp. 99-101; on the churches of Kastoria see the recent article by A.W. Epstein, "Middle Byzantine Churches of Kastoria: Dates and Implications," *Art Bulletin,* LXII, 1980, pp. 190-207.

3. T.F. Mathews, *The Early churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy,* University Park, Penn., 1971, pp. 138-147.

4. In addition to the references in Mathews, *Early Churches,* pp. 144-145, one should note the references to a place for the salutation (πρόσρησις) of the bishop in the atria of St. Sergius and St. Stephen at Gaza. Coricius, *Laudatio Marciani,* I, 22 and II, 33, ed. R. Foerster, *Choricii Gonaei Opera,* Leipzig, 1929, pp. 8 and 36.

5. On all aspects of this ceremony and its evolution see the recent monograph by Robert F. Taft, *The Great Entrance, A History of the Transfer of Gifts and other Pre-anaphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Orientalia Christiana Analecta,* 200, Rome, 1975.

6. On the introduction of litanies and antiphons at the beginning of the liturgy see Juan Mateos, *La Célébration de la Parole dans la liturgie byzantine, Étude historique, Orientalia Christiana Analecta,* 191, Rome, 1971. In Constantinople the patriarch continued for some time to enter the cathedral solemnly from his adjacent living quarters, letting lesser clergy attend to the opening litanies, Mateos, pp. 76-79. Generally, however, the development of the *prothesis* ceremony, that is the private blessing of the bread and wine before the start of the liturgy, required the presence of the celebrant in the sanctuary before the litanies. This order of events is attested to by Germanus in the eighth century. *Historia Ecclesiastica,* ch. 20-22; ed. Nilo Borgia, *Il commentario liturgico di s. Germano,* Grottaferrata, 1912, pp. 19-21.

7. Nicholas Cabasilas, *Commentary,* ch. 20, ed. S. Salaville et al., Nicholas Cabasilas, *Explication de la Divine Liturgie, Sources Chrétiennes, 4,* 2nd ed., Paris, 1967, p. 146.

8. Taft, *Great Entrance,* pp. 1-10, 178-203.

9. Taft, *Great Entrance,* pp. 413-416; Mathews, *Early Churches,* pp. 162-171.

10. We still lack a thorough history of the de-

velopment from templon screen to iconostasis. Cf. J. Walter, "The Origins of the Iconostasis," *Eastern Churches Review,* 3, 1971, pp. 251-267. The eleventh century churches of Cappadocia sometimes show an arcade screening the sanctuary, but it is significant that icons do not appear on these arcades even when the rest of the church is covered with frescoes.

11. Nicholaus Andidorum, *Protheoria,* 21, PG, 140, col. 445. For Nichetas see Taft, *Great Entrance,* p. 412.

12. Taft, *Great Entrance,* pp. 411-412. Walter assumed a general use of curtains in the Middle Byzantine period. Cf., *op. cit.,* p. 258.

13. On the *synthronon* at Hag. Eirēnē see U. Peschlow, *Die Irenenkirch in Istanbul, Untersuchungen zur Architektur, Istanbuler Mitteilungen,* beiheft 18, Tübingen, 1977, pp. 24-25. For the other churches see Mathews, *Early Churches,* pp. 26-27, 66, 99.

14. A Megaw, "Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* XVII, 1963, p. 336 and fig. A.

15. On the evidence for concelebration in the Byzantine rite see R. Taft, "Ex Oriente Lux? Some Reflections on Eucharistic Concelebration," *Worship,* LIV, 1980, 308-325. In the nave of Tokali seating is provided for the chanting of the divine office, which gives us a nice picture of the size of the monastic community which the church served. The benches along the north, south and west walls seated 15 monks at the most (one in each recess); along the east wall in front of the chancel are three arm chairs for priests and benches between them for another two or four monks. If necessary another ten monks could be accommodated in the west nave of the "old church." One is dealing, then, with a monastic community consisting of three priests and around 25 monks. Cf. G. de Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province de l'art byzantin : les églises rupestres de Cappadoce,* Paris, 1932, I, 2, pp. 297-376.

16. Mathews, *Early Churches,* pp. 149-152.

17. K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Literatur,* Munich, 1897, I, pp. 160-163.

18. Quinisext Council, canon 29, Mansi, XI, 952.

19. For archeological evidence in Constantinople of the *solea* and *ambo* see Mathews, *Early Churches,* pp. 36-37, 53-54, 66, 70 and 98-99.

20. *Descriptio ambonis,* lines 244-251, ed. P. Friedlander, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius,* Leipzig, 1912, pp. 263-264.

21. Portable lecterns appear in Byzantine art in representations of Christ reading in the Synagogue.

22. R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture,* p. 247; C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture,* New York, 1974, pp. 197-198.

23. G. Babič, *Les Chapelles annexes des églises byzantines : Fonction liturgique et programme iconographique,* Paris, 1969.

24. A. Megaw, "The Original Form of the Theotokos Church of Constantine Lips," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* XVIII, 1964, pp. 279-298.

25. T. Macridy, "The Monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Paleologi," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* XVIII, 1964, pp. 253-278 and fig. 24-27.

26. I am deeply grateful to Prof. George H. Forsyth of the University of Michigan for his generosity in sharing the results of his archeological study of Sinai before his final publication of the material. In addition to the photographs of fig. 4-9, which Prof. Forsyth made available to me, I was also the beneficiary of his patient exposition of the material in conversation and correspondence.

27. G.H. Forsyth, "The Monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai : The Church and Fortress of Justinian," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* XXII, 1968, p. 11 and n. 13.

28. Fig. 5-7 correspond to plates XCIX-B, XCIII-B, and XCII-A in G.H. Forsyth and K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai, The Church and Fortress of Justinian,* plate volume, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1970.

29. I am indebted to Forsyth for this observation. On the masonry technique see his remarks in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* XXII, 1968, p. 7, n. 6.

30. Fig. 30 appears as plate IX-A in Forsyth and Weitzmann, *The Monastery of St. Catherine.* For other views of the chapel and its frescoes see plates IX-B, CXXXIV-A and B, CXXV-A to C, and CXCIV to CXCVIII.

31. T.F. Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul : A Photographic Survey,* University Park, Penn., 1976, pp. 36-39, 366-382, with relevant bibliography.

32. Ibid., plate 8-24.

33. Leontius of Neapolis, *Life of John the Almsgiver,* ch. 39, ed. H. Gelzer, Leontios' von Neapolis Leben des Heiligen Iohannes des Barmherzigen, Sammlung ausgewahlter kirchen- und dogmengeschichtlicher Quellenschriften, V, Freiburg i.B. and Leipzig, 1893, pp. 78-79; trans. E. Dawes and N.H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints,* Oxford, 1977, p. 247.

34. Leontius, *Life,* ch. 42; ed. Gelzer, pp. 83-84; trans. Dawes and Baynes, p. 250.

35. Leontius, *Life,* ch. 42; ed. Gelzer, p. 85; trans. Dawes and Baynes, p. 251.

36. Ps. Codinus, *Patria Konstantinoupoleos,* ed. T. Preger, *Script. Orig. Const.,* Leipzig, 1906, II, p. 280. R. Cormack has corrected my earlier use of this text (*Early Churches,* p. 129) in a note in his article with E. Hawkins, "The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul : The Rooms above the Southwest Vestibule and Ramp,," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers,* XXXI, 1977, 199, n. 37.

37. Quinisext Council, canon 31 : τοὺς ἐν ευκτηρίοις οἴκοις ἔνδον οἰκίας τυγχάνουσι λειτουργοὺντας ἢ βαπτίζοντας κληρικούς, ὑπὸ γνώμης τοῦτο πράττειν τοῦ κατὰ τόπον ἐπισκοπου ὁρίζομεν. Mansi, XI, 956.

38. E. Herman, "Die kirchlichen Einkunfte des byzantinischen Niederklerus," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica,* VII, 1942, pp. 378-442, esp. 419-425; "'Chiese private' e diritto di fondazione negli ultimi secoli dell'impero bizantino," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica,* XII, 1946, 302-321; "The Secular Church," in *Cambridge Medieval History,* IV, part 2, Cambridge, 1967, pp. 104-133, esp. 116-125.

39. E. Herman, "Richerche sulle istituzioni monastiche bizantine : typica ktetorika, caristicari e monasteri 'liberi,'" *Orientalia Christiana Periodica,* II, 1940, 293-375; P. Lemerle, "Un aspect du rôle des monastères à Byzance : Les Monastères donnés à des laïcs, les charisticaires," *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles Lettres,* 1967, pp. 9-28.

40. E. Herman, *Cambridge Medieval History,* IV, part 2, p. 118.

41. For a general introduction see D.E. Rogan, *Mani : History and Monuments,* Athens, 1973. In Kastoria Epstein has remarked on the pattern of family patronage in *Art Bulletin, LXII, 1980, 200-1.*

42. Leo Allatios, ch. 7, trans. A. Cutler, *The Newer Temples of the Greeks,* University Park, Penn., 1969, pp. 34-35.

43. S. Khitrowo, *Itinéraires russes en Orient,* Geneva, 1889, p. 303.
I am grateful to Father Robert F. Taft, S.J., for calling this reference to my attention.