

Icons and the Liturgy, East and West: History, Theology, and Culture**Nicholas Denysenko****Publication Date**

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AND THE LITURGY,
EAST AND WEST

EDITED BY

Nicholas Denysenko

*Icons and the Liturgy,
East and West*

Icons

AND THE LITURGY,
EAST AND WEST

HISTORY, THEOLOGY, AND CULTURE

EDITED BY

Nicholas Denysenko

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Introduction

NICHOLAS DENYSENKO

*No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God,
who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.*

—John 1:18 (NAB)

Sacred icons and other works of art appeal to diverse peoples. Throughout the world, one beholds crosses everywhere. Crosses decorate the domes of churches and dot skylines, they fill cemeteries and mausoleums, they adorn the necks of men, women, and children, they appear as tattoos on arms, legs, and other body parts, and they hang from rearview mirrors, offering protection to drivers. Christian clergy and faithful have small crosses that they use in prayer and ritual; it is common to see Eastern Christians bowing before and kissing crosses. Statues and other three-dimensional depictions of Jesus, Mary, John the Baptist, and holy men and women join the chorus of faithful and offer praise to God in churches throughout the world. In urban areas, these statues humbly absorb punishment from birds and other creatures, yet they stand watch and witness to life in the city. Holy objects cross the

border from the carefully designated sacred spaces belonging to the Church into the world's chaos. Film writers use crosses as objects in stories for good and evil purposes. It is now common to view films that offer brief shots of two-dimensional painted objects called "icons."

Icons are largely deemed an Eastern Christian phenomenon, though Western churches permit the use of icons to varying degrees. Tradition maintains that St. Luke the Evangelist was the Church's first iconographer. Icons, frescoes, and mosaics of Jesus and Mary populate the walls of numerous churches in the Middle East and Europe, and Ethiopia and Eritrea have developed their own native iconographic traditions. Icons are holy objects and not without controversy. Some in the Byzantine Empire opposed the veneration of icons, finding fault with the practice of venerating icons because it appeared to violate the precept of the Decalogue that prohibits worship of graven images. The opponents of icon veneration (iconoclasts) asserted that the only appropriate holy objects for veneration are the eucharistic body and blood of Christ and the three-dimensional images of the cross. Two historical events represent the struggle for truth in icon veneration: the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787, which approved and promoted icon veneration, and the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 843. The fifty-six years separating the two events that authorized and sanctioned icon veneration elucidate just how contentious this disagreement was.

Byzantine monasteries led the victory of the "iconodules," symbolized by influential apologetic treatises written by the renowned monks Theodore the Studite and John of Damascus.¹ In this so-called Middle Byzantine period, liturgical life in the Byzantine capital and its periphery began to evolve in a new direction, when each component of sacred space in the church interior and exterior came to be decorated with icons. The gem-encrusted cross that hung from the central dome in Constantinople's Hagia Sophia was replaced by an icon of the risen Jesus, the Pantocrator. The Mother of God praying (*Theotokos Oranta*) came to occupy the second most prominent space in the church, the apse of the sanctuary. Saints, angels, and events from the scriptures and New Testament communicated to a largely illiterate populace the events of salvation history. Liturgical historians note that iconography's new hegemony in worship came to influence the eucharistic prepara-

tory rite, with the *prosphora* arranged in order of the Christian cosmos, following the pattern of the iconographic program in the sacred space of the temple. Iconographic styles varied, and when Rus' received the Byzantine rite from Constantinople, the East Slavs developed their own native iconographic style. The blend of colors and portraits of holy men and women did not merely depict but also invited the beholder—in particular, the liturgical assembly—to transcend the limits of time and cross over the plane into dialogical communion with the holy men and women who worship God with the holy angels, denoting an iconic paradigm shift from painted image to portal into the sacred space occupied by God and the fathers and mothers who have departed this life but live in Christ.

Icons offered Eastern Christians such a tangible experience of salvation history and communion with the saints, angels, Mary, and Christ that they heeded the decrees of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and decorated not only churches but also their homes with icons. Today's Eastern Christians have faithfully sustained these traditions, and it is customary for one to encounter icons on the walls of homes, in offices, on smartphones, and in other personal spaces. The role of the icon in Byzantine Christian culture has also evolved. The medieval Byzantine Church celebrated the grace produced by the figures depicted on icons, particularly Mary, who became the patron of the imperial city. One of the most famous icons depicting Mary is called *Nikopoia* (*The Maker of Victory*), and the Byzantines carried this icon into battle with the confidence that Mary would defend them from their enemies. The myth of Mary's military patronage of Constantinople resulted in a new title given to her, *Strategios* ("General"), who defends the city and its citizens.² Despite the Venetians' defeat of the Byzantines in 1204, Mary's place as the defender of the city and Orthodox people remained embedded in Byzantine Christian consciousness, an idea that was passed on to the Slavs, who adopted the Byzantine faith and with it Mary as their protector.

Icons were not only carried into battle and credited with making victory, but they also produced miracles. Like the relics of saints, many icons are considered wonder-working because they gush myrrh, and these oils are used to anoint the sick and impart grace for the remission

of sins. Wonder-working icons became so preponderant in Byzantine Church culture that new feasts entered the liturgical year commemorating the icon and its miracles. Copies of such icons are often made so that a local divine phenomenon can be shared with the universal church. The original icons go on the road to visit churches in various regions, drawing gatherings not only of Byzantine locals but also of numerous visitors and pilgrims.³ In this vein, the wonder-working icon has adopted a feature that once belonged to holy relics: the transfer of relics of antiquity has given birth to a related rite—the pilgrimage of a wonder-working icon. Like the transfer of relics, the scheduling of a visit of a wonder-working icon is ecclesiological, a decision of a local church to share the blessings and grace from the holy objects of their native community with other local churches. When a local church shares an icon with multiple churches of other regions, the local phenomenon becomes universal. The American Orthodox celebration of the *Vladimir Mother of God* in the liturgical calendar is an instance of the local becoming universal, the diffusion of grace through the simple act of sharing a holy object. The icon, then, has become somewhat ubiquitous in Eastern Christian culture. Its native habitat is the church, but the icon and other holy objects, such as crosses, statues, and votive candles, venture out into the world to decorate and sanctify it. These principles apply to other holy objects equally. The function of any given holy object is not reducible to decoration.

Our abbreviated survey discloses a rich multifunctionality for sacred art and holy objects. Sacred art is decorative, but it is also liturgical, because it works in harmony with the liturgy to communicate the past (salvation history) according to an organized hierarchy. Sacred art also invites the beholder and liturgical participant to engage it as a portal, ushering faithful from the past through the present and into the future life with God. The Church's euchology, her prayers, hymns, the liturgy of the Word, and ritual gestures contribute to the motion of the faithful to behold an image of future life with God and the communion of saints, and the icons serve as portals into that future life. Moreover, this motion facilitated by Church ritual is often literal: icons and objects of sacred art are frequently removed from their appointed stations in the church and carried in procession outside of the church, an act of

the community's sanctification of the world. Sacred art is also ecclesiological: its depiction of Christ, Mary, and the communion of saints introduces one to behold an image of the kingdom of God, an image that is the *telos* of the Church living in the present. Our above reference to the repetitive copying and visitation of icons demonstrates the phenomenon of the local becoming universal without losing its grounding in the native local tradition, especially when the narrative story of a given piece of sacred art inspires beholders to make pilgrimages to the native home of the work of sacred art. Sacred art is theological. Crosses and images of Christ communicate salvation history, and, more important, they reveal God. Icons of the communion of saints have a related function: they display to the faithful one's own *telos* by functioning as a picture of the call to universal holiness. The dialogue between assembly (or individual person) and the holy man or woman depicted in a work of sacred art beckons those in the present to imitate the life of the holy one and realize the divine vocation for humanity established from the beginning: *theosis*, "to become like God." This process of becoming is enormously complex and filled with perils and failures, which is why the Church encourages the faithful to return to the icons and images over and over again, and to respond to the call to be a citizen of God's kingdom even after failures. In this instance, the theological is inseparable from the liturgical, because liturgy provides the rehearsal and the environment for the faithful to behold the theology revealed by the icons, to worship the God revealed by Christ, and to respond affirmatively to the call of universal holiness issued from the communion of saints.

A SYMPOSIUM ON SACRED ART

This introduction claims that sacred art belongs to the Church, discloses God, and builds the Church in the image of the communion of saints, which makes the liturgy the native home for sacred art. Throughout history, Christians in the world have experienced this truth and have developed styles of sacred art that draw people into the mystery of God in particular times and places. In 2013, the Huffington

Ecumenical Institute of Loyola Marymount University hosted a symposium titled *Icons and Images*. The Henry Luce Foundation and Virginia Farah Foundation provided grants that are sponsoring three years of symposia devoted to exploring the past, present, and future of the liturgical arts in the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The *Icons and Images* colloquy inaugurated this series, bringing together a group of enormously gifted scholars and practitioners who shared their work and research in an ecumenical spirit. Their lectures confirm that sacred art is profoundly liturgical, ecclesiological, and theological, and that it has the capacity to contribute to God's salvation of the world. This volume presents the work of eight of the scholars who lectured at the 2013 symposium in Los Angeles. The volume is organized in three thematic parts: Part 1 presents scholarly and historical analyses of Byzantine and Roman art and iconography. Part 2 offers anthropological and cultural treatments of iconography and liturgy in Armenia, Rome, and Chile. Part 3 concludes the volume with two pastoral reflections on the creative process employed by iconographers and the meaning of praying to original icons and their copies.

Robert F. Taft, the preeminent Jesuit scholar of the Byzantine liturgy, opens up part 1 of the volume by reviewing the relationship between iconography and liturgy in the Byzantine tradition. Taft surveys Byzantine theologians and sets the stage for this volume by reminding readers of two crucial truths about Byzantine iconography. First, the Byzantines did not rely on an opaque, abstract symbolic system in their iconographic programs, but rather they portrayed the narrative story of salvation in a natural, humanistic way that communicated the theology they held to be true. Second, Byzantine sacred iconography contributed to the liturgy that shaped a way of life, reminding the Byzantines, along with the contemporary reader, that there is one Church of heaven and earth, and the liturgical participants belong to the same community as the saints they venerate on the walls of their temples.

Thomas Lucas, the rector of the Jesuit community at Seattle University and accomplished sacred artist and architect, reviews the contribution of iconography in the post-Vatican II Roman Catholic tradition and presents an informative historical survey on iconography in the Roman Catholic tradition. He offers a sober analysis of the place of art

in liturgy after Vatican II, tracing iconoclastic tendencies to minimalism that originated with the liturgical movement and establishing the cultural environment for sacred artists as aligned with modernism and liberated from the strict mores of the previous epoch. Lucas points to examples of sacred art in the contemporary environment that might offer a hopeful transition to a period of reinvigoration and renewal in Catholic sacred art.

Bissera Pentcheva offers a study on the patristic interpretation of icon (*eikon*) as a designation for the vocation of the human being: to become a Christian. Pentcheva's study is of enormous value to the student and scholar of iconology because she unveils the New Testament and patristic sense of icon as animation, where the descent of the Holy Spirit animates the human being, capacitating him or her to become an anointed one (Christ). Pentcheva suggests connections between this synthesis of patristic anthropology and the liturgy that illuminate the people of the Church as being the authentic icons, or images of God.

Kirstin Noreen delivers an insightful chapter on the liturgical use of the Lateran icon of Christ in Rome as the first contribution to part 2 of the volume. Noreen unveils the ecclesial and liturgical context of the icon, but beyond her detailed description of the icon and its metal cover is an intriguing analysis of the role of the icon in the processions that occur on the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary on August 14–15. Her discussion of the Lateran icon's visit to Marian icons and its reputation as a medium of protection in the local community raises important questions on the cultural significance of sacred art in urban settings. Noreen connects these central issues of sharing the power of an image by comparing it to the international phenomenon of copying and depicting images of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Christina Maranci introduces the historical and liturgical significance of sculpted reliefs at a seventh-century Armenian church in Wren, now in eastern Turkey near the Armenian border. She explores the theological significance of the sculpted reliefs by comparing them to the Armenian dedication rites of the eighth and ninth centuries. Her broadening of the liturgical context elucidates the sculpted reliefs as communicating a sense of entry into the heavenly Jerusalem upon entering a church, a precious insight into the eschatological legacy of

medieval Armenian worship communicated through audio and visual media. Maranci also reflects on other potential areas of research and the critical need to strive for the preservation of medieval Armenian edifices, which are threatened by decay from exposure to the elements.

The Jesuit scholar Dorian Llywelyn rounds out part 2 of our volume by presenting the cult of Jesus Nazareno through the lens of Chilote identity. His expertise in the dynamics of theology and national identity provide the reader with a rich background on the complex cultural and religious origins of the use of the life-size statue of Jesus Nazareno in processions and liturgy. His analysis contributes two special features. First, he offers a compelling distinction between two- and three-dimensional images and the implications of their veneration, which is also a natural line dividing Catholics and Orthodox in sacred art. Second, Llywelyn's probing analysis of Chilote identity in their devotion to the cult raises questions on the canonicity of art and its use in liturgy, since the cult of Jesus Nazareno has created tension between native Chilotes and Roman Catholic officials.

Part 3 of our volume begins with Michael Courey's informative first-person narrative on the work and vocation of the iconographer. Drawing upon his own vast experience as an apprentice who grew into a master iconographer, he outlines the meticulous process of preparing icons. His process reminds the reader that iconography is a ministry and act of worship performed not by individuals on the periphery of the Church, but by and from the people within. Courey's description of the process discloses iconography as a task belonging to liturgy: the iconographer must be attuned to the shape and language of the liturgy, and therefore must paint icons in an environment of prayer, *askesis*, and thanksgiving. He also refers the reader to several literary sources for aspiring iconographers.

Andriy Chirovsky presents the final study in this volume by addressing a crucial question on the reality of venerating icons: the validity and benefit of venerating not only copies but also copies of copies. His chapter draws our attention to the most frequent, private, and intimate ramification of venerating icons by referring to the kinds of typical icons people venerate in their homes and champion as archetypal. Chirovsky's study brings us full circle, from the iconographer and the liturgy of the Church community to the daily grind of domestic prayer.

Despite their many differences, the Catholic and Orthodox traditions are committed to preserving and furthering sacred art for the vitality of Christian life. The studies in this volume offer the reader a robust survey of select issues in the history of sacred art, and they take us on a journey around the globe, from medieval Constantinople, Rome, and Armenia, to contemporary Chile, Seattle, Los Angeles, and parts of Canada. This global tour through the history and theology of sacred images introduces the reader to the central issues addressed by Christians in iconography and sacred images, and I leave you to enjoy the expertise of our esteemed scholars. Allow me one final word as a segue to our opening quote from the Gospel according to St. John. One of the common elements revealed by our authors' diverse themes is the desire of Catholic and Orthodox communities to join the communion of saints and the chorus of those who enjoy eternal life in the triune God. My hope is that this volume will help communities separated by disputes in the past to capture an opportunity and seek God together by rejuvenating support for cultivating excellence in sacred art and liturgy.

NOTES

1. Treatises defending the veneration of icons are not limited to these two authors. Numerous proponents of icon veneration chimed in, including Germanus of Constantinople, Theodore Abu Qurrah, and others.

2. The notion that Mary defended the Byzantines was challenged during the Fourth Crusade, when the Venetians sacked, ruined, and occupied Constantinople. The Venetians captured the *Theotokos Nikopoia* icon and adopted her as their patron in military campaigns.

3. Contemporary examples of such miraculous icons include the *Vladimir Mother of God*, the Kursk Root icon, and the Hawaiian Iveron icon.

PART ONE

*Scholarly and
Historical Analyses*

CHAPTER ONE

Icon and Image East and West

ROBERT F. TAFT, S.J.

PREAMBLE: FULL DISCLOSURE

In contemporary public or literary discourse on areas where commentators, critics, journalists, or reviewers have a personal interest and cannot pretend indifference, it is customary to begin with a “full disclosure” or “declaration of interest”—for example, “the author of the book I am reviewing is my wife.” Honesty compels me to do the same here.

It is no secret that I am a specialist in the history and theology of the Byzantine and other Eastern liturgies, which I love, prefer, and to which I am in no way indifferent. That does not mean I am subjective or uncritical. It does mean that I have clear and unabashed preferences and sympathies based not on prejudice, which means negative prejudgment, but on what I call “postjudice,” because after a lifetime of studying the field, I can make fair claim to know something about it. So my professional knowledge and sympathies lie chiefly on the Eastern side

of the East–West divide, and I shall have more to say about the East, which is also where my competence lies.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC WEST

Much of what is written or said about twenty-first century Western Christendom is dominated by the present-day split between Vatican II Catholic loyalists, like me, and the neocon “reformers of the reform.” Their debate is concerned almost exclusively with church architecture and decoration, since the West has no iconography in the Byzantine Orthodox sense of the term. Churches in the West that do have some, like the churches and baptisteries of Ravenna or the Basilica of St. Mark in Venice, are the result of Byzantine influence in those areas: they are borrowed, not indigenous Western art. So the real Western debate historically has concerned architecture, not iconography, at least until the Baroque era when “chubby-cherub” type decoration, not iconography, was added to the church interior to liven things up. On the topic, the key study I would recommend for those interested is Anton L. Mayer, *Liturgie in der europäischen Geistesgeschichte (Liturgy in European Cultural History)*,¹ begun as a series of articles in the pre–World War II *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* (1921–41), revived after the war in 1950 as the still appearing *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft*. In those articles, Mayer weaves an ingenious tapestry of how changes in Western European cultural styles were mirrored step by step in art, sculpture, architecture, literature, and liturgy, as each case warranted.

In the United States, the heady renewal in the wake of Vatican II is best captured in that fresh and remarkable 1978 document *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*, issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (Washington, DC: USCCB, 1978). It was ghostwritten, with the collaboration of other major figures in the field,² by the brilliant liturgist and writer Fr. Robert W. Hovda (1920–92), a convert to Catholicism in 1943 under the influence of Dorothy Day’s Catholic Worker Movement, and he spent his last years living and working in Manhattan.³ I knew Bob well and was ecstatic over his profound and beautifully written text when it first appeared. Since then, of course,

there has been a retreat from the spirit and principles of Vatican II, on which one can read in the recent commentary in the May 28, 2012, issue of the Jesuit-produced National Catholic Weekly *America*.⁴

But I shall leave the West to those who know more about it than I, and I shall have more to say about the Byzantine East, where, as already indicated, my competency lies.

THE BYZANTINE EAST

The Formation of the Final "Byzantine Liturgical Synthesis" in the Patriarchate of Constantinople

What Orthodox Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann called the "Byzantine liturgical synthesis"⁵ reached its final formation in Palaiologan Byzantium (1261–1453), the last years of the Byzantine Empire before the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, thereby laying the foundations for the perdurance of the Orthodox culture that Romanian Byzantinist Nicolas Iorga (1871–1940) famously christened *Byzance après Byzance*—*Byzantium after Byzantium*.⁶ Palaiologan Byzantium was a contradictory epoch of political violence and social decadence—accompanied, ironically, by vital spiritual renewal.⁷ This renaissance is still reflected in the Byzantine Orthodox liturgy and iconography we have today, and in the theology that explains them both.

But before doing that, let me first clear away some of the popular clichés concerning Byzantine religious culture and art that are exaggerated when not downright false.

(1) The myth that Byzantine liturgy and iconography were more spontaneous and freewheeling over against the "rubricistic legalism" of the canonically obsessed Latins. In actual fact, the observance of an established *taxis* ("order") was fundamental to the Byzantine world-view in both Church and State.

(2) The view of Byzantine church iconography as abstract and unrealistic is but another cliché. Though Byzantine iconography and liturgy are of course highly symbolic, that does not mean they are abstract,

allegorical, metaphorical. In the Middle and Late Byzantine periods, when what Hans-Joachim Schulz famously called the Byzantine rite's *Symbolgestalt* ("symbolic form") was consolidating, Byzantine liturgy and church iconography moved deliberately from the symbolic to the narrative and concrete.⁸ We have allowed the Russian icon to color our views of iconography as nonrealistic, but for the Byzantines, the Greek term *eikon* meant any image.⁹ As one of the greatest living Byzantinists Cyril Mango of Oxford remarks, "Our own appreciation of Byzantine art stems largely from the fact that this art is not naturalistic; yet the Byzantines themselves, judging by their extant statements, regarded it as highly naturalistic. . . . When the Patriarch Photius described a mosaic of the Virgin in St. Sophia, he praised it as a 'lifelike imitation.' The Virgin's lips 'have been made flesh by the colors,' and, though still, they were not 'incapable of speaking.'"¹⁰ And, "The Emperor Leo VI, commenting on a mosaic of Christ in the dome of a church,¹¹ says that it appeared to be not a work of art, but Christ himself, who had momentarily stilled his lips."¹² Numerous other texts repeat the same topoi:¹³ for the Byzantines, the portrayed figures are so lifelike they seem about to speak; a painting depicts the martyrdom of St. Euphemia as if it were happening before one's eyes, "for the artist has so clearly painted the drops of blood you might think them to be trickling down in very truth from her lips, and so you might depart weeping."¹⁴

So Byzantine art and ritual were in fact a very concrete attempt at portrayal, at opening a window onto the sacred, of bridging the gap.¹⁵ As Mango remarked on the last of his three "principles of Byzantine church decoration," namely, hierarchical arrangement, selectivity, and explicitness: "The principle of explicitness was, in a sense, the repudiation of symbolism. . . . At the very end of the seventh century the Quinisext Council, in its famous Canon 82, prohibited the representation of Christ in the guise of a lamb. Instead of the symbol (*typos*), the anthropomorphic representation was to prevail. . . . The entire Iconoclastic controversy may be regarded, in this context, as the struggle between the symbol . . . and the realistic image or *eikon*. In 843 the issue was further clarified in the so-called Synodikon of Orthodoxy. . . . In other words, Byzantine religious art of the ninth century demanded realism, not symbolism."¹⁶

In short, Byzantine spiritual culture is far from abstract and other-worldly. As Slobodan Ćurčić has written: “Religious architecture and monumental art (mosaics, fresco paintings, architectural sculpture) constitute the most palpable remains of Byzantine spirituality. Paradoxically, in their reliance on these strictly visual, physical means, the Byzantines communicated not only their deepest spiritual sensibilities but also their most sophisticated theological thoughts regarding the structure of the heavenly kingdom upon which their own empire was believed to have been modeled.”¹⁷

So we see two contrary developments in ritual and iconography: (1) the symbolization of the concrete, as the once-functional rituals like the Little and Great Entrance processions become merely symbolic; but also (2) the concretizing of the symbolic, as iconography and liturgy move toward greater narrative explicitness.¹⁸

Taxis: The Byzantine Worldview

Three concepts are seminal for understanding this Byzantine liturgical and iconographic vision. The Byzantines called them *taxis*, *historia*, *theōria*. For the moment, let us translate them as “order,” “rite,” “contemplation.”¹⁹ First *taxis*. The Byzantines saw the *taxis* (“order”) of their highly ritualized society in Neoplatonic terms: “The imperial court and ecclesiastical institutions . . . were seen as images or reflections of the celestial world.”²⁰ “Earthly institutions, both ecclesiastical and temporal, were considered to mirror the order of the universe, the cosmic array created by God.”²¹ Byzantium was a conservative, backward-looking civilization, intent on continuity, not change; traditional models, not innovations, were its ideal.²² In Byzantium, one failed to grasp this at one’s own peril: “Do you not know that this *taxis* encompasses all things, as it is written?” thundered St. Symeon of Thessalonika (d. 1429). “And that God is not a God of disorder . . . but of peace and order? And that the good order in heaven is also in the Church?”²³

Not surprisingly with such a mind-set, the Byzantines wrote books aimed at canonizing this *taxis*. This codification process, begun after the “Victory of Orthodoxy” over Iconoclasm in 843,²⁴ intensifies in the final centuries of Byzantium, when *diataxeis* (“liturgical ordinals”)

that prescribe the proper order of the earthly liturgy begin to multiply.²⁵ These were not just rubric books: they conveyed the ideal image of an earthly ritual designed to mirror the heavenly ritual and order.²⁶ In a later period there were also manuals prescribing the proper iconographic decoration of the church, the most famous of which is the *Hermeneia* of Dionysios of Fournia (ca. 1670–1745/46).²⁷

Theology of the *Taxis*

There was also a theology underlying this *taxis*. For the Byzantines, the connection between heaven and earth, “realized in the mysteries of the Trinity and Christ and in church services, icon worship, and the system of images,”²⁸ had its theological basis in the mystery of the Incarnation. What had once been seen as an unbridgeable gulf between the divinity and humankind²⁹ had, for Christians, been bridged by the eternal Word of God made flesh in the God-man Jesus.

More importantly for Byzantine culture, this also made it possible to portray the divine in icon and ritual:³⁰ “The defenders of the holy images founded the possibility of Christian iconography on the fact of the Incarnation of the Word.”³¹ As St. John Damascene (ca. 675–d. 749), “last of the Greek Fathers,” taught: “In former times God, who is without form or body, could never be depicted. But now when God is seen in the flesh . . . I make an image of the God whom I see.”³²

In other words, Byzantine Orthodox Christians base the realism of their liturgy and its iconography on faith in the reality of the permanent presence of the Risen Christ. Because the Risen Jesus is humanity glorified, he is present through his Spirit to every place and age, not only as Savior, but as saving; not only as Lord, but as priest and sacrifice and victim. This is because nothing in his being or action is ever past except the historical mode of its manifestation. Hence Jesus is not extraneous to the heavenly-earthly liturgy of the Church, but its first protagonist. As the Byzantine liturgy prays: “You are the one who offers and is offered, who receives the offering and is given back to us!”³³ In this theology, Church ritual constitutes both a *representation* and a *re-presentation*—a rendering present again—of the earthly saving work of Christ. This vision, common also to the patristic West,³⁴ St. Symeon of Thessalonika vests in Byzantine theological dress:

Jesus, who is bodiless, ineffable, and cannot be apprehended, but who for our sakes assumed a body, and becoming comprehensible was “seen and conversed with men” (Bar. 3:38), remaining God, so that he might sanctify us in a twofold manner, according to that which is invisible and that which is visible. . . . And thus he transmitted the sacraments to us in a twofold form, at once visible and material, for the sake of our body, and at the same time intelligible and mystical, and filled with invisible grace for the sake of our soul. . . .³⁵

There is one and the same church, above and below, since God came and appeared among us, and was seen in our form and accomplished what he did for us. And the Lord’s priestly activity and communion and contemplation constitute one single work, which is carried out at the same time both above and here below, but with this difference: above it is done without veils and symbols, but here it is accomplished through symbols.³⁶

Taxis and Icon as One: The Byzantine Synthesis

Within the ever-shrinking remnant of the Byzantine Empire, liturgical life gradually became more indoors and private. The monastic victory over Iconoclasm (726–843) and the resultant monasticization of the offices had compressed the former splendors of the urban stational and basilical rites to within the walls of ever-smaller, cross-in-square style, mostly monastic churches.

This narrative symbolism becomes truly operative and appears in its fullness only in the “living icon” of the liturgy celebrated in a Byzantine church with its decorative iconographic programs. By obliterating the distinction between architecture and decoration, the interior of the Middle and Late Byzantine church building becomes a concrete image of the Christian vision. The surfaces of the church interior become so enveloped in this imagery that building and icon become one in evoking that vision of the Christian cosmos around which the Byzantine liturgy revolves. From the central dome, the image of the Pantocrator dominates the whole scheme, giving unity to the heavenly-earthly liturgy and salvation history themes. The movement of the former is vertical, uniting the present, worshiping community assembled in the nave with the

rest of the communion of saints depicted in the ranks of confessors, martyrs, prophets, patriarchs, and apostles, ascending to the Lord in the heavens attended by the heavenly choirs.³⁷

The liturgical theme, extending upward and outward from the sanctuary, is united both artistically and theologically with the “communion of saints” theme. In fact, it is only with the liturgical theme that the symbolism of the church building comes alive. The enclosed sanctuary wherein the mysteries of the covenant are renewed is conceived as the divine abode,³⁸ its iconostasis enclosure as the link between heaven and earth through whose central doors grace irradiates out from heaven (the sanctuary) to earth (the nave).³⁹ Before these “Holy Doors”⁴⁰ the deacon, mediator between the various orders in the Church and leader of the people in their intercessions, stands at the head of the congregation, knocking at the gates of heaven through prayer.

Behind the altar on the wall of the sanctuary apse are depicted the great Fathers of the Byzantine Church, especially the “liturgical Fathers,” St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom, to whom the Orthodox eucharistic liturgies are attributed.⁴¹ They stand around the altar bowed, in the traditional posture of Byzantine liturgical prayer,⁴² holding scrolls with the text of the liturgy as if concelebrating—as indeed they are—in the one liturgy of the communion of saints in heaven and on earth.⁴³

Overhead, in the conch of the apse, appears the Mother of God, arms extended in the orant position, “an interceder for our salvation,”⁴⁴ sending up to the heavenly altar our worship from the altar before her in the sanctuary below (see fig. 1.1).⁴⁵ A medallion in her bosom or the Mandylinion above her may depict the Christ, figure of the Incarnation that made this sacrificial intercession possible.⁴⁶

Above this, at the summit of the arch, may be the *bethoimasía*, or “Throne of Divine Judgment,”⁴⁷ where the sacrificial mediation intercedes on our behalf, in the words of the liturgy, “for a good answer before the dread judgment seat of Christ.”⁴⁸ Outside the chancel barrier, cycles of the gospel mysteries of Christ’s life are depicted clockwise in a lateral band of fresco panels that extend around the walls of the church,⁴⁹ binding past salvation history into its ongoing salvific continuation in the liturgy. Within this setting, the liturgical community commemorates



Figure 1.1 *Theotokos* mosaic in the apse of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

the mystery of its redemption in union with the worship of the Heavenly Church, offering the mystery of Christ's covenant through the outstretched hands of his mother, all made visibly present in the imagery of the iconographic scheme.

The *Taxis* Contemplated

Even the unlettered worshiper, enveloped in this symbolic cocoon as clouds of earthly incense mingled with the smoking thuribles of the heavenly liturgy being imaged on earth, must have grasped something of what Symeon of Thessalonika, last of the classic Byzantine commentators of this era, meant in chapter 131 of his endless *Dialogue against All Heresies*:

The church, as the house of God, is an image of the whole world, for God is everywhere and above everything. . . . The sanctuary is a symbol of the higher and supra-heavenly spheres, where the throne of God and His dwelling place are said to be. It is this throne that the altar represents. The heavenly hierarchies are found in many places, but here they are accompanied by priests who take their place. The bishop represents Christ, the church represents this visible world. The upper regions of the church represent the visible heavens, its lower parts what is on earth and [the earthly] paradise itself. Outside it are the lower regions and the world of beings that live not according to reason, and have no higher life. The sanctuary receives within itself the bishop, who represents the God-man Jesus whose almighty powers he shares. The other sacred ministers represent the apostles and especially the angels and archangels, each according to his order. I mention the apostles with the angels, bishops, and priests because there is only one Church, above and below.⁵⁰

A Spirituality for the Masses

In the declining years of Byzantium this synthesis achieved its classical liturgical and artistic expression. It was the genius of St. Nicholas Cabasilas (ca. 1322/23—d. after 1391), lay mystic and humanist (he may

later have become a monk), who brought Byzantine liturgical theology back to this interior center. Cabasilas's brilliant treatises (ca. 1350), the *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* and *The Life in Christ*,⁵¹ combine the best in humanism and hesychast spirituality to make him the classic exponent of Byzantine liturgical theology during the hesychast revival.

Cabasilas's interpretation is in no way extrinsic to the structure and meaning of the rites, nor is his contemplation a substitute for sacramental participation, but only its prelude. The Divine Liturgy, Cabasilas teaches, is ordered toward "the sanctification of the faithful who through these mysteries receive the remission of their sins and the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom." All else—the antiphons, lessons, prayers, chants—is meant to dispose one for this central sacramental communion. They "turn us towards God" and "make us fit for the reception and preservation of the holy mysteries, which is the aim of the liturgy."⁵² He continues:

But there is another level of liturgical signification . . . another way in which these forms . . . sanctify us. It consists in this: that in them Christ and the deeds he accomplished and the sufferings he endured for our sakes are represented. Indeed, it is the whole scheme of the work of redemption which is signified in the psalms and readings, as in all the actions of the priest throughout the liturgy. . . . The ceremonies which precede the act of sacrifice symbolize the events which occurred before the death of Christ: his coming on earth, his first appearance and his perfect manifestation. Those which follow . . . [symbolize] the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, the conversion of the nations which they brought about, and their divine society. The whole celebration of the mystery is like a unique portrayal of a single body, which is the work of the Saviour.

But this representational aspect of the ritual is not an empty show. The ceremonies are meant to be a concrete object of popular contemplation in order to stimulate a personal response of faith. "Their purpose," Cabasilas continues, "is to set before us the Divine plan, that by looking upon it our souls may be sanctified, and thus we may be made fit to receive these sacred gifts. Just as the work of redemption, when it was first achieved, restored the world, so now, when it is ever before

our eyes, it makes the souls of those who behold it better and more divine.” For Cabasilas the operation of this liturgical symbolism does not depend on some abstruse symbol-system. On the contrary, nothing could be more concretely realistic:

It was necessary, not only that we should think about, but also that to some extent we should *see* the utter poverty of him who possesses all, the coming on earth of him who dwells everywhere, the shame of the most blessed God, the sufferings of the impassible; that we should see how much he was hated and how much he loved; how he, the Most High, humbled himself; what torments he endured, what he accomplished in order to prepare for us this holy table. Thus, in beholding the unutterable freshness of the work of salvation, amazed by the abundance of God’s mercy, we are brought to venerate him who had such compassion for us, who saved us at so great a price: to entrust our souls to him, to dedicate our lives to him, to enkindle in our hearts the flame of his love. Thus prepared, we can enter into contact with the fire of the solemn mysteries with confidence and trust.

This is no intellectualist spirituality, no lofty gnosticism of a spiritual elite, but a profoundly imaginative popular piety.

BACK TO THE WEST

Nothing could be further than this fixed, unified, coherent synthesis of image and rite from the contemporary “postmodern” mentality in the West, where cafeteria-style religion prevails and one picks and chooses from this smorgasbord only what suits one’s taste. But that is all wrong, I believe. For what we’re doing at Christian services is a special kind of remembering. It’s what we call “liturgy,” which is just a fancy name for what religious communities do when they gather to express in prayer and gesture and song what they are, their identity as a religious group. Liturgy activates the group’s heritage, expressing their collective identity. So it’s a “public” not a private thing, which is why the Greeks called it *leitourgia*, the Greek word for “public service.”

As part of a group's heritage, liturgy is what we call a "ritual," a pattern of signs and gestures members of a community use to interpret and enact for themselves, and express and transmit to others, their relation to reality. It is something that helps communities maintain their cohesion and identity, what they are, their beliefs relating to the basic questions of life. It's a group's way of telling its story, of saying what it is. Now, what any group is includes a past, a present, and a future—the past that made it what it is, the present in which it lives that reality, and the future it hopes to be.

That's why our liturgical prayers are full of past, present, and future, as in the Roman Mass in the ICEL translation:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!
Dying you destroyed our death! Rising you restored our life!
Lord Jesus, come in glory!

Past, present, future, over and over again. This depends first of all on remembrance or memorial—called *anamnesis* in the Greek New Testament—a recalling and retelling of those events recounted in the Bible that have been transformed in the collective memory of the community into key symbolic episodes defining the community's being and self-understanding. For Jews it is the exodus and Sinai covenant. For Christians it is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jews celebrate the memorial of this covenant in the Seder with its Passover Haggadah. Orthodox and Catholic Christians celebrate our new covenant in Jesus in the memorial of the Lord's Supper and other sacraments, such as baptism. But it's always this same root metaphor that returns again and again in every celebration: Jesus Christ died and rose for our salvation, and we must die to sin in order to rise to new life in him. That's the basis for what we are and do at liturgy, following Jesus's command: "Do this in memory of me."

To paraphrase Dom Gregory Dix,⁵³ never in history has a command been better obeyed. Century after century, in every country and among every race, men and women have gathered, publicly or in secret, legally or illegally, to do this same action in obedience to that command. It has been done in every conceivable human circumstance,

from catacomb to cathedral, in peaceful village churches or on the fields and ships of war, and for every conceivable human need. Nothing better has been found to do for kings at their crowning or for a bride and groom at their wedding, for the death of a loved one, or because the Turks were at the gates of Vienna, for an ecumenical council in the splendors of St. Peter's in Rome, or by a secretly consecrated Russian bishop in a prison camp in the frozen Siberian tundra, or for the death of a loved one.

Down through the ages, the command "Do this in memory of me" has been obeyed; faithfully, constantly obeyed—at least until the 1960s, when some Americans of that decade's "me generation" began to decide they knew better, began to say they didn't "get anything out of going to church." Well, "what one gets out of it," as the millions once behind the Iron Curtain in the former Soviet empire have rediscovered now that they are free to do so, is the inestimable privilege of being able to glorify almighty God. For neither life nor liturgy is a pick-and-choose buffet, but the will of God for all, whether you know it or like it or not.

Furthermore, in earlier centuries Christians realized that what you got out of it was what you put into it. Here is what the fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions* (2.59) say about the ecclesial importance of the participation of the laity in the Church's liturgical prayer life, morning and evening:

When you teach, bishop, command and exhort the people to frequent the church regularly, morning and evening every day, and not to forsake it at all, but to assemble continually and not diminish the Church by absenting themselves and making the Body of Christ lack a member. For it is not only said for the benefit of the priests, but let each of the laity hear what was said by the Lord as spoken to himself: "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters" (Mt 12:30). Do not be neglectful of yourselves, nor rob the Savior of His own members, nor divide His Body, nor scatter His members, nor prefer the needs of this life to the Word of God.⁵⁴

That says it all.

CONCLUSION

It is my conviction that precisely the qualities of Byzantine iconography and liturgy I have described, both of them reflective of the larger Byzantine worldview, helped preserve popular Orthodoxy in *Byzance après Byzance*. Let me conclude by quoting Peter Hammond's charming book on the Greek Church, *The Waters of Marah*, on just this continuity:

Throughout the long centuries of Turkish domination, the Greek Church held fast the traditions which enshrined the saving truths of the divine economy. The Gospel was preached less by means of homilies and sermons than through the regular cycle of feast and fast . . . the visible catechism of the Church's liturgy. So it was that the faith was preserved as a royal treasure: the life of the mystical body burned on in secret, though the royal priesthood might be "expelled their Churches and those converted into Moschs; the Mysteries of the Altar conceal'd in dark places . . ." ⁵⁵

. . . Outwardly . . . [these churches] are scarcely distinguishable from the cottages which surround them . . .

Within, however, one finds oneself in another world. Walls unpierced by windows are covered with paintings which set forth the whole story of creation and redemption. Patriarchs and prophets mingle with the saints of the new dispensation; Elias is caught up to heaven in a chariot of fire and Jonah goes down to the bottoms of the mountains with the weeds wrapped about his head; those whose names are honoured throughout the length and breadth of Christendom, Athanasius, Basil and Gregory the Divine, rub shoulders with local saints like St. George of Iannina and the Neo-Martyrs; the Lord Christ is baptised in Jordan, He changes the water into wine and reigns in triumph from the tree of Calvary; the Holy Spirit descends in tongues of fire upon the apostles. ⁵⁶

For the Greek Christian . . . the humblest village church is always *heaven upon earth*; the place where men and women, according to their capacity and desire, are caught up into the adoring worship of the redeemed cosmos; where dogmas are no barren abstractions but hymns of exulting praise, and the saving acts of the divine compassion—the

cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day and the ascension into the heavenly places—are made present and actual through the operation of the Holy Spirit who “ever was, and is and shall be; having neither beginning nor ending, but for ever joined to and numbered with the Father and the Son . . . through whom the Father is known, and the Son is glorified, and by all acknowledged, one power, one worship and one order of the Holy Trinity.”⁵⁷

Worshiping in this atmosphere of profuse symbolism, through which the supernatural splendor of the inaccessible divine majesty and holiness is approached, the worshipers witness the exaltation and sanctification of creation, the majestic appearance of God who enters them, sanctifies them, divinizes them through the transfiguring light of his heavenly grace. It is not just a matter of “receiving the sacraments,” but of living habitually within a liturgical ambiance that encompasses one in body and soul, transfigured through faith into a concrete vision of spiritual beauty and joy.

NOTES

1. Anton L. Mayer, *Liturgie in der europäischen Geistesgeschichte Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. and intro. Emmanuel von Severus (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlich Buchgesellschaft, 1971).

2. I am indebted to my friend and colleague Fr. Richard Vosko for his generous help in bringing me up to speed on this and other issues in a field in which he is one of the major Catholic exponents today.

3. Fr. Hovda's obituary from *Worship*, with which he had collaborated for years, can be found at <http://liturgicalleaders.blogspot.com/2008/09/robert-hovda.html>.

4. Michael E. DeSanctis, “Upon This Foundation: Are New Church Designs Taking Us Backward?” *America*, May 28, 2012, 28–30.

5. A. Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, The Library of Orthodox Theology No. 4 (London: The Faith Press, 1966), chap. 4. On the formation of this “final synthesis,” see R. F. Taft, *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History*, American Essays in Liturgy (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), chaps. 6–7, and throughout the book.

6. N. Iorga, *Byzance après Byzance: Continuation de l'histoire de la vie byzantine*, Édition de l'Institut d'Études Byzantines (Bucharest: Institut d'Études Byzantines, 1935; repr. Bucharest, 1971).

7. Cf. D.M. Nicol, *Church and Society in the Last Centuries of Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 7–9, 12ff., 18ff., 34–35.

8. See R.F. Taft, “The Liturgy of the Great Church: An Initial Synthesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34–35 (1980–1981): 45–75, esp. 72–75.

9. See the remarks in C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453*, Sources and Documents in the History of Art Series (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972), xiv–v, 22–23. On the word itself, see E. Trapp, “Lexikalische Notizen zur Wortfamilie von *eikw'n*,” in *LIQOSTRWTON: Studien zur byzantinischen Kunst und Geschichte. Festschrift für Marcell Restle*, ed. B. Borkopp and Th. Steppan (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 2000), 287–94.

10. *The Homilies of Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople*, intro., trans., and commentary Cyril Mango, Dumbarton Oaks Studies 3 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 187.

11. Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 202–3.

12. C. Mango, “Antique Statuary and the Byzantine Beholder,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 17 (1963): 65–66.

13. Ibid.

14. St. Asterios of Amaseia (d. ca. 410), “Hom. 11 in laudem S. Euphemiae,” in *St. Euphémie de Chalcédoine*, ed. F. Halkin (Brussels: Soc. des Bollandistes, 1965), 4ff. = PG 40:333–37; translated in Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 39. (PG = *Patrologia Graeca*.)

15. See G. Mathew, *Byzantine Aesthetics* (New York: J. Murray, 1963), 38: “the Byzantine artist held that he was representing a past fact.”

16. C. Mango, “The Mosaics of Hagia Sophia,” in *Hagia Sophia*, ed. H. Kähler; trans. Ellyn Childs (New York: Praeger, 1967), 48. Some identify a move toward narrative cycles in church iconographic programs as characteristic of the monastic piety of the Palaiologan period.

17. Slobodan Ćurčić, “Religious Settings of the Late Byzantine Sphere,” in *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 65.

18. The same process is clearly visible in the history of the Byzantine Holy Week services: see R.F. Taft, “In the Bridegroom’s Absence: The Paschal Triduum in the Byzantine Church,” in *La celebrazione del Triduo pasquale: Anamnesis e mimesis. Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Liturgia, Roma, Pontificio Istituto Liturgico, May 9–13, 1988* (Rome: San Anselmo, 1990), 71–97; reprinted

in R. F. Taft, *Liturgy in Byzantium and Beyond* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), chap. 1; R. F. Taft, "Holy Week in the Byzantine Tradition," in *Hebdomadae Sanctae Celebratio: Conspectus Historicus Comparativus: The Celebration of Holy Week in Ancient Jerusalem and Its Development in the Rites of East and West*, ed. A. G. Kollampampil, *Bibliotheca Ephemerides Liturgicae*, Subsidia 93 (Rome: CLV—Edizioni liturgiche, 1997), 67–91.

19. On the concepts of *historia* and *theōria*, see Taft, "The Liturgy of the Great Church," 45–75, esp. 47–57; H. Musurillo, "History and Symbol: A Study of Form in Early Christian Literature," *Theological Studies* 18 (1957): 357–86, esp. 370–73, 378–81. Musurillo calls *historia* "typological history," *theōria* "existential interpretation" (381).

20. A. P. Kazhdan and G. Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium: An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1982), 157–58, and cf. 79–84; also C. Mango, *Byzantium and Its Image: History and Culture of the Byzantine Empire and its Heritage*, Variorum Collected Studies Series CS191 (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), chap. 1, esp. 30–32; Ćurčić, "Religious Settings of the Late Byzantine Sphere"; D. J. Geanakoplos, *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen through Contemporary Eyes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 17–22. See also H. Ahrweiler, *L'idéologie politique de l'Empire byzantin* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1975), 129–47.

21. Kazhdan and Constable, *People and Power*, 60–61, cf. 126, 134.

22. C. Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980), 218; Mango, *Byzantium and its Image*, chap. 1, esp. 32.

23. *De ordine sepulturae*, PG 155:680BC; translated by A. Rentel, "The 14th Century Patriarchal Liturgical *Diataxis* of Dimitrios Gemistos: Edition and Commentary" (Doct. diss., Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, 2004), 75. I directed this dissertation.

24. Kazhdan and Constable, *People and Power*, 134.

25. On liturgical *diataxeis* and their multiplication in this period, see Rentel, "The 14th Century Patriarchal Liturgical *Diataxis*," chap. 1; R. F. Taft, "Mount Athos: A Late Chapter in the History of the 'Byzantine Rite,'" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42 (1988): 191–94.

26. Rentel, "The 14th Century Patriarchal Liturgical *Diataxis*," 75.

27. P. Hetherington, trans., *The "Painter's Manual" of Dionysius of Fourna: An English Translation, with Commentary, of cod. Gr. 7608 in the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, Leningrad* (London: Sagittarius, 1974). Studies and editions of the Greek text are indicated at 116–17. This manual is probably a compilation of earlier materials (iii–iv), though how far back such instruc-

tions go is moot. This remains one of the innumerable inadequately studied aspects of Byzantine culture. On the whole question, see H. Torp, *The Integrating System of Proportion in Byzantine Art: An Essay on the Method of the Painters of Holy Images*, Institutum Romanum Norvegiae, Acta ad Archaeologicam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia, series altera in 8°, Vol. IV (Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 1984), esp. 12–14, 25–47. I owe this reference to my friend John Lindsay Opie, professor of Byzantine Art History at the University of Rome.

28. Kazhdan and Constable, *People and Power*, 157–58.

29. See *ibid.*, 79–84.

30. Except, of course, for the Iconoclasts: see *ibid.*, 86–90.

31. V. Lossky, “Tradition and Traditions,” in *Eastern Orthodox Theology: A Contemporary Reader*, ed. Daniel B. Clendinin (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995), 132; and Leonid Ouspensky, *The Meaning of Icons*, trans. G. E. H. Palmer and E. Kadloubovsky (Crestwood: St. Vladimir Seminary Press, 1982), 14.

32. *First Apology against Those Who Attack the Divine Images*, no. 16, in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, ed. B. Kotter, Patristische Texte und Studien 7, 12, 17, 22, 29 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969–1988), 3:89 = PG 94:1245A; translation in John of Damascus, *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies against Those Who Attack the Divine Images*, trans. D. Anderson (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1980), 23.

33. F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1896), 378. On this prayer and the phrase in question, see R. F. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, vol. 2, *The Great Entrance: A History of the Transfer of Gifts and Other Preanaphoral Rites*, 4th ed., Orientalia Christiana Analecta 200 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2004), chap. 3, esp. 135–41.

34. See, for example, the dictum of Pope St. Leo I, the Great (440–61): *Quod . . . Redemptoris nostri conspicuum fuit, in sacramenta transivit*—“What was visible in our Redeemer has passed over into the church’s liturgical ministry” (*Sermon 74: On the Ascension II*, chap. 2 [PL 54:398]). (PL = *Patrologia Latina*)

35. *Dialogue against All Heresies* 289–290, PG 155:524D–525A (translation adapted from Nicholas Constas’s notes).

36. *Ibid.*, 131, PG 155:340AB.

37. On the communion of saints theme, see Th. Mathews, “The Sequel to Nicaea II in Byzantine Church Decoration,” *Perkins Journal* 41, no. 3 (1988): 14; for its theology, see R. F. Taft, “The Veneration of the Saints in the Byzantine Liturgical Tradition,” in *Qusiva aijnevsew’’: Mélanges liturgiques offerts à la mémoire de l’Archevêque Georges Wagner*, ed. J. Getcha and A. Lossky (Paris:

Presses S. Serge, 2005), 353–68; R. F. Taft, *A History of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, vol. 5, *The Precommunion Rites*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta 261 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2000), 234–40.

38. The basic work on the iconography of the sanctuary is S. E. J. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries: Programs of the Byzantine Sanctuary*, College Art Association Monograph on the Fine Arts 56 (Seattle: College Art Association in association with University of Washington Press, 1999), see 6–14 on the evolution from sanctuary chancel to iconostasis; also A. Wharton Epstein, “The Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier: Templon or Iconostasis?” *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 134 (1981): 1–28; J. Walter, “The Origin of the Iconostasis,” *Eastern Churches Review* 3 (1971): 251–67; and the further literature they cite.

39. On the use and symbolism of the doors, see S. Parenti, “Le porte nella liturgia bizantina,” in *Pellegrini alla Porta della misericordia*, ed. M. Sodi, Quaderni di Rivista Liturgica 2 (Padua: Abbazia di Santa Giustina, 2000), 111–20, with further references there.

40. Not “Royal” or “Beautiful Doors,” as they are often mistakenly called today. The “Royal”—i.e., “Imperial”—“Doors” were the central doors leading from the narthex into the nave of Hagia Sophia, so called because only the patriarch and imperial party entered through them.

41. See Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 21–25; H.-J. Schulz, *The Byzantine Liturgy: Symbolic Structure and Faith Expression* (New York: Pueblo, 1986), 103–11; Ch. Walter, *Art and Ritual of the Byzantine Church*, Birmingham Byzantine Series 1 (London: Variorum Publications, 1982), 232–38.

42. See the rubrics ordering the celebrant to bow in the Byzantine Basil and Chrysostom anaphoras in the earliest extant euchology manuscript, the eighth-century *Barberini Gr. 336*: S. Parenti and E. Velkovska, eds., *L'Eucologio Barberini gr. 336* (ff. 1–263), 2nd ed., Bibliotheca *Ehemerides Liturgicae*, Subsidia 80 (Rome: CLV—Edizioni Liturgiche, 2000), §§15.1, 33.1, 34.1, 35.1, 3, 6; also in the Greek Liturgy of St. James: B.-Ch. Mercier, ed., *La Liturgie de S. Jacques: Édition critique, avec traduction latine*, Patrologia Orientalis 26.2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1946), 198, 200–206, 214, 220, and apparatus; the Syriac Liturgy of St. James in *Anaphorae Syriacae, quotquot in codicibus adhuc repertae sunt, cura Pontificii Instituti Studiorum Orientalium editae et Latinae versae*, vols. 1–3, ed. O. Heiming (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1939–), 2:142ff.; cf. 2:194ff., 218ff.; and, indeed, the rubrics to bow in the Syriac anaphoras throughout. See also the illustrations of Byzantine liturgical celebrants praying bowed in Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 145–200; Walter, *Art and Ritual*, plate XXVIII, no. 60.

43. Schulz, *The Byzantine Liturgy*, 103–11.
44. In the words of scholar-patriarch (858–67, 877–86) Photius, *Homily 17*, chap. 6, on the *Theotokos* mosaic of 867 still in the apse of Hagia Sophia: Mango, *Art of the Byzantine Empire*, 190.
45. Gerstel, *Beholding the Sacred Mysteries*, 144, plate I; 147, plate V; 148, fig. 1; 150–51, figs. 4–5; 156, fig. 13; 161, fig. 20; 16, fig. 25; 176–77, figs. 41–42; 181, fig. 46; 183, fig. 49; 189, fig. 56; 198, fig. 68.
46. *Ibid.*, 68–77, 91, 102–3, 106–9.
47. *Ibid.*, 22–23, 37–40, 45–47, 85, 87, 89; 152, fig. 8; 157, fig. 15.
48. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western*, 382.
49. As Mathews, “The Sequel to Nicaea II,” 14–15, notes, although art historians commonly refer to this series of panels as a festal cycle, that is inaccurate, since the series follows the chronology of Jesus’s life in the Gospels, beginning with the Annunciation, and not the festive cycle of the church year that begins September 1.
50. PG 155:337–40.
51. *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*: Nicolas Cabasilas, *Explication de la Divine Liturgie*, trans. and notes S. Salaville, 2nd ed., Sources chrétiennes 4bis (Paris: Cerf, 1967) = PG 150:367–492; English translation is Nicholas Cabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, trans. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty (London: SPCK, 1960). *The Life in Christ*: Nicolas Cabasilas, *La vie en Christ*, 2 vols., ed. M.-H. Congourdeau, Sources chrétiennes 355, 361 (Paris: Cerf, 1889–1900) = PG 150:493–726; English translation is *The Life in Christ*, trans. Carmino J. de Catanzaro (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1974). On Cabasilas, see G. Podskalsky, “Nikolaos Kabasilas: Meister und Lehre des Gebetes,” based on an unfinished and unpublished ms. of Hugo Rahner, S.J. (1900–1968), *Ostkirchliche Studien* 20 (1971): 17–42; and most recently Y. Spiteris, *Cabasilas: Teologo e mistico bizantino: Nicola Cabasilas Chamaetos e la sua sintesi teologica*, Pubblicazioni del Centro Aletti 15 (Rome: Lipa, 1996). On Cabasilas’s commentary on the Divine Liturgy, see R. Bornert, *Les commentaires byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VIIe au XVe siècle*, Archives de l’Orient chrétien 9 (Paris: Institut français d’études byzantines, 1966), 215–44; Schulz, *The Byzantine Liturgy*, 124–32, 190–96.
52. *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* 1.1. This and the following passages of Cabasilas are cited from the Hussey and McNulty translation, *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, 26–29.
53. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre, 1945), 743–46.
54. *Les Constitutions apostoliques*, vol. 1, ed. Marcel Metzger, Sources chrétiennes 320 (Paris: Cerf, 1985), 324.

55. Hammond is citing Paul Rycaut (1628–1700), who was the British consul at Smyrna during 1667–78, when he researched his *The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches* (1679).

56. P. Hammond, *The Waters of Marab: The Present State of the Greek Church* (London: Rockliff, 1956), 21–22.

57. *Ibid.*, 16.