

# THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE IN CHRISTIAN LITURGICAL TEXTS

A CASE STUDY OF HABAKKUK 3:2-3\*

By  
RON GROVE

Paul Ricoeur has criticized modern biblical criticism, since its intent is to produce a text which «no longer *is* a sacred text, because it is no longer the text which the community has always regarded as sacred...».<sup>1</sup> The place at which the sacred text and the sacred community meet most regularly, at which the text cannot possibly be separated from the community, nor the community from the text, is the sacred liturgy. Many biblical texts were generated by or for liturgical use,<sup>2</sup> and as Geo Widengren has remarked, «the liturgical use of Scripture... constitutes a

---

\* Thanks to Rev. Nick G. Manousakis, formerly of St. Barbara Greek Orthodox Church, Santa Barbara, CA, for sharing his library; to Mr. Bruce E. Ford of the Newark (NJ) Free Public Library for the text of «Today and well-contented;» to Rev. Frederick West of the United Church of Christ, Niles, MI, for access to the Ambrosian Breviary; to Very Rev. Chor-bishop Msgr. John Chedid of Our Lady of Mt. Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church, Los Angeles, for the text of the veiling rite from the Maronite Missal; to Sr. Angela Woods, SSL of St. John's Seminary Library, Camarillo, CA and to Rev. Harry M. Neely, OSA of St. Thomas Roman Catholic Church, Ojai, CA, for access to the Latin Liturgy of the Hours; and to Prof. Richard D. Hecht of the Dept. of Religious Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, Prof. Robert F. Taft, SJ of the Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Rome, and Prof. Demetrios J. Constantelos of the Department of History, Stockton State College, Pomona, NJ, for their criticism and encouragement.

1. P. Ricoeur, «The 'Sacred' Text And the Community», *The Critical Study of Sacred Texts* (ed. W. D. O'Flaherty; Berkeley Religious Studies Series, 2; Berkeley: Lancaster-Miller, 1979)271.

2. See, e. g., H. St J. Thackeray, «Primitive Lectionary Notes in the Psalm of Habakkuk,» *JTS* 12 (1910-11) 191-213; S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols.; New York: Abingdon, 1962); W. Rordorf, «The Lord's Prayer in the Light of its Liturgical Use in the Early Church,» *SL* 14 (1980-81) 1-19.

link between oral and written tradition.»<sup>3</sup> Liturgical texts frequently preserve variant textual traditions; and even more importantly, they are loci of biblical interpretation. It is impossible to know how Christians have understood the Bible without studying how they have used it liturgically. Two verses from Habakkuk (3:2-3) are the occasion for a wealth of such liturgical exegesis.

#### THE BIBLICAL TEXT

Christian versions of the Bible follow either the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT) or the Greek Septuagint (LXX). These read as follows:

##### MT<sup>4</sup>

- 3:2 O YHWH, I heard your tidings;  
     I feared, O YHWH, your works;  
 in the midst of the years, give it life;  
     in the midst of the years, make [it] known;  
 in anger, remember mercy.
- 3:3 'Elóah will come from *Témân*,  
     and the Holy One from Mount *Pá'rân*. *Selâ*.  
 His splendor covers the heavens,  
     and his praise fills the earth.

##### LXX<sup>5</sup>

- 3:2 O Lord, I heard your tidings and was afraid;  
 [O Lord,] I pondered your works and was amazed.

3. G. Widengren, «Tradition and Literature in Early Judaism and in the Early Church,» *Numen* 10 (1963) 81-2.

4. This and all citations of the MT are from *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (ed. K. Elliger, W. Rudolph, et al.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1977).

5. This and all citations of the LXX are from *Septuaginta* (2 vols.; ed. A. Rahlfs; 9th ed.; Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935). Habakkuk's Song appears twice in LXX, once in the prophetic book, and again as the fourth among the *Odes*, a Christian appendix to the Psalter. The version found in the *Odes* (and in some codices of Habakkuk) contains the place name Φαράν in verse 3a, which I have parenthesized. The text of Ode 4 used liturgically by the Greek Orthodox Church includes an additional Κύριε in verse 2, which I have bracketed: Ὁρολόγιον τὸ μέγα (6th ed.; Athens: Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece, 1977)69-70; English tr., *The Psalter According to the Seventy* (Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1974)272. For liturgical used of scripture, see D. J. Constantelos, «The Holy Scriptures in Greek Orthodox Worship,» *GOTR* 12 (1966)7-83.

In the midst of two living things, you will be made known;  
 when the years approach, you will be recognized;  
 when the time comes, you will be revealed;  
 when my soul is troubled, in anger you will remember mercies.

3:3 God will come from *Thaiman*.

and the Holy One from a mountain (*Pharan*) overshadowed  
 by forest.

*Diapsalma.*

His virtue covered heaven,  
 and the earth is full of his praise.

The LXX is an expansion of the Hebrew, containing several semantic differences, which can be explained as reasonable interpretations of unpointed Hebrew, e.g. reading *shanim*, «years», as if it were *shnayim* (=δύο), «two». Not all such differences are explained quite that easily, but our main purpose is to see how the biblical text is used by the Church, not how the text itself arose. The Latin Vulgate (Vg)<sup>6</sup> and the Syriac *Pshittá*<sup>7</sup> follow the MT more or less faithfully, while other Christian versions follow the LXX.<sup>8</sup> A whole family of such texts is referred to as the Old Latin (OL).<sup>9</sup>

6. Critical ed., *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem* (2 vols.; ed. R. Weber; 2nd ed., Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1975); official ed. of the Roman Catholic Church from the 16th cent. until the revision of the Vg completed in 1979 was *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Clementinam* (ed. A. Colunga and L. Turradó; 4th ed.; Madrid: BAC, 1965).

7. Critical ed. by A. Gelston, «Dodekapropheton,» *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version* (part 3, fasc. 4; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980) 61-2.

8. Sahidic ed. by J. Schleifer. «Sahidische Bibel-Fragmente aus dem British Museum zu London,» part 1, *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien: Philosophisch-Historische Klasse* 162/2 (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1909) 5 from Brit. Mus. Or. 4717(1); Bohairic ed. from a 17th cent. MS by H. Tattam, *Duodecim Prophetarum Minorum Libros in lingua aegyptiaca vulgo coptica seu memphitica* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1836) 148, Latin tr., p. 149; Syriac called «*Pšittá*» but heavily influenced by LXX, Ode 5 in some Syriac psalters, critical ed. H. Schneider, «Canticles or Odes,» *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version* (part 4, fasc. 6; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972) 13; compare M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, ed., *The Bible in the Syro-Palestinian Version* (part 1; Hebrew University Bible Project Monograph 4; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1973) 106.

9. Critical ed. by P. A. Vaccari, «Il Cantico de Abacuc» in *Studi critici sopra le antiche versioni latine del Vecchio Testamento* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1914) 25-6; see W. O. E. Oesterley, «The Old Latin Texts of the Minor

OL texts remained important for Latin Christians even after the triumph of the Vg. Haymo, a 9th cent. bishop of Halberstadt, comments on the Vg text and then records five different interpretations for an image in the OL, which he probably knew from its liturgical uses:

Another translation says: In the midst of two living things you will be recognized. Which two living things we recognize as God's Son and the Holy Spirit. Which living things are also considered to be the two cherubim, which look at each other and have in their midst the oracle or the mercy seat. Some consider that the two living things are the two thieves, in whose midst the Lord was crucified and recognized. Several say that the two living things are the two testaments, Old and New, which are alive and seen, and in the midst of which Christ is recognized. Many understand Moses and Elijah, between whom the Lord appeared transfigured on the mountain.<sup>10</sup>

It would be easy for modern minds to discount Haymo's interpretations as fanciful, contradictory, eccentric, etc., were it not for the support they receive in important liturgical texts. We shall begin our study of interpretations of Habakkuk 3:2-3 with the image from verse 2 we have just seen Haymo treat.

### THE TWO LIVING THINGS

1. *The Thieves Crucified with Christ.* Until 1969, the Roman Missal prescribed an OL text of Habakkuk 3:2-3 as the chant between the first two biblical readings (Hosea 6:1-6 and Exodus 12:1-11) at the commemoration of the suffering of Christ on Good Friday.<sup>11</sup> Most modern

---

Prophets,» *JTS* OS 5 (1904) 383; specific texts: *Missale Romanum* (New York: Benziger, 1943) 207-8; *Breviarium Gothicum* (PL 86) 81-2; *Breviarium Ambrosianum* (4 vols.; Milan: L. F. Cogliati, 1902) Pars Hyemalis I, p. 5\* (two vols. [Hyemalis I and Aestiva II] are in the University of Notre Dame Library; these were the only ones available to me); *Antiphonale Missarum juxta ritum Sanctae Ecclesiae Mediolanensis* (Rome: Soc. S. Joannis Evangelistae, 1935) 290-91, 330, 338; *Missale Ambrosianum Latinum et Italicum* (Milan: Daverio, 1965-7) 490, 522.

10. *Enarratio in Habacuc Prophetam* (PL 117) 188.

11. *Missale Romanum*, pp. 207-8; J. A. Jungmann (*The Mass of the Roman Rite* [2 vols.; New York: Benziger, 1951] vol. 1, p. 421, incl. n. 48) uses this tract, with its series of four verses (rather than only one), to show that tracts are vestiges of responsorial psalmody. The presence of such an older form on Good Friday is given as an example of A. Baumstark's Second Law of Liturgical Evolution:

commentators attribute such use to the image of the Lord «in the midst of two living things,» a type of the Lord crucified between two thieves.<sup>12</sup> St. Augustine<sup>13</sup> and the 5th cent. Spanish presbyter Eutropius<sup>14</sup> also support this interpretation. St. Bede explains another Roman liturgical use of the entire Song of Habakkuk (3:2-19) by saying:

The canticle of the prophet Habakkuk... proclaims promises of the most great suffering of the Lord. Therefore by the custom of the holy and universal and apostolic Church on the sixth [day after the] Sabbath, on which that suffering was fulfilled, it is usual to solemnly repeat [it] each week in the morning praises.<sup>15</sup>

He says that the «two living things... may be understood» as Moses and Elijah, but that «It is also possible to take it not inconveniently [as] in the midst of the two thieves between whom [he was] crucified.»<sup>16</sup> This image is among what he refers to as «promises of the ... suffering of the Lord.» This kind of reasoning undoubtedly lies behind the use of a similar OL chant from Habakkuk 3:2-3 after the eighth reading (Habakkuk 1:1-6; 2:11-14, 18-28) at the Paschal Vigil in the 7th cent. Spanish *Missale Mixtum*.<sup>17</sup>

There is an allusion to Habakkuk 3:2 in the *troparion* prescribed when there are no proper hymns for the Byzantine service of the Ninth Hour (mid-afternoon), the hour of Christ's death.<sup>18</sup> This hymn

---

«that primitive conditions are maintained with greater tenacity in the more sacred seasons of the Liturgical Year» (*Comparative Liturgy* [3rd ed.; rev. B. Botte; London: A. R. Mowbray, 1958]27). The fact that this tract has an OL text, not a Vg, strengthens this point.

12. E. g., O. B. H a r d i s o n, Jr., *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages* (2nd ed; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1969)129; P. P a r s c h, *The Church's Year of Grace* (5 vols.; 2nd ed.; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1964) vol. 2, p. 333; on the other hand, P. G u é r a n g e r (*L'année liturgique* [5th ed.; Paris: Henri Oudin, 1876] vol. 6, pp. 509, 533) says the chant evokes Christ's eschatological victory over his enemies, in contrast to his apparent defeat on the cross. This notion may find very weak support in verse 3b, but see n. 20 below.

13. *De Civitate Dei* 18:32 (CChr, Latina 48) 623.

14. *De Similitudine Carnis Peccati* (PL Suppl. 1) 553.

15. *Super Canticum Habacuc Prophetæ Allegorica Expositio* (PL 91) 1235-7.

16. *Ibid.*, col. 1238.

17. *Missale Mixtum* (PL 85) 456. Neither the reading nor the chant appear in the Spanish *Liber Commicus* ed. from 9-11th cent. MSS by J. P é r e z d e U r b e l and A. G o n z á l e z y R u i z Z o r r i l l a (2 vols.; 1946; rpt. Madrid: Antonio Nebrija, 1950-55) vol. 2, pp. 355-88.

18. This tradition is regarded as the reason for prayer at the 9th hour in Canon

begins «In the midst of two thieves,»<sup>19</sup> inspired by the biblical phrase «in the midst of two living things.»

[Note that under pressure of biblical criticism, which tends to value only the «original» text, and of modern (nontypological) methods of interpretation, the Roman Church first «corrected» the text of its Good Friday tract to conform to the MT (and the Vg)<sup>20</sup> and then eliminated it entirely.<sup>21</sup>]

2. *Cherubim and Seraphim.* A different meaning is given to the «two living things» in certain anaphorae of the Egyptian tradition. They allude to this image in the prayer following the introductory dialogue and leading up to the singing of the Thrice-Holy Hymn (Isaiah 6:3). Just as Isaiah 6:2 sets this hymn in the context of a theophany during which the Seraphim sing the hymn, so Revelation 4:8 puts it in the mouths of «the four living things,» and Christian liturgies enumerate, often elaborately, the orders of visible and invisible beings with which the Church joins in song.

The earliest source concerning us is the 4th cent. Euchology of Serapion of Thmuis. The relevant passage reads: «... before you stand the two most honorable Seraphim....»<sup>22</sup> The 6-7th cent. Dêr-Balizeh

---

25 of the Canons of Hippolytus: R.-G. C o q u i n, ed. & tr., *Les Canons d'Hippolyte* (PO 31/2; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1966) 393; compare chap. 41 of the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus: B. B o t t e, ed. & tr., *La tradition apostolique de saint Hippolyte* (LQF 39; Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1963) 92-3.

19. Ὁρθόδοξον, p. 144; English trs.: I. F. H a p g o o d, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Church* (rev. 4th ed.: New York: Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of New York and all North America, 1965)56; J. R a y a and J. d e V i n c k, *Byzantine Daily Worship* (Allendale, NJ: Alleluia Press, 1969) 245; M o t h e r M a r y and K. W a r e, trs. & eds., *The Lenten Triodion* (London: Faber, 1978)86.

20. Not done in trs. of the tract made between Vatican II and the promulgation of the revised Missal (1969), e.g. *The Book of Catholic Worship* (Washington: The Liturgical Conference, 1966) 93-4; done, however, in *The Simple Gradual for Sunday and Holy Days* (ed. J. A i n s l i e; rev. ed.; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1970) 52, which offers a responsorial «psalm» made up of Habakkuk 3:2,4-6, 10c-12. This latter text supports Guéranger's notion mentioned above, n. 12, in a way that the traditional tract did not.

21. *Lectionary for Mass* (2nd ed.; Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1970) no. 41, p. 16. and *Ordo Cantus Missae* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1972)45, both use other chants, as well as other readings. The Ambrosian Rite is also left without this chant: *Messale Ambrosiano* (2 vols.; Milan: Centro Ambrosiano di Documentazione e Studi Religiosi, 1976).

22. F. E. B r i g h t m a n, ed., «The Sacramentary of Serapion of Thmuis»,

papyrus reads: «before you stand the many-eyed Cherubim; the Seraphim encircle you...»<sup>23</sup> Serapion and the author of this latter prayer both participate in the same general tradition. But their anaphorae, though structured similarly, use different wording. In the phrases quoted, Serapion has the word «two» but no Cherubim. Dêr-Balizeh has both Cherubim and Seraphim but no «two». The Ethiopian Anaphora of our Holy Fathers the Apostles has the phrase «your honorable living things... the Seraphim and Cherubim.»<sup>24</sup> «Living things» is a third element of what was to become a fuller allusion to Habakkuk 3:2.

Later Egyptian tradition combines these elements, referring to the Cherubim and Seraphim as «your two living things.» R.-G. Coquin claims our two earliest texts have omitted this phrase, although he supposes it must have normally been included even very early.<sup>25</sup> K. Gamber notes that the mention of «two living things» at this point is typically Egyptian.<sup>26</sup> The received texts of the anaphoral tradition whose Greek

---

*JTS* OS 1 (1900) 105; A. H ä n g g i and I. P a h l, eds., *Prex Eucharistica* (Spicilegium Friburgense 12; Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1968) 130, Latin tr., p. 131; R.-G. Coquin, «L' Anaphore alexandrine de saint Marc,» *Le Muséon* 82 (1969) 325; P. E. Rodopoulos, *The Sacramentary of Serapion* (Thessaloniki: E. Sphakianakes, 1967) 51, 56, 124; with Latin tr., E. Lodi, ed., *Enchiridion Eucharologicum Fontium Liturgicorum* (Bibliotheca «Ephemerides Liturgicae», subsidia 15; Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano, 1979) no. 564; English tr.: L. Deiss, ed., *Springtime of the Liturgy* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979)194

23. *An Early Euchologium* (Bibliothèque du *Muséon* 23; ed. C. H. Roberts & B. Capelle; Louvain: Bureaux du *Muséon*, 1949)22; H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 124; Coquin, «L' Anaphore», p. 325; Rodopoulos, p. 56; Deiss, p. 246. The Anaphora of St. Gregory of Alexandria reads: «for the cherubim and the seraphim encircle you», ed. H Lietzmann, «Sahidische Bruchstücke der Gregorios- und Kyrillos - liturgie,» *OrChr* NS 9 (1920) 4, German tr., p. 5. Similar wording is also found in some non-Egyptian traditions; see: St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 23 (=Κατῆχησις Μυσταγωγικὴ Ε' [PG 33] 1113; F. E. Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western* [2nd ed., 1896; rpt. Oxford: Oxford University, 1965]465); St. Anastasius the Sinaite, Λόγος περὶ τῆς ἀγίας συνάξεως (PG 89) 840 & Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 482.

24. Latin tr., H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 146; English trs., Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 231 & S. A. B. Mercer, *The Ethiopic Liturgy* (Milwaukee: Young Churchman, 1915)227, 352 & J. M. Harden, *The Anaphoras of the Ethiopic Liturgy* (London: S.P. C. K., 1928) 34; Arabic & English trs., M. Daoud, *The Liturgy of the Ethiopian Church* (rev. M. Hazen; Cairo: Egyptian Book Press, 1959)72 (Daoud's English omits the words *seraphim* & *cherubim*).

25. Coquin, «L' Anaphore,» p. 366, n. 51.

26. K. Gamber, «Das koptische Ostrakon London, B. M. Nr. 32, 799 + 33 050 und seine liturgiegeschichtliche Bedeutung,» *OS* 21 (1972) 300,

versions are ascribed to St. Mark (and whose Coptic translations are later ascribed to St. Cyril)<sup>27</sup> include the following: «...before you stand your two most honorable living things, the many-eyed cherubim and the six-winged seraphim...».<sup>28</sup> The Coptic Anaphora of St. Thomas contains: «...you before whom stand your two honorable living things, the cherubim and the seraphim...»<sup>29</sup> Texts edited by H. Quecke from ostraka of the 7-8th cent. contain the passage in question, except for the word *ettaetéou*, «which are honored.»<sup>30</sup> Quecke identifies these texts as the Anaphora of St. Matthew, but Gamber, while acknowledging their similarity at this point to Matthew, proposes that they represent the anaphoral tradition ascribed to St. Basil.<sup>31</sup> Since later texts of both Matthew and Basil lack the phrase «your two living things,»<sup>32</sup> both these theories must be treated with caution. At any rate, the allusion to Habakkuk 3:2 in which the «two living things» are identified as the

27. Titles in the *Khûlâgî* (= εὐχολόγιον) include both names: Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 164; M. Chainé, «La consécration et l' épiclese dans le missel copte,» *ROC* 17 (1912) 239. This anaphora is no longer in common use.

28. Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 131; H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 110; Rodopoulos, pp. 51, 56; Coquin, «La Anaphore,» p. 323 (Melkite text) p. 325 (Greek text of the Copts); W. F. Macomber, «The Anaphora of Saint Mark according to the Kacmarcik Codex,» *OCP* 45 (1979) 93. For the Coptic version, there is an English tr. in Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 175; Latin trs., H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 136; Coquin, «La Anaphore,» p. 323.

29. 10-11th cent. MS ed. E. Lanne, *Le Grand Euchologe du Monastère Blanc* (PO 28/2)310; also, K. Zentgraf, «Eucharistische Textfragmente einer koptisch-saidischen Handschrift,» *OrChr* 4S 42 (1958) 44.

30. H. Quecke, «Das anaphorische Dankgebet auf den koptischen Ostraka B. M. Nr. 32 799 und 33 050 neu herausgegeben,» *OCP* 37 (1971) 393, German tr., p. 395; idem, «Das anaphorische Dankgebet auf dem koptischen Ostrakon Nr. 1133 der Leningrander Eremitage neu herausgegeben,» *OCP* 40 (1974) 53, German tr., p. 54.

31. Gamber, pp. 301 & 308.

32. Matthew: Lanne, pp. 348-9; A. M. Kropf, ed & tr., «Die koptische Anaphora des heiligen Evangelisten Matthäus,» *OrChr* 3S 7 (1932) 112, German tr., p. 113. Egyptian Basil in Greek: H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 348, Latin tr., p. 349. Coptic Basil with Arabic tr.: *Khûlâgî* (Cairo: Coptic Orthodox Fellowship, 1967) 244-5; with English tr.; John, Marquess of Bute, *The Coptic Morning Service for the Lord's Day* (London: J. Masters, 1882) 79. Ethiopian text in English and Arabic trs., D a o u d, p. 199. Byzantine Basil, an expansion of the Egyptian text: Brightman, *Liturgies*, pp. 323, 402; H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 232. Latin tr., p. 233; Lodi, no. 533; Ἱερατικὸν (Athens: Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece, 1962) 182; N. D. Uspensky, «Anafora,» *BT* 13 (1975) 86; English trs.: H a p g o o d, p. 102; *The Priest's Service Book* (2 vols.; New York: Orthodox Church in America, 1973) part. 2, p. 328, R a y a & d e V i n c k, p. 327.

cherubim and seraphim surrounding God is firmly established in the Egyptian Anaphora of St. Mark (=St. Cyril), in that of St. Thomas, and in at least one other textual tradition. Patristic writings also record this interpretation.<sup>33</sup>

3. *The Ox and the Ass in the Stable at Bethlehem.* A third interpretation is prominent in popular piety even today. Art<sup>34</sup> and song depict the newborn Christ between an ox and an ass, inspired by a combination of LXX or OL Habakkuk 3:2b with Isaiah 1:3a («An ox knows its owner and an ass its master's manger»). Origen<sup>35</sup> and St. Augustine<sup>36</sup> both understood Isaiah's text as referring to the divine nativity; a Christmas sermon of pseudo-Augustine<sup>37</sup> does the same for Habakkuk's. The first explicit use of these two texts together is in the 8-9th cent. Latin Gospel of (pseudo-)Matthew.<sup>38</sup>

In the Roman Breviary, a *responsorium* after one of the lessons at Matins on Jan. 1 (Circumcision of the Lord and Octave Day of Christmas) and on Jan. 3 understood the «living things» of Habakkuk 3:2 as the animals at the manger:

33. St. Cyril of Alexandria, Ἐξήγησις ὑπομνηματικὴ εἰς τὸν Προφήτην Ἀμβακούμ 3:35 (PG 71) 897, 900; Bl. Theodoret of Cyrillus, Ἐρμηνεία εἰς τὸν Προφήτην Ἀμβακούμ (PG 81) 1825; Theophylaktos of Bulgaria, Εἰς τὸν Ἀμβακούμ (PG 126) 877.

34. At least since the 4th cent. See the ivory book cover in G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, «The Persecutions», chap. XV of *The Crucible of Christianity* (ed. A. Toynbee; New York: World, 1969) 339. See also K. D. Kalokyres, Ἡ Θεοτόκος εἰς τὴν Εἰκονογραφίαν Ἀνατολῆς καὶ Δύσεως (Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute of Patristic Studies, 1972) pls. 195-200, 202-3, 211; V. N. Lazarev, *Istoriya Vizantiyskoy Zhivopisi* (2 vols.; Moscow: Isskustvo, 1947-8) vol. 1, pls. XXVI, XLIXb, vol. 2, pls. 153, 164, 225, 335a, 348; idem, *Vizantiyskaya Zhivopis'* (Moscow: Academy of Sciences, of the U.S.S.R., 1971) 384; N. Ozolin, «The Icon of the Nativity», *SAJ* 1/3 (Oct.-Dec. 1980) 6-19; G. Schiller, *The Iconography of Christian Art* (2 vols.; Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1971) vol. 1, pp. 60-61; S. Chojnacki, «The Nativity in Ethiopian Art», *JES* 12/2 (1974) 30-39.

35. Origen, *In Lucam Homilia XIII* (tr. St. Jerome: PG 13) 1832; (PL 26) 262.

36. St. Augustine. *In Psalmum CXXVI Enarratio* (CChr, Latina 40) 1865.

37. *In Natali Domini IX, Sermo 1,15* (PL Suppl. 2) 937.

38. Chap. 14, ed. C. von Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha* (2nd ed.; Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1876) 80; rpt. ed. C. Michel, *Evangelia apocrypha*, Vol. 1 (2nd ed.; Paris: Auguste Picard, 1924) 104, French tr., p. 105; English tr., E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha* (2 vols; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963) vol. 1, p. 410.

R. Blessed and venerable are you, O Virgin Mary, who without the touch of shame were found [to be] the Savior's Mother:  
 \* He lay in a manger, and he shone in heaven. V. O Lord, I heard your tidings, and was afraid: I pondered your works, and was terrified: in the midst of two living things.....<sup>39</sup>

A medieval *sequentia*<sup>40</sup> is even more explicit:

Habakkuk pondered this work  
 And was terrified by this  
 Between the living things:  
 That the containing be contained  
 And she sustains the sustinence,  
 That the daughter be the mother.<sup>41</sup>

A Christmas sequence contains the line: «The king of the heavens is found between living things.»<sup>42</sup> Medieval nativity dramas often included prophetic witnesses to Christ's birth. Habakkuk's «two living

39. *BR* (Antwerp: Plantiniana, 1770) Pars Hiemalis, p. 275 (after Lesson 6, Jan. 1). This text remained in the Breviary through the reforms of 1911 & 1964: *BR* (Raciborz: Pustet, 1923) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 420 (after Lesson 6, Jan. 1), 444 (after Lesson 3, Jan. 3); English tr., *The Roman Breviary* (ed. B. B a b o; New York: Benziger 1964) 101, 115-6; but it was dropped, along with the whole office of Matins, from the revised Liturgy of the Hours. Matins was replaced by the Office of Readings: nos. 55-69 of General Instruction, *Liturgia Horarum iuxta ritum Romanum* (4 vols.; Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1973) vol. 1, pp. 42-5; English tr. in *The Liturgy of the Hours* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1971) 32-5. Part of our text, in an extended form, is used (*Liturgia Horarum*, vol 1, p. 408) as the antiphon to Zachary's Song (Luke 1:68-79) at Morning Praises on Jan. 2; the English version in *Christian Prayer* (ed. R. Ke i f e r; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1976) 145 is even further amplified. [Note that since Roman Catholics in the U.S. observe Epiphany on the Sunday following Jan. 1, rather than on the traditional Jan. 6, this last ed. prescribes this antiphon for a Monday between Jan. 1 and Epiphany, rather than for Jan. 2].

40. Sequences began as farces on the final syllable of elaborate Alleluia chants before the Gospel at Mass. See J. M. Neale's «Epistola Critica de Sequentiis», in, ed. H. A. Daniel, *Thesaurus Hymnologicus* (5 vols.; 1841-56; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms. 1973) vol. 5, pp. 3-36.

41. From *Jesse virgam humidavit*, sequence for Monday within the Octave of the Nativity of the Bl. Virgin Mary: *Missale ad Usam percelebris Ecclesiae Herfordensis* (ed. W. G. Henderson, 1874; rpt. Westmead: Gregg, 1969) 320; Daniel, vol. 5, p. 255.

42. From *Caeleste organum hodie sonuit in terra*, Sequence for the Dawn Mass on Christmas; *Missale Herfordensis*, p. 15.

things» sometimes appear in them.<sup>43</sup> This ancient interpretive tradition continues in later Christmas carols;<sup>44</sup> although they are not, strictly speaking, liturgical texts, they have in fact found their way into the worship of most churches. They are now often the only remnants of traditional exegesis found in modernized rites.

4. *Moses and Elijah at Christ's Transfiguration.* We have already seen that the «two living things» are sometimes identified with Moses and Elijah, who appeared on either side of Christ on an overshadowed mountain at his transfiguration. This interpretation is explicit in stanza 10 of a *sequentia* for the Transfiguration (Aug. 6) in the (1540) diocesan missal of Tournai:

Foretold by the prophets  
They recognized transformed  
Between living things  
What the Prophet foretold,  
When he was terrified: God's Word's  
Great deeds in the flesh.<sup>45</sup>

#### THE SHADY (LADY) MOUNTAIN

*The Biblical Text.* Discussion of the text of verse 3a is necessary in understanding the source of this image. Two Hebrew place names (*Têmân* and *har-Pâ'rân*) are rendered in varying ways in the Christian versions. Sometimes they are merely transliterated: MT *Pâ'rân*=LXX Φαράν=Vg *Pharan*; sometimes replaced by other geographical terms: MT *Têmân*=Vg *auster*=OL *africanus*/*Libanus*; sometimes replaced by a different expression: MT *mê-har-Pâ'rân*=LXX ἐξ ὄρους κατασκίου δασέος=OL *de monte umbroso et condenseo*... The last group of translations isn't as arbitrary as it may first appear.

*Têmân-South.* This Vg translation is entirely correct, as *têmân* can mean «south (wind).» St. Jerome equates this «south» with Bethle-

43. Eg., in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS lat. 1139 (12th cent.); Laon, Bibliothèque Communale, MS 263 (13th cent.); cited by A. Watson, *The Early Iconography of the Tree of Jesse* (London: Oxford, 1934) 154.

44. Notably, a little-known verse to the familiar English carol, «The First Nowell,» in *The Hymnal 1940 Companion* (3rd ed.; New York: Church Pension Fund, 1949)25.

45. *De Parente summo natum*, Daniel, vol. 5, p. 288.

hem, south of Jerusalem, whence Christ came.<sup>46</sup> This interpretation is implied in an Advent *responsorium* in the Roman Breviary: «Behold, from the South I come, I the Lord, your God...»<sup>47</sup> The Slavonic text of Habakkuk's Song used in the services reads: «God comes from the south,»<sup>48</sup> and the *kondak* (= κοντάκιον) for the commemoration of the Prophet Habakkuk on Dec. 2 begins. «Announcing to the world the divine advent from the south from a virgin, O eloquent Habakkuk,.....»<sup>49</sup> Verse 3a, in a translation reading «from the south» is recited by the deacon as he walks toward the south in the Great Entrance procession of the Armenian Divine Liturgy.<sup>50</sup> In a Byzantine rite blessing the four sides of the foundation of a new church building, the prayer said at the south side begins: «O Lord Jesus Christ our God, who came from the south for our salvation, and from the shady Virgin Mount revealed yourself as the Holy One,.....»<sup>51</sup>

Some OL versions have different wording. The reading *ab Africo* may be defended, since *africus* can mean «southwest (wind),» and so, like *auster*, is equivalent to *Témân*. St. Augustine used this translation.<sup>52</sup>

46. St. Jerome, *In Abacuc*, Bk. 2 (CChr Latina 76A) 623; idem, *Tractatus de Psalmo CVI* (CChr Latina 78) 197; also St. Cyril of Alexandria (*PG* 71) 904; St. Bede (*PL* 91) 1239; Haymo of Halberstadt (*PL* 117) 189; Theophylaktos of Bulgaria (*PG* 126) 880.

47. After Lesson 3 at Matins on the first two Tuesday of Advent: *BR* (1770) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 162, 175; (1923) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 308, 320; *Roman Breviary*, pp. 6,17; not in *Liturgia Horarum*.

48. *Psaltir'* (rpt. Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1959) CI; *Chasoslov* (Rome: Grottoferata, 1951)108.

49. *Velikiy Chasoslov* (rpt. Jordanville, NY Holy Trinity Monastery, 1964)677; *Chasoslov* (Rome, 1951) 929; English tr., *Horologion* (2 vols.; ed. Bros. Marion Francis & George; New Canaan: Byzantine Franciscans, 1967-8) vol. 1, p. 508. This text does not appear in the Greek Orthodox *ᾠρολόγιον*, p. 261, or *Μηνναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου* (Athens: Phos, 1960) 12-19, or in non-Slavic Uniate books, e.g. *Raya, & de Vinck*, p. 530. There is almost certainly a Greek original, although no longer in use, since, «Slavic originality is usually limited to inserting into the liturgy... pieces taken from... other parts of the liturgy. These are invariably Slavonic translations of an original Greek composition». R. Taft, «A Proper Offertory Chant for Easter in Some Slavonic Manuscripts,» *OCP* 36 (1970) 438.

50. Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 431; T. Nersoyan, *The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church* (rev. 4th ed.; New York: John XXIII Center, 1970)31.

51. *Trebnik* (1902; rpt. Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery 1961) part 2, reverse of p. 42; Hapgood, p. 489.

52. *Sermo* 46:39-40 (CChr Latina 41) 566-9. St. Augustine was also aware of *Theman* and *Austro* here: *De Civitate Dei* 18:32 (CChr Latina 48) 623.

Têmân=*Lebanon*. The OL reading *Libanus* was found in the Roman Good Friday Tract and in the Roman Breviary: in the *responsorium* after the third lesson at Matins on the first two Mondays of Advent,<sup>53</sup> in the antiphon sung before and after Habakkuk's Song at Lauds on the Friday before the Vigil of Christmas.<sup>54</sup> (In this latter case, the text of the canticle is from the Vg, even though the antiphon preserves the OL reading). The Ambrosian Rite of Milan used Habakkuk's Song in the third nocturn at Matins from the first Sunday of October until Palm Sunday, «since it is known to contain the Lord's advent and his birth.»<sup>55</sup> The antiphons prescribed for this canticle on most Sundays of Advent connect it explicitly with the coming of Christ; of special interest here is that for the Fourth Sunday: «Our God \* will come from Lebanon, and his majesty will fill the earth.»<sup>56</sup> The 7th cent. Spanish *Breviarium Gothicum* used this canticle at Lauds on the Third and Fifth Sundays of Advent with the antiphon: «God will come from Lebanon, and the Holy one from Dark Mountain: his virtue covered the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.»<sup>57</sup> A 10th cent. Spanish antiphony has similar variants of our text on two occasions: as an antiphon commemorating the Advent season at Vespers on the eve of the feast of St. Romanus (Nov. 18);<sup>58</sup> as a verse within a *responsorium* at Matins on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.<sup>59</sup>

53. *BR* (1770) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 160, 173; (1923) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 307, 319; *Roman Breviary*, pp. 5,16; lost along with Matins from *Liturgia Horarum*.

54. *BR* (1770) Pars Hiemalis, p. 187; (1923) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 235-6, 332; *Roman Breviary*, p. 27. *Liturgia Horarum* (vol. 1, pp. 697-8, vol. 2, pp. 366-7, 1015-16, vol. 3, pp. 766-7, vol. 4, pp. 715-16; *Christian Prayer*, pp. 359-60, 879-80) keeps Habakkuk 3:2-3, 13a, 15-19 as a canticle at Morning Praises on the second Friday of a four-week cycle, and on Good Friday, but without ever using this antiphon. The antiphon does appear, though, as the first antiphon at Morning Praises and Vespers on the Saturday occurring Dec. 17-23: *Liturgia Horarum*, vol. 1, p. 260: *Christian Prayer*, p. 75.

55. Quoted from Beroldus' *Expositione exceptati*, in *Beroldus sive Ecclesiae Ambrosianae Mediolanensis Kalendarium et Ordines Saec. XII* (ed. M. Magistretti; 1893; rpt. Westmead: Gregg, 1968) 161, n. 23, and p. 39; see also W. C. Bishop, «The Breviary at Milan,» *The Mozarabic and Ambrosian Rites* (Alcuin Club Tract 15; Milwaukee: Morehouse, 1924) 101, 115.

56. *Breviarium Ambrosianum*, Pars Hyemalis I, p. 90.

57. (PL 86) 81-2, 99. [Note that the antiphon and the text use two different OL texts.]

58. *Antifonario visigótico mozárabe de la Catedral de León* (Monumenta Hispaniae Sacra, Serie Liturgica V/1 [V/2 is a facsimile of the codex]; ed. L. Bro u and J. V i v e s; Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1959)

Why «Lebanon?» The Greek equivalent of *africus* is λίψ, the genitive of which is λιβός. A Greek textual tradition reading ἀπὸ λιβός instead of ἐκ Θαμιάν was probably corrupted into the OL *a Libano*.<sup>60</sup> This wording resonates to the symbolic significance of Lebanon itself,<sup>61</sup> especially its reputation as a wooded area.<sup>62</sup> This association makes «Lebanon» an appropriate companion to our next problematic phrase.

Har-Pâ'rân = *Shady Mountain*. The second place name has fewer significant variants, but at first they seem stranger. How does the straightforward «Mount Pâ'rân» become «a mountain overshadowed by forest» or «a shady and thick mountain?» Again, there are linguistic coincidences. *Pâr'rân* is related to *pô'râh*, «bough(s);» hence the LXX translation of *har-Pâr'rân* («Mt Boughs?») as «a mountain 'covered' (κατάσκιον) by '(thick) forest' (δάσος).» Δάσος is related to δασύς, which can mean «veiled,» as well as «thick; hairy; rough.» Just as *Pâr'rân* suggested «forest» to the Greeks, so δάσος suggested «thick shade» to the Latins. Numbers 10:12 states that as Israel set out from Sinai, «...the cloud settled on the wilderness of *Pâr'rân*». So even without the benefit of Greek or Latin translations, Mt. *Pâr'rân* is associated with an event involving a kind of «veiling» under a cloud.

Christ was transfigured on an overshadowed mountain. Patristic literature links this event with the «overshadowing» of the Virgin Mary by «the power of the Highest,» when she conceived «the holy [one]»

17. Nov. 18 was declared a pan-Iberian Marian feast by the 10th Council of Toledo (656). See J. I b a ñ e z and F. M e n d o z a, *Maria en la liturgia hispana* (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1975) 94-5, n. 3. The feast didn't «take,» but this antiphon may be a vestige of it.

59. *Antifonario de León*, p. 65.

60. V a c c a r i, p. 33; this may also account for the Slavonic and Armenian trs. previously mentioned.

61. See G. V e r m e s, «The Symbolical Interpretation of *Lebanon* in the Targums: The Origin and Development of an Exegetical Tradition,» *JTS NS* 9 (1958) 1-12; rev. as «Lebanon—The historical development of an exegetical tradition,» *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (Studia Post-Biblica 4; 2nd ed.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973) 26:39; H. F. D. S p a r k s, «The Symbolical Interpretation of *Lebanon* in the Fathers,» *JTS NS* 10 (1959) 264-79.

62. Most biblical references to Lebanon associate it with forest or vegetation: Judges 9:15, 1 Kings 4:33, 5:6-14, 7:2, 10-17, 21 (=2 Chronicles 9:16, 20), 2 Kings 14:9 (=2 Chronicles 25:18), 19:23 (=Isaiah 37:24); 2 Chronicles 2:8-16; Ezra 3:7; Psalms 29:5, 37:35, 72:16, 92:12, 104:16; Song of Songs 3:9, 4:6-8, 11-15, 5:15; Isaiah 2:13, 10:34, 14:8, 29:17, 33:9, 35:2, 40:16, 60:13; Jeremiah 22:6, 23; Ezekiel 17:3, 27:5, 31:3, 15, 16; Hosea 14:6, 7; Nahum 1:4, Zechariah 11:1; 1 Esdras 4:48, 5:55, Sirach 24:13, 50:8, 12 (numbered as in *RSV*).

(Luke 1:35).<sup>63</sup> In the Incarnation, as in Habakkuk 3:3, the «Holy One» comes from something «overshadowed.» It is a small step to identify Habakkuk's «overshadowed mountain» with the Mother of God.

We are dealing with a complex and indefinitely expandable matrix of images, the individual elements of which may change or be variously interpreted; yet the interpretation of the matrix as a whole remains constant. Most Latin liturgical uses of Habakkuk 3:3 occur during Advent, appropriate for a text referring to God's «coming.» Other elements in the matrix strengthen this Marian connection.

*Mary and Lebanon.* Latin liturgies often portray Mary as the bride in the Song of Songs,<sup>64</sup> who in verse 4:8 is urged to come «from Lebanon.» The Roman Breviary prescribed readings from St. Jerome at Matins of the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8); Lesson 5 explains: «Not undeservedly then is the bidden to come from Lebanon, for Lebanon is translated 'shining whiteness.' For she was... whitened whiter than snow by the gifts of the Holy Spirit...»<sup>65</sup> These comments probably inspired the addition of the words «My chosen one [is] white as snow in Lebanon»<sup>66</sup> to Song 4:8,11 at the beginning of the *responsorium* after Lesson 3 in the same office. Other texts mentioning Lebanon are also applied to Mary, e.g.: Isaiah 35:2;<sup>67</sup> Vg Sirach 39:17-18

63. St. Ambrose, *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam* 7:19 (CChr Latina 14) 221; Theophylaktos of Bulgaria, Εἰς τὸν Ἀμβροσίῳ (PG 126) 880; P. s. - Augustine, *De Epiphania Domini II* (=Sermo 2,36) (PL Suppl. 2) 1047; see A. Kniazeff, «Des acclamations dans la liturgie byzantine,» *Gestes et paroles dans les diverses familles liturgiques* (Bibliotheca «Ephemerides Liturgicae» Subsidia 14; ed. A. Pistoia and A. M. Triacca; Rome: Centro Liturgico Vincenziano, 1978) 149-50.

64. C. Marbach (*Carmina Scripturarum* [1907; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1963] 265-76) lists 196 uses of the Song of Songs in Roman liturgical chants. All but 47 occur on Marian feasts; most include botanical and/or nuptial imagery.

65. BR (1770) Pars Hiemalis, p. 461, prescribes a different lesson (from St. Ambrose *De Virginitate*); but our text is found in the office revised after the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception: BR (1923) Pars Hiemalis, pp. 645-6; *Roman Breviary*, p. 744; dropped along with Matins from *Liturgia Horarum*.

66. BR (1923) Pars Hiemalis, p. 643; *Roman Breviary*, p. 743.

67. Antiphon for Mary's Song (Luke 1:46-55) at 2nd Vespers of the Commemoration of the Bl. Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel (July 16): BR (1770) Pars Aestiva, p. 490; (1923) Pars Aestiva, p. 670. The reforms of 1964 demoted this observance (except, of course, among Carmelites), eliminating 2nd Vespers and therewith this antiphon. *Missale Romanum*, pp. 12-13, used Isaiah 35:1-7 as the 2nd reading at Mass on Ember Saturday of Advent; *Lectionary for Mass* prescribes Isaiah 35:1-6a,

(=39:13-14);<sup>68</sup> Vg Sirach 24:17.<sup>69</sup>

10 on the 3rd Sunday of Advent in Year A of a 3-year cycle (p. 6, no. 7), and Isaiah 35:1-10 on the 2nd Monday of Advent (p. 52, no. 182). Isaiah 35:1-7 was Lesson 3 at Matins on the Annunciation (Mar. 25): *BR* (1770) Pars Verna, pp. 512-13; (1923) Pars Verna, p. 727; *Roman Breviary*, p. 831. A Parisian sequence for the Purification of the Bl. Virgin Mary (Feb. 2) alludes to Isaiah 35:2, *Daniel*, vol. 5, p. 238.

68. Offertory, among Dominicans, for their Feast of the Most Holy Rosary of the Bl. Virgin Mary (First Sunday of Oct.): *Graduale juxta ritum Sacri Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Rome: S. Sabina, 1950) 581-2; a rubric on p. 565 prescribes the same chant for St. Rose of St. Mary of Lima (Aug. 30). The general Roman Rite permitted this latter use: *Graduale Sacrosanctae Romanae Ecclesiae* (1938; rpt. Tournai: Desclée, 1961) 87\*\* (among the Masses for Certain Places, St. Rose being the Principal Patron of all Latin America). The Alleluia verse (and the Gradual during Paschaltide, this latter obviously only applying to votive Masses) for the Mass of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus (Oct. 3) was taken from (Vg) Sirach 39:17-19: *Missale Romanum*, p. 853; *Ordo Cantus Missae*, p. 164, no. 453, retains it as one option for the Alleluia verse (Oct. 1). The Old Spanish common of several virgins used (Vg) Sirach 39:17-21 as a lesson at Lauds (*Breviarium Gothicum* [PL 86] 1032) and Mass (*Missale Mixtum* [PL 85] 978-9). The same texts could be applied to the holy Virgin, as well as to other holy virgins. *Breviarium Ambrosianum*, Pars Aestiva II, pp. 377-8, used (Vg) Sirach 39:12-17 as Lesson 1 at Matins of the Most Holy Name of Mary (Sept. 12).

69. *Missale Romanum*, p. 800, used (Vg) Sirach 24:11-13, 15-20 as a reading for the Assumption (Aug. 15) until new propers were prescribed in 1950, following the definition of the dogma of the Assumption. The same reading was also used in some places for the Translation of the Beloved Home of the Bl. Virgin Mary (Dec. 10): p. (159); and for her Humility (July 17): pp. (205)—(206). (Vg) Sirach 24:17 occurred often in the *BR*: Lesson 2, Matins, & little chapter, None, Most Sacred Rosary of the Bl. Virgin Mary (Oct. 7): (1923) Pars Autumnalis, pp. 565, 574; *Roman Breviary*, pp. 1079, 1083; Lesson 3, Matins, Motherhood of the Bl. Virgin Mary (Oct. 11): *Roman Breviary*, p. 1087; Lesson 3, Matins, Little Office of the Bl. Virgin Mary throughout the year: (1770) Pars Hiemalis, pp. clv-vi, Verna, p. clxvij, Aestiva & Autumnalis, both p. clv; (1923) Pars Verna, p. (217), all others, p. (189); *Roman Breviary*, p. 164\*; responsory after Lesson 2, Matins, Assumption (Aug. 15): (1770) Pars Aestiva, p. 586; (1923) Pars Aestiva, p. 783; *Roman Breviary*, p. 933; after Lesson 4, Matins, Immaculate Heart of the Bl. Virgin Mary (Aug. 22): *Roman Breviary*, p. 1005; after Lesson 2, Matins, Octave of the Assumption (Aug. 22): (1770) Pars Aestiva, p. 616; (1923) Pars Aestiva, p. 812; after Lesson 4 of the Common of the Bl. Virgin Mary: (1923) Pars Verna, p. [204], all others, p. [176]; *Roman Breviary*, p. 147\*, *Liturgia Horarum*, vol. 4, p. 1065, uses this verse as the basis for an antiphon at Terce of the Assumption. The Ambrosian Rite used (Vg) Sirach 24: 11b-20 as a reading at Mass on the Purification and on the Vigil and Feast of the Assumption: *Missale Ambrosianum Latinum et Italicum*, pp. [624], [271]-[272], [275]; in a *psalmellus* for the Immaculate Heart and its Votive Mass: *ibid.*, pp. [296], (17); as the *responsorium* at First Vespers and the 2nd *responsorium* at Matins of the Assumption: *Breviarium Ambrosianum*, Pars Aestiva II, pp. 345,

*Mary and Mountains.* St. Gregory the Great<sup>70</sup> and St. John of Damascus<sup>71</sup> both identify biblical mountains as types of Christ's Mother. A mountain frequently appearing in such identifications is that of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:34-5, 44-5). St. John of Damascus does so in his first Dormition homily.<sup>72</sup> This text fuses Daniel's uncut stone from the mountain with the cornerstones of Psalm 117 (=118):22 and Isaiah 28:16, a favorite New Testament image of Christ (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8). So does a Byzantine prayer before laying the foundation stone of a church: «O Lord Jesus Christ,... you are the cornerstone cut without power of the seed of man from the most pure Virgin Mountain, and the immovable foundation of your Church;...»<sup>73</sup> The recently promulgated Roman Catholic analogue begins: «O Lord... whose Son born from Mary the Virgin the Prophet announced as a stone cut without hands from a mountain, and the Apostle called the immovable foundation...»<sup>74</sup> Numerous Byzantine hymns repeat this interpretation of Daniel's mountain: the *theotokion* after the Praises on Wednesdays and Fridays of Tone 4;<sup>75</sup> the second *troparion* of Ode 7 of the first canon on the morning of the Nativity of the Mother of God (Sept. 8);<sup>76</sup> the

---

348; (Vg) Sirach 24:17-18 is the *epistolella* at Sext of the Assumption and at None of the Most Holy Rosary (Monday after first Sunday of Oct.): *ibid.*, Pars Aestiva II, p. 349, Pars Hyemalis I, p. 361; (Vg) Sirach 24:17--22 is Lesson 2 at Matins on this last feast, p. 359. *Missale Mixtum* (PL 85) 933-4 used (Vg) Sirach 24:11b-13, 15-20 as the 2nd reading at Mass on the Conception of the Bl. Virgin Mary (Dec. 8).

70. St. Gregory the Great's commentary on 1 Kings (=1 Samuel) 1:1 (PL 79) 25, prescribed in *BR* (1770) Pars Aestiva, pp. cxliij-iv, (1923) Pars Aestiva, p. [186], *Roman Breviary*, p. 161\*, as Lesson 3 at Matins of the Sabbath Office of the Bl. Virgin Mary during Aug.

71. St. John of Damascus, first Dormition Homily (PG 96) 717, using Psalm 67:16,17 (=68:16).

72. *Ibid.*, col. 713.

73. *Trebnik*, part 2, reverse of p. 37; Hapgood, p. 486.

74. *Ordo Dedicationis Ecclesiae et Altaris* (Rome: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977) 17; English tr., *Dedication of a Church and an Altar* (Washington: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1978) 8. The former Roman prayer also contained an allusion to Daniel 2, but did not identify the mountain with Mary: *Pontificale Romanum* (Venice: Balleoni, 1844) 171; there was also an allusion in the prayer before the door of the church during its dedication or consecration (p. 179).

75. Παράκλητική (Athens: Phos 1959) 476; Raya & de Vincy, p. 417.

76. Μηναῖον τοῦ Σεπτεμβρίου (Athens: M. Saliveros, n.d.) 86; English tr., Mother Mary and K. Ware, trs. & eds., *The Festal Menaion* (2nd ed.: London: Faber, 1977) 546-8, 553.

*exaposteliarion* of the Entrance of the Mother of God (Nov. 21);<sup>77</sup> the *heirmos* and *katabasia* of Ode 9 in the morning of the Sunday of Orthodoxy;<sup>78</sup> the third hymn at the *lité* on the Annunciation (Mar. 25);<sup>79</sup> the 6th *troparion* of Ode 9 on the morning of the same feast.<sup>80</sup> So does a Christmas hymn attributed to St. Ambrose<sup>81</sup> and a later Latin Marian hymn.<sup>82</sup> A 14th cent. Greek hymn by St. John Koukouzeles identifies Daniel's mountain with Habakkuk's:

We magnify you, really the Mother of God  
 . . .  
 the mountain overshadowed, unquarried  
 from which the cornerstone was cut,  
 Christ our God...<sup>83</sup>

So did St. Bede<sup>84</sup> and the 11th cent. Archbishop Theophylaktos of Bulgaria.<sup>85</sup>

*The Shady Mountain of Habakkuk* 3:3. What G. Vermes said of another equation of images (Lebanon=Temple) can be said of this one (Shady Mountain=Mother of God): «once the tradition [...] was established, everything combined to confirm it.»<sup>86</sup> Many liturgical texts do confirm this interpretive tradition.

Because of their daily use of Habakkuk's Song as Ode 4 of the canon, Byzantine churches possess the largest body of relevant liturgi-

77. Μηναῖον τοῦ Νοεμβρίου (Athens: M. Saliveros, 1926) 225; *Festal Menaion*, p. 193.

78. Τριώδιον (Athens: M. Saliveros, n.d.) 139; *Lenten Triodion*, p. 309.

79. Μηναῖον τοῦ Μαρτίου (Athens: M. Saliveros, n.d.) 157; *Festal Menaion*, p. 443.

80. *Ibid.*, pp. 163 and 458, respectively.

81. *A solis ortus cardine: Daniel*, vol. 1, p. 21 and vol. 4, p. 60.

82. *Ave radix Jesse*; I have been unable to locate the Latin text. C. E. Poocknee (*The French Diocesan Hymns and Their Melodies* [Alcuin Club Tract 29; London: Faith, 1954]34) gives only its melody, but he reports (p. 162) that it is found in the (1728) *Sens Processional*. There is an English version as a Vespers hymn from an alternative form of the Sabbath Office of the Bl. Virgin Mary in *The Anglican Breviary* (Mt. Sinai, NY: Frank Gavin Liturgical Foundation, 1955) G9.

83. S. Eustratiades, «Ἰωάννης ὁ Κουκουζέλης, ὁ Μάττωρ καὶ ὁ χρόνος τῆς ἀμῆς αὐτοῦ,» *Ἐπετηρίς Ἐταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν* 14 (1938) 46.

84. St. Bede, *Super Canticum Habacuc* (PL 91) 1240.

85. Theophylaktos of Bulgaria, Ἐξήγησις εἰς τὸν Προφήτην Ἀμβακοῦ (PG 126) 880.

86. G. Vermes, «The Symbolical Interpretation,» p. 12; *Scripture and Tradition*, p. 38.

cal texts. These hymns, particularly the *heirmoi*, indicate the significance of the Ode for Christian worshippers:

With foreseeing eyes, Habakkuk observed you by the divine grace, an overshadowed mountain, out of which came a stone, the Holy One of Israel he foretold for our salvation and renewal.<sup>87</sup>

Foreseeing your birth from a Virgin, the Prophet proclaimed, crying: «I heard your tidings and was afraid, for from *Thaiman* and out of a holy overshadowed mountain, you came home, O Christ.»<sup>88</sup>

Habakkuk foresaw the overshadowed mountain, your immaculate mother, O Pure One; and therefore he cried out; «God will come from *Thaiman*, and the Holy One from a mountain overshadowed by forest.»<sup>89</sup>

By a divine vision, O Word, the Prophet observed you about to be incarnate from the overshadowed mountain, the only Mother of God, and in fear he glorified your power.<sup>90</sup>

O many-named Maiden, rejoice, O Mother of God: ark and jar and table, light-bearing candelabra, fire-shaped bush, overshadowed mountain of God.<sup>91</sup>

«Christ who comes manifestly as our God, will come, and not delay, from a mountain overshadowed by forest, a Maiden who conceives without knowing a man,» the Prophet declared of

87. Παρακλητική, Tone 1, pp. 10,11 (Sunday morning), 6 (Sunday midnight), 19 (Monday morning), 35 (Wednesday morning), 43 (Thursday morning), 58-9 (Saturday morning); Πεντηκοστάριον (ed. B. Koutloumousianos; Athens M. Saliveros, n.d.) 26 (Sunday of St. Thomas midnight). [Note the fusion of Habakkuk's and Daniel's mountains.]

88. Παρακλητική, Tone 2, pp. 86 (Tuesday morning), 115 (Saturday morning); Τριψίδιον, p. 9 (Sunday of the Prodigal Son morning); *Lenten Triodion*, p. 117.

89. Παρακλητική, Tone 3, pp. 142 (Tuesday morning), 157 (Thursday morning), 171 (Saturday morning); Πεντηκοστάριον, p. 79 (Sunday of the Paralytic morning).

90. Παρακλητική, Tone 4 plagal, p. 420 (Monday morning); Τριψίδιον, pp. 16 (Saturday of Meatfare Week morning), 56 (Saturday of Cheesefare Week morning); *Lenten Triodion*, p. 133.

91. *Theotokion* after Ode 5 of 2nd canon, first Friday of Lent, morning: Τριψίδιον, p. 118; *Lenten Triodion*, p. 269.

old; wherefore let us all cry: «Glory to your power, O Lord!»<sup>92</sup>

The thick and overshadowed mountain that Habakkuk formerly saw, out of which came the Holy One, manifested the unobserved birth conceived by you, O Virgin.<sup>93</sup>

The overshadowed mountain announced beforehand of old by foreseeing Habakkuk, retires within the sanctuaries of the temple; she blossoms forth virtues, and she overtakes the ends of the earth.<sup>94</sup>

Let us hymn the much-honored and overshadowed mountain, the ever-virgin who became God's Mother; for she flashed the light in all directions.<sup>95</sup>

You were seen as a mountain overshadowed by virtues, out of which the Master, as a slave, came home; you set humans free from slavery, O Most Pure One<sup>96</sup>.

A rod from Jesse's root, and a blossom from it, O Christ, sprung up from the Virgin: from a mountain overshadowed by forest you came, the praiseworthy, having taken flesh from one who knew no man, the immaterial and God. Glory to your power O Lord!<sup>97</sup>

A verse in a long Christmas hymn of St. John of Damascus reads:

Awestruck by the renewal of a mortal race,  
Of old the prophet Habakkuk foretells,  
Worthy to see inexpressibly the type.  
For a new infant from a mountain, the virgin,  
Came forth, a word for the renewal of peoples.<sup>98</sup>

92. Τριώδιον, p. 369 (Palm Sunday morning); *Lenten Triodion*, p. 497.

93. Πεντηκοστάριον, p. 135 (Sunday of the Blind Man midnight) *theotokion*.

94. 2nd *troparion*, Ode 4, 1st canon, Entrance of the Mother of God (Nov. 21) morning; *Μηναῖον τοῦ Νοεμβρίου*, p. 218; *Festal Menaion*, p. 179.

95. 6th *troparion*, Ode 5, 2nd canon, Nov. 21, morning: *ibid.*, pp. 220 and 183, respectively.

96. *Μηναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου*, p. 14 (Dec. 2, Commemoration of the Holy Prophet Habakkuk, morning, Ode 3) *theotokion*.

97. *Ibid.*, pp. 390-91 (Christmas morning); *L o d i*, no. 1839-d; R a y a & d e V i n c k, p. 565; *Festal Menaion*, p. 273; also *Μηναῖον τοῦ Νοεμβρίου*, p. 219 (*katabasia* Nov. 21 morning); *Festal Menaion*, p. 181; from a longer hymn of C o s m a s of J e r u s a l e m (8th cent.): *D a n i e l*, vol. 3, p. 56.

98. *D a n i e l*, vol. 3, p. 81; *heirmos* of Ode 4, 2nd canon, Christmas morning; *Μηναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου*, p. 311; *Festal Menaion*, p. 274.

One final *heirmos*:

Of old wonderful Habakkuk heard, O Christ, your tidings and cried out in fear: «From *Thaiman* God will come and the Holy One from a mountain overshadowed by forest, to save his Anointed Ones: Glory to your power, O Lord!»<sup>99</sup>

This image also occurs in one of the chants at the *aposticha* at Small Vespers of the Nativity of the Mother of God (Sept. 8):

The barrenness of Anna was indicated so truly as an overshadowed mountain, out of which salvation was presented to all the faithful.<sup>100</sup>

Slavic churches preserve two additional uses in chants consisting of strings of Marian titles preceded by the angel's greeting at the annunciation: «Rejoice/Hail!» The phrases used are: «Hail, mountain overshadowed;»<sup>101</sup> «Hail, divine overshadowed mountain, virgin.»<sup>102</sup>

In addition, the verses at the *aposticha* at Vespers and Orthros and before the *prokeimena* of the prophecy at each of the Royal Hours on Christmas Eve are:

God will come from *Thaiman*, and the Holy One from a mountain overshadowed by forest.

Ô Lord, I heard your tidings and was afraid; O Lord, I pondered your works and was amazed.<sup>103</sup>

99. *Heirmos* of Ode 4, Jan. 5, morning before Theophany: Μηναῖον τοῦ Ἰεναρχίου (Athens: M. Saliveros, n.d.) 64; *Festal Menaion*, pp. 305-6.

100. Μηναῖον τοῦ Σεπτεμβρίου (Athens: M. Saliveros, n.d.) 76; *Festal Menaion*, p. 99.

101. *Velikiy Chasoslov*, p. 395, with the verses in the service of the Most Holy Mother of God the Guide; Uniates use it after the canon proper in the Supplicatory Canon to the Most Holy Mother of God: *Chasoslov*, p. 386; *Horologion*, vol. 1, p. 240. The latter service may be celebrated on any weekday, but it is especially appropriate during the Fast of the Dormition (Aug. 1-14). The Greek Orthodox Church uses two such canons, a «small» and a «great» one, the former ascribed to the same author (Theosteriktos) as the Uniate Service; neither has this chant: Ὁρολόγιον, pp. 554-5, 569-70; nor is it found in the Russian Orthodox Service: *Velikiy Chasoslov*, pp. 557-8; nor that of non-Slavic Uniates: Raya & de Vincik, pp. 952-3. It is used in a 20th cent. Ukrainian Catholic *moleben* to the Mother of God; M. Schudlo, *My Divine Friend* (Yorkton, SK: The Redeemer's Voice, 1959) 676.

102. Last chant before the Great Doxology, morning service common to feasts of the Mother of God: *Velikiy Sbornik* (3 parts in 5 vols.; Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1951) part 1, p. 308; *Chasoslov*, p. 489.

103. Μηναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου, pp. 269, 283, 285, 288, 291-2, 295; *Festal, Menaion*, pp. 201, 203, 219, 224-5, 231, 238, 245.

Visual representations of our Marian metaphor occur in Byzantine iconography. The Mother of God is depicted surrounded by prophets with emblems of their prophecies of her. Habakkuk's is a mountain overshadowed by forest.<sup>104</sup> An 18th cent. manual for iconographers by Dionysius of Fournas spells this out:

The Most Holy [Virgin] sitting on a throne, holding the Christ as an infant, and below the footstool this inscription: «From above the prophets worship you [Ἐνωθεν οἱ προφηταὶ σὲ προσκυνοῦσιν];» and in a circle the prophets, thus: ... Habakkuk carrying an overshadowed mountain says on a scroll: «When the spirit granted foreseeing grace, I saw you a thick and overshadowed mountain...»<sup>105</sup>

K. D. Kalokyres gives an example of this icon and describes it in detail.<sup>106</sup> However, his text of «From above the prophets» differs from that mentioned by Dionysius, since it contains no «worship you»:

From above the prophets announced you beforehand [Ἐνωθεν οἱ προφηταὶ σὲ προκατήγγειλαν], jar, staff, tablets, ark, lampstand, unquarried mountain, golden censer and tabernacle, unentered gate, palace and ladder and throne of the king.<sup>107</sup>

His main interest is in the «ladder» imagery (from Jacob's dream, Genesis 28:10-17), which may be why he overlooks this discrepancy.<sup>108</sup> Of concern to us is the fact that Kalokyres' text does not account for the presence of Habbakkuk and his mountain in the icon, except by iconographical concomitance, since it only mentions Daniel's mountain. Kalokyres says the chant derives from the icon; he also mentions a text,

104. See Kalokyres, pl. 287; Lazarev (1948) vol. 2, pl. 349; idem (1971) 385; G. J. Larson, et al., *In Her Image* (Santa Barbara, CA: UCSB Art Museum, 1980) 106.

105. Ἐρμηνεῖα τῆς Ζωγραφικῆς Τέχνης (ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus; St. Petersburg: Imperial Russian Archeological Society, 1909)146; English tr. P. Hetherington, *The 'Painter's Manual' of Dionysius of Fournas* (London: Sagittarius, 1974) 51. [Note also: «Daniel carrying a mountain says on a scroll: 'Pure virgin mother, I foretold you, a spiritual mountain, from which a stone was cut.'»]

106. Kalokyres, pl. 272, discussed, pp. 191-4.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 193. This chant is prescribed at the beginning of the hours before a hierarchical Divine Liturgy in at least some Russian uses: Haggood, p. 78.

108. Kalokyres, p. 192, n. 1, does refer to Dionysius' manual, but he notes only page numbers, never the edition he used.

«Ἀπαντες οἱ προφῆται,» but he doesn't give it in full.<sup>109</sup> I have been unable to locate these chants in Greek liturgical books, but the iconographic tradition is real.

Aside from the Byzantine Rite, the Ethiopian Anaphora of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, addresses her: «Thou wast the hope of Adam... the mountain of Pharan of Habakkuk...»<sup>110</sup>

An informant within the Episcopal Church has supplied the text of a hymn for the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple (Nov. 21), which is of interest:

Today and well-contented to God's own house there came  
A maid to be presented to God, devoid of blame;  
It was the child of Joachim and Anna, and sweet as mel or manna,  
Maid Mary was her name.

'Twas she, and not another, who e'er the worlds began  
Was chosen to be mother of God th'eternal Son:  
The Holy Ghost, 'twas by his operation she bore for our salvation  
The High and Holy One.

See here the thick and shady dark mountain seen of old  
By Abbakoum; the Lady of whom Isaiah told,  
The Mother - Maid; the royal gate, the portal which afterward  
no mortal  
Might venture to unfold.<sup>111</sup>

Unlike the «two living things», which were variously interpreted, the «shady mountain» is a pan-Christian image of the Mother of God.

109. *Ibid.*, p. 193. I would be grateful for any information readers of this article could supply about any of these hymns.

110. D a o u d, pp. 134-5; Ge'ez text: S. E u r i n g e r, «Die äthiopische Anaphora unserer Herrin Maria,» *OrChr* 3S 12 (1937) 78, German tr., p. 79; H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 162.

111. Contributed by Mr B. E. F o r d of Newark, NJ. This hymn appeared in no official service books of either the Roman Catholic or Episcopal Church. Mr. Ford surmises that the use of the Greek form of the prophet's name dates the text from the «Greek-happy» Renaissance; however, its source is not found in the present Greek Orthodox services for the Entrance of the Most Holy Mother of God into the Temple (Nov. 21): *Μηναῖον τοῦ Νοεμβρίου*, pp. 211-26; *Festal Menaion*, pp. 164-98. It was traditionally used at a service of Nine Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve at St. George's-by-the-River, Rumson, NJ. Mr. Ford, who is a professional librarian and a liturgical and musical consultant for the Diocese of Newark, was unable to trace it beyond that local use.

## SPLENDOR COVERING THE HEAVENS

Habakkuk 3:3b has also caught the imagination of liturgical poets.

The *heirmos* of Ode 4 for Habakkuk's commemoration (Dec. 2) paraphrases it:

Your virtue covered up the heavens, and the earth was full of your glory, O Christ; therefore we unceasingly cry out: «Glory to your power, O Lord!»<sup>112</sup>

The Ambrosian Rite alluded to our text in the antiphon for Habakkuk's Song on the Fourth Sunday of Advent (see n. 56). It uses the text itself as the *confractorium* at the Dawn Mass of Christmas,<sup>113</sup> and as the antiphon for Habakkuk's Song at Matins of the Sunday after Christmas, the Day after Epiphany called Christophoria (Jan. 7), and the Feast of the Holy Family (Monday after the Third Sunday after Epiphany),<sup>114</sup> thus applying it to the advent and birth of Christ. This interpretation is implied also in the *Breviarium Gothicum*, which used Habakkuk's Song at Lauds on the Third and Fifth Sundays of Advent, with verse 3:3 as the antiphon and the refrain *Et laudis ejus plena est terra* repeated before and after the concluding doxology.<sup>115</sup> In the following *heirmos*, the moment when Christ's glory covered heaven is taken as his presentation in the Temple:

Your virtue covered heaven, O Christ; for emerging from the ark of your sanctification, your undefiled Mother, you were seen as a babe in arms in the Temple of your glory, and every place was full of your praise.<sup>116</sup>

The Ambrosian Rite also used the antiphon from verse 3b discussed above in its celebration of this event (Feb. 2).<sup>117</sup> The first Byzantine *troparion* of Ode 5 on Palm Sunday morning alludes to this verse:

112. *Μηναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου*, p. 14.

113. *Antiphonale Mediolanensis*, p. 40; *Missale Ambrosianum Latinum et Italicum*, p. 595; *Messale Ambrosiano*, vol. 1, p. 101.

114. *Breviarium Ambrosianum*, Pars Hyemalis I, pp. 220, 251, 292.

115. (*PL* 86) 82. The short refrain at the end is the debris of responsorial chanting, at one time repeated by the congregation after each verse of the song.

116. *Παρακλητική*, Tone 3, p. 163 (Friday morning); *Μηναῖον τοῦ Φεβρουαρίου*. (Athens: Phos, 1961) 33 (Meeting of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ [Feb. 2] morning); *Festal Menaion*, p. 421.

117. *Breviarium Ambrosianum*, Pars Hyemalis I, p. 481.

God who is seated on the Cherubim in the highest, yet bearing the lowly, comes himself, in glory with lordship, and all things will be filled with his divine praise; peace upon Israel, and salvation to the nations!<sup>118</sup>

The use of Habakkuk 3:2-3 on Good Friday in the Roman Church and in the Paschal Vigil of the old Spanish Church implies another moment in Christ's career: the covering of the earth by darkness during his passion. This is explicit in the following Byzantine hymn:

When the great lightgiver looked down at you, O Mighty One, on the Cross, it was seized by trembling, cowered, [and] hid its rays; and all Creation hymned in fear your longsuffering, for even the earth was filled with your praise.<sup>119</sup>

A Byzantine hymn for the morning of Great Saturday begins:

Today a tomb encompasses him who encompasses the Creation in [his] hand; a stone covers him who covers the heavens with virtue;...<sup>120</sup>

Yet another moment is described by the First (=Great) Ethiopian Anaphora of St. Cyril of Alexandria:

He rose from the dead on the third day and entered where his disciples were while the door was closed, and then departed from his disciples.

While he was there his glory covered the heaven.

He ascended unto heaven, sat at the right hand of his Father, heaven became his throne and the earth his footstool.<sup>121</sup>

It must also be noted that two of the chants from Ode 4 mentioned above (see nn. 94 & 96) seem to apply the «earth-filling» and the «virtue» of this verse to the Mother of God.

Finally, this text is used during the rites which prepare the bread and wine before the eucharistic liturgies of Byzantine, Syrian,

118. Τριώδιον, p. 369; *Lenten Triodion*, p. 498.

119. *Katabasia* of Ode 4, 3rd Sunday of Lent, morning: *ibid.*, pp. 220 and 341, respectively.

120. *Ibid.*, pp. 446-7 and 652, respectively.

121. D a o u d, p. 267; O. L ö f g r e n, ed., and S. E u r i n g e r, tr., «Die beiden aethiopischen Anaphoren 'des heiligen Cyrillus, Patriarchen von Alexandrien', *Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete*, Ge'ez text, 8 (1932) 222, German tr., 9 (1933-4) 60; H ä n g g i & P a h l, p. 195.

and Maronite churches. In the *prothesis* rite of the Greek Divine Liturgy, after the elements have been prepared, they are covered by three veils: one over the bread on the *diskos* (actually over the asterisk, a metal frame which keeps the veil from touching the bread); a second one over the chalice containing the wine; a third one over both veiled vessels. As he veils the chalice, the priest says: «Your virtue covered heaven, O Christ, and the earth, is full of your praise.»<sup>122</sup> Maronite priests veil both vessels, saying: «The heavens were covered by his glorious splendor, and [with] his praise all the earth was filled; his is the glory forever. Amen.»<sup>123</sup> In the Syrian Rite, the veiling occurs at the end of the second (preparatory) service, that of Aaron. The formula used is: «His glory covered the heavens and all the earth was full of his praise.»<sup>124</sup> These preparatory rites are full of snippets of scripture recited to accompany ceremonial acts. In this case, the covering of the offerings with a veil attracted to itself the recitation of a verse about the covering of heaven with the Lord's glory and the filling of the earth with his praise. The assembled church usually acts out the second part of the verse (e.g. by reading the hours) even as the priest prepares (and veils) the gifts privately.<sup>125</sup>

122. Ἱερατικόν, p. 106; Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 360. Brightman's Appendix Q traces the development of the Prothesis through the MS traditions. See also Haggood, p. 75; *Priest's Service Book*, part 2, p. 239; Raya & de Vincy, p. 259.

123. *Ktâbâ d-Qûrbânâ 'ayk 'idâ d-'Idâ d-Antyôkâyâ d-Marônâyê* (Beirut: Imprimerie Maronite Universelle, 1908)4; French tr., P.-E. Gemayel, *Avant-messe maronite* (OCA 174; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1965)11.

124. *Anaphora* (Hackensack, NJ: Metropolitan Mar Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, 1967)15; note that Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 74, has «all creation» instead of «all the earth.»

125. In Greek practice, the prothesis (which may actually be done any time before the Liturgy begins) is often done during the singing of the Αἶνοι (=Laudes, «Praises»), Psalms 148-50 at the end of the morning service. This reinforces the image of the earth being filled with praise. Baumstark (pp. 37-8) notes that until 1911, when the Roman Church revised its offices, abandoning the custom, «there was nothing in the Christian Liturgy of such absolute universality as [singing Psalms 148-50]... in the Morning Office.» He asserts that there was a Jewish origin for the practice, but this is «extremely doubtful» in the light of R. S. Sarason's critique, «On the Use of Method in the Modern Study of Jewish Liturgy», *Approaches to Ancient Judaism* (Brown Judaic Studies 1; ed. W. S. Green; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1978) 129-30.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LITURGICAL TEXTS

This study has revealed a variety of phenomena: several distinct interpretations of one image («two living things») even within the same tradition: a consistent interpretation of an image («shady mountain») in several traditions, application of an image («splendor covering heaven») to various events in Christ's life, to his Mother, and to ceremonial actions. Not only are liturgical texts an incomparably rich source of data about Christianity, they are also a necessary source.

H. F. D. Sparks, denying the very existence of Christian traditions interpreting «Lebanon», writes that «there were a number of independent, and in many cases mutually inconsistent, symbolical interpretations, of *Lebanon* known in the Church...»<sup>126</sup> By confining his study to Geza Vermes' Jewish categories (which did not include the Mother of God), by ignoring liturgical texts and the OL versions (which contain more references to Lebanon), and by seeking only the most direct symbolism (Lebanon=X, Y, or Z), Sparks failed to discover the rich Marian resonances of «Lebanon» in the Latin Church. His implication that religious thought ought to be «consistent» is an example of the kind of thinking that Jonathan Z. Smith says «has resulted in the vast majority of religious phenomena remaining unintelligible to most Western scholarship.»<sup>127</sup>

It is to be hoped that liturgical texts and the rites they are part of will be studied both by scholars seeking Christian interpretations of Scripture and by those seeking a fuller understanding of Christianity itself. If a tradition so close to western civilization is so poorly understood by western students of religions, how can we be convinced we know anything at all of traditions more distant from our cultural heritage?

126. Sparks, «Symbolical Interpretation,» p. 273.

127. «Sacred Persistence: Towards a Redescription of Canon,» *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, p. 17.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BAC	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos
BR	<i>Breviarium Romanum</i>
BT	<i>Bogoslovskie Trudy</i>
CChr	Corpus Christianorum
GOTR	<i>Greek Orthodox Theological Review</i>
JES	<i>Journal of Ethiopian Studies</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LQF	Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen
OCA	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
OrChr	<i>Oriens Christianus</i>
OS	<i>Ostkirchliche Studien</i>
PG	Migne, <i>Patrologia, series graeca</i>
PL	Migne, <i>Patrologia, series latina</i>
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
ROC	<i>Revue de l'Orient Chrétien</i>
SAJ	<i>Sacred Art Journal</i> of the St. John of Damascus Association of Orthodox Iconographers, Iconologists, and Architects
SL	<i>Studia Liturgica</i>