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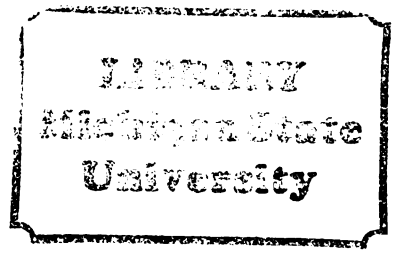

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- THE SKĒNĒ (ἡ σκηνή) -
A UNIVERSAL SYMBOL OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE:
PERSPECTIVES ON THE FORM AND FUNCTION OF A SYMBOL

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Jane Merriam deVyver

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BY
Jane Merriam deVyver

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ABSTRACT

- THE SKĒNĒ (ἡ σκηνή) -
A UNIVERSAL SYMBOL OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE:
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By

Jane Merriam deVyver

To identify the skēnē as a universal symbol and to explore its symbolic significance in terms of its form and function is the major aim of this inquiry. The skēnē is shown to be integrally involved with one of the most fundamental, universal themes found throughout all the arts, philosophy, and theology -- the conflict and reconciliation of opposites. The skēnē seems to symbolize the commemoration of the Divine Presence which manifests Itself by achieving the victory of good, life, order, and creation over evil, death, chaos, and destruction. This study offers an understanding of the significance of various forms encountered daily, and in the history of ideas and the arts. It is a highly interdisciplinary work that encompasses art history, symbolism, philosophy, phenomenology of religion, Old and New Testament, early Christian thought and practice, and general cultural history.

"Tent" is the original meaning of the Greek word, skēnē; and a later use is to designate the stage-building of the Greek theatre. The word subsequently comes to mean tabernacle, temple, canopy, and dwelling-place of God, apparently

as a result both of the translators' choice of the word, skēnē, to render several different Hebrew words that referred to the Tabernacle of Moses when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek, and of the word's further use in the Greek New Testament.

Included in this inquiry is an examination of the forms of the Tabernacle of Moses and the Greek theatre skēnē, and the dramatic and religious functions of each, interrelated to an expanded concept of the skēnē's functions to include liturgy and worship, play, fertility and marriage, order and royalty, and the Apollonian/Dionysian components of experience.

From an expanded understanding of the skēnē's functions proceeds a similar expansion of the scope of the skēnē's forms: two- and three-dimensional architectural canopies, the shell and niche, the triumphal arch and portal, the dome, the Greek temple, the iconostasis, and the ubiquitous curtains. The various skēnē forms customarily delineate and adorn temples and churches, palaces and tombs, and sacred play-space. Approximately half of the study deals directly with art historical monuments, documented by ninety-three photographs.

The major historical focus is the early Christian and Byzantine periods, through the ninth century, and some of the contributing Hebrew, Greek and Roman forms and ideas.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to identify a single form, which I designate by the Greek word, skēnē; to demonstrate that the skēnē is a previously unrecognized universal symbol; [1] to explore the symbolic meaning and function of the skēnē; and to show that a variety of other forms are aspects and descendents of the original form, function, and meaning of the skēnē.

In the first three chapters I will seek to fulfill this purpose by first, establishing the linguistic basis

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[1] The essence of the universal experience of symbols is the basic human encounter with aspects of the material-temporal-visible world (objects, relationships, actions, shapes), and their transference to the spiritual-cosmic-non-material/non-visible world, as a means of describing and referring to the encounter with this latter level of existence.

A fundamental example of this symbolizing process is the basic experience of the sun as the primordial prerequisite for life on earth - without the sun there would be no light, nor heat, nor, consequently, any life. Since the sun is the source of the life energy of the material world, therefore, in the symbolizing process, the material experience of the sun, light, and heat, is transferred to the non-material world as the primordial symbol for the Divine forces (God), Who is the life-energy of the spiritual world, (as well as the creator of the sun and of all the material world).

Although I maintain that the skēnē is a universal symbol, this study will be concentrating on its Judaeo-Christian manifestations. It will remain for a future study to present the documentation for other cultures.

and justification for calling a variety of forms a skēnē; then, by examining the various forms; and finally, by exploring the meaning of the symbol in terms of its functions.

In the first chapter we will see that the oldest and primary meaning of the Greek word, skēnē, is "tent." Later meanings include: booth, tabernacle, dwelling-place, temple, canopy-like covers, and the wooden or stone stage, stage-building and "scenery" back-drop where actors performed in the ancient Greek theatre. (Usually this is the only meaning of the word, skēnē, with which people today may be familiar.) Most of the variant meanings seem to be due to the translators' choice of the Greek word, skēnē, to render three different Hebrew words when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek during the third-second centuries B.C. The Septuagint usage was then carried over into the terminology of the Greek New Testament, as well as being used by Philo in his platonizing of Hebrew theology. We will discuss exactly how and why the word, skēnē, came to mean tabernacle, dwelling-place, temple, booth, especially designating the Tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness. The use of the word skēnē in the Greek New Testament follows, where we will particularly emphasize its important use in the three accounts of Christ's Transfiguration.

In the second chapter we will look at the visual forms which most closely correspond to the major meanings of the word as seen in Chapter One: the theatre skēnē, and the

Tabernacle of Moses. Initially, we will see that basically the function of the theatre skēnē is the dramatic function, and the function of the Tabernacle is the religious function. Within this religious function four elements can be distinguished: the commemoration of a theophany; the creation of the earthly dwelling-place of the Divine; liturgical action as the means of recreating past theophanies; and sacred ritual and worship as the response to the Divine.

In the remaining three chapters, however, I will proceed to endeavor to expand our understanding and perception of the skēnē forms and functions. In Chapter Four I will propose that the linguistic use, forms, and functions can be distinguished, but not separated from each other. Then, in comparing the forms of the theatre skēnē with those of the Tabernacle, we will observe that there is considerable similarity. Furthermore, in comparing the functions of both, we will find that there is far more than just a dramatic function involved in the theatre skēnē, and far more than just a religious function involved in the Tabernacle skēnē. In fact, as I will seek to demonstrate, precisely the same functions are involved in both skēnē forms, and these include all four aspects of the religious function, the dramatic function, which is closely related to the play function, plus the ubiquitous and interrelated functions associated with fertility and marriage, order and royalty.

On the basis of the first four chapters' discussion of

the functions associated with the skēnē, I will seek in Chapter Five to summarize and expand our understanding of the skēnē's functions by formulating six dimensions of theophanies or divine activity which become, by association, functions of the skēnē. These are: to manifest the Divine Presence; to manifest truth and wisdom; to manifest divine order either on earth or in heaven; to manifest the victory of life and order (the Good) over death and chaos (evil); to manifest divine play and creativity; and for humans to imitate any of these divine activities.

I will also suggest that usually skēnē forms are found whenever and wherever any of these divine activities or theophanies are manifested or imitated. I will furthermore propose the corollary idea, that whenever any divine activity or theophany is experienced or commemorated, that there we will also find some skēnē form. In other words, when a skēnē function is experienced, there we will find a skēnē form; and when a skēnē form is found, there, at least originally, had been experienced a theophanic skēnē function.

In the sixth and final chapter, we will seek to apply these expanded understandings by examining five further types of skēnai that correspond to the expanded formulation of the skēnē functions, and we will observe that any or all of the different skēnē forms can be associated with any or all of the skēnē functions. These five additional categories of skēnē forms are: the three-dimensional architectural

canopy; the shell/niche/two-dimensional canopy; the triumphal arch/portal; the Greek temple form; and the dome. In addition, we will consider curtains, a ubiquitous component characteristic of skēnē forms. For each of these skēnē forms I will explain why it is valid to consider them types of skēnai, and present a few of the extant visual examples of each type. There will also be a short Appendix where the Iconostasis as a skēnē will be briefly considered.

Any study must establish its limits and boundaries. Although this study deals with what I contend is a universal symbol, examples in only a few cultures can be considered. When discussing the Hebrew Tabernacle and Temple, and the Greek theatre, we are obviously dealing with forms antecedent to Christianity. Hebrew, Greek, and Roman forms and ideas contributed extensively to the synthesis of ideas and forms of the early Christian centuries, and particularly to the Byzantine synthesis. In general, however, I have chosen to emphasize the first nine centuries of the Christian era, through Iconoclasm (formally ended in 843). This is the formative Christian period of the seven Ecumenical Councils, the seventh being in 787. I have chosen, further, to stress the experience of the Eastern part of the Roman (Byzantine) Empire during these centuries, but not to the exclusion of the Western experience, because it was frequently closely interrelated to the Eastern experience. Since the scarcity of extant visual evidence is frequently a problem when

investigating early periods, occasionally I use later visual materials which seem to reflect earlier traditions.

In what ways does this study make contributions? I believe that recognizing the skēnē as an important universal symbol, and understanding its meaning and significance, can help people to better understand their role in the cosmos, and their relationship with the cosmic forces. This can result in an expanded awareness of who they are, and their meaning and purpose in life. It can also lead to a greater understanding and awareness of the significance of forms which we constantly encounter in our daily lives, as well as in the history of ideas and the arts. I propose that these contributions can be achieved precisely because the skēnē is involved with what perhaps is the most fundamental, universal theme found throughout all the arts, philosophy, and theology - namely, the conflict and struggle between good and evil, life and death, creation and destruction. My basic contention is that the skēnē symbolizes the commemoration and manifestation of the Divine Presence, which achieves the victory of good, life, and creation over evil, death, and destruction.

What prior work has been done on the topic of this study? In one way the literature is virtually non-existent, because no one has ever before really dealt with the symbolism of the skēnē. Yet, in another way, the literature is extremely voluminous. This is because there are so many

countless avenues of inquiry involved: the art historical style and monuments, the literary, cultural, and intellectual history, and the economic, political, and social history of the periods; countless studies in symbolism, mythology, and comparative religion; countless studies of paricular motifs, be they visual (the dome, the canopy, the iconostasis, the entrance portal), liturgical and ritual enactment (the procession, eating, the new year's festival and other festivals), relationships and activities (mother, father, son, creation, death and resurrection, play and fantasy); the psychic-spiritual dimensions (alchemy, I Ching, Kabbalah, astrology, contact between the material and non-material realms and their interpenetration); the theology, philosophy, practices, archeology, and history of the ancient Hebrews, Greeks, Romans, early Christians, Byzantines, and other ancient Mediterranean civilizations. Considering the vastness of the scope and pertinent areas of investigation, a review of the literature can mention only a few of the most note-worthy studies in a few of the areas. Thus I will deal with the areas that affect the overall general approach and orientation of this entire inquiry, and consider some other individual, specific aspects within the body of the dissertation itself, or in the bibliography.

Perhaps the person to whom a contemporary student of symbolism must be most indebted is Carl Gustav Jung. He and his school have established for the modern Western scholar

the validity of the symbolic functioning of the conscious and unconscious mind. They have shown that the symbolizing process is basically uniform, consistent, and universal (when utilizing archetypal symbols). This universal consistency is manifested in the visual arts, fairy tales, mythology, and other literature, dreams, the inner psychic world, fantasy and imagination, and children's art. Most of Jung's writings deal with symbolism in some way, and so we could cite most everything he has written. However, one more specific and self-conscious examination of symbolism in the arts is Man and His Symbols edited by Jung.[2] One of Jung's students, Erich Neumann, has made a distinctive contribution to man's study of himself and his symbolizing nature, which has had a significant effect on my own thought, in his Origins and History of Consciousness.[3]

Studies in symbolism, mythology, comparative religions (or the phenomenology or history of religion), ritual and worship, are all quite interconnected. Alan Watts has written and edited some valuable work in some of these areas, such as the four book series, "Patterns of Myth," of which he was the general editor, and the author of one of them.[4]

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[2] Doubleday, New York, 1964.

[3] Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970(1954).

[4] Alan W. Watts, The Two Hands of God: the Myths of Polarity, Collier Books, New York, 1969 (1963).

Mircea Eliade has done numerous studies pertinent to our inquiry, including Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism; [5] The Sacred and the Profane: the Nature of Religion, [6] especially valuable for its discussion of sacred space and sacred time; Cosmos and History: the Myth of the Eternal Return, [7] and its consideration of the regeneration of time and cosmos through ritual; and The Two and the One, [8] with its examination of cosmic and eschatological renewal in different cultures.

E.O. James' Christian Myth and Ritual is a very valuable study, particularly in its relating modern "secular" rituals, such as the New Year's Day football game, to older rituals, including various new year's festivals. [9]

Gerardus van der Leeuw has also made significant contributions in his Sacred and Profane Beauty: the Holy in

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Charles H. Long, Alpha: the Myths of Creation, Collier Books, New York, 1969 (1963).

John Weir Perry, Lord of the Four Quarters: the Myths of the Royal Father, Collier Books, New York, 1970 (1966).

Joseph L. Henderson and Maud Oakes, The Wisdom of the Serpent: the Myths of Death, Rebirth, and Resurrection, Collier Books, New York, 1971 (1963).

[5] Sheed and Ward, New York, 1969 (1952), (Trans. Philip Mairet).

[6] Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1961 (1957), (Trans. Willard R. Trask).

[7] Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1959 (1949), (Trans. Williard R. Trask).

[8] Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1965 (1962), (Trans. J.M. Cohen).

[9] John Murray, London, 1933.

Art, [10] in which he deals with theological aesthetics, music, dance, visual arts, the House of God, and the concepts of these things in relation to beauty and the holy. In his Religion in Essence and Manifestation, [11] he considers the countless outward and inward actions of ritual, and the relationships of the sacred groups and their leaders.

In many of the above books the authors deal with the king and cosmic renewal. The paradigmatic study of cosmic kingship is by H.P. l'Orange, [12] who deals with the subject in the ancient Mediterranean world as manifested in visual forms and ritual, such as the dome and raising the emperor on a shield.

The practice and concept of self-consciously utilizing the symbolic process is not new to modern authors. What modern scholars have done is to make the study of symbolism a science, and to make it acceptable and respectible in a scholarly way. This was necessary due to the rejection of the very concept of universal, archetypal symbolism, and its manifestations by the eighteenth - nineteenth centuries' scientific, rationalistic (western) world-view. Alchemy was particularly attacked in the seventeenth and eighteenth

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[10] Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1963, (Trans. David Green).

[11] 2 vols., Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1963 (1933), (Trans. J.E. Turner).

[12] Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World, H. Aschehoug & Co., Oslo, 1953.

centuries as unscientific and superstitious. However, alchemy is one of the particularly prevalent and enduring psychic-spiritual arts, and its symbolism is closely related to the marriage and fertility rites of the king and queen in ancient new year's festivals (which will be discussed in several chapters of this study). The symbolism of alchemy has been studied by several noted contemporary scholars, including Carl Jung, [13] Mircea Eliade, [14] and Titus Burckhardt. [15] A superb comparison of the symbolic content of alchemy, Kabbalah, I Ching, Tarot, and astrology is found in Charles Poncé's The Game of Wizards: Psyche, Science, and Symbol in the Occult. [16]

Alchemy traces its descent back to ancient Egypt, from where it spread throughout the Mediterranean world and eastward, and then found its way into Byzantium and the Latin West.

However, the mystical-spiritual process of symbolization was hardly reserved for alchemy alone. Rather, it seems that much of the philosophical-theological intellectual life

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[13] Alchemical Studies, Trans. R.F.C. Hull, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970, (collection of essays by Jung).

[14] The Forge and the Crucible: the Origins and Structures of Alchemy, Trans. Stephen Corrin, Harper Torchbooks, New York, 1971 (1956).

[15] Alchemy: Science of the Cosmos, Science of the Soul, Penguin, Baltimore, 1971 (1960), (Trans. Wm. Stoddart).

[16] Penguin, Baltimore, 1975.

of the ancient world self-consciously utilized similar concepts. For example, the very fundamental concept of "As above, so below" is essential to alchemy, but it is also an essential element in Platonism, neo-Platonism, Christian symbolism and theology of church architecture and images. In fact, it is basic to much biblical theology, and furthermore, underlies the very biblical concept of the skēnē as being the earthly manifestation of the heavenly prototype.

Various early Christian theologians and commentators about church architecture described, sometimes in detail, what each of the parts of the church meant symbolically, such as Eusebius (c.265-340), [17] Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215), [18] Maximus the Confessor (c.580-662), [19] and Germanus I, Patriarch of Constantinople from 715 to 730. [20] The most complete theoretical expression of their symbolizing was in the seventh and eighth centuries. [21] Characteristic of their approach is an often quoted statement by Germanus I in his Historia Mystagogica: "The church

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17 Historia Ecclesiastica, especially, "Panegyric on the building of churches," an address by Paulinus, the Bishop of Tyre, at the dedication of a church at Tyre.

18 Stromateis (Miscellanies), PG IX, 56-68.

19 Mystagogy, PG 91, 657-718.

20 Historia Mystagogica, PG 98, 384ff. (An abridged English version is found in the Journal of Theological Studies, IX, 1908, pp. 248ff., by F.E. Brightman.)

21 See Leonid Ouspensky, Theology of the Icon, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, 1978, Chapter One, "The Symbolism of the Church."

is heaven on earth, the place where the God of heaven dwells and moves. It represents the crucifixion, sepulchre, and resurrection of Christ." [22] Basically paraphrasing the earlier Byzantine authors, Gervase Mathew, in his Byzantine Aesthetics, continues in the same vein:

> The church is not only a representation of the whole world, it also represents the setting of Christ's life on earth, so that the conch of the apse is an image of the cave of Bethlehem, the altar that of the table of the Last Supper, and the ciborium above it is the sepulchre. [23]

A similar symbolic or allegorical approach was utilized in the interpretation of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. Much of the Old Testament was interpreted by the patristic writers in terms of Christian theology, and for most every major aspect of Christian theology, a prototype was sought in the Old Testament, and frequently was found through allegory or symbolism. Most of the major Church Fathers, from about the second to the sixth centuries, included among their writings vast and detailed biblical exegeses, including the Cappadocian, the Latin, and the Alexandrine fathers. These latter theologians were greatly influenced by the Platonism/neo-Platonism of Clement, Plotinus, and Origen, and the Platonizing, allegorical method of Philo.

Whereas the literature mentioned so far deals primarily

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[22] Quoted by E. Baldwin Smith in The Dome, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1971 (1950), p. 93.

[23] Harper and Row, New York, 1971 (1964), p. 106.

with symbolism in general, the symbolic approach, and specific symbolic-ritual-liturgical practices and the concepts behind them, there is one indispensible study of an actual skēnē form and its symbolic meaning which is of supreme importance - E. Baldwin Smith's The Dome: A Study in the History of Ideas, [24] first published in 1950. This study followed closely after Karl Lehman's "The Dome of Heaven" in 1945, [25] and André Grabar's Martyrium in 1946. [26] These studies actually necessitated significant rewriting of Smith's initial manuscript. In The Dome Smith studies the visual evidence of domical monuments from the ancient near east, in conjunction with the ideology of the various domical forms, considering especially the Syrian and Palestinian traditions and their influence on Greek, Roman, and Christian forms, and the continuity of the symbolic ideas behind the forms. Smith is the only author I have encountered who even mentions the idea of the skēnē-tent form and some of its symbolic concepts. He does this briefly primarily in connection with his discussion of the Martyrium of St. Babylas at Kaoussie, completed near Antioch before 387. It was in this martyrium where Bishop Meletius (who built the martyrium) was buried along with the relics

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[25] Art Bulletin, XXVII, 1945, pp. 1-27.

[26] The subtitle is: "Findings on the cult of relics and early Christian art," first published in Paris, 1946.

of the saint. Smith points out that St. John Chrysostom d. 404) referred to Bishop Meletius and St. Babylas as "tent-mates" (ὁμόσκηνος- homóskēnos). Smith continues:

> Most churchmen accepted both the authority of Isaiah, who said that God "established heaven as a vaulted chamber and stretched it out as a tent to dwell in," and the Hebrew tradition of the tabernacle, or tent, of Moses, being a replica of the world. As a result, many theologians conceived of God's universal house, its domelike celestial roof, and the salvational abode of martyrs as like a tent. Skēnē, therefore, in this cosmic and mystic sense was used for dome, or heavenly covering ... to designate an ideal and heavenly dwelling in a blessed hereafter... That the idea of referring to a double interment as "tent-mates" was not peculiar to St. Chrysostom, is proved by Theodoret in his life of Theodosius ... for he says that when Theodosius died he was buried with Aphraates in the same skēnē (ὁμόσκηνος τε καὶ ὁμορρόφιος- homóskēnos te kai homorrhophios) indicating again that skēnē was a celestial abode. [27]

Smith also examines many dome-like and curvilinear architectural shapes, such as the omphalos, mound, aedicula, tabernacle, ciborium, baldachino, baptistry, church, mosque, audience hall, hemisphere, beehive, tholos, helmet, cosmic egg, pine cone, umbrella, and concludes that they all share a similar ideology. They represent a heavenly, cosmic, divine house or dwelling (e.g. domus means "house").[28] He specifically points out that tabernacles, ciboria, and baldachinos were derived from the tent. [29]

I will be mentioning many of these forms as variations of what I term the skēnē, including the dome, baldachino,

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[27] op. cit., pp. 109-110.

[28] See particularly Chapter One - "The Origin of Domical Ideas."

[29] Ibid., p. 8.

ciborium, baptistry, tabernacle, church, and audience hall.

At this point I wish to express particular thanks and appreciation to Dr. Molly Teasdale Smith, of the Art History Department of Michigan State University, for her long, patient, and continuing counsel, assistance, and friendship to me while working on this study, despite her own physical difficulties. I also wish to thank Rt. Rev. Fr. Photius (Dr. Francis Michael) Donahue, now, Professor Emeritus of the Religious Studies Department of Michigan State University, and Pastor of St. Andrew Orthodox Church, East Lansing, under whose tutelage I learned and grew so much. And finally, much thanks and appreciation is offered to my friends and family who supported and encouraged me during the years spent working towards the completion of my doctorate and this dissertation.

Chapter One

LINGUISTIC USE OF THE WORD ἡ σκηνή

At the first level of our inquiry we shall investigate five aspects of the linguistic use of the Greek word, ἡ σκηνή : (1) the Greek dictionary-lexicon definition; [1] (2) the skēnē of the Greek theatre; (3) the use in the Septuagint, and the meaning of the Hebrew words which are therein translated as skēnē; (4) the use of the word by Philo and Josephus; and (5) the use of the word in the Greek New Testament. [2]

1. The Greek-English Dictionary-Lexicon Definition of ἡ σκηνή

There are five general translations or categories of meanings in the Greek-English lexicon:

(a) tent (which appears to be the oldest meaning of the word, the source and root from which later meanings are derived), [3] booth, tabernacle;

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[1] Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Revised Edition, Oxford University Press, London, 1948; W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gindrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 4th ed., University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1952.

[2] A Handy Concordance to the Septuagint, Samuel Bagster and Sons, Ltd., London. (Reprinted in 1970 following the 1880, 6th edition of the Tischendorf edition.)

[3] It is interesting to note that it is believed that the distinctive onion dome of Russian church architecture is derived from the shape of ancient tents, primarily the tent of

(b) a wooden or stone stage upon which actors perform; [4]

(c) a dwelling-place, lodging, house, temple; [5]

(d) the tilted cover of a wagon or carriage, [6]
a bed-testor; [7]

(e) an entertainment given in tents, a banquet.

Related variants are:

σκήνημα (skēnēma) = a dwelling-place, nest, abode;

σκήνωμα (skēnōma) = a tent, habitation, God's dwelling;

σκηοπηγία (skēopēgía) = pitching of tents, as in the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles;

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the tribal chief. And the dome is a type of skēnē, as we shall see later in this study. In the Russian film by Sergei Eisenstein, Ivan the Terrible, when the Tzar and his troops were camped against the Mongol Tartars at Kazan, the Tzar's tent is portrayed with just such an onion dome at the top.

[4] The use of the word, skēnē, to designate the stage of the Greek theatre seems to be the only meaning of the word used in modern Western academia. Students of Greek drama generally learn this term to refer to the Greek stage-building.

[5] In general, tents pre-date permanent dwellings in much of the Mediterranean. But when mud-brick, or the more rare wooden or stone temples superceded tents, apparently the tent-word designation remained.

[6] Originally, ancient wagon covers must have been tent-like, perhaps comparable to the covered wagons of American pioneer days.

[7] A bed-testor, or canopy over a bed with curtains suspended on each side that can be tied back, appears in numerous Gothic and Renaissance paintings, such as Jan van Eyck's famous portrait of Arnolfini and his bride, and in most portrayals of the Annunciation painted in these periods in the West, which show the Virgin in her bedroom. I suggest that these comprise a form of skēnē, celebrating marriage and fertility in the former, and creating a tabernacle in the latter.

σκῆνος (skēnos) = tent, lodging (referring figuratively to the body);

σκηνόω (skēnóō) = to pitch tents, to encamp, to live or to dwell in a tent; to settle or take up one's abode.

In order to develop the fullest possible understanding of the extremely rich symbolism of the skēnē, it is valuable to investigate the background and historical development of these different meanings of skēnē.

2. The Skēnē of the Theatre [8]

The early theatre developed and flourished in the fifth century B.C., accompanying the growth of rationalism and humanism in the Greek Golden Age. In the fifth century B.C. the stage-set structure was a tent consisting of a framework of pillars with moveable walls, which then became a wooden structure. Purple hangings were used for tragedy and animal pelts for comedy. In most plays the skēnē, which usually had three doors, represented the façade of a palace, temple or a house. The stage evolved from that early form into a stone and masonry building consisting of three parts:

(a) a raised stage on which the actors stood, as opposed to the circular orchēstra (ορχήστρα) where the chorus sang and danced;

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[8] Kittels's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. 7 -Σ, Edited by Gerhard Friedrich and Gerhard Kittel, Trans. G.W. Bromiley, Eerdman Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1964 p. 369; and W.J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill, The Complete Greek Drama, Random House, New York, 1938, Introduction.

(b) the scenery, back-drop, stage-setting; [9]

(c) a building into which the actors could withdraw when not on stage and in which they could change and store their costumes, masks, and props.

As indicated above, the basic original meaning of the word skēnē is "tent." But the Greek theatre witnessed the same metamorphosis as was experienced in various cultures, namely, the translation into stone of antecedent wooden architectural forms. In turn, the wooden architecture might have carried over forms from the regional structure of tents, such as is found to be true of Russian medieval architectural forms. However, regardless of the building materials, the meaning and significance of certain ritual structures remained unchanged. This unchanged significance of the skēnē structure is partially conveyed by the unchanged terminology: the word skēnē continued to be used despite the metamorphosis from tent to wood to stone structures.

3. The Use of the Word ἡ σκηνή in the Septuagint, and the Meaning of the Hebrew Words Translated as Skēnē

The most fruitful inquiry into the use of the word skēnē for this study in symbolism is its use in the Septuagint, (the Greek Old Testament, translated during the third-second

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[9] Sophocles is credited with inventing scene-painting (σκηνογραφία - skēnographía) for his play, Oedipus at Colonnus. (Sophocles, The Theban Plays, Trans. E.F. Watling, Penguin, Baltimore, 1976, Introduction, p. 21.)

centuries B.C.), and in the Greek New Testament (see the next section). Here we see the linguistic evolution of both the word and the symbolic meaning associated with it. This evolution also seems to correspond to the evolution of the visual symbolism, which we will explore in Chapters Two and Six.

There are three Hebrew words that are rendered in the Septuagint as skēnē, and which receive a variety of English translations: tent, tabernacle, temple, curtain, dwelling-place, booth. [10] Therefore we must ask why three separate Hebrew words are rendered as one Greek word by the translators of the Septuagint. These three Hebrew words are:

(a) אֹהֶל ('ohel) is the characteristic Hebrew word for tent. It occurs 330 times in the Hebrew Testament: 245 times it is translated by skēnē; forty-six times by σκήνωμα (skēnoma); nineteen times as οἶκος (oíkos); four times as οἰκία (oikía); and sixteen times as one of nine other terms that seem less pertinent to this study.

(b) The other major Hebrew word is מִשְׁכָּן (mishkan), which means "tabernacle" or "dwelling-place." In the Septuagint, ninety-three times skēnē is chosen to translate mishkan; in seventeen other instances mishkan is rendered as σκήνωμα (skḗnoma), and once as Κατασκήνωσις (kataskḗnosis).

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[10] Much of this linguistic study is derived from Kittel's essay on the word, ἡ σκηνή in his Theological Dictionary, op. cit., pp. 368-393.

(c) A third Hebrew word, סֻכָּה (sukkah), meaning "a covering," "covert," or "booth" (as in the Festival of Booths, Tabernacles, or Weeks), is also translated as skēnē twenty-six times in the Septuagint.

Thus, of the 370 occurrences of skēnē in the Septuagint, [11] 245 times it is the translation of 'ohel (tent), ninety-three times it translates mishkan (dwelling), and twenty-six times it is the rendering for sukkah (booth). Why are these latter two words translated as "tent" when they do not literally mean "tent"?

In endeavoring to answer the basic question, why three different Hebrew words are rendered into Greek as skēnē, we first look at the word sukkah. In about two-thirds of the instances when sukkah is used, it is related in some way to the Tabernacle, [12] although it does not mean the Tabernacle

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[11] There are sixty-five other instances that have no Massoretic equivalent.

[12] The Tabernacle was the portable sanctuary built at God's command by the Hebrews in the Wilderness after their Exodus from Egypt, according to the instructions given by God to Moses, as recorded in Exodus 25-31 and 35-40. The Tabernacle was known by various names, particularly, the "Tent of Meeting" or "Witness" because there God met with and revealed Himself to man, and the "Dwelling of the Lord." (The words "tent" and "dwelling" are both rendered as skēnē in the Greek Bible.)

The Tabernacle consisted of three parts: the outer court where animal and blood sacrifices were offered on a huge altar; the Holy Place, an inner court which contained the seven-branched Menorah, the Table of the Shewbread, and the altar of incense; and the Holy of Holies which contained the Ark of the Covenant in which the Tablets of the Ten Commandments were kept.

The Tabernacle was the focal point of Hebrew worship; it was a daily visual affirmation of the Covenant between the

itself. When the translators of the Septuagint chose the Greek word, skēnē, for the Hebrew word, sukkah, it marked an extremely significant shift in meaning from simply "tent," to designating the Tabernacle. Although used in relation to the Tabernacle, sukkah is the term that designates the Feast of Booths, which is meant to recall the Hebrew people's wandering in the wilderness, when they lived in tents, and when the Tabernacle also was in the form of a tent. However, the word, sukkah, itself is never used to refer to the Tabernacle per se, which is always rendered in Hebrew as either ʾohel or mishkan. Kittel suggests that ʾohel remained in continuous use,

> because in the light of the desert wandering, when all Israel lived in tents, it was hard to think of the Tabernacle as anything but a tent. If it is also called mishkan, this expresses a rather different view of its character. As ʾohel the Tabernacle...is not regarded as a place where God resides, but rather as the place where He may be met with from time to time. But the term mishkan seems to presuppose that God dwells in the Tabernacle.[13]

Once again, why do the translators of the Septuagint not consider it important to distinguish between the Hebrew terms, and why do they choose to render several Hebrew words by the single word, skēnē? Furthermore, why are there

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Hebrew people and Yahweh; and it was the tangible dwelling of the Lord among His people on earth, visible in the Shekhinah the pillar of cloud of the the Divine Presence seen at the entrance of the Tabernacle. (F.L. Cross, ed., Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, Oxford University Press, London, 1958 (1971), and others.)

[13] Kittel's, op. cit., p. 371. (Kittel uses the actual Hebrew letters, whereas I am giving the transliteration.)

eighty-five instances where ʾohel is rendered otherwise than by skēnē? We find only two instances where mishkan is not translated as skēnē. In II Samuel 7, where both ʾohel and mishkan are found together in the Masoretic text, in verse 6 mishkan refers to the Tabernacle, (in distinction to the Temple as oíkos in verse 5). [14] It is mishkan that is translated as skēnē, whereas for ʾohel, κατάλυμα (katáluma) is chosen. Kittel suggests that the reason for the close identity between mishkan and skēnē is not because skēnē had the meaning of "dwelling," but rather, because the translators must have regarded skēnē as the natural, inevitable word-equivalent of mishkan, because, as Kittel points out, skēnē and mishkan contain the same three consonants, s k n, in the same sequence. Consequently, the Greek term, skēnē, assumed the character of what is fixed and constant (e.g. a permanent dwelling) from its relationship to mishkan, which is the exact opposite of the original connotation of tent (ʾohel), as the shelter which was mobile, and used while wandering in the wilderness.

There are only a few places in the Septuagint, usually figurative, which mention God dwelling in a skēnē, either in heaven or on earth, without any reference to the Tabernacle. One such instance is Isaiah 40:22, where the prophet praises God Who "...stretches out the heavens like a curtain,

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[14] The usual meaning of the Greek word oíkos is "house."

and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in" (RSV), ὡς σκηνὴν κατοικεῖν (hos skēnēn katoikein). This reference and analogy is important symbolically in many visual forms of architecture, painting, and sculpture, as shall be discussed in Chapter Six.

Another important symbolic concept is the idea, and its corresponding image, that the earthly Tabernacle is constructed after the type (typos), or pattern, of a heavenly prototype (Exodus 26:30, 25:9, 25:40, 27:8, and Wisdom 9:8). I will return to this concept later when dealing with specific monuments.

4. The Use of the Word ἡ σκηνή by Philo and Josephus

The Alexandrian Jewish philosopher, Philo, (c. 20 B.C.-c. 50 A.D.), uses the word, skēnē, in three ways that are most pertinent to this inquiry. Besides the usual use in referring to the Tabernacle, he uses skēnē in the following ways:

(a) in the sense of "stage";

(b) to talk of the Tabernacle (skēnē), not as a place, but as a symbol or allegory of virtue, in which the fittings of the Tabernacle are ἔργα τῆς ψυχῆς (erga tēs psychēs - works of the soul) (Legum Allegoriae, III, 95);

(c) in the sense that Wisdom is a "tent" in which the wise person figuratively dwells (Legum Allegoriae, III, 46). [15]

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[15] Kittel's, op. cit., p. 373.

This association of the skēnē with the stage, Tabernacle, virtue and wisdom will be important later in our discussion.

By the time we get to the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus (c. 37-c. 100 A.D.), we find that the word, skēnē, had unquestionably become the customary term for the Tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness. [16]

5. The Use of the Word, ἡ σκηνή in the Greek New Testament

The word, skēnē, occurs only twenty times in the Greek New Testament:

(a) three times in Acts (7:43 and 44; 15:16), in reference to the Tabernacle of Moses;

(b) once in Luke 16:9, translated in the King James Version as "everlasting habitations";

(c) three times in the Apocalypse (13:6; 15:5; 21:3), each having the connotation of God's heavenly dwelling-place;

(d) ten times in Hebrews (8:2, 5; 9:2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 21; 11:9; 13:10), once meaning the tent in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwelt, and the rest referring to the Mosaic Tabernacle.

(e) three times in the Synoptics (Matthew 17:4; Mark 9:5; and Luke 9:33), in the accounts of the Transfiguration of Christ. This use is extremely important to this study, and therefore will be discussed at length below. (Neither the word skēnē, nor an account of the Transfiguration occurs

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[16] Ibid., p. 373.

in St. John's Gospel.

Let us look at the meaning of skēnē in each of these instances.

(a) The three occurrences in Acts are simple references to the Tabernacle of Moses, following the usual Septuagint terminology: "τὴν σκηνὴν τοῦ Μόλοχ," "ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου," and "τὴν σκηνὴν Δαυὶδ (tēn skēnēn tou Móloch; hē skēnēn tou martyríou; and tēn skēnēn David), meaning, "the skēnē of Moloch," "the skēnē of Witness," and "David's skēnē" respectively.

(b) In Luke 16:9 the Evangelist uses the words, "τας αἰωνίους σκηνάς" (tas aiōníous skēnas - "the eternal tabernacles"). By joining the word, eternal, to skēnē, there is an added connotation given to the word, as being the heavenly dwelling-place of God, which likewise is the connotation of skēnē in its three occurrences in the Apocalypse, as we shall see below.

(c) In the Apocalypse the use of skēnē indicates that the reference is to the dwelling-place of God, not on earth, but in heaven. Apocalypse 15:15 says: "ὁ ναὸς τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ" (ho naos tēs skēnēs tou martyríon en tu ouranō - "the temple of the Tabernacle of Witness in heaven"). Thus, this usage in Luke and the Apocalypse seems to present the idea that the skēnē on earth is a reflection or copy of the true skēnē which is in heaven. This meaning is supported by another example in the Apocalypse

(21:3): "Ἰδοὺ, ἡ σκηνὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ σκηνώσει μετ'αὐτῶν" (Idoú, hē skēnē tou Theoú meta' tōn anthrōpōn kai skēnōsei met' autōn' - "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell [tabernacle or skēnē] with them"), which continues, "and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God" (AV).

We note here that skēnē is used as a verb, skēnōsei, instead of using the customary verb for dwelling or living. There is no adequate way of rendering this in English. The same verbal form of skēnē occurs in the Prologue of John's Gospel: "...and the Word was made flesh and dwelt (eskḗnōsen) among us (John 1:14). Sometimes this term is translated as "tabernacled" or even "pitched His tent" among us. We might say "skened" among us. (See footnote thirty-six in this chapter.) The implication is that in Christ's incarnation, God was present on earth in the Logos in the same way as He was present as the Shekhinah in the Mosaic Tabernacle, which was constructed following the true prototype of the heavenly skēnē of God. Obviously, this is a most significant connotation of the skēnē, and we shall return to this idea at the end of this chapter, and at the conclusion of our study.

(d) Hebrews 8:1-2 adds a most intriguing dimension to our study of skēnē symbolism. The verses read: "We have such a High Priest Who sat at the right of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the Holy Things, and of the true Tabernacle (καὶ τῆς σκηνῆς τῆς ἀληθινῆς -

kai tēs skēnēs tēs alēthinēs), which the Lord pitched, and not man." The author of Hebrews is making an analogy between the High Priest who is a minister of the Holy Things in the earthly Tabernacle, and Christ, the High Priest, Who is a minister of the Holy Things in the True Tabernacle in Heaven. Also, in 9:11 the author further says that Christ is the High Priest of the greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made by hand, and not of this creation (καὶ τελειοτέρας σκηνῆς οὐ χειροποιήτου - kai teleiotéras skēnēs ou cheiropoiētou).

These passages from Hebrews reflect elements of Jewish theology and practice. The Jewish High Priest was the only one who was allowed to enter into the Holy of Holies, the innermost part of the Tabernacle or Temple, where the Ark of the Lord was kept, and even then, he could enter there only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) on the tenth day of the seventh month - Tishri. The Holy of Holies was the most sacred place, where God's Holy, Mystical Presence dwelt on earth, above the Ark of the Covenant, which held the Tables of the Law given to Moses. This Mystical Presence of God is called the Shekhinah. [17] In the Talmud, [18] Shekhinah became a

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[17] The meaning of Shekhinah is discussed more fully later in this chapter.

[18] The Jewish Talmud, considered by most Jews to be an authoritative guide and companion to the spiritual life, was compiled and written down (from the oral Tradition) in the early centuries of the Christian era. It consists of two parts: the Mishnah, or oral tradition of teaching that developed and was handed down beginning with the time of Moses; and the Gemara, or lengthy commentary in the form of debate

substitute for God's Holy Name, the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, [19] because the reverence for the transcendental Holiness of God gave rise to the reluctance of speaking God's Holy Name at all, due precisely to the belief that all of God's Being and Holiness and Power were contained in His Holy Name. Thus the Holy Name was too holy to be uttered by mortal

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and discussions about every possible aspect of the Mishnah, by the leading rabbis of the late pre-Christian and early Christian centuries. There are two versions of the Talmud: the major version is the Babylonian Tadmud, and the second one is the Palestinian. Beginning with the Babylonian Exile of the Jews in the sixth century B.C. a significant Jewish community existed in Babylonia. After the Roman conquest of Palestine and the destruction of Herod's Temple in 70 A.D., the Jewish intellectual center was in Babylonia. This is why the major Talmud originated there. It records the thinking of the best Jewish scholars of that period. (B.J. Bamberger, The Story of Judaism, Schocken Books, New York, 1972 (1954); J. Neusner, There we Sat Down, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1972; Baron and Blau, Judaism, Bobbs-Merrill Co., New York, 1954.)

[19] The Tetragrammaton, which literally means "four letters," refers to the ancient Jewish written name of God - YHWH or JHWH. Ancient Hebrew did not write vowel sounds, and thus "Yahweh" was spelt only with the four consonants. A system of notating the vowels in the Bible, necessary because Hebrew was less and less a spoken language, was developed between the sixth and tenth centuries A.D., and the result was the Massoretic test. However, since God's Holy Name was too holy and awesome to be spoken, the Hebrew word, Adonai, meaning "Lord," was always read in the place of the name YHWH. Consequently, the Massoretic text used the vowels of Adonai whenever YHWH's name appeared. The English translators of the King James Version (AV) of the Bible mistakenly combined the vowels of Adonai with the consonants of YHWH, and produced the name, "Jehovah," which doesn't correspond with any Hebrew word at all. It is generally accepted today that the proper vowels, and therefore the correct pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton is "Yahweh." (Cross, The Oxford Dictionary..., op. cit.; Bamberger, op. cit.)

Having established the linguistic use of the word, skēnē, let us now consider in the next chapter the visual forms which correspond to the word-use, and then, in the third chapter, proceed to examine the functions that, in turn, correspond to the visual forms.

Chapter Two

VISUAL FORMS OF THE SKĒNĒ

Some of the forms of the skēnē that correspond to the lexicon meanings are common-place, ordinary forms, with no special symbolic meaning or function. A tent is a tent; a canopy is a canopy; a dwelling-place is a dwelling-place; a grass hut is but a hut. But when is a tent more than just a tent; when is a canopy, dwelling-place, grass hut, more than the mere everyday, ephemeral forms? My primary thesis is that these forms become more than ordinary, everyday forms exactly when their function embues them with a cosmic-divine significance. Then, instead of a lowly tent, canopy, or grass hut, the forms become the dwelling-place of the Divine Presence, or the manner of commemorating a theophany, that, in a way, crystalizes the experience so that others might share in the benefits of the theophany. The concept of sacred space is essential to an understanding of the powerful and universal symbolism of the skēnē. [1] In fact, we might keep in mind as we continue our investigation of the skēnē, whether

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[1] See M. Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, op. cit., Chapter One, "Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred;" van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, op. cit., Vol. 2, Chapter 57, "Sacred Space;" and Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, Trans. Maria Jolas, Beacon Press, Boston, 1972 (1958).

most sacred space is delineated and set apart as sacred by a skēnē form, and whether, the more sacred a particular space might be, the greater the likelihood that there might be some skēnē form associated with it.

What exactly does a skēnē look like? Based on linguistic use, as discussed in the previous chapter, there are essentially two uncontested skēnē forms, only one of which is generally recognized as such - the theatre skēnē. The second, the Tabernacle of Moses is also an uncontestable skēnē because of the Septuagint translation of ʾohel, mishkan, and sukkah. First we will look briefly at the form of the ancient Greek and Roman theatres.

1. The Theatre skēnē

The theatre skēnē,[2] as we mentioned in the previous chapter, is the stage and stage-building that form the back-drop against which the sacred dramas of the ancient Greeks were enacted. Beginning with Sophocles, there was added painted back-drops used as scenery (called σκηνογραφία - skēnographía - skēnē-writings), and thus the words "scene," "scenery," and related words are derived directly from the word skēnē. We see in the plans of the theatres at Athens

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[2] Since this study concerns the form and significance of the skēnē as a universal symbol, there is no attempt to present a definitive study of the Greek and Roman theatre, for the development of the theatre is a complete study in itself. We here mention only those elements of the theatre which are pertinent to our study.

and Epidaurus (Figure 3) the general plan of the ancient theatres. The photos of the remains of the Theatre of Dionysus in Athens (Figure 93), of the theatres at Epidaurus (Figure 4), and at Priene (Figure 5), plus a suggested restoration of Priene (Figure 6), give a fuller view of what the theatres might have looked like. There were usually two or more levels, the lower of which normally had three sets of doors, the center one frequently being larger. These doors became a type of "royal doors," for the basic stage-setting was usually a palace, and the main characters were members of a royal or noble family. Thus, the skēnē both set the scene, and provided the sacred space for the royal appearances. Royalty is frequently associated with skēnē functions, as we shall see repeatedly throughout this study. In the Priene reconstruction one can see where the painted scenery would have hung, in the large, blank spaces on both stories. Furthermore, in the photo of Priene, the columns across the front are clearly visible; columns are often closely related to a variety of skēnē forms.

In the Roman development of the Greek theatre legacy, the theatre became an architectural unity of auditorium and stage.[3] The skēnē became a much higher, more architecturally elaborate form, and was enclosed within a virtual amphitheatre, as seen in the Augustan period theatre at Orange, in southern France (Figure 7). There are still the three sets of doors,

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[3] Heinz Kähler, The Art of Rome and Her Empire, Crown, New York, 1965, p. 26.

the row of columns, and the multiple tiers.

However, what did these theatres look like in their own time? I suspect that the suggested restoration of the Priene theatre is too modest and restrained, judging from three paintings at which we will look shortly, and because the Hellenistic period developed a constantly increasing taste for the lavish, ornate, colossal, and decorative - not only in architectural forms, but in all areas of life.

In the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. the skēnē was quite simple, and purely a Greek phenomenon. But by the fourth, third, and subsequent centuries, in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the theatres apparently were more three-dimensional, with the skēnē projecting out onto the stage more than the Priene reconstruction indicates.

The fragment of a Krater from Taranto, dating from the mid-fourth century B.C. (Figure 8), shows an architectural canopy projecting out from over one of the doors (possibly the left door) of the skēnē building wall. This canopy is supported by four columns; on the underside of the canopy stars are painted to indicate the heavens; surmounting the canopy is a triangular gable, typical of Greek and Roman temple architecture; and, there is a row of columns across the front. Each of these elements is found in most skēnē forms. That this krater fragment dates as early as the mid-fourth century B.C. is of interest, since other evidence is much later.

In the light of the Taranto fragment, the third century A.D. floor mosaic in Antioch of a drinking contest between Dionysos and Hercules is more intelligible (Figure 9). In the mosaic, we have a fully frontal, somewhat stylized portrayal of a skēnē similar to the Taranto Krater fragment. There are again four columns that carry a canopy. On the underside of the curved canopy are what appear to be recessed coffers, such as are found on the underside of many triumphal arches, on canopies over baptismal fonts and altars, and sometimes, on basilica apses, such as the early fourth century A.D. Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine. I suspect that rosettes or stars also might have been painted inside each of the recessed squares. In the skēnē depicted in this floor mosaic curtains are tied-back across the top of the scene - another prevalent component of skēnē forms. The subject matter is interesting, for it is an appearance of Greek gods. The skēnē as a setting for the appearance of divine or royal figures is a chief function associated with the skēnē.

In the well-known, illusionistic first century A.D. wall-painting at Herculaneum depicting a Roman theatre skēnē (Figure 10), we find a much more elaborate and ornate skēnē, which dates from approximately the same period (Augustan) as the theatre at Orange (Figure 8). In the Herculaneum house wall-painting, again we find the four columns supporting an architectural canopy over a double doorway. Above and behind the canopy are painted the architectural columns,

pediments and portals of the second tier of the skēnē. However, a major change has occurred compared with the less ornate Greek forms: the edge of the curtains shown across the top of the painting indicates the presence of stage curtains, possibly much like the stage curtains across the front of the traditional proscenium stage of our own era. An open theatre, such as those built by the Greeks, did not cordon-off a stage with curtains, because the singing and dancing of the chorus in the orchēstra was an important and integral part of the drama. However, the theatre at Orange shows how the Roman theatre had become enclosed on the sides. Most likely, the curtain hung across the front of the stage at a level even with the edges of the side walls of the scaenae frons. It has been suggested that the stage might have been roofed in. [4]

In the above examination of the visual form of one of the two uncontested skēnai, we see most of the fundamental elements of the skēnē: a multiple-tiered, vertical stage-setting with three doors in the bottom story. In the center was the largest door, and on each side, a canopy of heaven projected out from the wall above the doors, supported by four columns, two of which may be engaged to the walls. Frequently there was a lateral row of columns forming the support and basis of the front wall, surmounted by an architrave across the top. Skēnographía and curtains may have

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[4] Herbert Read, ed., Encyclopedia of the Arts, Meredith Press, New York, 1966, p. 437.

been suspended between the columns of the skēnē wall, and possibly in front of the stage as well (in the Roman theatres), thus enclosing the sacred space where the dramatic action occurred. [5]

2. The Tabernacle of Moses

Let us now consider the other incontestable skēnē, (incontestable due to the Septuagint translation), the Old Testament Tabernacle of Moses. [6] It is impossible to establish definitively what the form of the Tabernacle was, because it has all perished, unlike the architectural and other remains of the theatre skēnē, which descended from earlier examples, the details of which are still in question in spite of the visual evidence. The account in Exodus 25f. of the instructions given to Moses stating how to build the Tabernacle are not sufficiently clear in certain places to form a complete visual image. Figure 11, from the Encyclopedia Judaica, shows a suggested model of the original skēnē,

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[5] For further information, see Roy C. Flickinger, The Greek Theatre and Its Drama, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1918, pp. 57-107 - a very complete study of the Greek theatre; and a briefer study by Gilbert Norwood, Greek Tragedy, Methuen and Co., London, 1948 (1920), Chapter II, "The Greek Theatre and the Production of Plays," pp. 49-88.

[6] Similarly as for the consideration of the theatre, this discussion of the Tabernacle of Moses is likewise not intended to be a complete study, which would be beyond the scope of this inquiry. Rather, we will mention just those aspects which are relevant to our inquiry.

built, allegedly, according to the instructions given to Moses, but its accuracy seems questionable. The model seems excessively spartan, and I wonder whether it reflects the modern tendency to underestimate the abilities of the ancient, so-called "primitive" peoples. The Hebrews of the Exodus were the same people who had seen or built the very sophisticated, grandiose pyramids, temples, and palaces of Egypt. Moses himself had been raised in the splendor of the pharoah's palace. Even though the Tabernacle had to be portable, I doubt if they would have been satisfied with a Tabernacle of the Dwelling-Place of the Tables of the Covenant, and of the Lord's Shekhinah, that was as lowly and "primitive" as this proposed restoration suggests, where, for example, animal skins are simply thrown over a frame which housed the very Holy of Holies itself.

An alternative reconstruction by Ferguson (Figure 12) may be more realtistic in some ways, but there seem to be just as many problems as with the Levine reconstruction above. I suggest that the Ferguson model is inadequate primarily because it does not show the relationship between the parts of the Tabernacle. The Holy of Holies is covered, according to Exodus 26:14, (indicated by animal skins on top of the rear section), but the Holy Place, where the altar

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[7] For detailed discussion of the text of Exodus 25-28, see The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 1, Abingdon Press, New York, 1956, pp. 1020-1037.

was, could not be covered since the sacrifices were burned there in the open air. And where is the outer court? In Exodus 26 the directions for making the inner curtains designate loops on the top where clasps held them onto bars of acacia wood. The court was formed by linen curtains suspended between twenty pillars on the north and south, and ten pillars on the east and west, with a screen across the entrance two-fifths of the width. These things, among others, are absent from the Ferguson model. In fact, this model looks suspiciously like a very modern conception of a tent.

Figure 13 shows a basic ground plan for the Tabernacle, that, although from a seventeenth century manuscript, seems to correspond with other ground plans, especially the one in the late seventh century English Christian manuscript, the Codex Amiatinus, as well as, most importantly, with the biblical descriptions themselves.

What did the Tabernacle look like? Apparently, Jews and Christians of the early Christian centuries conceived of the Mosaic Tabernacle as being more sophisticated than either of these models, as is indicated in the late sixth or early seventh century A.D. manuscript, the Ashburnham Pentateuch (figure 14). The bottom scene of this illumination shows Moses and Aaron (flanked by Joshua, and Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abiud), going into the Tabernacle's Holy of Holies, which is surrounded by columns with curtains suspended between them. The two outer courts are indicated by the two successively higher curtain walls. The pointed tents

flanking the Tabernacle are labelled as being the tents of the children (or sons) of Israel. I suggest that this illumination was more closely based on authentic Jewish Tradition than the modern models we mentioned above. First of all, the Ashburnham Pentateuch seems to correspond accurately to the Exodus description. Secondly, it makes sense of countless little facts, traditions, customs, and visual evidence. Another reason why I contend that this illumination is accurate is that Jewish life laid enormous emphasis on Oral Tradition, only a portion of which was eventually written down and codified. The enormous importance of the Mosaic Tabernacle would clearly indicate, I maintain, that the oral and pictorial Tradition about it would have been carefully guarded. Furthermore, due to the conservative/preservative nature of the early Christians as well as the Jews, and to their strict adherence to Tradition, I suggest that in early portrayals of Old Testament scenes, Christian artists would have used already existing Hebrew visual prototypes as their models, as they did in music, liturgy and worship, architecture, theology, and countless ritual practices. Iconographic tradition has been extremely strong throughout the history of the Eastern Church (although weakened in recent centuries), and Christian iconographers, similar to their Jewish counterparts, were not permitted to deviate from iconographic canons, nor to simply invent scenes from their imaginations. [8] Thus I suggest that the

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[8] The Quinisext Council of 692 made a number of

Christian preservation of Tradition is derived from Jewish antecedents, and awareness of the more accessible Christian attitude can help us to better understand the prior Jewish heritage.

The strongest argument against the Encyclopedia Judaica model of the Tabernacle is the biblical evidence itself. An examination of the directions given to Moses by the Lord definitely does not correspond to the model given in either Jewish encyclopedia. Indeed, the portrayal in the Ashburnham Pentateuch, as mentioned, appears to correspond quite accurately to the biblical description.

All the directions in Exodus require only the finest materials - pure gold, silver, bronze, and fine blue, purple and scarlet linen - there is nothing at all "primitive," as the established models suggest. The pattern for the Tabernacle and its furniture is the very heavenly dwelling-place of the Lord Himself, as is frequently explained by the Church Fathers and historians (Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, and Eusebius of Caesarea), in addition to the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Lord tells Moses: "You shall

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regulations concerning iconography, and then, during and after the Iconoclastic Controvery, it was required that iconographic canons be adhered to strictly. In various regional councils, different iconographic issues have been dealt with. Manuals of iconographic patterns and verbal directions for colors, etc. were established, called in Russian, podlinnik, and hermeneia in Greek. Due to the theology of the icon, whereby the image is viewed as a reflection of the prototype, and whereby reverence accorded to the image is passed on to the prototype, strict regulation was necessary to guard against idolatry and superstition.

make me a sanctuary (holy place - ἁγίασμα - hagíasma), and I will appear among you" (Exodus 25:8).

Indeed, it is perhaps impossible to really determine what the Tabernacle looked like precisely. I suggest that the Ashburnham Pentateuch visualization might be about the closest we can get. Certainly the encyclopedia models are to be rejected. Some scholars say that the account in Exodus is not valid, because it was embroidered several centuries later. On the contrary, I tend to think that something as crucial as the form of the Tabernacle would be carefully guarded through the centuries. It is difficult for us today to comprehend the oral tradition, and how generations of persons would commit to memory the equivalent of hundreds of pages of text.

In the process of determining the forms of the Holy Place of God, let us also briefly consider the portrayal of the Ark of the Covenant, since that is what was housed in the Tabernacle. When the Hebrews moved (early nomadic period), or went to war (later period), they carried the Ark of the Covenant with them. The Mosaic instructions recorded in Exodus indicate that rods went through rings on the Ark so that it could be carried, as is shown in Figure 15. The proportions of the Ark in this manuscript illumination are too small, but we see that the Ark was conceived of as a cube with a triangular pediment on top.

The Ark is depicted differently in an early third

century A.D. at Dura-Europas Synagogue fresco (figure 16), where the Philistines are returning the Ark to the Israelites, due to the plagues of death and destruction that ravaged the Philistines after they had captured the Ark of the Lord. Their priests and diviners had instructed that it be returned on a new cart drawn by two milch cows (I Samuel 5-6). In this fresco, the Ark is not square, but rectangular, in the 1:3 proportions of the Holy of Holies itself. [9] The Ark has coffered doors, and is curved on top, with a veil over the top, and with a pointed tent covering the entire Ark.

Another image of the Ark on a cart (Figure 17), possibly based on a biblical reference to the Hebrews bringing the Ark on a cart to David (III Samuel 6:3), is found on a frieze in the Capernaum Synagogue (second-third century A.D.). Here it looks like a miniature temple, with double doors with a semi-circular shell over them. It is flanked by columns, with additional columns along the sides. The roof appears to be a curved, barrel vault.

Somewhat similar in form to the Capernaum Synagogue depiction of the Ark is another fresco at Dura-Europas, showing not just the Ark, but the First Temple of Solomon

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[9] In the Tabernacle and in the Temples, the entire sanctuary was in a 3:1 ratio, originally 30 x 10 cubits, later doubled in Herod's Temple. The curtain separating the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place divided the space into a square (10 x 10) and a rectangle twice its size (10 x 20), respectively.

(Figure 18). This fresco is approximately contemporary with the Capernaum Synagogue, since the former was constructed sometime prior to 256 A.D., when the town was destroyed. This fresco is entitled "The Priesthood of Aaron," and portrays the Ark of the Covenant, with a semi-circular top and coffered doors, standing within the Holy of Holies, which is in the shape of a Greek temple, with columns and pediment. Outside the Holy of Holies stands the High Priest, Aaron (AΡΩΝ), in the Holy Place or Inner Court, where the Menorah and the Table of the Shewbread are located, just outside the curtains of the Holy of Holies. Also, in the same court are various animals awaiting sacrifice on the altar which was also located in the Holy Place. At the bottom of the scene there are three portals piercing the outer wall of the Temple precincts into the outer court. These three entrances have semi-circular shells over them, and the central portal is larger than the side ones. The curtains at the upper right and left might indicate that the Holy Place was curtained off from the outer court, and that the figures beneath the curtains are inside the inner court.

This fresco of the Temple is most likely intended to be Solomon's Temple, built in the tenth century B.C. However, Aaron, Moses' brother, died several hundred years before the Temple was built. I suggest that the idea being represented here is that Aaron's priesthood continued unchanged from the Tabernacle into the Temple. Thus the transference that has

occurred is most striking: the skēnē - the Dwelling-Place of the Lord - has been transformed. According to Exodus, the skēnē/Tabernacle of the Lord, which housed the Ark containing the Tablets of the Law, was a skēnē made of curtains, columns, and tanned animal skins, plus precious metals, fabrics, and wood. It was here that Aaron served as High Priest. However, in the tenth century B.C. Solomon built a permanent dwelling for the Ark. Was this Temple still a skēnē? [10] I contend that it was, because wherever the Ark of the Covenant was, there was the Presence of the Lord, and it made little difference what materials were used to construct the Holy of Holies. The experience of the Jews of the third century A.D. (after the final destruction of the Temple by Titus in 70 A.D.), as reflected in Figure 18, was that Aaron's highpriesthood, (through his descendants), was no different in the Temple than it was in the Tabernacle. Both were the Dwelling-Place of the Lord on earth. Within both were housed the Ark, the Mercy-Seat with its flanking Cherubim, and the continuously burning oil lamp within the curtained Holy of Holies. Repeated biblical

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[10] There seems to be a change in terminology that accompanies the change from the Mosaic Tabernacle to Solomon's Temple. In the Septuagint, the customary term used for the Temple is ναός - naos' - from the verb ναίω - naiō - meaning "to dwell." The Greek-like Temple housed only the Holy of Holies, with a vestibule in front of it with the Menorah and Shewbread; there were still the uncovered inner and outer courts. Possibly the term naos' referred to the entire precinct, and skēnē would still be reserved for the Holy of Holies. Naos' is the customary Greek term to designate a temple of any kind.

references state that the Lord dwells between the Cherubim over the Mercy-Seat, a reference to the Shekhinah. We saw in Chapter One that the same three letters, s, k, n, appear in mishkan, Shekhinah, and skēnē, which thus linked them inseparably in the minds of the ancient Hebrews and of the translators of the Septuagint, which was then transmitted to the early Christian theologians. One might say, then, that where the Shekhinah was, there was a skēnē, since the Hebrew root of Shekhinah is $s^{a}k^{e}n$, which means "to pitch a tent, suggestive of the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness where God's glory abode." [11]

That this transference occurred is clearly indicated by a scene in the fifth century A.D. mosaics on the triumphal arch of Sta. Maria Maggiore in Rome (Figure 19). There we see Moses and two companions being protected from the stones being thrown at them, by a cloud, designated as the Divine Presence by God's hand shown coming from heaven. The cloud is at the doorway of the Tabernacle to which Moses is running for sanctuary. I suggest that without a doubt this cloud is the Shekhinah, because the Shekhinah was frequently visualized as a cloud, and that cloud appeared at the entrance of the skēnē. However, we observe here that the skēnē is not a tent, the only form that existed in Moses' lifetime, but that the skēnē is an architectural temple

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[11] J.T. Burtchaell, "Shekhinah," in The New Catholic Encyclopedia, op. cit.

structure with columns, triangular pediment, and steps. Thus, we conclude that there was a visual transference of form (from tent to temple), when there was a continuation of function, i.e., serving as the Dwelling-Place of the Divine Presence.

Let us take a closer look at this process of transference of function, and consequent transference or even exchange of form, such as just observed at Sta. Maria Maggiore, and seen previously at the Dura-Europas Synagogue. We will note that the transference of both form and function first was passed on to Solomon's Temple, then to Zerubbabel's (the Second) Temple and Herod's Temple, and then to the Synagogue.

Solomon was the first to build a permanent home for the Ark of the Covenant (Figure 20). [12] Most everything significant about the Tabernacle was transferred to the Temple, including the religious functions of the Tabernacle. The very presence of the Ark and of the Shekhinah consecrated the permanent Temple. With the establishment of the Temple of the Lord on Mount Zion, Jerusalem became the religious and political focal point for all the twelve tribes of Israel. Sacred rituals became increasingly developed. As Jerusalem grew as a political power, the grandeur of the

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[12] Compilation of sources on the Temple, as discussed here and following, include: Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, Scribner's, 1930 ed.; Cross, Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, op. cit.; Alfred Edersheim, The Temple: Its Ministry and Services, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1958 reprint; Encyclopedia Judaica, op. cit.; The Jewish Encyclopedia, op. cit.; The New Catholic Encyclopedia, op. cit.; and the biblical descriptions themselves.

Temple ritual had to keep pace. Palestine became embroiled in political intrigues, civil wars, and foreign disputes. The transference of the Ark and its associated worship to Solomon's Temple in ca. 959 B.C. was a jubilant day in a continuous, unbroken line of Covenant, Presence, and Worship.

What did Solomon's Temple look like? It is impossible to construct a complete visual image of his Temple solely on the basis of the descriptions in I Kings 6-7, II Chronicles 3, and Ezekiel 40-41ff. [13] We know the proportions: its length was three times its width. This 3 x 1 rectangle was comprised of three equal parts, each a square measuring 1 x 1 modules. The square at the east end constituted the Holy of Holies, within which two cherubim stood above the Ark. Each wing of the cherubim was one-fourth the width, so that wing-to-wing they spanned the entire width of the Most Holy Place.

The inner court of the Tabernacle became divided in two when the First Temple was built. The place of sacrifice, of necessity, remained outside: the square altar was the same size as each of the three squares of the Temple. The middle area of the Temple comprised the other part of the Holy Place: it contained five lampstands and five tables facing each other on the north and south sides. The square at the

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[13] For fuller discussion, see the appropriate entries in The Interpreter's Bible, op. cit., and The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol IV, Abingdon Press, New York, 1962, pp. 534-559, article on "The Temple."

west end was a vestibule. The walls and ceiling of the entire Temple were lined with gold. However, there is no mention at all about the shape of the roof - it could have been flat (most scholars seem to think it was), or it could have been a pitched roof with a pediment. (Representations of the Temple made in the early Christian era all show it with a pediment, but very possibly the current Greek style was projected back onto earlier forms in order to demonstrate the continuity of meaning between the current forms and the prior ones.) A most prominent component of the Temple structure were the two pillars in front of the Temple, on the south side called Jachin, and on the north called Boaz. These two pillars are always included in any portrayal of any of the three Temples, no matter how schematic the representation might be. The height of the columns was equal to twice the width of the Temple. However, the biblical narrative indicates that the height of the vestibule was six times the width of the structure, which would be twice the length, and three times the height of the columns. (It is not clear whether the entire building was the same height as the vestibule.) These seem to be most unusual and very strange proportions. It is possible that the measurements could refer to the inner dimensions, and that flanking each long wall there were a series of chambers used for storage, preparation, and vesting, that added to the exterior dimensions. And it is further possible that there might have been some type of

exterior colonnade or porch that might have additionally resulted in more harmonious proportions. In any event, Solomon's Temple was renowned as the epitome of a glorious temple, indeed worthy of the most supreme God. [14]

Sometime before the sixth century B.C. the Ark of the Covenant disappeared - no one knows what happened to it.

The unbroken line of Covenant, Presence and Worship, extending for about 600 years, from the Mosaic Tabernacle through Solomon's Temple, was severed in 587-586 B.C., when the Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar, captured Jerusalem, burned the Temple to the ground, and carried off the Jewish leaders into exile. [15] After the Babylonian Captivity was over, the rebuilding of the Temple commenced in 520 B.C., due to the influence of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, and to the leadership of Zerubbabel, a leader of the returned exiles and govenor of Judah. This Temple, dedicated in 516 B.C., is called the Second Temple, or sometimes, Zerubbabel's Temple (Figure 21). Much definitive information about the Second Temple is lacking, but it is generally acknowledged that the Second Temple followed the ground-plan

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[14] So prodigious was the reputation of the glory of Solomon's Temple, that when Justinian had Constantine's Church of the Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia, consecrated on Christmas Eve, 537, the Emperor declared, "Ah-ha! I have outdone you, Solomon."

[15] For further details about these historical events, see any standard Old Testament text, such as Bernard W. Anderson's Understanding the Old Testament, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1957, or a history of Judaism.

of its predecessor as closely as possible. The Second Temple was then plundered and desecrated in 168 B.C. by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, King of Syria, but three years later, under Judas Maccabaeus, the Syrian rule was overthrown, new temple sacred furniture was built, and the Temple was reconsecrated/rededicated, celebrated since then by Jews as the Feast of Chanukah.

At the end of the first century B.C. Herod the "Great," last of the legal Hasmonaean (Maccabaean) rulers, and appointed by the Romans to be the King of the Jews, attempted to curry Jewish favor by rebuilding Zerubbabel's Temple, greatly increasing its size, splendor, and lavishness (Figures 22 and 23). The Temple proper was completed in eighteen months (ca. 18 B.C.), built by 1000 specially trained priests, but the rest of the courts, gates, walls, and other Temple precinct buildings took years to complete; indeed, finishing touches were still being given six to seven years before its ultimate destruction in 70 A.D. It was Herod's Temple that stood in Christ's lifetime. (However, it is interesting to note that there is not a single mention in any Hebrew literature of the period that the rebuilding was under the instigation of Herod.)

In 70 A.D. the Roman legions, under the Emperor Titus, destroyed the Temple, carrying off as booty all of its sacred furnishings, and stripping it of its precious materials. On the Arch of Titus, which depicts the emperor's "victories,"

are portrayed the Temple's great Menorah and its Table of Shewbread being carried off by the Roman soldiers. The Temple was never rebuilt, and the Moslem mosque called the "Dome of the Rock" now stands on the Temple site on Mount Zion. After 70 A.D. Jewish worship shifted entirely to the synagogue and the home, and the Jewish Diaspora expanded further.

Synagogues first developed, apparently, when the Jews were in Exile in Babylonia, and the Temple was destroyed; then continued in the Diaspora (when people had no access to the Temple), and flourished even in Palestine after Ezra's reforms in the fifth-fourth centuries B.C. The synagogue (συναγωγή - synagogē - from the verb meaning "to assemble" or "to gather together"), was a place to meet, in lieu of the Temple, in order to read, hear, learn, and discuss the Law (especially in the form of the Pentateuch), and to offer prayers and hymns and Psalms, but not sacrifices, which could be offered only at the Temple in Jerusalem. The visual focal point of the synagogue was the Torah Shrine, where the scrolls of the Torah were kept. Paricularly after the final destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., when there was no longer any Holy of Holies, the synagogue's Torah Shrine may be viewed as a substitute skēnē, substituting the Ark of the Law in place of the Ark of the Covenant. The new Ark contained the scrolls of the Law - the Torah - whereas the old Ark contained the Tables of the Law. The religion of the

synagogue came to be viewed as a more spiritualized religious manifestation, in contrast to the more gross manifestation of the animal sacrifices of the Temple. The religion of the synagogue was (and is) a religion of the Torah. In the Torah is found the revelation and manifestation of the Lord, no longer in the visible Shekhinah and stone tablets, but in the verbal accounts of the Lord's theophanies and commandments, concerning how He expects His people to live and act on a daily basis. With the growing spiritualization of Judaism through the influence of the prophets and the synagogues, the Jews gradually came to realize that the most tangible manifestation of the Lord accessible to them was His Word. Then, the Ark of the Law was placed in the position of greatest prominence in the synagogue, and received the greatest ornamentation. The Torah Shrine was situated in the front of the synagogue, as the focal point, and would be oriented toward Jerusalem.

The most interesting point is that the Ark of the Law has the same form as the Ark of the Covenant; that is, it looks like a small temple, e.g., a small skēnē (Figures 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28). In fact, the Beth Alpha Synagogue floor mosaic (Figure 24) could equally be either the Ark of the Covenant or of the Law.[8] (Usually the Ark of the Law

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[8] The similarity, I suggest, is intentional, in order to purposefully illustrate the close relationship between the two, to show that the synagogue's Torah Shrine (Ark of the Law) is the direct continuation of the meaning and significance of the original Ark of the Covenant of Moses and the First Temple, which contained the Tablets of the Ten Commandments.

has circles which represent the Torah scrolls.) The Beth Alpha mosaic is almost identical with that on a glass dish in Rome's Museo Borgiano (Figure 25), identified as the Ark of the Law, and with that on another glass dish from the fourth century A.D., found in the Roman Jewish catacombs (Figure 26). Each of these depict two Menorahs and two guardian beasts in addition to the Ark. In comparing the form of the Ark with a detail of the "Priesthood of Aaron" fresco at Dura-Europas that shows the Ark of the Covenant inside the Temple or Tabernacle (Figure 27), we find that the Torah Shrine/Ark of the Law has maintained basically the same form throughout the centuries, as seen also in the modern Ark in the Amsterdam Sephardic Synagogue (Figure 28). All of these were probably considered as forms of the original skēnē, the Tabernacle of Moses, containing the original Ark of the Covenant. Even in the Second and Third Temples, after the Ark of the Covenant had disappeared, the Holy of Holies existed and functioned as though it still contained the Ark. The function of the central skēnē (the Holy of Holies) continued unabated in the experience of the people, and still the high priest entered but once a year on Yom Kippur (to sprinkle the altar with the purifying blood of a sacrificial animal).

By the end of the fourth century B.C., with the spread of Hellenistic culture throughout the Mediterranean after the conquests of Alexander the Great, it is very difficult to distinguish native Hebrew architectural forms, because

the Greek temple style became so pervasive. Since we have little of significance prior to that time, all subsequent conceptions of what prior monuments looked like are first passed through the sieve of Greek forms.

Regarding the development from Mosaic Tabernacle to Temple, and from Ark of the Covenant to Ark of the Law, we see that there was little or no change in the deep underlying function of each form, and consequently, there is a continuity of form. Therefore, I contend that the Mosaic Tabernacle, the Temple, the Synagogue, and the Arks of the Covenant and of the Law all can be considered as uncontested skēnai.

Furthermore, we note that both the Greek theatre skēnē and the Hebrew Tabernacle skēnē (and its subsequent forms) developed from tents to wood, and then to stone architectural forms, and that both of these forms are characterized by columns supporting either a canopy or a triangular pediment or gabled roof, and by curtains hung between columns, which, in both cases, are carried over from earlier forms.

Let us now turn our attention to a discussion of the functions associated with these skēnē forms.

Chapter Three

FUNCTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SKĒNĒ

Let us now examine some of the functions associated with the visual forms of the skēnē discussed in Chapter Two, the Greek theatre skēnē, and the Old Testament Tabernacle and its related forms, the Temple and the Torah shrine.

1. The Dramatic Function of the Classical Theatre Skēnē

The function associated with the skēnē of the Greek theatre obviously is the drama. The classical Greek drama, it should be recalled, was a sacred performance dedicated to Dionysos, or Bacchus, who was the god of wine, ecstasy, and fertility. Closely interrelated to fertility is the whole cycle of death and rebirth of life, especially of the seasons, and hence, of the land and crops. The characteristics of what is known as the Dionysian element of life are all derived from his primary role as the wine-fertility god. The Dionysian dimension of experience concerns the emotional, mystical, meta-rational, ecstatic, imaginative, and the unconscious - all traits that are

classified symbolically as earth and the feminine. [1] In direct contrast to the Dionysian is the Apollonian dimension of existence, which involves the intellectual, cognitive, rational, controlled, conscious, spirit, will-power, and judgment - symbolically the sky and the masculine component of existence and personality. [2]

It is largely the Dionysian elements that are involved in the play-activity, and the plays that were enacted in the Greek theatre were part of the annual religious festivals (of seasons and crops). The major festival was in the Spring, in honor of Dionysos, called the "Greater" or "City Dionysia," [3] when the victory of life over death is the most jubilant. Thus, as the sacred drama, dedicated to Dionysos, is associated with the skēnē, so likewise, by extension, the Dionysian characteristics must be associated with the skēnē.

Let us examine this thesis a little closer. Is it, in

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[1] All of these Dionysian characteristics are connected with the very complex symbolism of the Moon, with its cycles of waxing and waning (e.g. birth, life, death), its interrelationship with biological cycles of nature and of women, and thus of fertility or victory of life over death. (See J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, Philosophy Library, New York, 1962. essay on "Moon." pp. 204-206.)

[2] All of these Apollonian characteristics are connected with the symbolism of the Sun. (See Cirlot's essay on "Sun," pp. 302-304.) Perfection or completeness is the result of the marriage of Sun and Moon (or Sun and Earth), King and Queen, brother and sister. (Cirlot, Ibid., p. 304.)

[3] Oates and O'Neill, op. cit., p. xviii.

fact, only the Dionysian traits that are to be found in the Greek theatre? Correspondingly, is it only the Dionysian elements that are involved in fertility? Common sense indicates an obvious "no," for both masculine and feminine polarities are necessary to create new life. Heaven and earth must come together in order to have the spring-time fertility, symbolized and actualized by the rain that comes from heaven to fertilize the earth. Play, or a play, which is purely Dionysian would be totally unstructured, chaotic, and random. The unconscious, imaginative, and ecstatic needs the control and rational direction and ordering that the Apollonian can give. The puppy or little child might be purely Dionysian in the ecstatic abandon of its play, but to be fully creative, that is, to bring order out of chaos, or to bring forth new life, be it a creature, a crop, a concept, or a drama, a delicate balance of the Dionysian and Apollonian polarities is necessary. Insufficient rain causes drought; too much rain causes flood; infertility is the result in either case.

How, then, might we understand the central role that Dionysos has in the Greek drama, if it is the balance of Dionysian and Apollonian that is necessary in order to be fruitful? Possibly the answer lies in a certain dual nature of the Dionysian symbolism. Perhaps, on the one hand, he represents all the polar opposites of the Apollonian traits, where the union of both are necessary for creative life, yet on the other hand, since he is the god of fertility, he rejoices in and symbolizes the union of opposites which is

very prerequisite for life. Furthermore, it might be precisely this paradoxical quality of Dionysos and his dual role, which finds expression in the, at times, almost androgynous portrayals of Dionysos. [4] Supporting these ideas is the modern psychological theory of Carl Jung and his followers, who maintain that in order to release the creative energies within a person, both the masculine and feminine components, the anima and the animus, Apollonian and Dionysian, must be brought together, balanced and harmonized. [5]

Consequently, possibly the theatre and its skēnē are not as Dionysian as it first appeared, but rather, are testimonies that the affirmation and creation of life is dependent upon the coming together of polar opposites, the product of which, in this instance, is the creative life of the sacred plays that are enacted within the theatre's sacred space.

Sometimes the plays deal with the ordering, and therefore balancing, of the Dionysian and Apollonian elements, such as the conflicts between the furies and the rational social order. I suggest that this may be seen as an allegory

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[4] For example, the wall painting at Herculaneum where Dionysos is covered with huge grapes, which look more like breasts, similar to the "Diana of Ephesus."

[5] For example: Carl G. Jung, Ed., Man and His Symbols, Doubleday, New York, 1964; Erich Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, op. cit.; and C.G. Jung, Aion, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970 (1959).

of the process of civilization. The civilizing process as the affirmation of life, order, and creation is a theme that appears ubiquitously in connection with the skēnē. [6]

Let us briefly look at some other elements of the dramatic function of the theatre skēnē.

2. The Nature of the Classical Greek Drama According to Aristotle

The nature of the classical Greek drama (primarily tragedy) that was dedicated to Dionysos and performed within the sacred precincts of the skēnē was analyzed by Aristotle in his Poetics. [7] According to him, the excellence of tragedy is that it portrays the perfection that Nature (φύσις - phýsis) intends, but which is usually thwarted in actual life. Nature is always teleological: it aims at that state of perfection which is the end purpose for each thing, each creature, each activity. Tragedy (poetry) imitates Nature exactly insofar as it perceives the higher universals

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[6] The Dionysian festivals perhaps also served a balancing function for classical Greek life itself, which possessed a dominant Apollonian element, with its philosophical quests, and its imposition of order over the barbarian chaos. The Roman ethos, by comparison, seemed to lack the Dionysian balance, and became almost purely Apollonian, a characteristic of the West that seems to continue to this day, in contrast to the Eastern European civilization. One manifestation of this contrast is seen in the Dionysian-Apollonian balance of Greek, Byzantine, Slavic Christianity, as opposed to the highly Apollonian nature of the Roman Catholic Church.

[7] Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, Trans. by S.H. Butcher, Dover Press, New York, 1951 (1894).

and end perfection. (Good) tragedy accomplishes this imitation by eliminating the mundane trivia of historical life which normally blind us to perceiving Nature's true purpose and meaning, which is to attain teleological perfection or excellence. Says Aristotle: "Poetry ... is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular." [8] The tragedy that achieves its own excellence is both a microcosm and a macrocosm, insofar as it reveals universal reality through particulars (microcosm), yet selects only those particulars that contribute to the fuller understanding of the organic wholeness of the universal (macrocosm). [9]

Thus the skēnē both sets the stage for the sacred drama, and shapes the sacred space that delineates the boundaries of a microcosm wherein the cosmos is made known by means of sacred play, which in turn, embues the sacred drama with a cosmic-divine significance.

Let us now consider the function of the second skēnē that has been discussed.

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[8] Ibid., ix, 3; pp. 34-35.

[9] Please note that the references to microcosm and macrocosm are this author's, and not the terms used by Aristotle in this context.

3. The Religious Function of the Tabernacle of Moses

The function associated with the Old Testament Mosaic Tabernacle of Meeting (Witness, or Testimony), Solomon's Temple, and the Ark of the Covenant they were built to house, is obviously religious. As suggested above, we may discern four closely interwoven threads of a single precious cloth which comprise the religious function of the skēnē. The four aspects are: (1) the commemoration of a theophany; (2) creation of the earthly dwelling-place of the Divine; (3) liturgical action as a means of recreating past theophanies as present events; and (4) sacred ritual as response to the Divine. Each of these four aspects of the religious function must be understood as facets of a single, organic, and meaningful whole, which can be distinguished, but rarely separated.

a. Commemoration of a Theophany

The first aspect of the religious function of the Tabernacle skēnē is that it commemorates a theophany (theophanies). Some of the most awesome, moving moments in the Old Testament are the descriptions in Exodus of Moses' encounters with God on Mt. Sinai. After being in God's Holy Presence, Moses' face shown so brightly that the people could not bear to gaze on him; so he had to cover his head with a veil so that they could see him. The people could not encounter God as directly as Moses could, yet God wished to reveal Himself to the people in a manner which they could

understand, and to which they could relate. Thus, He inscribed His Ten Commandments in stone as a visible sign of His Presence, and of His Covenant with the children of Israel. But, just as Moses had to veil his head so that he might approach the people, so even the stone tablets inscribed by God Himself also had to be veiled within a special Ark and Tabernacle. This was not because the stone tablets had to be protected, but to protect the people from getting too close to such a manifestation of God, lest they be burned. [10] There are various biblical references to people dying because they touched the Ark (e.g. Uzzah, II Samuel 6:6-7). Also the Ark spread death and destruction when captured by the unbelieving Philistines.

In addition to receiving the Tablets of the Torah from God, Moses also received complete instructions about how to construct a place adequate to house the holy Tablets. We recall that the model for the earthly Tabernacle was the heavenly Tabernacle itself. [11] In order to approach the people in a manner that they could understand, the Invisible

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[10] In the third troparion of the eighth ode of the "Canon for Preparation for Holy Communion," this idea is clearly expressed in relation to receiving Holy Communion (the Heavenly Tabernacle): "I tremble, taking fire, lest I should burn as wax and hay, O dread Mystery. How can I, who am clay, partake of the divine Body and Blood and become incorruptible." (Prayer Book, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York, 3rd edition, 1979, p. 316.)

[11] Various places in the New Testament, as well as in the Church Fathers, explain that Christ is the new Tabernacle on earth, the prototype of which was Moses' Tabernacle in the wilderness (John's Prologue, and the Epistle to the Hebrews).

had to become visible, in the form of the Tablets, in the form of the Ark of the Covenant, and in the form of the entire Tabernacle with all of its furnishings. The Ark and its Tablets sanctified the space where they were kept, and the skēnē, the form of which was given by God Himself, modelled after the pattern of the Heavenly skēnē, delineates that sacred space.

b. Creation of the Earthly Dwelling-Place of the Divine

There is a second element of the religious function of the Tabernacle skēnē closely related to the first, namely, that it forms the earthly dwelling-place of the Divine Presence. That the Tabernacle serves this function is also based on Moses' encounter with God on Mt. Sinai, for the Lord told Moses to make a Holy-Place for Him, and that He would appear among them (Exodus 25:8). His Divine Presence, as outlined in Chapter One, is the Shekhinah (q.v.), visualized as a cloud seen at the entrance of the Holy of Holies, and also covering the Tabernacle, and with Whom Moses conversed. It is this same pillar of cloud that led the Hebrew people by day during their wandering through the Sinai wilderness, and was seen as a pillar of fire leading them and filling the Tabernacle by night (Exodus 40:34-38).

Today we seem to have difficulty understanding the motivating principle behind the idea of having a Holy-Place on earth in which God dwells. We question why God needs such a Holy-Place, and further, how He can be confined to

some earthly, temporal place, no less to many temporal places. I contend that we are not simply dealing with the "primitive" mind who establishes such holy-places and (mistakenly) thinks that God somehow resides there, but that we are dealing with universal, archetypal experiences, but ones much suppressed in our society.

Of course, it is not God who needs a dwelling-place on earth, but humans who have the need. It is difficult for us to deal with and understand the meta-rational, the apophatic dimension of religion and its concept of the otherness of God and His unapproachability, or what Rudolf Otto terms the "numinous" or the "mysterium tremendum." [12]

If we endeavor to develop an awareness of the non-rational or meta-rational dimension of existence, we can recognize that humans need a specially set-apart space, well veiled, so that we will be protected from getting too close to the Numinous One, closer than we are able to tolerate. Furthermore, as creatures of the material world, we need a tangible, visible reality to lead us beyond to the higher, invisible Truth and Reality.

To help us understand this experience better, I suggest a parallel with energy. The universe is filled with energy: perhaps the universe is energy. All living things have

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[12] The Idea of the Holy, Trans. John W, Harvey, Galaxy-Oxford University Press, New York, 1963 (1923).

energy fields around them, although most people cannot (consciously) see the energy until it has been focused in a light bulb, electrical machinery, lightning, or a laser beam. Yet, whether perceived visibly or not, the energy can still affect or even harm persons or things, especially in the hands of someone who can focus the energy of the universe. I suggest that God is like energy: He is everywhere, but most people cannot perceive Him until His Energies can be focused in some particular way, in some particular place.[13] Thus, the idea behind God's desire to have a Holy Place where He might dwell among people, is that He wishes to communicate with, and be known by people. Thus, He comes in ways persons can apprehend, if not fully comprehend.

c. Liturgical Action as Means of Recreating Past Theophanies

In the absence of the on-going, visible Presence of the Shekhinah, as experienced in the Mosaic Tabernacle and First Temple, there is a third aspect of the religious function of the skēnē that arises more prominently: that by means of sacred rituals, the Divine Presence might somehow be enduced to dwell in a certain place; by ritual

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[13] Numerous Church Fathers discuss the distinction between God's Energies and His Essence, which might be considered a parallel to Aristotle's distinction between Actuality and Potentiality. The discussion is central to St. Gregory Palamas' explanation that the vision of the Uncreated Light of Mt. Tabor refers to God's Energies, and not to His Essence.

commemoration of salvation-history's past theophanies (usually on feast days), those theophanies might be recreated (recreation) and re-presents (representation) as present theophanies, so that subsequent generations of people might be enabled to encounter the Divine Presence, to the extent that they are able to apprehend and comprehend. [14]

d. Sacred Ritual and Worship as Response to the Divine

How are people going to react when they apprehend a theophany or manifestation of the Divine Presence? They might react as St. Peter did on Mt. Tabor (loc. cit.), and wish to build a skēnē. Coupled with such a response is commonly the instinct to offer sacrifice, praise,

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[14] For example, the hymns of many feast days (in the Orthodox Church's hymnography) clearly state the experience of the feast as a present reality:

"Today the Virgin gives birth to the Transcendent One..."
(Kontakion, Christmas)

"Today Thou hast revealed Thyself unto the universe..."
(Kontakion, Theophany)

"Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery..."
(Troparion, Annunciation)

"Yesterday, O Christ, I was buried with Thee, and today I rise again with Thy rising..."
(Canon, Ode 3 Troparion, Pascha)

"Today is the prelude of the goodwill of God...

"The most pure Temple of the Savior ... is presented today to the house of the Lord..."
(Troparion and Kontakion, Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple)

thanksgiving, and other forms of worship. Whereas one might worship anywhere, the particular focus of response is likely to be where the Divine was made known by means of a specific manifestation, usually in the tabernacle or temple built to commemorate the theophany. Thus, in addition to the Holy of Holies where the Divine Radiance was shielded in order to protect the people, there was the need for a somewhat less holy place where sacred actions might be enacted. The performance of sacred actions is therefore the fourth element of the religious function of the Old Testament Tabernacle skēnē.

Yet even the formal, public response to the theophany and the Shekhinah became prescribed and regulated to a large extent by the Mosaic Law. The nature of Jewish ritual is a study all its own, but for our purposes here, let it suffice to indicate that the basic elements of Jewish sacred actions (as outlined in Leviticus) included: a strong emphasis on sacrifice; various rituals of cleanliness; ritual commemorations of special saving events, the most important of which was the Passover and Exodus from Egypt; rituals of repentence and atonement (especially Yom Kippur); and a gradual development of hymns, psalms, prayers, Scripture readings and expositions on them, and rites of daily worship offerings of praise and adoration, thanksgiving, repentence, and petition. There was a very long, gradual process of development of Jewish liturgy and worship, from the

Tabernacle, to the Temple, to the Synagogue. Many elements cannot be dated precisely, and there are differences of views among various scholars about when certain practices, prayers, psalms, etc. were developed, as well as conflicting views regarding the visual forms and Jewish iconography. [15]

In conclusion, we see that there is both a dramatic function and a religious function associated with the skēnē. However, these two are closely related, for through the use of drama, an underlying religious function is expressed in the Greek theatre, and the liturgical action and sacred rituals associated with the religious action and sacred rituals associated with the religious function of the Tabernacle are frequently enacted through dramatic action.

In concluding this chapter, let us recapitulate the four aspects of the religious function of the skēnē, since we will be referring back to them later in this study. These aspects are:

- to commemorate a theophany;
- to create the earthly dwelling-place of the Divine;
- to recreate past theophanies through liturgical

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[15] Based on the following studies of Jewish liturgy: Frank Gavin, Jewish Antecedents for the Christian Sacraments, KTAV Publishing House, New York, 1968 (1928 by SPCK); A.Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and Its Development, Schocken Books, New York, 1972 (1932); Eric Werner, The Sacred Bridge: Liturgical Parallels in Synagogue and Early Church, Schocken, Books, New York, 1970 (1959); Louis Boyer, Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer, Trans. C.U. Quinn, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana, 1968.

action, in order to make them present realities for subsequent generations;

- to respond to the manifestation of the Divine by means of sacred rituals and worship.

Let us not forget that each of these four aspects are very closely interwoven and interdependent; that they are distinguishable, but not separable. Furthermore, let us recall that we saw in Chapter Two that the functions associated with Moses' skēnē/Tabernacle in the wilderness, continue in an unbroken line to subsequent skēnai, to the three Jewish Temples, and then to the synagogues.

We will now inquire how the linguistic use, the forms, and the functions of the skēnē are interrelated.

Chapter Four

THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE LINGUISTIC USE, THE FORMS, AND THE FUNCTIONS OF THE SKĒNĒ

In the above three chapters we have considered three elements of the skēnē: the linguistic use of the Greek word; the visual forms that directly correspond to the dictionary meanings; and the functional purposes of those visual forms. We have already made a few cursory observations about some correlations between the different elements of the skēnē, but now I shall summarize and endeavor to make more explicit some of the multifaceted interrelationships,

1. Linguistic Use, Form, and Function May Be Distinguished, But Not Separated

We must first thoroughly be aware that, although these three elements may be distinguished, they cannot be separated. Indeed, one cannot comprehend what the words "tabernacle," or "stage" would mean without being able to have some mental image of what they looked like (regardless of how inaccurate the image might be). In fact it is common that the very definition of a noun will include a description of both its function and its form. For example, if we attempted to define the words knife, chair, cup, or pencil, without describing their form or function, it then would be clear how inseparable

are form and function..

With many everyday words, the particular sound associated with a particular form/function is rather arbitrary, and most any mutually understandable sound could represent a particular object, action, emotion. However, when we move away from concrete, everyday words to more abstract terms and theological-philosophical-psychological concepts, we find that a study of etymolological derivation and linguistic use can greatly expand and develop our understanding of the larger concepts involved. [1]

Therefore, by investigating the etymology, form, and function of the Tabernacle/skēnē, our understanding of many phenomena of human existence is being expanded. For example, we have seen thus far that from the simple, concrete, everyday Greek word for "tent," two major variants developed, whose significance extends far beyond a mere tent. Let us continue our exploration of these variants, the Tabernacle, and the theatre skēnē.

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[1] For instance, in order to understand the significance of Christ being called the "Word" (as in St. John's Prologue), one must have at least a passing knowledge of the use of the Greek term, ὁ λόγος (ho logos), in the philosophical milieu of the ancient world, as well as of the extensive symbolic significance of words, names, language both in universal human experience, as well as in the experience of the ancient Eastern Mediterranean world.

2. Theatre and Tabernacle: Comparison of Forms

Both the Greek theatre skēnē, and the Jewish Tabernacle, each of which are originally called a skēnē, initially were tents. There is not a great deal of similarity in form between the Mosaic Tabernacle and the Greek theatre, however. Yet, by the time that the Tabernacle becomes the Temple, similarities develop: emphasis on a facade with grand portal(s), flanked by columns, frequently with a pediment. Too, the use of curtains to conceal and reveal is a form common to both Tabernacle-Temple and theatre. The Greek theatre was ither within or adjacent to the temple precincts of Dionysos, and early theatres usually had an altar to the god in the center of the orchēstra (the "dancing place"), comparable in form to the Jewish altar in the sacred space in front of the Holy of Holies. The sacred rituals were enacted in the vicinity of the altars in both situations, which included sacrifices on the respective altars.

The Mosaic Tabernacle was first constructed in the thirteenth century, the First Temple in the tenth century, and the Second Temple in 520 B.C., whereas the first Greek theatres that we know about were in the sixth and mostly the fifth centuries B.C. There was relatively little interaction between these two civilizations during these centuries, as far as we know. But during the fourth to the first centuries B.C., the Hellenistic period, Greek culture - thought and forms - spread throughout the Mediterranean. Roman adaptation or Greek cultural forms spread Greek influence further. The

Septuagint was translated in the third-second centuries B.C., thus establishing the verbal connection between skēnē, shekhinah, and mishkan. Since most of our early existing visual representations of the Tabernacle and Temple date from this period of strong Greek influence, it should not be surprising to find the Tabernacle and the first two Temples depicted according to the Greek forms that were in use at that time. It was perhaps similar to the Gothic Age convention of portraying the Jerusalem Temple as a Gothic cathedral. I suggest that this transference of forms could occur precisely because there were similar functions associated with the forms of the borrowers and the borrowees. This occurred first when Judaism accepted Greek forms, and again when Christianity accepted Jewish, Greek and Roman, Syrian, and other forms. Consequently, a comparison of the functions of the skēnē will provide a fuller understanding of why various forms can be designated as skēnē forms. To this we now turn.

3. Theatre and Tabernacle: Comparison of Functions

In the Greek theatre the skēnē set the scene and delineated the sacred space within which the sacred drama was enacted. For the ancient Hebrews, the skēnē was the holy house within which the Ark of the Covenant was kept, and where Moses conversed with God. Although the Greek word changed from skēnē to naós (dwelling) when the Tabernacle became the Temple, the function of both remained the same.

Seemingly, the function, as well as the form, of the Greek and Hebrew skēnai were quite unrelated. But is the assumption that the Greek theatre and the Mosaic Tabernacle had little in common really valid and accurate? I plan to demonstrate that, on the contrary, the functions of the Greek and Hebrew skēnai were indeed very similar.

a. Religious Function

We have discussed in the previous chapter four aspects of the religous function of the Mosaic Tabernacle, which, in turn, were transferred to the Jewish Temple and Synagogue. Might these religous functions be applicable to the Greek drama? I suggest they may.

1) Theophany

Theophany is basic to the Tabernacle. Do theophanies occur in the theatre? In answering this question, we must realize, of course, that the concept of what would constitute a theophany would be considerably different for the Greeks than for the Hebrews. Judaic radical monotheism, obviously, is much different from Greek polythism. The Mosaic skēnē commemorated the manifestation of the One God, and of the Covenant between God and man, and the high moral standards of conduct expected by God of His people. Greek religion, on the other hand, was not especially involved with morality, and rarely possessed the concept of a moral God who expected humans to act equally as morally as He (according to Judaic

moral standards). Nor did the Greeks have a book of Sacred Scriptures, as the Jews did, which recorded the divine Self-revelation. [2]

What the Greeks did have, though, were the great epics, (perhaps the Greek's equivalent of Sacred Scriptures), which were dramatically recited to groups of people by wandering poets, and which eventually led to the development of the classical Greek drama. The tragedies are characteristically "preoccupied with fundamental religious problems - the nature of God or the gods, the relationship of the human and the divine, or the nature of God's ways to man." [3] Through the unified action and character of the persons in the epics and dramas, [4] (heroes, noble men and women, and the gods and goddesses), the divine manifestation of the purpose and meaning of life were represented. As mentioned above, Aristotle says that tragedy reveals the universal, teleological principles (the arētē or excellence) of Nature, which are usually thwarted, as well as masked, by the plethora of trivial, mundane events. I suggest that for the ancient Greeks, the discernment of the immutable, cosmic (e.g. divine) order and significance of events, and of the role played by the gods in particular events, was their form of a theophany. In the (good) Greek drama, everything makes sense, which is a

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[2] For further information, see G. Lowes Dickenson, The Greek View of Life, Ann Arbor Paperbacks, 1967 (1958), Chapter One, "The Greek View of Religion," pp. 1-64.

[3] Oates and O'Neill, op. cit., p. xxiii.

[4] Again, see Aristotle's Poetics, op. cit.

type of manifestation of divine purposes, where everything had a discernible cause and effect, in contrast to everyday life where cause and effect are so difficult to perceive. The Greek holy men were "seers" (as were the Jewish prophets) - they could perceive causes and effects, and see the divine activity in the lives of men. One might theorize that the dramatists themselves were types of seers (and theologians), for through them the cosmic/divine realm was made known to the people, insofar as they were capable of perceiving it.

I hypothesize that this function of revealing the divine/cosmic purposes was the primary way in which the theatre re-enacted theophanies and revelations by the gods, and that these repeatable theophanies occurred in, and were designated by, the skēnē form of the theatre, which, in turn, delineated the sacred space within which the sacred actions occurred. Thus we see that the Greek theatre shares with the Tabernacle the first aspect of the religious function of the skēnē - delineating the place of theophany.

ii) Recreation of Past Theophanies

Closely associated with the Greek drama as a manifestation of the divine order of the cosmos is the built-in feature that these manifestations are readily repeatable whenever they are performed. Thus, by means of the re-enactment of the designated actions, the theophanies may be recreated. And furthermore, the plays themselves are recreations of past events and persons, from an ancient, or even

alleged "mythical" past, when gods and mortals freely interacted, and when noble, royal heroes ruled, but whose excellence and nobility were marred by a fatal flaw. [5] The divine activity, and cause and effect, were readily discernible in the lives of these royal, and sometimes, semi-divine heroes. [6] When cause and effect are discernible, one can perceive order and eternal laws. The opposite of order and the arrangement of things and events according to laws, is randomness or chaos. Creation is traditionally understood as bringing order out of chaos. Consequently, chaos is the opposite of life and fertility. We saw in our discussion in Chapter

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[5] Scholars and archeologists, such as Henry Schliemann and his wife, Sophia, have discovered - in the late nineteenth century - that many of the Greek heroes, such as Agamemnon, Menalaus, etc., and events such as the Trojan War, were, indeed, historical, and not mythological, as had been previously believed. (Yet the accounts of these historical events sometimes have been embroidered with some mythical details and episodes.)

[6] For example, in the Oresteian Trilogy by Aeschylus (490-460 B.C.) Agamemnon brought evil upon himself by his evil act of sacrificing his daughter in order to get a good wind to sail to Troy. Thus his own act was avenged when his wife, Clytemnestra, killed him. In turn, her evil act also brought calamity upon herself, for her son, Orestes, had to avenge the murder of his father. Going beyond the problem of evil, justice and mercy, the action of the triology basically is a study in cause and effect: morally outrageous deeds bring their own consequences.

A further example is seen in Oedipus Tyrranus. Because the universe is ordered, and not chaotic, there could be such things as oracles. But Oedipus sought to escape the ordering of the universe - to escape his own destiny. This he could not do, despite his efforts. The heinous crime of patricide, plus marrying one's own mother, albeit unknowingly, brought the natural consequences of the deeds upon Oedipus. Thus the dramas proclaim: every cause has its effect - evil acts bring evil consequences - it is a cosmic law.

Three that the Greek dramas were performed at harvest festivals, which themselves are affirmations of life and fertility and the order of nature, and these dramas were dedicated to Dionysos, the god of fertility and life and their ecstatic expression.

The festivals of Judaism are also celebrations of life and fertility. The central feast, Passover, is a celebration and proclamation of life: the Hebrews died to the land of slavery, and passed over into the Promised Land of Milk and Honey - an image of new and fuller life. Chanukah celebrates the victory over the death-dealing forces of Syria, and the rededication of the Second Temple, the visible manifestation of God's presence on earth. The Feast of Booths (Sukkoth) is both a harvest festival and a commemoration of Yahweh's giving of the Law to Moses - again, both celebrate fertility and the ordering of the cosmos by means of law.

We continually find fertility and order (law) closely associated in various contexts, and we find them both together as a major element of the religious function of the Greek theatre and of the Tabernacle/Temple, where they were products of the manifestation of the Divine, and which may be recreated in order to re-present past theophanies. In Section C of this chapter we will look more closely at how fertility and order are related to marriage and royaly.

iii) Sacred Ritual

Sacred ritual as a response to the manifestation of the divine, and its role in the Tabernacle, Temple, and Synagogue is undisputed. However, to what extent was sacred ritual involved in the Greek theatre?

To the "modern mind" drama is not viewed as sacred ritual. On the contrary, it is an entertainment, a diversion, something to attend on an evening out, and sometimes deals with important topics. We go to a play, but the play activity tends not to be regarded as a really important and serious dimension of life. To a large degree, for modern western man, work is considered the activity of prime importance - that which one does seriously. Play might be valuable insofar as it enables one to relax and thereby return to work more refreshed. To play more than is "necessary" tends to be considered as a waste of time, as frivolous; and the person who plays too much is viewed as lazy, or at best, not understandable.

Let these few words about the play element in sacred ritual suffice for now. In the next section we will consider play further, in the context of the dramatic and play function that corresponds to the religious function, as twin dimensions of the function of the skēnē. For now, let us accept that the experience of play for the ancient Greeks was very different from that of our modern age.

I maintain that the Greek drama was exactly that sacred

ritual whereby the divine manifestation occurred. It was through the sacred ritual, or sacred play, that the order and fertility of the cosmos and therefore, of life itself, were affirmed, and indeed, perhaps even guaranteed to some extent. Survival depended upon the crops, which depended on the order of the seasons, of the rain, and of the sun. Survival depended upon the fact, and faith in the fact, that when seeds were buried in the ground (symbolizing the earth-mother), new life would appear, and when seeds were buried in animal and human mothers, new life would also appear. In a random universe, there could be no such assurance. Sacred ritual both celebrates and recreates theophanies. The sacred ritual that is the Greek drama celebrates and recreates the manifestation of the divine order of the cosmos, in which each living thing participates. This theophany affirms that there is nothing random, nothing accidental in the divinely ordered universe: everything proceeds according to fixed cosmological, universal principles of cause and effect.

One of the most important ways in which this order was manifested was the structure and ordering of the action of the plays, as discussed by Aristotle in his Poetics. One way in which the ordering of the dramatic action was achieved was by having a clear beginning, middle and end, where consequences follow logically one from another. In our daily lives, Aristotle ponders (as discussed by Butcher), we rarely clearly see the ends of our actions, and thus life may seem

random. However, good drama extracts the important elements of action and life, ignoring the trivial and mundane particulars, so that we can clearly observe, within a unity of time, action, and place, the ends which follow from certain beginnings. For example, we see Agamemnon's end which is the consequence of his killing his daughter, and we Oedipus' end which is the consequence of his trying to escape his destiny, of seeking to know what he ought not to know, and of killing his father and marrying his mother. In both the Oresteia and the Oedipus trilogies, the second and third plays primarily deal with the sequence of actions and consequences that proceed from the first play. Aristotle states that drama is superior to history, because drama reveals to us the logical ends of actions and universal laws, whereas in history the universal principles are lost in the plethora of particulars, and we cannot perceive the logical, cosmic principles that are essential to nature's operations. Thus, dramatic order, unity, and logic reveal the underlying order, unity, and logic of the universe. The driving passion of Aristotle's whole system of science-philosophy was to discover and reveal this precise order, unity, and logic of the universe, where there is nothing random or accidental, nor without purpose or end. Aristotle especially admired Oedipus Tyrranus for achieving the intended ends of drama. [7]

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[7] Aristotle's Poetics, op. cit., passim.

The role of Greek drama as sacred ritual is further demonstrated by another highly significant factor, namely, the presence of the various components of sacred ritual. (These components are also the same as are involved in the general play-activity.) These elements include :

- a designated play-space (delineated by the skēnē and the theatre's orchēstra);
- specially trained and set-apart players (actors) who:
  * wear special clothes (costumes);
  * speak pre-established words;
  * perform pre-established actions;
  * enact pre-established roles;
  * fulfill their roles on behalf of the gathered community;
  * adhere to specific rules governing their activity;
- an audience, gathered to observe, and to vicariously participate in the entire ritual enactment. [8]

The play-activity will be discussed further in Section b, the "Dramatic and Play Function."

iv) Dwelling-Place of the Divine

The fourth element of the religious function of the Jewish Tabernacle is its role as the dwelling-place of the Divine on earth. This is the one element that is not fully

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[8] See Huizinga, Homo Ludens, Beacon Press, Boston, 1955, (10th printing, 1972).

developed in the Greek theatre, at least not when viewed as a static, constant experience. However, remember that we saw in Chapter One, Section Three, that the original connotation of *'ohel*, as the term for the Tabernacle, was something mobil, not static, and that the static connotation developed later. As far as I can determine, the theatre itself was not regarded as a permanent dwelling-place of a god or gods, although, as seen above, the theatre did become the temporary dwelling-place of the divine during the dramatic enactments which disclosed and reaffirmed the divine nature and role in life.

In addition, the theatre was in the sacred precinct of a city, immediately adjacent to the local temple of Dionysos, and its altar. However, it was the ususal practice to have an altar in the center of the *orchēstra* circle, upon which sacrifices would be offered as part of the enactment of the dramas.

Even the Greek temples themselves were not consciously viewed as much as the earthly dwelling-place of the divine as they were were primarily places to offer sacrifices to the gods, in the courtyard in front of the temple, and to house the cult statue. The purpose of the sacrifices was basically to please and appease the gods, hoping to curry their favor. [9]

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[9] Dickenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

It seems that the major focus was on the exterior of the temple and their sacrifices - the public ritual - and not on the interior. I suggest that the explanation for this phenomenon is that that Greek religion was predominantly immanent, in contrast to Hebrew transcendentalism. The Greek gods "were beings essentially like man, superior to him not in spiritual or even in moral attributes, but in outward gifts such as strength, beauty, and immortality. As a consequence of this, his relations to them were not inward and spiritual, but external and mechanical." [10] Thus the gods of Greece were readily accessible to man, and freely dwelt among, interacted with, seduced or even married mortals, producing half-human and half-divine offspring. It was this interaction between the gods and mortals that was the primary subject of many of the dramas. The classical Greek world-view, in large part, according to many scholars, was anthropocentric: "Man is the measure of all things." The Greek gods were also measured by man, whereas in the Hebrew world-view, man is measured by God, because the Hebrews viewed God as far above, beyond, and different from man, even though man was created in the "image of God."

Because of the Hebrew understanding of the transcendental nature of the Divine Essence, it was necessary to balance the unknowability and unapproachability of God with

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[10] Ibid., p. 18.

ways of knowing and approaching Him. Thus, revelation was an important component of Hebrew religion, as well as the religious instinct to have a place where God "dwelt" and could be encountered. Both of these elements are minimized in an immanent religion. Nevertheless, I postulate that in reality, the tradition that the Greek heroes of the past freely interacted with the gods, and the tradition that Moses, the Patriarchs and the Prophets freely interacted with God, are very similar and serve similar functions.

Consequently, although the Greek theatre is not customarily viewed as the earthly dwelling-place of the divine in the same, perhaps static way that the Hebraic Tabernacle and Temples were, I suggest that this difference between the theatre and the Jewish Temple can be explained by the basic differences between transcendent and immanent religion. In both instances, however, both Greek and Hebrew, the function was to enable the individual to discern his relationship with the Divine and the cosmic forces.

And finally, we are once again reminded that although not a permanent dwelling-place of the divine in a static sense, the theatres did serve that function temporarily during the ritual dramas, when the divine order and purpose of the cosmos were made more readily discernible.

b) Dramatic and Play Functions

In the above discussion of the religious function of the skēnē, we have found that, although at first glance one might conclude that there could be little similarity of function between the Mosaic Tabernacle and the Greek theatre, upon closer examination, many of the elements of the primarily religious function of the Mosaic Tabernacle/Temple also were present as important components of the the Greek theatre.

Let us reverse our inquiry, and question whether the theatre's obvious dramatic function is to be found in the Mosaic Tabernacle. Once again, one might conclude that the dramatic function has nothing to do with the Tabernacle and the Temple. However, I contend that the drama function is indeed common to both.

At the root of the similarity between the Tabernacle and theatre, and essential to an understanding of the skēnē, is the element of play, common to both drama and ritual. Because play is so important in both, we shall discuss it in detail.

There have been several excellent modern studies of the philosophical-theological-psychological-sociological perspectives of play, most notably, Johan Huizinga's Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture,[11] and Hugo Rahner's Man at Play. [12] Hermann Hesse's Magister

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[11] op. cit.

[12] Herder and Herder, New York, 1972.

Ludi, [13] ("The Game Master"), published originally in 1945 as Das Glasperlenspiel ("The Glass Bead Game"), is a most intriguing fictional exploration of the concepts and meaning of play. E.O. James' Christian Myth and Ritual makes significant contributions to an understanding of ritual play. [14] And, certainly, throughout Carl Jung's writings and thought, and that of his followers, is found a truly profound understanding of the many faces of play, especially in mythology and fairy tales (such as the trickster-knave element of the hero).

Hugo Rahner emphasizes the theological-philosophical dimensions of play, exploring the concept of play in the Bible and in philosophers-theologians such as Plato, Aristotle, Philo, Plotinus, Maximus the Confessor, and Aquinas, who, according to Rahner, follow the Old Testament concept of Hochmah, or Wisdom - the "little child of God" - and see the creation of the world as the "playing of God," especially as the "dancing and playing of Divine Wisdom." [15] The Old Testament attitudes and concepts are further echoed by Tertullian: "And so the 'play' or 'dance' which the Creator of the world regards with such delight is the fullness of creative thought mirrored in Wisdom, in the Logos." [16]

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[13] Ungar Paperbacks, New York, 1949, (14th printing, 1968).

[14] op. cit.

[15] Man at Play, op. cit., p. 20.

[16] Ibid., p. 22.

Proceeding from the affirmation of the playing of God is the further premise that man's highest calling is to imitate God (theōsis) and be a creature who plays. [17] Both Huizinga and Rahner discuss at some length how all of the different art forms and sacred ritual are play. What exactly are the characteristics of play? Huizinga attempts to define them in his study about play:

> It is an activity which proceeds within certain limits of time and space, in a visible order, according to rules freely accepted, outside the sphere of necessity or material utility. The play-mood is one of rapture and enthusiasm, and is sacred or festive in accordance with the occasion. A feeling of exhaltation and tension accompanies the action; mirth and relaxation follow. [18]

Other elements of play considered by both these authors and by E.O. James in his Christian Myth and Ritual [19] are the "special" quality surrounding much play, including what one wears, and the play-space where one plays and its visible delineation. Various other scholars of the phenomenology of religion have studied the concepts and characteristics of sacred space, a corollary of play-space. It is intriguing to note that the skēnē appears repeatedly as that form which delineates a play-area, and originally, a sacred play-ground.

Why is there such a close association between play and

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[17] Ibid., p. 25.

[18] Ibid., p. 132.

[19] op. cit.

the sacred? Play is sacred for two main reasons. It is sacred because it is done in proximity to the sacred dwelling and place of theophany, and it is sacred because it imitates the divine activity. Sacred ritual usually combines many types of play, and is perhaps the culmination and apex of play.

How can sacred ritual be understood as play? Let us look again at Huizinga's characteristics of play just quoted, and think of each element both in terms of God's activity in creating the world, and in terms of the sacred ritual of divine services. Both have the restrictions of time, space, visible order, and pre-established rules which are freely accepted; most importantly, both are not necessary. Characteristic of creation and sacred ritual-play are the feelings of mirth and relaxation. This fact is illustrated in Genesis, where, after each day of creation, God said, "It is good," and on the seventh day He rested. In imitation of God's activity, after the Divine Services of the Sabbath or feast day, Christians are supposed to relax and play, not work.

In the performance or creation of art, the musician, actor, painter, architect, sculptor, dancer, and those who vicariously participate in their creative work, share these very same feelings. In fact, even the results of artistic creativity can be described in terms of alternating rhythms of tension and relaxation. In addition, as is true of all play, the performing, visual and literary arts also must

function within certain boundaries of time, space, order, and rules.

It is all of these art forms that are the components of sacred ritual: recitation of poetic visions; enactment and dancing of various dramas; performance of music (how can one celebrate without music?); all usually staged within a monument of an architect's creative vision, surrounded by paintings and sculpture produced by others' creative inspiration. [20]

In order to be creative there must be a balance between the masculine and feminine, between the Apollonian and Dionysian. Likewise, sacred ritual also requires a balance between all opposites, and the skēnē itself symbolizes that reconciliation of opposites, of heaven and earth.

However, I contend that our society is heavily Apollonian, as revealed by its over-emphasis on the 'work-ethic,' 'success,' and a rationalistic-scientific explanation for all reality. As a consequence, it is difficult for people to learn to play creatively, and sacred ritual becomes a thing one does instead of a creative process that one is, and which helps one to achieve one's true being. Instead, American passtimes tend to be largely escapist instead of

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[20] Of course there is much so-called art that is without creative inspiration, but we are speaking of the ideal toward which we aspire, we who desire to imitate the Divine Nature through creating beauty, and imitate the Divine Activity through creative play.

re-creative. Such an attitude toward play is antithetical to sacred play and to the very meaning of the skēnē. [21]

Apollo does; Dionysos is. Sacred ritual, like all creative or re-creative play, must combine both. In our society we are so busy doing, it is hard to learn to be. In the fullness of creative sacred ritual, one's being and doing are one, as is the saint in mystical communion with God, or the creative performer who virtually becomes one with his artistic expression, or the creator who is one with his creation during the creative process.

The dance might be viewed as the most full, complete expression and imitation of the Divine Activity; the religious significance of the dance is extensive. David danced before the Ark of the Lord. Many traditions in philosophy,

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[21] Most creative persons are outcasts and misfits in a society that escapes through alcohol, drugs and being passive spectators of T.V. and movies that are themselves escapist, using violence and sex to escape the boredom of an uncreative and monotonous society.

Sexuality is another aspect of truly creative play, and an act that imitates the divine creativity par excellence, and that, too, has become something secularized, banal, and ordinary - neither sacred nor festive - but a thing to be used to sell products and escape boredom.

Accompanying the gradual secularization of industrialized society, with its overbalance on the side of the Apollonian character, is the consequent effect on Western sacred ritual, where divine services are rarely danced, but instead, where music and liturgical action are commonly lifeless and lugubrious, rather than being filled with energy and vitality and joy. For instance, the very concept of a "low" Mass, as exists in the Western Church, is viewed by some as inconsistent with the festive, creative nature of the Eucharist, and does not exist in the Eastern Church, which, perhaps has managed to maintain a little more of a balance between Apollonian seriousness and Dionysian ecstasy.

religion and fantasy understand and utilize this rich imagery of the dancing of God, from the playfulness of the child Krishna, to the dancing Hindu god, Shiva, to the Platonic and neo-Platonic image of Wisdom's (the Logos) creation of the world as His dancing. [22]

The idea of the Logos or Wisdom of God singing and dancing expresses the basic attitude that play is a mystical-spiritual attitude of childlike simplicity and abandon, of joy and wonder. This concept and attitude is manifested in Kind David's exclamation, "I will dance and play before the face of the Lord (II Kings 6:22), [23] and reflects the spiritual ideal of imitating the Divine Activity.

Holy play and dance both breathe the same spirit as the contemplation of the deepest mysteries of theology - contemplation of the essentially paradoxical nature of God, existence, and the cosmos. One might say that paradox, in itself, is a form of mental play.

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[22] This ancient image of the dancing of God is echoed in the words of Sidney Carter's song, "Lord of the Dance," sung to an old Shaker melody, which is used by Aaron Copland in his "Apallachian Spring."

> I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
> And I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
> And I came down from heaven and was born on earth -
> At Bethlehem I had my birth.
>
> Dance, then, wherever you may be;
> I am the Lord of the Dance, said he;
> And I'll lead you all wherever you may be,
> And I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

[23] The Greek word, prōsōpon, translated as "before the face" also means "in the presence of."

The dance held a most important position in the early period of the Greek theatre. In the sixth century B.C., prior to the known playwrites whose works are extant, most of the dramas were enacted by a chorus who sang and danced, and only in the fifth century were actors added, and the chorus' role diminished. [24]

Dance deserves to be regarded so highly because it is the perfectly balanced, ordered, harmonization of soul and body; it is the marriage between the material body and the semi-material existence that is music. Dance is the marriage of opposites wherein the material body is transfigured by, and made one with music. Above all other art forms, it is music's rhythm, order, and harmony that corresponds to, and is an invisible echo of the rhythm, order, and harmony of the music and dance of the cosmic spheres.

Temporal music and dance, like the cosmic order and harmony, are organic processes, not static, crystallized forms. These cosmic, organic processes are also echoed in the ordered rhythms of nature - in the procession of the seasons and of the zodiac reflecting the annual solar cycle, and in the monthly lunar cycle of nature, the seas, and women. Ancient man, and cultures and religious sub-groups not totally controlled by westernization (with its secularism,

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[24] Aristotle tells us in his Poetics that Sophocles raised the number of actors to three. (op. cit., iv, 13, pp. 18-19.)

materialism, and rationalism), [25] see themselves as part of the cosmic order and process, where mankind participates in the cosmic rhythm, and where nothing happens by chance or accident, but by divine ordering.

With this expanded concept of the dance, we can see that all creative artists and performers can be said to dance their art form; that the person enraptured with the contemplation of, and communion with, God is dancing before the face of the Lord; and all sacred ritual, when fully and truly enacted, is also dancing and playing before the face of the Lord.

Thus we see that true sacred ritual, like Greek sacred drama, and like all truly re-creative play, combines the Dionysian mirth, fantasy, exaltation, and ecstasy, with the Apollonian restrictions of rules and order within time and space. Both the sacred ritual of the Hebraic Tabernacle and Temple, and the sacred drama of the ancient Greek theatre share this creative play function. In the theatre there was the combination of music, poetry, dancing, drama - all

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[25] In response to the bifurcation of man and nature of the scientific age and the second industrial revolution, today there is an upsurge of interest in, and even scientific study of, such things as : lunar and solar biorhythms; the auras (energy-fields) that surround all living things; acquapuncture and the meridians of bodily energy flow; homeopathic approach to medicine; psi (psychic) healing; and the various forms of communication and knowledge that go beyond material sensory perception. These all reflect the desire to recapture the concept of human involvement in the cosmic order.

within the architectural and sculptural environment of the sacred precinct and the theatre skēnē, to which painting was also added later. [26] (Painting was viewed as the lowest of the arts due, in part, to its static nature.) The fullness of liturgical enactment, at any time or place, also combines these elements of play, as well as other products of the crafts and "minor" arts.

In conclusion, we realize that the functions associated with the skēnē in Tabernacle and theatre once again are found to coincide, as we discover that the theatre's dramatic function and the Tabernacle/Temple's sacred ritual function are both dimensions of play. Because most skēnē forms are associated with play functions, and the space reserved for much sacred play is delineated by a skēnē form, it has been valuable to our inquiry into the form and function of the skēnē for us to have made this examination of the nature of play.

Regarding the space reserved for sacred play, let us also point out that because play imitates the Divine Activity, the space in which that play is performed may become a microcosm, where the ancient maxim, "as above, so below" is fulfilled, insofar as the Divine Activity within the cosmos is mirrored and imitated therein. The Greek theatre and Hebraic Tabernacle/Temple are such microcosms due to

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[26] Aristotle also tells us that Sophocles was the first to use painted scenery (skēnographía). (Poetics, op. cit., iv.13, pp. 18-19.)

both the presence of the skene and to the sacred creative play-ritual danced within it.

c) Fertility and Marriage, Order and Royalty

While examining the function of the skēnē, we have repeatedly encountered the close association between the skēnē form, and fertility and marriage, order and royalty. I suggest that this association not only is not accidental, but, on the contrary, is an essential part of the entire meaning of the skēnē. Let us look briefly at how these four elements, fertility and marriage, order and royalty, are related to each other.

For countless centuries, most civilizations have been dependent upon agriculture for their very survival. The transition from a hunting and picking society to the more stable agriculturally based society inevitably is a part of the early history of developing civilizations. In such agricultural societies the people experienced their lives as integrally connected with the order of the universe. That the universe is indeed ordered and not capricious has virtually never been seriously questioned. Modern science, far from disproving cosmic orderliness, continually discovers further universal principles that reveal the intricacies of cosmic order. Yet, contrary to Western industrialized man's sense of alienation from the natural world and its cosmic principles, agricultural societies have always been acutely

aware of their interrelationship with the cosmic order, for their very lives depend upon that order. Their whole existence revolves around and is based upon the truth of the maxim, "As above, so below." To survive, the order of the heavens above had to be reflected on earth, and people had to constantly reinforce their faith in that order. Without such order, no one would know when to plant which crops, nor when to harvest them. Without faith in such order on earth, the farmers would not have the confidence to bury dead seed in the ground, with the expectation that new life would shoot forth from that dead and buried seed. Precisely because of the order of the universe, readily discerned in the solar and lunar cycles, it can be relatively accurately predicted that the buried seed will indeed grow according to the farmers' expectations.

To help give the members of ancient agricultural societies confidence that the universe is ordered, that their crops would grow, and that therefore they would not starve, as well as to celebrate and rejoice in the life and order of creation, most such societies had spring and harvest festivals.

Paricularly at the spring harvest festival it was common to have ritual enactments that dramatized the joy, faith, and confidence in the divinely ordered cosmos. The Greek theatre dramas are just such enactments. [27] In other

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[27] Refer above to Chapter Three, Section Two, to the

Mediterranean cultures, such as the Egyptian, Babylonian, and Palestinian, there would be at first a literal, and then a purely ritual enactment of the slaying of the king, the crowning of the new king (or recrowning of the former king at later stages of development), and then, the marriage of the king and queen and their (explicit or implicit) sexual union, all of which were enacted beneath a canopy. [28] I suggest that such enactments were experienced as microcosms which confirmed "as above, so below," but which may perhaps also be viewed as macrocosms - "as below, so above," thus becoming an assertion that what they enacted would indeed occur and be affirmed cosmically.

In other words, the fertility of the land was necessary in order to have life. To be fertile means to produce or create life. Since fertility of the land depends on the cosmic solar and lunar order, therefore, order is a requirement of life and survival. Throughout the centuries, creation and creativity have been understood as bringing order

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discussion of Aristotle's explanation of the nature of the classical Greek drama to clarify the specific ways in which these dramas enacted the affirmation that the cosmos was divinely ordered.

[28] See E.O. James, Christian Myth and Ritual, op. cit., Chapter One, "The Divine Kingship," pp. 1-41.

Although there are no extant records to indicate so, it is very possible that the early Hebrews also had this type of New Year's festival, as their neighbors did. However, as Hebrew monotheism developed, undoubtedly such practices were suppressed as pagan rites, unbefitting the worship of the One True God.

out of chaos. And of course, it is God (the gods - the Divine) Who is the Creator of all things, and creates the ordered world by overcoming the primordial chaos. Creation, in fact, is the paradigmatic Divine Activity.

However, not only does cosmic creation originate as a manifestation of the victory of order over chaos, but life is also maintained by order as well. This truth we have already encountered regarding the fertility of the crops. However, the regulation of the external existence of society, without which man's survival is tenuous at best, is also based on order. That order is invariably derived from divinely given laws and administered by a king and queen, or comparable figures. In a society without the order that results from (enforced) laws, people cannot survive, as has been seen at various times when anarchy has ruled in the place of a stable, reliable, and just central authority. But since, as we have seen, order is a part of creation, and creation is a chief activity of the divine, then those who administer and maintain order in the temporal sphere are performing a divinely sanctioned function. It is precisely in this parallel between the divine ordering of the cosmos, and the ordering of the temporal sphere, that divinity has been so closely and intimately associated with royalty throughout so many civilizations and eras. It is precisely because of this parallel, that the <u>skēnē</u> demarcating the theophany of God can be used to demarcate the theophany of the emperor.

There are several other elements of universal symbolism involved in the role of the king and queen. As we saw above, a king symbolizes man and the masculine elements of the sun and rain, and a queen correspondingly represents woman and the feminine element - the earth - which must receive the nourishment of the sun and the rain in order to be creative and fruitful. Thus, in the sacred marriage and procreation of the king and queen, there is to be seen in microcosm the sacred marriage of opposites that produces life - the marriage of heaven and earth that gives fertility to the land, and the marriage of male and female that produces creativity in human life.

Another result of such marriage of opposites is peace, harmony, and balance, or in other words - order. Thus, we see a further interrelationship between order, life, creativity, marriage, royalty, and fertility. The concept of the union of opposites as both a prerequisite and a result of higher levels of spiritual development can be found in most religions.

Jung and his school maintain that harmony of the masculine and feminine components within each individual is necessary for the full development of the personality, and for the release of the full creative potential.[29] In alchemy the androgynous marriage of king and queen represents the ultimate, crowning achievement and goal of the alchemical

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[29] See, among others, Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, op. cit., Chapter C/I, pp. 195-219.

spiritual quest.[30] Alchemical gold symbolizes spiritual knowledge of, and union with, the Divine, because gold, the color of the sun, is a universal symbol of spiritual knowledge and divine life. In turn, gold, of course, is likewise associated with both God and king, and thereby, both palaces and sanctuaries, both of which usually possess some skēnē form, traditionally have been filled with as much gold as circumstances would allow.

Thus we see that fertility and marriage, order and royalty, are all related to divine functions and activities, and are involved in the victory of order over chaos, of life over death. And, certainly, life is what creation is all about, and creation and maintenance of life is the prime Divine Activity.

Since fertility and marriage, order and royalty are divine functions, it is logical that their divinity should be visibly demonstrated by the presence of a skēnē, since the skēnē represents the dwelling-place of the divine, and that place where the Divine manifests Itself to humans. The skenē, in turn, also becomes the microcosmic divine playground where humans imitate the Divine Activity of playful creativity and creative play.

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30 See Burckhardt, Alchemy, op. cit., Chapter 11, "Of the Chemical Marriage," pp. 149-156.

Chapter Five

EXPANDED FORMULATION OF SKĒNĒ FUNCTIONS

If fertility and marriage, order and royalty are divine functions as we have proposed, then to perceive them is to perceive a theophany, or at least a partial manifestation of the Divine. We saw in Chapter Three that the prime function of the skēnē is to manifest the Divine Presence or commemorate a theophany. The four functions at which we just looked at the end of the previous chapter, fertility, marriage, order, and royalty, are basic to such theophanies, and consequently, are likewise, functions of the skēnē.

On the basis of our above discussions, let us attempt to summarize and expand our discussion about functions by formulating six dimensions of theophanies, or divine activity, that become, by association, functions of the skēnē.

1. To Manifest the Divine Presence Itself

Initially we saw this function in our discussion of the Mosaic Tabernacle of Meeting in the wildereness. Actually, the function of manifesting the Divine Presence - its Nature and Activity - is the prime function of the skēnē, from which all the other functions proceed. Distinctive of this first function is the experience of the Divine Presence itself, as

in the encounter with the Shekhinah. We can therefore expect to find skēnē forms whenever a church, temple, or other type of shrine is viewed (or once had been viewed) as a dwelling-place on earth of the Divine.

2. To Manifest Truth and Wisdom

All truth and wisdom proceed from God and are perceptions of the Nature and Activity of God and of His creation. We therefore can expect to find skēnē forms whenever a place, a thing, a building, or a person or office is perceived to be a vehicle to manifest such truth and wisdom. The proclamation of the Word of God by means of reading the Holy Scriptures, and expounding the Word of God in preaching are examples of this second function.

3. To Manifest Divine Order on Earth or in Heaven

Since life and creation can be defined as bringing order out of chaos, and God is the source and origin of all life and creation, therefore the ordering of temporal existence by means of law and stable government corresponds to the divine life-giving and life-sustaining function. This refers to religious law, such as compiled in the Jewish Torah, which orders countless aspects of existence, as well as political law, such as the manifestation of the emperor as he regulates and orders the affairs of the realm, thereby fulfilling the royal-imperial life-sustaining function.

Consequently, we would once again expect to find skēnē forms associated with the places, persons or objects involved in cosmic or temporal ordering, including government buildings and law courts.

4. To Manifest Victory of Life and Order (e.g. the Good) Over Death and Chaos (e.g. Evil)

The cosmic and temporal struggle between good and evil, life and death, is perhaps the most fundamental aspect of existence. It is a basic theme of most religions, myths, fairy tales, and other literature, and the visual expression of these things. Thus, we would also expect to find skēnē forms whenever there is some proclamation that life, order, and the Good indeed are stronger and are victorious over death, chaos, and evil. The ancient Greeks and Romans believed that spread of their culture and victory over the barbarians (e.g. non-Greeks or Romans) entailed just such a proclamation that order and the Good were stronger than the chaos of the barbarians. (Misuse of the perception of this concept can lead to gross atrocities and the attitude that "might makes right.")

5. To Manifest Divine Play and Creativity

As we saw in Chapter Four, Section 3b, play is one way in which we can describe the divine attitude towards His acts of creation-creativity. They are not required acts, nor are they labor; on the contrary, they proceed freely and

lovingly from God's Nature: thus, by definition, they are play. Consequently, in places where divine play and creativity is manifested, again we would anticipate finding skēnē forms.

6. To Imitate Any of the Divine Activities

It can be said that to imitate any of the divine activities is one of the highest endeavors to which humans can aspire. Naturally, any of the above mentioned divine activities or aspects of the Divine Nature that are functions of the skēnē would be open to human imitation. For example, the human search for truth and wisdom; the attempt to create order on earth; to actualize to some extent the victory of life and the Good over death and evil, such as in healing; or to create playfully or play creatively - these would all be ways in which we imitate the Divine. Consequently, skēnē forms frequently would be seen where these imitative actions occur.

I suggest that whenever any of these six functions are experienced, that there is a theophany, regardless of the vehicle of the manifestation. Furthermore, I propose the corollary idea that whenever a theophany is experienced, that there we will also find some skēnē form.

With such an expanded understanding of the functions of the skēnē, we can no longer restrict our inquiry solely to the Hebrew Tabernacle-Temple-Synagogue-Ark, and the Greek

theatre, for these expanded functions are universal experiences.

In our next and final chapter, we will search for a more universal encounter with these divine functions and their corresponding skēnē forms. We will restrict ourselves, however, to manifestations in the ancient Mediterranean world, primarily in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. (Inquiry into other cultures will have to remain for a future study.) We will find that any or all of the different skēnē forms can be associated with any of the skēnē functions.

Chapter Six

EXAMINATION OF THE SKĒNĒ FORMS THAT CORRESPOND TO THE EXPANDED FORMULATION OF SKĒNĒ FUNCTIONS

In our first five chapters we have looked at the meaning of the word skēnē, based on Greek word use, the theatre skēnē, and the use of skēnē in the Septuagint and in the Greek New Testament. We then looked at the visual forms that corresponded to the actual terms, limiting ourselves, therefore, to the Greek-Roman theatre skēnē, and to the Mosaic Tabernacle with its Ark of the Covenant. At that point we could not discuss Christian forms, because the New Testament uses refer either to the Mosaic Tabernacle, or to the skēnai of the Transfiguration (which were never constructed), or are figurative references, indicating God's heavenly dwelling-place. Thus, there is no Christian structure customarily designated as a skēnē.

From there we proceeded to analyze the functions associated with the Greek theatre skēnē, and the religious functions associated with the Mosaic Tabernacle and Ark of the Covenant, which were transferred, in turn, to succeeding Temples, and then to the Synagogue.

Subsequently, we sought to compare linguistic use, the forms, and the functions of the Theatre and Tabernacle, and

found that in addition to the religious function of the skēnē, that there were also dramatic and play functions, plus recurrent imperial involvement, and association with creation, life, fertility and order.

Finally, we formulated an expanded concept of the functions of the skēnē, listing six theophanic functions common to the universal experience of the skēnē. Now I contend that whenever and wherever we encounter any of the functions of theophany, that there will be some skēnē form associated with it. Furthermore, I maintain that the marriage of the form of the skēnē with its functions is so indissoluble, that whenever one encounters any skēnē form, that, at least originally, there had been some experience of the skēnē functions of theophany.

Also, I contend that virtually any of the six functions mentioned in the previous chapter can be expressed by virtually any of the various skēnē forms.

At this point in our search for an understanding of the universal meaning and significance of the skēnē, we will now examine some of the skēnē forms that correspond to our expanded formulation of skēnē functions.

We will consider five basic skēnē forms: the three-dimensional architectural canopy; the shell/niche/two-dimensional canopy; the triumphal arch/portal; the Greek temple; and the dome. Finally, we will consider the role of curtains as a common, even ubiquitous, component of most skēnē forms.

1. The Three-Dimsional Architectural Canopy Skēnē

The three-dimensional architectural canopy is the first form we will look at in this expansion of our concepts and understanding of the skēnē forms that correspond to our expanded formulation of skēnē functions, as formulated in the previous chapter.

In Chapter Two we considered the two most obvious forms of the skēnē, according to linguistic definition: the Mosaic Tabernacle of the Presence in the wilderness, and its successors; and the skēnē stage-setting of the Greek theatre, and its Roman successors. We saw in that chapter that the skēnē forms appeared consistently in order to set apart the sacred space of the Holy of Holies and the Ark of the Covenant (and their successors), wherein was manifested the Divine Presence (the Shekhinah) and His Word of law, order, purpose, truth, and wisdom - His Word of life and victory over death, chaos and evil.

I propose that the architectural canopy skēnē, a few examples of which we will see in this section, fulfills the same functions, and that the Christian forms are derived from, and are a continuation of the Jewish prototypes, as expounded upon by numerous early Church Fathers, including Ss. Clement and Cyril of Alexandria, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and the three Cappadocian Fathers.

Since, after "tent," "canopy" is one of the prime translations of the word skēnē, I commence this chapter by

considering the canopy as the first, most logical extension of our understanding of the forms of the skēnē.

There are three basic forms of the roof of the canopy - flat, round, or pointed. The pointed canopy will usually have either four (pyramidal) or eight sides. These canopies can be either free-standing, or built into a wall. The latter (invariably curved), can be an actual part of the three-dimensional architecture.

There are four common uses for skēnē-canopies: over imperial thrones; [1] over altars; over baptismal fonts; and over tombs. There is a close connection between these four uses. For example, in Byzantine Christian theology, the altar is not only an altar of sacrifice, but the throne and tomb of Christ. Also, in Eastern and Western Christian theology, the baptismal font is a tomb as well as a place of new life, following Pauline theology. Thus, since there is such a close relationship of functions, it is logical that the forms would also be closely related.

First we will look at a few examples of a pointed canopy, and then examine the rounded form.

In an eleventh century Yugoslavian fresco of the

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[1] See Darius, the Persian king, enthroned in audience, under a flat canopy - a relief carving at Persepolis, 5th-6th centuries, B.C., in Ghirshman, Persia, Thames and Hudson, England, 1964, p. 198. See l'Orange, op. cit., for many examples. Also see the illustrations of saints and imperial persons enthroned in Section Two of this chapter. The altar and baptistry use of the canopy is derived from the prior pagan forms and symbolism.

Communion of the Apostles (Figure 29), we see Christ under a pyramidal altar canopy, standing behind the altar, serving the Divine Liturgy. (Notice that there seems to be a low wall in front of the altar, with double doors in the center: we will consider this later.) Although this is a later and a painted example, I suggest that it is intended to depict the actual types of altar canopies that were in use in the early centuries, whose traditional forms were handed on from one century to the next. Because ciboria are rather perishable, and few exist from the early centuries, thus we look to later and painted portrayals of the forms in use in earlier centuries.

We also look to early verbal descriptions, such as that of Paul the Silentiary, about the resplendent altar ciborium canopy at Hagia Sphia, constructed in the sixth century by Justinian, in the imperial capital of Constantinople. Paul's word painting forms a perfectly clear image of what these early pyramidal canopies looked like. In this case it is an octagonal pyrgos type pyramid on four columns, with four arches.[2]

One pyramidal canopy that is extant is part of an ambon at Kalabaka Cathedral, consisting of primarily early Christian materials (Figure 30). It consists of a very high platform with a canopy over it, reached by a steep flight of steps.

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[2] Descriptione S. Sophiae, and Descriptione ambonis, (563), in Cyril Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453: Sources and Documents, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1972, pp. 72f.

(Western comparable forms are known as pulpits, but are normally located on the side, not in the center of the nave.)

If we were to close in the sides of these pyramidal canopies, we would have a form rather like the so-called "Tomb of Zechariah," built by Herod the "Great" (ruled 37-4 B.C.) in the Kidron Valley outside of Jerusalem (Figure 34).

Let us pause here to briefly examine the basic symbolism of the pyramid, because its significance is closely related to the meaning of the skēnē. (Certainly the most monumental examples of the pyramid are the Egyptian pyramidal tombs of the pharoahs.)

I suggest that the pyramid can either designate a dwelling-place of the Divine on earth (as in canopies over an altar, ambon, or baptismal font), or symbolize the cosmic divine dwelling, perceived as a microcosm (as in tombs), where it is hoped and/or believed that the deceased would be present with the Divine in His cosmic dwelling-place - the heavens. This hope-belief is also conveyed in the neo-Platonic and spiritual dictum, "As above, so below," which would translate in these circumstances, that, as the deceased's body is beneath the microcosmic skēnē on earth, so, in the same manner, his soul dwells within the cosmic skēnē - the divine realm in heaven.

What gives such cosmic symbolic power to a pyramid? There are two main reasons for it. First, the general shape is a mound or mountain. Since mountains reach up into the

heavens, and virtually unite heaven and earth, they are the natural places for theophanies. Most theophanies, in fact, have occurred on mountain tops: the theophanies to Moses and to Elias on Mt. Sinai/Choreb; the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor; the Crucifixion on Mt. Golgotha; the Ascension of Christ from the Mount of Olives. Most ancient civilizations have their sacred mountains where their god or gods dwell. It is also common to build mounds, or temples like the ziggurat, which imitate mountains - both physically and symbolically. [3]

The second major symbolic element of the pyramid is its number symbolism - four and three. Four represents the earth, because of the four directions or poles, the four winds, the four seasons, et cetera, and also because a four-sided figure is unstable, moveable, changeable, as is the temporal sphere. Many cosmologies envision the earth as supported on four world pillars. [4]

If a rectangular structure needs to be stabilized, a support forming a triangle will be added, because a triangular shape is stable and immoveable. Thus, the number three symbolizes the celestial, cosmic order and permanence. An

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[3] For further discussion on the symbolism of the mountain-mound-pyramid, four, three, and twelve, see these entries in J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, Philosophical Library, New York, 1962; and in G. Jobes, A Dictionary of Myth, Folklore and Symbols, Scarecrow Press, New York, 1961.

[4] See, for example, Charles Long, Alpha:the Myths of Creation, Collier Books, New York, 1963.

equilateral triangle pointing down represents the Divine making Himself known on earth - of coming down to earth - whereas an equilateral triangle pointing up represents man's ascension to heaven, or man's spiritual striving upward. [5]

A pyramid consists of four equilateral triangles. In Egypt the great pyramids were built so that the four bases were aligned with the four compass points. Thus, on the one hand, a pyramid represents the whole earth ascending to heaven. Yet on the other hand, since four plus three equals seven, and four times three equals twelve, both seven and twelve are cosmic numbers symbolizing the totality of the cosmos - material and spiritual, temporal and celestial, changeable and unchangeable. Thus we add to the pyramidal symbolism a cosmic totality of things and unity of opposites, a perrenial motif of the skēnē. Consequently, the pyramidal skēnē actually forms a microcosm of man's ascent to heaven, in response to God's search for man on earth.

A pyramidal roof might be regarded as a triangular pediment on the front and back, extended to the sides, and tilted toward the center so that the edges meet. (Naturally, such a form only works on a square base.) Hence, we might conclude that the triangular pediment-gable, found in so many

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[5] The Jewish Star of David combines these two triangles, thus representing the uniting of heaven and earth - of God's search for man, and man's search for God, and of the restoration of communion, cooperation, and companionship between God and man.

The ambon skēnē affirms visually the view that Christ's Presence in the reading of the Gospel is as fully real as His Presence at the Divine Liturgy, which is enacted under the altar canopy-skēnē. [6] The bishops - and their delegates, the priests - liturgically represent Christ (play the role of Christ) in both these functions.

Furthermore, the Presence of the Gospels is a visual way of indicating Christ's Presence, and effecting that Presence. This belief is made tangible in the manuscript illumination of the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381, found in the Sermons of St. Gregory of Nazianzus, a manuscript copied and illuminated in 880, where the open Gospels are enthroned on an elaborate throne-altar (Figure 32). An earlier example of the enthronement of the Gospels is found in the upper wall masaics in the sixth century Baptistry of the Orthodox in Ravenna, [7] and probably in the dome mosaics at St. George's, Salonika. These visual portrayals reflect the ancient practice which has continued until today in all Eastern Orthodox churches, where the Gospels are one of the few items allowed (and required) to be on the altar.

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[6] At the Seventh Ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 787 it was declared that holy icons and the holy cross are equal to the Gospels, and that all three are to be offered incense and lights (traditional offerings to God). (Quoted in the "Evidence and Documents" section of Kostos Papaioannou, Byzantine and Russian Painting, Heron Books, London, 1966, p. 104.)

[7] See Grabar, Golden Age of Justinian, Trans. Gilbert and Emmons, Odyssey Press, New York, 1967, p. 21.

Because of the functional and liturgical importance of the proclamation of the Word of God by means of the Scripture readings and homilies in the church during approximately the first ten Christian centuries, in early Byzantine churches the ambon was a very prominent structure which jutted out from the bēma (solēa) into the nave, just east of the center of the church. It was usually elevated considerably, such as the one at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, where it was high enough so that singers could stand under it, according to the description of it by Procopius and Paul the Silentiary. [8] Seated at the top of the glorious and resplendent ambon at Hagia Sophia, St. John Chrysostom, the "Golden-Mouthed," as Patriarch of Constantinople, daily preached to the throngs of the faithful who filled the church for Vespers.

There are only a few early ambons extant, and some remnants in Syria and Salonika, but the verbal descriptions of the one at Hagia Sophia, combined with the ambon at Kalabaka Cathedral, give a good idea of what they looked like, with their prominent skēnē-canopies.

Another prominent pointed canopy form is the thōlos type, which is a very significant type because the canopy over Christ's tomb was this shape. There are various extant portrayals of it, and since it was the prototype skēnē for

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[8] Procopius, De aedificius, I, i, 6th century; and Paulus Silentiarius, Descriptione S. Sophiae, and Descriptione ambonis, 563. (Found in Mango, Sources..., op. cit., pp. 72-96.)

Christians, its form had great influence. One of the popular "souvenirs" of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a silver vial or ampoule of holy oil, on which was sculpted Christ's tomb, such as the Bobbio and Monza ampoules. [9]

Let us now consider the canopy with a curved top, first the kind built into a wall, and then the free-standing type.

One of the oldest Christian meeting places used as a church that has been discovered is the "Christian House" in Dura-Europas, Syria (several hundred miles east of Antioch), preserved by sand-bagging against invasion in the year 256 A.D. when the town was about to be attacked. As a result, it was preserved in the same same way as the near-by Jewish Synagogue was. Both were accidentally discovered in the 1930's. In that "Christian House" was located a baptistry (Figure 33) which was transferred to and reconstructed at Yale University Art Gallery. Although the canopy is not free-standing, it does have the columns and the curved (vaulted) roof, with stars painted on the underside of it. It seems incontravertible that the self-conscious intention of those who designed this baptistry was to make a model of the sky, that is, the heavens, for what else has stars and appears to the observer to be curved? The question is, however, why portray the sky over a baptistry, which is

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[9] For example, see Grabar, Golden Age..., op. cit., p. 314, Fig. 364 - Monza Ampoule No. 3, ca. 600. Rome's Museo Sacro's Reliquary Box depicting the Holy Women at Christ's tomb also clearly shows the thōlos canopy over the tomb. (Smith, The Dome, op. cit., fig. 14.)

really the same as asking what the form and function have to do with one another.

To deal with this question, first let us refer back to Chapter One (5/c) where we discussed the use of the word skēnē in the Apocalyse. Here we encountered the verse, "Behold, the Tabernacle (skēnē)of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, ...and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God" (21:3, AV). It was mentioned also in the same section that the use of the word skēnē elsewhere, such as in Apocalypse 15:15 and Luke 16:9, suggested that the skēnē on earth is a reflection or copy of the true skēnē, which is in heaven.

Liturgically, this is manifested in two primary ways, in the Divine Liturgy and in Holy Baptism. Just as the skēnē on earth is seen as a reflection of the true skēnē in heaven, so likewise, the liturgical action performed under that temporal skēnē corresponds to a celestial and cosmic act. We saw this visually in the Ochrid fresco of the Communion of the Apostles (Figure 29), where Christ was depicted serving the Divine Liturgy in heaven as the High Priest ministering the Holy Things in the heavenly Tabernacle. The liturgical action of Christ in heaven was then reflected on earth, where the priest visibly serves the Divine Liturgy (see Chapter One, 5/d). This experience is verbally expressed in the Hymn of the Great Entrance of the Presanctified Liturgy: "Now the powers of Heaven do serve invisibly with us. Lo,

the King of Glory enters. Lo, the mystical sacrifice is upborne, fulfilled."

Holy Baptism is the other main liturgical action where the temporal and celestial skēnē, and the enactment which occurs there, are viewed as corresponding to each other, and as proof that God does indeed dwell among men. According to Christian doctrine, in the rite of Baptism the person dies to the "old man" and "every dark and evil work of the devil," and is spiritually reborn, and "puts on Christ," puts on the "new man," makes a covenant with God, and becomes a member of the Body of Christ(see Romans 6:3-11).

Hence, we should expect to find a skēnē form to delineate the sacred space and place where this covenant is established - the place which is both a tomb and a womb - such as we found at the Dura-Europas baptistry.

That the drama which occurs beneath the baptismal skēnē ritually makes people part of God's people, or God's flock, is further made quite clear by the painting of the "Good Shepherd and His Flock" which is found at the Dura-Europas Baptistry in the semi-circular space formed against the wall by the curved canopy, and what would be the rear two columns if the canopy were free-standing (Figure 34).

We can compare this with another portrayal of the "Good Shepherd and His Flock" in a similar semi-circular lunette, with a star-studded (999 of them) canopy of heaven in front of it (Figure 35), which, instead of being a separate canopy,

was expanded to become the vaulted ceiling of a building. But instead of a baptistry, it is part of the so-called Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna, [10] dating from the second quarter of the fifth century. The forms are similar, but what is the connection between their functions? One connection we have already seen: the baptistry is a tomb of darkness and evil, and a womb of light and life. In the same way, when a Christian dies ("falls asleep in the Lord"), the community prays that the soul who has departed from the body may dwell in the place of the blessed and be numbered among the righteous. [11]

Thus, once again, after considering the function involved, we realize it is natural to see the skēnē forms

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[10] This building might have been originally built as an oratory, which was later converted to a mausoleum.

[11] "With the souls of the righteous departed, give rest to the soul of Thy servant, O Savior, preserving him in the blessed life which is with Thee, Who lovest mankind." (Troparion)

"With the saints give rest, O Christ, to the soul of Thy servant, where sickness and sorrow are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting." (Kontakion)

"Give rest, O Lord, to the soul of Thy servant, and establish him in Paradise, where the choirs of the saints and of the just, O Lord, shine like the stars of heaven; give rest to Thy servant who has fallen asleep, overlooking all his transgressions." (Troparion on "Blessed Art Thou, O Lord")

"Their souls shall dwell with the blessed."
"Blessed is the way in which thou shalt walk today, O soul, for a place of rest is prepared for Thee." (Prokeimena)

(Hymns from the Panikhida, OCA Translation, from the service booklet by Fr. Igor Soroka, 1972.)

associated with baptistries, which are both places of burial and places of new life. It should also be expected that we find various symbols of heaven associated with tombs, including various symbols and forms that represent paradise, including the skēnē-dwelling of God. The reason that this is to be anticipated is that it is prayed for and hoped that the soul of the departed is, indeed, dwelling in the Presence of God. Therefore, the realization and actualization of the prayers is made visible and tangible in the art forms - in the skēnē which defines the space where this actualization occurs.

We should not be surprised, then, to find similar forms and portrayals in the early Christian catacombs. Indeed, there are many niches in these catacombs (Figure 36) where structures have been dug out, (called arcosolia), similar to the canopy structure over the Dura-Europas baptisty, consisting of a curved canopy-roof supported by two columns in the front, forming a lunette on the rear wall. Some of the favorite scenes depicted on these lunettes are: the Good Shepherd (Domitilla, late second-early third century; S. Callisto, early third century); Christ Raising Lazarus (Via Latina, mid-fourth century); Jonah and the Kētos/sea-monster (Ss. Pietro e Marcelino, late third century; S. Callisto, early third century); the Three Holy Children (Priscilla, mid-third century); and Daniel in the Lion's Den (the

Giordani, fourth century). [12]

These subjects correspond to the prayers for the dead, which, following the Jewish berakah form of prayer, [13] would petition something similar to this:

> O Lord, as You did raise Lazarus from the dead; as You did save Jonah from the belly of the sea-monster; as You did save the Three Holy Children from the fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar; and as You did save Daniel from the lion's den - so now save Your servant who has fallen asleep: raise him up, and number him among Your chosen saints.

Andre Grabar confirms and supports the correspondence between these iconographic themes and the prayers in use at the time, and accepts the liturgical use as the explanation for the presence of these themes in the catacombs. He also suggests that the Christian use was inherited from Jewish funereal tradition. [14]

These biblical subjects found in the catacombs were also frequently depicted on sarcophagi. The third century Lateran Museum Jonah Sarcophagus (Figure 37) portrays not only several Jonah scenes, but the Raising of Lazarus, Noah

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[12] Orpheus, although pagan and non-biblical, is another popular theme, for he was viewed as a pagan prototype of Christ, both as a Good Shepherd, and as one who tamed the wild beasts (e.g. Christ's victory over demons), as well as having gone into hell and returned).

See Grabar, Early Christian Art, Trans. Gilbert and Emmons, Odyssey Press, New York, 1968; and Michael Gough, The Early Christians, Praeger, New York, 1966.

[13] Discussed in depth in Louis Boyer's superb study, Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer, op. cit.

[14] Early Christian Art, op. cit., p. 103.

and the Ark, and the Good Shepherd, in addition to still other scenes. On the late third century Ny Carlesberg Glyptotek Jonah Sarcophagus (Figure 38) the Good Shepherd flanks the usual three Jonah scenes.

This same sarcophagus, however, is most note-worthy due to the tent-shaped skēnē-canopy over the ship from which Jonah is being thrown. (We recall again that "tent" is the original meaning of skēnē.) I suggest that there are three reasons for the presence of this blatantly obvious skēnē form. First, the ship itself represents the temporal church, and thus has a skēnē to indicate that it is the dwelling-place of God. In the early Christian period, especially in the West, the ship was a very common symbol for the Church on earth, as mentioned in the fourth century Apostolic Constitutions,[15] and in Western church architecture, where the central part of the church building is called the "nave," derived from the Latin word for ship, navis.

The second reason is that the Jonah story is understood as a prototype of Baptism. This is because after being immersed three times in the baptismal font, and dying to evil, darkness and death, the person is raised up anew, born of the Spirit into the good, light and life, repentent and dedicated to doing God's will, as was Jonah at the time of his rebirth after his three days' sleep in the belly of the deep

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[15] II, 57, 3ff; quoted in Mango, Documents, op. cit., Also discussed by Ouspensky in Theology of the Icon, op. cit., p. 24, especially that Noah's ark was a symbol and prefiguring of the Church.

(another lexicon definition of the word, skēnē). [16]

I propose that the third reason that there is a skēnē tent-canopy over the ship in the Jonah Sarcophagus is that, according to the Gospels, Jonah is the prototype of Christ, Who arose from the dead after three days' sleep in the deep. [17] This biblical belief is reflected in the sixth Ode of the (Orthodox) Paschal Canon in Matins:

> Thou didst descend, O Christ, to the depths of the earth. Thou dist break the everlasting bars which had held death's captives, and like Jonah from the whale on the third day, Thou didst arise from the grave. [18]

Consequently, the skēnē-sail over the ship represents a witness to Christ's victory over death, and to the faithful's sharing of Christ's death and resurrection by means of Baptism. The customary time for baptisms used to be Pascha (Easter), by which the person becomes a member of Christ's Body, the Church. When a person falls asleep in the Lord, the Church prays that, like Jonah, he will be raised up again, as he had been in Baptism, and dwell in the mansions of God's dwelling-place.

The other variant of the canopy with a curved top is

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[16] Liddell and Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, op. cit., entry for skēnē.

[17] Mathew 12:40 - "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth" (RSV).

[18] The Paschal Canon, one of the essential parts of the Easter Vigil, was written by St. John of Damascus, c. 675 - c. 749.

is the free-standing type, frequently called a baldachino or ciborium. (A ciborium may have any shape canopy top - round, pointed, or tholos. Thus the word may apply to those canopies discussed near the beginning of this section.)

We have already considered the nature of Baptism, and why it is therefore expected that there would usually be some skēnē form associated with the baptistry. At Dura-Europas we saw a built-into-the-wall type canopy-skēnē over a baptistry. At Jemila in Algeria, North Africa (Figure 39), there are the remains of a fifth-sixth century free-standing ciborium over a baptismal font, located in a round room in the center of the baptistry building. The font itself is sunk into the ground, as was usual in the early church when total immersion of the numerous adult converts was the rule. This ciborium has four rather massive, short Corinthian stone columns supporting a curved stone canopy. It is not possible to tell what the underside of the canopy had been like.

Another free-standing ciborium-skēnē, constructed about 450 A.D. is located in the crypt of St. Demetrios in Salonika, Greece (Macedonia) (Figure 40). The over-all shape seems to be circular, with eight rounded arches, supported by eight columns. The top of the canopy has been destroyed, so we cannot determine its shape - it could have been round, or octagonal and pointed to correspond to the eight arches.

One of the striking aspects of this structure is the

low wall on either side and in between the columns in the front. Although the original use of this ciborium might have been over a fountain rather than an altar, the wall flanking it is similar to early sanctuary screens.

At Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, according to the descriptions by Procopius and Paul the Silentiary, [19] there was a similar low marble altar screen, but, in addition, there was also an architrave (along which the lamp-lighters walked), supported by a series of beautiful columns that spanned the width of the apse. It probably would have looked rather like the reconstruction of the bēma of the Aphentelli Basilica on the island of Lesbos. The reconstruction was made in 1935 by A. Orlando (Figure 41); of course the one at Hagia Sophia was on a far grander scale, with an enormous and elaborate ciborium and altar.

The sanctuary screen is appropriately associated with the altar skēnē, because it separates the Holy of Holies from the nave, and corresponds to the screening-off of the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and Jewish Temple, (which itself was a skēnē, according to the Septuagint word use, as seen in Chapter One), and within which was a further skēnē - the Ark of the Covenant, containing the Tablets of the Law. In Christian church architecture we customarily also find this multiple use of skēnē forms - the apse itself, plus the ciborium over the altar. So little architectural

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[19] See Footnote # 7 of this chapter.

evidence exists from the early centuries, we have to use other visual (as well as literary) evidence.

The Stuma Paten and the Riha Paten (Figures 42 and 43), both dating from 565-578, are early examples of the prevalent altar-area skēnē forms. Each of these patens portray Christ giving Communion to the Apostles. On the Stuma Paten He stands under an umbrella-shaped canopy, and on the Riha Paten He is under a shell-arch surmounting an architrave supported by columns, where the arch of the sanctuary screen serves the function of providing a skēnē over Christ.

A later Byzantine manuscript gives a more detailed picture of what these early sanctuary screens and altar ciboria were like. Although the manuscript, the Menalogion of Basil II was made around the year 1000, I suggest that these forms were based on the precedent forms, as was customary in the Byzantine church with its highly traditional and preservative attitude. I cite two illuminations from this manscript, because of the different shapes of the sanctuary and of the curved ciboria. The one (Figure 44) depicts the Annunciation to Zachariah in the Temple, and shows the umbrella-like shape a canopy might have that surmounts eight columns (like the ciborium in the crypt at St. Demetrios in Salonika). The other (Figure 45) illustrates the Presentation of Christ to St. Simeon in the Temple, and contains a ciborium with four columns inside a much larger Holy of Holies. Both of these illuminations depict the Jewish Temple at the time of

Christ as though it were a Christian sanctuary, with its altar and ciborium, thus making visible the theological understanding that the Christian Holy of Holies manifests the living Presence (Shekhinah) of God as fully as the Jewish Tabernacle and Temple had done. Since Christ is the visible manifestation of the Divine ("He who sees Me, sees Him Who sent Me" John 12:45), this divine Shekhinah is even more graphically presented by portraying Christ behind the altar, serving the Divine Liturgy (Mass), or giving Communion to the Apostles - a true Theophany.

In the above discussion of the three-dimensional architectural canopy-skēnē, we have found that indeed, where there is the skēnē form of the canopy, there exists one or more of the skēnē functions.

We have seen that the skēnē-canopy over the altar and the ambon, like the Jewish Temple and Tabernacle, mark the manifestation of the Divine Presence - the Shekhinah - His Truth and Wisdom, and the divine order on earth, in the elements of the Holy Eucharist, and in the Gospel Word.

Furthermore, we observed that the skēnē-canopy over baptistries, in the catacombs, and in such funereal themes as the Jonah cycle, that the skēnē functions of proclaiming the victory of life and order over death and chaos.

Similar to the three-dimensional canopy is the two-dimensional canopy, with its variants, the shell and the niche, to which we now turn our attention.

2. The Shell/Niche/Two-Dimensional Canopy Skēnē

In Section One we primarily discussed the architectural, three-dimensional canopy/baldachino/ciborium form of the skēnē, including paintings of the architectural forms. In these, all four columns that support the curved or pointed canopy are visible or implied. It seems like an easy and logical step to move from these three-dimensional forms, to the two-dimensional or bas-relief type canopy, including the niche and shell.

In the two-dimensional niche canopy form of the skēnē a shell is commonly found at the top of the arch. There is a dual purpose to this shell. First, its ubiquitous presence is closely associated with its universal symbolic significance. The second purpose is based on the shell's shape, whereby, due to its curved form, it frequently comprises the curved arch which itself constitutes the top of the canopy or niche, nestling inside a semi-dome, yet at the same time, forming the semi-dome.

First, let us briefly inquire about the symbolism of the shell. What do we associate with shells? Water. And water is not only associated with life and fertility, but it is a requirement of life - a fact well appreciated in an area of the world such as Israel, where the desert encroaches at every turn. Without water for humans and animals to drink, and to nourish the crops, everything withers and dies quickly. Almost every creation mythology, as well as evolutionary

theory, envisions life as arising from the sea. In both Judaism and Christianity there are countless examples of water symbolism: Moses brought forth water from the rock in the wilderness; God is seen as the Fountain of Life and Immortality, as are the Communion Chalice and baptismal font; Psalm 63 says, "My soul thirsts for Thee ... as in a dry and barren land where no water is." A whole dissertation could easily be written about the symbolism of water, but let this be sufficient explanation of why it is so natural to have a symbol like the shell associated with and actually form the skēnē. [20]

Because of the universal nature of the symbolism of the shell, the Judaeo-Christian use of the shell has pagan antecedents. Just one of the countless examples we could cite of the pagan use of the shell is part of a tomb discovered in 1939-1940 under St. Peter's, Rome (Figure 46). Due to the funereal use of the shell symbol, we might suspect from its presence that it was hoped and prayed that the soul of the departed would dwell with God or the gods. I maintain that this conclusion seems logical, based solely on the universal symbolic meaning of the skēnē - the canopy of heaven - to be the dwelling place of the Divine.

Descending from its pagan antecedents, the shell is found throughout Jewish, early Christian, Byzantine, and

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[20] See Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, op. cit., and Jobes, A Dictionary of Myth, Folklore and Symbols, op. cit.- entries for "Shell" and "Water."

Western art. I suggest that there can exist this transference of forms to Jewish and Christian art, exactly because there is a transference of the thought behind it - its universal symbolism, or its function.

In the illustrations in Chapter Two of this study, we found the shell depicted at the top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Capernaum Synagogue frieze (Figure 17), and also over the Ark depicted within Solomon's Temple, in addition to being over the three doors of the façade of the Temple in the frescoes at the Dura-Europas Synagogue (Figures 18 and 27). Consequently, it is not surprising to find the actual Torah Shrine at the same Dura Synagogue to be surmounted by a shell also (Figure 47). (We also observed above that the Torah Shrine in the synagogue is the successor to the Temple's Ark, as the visible expression of God's Presence and Covenant.) In this Torah Shrine at Dura-Europas the shell is situated atop a recessed alcove-niche, and the shell corresponds to the shape of the semi-dome at the top of the niche. In case there might be any question that the shell marks off the sacred space of the skēnē (for the Torah and its shrine which holds the scrolls of the Old Law, and therefore represents the Divine Presence that dwells among man), all doubts are banished by the painting on the wall above the Torah Shrine. This fresco portrays The Temple, with its shell-skēnē designating the sacred dwelling-place on earth of the Divine in the form of the Ark of the Covenant,

just as we saw in Figures 17 and 18).

So important to Judaism, apparently, was the symbol of the curved shell-like top of the Ark of the Covenant, that it was used on a Jewish coin in the second century B.C. This coin seems to have sought to inspire, as well as to symbolize, a resurgence of Judaic spirit during the Second Revolt in 135-132 B.C. To accomplish that end, the coin depicts the curved-top Ark of the Covenant between the four columns of the Temple, in an almost "short-hand" symbol of the Temple (Figure 48). [21]

The pagan and Jewish use of the shell/niche/two-dimensional canopy is carried over into Christianity. One application of such a skēnē form is the representation of the dwelling-place of God, where God makes Himself manifest, such as we saw in Figure 44, the "Annunciation to Zachariah in the Temple," where Zachariah was censing before a baldachino-type canopy, which also seemed to echo the form of the Byzantine altar-canopy.

However, it is also extremely common to have persons, usually alone, enshrined under a skēnē. The selected examples viewed here are but a few of the countless

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[21] It is true that one cannot absolutely determine that what surmounts the Ark is a shell. However, if one were to depict a shell over the Ark in the small space of a coin (this photo seems to be an enlargement), it might well look like this. The top of the Ark is curved, indisputably, and there is a second curved line over it. If it is not a shell, one must assume that it is a curved canopy of some sort.

manifestations of this fertile and prolific symbol in Eastern and Western Christian lands, through every century, including our own. The saints, standing in tabernacles or niches, under canopies, shells (or both), line the walls of numberless Christian churches and baptistries, such as the magnificant Orthodox Baptistry in Ravenna (Figure 49). Or, we find an orant figure of a deceased woman sculpted into a funeral stele (Figure 50), [22] or we find Christ and the Apostles covering the sides of a sarcophagus (Figure 51). What is the meaning of the proliferation of these skēnai niches with shells? Since we have more than sufficiently established that the skēnē form represents the dwelling-place of the Divine, or where the Divine Presence is made known, it follows logically that whenever a person is placed beneath a skēnē, the idea to be conveyed is that this person is also dwelling with God.

I suggest, however, that when Christ is thus presented, we go a step further, because according to the Chalcedonian Definition of 451 (formulated at the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon), Christ is the God-Man, and therefore, whenever and wherever Christ appears, it is the same as a theophany or manifestation of God: "He who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me," (John 12:45) says Christ about Himself and His relationship to the Father. Concerning the saints, since

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[22] An orant is a person praying, standing with up-raised arms, as though standing in the Kingdom of God.

they are believed to be dwelling in the Kingdom of God, and according to the New Testament uses of the word skēnē, God dwells in a heavenly skēnē, it follows logically that the saints who are with God should also be depicted under a skēnē. Therefore, to carve such scenes on a sarcophagus or a funeral stele, or to paint them in a tomb, seeks to convey the hope or belief that they are also in the Kingdom of God.

The shell, niche, and two-dimensional canopy, as well as other skēnē forms (such as the dome), are frequently utilized to represent the divine function of imperial persons. According to E. Baldwin Smith, it was at the time of Nero (54-68 A.D.) that the basically Eastern ideas of cosmic kingship had their real impact on Rome, "when the cosmic tent of Alexander the Great was adopted as an imperial symbol and heavenly covering over the Roman emperors in their role of a divine being and cosmic ruler." [23] Most of the ideology, along with its cosmic kingship symbolism, was eagerly received by the Christian successors to the pagan Roman emperors, as seen in the various consular diptychs of the fourth and fifth centuries, [24] and in the Roman Calendar of 354 A.D. portraying the Consul Constantius II enthroned

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[23] The Dome, op. cit., p. 53. See also l'Orange's study, op. cit.: he maintains that the dome is a symbol of cosmic kingship and originates in the near East.

[24] For example, see two consular diptychs dating from 406 in Grabar's Golden Age, op. cit., pl. 329, p. 285.

and haloed, as though he were Christ (Figure 97).[25]

Justinian and Theodora eagerly carried on the divine-imperial traditions, as can be observed by the enormous and strikingly prominent shell found over the Empress Theodora (Figure 52), the wife of the Byzantine Emperor, Justinian, who ruled from 527 to 565. Not only are she and Justinian under a shell-skēnē, but they even have very prominent halos around their heads,[26] in mosaics in the chancel at San Vitale, Ravenna, consecrated in 547. However, we need only to reflect back to Chapter Four, 2/C, and our discussion about "Fertility and Marriage, Order and Royalty" in order to realize that this manner of portraying Justinian and Theodora is an expression of the belief that, as God brought order out of chaos in creating the cosmos, so the emperor and empress establish order and banish chaos on earth. Thus, they are God's agents and representatives on earth in the political-temporal (versus ecclesiastical-spiritual) sphere.

By no means do all niches and canopies contain shells. More often the two-dimensional canopies alone serve the purpose of constituting the skēnē. One of the frequent

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[25] The importance of the divine-imperial symbolism in the Christian Roman Empire is well recognized and discussed by Gervase Mathew in his Byzantine Aesthetics (op. cit.), especially in Chapters Two, Five, and Six.

[26] Halos in Christian art develop from their use on representations of the Roman emperors to express the divine light/presence which radiated from within them. Thus halos are used for both imperial persons and saints.

instances of saints depicted under (usually) shell-less skēnai are the evangelists, canon tables with authors, the incipit pages of each Gospel, and the covers which embellish them. As mentioned above, the Gospels make present Christ - the "God-Man" - and thus are a manifestation of the Divine. Consequently, it is entirely natural to expect skēnai to be associated with the Gospels. Almost all Gospel books have long been covered with carved ivory or répoussé metal covers, such as the late sixth or early seventh century Syrian silver Gospel cover in Figure 58, or the famous and beautiful ivory bas-relief Lorsch Gospel covers (Figure 54). Although these latter covers were carved around 810 in Charlemagne's palace workshop, a visual comparison of them and Byzantine ivories suggests that the Lorsch ivories are based on Byzantine prototypes, such as the Byzantine diptych in Figure 55, or the Byzantine carvings on Maximian's Episcopal Throne (Figure 56), both dating from the mid-sixth century. Very possibly the Lorsch Gospel covers were created by a Byzantine ivory carver who moved to Charlemagne's palace workshop in order to avoid the ravages of the iconoclastic struggle that was raging in Constantinople and the Eastern Empire at that time.

The Evangelists were usually portrayed at the beginning of their Gospels. One of the earliest extant illuminated Gospel manuscripts is the Rabula Gospels from sixth century Syria, and it includes Evangelists portraits with Canon

Tables (Figure 57). [27] Another illuminated manuscript of approximately the same period, the Rossano Gospels, which probably comes from Alexandria, follows a totally different style, and is much more classical and narrative. This is in marked contrast to the hieratic and iconic near-Eastern style of the Rabula Gospels. Evangelists portraits seem to have become particularly popular in Western manuscripts, such as the miniature of St. Luke with its prominent skēnē, from the Italian Gospels of St. Augustine, from very late in the sixth century (Figure 58).

Although iconoclastic tendancies are found throughout the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, they erupted full-force in 726, lasting, with a brief hiatus, until 843. During this time we have few portrayals of the persons and events of the Bible and of the saints' lives, for sacred art became almost entirely symbolic and non-figurative. However, the skēnē canopy remained. An excellent example of this is found in the northern French Sacramentarium Gelasianum of ca. 750 (Figure 59), which has striking similarities to the Syrian canon tables.

In conclusion, in this second section of the expansion of our concept of skēnē forms, we have found that when the skēnē form of the shell, niche, or two-dimensional canopy

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[27] It is interesting to observe that in this Canon Table the Evangelists are literally portrayed as "Pillars of the Church," a common motif among early Christian writers, such as St. Clement of Alexandria.

appears, indeed, the skēnē functions are also present.

We will now consider a third form of the skēnē, the triumphal arch and portal skēnē.

3. The Triumphal Arch/Portal Skēnē

We start this third section by looking at the triumphal arch itself. By this term I designate the free-standing, highly three-dimensional arch of either one or three arches, which may occasionally be pierced by arches on the sides also. Arches such as the Arch of Constantine (Figure 60) were built mostly by Roman emperors to commemorate their victories. In later centuries other arches were built by those who sought to emulate the Roman Empire or its emperors. In these triumphal arches we see the common skēnē form of triple arches flanked, at times, by pillars (or pillasters), similar to what we will see in some of the grand portals of churches, and the audience porticoes of emperors.

If the proportions of the triumphal arches were altered slightly, and we considered only a single arch, the shape of the triumphal arch would be very similar to the canopy over the Dura-Europas Christian House Baptistry, as well as countless ciboria. This is true particularly if we consider the quadrifons arch, a cube-shaped triumphal arch pierced by arches on all four sides, such as the Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli (Figure 61), where the four corners almost become four pillars supporting a canopy, symbolizing the four corners

of the earth or four world-pillars, supporting the canopy of heaven.

Naturally, we must inquire about the significance of such an obvious skēnē form as the triumphal arch. Actually, this free-standing imperial monument embodies many of the skēnē functions, including the symbolic significance of the portal and other triumphal arches, at which we will look later. All of the imperial-divine cosmic symbolism is found in the triumphal arch - the victorious emperor manifests the divine order on earth, including vanquishing the enemies of the empire, who represent the powers of chaos, destruction, and death. When the emperor would march under the triumphal arch, (pausing under it to be hailed as victor, and perhaps to give a speech and to praise his troops), he would appear as the cosmic ruler of the temporal sphere. This ceremony would frequently be repeated annually to celebrate the anniversary of the emperor's victories.

This theophanic experience is comparable to the emperor being revealed in audience at his palace. The major difference is that in the triumphal arch, the skēnē form was separated from his palace, and transferred to the entrance to a city (usually the imperial or provincial capital), or to its central forum or plaza. It was to this central point that the returning, conquering armies would ritually and literally return, re-entering into the life of the city, the center of ordered life. Furthermore, we point out that

it was at the central forum, in close proximity to the triumphal arch, where various commemorations and festivals would be observed, which would serve as an ever-present reminder of the victorious presence of the divine order brought by the emperor, whose conquests were seen as bringing order out of chaos, civilization out of barbarism.

I suggest that the deep power of the imagery of the emperor's battle with the threatening forces of chaos and death which takes place "out there," in the dark, uncivilized world, is derived unconsciously from the correspondence with the individual psychic and spiritual battle between higher and lower forces, between good and evil, life and death. Consequently, the individual and the empire collectively share and participate vicariously in the emperor's conquests, which become more tangible to the people when depicted visibly on the triumphal arch.

Another type of triumphal arch is not free-standing, but part of a building, such as is seen at Diocletian's Palace (Figure 62). Sometimes this type of imperial skēnē would be transferred into a two-dimensional form, such as the portrayal of Theodoric's Palace shown in the mosaic at Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (Figure 63), and the reconstruction drawing based on that mosaic (Figure 64).

Another famous example of the two-dimensional triumphal arch is the fourth century silver plate called the Missorium of Theodosius (Figure 65), which reveals the emperor in his

role as the vehicle of the imperial-divine manifestation of divine order on earth, embodied in the person (as well as the office) of the emperor, even to the extent that he is shown with a halo around his head, [28] as do the Byzantine mosaics of Justinian and Theodora at S. Vitale in Ravenna that we mentioned above. We observe in the Missorium that the emperor is enthroned under the larger central arch of a triple-arched form, (the so-called fastigium), surmounted by a pediment. If, on a closely cropped two-dimensional surface, one were to portray Theodoric or Diocletian enthroned in majesty at his palace audience portico-entrance, as shown in Figures 62, 63, and 64, I suspect that it could look much like this Missorium enthronement of Theodosius, although there are other ways in which this has been explained or described.

Thus, I propose that this triumphal arch form is a type of short-hand and stylized portrait of the emperor actually enthroned in audience at his palace. Furthermore, we observe that once again we find that where a skēnē form is encountered, that there we also find the skēnē functions are being fulfilled, (in this instance, the imperial functions we have talked about, such as manifesting the divine order on earth), we will find there some type of skēnē form.

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[28] The imperial use of the halo is derived from prior pagan Roman practice, developed in conjunction with the concept of the divinity of the emperor.

In considering the Missorium, if we were to remove the pediment and narrow the side portals, we would have a form that would look very much like the Jewish Temple (Tabernacle) on the two seventh century silver dishes from Constantinople, which show Samuel Anointing David (Figure 66), and the quite similar plate depicting the Marriage of David. [29] In the former, we know that the manifestation of God's order and wisdom which is being portrayed occurred in the Holy Place, just outside the Holy of Holies, because the Altar of Sacrifice, with a lamb and a calf, are depicted at the bottom. Therefore, the skēnē triumphal arch simultaneously is the skēnē of the Temple's (Tabernacle's) Holy of Holies, plus the skēnē of imperial presence and function.

At this point in our discussion, let us consider the symbolic function of the entrance/portal/doorway which is so closely associated with the triumphal arch and other skēnē forms. Christian churches, the Jewish Temple and synagogues, in addition to pagan temples, are generally characterized by some skēnē form at the entrances.

Entrances are a fundamental element of the Greek theatre also, where the practical function of the skēnē was two-fold: the first was to provide a backdrop against which the plays were enacted; and the second was to provide a building in which the actors could put on and store their costumes and props, with doorways whereby the actors could enter to and

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[29] See Grabar, Golden Age, op. cit., p. 308.

exit from the proskenium. Frequently the skēnē would be painted as a palace (as in Figure 8), and the action of the dramas occurred in front of the palace, with it written into the script that the royal characters exited from, and re-entered the palace. Other players, such as a seer, messenger, or shepherd, would enter from the sides, as did the Chorus. Aeschylus' and Sophocles' plays tend to follow this pattern, as in Agamemnon and Oedipus Tyrranus.

Moving from the theatre to the Hebrew forms we have considered in earlier chapters, we note that in all of the representations of the Jewish Temple (other than modern models), we have found a skēnē form at the entrance. This concept of entrance is actually a very important dimension of the skēnē form and of the skēnē symbolism, and by no means accidental nor incidental.

Since universal symbolism is based on human experience in the material realm, which in turn is used to refer to experience in the non-material realm, let us first look at the human encounter with doorways, and then at their corresponding spiritual-symbolic significance.

What is the every-day experience of the doorway? It is to enter or exit from one area of the material world to another, to enter or exit a building(enclosed), or an out-of-doors designated area such as a garden-park, a cemetery, a courtyard, or a collection of buildings, such as a farm, palace, monastery, estate, or a city or part of a city. What

then, is the symbolic significance of a doorway? I suggest that it symbolizes a passage from one level of existence to another. Frequently part of the symbolism involves the designation of whom may pass through a portal/entrance, and sometimes, when this passage may occur.

For example, the skēnē doorway/entrance of the Holy of Holies of the Mosaic Tabernacle or the later Jewish Temple could be passed through only by Moses, Aaron, and the high-priests after him, and in later centuries, only on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Another example is found in Orthodox Christian liturgical practice, where only a priest or bishop may go through the central "royal doors" or "holy doors," and then, only at a few designated times during the divine services.

I contend that a doorway has more than the usual significance when it is a skēnē, and a skēnē designates the dwelling-place of God, and/or a place where the Divine, or some aspect of His Nature or Activities, is encountered and made manifest. Thus, to pass through a skēnē entrance is to pass through into a higher spiritual level of existence, or at least, where the opportunity is provided to attain a higher level. [30] Consequently, I suggest that the skene

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[30] Several years ago when I saw a performance in Toledo, Ohio, of Mozart's The Magic Flute by the Metropolitan Opera Company, the major stage scenery was a giant wall, pierced by three arched doorways. The portal in the center was larger than the ones flanking it, and over it was written "WISDOM." The search for wisdom is the major theme

in its aspect as entrance, indicates the activity of entering into the presence of God. This significance is a prominent and central element of the rite of procession, and implies that entrance into the realm of the Wisdom of God is no static condition, but a vital, dynamic, creative process.

Do these concepts about the significance of the entrance apply to the skēnē in its two-dimensional form of a niche, canopy, or tabernacle - commonly found with a saint, or other holy person or symbol beneath it - such as we saw in the previous section? I suggest that the person portrayed has already entered (processed) into the higher spiritual state which is a result of dwelling with God in His heavenly skēnē/Tabernacle, or otherwise existing in the Divine Presence.

We have been considering the aspect of the entranceway as a boundary line, or a place where two realms come together and meet. However, a doorway is also an exit, as well as an entrance. Therefore, a person appearing in a skēnē portal may be viewed, at times, as someone who has entered the

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of the opera, as it is also the major theme of the Masonic Order, with its great emphasis on the "Wisdom of Solomon," and of Solomon's Temple. Thus the triple doorway could be understood as a reference to Solomon's Temple. This would be appropriate since the whole opera is filled with so much symbolism. In any event, it is stiking to observe this modern, secular association between the very traditional skēnē form - triple-arched portals - the search for Wisdom, and the rite of passage in that search.

divine dwelling-place (or whose origin is that dwelling-place of God), but who then returns to the material dimension of existence to reveal the Divine to the people. A liturgical example of this is seen when the Orthodox priest comes out through the iconostasis' Holy Doors (the boundary between the two realms of heaven and earth), to read the Gospel and to administer Holy Communion. I propose that this latter experience of the skēnē is especially found in relation to imperial manifestations, by nature of the imperial office and function, as discussed above.

Let us look at some examples of this entrance-skēnē form and concept in Christian church architecture. One of the most important churches built after the "Peace of the Church" of 313 A.D. was Constantine's Basilica of the Holy Wisdom - Hagia Sophia - in Constantinople (Figure 67). The Theodosian façade that was added later in the fourth century is a most superb example of the type of skēnē portal-entranceway that we are discussing. What is interesting to note is the striking resemblance to the three silver plates mentioned above: the Missorium of Theodosius (Figure 65); the Anointing of David (Figure 66); and the Marriage of David. Could it be that the façade of Hagia Sophia and Theodosius' palace audience triumphal arch were models of each other, and that the Missorium, which depicts Theodosius in audience, in turn, is a portrait of his actual place of audience in his palace? These triumphal arches are also

similar to the audience portico of Theodoric's and Diocletian's palaces, scaled down to one portal. (The other two portals might be further to the sides, and thus not visible in this drawing.)

The triple-entrance façade of church and synagogue is attributed by Grabar to an earlier legacy from pagan Syrian temples. [31] One Christian example of this Syrian legacy is the south façade of the fifth century Monastery of St. Simon Stylites at Kalat Seman (Figure 68), which is characterized by the ubiquitous triple entrances flanked by pillars. The doorways into the nave are post and lintel, with arches above the doors. In addition, there are large open arches which form the triple entrances into a type of open narthex. Grabar comments that this monastery church "might almost be taken for a piece of Roman architecture of the first or second century, or a Romanesque façade of southwestern France." [32]

We find grand, royal portals not only attached to buildings as part of the façade, but free-standing, such as the Gateway to the Lorsch Monastery (Figure 69). (That scholars suggest that this gatehouse is based on the Roman triumphal arch further reinforces the close relationship between the triumphal arch and the portal.) But then, this, too, is

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31 Early Christian Art, op. cit., p. 59.

32 Ibid., p. 51.

to be expected, since it is that very portal which separates the monastery world from the rest of the material world, and which is the place where the two worlds meet. We might, therefore, draw a hypothesis from this, and propose that wherever and whenever we find the meeting-place between two worlds, there we will also find a skēnē form.

Yet there are more than just two realms with which to deal. For instance, the Jewish Temple had three divisions: the Holy of Holies; the Holy Place or Inner Court; and the Outer Court. Then there was the rest of the world outside the walls of the sacred precincts. The same three-fold delineation was carried over into the Christian church architecture: the Holy of Holies became the Sanctuary, Apse, or Altar; the Holy Place became the Nave; and the Outer Court became the Narthex. [33] Consequently, in many, if not most early churches, there were skēnē forms at each juncture, such as are found at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The large, double central portal (the middle of five entrances) piercing the west façade were echoed by the doors leading inside from the narthex into the nave, and on the outside into the atrium. In Eastern churches the royal doors of the iconostasis, in turn, echoed the narthex doors.

Long before the Russians and other Slavs developed the floor to ceiling five-tier iconostasis, lower sanctuary

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[33] See Ouspensky, Theology of the Icon, op. cit., Chapter One, "The Symbolism of the Church."

screens were used. As mentioned above, they were comprised of waist-high marble slabs, and marble columns surmounted by an architrave. Icons were hung on the pillars from an early date. Procopius and Paul the Silentiary described the sacntuary screen and architrave in their splendid detail at Hagia Sophia. [34] The Syrians early adopted the use of a sanctuary screen, derived from the curtains delineating the Holy of Holies in the Mosaic Tabernacle and Jerusalem Temple.

Ouspensky discusses the early sanctuary screen and its development:

> It is well known that the original iconostasis in the form of a screen between the Sanctuary and the nave has existed in Christian churches from very ancient times. We find information about ancient screens in the writings of Church Fathers, for instance Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom, and in ancient historians, such as Eusebius. The form and height of these original screens varied. Sometimes they were solid low walls or balustrades, the height of a man's chest, on which one could lean one's elbows, at other times they were higher latticed screens or a row of columns with an architrave. They were often made of particularly precious materials and decorated with sculpture or painted images. On the inner side, that is, on the side of the Sanctuary, was a curtain which was drawn open or closed in accordance with the various stages of the church service. In this way the sanctuary screen made the Sanctuary both visible and at the same time inaccessible.
>
> The sanctuary screen began to grow more complex very early. Even in Byzantium icons of the months ... and icons of holy days began to be placed there. At first under the architrave, and later upon it, immediately over the Royal Door, was an icon of the Savior, and later a triptych of the Savior, the Holy Virgin and John the Baptist ... the so-called Dēisis. [35]

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[34] See footnote # 7 in this chapter for citations.

[35] The Meaning of Icons, op. cit., p. 59.

Liturgically, the sanctuary represents the dwelling-place of God on earth, corresponding to the Shekhinah dwelling between the Cherubim above the Ark of the Covenant in the Jewish Temple and Tabernacle. The Narthex represents the world apart from God, yet beginning to approach the Divine, and corresponds to the outer court. And the Nave represents where the faithful people live, standing between the two worlds, and corresponds to the Inner Court or Holy Place. The iconostasis (Figure 70), then, is the boundary line between the two worlds, and the place where the two realms, earth and heaven, meet. It is also the vehicle by which the two realms can interpenetrate each other. [36] The iconostasis (see the Appendix) is the skēnē form closest to the skēnē of the Greek theatre: it is a wall pierced by three doors, the central one called the "royal" doors; it forms the backdrop of a sacred drama; it is covered with painted "scenery" which sets the stage for the dramatic liturgical action. [37]

The iconostasis shares a similar function with the triumphal arch, for it also makes tangible to the people the

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[36] This understanding of the nature of the iconostasis underlies much Orthodox liturgical ritual regarding when the doors are opened or closed, and whom may enter or exit through which doors, at what point in the service: the Little Entrance, the Great Entrance, reading the Gospel, preaching the sermon, and administering the Sacraments are the major times.

[37] The west façade of Gothic cathedrals served a similar function as the backdrop to the Medieval mystery plays.

conquests of the higher, spiritual forces of good, life and order, over the lower, material forces of evil, death and chaos, achieved by Christ, the saints, prophets and patriarchs, and angels. One of the chief purposes of making these victories visible and tangible is that through the vicarious participation in the victorious experience, the individual will achieve the spiritual victory that symbolically corresponds to the material, temporal victory.

In the architecture of some Western basilicas, the sanctuary sacred space was delineated, not by an iconostasis, or lower sanctuary wall-screen, but by a different skēnē form, the triumphal arch. Two fifth century examples still standing are seen in Rome, at San Paolo fuori le Mura (Figure 71), and at Sta. Maria Maggiore (Figure 72). These also make visible salvation-history through their mosaics, and form a backdrop for the divine drama, in addition to delineating the meeting-place of the temporal and celestial worlds.

In the above, we have inquired into the form and significance of the triumphal arch, and found it integrally related to the symbolism of the act of entrance. We also have noted that there are various skēnē forms which serve as entrances, marking the point at which the divine and temporal worlds meet, although these are basically variations of the triumphal arch. I contend that the purpose of all these skēnē forms of arches and entrances is to designate the place of theophany - where God holds audience, so to speak - where

one may encounter and even enter into the divine existence. Therefore, once again, we discover that where there is a skēnē form, there will be a skēnē function also.

We will now consider the Greek temple form of the skēnē.

4. The Greek Temple Skēnē

The Greek temple is a variation of the canopy and triumphal arch skēnē types.[38] It is basically the facade which exhibits the symbolic form. This form is comprised of two or more columns supporting a triangular gable or pediment. I suggest that the triangular form is basically a canopy of heaven - as though seen in two dimensions - supported by two of the four world pillars; the other two world pillars and the rest of the canopy are implied behind the façade. An additional symbolic element is added by the symbolism of the three-sided pediment, involving the number three and the pyramid, which we have considered above. The pyramid and pediment are also symbols of mountain tops, the paradigmatic place of theophany (see Section One of this chapter).

We have seen a variety of Greek temple façades in our above discussions. In Figure 8 we saw the canopy of heaven gable and columns over the doors of the theatre skēnē on the mid-fourth century B.C. fragment of a krater from Taranto.

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[38] By no means is this brief consideration meant to present a definitive study of the Greek temple, which would be a complete dissertation topic itself, and therefore far beyond the scope of this discussion of the symbolism of the skēnē.

The third century A.D. fresco at the Dura-Europas Synagogue (Figure 18) depicts the Jewish Temple in the form of a Greek temple, as do the mosaics on the triumphal arch at Sta. Maria Maggiore (Figures 19, 85 and 86), and the fifth century doors at Sta. Sabina, also in Rome (Figure 73).

We have seen several portrayals of imperial triumphal arches which have basically the same form as the Greek temple façade: Theodoric's Palace shown in the S. Apollinare in Classe mosaics (Figure 63) and Diocletian's Palace (Figure 62); the Missorium of Theodosius (Figure 65); and the Theodosian façade of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (Figure 67). (In the latter three examples, the curved arch canopy between the central columns projects up into the triangular pediment, whereas in the Greek temple there is a flat architrave all the way across the base of the triangle.) This same imperial function is joined with the Greek temple form also in the drawing of the Roman Calendar of 354 (Figure 87).

Sometimes, instead of a curved canopy, a pointed gable forms the top of niches within which saints or others stand, as in the orante figure seen in Figure 50, or in the semi-stylized pointed niches which alternate with the curved niches with saints which encircle the drum of the dome of Ravenna's Orthodox Baptistry (Figure 49).

On several Jonah sarcophagi - for instance, the one in the Lateran Museum (Figure 37) - the church with the sheep emerging (upper right), and the church-sepulchre with Lazarus

emerging (upper left), are both portrayed in the Greek temple form. In the early church's funereal art, representations of Christ resurrecting Lazarus were quite common, and the sepulchre is virtually always depicted as a miniature church in the form of a Greek temple. This pedimental form was commonly used for tombs in the West. The ambiguity - is Lazarus emerging from a church or a tomb? - reflects the dual nature of the church as a tomb and the dwelling-place on earth of the Divine. This is found even in a highly schematic late third century painting in the Catacomb of Ss. Pietro e Marcellino (Figure 74), in the fourth century bas-relief carvings of the Brescia Museo Civico ivory casket (Figure 75), and the fifth century mosaic at S. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (Figure 76). Later Eastern iconography depicts Lazarus emerging, not from a church-tomb, but from a cave in a mountain. [39]

The functions associated with these forms are the constantly recurring skēnē functions - the dwelling-place or manifestation of the Divine, the imperial manifestation, and the victory of life over death, understood as the resurrection of the dead.

Now we will briefly consider another form of the skēnē - the dome.

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39 For an example, see Onasch, Icons, op. cit., pl. 45.

5. The Dome Skēnē

The dome is really an extension of a curved canopy, supported on four columns, [40] such as we have seen in the form of the baldachino-canopy ever the altar, over the emperor's throne, over the ambon, over the baptismal font, over a tomb, over the Ark of the Covenant and Torah Shrine, over the Evangelists or other saints and prophets; sometimes the curved canopy was given a squared top over it to form a triumphal arch, with its various comparable uses.

It is a fairly simple, and perhaps obvious, transition to expand the smaller architectural curved canopy - usually found within a building or over an entrance - into a dome covering an entire building. The earliest examples of domed structures were used to assert the divine authority and the nature of the imperial office - the divine regent on earth. Particularly in the official exercise of the imperial power is that divine quality manifested, and thus the dome (or the skēnē carries that same significance.

Domes can assume a variety of forms. The dome can basically cover the entire structure, like the skull covers the head, or a dome can be raised up on a cylindrical drum. The shape of the dome can likewise vary. It can be curved at the top as in the Byzantine dome and its variations and

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[40] It is far beyond the scope of this inquiry into the nature and significance of the skēnē to attempt to present a definitive examination of the dome, which various fine studies have already done. (See the Introduction, p. 13 ff.)

precedents. Or it can be pointed at the top, as are the Russian "onion" domes.

One early example of the rounded dome is the Mausoleum of Theodoric (the Arian ruler in Italy in the late fifth-early sixth century A.D.), built in Ravenna in the early sixth century (Figure 77). Instead of being square, this building is octagonal, which therefore combines the universal symbolic significance of the canopy of heaven dome-skēnē with the symbolism of eight. Eight is seven plus one: therefore, since seven represents the cosmic totality of creation (e.g. four signifies the earth, and three represents the heavens), then one more symbolizes a renewed cosmos, a new beginning. (Thus octagonal buildings are appropriate for both baptistries and tombs.) The dome, or canopy of heaven, denotes that this new beginning is a cosmic event, and that the earthly skēnē is a microcosm.

An early example of the pointed thōlos type dome, supported on a drum rising above a rectangular building, is the late first century B.C. so-called "Tomb of Absolom," (erected by Herod the Great in the Kidron Valley near Jerusalem (Figure 78).

One of the most spectacular domed structures ever built is Justinian's magnificent Church of the Holy Wisdom - Hagia Sophia - consecrated in 547 in Constantinople - the Byzantine Empire's capital (Figure 79). It had been the largest dome ever built, and had retained that pre-eminence until

modern centuries. Justinian had sought to re-establish the glories of Solomon's Temple and build a monument worthy of what he considered to be the glories of his own empire, of his own office as emperor, and of his magnificent capital. Such a worthy monument would combine the functions of cosmic kingship with the divine attributes of truth, wisdom and splendor. Hagia Sophia was one of three churches dedicated to an attribute of God: Holy Wisdom, Holy Peace (Hagia Eirēnē), and what is believed to have been Holy Might or Holy Power (Hágios Ischyros).

Almost all Byzantine churches built after Justinian had domes. Baptistries also frequently were domed buildings, commonly over octagonal structures, such as Ravenna's Orthodox Baptistry (Figure 80). The symbolism of eight as a new beginning corresponds to the theology of Baptism. The neo-Platonic concept of "as above, so below" is reinforced by what is depicted in the occulus of the cosmic dome: the Baptism of Christ. This signifies that when a person is baptized in the font beneath the occulus, that he shares and participates in Christ's own Baptism, which becomes, therefore, a cosmic event by being depicted in the eye of the cosmic canopy or canopy of heaven. Furthermore, the occulus is also rather like a mirror which reflects what takes place beneath it and projects it as a cosmic event.

One of the most famous of all tombs is the tomb of Christ - the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Among the

earliest extant portrayals of the Resurrection of Christ are several which depict the Maries at the empty tomb, and an angel talking to them. These works date from circa 400 and from the latter fifth century. Each of them show Christ's tomb as a small domed building, sometimes on a single level, and other times on two levels with the dome raised on a cylindrical drum (Figures 81, 82, 83, and 84).

After the Constantinian Churches of the Holy Sepulchre and Anastasis were constructed, any portrayal of Christ's tomb was customarily patterned after the twin monuments. However, in the fourth and ealy fifth centuries, sometimes pre-Constantinian models still prevailed in areas far-removed from Jerusalem's influence.

In S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, there is a mosaic of the two Maries at the tomb which is almost diagrammatic in its simplicity (Figure 81). I think that it is possible that this representation was based on pre-Constantinian iconographic precedent, an example of which is seen in the fresco in the Dura-Europas baptistry. Nevertheless, we note once again that we have a standard skēnē form of an entrance flanked by four columns, surmounted by a dome - the canopy of heaven - in both the Ravenna mosaic (Figure 81), and another representation of the Resurrection on the Munich ivory (Figure 83). On two ivory panels dating from about 400 (Figures 82 and 83) we have what appears to be a more complete portrayal of the Holy Sepulchre, with six panels shown

on the sepulchre's doors, depicted on the Castello Sforesco ivory. These door panels illustrate three scenes in the life of Christ, including the Resurrection of Lazarus in the top two panels (Figure 82). The Munich ivory is distinguished by a rather detailed upper story (Figure 83).[41] In the latter, Christ's Ascension has been combined with His Resurrection. These two events are sometimes viewed theologically as two dimensions of the same experience. The tree growing out of the dome undoubtedly is the tree of the cross, which, because of the Resurrection, now blossoms as the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Paradise.[42]

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[41] See also the Pilgrim's Ampulla showing the Holy Anastasis, circa 600, in the Monza Treasury, in Grabar, Golden Age of Justinian, op. cit., p. 314.

[42] Many of the texts for the feast of the Elevation of the Cross, September 14th, convey the significance of the holy tree of the cross, and its relationship to the tree in Paradise from which Adam and Eve ate, thereby chosing their own will rather than God's will, and thus bringing death and sin to humanity. Here are two of the many texts that present these ideas.

> How strangely wonderful that the Cross which bore the High One as a cluster of grapes full of life, appearing today elevated from the earth, through which we were all drawn to God, and death was swallowed unto the end. O what a pure Tree through which we have received the non-mortifying food of Eden, glorifying Christ.
>
> (Stikhera on the Praises; Matins)

> Let all the trees of the wood, planted from the beginning of time, rejoice; for their nature hath been sanctified by the stretching of Christ on the Tree...
>
> (Ninth Ode of the Canon; Matins)

(Texts translated by Seraphim Nassar, Divine Prayers and Services of the Catholic Orthodox Church of Christ, Syrian Antiochan Orthodox Archdiocese of New York and All North America, 1961 (1938), pp. 303 and 302, respectively.)

In the Milan ivory diptych seen in Figure 84 we have many events portrayed: (starting with the upper right) - Christ washing the Apostles' feet at the Last Supper; Christ's trial before Pilate; and four Resurrection experiences, ending with Doubting Thomas - all squeezed into a small space. Consequently, the people and buildings are naturally limited in detail. Yet the Church of the Holy Sepulchre looks like itself, and is very similar to the two previous ivories seen in Figures 82 and 83. Also, whereas the Holy Sepulchre is a small domed building, as shown in Christ's burial (bottom right and upper left scenes), the church built on the site of the Holy Supper is a basilica, as is portrayed in the first and last scenes. In Egeria's diary of her pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the fourth century, she describes these Constantinian churches, as well as their liturgical role in Holy Week. [43]

In most extant representations of Jerusalem, such as the apsidal mosaic of the Heavenly Jerusalem at Rome's fifth century Sta. Pudenziana, [44] we have actual "portraits" of the buildings on the holy sites associated with Christ's Passion and Resurrection. In fact, although the Temple did not have a dome, in latter icons showing Jerusalem or the Temple, the dome of the Anastasis church replaces the pediment of the Herodian Temple.

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[43] Egeria's Diary of a Pilgrim, Trans. R.M. French, London, 1954.

[44] See Grabar, Golden Age of Justinian, op. cit., p. 135.

These dome-skēnē forms asserted the divine, and at times, priestly, nature of the imperial personage. Christ was the divine-king-priest par excellence, after the order of Mechizedek. Therefore, it is only to be expected that Christ's tomb should be a skēnē par excellence - the domed building.

Now we turn to the last segment of this chapter, where we shall inquire about the use and significance of curtains, as an element that is so frequently a component of most skēnē forms.

6. Curtains: A Common Component of Skēnē Forms

Curtains are a significant and ubiquitous component of skēnē forms, including the Mosaic Tabernacle and the Jewish Temple, the three-dimensional architectural canopy, the carved niche and two-dimensional canopy, the triumphal arch, and the iconostasis.

Due to the obvious perishability of cloth, we have no existing architectural examples of the use of curtains in the early centuries. But we do have manuscript paintings, mosaics, and bas-relief sculptures, in addition to literary references, such as Paul the Silentiary's Description of Hagia Sophia [46] which give us some idea of the extensive use of curtains in the early Christian period by both Christians and Jews.

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[46] See Footnote 2 in this chapter.

Actually, if we did not find curtains, it would be most surprising, since according to the directions given to Moses, recorded in Exodus 26:1-6, it was the ten inner curtains that really constituted the actual Tabernacle (skēnē) of the Lord, Whose Divine Presence was manifested in the Tables of the Ten Commandments, which were kept in the Ark of the Covenant which resided within the Tabernacle - behind the veil (curtain) of the Holy of Holies. Probably the clearest representation we have of the use of curtains for the Tabernacle is in the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Figure 14). In another (rather schematic) portrayal of the Tabernacle in the Dura-Europas Synagogue fresco seen above in Figures 18 and 27, the central entrance to the Temple precincts (shown at the bottom) is behind a blue and pink (scarlet) curtain, and the Ark of the Covenant is shown at the top, veiled by the curtain of the Holy of Holies, but here depicted behind the Ark so that the Ark itself would be visible. I would speculate that one possible alternative meaning, in addition to those mentioned above, is that the curtain behind Aaron's head indicates that in his role as High Priest, he is the only one allowed to enter into the curtained-off Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle of the Lord.

Further examples of the curtains of the Tabernacle are seen at Rome's Sta. Maria Maggiore, seen above in Figure 19. In this scene the Tabernacle is visible in the upper right and lower left, where, in both instances, the curtains are

tied back to reveal the interior of the Holy of Holies with the hanging lamp which was always kept burning.

In Figures 85 and 86, which are also from the mosaics at Sta. Maria Maggiore, we see the Temple in Christ's time (the Herodian Temple) portrayed almost the same way as was Moses' Tabernacle of Witness in the wilderness from the same mosaic series, with the exception that the Herodian Temple has four columns instead of two, [47] and has ornamentation around the pediment and roof. This similar portrayal conveys the belief that the Mosaic Tabernacle and its subsequent Temples were experienced in the same manner, as making present the same reality - the Dwelling-Place of the Divine on earth.

Why, precisely, should curtains be so prevalent and important a component of the skēnē? According to Exodus, the earthly Tabernacle is patterned after the heavenly prototype (παράδειγμα, paradeígma, Exodus 25:9; or τύπος, túpos, Exodus 25:40, both translated as "pattern"), revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai. Consequently, we should expect to find curtains, used in conjunction with various skēnē forms, to be associated with the heavens. Psalm 104 (103 in the Septuagint) gives verbal expression to this idea: "...Who spreads out the heavens as a curtain," (translated in the New English

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[47] According to the reconstruction of Herod's Temple (Figure 23) there were four columns; the biblical description of Solomon's Temple mentions just two columns.

Bible as "... as a tent"). The same imagery is found in Isaiah 40:22: "... Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in (RSV). As we recall from our first chapter, "tent" is the original meaning of the word skēnē. But a tent without sides is really a canopy. Thus one might translate the Psalm verse "Who spreads out the heavens as a canopy." From there it is but a simple step further to the idea that the sky, or the heavens, is the canopy or tent (the skēnē), which forms the dwelling-place of God. Therefore, in answer to the question, what does the dwelling-place of God look like, we answer that it looks like a giant canopy or tent with curtains. Consequently, it is perfectly logical that since ancient times, whenever the earthly dwelling of God was to be delineated, described, depicted, or built, that it would look like a canopy or tent with curtains, such as the Hebraic Tabernacle of Moses.

The use of curtains is found in conjunction with another major function of the skēnē - the imperial function - to represent and symbolize the divinity of the emperor, as was the case with the later Roman emperors, or to convey the concept that at least the office, if not the person, of the emperor was divine.

An early Christian/Roman expression of this divine-imperial function is seen in the Roman Calendar of 354 (Figure 87), showing the emperor (in this case, the Consul

Constantius II) as though a god, distributing his largesse of gold(the most divine of all materials) coins, signifying physical and spiritual blessings. In this drawing the curtains are hanging from an architrave, tied back to reveal the haloed divine emperor (consul), who sits enthroned under a skēnē-triumphal arch, comprised of a triangular pediment with a shell in the center, supported by two columns. The form is quite similar to portrayals we have seen above of the Tabernacle-Temple, Canon Tables, and other two-dimensional canopies and niches.

Another example of this symbol of the curtains pulled back from a skēnē to manifest and reveal the divine cosmic order or presence through the person of the imperial majesty is found in Ravenna, at S. Apollinare Nuovo, built by the Arian Ostrogothic king, Theodoric (Figure 63). Originally, Theodoric and his chamberlains were depicted beneath those curtained arches, (parts of the hands remain in the mosaic of the columns), but were removed when Ravenna was recaptured by the Orthodox Emperor, Justinian, and Theodoric's church was reconsecrated as an Orthodox, rather than as an Arian, temple.

The Calendar of 354 and the S. Apollinare Nuovo mosaic are just two early examples that illustrate how much of the universal and cosmic symbolism used by the pagan emperors was adopted and adapted to Christian imperial needs.[48]

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[48] See H. P. L'Orange, op. cit., passim.

It is due to the influence of such symbolism that the Empress Theodora, surrounded by her retinu, is depicted with a giant halo under a shell-skēnē at S. Vitale in Ravenna (Figure 52). One of her chamberlains is pulling back the curtains as the Empress is about to make her entrance, bearing her gifts, and thereby manifesting herself to the people. It could just as easily be the reverse, that she is shown already in theophany, and is about to withdraw behind the curtain to re-veil herself after revealing herself. Her husband is similarly shown opposite her.

There are also numerous bas-relief ivory imperial and cunsular diptychs which use similar symbolism, such as the two early sixth century diptychs of Empress Ariadne (d. 515) in Figure 88, depicted in the full imperial regala and splendor of her imperial office. She is standing, enthroned under an architectural skēnē, with a shell that looks like a dome, with the curtains tied back as though to reveal a manifestation of the Divine Wisdom to the world, which, of course, was the precise intention. To further emphasize the importance of her office, her humanity is minimized to the extent that it is virtually irrelevant. What is relevant is the message : just as Christ invisibly reigns in heaven, so His appointed and anointed regent and representative visibly reigns on earth. Thus, I contend that the tied-back curtains symbolize the curtains of the heavens which are drawn back to reveal the Divine Nature and Activity.

These divine-imperial cosmic kingship ideas also found expression in the West, by the successors of Charlemagne's attempt to re-establish the Roman Empire in the West - the "Holy Roman Empire." Although there was not much communication between the East and West in the ninth century, Charlemagne was well aware that the Roman Emperor was on the throne in the imperial capital of Constantinople. It was thus all the more important to assert the divine right of the Holy Roman Emperor in the West by graphically portraying the emperor surrounded by symbols of his divinity. One striking illustration of this is a miniature (from about 856), of Charlemagne's son, Charles the Bald, who is enthroned under an architectural canopy, and under a curtain draped across the heavens (Figure 89). That the curtain and canopy indeed represent the heavens - God's dwelling-place - and that Charles is His regent, is furthermore made absolutely certain by showing the hand of God protruding from a cloud, flanked by the same vigil lights (and/or censor) seen in the Holy of Holies, and which are also used in the Christian Sanctuary to indicate the Divine Presence. The hand of God shown in this manner is a pre-Christian convention to show the Presence and Activity of God in the event portrayed. Hence, Charles the Bald was seeking to communicate the concept that in his actions as king, he was making known the Divine Presence on earth, by means of the divine sanction. To further express this intention, the

clergy, arrayed across the bottom, much smaller in importance compared to the king, are readily acknowledging his divine right as king. As audacious as this scene appears to us now, there was considerable precedent in pagan Roman and Byzantine imperial symbolism for Charles' extremely bold presentation, as we have already seen.

In Chapter Four, 2/c we discussed the important relationships between "Fertility and Marriage, Order and Royalty," where we saw why it was seemingly such a natural affirmation to maintain that the king indeed did manifest the divine order on earth. Charles the Bald is a graphic example of such ideas.

That there is such a close interrelationship between the Divine and the law, order, and wisdom, (which the emperor represents and disseminates), is clearly shown on the Brescia Museo Civico ivory casket (Figure 90). Here we see a manifestation of Divine Wisdom, as Christ, the Divine Logos and Wisdom incarnate, is unequivocally revealing to His Apostles, the Divine Law, Order, and Wisdom, symbolized by the open scroll. This manifestation occurs under a dome-like structure within two columns with curtains. I supect that the structure might have been intended to be a church, possibly even the apse or altar canopy of the church, where curtains were commonly used, in which case, a further idea would then be expressed: it is within the Church (and perhaps specifically in the Eucharist which is enacted within the apse),

that this Divine Word (Logos) of Law, Order, and Wisdom was manifested. Christ, as the Logos, or rational principle of creation, is Himself the personification and incarnation of the Divine Wisdom.

So established does this skēnē symbol of columns, architrave, and curtains seem to be, that a jeweled cross on a mound, under a skēnē (Figure 91) can be substituted for Christ. Yet the meaning remains clear: by means of Christ's cross on Golgatha (the mound), and His Resurrection (the empty cross; and jeweled, indicating glory and victory), the Divine Law, Order, and Wisdom are revealed (curtains of the Tabernacle pulled back). [49]

Just as the curtains - the canopy of heaven - was an essential element of the Mosaic Tabernacle and the Temple's

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[49] It appears from the existing evidence that it was customary up until the fifth and sixth centuries to portray Christ's cross empty. The oldest known cross with Christ on it is on the wooden bas-relief doors of Sta. Sabina, Rome, dating from ca. 430. Apparently it was in response to the Monophysite heresy of the fifth-sixth centuries that the Orthodox started to portray Christ on the cross. Monophysitism contended that Christ had only one Divine Nature, as opposed to the Chalcedonian Decree (Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451) that Christ was the "God-Man," with two Natures (physis), Divine and Human, equal and undevided in One Person. If Christ were only Divine, as the Monophysites contended, He could not have died on the cross, for God could not die. Thus to portray Christ on the cross asserts the Orthodox view of the Chalcedonian Decree, that Christ is fully human as well as fully Divine. Again, it was customary, however, to show Christ alive. The first time, at least in the East, that Christ is depicted dead on the cross seems to be in the narthex mosaics at Hosios Loukas in Phocis, Greece, dating from around 1000.

Holy of Holies, and of the Greek and Roman theatre's stage skēnē (Figures 9 and 10), so likewise, they apparently were attached to the architrave of the sanctuary screen forming the Christian Holy of Holies in early church architecture, in addition to the curtains which were suspended from the ciborium over the altar. Two modern forms of these curtains are the stage curtain across the front of the traditional proskēnium stage, and the curtain behind the Holy or Royal Doors of the Orthodox iconostasis, each of which is opened or closed at times appropriate to the drama enacted.

Let us reflect momentarily upon the human experience of the phenomenon of the curtain or veil. We are familiar with the public ritual of the formal unveiling of something new - a painting, a statue, a car, etc. - where, once people have gathered, and after the appropriate preludes, there is the special moment when ... voilà - there it is - the veil is removed or pulled back, and the object is revealed. This ritual involves an object in the material plane of existence. However, when dealing with the spiritual plane of existence, I suggest that sometimes we need a veil precisely to enable us to perceive something on a very high spiritual level. (It is rather like putting on sunglasses - veiling one's eyes - in order to see in the glare of the sunlight.) An example of this spiritual experience is Moses, who, after he had been on Mt. Sinai in the Presence of the Lord, had become so physically and spiritually transfigured that his

head shone like tha sun with brilliant rays (not horns as the Vulgate translated it) emanating from his head. However, in order that the children of Israel might look on him after he came down from the mountain, he had to veil his head (Exodus 34:29-35). [50]

At the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor the brilliance of the Uncreated Light around Christ knocked the three Apostles to the ground, and they had to cover or veil their eyes to shield themselves from the blinding Light of the Divine (see Figures 1 and 2).

In fact, the word "re-veal" or "re-veil" implies the very experience we are talking about - that in order to be revealed, the Divine must be re-veiled, or hidden. It is as though by divine condescension (or imperial condescension), that the curtains will be drawn back at certain times so that the select or the initiates might perceive the divine radiance - but only insofar as they are capable of tolerating the experience. [51] In the early church the catechumens (those who had not yet been initiated or illumined) left the church before the Holy Mysteries were revealed, because during the Anaphora (the Consecration and Epiclesis) the Holy Doors remain open, with the curtains drawn back.

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[50] I suggest that the figure in the Dura-Europas Synagogue frescoes simply called "a prophet" who has a black square behind his head, might be a portrayal of Moses with his head veiled.

[51] See the hymns for the Transfiguration referred to in Chapter One. Perhaps it was this spiritual experience that Plato had in mind, among other things, when he composed his "Allegory of the Cave."

Similarly, the imperial majesty and glory were revealed under the skēnē at appointed times when the curtains were drawn back to reveal in audience the symbol, and even the embodiment, of the divine order on earth.

With this discussion of curtains, we bring to a close our exploration of the form and significance of the skēnē. In the following Summary we shall attempt to summarize our findings.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Let us now attempt to summarize what we have done in our inquiry, and draw some conclusions.

We have come a long way from our first encounter with the skēnē in the Greek theatre and the Mosaic Tabernacle, where we saw that they were closely parallel in meaning and function. The purpose common to both theatre and Tabernacle was to make manifest the Divine Presence, and the consequences of His Presence (e.g. His Activity): creation, life, order, the good, and the Divine victory over destruction, death, chaos, and evil. This Divine victory constitutes a reconciliation of opposites, a universal and perennial theme of spiritual striving. Thus, in the skēnē, which represents that Divine victory, Presence, and reconciliation, heaven and earth are united. The canopy or tent (skēnē) of heaven that touches earth on its four earth pillars visualizes this reconciliation.

In the skēnē the Invisible One provides a visible manifestation of Himself on earth, where the earthly skēnē is patterned after the invisible, heavenly prototype. Just as heaven and earth unite in the Divine victory of life and creation over death and destruction, so likewise the rain and sun fertilize the earth, bringing forth the crops which

sustain life. Just as creation brings order out of chaos, so the exercise of the imperial office on earth establishes and maintains order and overcomes chaos.

The purpose of the Divine Self-manifestation is that mankind might respond to, and participate in the Divine Nature and Activity, and thereby participate in the reconciliation of warring opposites, and champion life and good over death and evil. The skēnē marks off the sacred space where this human response to, and participation in the Divine victory and Presence occurs. This response has several names, among which are: liturgy, ritual, worship, creativity, play.

As we have seen, one of the many ways of expressing this experience is the balancing and harmonizing of the Dionysian and Apollonian components of existence and personality. This may be viewed also as the civilizing process of mankind - the affirmation of life, order and creation. The Dionysian is the emotional, mystical, meta-rational, ecstatic, imaginative, unconscious - symbolized by the earth and the feminine. The Apollonian is the intellectual, cognitive, rational, controlled, conscious, spirit, will-power, judgment - and is symbolized by the sky and the masculine. The extreme of the Dionysian element is lack of control or order; in other words, chaos. The extreme of the Apollonian is such restriction and order that there could be nothing new, and no creation. In either extreme life could not exist and be renewed and maintained. The balance and harmony of the two opposing dimensions

of life is required to have creation. Humans participate in and imitate this Divine Activity by means of creative play, playful creativity, ritual, worship and liturgy.

Similarly, Beauty is an allegory or symbol of the Divine Nature. Thus, humans imitate the Divine Nature by means of creating beauty. In so many cultures and civilizations the highest efforts of its artists and patrons have been channeled into creating beauty to adorn its skēnai - temple, church, palace, tomb - by creating beautiful architecture, sculpture, painting, music, poetry, drama, and dance. It is these monuments that are created to last through the centuries.

An important result of the unification, reconciliation, harmonizing and balancing of opposites, which is an essential dimension of the skēnē, is the spiritual dictum, "as above, so below," which reflects the concept that the skēnē forms a microcosm. But I suggest that there is an important corollary - "as below, so above," which indicates that the skēnē also forms a macrocosm. I contend that this two-way movement is not only possible, but an essential result of the skēnē, which unites heaven and earth, the above and below, so that movement is possible in either direction.

The Hebrew Tabernacle of Witness of Moses, as we have seen, was patterned after its prototype, the heavenly skēnē (Ex. 26:30, 25:9, 25:40, 27:8, and Ws. 9:8). It was in the heavenly and temporal skēnē that the Shekhinah dwelt and manifested Himself. As we saw in Chapter One, there is a

close linguistic connection between Shekhinah, skēnē, and mishkan, because they each have the consonants s k n, and therefore they have a corresponding close connection in meaning.

Philo was the first to move away from viewing the Mosaic Tabernacle as a place, and saw it as an allegory of virtue and wisdom. Wisdom, Philo allegorizes, is a tent (skēnē) in which the wise person dwells. This allegorical and symbolic method greatly influenced Christian biblical exegesis, but the basis of it is already discernible in the New Testament. We saw above that in the Prologue of John's Gospel the evangelist uses a verb form of skēnē - "and the Word was made flesh and dwelt (eskēnosen) among us (John 1:14). This term could be translated as "tabernacled," or "pitched His tent" among us. The implication is that in Christ's Incarnation, God was present in the Logos (the Wisdom or Word of God) in the same way as He was present in the Shekhinah in the Mosaic Tabernacle. If Christ's Body is the dwelling-place of the Shekhinah, then He Himself is a skēnē, and His Incarnation could truly be described as pitching His tent/skēnē/tabernacle among us.

St. Paul calls the Church the Body of Christ (Col. 1:18, 24; I Cor. 12:27; Rom. 12:5). If Christ's Body was the dwelling-place of the Shekhinah, then the Church must likewise be the dwelling-place of the Shekhinah. And indeed, just as the Mosaic Tabernacle was the prototype of Christ,

as the new Tabernacle on earth, so likewise, the Church, as the Body of Christ, continues to manifest the Divine Presence on earth as God's skēnē, as did the old Tabernacle. And, of course, we have seen a host of skēnē forms associated with church architecture, painting, and furnishings: the dome, apse, baldachino, canopies of various types, tabernacles and niches, pediments, the iconostasis, and triumphal arches. Curved spaces supported on columns are patterned on the heavenly model - the tent or canopy or dome of heaven (the sky) supported on the four earth pillars. The dome of Byzantine churches forms a microcosm as the canopy of heaven, but it is also the cranium of Christ. But then, again as St. Paul says, Christ is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23). Thus Christ as Pantocrator (Creator of All) is usually depicted in the occulus of the dome.

But St. Paul also states that we humans - our bodies - are also temples of God - temples of the soul or Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19). This is appropriate because God made us according to Him Image (κατ' εἰκόνα - kat' eikóna) and Likeness (καθ' ὁμοίωσιν- kath' hōmoiōsin). Thus, since Christ made the Invisible One visible, and Christ was a skēnē, therefore we must also form skēnai. Perhaps our dome-shaped heads are reminders of our true nature, where our bodies form a skēnē for the divine spark within us - the soul.

Haloes around the heads of saints, I suggest, are a reflection of at least an unconscious awareness of the head

as the celestial dome of the soul while it resides in the body. Jill Purce says in her intriquing book, The Mystic Spiral: Journey of the Soul, "The head is the inner sanctuary of the temple of man's body." [1] I suggest that in many other societies people can perceive more readily the energy patterns and their corresponding colors which emanate primarily from people's heads. One of the most sacro-delic and psycho-delic visualizations of this experience of the sanctification of the body/temple centered about the head is the illumination of an Evangelist (probably St. John) from the Book of Kells (Figure 92). We notice here that he seems to be within a body, for the hands and feet protrude. I suspect that this might be the Body of Christ - the Church - from which he is born into the illuminated life and Presence of God.

Because the Church is a tomb, womb, and temple, it is intimately involved with rites of passage, by means of which souls attempt to process from tomb to womb to temple, that is, from death to life to dwelling in the Presence of God. The skēnē as an entrance portal signifies and delineates the sacred space where the passage or procession from one level of existence to a higher spiritual level occurs. We recall that the original meaning of the word skēnē was "tent," which connoted a readily transportable dwelling. The

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[1] Avon Books, New York, 1974, p. 98.

Jewish Feast of Booths tries to maintain this dynamic quality of the skēnē. The sense of liturgical movement and procession also is an attempt to maintain the crucial concept and awareness that to enter into the Presence of God is no static condition, but a vital, dynamic, creative process. Sacred ritual and liturgy is a creative process that one is, not a static thing that one does. The skēnē is a universal symbol of that creative process - the journey of the soul - and the realization of the goal of that spiritual process.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

The Iconostasis Skēnē

The full iconostasis of the Eastern Orthodox Church was developing in Russia during the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, and thus, strictly speaking, is beyond the scope of our study. However, since it is the most direct descendent of the actual form of the skēnē of the Greek theatre, one of our original two forms, it seems too significant to omit altogether. Thus, a very brief discussion is included here as an appendix. This supplements what was said in Section Three of Chapter Six, but in no way is it intended as a definitive study, but only to present a few observations insofar as the iconostasis pertains to our study of the skēnē.

The Russian development of the iconostasis proceeded directly from the sanctuary screens and curtains of the earliest Christian centuries, and in fact, according to Ouspensky in his The Meaning of Icons, the sanctuary screen finds its clearest and fullest development in the iconostasis.[1] He continues to say that the sanctuary screen, according to the Church Fathers, is a boundary between two worlds, the Divine and the human, the permanent and the transitory, the spiritual and the sensory. Furthermore, he says, "although

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[1] op. cit., p. 60.

on the one hand, it is a screen dividing the Divine world from the human world, the iconostasis at the same time unites the two worlds into one whole in an image which reflects a state of the universe where all separation is overcome, where there is achieved a reconciliation between God and the creature, and within the creature himself. Standing on the boundary line between the Divine and the human, it reveals by means of images as fully possible the ways to this reconciliation." [2]

This idea of a skēnē form separating, yet providing the means of communication between the divine and the secular, we have repeatedly encountered, especially prominently in the discussion of the portal skēnē.

There is much similarity between the iconostasis and the Greek theatre skēnē, in both form and function. In both instances there is a free-standing vertical wall separating off the place from which the actors (clergy) emerge, and into which they re-enter, during their ritual dramatic enactments of life and death, and the manifestation of the Nature and Activity of the Divine. The means of communication between the two realms are three doors, the central one being the largest. Emerging through the central "royal" doors liturgically is comparable to a theophany.

Just as there was "scene-painting" on the ancient theatre skēnē, so, likewise, the icons of the iconostasis may

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[2] Ibid., p. 60.

also be regarded as "scene-painting," because they set the stage for the liturgical drama by portraying the saints already in the Kingdom of God, and by depicting scenes of the revelation of the Nature and Activity of God, and His purposes for mankind.

As seen in the diagram of the full iconostasis (Figure 70), there are (up to) five tiers with icons, each level being of a different size, with the largest on the bottom. If we compare this diagram with a photo of the Theatre of Dionysos in Athens (Figure 93) we see that the theatre also has five tiers, each level lined with niches. I speculate whether there might have been originally a scene-painting or a statue in each niche. There is evidence of at least statues being used in Roman theatres, as seen in Figure Seven. Of special interest is the second row, which has twelve (a cosmic number symbolizing the totality of heaven and earth) small niches, because it seems so similar to the iconostasis' feast-day tier, which also commonly has (at least) twelve icons of the twelve major feast days. (There can be more on a particularly large iconostasis.)

I contend that both the form and the function of the Greek theatre skēnē and the iconostasis are basically the same. In addition to the functions of the theatre's skēnē (discussed in previous chapters) which correspond to the significance of the iconostasis, are the functions of the Hebrew Tabernacle and Temple, especially that of the

separation of the Holy of Holies from the place where the people stood. This is just one more way in which the iconostasis is an expansion of the waist-high sanctuary screens of the earlier centuries, and corresponds to the rood screen and Communion rail in Western church architecture.

In conclusion, I suggest that the iconostasis fulfills all six functions of the skēnē enumerated in Chapter Five, and is the closest direct descendent of the Greek theatre's skēnē.

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52. Empress Theodora and Her Retinu, south choir wall mosaic, S. Vitale, Ravenna, 532-547, in situ. (From: Ibid., pp. 161-162.)

53. Silver Gospel Book Covers, depicting two saints, late 6th-early 7th centuries, found near Antioch, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. (From: Beckwith, op. cit., pls. 48 and 49.)

54. Ivory Cover of the Lorsch Gospels (Codex Aureus), depicting the Virgin and Child Enthroned between Ss. John the Baptist and Zachariah, Charlemagne's Palace School, ca. 810, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. (From: Hubert, Porcher and Volbach, Carolingian Renaissance, Trans. Emmons, Gilbert and Allen, Braziller, New York, 1970, p. 231.)

55. Virgin and Child Enthroned between Archangels, and Christ Enthroned between Ss. Peter and Paul, ivory diptych, Constantinople, mid-6th century, in the Ehemals Staatliche Museen, Berlin. (From: Beckwith, op. cit., pl. 67.)

56. St. John the Baptist between the Four Evangelists, detail of Bishop Maximian's Throne, Ravenna, ca. 547. (From: Kitzinger, Byzantine Art in the Making, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1977, pl. 172.)

57. Canon Table with Two Evangelists, Rabula Gospels, Syria, 586, in the Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence, Plut. I, Codex 56, f. 10. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 209.)

58. St. Luke in a Tabernacle with Scenes of the Life of Christ, from the Gospel Book of St. Augustine, Italy, late 6th century, in the Corpus Christi College Library, Cambridge, England, ms. 286, f. 129v. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 213.)

59. Frontispiece, Sacramentarium Gelasianum, Northern France, ca. 750, in the Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican, Rome, Vat. Reg. Lat. 316, f. 3v. (From: Hubert, Porcher, and Volbach, Europe of the Invasions, Trans. Gilbert and Emmons, Braziller, New York, 1969, p. 164.)

60. Arch of Constantine, in the Forum, Rome, before 315, in situ. (From: Toynbee, op. cit., p. 344.)

61. Arch of Marcus Aurelius, Tripoli, North Africa, ca. 160-180 A.D. (From: Frova, L'Arte di Roma e del Mondo Romano, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, Italy, 1961, p. 631.)

62. Diocletian's Palace at Spalato, main entrance preceded by an arcaded portico, Split, Yugoslavia, ca. 300 A.D., in situ. (From: Grabar, Early Christian Art, op. cit., p. 152.)

63. Theodoric's Palace, nave mosaic, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, early 6th century, in situ. (From: Rice, op. cit., p. 161.)

64. Theodoric's Palace at Ravenna, reconstructed according to the mosaic at S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna. (From: Ibid., p. 171.)

65. Missorium of Theodosius I, silver plate, Constantinople (?), 379-395, in the Academia de la Historia, Madrid, Spain. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 305.)

66. Samuel Anointing David, silver plate, Constantinople, 610-629, found in Cyprus, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. (From: Beckwith, op. cit., pl. 84.)

67. Constantine's Basilica of Hagia Sophia, Theodosian Facade with Portico (reconstruction), Constantinople, early 4th century. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 82.)

68. Monastery of St. Simon Stylites, Kalat Seman, Syria, South Facde, ca. 480. (From: Ibid., p. 51.)

69. Lorsch Monastery Gateway, West Façade, near Worms, Germany, 778-784. (From: Grabar, Carolingian, op. cit., p. 61.)

70. Diagram of an Iconostasis, showing fully developed, five tier program. (From: Ouspensky and Lossky, The Meaning of Icons, Boston Book and Art Shop, Boston, 1969, p. 62.)

71. San Paolo fuori le Mura, Rome, Interior looing East, showing Triumphal Arch and Apse, 386-ca. 440, in situ. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 7.)

72. Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome, Interior looking East, showing Triumphal Arch and Apse, 432-440. (From Ibid., p. 8.)

73. Annunciation to Zachariah in front of the Holy of Holies, detail of bas-reliefs on wooden doors of Sta. Sabina, Rome, ca. 430. (From: Volbach, Early Christian Art, Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1961, pl. 105.)

74. Resurrection of Lazarus, catacomb painting, Catacomb of Ss. Pietro e Marcellino, Chamber XIII, Rome, late 3rd century A.D., in situ. (From: Grabar, Early Christian Art, op. cit., p. 25.)

75. Resurrection of Lazarus, Ivory casket, second half of the 4th century, in the Museo Civico, Brescia, Italy. (From: Volbach, op. cit., pl. 88.)

76. Resurrection of Lazarus, nave mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, 5th century, in situ. (From: Bovini, Mosaici di S. Apollinare Nuovo di Ravenna: Il Ciclo Cristologico, Arnaud, Florence, Italy, 1958, p. VIII.)

77. Mausoleum of Theodoric, Ravenna, early 6th century, (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 18.)

78. Tomb of Absalom, Kidron Valley, reign of Herod the Great, 37-4 B.C. (From: Toynbee, op. cit., p. 51.)

79. Hagia Sophia, Interior looking East, Constantinople, reign of Justinian, 532-537. (Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 4.)

80. Baptistry of the Orthodox, Ravenna, 6th century, view of the dome, depicting the Baptism of Christ. (From: Ibid., p. 123.)

81. Two Maries at the Empty Tomb, nave mosaic at S. Appolinare Nuovo, Ravenna, 5th century, in situ. (From: Bovini, Ravenna, op. cit., p. 84.)

82. Two Maries at the Empty Tomb, leaf of an ivory diptych, ca. 400, at the Castello Sforzesco, Milan. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 288.)

83. Three Maries at the Empty Tomb, and Ascension of Christ, ivory panel, ca. 400, at the Bavarian National Museum, Munich. (From: Ibid., p. 288.)

84. Scenes of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, ivory diptych, early 9th century, in the Cathedral Treasury, Milan. (From: Hubert, et al., Carolingian Renaissance, op. cit., p. 221.)

85. An Angel Appearing to Joseph Outside the Temple, Telling Him to Flee to Egypt, and other Scenes of the Early Life of Christ, Triumphal Arch mosaics, Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome, 432-440, in situ. (From: Karpp, op. cit., pl. 13).

86. Detail of Figure 85, showing the Temple's Holy of Holies. (From: Ibid., pl. 17.)

87. Consul Constantius II Enthroned, from the Roman Calendar of 354 (after a drawing by Peiresc), Rome, 354 A.D., 17th century copy, in the Vatican Library, Rome. (From: Grabar, Early Christian Art., op. cit., p. 18.)

88. The Empress Ariadne, panels of two imperial diptychs, ivory, Constantinople, early 6th century, in the Museo Nazionale, Florence, and the Kunsthistorisches Museen, Vienna. (From: Beckwith, The Art of Constantinople, Phaidon Publishers, London, 1961, p. 37.)

89. Charles the Bald Enthroned in Audience, miniature in The First Bible of Charles the Bald, Tours, ca. 846, f. 423r, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Lat. I. (From: Hubert, et al., Carolingian Renaissance, op. cit., p. 139.)

90. Ivory Casket of the Museo Civico, Brescia, Italy, with scenes from the Old and New Testaments, early Christian, second half of the 4th century. (From: Volbach, op. cit., pl. 85.)

91. Ivory Gospel Book Cover, with Jeweled Cross, and Scenes from the Life of Christ, Italy, 5th century, in the Cathedral Treasury, Milan. (From: Grabar, Justinian, op. cit., p. 288.)

92. An Evangelist (St. John ?), miniature from The Book of Kells, Irish (Celtic), 8th century. (From: Hubert, et al., Europe of the Invasions, op. cit., p. 157.)

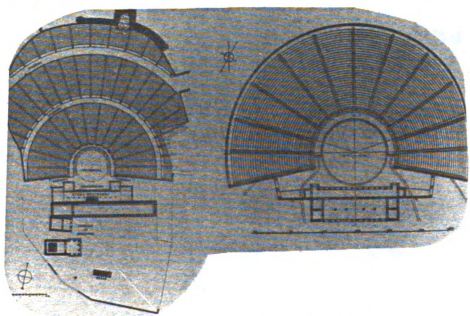
93. Theatre of Dionysos, Athens, 4th century B.C., photo.

FIGURES

1. Transfiguration, Russian, Theophanes the Greek, end 14th c.

2. Transfiguration, Russian, Novgorod School, 15th c.

(a)

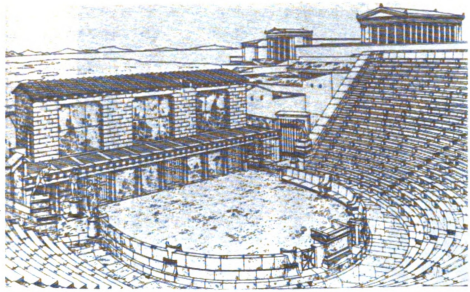


(b)

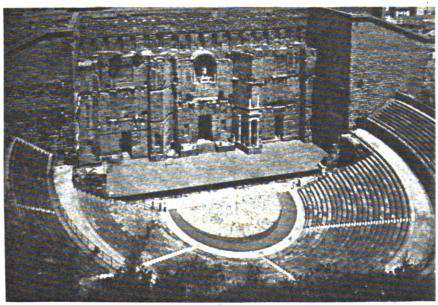
3. Plan of (a) Theatre of Dionysos, Athens, 4th c. B.C.
(b) Theatre at Epidaurus, 4th c. B.C.

4. Theatre in Epidaurus, photo, 4th c. B.C.

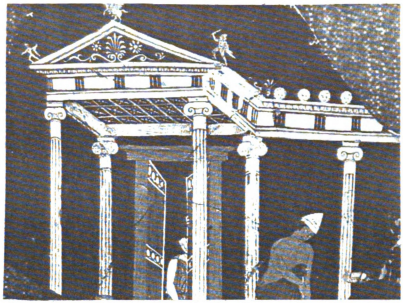
5. Theatre in Priene, 2 photos, 4th c. B.C.



6. Theatre in Priene, Hellenistic form, restoration after von Gerkan.

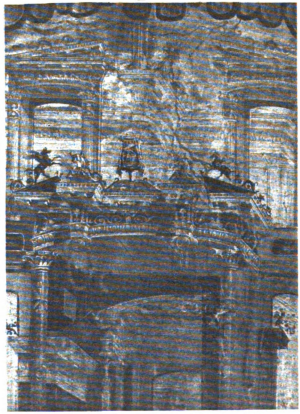


7. Roman Theatre in Orange, France, photo, Augustan Period, 27 B.C.-14 A.D.

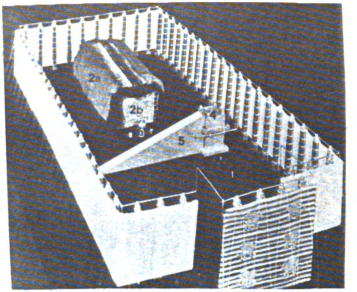


8. Krater painting fragment, from Taranto, mid-4th c. B.C.

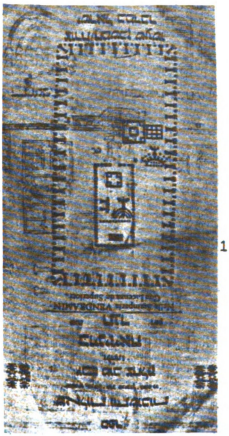
9. Floor mosaic, House of the Drinking Contest, Antioch, 3rd c. B.C.



10. Wall-painting of a Theatre, Herculaneum, before 79 A.D.



11. Model of the Tabernacle, suggested by M. Levine.



13. Ground-plan of the Tabernacle, title page from Yom-Tob Zahalon's "She'elot u-teshubot," Venice, 1694.

12. Model of the Tabernacle, suggested by Ferguson.

14. Moses receiving the Law on Mt. Sinai, and bringing the Law to the people (above); Moses and Aaron entering the Holy of Holies (below), Ashburnham Pentateuch, 6th-7th cs.

15. Priests carrying the Ark across the Jordan, 12th c. Spanish Bible, Leon.

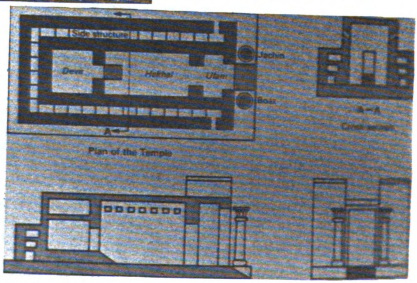
16. The Philistines returning the Ark of the Covenant, Dura-Europas Synagogue, before 256 A.D.

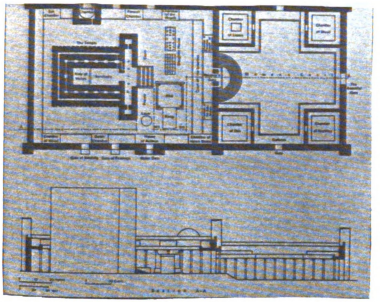
17. Ark of the Covenant on a cart, frieze, Capernaum Synagogue, 2nd-3rd c. A.D.

18. Ark of the Covenant in the Temple, Dura-Europas Synagogue, before 256 A.D.

19. Moses being stoned outside the Tabernacle, protected by Shekhinah, Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome, 5th c. A.D.

20. Plan of Solomon's Temple, according to Watzinger, 1933.

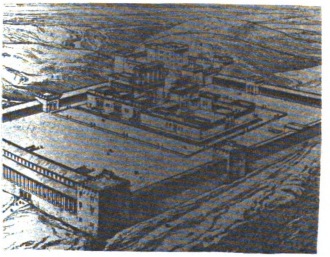


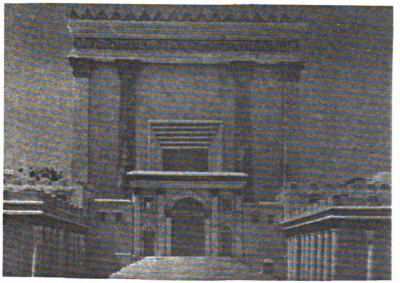


21. Plan and restoration of 2nd Temple, Atlas of Israel, 1970.

22. Reconstruction of Herod's Temple, after M. de Vogüé.

23. Michael Avi-Yonah's model of Jerusalem, detail of entrance to Herod's Temple from Inner Courtyard.



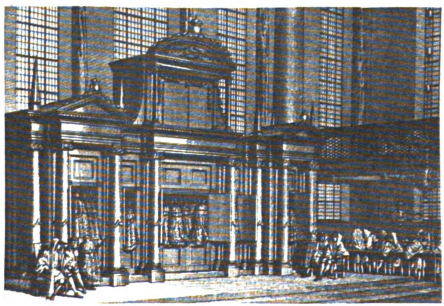


24. Ark of the Covenant, or Ark of the Law, floor mosaic, Beth Alpha Synagogue, Hefzibah, Israel, 6th c. A.D.

25. Ark of the Law, symbolic representation on a glass dish, Museo Borgiano, Rome.

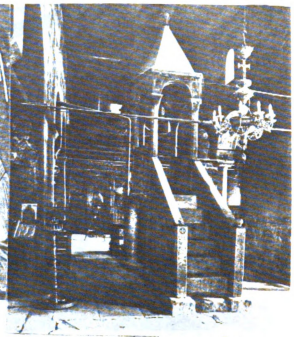
26. Ark of the Law, symbolic representation on a glass dish, Roman Jewish catacomb, 4th c. A.D.

27. The Temple and the Ark of the Covenant, detail of The Priesthood of Aaron, Dura-Europas Synagogue, before 256 A.D.



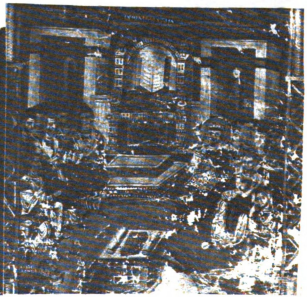
28. Ark of the Law, Sephardic Synagogue, Amsterdam, 17th c.

29. Communion of the Apostles, apse fresco, St. Sophia Cathedral, Ochrid, 11th c.

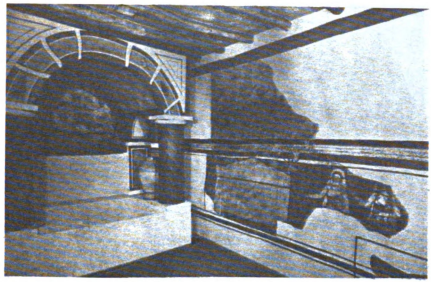


30. Ambon in Kalabaka Cathedral, mainly early Christian material.

31. Tomb of Zechariah, Kidron Valley, reign of Herod the Great, 37-4 B.C.



32. The Gospels Enthroned at the Second Ecumenical Council of 381, from The Sermons of St. Gregory Nazianzus, Byzantine, 880.

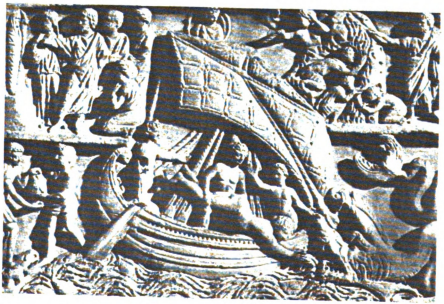


33. Baptistry, Christian House, Dura-Europas, before 256 A.D.

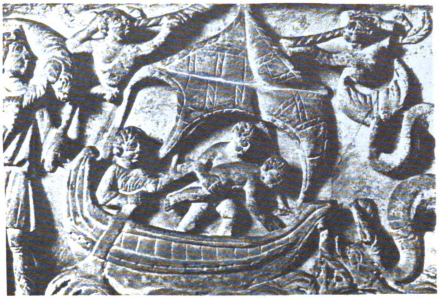
34. Good Shepherd and His Flock, above Baptistry, Christian House, Dura-Europas, before 256 A.D.

35. Good Shepherd and His Flock, mosaic, Galla Placidia, Ravenna, 2nd ½ 5th c.

36. Room N, Via Latina Catacomb, Rome, 4th c. A.D.

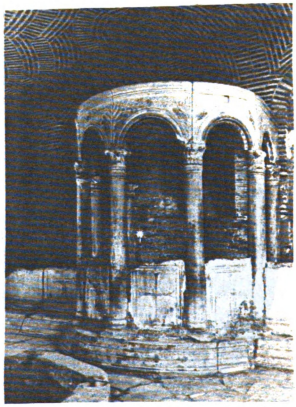


37. Jonah Sarcophagus, 3rd c. A.D., in the Lateran Museum, Rome.

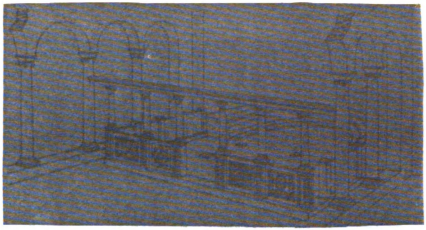


38. Jonah Sarcophagus, 3rd c. A.D., in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen.

39. Ciborium over baptismal font, Jemila, Algeria, 5th-6th cs.



41. Ciborium in crypt of St. Demetrios, Salonika, ca. 450.



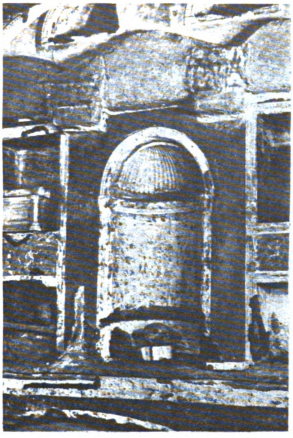
41. Bema of Aphentelli Basilica, Lesbos, reconstruction after A. Orlando, 1935.

42. Stuma Paten, Byzantine, 6th c.

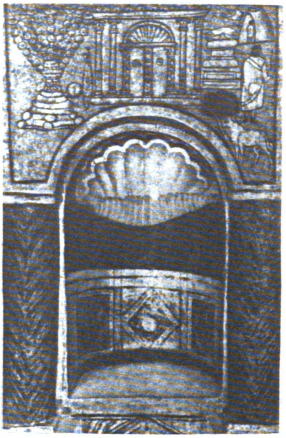
43. Riha Paten, Byzantine, 6th c.

44. Annunciation to Zachariah, from the Menalogion of Basil II, Byzantine manuscript, ca. 1000 A.D.

45. Presentation of Christ in the Temple, from the Menalogion of Basil II, Byzantine manuscript, ca. 1000 A.D.

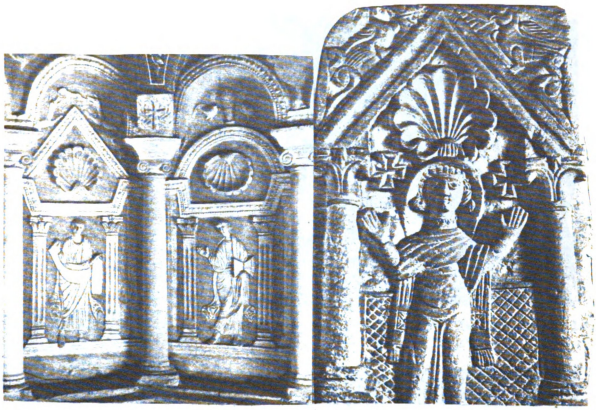


46. Tomb of the Caetennii, St. Peter's Necropolis, Rome, 2nd c. A.D.



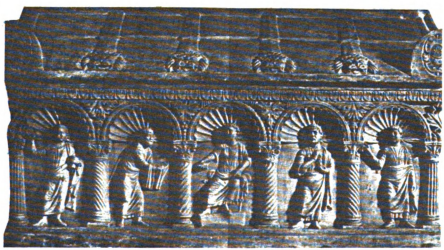
47. Torah Shrine, Dura-Europas Synagogue, before 256 A.D.

48. Jewish coin showing reconstructed Temple with the Ark of the Covenant, 133 A.D.



49. Upper wall, Orthodox Baptistry, Ravenna, 1st ¼ 5th c.

50. Funeral Stele with Orante, Egypt, 5th-6th cs., in Coptic Museum, Cairo.

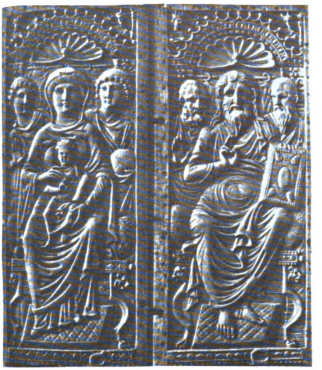


51. Christ Delivering the Law, Sarcophagus, 4th c. in San Francesco, Ravenna.

52. Empress Theodora and Her Retinu, mosaic, San Vitale, Ravenna, 532-547.

53. Silver Gospel Book covers, with two saints, 6th-7th cs., Antioch.

54. Lorsch Gospels cover, ivory, Virgin and Child, enthroned between 2 saints, Charlemagne, ca. 810.



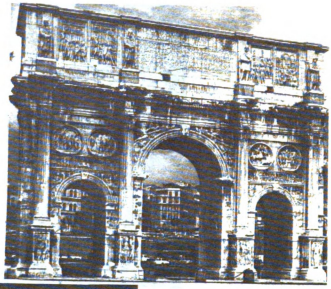
55. Virgin and Child Enthroned between Archangels, and Christ Enthroned between Saints, ivory diptych, Constantinople, mid-6th c.

56. St. John the Baptist between the Four Evangelists, detail of Maximian's Throne, Ravenna, ca. 547.

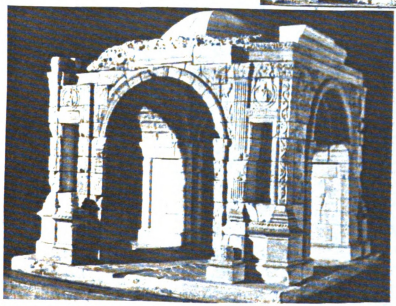
57. Canon Table with 2 Evangelists, Rabula Gospels, Syria, 586.

58. St. Luke in a Tabernacle, from Gospel Book of St. Augustine, Italy, late 6th c.

59. Frontispiece, Sacramentarium Gelasianum, northern France, ca. 750.

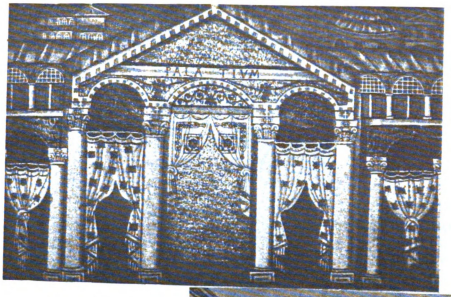


60. Arch of Constantine, in the Forum, Rome, before 315.

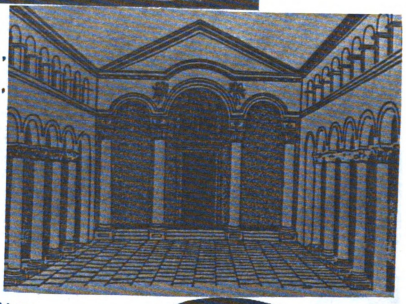


61. Arch of Marcus Aurelius, Tripoli, Africa, 160-180 A.D.

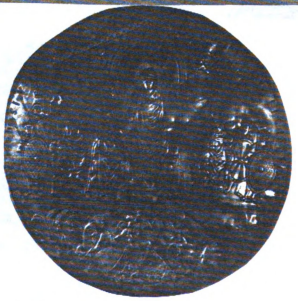
62. Diocletian's Palace at Spalato, main entrance, c. 300 A.D.



63. Theodoric's Palace, mosaic, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, early 6th c.

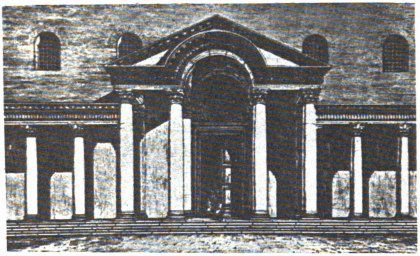


64. Theodoric's Palace, reconstructed according to mosaic in Ravenna (see figure 63).

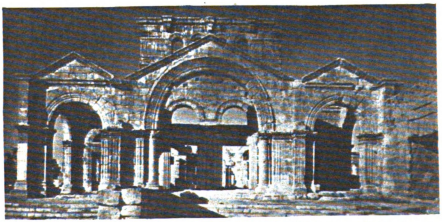


65. Missorium of Theodosius I, silver plate, Constantinople (?), 379-395.

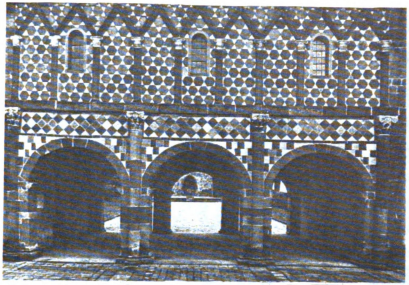
66. Samuel Anointing David, silver plate, Constantinople, 610-629.



67. Constantine's Basilica of Hagia Sophia, Theodosian facade, Constantinople, early 4th c., (reconstruction).



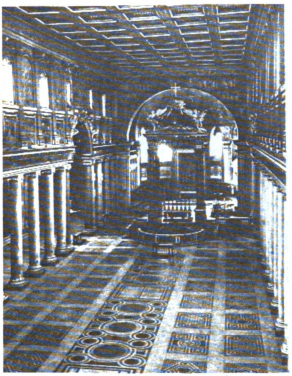
68. Monastery of St. Simon Stylites, Kalat Seman, Syria, south facade, ca. 480.



69. Lorsch Monastery Gateway, near Worms, Germany, 778-784.

70. Diagram of an Iconostasis, showing fully developed, 5-tier programme.

71. San Paolo fuori le Mura, Rome, interior looking East, 386-ca.440.



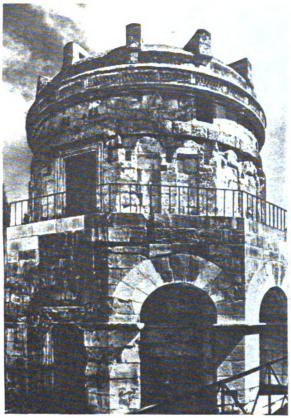
72. Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome, triumphal arch, 432-440.

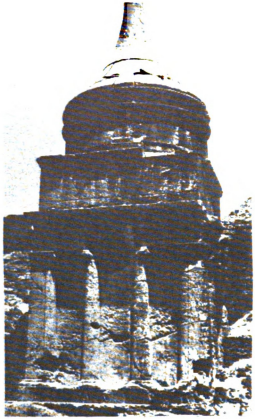
73. Annunciation to Zachariah, doors of Sta. Sabina, Rome, ca. 430.

74. Resurrection of Lazarus, Catacomb of Ss. Pietro e Marcellino, Rome, late 3rd c.

75. Resurrection of Lazarus, Brescia Ivory Casket, 2nd ½ of 4th c.

76. Resurrection of Lazarus, nave mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, 5th c.

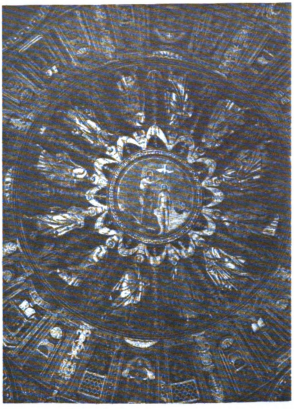




77. Mausoleum of Theodoric, Ravenna, early 6th c.

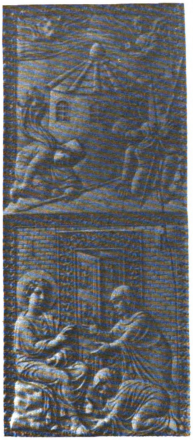
78. Tomb of Absalom, Kidron Valley, reign of Herod the Great, 37-4 B.C.

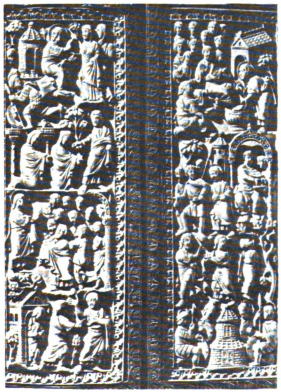
79. Hagia Sophia, Constantinople, reign of Justinian, 532-537.



80. Baptism of Christ, dome mosaic, Baptistry of the Orthodox, Ravenna, 6th c.

81. Two Maries at the Empty Tomb, nave mosaic, S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, 5th c.





82. Two Maries at the Empty Tomb, Castello Sforzesco Ivory Diptych, Milan, ca. 400.

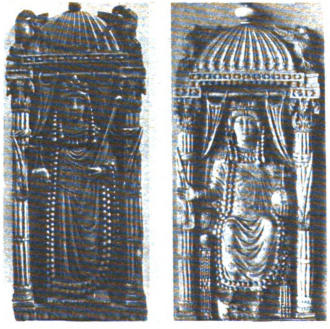
83. Three Maries at the Empty Tomb and Ascension of Christ, Bavarian National Museum Ivory Panel, Munich, ca. 400.

84. Scenes of the Passion & Resurrection of Christ, Milan Cathedral Treasury Ivory Diptych, early 9th c.

85. An Angel Appearing to Joseph outside the Temple, and other Scenes from the Early Life of Christ, Triumphal Arch mosaics, Sta. Maria Maggiore, Rome, 432-440.

86. Detail of Figure 85, Showing the Holy of Holies.

87. Consul Constantius Enthroned, from the Roman Calendar of 354 A.D.



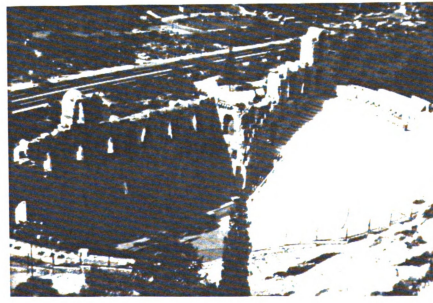
88. Empress Ariadne, two ivory imperial diptychs, Constantinople, early 6th c.

89. Charles the Bald Enthroned in Audience, from The First Bible of Charles the Bald, Tours, ca. 846, f. 423r.

90. Museo Civico Ivory Casket, with scenes from the Old and New Testaments, Brescia Italy, 2nd ½ of 4th c.

91. Ivory Gospel Cover, with Jeweled Cross, and Scenes from the Life of Christ, Italy, 5th c.

92. An Evangelist (St. John?), Book of Kells, Irish, 8thc.



93. Theatre of Dionysos, Athens, 4th c. B.C., photo.