

# ECCLESIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The Christological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor

*Mystagogy*

## INTRODUCTION

- The challenge is to lift one's mind from the carnal way of thinking.
- The task is to help readers to grasp the "beaming ray of ceremonies" so that they may be drawn to God by means of them.
- God "guides our words and concepts" if we can focus on him beyond being. The mind can cling to nothing in the realm of beings. "He has in fact a simple existence, unknowable and inaccessible to all and altogether beyond understanding which transcends all affirmation and negation."
- Mystery anchored to intelligibility

## CHAPTER ONE

The Church images God.

- It contains the people and structures/limits them.
- It gives an identity of unity to them.
- "This reality abolishes and dims all their particular relations considered according to each one's nature, but not by dissolving or destroying them or putting an end to their existence. Rather it does so by transcending them and revealing them, as the whole reveals its parts or as the whole is revealed in its cause by which the same whole and its parts came into being and appearance since they have their whole cause surpassing them in splendor."
- The Church holds all people together in unity while both preserving and guaranteeing their individuality.

## CHAPTER TWO

The church building images the world

- Unity in diversity: sanctuary and nave
- The integration frees them from their differences
  - "It shows to each other that they are both the same thing, and reveals that one is to the other in turn what each one is for itself."
  - The sanctuary is the nave in act; this mirrors the relationship between the physical and the intelligible world
- "For the whole spiritual world seems mystically imprinted on the whole sensible world in symbolic form, for those who are capable of seeing this, and conversely the whole sensible world is spiritually explained in the mind in the principles which it contains."

## CHAPTER THREE

The church building images the sensible world

- The sanctuary signifies the heavens and the nave the earth.
- Thus the world is also a church.

## CHAPTER FOUR

The church building images the human

- Sanctuary = soul; mind = altar; body = nave
- The person is also a mystical church: asceticism brightens the body/nave, contemplation brightens the soul/sanctuary; "through the altar of the mind he summons the silence abounding in song in the innermost recesses of the unseen and unknown utterance of divinity by another silence, rich in speech and tone."
- "As far as man is capable, he dwells familiarly within mystical theology and becomes such as is fitting for one made worthy of his indwelling and he is marked with his dazzling splendor."

## CHAPTER FIVE

The church building images the soul

- The contemplative power = the sanctuary
- The rational power = the nave
- The two united produce a virtuous person. "In both these things consists the true science of divine and human matters, the truly secure knowledge and term of all divine wisdom according to Christians."
- Mind & reason, wisdom & prudence, contemplation & action, knowledge & virtue, enduring knowledge & faith must all be united like the nave to the sanctuary.
- The proper action of the diverse parts of the soul leads to being drawn up into the unknowability of God.

## CHAPTER SIX

Scripture images a person

- Letter and spirit unite in one

## CHAPTER SEVEN

The world images the person and the person the world

- Sensible and intelligible are united

## CHAPTER EIGHT

The first entrance

- The entry of Christ in to human life and the taking of human life into the divine.

## CHAPTER NINE

The entrance of the people

- The conversion of all humanity
- The conversion of the individual

## CHAPTER TEN

The readings

- The desire of God

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

The chants

- The desire of humans

## CHAPTER TWELVE

The greetings of peace

- The assistance of the angels

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Gospel

- Lifting of the body to the spiritual

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Dismissal of the catechumens

- Proclamation of the Gospel and final judgment

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The closing of the doors

- Passing of material things

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The entrance into the mysteries

- Revelation of the mystery of our salvation

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The divine kiss

- Union and harmony

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The creed

- Mystical and eternal thanksgiving

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

Trisagion

- Union of physical and intelligible in praise of God

## CHAPTER TWENTY

The Our Father

- Adoption

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

One is Holy

- Entry beyond reason into the presence of God

## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Reconsideration according to deification

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The first entrance

- Focus of the soul on the divine
- Inculcating the desire for God
- Stripping away of attachment
- Journey into theology
- Union with God

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The grace of the Holy Spirit

- The causality of the synaxis
- The transformation of the person

## CONCLUSION