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From House Church to Church Building

Phases of Christian Growth and Adaptation

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To the Roman historian Tacitus, writing in the early second century, the Christians had begun to emerge as a separate and identifiable new religious group. As such they were liable to popular as well as official suspicion. They were seen as another among the numerous foreign superstitions that had flooded toward the capital as a result of the *Pax Romana*.[1] Still, it must be noted that while Tacitus was commenting on events in Nero's day, he was a contemporary of the Emperor Trajan. He was also a good friend and protege of the younger Pliny, whom he had visited while the latter was serving as imperial legate in Bithynia as a special favor to Trajan. In fact, Pliny's personal correspondence with the Emperor (Epp. X.96 and 97), written during this same period, constitutes the first official recognition on the part of Roman authorities of Christians as a religious group separate from Jews. Tacitus himself also served as proconsul of Asia in 112–113, about the time that Ignatius of Antioch passed through Ephesus and Smyrna on his way to martyrdom at Rome. Thus, Tacitus' histories may have projected onto the actions of Nero a cognizance of Christian group identity not possible in that earlier period. By the second century, however, Christians were becoming identifiable among the myriad travelers on the roads to and from the seats of Roman power. Missionaries, priests, charlatans, and shams come to the fore also in Apuleius and Lucian, and even moreso by the time of Celsus and Galen.[2] By way of contrast, the earliest form of the *Jesusbewegung* (or "Jesus movement"), as Gerd Theissen calls it, had no such self-consciousness.[3] As a sectarian apocalyptic movement within first-century Palestine, its identity was dominantly Jewish and millenarian. Within these groups, Jesus was remembered as

saying, "Go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" and "You will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes" (Matt. 10.6, 23). The mission and message of the earliest Jesus sects were by and for Jews exclusively.[4]

The exclusively Jewish mission of the earliest Jesus movement apparently had little need for formal places of worship, especially prior to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. Other Jewish groups offered models of causal assembly for prayer and study as well.[5] The passage of time, the movement beyond the limited scope of the Jewish mission, and the experience of the broader Diaspora environment for private religious groups gradually prompted new needs for accommodation and adaptation.

The House Church

Like the early Pharisees, we may imagine the followers of Jesus and other teachers of the time gathering occasionally for fellowship, prayer, and study.[6] This practice is depicted both in the gospel narratives regarding Jesus and in the traditional picture of Acts. In Acts 2–5 the earliest disciples at Jerusalem reportedly met "from house to house" or just "at home," while also attending to traditional Jewish observance at the Temple.[7] Beyond this little more can be said. It would appear that there were relatively few, if any, settled communities, since the original leadership was vested in wandering charismatic teachers and prophets, including the original disciples.[8] There is evidence of more settled Christian groups after the mid-forties. This evidence comes mainly from the accounts of the Jerusalem council and may reflect only the circumstances of Jerusalem and Antioch. Of what was happening in other localities, such as the Galilee or nearer Syria, hardly anything is known. The dominant expectation remained for a speedy consummation of apocalyptic hopes, an imminent political eschaton, which might have militated against rapid institutionalization.[9] There is some evidence of an emerging tension between the ethos of itineracy held by wandering charismatics and the ethos of localized gatherings in the

homes of individual leaders.[10] Still, we may suppose with the author of Luke-Acts that the earliest cells of the Jesus movement began to assemble with regularity in houses and that this practice spread with the initial expansion of the movement outside the exclusively Jewish Homeland. In the initial move to the Diaspora, the pattern of house synagogues could well have afforded the first lines of Christian organization. Even so, early questions and shifts over community practice and boundaries could have generated diverse responses from cell to cell.[11]

Whatever our speculation regarding the beginnings, the most explicit indicator of a move toward household location for the movement comes from Paul's Aegean mission. In these areas it became typical for Christians to meet in the home of an individual member who served as host and patron. The Pauline mission was largely an urban phenomenon in the romanized centers on major trade routes through western Asia Minor and Greece. Even in areas not founded directly on Paul's efforts, such as Rome or Cappadocia, similar patterns are indicated.[12] Thus, by the fifties and sixties there was a proliferation of settled house church cells as part of the process of expansion through the Roman world. It is possible that Pauline missionary practice grew out of his initial efforts at a gentile mission while in the region of Syria near Cilicia, before his ill-fated confronta-. tion with conservative factions at Antioch.[13] It is significant to note that the way west, to the Aegean and on to Rome, was already well marked by the establishment of synagogue communities in major urban settings (as noted in the previous chapter). Still, one must exercise caution regarding the traditional picture, since many of these synagogue communities also began in homes or other private settings. Nor can we naively assume that Paul went to household meetings only after being forced out of the synagogue by Jewish opposition to his Christian message. Many Pauline house churches seem to have been drawn almost entirely from the non-Jewish population, and the pattern of organization had to have been recognizable and acceptable in their environment.[14]

By definition, these earliest Pauline house churches would have had no distinguishing features, since there was no move toward spatial articulation or architectural adaptation. For the most part private houses were used for casual assembly. Otherwise they remained in domestic use. Other kinds of private meeting places were also available, such as the "hall" (scholē) of Tyrannus at Ephesus (Acts 19.9). The apocryphal *Acts of Paul* depict a large crowded assembly of Christians in a warehouse (horreum) on the outskirts of Rome.[15] Still, by far the most common reference in the early literature, including the apocryphal Acts, focuses attention on the private domestic setting.[16]

The house church setting offers two important features for understanding the nature of the Pauline mission: first, in the social organization, and second, in the nature of assembly. In the first, then, when one looks carefully at any of Paul's letters, it becomes clear that each one presupposes an active interchange through travel and correspondence. His correspondence with the Christians at Philippi probably involved five exchanges (including a personal envoy from Philippi to Ephesus to bring Paul money) prior to the present Philippian letter of the New Testament.[17] Perhaps better known are the multiple letters and visits to and from Corinth. In addition to the several pieces preserved, there were at least two lost letters from Paul, three visits by Paul alone (not counting those by his helpers), and at least one official delegation from Corinth, carrying a letter to Paul in Ephesus.[18] In short, the mission must have been a beehive of activity as Paul, his co-workers, other Christians, and letters by all of them crisscrossed the Aegean. This enterprise depended upon the social organization of the house church communities.

In the major cities there were probably several such house church cells loosely tied together. There may have been six or more at Corinth during Paul's time. According to Acts 18, when Paul first arrived at Corinth he stayed and worked with Prisca (Priscilla) and Aquila. Later, however, it seems that Prisca and Aquila moved to Ephesus, where they also hosted a church in their house.[19] By the time Paul wrote to Rome, they had gone ahead to set up yet another house church there.[20] Back at Corinth, then, it is noted in Acts 18.7 that Paul also worked out of the house of Titius Justus, who lived adjacent to the synagogue.

We know, too, that the households of Stephanas, Crispus, and Chloe played a pivotal role.[21] Still another house church cell was located at Cenchreai (the eastern port at Corinth) under the patroness Phoebe, and another elsewhere in the house of Gaius.[22]

Group organization and travel depended upon the hospitality of these house church owners. A number of important social conventions developed around the practice of household hospitality, which came to apply equally well to groups as to individuals. Some of these social conventions can still be glimpsed in the letters in terms of "extending the right hand of fellowship" or "greeting with a holy kiss."[23] Letter-writing itself was part of this social fabric. We may notice especially the case of the house church patron Philemon, to whom Paul wrote requesting that a guest room (*xenia*) be readied.[24] Thus, Paul regularly lodged with the house church patron. Letter-writing served not only as a means of transmitting information, but also for securing hospitality for himself or a protegé. So widespread was this practice that a convention of letter-writing developed. The "letter of recommendation" had a virtually standardized form and technical language for the implicit social obligations of the household.[25] Typical phrases such as "receiving" and "sending on one's way," therefore, are recognizable literary clues to the social networks of hospitality and patronage in the house church organization.

Even the massive Roman letter carried, as one of its intentions, a request that hospitality be shown to its bearer, Phoebe, who was probably acting as Paul's personal envoy.[26] Thus, the same kindness and generosity that she had extended to Paul and the church at Cenchreai was now to be shown to her in a house church at Rome. It appears that Phoebe was directed first to the house of Paul's old friends Prisca and Aquila, by then at Rome, before addressing the several other house churches of the capital.[27] Paul's old house church network from the Aegean was now providing entry into the new house church networks at Rome, through the exercise of letter-writing and hospitality. In the same vein, it should be recognized that in sending Phoebe (with the letter as a kind of manifesto for himself) Paul was anticipat-

ing his own trip to Rome. Paul wanted not only to be received hospitably in their house churches, but also to be "sped on his way" by them in his intended mission to Spain.[28] In other words, using the conventions of hospitality, letter-writing, and patronage centered in the house church setting, Paul was requesting financial support for his mission in terms that the Roman Christians could hardly misunderstand.

If the house church setting was basic to the social fabric of Paul's mission, it was also the center of assembly and worship within the local group. Housing patterns, of course, varied considerably across the Empire. The Italian villa, the Greek peristyle, the Hellenistic-oriental multistoried insula, apartments, and others had their own local stylistic traditions. We must expect, then, that as with mithraea and synagogues there was considerable diversity from place to place depending on the local circumstances of each cell group.[29] In sharp contrast to the assumptions of older theories regarding Christian architecture, it is now believed that it was highly unlikely that Christians assembled in any regular fashion in the atrium of a large Campanian style villa.[30] For the cities of the Aegean coast a different type of house setting must be envisaged. It seems that assembly was regularly convened in the dining room of the house, which in some cases might open onto a peristyle or portico. Often the triclinium, or dining room, was the largest area in the house and the most suitable for a gathering of people. Greeks and Romans alike were well known for their dinner parties, and the larger houses came well equipped to accommodate the social functions.

In dealing with the circumstances of worship, Paul presupposes that the gathering was held around the common table. This is precisely the situation one must imagine to understand the setting and the problems in 1 Corinthians 11, which deals with the Lord's Supper, as well as in chapters 12–14. Many of the problems seem to come naturally from the social composition of the house church group. We should not assume, however, that all the Christians in a given city got together regularly for the eucharist or that the eucharist was functionally separate from the meal itself. Thus, dining in individual house church
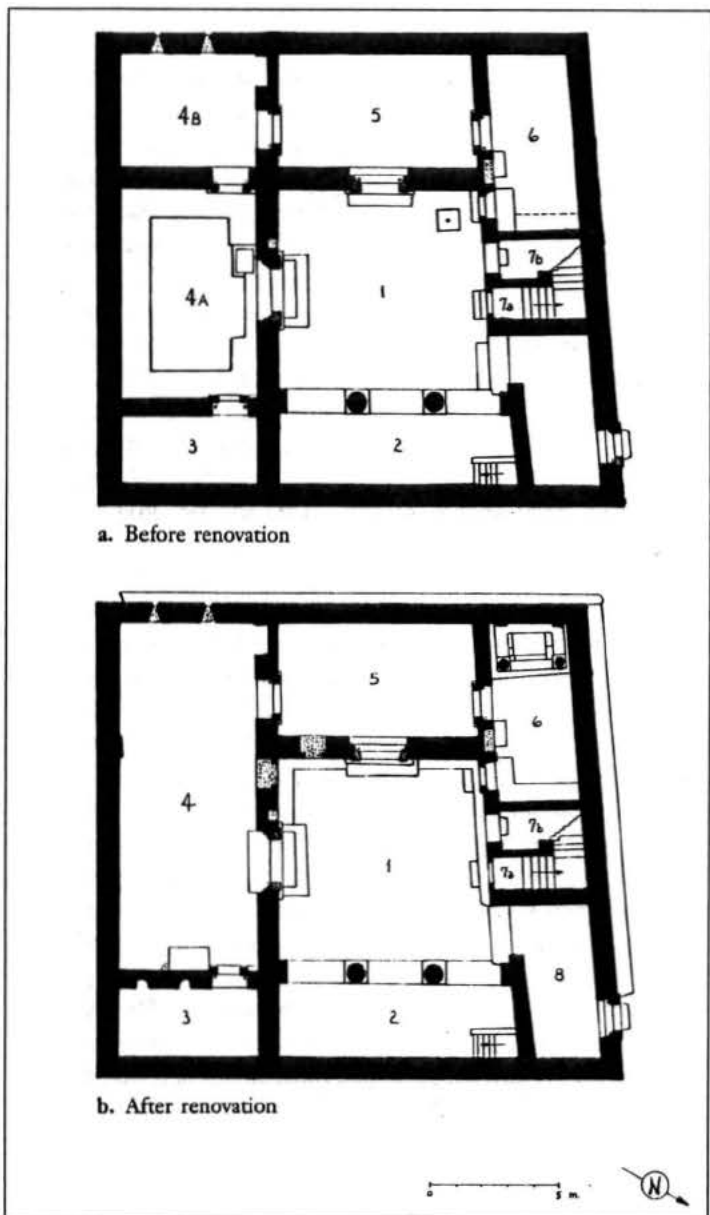
a. Before renovation

b. After renovation

Fig. 17.
Plan reconstruction before and after the Christian Building at Dura-Europos was renovated into a domus ecclesiae.
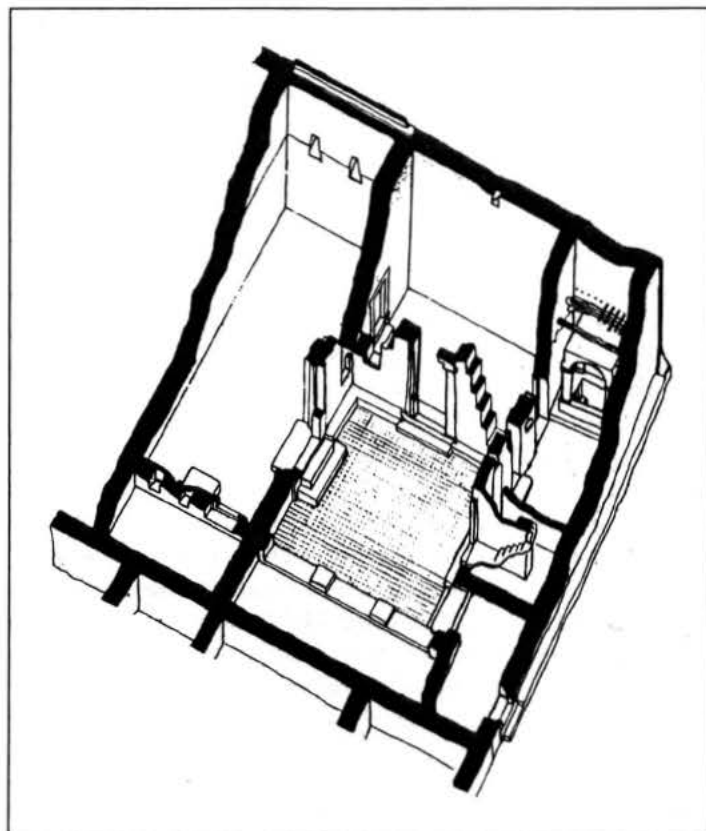
Fig. 18.
Isometric reconstruction of the Christian Building at Dura-Europos.

groups was fundamental.[31] At Corinth, in the context of communal dining, a lack of discernment regarding the meal as a sign of fellowship among the members of the group was creating dissension.[32] Still, the communal meal was the center of fellowship (*koinōnia*), as eating was a sign of social relations with others. The extension of hospitality through the meal setting was the central act that served to define the worshipping community, the church (*ekklēsia*) in household assembly.[33]

How long this indistinct household setting continued to predominate in Christian practice is difficult to judge. The Johannine epistles still clearly reflect a localized house church setting under a patron in western Asia Minor by the early part of the second century.[34] This picture is consistent in the works of other contemporaneous Christian writers from the region, such as 1 Peter, the works of Ignatius, the works of Polycarp, and the Pastoral Epistles.[35] The earliest and clearest archaeological evidence of the development is, of course, the Dura-Europos Christian building (see figs. 17 and 18). Its renovation from a house into a church building can be securely dated to before the mid-third century;[36] however, given its somewhat isolated location, one would not think it the first to have undergone such architectural adaptation. Literary evidence suggests that household and other private meetings continued through the second century. The *Martyrdom of Justin* points to the situation at Rome at least until 165.[37] Justin had initially come to Rome in around 150 and had taught there in his own school. Upon his arrest, he was asked by the prefect Q. Junius Rusticus where the Christians customarily met. Justin shrugged off the notion of a single meeting place, but admitted of his own assembly in the same place where he also lived and taught, "above the baths of so-and-so." It is unfortunate that the text is corrupt at precisely that point where the baths or their owner were named, as it might have provided evidence of a concrete locality in Rome.[38] Nonetheless, it appears that private or domestic settings were still in use in the middle of the second century for at least some groups. In his own writings Justin indicates that baptism was still administered at a convenient spot "wherever there is water."[39] If these two texts of Justin can be tied together, then baptism might well have been performed downstairs at the baths. In any case, nothing in Justin's description of worship explicitly required physical renovation such as that at Dura-Europos. Given the allusion to a meeting place "above the baths," a large urban insula of the type typically found at Rome might be presupposed.[40]

The Domus Ecclesiae

To gain some sense of the development that occurred in Christian attitudes toward their buildings, we need only reflect momentarily on the situation of Justin's assembly compared with that at Dura-Europos less than a century later. For Justin the needs of communal assembly could still be met in the same location that he lived, while the liturgical functions of baptism required nothing more than access to water, even that in an otherwise typical bathing establishment. At Dura, however, such catch-as-catch-can arrangements were no longer adequate or desirable. The edifice itself, to be sure, was still just a house in external form, but one room had been set aside as an assembly hall, and the self-consciousness reflected in the adaptation for another room as a private and carefully laid-out baptistry is even more striking. It had become a "church building" of some sort.

Needless to say, these two cases are not precisely comparable in historical terms, since they are so distant from one another in time and geography. One expects intuitively that local circumstances and social factors would condition distinctive features of the setting for assembly between Rome in the second century and Syria in the third. As a heuristic device, these cases are indicative of courses of change and development in stages, as orders of magnitude rather than rigid categories of architecture. They reflect the beginnings of physical adaptation of an existing edifice to make it more suitable for the specialized religious and social functions of Christian assembly. Thus, since we have defined the unrenovated space of the Pauline period as the *house church*, we may call a specially adapted building the *house of the church*, hence a *domus ecclesiae*. It is natural to suppose that in some cases private homes where Christian groups had met were gradually given over more and more to specific church functions. In other cases it is possible that new buildings became available, as local Christian congregations grew and began to hold property. Often we can only guess the steps in this process for any given group or locality, since the recognizable church building from an archaeological perspective depends upon renovation to a domus ecclesiae. In the case of Dura-
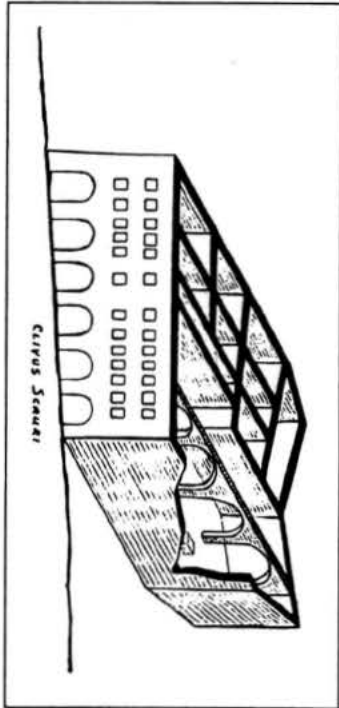
Isometric reconstruction of *titulus Byzantis* at Rome.

Fig. 20.

CLIVUS SCAURI

Plan restoration of renovated insula in *titulus Byzantis* at Rome.

Fig. 19.

CLIVUS SCAURI

1
2
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Ⓝ

C₃
C

24
29 30
24
21
23
25

A

D

B

F
E

CLIVUS SCAURI

- ▨ Houses, II century
- ▦ House C, mid. II century
- ▧ additions C₂-C₃, late II century
- ■ Insula D, late II
- ▨ Renovation of D, annexed to C, early III century
- ▦ Façade F, mid. III
- ▦ Façade Bldg. E, mid. III century
- ▨ Church hall renovation, end IV
- □ Basilica, begun ca. 400

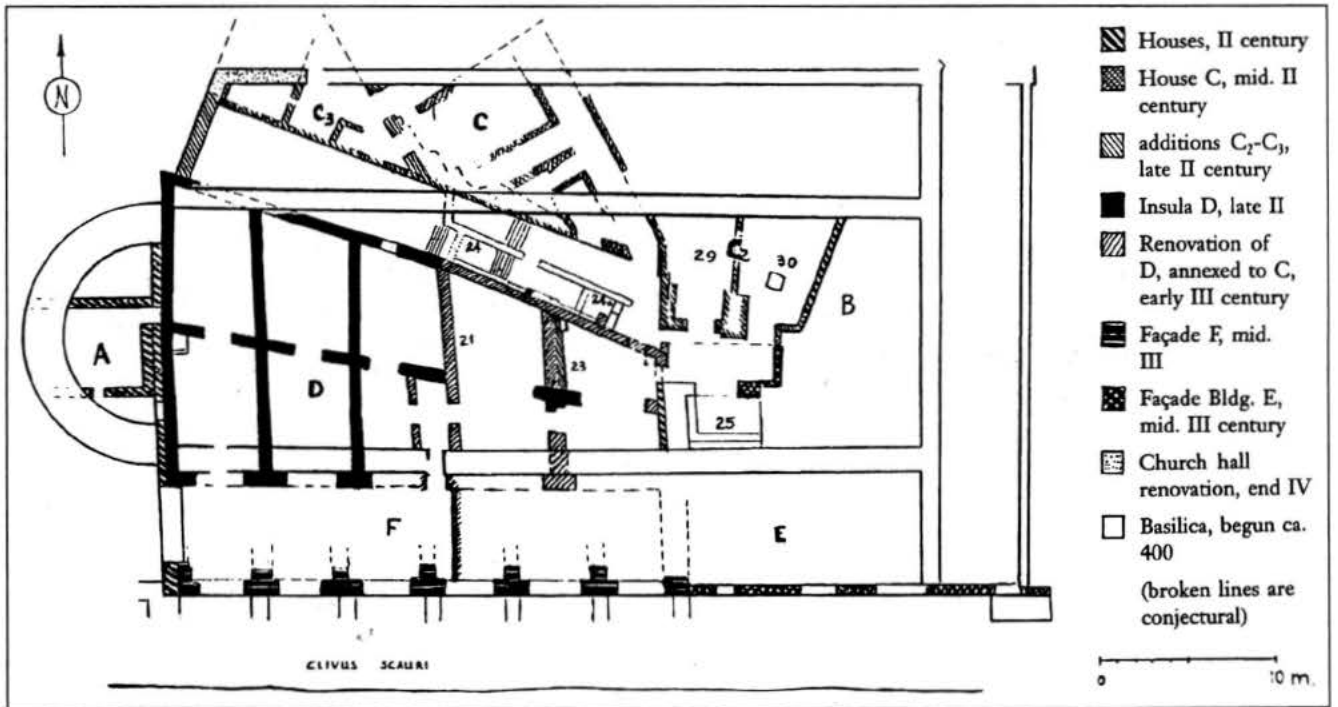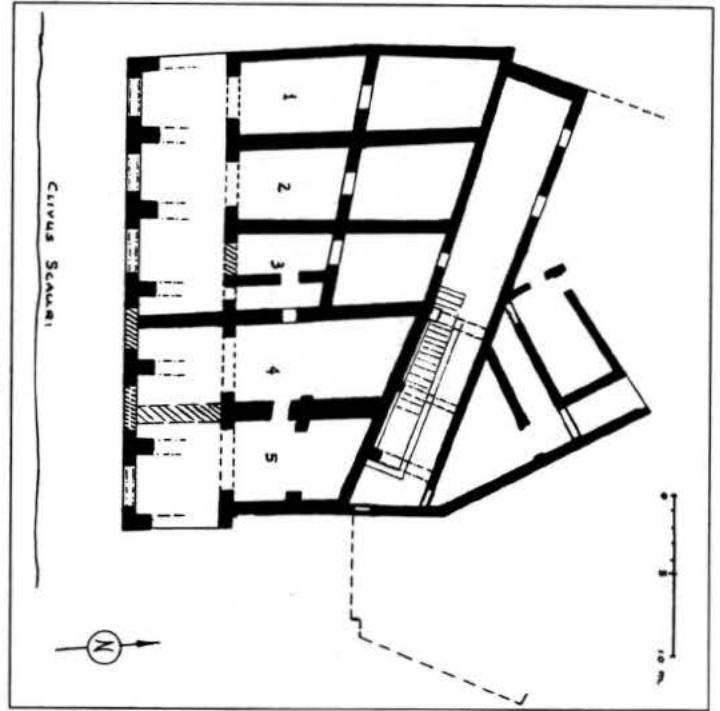 (broken lines are conjectural)

0   10 m.

Fig. 21.
Plan restoration of the Basilica SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Rome.

Europos, it is not clear that the Christians met in that particular house prior to its renovation as a church building. Nonetheless, through its physical adaptation we may observe the activities of an existing local Christian group in the process of development.

In general, it appears that the first steps toward adaptation occurred in an edifice where the Christians were already accustomed to meeting. Renovation reflects a natural course of functional usage by designating areas spatially that had become associated with specific forms of religious actions or assembly. Partial or gradual renovation of an existing house church location is probably indicated by the third century for at least two of the roman *tituli*, later known as parish churches. The *titulus Clementis* (later the Basilica San Clemente) is linked by tradition to the renowned figure of Clement, a "bishop" and author of a letter to Corinth at the end of the first century.[41] While clear evidence of Christian usage is lacking in the private structures of the first-century levels, by the third century the edifice had been taken over and renovated in successive stages from a domus ecclesiae. It was finally converted to basilical form in the fifth century. In the case of the *titulus Byzantis* (later the Basilica SS. Giovanni e Paolo; see figs. 19, 20, and 21), Richard Krautheimer has suggested a continuum of Christian adaptation beginning by the late second or early third century.[42] It progressed from an insula complex, in which a small Christian cell met in a rear shop, to a renovated domus ecclesiae. Gradual adaptation continued until the entire insula had been taken over, well before the time it was converted to basilical form in the early fifth century. Not long thereafter (around 540) the future pope Gregory the Great was born in a house just across the street.

Partial renovation in many cases seems to have been the initial stage of architectural adaptation for Christians as for Jews and other groups in the Roman environment. Partial renovation is also indicated in archaeological remains for the earliest levels beneath the Basilica Euphrasiana at Parentium, Istria.[43] The site had originally been occupied by a large villa, in which one room appears to have been designated for Christian usage. Later, in the fourth century, the entire house was taken over and renovated more substantially, prior to its subsequent monu-
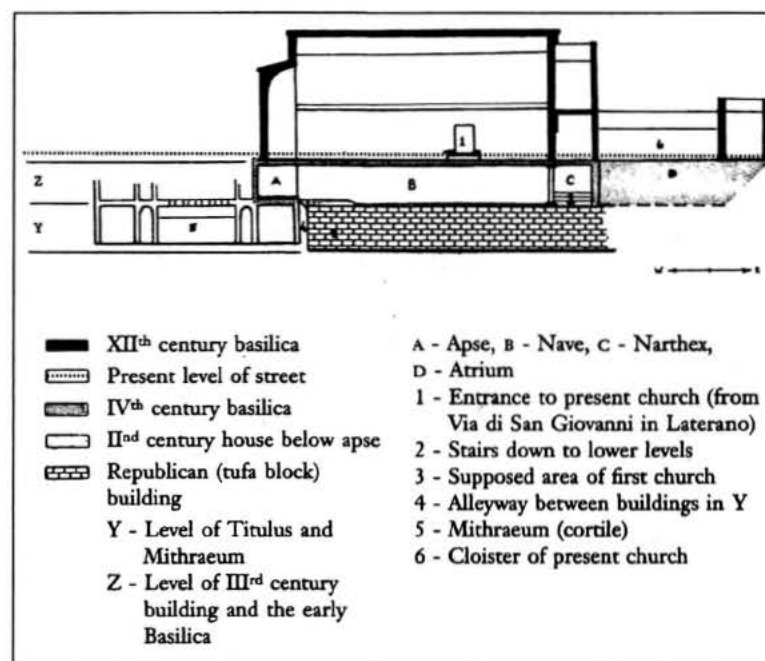

Fig. 22.
Schematic section of the Basilica San Clemente at Rome.

mentalization as a basilica in the fifth and again in the sixth centuries. Other sites that may provide archaeological support for intermediate stages of partial renovation from private domestic structures include the so-called Church of Julianos at Umm el-Jimal, Syria/Arabia, and the supposed villa and domus ecclesiae beneath the Church of Bishop Theodore at Aquileia, Istria.[44] We may surmise that in some ways these cases are analogous to the provisions made in the contemporary renovation of the house of Claudius Tiberius Polycharmos into a synagogue, or in a number of mithraea, where gradual growth and expansion is reflected in subsequent stages of renovation.[45]

It is difficult to glimpse the features of these intermediate stages of adaptation, since they were so often overlaid or destroyed in later rebuilding. At San Clemente (fig. 22), for
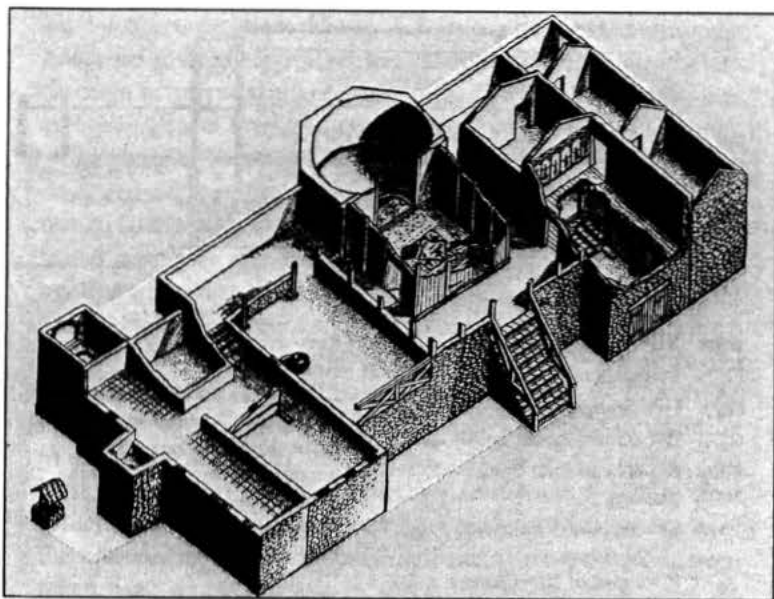
Fig. 23.
Isometric reconstruction of the Roman villa with Christian chapel at Lullingstone.

example, supports for the later basilica were built down to the level of the earlier buildings, thus removing some of the most significant archaeological remains. Dura-Europos is all the more significant, therefore, since it offers such evidence without later levels of usage. Another illuminating case comes from the Lullingstone villa in Roman Britannia.[46] Here, in the last half of the fourth century, one wing of a large estate home was given over to serve as a Christian "chapel" (see fig. 23). In the renovation the area was given a separate entrance and an antechamber to the "chapel" hall, while the rest of the villa continued in private domestic occupation. After a while the house was abandoned, but the chapel continued to be used by a local Christian group until the barbarian invasions when the entire complex was destroyed. The nature of these renovations suggests a concrete design on the part of the owners of the villa to

articulate architecturally an assembly space. Their role can probably be seen in the decoration of the chapel room and antechamber, reflecting a kind of familial patronage over the Christian community. It is also possible to see a gradual segregation of the "chapel" wing from the rest of the house, accomplished finally by a physical alteration. The access hall to the rest of the house was walled off, and a new doorway was cut to the outside to allow entry without going through the house. Thus, a partial renovation gradually achieved a more autonomous function as a domus ecclesiae through continued adaptation. It was no longer just the house church of the owner/patron; it had become the church building of the local Christian community.

More often than not, we must guess, partial renovation of an existing edifice depended on its tacit designation by the local religious group as a permanent place of assembly. Naturally, such a designation depended not only on the habits and self-consciousness of the community, but also on the auspices of the owner, especially in the case of a house. Among the factors that gave rise to partial adaptation was a focus on assembly as the central area of concern. Articulation of an assembly space began most likely as a modest and utilitarian design, with other functional adaptation or decorative treatments coming later. Often, the initial adaptation of an assembly space might entail little more than a minor physical alteration or an artistic flourish to demarcate the space for worship. So, at Parentium the first adaptation in the villa's tablinum (living room) seems to have been a mosaic floor with cryptic Christian symbols. Other Christian floor treatments are seen in the Roman house at Hinton St. Mary's near Dorset, England, where there is otherwise little indication of a place for worship.[47] In most cases such minimal adaptations have been obscured by later layers of Christian rebuilding and monumentalization.

Exactly when Christians first began to renovate houses or other private structures into church buildings is hard to say with certainty. One would not expect the transformation to have taken place overnight, and a different pace was likely from region to region within the Empire.[48] Dura-Europos was

hardly the first. The earliest clear reference to an identifiable Christian edifice comes from the Syriac *Edessene Chronicle*.[49] Ostensibly a court history, the *Chronicle* records a flood that swept through the city in the year 201 C.E. Numerous buildings, including the palace, were damaged or destroyed. In the listing of damages is "the temple [*haikla*] of the church of the Christians." The passage is debated, some taking it more or less at face value, others questioning it as a later historiographical projection from Catholic orthodoxy.[50] The problem lies in interpreting the redundant phrase "temple of the church," at a time when orthodox basilical church architecture did not exist. In fact, the seeming redundance of the phrase is similar to usage found in some synagogue inscriptions that refer to the holy place (*hagios topos*) or prayer hall (*proseuchē*) of the Jewish congregation (*synagogē*).[51] Far from evincing an early instance of monumental church architecture, the passage probably reflects a building that had become publicly identifiable to locals as the regular meeting place of the Christians. Hence, reading "the holy place of the congregation of the Christians" would suggest a renovated domus ecclesiae.[52] This reading may be supported by another entry from the *Edessene Chronicle* for the year 313. It records the building of the "church" at Edessa, which was begun under the famous bishop Kûne (ca. 284–313) and completed under his successor, bishop Saʿad (313–324).[53] With Walter Bauer, I take this passage to refer to the erection of the first monumental church building by the orthodox, in some measure as a replacement for the buildings of earlier times used by divergent Christian groups.[54]

There are perhaps other indications of architectural change around the beginning of the third century, or at about the same time as the earlier entry from the *Edessene Chronicle*. Between the time of Justin (ca. 165) and the year 212, with the universal grant of citizenship under the *Constitutio Antoniana*, there was an emergence of a more distinctively Christian material culture. Graydon Snyder, for one, sees the years from 180 and 200 as the period during which Christian art, funerary symbolism, and building began to achieve their own cultural definition.[55] In terms of the development of the domus ecclesiae this period

seems to correspond with the emerging needs within the Christian community for specially articulated places of worship. These needs can be seen in some measure as a direct, functional development of the kind of assembly that had obtained in the house church setting.

In Paul's day and into the second century the primary setting for assembly had been the communal meal in the dining room of the house. Paul's own version of the Last Supper tradition stressed the meal setting by having the eucharistic elements of bread and wine literally bracket the meal proper.[56] The problem addressed by Paul at Corinth was the distortion of the meal as a result of social stratification within the community, so that its communal intentions had been destroyed.[57] Given the problem and Paul's corrective, we may see that the eucharist, as later understood, had not yet become an act of worship separate from the communal meal, sometimes called the agapē or love feast.[58] The main arena of worship assembly, including both the eucharist and other acts of instruction and exhortation, was the communal context of the dining table in the house church.[59] Nor should we assume that in Paul's day all the various house church cells in a given locality ever got together regularly for a larger eucharistic assembly.[60]

Two interrelated factors may have created the need for a different articulation of worship space. The first is numerical growth of the house church community, which would make a meal gathering within the confines of typical domestic architecture impractical. The second, then, is the gradual separation of the eucharist from the agapē meal.[61] Together these two factors would contribute to lines of architectural definition in individual communities. There is no direct evidence for a separate eucharist prior to the middle of the second century; agapē and eucharistic assembly still appear to have been interchangeable.[62] Even within the liturgical instruction of the *Didache* there is no clear separation of setting.[63] As the meal became less practical, however, it was possible to stylize the meal elements into symbolic forms, resulting in the liturgical pattern seen in Justin and Tertullian in the latter half of the second century.[64] Ritual forms then came to replace the casual elements of house

church dining though they attempted to preserve it through symbolism. As the actual amount of dining diminished less food was needed and the voluntary offering for the common table was reduced. The offertory developed as a symbolization of individual contributions to the meal, a ritualization of common meal actions, even though the actual practice was changing.[65] These shifts were by no means uniform or unilateral; however, they resulted in a gradual separation of the stylized eucharistic liturgy from the older casual form of communal dining. The earliest direct evidence for this separation comes from the beginning of the third century, seen then as more or less a fait accompli. Clement of Alexandria reflects this sharper division in his references to the agapē meal practice.[66] The clearest regulation of private agapē meal practice apart from public assembly for eucharist appears in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus.[67] This separation of eucharist from agapē, whether for pragmatic or theological reasons, had a correlative impact on the arrangements and setting for assembly. As the eucharistic assembly was no longer confined to the domestic dining area, it became possible, or necessary, to adapt the assembly space to another kind of arrangement. At this point the archaeological evidence points to the emergence of a hall arrangement for assembly, much as in the formalization of the synagogue. Both cases are in evidence from Dura-Europos.

The Dura Christian building represents a thorough transformation from house to domus ecclesiae through architectural adaptation. Since there is no evidence of partial adaptation at an earlier stage, it is not possible to claim that the Christians had been accustomed to meeting there as a house church prior to its renovation.[68] The renovation project dates to around 240–241, at which time the house was entirely devoted to religious functions and all domestic activities ceased. How the property was acquired by the Christians is uncertain; however, an outright purchase or individual donation is likely. Indications of personal acts of patronage may be evidenced in the inscriptions of the baptistry room.[69] In any case the legal principles of ownership remain a clouded issue for many religious sanctuaries in this period. Functionally, at least, the Dura building had become a

"church," a domus ecclesiae, donated to and property of the local Christian community. The manner in which the Dura building was renovated also illuminates the process of adaptation. On the exterior no major structural modifications were undertaken to change the essential domestic character of the edifice. On the interior no basic changes were made in the arrangement of rooms around the central court. Even though the building was devoted entirely to Christian religious functions, and all habitation ceased, the adaptation is closer to the structural level of the earlier rather than the later synagogue at Dura.

The major adaptation for assembly came with the enlargement of the diwan or dining room (triclinium) by knocking out the partition wall to create the elongated hall, Room 4 (see fig. 17). The process suggests a well-defined plan to accommodate assembly and liturgy. The orientation of the room toward a dais (probably used as a pulpitum or bema) at one end created a more formal order to the assembly than that expected in the dinner setting.[70] The other major area of adaptation occurred internally in Room 6, transforming it into the baptistry. The changes included construction of a low ceiling and the font edifice, and decoration of the walls. These measures were designed consciously to make the set liturgical function of baptism spatially distinct from other acts of assembly.[71] Other modifications were also implemented in the renovation of the Dura building to accommodate communal religious functions both in and out of strictly cultic or liturgical contexts. Benches were installed around the courtyard, and shuttered windows were made to communicate between the court and the Assembly Hall (as well as Room 5). These measures suggest conscious adaptation for specific patterns of ritual, movement, and communication in and between the various areas of the domus ecclesiae.[72] Thus, liturgical as well as socioeconomic factors are seen in the conscious plan of adaptation of the Dura building. Through this process the house was transformed into a domus ecclesiae and redefined through architectural articulation into a church building. Its identity was not in any way secretive. Even though there were no major exterior alterations to public religious

architecture, the fact that it was now a place of gathering rather than a domicile was not likely to go unnoticed in the neighborhood social life of a small town.

Other sites where a house was completely taken over and renovated as a domus ecclesiae are relatively rare in archaeological remains, partly because many are buried beneath later levels of ecclesiastical architecture.[73] The literary sources provide more widespread corroboration of the process although the detailed steps of architectural adaptation cannot be seen as readily. An official record, dated 19 May 303 (during the great persecution), details a search made of a church edifice at Cirta, Numidia.[74] From the record the church was apparently a renovated house in which various areas of the domestic plan had been turned to specific functions. It contained a library (*bibliotheca*) equipped with cupboards and barrels as well as a dining room (*triclinium*) containing four large jars and six barrels. In other rooms a quantity of gold, silver, and bronze implements were stored, apparently for use in the building. Also in storage were numerous items of men's and women's apparel, recorded in detail in the inventory. Too numerous to constitute a private wardrobe, these clothing items probably represent the charitable store of the Christian community.[75] In this case, then, some formal lines of adaptation seem likely; however, the precise degree of formality remains uncertain. No reference is made to larger areas specifically designed for assembly or other cultic functions. It should be noted here, in contrast to Dura, that the domus ecclesiae still preserved the dining area and function of the domestic edifice. Yet the building was clearly known as the church edifice to the local authorities.

Similar observations are available from several documentary papyri from Egypt around the end of the third century. At Pannopolis in the Thebaid a municipal street survey provided a list of buildings that included a church edifice (*ekklēsia*).[76] The survey was conducted street by street with the buildings listed sequentially by owner's name or functional public designation, or both. On one street, which consisted almost entirely of private houses, the recorder entered on the ledger without a second thought, "the house which is the such-and-such of the

church" (*oikia ētoi ekklēsias s[. . .]*). Unfortunately the document is damaged just at the crucial point that might have given more information regarding the form or use of the building. The formula *oikia ētoi* was used by the recorder in other instances to indicate that the building so designated was a house of typical domestic plan, known publicly to be used for other purposes. In this case the house seems to have been the property of the local Christian community. Whether it was the actual church building, a renovated domus ecclesiae, or some other dependency, cannot be determined with more certainty.[77]

At Oxyrhynchus in Arcadia a municipal survey of street wardens for around 295 listed two streets known as North-Church Street and South-Church Street.[78] Since the streets on the list are usually identified by a prominent building or landmark, it seems that in these two sections of town a church edifice had become physically identifiable. In both cases the street had become associated with its major building, the *ekklēsia*, as a toponymic landmark. The progress of Christianity in Oxyrhynchus had been established publicly by means of the two buildings. Less than a decade later, even in the nearby Coptic village of Chysis, which fell under Oxyrhynchite jurisdiction, a Christian church building was readily identifiable. In the year 304 under the Diocletianic edicts the building was confiscated. The papyrus records preserve the inventory of the search and seizure, which took place much in the same manner as the one at Cirta, Numidia.[79] In this case, however, an even more modest domus ecclesiae seems to be indicated, as it contained "neither gold nor silver, nor money nor clothes, nor beasts nor slaves, nor lands nor property," except some bronze implements that were sent to Alexandria.

Beyond the Domus Ecclesiae

By the third century, then, Christian buildings in many areas of the Empire were becoming recognizable landmarks even though they had not yet begun to achieve monumental architectural definition. Such recognition must have depended upon at least a minimal degree of physical adaptation to a domus eccle-

siae as a formal setting for assembly. Other references in the literary sources may point to these developments. Although the physical arrangements are seldom discussed in detail in Christian writings, some general lines of development may be seen. In Cyprian's letters, for example, passing reference is made occasionally to accouterments of the assembly. The fact that they are taken for granted indicates the degree to which the adaptation had progressed as a natural course. In reference to the act of ordaining the confessor Celerinus to the office of reader in the year 250, Cyprian speaks of placing him "upon the pulpitum, that is upon the tribunal of the church," which was "propped up in the place of highest elevation and conspicuous to the entire congregation."[80] In Cyprian's church, then, the act of ordination had become defined in terms of the physical arrangement of the assembly hall. To "ascend the platform" (*ad pulpitum venire*) became part of the technical vocabulary of clergy and ordination.[81] We cannot ascertain the general plan or size of Cyprian's church, even though these clues suggest continued growth and adaptation. Still, by the years 250–252 it can be determined that the area physically defined for assembly was sufficiently large to accommodate a segregated area for the clergy and a raised platform, called the pulpit or tribunal. In a letter of 252 to bishop Cornelius of Rome, Cyprian alludes to this area as "the sacred and venerated congestum of the clergy."[82] What is probably reflected here is the forerunner of the chancel and synthronon as articulated spatial features of the assembly hall.

Similarly, at Syrian Antioch, records indicate that the tribunal was being introduced into the assembly setting just after the middle of the third century. There, however, in contrast to the unassailed acceptance under Cyprian, these developments were viewed as dangerous novelties, since they were associated with the innovations of the infamous schismatic Paul of Samosata (bishop from 261–270).[83] Of course, some allowances must be made for the rhetoric in our sources, since they are documents preserved by Eusebius from the group that ousted Paul from the episcopate. Once again, references to the physical arrangements of the church building arise in passing, as the tribunal

had become a symbol of Paul's arrogance. Thus, in keeping with his faulty theology, the synodal letter charges, Paul manifested his irreverence and self-aggrandizement by installing a throne and secretum on the bema of the assembly area. These were features directly associated with the tribunal of a public magistrate.[84] It is perhaps more indicative of the degree to which adaptation had progressed that when Paul was removed forcibly from the Church, with the aid of an imperial decree, the bema edifice seems to have remained.[85]

In major urban centers such as Antioch, Carthage, or Rome the process of architectural adaptation seems to have been far ahead of the lesser, remote cities. The domus ecclesiae at Dura-Europos was precisely contemporary with Cyprian; however, the scale of adaptation seems to have been quite different. To be sure, some common lines of assembly pattern were emerging, as both moved toward a longitudinal hall with a platform at the end. Yet, the Dura Christian building cannot be thought comparable in scale to that at Carthage, or even at the much nearer Antioch. There were still further possibilities for adaptation and renovation beyond the initial developments of the domus ecclesiae. Factors such as population and constituency, the size, wealth, and social standing of the Christian community account for both the nature and the pace of architectural adaptations. Such factors were operative from locality to locality for Christians just as for Jews or Mithraists.

Some church buildings were pushed ahead through renovation and adaptation, others lagged behind. At Lullingstone (see fig. 23) a much simpler type of domus ecclesiae, only partially renovated, continued in use through the fourth century. The pattern of local adaptation through the private auspices of a patron's house was still a viable starting point. The reasons may lie in the relative isolation of the Lullingstone villa, a rural estate in a faraway province. Similar suggestions have been made regarding the archaeological evidence from other areas of the Empire, as in Tripolitania.[86] In most cases, however, there is evidence of an awareness of fourth-century trends back at Rome, so they cannot be dismissed as throwbacks to a more primitive time.[87] The pervasiveness of architectural adaptation

from private buildings was a widely accepted process, for pagans, Jews, and Christians alike.

It should not be a surprise, then, that in the year 303 the church edifice at Cirta was still very much a house in plan. Perhaps it also served as the bishop's residence, or maybe it had been his own house before. It is uncertain, but it may be significant to the development of North African Christianity in general that Augustine's church at Hippo Regius is now thought to have grown from what was originally an adjacent peristyle house and then served as an episcopal residence.[88] Nearly two years later (4 March 305) a synod convened at Cirta in the house of Urbanus Donatus to elect new bishops.[89] Still later, Optatus, bishop in around 400 at nearby Mileve, suggests that the synod met in a private home "because the Churches had not been rebuilt" after the edict of destruction in 303.[90] This view is partially substantiated by a hagiographical record of martyrs from another Numidian village, Abitina, from 12 February 304.[91] For them assembly was easily managed in the homes of private individuals, either Octavius Felix or the lector Emeritus.[92] It is likely that many of the church buildings, having become publicly recognizable through architectural adaptation, were confiscated. However, the move back to the private household setting was not a big step. In times of duress, it was not difficult to return to simpler forms.[93] Donatist conventicles in North Africa continued to preserve these simpler church buildings in opposition to the more elaborate church buildings of the Catholics at Carthage.[94] For a variety of reasons—persecution, controversy, geography, social status, wealth, and patronage—the adaptation of church buildings progressed at an uneven pace. The earliest instances of partial adaptation commenced in the second century, but the practice continued through the fourth. On the whole, however, the domus ecclesiae as a building devoted to Christian usage and defined through physical renovation had become fairly typical by the third century. The process continued as subsequent renovations were introduced to accommodate new needs.

The Aula Ecclesiae

Subsequent stages of adaptation eventually produced even larger and more formal types of church buildings. Cyprian takes for granted a setting for assembly in a hall of some size. The letter of Malchion of Antioch states that the church of bishop Paul had become a showplace for the surrounding region. We should not expect that these buildings were as yet on the grand scale of the monumental basilicas of the next century; still, they had progressed well beyond the domestic dining room of Paul's house churches at Corinth. By the third century there was a growing need for a more regularized hall of assembly among both Jewish and Christian congregations.[95] These changes can be seen in comparable ways in the renovations of the Christian building and the Jewish synagogue at Dura-Europos and elsewhere.

The Christian historian Eusebius, writing during the violent years of the great persecution, refers to a building "boom" in the last half of the third century. Chronologically, Eusebius was describing the period from Cyprian's death in 258 to the first edict of Diocletian in 303. In book VII of his *Church History* Eusebius deals with the upheavals within the church precipitated by the likes of Paul of Samosata. In book VIII, he turns to the period of persecution and what he viewed as the eventual triumph of the Christian church. It is significant, therefore, that Eusebius regularly refers to the persecution as "the destruction of the churches," a reflection of a new perspective on the development of church buildings emerging in the early part of the fourth century. Thus, at the beginning of book VIII, Eusebius describes the situation on the eve of persecution:

How could anyone describe those assemblies with numberless crowds and the great throngs gathered in every city as well as the remarkable concourses in the houses of prayer? On account of these things, no longer being satisfied with their old buildings, they erected from the foundations churches of spacious dimensions in every city.[96]

Reading the historiographical interpretations of Eusebius is sometimes difficult. In older studies of Christian architecture this passage and others were taken to represent the inception of the basilica as monumental church architecture prior to the beginning of the fourth century.[97] But since we have seen that the basilica was not introduced until after Constantine, we must attempt to understand Eusebius's reference in a different light. To be sure, his reliability has to be tested; however, in this case the pattern does seem to reflect the ongoing process of adaptation and renovation from existing domus ecclesiae.[98] Although it is, from what we have seen elsewhere, a vast overgeneralization, it must have been the case for some localities. The language used, in fact, is precisely that found often in building inscriptions. In particular we should note the phrase "erected from the foundations" (*ek themeliōn anistōn*), also prominent in a number of mithraic and synagogue inscriptions where it usually refers to the rebuilding of an existing edifice.[99] It is possible, then, that Eusebius knew such inscriptions from Christian buildings as well. It is also worth noting that Eusebius does not predicate renovation on architectural style, but rather on issues of numerical growth and social status.

Well before Constantine introduced the basilica to Church architecture, the Christians had begun to move toward larger, more regular halls of assembly. It is for this stage of the development that the term *aula ecclesiae* ("hall of the church") has been chosen.[100] The term is intended to connote a direct continuity with the domus ecclesiae, from which it evolved through a continued, natural course of adaptation. Archaeologically, this continuity can be seen in two cases from the early fourth century. At this time the villa at Parentium that had been renovated at least partially into a domus ecclesiae was more thoroughly rebuilt into a tripartite hall structure.[101] Despite the tripartite configuration, the building was not a true basilica, as each hall was physically separate. Instead, the plan and configuration of the halls depended upon the liturgical use of the same areas in the earlier villa. The middle hall served for the assembly, while the smaller flanking halls served as a baptistry and martyrium respectively. A funerary inscription from the martyrium seems

to verify that the tripartite hall-church was renovated from the earlier church edifice (probably the villa as domus ecclesiae) of the bishop Maurus, who was honored as martyr or confessor.[102] A comparable case is known from an inscription at Laodicea Combusta in Lycaonia. There the epitaph of the bishop Marcus Julius Eugenius attests that he personally rebuilt the church "from its foundations" during or just after the persecutions of 303–313.[103]

At Qirkbize in Coele-Syria a different process of construction was followed, but with similar results. There the church edifice was built as an entirely new construction in the first third of the fourth century.[104] Since the village was just being developed it had no existing structures from which to be rebuilt. It is interesting, then, that the church was built as a modest aula ecclesiae, though the exterior plan was clearly modeled after the house next door, which was owned by the founder and patron of the church. Externally, the church complex resembled domestic architecture. Internally, however, all the space, both floor plan and elevation, was designed as a single hall of assembly. Originally, it was nothing more than a plain rectangular hall with no internal divisions or specially marked areas save a raised platform on one end. Only later, through five stages of renovation covering two centuries, did this simple aula ecclesiae come to have the trappings of typical eastern basilical architecture.

By the end of the third century, some church buildings had become more prominent public edifices. This is confirmed by pagan observers as well, one offhand barb in particular from a pagan detractor. Porphyry, a student of the philosopher Plotinus at Rome in around 262–263, was a contemporary of Paul of Samosata. In his view the Christians were inconsistent and irrational since they deprecated pagan worship but, he says, they "erected great buildings" of their own, "imitating the construction of temples."[105] It should be noted that the case of Paul of Samosata attracted the attention of the emperor in matters pertaining to the disposition of Christian buildings. Thus, Eusebius reports that the case was appealed to the emperor Aurelian (ca. 270–272), with the result that the church building (*oikos ekklēsias*) was declared the property of the "orthodox"

group.[106] Still earlier, under Severus Alexander (222–235) it is reported (in the *Historia Augusta*) that a dispute over a piece of property was similarly decided by imperial fiat in favor of the Christians.[107] In this case the dispute was with a group of cooks who wanted the property; the imperial decree expressly favored its use for religious purposes instead, even though the property must not have been a public sanctuary. Even allowing for the historiographical excesses of the *Historia Augusta* and Eusebius' *Church History*, it seems that public notice had ratified the presence of Christian buildings of growing proportions and social prominence.

At the beginning of the fourth century the public position of church buildings in the city of Nicomedia, Bithynia (Diocletian's eastern capital) was described by the Christian writer Lactantius. He reports that as the first official act of persecution in 303 Diocletian ordered this church building destroyed while he looked on from the palace.[108] Apparently the church building was an eyesore because it symbolized the recalcitrance of the Christians. Moreover, it rose up to greet his view, as it was "situated on a high spot visible from the palace," in the midst of a number of large houses. Lactantius calls it a "lofty temple" (*fanum editissimum*). The description indeed suggests a larger renovated aula ecclesiae, though clearly not a monumental building, since it was razed in a matter of a few hours. More significant, perhaps, was its location in a wealthy residential quarter and the fact that it was well known to the general populace as the Christians' church building. In the same year the smaller domus ecclesiae at Cirta (Numidia) and Chysis (Egypt) were similarly well known to local authorities who carried out Diocletian's edict of search and seizure.[109]

If these church buildings were not yet monumental public basilicas with a peculiarly Christian architectural form, what made them so clearly recognizable to local authorities? The evidence points to the process of renovation and construction as an accepted part of daily life for religious groups of all sorts. Tearing down exterior walls in order to erect new ones "from the foundations" must have drawn attention to the project. The more elaborate the rebuilding, the more local contractors and

workmen would have been involved. For example, it is possible, given features of design and decoration, that the font edifice in the baptistry room of the Dura Christian building was built by the same workshop that produced the Torah shrine in the synagogue and the altar canopy in the mithraeum at Dura. The remodeling of the house into a religious building was not self-consciously secretive, even if the rites performed there after completion were.

If the more limited interior remodeling of the Dura Christian building was tacitly public, the remodeling of the later synagogue at Dura was an overtly and self-consciously public statement on the part of the Jewish community. By analogy, the later Dura synagogue corresponds to the phase of development we are describing as the aula ecclesiae, since the former reflects a subsequent renovation with a conscious plan to redesign the entire edifice for religious functions. Walls were torn down to create an elevation above the other houses in the block, while the entrance was moved to the other side of the block on a nicer street. The central focus of the plan was the enlarged hall of assembly and its entrance through the formal courtyard. Within the hall itself the spatial and visual focal point of the room centered on the Torah niche, around which the artistic decoration, seating, and acts of worship were coordinated.

Similar factors can also be seen in the move from domus ecclesiae to aula ecclesiae on the Christian side. Had not Dura been destroyed, the Christian building would probably have undergone comparable renovation, assuming that the community continued to grow and develop apace. Each locality tended to follow its own course, according to local styles, conventions, and circumstances. Elsewhere on the Christian side the general process can be seen in the renovation of the *titulus Byzantis* at Rome in the later third century. Whereas the earliest Christian cells met in the rear shops of the ground floor, later the entire mezzanine level (*piano nobile*) was taken over and converted into a large open hall. This conversion was marked by substantial construction work (including knocking out the interior partitions, perhaps through two levels) on the upper floor, as well as annexing and integrating the rooms from the street-side facade.
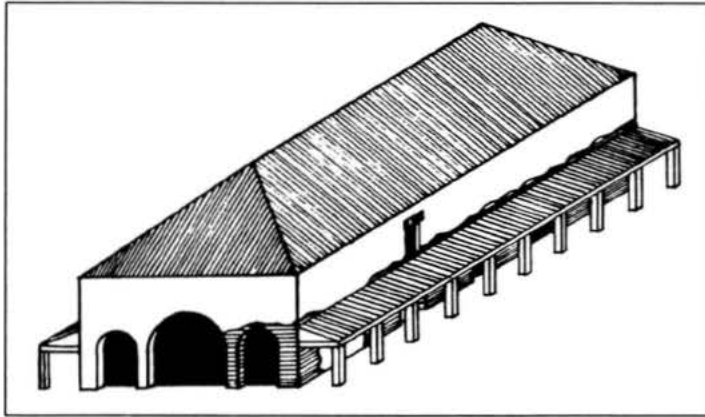
Fig. 24.
Isometric reconstruction of the First Church (aula ecclesiae) below San Crisogono at Rome.
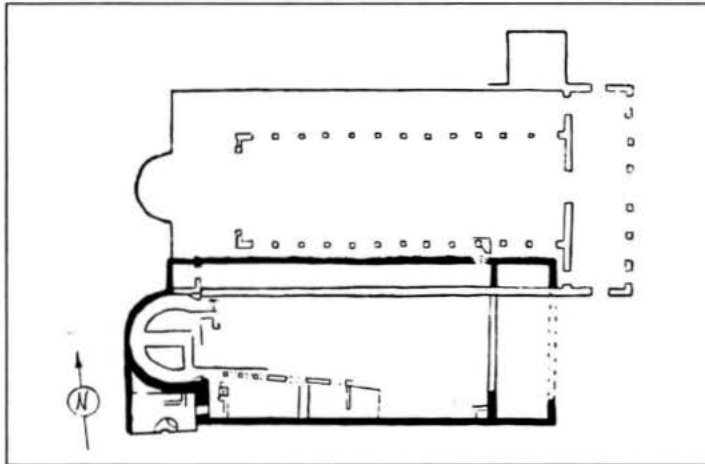

Fig. 25.
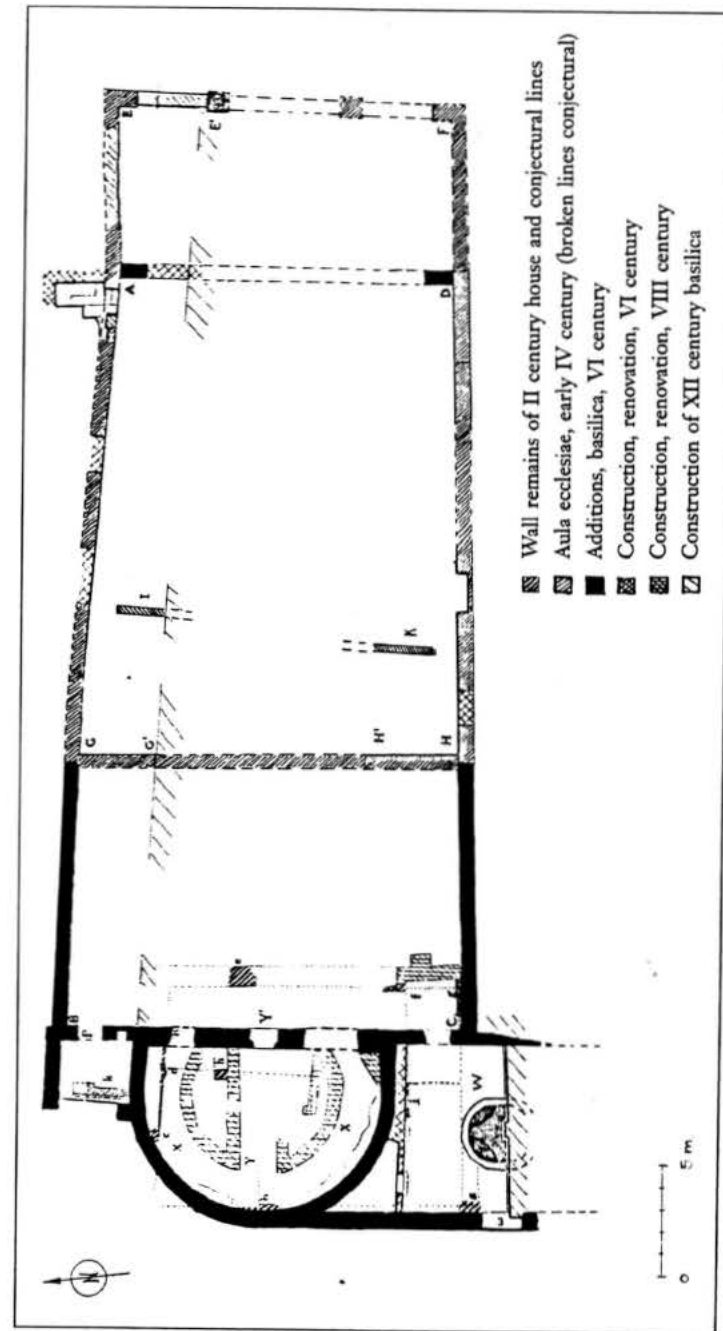Siting plan of the fourth- to sixth-century church beneath the medieval basilica of San Crisogono at Rome.

Fig. 26.
Plan restoration of San Crisogono and aula ecclesiae at Rome.

Legend:
- Wall remains of II century house and conjectural lines
- Aula ecclesiae, early IV century (broken lines conjectural)
- Additions, basilica, VI century
- Construction, renovation, VI century
- Construction, renovation, VIII century
- Construction of XII century basilica

Also, massive load-bearing walls were added in the ground-level shop area to carry the open elevation of the upper floors by means of pillars in place of partition walls.[110] In all likelihood the other known titular churches at Rome that can be dated to the late third century, San Clemente and San Martino ai Monti, are also examples of the construction of halls for assembly out of previously existing buildings. In both cases, however, these halls seem to have been subsumed when the churches were later rebuilt in basilical form at the beginning of the fifth century.[111]

There are other cases at the beginning of the fourth century in which hall churches were being built de novo. In the case of Qirkbize (noted above) the hall followed domestic planning on the exterior. The best example of the new dimensions of the aula ecclesiae can be seen in San Crisogono at Rome.[112] This church was built in the Trastevere, sometime around 310 (see fig. 24). Originally, it was nothing more than a large rectangular hall with no interior aisles or partitions. Still, it was obviously not a house; more like a warehouse in plan, but with exterior porticoes. Thus, it was made to conform to a large public concourse in style and function. Only later would it, like other churches at Rome, be remodeled to basilical church form by adding on an apse and crypt, and by partitioning off the entrance area to form a narthex (see figs. 25 and 26). Such hall structures in public buildings, as San Crisogono, probably provided assembly space that could then be accommodated to the new aesthetic of an emerging Christian architecture.

It is likely, however, that the first phase of building or rebuilding of churches after the persecution continued the lines of domus ecclesiae and aula ecclesiae, as in the so-called "basilica" of Paul at Philippi, which was built by Bishop Porphyrius in about 334 (see fig. 27). Most of the edicts of toleration contained some provision for the restoration of confiscated church properties.[113] Despite the rhetoric of Eusebius, it appears that the majority of Christian buildings were merely confiscated and closed rather than destroyed. Thus, there were many localities that could resume the use of older church buildings, although the new sense of freedom and triumph might well have been stimulus to renovation. In other cases rebuilding was indeed
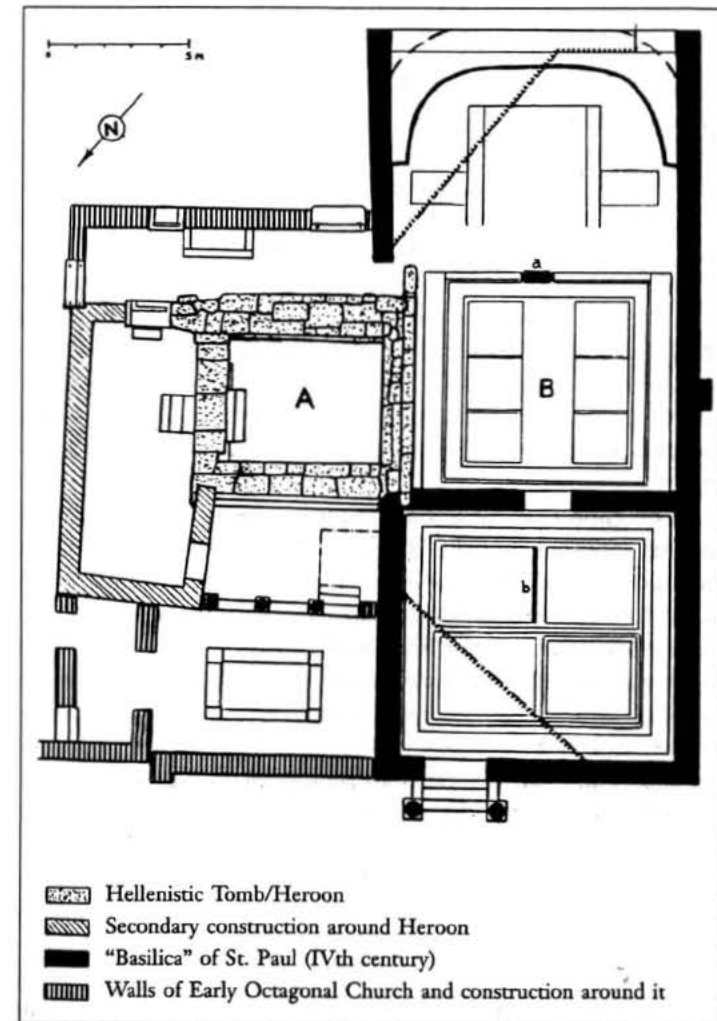

Fig. 27.

Plan restoration of the fourth-century hall church and heroon beneath the Octagonal church complex at Philippi.

Legend:
- Hellenistic Tomb/Heroon
- Secondary construction around Heroon
- "Basilica" of St. Paul (IVth century)
- Walls of Early Octagonal Church and construction around it

notable and monumental. But, as in the case of the church of bishop Theodore at Aquileia begun in around 314, many were just more elaborate local or personal expressions of the hall model, only later to witness the superimposition of basilical form.[114] The epitaph of the bishop Marcus Julius Eugenius at Laodicea Combusta also reflects the rebuilding of churches after the cessation of persecution. His account suggests that the existing church edifice was used in the rebuilding, enlarged or elaborated according to local needs and his own sense of triumph and benefaction.[115] This case, known only from the epigraphic record, is similar on many levels to the better known account of the rebuilding of the church at Tyre after the persecution.

The church at Tyre was rebuilt by the young, aristocratic bishop Paulinus and was dedicated in 317. The nature of the rebuilding is not known from archaeological remains, but is renowned from the elaborate panegyric delivered at the dedication by none other than Eusebius himself.[116] Generally, it has been assumed that the new church was a basilica, since it was built after the Constantinian triumph and since Eusebius regularly refers to the edifice as a temple, comparing its rebuilding to the "glory" of the Second Temple in the days of Zerubbabel.[117] Despite the decor and more monumental scale of the rebuilt church of Paulinus, it was probably not a basilica, but an elaborated aula ecclesiae in form.[118] Many of the features of Eusebius's description, indeed, suggest affinities for, or perhaps developments toward, what would become Constantinian basilical form. For example, there was an atrium forecourt with tetrastoa opening onto a triportal main entrance (HE X.4.39, 42). There were other annexes or dependencies that served for specialized functions, such as a baptistry (par. 45). Still, there is no mention of an apse or synthronon, only a raised platform on one end for bishop and clergy (par. 44), not unlike that at Antioch or Carthage a generation earlier. Nor does it seem that there was an internal colonnade in the nave, as has sometimes been supposed, but rather an external portico along the long sides of the building similar to that suggested by Krautheimer for San Crisogono at Rome.[119]

What is architecturally significant about the continuity of the aula ecclesiae is a tendency to standardize the rectangular hall plan for assembly and cluster ancillary rooms, annexes, or dependencies around it. Existing edifices could be modified to suit this need. A good example is the so-called Church of Julianos at Umm el-Jimal.[120] Dating to the fourth or fifth century, the church is a modest basilical plan containing an apse but no aisles. The peculiarity of the structure lies in the fact that the apse end of the hall protrudes from an otherwise typical housing complex. There is evidence also that features of the hall itself, including the tri-portal entry, were already in use prior to construction of the basilical extension. In other words, it appears that the housing complex might have already been converted to a hall structure (perhaps a Christian aula ecclesiae) in the late third or fourth century, prior to full-scale conversion to the basilical hall plan.

There is also an increased possibility for new design and construction, either of an independent sort or in conjunction with existing structures already in use. The period during which such transitions occurred ranges from the middle of the third century, especially in larger urban centers, through the end of the fourth century. The domus ecclesiae-aula ecclesiae patterns for adaptation and growth continued well into the period when Constantinian influence began to reshape Christian architecture into the basilica. At this time synagogue architecture, even in the Homeland, was beginning to develop its own pattern of regularized hall forms in freestanding edifices.[121] Most of the active synagogues known from the Diaspora at this time were also going through multiple stages of adaptation to elaborated hall forms. Thus, despite the fact that they were still very much conditioned by local customs and circumstances and by the constraints of existing architecture, there were additional features of architectural articulation and orientation. They, too, may reflect the influence of the emerging normative synagogue worship of the mishnaic and talmudic periods.[122]

In the diverse developments of the Christian aula ecclesiae interior arrangements tended to become more defined and gradually standardized as liturgy, clerical orders, and congrega-

tional seating became oriented in terms of the longitudinal axis of the hall plan. More formal segregation of the clergy in a designated area at the front of the hall had already taken place in Carthage in the mid-third century. By the time of San Crisogono and Theodore's church at Aquileia, the focal point of the hall was the area set aside for altar, clergy, and bishop.[123] Several other features of liturgical development are probably correlated with this development. It certainly presupposes a separate eucharistic liturgy with its focal point in the front of the hall. Also, such strict clerical ordering might have been an initial stimulus toward processional patterns of entry and exit.[124] The shift from the dining arrangement for assembly to a hall plan also resulted in a move to more formal seating arrangements for the congregation in assembly. We may take special note of instructions from the late third century (ca. 270) Syrian church order known as the *Didascalia Apostolorum*.[125] This document presupposes some separation of clergy from laity, as the presbyters were to be seated in "the eastern part of the house" with the bishop "in their midst." Behind them were first, the adult men, seated from east to west, then the women, apart in a separate area also seated from east to west, and finally the mothers with babies and all the rest of the children, sitting or standing on the sides (presumably at the rear of the hall).[126] While the hall itself does not seem to have been more than a plain edifice, conceivably even a renovated domus ecclesiae like that at Dura, there was already a rigid sense of order in the articulation of assembly space. This rigidity and formality is also attested by the fact that one of the deacons, probably the one who was assigned to stand at the door while the people entered, was charged with making sure that all assumed their proper places.[127] Such formality, combined with the articulation of space seen at Carthage and elsewhere, might lead quite naturally to further provisions for the chancel and the bishop's cathedra well before the advent of basilical form.[128] Likewise, developments in the catechumenate and in penitential practice were probably made more formal in spatial definition as the church edifice grew into the formal hall pattern.[129]

Seen from this perspective it may be suggested that the grad-

ual adaptation toward the aula ecclesiae had already achieved accommodation of Christian assembly and worship. The Constantinian innovation of basilical architecture, therefore, seems less abrupt. Although it surely represents a radically new imposition of scale and style on the architecture and aesthetic, it still depended on some continuity with earlier church buildings. The basilica may be seen as a further adaptation, monumentalization, and ultimately a standardization of diverse pre-Constantinian patterns of development. It is noteworthy, too, that with Constantine some of the same social and economic factors in patronage and adaptation were at work as in the earlier periods.[130]

5. From House Church to Church Building

1. Tacitus, *Annals* XV.44. Cf. Pliny, *Epp.* X.96, 97, see CDEE, no. 25.

2. Cf. Robert Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (New Haven, CT, 1985) passim; A. D. Nock, *Conversion, the Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (London 1933) 48–71; *Early Gentile Christianity in its Hellenistic Background* (New York 1964) 23f.

3. Gerd Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity* (Philadelphia 1978) 1.

4. L. M. White, "Shifting Sectarian Boundaries in Early Christianity," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 70:3 (1988) 7–24. See also Matt. 15.24 and the parallel passage in Mark 7.24–

30; cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (rev. ed., New York 1968) 145; Norman Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teachings of Jesus* (London 1967) 201–3; John Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1975) 19–41.

5. Jacob Neusner, *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism* (2nd ed., New York 1979) 81–96.

6. Cf. *mShabbath* 1.4; *bMenaboth* 41b; S. Safrai, "Home and Family," CRINT I.2:728–92, esp. 731; Marcel Simon, *Jewish Sects at the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia 1967) 32, 56.

7. The phrase *kat' oikon* in Acts (2.46; 5.42) is regularly rendered "from house to house," more or less at random, a sense that is traceable to the Vulgate (*circa domos*). It would be more consistent with the inferred customary action in Acts 12.12 as well as with the Pauline usage simply to render it "at home" (cf. 1 Cor. 16.19 and esp. Philem. 2). This seems to be more in keeping with the distinction being made in Acts between the private gathering "at home" versus the public worship "in the Temple." Cf. Marlis Gielen, "Zur Interpretation der paulinischen Formel *he kat' oikon ecclesia*," ZNW 77 (1986) 109–25.

8. Cf. Gerd Theissen, "Wanderradikalismus," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 70 (1973) 245–71; *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, 8–16; G. Kretschmar, "Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem Ursprung frühchristlicher Askese," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 61 (1964) 27–67.

9. Cf. Wayne A. Meeks, *The Moral World of the First Christians* (Philadelphia 1986) 97–107.

10. Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, 17–25; "Legitimation and Subsistence: An Essay on the Sociology of Early Christian Missionaries," in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia 1982) 27–53.

11. L. M. White, "Sociological Analysis of Early Christian Groups: A Social Historian's Response," *Sociological Analysis* 47 (1986) 249–66; "Shifting Sectarian Boundaries in Early Christianity," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 70:3 (1988) 7–24; Gager, *Kingdom and Community*, 19–41.

12. Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven, CT, 1983) 9–50; *The Moral World of the First Christians* 108–23; cf. John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: A Sociological Exegesis of 1 Peter* (Philadelphia 1981) 59–84.

13. Wayne Meeks and Robert Wilken, *Jews and Christians at Antioch* (Chico, CA, 1981) 13–22; L. M. White, "Adolf Harnack and the 'Expansion' of Early Christianity: A Reappraisal of Social History," TSC 5 (1985/1986) 97–127.

14. White, "Harnack and the Expansion," 111–15; Cf. A. J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians* (Philadelphia 1987) 5–33; A. T. Kraabel, "Greeks, Jews, and Lutherans in the Middle Half of Acts," *Chris-*

tians Among Jews and Gentiles: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl on His Sixty-fifth Birthday (HTR 79, Philadelphia 1986) 147–57.

15. *Passio Pauli* 1 (cf. CDEE, no. 9b).

16. See CDEE, nos. 8, 10, 11, among others. Many, of course, are legendary episodes modeled after the canonical book of Acts; however, it should be noted that the household setting is simply assumed to be "typical" and that the role of these house church meetings often has theological import for the particular document. Noteworthy here is the house of the Marcellus in the *Acts of Peter*, cf. Robert Stoops, "Patronage in the Acts of Peter," in *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Dennis McDonald (*Semeia* 39, Atlanta 1986) 78–94.

17. Cf. Calvin Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul* (2nd ed., Atlanta 1982) 79; Helmut Koester, "The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment," *New Testament Studies* 8 (1962) 317.

18. Cf. Victor Paul Furnish, *Second Corinthians* (Anchor Bible, Garden City, NY, 1984) 26–35.

19. Acts 18.2–4; 1 Cor. 16.19.

20. Rom. 16.5 (see below n. 26).

21. 1 Cor. 16.15; cf. 1.11, 15 (compare Acts 18.8).

22. Rom. 16.2, 23.

23. Gal. 2.9; Rom. 16.16.

24. Philem. 22.

25. Chan-Hie Kim, *The Form and Structure of the Familiar Greek Letter of Recommendation* (Missoula, MT 1972) passim; S. K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia 1986) 51–70; A. J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (2nd ed., Philadelphia 1983) 94–103; *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* (Atlanta 1988) 1–13, 30–41; Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 23, Tübingen 1987) 91–117.

26. Rom. 16.2. I am assuming here (as above in n. 20) that Rom. 16 is integral with the rest of the letter. Cf. Harry A. Gamble, *The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans: A Study in Textual and Literary Criticism* (Grand Rapids, MI 1977) passim; W. A. Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 16; A. J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects*, 64–65.

27. I base this suggestion, first, on the proximity of the letter of recommendation for Phoebe to the greeting to Prisca and Aquila and, second, on the assumption that Phoebe herself would have known or known of Prisca and Aquila from their earlier stay in Corinth. The other cells at Rome are noted in Rom. 16.5b–19; cf. W. A. Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 57, 60, 143.

28. Rom. 15.22–30.

29. Cf. A. G. MacKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World* (London 1975) passim, and with regard to exegetical issues cf. L. M. White, "Scaling the Strongman's Court (Lk. 11.21): An Index of Social

Facets," *Foundations and Facets Forum* 3 (1987) 3–28. By contrast note the assumptions of homogeneity in housing in J. Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and Archaeology* (Wilmington, DE 1983) 153–60.

30. See above chap. 1.

31. I am not convinced by the study of N. Afanasieff, "L'assemblée eucharistique unique dans l'église ancienne," *Kleronomia* 6 (1974) 1–36, which argues for a single eucharistic gathering for each city, based largely on the reference in Rom. 16.23. Because the eucharist was still thoroughly a part of the common meal in the house church gathering, there would probably have been diverse gatherings (and practices) within any given locality where there were multiple house church cells. This seems to be precisely the case (and the source of some of the problems) at Corinth, cf. 1 Cor. 11–14; Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 76, 221 n. 7.

32. G. Theissen, "Social Integration and Sacramental Activity," in *Social Setting of Pauline Christianity*, 145–73; A. J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects*, 81; Dennis E. Smith, "Meals and Morality in Paul and his World," *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 1981 (Chico, CA, 1981) 319–40.

33. W. A. Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 158–63; cf. Hans-Josef Klauck, *Hausgemeinde und Hauskirche im frühen Christentum* (Stuttgart 1981) 30–40. Stephen C. Barton ("Paul's Sense of Place: An Anthropological Approach to Community Formation in Corinth," *New Testament Studies* 32 [1986] 225–46), I think, goes a bit too far in drawing a radical distinction between the household and the "church," but the discussion of boundary definition and "sacred space/sacred time" is useful.

34. Cf. A. J. Malherbe, "The Inhospitality of Diotrophes," in *Social Aspects*, 2nd ed., 92–112.

35. Ibid., 95–99; Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless*, 165–219; William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch* (*Hermeneia*, Philadelphia 1986) 12–19.

36. See CDEE, no. 36. The dating of the renovation to 240/241 C.E. is established by C. H. Kraeling, DEF VIII.2, 34–37.

37. *Passio Sancti Justini et Socii* 3 (CDEE, no. 7b). For the dating (ca. 164/165, under the prefect Q. Junius Rusticus) see H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford 1971) xviii, 43 n. See also A. J. Malherbe, "Justin and Crescens," in *Christian Teaching: Studies in Honor of L. G. Lewis* (Abilene, TX, 1981) 312–27.

38. According to one line of tradition from this text, the place "above the baths" has been linked with the *titulus Pudentis*, upon which the basilica S. Pudenziana presumably rests. This tradition is based on the two names attached to the bath (Martinus and Timotheus) that appear in Recension B of the text (see CDEE, no. 7b, n. 3.3). Cf. R. M. Grant, *Early Christianity and Society* (New York 1977) 149. It must be

noted, however, that the names differ in the other recensions and make such an identification impossible, while the architectural history of S. Pudenziana does not present clear evidence of Christian usage in the levels below the present basilica (cf. CDEE, Appendix A, no. 10). The more likely candidate, where a securely identified pre-Constantinian meeting place is located in a residential complex containing both baths and upper-story rooms, is the *titulus Byzantis* beneath the basilica SS. Giovanni e Paolo (CDEE, no. 52).

39. Justin Martyr, *Apology* I.61.3 (see CDEE, no. 7a).

40. As suggested above in n. 38 for the insula of SS. Giovanni e Paolo. Cf. James E. Packer, "Housing and Population in Imperial Ostia and Rome," JRS 57 (1967) 80–95; Jerome Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (New Haven, CT, 1940) 22f. It is perhaps significant of incipient changes in attitude toward the location (becoming a more formal sense of "church") that Justin refers to the "meeting place" (*syneleusis*). The term is a synonym for *koinon* and begins to move in the direction of identifying the congregation (as "church") with the regular place of assembly. So, also, note the regular use in Justin of the Pauline phrase *synerchesthai epi to auto* almost as a specialized technical term for the eucharistic assembly. Compare Justin, *Apol.* I.67.3 and *Mart.* 3.1 (Rec. B), 2.4 (Rec. C, see CDEE, no. 7b, n. 3.1) with Ignatius, *ad Eph.* 5.2, 13.1; *ad Mag.* 7.1 (CDEE, no. 6a–b), and Origen, *De orat.* 31.5 (CDEE, no. 15).

41. See CDEE, no. 53.

42. See CDEE, no. 52b; cf. CBCR I:293ff.

43. CDEE, no. 50.

44. CDEE, no. 41 and Appendix A, no. 8.

45. See above chap. 3 and CDEE, no. 72.

46. CDEE, no. 57b.

47. See CDEE, Appendix A, no. 12.

48. See above chap. 1.

49. For the text see CDEE, no. 26.

50. The reference is much debated, especially since the work of Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (English transl., Philadelphia 1971) 12–15. In keeping with his view of the development of Christianity in Syria (much as in Egypt) Bauer argued that the two references of the *Edessene Chronicle* were a product of later orthodox Christianity in an effort to project an episcopal succession back on the earlier period. Thus, rather than reflecting one of the diverse forms of heterodox Christianity of that earlier period, the flood account was taken to be a fabrication. See also DEF VIII.2, 137–38.

51. For such combinations in Jewish usage, although rare, see CIJ 682 (Olbia on the Black Sea, as restored by LD 11); CIJ 694 (Stobi, CDEE, no. 73); CIJ 867 (Gerasa). Cf. above chap. 3.

52. While we should take W. Bauer's criticisms of a literalistic

reading seriously, we should give more credence to the historical evidence, since other records attest to the flood disaster in Edessa. For me, however, the seeming redundance of the phrase "temple of the church" is less problematic. The term *baikla* in the earlier period could be "temple," "holy place," or just "palace/hall," i.e., any public building. At this period, *church* (like synagogue) probably still had the ambiguous sense of either building or congregation. Hence, the title cited in the text sounds very much like a lintel inscription or public census designation. The building had come to be known as the "holy place of the Christian congregation." Moreover, this is the kind of notice we might well expect to be preserved in a court record (perhaps using official census records) of the list of buildings destroyed by the flood of 201, as suggested by Hallier. For *topos* used in this way of the Christian institution see the late third century papyrus letter from bishop Sotas (P. Oxy. XII, 1492; cf. CDEE, no. 45).

53. See CDEE, no. 26 for text. See also A. Harnack, *Mission and Expansion*, II:142–45.

54. Cf. W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 14–15. Bauer, of course, saw this monumentalization as a reflection of the orthodox victory and suppression of the earlier heterodox varieties. Yet, he does discuss the activities of the nascent orthodox from as early as ca. 190 (under the bishop Palut) alongside the other groups; cf. ibid., 20–21.

55. Graydon F. Snyder, *ANTE PACEM: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine* (Macon, GA 1985) 163–65; compare ECBA, 24.

56. 1 Cor. 11.17–34. For Paul both the problem and the corrective arose out of the integral nature of the meal setting for worship and eucharist. Cf. Günther Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience* (English trans., New York 1969) 127–38, 155. P. Neuenzeit, *Das Herrenmahl* (Munich 1960) 70–73; Gerd Theissen, "Social Integration and Sacramental Activity," in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia 1982) 145–74. Also on the bracketing effect of the words of institution before and after the meal proper see H. Conzelmann, *First Corinthians* (English trans., *Hermeneia*, Philadelphia 1975) 199.

57. So following G. Theissen (note above); cf. his "Social Stratification in the Corinthian Community: A Contribution to the Sociology of Early Hellenistic Christianity," in *Social Setting of Pauline Christianity*, 69–120. Here I would not take the phrase "one is hungry and another is drunk" (v. 21) as a literal reflection of the problem. Rather it is part of Paul's stylized characterization of the situation. Thus, "hungry" and "drunk" are to be read as part of the overall parallel structure of the passage built around the terms *eat/drink*, *bread/cup*, and *body/blood*. See also W. A. Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 67–68, 157–62.

58. Cf. Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (English

trans., London 1966) 115–17; Dennis E. Smith, "Social Obligation in the Context of Communal Meals" (Ph.D. Thesis; Harvard University 1980) passim; "Meals and Morality in Paul and his World," *SBL Seminar Papers 1981* (Missoula, MT 1981) 327, 337.

59. D. E. Smith, "Meals and Morality," 325; cf. G. Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience*, 176 n. 2. The key phrase is *synerchesthai epi to auto* in 1 Cor. 11.20 and 14.23, which suggests that the activities discussed in chaps. 12–14 were also conducted in the same meal setting.

60. N. Afanasieff, "L'assemblée eucharistique unique dans l'église ancienne," *Kleronomia* 6 (1974) 1–36.

61. Thus, I would disagree with Gregory Dix and others who maintain that the eucharist was from the beginning a separate sacramental act. If anything, Paul himself sowed the seeds of this separation in 1 Cor. 11. Cf. G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (2nd ed., London 1945) 77–79; Josef Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy to the Time of Gregory the Great* (Notre Dame, IN, 1959) 32–33.

62. The earliest evidence comes from the Epistle of Jude (v. 12) and from the *Epistula Apostolorum*, dated to the middle of the second century; cf. Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 115–16.

63. Did. 9–10. Contra Jeremias (118–20), however, I see no evidence for a separation or sequencing of agape and eucharist based on the two sections in Did. 9–10 and 14 read back as a parallel on the idealized Jerusalem church in Acts. 2.42. Cf. Willy Rordorf, "The Didache," in *The Eucharist of the Early Christians* (New York 1978) 1–23. On the Didache I would follow more along the lines of Hans Lietzmann, *Mass and Lord's Supper* (Leiden 1972) 123, 187–88, who argues for a change of function over time in the two originally integral acts of worship.

64. Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* X.96 (CDEE, no. 25); Tertullian, *Apol.* 39 (CDEE, no. 13b); Justin, *Apol.* I.61–66 (CDEE, no. 7a).

65. Cf. Tertullian, *De exhortatione castitatis* 11; Cyprian, *De opere et eleemosyne* 15. Compare Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy*, 116–17; however, I would argue that the new practice was more a result of gradual changes in the eucharistic assembly than just theological formality.

66. *Paedagogus* II.1 (= 4.3–7.3 in the GCS edition of Staehlin). Cf. the third century Coptic *Acts of Paul* (in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Hennecke and Schneemelcher [Philadelphia 1965] II:388), which reflects the tendency of reading later developments back into Pauline practice. See also the fourth century commentators, such as Amphilochius of Iconium (bishop from 376–395); cf. Harnack, *Mission und Ausbreitung* (4th German ed., Leipzig 1924) II:611.

67. *Apostolic Tradition* (ed. G. Dix) XXIV, XXVI.1–12 (CDEE, no. 14b); cf. Dix, *Shape of the Liturgy*, 82–84 (though he tends to push the evidence of Hippolytus back as identical to that of Justin's time).

68. See CDEE, no. 36, based on the archaeological reports of C. H. Kraeling, *The Christian Building* (= DEF VIII.2) 34–38.

69. For the inscriptions see CDEE, no. 37. On the legal issues see DEF VIII.2, 139 or ECBA, 25 in contrast to the traditional view reflected in G. Bovini, *La proprieta ecclestici e la condizione giuridica della chiesa in eta preconstantiniana* (Milan 1948), and by Marta Sordi, *Il cristianesimo e Roma* (Bologna 1965) 468–71; cf. Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire* (Norman, OK, 1986) 188.

70. DEF VIII.2, 153–54. Compare the layout of the Lullingstone chapel (CDEE, no. 57b) and others which suggest the beginning of an orientation on the long axis of the room toward a bema or dais on one of the shorter sides. This development is consistent with the evidence noted above regarding changes in eucharistic practice.

71. Dura is the earliest known case where baptism was consciously integrated into the ecclesiastical setting by means of architectural adaptation. A similar process seems to have been involved in the second phase adaptation of the Parentium villa (CDEE, no. 50).

72. While there is no archaeological evidence that the house was used by the Christians prior to renovation, the level of planning in movement and articulation of liturgical space may suggest a familiarity with the space. Thus, note the window emplacements for communication between Rooms 4 and 5 and the courtyard (discussed by C. H. Kraeling, DEF VIII.2, 19). The planning shows formal liturgical considerations and larger community considerations (cf. DEF VIII.2, 153). These factors may point to some short-term use of the building by the Christians prior to the renovation project. This would suggest the role of a major patron or donor, as I have suggested for the inscriptions of the baptistry (cf. CDEE, no. 37, notes).

73. Other sites include the villa at Parentium, Istria (CDEE, no. 50), the so-called Julianos' Church at Umm el-Jimal, Syria/Arabia (CDEE, no. 41), and perhaps the house at Hinton St. Mary's, Britannia (CDEE, Appendix A, no. 12).

74. The text, now called the *Acta Munati Felicis*, is preserved untitled in the *Gestae apud Zenophilum* (CDEE, no. 31).

75. Cf. W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church* (New York 1967) 372–73; A. H. M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* (New York 1948, repr. 1978) 53–56.

76. P. Gen. Inv. 108, dated ca. 298–341. See CDEE, no. 44.

77. Ibid., column D, line 11. For possible reconstructions of the lacuna see the notes to CDEE, no. 44.

78. P. Oxy. I (1898) 43 verso, dated ca. 295 (text at CDEE, no. 46).

79. P. Oxy. XXXIII (1968) 2673, dated 304 (text at CDEE, no. 47). The document, preserved in triplicate, is an official declaration of church property written by a court official and attested by a church official (who was apparently illiterate in Greek).

80. Cyprian, Ep. 39.4.1 (text at CDEE, no. 16a).

81. Compare Ep. 38.2 and the reference to the ordination of the confessor Numidius in Ep. 40. By contrast we should remember that in Tertullian's day, acts of worship were still conducted without clerical distinction and simply "in the midst" of the assembly (*Apol.* 39; text at CDEE, no. 13b). Thus, we may be able to mark the chronological parameters of the development, at least for Carthage, so that prior to Cyprian's time the larger scale of worship had not appeared. As to its nature in the days of Tertullian, I doubt that the reference in *Adv. Valentinios* 3 to "the house of the dove [Christ]" which "is high up and close to the light" is to be taken literally. Hence I would not read it, as some have, to indicate a "house church" assembly in Tertullian's day. Rather, the references in Tertullian to assembly during persecution (*De fuga* 3.2, 14.1; CDEE, no. 13d) and to patterns of penitential discipline (which place the offender outside the door of the church) would suggest a move toward a domus ecclesiae type of structure around the beginning of the third century in Carthage (cf. *De pudicitia* 3.5, 4.5; CDEE, no. 13e).

82. Cyprian, Ep. 59.18.1 (text at CDEE, no. 16d).

83. The information comes from the synodal letter of Malchion of Antioch (who helped to depose Paul) as preserved in Eusebius HE VII.30.9 (see text at CDEE, no. 20).

84. The bema must have been a raised platform or *pulpitum* (as in Cyprian), on which Paul had built (probably at his own initiative and expense) the *secretum*. Both terms come from the vocabulary of Roman civil architecture, as indicated by the use of the Latin word *secretum* in the Greek text. The *secretum* was an enclosure for magistrates and officials in court buildings and audience halls.

85. It would appear from the wording of Malchion's letter that the bema itself was already present in the church building and was not viewed as part of Paul's innovation. It is comparable, then, to the development at Carthage and to the analogous period in synagogue development, when the bema became more of a regular feature.

86. See J. B. Ward-Perkins, "Recent Work and Problems in Libya," CIAC VIII, 219–36; J. B. Ward-Perkins and R. G. Goodchild, "The Christian Antiquities of Tripolitania," *Archaeologica* 95 (1953) 39–41. Most recently, archaeological work in Greece has begun to suggest that basilical church building was a rather late innovation, commencing in the late fourth or fifth centuries.

87. The most distinctive feature of the Lullingstone chapel decoration is the incorporation of three large Chi-Rho monograms in the form of a *labarum* with encircling wreath and flanking doves. This design clearly suggests familiarity with mid-fourth-century Roman interests especially associated with the Constantinian revolution. Also, the orant figures on the rear wall of the Lullingstone chapel have been

described as "Byzantine" in artistic style and in dress. Cf. G. W. Meates, *Lullingstone Roman Villa* (London 1955) 132–34; *Excavations of the Lullingstone Roman Villa* (2 vols; London 1986–88) passim.

88. On Cirta see the suggestion of C. H. Kraeling, DEF VIII.2, 140 n. 3, although it appears to me to be a suggestion made on slim evidence save the fact that when the authorities went to search the church the bishop was there and watched the proceedings from his chair. On Hippo cf. H. I. Marrou, "La basilique chrétienne d'Hippo d'après le résultat des derniers fouilles," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 6 (1960) 109ff.; Jean Lassus, "Les édifices du culte autour de la basilique," CIAC VI, 588. More recently an episcopal residence has been excavated as part of the complex associated with the earliest (i.e., the Octagon) of the several churches at Philippi, Greece. The episkopeion was renovated from an existing insula adjoining the octagonal complex that had been built over an earlier fourth century "hall" church. Cf. CDEE, Appendix A, no. 4; Charalambos Bakirtzis, *"TO EPISKO-PEION TON PHILIPPON"* in *Proceedings of Symposium on Kavala and its Region* (Kavala 1987) 149–57.

89. Augustine, *Contra Crescionum* III.30 (PL VIII, 744).

90. Optatus, *On the Donatist Schism* I.14: *quia basilicae necdum fuerunt restitutae, in domum Urbani Carisi* (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum XXVI; Vienna 1893). On the name of the owner, a variant appears between Augustine (above) and Optatus. Optatus also says (*De schism.* I.15–19) that this same assembly initiated the Donatist schism a little later at a gathering in Carthage in 312/313, but it is noteworthy that at that point the church building at Carthage was still standing apparently untouched.

91. *Acta Saturnini* 8–9 (text at CDEE, no. 21). Cf. W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church* (Oxford 1952) 9–10; A. H. M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, 52–53.

92. The text (*Acta Sat.* 2) also mentions the house of Octavius Felix as the meeting place. The text is considerably later (perhaps by a century) than the event; therefore, the phrase *dominicas basilicas* should be read with some caution, either without technical architectural signification on the word *basilica* or as an anachronism (as in Optatus). There is growing evidence that the former was possible, as in the inscription from Altava, Mauretania (cf. CDEE, no. 56) and in the inscription from the simple fourth-century "hall" church, called the "Basilica of St. Paul," found under the Octagonal complex at Philippi (cf. CDEE, Appendix A, no. 4). Also on the use of *basilica* in literary texts of this period see L. Voelkl, "Die konstantinischen Kirchenbauten nach dem literarischen Quellen des Okzidents," RDAC 30 (1954) 99–136; "Die konstantinischen Kirchenbauten nach Eusebius," in RDAC 29 (1953) 60–64.

93. Cf. Tertullian, *De fuga in persec.* 14.1 (text at CDEE, no. 13d).

94. Cf. W. H. C. Frend, *Donatist Church*, 53–54. Optatus seems to have referred to the simple mudbrick buildings of the Donatists as *basilicas non necessarias*. See also J. B. Ward-Perkins, "Memoria, Martyr's Tomb, and Martyr's Church," *Journal of Theological Studies* ns 17 (1966) 20–25.

95. ECBA, 38. Compare the developments in the Dura-Europos Synagogue by the mid-third century (CDEE, no. 60).

96. Eusebius, HE VIII.1.5 (text at CDEE, no. 23b). This section of text comes, in all probability from the first edition of Eusebius' work; cf. H. J. Lawlor and J. E. L. Oulton, *Eusebius: The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine* (London 1954) II:5f.; H. J. Lawlor, *Eusebiana* (Oxford 1912) 211–35; R. M. Grant, "Eusebius H.E. VIII: Another Suggestion," VC 22 (1968) 16–18.

97. So A. Harnack, *Mission and Expansion* II:88; and R. M. Grant, "Temples, Churches, and Endowments," in *Early Christianity and Society* (New York 1977) 150; but contrast ECBA, 38 and n. 50, and above chap. 2.

98. H. J. Lawlor and J. E. L. Oulton, *Eusebius*, II:30ff., 268, 275; Norman Baynes, *Eusebius and Constantine* (New York 1984) 15ff.

99. The phrase is common in inscriptions, as in the Aegina synagogue (CDEE, no. 74) as well as in LD 11 (CIJ 682, Olbia) and no. 72 (Joppa); CIJ 744 (Teos); and CIJ 735 (Golgoi, Cyprus). For mithraea compare Virunum, discussed above in chap. 3, nn. 122–27.

100. The term *aula ecclesiae* is coined here after A. Harnack's *Saalkirche* (cf. *Mission und Ausbreitung*, 4th German ed., II:615). See above chap. 2.

101. CDEE, no. 50.

102. Text of the inscription at CDEE, no. 51.

103. *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*, vol. I.1 (Manchester 1928), 170; text of the inscription at CDEE, no. 49. M. Julius Eugenius had been a soldier in the military officium of the province but was forced into retirement as a Christian confessor during the persecution of Diocletian. He was apparently from a prominent local family as his marriage and his position in the local decurionate later attest. Thus, his role as confessor and bishop who rebuilt the church must be seen in light of local circumstances as well.

104. CDEE, no. 39. That the church building was built de novo as a Christian aula ecclesiae was a result of the peculiar local circumstances of the village, apparently just being settled at the beginning of the fourth century. Georges Tchalenko (*Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord* [Paris 1953–1958] I:319–32) postulated that this period of settlement corresponded to the beginning of private estate farming in the region. The owner of the house next door to the church was the founder of the village/estate and would have served as patron of the free villagers. As

he also built the church complex adjacent to his own house, he was the patron of Christianity in the village.

105. Porphyry, *Adversos Christianos* frag. 76 (text at CDEE, no. 29).

106. Eusebius, HE VII.30.18–19 (text at CDEE, no. 20b). Cf. Fergus Millar, "Paul of Samosata, Zenobia, and Aurelian: The Church, Local Culture, and Political Allegiance in the Third Century," JRS 61 (1971) 126–34.

107. apud Lampridius *Historia Augusta, Severus Alexander* 49. 6 (text at CDEE, no. 27). Cf. R. Syme, *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta* (Cambridge, England 1968) passim; R. J. Penella, "Alexander Severus 43.6–7: Two Emperors and Christ," VC 31 (1977) 229–30.

108. Lactantius, *De mortibus persecutorum* 12.4–5 (text at CDEE, no. 24).

109. See above nn. 74–75, 79, 88.

110. See CDEE, no. 52b. We must begin to recognize too that such renovations must have had enormous socioeconomic impact. In addition to the cost of acquisition and renovation of an entire urban insula property, the renovations of the upper floors for exclusive ecclesiastical use would have displaced the residents (both commercial and domestic). On the implication for population at Rome cf. James E. Packer, "Housing and Population in Imperial Ostia and Rome," JRS 57 (1967) 80–95.

111. See CDEE II, nos. 53, 54.

112. ECBA, 37–39; CBCR I;144–65. Cf. CDEE, no. 55.

113. For texts see CDEE, nos. 32–35.

114. See CDEE, Appendix A.8. Much has been made of the supposed house church under the later cathedral; however, the evidence is slim. Yet it must be noted that the elaborate double hall edifice begun under bishop Theodore was not basilical when it was first built in ca. 314–317. The North Hall seems to have had a chancel and bema on the east end, but there was no apse or aisle construction.

115. *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua*, vol. I.1 (Manchester 1928), 170; text at CDEE, no. 49.

116. Eusebius, HE X.4.1, 37ff. (text at CDEE, no. 23d).

117. Eusebius, HE X.4.33–36. Cf. Paul Corbey Finney, "TOPOS HEIROS und christlicher Sakralbau in vorkonstantinischer Überlieferung," *Boreas* 7 (1984) 217–25. I have suggested elsewhere that the section in Eusebius, HE X.2–4, is a thematic composition intended to tie the first period of reconstruction directly to themes in the earlier edition of the work, especially in bk. VIII.1–2, but prior to the more elaborately developed Constantinian panegyric of later Eusebian works. Hence I see the grandiose descriptions of the church more as a product of Eusebian "triumph" metaphor than as a reflection of an immediate transition to monumental basilical architecture. Cf. L. M.

White, "The Glory of this House: Church Building and Church History in Eusebius" (forthcoming).

118. Cf. R. Krautheimer, "The Beginnings of Early Christian Architecture," RER 3 (1939) 134–36.

119. This fact has often been overlooked, since the text refers to side *stoai* on the main building (HE X.4.42). Most scholars have assumed this to reflect an internal basilical aisle with colonnade. Careful analysis of the text, however, shows that this terminology is precisely parallel to that used to describe the external portico of the atrium (X.4.39). It is not unlikely, then, that the long sides of the building were flanked by lateral *stoai* or promenades, which communicated with exedrae and other external structures (X.4.45). Read in this way the description is more similar to Krautheimer's reconstruction of the first building of S. Crisogono at Rome (ca. 310; see fig. 24) and is in some measure comparable to the description of M. Julius Eugenius' rebuilt church at Laodicea Combusta and bishop Theodore's church at Aquileia, both of which come from the same period (ca. 314–319). Finally, it should be noted that each of these was rebuilt by the bishop himself as patron of the project. Compare also the hall church under the Octagon at Philippi (see fig. 27).

120. See CDEE, no. 41.

121. See above chap. 3. Cf. E. M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, *Archaeology, the Rabbis, and Early Christianity* (Nashville, TN 1981) 140–54; E. M. Meyers and A. T. Kraabel, "Archaeology, Iconography, and Nonliterary Written Remains," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, eds. R. A. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg (Atlanta 1986) 175–93.

122. Thus, we should note that both S. Clemente and SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Rome are the reverse of the normal orientation of church architecture, precisely because their development was determined by the existing structures and their earlier use. By the same token, we should note that in both the Ostia and Sardis synagogues the Torah shrine seems to have been a later addition that resulted in a reversal of the existing orientation of each building to fit more of a normative pattern. Thus, on the Torah shrine see E. M. Meyers and A. T. Kraabel, *Early Judaism* (1986) 194–96; on orientation see F. Landsberger, "The Sacred Direction in Church and Synagogue," in *The Synagogue: Studies in Origins, Archaeology, and Architecture*, ed. J. Gutmann (New York 1975) 239–60.

123. Compare Eusebius, HE X.4.44 (CDEE, no. 23d: on the introduction of the chancel to guard the "holy of holies" in the Church at Tyre). Contra Dix (*Shape of the Liturgy*, 28–29), I do not see evidence of a fully segregated area for bishops and clergy at the beginning of the second century (i.e., in Rev. 4.1–7 and Ignatius, *ad Mag.* 6.1). The earliest evidence comes from the end of the second century and

through the third, as in Tertullian and Cyprian or the apocryphal Acts literature. In the case of the latter, a cathedra was often placed in lofty position for the apostle, but they most likely reflect the beginnings of such arrangements in their own day, telescoped backward onto the apostolic period. Cf. Clementine *Recognitions* X.71 (text at CDEE, no. 11). Also on Carthage and the development of clergy see Albano Vilela, *La condition collegiale du Prêtres au IIIᵉ siècle* (Paris 1971) 286–88 (with special reference to Cyprian, Epp. 12.1, 16.1, 40, and 55.11).

124. There is no evidence for the processional liturgy prior to the fourth century. J. A. Jungmann (*The Early Liturgy*, 117) posits as a starting point a procession of laity in conjunction with the newly formalized offertory in the third century. But, as noted above (n. 65), the offertory was also a liturgical byproduct of architectural renovation. There were, however, substantial variations in each locality. For example, most Syrian churches of the fourth century were entered through two (or three) side portals. H. C. Butler argues that these were designated for segregated entry (laity on the west end, clergy on the east); cf. *Syria: Publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899–1900*, ed. R. Garrett et al., vol. II (New York 1903), 89.

125. Edited by R. H. Connolly (Oxford 1929), chap. XII (= II.57–58; text at CDEE, no. 18). While this document was dependent upon the Didache, it shows considerable development in liturgical forms. Later it was taken over directly into the still more highly ordered procedures of the *Constitutio Apostolicorum* dating from the fourth to fifth centuries.

126. Cf. H. Selhorst, *Die Plätzanordnung im Gläubigenraum der altchristlichen Kirche* (Münster 1931) passim; Klaus Gamber, "Die früh-christliche Hauskirche nach *Didascalia Apostolorum* II.57.1–58.6," *Studia Patristica* X (1970) 337–45. Gamber must be taken with some caution, however, given his treatment of the evidence in relation to Dura-Europos and Aquileia in *Domus Ecclesiae: Die ältesten Kirchenbauten Aquilejas sowie im Alpen- und Donaugebiet bis zum Beginn des 5 Jahrhunderts liturgeschichtlich untersucht* (Regensburg 1968) passim.

127. On the date and situation supposed see Connolly, *The Didascalia Apostolorum* (Oxford 1929) xxx, lxxxvii–xci.

128. Eusebius, HE X.4.44; see above n. 123, and CDEE, no. 55 and Appendix A, no. 10; ECBA, 40; on the altar see also Eusebius, HE VII.15.4 (text at CDEE, no. 23a).

129. For the third century see Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* 16–18 (CDEE, no. 14b) and Gregory Thaumaturgus' *Canonical Letter* 11 (CDEE, no. 19). In the Pauline period, however, there seems to have been no effort to exclude the unbaptized, so Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience*, 171; cf. B. Capelle, "L'introduction du catéchumenat à Rome," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et medievale* 5 (1933) 120–54. The

development of the baptismal liturgy, and especially its articulation within ecclesiastical architecture, remains a complex problem. The shift from natural settings (Acts 8.36, 16.33; Did. 7.1–3) to indoor settings (Justin, *Apol.* I.61; Tertullian, *De bapt.* 4) would result, by the early third century, in more formalized practice. Thus, see *Acts of Thomas* 132; Tertullian, *De bapt.* 20.5; Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.* 21.20; Cyprian, Ep. 73.9–10). Of course the earliest visible evidence for the integration of baptism into church architecture is Dura-Europos; cf. DEF VIII.2, 146–47. Cf. T. Klauser, "Taufet in lebendigem Wasser," in *Pisciculi, Festschrift für F. J. Dölger* (Münster 1939) 157–65; Jean Lassus, *Sanctuaires chrétiennes de Syrie* (Paris 1947) 17–19; A. F. J. Klijn, "An Ancient Syriac Baptismal Liturgy in the Syriac Acts of John," in *Charis kai Sophia, Festschrift für Karl Heinrich Rengstorf* (Leiden 1964); A. Voöbus, "Regarding the Background of the Liturgical Relations in the Didache," VC 23 (1969) 81–87; J. Quasten, "The Blessing of the Baptismal Font in the Syrian Rite of the Fourth Century," *Theological Studies* 7 (1946) 309–13; J. G. Davies, *The Architectural Setting of Baptism* (London 1962) passim; W. M. Bedard, *The Symbolism of the Baptismal Font in Early Christian Thought* (Washington, D.C. 1951) passim.

130. ECBA, 28, 40; Ramsay MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven, CT, 1981) 126–30; *Christianizing the Roman Empire* (New Haven, CT, 1984) passim.

Building God's House
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. . .

Architectural Adaptation
among Pagans, Jews, and Christians

L. MICHAEL WHITE

For Gloria, Jessica, and Travis