

MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION*

*Educational Implications of the Early Greek Patristic Anthropology
and their Relation to Modern Theories of Moral Education.*

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III. Free Will, Grace and Evil.

Discussing the issue of man's salvation, Macarius relates it not only to the divine factor, but also to man's free will and the operations of evil. The triptych free will — grace — evil forms a much discussed topic which disturbed the Christian West during the Pelagian controversy and appeared again as a question at issue in the time of the Reformation.⁵⁶

Macarius in all probability lived before the outbreak of the Pelagian dispute, but nevertheless, he, as a religious teacher with ethical interests, expresses repeatedly his views on the subject.

Free will is usually called by Macarius *αὐτεξούσιον*, and it is understood by him as the capability of the spiritual beings to move from the original state in diverse direction and the possibility of returning back to the state originally created (cf. XVI. 1, p. 237,4f; IX. 1, p. 192, 4f). Macarius believes that free will belongs to the essential structure of man's original nature, since God's image in man consists in it (XV. 23, p. 225, 15f), as we have seen in chapter I. Thus, freedom of will was not destroyed by the powers of sin but remained almost intact;⁵⁷

* Συνέχεια ἐκ τῆς σελ. 198 τοῦ προηγουμένου τεύχους.

56. G. C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*, p. 314f. Pelagianism affirms man's being as a reality external to, and independent of, God. Man is seen as equal partner in the God-man relationship, endowed with his own self-sufficient will, which meets and interacts with that of God in a co-operation which places man on the same level with God. Augustine reacted against Pelagianism, since he saw that such an assumption could lead to a non-religious humanism in which man is self-determining and has no need of God; see P. Scherrard, «The Christian Understanding of Man», in *Sobornost*, series VII, no 5 (Summer 1977), p. 331. This is one side of an extreme case of Pelagianism; the latter, however, had also its positive side which should not be overlooked. As a movement Pelagianism stressed the necessity and the possibility of a life in accordance with Christian morality; see G. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, p. 164.

57. Basil argues that man's free will was weakened after the fall; see *Hom. Quod Deus non Est Auctor Malorum*. VII, PG. 31, 345BC.

the post-Adamic man maintains his free will (XXVII. 11, p. 287,10) and acts freely, regardless of whether or not he is a most sinful person or a person of high spirituality: Ούτε γὰρ ὁ τέλειος εἰς τὸ κακὸν καὶ βαθὺς εἰς τὴν ἀμαρτίαν καὶ ποιῶν ἑαυτὸν σκεῦος τοῦ διαβόλου, ὅφ' οὗ τὸ ὄλον κατεκυριεύθη ἀνάγκη τινί, δέδεται, ἀλλ' ἔχει τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τοῦ γενέσθαι σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς καὶ ζωῆς. Ὅμοίως πάλιν οἱ μεμεθυμένοι εἰς τὴν θεότητα, καίτοι πεπληρωμένοι καὶ δεδεμένοι Πνεύματι ἁγίῳ οὐκ ἀνάγκη τινὶ κεκρατηνται, ἀλλ' ἔχουσι τὸ αὐτεξούσιον τοῦ τραπῆναι αὐτοὺς καὶ ποιεῖν ὃ θέλουσιν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦτον (XV.40, p. 231,29f).

The essence of free will consists in man's ability to choose freely between good and evil (cf. *Ibid.*; *De Costodia Cordis*. 12, vol. 42, p. 185,24). This is of great importance to Macarius and constitutes the ethical basis of his thought; man is liable to punishment and praise because he is free to choose between good and evil: ἐφ' οἷς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐργάσθαι κακοῖς πρὸς τοῦ Σατανᾶ ὑπαγόμενος, οὐχ ὁ Σατανᾶς μᾶλλον, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος τὴν τιμωρίαν εἰσπράττεται, ὡς μὴ βία συνελαθείς, ἀλλ' ἰδίῳ θελήματι πεισθεὶς τῇ κακίᾳ. Παραπλησίως δὲ κἀν τῷ ἀγαθῷ (*De Libertate Mentis*. 3, vol. 42, p. 237,26f). This is so, Macarius explains, because grace gives way to man's free will so that his choice will be shown (*Ibid.*).

In this respect Macarius is in agreement with Origen,⁵⁸ Athana-

58. Origen, *De Princ.* 3, 1: 4-5. BT, 161. Such an understanding of man's free will is accepted by the «third-force psychology» which is also known as humanistic psychology; this believes in the inherent goodness of man and in his freedom. However, the other two main schools of psychology, namely Freudian and Behavioristic psychologies, are based on deterministic premises and claim that man is *free* only in the sense that he can do whatever he chooses, but his choices are governed by unconscious drives, environmental influences (rewards and punishments) and biological factors (Th. Dobzhansky, *The Biological Basis of Human Freedom*). In other words they claim that man's motives, wishes and desires are not themselves free, but they are determined by antecedent conditions; see B. F. Skinner, *Science and Human Behavior*, pp. 447-449 and R. Brinckerhoff, «Freudianism, behaviorism, and humanism», in F. W. Matson, *Without/Within Behaviorism and Humanism*, p. 35 f. Concerning humanistic psychology see F. W. Matson, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1f. Macarius shares with humanistic psychology the beliefs that man is essentially good and that he freely chooses his behavior. He differs, however, from humanism in that he believes in the doctrine of original sin, which, according to Macarius, makes it difficult for man to realize whatever good he freely chooses; hence the necessity for divine help comes. Freud and Skinner believe in an innate hostility of man toward man, which humanists see as something similar to the Christian doctrine of original sin and reject it; see F. W. Matson, «Counterrebuttal», in his *Without/Within*, p. 42.

sius⁵⁹ and in general with the main stream of Christian understanding of free will. The importance of man's free will and the idea of human responsibility was very much emphasized by the Apologists, mainly by Justin⁶⁰ and Irenaeus, as against the Stoic doctrine of fate (καθ' εἰμαρμένης ἀνάγκην).⁶¹ Irenaeus argues that if it were by nature that some are good and others bad, the former would not be praiseworthy for their goodness, which would be their natural equipment, nor would the bad be responsible for their actions, having been so created. But in fact, adds Irenaeus, all men have the same nature and the same potentialities for both goodness and badness and, therefore, it is right that in a well-ordered community the good people are praised and the evil ones are called to account.⁶²

The way early Christians understood freedom and its implications seems to differ from the Neoplatonic way; Plotinus, for instance, argues that freedom does not consist in having the power to choose between good and evil, but in having the power to choose only virtue.⁶³ According to Plotinus freedom can be attained only by those who have advanced themselves to their higher and true self by living virtuously and intelligently on the level of *nous*.⁶⁴ Thus, for Plotinus freedom is somehow identified with virtue itself, while in Macarius' thought free will lies right at the beginning of the way leading to virtue (cf. *Seven Hom.* VI. 2, vol. 42, p. 31, 18f) and salvation.⁶⁵

Macarius, however, speaks also about ἐλευθερία, which he seems to understand as a state of human existence rather than as an ability, and associates it with detachment (ἀπάθεια); this way of understanding is close to Clement of Alexandria's definition of liberty, according to

42. For a full discussion of this issue see a number of articles which appeared in *The Humanists* (March/April and May/June 1971), reprinted in F. W. Matson, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 34-46.

59. Athanasius, *Contra Gentes*. IV. PG. 25, 9Df.

60. Justin, *I Apologia*. XLIII, PG. 6, 393AB; *II Apologia*. VII.

61. J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

62. Irenaeus, *Adv. Hear.* IV. 37, PG. 7, 1100Bf.

63. Plotinus, *Enn.* VI. 8:3,4; cf. III. 4:9,10.

64. Plotinus, *Enn.* VI. 8:1-6; I. 8:7, V. 3:17; I. 4:12, 6:7.

65. In his *Symposium* and *De Libero Arbitrio*, Methodius of Olympus expresses similar views with Macarius; he understands freedom as the indetermined liberty of choice. For his views on freedom see A. H. Armstrong, «Two Views of Freedom: A Christian Objection in Plotinus VI. 68:7?», presented at the Eighth Patistic Conference (Oxford, 1979).

which liberty (ἐλευθερία) is keeping the passions in subjection.⁶⁶ Man, says Macarius, reaches that state only by the assistance of divine grace, after he has exercised his free will and has deliberately chosen only virtue (cf. *Ep. Magna*. 36 and 38, vol. 42, pp. 172,41f and 174,31; *De perfectione in spiritu*. 1, vol. 42 p. 189,2f). In this state man is free from the slavery of evil (*Neue Hom.* XIII. 1, vol 42, p. 75,32f). Macarius' concept of ἐλευθερία is also close to what Augustine calls liberty. He, and later Anselm, distinguishes between «free choice» and «liberty». The latter requires a free choice plus an inclination for man's will toward justice and the power to act according to this inclination. After the fall man has free choice but not liberty. The lost liberty is regained through grace.⁶⁷

Macarius, however, experiences continuously the power which evil and its angels exercise on fallen man and does not allow himself to take the optimistic view of Pelagius regarding the power of man's free will. Pelagius argues that his free will could do all things,⁶⁸ while Macarius thinks that man's free will has limited power. On account of his free will man can resist the devil, but he cannot have an absolute command over the passions: Τὸ γὰρ ἐν τῇ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου δυνάμει αὐτεξούσιον ἐπὶ τῷ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ διαβόλῳ κεῖται, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπὶ τῷ δύνασθαι ἔχειν παντελῶς τὸ κράτος κατὰ τῶν παθῶν (XXV. 1, p. 267,27f). In another case Macarius reproaches those who believe that they can achieve a perfect success by their own power (VI. 3, p. 185,10-16). This is a very basic doctrine of his and appears again in other Homilies: οὐαὶ ψυχῆ, εἰ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν μόνον ἔστηκε καὶ εἰς τὰ ἑαυτῆς ἔργα μόνον πέποιθε, μὴ ἔχουσα θεοῦ Πνεύματος κοινωνίαν, ὅτι ἀποθνήσκει ζωῆς αἰωνίου θεότητος μὴ καταξιωθείσα (I. 11, p. 152,4f). A few lines further on, showing how important this view is to him, Macarius declares that what he says on freedom and grace are not mere words but the work of spiritual life: Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ πάλιν φημί· οὐκ εἰσὶν ἀπλῶς λόγοι λαλούμενοι, ἀλλ' ἔργον πνευ-

66. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*. II. 23, ST. II, p. 192,21.

67. E. Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, p. 138 f.

68. Pelagius quoted in E. Portalie, *A Guide to the Thought of St. Augustine*, p. 194. Augustine's reply to that was that man's liberty «attains to nothing without God. It depends on him in everything, at every instant.» E. Portalie notes that Augustine starts from the idea that God must be the unique source of all good, including moral good; Augustine writes: «Because all goods, as we have said, whether great, moderate, or small, are from God, it follows that the good use of freedom of choice, which is virtue, is also from God and is reckoned among the great goods», *Retractationes*. I, 9, 6, quoted in pp. 194-95.

ματικῆς ζωῆς, ἔργον ἀληθείας, εἰς τὴν ἀξίαν καὶ πιστὴν ψυχὴν γιγνόμενα (*Ibid.*, lines 11f). Here it is clear that Macarius talks out of his personal experience.

Morally speaking the αὐτεξούσιον is neutral, and it can be the source of both good (*Ibid.*, lines 4f) and evil, as it happened in the case of Adam (cf. XII. 8, p. 208,23). The neutrality of free will is attested to by current research which has proven that to morally developed people the power of will backs their resistance to deceitful acts, while in the case of those who are morally underdeveloped, this power encourages immoral acts.^{68a}

In the Macarian context the terms αὐτεξούσιον θέλημα (XIX. 4, p. 254,38) and ἴδιον θέλημα are synonymous terms; the latter is usually applied by the ascetic literature to denote the sinful will of the fallen man,⁶⁹ but Macarius uses it to express both the sinful desires of the soul and its will for salvation. Two examples will suffice to illustrate the double usage of the term. In the first passage Macarius argues that most men wish to obtain the kingdom of God and inherit eternal life but do not refuse to live to their own wills (ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις αὐτῶν θελήμασι). Not denying themselves, they wish to get these blessings, and this is impossible (V. 6, p. 174,38f). In the other passage, a few paragraphs down, Macarius argues that through personal faith and much earnestness and through the help which comes from above a person can be accounted worthy of eternal life, which he had loved with his personal will (ἰδίῳ θελήματι) (*Ibid.*, p. 177,13f).

Man, writes Macarius, is being claimed by both God and the devil, and his own will becomes a decisive factor in this rivalry. Man's soul is in the middle of these two, and to whichever side the will of the soul inclines, of that side man becomes a possession and a son (XXVI. 24, p. 281,17f). This appropriation is rather easy since man's nature is susceptible (δεκτικῆ) to good and bad, and the adverse power acts by persuasion and not compulsion. Thus man has the free choice to incline which way he wills (XXVII. 10, p. 286,19f; cf. XXVI. 5, p. 273,36f). It is up to man's free choice to become either a son of God or a son of perdition: εἰ θέλει τις γίνεται υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἴτε πάλιν υἱὸς ἀπωλείας διὰ τὸ παραμένειν τὸ αὐτεξούσιον (*Ibid.*, 11, p. 287 8f). In another passage Macarius likens man's heart to a scale inclining on both God's side and

68a. L. Kohlberg, «The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Moral Education», in p. Scharf, *Readings in Moral Education*, p. 39.

69. *Vios Pachomiou*. XXVI, VHP, vol. 41, p. 95,4.

the devil's side. His personal choice can make either side outweigh the other (V. 6, p. 175,13-24).

When, however, Macarius speaks of the will of mind (θέλημα νοῦς) he seems to refer to the sinful desires of man. The soul, he writes, whose movement is truly towards the Lord, compels its affection wholly to him and in will binds itself with all its power to him, and from that quarter gains the help of grace and denies itself and refuses to follow the desires of its own mind, since the mind deals deceitfully with man through the evil that is present with man and entices him (*Ibid.* p. 176,31f; cf. *Ibid.* p. 175,35). This is so because Adam, who was originally pure and could rule over his thoughts, lost control over them after the fall. This happened because the evil thoughts were mingled with man's mind and were all made his own, and yet none of them was really his own since they were under the dominion of evil (XV. 25, p. 226,10f; cf. *Ibid.* 47, p. 234,25f). The same mind, however, when restored, can become man's throne (VI. 5, p. 185,30f) and contemplate Christ's glory (XVII. 4, p. 244,15f).

Another term with similar meaning to the will of mind is desire (ἐπιθυμία), which is usually qualified either as the desire of flesh (V. 6, p. 176,17), in accordance with II Pet. 2,18, or as earthly desire (γητὴν ἐπιθυμία) (*Ibid.* p. 180, 13; XXI. 4, p. 261,40). The meaning of desire in Macarius, and Christian literature in general, seems to cover all the spectrum of Augustine's concupiscence;⁷⁰ it stands for every inclination making the fallen man to seek satisfaction not in God but in material things.

Finally, it seems that Macarius uses the term προαίρεσις to denote the free disposition of man which springs out of his essence and leads him naturally towards the good (cf. XIII, 5, p. 214,3), as well as the sinful desires of fallen man (cf. XXXI. 1, p. 302,35f). In other cases, moreover, this term denotes the faculty of free choice without moral qualifications (cf. XXIV. 5, p. 267,5f; IX. 7, p. 193,31).

Macarius believes that man can will something good out of his free choice because he shares with all the other Christians the conviction that man's essence is good by nature, and, therefore, it can give good fruits even after the fall: ἔχει (sc ἄνθρωπος) θέλημα τοῦ βοηῆσαι πρὸς

70. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*. XIII. 3 and 14; cf. Hermas, *Mandata Pastoris*, XII. 2. 1,2 and Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* I. 13, PG. 8, 372B; see also J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 364. In patristic literature, however, ἐπιθυμία also means a good desire or an indifferent one; see Hermas, *Op. Cit.*, XII. 1. 1f.

τὸν Θεόν, ἔχει φυσικοὺς καρποὺς τοῦ ἀγαπῆσαι Θεόν, τοῦ πιστεῦσαι, τοῦ ἐπιζητῆσαι καὶ προσελθεῖν (XXVI. 10, p. 275,32f). This is so because the distraction of fallen man's soul was not total: καὶ ἡμαύρωται ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐκ ἡμαύρωται καὶ τετύφλωται καὶ μερικῶς διήνοικται καὶ νεκρὸς ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν τῇ φύσει ζῆ (Neue Hom. I. 1, vol. 42 p. 35,7f; cf. XXVI. 9, p. 275,20f). Thus, out of his nature man can bring forth what Macarius calls natural fruits, among which he includes love, faith and prayer (XXVI. 20, p. 279,35f; cf. *Ibid.* 21, 279,39f). These fruits, however, though they are acceptable to God are not quite pure (*Ibid.* 21, p. 280, 3f). God completes what man cannot reach based on his own nature, when he sees that man has the motive (προαίρεσις) for spiritual growth and the humility to ascribe to God whatever he does of his own nature (*Ibid.* 20, p. 279,34f). God expects man to cultivate with a will (ἀπὸ προαιρέσεως) the ground of his soul and to toil and travail; this, however, alone brings no profit to man, but together with divine grace brings good results (*Ibid.* 10, p. 275,38f).

Man's motives and free will, says Macarius, are continuously under approbation; when man contends in much endurance the work of grace is proved to be perfect in him; Καὶ τότε τὸ ἔργον τῆς χάριτος τέλειον εἰς αὐτὸν ἀποδείκνυται, τῆς αὐτεξουσίου προαιρέσεως μετὰ πολλῆς δοκιμασίας εὐαρέστου τῷ Πνεύματι ἀποδειχθείσης καὶ διὰ χρόνων τὴν δοκιμὴν καὶ ὑπομονὴν ἐπιδειξαμένης (IX. 1, p. 192,3f). Elsewhere Macarius adds that when the will is gradually and progressively tested by time and opportunity and is found well-pleasing to the Spirit, man's will is wrought by the Spirit and made meet for the kingdom (XXIV. 6, p. 267,5f; cf. XLI. 2, p. 325,35f).

Thus, man's free will becomes the necessary condition for the work of the Holy Spirit in man's soul. Man has by nature the propensity (ἐπιτήδευσις) for advancement and this is what God asks from him, as we have seen. He offers his free will and opens the doors to the sanctifying power of the Spirit to work within him. Unlike Augustine, who claims that man's freedom cannot impede the divine degrees,⁷¹ Macarius argues that nothing can be done without man's will (XXXV II. 10, p. 319,13f); the effectual working of God depends upon the will of man. This is an essential condition and gives substance to God's power. Therefore, God demands man's will, which, Macarius notes, is manifested in voluntary labour:

71. E. Portalie, *A Guide to the Thought of St. Augustine*, p. 129 f.

Προείπομεν, ὅτι τὴν ἐπιτήδευσιν ἔχει ὁ ἄνθρωπος κατὰ φύσιν, καὶ ταύτην ὁ Θεὸς ἐπιζητεῖ. Παραγγέλλει οὖν, ἵνα πρῶτον νοήσῃ καὶ νοήσας ἀγαπήσῃ καὶ θελήματι ἐπιτηδεύσῃ. Τὸ δὲ ἐνεργηθῆναι τὸν νοῦν ἢ ὑπομεῖναι τὸν κόπον ἢ τελέσαι τὸ ἔργον ἢ χάρις τοῦ Κυρίου παρέχει τῷ θελήσαντι καὶ πιστεύσαντι. Τὸ οὖν θέλημα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὡς παράστασις ὑποστατικῆ· μὴ παρόντος δὲ τοῦ θελήματος, οὐδὲ αὐτὸς ὁ Θεὸς τι ποιεῖ, καίπερ δυνάμενος, διὰ τὸ αὐτεξούσιον. Ἡ οὖν τελεσιουργία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ θελήματι τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κεῖται (*Ibid.* p. 219,8-16; cf. XX. 8, p. 260,1f).

This view stands in opposition to Augustine's thesis, according to which grace takes the first step and in a way forces man's free will, since grace anticipates it and (inaugurates every stirring of man's will in the direction of the good).⁷² Macarius' view, i.e. that the initial movement is the sinner's own (XX. 7, p. 259,37f), seems to be closer to the views of those who, rather unkindly,⁷³ have been called by Western scholars Semi-Pelagians, since the seventeenth century. The latter believed, like Macarius, that grace does not replace free will, but assists it.⁷⁴ Macarius, therefore, and practically the entire Eastern Christian tradition has been taxed with being Semi-Pelagian. «but the judgment was given in connection with categories foreign to Eastern patristic tradition».⁷⁵ Macarius makes more than clear that human effort succeeds only when in communion with grace (XVII. 3, p. 249,30f).

In order that his teaching on the role of grace may be better understood, a short description of his general doctrine on grace will be presented below.

All three persons of the Trinity are regarded by Macarius as the source of grace; thus he speaks of God the Father's grace (XVII. 5, p. 244,31), Christ's grace (I. 6, p. 149,9) and the Spirit's grace (V. 6, p. 180,19f). God's grace is occasionally equated with the Holy Spirit (IV. 26-27, pp. 169,38-170,5), as it is often done in the early patristic literature.⁷⁶

Macarius repeatedly emphasizes the absolute necessity of grace for spiritual life (I. 11, p. 152,4f; XXXVI. 9, p. 218,37f) and relates

72. J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 367.

73. J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 370.

74. J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 371.

75. J. Meyendorff, *Christ in E. Chr. Thought*, p. 124.

76. Basil, *Epistula* 105, PG. 32, 513B; Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Comment, in XII Prophetas*, PG. 66, 485 A.

its efficiency to faith (XXIV. 9, p. 266, 33f) and to constant human efforts (IX. 1, pp. 191,40-192,6), and in particular to the practice of self-denial (XV. 27, p. 226,35f) and charity (XXVI, 16, p. 278,13f). Man can easily lose God's grace through pride (VII. 4, p. 108,18f) and through negligence and instability (XV. 16 and 36, pp. 222, 26f and 230,10f), but it can be regained through virtuous life (IV. 23-27, pp. 168,27-170,28).

Grace does not exclude free will (XXVIII. 11, p. 286, 36f), but co-operates with it for man's restoration (II. 3, p. 154,1-20). Grace purifies man (XVII. 3, p. 244,1f) and liberates him from passions (IX. 13, p. 196,11f), but not from temptations (XXVI. 6, p. 274,11f). Macarius speaks generally about the purgative, sanctifying and redemptive function of grace (XL. 2, p. 323,9f; XVIII. 3, p. 244,1f), but nowhere refers to the remitting function of grace. Moreover grace, adds Macarius, develops virtues in man (XXIV. 6, p. 266,33f; XLII. 9, p. 335,1f) and grants salvation to him (XXIV. 6, p. 266,35f). It also brings knowledge of God (XV. 4, p. 218,11f); when man tastes of the grace of God, he acquires within him an effectual power of the Spirit in full certainty, ministering in his heart (*Ibid.* 20, p. 224,6f). In addition grace brings about mystical experience (VIII. 5, p. 191,12f; X. 4, 197,31f), gladness and mirth (XXVI. 20, p. 279,37), spiritual consolation (*Ibid.* 3, p. 197, 13f) and, at last, makes the faithful christians by its sanctifying power (XVII. 1, p. 243, 3). 3f). Finally, Macarius argues that grace is found in different degrees (XVI. 12, p. 241,35), works in various ways in man's heart (XII. 2, p. 207,3), and its presence does not exclude sin (VIII. 5, p. 191,12f).

Macarius' doctrine of grace is different from that of Pelagius according to which «grace means the natural gifts of creation, the possibility of choice itself (*posse in natura*), the subsequent gift of instruction, whether by Law or by Christ, the forgiveness of sins given in baptism». ⁷⁷ Unlike the Pelagians, Macarius understands grace, as we have seen, as God's power which is manifested in man as a πνευματικὴ ἐνέργεια working within man's soul great patience (IX. 1, p. 191,40f); it removes the veil of darkness with which the devil has covered the soul after the fall, cleans, and finally, restores the soul to her original purity:

Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος παρέβη τὴν ἐντολήν, ὁ διάβολος ὄλην τὴν ψυχὴν ἐκάλυψε καλύμματι σκοτεινῷ. Λοιπὸν οὖν ἔρχεται ἡ χάρις καὶ

77. H. W. Robinson, *The Christian Doctrine of Man*, p. 182; cf. J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 359.

ἀπεκδύεται ὅλον τὸ σκέπασμα ὥστε λοιπὸν τὴν ψυχὴν καθαρὰν γενομένην καὶ ἀπολαβοῦσαν τὴν ἰδίαν φύσιν, τὸ κτίσμα τὸ ἄμωμον καὶ καθαρὸν, πάντοτε λοιπὸν καθαρῶς ἐν τοῖς καθαρῶς ὀφθαλμοῖς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ φωτὸς τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ καθορᾶν καὶ τὸν ἀληθινὸν Ἡλίον τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἐξαστράπτοντα ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ καρδίᾳ (XVII. 3, pp. 243,38-244,5).

Moreover, grace writes the laws of the Spirit and the mysteries of heaven upon the tablets of the heart (XV. 20, p. 244,12f). When this is done grace possesses the ranges of the heart and reigns over all the members of the body, the mind and all the other faculties of the soul (XV. 20, p. 224,16). This is so because Macarius, like Paul,⁷⁸ regards the heart as the source of will, thoughts and affections (cf. *De Custodia Cordis*. 13, vol. 42, p. 166,1f; XV. 32, p. 228,35).

Such views qualify J. Meyendorff's statement that in the Christian East the notion of grace is identified with that of participation in the divine life.⁷⁹ Man purified by grace, adds Macarius, always sees the glory of Christ's light and is with the Lord day and night, in like manner as the Lord's body united with the Godhead is always with the Holy Spirit (XVII. 4, p. 244,15f).

Human nature, argues Macarius, is unable to restore itself to its original purity; for this it needs to receive the mixture and communion of the heavenly nature (XXXII. 6, p. 307,35f). Furthermore, Macarius adds that Christ in his incarnation mingled human nature with his divine Spirit in order that fallen man might receive the heavenly Spirit and become the temple and habitation of God. In this communion with the divinity man becomes perfect; he becomes heir and son of God (*Ibid.* 6, p. 307,38f). From all this it is clear that for Macarius grace is not a mere external assistance, as Pelagius thought, but it is God's power operating within man and leading him to participate in the divine life. In this point Macarius is closer to the Augustinian notion of grace (cf. XXI. 4, p. 261,27f)—an internal and secret power, wonderful and ineffable, by which God operates in men's hearts—⁸⁰ but in Macarius man's free will anticipates God's grace (cf. XIX. 3, p. 254,20f), as we have seen, and, moreover, determines the amount of grace given to each individual (cf. XV. 52, p. 236, 22f; XLI. 2, p. 325,31). Thus, man participates

78. R. Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms*, pp. 313 and 44.

79. J. Meyendorff, *Op. Cit.*, p. 115.

80. J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 366.

dynamically in the restoration of his nature; this, however, is a long process and takes place gradually (XV. 41, p. 232,10f; *Ep. Magna*. 5, vol. 42, p. 146,6-21). In other passages as well it is obvious that in the thought of Macarius man participates dynamically in his restoration; in one of them he argues that grace could purify man immediately, but avoids this in order to test man's purpose: whether he preserves his love towards God entire, not complying with the evil powers in anything, but offering himself wholly to grace. When grace finds man living that way it strikes roots to all parts of the soul, until the whole soul is embraced by grace, provided that man corresponds with grace on all occasions (XLI. 2, p. 325,35-326,7; cf. L. 4. p. 354,29f).

Man's participation in his own restoration, which is mainly the work of grace, consists in the offering of his free will towards this cause. As Macarius puts it, man offers his θέλειν and God his δύνασθαι (II. 3, p. 154,1-20). Thus, salvation is seen by Macarius as a result of the collaboration between God's grace and man's free will, which Macarius and the other Eastern Fathers call synergy (συνεργία). Man's free will is, according to Macarius, manifested in voluntary labour (XXXVII 10, p. 319,24f). Elsewhere Macarius explains in more detail what falls into man's capacity and responsibility and what is God's task: it is not within man's competence to root out his sin and the evil that is ever with him; his responsibility is to wrestle and fight against evil. The uprooting of sin can only be accomplished by the divine power. If man were able to do it there were no need for Christ to come (III. 4, p. 157, 5f). It seems that in Macarius' time there were people, perhaps of Neoplatonic affiliations,⁸¹ who overestimated human abilities. Macarius reproaches them and declares that those who believe that spiritual growth comes not from synergy but depends totally on man's own effort and power are in the wrong (XXIV. 5, p. 266,18f). The only safe way which leads to eternal life is the harmonious synergy between grace and human effort (XXI. 5, p. 262,24f).⁸²

In his *Epistula Magna*. 5, Macarius gives a kind of synopsis of his doctrine on synergy.⁸³ Divine grace, says Macarius, arranged things in such a way that man participates in his spiritual growth in the mea-

81. Cf. G. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, p. 193.

82. In his *Gnostica Capita*. LXXIX, Diadochus writes that through baptism the «image» is restored in man and through this collaboration the «likeness» is reached; SCH, no 5, p. 149 f.

83. See also J. Meyendorff, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 124-28.

sure of his will, labour, effect and zeal. The more man loves and tries to accomplish the commandments, the greater the communion he achieves with the Spirit in spiritual growth and renewing of his mind; salvation is acquired by grace and divine gift, but it is received by faith, by love and by the effort of free will. Thus, man gains eternal life through the divine power. This, however, is not unfair and against the laws of justice, since man has collaborated and worked for it. Nor is it only by man's effort and power; man is unable to reach the full measure of all freedom, purity and the perfect accomplishment of the divine will without the help of the Holy Spirit (vol. 42, p. 146, 6-21).

In his collaboration God treats man's free will with great respect; grace never forces it, though man's free will can stop the beneficial influence of grace: *μη παρόντος δὲ τοῦ θελήματος, οὐδὲ ὁ Θεός τι ποιεῖ, καίπερ δυνάμενος, διὰ τὸ αὐτεξούσιον. Ἡ οὖν τελειουργία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ θελήματι τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κεῖται* (XXXVII. 10, p. 319, 13f). God's grace never binds man (XV. 40, p. 231, 36f), its role is hortatory and not coercive: *ἡ θεία χάρις προτρεπτική, οὐκ ἀναγκαστική δείκνυται οὕσα, ἵνα ὄντως ἡμῖν τὸ ἐλεύθερόν τε καὶ αὐτεξούσιον περισφύζοιτο* (*De Libertate Mentis*. 3, vol. 42 p. 237, 24f; cf. XXVII. 22, p. 291, 29f; *De Custodia Cordis*. 12, vol. 42, p. 185, 9-24).

Likewise is the role of evil: *προτρεπτικαὶ γὰρ εἰσὶν αἱ ἀμφοτέραι δυνάμεις τοῦ τε κακοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, οὐκ ἀναγκαστικαὶ* (XXVII. 22, p. 291, 29f; cf. *Ibid.* 10, p. 286, 19f). It is important to make clear that Macarius believes in the co-existence of grace and evil in man's heart; this is a firm conviction of his which he does not dispute: *οὐδεὶς οὖν τῶν ἐχεφρόνων τολμᾷ εἰπεῖν ὅτι συνούσης μοι τῆς χάριτος τὸ ὅλον ἡλευθέρωμαι τῆς ἀμαρτίας, ἀλλὰ τὰ δύο πρόσωπα ἐν τῷ νῷ ἐνεργεῖται* (XVII. 6, p. 245, 4f; cf. *Ibid.* 5, p. 244, 34f; XXVI. 22, p. 280, 31f). Though these two powers co-exist in the same heart (XVII. 4, p. 244, 20f), the power of evil is unable to pollute grace (*Ibid.* 5, p. 244, 23f), or to harm in any way those who have acquired God's grace: *Ὅταν πλεονάσῃ ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἡ χάρις εἰς τὸν ἀνθρώπον καὶ πλουτῇ εἰς τὸν Κύριον, σύνεστι δὲ ἡ κακία μερικῶς, οὐ δύναται βλάψαι τὸν ἀνθρώπον, οὔτε ἔχει ἰσχύιν τινα ἢ νομὴν κατ' αὐτοῦ* (XXVI. 22, p. 280, 30f). The man of grace returns to his original state when he was in communion with God and evil had no power on him. Evil, as we have seen, gained range against man after the fall; therefore, evil loses again its force against man when he reestablishes the original terms.

Christ's coming and his provision made this reestablishment

possible (*Ibid.* lines 33f). Man, however, never loses his free will; he retains it even when grace has abounded in him. Even the perfect ones have the free will to take either way, though they have reached spiritual fullness (XV. 40 p. 231, 36f; XXVII. 10-11, pp. 286. 16-287,10). Therefore, in order to keep them alert God allows them to be tempted (XXVI. 23, p. 281, 6f). Thus, so long as they are in flesh their case is precarious; they are free of trouble and temptations only when they finally succeed in reaching the city above (*Ibid.*).

Satan, argues Macarius, furiously attacks Christians and pagans alike; his desire is to demolish all if he were allowed (XXVI. 3, p. 273,1f). God, however, regulates the strength of Satan's attacks in such a way that this war becomes beneficial for man (*Ibid.* lines 6f); it acquires an educational significance, since it contributes a lot to the spiritual progress of man: ὁ ἀκούων λόγον ἔρχεται εἰς κατάνυξιν καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο, ὑποστελλούσης τῆς χάριτος κατ' οἰκονομίαν πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, εἰσέρχεται εἰς γυμνασίαν καὶ παιδείαν πολέμου καὶ ποιεῖ πάλην καὶ ἀγῶνα πρὸς τὸν Σατανᾶν καὶ μετὰ πολλοῦ δρόμου καὶ ἀγῶνος ἀποφέρεται τὰ νικητήρια καὶ γίνεται Χριστιανός (XVII. 20, p. 290, 36f; cf. XXVI. 7, p. 274, 20f; XXXII. 10, p. 302. 81f; VII. 2, p. 187, 24). Thus, the attacks of the devil make Christians more careful in their everyday conduct and prove the validity of faith in Christ (XXVI. 8, p. 274, 35f). Occasionally God strips naked of the divine grace proud people and hands them to the devil to tempt them with many afflictions. Thus, their self-esteem is made obvious (XLI. 3, p. 326, 9f; cf. XXII. 10, p. 309, 28f).

That God permits evil acts to happen for educational reasons is found in other Christian writers, too, among whom we mention Origen.⁸⁴ He argues that God uses even man's evil actions as educational measures.⁸⁵ Origen probably derives this idea either from the Stoics,⁸⁶ or from the Rabbinic teaching, according to which God places within man an impulse towards sin as a necessary pre-condition of moral virtue.⁸⁷

On account of his doctrine of co-existence of good and evil in man's soul (XLIII. 3, p. 329, 4f), Macarius has been accused of Messa-

84. Origen, *C. Cels.* 4. 69-70, VHP, 9, p. 282 f; 7. 68, VHP, 10, p. 174,3 f; *Princ.* 3.2-6-7. BT. 220f; cf. Diadochus of Photice, *Op. Cit.*, LXXXVI and XXVII, SCH, no 5, pp. 134,22f. and 146, 23 f.

85. Origen. *De Princ.* 3. 1:7-14, VHP, 16, p. 315 f; *C. Celsum.* 4. 70 f, VHP. 9, p. 283,24f.

86. Plutarch, *Moralia*, 1050 E, 1065 B; see also A. Tripolitis, *Op. Cit.*, p. 123.

87. N. Williams, *Op. Cit.*, p. 86 f.

lianism. As we have seen, however, Macarius, unlike the Messalians,⁸⁸ does not believe in the ontological dualism of good and evil, since he defines evil as *ἀνυπόστατον* (XVI. 1, p. 237,14). Moreover, as Louis Bouyer points out, Macarius «in no way considers this condition as being normal; for him, while grace always finds sin present ahead of it in the spiritual man, it never ceases to fight against it».⁸⁹ Finally, J. Meyendorff argues that all the Macarian texts quoted by Dörries as implying ontological dualism of good and evil in the soul are simply developments of the Pauline thesis of the old and the new Adam, which dynamically co-exist in man.⁹⁰ Spiritual perfection, as we have seen, does not mean freedom from the devil's attacks, but it means not to be defeated by him; the life of the faithful is a continuous struggle against the powers of evil and the passions they motivate. Perfection can be reached only through sufferings and temptation. This is a strong conviction of Syrian spirituality,⁹¹ and it appears in Macarius and other Eastern Fathers; a good example is Diadochus of Photice.⁹² He, however, refutes those who believe in the cohabitation of grace and sin in the soul and argues that they misinterpret John I. 5 in order to provide Biblical support for their thesis.⁹³ It should be noted that Macarius argues for the cohabitation of grace and sin by means of John I. 5 (XVII. 5, p. 244, 27f). Diadochus prefers to say that before baptism Satan is inside the soul and grace outside admonishing the soul towards virtue.⁹⁴ At baptism, however, grace enters the soul and Satan assaults it using the bodily senses.⁹⁵ Both Macarius and Diadochus refer to grace and sin as *τὰ δύο πρόσωπα* (XVII. 6, p. 245, 6; *De Perfectione Spirituali*, cap. 78 and 80, pp. 136,9 and 137, 23), using the term *prosopon* to denote what later was called *hypostasis*.⁹⁶

88. A. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. II, p. 135.

89. Quoted by J. Meyendorff, «Messalianism or Anti-Messalianism?», in *Kyriakon*, vol. II, p. 587.

90. *Ibid.*

91. A. Vööbus, *The Legacy of Ps-Macarius*, p. 13.

92. Diadochus of Photice, *Op. Cit.*, XCVIII, p. 160,9 f.

93. *Ibid.* LXXX, p. 137, 23f.

94. *Ibid.* LXXVI, p. 134,4f.

95. *Ibid.* LXXIX, p. 137,8f.

96. This seems to be in disagreement with his conviction that evil has not a hypostasis, but it should be kept in mind that this is so in relation to God; Θεῷ δὲ οὐδὲν ἐστὶν κακὸν ἐνυπόστατον κατὰ τὸ ἀπαθές καὶ θεϊκόν, ἡμῖν δὲ ἐστὶ ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει καὶ αἰσθήσει, πάσας ἐπιθυμίας ῥυπαρὰς ὑποβάλλον (XVI, 1,

Because of its long presence in man evil has become a kind of second nature to man: ὡσπερ ξένην τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν τὴν κακίαν οὖσαν, διὰ δὲ τῆς παραβάσεως τοῦ πρώτου παρεισδύσαν ἀνθρώπου καταδεξάμεθα, φύσιν ἡμῖν τῷ χρόνῳ καθαπερὶ γεννωμένην (*De Elevatione Mentis*, 5, vol. 42, p. 215, 24f). However, since evil and the soul are of different natures (XVI. 1, p. 237, 16f; I. 7, p. 150, 5f) they never form an organic unity, but simply co-exist, while Messalians are said to have described the relation between the human soul and its demon as a physical union (οὐσιωδῶς).⁹⁷ It is worth noticing that Macarius never uses any of the terms κράσις, σύγκρασις, ἀνάκρασις, μίξις, ἔνωσις, in order to describe the soul-evil relation, though he employs them for the grace-soul relation (XVIII. 10, p. 252, 15; IV. 9, p. 162, 1f). We have seen that according to Macarius man's soul differs also from God's nature (I. 7, p. 150, 5f), but this does not prevent Macarius from using these terms. This is probably so because Macarius believes, as we seen, that between God and man there is a close kinship (XLV. 5, p. 337, 35 f).

Unlike Pelagius, Macarius accepts that sin has dominion over fallen man, but he does not adopt views similar to Augustine's teaching on the state of fallen man. Macarius calls evil teaching the theories which claim that after the fall man is dead once for all and cannot accomplish anything good whatsoever. If fallen man, argues Macarius, is incapable of great accomplishments, at least he can follow the example of a baby and cry out for help; God in his kindness towards man will certainly respond to such a call (XLVI. 3, pp. 339, 32-340, 5).

This is an important point in Macarius' teaching, and he presents it again in another way: Those who say that sin is like a powerful giant and the soul like a little child are in the wrong. If things were that way and the child-giant analogy were true, the Lawgiver would have been unjust in asking man to struggle against a powerful opponent (XXV II. 22, p. 291, 35f).

In the present chapter we have seen so far what Macarius believes to be the means and the conditions of man's salvation, and we have been discussing in detail how man's free will relates to grace and evil in the long process of his restoration. We have seen that the basis for man's salvation is the incarnate Christ and his Church, and that the

p. 237, 14 f; cf. *Ibid.* 5, p. 239, 5). This allows Macarius to speak of evil's nature (I. 7, p. 150, 5 f).

97. A. Vööbus, *Hist. of Ascet.*, vol. II, p. 135 note 7. Cf. Timothy of Const., *Op. Cit.*, 1, PG. 86. I, p. 48 B.

actualization of salvation of an individual person is closely related to one's own free will, which can create the conditions for this actualization. In *Homily XIX*, Macarius discusses these conditions and the first steps to salvation. Therefore, we are going to present here its outline, which can serve as a kind of summary of what has already been said on this matter. One can break what Macarius says into six steps:

- a) Firm faith in Christ and obedience to his commandments.
- b) Renunciation of the world, which would lead to freedom of mind. This will open the way to the next step which is continuous prayer.
- c) At the same time it is important that the faithful will not overlook the cultivation of the other virtues as well. Some of them are humility, charity, love, compassion and patience.
- d) This involves a voluntary war against the powers of sin existing within man; although man's heart might not like this in the beginning man should not give up the struggle.
- e) Christ, seeing man's good intention and his continuous effort to break the power of evil, comes and helps him. Moreover, Christ dwells in man's heart and enables man to do easily what originally seemed to be hard for him.
- f) Finally, God's grace purifies man, teaches his soul the true virtues, and then it offers the purified and spotless souls to Christ like fair and clean brides (*Ibid.* 9. p. 257, 5f). The ultimate relation between man and God is often described in marriage terms. About this relation, which should be the supreme goal in man's life, we are going to write later in this chapter.

Before that, however, we are going to discuss Macarius' concept of faith, which he places at the beginning of the spiritual progress (*Ibid.* 1, p. 253, 14f). This, together with the personal efforts, which verify man's personal choice to follow God's will (XXXVII. 10, p. 313, 23f), form two necessary conditions for further spiritual development: Πίστεως πολλῆς καὶ μακροθυμίας καὶ ἀγῶνος καὶ ὑπομονῆς καὶ πόνων καὶ πεινῆς καὶ δίψης εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ ὀξύτητος καὶ ἀναιδείας καὶ διακρίσεως καὶ συνέσεως χρεία (V. 6, p. 179,6f). Unlike Augustine, who claims that faith is a gratuitous gift of God,⁹⁸ Macarius believes that faith is natural to

98. In his early writings, Augustine attributes faith exclusively to freedom of choice; later, however, he changed his views and writes that the call to faith is a gratuitous gift of God, but the acceptance of faith is an act of human liberty alone; see E. Portalie, *Op. Cit.*, p. 181.

man (XXVI. 21, p. 279, 39f; XXXVII. 10. p. 319,12), but he adds that natural faith, like all the other natural qualities of man, is acceptable to God, though it is not quite pure (XXVI. 21, p. 280, 3f). This is certainly so because the nature of fallen man is polluted by the evil powers, as we have already seen. These powers have besieged man's heart and do not let natural faith come out freely to the degree man would like (XXI. 2, p. 261, 10f). Nevertheless, Macarius argues, man's natural faith is required by God, since this entitles him to the heavenly faith (XV. 22, p. 224, 36f), which, unlike the natural one, is pure (XXVI. 21, p. 280, 3f); this faith is given to man as a gift (*Ibid.*), but it is never forced upon man, so that man's will would be saved (XXVI. 6, p. 274, 16f).

The object of faith is not so much the existence of God; man knows that God exists from his natural reasoning (XII. 9, p. 208, 32f). Through faith man learns what God is like; he receives the knowledge of the divine mysteries (X. 1, p. 196, 27f).

Man, according to Macarius, should always preserve his faith sound; therefore, he should examine himself and, moreover, let himself be examined and proved by spiritual persons (XLVIII. 2, p. 348, 20f). Finally, man should make his faith a principle of living in his everyday conduct (*Ibid.* 3-4, pp. 348, 34-349, 30). Thus, man through such a faith alters the mode of his life and changes from his present lowly nature into another nature which is divine. Finally, man becomes new and fit for the heavenly kingdom (XLIV. 5, p. 33, 13f). Through faith, Macarius adds, God bestows the participation (*μετουσία*) of the Spirit (XXXVII. 7, p. 318, 9f), and the gifts of the eternal and imperishable world (XLVIII. 1, p. 348, 11f). Macarius relates man's salvation to faith rather than to man's deeds (XXXVII. 7, p. 318, 9f), but he certainly expects man's life to be in accordance with his faith (*Ibid.* 10, p. 319, 22f; XLVIII. 3-4, pp. 348, 34-349, 30).

IV. Perfection—Deification of Man.

Macarius, like the early Christian writers in general, employs a number of Biblical and non-Biblical terms when he refers to redemption. These terms are more or less synonymous or they denote different stages of the spiritual ascension of man (cf. XXXIV. 2, p. 312, 29f; XLI. 2, p. 325, 33f).

The terms salvation (*σωτηρία*), eternal life (*αἰώνιος ζωή*), heavenly kingdom (*βασιλεία οὐρανῶν*) and restoration (*ἀποκατάστασις*) (IV.

8. p. 161,28) mean fundamentally the same thing,⁹⁹ while perfection (τελειότης or τελείωσις)¹⁰⁰ and deification (θέωσις) refer to the highest possible spiritual progress a human being can attain. We shall now discuss briefly the stages before deification and the nature of the latter.

As has been said before, in Macarian thought grace finds sin rooted in man's nature; when the conditions prescribed exist, grace starts working gradually for the eradication of sin (XLI. 2, p. 325, 33f). The process is long, and often a period of many years of hard work on the part of man is not enough for the purification of his nature (XV II. 4, p. 244, 29f; cf. *Ibid.* 6, p. 244, 40f). Thus, in that long process of his restoration man passes through different degrees of spirituality: 'Ὁρᾶς πόσοι βαθμοὶ εἰσι καὶ μέτρα τοῦ πνεύματος, πῶς κατὰ μέρος διὐλλίξεται καὶ λεπτύνεται τὸ κακὸν καὶ οὐχὶ ἅπαξ (XV. 7, p. 22f).

Macarius suggests that the levels of spirituality one can go through must be twelve:¹⁰¹ 'Ὡς ἵνα εἴπωμεν χρὴ δώδεκα βαθμοὺς παρελθεῖν τινα καὶ φθάσαι εἰς τὴν τελειότητα (VIII. 4, p. 190, 28f; cf. *de charitate.* 10, vol. 42, p. 227, 12).

Unfortunately, nowhere does Macarius say anything regarding these degrees. One possible explanation is that he means the eleven degrees of moral ascension which the chain of the eleven virtues represent (*Ep. Magna.* 21, vo. 42, p. 160, 29f; cf. XL. 1, p. 322,24f),¹⁰² plus deification which is the ultimate goal of every moral endeavour. The practice to connect spiritual progress with a set of virtues is known in patristic literature from John Climacus' *Ladder*.

The number twelve is unusual for both classical and Christian writers in relation to spiritual life. Among the former Plato and the Neoplatonists have as a favorite the number three.¹⁰³ Through Philo

99. J. Meyendorff, *Christ in E. Chr. Thought*, p. 124. However, it has been indicated above that often God's kingdom is understood as referring to a higher degree of spirituality than the restoration to the original state (ἡ ἀποκατάστασις εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον). This is so because in his original state Adam had not yet reached perfection. Gregory of Nyssa makes clear that restoration to the original condition means acquisition of the original status; see *De Virginitate.* XII, in W. Jaeger, *Gregor. Nyss. Opera* VIII, 1, p. 302.

100. Though Macarius prefers the term τελειότης to τελείωσις he does not seem to make any distinction between them.

101. Analogous to the degree of spirituality is also the liberty of approach to God (XVI. 2, p. 241,35 f).

102. In *Homily XL* justice is omitted from the list of virtues and thus the total number of them is ten; more about them follows in the next chapter.

103. A. C. McGiffert, *Op. Cit.*, p. 299 f.

and Origen this passed on to other Christian writers,¹⁰⁴ such as Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus Confessor¹⁰⁵ and Ps-Dionysius. Ps-Dionysius calls the three stages of the soul's process towards God purification, illumination and perfection. These stages are connected symbolically with a particular sacrament and a particular order of the ministry.¹⁰⁶

The one who has gone through all these stages and has reached the highest one has acquired the fullness of perfection and is called perfect (τέλειος) or a true Christian. Macarius gives the identity of the perfect Christian which he describes in terms of man's relation to God, rather than to his fellow man. Perfection presupposes morality but it is above it; it is participation in the divine life:

Πάντες Χριστιανούς νομίζουσιν ἑαυτοὺς εἶναι διὰ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως, ἣ καὶ δι' ὀλίγας τινὰς ἀρετάς, ἀλλὰ οἱ ἀληθινοὶ Χριστιανοὶ ὀλίγοι εἰσὶν, οἱ Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ πλούσιοι, οἱ ταῖς διαφόροις τρυφαῖς τῆς χάριτος ἀναπολαβόντες, οἱ τῷ οὐρανίῳ πόνῳ τοῦ Πνεύματος εὐφραίνόμενοι, οἱ τοῖς διαφόροις τῶν χαρισμάτων οὐρανόις ἐνδύμασι τὴν ψυχὴν κεκοσμημένοι, οἱ οὐχ ὁμολογία καὶ φιλή πῖστει, ἀλλὰ δυνάμει καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ Πνεύματος τὸν Χριστιανισμὸν κεκτημένοι, οἱ τὸν οὐράνιον χρυσὸν (τουτέστι τὴν τῶν μυστηρίων τοῦ Πνεύματος γνῶσιν καὶ διήγησιν) μετὰ χειῶρας τῆς ψυχῆς ἀδιαλείπτως τῷ νῶ ψηλαφῶντες, οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ ἀληθινοὶ Χριστιανοὶ (*Neue Hom.* VII. 6, vol. 42, p. 57, 8f).

Macarius makes clear that confession of faith or possession of a few virtues do not qualify one for the title of the true Christian. The true Christians, as it is shown above, participate in the delights of God's

104. J. Daniélou, *Origen*, pp. 189 and 304-5.

105. In his *Microcosm and Mediator*, L. Thunberg gives a summary of their views on the three-fold spiritual development. Clement of Alexandria speaks of (1) struggle against passions, (2) contemplative life in *gnosis* and (3) vision of God. Origen argues that the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs correspond to the three stages of *ethicum*, *physicum* and *enoptice*. Gregory is influenced by Origen and names the three stages after the experience of Moses: The first is effected through light, the second through the cloud and the third in darkness. Evagrius speaks of practical virtues (*praktike*), natural contemplation (*physike*) and knowledge of God (*theologike*). Maximus, finally, names them practical or ethical philosophy, natural contemplation or natural philosophy and theological philosophy; see pp. 352-57.

106. Ps-Dionysius, *Eccles. Hier.* VI. 3:6; see also A. C. McGiffert, *Op. Cit.*, p. 299.

grace and by the Spirit's power their souls, garbed in heavenly dress, live a rich spiritual life (*Ibid.* lines 10f). The conduct of their mind and the life of their soul differs from that of the non-developed ones as day differs from night (*Ibid.* lines 16f).

Macarius believes that this kind of spiritually perfect life is possible for man (*de oratione.* 11 and 13, vol. 42, pp. 198, 35f and 199,27f). At the level of perfection man's soul is purified from all passions by the Spirit's power and is united and mingled with the Spirit in an unspeakable communion; in this state soul itself becomes spirit and then it is made all light, all eye, all joy, gladness and goodness (XVIII. 10, p. 252, 12f).

Therefore, it is obvious that perfection is more than the mere abstention from evil things (XVII. 15, p. 248, 6f); it implies purity of heart (VII. 3, p. 190, 24f) and communion with the Holy Spirit (XXXII. 6, p. 308, 5f).

In Macarius' thought perfection is linked with the moral aspect of man's personality (XVIII. 10, p. 252, 9f). Macarius quotes John I. 7 and argues that love is the link of perfection (XXVI. 16, p. 278, 13; *de perfectione*, 13, vol. 42, p. 193,14). If one has not acquired the fullness of love one has not reached full perfection even if he can perform miracles: Πολλοὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἦλθον εἰς τοιαῦτα μέτρα καὶ ἔσχον χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων καὶ ἀποκάλυψιν καὶ προφητείαν, καὶ ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἔφθασαν εἰς τὴν τελείαν ἀγάπην ὅπου ὁ ἀσύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος, ἐπῆλθεν αὐτοῖς πόλεμος, καὶ ἀμελήσαντες ἔπεσον (XXVI. 16, p. 278, 9f). However, in another passage Macarius seems to put perseverance in prayer above all other virtues, and he calls it the chief (κεφάλαιον) of all good endeavours and the topmost of moral achievements (XL. 2, p. 323, 1f). This is in agreement with the hierarchy of virtues he gives in *Homily XL*; this hierarchy is led by prayer (*Ibid.* 1, p. 322, 25f). This seems to contradict his view according to which love is the completion of all virtues, as we have seen above, but from the explanation he offers for prayer's high importance it is clear that its importance lies in the fact that prayer leads finally to love (*Ibid.* 2, p. 323, 4f). Comparing Macarius' concept of love to that of Evagrius, one finds that the latter attributes to love a relatively lower position than Macarius. Evagrius sees it as the end of the *vita practica* leading on to *gnosis* which unites man with God,¹⁰⁷ while Macarius does not interpolate *gnosis* or anything else

107. Evagrius, *Practicus*, prol., PG. 40, 1221 BC. In his *Microcosm*, L. Thunberg believes that Evagrius' hierarchy probably goes back to a hierarchy established by Clement of Alexandria; see p. 303 f.

between love and communion with God; the perfect love, argues Macarius, makes man a captive of grace (XXVI. 16, p. 278, 13f). If one, however, approaches within a little of the measure but does not attain to being fast bound in love itself, he is still subject to fear, and war, and falling (*Ibid.* lines 15f) since, as we saw, the perfect ones retain their free will, which is always under constant trial (*Ibid.* 23, p. 281, 6f; XXVII. 9, 285, 40f). Thus, their place in the scale of perfection is not permanent, but depends upon their carefulness (XXVI. 16, p. 278, 17f) and upon grace, which allows ups and downs for educational reasons (VIII. 4, p. 190, 30f; XXVI. 23, p. 281, 7f; XXVII. 9, p. 44f). Those, however, who have reached the fullness of perfection are safe, since they are fast bound to grace (XXVI. 16, p. 278, 14f) and can willingly and bravely endure every temptation (X. 5, p. 198, 13f) and finally choose the good: 'Εγὼ δέ σοι λέγω, ὅτι καὶ τοῖς τελείοις Χριστιανοῖς τοῖς ἡχμαλωτισμένοις καὶ μεμεθυμένοις εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν σύνεστι τὸ ἀντεξοῦσιον, ὅθεν μυρίοις κακοῖς ἐξετασθέντες τρέπονται ἐπὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν (XXVII. 9, p. 286, 7f).

In Macarian thought the endurance under temptation constitutes the state of detachment or *apatheia* (X. 5, p. 198, 10 10f). The Christian concept of *apatheia* is a development of the Stoic concept of *apatheia* which means impassibility.¹⁰⁸ Clement of Alexandria was the first one to make it a key concept in Christian spirituality. In the Stoic context *apatheia* has a rather negative character, since it means simply impassibility, while in Clement this was combined with the Christian concept of love, which has a positive character.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, in Christian thought *apatheia* is also understood as an imitation of God's *apatheia* and, furthermore, as a participation of the soul in the divine life.¹¹⁰ Evagrius and Maximus Confessor use the term to refer to that state of virtuous development which precedes perfection. Gregory of Nyssa also uses the term and relates it to the image of God in man.¹¹¹ In Evagrius' opinion *apatheia* is the outcome of the *vita practica*, which

108. G. Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, pp. 70-71. Cynics use this term to denote indifference; see Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philos.* VI. 15 and J. M. Rist, *Stoic Philosophy*, p. 62 f. In his *Consolation Philosophy* R. C. Gregg discusses the Greek philosophical concept of *apathy*; pp. 81-123.

109. L. Thunberg, *Op. Cit.*, p. 317.

110. L. Thunberg, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 317-19.

111. L. Thunberg, *Op. Cit.*, p. 319. Similarly, Clement of Alexandria sees also apathy as a peace of the soul without desires, which is an image of God's own *apathy*; *Ibid.*, p. 317.

consists of a keeping of the commandments.¹¹² *Apatheia*, however, surpasses self-mastery, since it implies a removal even of impassioned thoughts, while self-mastery means the abolition of active sin.¹¹³ In Macarius the term *apatheia* is not as common as in Evagrius and Maximus; though Macarius does not reveal his understanding of it, it seems that Macarius is closer to the Stoic sense than all the other writers named above (X. 5, p. 198, 11f). Diadochus of Photice's explanation of *apatheia* seems to express Macarius' views on the matter: ἀπάθειά ἐστι οὐ τὸ μὴ πολεμεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν δαιμόνων, ... ἀλλὰ τὸ πολεμουμένουσ ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀπολεμήτους μένειν.¹¹⁴ The passage which throws light on Macarius' understanding of *apatheia* argues that through many labours and trials the soul reaches *apatheia* and after that endures every temptation: ... διὰ πόνων πολλῶν καὶ ἀγώνων καὶ χρόνων καὶ σπουδῆς μετὰ δοκιμασίας καὶ πειρασμῶν ποικίλων τὴν πνευματικὴν ἀύξησιν καὶ προκοπὴν λαμβάνει (sc ἡ ψυχὴ) ἕως τοῦ τελείου τῆς ἀπαθείας μέτρου, ἵνα εἰς πάντα πειρασμὸν ὑπὸ τῆς κακίας ὑπαγόμενον ὑπομένουσα προθύμως καὶ γενναίως (X. 5, p. 198, 10f). This understanding of *apatheia* is closer to the Evagrian self-mastery given above than to *apatheia*.

Apatheia, as understood by Macarius, brings man back to his original purity (cf. XLVII. 5 and 6, p.350, 2 and 13) and frees him from the dark veil of sin, which has covered man's soul after the fall (*Neue Hom.* XXVI. 4, vol. 42, p. 125, 21f) 21f), Thus, it is clear why in patristic thought *apatheia*, the outcome of a virtuous life, is usually understood as leading to contemplation (θεωρία).¹¹⁵ The experience of it is not, according to Macarius, something permanent, but it depends upon the educating «economy» of God's grace: ...καὶ τὸ φῶς (τῆς χάριτος) ἔστι μὲν ὅτε μᾶλλον ἐκλάμπει, ἔστι δ' ὅτε καὶ συστέλλεται καὶ ἐπιστυγνάζει κατὰ θεῖαν πάντως οἰκονομίαν, καίτοιγε τῆς λαμπάδος ἄσβεστα καιομένης (De Caritate. 9, vol. 42, p. 226, 39f). Furthermore, Macarius describes the state of contemplation and claims that one who has reached it is full of God's love and experiences a kind of sweetness and loses any in-

112. Evagrius, *Practicus*. I, 53, PG. 40, 1233 B; cf. J. Meyendorff, *Op. Cit.*, p. 120. For Eastern Christian asceticism in general the *vita practica* consists in the struggle against vice and for virtue, which prepares the way to *theoria*; see G. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, p. 331.

113. L. Thunberg, *Op. Cit.*, p. 319.

114. Diadochus of Photice, *Op. Cit.*, p. 160,9 f. In Macarius' thought then, *apatheia* is the common characteristic of the pre-fallen man and the man restored by Christ.

115. G. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, p. 331.

terest in this world (*Ibid.*). The experience of contemplation, notes Macarius, often occurs during the practice of prayer (*Ibid.* 8, p. 226, 20f; VIII. 1, p. 189, 19f). Prayer, as we have seen, has a superior place in the hierarchy of virtues (XL., 1, p. 322, 25f), and in its advanced state presupposes a purified mind (VI. 3, p. 184, 29f).

The latter plays a very important role in the function of contemplation. The fallen mind cured by Christ (*De Elevatione Mentis.* 11, vol. 42, p. 218, 12f) and cleansed by baptism (XXXII. 4, p. 307, 12f) reflects the form of Christ in the manner of a mirror (XXV. 3, p. 268, 14f). This metaphor is of Platonic background¹¹⁶ and it is common in Gregory of Nyssa,¹¹⁷ and Basil.¹¹⁸ Purified mind, continues Macarius, becomes God's throne (VI. 5, p. 185, 30), contemplates the glory of the light of Christ and remains with the Lord day and night (XVII. 4, p. 244, 15f). Thus, mind becomes truly the soul's eye, as it should be (VII. 8, p. 189, 10f). The purification of mind and the rest of human nature scrapes off passions from man, and thus opens the way to moral development and, moreover, to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (XVIII. 10, p. 252, 9f; XV. 53, p. 236, 24f). In that sense purification prepares the soul for reaching union with God.

Evagrius, on the basis of the Origenistic notion of a natural kinship between the divine and the intellectual, argues that a purified intellect sees God as He is, in His essence.¹¹⁹ Macarius, as we have seen, does not believe in the divinity of the soul and, therefore, he seems to diverge from Evagrius and agree with both the Cappadocians and Ps-Dionysius, who firmly support the notion of divine transcendence.¹²⁰ He attributes the following predicates to God, some of which are not of Biblical background: ἀπειρος (VI. 9, p. 161, 38; *Ibid.* 10, 162, 12); ἀεννόητος (VI. 10, p. 162,12), ἀπρόσιτος (*Ibid.* 9, p. 161, 38), ἀκατάληπτος (XVI. 5, p. 238,30) and ἀπερίγραπτος (*Ibid.*). The notion of divine transcendence has led to the so-called «negative theology», whose basic idea is that every predicate taken from the finite world can lead only to the negation of that predicate with regard to its applicability to God,

116. G. Ladner, «The Image Concept», in *DOP*, vol. VII, p. 12.

117. J. T. Muckle, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 73-77.

118. Basil, *Hom. in Psalm.* XLV. 8, PG. 29, 419 C.

119. J. Meyendorff, *Christ in E. Chr. Thought*, p. 121 f.

120. I. Hausherr quoted in J. Meyendorff, *Op. Cit.*, p. 122. Gregory of Nyssa argues that man can contemplate deity but not the divine nature in its essence. In this life man can see God's attributes and in the next life God *qua* God; see J. T. Muckle, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 76 and 80; cf. W. Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works*, p. 76.

who is infinite. Christians share negative or apophatic theology with Neoplatonists. Among its supporters one should mention Philo, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa and Ps-Dionysius.¹²¹ Macarius cannot be included in this list.

In some passages Macarius writes that the directing mind (ἡγεμών νοῦς) is capable of seeing God (XX. 4, p. 258, 37f), but in other passages he makes clear that man can see God's glory only and not his essence: "Ὅτι τὸ πρῶτον καθαρεύων ὁ νοῦς ἐώρα τὸν Δεσπότην αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀξιώματι ὄν, καὶ νῦν ἐνδέδεται διὰ τὴν ἐκπτώσιν αἰσχύνῃ, τυφλωθέντων τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τῆς καρδίας τοῦ μὴ βλέπειν ἐκείνην τὴν δόξαν ἣν ἐβλεπε πρὸ τῆς παρακοῆς ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀδὰμ (XLV. 1, p. 335, 36f). In another passage Macarius argues that the purified mind contemplates the glory of Christ's light (XVII. 4, p. 294. 15f); only in the other life the souls of the saints see the beauties of the Godhead (XXXIV. 1, p. 311, 36f). In this life these souls see in real experience and feeling the good things of heaven and the inexpressible delights and infinite riches of divinity (IV. 12, p. 163, 8f). This glory is hidden to the bodily eyes; this is only revealed to the eyes of the souls regenerated by Christ (XXXIV, 1, p. 312, 1f).

It is clear, therefore, that, according to Macarius, man contemplates not the essence of God but his glory and beauty. God transcends man's abilities and, therefore, man cannot learn something positive about God's essence (*Neue Hom.* XXII. 1, vol. 42, p. 101, 38f). Christ only can teach man the mysteries of God in the measure of human ability, but not in the measure God really is; the knowledge man gets is partial even in this case (*Ibid.* 2, p. 102, 25f). This, however, does not imply that man is not capable of communicating with God; he can certainly participate in the divine life. This became possible through Christ's incarnation, which enabled man to live in God, to feel immortal life and partake in incorruptible glory (IV. 10, p. 162, 12f). The degree of man's participation in the divine life goes as far as deification, which is often seen by Christian writers as the ultimate goal of man's life.¹²²

The concept of deification has a long tradition not only in Christian and ascetic spirituality, but in classical and Hellenistic philosophy.¹²³ Platonists, believing in the natural immortality of the soul and its kinship with God, thought that man can and should obtain likeness

121. W. Jaeger, *Op. Cit.*, p. 77 f.

122. Maximus Confessor, *Capitulum Quingue Centuriae*, I. 42, PG. 90, 1193 D.

123. For a full discussion of Greek philosophical views on the concept of deification' see J. M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche*, pp. 155-168.

to God (ὁμοίωσις Θεῶ)¹²⁴ by obtaining knowledge of the form of the good and living accordingly.¹²⁵ Stoics, too, believed that it was in the ability of man to obtain this likeness by living according to nature (ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν).¹²⁶

The same notion of likeness appears also in Plotinus as a basic one in his system; he argues that man's soul is capable of obtaining deification by undergoing the proper purification. The process of deification starts when the individual man reaches the level of the higher soul, which remains always in the intelligible world, contemplating continuously the intelligible realities.¹²⁷ A basic point, however, which differentiates the Greeks from the Christians is their conviction that man's way to God is led through self-perfection,¹²⁸ while for the Christians the human factor is not sufficient for such a cause. Macarius, as we have seen, disapproves of such ideas; likewise does Augustine who censures those who hold the Neoplatonic view that man can be purified by his own virtue so that he can contemplate God.¹²⁹

The germs of the Christian doctrine of deification are found in the Old Testament¹³⁰ and the New Testament,¹³¹ and it is further developed by Irenaeus,¹³² Clement of Alexandria,¹³³ Origen¹³⁴ and others.¹³⁵ The actual terms used in the Christian literature are θεοποίησις and θέωσις; Ps-Dionysius gives the following definition of deification: ἡ θεοποίησις ἐστὶν ἡ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, ὡς ἐφικτὸν ἁφομοιώσις τε καὶ ἔνωσις.¹³⁶

124. Plato, *Theaetetus* 176 A.

125. J. M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche*, p. 162.

126. *Ibid.*

127. *Enn.* II. 9:2.

128. H. Jonas, *Gnostic Religion*, p. 280.

129. G. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, p. 193; Augustine claims that deification is reached not by nature but only through grace and adoption; *Ibid.*, p. 194.

130. Gen. I. 28; Psalm LXXXI (LXXXII). 6; Is. I. 2; LVI. 5; II. 10.

131. John I. 12; Rom. VIII. 15; Gal. III. 26; Eph. IV. 24; Hebr. XII. 10; I John III. 2; II Petr. I. 4 etc.

132. C. Shapland, *The Letters of Saint Athanasius concerning the Holy Spirit*, p. 39 f.

133. Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 11. 114. 4, ST. I, 81.

134. Origen, *C. Celsum*, 3. 28, VHP. 9, 198, 24 f; *De Princ.* 1. 6:2, BT 53.

135. Basil, *C. Eunom.* III. 5; Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat.* XXXI. 4 and 29; XLI. 9; concerning Athanasius' doctrine on the subject see P. Demetropoulos, *He Anthropologia tou Megalou Athanasiou*.

136. Ps-Dionysius, *De Eccles. Hier.* I, 3, PG. 3, 376 A. The basis for this is Christ's incarnation in which human nature was assumed into an intimate and hypostatical unity with God himself (cf. G. Florovsky, «The Lamp of God», in SJT, vol.

Macarius does not use the term *θέωσις*, but he uses either the verb *ἀποθεοῦσθαι* (XV. 35, p. 229, 39; XXVI. 2, p. 272, 38), or he refers to deification periphrastically.

Man, according to Macarius, stands between God and the devil, as we have seen, and his nature is capable of fellowship with the evil spirits and likewise with the angels and the Holy Spirit (XXVII. 19, p. 290, 20f). However, man has his own nature which is different from that of God and the nature of evil (I. 7, p. 150, 5f; XLIX. 4, p. 352, 15f). Every kind of union between man's soul and the devil is impossible, as we have seen; with God, however, there exists a kind of kinship»¹³⁷ in fact the closest one between God and any of the creatures (XLV. 5, p. 337, 23f). Therefore, man's nature can be mixed with that of God in the person of the incarnate Christ (IV. 10, p. 162, 12f), who alters man's nature and creates his soul anew, so that man's soul can be made a partaker of the divine nature (XLIV. 9, p. 335, 1f), as II Pet. 1.4 also argues. This alteration applies to the entire man (*Epistula* II, PG. 34, 416A) and Christians become Christs of the same substance and body with Christ (XLIII. 1, p. 327, 34f). Christians do not share exactly the very same nature of the Godhead, but they are related to God in the same way a lamp (=man) is related to another lamp (=Christ) from which it was kindled (*Ibid.* 23, p. 328,1f). They both share the same nature of fire. Thus, man's soul united and mingled with God's Spirit becomes purified (XVIII. 10, p. 252, 15f); moreover, all the practices of virtue which by nature belong to God, come to man naturally (XIX. 6, p. 255, 30f). The acquirement of all these virtues enables man to partake in God's holiness and spiritual energy (XL. 2, p. 323, 4f). In another case Macarius speaks more generally, arguing that the souls of Christians are mingled with Christs' own nature and that in the world to come all alike are to be changed into a divine nature and to be made gods and children of God (XXXIV. 2, p. 312, 29f; cf. XXVII. 3, p. 284,3). God's Spirit has the power to change the nature of fallen man's soul

IV, 1954, p. 17; for Macarian references see below). Thus to call deified human nature «god» (cf. XLIII. 1, p. 327, 34 f) is not a semantic trick but a description of reality; see G. Florovsky, *Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century*, p. 116.

137. This sounds like an Origenistic view, but it should be remembered that Macarius does not believe in the natural immortality of man's soul (cf. I. 10, p. 151, 27 f) and makes clear that God and man are of different natures (XLIX. 4, p. 352, 15 f). Macarius seems to relate their kinship to the fact that man only was created in the image of God (cf. XL. 22, p. 225, 6 f; XLV. 5, p. 337, 35; XV. 42, p. 232, 39 f).

into a new and divine condition full of virtues (XLIV. 5 and 8 pp. 333, 21f and 334,21f).

The state which one can reach by the way described above is regarded by Macarius as being of a higher spiritual level than that of Adam before the fall: Οὕτω μέντοι διὰ τῆς δυνάμεως τοῦ Πνεύματος καὶ τῆς ἀναγεννήσεως τῆς πνευματικῆς ἔρχεται (sc ὁ ἄνθρωπος) εἰς τὰ μέτρα τοῦ πρώτου Ἀδάμ καὶ μελίων αὐτοῦ γίνεται. Ἀποθεοῦται γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος (XXVI. 2, p. 272, 36f; cf. XLVIII, 6. p. 350. 12f). This distinction is not peculiar to Macarius; G. Ladner¹³⁸ notes that it appears also in Origen, Chrysostom and Ambrose. All these Fathers accept that Adam's state in paradise was exalted, but, nevertheless, inferior to the kingdom of heaven.¹³⁹

In Macarian thought *υἱοποίησις* is synonymous with *θέωσις* as it is clear from the following passage: — Ἀποθεοῦται λοιπὸν ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ γίνεται υἱὸς Θεοῦ (XV. 35, p. 229, 39; cf. XXXIV. 2, p. 312, 29f).¹⁴⁰

The Christ-divinized man relation can be better expressed, as we have seen, in terms of the groom-bride (*νυμφίος-νύμφη*) relation (XXV. 8, p. 271, 11; XLVII. 17, p. 347, 26f). The joining force in this relation is love; Macarius argues that love is one of the faculties of the soul (I. 3, p. 146, 32 32f), which, like everything else in man, lost its original purity and power after the fall, but, nevertheless, remained as one of man's «natural fruits», and it can be reestablished in its original state by the power of Christ (XXVI. 21 and 22, pp. 279, 40-280, 5). Man has the free choice to direct his love either to God or to earthly interests, as is often done by fallen man (V. 6, p. 174, 13f). Man, however, should be directing it towards the divine things; God seeing man's toilsome effort will give to him the heavenly love (*Ibid.* lines 21f). Thus, love becomes within man a moving force which drives him towards the divine: τετρωμένη γὰρ τῇ εἰς αὐτὸν ἀγάπῃ ἐπιποθεῖ καὶ ἐκλείπει, ἵνα τολμήσας εἴπω, τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν (sc Χριστὸν) ὡς ὠραίαν καὶ νοητὴν συνουσίαν κατὰ τὴν ἀφθαρτον συνάφειαν τῆς ἐν ἀγιασμῷ κοινωνίας (*Epistula.* II, PG. 34, 416D; V. 6, p. 173,35f). The communion between Christ and man is a mystery: Κοινωνησάτω γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ σου τῷ Χριστῷ ὡς κοινωνεῖ νύμφη νυμφίῳ· Τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστὶ, φησὶν, ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστὸν

138. G. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform*, pp. 65 note 6, 72 f and 143 f.

139. In his *Eighth Hymn on Paradise*, Ephraem takes paradise to be identical with the kingdom of heaven; see G. Ladner, *Op. Cit.*, p. 65 note 6.

140. The same applies to Athanasius and Gregory Nazianzen; see J. Kelly, *Op. Cit.*, p. 378 and Gregory's *Oratio* VII. 21.

καὶ εἰς τὴν ἄμωμον ψυχὴν (XXVIII. 5, p. 321, 37f). When, after much searching and pains, man receives the heavenly fire of the divine love, he loses the hardness of his fallen nature in the manner in which metals lose it when cast into the fire; thus man finds himself free from all affections of the world and passions. Wounded by the divine love man loses all his natural habits and considers all earthly things indifferent in comparison with the heavenly bridegroom, whom his soul has received, at rest in his fervent and ineffable love (IV. 14, p. 164, 13; cf. XXVI. 15, p. 277, 35f).

The concept of marriage with all its related terms—*νυμφίος*, *νύμφη*, *νυμφών*, *πόθος*, *ἔρωσ* — is very common in Macarius.¹⁴¹ As a matter of fact he expresses the whole spiritual history and destiny of man along these terms: God, says Macarius, created man's soul and body for a dwelling for himself, to inhabit and take his rest in the body as in his own house, having for his fair bride the lovely soul, which was made in accordance with his own image (XLIX. 4i p. 352, 1f). In its fallen state man's soul fornicates with the devil (XXVI. 13, p. 276f). Christ, however, cleans man's soul from the evil existing in her and presents her to himself a bride without blemish and spot (XXXIII. 4, p. 311, 18f; cf. XV. 47, 234, 20f). Man's soul, on the other hand, being smitten by the divine eros is carried away captive by her desire and the longing for Christ (V. 6, p. 173, 35f; XV. 37, p. 230, 34f). Because of this desire and longing the soul detaches herself from this world, so that she can remain bound fast in the longing for Christ (*Ibid.* p. 174, 5f; *Neue Hom.* VII. 5, vol. 42, p. 55, 29f).

Plotinus also explains, for purposes of clarification, the union, of God and man in terms of the union of earthly lovers,¹⁴² and argues that the soul which is possessed by the divine love casts away everything, the forms and the world of Nous included, so that she will be able to receive the One.¹⁴³ Philo had also used the imagery of sexual union, an idea widespread among Gnostics, to explain the God-man relation.¹⁴⁴

141. Macarius employs a number of terms which seem to be synonymous with *agape* and uses them interchangeably; these are *πόθος Χριστοῦ* (IX. 9, p. 124,22), *θεῖος ἔρωσ* V. 6, p. 173,36) *οὐράνιος ἔρωσ* V. 5, p. 173, 8) *ἀγάπη Κυρίου* (*Ibid.*), etc.

142. Plotinus, *Enn.* VI. 7:34, 9:9; see A. Tripolitis, *Op. Cit.*, p. 94. Concerning Plotinus' doctrine of deification see pp. 93-96 and 201-202.

143. *Enn.* V. 3:17; VI. 7:34.

144. Philo, *Leg. All.* III. 180; see also H. Jonas, *Op. Cit.*, p. 278.

As a conclusion one may say that though Macarius relates closely the process of sanctification with purity of heart and the ethical development of man, he does not limit Christ's redemptive role to the illumination of the mind and the conscience, as some other Fathers did,¹⁴⁵ but he understands Christ's mission as aiming at the restoration of man to his original state and, moreover, to his elevation to a new state, which enables him to partake in the divine life and become god by the power of grace. Thus, he can write that redeemed man reaches the state of Adam and, moreover, becomes greater than Adam, since he attains deification (XXVI. 2, p. 272, 36f).

(to be continued)

145. C. R. Shapland, *Op. Cit.*, p. 38.