

HIPPOLYTUS AND THE *APOSTOLIC TRADITION*: RECENT RESEARCH AND COMMENTARY

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[One of the most important sources for reconstructing early Christian liturgy has been the Apostolic Tradition attributed to Hippolytus, a Roman presbyter, anti-pope, and martyr of the early third century. In this study the author reviews recent scholarly investigation and commentary on this significant document and concludes that it cannot be securely attributed to a single author nor can its contents be assigned with any certainty to Rome in the third century.]

VERY FEW DOCUMENTS from the early Church have inspired as much interest over the past 15 years as the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* attributed to Hippolytus who supposedly compiled this “church order” in Rome at the beginning of the third century. The document as we have it in a reconstructed form was originally compiled in Greek. We have a fourth-century Latin translation in a fifth-century manuscript as well as later translations in Sahidic Coptic, Arabic, Ethiopic and Bohairic Coptic. Several church orders, including the Epitome of Book VIII of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the *Canons of Hippolytus*, and the *Testamentum Domini* as well as some Greek fragments clearly attest to the original. Each translation has significant lacunae, but pieced together the document seems to have covered the following topics: the rites and prayers of ordination for bishops, presbyters, and deacons; regulations on confessors, readers, subdeacons, widows, virgins and spiritual gifts; then rules for newcomers to the faith and rites of Christian initiation, followed by rules for the distribution (of Communion?), fasting, and gifts for the sick. Then follow regulations for the communal supper and for eating, cemeteries, and daily prayer. The

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section on the ordination of a bishop contains a eucharistic prayer as well as blessings for oil, cheese, and olives.

When I was a student, the commonly accepted opinion on the *Apostolic Tradition* ran something like this: Here we have a church order that gives us data on important ecclesiastical practices from the early-third century. The writer was a presbyter/theologian, named Hippolytus, who opposed Bishop Callistus of Rome over the latter's laxity in readmitting sinners to church fellowship. He thus became a schismatic anti-pope, but was reconciled before his death as a martyr. A conservative, he advocated ancient usages of the Church. A crusty old parish priest unwilling to abide by his bishop's liturgical innovations, he set down in a single document these rather antiquarian rules for liturgy and church conduct.

Nothing about this synthesis is correct. The title of the document in question is not the *Apostolic Tradition*. It cannot be attributed to Hippolytus, an author whose corpus of biblical commentaries and anti-heretical treatises is somewhat well known. As a matter of fact it is even doubtful whether the corpus of that writer can actually be attributed to a single writer. Finally, the document does not give us certain information about the liturgical practice of the early-third-century Roman Church.

Why then is it important to revisit the document? The importance of the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* consists mainly in its use by modern students in constructing the early history of the liturgy, and its use as the foundation of contemporary liturgical practice. Three examples will suffice: (1) The Second Eucharistic Prayer of the post-Vatican II Roman Rite (not to mention similar prayers used by a number of Anglican and Protestant churches) finds its inspiration in the anaphora given in chapter four of the *Apostolic Tradition*. (2) The ordination prayers of the Roman Rite have been influenced by the document. And (3), as a colleague once put it, the Roman Catholic adult catechumenate would never have taken its present shape without the framework provided by Hippolytus.

How, then, did we arrive at this false synthesis known as the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus of Rome and what can we say today about the putative author and provenance of the document? That question constitutes the first part of my article. My second part deals with two important commentaries on the *Apostolic Tradition* that have appeared in the course of the past year: a commentary by Alistair Stewart-Sykes part of a series of texts for students published by St. Vladimir's Seminary Press;¹ and a collaborative work of Professors Paul Bradshaw of Notre Dame, Maxwell E. Johnson (also of Notre Dame) and L. Edward Phillips of Garrett Evan-

¹ Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *Hippolytus: On the Apostolic Tradition: An English Version with Introduction and Commentary* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 2001).

gelical Seminary, Chicago, published as a volume in *Hermeneia*, the highly respected series of biblical and patristic commentaries published by Fortress Press.²

PART ONE: THE TRADITIONAL SYNTHESIS

In the year 1551, a Renaissance archeologist, Pirro Ligorio, found the remains of a statue somewhere between the Via Nomentana and the Via Tiburtina. That statue now stands at the entrance to the Vatican Library. Ligorio reconstructed the statue as a third-century Roman “bishop” named Hippolytus because on its base were inscribed a number of works that corresponded to writings attributed by Eusebius and Jerome to a bishop named Hippolytus. Recent research has demonstrated, however, that the original figure is not that of a bishop but most probably that of a woman. In her extensive studies, Margherita Guarducci has suggested that the female figure represents an Epicurean philosopher named Themista of Lampascus.³ After an exhaustive examination of the evidence, Allen Brent proposed the theory that the statue of Themista had been transformed into the figure of Sophia (or Wisdom) and that it stood in a house church belonging to a group led by a writer named Hippolytus.⁴ The suggestion that this statue originally represented an allegorical figure makes a great deal of sense given the fact that, as Marcel Metzger has suggested,⁵ a statue dedicated to an individual in the ante-Nicene period would be a unique find.

Now, why is this statue so important? One of the works inscribed on the right hand side of the base is entitled

[A]POSTOLIKE PARADOSIS

—or perhaps not, since the line above it may represent the first part of a title:

[P]ERI CHARISMATON

The title of the work therefore could be *Apostolic Tradition* or it could be *Apostolic Tradition with Regard to Gifts (or Charisms)*.

In addition one should note that the statue (even if it were of Hippoly-

² Paul Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, L. Edward Phillips, *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002).

³ M. Guarducci, “La ‘Statua di Sant’Ippolito’ e la sua provenienza,” *Studi Ephemerides Augustinianum* 30 (1989) 61–74.

⁴ Allen Brent, *Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarchical Bishop*, *Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae* 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1995) 109–14.

⁵ Marcel Metzger, “Nouvelles perspectives pour la prétendue *Tradition Apostolique*,” *Ecclesia Orans* 5 (1988) 243.

tus) would be the only place where anything entitled “Apostolic Tradition” is attributed to this writer. The name Hippolytus does figure in later collections of so-called church orders, such as the fourth-century Canons of Hippolytus and some manuscript ascriptions of the *Epitome of Book VIII of the Apostolic Constitutions*. But the manuscripts of the document itself have neither title nor author. The key to putting the document, the author, and the title together is the statue. In fact, the Greek fragments discovered by Marcel Richard contain the title: *Diataxeis* (“Regulations”—not *Paradosis* “tradition”)—*apostoliké*.⁶

Not only is the identification of the statue with Hippolytus doubtful, but three of the most significant works attributed to Hippolytus are not found in the statue’s list of works: the *Refutation of the Heresies*, the *Contra Noetum* (written against a Monarchian Patripassionist from Asia Minor), and the *Commentary on Daniel*.

Further, we cannot be certain about the identity of the Hippolytus to whom a corpus of writings has been attributed. Both Eusebius and Jerome list works by a bishop of an unknown see named Hippolytus. In the fifth century both the Syrian church historian, Theodoret, and Pope Gelasius considered Hippolytus as Eastern writer, perhaps from Arabia. A fragment attributed to Apollinarius of Laodicea in the late-fourth century does mention a commentary on Daniel by “Hippolytus, the most holy bishop of Rome,” but a recent monograph by John Cerrato has cast doubt on the authenticity of this attribution. The next reference to a Roman Hippolytus is found in the late-fifth century non-Chalcedonian patriarch of Alexandria, Timothy Aelurus, who writes of “Hippolytus, Archbishop [*sic*] of Rome and martyr.”⁷ Even if we could be sure that Hippolytus was Roman, there were 16 commemorations of martyrs named Hippolytus listed in the fifth-century *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*.⁸ Where then does our prolific writer the antipope Hippolytus come from? Cerrato has argued more recently and convincingly that the biblical commentaries attributed to Hippolytus are of Eastern origin.⁹

Another question: how many writers are represented in the corpus? The current consensus among leading Hippolytan scholars like Allen Brent, Christoph Marksches, and Manlio Simonetti is that there are at least two

⁶ Marcel Richard, “Le Florilège eucharistique du Codex Ochrid, Musée National 86,” *Charistérion eis Anastasion K. Orlandon III* (Athens: Publications de la Société archéologique d’Athènes, 1966) 47–55. See Metzger, “Nouvelles perspectives” 259; and also his “Enquêtes autour de la prétendue *Tradition Apostolique*,” *Ecclesia Orans* 9 (1992) 7–9.

⁷ See John Cerrato, *Hippolytus Between East and West: The Commentaries and the Provenance of the Corpus* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002) 83–85.

⁸ *Ibid.* 8–13.

⁹ *Ibid.* 250–58.

writers to whom the Hippolytan corpus can be attributed.¹⁰ Scholarly opinion had moved in this direction ever since Pierre Nautin published his thesis that the corpus can be attributed to two writers: one named Hippolytus, responsible for the *Contra Noetum*, and the other a Roman: Josephus, the author of the *Refutation* and an opponent of the Roman bishop Callistus. This present consensus refutes the position that had been taken in the 19th century by Ignaz von Döllinger in a move that Simonetti calls “the fundamental moment in the complex itinerary of the Hippolytan question.”¹¹ In 1853 Döllinger claimed that Hippolytus of Rome was the author of the newly discovered *Refutation of All Heresies*. He made this identification on the basis of the *Refutation's* reference to one of the works inscribed on the base of Ligorio's statue, namely, *On the Nature of the Universe (Peri tes tou pantos ousias)*. The writer must therefore have been the presbyter who in the ninth chapter of the same *Refutation* describes himself in conflict with Callistus, bishop of Rome and who was deported with Callistus's successor Pontianus and died as a martyr in the mines of Sardinia in 235.¹² Döllinger's argument was to prove crucial for the subsequent identification of the *Apostolic Tradition*.

The birth of the document called the *Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome* took place in 1910 when Eduard Schwartz claimed to have found the lost Hippolytan document inscribed on the statue in a canonical collection of the patriarchate of Alexandria.¹³ His contribution was followed six years later by Richard H. Connolly's important book, *The So-Called Egyptian Church Order and Derived Documents*, which identified the Ethiopic, Coptic, and Arabic versions of the document with the Verona Latin palimpsest that has served as the basis of a number of modern reconstructions.¹⁴ Important commentaries by Burton Scott Easton,¹⁵

¹⁰ Manlio Simonetti, *Ippolito: Contra Noeto* (Bologna: Dehoniana, 2000) 130–36; Brent, 256–367, Christoph Marksches, “Wer schrieb die sogenannte *Traditio Apostolica*?, in Wolfram Kinzig, Christoph Marksches, Markus Vinzent, *Tauffragen und Bekenntnis: Studien zur sogenannten “Traditio Apostolica” zu den “Interrogationes de fide” und zum “Römischen Glaubensbekenntnis”* (New York: De Gruyter, 1999) 20–22.

¹¹ Simonetti, *Contra Noeto*: “un momento fondamentale nel complesso itinerario della questione ippolitiana” (89).

¹² Ignaz von Döllinger, *Hippolytus und Kallistus: oder die römische Kirche in der ersten Hälfte des dritten Jahrhunderts* (Regensburg: Manz, 1853).

¹³ Eduard Schwartz, *Über die pseudoapostolischen Kirchenordnungen* (Strasbourg: Trubner, 1910).

¹⁴ Richard H. Connolly, trans., *The So-Called Egyptian Church Order and Derived Documents*, Texts and Studies 8:4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1916) esp. 136–40.

¹⁵ Burton Scott Easton, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1934).

Gregory Dix,¹⁶ and especially Bernard Botte¹⁷ solidified the hitherto commonly held hypothesis that the document was the work of the martyr presbyter of Rome to whom could be attributed an impressive corpus of Scripture commentaries and anti-heretical treatises.

With very good reason Marcel Metzger has called the “Apostolic Tradition” a “phantom document.”¹⁸ It is impossible to reconstruct it from the existing translations and/or from documents such as the *Canons of Hippolytus* and *Testamentum Domini* that are clearly dependent on it.¹⁹ This does not mean that after the deconstruction of the author and of the unity of the document there is nothing more to be said. On the contrary, as the two commentaries that I discuss in part two illustrate, a great deal can be said.

Much of what is written today about the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* and about the writer formerly known as Hippolytus must take into consideration the monumental work of Allen Brent in his *Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century*. Brent’s thesis is particularly important for our purposes because it underlies the intriguing commentary of Alistair Stewart-Sykes. The remainder of my section consists of a sketch of his thesis, its attractiveness, and some of the problems it poses.

Brent has argued that “Hippolytus” is not so much the name of a single author as a cipher that stands for a Roman house church (or better house school), a community that only in the mid-third century accepted the relatively new situation of a monarchical episcopate at Rome. This monarchical episcopate had grown out of the house church community of Zephyrinus and Callistus, the enemies of the author of the *Refutation of All Heresies*, the same community whose leading presbyters formed the succession list of Roman “bishops” known to Eusebius and to the *Chronograph of 354*. Accepting Guarducci’s assessment that the Ligorio statue was originally the figure of an Epicurean woman philosopher, Brent contends that [when combined with the paschal tables and list of literary works on the base of the statue,] the figure acted as an allegory of Christ-Wisdom and that it first stood in the house school’s library. The writings on the statue therefore, do not refer to the work of an individual but to a school, whose leader, Hippolytus was reconciled to the Logos theology that Callistus and Zephyrinus represented. Brent then argues that the treatise *Contra Noe-*

¹⁶ Gregory Dix, *Apostolike Paradosis: The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of Saint Hippolytus of Rome* (New York: Macmillan, 1937).

¹⁷ Bernard Botte, *La Tradition Apostolique de Saint Hippolyte: Essai de reconstitution*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 39, notes by Albert Gerhards (Münster: Aschendorff, 1963, 5th ed. 1989).

¹⁸ Metzger, “Nouvelles perspectives” 244.

¹⁹ It would be like trying to “homogenize” the three Synoptic Gospels; see Brent, 195.

tum was an effort of this Hippolytus to be reconciled with a church presided over by a monarchical bishop. In the fourth century, Pope Damasus and the poet Prudentius make Hippolytus into a presbyter who was reconciled in the course of the mid-third century Novatian schism because they did not have the conceptual tools to understand a pre-Cyprianic church order, in other words a church that consisted of a confederation of house churches instead of one with a single bishop at the head of multiple house churches. This same reason is proffered for the fact Eusebius and Jerome both fail to name the location of Hippolytus's see.²⁰ Moreover, Brent argues that the attack on Callistus in Book 9 of the *Refutation of the Heresies* by an earlier member of the Hippolytan church school was occasioned not so much by Callistus's lax approach to penitential discipline as by his impertinence in accepting, indeed enticing, expelled members from one house church to join his own. The importance of Hippolytus is signaled by his inclusion in the martyr list of the *Chronograph of 354* (also called the *Liberian Catalogue*) on the same date as the Roman martyr-bishop Pontianus.²¹ The entry reads:

Idus Aug Ypoliti in Tiburtina et Pontiani in Calisti (or 13 August—Hippolytus is commemorated in the cemetery on the Via Tiburtina and Pontianus in the cemetery of Callistus).

The episcopal chronicle in the same *Chronograph of 354* has for the year 235: "At that time Pontianus the bishop and Hippolytus the presbyter were exiled and sent to Sardinia."²² Why, asks Brent, is a single presbyter (presumably among many presbyter-martyrs) mentioned with the bishop Pontianus? Is it a coincidence that August 13 is also the date of the festival of Diana that commemorated the unification of Italian cities into a league federated with Rome?²³ These are important observations that at least point to the symbolic significance of a presbyter named Hippolytus for the Roman Church.

What of the *Apostolic Tradition*? Brent considers this document a work of the Roman Hippolytan school (since it is found on the statue's list), a work eventually assigned to Hippolytus in the church order literature like the Epitome of Book VIII of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, much in the same manner as another famous Roman author, Clement, became a cipher for "the convergence of Jewish and Gentile Christianity."²⁴ Even though he admits that there are difficulties in equating the title on the statue with the

²⁰ Brent, *Hippolytus* 397.

²¹ *Ibid.* 257, 379–80.

²² J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, I:1 (London: Macmillan, 1890) 255.

²³ Brent, *Hippolytus* 291.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 194. Here I am briefly summarizing what it takes Brent nearly 550 pages to argue. See the excellent summary of Manlio Simonetti, "Una nuova proposta su

so-called *Egyptian Church Order*, Brent proceeds on the hypothesis that they are the same document, for this enables him to argue that there are a number of layers in the *Apostolic Tradition* that reveal the hands of the authors of the *Refutation* and the *Contra Noetum* respectively. In part two, I return to this question with regard to the ordination prayers. In the end, however, Brent had to admit: “the problem here is that a composite work of this liturgical and communal character is too fluid in its development and compilation to be able to fix at any one point of time an individual author.”²⁵ With this observation, it seems to me, he is right on target. I would add here that Paul Bradshaw has recently reported some findings of his co-author Edward Phillips who investigated the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* for parallels between the literature attributed to Hippolytus and the document and found four interesting parallels, three of them in the literature that Brent assigns to the author of the *Contra Noetum*.²⁶

Brent’s bold and elaborate hypothesis is built on three major arguments. First, he accepts the attribution of the statue in the Vatican Library not to Hippolytus but to a female figure, a judgment that has received a fairly broad consensus among scholars. Second, he judges that the *Refutation of Heresies* and the *Contra Noetum* represent not only different authors with different styles and incompatible Christologies, but that the *Contra Noetum* is an attempt by a member of the Hippolytan school to reconcile the theology of his community with that of the house church of Zephyrinus and Callistus. This contention is linked to a third and crucial argument with regard to the composition of the Roman Church in the third century.

For this argument Brent builds upon the important work of Peter Lampe who has contended that up until the time of Pope Victor (189–199) the Roman Church lacked a single bishop at its head.²⁷ Each house church had a council of presbyters one of whom could be called *episkopos*—or to use the title given in Justin Martyr *proestēs*.²⁸ One of the major reasons that Lampe sketches this organization of the Roman Church is found in the multiple pre-Constantinian titular churches throughout the city—of which the *Liber Pontificalis* for Pope Marcellus (308–309) says: “he built a cemetery on the Via Salaria and established XXV titular (churches) within the

Ippolito,” *Augustianum* 36 (1996) 13–46; for a summary in English, see review by Robert Butterworth, *Journal of Theological Studies* 47 (1996) 671–76.

²⁵ Brent, *Hippolytus* 306.

²⁶ Paul Bradshaw, “The Problems of a New Edition of the Apostolic Tradition,” in *Comparative Liturgy Fifty Years after Anton Baumstark (1872–1948)*, ed. Robert F. Taft and Gabriele Winkler, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 265 (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 2001) 621–22.

²⁷ Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, trans. Michael Steinhauser (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003).

²⁸ Brent, *Hippolytus* 410–11.

city of Rome.”²⁹ The *tituli* were most probably distinctly organized house churches. This large number, the variety of national and language groups, and the lack of a space conceivably large enough to hold the Christian population, all suggest that the Roman Church had no single venue for meeting or worship.³⁰ Brent also follows Lampe in postulating that the Christian presbyter-bishops of the various house churches were loosely united in a federation that named one of their number as a kind of foreign minister, who corresponded with churches in other cities. This is the position that Hermas ascribes to Clement, the late-first-century writer of the *Letter to the Corinthians*. This same episkopos-presbyter was, according to Brent, responsible for sending relief to the poor in other churches.³¹

Brent accepts the findings of Lampe’s work only up to a point. He prefers to describe the early Christian communities as house schools rather than house churches and he argues that the career of the Hippolytan school (and especially the layers of the *Apostolic Tradition*) suggest that the monarchical episcopate was not established in the Roman Church until the middle of the third century, not the end of the second as Lampe has proposed. Brent’s two reasons for rejecting Lampe’s dating of the introduction of monarchical episcopate are: (1) the survival of the titular churches in Rome, each governed *quasi diocesis*, and (2) the fact that the author of *Refutation* Book IX is arguing not so much about who should be bishop of Rome as to whether one person should arrogate the position of bishop to himself. The significance of Brent’s position will become clearer when I discuss the ordination prayers in part two.

What is one to make of Brent’s extraordinarily inventive proposal? First, there are several weaknesses. Manlio Simonetti has argued persuasively that the *Contra Noetum* contains a theology of the Logos that can easily be ascribed to the later-second-century and indeed that it is more likely that the author of the *Refutation* was familiar with the *Contra Noetum* than vice

²⁹ Duchesne, ed., *Liber Pontificalis*, “. . . fecit cymeterium in Via Salaria et XXV titulos in urbe Romana constituit quasi diocesis.” See Brent, 399–400.

³⁰ See John Baldwin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origin, Development and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 228 (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 1987) 145; see also Giorgio La Piana, “The Roman Church at the End of the Second Century,” *Harvard Theological Review* 18 (1925) 201–77; N.-M. Denis-Boulet, “Titres urbains et communautés dans la Rome chrétienne,” *Maison Dieu* 36 (1953) 14–32; Georg Schöllgen, “Hausgemeinden Oikos–Ekklesiologie und monarchischer Episkopat: Überlegungen zu einer neuen Forschungsgericht,” *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 31 (1988) 74–90. Another symbol of this fractionalization was the exchange of the elements of the Eucharist between various congregations, a practice called the *fermentum*; see Brent, 413–14.

³¹ Brent, *Hippolytus* 455.

versa.³² Even more telling is Simonetti's case against Brent's proposal that the Hippolytan corpus is a tale of reconciliation with the monarchical episcopate at Rome. For Simonetti the letter from Dionysius of Alexandria to Soter, *the* bishop of Rome about A.D. 170, is a sign that the monarchical episcopate had already developed at Rome, and we have no documentary evidence for a council of Roman presbyters with a "foreign minister."³³ So Brent's portrait of a Roman house school community aligning itself with a developing monarchical episcopate at Rome in the mid-third century, while intriguing, is far from certain. Moreover, John Cerrato's carefully argued position that Hippolytus, the writer of biblical commentaries and the *Contra Noetum*, is an early-third-century writer from the East, most likely from Asia Minor, is very persuasive.

On the other hand, Brent has made a very good case for the multiple authorship of the Hippolytan corpus and for the likelihood that the document we know as the *Apostolic Tradition* contains several layers.³⁴ His enormous and densely argued book is like a mountain that no one who deals in Hippolytan studies can circumvent—it must be climbed. So, that is the state of the question of Hippolytus at present.

PART TWO: DIALOGUING WITH THE *APOSTOLIC TRADITION*

The second part of my article deals with the two most recent commentaries on the *Apostolic Tradition*. First, I survey the broad lines and basic thrust of these commentaries, the first by Alistair Stewart-Sykes, and the second by Paul Bradshaw, Maxwell Johnson, and Edward Phillips. Then I consider three crucial liturgical issues that arise from the document especially: regarding the initiation rite (is it Roman?); regarding ordinations (do different types of church orders lie behind the text?); and, regarding the Eucharist (what can one learn from the document's anaphora?).³⁵

Stewart-Sykes, as already noted, makes Brent's argument the foundation of his approach to the so-called *Apostolic Tradition*. In other words he interprets the document as the product of a Roman church school in transition from a loose federation of house churches to a monarchical episcopate. The document represents material stretching over the time period

³² See Simonetti, "Nuova Proposta" 17–33 for the detailed argument; see also Simonetti, *Contra Noetum* 61–68, 121–24.

³³ Ibid. 34.

³⁴ Marksches has suggested that the two layers of work in the *Apostolic Tradition* can be called "Apostolizing" and "Hippolyticizing" ("Wer schrieb" 39, see n. 10 above).

³⁵ Needless to say many other questions could be asked: on the shape of daily liturgical prayer, on the evening agape meal and its relation to the Eucharist, and on the various blessings found throughout the document.

between the late-second century and the mid-third. He adds to Brent's hypothetical picture of the third-century Roman Church in two ways. First, he adopts a social-scientific construct for the difference between the patrons of the house church or house school communities and the teachers (*episkopoi* or bishops) who are in the process of gaining real control over the churches. For Stewart-Sykes these leaders (he thinks the word for them in the preface to the *Apostolic Tradition* would have been *proistamenoí*) were the presbyters whose collegial leadership was being undone by the introduction of the monarchical episcopate.³⁶ It is not at all clear to me that what is fairly well accepted as collegial leadership of the Roman Church in the mid-second century (according to the *Shepherd of Hermas*) is also operative in the early-mid-third century. Even in Justin Martyr's *First Apology* there seems to be one president or *proestēs* responsible for the leadership of the liturgy and the distribution to the poor. This move in interpreting the document as a conflict between patrons and professors will be crucial, as will be later noted, for Stewart-Sykes's understanding of the ordination rites.

A second move beyond Brent in this commentary is the author's discernment of three levels in the so-called *Apostolic Tradition*. One level corresponds to the writer of the *Refutation of All Heresies* in the early-third century. This editor he call the E1 (after *Elenchos* = *Refutation*) redactor. A second level he attributes to the reconciling author of the *Contra Noetum*, suitably called the CN redactor. But, given the nature of a compendium of regulations, Stewart-Sykes recognizes that there was probably a layer of earlier material. This layer he calls P for *paradosis*, the Greek word for tradition.³⁷ Very little of this second-century material is left untouched as far as Stewart-Sykes is concerned. It can be discerned the regulations on the catechumenate and baptism as well as on what has come to be called the *Agape* or "communal Lord's Supper." The first 14 sections (on ordination and other offices) were added to the earliest layer because it was precisely the question of church order that inspired the work of the two redactors.

As in the editions of Bernard Botte and Gregory Dix, Stewart-Sykes presents a reconstruction of the text. He is confident that a single Greek original of what can be called the *Apostolic Tradition* once existed³⁸ even though it nowhere appears in the original language nor does a single manuscript appear without significant lacunae. Part of his argument relates to the apparent literalism of the earliest Latin translation. He quotes Dix to the effect that "in places the style is like nothing so much as the 'English'

³⁶ Stewart-Sykes, *Hippolytus* 41–42. See also Allen Brent, *The Imperial Cult and the Development of Church Order: Concepts and Images of Authority in Paganism and Early Christianity before the Age of Cyprian*, Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae* 45 (Leiden: Brill, 1999)

³⁷ Stewart-Sykes, *Hippolytus* 29.

³⁸ *Ibid.* 26.

of Dutch bulb catalogues.”³⁹ He bases his translation on the oldest extant version available for each section.⁴⁰ The result is a continuous and therefore somewhat misleading text. In general I would have to say that although Stewart-Sykes has made a noble effort in rehabilitating the traditional argument as to the provenance of the document in third-century Rome and although he has made a very attractive case for his position, a reconstruction of this sort will have limited use for scholars.

A very different approach, both in terms of presentation and of content has been taken by Paul Bradshaw, Maxwell Johnson, and Edward Phillips. These authors do not attempt a reconstruction of the document; i.e. they do not homogenize the different translations and dependent documents into one continuous text. Rather they present the various representatives of the text side by side, much in the way that Jean-Michel Hanssens did in his second work on “the liturgy of Hippolytus.”⁴¹ The result is that we can far better appreciate what Metzger means by calling the *Apostolic Tradition* a “phantom document.” A continuous document does not exist in any coherent way—nor was it ever transcribed independent of a collection of similar documents, at least as far as we can tell.⁴² The authors present the *Apostolic Tradition* as a piece of “living literature” rather than the work of a single author or even a series of authors.⁴³ Thus they naturally keep an “open mind” on the issue of the identity of the historical Hippolytus as martyr, bishop, presbyter, or writer. As to the Roman provenance of the document, Bradshaw, Johnson, and Phillips argue persuasively that its so-called Roman elements are all found in much later Roman sources and that therefore they could easily have been influenced by the *Apostolic Tradition* rather than vice versa. I shall return shortly to this question when I deal with the initiation rites.⁴⁴ They basically favor the position taken by Marcel Metzger. Within the existing document, they discern three core sections that they tentatively assign to the mid-second century.⁴⁵ Regarding what

³⁹ Ibid. 46, see Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition* liv.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 48, thus often the Latin.

⁴¹ J. M. Hanssens, *La Liturgie d'Hippolyte: Documents et études* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1970).

⁴² Bradshaw, *Apostolic Tradition* 7.

⁴³ Ibid. 13. Here the commentators follow Jean Magne, *Tradition apostolique sur les charismes et Diataxeis des saints Apôtres* (Paris: Magne, 1975) 76–77, and Alexandre Faivre, “La documentation canonico-liturgique de l’Eglise ancienne,” *Revue des sciences religieuses* 54 (1980) 286. See Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University, 2002) 91–92.

⁴⁴ Bradshaw, *Apostolic Tradition* 5.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 15. Namely: (1) appointment to ministry: 2:1–4, 7:1, 8:1, 9:1–2(?), 10:1–3, 11, 12, 13, 14; (2) initiation: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21:1–5, 12–18, 20, 25–26 (perhaps

can be said positively about the document Bradshaw and his colleagues have this to say:

[W]e judge the work to be an aggregation of material from different sources, quite possibly arising from different geographical regions and probably from different historical periods, from perhaps as early as the mid-second century to as late as the mid-fourth . . . We thus think it unlikely that it represents the practice of any single Christian community, and that it is best understood by attempting to discern the various individual elements and layers that constitute it.⁴⁶

And so these authors have made it difficult for future scholars who make use of their edition and commentary to continue to make blithe generalizations about the state of liturgy in the Roman Church of the early-third century. But the proof of commentaries is in the details. Let us turn, then to three significant issues: initiation, ordination, and Eucharist.

A Roman Initiation Rite?

The catechumenal and baptismal rites found in *Apostolic Tradition* (nos. 15–21) are of special importance because they have been used to argue the validity of contemporary sacramental/liturgical practices on the basis of their origin in the third-century Roman Church. A number of observations are in order. First, the document consists of several historical/editorial layers. For example, there seems to be some confusion as to whether a presbyter or bishop performs the baptism in the water (21:9–19). Likewise, the person coming up from the water is anointed by a presbyter, the bishop then lays his hand on him with a prayer, and finally he is anointed a second time. Perhaps this multiple anointing was inspired by later editors or translators not understanding the earlier equivalence of presbyters and bishops and thus needing to find some role for the bishop where the presbyter only appeared in the original text. Second, the number and variety of professions (actors, soldiers, teachers) represented in the interrogation of the candidates for the catechumenate does indeed suggest an urban setting for these rites.

Stewart-Sykes interprets the rites of initiation within the basic Roman framework which I described earlier. But some of this argument is circular, for example when he assumes the setting of the Roman house church/school to account for his inclusion of the phrase: “in the house” a reading found only in the *Testamentum Domini*.⁴⁷ He also argues that the setting

parts of 21:27–28, 31–32, 34, 37–38); (3) community meals and prayer: 23, 24, 25, 26 (?), 27, 28:4–6, 29 A, 30A, 31, 32, 33, 35.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 14. It is a pity that neither commentaries attempt a *stemma* for either the translations or the various versions. See, e.g., Marksches, “Wer schrieb” 6 (translations), 12 (church orders); see also Bradshaw, *Search* 76.

⁴⁷ Stewart-Sykes, *Hippolytus* 98–99.

apart of catechumens for the last stage of their preparation for baptism is mirrored by the later Roman term for those chosen, the *electi*.⁴⁸ But a very similar process is described by the pilgrim, Egeria, for the Jerusalem Church in the late-fourth century.⁴⁹ (There is a lacuna in the Latin text of *Apostolic Tradition* here and so we have no way of knowing the original term used for “the chosen.”) Another argument that Stewart-Sykes adduces for the early Roman origin of the text is the use of Greek (the language of the “original” document) for the baptismal interrogation in the Gelasian Sacramentary of the sixth and seventh century.⁵⁰ But the introduction of Greek into the Roman liturgy (for example in the use of *Kyrie Eleison*) entered the Roman Rite only with the Byzantine reconquest of the city in the sixth century and can in no way be considered a holdover from an early Greek-speaking Roman Church.

Stewart-Sykes’s commitment to a Roman provenance for *Apostolic Tradition* also moves him to accept the Eastern versions of the postbaptismal hand-laying prayer by the bishop instead of the Latin reading. The Latin version of the prayer reads this way:

Lord God, who have made them worthy to receive the forgiveness of sins through the laver of regeneration of the Holy Spirit, send on them your grace, that they may serve you according to your will; for to you is glory, Father and Son with the Holy Spirit in the holy church, both now and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Bohairic (Coptic) translation, on the other hand, reads for the crucial phrase:

[Y]ou have made these worthy to receive forgiveness of their sins for the coming age, make them worthy to be filled with your Holy Spirit and send upon them your grace. . . .⁵¹

The Latin version is certainly closer to the Scriptural allusion to Titus 3:5, and it seems to me that only an anachronistic reading back from later Roman prayers into the text would lead one to accept the Eastern versions over the Latin text.

Bradshaw, Johnson, and Phillips have a more sober approach to the document’s material on initiation. In the first place, since they have not adopted a theory about the *Apostolic Tradition* as a whole, they have considerably greater freedom in treating the various problematic aspects of the text. These authors argue that three levels can be discerned in the

⁴⁸ Ibid. 107, see *Apostolic Tradition* no. 20.

⁴⁹ See *Peregrinatio Egeriae* 45, in *Egeria’s Travels*, ed. John Wilkinson, 3rd ed. (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1999) 161–62.

⁵⁰ Stewart-Sykes, *Hippolytus* 109.

⁵¹ No. 21:21 in the translation of Bradshaw and his colleagues. See Aidan Kavanagh, *Confirmation: Origins and Reform* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1988) 47.

initiatory material contained in chapters 20–21 (on the immediate preparation for baptism and the rites associated with the baptismal bath, anointings, and the first Eucharist). An early, perhaps second-century, level is suggested by those sections in which no specific minister is indicated for the various actions. A somewhat later level inserts directions for the ministry of the bishop in initiation. Finally, a third level is characterized by specific directions for the actions of presbyters and deacons.⁵²

The authors seem generally happy to accept a third-century context for most of the initiation material especially given the role assigned to the teachers (no. 15) and the list of the prohibited professions (no. 16) for those who seek baptism.⁵³ On the other hand they express considerable skepticism as to whether a three-year catechumenate existed in the third century and they point out that the document would be the sole ante-Nicene testimony to the imposition of hands at the dismissal of the catechumens from the assembly.⁵⁴ They also argue that there is nothing in chap. 20 that speaks of bathing on a Thursday, fasting on a Friday, and being baptized at a vigil on a Saturday to indicate that this is necessarily a reference to *Easter* baptism. As a matter of fact they point out that since Easter baptism is known in the third century to both Tertullian and to the author of the Commentary on Daniel, traditionally attributed to “Hippolytus,” it would be somewhat odd if the compilers meant to indicate Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week (to use an anachronism) but did not do so explicitly.⁵⁵

Do the baptismal rites described in the document originate in Rome? One of the traditional arguments for a Roman provenance has been the text of the baptismal creed in the Latin manuscript.⁵⁶ Bradshaw and his colleagues agree with the arguments of Wilhelm Kinzig and Markus Vinzent who regard the Latin version of the creed as an updated version that corresponds to a late-fourth-century situation.⁵⁷ In my opinion, since church orders represent “living literature,” it is very feasible that translators made this kind of interpolation into traditional documents. Bradshaw, Johnson, and Phillips also argue that the combination of prebaptismal and

⁵² Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 108, 124.

⁵³ Ibid. 85, 93.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 96–98, 102.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 110–111. See Paul Bradshaw, “Diem baptismo sollemniorum: Initiation and Easter in Christian Antiquity,” in *Living Water, Sealing Spirit*, ed. M. Johnson (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1995) 137–47. Note that Cerrato has recently argued fairly persuasively for an Eastern origin for the commentary on Daniel ascribed to Hippolytus, see n. 9.

⁵⁶ The Eastern versions show clear late-fourth-century interpolation, e.g. in the Coptic use of “one substance” with regard to the persons of the Trinity, see Bradshaw et al., 114.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 126; see M. Vinzent, “Die Entstehung des römischen Glaubensbekenntnis,” in Kinzig et al., *Tauffragen* 189.

postbaptismal anointings occur nowhere before the fourth century. In fact, there is no evidence for a prebaptismal anointing at all in the West prior to Ambrose.⁵⁸ On the other hand, they admit that an association between postbaptismal imposition of hands and the gift of the Holy Spirit can be found in the third-century North African authors Tertullian and Cyprian. More troubling is the second postbaptismal anointing performed by the bishop. I have already suggested that this anointing may have been added because of a confusion of the role of presbyters and bishops. On the basis of comparisons with the North African evidence, the lack of evidence of anointing associated with the “spiritual seal” (*spiritale signaculum*) described by Ambrose, and the fact that this episcopal postbaptismal anointing does not appear in the West until the Letter of Pope Innocent I to Decentius of Gubbio (416), the authors conclude that the original version of the document may well have “consisted simply of a hand-laying prayer and consignation.”⁵⁹ They also point out that the Latin version’s description of the eucharistic offering that includes the phrase “which the Greek calls the antitype” is a clear sign that this is not a mere translation but a reworking of the original Greek text.

All of this leads me to conclude that the parallels of the initiation rites in the *Apostolic Tradition* to later evidence in the Roman Rite do *not* demonstrate a third-century Roman origin to our material but rather that the liturgical material reworked as “living literature” in the fourth century had an influence on later Roman practice.

Ordination Rites

I now turn to the document’s ordination rites and raise the question whether they reflect a period of transition in church order. Interpreting the section on ordination in the *Apostolic Tradition* is crucial for assessing the recent proposals of Brent and Stewart-Sykes. First, I briefly review Stewart-Sykes’s argument that the *Apostolic Tradition* is the product of a “Hippolytan School” at Rome in the mid-third century. This school had been reconciled to the majority Church that recently had established a monarchical episcopate. Thus the Christology of an earlier member of the school (the redactor of the *Refutation*) was modified to fall in line with his former opponents Zephyrinus and Callistus. The shift to accepting a monarchical form of episcopate is also manifest in the tension between the former patrons (*presbyters*) who controlled the church-houses and the teachers (*episkopoi* or bishops) who were now in command. The section on ordination, he argues, was added to an earlier set of regulations precisely because of the crisis in church leadership.

⁵⁸ Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 131.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 133.

Stewart-Sykes, in agreement with Brent, discerns two strata in the ordination prayers. The prayer for the bishop represents the thought of the author of the *Refutation* while the prayer for presbyters reflects the thought of the author of the *Contra Noetum*.⁶⁰ The argument is somewhat counterintuitive. One would have thought that the earlier stage would have reflected the corporate episcopate while the later stage the sole bishop. According to Stewart-Sykes, the prayer over a bishop (no. 3) was originally intended for presbyters but was reformulated in a social situation where teachers (bishops) had to vie with patrons (presbyters) for control over the community. Hence the emphasis on sacerdotal language, for example, language about the high priesthood, the offering of gifts, and the forgiveness of sins.⁶¹

I agree with Stewart-Sykes that the prayer for presbyters (no. 7) betrays a very different theology from the prayer for the bishop. Here the imagery is no longer that of Abraham and the priesthood but rather of Moses and assistance in leadership. It is not hard to see two different hands at work in these ordination prayers and thus two different strata in the document.

Bradshaw, Johnson, and Phillips take a different approach to the ordination rites. For example, the rubrics for the election and ordination of a bishop mention the imposition of hands twice. First, an unspecified group is to lay hands; then one of the bishops is chosen to impose hands and pray. A number of solutions have been proposed, but Bradshaw and his colleagues suggest that two sets of directions have been fused into one document.⁶² I agree that this is a better solution than arguing for example as does Rordorf that the first imposition made the candidate a member of the episcopal college and the second imposition imparted the Spirit,⁶³ although I must admit that the logic of compilers putting contrary directives into the same document escapes my modern Western mind. These three authors also favor a rather late dating for the ordination prayer of a bishop, claiming that since “doctrinal developments generally appear in theological discourse well before they find a place in liturgical texts, which are by nature more conservative, it is unlikely that the prayer—at least in the form in which we have it—is older than the mid-third century, and may well be much later still.”⁶⁴ This argument is founded on the use of the language of “high

⁶⁰ It should be noted here that Brent is aware of the difficulties in assigning authorship to a work like the *Apostolic Tradition* as well as of the tentative nature of equating it with the so-called *Egyptian Church Order*. See Brent, *Hippolytus* 306.

⁶¹ Stewart-Sykes, *Apostolic Tradition* 62–63.

⁶² Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 28–29.

⁶³ Ibid. 28; citing the suggestion of Willy Rordorf, “L’ordination de l’évêque selon la Tradition apostolique d’Hippolyte de Rome,” *Questions Liturgiques* 55 (1974) 145–50.

⁶⁴ Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 35.

priesthood.” But, as the authors admit, the language of high priesthood is used allusively in *1 Clement* as well as *Didache* 13:3. I am disinclined to date this prayer later than the mid-third century when sacerdotal language has been adopted for ordained ministers. Such language, it is true, is not used of Christian ministers in the New Testament, but it does hover in the background waiting to be applied to the ordained not long after. Bradshaw and his colleagues are on firmer ground when they suggest that the use of the language of high priesthood and a highly defined role for the bishop are part of the struggle over monarchical episcopate and the tensions of transition to a different sort of church order from a governing council of presbyters.⁶⁵ This would suggest either Rome or Alexandria as the provenance for these particular prayers since those were the churches to which the monarchical episcopate came relatively late.

The next controverted question in the sections on ordination is the puzzling rubric for the ordination of a presbyter. The translation of the Latin version by the Bradshaw team reads:

And when a presbyter is ordained, let the bishop lay [his] hand on his head, the presbyters also touching [him], and let him say according to those things which have been said above about the bishop, praying and saying:⁶⁶

But the text goes on to give an entirely different prayer than the one said at the ordination of a bishop. I have already alluded to the opinion that these ordination prayers betray different hands. Bradshaw and his colleagues make the reasonable suggestion that the prayer for the presbyter could well come from a time when a church was governed by a council of presbyter-*episkopoi*.⁶⁷

According to the Bradshaw group the translator thought that the rubric describing the ordination of a presbyter referred, not to the *action* of the communal imposition of hands, but rather to the prayer itself. This conclusion was reached because the translator did not understand that the presbyters originally ordained one of their own to be bishop. How this particular rubric should be read has been much discussed, but it seems to me that the suggestion made by C. H. Turner and adapted by Dix and Hanssens among others, is much more feasible.⁶⁸ Turner thought that the prayer for the bishop would have been said up to the point where it be-

⁶⁵ Ibid. 34.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 56. Cum autem presbyter ordinatur, inponat manum super caput eius episcopus contingentibus etiam presbyteris et dicat secundum ea, quae praediximus super episcopum, orans et dicens: The Latin edition I follow here is Erik Tidner (ed.), *Didascaliae apostolorum, Canonum ecclesiasticorum, Traditionis apostolicae versiones Latinae*, Texte und Untersuchungen 75 (Berlin: Akademie, 1963) 117–50.

⁶⁷ Ibid. 59.

⁶⁸ Cuthbert H. Turner, “The Ordination of a Presbyter in the Church Order of

comes clear that the specific ministry of the bishop is mentioned, and then the paragraph about presbyters would be added. This argument has merit. The prayer for presbyters is extremely brusque and goes immediately into a request for the grace of the presbyterate. There is hardly an introductory section describing God's qualities and action. Either the prayer given in no. 7 has lost its original introduction or Turner is correct in saying that the first part of the prayer for a bishop was used up to the point where it becomes clear that a presbyter is being ordained. In the end I agree with Turner.

In any case my review of the treatment of the ordination rites and prayers suggests that both recent commentaries are on the right track when they argue that the document bears witness to a developing church order, although I have to express my doubts that the document is a witness to a struggle between patrons (presbyters) and teachers (*episkopoi*) for control over the Church. But let me add that the consensus achieved would point to the end of the second or the beginning of the third century as the original stratum of the *Apostolic Tradition*.

Eucharistic Prayer

Finally, what can one learn from the Eucharistic prayer that follows the ordination rite for a bishop (no. 4)? Very few elements in the literature of the early Church have had as much influence as the anaphora found in the *Apostolic Tradition*. It has, of course, been used as the basis of the Second Eucharistic Prayer in the Roman Rite as well as by a number of other churches. As far as this inquiry is concerned, the major question is: does this prayer in its integrity represent an anaphora that was used in Rome (or anywhere else for that matter) in the early-third century?

I shall deal albeit briefly with four issues here: (1) What lies behind the imagery of the prayer? (2) is the institution narrative a part of the original nucleus of the prayer or a later addition? (3) what is the meaning of *ministrare* in the anamnesis/oblation section of the prayer? and (4) is the epiclesis in its existing form original to the prayer? Clearly the document makes no pretense whatsoever that this is *the* eucharistic prayer of the Church. It is an example of a prayer given in a specific situation (the ordination of a bishop); later in the document (no. 9) it is clear that the prayers proposed are models and that the bishop gives thanks according to his ability.⁶⁹

First, Enrico Mazza has proposed, regarding the background of this

Hippolytus," *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1915) 542–47. See the literature cited in Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 55.

⁶⁹ At least in the Eastern translations, see Bradshaw et al., 68. As with the

prayer, a number of parallels between the anaphora of the *Apostolic Tradition* and the *Paschal Homilies* of Melito of Sardis and Pseudo-Hippolytus, both associated with the second century.⁷⁰ He does not suggest a strict dependence between the homilies and the anaphora but he does argue that they belong to the same tradition.⁷¹ Bradshaw has challenged Mazza's reading by citing Robert Taft's principle that one can establish a link between a liturgical text and an author only when one finds vocabulary and phrases that are exclusive to both.⁷² What can be said, according to Bradshaw and his colleagues in their commentary, is that some of the language, e.g., *puerum* (child) or *angelum voluntatis tuae* (angel of your will) do suggest a second-century origin for at least parts of the prayer since these words are not found in later literature.⁷³ For Stewart-Sykes the language in this section is reminiscent of the theology of the *Contra Noetum*.⁷⁴ Thus this part of the prayer would belong to the mid-third century. I have already referred to Simonetti's more plausible argument for dating the *Contra Noetum* to the late-second century.⁷⁵ Other sections of the prayer lead me to suggest that as a whole it cannot be ascribed to the early-third century, but that there are very early elements contained in it, as one might suspect with a set of regulations that are being reworked.

Second, the anaphora found in the *Apostolic Tradition* is the only eucharistic prayer we have from the ante-Nicene period that contains an institution narrative. Enrico Mazza interprets this narrative as the culmination of the series of Christological thanksgivings in the first part of the prayer. As the last in the series it serves as a formula for the etiology of the rite.⁷⁶ Stewart-Sykes, because of the transition between it and the thanksgiving series, sees it as part of the same redactional level.⁷⁷ Bradshaw and his colleagues, on the other hand, follow the opinion of E. C. Ratcliff who thought that the institution narrative was clumsily connected to what went before. (Opinions about transitions in prayers seem to be notoriously sub-

ordination prayers our ability to make comparisons is hampered by the omission of this prayer from the Coptic (Sahidic) and Arabic translations.

⁷⁰ Enrico Mazza, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer*, trans. Ronald E. Lane (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1995) 103–26.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 128–29.

⁷² Paul Bradshaw, "A Paschal Root to the Anaphora of the Apostolic Tradition? A Response to Enrico Mazza," *Studia Patristica* 35 (2001) 257–65; the citation is from Robert Taft, "St. John Chrysostom and the Byzantine Anaphora That Bears His Name," in *Essays on Early Eastern Eucharistic Prayers*, ed. Paul Bradshaw (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1997) 209.

⁷³ Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 37, 45.

⁷⁴ Stewart-Sykes, *Apostolic Tradition* 68–69.

⁷⁵ See above, n. 31.

⁷⁶ Mazza, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer* 135.

⁷⁷ Stewart-Sykes, *Apostolic Tradition* 71.

jective. What is smooth to one scholar is often perceived as awkward to another.) The Bradshaw trio judges the entire institution narrative and anamnesis (but not the oblation) as a late interpolation into the prayer, that is, later than the third century. They suggest that it might have been introduced about the same time as the institution narrative in the *Sacramentary of Sarapion*.⁷⁸

I am inclined to agree with Bradshaw, Johnson, and Phillips that the institution narrative is added to eucharistic prayers only in the fourth century, since none of the prayers and fragments that predate Nicaea (*Addai and Mari*, *Didache* 9–10, *the Strasbourg Papyrus*, *Apostolic Constitutions*, Book 7) has an institution narrative. The only piece of counterevidence that does relate to prayer but is not a prayer text itself, but the description of elements that go into the institution narrative in the *First Apology* (66–67) of Justin Martyr.

Third, the oblation formula with the phrase: “We offer to you the bread and cup, giving thanks to you because you have held us worthy to stand before you and minister to you” (*gratias tibi agentes, quia nos habuisti adstare coram te et tibi ministrare*) has also been the subject of a good deal of discussion and debate. What precisely does the Latin infinitive *ministrare* translate: *diakonein* or *leitourgein* (Greek for “to serve”) or *hierateuein* (Greek for “to act as a priest”)? Bradshaw and his colleagues simply translate the Latin as “minister to you,” rejecting Bernard Botte’s reading of “exercise the priesthood.”⁷⁹ The Ethiopic translation as well as the versions of the prayer in *Apostolic Constitutions* and *Testamentum Domini* all have some form of “serve you in the priesthood.” This is the meaning that Stewart-Sykes accepts in his reconstruction, reasoning that this particular anaphora was inserted immediately after the ordination prayer for a bishop.⁸⁰ I find that reasoning convincing. After all we have here not *the* eucharistic prayer of the Roman (or any other church) but rather *a* eucharistic prayer that is proposed for a specific occasion. However the phrase is interpreted in contemporary adaptations of this prayer, the original must have referred to the service of the priesthood and the original Greek term was most likely *hierateuein*.

The fourth issue, the epiclesis, is the most complex, mainly because the Latin text is very difficult at this point. Bradshaw and his colleagues translate the Latin text as follows:

And we ask that you would send your Holy Spirit in the oblation of [your] holy

⁷⁸ Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 46. See Maxwell Johnson, *The Prayers of Sarapion of Thmuis: A Literary, Liturgical, and Theological Analysis*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 249 (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 1995) 219–26.

⁷⁹ Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition* 48.

⁸⁰ Stewart-Sykes, *Apostolic Tradition* 66.

church, [that] gathering [them] into one you will give to all who partake of the holy things [to partake] in the fullness of the Holy Spirit for the strengthening of faith in truth that we may praise and glorify you through. . . .⁸¹

The concluding doxology follows. The basic problem is that the connection between the first part of the epiclesis that asks for the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the offering with a prayer for unity is rather awkward—by any standard. Moreover there is no object for the participle “gathering” (*congregans*); hence what is being gathered is not altogether clear. Bradshaw and his colleagues agree with Mazza that the first phrase is most likely an addition to the original version of the prayer.⁸² For them:

the original prayer . . . would appear to have been created by the combination of a substantial hymn of praise for redemption with perhaps a brief offering/thanksgiving formula, and then with a short petition for the communicants and a concluding doxology Everything else was probably added in the course of the fourth century.⁸³

Stewart-Sykes, on the other hand, proposes a different reading altogether. He hypothesizes that a Greek copyist of the manuscript made an error in transcribing *prophoron* (offering) for *presbyterion* (presbytery) because he was making his copy at a time when the epiclesis over the gifts had come into use. The Latin and Ethiopic translators merely translated what was in front of them. Again, in line with his interpretation of the final stage of the document as the reconciliation with a monarchical episcopate represented by the author of the *Contra Noetum*, Stewart-Sykes suggests that an anaphora being prayed in the course of an ordination service might well emphasize the unity of the presbytery with the bishop.⁸⁴ There is some merit in this proposal, but I think it is weakened by the unlikelihood of Brent’s basic argument about the development of church order as well as by the fact that there is no way of telling whether the supposed scribal error is better than a good guess.

In the end, I would judge that Bradshaw, Johnson, and Phillips are

⁸¹ Bradshaw et al. *Apostolic Tradition* 40. Et petimus, ut mittas spiritum tuum sanctum in oblationem sanctae ecclesiae; in unum congregans des omnibus qui percipiunt sanctis in repletionem spiritus sancti ad confirmationem fidei in veritate, ut te laudemus et glorificemus per

⁸² Ibid. 42. Also for a review of the scholarly opinions. They also find support in the studies of Sebastian Brock (“The Epiklesis in the Antiochene Baptismal Ordines,” *Symposium Syriacum 1972*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 197 [Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 1974] 183–218; Gabriele Winkler, “Weitere Beobachtungen zur frühen Epiklese (den Doxologien und dem Sanctus): über die Bedeutung der Apokryphen für die Erforschung der Entwicklung der Riten,” *Oriens Christianus* 80 (1996) 1–18.

⁸³ Bradshaw et al. *Apostolic Tradition* 46.

⁸⁴ Stewart-Sykes, *Apostolic Tradition* 74.

correct with regard to the original state of the prayer. As an element within “living literature” the eucharistic prayer would easily have been liable to a great deal of interpolation, especially in the rapidly developing situation of the fourth century when the Latin translation seems to have been made.⁸⁵

CONCLUSION

On the basis of this present study,⁸⁶ I draw five conclusions.

(1) The first conclusion is obvious, namely that, in its present state, the document commonly but probably mistakenly referred to as the *Apostolic Tradition* does not represent the state of affairs in the Church at Rome in the early-third century. While Rome cannot be completely ruled out as one of the places that the document originated, it seems far more likely that it was “born” in the East, perhaps even Alexandria as Jean Michel Hanssens suggested almost 40 years ago.

(2) One can speak only cautiously of authorship of a document that consists of church regulations. It is a piece of “living literature.” At the most, one can say that there are some phrases that point to the compilers’ familiarity with the work attributed to the Hippolytus of the *Contra Noetum* and that some elements in the document have a second-century origin.

(3) The current state of research favors a picture of church order and ministerial structure in transition, if not necessarily at Rome, then perhaps in various churches of the third century.

(4) There is a very real possibility that the *Apostolic Tradition* describes liturgies that never existed. A fortiori, great caution must be employed in appealing to this document to justify contemporary rites. (I do not object to someone wanting to use the anaphora contained in the ordination rite for a bishop [no. 4], for example, as the basis of a contemporary prayer. Ancient documents often provide fine exemplars for prayer today. But I do question the unjustifiable reason for using this prayer, namely the assumption that it was *the* eucharistic prayer of the early-third-century Church at Rome.)

(5) Many doubts have been expressed here, and many questions left open. Even if the liturgies described in the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* never existed in practice, they have had a major impact on the subsequent history of liturgical practice especially and perhaps even ironically in the West. The document addressed in this study has shaped the contemporary liturgies of initiation, ordination, and Eucharist. Of this there can be no doubt at all.

⁸⁵ For a treatment of the development of early eucharistic praying, see John F. Baldovin, “Eucharistic Prayer,” in *The New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. Paul F. Bradshaw (London: SCM, 2002) 193–99.

⁸⁶ This article was delivered as the Donahue Lecture at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, and as the Diekmann Lecture, St. John’s University, Collegeville, both in March 2003.