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## INTRODUCTION. MATERIALS

THE authorities from which we derive our knowledge of the liturgy in the first three hundred years or so fall into two groups—

1. The Patristic writings,
2. The Church Order documents.

1. Of the Patristic writings it is not necessary to say much.

There is first the *Didache*, a work consisting of two different parts, the “Two Ways,” cc. i.—vi., which is probably a Jewish work, and cc. vii.—end, containing certain disciplinary rules. It is the second part that is valuable for our purpose. The whole work in its present form is probably to be dated c. 110—130.

Of St Justin, of St Irenaeus, Tertullian and St Cyprian, it is not necessary to say anything.

Then there are two apocryphal works, the “Acts of John,” and the “Acts of Thomas.” These two works are apparently to be dated at c. 160 and c. 200 respectively. Certain descriptions and forms are given in connexion with the celebration of the Eucharist which are of great value, though from the point of view of later days these works were heretical.

But from all these works except the two last all the knowledge which we gain as to the Liturgy of the Eucharist is only incidental and therefore somewhat uncertain.

2. It is when we come to the Church Orders that we first come to definite forms. The dates of these documents are however at present unsettled and it is therefore necessary to deal with them somewhat fully in view of the date which we have assigned to them.

### *The Church Orders*

By far the most important sources of our knowledge of the Liturgy of the first four hundred years are the "Church Orders."

The most complete form of the Church Order is to be found in the work which is known as the "Apostolic Constitutions."

The date of this work is very generally accepted as being somewhere about the last quarter of the fourth century, and need not be discussed here.

The important question is, What is the relation of this work to the other and smaller "Church Orders"? Are the "Apostolic Constitutions" the final form which the Church Orders took? or are the "Church Orders" simply extracts or epitomes of the eighth book of the Constitutions and so of later date?

The "Apostolic Constitutions" are made up from several sources.

Books I.—VI. are the Didaskalia, of which a somewhat earlier form in Syriac is still extant.

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Book VII. is an amplification of the *Didache* and contains the whole of the latter work embedded in it.

Book VIII. is the most complete and finished form of Church Order, and it is with this portion of the Constitutions that we are chiefly concerned.

It contains the Liturgy in its completest form, Proanaphora and Anaphora. The Canons of the Apostles are given at the end.

The other works are as follows:

I. The *ἐπιτομή*, so called, of the eighth book of A. C.

This work is very closely related with A. C. VIII. It is either the immediate source from which A. C. VIII. is taken, or else is an immediate *ἐπιτομή*.

It is divided into five parts, each part having a special name.

(a) *Διδασκαλία τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων περὶ χαρισμάτων.*

(b) *Διατάξεις τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων περὶ χειροτονιῶν διὰ Ἰππολύτου.*

(c) *Παύλου τοῦ ἁγίου ἀποστόλου διατάξεις περὶ κανόνων ἐκκλησιαστικῶν.*

(d) *Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων διατάξεις.*

(e) *περὶ εὐταξίας διδασκαλία πάντων τῶν ἀποστόλων.*

The whole of the matter here contained occurs almost word for word in the text of A. C. VIII. and this work clearly stands between A. C. VIII. and the other Church Orders whether it be in the ascending or descending line<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The text of the *ἐπιτομή* with critical apparatus is given in Funk's *Didaskalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, vol. II.

II. A group of documents closely related to each other and which constitute the "Church Orders" proper.

(1) The "Apostolic Church Order." This little work has been given the title of "Church Order," a name which really is not suitable. The work is, it would seem, a popular handbook rather for lay folk than others and cannot be regarded as dealing with church discipline. It is an enlarged form of the "Two Ways" (*Didache* i.—vi.) and dates apparently from the second century. The text is extant in Greek and in several versions.

(2) The Egyptian Hexateuch<sup>1</sup>. This work consists of six books and exists in Coptic both in the Sahidic and Bohairic dialects, in the latter of which the Canons of the Apostles occur as an appendix making a seventh book.

Book I. is the "Apostolic Church Order."

(3) The Ethiopic "Statutes of the Apostles"<sup>2</sup>. This work is a translation of the Coptic Hexateuch, but is important as having among additional matter some that probably represents Coptic omissions.

(4) The "Canons of Hippolytus"<sup>3</sup>. This work, existing only in Arabic, is a translation from the Coptic and represents a variant text, probably somewhat later, of the second book of the Coptic Hexateuch.

(5) The "Testamentum Domini nostri Jesu Christi"<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The *Canones ecclesiastici* (Sahidic) published in de Lagarde's *Aegyptiaca*, and *The Apostolical Constitutions and Canons of the Apostles* (Bohairic) by H. Tattam, 1840, with an English translation which is inaccurate.

<sup>2</sup> Text and translation in G. Horner's *Statutes of the Apostles*.

<sup>3</sup> Text and Latin translation in von Haneberg's *Canones Hippolyti*, now out of print. A German translation is given by von Achelis in his *Canones Hippolyti*.

<sup>4</sup> The Syriac text with a Latin translation and notes was published by

This is an apocryphal work in Syriac which contains embedded in it a form of Book II. of the Coptic Hexateuch.

(6) "Canonum Reliquiae<sup>1</sup>." These are fragments of an ancient Latin version of the work represented by Book II. of the Coptic Hexateuch.

Thus all these documents are closely interrelated.

The two questions to be decided are :

- I. What is their relationship exactly to each other ?
- II. What is the relationship between these "Church Orders" proper and A. C. VIII. ?

I. The Egyptian Hexateuch or Egyptian Church Order seems to answer both these questions.

The first book is a version of the "Apostolic Church Order," and is of little moment.

The second book is the same work as the Canons of Hippolytus, the "Canonum Reliquiae," and the work embedded in the "Testamentum Domini."

The remaining Books III.—VI. (or §§ 64—77) are really a later edition of Book II. and cover exactly the same ground.

This is evident when the contents of Book II. are placed parallel to the contents of Books III.—VI.

#### BOOK II.

§ 31 concerning Bishops.

Their election, consecration, the Eucharist celebrated after the consecration, beginning with *Sursum corda*.

#### BOOKS III.—VI.

§§ 64, 65 concerning Bishops.

Their election and consecration. Eucharist to follow, Gospel, sermon, washing of hands, deacon's proclamation, Invocation of Holy Spirit, etc.

Mgr Ignatius Rahmani, Uniat-Patriarch of Antioch. An English translation with notes has been made by Dr Cooper and Dr Maclean, *The Testament of our Lord*.

<sup>1</sup> M. E. Hauler's *Didascalie apostolorum fragmenta veronensia latina*.

## BOOK II.

§§ 32, 33 Ordination of Priests according to the form we have given for the Bishop.

Ordination of Deacons.

§ 34 Confessors.

The confessor not to be ordained to the diaconate or priesthood, but if appointed a Bishop is to have hands laid on him for that office.

§ 35 Readers.

To be appointed without laying on of hands.

§ 36

Subdeacons also to be appointed without the laying on of hands.

§ 37 Widows.

Not to be ordained. Their qualifications.

§ 38 Virgins not to be ordained.

Virginity a matter of free choice.

§ 39 Charismata of healing.

No ordination for such; the power manifests itself.

§ 40 concerning new men who come in to the Faith.

§ 41 concerning works and crafts.

Enquiries to be made into lives and occupations of all who seek admission to the church.

§ 42 Catechumenate to last three years.

## BOOKS III.—VI.

§ 66 Ordination of Priests and Deacons.  
Forms given.

§ 67 Confessors.

Not to be ordained. If he has confessed he is worthy of great honour. If need to make him Bishop or Priest or Deacon he is to be duly ordained to such an office.

§ 66

To the same effect.

§ 66

The same, also of deaconesses.

§ 67

To the same effect.

§ 68

To same effect, not in contempt of marriage.

§ 70 Exorcists and those possessing charismata not to be ordained.

A gift of the Holy Ghost.

§ 74

To same effect but shorter.

§ 75 The same but at greater length.

Mention made of Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Nativity of Christ, Baptism of Our Lord, Feast of the Apostles, and Feast of Stephen.

§ 75 The same.

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## BOOK II.

## BOOKS III.—VI.

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|---|--|
| § 43 The instruction of catechumens.  | § 75 Referred to.  |
| § 44 Blessing of catechumens after instruction even by lay instructors.<br>Baptism of Blood.                        | § 75 Mention of lay instructors.<br>No mention of Baptism of Blood.      |
| §§ 45, 46 Long and detailed account of rite of Baptism.   | Nothing.   |
| § 47 Regulations for fasting.   | Nothing.   |
| § 48 Grace to be said before meals.   | Nothing.   |
| § 49 Agape not to be thrown open to unbelievers.  | § 75 To same effect.   |
| § 50 Eating and drinking to be with moderation.   | § 76 To same effect.   |
| § 51 Grace to be said after meals.  |  |
| § 52 concerning the Agape.<br>(Supper of widows.)   | § 76 Regulations dealing with suppers in commemoration of the departed.  |
| § 53 Firstfruits to be brought to the Bishop.<br>Form of thanksgiving to be said over them.                         | § 72 Tithes and firstfruits to be brought for the support of the clergy. |
| § 54 List of produce which may be brought to be blessed.<br>55 Strict fast to be kept on two days preceding Easter. | § 75 Week before Easter to be kept free from work.                       |
| § 56 Deacons to be diligent in their attendance on Bishops.   |  |
| § 57 Believers to pray on waking.<br>To go to any occasional services.  | § 75 Same but much more detailed.  |
| § 58 The Eucharist to be received fasting.  |  |
| § 59 Care to be taken to guard the sacred elements.   |  |
| § 61 No overcharge to be made for burying in the cemeteries.  |  |

## BOOK II.

## BOOKS III.—VI.

§ 62 Long details of hours of prayer.

§ 75 To same effect.

§ 73 The *εὐλογίαι* which are not required for the Eucharist to be divided among the clergy.

§ 77 concerning those who are persecuted for the faith.

Books III.—VI. begin with a long introduction (§ 63) that has no parallel in Book II. Also in Book II. there is nothing similar to § 77 which concludes VI.

This comparison shows us that in the Egyptian Church Order we have not two different works but a first and second edition of one and the same document.

It is most convenient perhaps to call these two recensions, the First Church Order and the Second Church Order.

The Second Church Order we shall deal with later on in connexion with the *ἐπιτομή* of A. C. VIII.

*The First Church Order*

As has been stated above, Book II. of the E. C. O., that is the "First Church Order," is also represented by the Ethiopic version in the Statutes of the Apostles, the Latin Verona fragments, the Canons of Hippolytus and the "Testamentum Domini." These different versions vary in certain points among themselves.

What was the origin of the First Order? The original text was beyond doubt in Greek and has long vanished.

The Coptic was made from the Greek as is evident from the fact that in the Sursum corda the Greek text is simply taken bodily into the translation.



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The Latin is also from the Greek as is evident from such remarks as the following which occur in the text—“in exemplum, quod dicit graecus antitypum,” and “calicem vino mixtum propter antitypum quod dicit graecus ‘similitudinem sanguinis,’” where evidently the translator has before him *ὁμοίωμα* (cf. Sarapion).

The Ethiopic text is translated from the Coptic.

The “Testamentum Domini” is a translation from the Greek and this translation was made in the seventh century by James of Edessa.

The Canons of Hippolytus exist only in the Arabic, and this version clearly comes from the Coptic. In the translation, for example, of the description of the commencement of the liturgy at the consecration of a bishop where the *Sursum Corda* is preserved in Greek in the Coptic text, in the Arabic Canons of Hippolytus all is translated except these Greek words which are simply transliterated.

These different versions vary, some more, some less, among themselves. The oldest underlying text, we believe, is represented by the Coptic version and by the Latin.

The Ethiopic perhaps represents a slightly later recension of the Coptic, and the Canons of Hippolytus another and different recension of the Coptic.

The work has been incorporated into another in the Testament of Our Lord and has suffered some omissions and changes in the process. Probably all these documents have suffered somewhat from copyists.

Perhaps we should first indicate the more important variations.

One of the most important variations is in the liturgical texts given.

The Coptic only gives the commencement of the Eucharist, but there seems little room to doubt that the whole liturgy as given in the Latin version and in the Ethiopic (with additions and alternatives) was originally in the Coptic<sup>1</sup>. In the same way the Coptic omits the ordination prayers which are given by the Ethiopic and Latin<sup>2</sup>. Yet that the forms were once in the Coptic is clear from the direction given in the canon concerning the ordination to the priesthood (§ 32) in which it is directed "and let them pray over him according to the form which we said for the Bishop," though no such form occurs in the text as it has come down to us.

In the Canons of Hippolytus the liturgy is only partly given, thus following closely the text as we have it in the Coptic. In the ordination of priests, as in the Coptic, the same prayer of ordination is to be said as over a Bishop, and the prayer of ordination for a Bishop which is omitted by the Coptic occurs in the C. H. The C. H. also varies in order in the less important parts towards the end, into which also a long homily is inserted.

In the "Testament of Our Lord" there are several omissions.

The Latin version is unfortunately fragmentary but is very close to the text represented by the Coptic though it gives the liturgy, as does the Ethiopic, which is omitted from the Coptic. The Ethiopic gives some extra prayers which are not contained in the Latin.

<sup>1</sup> In the Canon on Confessors, when referring to their ordination, the Bishop is to celebrate the Eucharist: "Now the Bishop shall give thanks (εὐχαριστοῦν) according to the things which we said before." Evidently this shows that the liturgy was once in the Coptic as in the Latin and Ethiopic.

<sup>2</sup> And some in the C. H.