Ten Principles for Interpreting Early Christian Liturgical Evidence[1]

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[Editors' note: Paul F. Bradshaw, Professor of Liturgy at the University of Notre Dame, here challenges some traditional assumptions about how to handle the complex evidence for the evolution of liturgical practice in the first few centuries of Christianity's existence and sets out some principles to guide students in this field.]

As is the case with Jewish liturgy, extant liturgical manuscripts from the Christian tradition are nearly all of relatively recent date, beginning around the eighth century C.E. Sources for a knowledge of the practice of worship prior to that time are fragmentary, consisting chiefly of brief, and often partial, descriptions of rites in letters and sermons; of even briefer, and less easily interpreted, allusions that appear in writings dealing with some quite different subject; of pieces of legislation affecting liturgical matters that occur among the canons produced by various councils and synods; of some fragments of what seem to be the texts of individual prayers; and, last but not least, of the prescriptions concerning worship in an extremely enigmatic genre of early Christian literature, the pseudoapostolic church orders.

All these are, in effect, little more than a series of dots of varying sizes and density on a large sheet of plain paper. To the liturgical historian, therefore, falls the task of attempting to join up those dots and so creating a plausible picture that explains how, and more importantly why, Christian worship evolved in the way that it did. Because, however, the dots on this sheet of paper are not prenumbered and so the connections

which should be made between them are by no means obvious, the assumptions and presuppositions with which one begins such an operation are vitally important in determining its outcome. If one adopts, for example, the axiom that the primary connections must always run between the dots that lie closest to one another on the paper, then one will get a very different picture than if one starts by joining up all the largest dots first and then proceeding to the smaller ones in relative order, no matter how many times one's pencil has to crisscross the page.

What follows, then, is a brief critique of certain methodological presuppositions that have tended to be followed in traditional study of the origins of Christian worship, some indications as to how these are already changing—or in some cases ought to be changing, even if they are as yet not doing so—and the effect that this altered perspective has on our picture of early liturgical practice. Quite fortuitously, it turns out to be a decalogue of proposed principles for the interpretation of early Christian liturgical evidence.

1. What is most common is not necessarily most ancient, and what is least common is not necessarily least ancient.

As I have indicated elsewhere,[2] the dominant view of liturgical scholars concerning the origins of Christian liturgy has traditionally been that the many varied forms of the celebration of the eucharist, of baptism, and perhaps also of other rites that we find in different geographical regions in later centuries can all be traced back to a single common root in their institution by Jesus; and that variety tended to increase in the course of time as the Church developed and these practices were subject to differing local influences and emphases. Thus, it has been thought, what is common to most or all of these later forms must represent the very earliest stratum of Christian worship, while what is found in just a few instances, or merely one, is a later development.[3]

Such a view cannot really be sustained any longer in the light of recent scholarship. Not only has the theory always had

considerable difficulty in demonstrating how such very diverse later practices can all arise from a single source, but it now has to take into account both the fact that Jewish worship of the first century C.E., from which Christian worship took its departure, was not nearly so fixed or uniform as was once supposed, and also the conclusion that New Testament Christianity was itself essentially pluriform in doctrine and practice.

Thus, what is common in later Christian liturgical practice is not necessarily what is most primitive. It certainly may be so, but it is equally possible that similarities that exist between customs in different parts of the ancient world are the result of a conscious movement towards conformity. Similarly, what is unusual or unique is not necessarily a late development. Once again it may be so, but it is equally possible that the unusual is the vestigial remains of what was once a much greater variety of forms of worship than we can now see in the surviving evidence, an ancient local custom that somehow managed to escape—or at least avoid the full effect of—a later process that caused liturgical diversity to contract its horizons.

For the true story of the development of Christian worship seems to have been a movement from considerable differences over quite fundamental elements to an increasing amalgamation and standardization of local customs. This can already be seen in the second century C.E., but it gathered much greater momentum in the fourth, as the Church expanded, as communication—and hence awareness of differences—between different regional centers increased, and above all as orthodox Christianity tried to define itself over against what were perceived as heretical movements, for in such a situation any tendency to persist in what appeared to be idiosyncratic liturgical observances was likely to have been interpreted as a mark of heterodoxy. As Robert F. Taft has written,

> This is the period of the unification of rites, when worship, like church government, not only evolved new forms, but also let the weaker variants of the species die out, as the Church developed, via the creation of intermediate unities, into a federation of federations of local churches, with ever-increasing unity of practice

within each federation, and ever-increasing diversity of practice from federation to federation. In other words what was once one loose collection of individual local churches each with its own liturgical uses, evolved into a series of intermediate structures or federations (later called patriarchates) grouped around certain major sees. This process stimulated a corresponding unification and standardizing of church practice, liturgical and otherwise. Hence, the process of formation of rites is not one of diversification, as is usually held, but of unification. And what one finds in extant rites today is not a synthesis of all that went before, but rather the result of a selective evolution: the survival of the fittest—of the fittest, not necessarily of the best.[4]

2. *The so-called Constantinian revolution served as much to intensify existing trends as it did to initiate new ones.*

The conversion to Christianity of the emperor Constantine early in the fourth century is usually portrayed as marking a crucial turning-point in the evolution of forms of worship; and it is undoubtedly true that a very marked contrast can be observed between the form and character of liturgical practices in the pre-Constantinian and post-Constantinian periods. For example, whereas the first Christians saw themselves as set over against the world and were careful to avoid any compromise with paganism and its customs, stressing rather what distinguished Christianity from other religions, in the fourth century the Church emerged as a public institution within the world, with its liturgy functioning as a *cultus publicus,* seeking the divine favor to secure the well-being of the state, and it was now quite willing to absorb and Christianize pagan religious ideas and practices, seeing itself as the fulfillment to which earlier religions had dimly pointed.

On the other hand, scholars are now beginning to realize that one must be careful not to overstate this contrast between the two periods of ecclesiastical history. A number of developments, the genesis of which has traditionally been ascribed to the changed situation of the Church after the Peace of Constantine, are now shown as having roots that reach back into

the third century, and in some cases even earlier still. Hence, in these respects at least, the so-called Constantinian revolution did not so much inaugurate new liturgical practices and attitudes as create conditions in which some preexistent customs could achieve a greater measure of preeminence than others that were no longer considered appropriate to the changed situation of the Church.

The pattern of daily worship, for example, practiced in the monastic communities that began to emerge in the early fourth century was not entirely a new creation of this movement. In some respects the monastic pattern was simply a conservative preservation of a very traditional style of prayer and spirituality. There are certainly some new features—as for example the regular recitation of the book of Psalms in its entirety and in its biblical order as the cornerstone of the spiritual life—but in other ways the monks and nuns of the fourth century were simply continuing to do what ordinary Christians of earlier centuries had once done. The customs only appear peculiarly monastic because they had now been abandoned by other Christians, who, in the more relaxed atmosphere of the Constantinian era, tended to be more lukewarm about their religious commitment than their predecessors in the age of persecution.[5]

Similarly, the interest in time and history that comes to the fore during this period is not something to which the Constantinian world gave birth, though it certainly suckled and nurtured it. It is simply not true, as earlier generations of liturgical scholars tended to conclude, that the first Christians could not possibly have been interested in discovering and commemorating the precise dates and times of the events of the life of Jesus or in establishing a rhythmical pattern of hours of prayer because they expected the end of this world to come at any moment with the return of their Lord. On the contrary, an interest in time and eternity, history and eschatology, can coexist, and indeed the one can be an expression of the other: the early Christians established regular patterns of daily prayer times not because they thought that the Church was here to stay

for a long while but precisely so that they might practice eschatological vigilance and be ready and watchful in prayer for the return of Christ and the consummation of God's kingdom.

Hence, the interest in eschatology, which certainly declined when it appeared less and less likely that the world was going to end soon, was not simply replaced by a new interest in time and history. Rather, a preexistent interest took on a new vigor in a new situation, and a multiplicity of feasts and commemorations began to emerge in the fourth century in a way they had not done earlier. This development was generated at least in part by apologetic factors. The Church now needed to communicate the tenets of its faith to a barbarian world which was willing to listen, and to defend its doctrinal positions against a variety of heretical attacks; and what better means could be found than the promotion of occasions that publicly celebrated aspects of what the Church believed?[6]

3. Authoritative-sounding statements are not always genuinely authoritative.

Many ancient Christian writers in their allusions to liturgical practices make very emphatic statements about what is or is not the case, and traditional liturgical scholarship has been inclined to accept such remarks as truly authoritative declarations of the established doctrine and practice of the Church at the time that they were written, especially as many of those making these apparently *ex cathedra* pronouncements did actually occupy the office of a bishop. So, to cite two early examples which actually concern the development of the ordained ministry rather than liturgy itself, the First Epistle of Clement, usually thought to have originated from the church at Rome c. 96 C.E., is a long and impassioned denunciation of the church at Corinth for dismissing its presbyters and replacing them with others; and the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, conventionally dated early in the second century, repeatedly insist on the necessity of obedience to the bishop and his fellow ministers. Both have generally been understood as expressing the agreed position of the Church on these issues—that ministers were always appointed for life and that episcopal government was the norm early in the second century. Recent study, however, has suggested that, since they were apparently having to argue the case at considerable length and with great vigor against opponents who seemingly did not share their conclusions, they must, on the contrary, represent only one view among others at the time, a view which ultimately came to triumph but which did not achieve supremacy without a considerable struggle against alternative positions and practices.[7]

Hence the development of ecclesiastical structures and liturgical practices seems to have been much slower than has traditionally been supposed. Many things did emerge quite early in the life of the Church but did not immediately achieve normative or universal status, however strongly some individuals might have thought that they should. Authoritative-sounding statements, therefore, need to be taken with a pinch of salt. When some early Christian author proudly proclaims, for example, that a certain psalm or canticle is sung "throughout the world," it probably means at the most that he knows it to be used in the particular regions he has visited or heard about: it remains an open question whether a similar usage obtained in other parts of the world.[8] Similarly, when some ancient bishop solemnly affirms that a certain liturgical custom is "unheard of" in any church, he is almost certainly excluding from his definition of *church* those groups of Christians whom he judges to be heretical, among whom the practice might well still be flourishing as it once had done in many other places in earlier times, in spite of our bishop's confident (though ignorant) assertion to the contrary.[9]

4. Legislation is better evidence for what it proposes to prohibit than for what it seeks to promote.

When attention is directed toward the decrees of ecclesiastical councils and synods in the search for information about the practice of worship in the early Church, there is a natural

tendency to focus on the things that it is said shall or shall not be done. Thus, to cite a simple example, when the Council of Braga in 561 C.E. insists that "one and the same order of psalmody is to be observed in the morning and evening services; and neither individual variations nor monastic uses are to be interpolated into the ecclesiastical rule," one might be tempted to conclude that liturgical practices in Spain must have been uniform thereafter. Such a conclusion, however, can be shown to be false by the fact that synods held in later years found it necessary to repeat over and over again this demand for a standardization in usage.[10] Just because an authoritative body makes a liturgical regulation does not mean that it was observed everywhere or ever put into practice anywhere at all. Conservatism in matters liturgical is notoriously intractable, and, as we all know well, canonical legislation from even the highest level is frequently unable to dislodge a well-established and much-loved local custom.

This does not mean, however, that such pieces of legislation are entirely valueless in the search for clues to the liturgical customs of the early Church. Indeed, quite the opposite is the case: regulations provide excellent evidence for what was actually happening in local congregations, not by what is decreed should be done but by what is either directly prohibited or indirectly implied should cease to be done. The fact that such regulations were made at all shows that the very opposite of what they were trying to promote must have been a widespread custom at that period. Synodal assemblies do not usually waste their time either condemning something that is not actually going on or insisting on the firm adherence to some rule that everyone is already observing. Thus, for example, the fact that the Council of Vaison in 529 C.E. decreed that the response *Kyrie eleison* should be used does not prove that this foreign innovation was quickly accepted in that part of Gaul—and indeed we have virtually no trace of its subsequent adoption there—but it does show that prior to this time that response was not a common part of the worship of that region.

The same is true of the liturgical comments that are found

in many of the writings and homilies of early Christian theologians and bishops. We generally cannot know whether the practices and customs that they advocated were ever adopted by their congregations, or just politely listened to and then ignored, as the pleas of preachers often are; but we can conclude that there must have been some real foundation to the contrary custom or practice that is either directly criticized or implicitly acknowledged in the advice being given. Such writers may sometimes be suspected of hyperbole in the things they say, but they do not usually tilt at nonexistent windmills. So, for example, when John Chrysostom describes those who fail to stay for the reception of communion at the celebration of the eucharist as resembling Judas Iscariot at the Last Supper,[11] we do not know if he had any success in reforming the behavior of his congregation, but we can safely assume that what he is complaining about was an observable feature at that time.

5. *When a variety of explanations is advanced for the origin of a liturgical custom, its true source has almost certainly been forgotten.*

One frequently encounters in early Christian writings not only a partial description of some liturgical practice but also an explanation as to how it originated. Sometimes it is very easy to detect when such an explanation seems to be no more than the product of a pious imagination. When one reads, for example, in Coptic tradition that it was Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria in the fourth century, who introduced baptismal chrism into Christian usage in response to the instruction of an angel to bring balsam trees from Jericho, plant them, extract the balsam, and cook the spices,[12] one may well have serious doubts about the veracity of the claim. But in other cases it is less clear whether the author has access to a reliable source of information or not. Sometimes several writers will allude to the same custom but offer widely differing stories as to its true meaning or origin. This is the case, to cite just two

examples, with regard to the times of daily prayer commonly observed in the third century, and with regard to the custom, first evidenced in Syria in the late fourth century, of placing the book of the Gospels on the head of a bishop during his ordination.

It is tempting in such instances to opt for the explanation that one finds most congenial to one's point of view and to discount the rest. This is in fact what scholars have generally done with respect to the explanations for the customs just mentioned,[13] but there seems no particular reason to suppose that any one of the ancient commentators had access to a more authoritative source of information than the others. Indeed, the very existence of multiple explanations and interpretations is itself a very good indication that no authoritative tradition with regard to the original purpose and meaning of the custom had survived, and hence writers and preachers felt free to use their imaginations. This is not to say that the real origin can never be unearthed by modern scholarship, with its access to sources and methods not known to the ancients, or that sometimes one of those early writers may not accidentally have hit upon the right solution, but it does suggest that in such situations it may often be necessary to look for the real answer in a quite different direction from that of the conventional accounts.

6. Ancient church orders are not what they seem.

Within early Christian literature is a group of documents that look very like real, authoritative liturgical texts, containing both directions for the conduct of worship and also the words of prayers and other formularies to be used in this activity. Since they claim in one way or another to be apostolic, they have generally been referred to as apostolic church orders. But they are not what they seem. Not only is their claim to apostolic authorship spurious—a judgment that has been universally accepted since at least the beginning of the twentieth century—but they are not even the official liturgical manuals of any third- or fourth-century local church, masquerading in apostolic dress to lend themselves added authority—a judgment that is still not always fully appreciated by all contemporary scholars.

It is usually recognized that at least some of them, especially those dated later in the sequence, were in part the products of the imagination and aspirations of their compilers, armchair liturgists dreaming up what the perfect liturgy might be like if only they had the freedom to put into practice what their idiosyncratic tastes and personal convictions longed for. But there has still been a tendency to want to hold on to at least one or two of them as reliable descriptions of the real liturgy of the local church from which they seem to derive. Indeed, the prayers contained in one of them, the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus,[14] have been reproduced for use in the modern service books of a considerable number of Christian churches in the last few years, so convinced have the revisers been that here we are in touch with the authentic liturgy of the early Church and so we can now say the same words that ancient Christians once did when we celebrate the eucharist, ordain a bishop, or initiate a new convert.

There is, however, no reason to suppose that this document is a more, or less, reliable guide to what early Christians were really doing in their worship than any of the other church orders, especially as there is also some uncertainty as to what part of the ancient world it comes from and what its original text actually said, since all we have extant are translations and reworkings of it. This does not mean that these church orders are of no value in attempting to recover the liturgical practices of the early Church. They may indeed present evidence for what was actually going on in the churches from which they come, but that evidence can only be disentangled with difficulty and caution from both the idiosyncratic idealizing of the individual authors and the corrections and updating to which the documents tend to have been subjected in the course of their subsequent transmission. Without corroborative evidence from another source it is dangerous to claim that any particular prayer text in them was typical of the worship of the period,

and it is still more unwise, on the doubtful presumption of its once-authoritative status, to ask twentieth-century congregations to make it their own.[15]

7. Liturgical manuscripts are more prone to emendation than literary manuscripts.

F. L. Cross once observed:

> Liturgical and literary texts, as they have come down to us, have a specious similarity. They are written in similar scripts and on similar writing materials. They are now shelved shoulder to shoulder in our libraries and classified within the same system of shelfmarking. . . . But these similarities mask a radical difference. In the first place, unlike literary manuscripts, liturgical manuscripts were not written to satisfy an historical interest. They were written to serve a severely practical end. Their primary purpose was the needs of the services of the Church. Like timetables and other books for use, liturgical texts were compiled with the immediate future in view. Their intent was not to make an accurate reproduction of an existing model.[16]

In other words, copyists or translators of ancient liturgical material did not normally expend considerable time and energy on their work merely out of a general desire to preserve antiquity for its own sake but because they believed that the document legitimized as traditional the liturgical practices of their own day. What were they to do then, for example, when they encountered in a text the apparent omission of some element that was regarded as important or essential in their own tradition? They could only conclude that it ought to be in the text before them, that it must have been practiced in ancient times and had simply been omitted by accident from the document or had fallen out in the course of its transmission. It was then only the work of a few moments to restore what they thought was the original reading and bring it into line with current practice.

This is a very different situation from, say, the copying of the works of Augustine or some other patristic writer, when the desire was precisely to preserve antiquity and make an

accurate reproduction of the original. Although such literary manuscripts might also be subject to occasional attempts to correct what were perceived as lapses from doctrinal orthodoxy in the text, these emendations are relatively rare and much easier to detect than in liturgical manuscripts, where the risk of a passage being updated and modified to fit a changed situation is far greater. The latter constitute "living texts," and hence one should not easily assume that the received text of any liturgical document necessarily represents what the author originally wrote, especially when it has been subsequently translated from one language to another. This is the case with regard to the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus mentioned earlier, where unfortunately such caution is all too rarely exercised. The careful disentangling of the various strata present in such texts can often not only point to a very different reading in the original but also tell a fascinating story of how later liturgical practice evolved.

8. Liturgical texts can go on being copied long after they have ceased to be used.

This principle serves as an important counterbalance to the last, in that we should be cautious about concluding that everything that appears in an ancient source must have been in active use in the communities through which that document is thought to have passed. We are all doubtless familiar in our own experience with certain prayer texts, or hymns, or complete orders of service that go on appearing in successive editions of an official book of liturgies for years and years without ever being used by anyone. They were appropriate or fashionable in some earlier generation, perhaps at a particularly sensitive point in the history of that religious tradition, but have since become out-of-date. Yet nobody has the courage to say, "Let's drop this from our formularies," since to do so would appear to be somehow a betrayal of our heritage, a reneging on our ancestors in the faith, or a wanton disregard for tradition. So it goes on appearing in the book, and everyone knows

that when you reach it in the order of worship, you simply turn the page and pass over it to the next prayer or whatever.

Thus, while it is true that liturgical manuscripts were generally copied in order to be used, yet Christians of earlier generations were quite as capable as we are of carrying some excess liturgical baggage along with them, of copying out primitive and venerable texts into later collections of material just because they were primitive and venerable and not because of any real intention of putting them into practice. The problem is that they knew which of their texts were to be used and which passed over, while we are left to guess at it with whatever assistance other sources can give us. So, for example, while all who have studied the matter are agreed that a number of the prayers in book 7 of the fourth-century church order, the *Apostolic Constitutions,* have a strongly Jewish character, nobody can be sure what conclusions should be drawn from it. Does it mean that Judaism was still exercising a strong influence on Christian worship at this late date, or it is just another piece of what Robert F. Taft has called "liturgical debris" carried down by the tide of tradition from former times?[17]

9. *Only particularly significant, novel, or controverted practices will tend to be mentioned, and others will probably be passed over in silence; but the first time something is mentioned is not necessarily the first time it was practiced.*

It is dangerous to read any ancient source as though it were a verbatim account of any liturgical act. This is obviously so in the case of the brief allusions to Christian worship that crop up in writings dealing with some quite different topic. We cannot there expect the authors to be describing in exact and full detail all the aspects of the custom to which they are referring, but they are naturally only choosing to mention what is germane to the point they are making. It is important to remember, however, that the same is also true of other early sources. Even those fourth-century sets of homilies that were delivered to new converts to Christianity and were intended to instruct them in the meaning of the liturgies of baptism and the eucharist cannot be presumed to be mentioning everything that was said or done in those services. The authors will have highlighted those parts of the liturgy which seemed to them to be especially significant or to contain something of which they judged it important for the neophytes to be conscious, but they probably will have passed over other parts that they thought less significant or out of which a relevant lesson could not be drawn.

What is more, the same selectivity can be expected even in sets of directions for the conduct of worship, such as we find in the ancient church orders, in conciliar decrees, or in early monastic rules. At first sight, they may look like a complete list of instructions, but one has only to consider for a moment the twentieth-century equivalents of these texts to realize how much is always left unsaid because it is presumed to be familiar to the readers. Indeed, many amusing stories can be told of groups attempting to replicate liturgical rites that they have never seen solely on the basis of the printed rubrics, for even the clearest of instructions always contain an element of ambiguity for those unfamiliar with the tradition. Thus, directions do not generally deal with accepted and customary things but only with new, uncertain, or controverted points: everything else will tend either to be passed over in silence or to receive the briefest of allusions. What is most infuriating, therefore, for the liturgical scholar are passages that give the reader an instruction like "say the customary psalms" or "do what is usual everywhere on this day," since it is precisely those things that were known to everyone of the period and so were never written down that are consequently unknown to us and of greatest interest in our efforts to comprehend the shape and character of early Christian worship.

On the other hand, we ought not to rush to draw the opposite conclusion and assume that the first time something is mentioned was the first time it had ever occurred. As Joachim Jeremias has said, "In investigating a form of address used in prayer we must not limit ourselves to dating the prayers in

which it occurs; we must also take into account the fact that forms of address in prayer stand in a liturgical tradition and can therefore be older than the particular prayer in which they appear."[18]

All this naturally makes the task more difficult. We cannot assume that just because something is not mentioned, it was not being practiced. Equally, arguments from silence are notoriously unreliable. Earlier generations of liturgical scholars frequently attempted to reconstruct the worship of the first and second centuries by reading back customs which were described for the first time only in the fourth century, especially if they bore the slightest resemblance to Jewish customs which were, rightly or wrongly, thought to have been current in the first century C.E., for it was concluded that the one was directly descended from the other and so must have been practiced by Christians in unbroken continuity in the intervening years. In many cases, more recent investigation of either the Christian or the Jewish custom has often shown such conclusions to be mistaken.

10. Texts must always be studied in context.

This principle is in effect a summary of many of the others, for knowledge of the true nature of a document is vital to its correct interpretation, and the temptation to "proof-text" sources must be resisted as much here as in biblical study. For example, whether or not it is significant that something is mentioned or omitted will depend to a considerable extent upon the type of material with which one is dealing: the same treatment of a subject should not be expected in, say, a mystagogical catechesis as in monastic directions for reciting the divine office. Even historically inaccurate statements, like the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] reference besides the text itself, whether this is a further document or archaeological remains or whatever, so that any conclusion drawn may be based not upon the unsubstantiated testimony of one witness but upon some form of "triangulation."

Conclusion

These, then, are ten principles or guides that may be of assistance in the task I described at the beginning as that of "joining up the dots," the scattered pieces of possible evidence for the ways in which Christians were worshiping in the early centuries of the Church's existence. I make no claim that these ten constitute a definitive or comprehensive set of such principles, and more could doubtless be added to them.[20] But perhaps my ten will suffice as a starting point for the operation.

On the other hand, in the light of all the caution and uncertainty that I have stressed in the course of my journey through them, you may feel that the whole attempt to reconstruct patterns of ancient Christian worship is doomed to failure, that it is not simply a matter of joining up dots on a sheet of plain paper as I advertised at the beginning, but rather of finding the dots in the first place, buried as they are among countless others of different shades and hues, and of doing so with a blindfold over one's eyes. I share some of that trepidation: the task is certainly not as easy as earlier generations often judged it to be; but while we cannot hope to learn everything we would like to know about the Church's early worship, it is not wholly impossible to say, even if only in a provisional way, a certain amount about how that worship began and developed in the first few centuries of the Christian tradition. When the dots are carefully joined together, a faint picture can indeed emerge.

NOTES

1. I am grateful to John Baldovin and the other members of the Early Liturgy group of the North American Academy of Liturgy for

their many helpful comments and suggestions on an early draft of this paper.

2. Paul F. Bradshaw, "The Search for the Origins of Christian Liturgy: Some Methodological Reflections," *SL* 17 (1987): 26–34.

3. This is, for example, the judgment made by Anton Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy* (London/Westminster, MD, 1958), pp. 31–32, in spite of his earlier affirmation (pp. 16ff.) that liturgical evolution proceeded from variety to uniformity.

4. Robert F. Taft, "How Liturgies Grow: The Evolution of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 43 (1977): 355 = idem, *Beyond East and West* (Washington, DC, 1984), p. 167.

5. See further Paul F. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church* (London, 1981/New York, 1982).

6. See further Robert F. Taft, "Historicism Revisited," *SL* 14 (1982): 97–109 = idem, *Beyond East and West*, pp. 15–30.

7. See further Paul F. Bradshaw, *Liturgical Presidency in the Early Church*, GLS 36 (Bramcote, Notts., 1983), pp. 11–14.

8. Caesarius of Arles, for example, makes this claim with regard to the use of Ps. 104 at the daily evening service (*Serm.* 136.1). He maintains that as a result it "is so well known to everybody that the greatest part of the human race has memorized it"; whereas in reality its use at this service seems to have been restricted to parts of the West, and in the East Ps. 141 was instead the standard evening psalm.

9. For example, Demetrius, patriarch of Alexandria in the third century, made such a claim with regard to the practice of preaching by those who were not ordained ministers, though the custom was defended by the bishops of Caesarea and Jerusalem and seems to have other traces of its former existence (see Bradshaw, *Liturgical Presidency*, pp. 18–20).

10. See further Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, p. 115.

11. John Chrysostom, *De Baptismo Christi* 4 (PG 49.370).

12. See Louis Villecourt, "Le Livre du chrême," *Muséon* 41 (1928): 58–59.

13. For further details see Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, pp. 48–62; and idem, *Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of East and West* (New York, 1990), pp. 39–44.

14. The most recent critique of the reliability of this document is by Marcel Metzger, "Nouvelles perspectives pour la prétendue *Tradition apostolique*," *Ecclesia Orans* 5 (1988): 241–59.

15. See further Paul F. Bradshaw, "The Liturgical Use and Abuse of Patristics," in Kenneth Stevenson, ed., *Liturgy Reshaped* (London, 1982), pp. 134–45.

16. F. L. Cross, "Early Western Liturgical Manuscripts," *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1965): 63–64.

17. With regard to this particular example, see further David A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the "Constitutiones Apostolorum,"* Brown Judaic Studies (Decatur, GA, 1985).

18. Joachim Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* (London, 1967), p. 26.

19. See Paul F. Bradshaw, "Baptismal Practice in the Alexandrian Tradition, Eastern or Western?" in Paul F. Bradshaw, ed., *Essays in Early Eastern Initiation*, JLS 8 (Bramcote, Notts., 1988), pp. 5–17.

20. Robert F. Taft has already done much to explore for a slightly later period how liturgical units grow and change. See especially "The Structural Analysis of Liturgical Units: An Essay in Methodology," *Worship* 52 (1978): 314–29; and "How Liturgies Grow: The Evolution of the Byzantine Divine Liturgy," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 43 (1977): 355–78. Both of these are reproduced in his book, *Beyond East and West*, pp. 151–92.