Auctoritas and Potestas in the Apostolic Constitutions

by

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Abstract

The fourth century is a time of rapid change in the Christian churches brought on by developments such as the rise of the ascetic movement, the new relationship with the emperor instituted by Constantine, and the various Christological debates which splintered the church. This dissertation will contribute to our understanding of this process of rapid change by examining how the non-Nicene *Apostolic Constitutions* viewed religious authority. It will argue that the *Apostolic Constitutions* represent the editor’s attempt to defend the religious authority of the clergy in his community, while ultimately rejecting potential alternative authorities, especially alternative lay authorities such as ascetics and the emperor. The categories of *potestas* and *auctoritas* will be used to systematize the available data and provide a model for its interpretation.
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List of Abbreviations


*EW*  *Eusebius Werke*


*GCS*  *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*


*LCL*  *Loeb Classical Library*


Opitz  *Athanasius Werke*

*PG*  *Patrologia Graeca*

*PLS*  *Patrologia Latina Supplementum*

*PTS*  *Patristische Texte und Studien*

*SEA*  *Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum*

*SC*  *Sources Chrétiennes*

*SH*  *Subsidia Hagiographica*

*SVCTP*  *Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha*
Introduction

Apostolic Constitutions and Authority

The fourth century was a key time in the evolution of the Christian church. Two fluid traditions in the post-Constantinian church, known slightly anachronistically as the Nicene and non-Nicene traditions, were just starting to become rigorously defined. The concept of spiritual authority wielded by an individual began to undergo a change due to the interactions and conflicts between and within these traditions. Many studies have been devoted to examining the evolution of spiritual authority as exercised by both clergy and laity.¹ In general, these studies have focused on the Nicene tradition, causing comparatively little attention to how an individual’s spiritual authority evolved from a non-Nicene perspective. Because of the frequent clashes between Nicene and non-Nicene worldviews, especially in the Eastern Roman Empire, a deficient understanding of non-Nicene conceptions of authority minimizes the complexities of the period, leading to a one-sided view of how churches handled the changing issues of spiritual authority. This study will attempt to remedy this gap in knowledge by examining the Apostolic Constitutions;² a key witness for liturgical and ecclesiastical practice in a non-Nicene church.³ This study argues that the non-Nicene

¹ Some of the more significant monographs since 2000 which cover Nicene developments include the following: Daniel Caner, Wandering, Begging Monks: Spiritual Authority and the Promotion of Monasticism in Late Antiquity (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Claudia Rapp, Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005); Philip Rousseau, Ascetics, Authority, and the Church in the Age of Jerome and Cassian, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010); Andrea Sterk, Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).


³ See Chapter 1 for a defense of attributing the Apostolic Constitutions to a non-Nicene editor.
conception of authority represented by the *Apostolic Constitutions* represented a unique response to a divided church and the rise of lay religious authority in Antioch.

The *Apostolic Constitutions* represent a key witness in a period of change and debate over the nature of ecclesiastical authority. The pre-Constantinian church bequeathed a variety of models of personal religious authority to the post-Constantinian church. Later, in the post-Constantinian period, the emperor emerged as a more significant religious authority for Christians by calling councils and deposing and exiling Christian leaders. The Nicene controversies, which helped birth the *Apostolic Constitutions*, contributed to changing notions of religious authority. The controversies caused schisms, anathemas, and broken communions, leading to a divided Church where all sides claimed to embody apostolic teachings and represent the “universal and catholic” faith. All sides in the Nicene controversies sought to claim authorities for themselves, while seeking to deny or discredit the authorities which their opponents gathered. Antioch itself, the probable birthplace of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, was the center of a debate over personal religious authority during the schisms which followed the deposition of Eusathius in late 320s.⁴

This dissertation seeks to demonstrate that the *Apostolic Constitutions* represented a distinctly non-Nicene attempt to defend its view of personal religious authority. This defense helped to support the non-Nicene party in the face of the schisms in Antioch and defend it from the competing ideologies borne from the Nicene controversies. Chapter 1 argues that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were compiled in or around Antioch around 375-80 CE by a non-Nicene editor; as well as examines the social context in which that attribution places the

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⁴ By the 370s, there were as many as five competing bishops in Antioch: Euzoius, Paulinus, Meletius, Vitalis, and possibly a Eunomian bishop (Julian?).
document. Chapter 2 recounts the varied approaches to an individual’s authority in the pre-
Constantinian church to demonstrate how the *Apostolic Constitutions* inherited and reworked
the pre-Constantinian tradition. The chapter also discusses Nicene and other non-Nicene
views in religious authority to place the *Apostolic Constitutions* properly in the ongoing
debates over authority. Chapter 3 recognizes that the *Apostolic Constitutions* represent a
reworking of basic source materials, including the *Didache, Apostolic Tradition, Didascalia,*
and possibly Jewish prayers, and so focuses on the views of religious authority in these
documents as part of the process of source criticism. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the *Apostolic
Constitutions’* view of personal religious authority using the categories of *potestas* (Chapter
4) and *auctoritas* (Chapter 5).

**Definition of Terms**

Already several controversial terms, or terms that should be controversial, have been used.
While recognizing that the definitions are not universal, in this dissertation several terms will
have a particular meaning. “Church,” and its derivatives: “early church;” “pre-Constantinian
church;” and “early Christianity;” refer to the stream of doctrine, practice, and organization
which both the Nicene and non-Nicene churches accepted as reflecting, to a greater or lesser
extent, “apostolic” teachings. There were many groups in the first four centuries of
Christianity which claimed to represent Jesus’ teachings, apostolic teachings, or hold a
special connection with Jesus. This dissertation ignores these groups, unless they were
adopted by either the Nicene or non-Nicene churches as being part of their own tradition. I
am using the terms “Nicene” and “non-Nicene” as a convenient shorthand. Each term
represents a plurality of positions, some of which would consider themselves theological
enemies of those classified in the same group. The two terms do not imply a false dichotomy, as if there were only two positions in the Trinitarian debates and that a clear distinction was always present between them. Nor should the terms be understood as implying a full agreement, disagreement, or even knowledge of the Council of Nicaea.

Instead, “Nicene” is used as a broad term covering many differing positions which were later perceived as being compatible to the Nicene creed. The term “non-Nicene” is likewise a broad term covering many differing positions which modern scholars would recognize as being incompatible with the Nicene creed. These terms will be used even when the individuals under discussion did not know of, or reference, the creed.

The terms “clergy” and “laity” are used throughout the dissertation. These two terms are a convenient shorthand for a complex church structure. Many definitions of these terms exist prior to, contemporary with, and after the editing of the Apostolic Constitutions. These terms will be used as the Apostolic Constitutions itself uses them as much as possible. Thus, “clergy” refers to any office in the Apostolic Constitutions which required a rite of ordination: bishops, presbyters, deacons, readers, singers, porters, and ministers. “Laity” refers to the non-ordained who were found in a church. The non-ordained included the baptized, but also catechumens, candidates for baptism, penitents, and listeners, who would associate themselves with the church but who were not seeking baptism.


6. It is important to stress that I am viewing the category of “clergy” through the lens of the Apostolic Constitutions. The concepts of “clergy” and “laity” were fluid during the first four hundred years of the church.
“Authority” is a problematic term. As Hannah Arendt stated, “Little about its [authority’s] nature appears self-evident or even comprehensible to everybody.” 7 Arendt believed it is easier to say what authority is not; “if authority is to be defined at all, then, it must be in contradistinction to both coercion by force and persuasion through arguments.” 8 For Arendt, the use of force and the need for argumentation exist only in the absence of a recognized authority. Authority, for Arendt, is the relationship between the one who commands and the one who obeys, which rests on a social relationship which both parties recognize as right and legitimate. 9

The social relationship which undergirds authority is a complex web of motives and data. Because of the complex nature of authority, throughout the dissertation, I will impose a categorization to organize and make sense of the data. The most widespread structure for authority is Max Weber’s tripartite scheme of authority: rational-legal authority, traditional authority, and charismatic authority. 10 Legal authority is grounded in the belief in the “legality” or “rightness” of rules and the rightness of those elevated to authority by the rules to issue commands. 11 Traditional authority rests upon the established belief in the “rightness” or “sanctity” of traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them. 12 Charismatic authority depends upon devotion to an individual person due to some personal abilities, actions, or character, and to the rules or orders given by him or her. 13

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8. Ibid., 93.
9. Ibid., 93.
11. Ibid., 217ff.
12. Ibid., 226ff.
13. Ibid., 241ff.
Weber’s model is usually used in the discussion of early Christian authority to postulate a conflict between charismatic authority, represented by prophets, and later ascetics; and rational-legal authority represented by ecclesiastical offices.\(^{14}\)

However, for the purposes of this dissertation, Weber’s model, and especially its use by some studies of early Christian leadership, is inadequate. In particular, it contributes to the confusion of conflating *charisma*, introduced into Christian discourse by Paul,\(^{15}\) with Weber’s category of charismatic leadership.\(^{16}\) Examples from the early church given throughout this dissertation will show that *charisma* is not the sole domain of “charismatic” leadership. Ignatius of Antioch, for example, was a bishop who used prophetic utterances to support the office of bishop.\(^{17}\) Later, in the post-Constantinian church, the “*charisma*” of the ascetics was co-opted in various ways. Depending upon the locale and writer, ecclesiastical offices shared similarities with both of Weber’s other categories: traditional authority and rational-legal authority. In some places, such as perhaps Alexandria, the episcopal form was the rational-legal authority which conflicted with the traditional authority represented by teachers or presbyters.\(^{18}\) In other places, the episcopal form may have been the traditional


\(^{15}\) Cf. 1 Cor. 1.7, 7.7, 12.4–11; 2 Cor. 1.11; 1 Tim. 4.14; 2 Tim. 1.6.

\(^{16}\) I am here using “charisma” to refer to the supernatural gifts or abilities displayed by individuals or groups. Prophecy, healing power, and other miracles are among the best-known charisma.

\(^{17}\) Ign. *Philad.* 7.1, Holmes, 240-2. All quotations from the Apostolic Fathers are my own based on Holmes’ critical edition unless otherwise noted. In this dissertation when I use the name “Ignatius” I am referring to the second-century bishop of Antioch; when I use the name “Pseudo-Ignatius” I am referring to the fourth-century anonymous writer who edited and expanded the Ignatian corpus to what is now known as the Longer Recension.

\(^{18}\) Alistair Stewart-Sykes, “Origen, Demetrius, and the Alexandrian Presbyters,” *St. Vladimir’s*
authority and teachers the rational-legal authority.\textsuperscript{19} Clergy in the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} had aspects of all three of Weber’s categories of authority.

For this study, Weber’s categories of authority are too inflexible and overlap to an extent which limits their usefulness. Therefore, this study will prefer the categories of “\textit{auctoritas}” and “\textit{potestas}.”\textsuperscript{20} For the purposes of this study, \textit{auctoritas} is authority which derived from the personal condition. \textit{Potestas} is authority which derived from formally ascribed social status.\textsuperscript{21} The two terms are thus distinct, yet together form a binary system.\textsuperscript{22} The word “authority” is used as a generic term, and includes both \textit{auctoritas} and \textit{potestas}.

In Roman political thought, from which the terms \textit{auctoritas} and \textit{potestas} derive, \textit{auctoritas} was not founded upon any legal power but rather sprung directly from the person.\textsuperscript{23} The recognized authority that the \textit{auctor} holds was thus rooted directly in himself without appeal to any outside force. There is thus overlap between the concept of \textit{auctoritas} and Weber’s \textit{charisma}. \textit{Auctoritas}, however, is not a type of authority in the Weberian sense. \textit{Auctoritas} is not limited to certain people, like prophets or ascetics, but are the inherent characteristics


\textsuperscript{19} Stewart-Sykes, “Prophecy and Patronage,” 177.

\textsuperscript{20} Though these categories are rooted in Roman political thought, I am not claiming that the editor of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} thought in these categories, merely that they are a helpful tool to use in interpreting the data from the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}.

\textsuperscript{21} While the dissertation focuses on individuals who hold either \textit{potestas} or \textit{auctoritas}, these categories are not only held by individuals. For example, Pollmann lists leaders, experts, apostles, bishops, martyrs, saints, God, Jesus Christ, church, tradition, councils, augury, reason, academic disciplines, the Bible, the Creed (or creeds), pagan and Christian authors, laws, and a canon of books as all holding either \textit{potestas} or \textit{auctoritas} in early Christianity. Karla Pollmann, “Christianity and Authority in Late Antiquity: The Transformation of the Concept of Auctoritas,” in \textit{Being Christian in Late Antiquity: A Festschrift for Gillian Clark}, eds. Carol Harrison, Caroline Humfress, and Isabella Sandwell (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 160.


\textsuperscript{23} R. Heinze, “Auctoritas,” \textit{Hermes} 60 (1925): 358. Even someone with \textit{potestas} benefits from the added weight his \textit{auctoritas} lends his words and actions. Ibid., 353. For the concept of \textit{auctoritas} in modern political theory see Agamben, \textit{State of Exception}, 77.
found in everyone. These characteristics can be authoritative in any person, given it is recognized as authoritative by a different person. So, the auctoritas of a bishop can be recognized as significant in a command-obey relationship just as much as the auctoritas of a prophet. Auctoritas is thus, in theory, something any person can have, as long as the other person in the authority relationship recognizes it. In contrast, potestas is restricted to those with a socially bestowed status. While auctoritas comes from the person, potestas originates from an office, status, or the rule of law. The potestas of an office remains in force regardless of the person holding the office.24

The editor of the Apostolic Constitutions employed a rhetorical strategy which assumed, rather than argued for, his position. Though the concept of authority stood behind virtually the entirety of the Apostolic Constitutions, the editor rarely addressed it directly. If one restricts oneself to only specific Greek words, such as “ἐξουσία,” or one of its cognates, at best one will get a severely limited understanding of how the editor saw spiritual authority operating in his church. Rather than examining how the editor used a certain word group, this dissertation will focus on how the editor used, assumed, and manipulated the concept of an individual’s spiritual authority.

24. I recognize, however, that applying these categories can sometimes feel arbitrary. For example, is the bishop’s sermon authoritative because of his auctoritas as teacher or his potestas as bishop? This is a feature of the nature of authority. As discussed earlier, authority is undergirded by a complex, interrelated, and overlapping web of beliefs and relationships. While for the purpose of analysis I will be isolating some of these beliefs and relationships, it should never be forgotten that they exist only in an interrelated, complex, and sometimes unreflective whole.
Survey of Scholarship

There has been increased interest in issues of authority in the early church over the last fifty years. Peter Brown pushed the issue to the forefront of scholarship with several articles and books centered on the topic of the “holy man” in late antiquity. Brown’s holy man was a figure, usually without formal institutional authority, who maintained a significant role in society thanks to his “charisma.” Though originally seeing the holy man as inheriting the function of the Roman patron, Brown later argued that he overdrew the similarities between the two. Authors such as Alberto Camplani, Claudia Rapp, Philip Rousseau, Andrea Sterk, and others built upon Brown’s work, highlighting the growing religious authority invested into non-clergy, and especially monastics, during this time period. In particular, Sterk and others argued that Basil of Caesarea, a contemporary to the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ editor, as well as a frequent interlocutor of non-Nicene theologians, was one of the central

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26. As Brown used it, “charisma” shares characteristics with the study’s preferred terminology of auctoritas.

characters in the evolution of religious authority. Basil’s synthesized the monk’s *auctoritas* with the institutional authority of bishops in the monastic-episcopate ideal.\(^{28}\)

The increased interest in fourth-century religious authority by scholars has, however, largely been restricted to fourth-century Nicene developments. Non-Nicene developments have been, in comparison, relatively ignored. Rowan Williams has brought attention to the importance of authority in the Nicene controversies. In *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, he successfully proved one of the fundamental issues in the initial stages of the Nicene controversies was the conflict between competing views of religious authority. Arius represented a model which invested religious authority upon exegetical experts, which came into conflict with the bishops of Alexandria, who sought to both judge exegetes, as well as remain free from judgment by exegetes.\(^{29}\)

Scholars have mostly ignored non-Nicene views of authority until the period of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and her sister documents in the Pseudo-Ignatius corpus. James Smith’s article on authority in Pseudo-Ignatius focused on Pseudo-Ignatius, and to a lesser extent the *Apostolic Constitutions*, placement of the bishop’s authority as over the authority of the emperor as representing a unique position in the east.\(^{30}\) In modern scholarship, three scholars, 


in particular, highlighted *Apostolic Constitutions*’ view on personal religious authority:

Henry Chadwick, Gregory Bloomquist et al., and Joseph Mueller.

Though Chadwick does not deal with the *Apostolic Constitutions* in a sustained manner, he frequently cited it as evidence for the changing role of Christian bishops and so provides one of the first modern treatments of authority within the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Chadwick identified the *Apostolic Constitutions* as being edited by an “Arian author,” who revised older material in about 360 CE in Syria, possibly Antioch. Despite having recognized the non-Nicene provenance of the document, Chadwick focused only on those aspects of the *Apostolic Constitutions* which he identified as reflecting earlier practices or which support general Nicene trends. This implied that there were no significant differences between Nicene and non-Nicene views of the authority of Christian bishops during this time. For example, Chadwick identified the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ requirement that bishops be consecrated by “two or three” to be a pre-Nicene practice. Despite later commenting that consecrations by only two bishops were almost always partisan, he did not attempt to connect the editor’s retention of the practice to the Nicene controversies, nor to the state of the non-Nicene church at the time.

More often, Chadwick cited the *Apostolic Constitutions* as evidence to support a change or practice within the wider church. He overlooked any unique contributions the *Apostolic Constitutions* might give to understanding authority by non-Nicenes in favor of the common

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33. Ibid., 3-4.
features it held with Nicene developments. So, for example, Chadwick cited the *Apostolic Constitutions* as evidence for the increased role of the bishop in judicial matters.\(^{34}\) When Chadwick noted the *Apostolic Constitutions* were written to “emphasise in the strongest terms the authority of the bishop and his clergy against ascetic indifference” it is, along with Jerome and “much fourth-century evidence,” evidence for tensions between ascetics and clergy.\(^{35}\) Chadwick recognized the importance of the *Apostolic Constitutions* to the development of religious authority in the fourth century. However, he focused on how it provided evidence of Nicene developments, and thus overlooked the unique developments that occurred within the non-Nicene churches. Finally, his focus on the role bishops played led him to concentrate on the *potestas* held and wielded by the clergy while minimizing the role of *auctoritas* towards building authority.

Bloomquist, et al. began the process of discussing the non-Nicene aspects of authority in *Apostolic Constitutions* in their article “Prolegomena to a Sociological Study of Early Christianity.”\(^{36}\) The article sought to interpret *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.25-26 using the framework of the sociological theory of P.L. Berger, T. Luckmann, and others. Using the sociological theory of Berger and Luckmann as the foundation, the article argued that *Apostolic Constitutions* was written to justify a particular institutional arrangement in the face of institutional segmentation brought about by the Nicene controversies.\(^{37}\) The editor created a complex system of rules and behaviors in order to bind together a small subgroup

\(^{34}\) Ibid., 6, 7.  
\(^{35}\) Chadwick, “Role of the Christian Bishop,” 12.  
\(^{37}\) Ibid., 225-8.
and differentiate them from the majority. Their argument demonstrates the need for further scholarly attention to the *Apostolic Constitutions* as a specifically non-Nicene document. The article used the language of B.J. Malina to articulate a group theory for the editor. Their theory was that the individual subordinated themselves to the group in a tightly controlled, high conformity community. Though a helpful beginning to the study of authority in *Apostolic Constitutions*, the article contains several inherent shortcomings. First, by limiting itself to 2.25-26, the article restricted itself to a narrow consideration of the text which failed to interact with the entirety of the editor’s theology. For example, it ignored the highly significant aspect of the authority of ritual experts present in the liturgical portions of the text. In addition, a lack of redaction criticism with the sources blurred the lines between what was inherited from the sources and what was unique to the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Without source criticism, it is impossible to gain a clear understanding of the place and significance of the *Apostolic Constitutions* to the development of a non-Nicene understanding of religious authority.

In 2004, Mueller published a French monograph on hierarchy in *Apostolic Constitutions* which has virtually been ignored by subsequent scholarship. Mueller built on Synek’s argument that the *Apostolic Constitutions* functioned as a “Christian Talmud” for the church. Mueller builds on his argument to argue that the editor used the Old Testament as his main

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38. Though this dissertation will argue that they have underestimated the other fourth-century pressures, such as those offered by alternative religious authorities like the emperor and ascetics. However, they do offer an intriguing suggestion that the editor is not writing against fellow “theoreticians,” but against the “naive,” ‘primitive’ masses.” Ibid., 227-8. Though I do not explicitly endorse such a view in my conclusions, it harmonizes well with several observations I make throughout the dissertation.

39. Ibid., 228-30.

source to establish an ecclesiology. Mueller believed the editor’s ecclesiology was a direct response to Theodosius’ promulgation of canons, as well as the Council of Constantinople. Thus, the editor established an anti-imperial “church order” based on Scriptural authority.\footnote{41} Mueller’s study focused primarily on two issues: the presbyterate as fulfilling the role of elders from among the people of Israel\footnote{42} and penitential discipline as the extension of the Mosaic law, which acts as a guide for Christian conduct.\footnote{43} Mueller concluded that the whole apparatus of the church was seen by the editor as the fulfillment and completion of Israelite institutions.\footnote{44}

While this dissertation recognizes the contributions made by Mueller, it differs in its focus. While Mueller focused on the ecclesiastical structures, especially of presbyters, this work focuses on ecclesiastical authority and what the editor viewed as threats to that authority. In particular, it follows the editor’s own theology. Personal authority, the auctoritas, of the officeholders was as significant to the editor’s theology as the potestas, the authority of the office. In addition, methodologies from ritual studies will be used to examine the underlying power structures in the liturgical portions of the Apostolic Constitution.\footnote{45} This is in contrast to Mueller, who tended to focus on the rites themselves and what clergy do in them.\footnote{46} Lastly,

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{41}{Ibid., 117-26. Of course, anti-imperial as a general practice and anti–current emperor are two different categories completely.}
\item \footnote{42}{Mueller, \textit{L’Ancien Testament dans L’Écclésiologie des Pères}, 265-327.}
\item \footnote{43}{Ibid., 328-412.}
\item \footnote{44}{Ibid., 479ff.}
\item \footnote{45}{I am intentionally using the plural form of “ritual studies” as acknowledgement that there is no one universally recognized, scholarly, accepted method to ritual studies. For the interaction between authority, power, and Christian rituals there are two central scholars who each take a slightly different view: Catherine Bell and Ronald Grimes. For the best synthesis of their thought on these issues, see Catherine Bell, “The Authority of Ritual Experts,” \textit{Studia Liturgica} 23 (1993): 98-120, and Ronald Grimes, “Liturgical Supinity, Liturgical Erectitude: On the Embodiment of Ritual Authority,” \textit{Studia Liturgica} 23 (1993): 51-69. While I will interact with Grimes, most of my treatment of authority and ritual studies will be based on the work of Bell.}
\item \footnote{46}{For an example of the different foci, Mueller does not list any ritual theorist in his bibliography. Mueller, \textit{L’Ancien Testament dans L’Écclésiologie des Pères}, 7-28.}
\end{itemize}
Mueller argued that the *Apostolic Constitutions* was crafted as an anti-imperial response to Theodosius I’s imperial canons. I will argue that it was written to combat the growing authority of the laity, which includes both imperial authority and the growing authority of lay ascetics.
Chapter 1

Social Context of the *Apostolic Constitutions*

**Authorship**

The *Apostolic Constitutions* were compiled as a response to particular events from a particular point of view. This chapter establishes the context of the *Apostolic Constitutions* to determine the milieu from which the *Apostolic Constitutions* were compiled. In particular, this chapter argues three main points held by the majority of scholars: that the document was edited by a non-Nicene; that it was compiled circa. 380 CE; and that it originated in or around Antioch. This chapter also examines the theory linking the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* with Pseudo-Ignatius and the more recently published non-Nicene *Commentary on Job*, as the attribution may lend further evidence for the editor’s views on authority.

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47. For this dissertation, I treat as settled the claim that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were compiled by one hand in eight books. Specifically, this means that the so-called *Apostolic Canons* which make up 8.47.1-85 were intended by the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* to serve as the conclusion of his document. In making this determination, as I am in several other places, I am following the work of C. H. Turner, “Notes on the *Apostolic Constitutions* II. The Apostolic Canons,” The Journal of Theological Studies 16 (1915): 523-38. In particular, Turner demonstrated, in my view, the non-Nicene character of the *Apostolic Canons*. Ibid., 525-7 and verbal and thematic parallels between the *Apostolic Canons* and the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Ibid., 533-6. Turner also believed there are strong parallels between the *Apostolic Canons* and the Pseudo-Ignatius letters, which strengthens the association if one also holds to the identification of the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* with the editor of the Pseudo-Ignatius letters, as is argued later in this chapter. For these reasons, it seems safe to conclude that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were intended by the editor to contain the *Apostolic Canons*, or, at the very least, the *Apostolic Canons* were added by someone with theology and practice sympathetic to the editor’s own; thus they can be treated as containing the editor’s own beliefs. For a later summary of both arguments for and against, see Bruno Steimer, *Vertex Traditionis. Die Gattung der altchristlichen Kirchenordnungen*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft 63 (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1992), 88-90.

48. To reduce confusion, when I talk about what the *Apostolic Constitutions* say, I am referring to the compiled text, which contains material from both the editor and his sources. When I refer to the “editor,” I am specifically referencing what Funk identifies as being from the editor’s own hand.
It is almost universally agreed that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were compiled somewhere in Syria. Antioch was almost certainly the origin if the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* and Pseudo-Ignatius were the same person. Even if one assumed for the sake of argument that the two works are separate, there is compelling evidence to suggest an Antiochene origin for the *Apostolic Constitutions*. The editor used the Syro-Macedonian calendar in naming months: Xanthicos, Dustros, Gorpiaes, and Hyperberetaeos. In the list of bishops found in 7.46.1-15, the editor named Antioch before Alexandria, despite the fact that canons 6 and 7 of the Council of Nicaea gave priority to Alexandria. The liturgy, especially book eight, reflects the practice of the region of Antioch in the last quarter of the fourth century. While it can partially be explained through an appeal to the editor’s sources, the *Apostolic Constitutions* does seem to reflect an urban setting. If one accepts the non-Nicene nature of the book, as argued below, Antioch, as one of the major non-Nicene centers, becomes a logical place of origin.

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49. Turner provides a notable exception to this, as he argues for an origin in Palestine soon after 350 CE. C. H. Turner, “Notes on the *Apostolic Constitutions* III. The Text of the Eighth Book,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 31 (1930): 138. The Palestinian origin of the church orders has since been proven suspect at the very least, if not decisively proven wrong. If a Palestinian origin were accepted, it would date the *Apostolic Constitutions* as almost impossibly late (*contra* Turner), as the feast of nativity (8.13.33) is introduced into Jerusalem in 420 CE. *SC* 320.55.

50. *Apostolic Constitutions* 5.14.1; 5.17.3; 5.20.3; 8.47.37 (*SC* 329.248, 268, 276; *SC* 336.286; Funk 271, 289, 295, 574).

51. *SEA* 95.22; *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.46.4-5 (*SC* 336.108, Funk 452). Granted, this is a weak argument. The non-Nicene character of the document would make it surprising if it followed the Alexandrian priority given at Nicaea, no matter its origin. Also, if one were to stretch the argument to its limits, then Jerusalem as the first place listed in 7.46.2, and Caesarea as the second in 7.46.3, would have priority over both Antioch and Alexandria.


53. Metzger highlights especially 8.4-5. *SC* 320.55.

54. Despite the presence of at least two “Nicene” bishops, Meletius and Paulinus, Antioch can be viewed as a stronghold for the non-Nicenes based on two factors: their virtually unbroken control of the imperially sanctioned bishopric of Antioch since the deposition of the pro-Nicene Eustathius, and their numerous support among the population. *Soz.*., *H.e.* 6.21.1 (*SC* 495.340).
While the exact date of the compilation of the *Apostolic Constitutions* is unknown, scholars have long accepted a date in the second half of the fourth century. More recent scholarship believed the date could be narrowed down even further to circa. 380 CE. One of the key issues to dating the *Apostolic Constitutions* is its liturgical elements. In its baptismal rites, the *Apostolic Constitutions* interpreted baptism as into the death of Jesus, which suggests a post-Nicene date. Though it is an argument from silence, elements of the liturgical calendar in the *Apostolic Constitutions* were absent from Epiphanius in 375 CE, suggesting a later date. The key liturgical event for the precise dating of the text is its identification of the 25th of December as a major festival celebrating the birth of Jesus in 5.13.1. In the eastern part of the Roman Empire, Epiphany was the traditional date associated with the birth of Jesus, not December 25th. It was not until the fourth century that December 25th as the date of Jesus’ birth began to be celebrated. Assuming an Antioch origin, the date for the acceptance of December 25th can be dated with some precision. In 386 CE, Chrysostom stated that December 25th was unknown in Antioch as the date of Jesus’ birth less than ten years prior.

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55. Funk dates it to the beginning of the fifth century, Funk XIX-XX. Bradshaw offers 375-80 CE, Paul Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 84. Metzger places it around the year 380 CE. For him the ambiguity lies in whether it is immediately before the Council of Constantinople, which he dates to 380-1 CE, or is compiled as a reaction against it. If the second, however, Metzger believes that it must be almost immediately after the Council, as Theodosius “almost completely eliminates” the “heretics” during his reign. *SC* 320.59-60.

56. *Apostolic Constitutions* 3.17.1; 6.15.1 (*SC* 329.158, 342; Funk 211, 337).

57. Associating baptism with the death of Jesus is very rare in the Greek pre-Nicene East, with Origen the lone witness. Maxwell Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 72, cites Origen’s commentary on Romans as support. It is only after the Nicene Council that associating baptism with Jesus’ death becomes widespread within the East, perhaps as a result of the influence of the Jerusalem rite. While the baptismal theology alone does not decisively prove a post-Nicene date, considering the exception of Origen, it does strongly suggest it.


to his sermon. Assuming *Apostolic Constitutions* came from an Antioch milieu and assuming Chrysostom’s assertion about Christmas was generally correct, it would have to have been compiled after 376 CE.

Another liturgical feast that helps to date the document is the Feast of Ascension. The earliest the Feast of Ascension was attested to in Antioch outside the *Apostolic Constitutions* was by John Chrysostom in 388 CE. The liturgical calendar thus gives an approximate date for the earliest the *Apostolic Constitutions* could be compiled: it was compiled no earlier than 376 CE, and more likely between 378-380 CE. There is less evidence for determining the latest the *Apostolic Constitutions* could have been compiled. The editor seemed to assume that his church was the true church in Antioch. Assuming a non-Nicene milieu, that position became increasingly difficult to hold as Theodosius’ reign continued. While open ended, Metzger’s discussion on whether the editor was ignorant of the Council of Constantinople (and thus the *Apostolic Constitutions* dates to before 381 CE) or was compiling the *Apostolic Constitutions* as a polemic against the recent council (thus dating the *Apostolic Constitutions* to 381/2 CE) does firm up the plausible range for the compilation of the *Apostolic Constitutions*: somewhere between 376-382 CE.

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61. Chrys. *In diem natalem Domini nostri Jesu Christi* 1 (Montfaucon, 418).
65. While less precise, other elements of the *Apostolic Constitutions* support a later fourth-century dating. In particular, the *Apostolic Constitutions* seems to follow the Canons of Laodicea (363–64 CE) in its ecclesiastical offices and post-baptismal anointing. *SC* 320.60.
67. *SC* 320.60.
Attributing a non-Nicene character to the *Apostolic Constitutions* has a long history. As early as the council of Trullo, the *Apostolic Constitutions* were considered suspect due to its heterodox contents.\(^{68}\) Funk cautiously stated that nothing definitive could be said about the theology of the editor.\(^{69}\) However, he did believe that the fact that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were used by later Nicene church fathers, such as John of Damascus, supported the Nicene origin of the document.\(^{70}\) Against Funk, Turner provided a vigorous defense of the attribution of the “Arianism” of the *Apostolic Constitutions*.\(^{71}\) The basis for Turner’s argument was his belief that Vat gr 1506 “is not only the best individual witness to the text of the *Constitutions* and *Canons*, but that where supported by the Verona fragment it is very rarely wrong.”\(^{72}\) Using Vat gr 1506 as his guide to the original recension, Turner argued that the non-Nicene elements in the text are prevalent enough to draw the conclusion that the editor was non-Nicene in theology. Earlier critical editions, such as Funk’s, downplayed the importance of Vat gr 1506. This privileged what Turner saw as later changes to bring the document into orthodoxy rather than what he saw as the original, heterodox reading.\(^{73}\) As the vast bulk of the transmission history occurred in a Nicene milieu, it is vastly more probable that

\(^{68}\) Trullo Canon 2 (*SEA* 95.104).

\(^{69}\) Funk, XIX.

\(^{70}\) Ibid., XIX.


\(^{73}\) It is worth noting that Turner believed that not even Vat gr 1506 has wholly escaped this (what he calls) “catholicizing” of the text. In his estimation, it is only because of an acceptance of the apostolic authorship of the text, which caused a hesitancy to change the received text, that any of the heterodox passages remain. C. H. Turner, “Notes on the Apostolic Constitutions III. The Text of the Eighth Book,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 31 (1930): 129. For Metzger’s views on Vat gr 1506, see *SC* 320.76, 82.
transmitting scribes would change heterodox passages to orthodox passage rather than the reverse. Where both a heterodox and orthodox variant readings exist, it is almost certain that the heterodox reading is the original. The presence of heterodox variant readings thus gives a strong indication that the original editor was non-Nicene.

Assuming the priority of Vat gr 1506, Turner highlighted several passages which point to a non-Nicene editor for the *Apostolic Constitutions*. One such passage is the prayer in *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.36.6, which describes God as “God and Father of the Christ.” Hanson noted this as a “clear mark of Arian origin” due to the non-Nicene practice of calling God the Father the “God of the Son.” Drawing from texts such as Psalm 44.8, 15.1, and John 20.27, non-Nicene writers stressed this formula to highlight the subordination of the Son to the Father.

The majority of modern scholarship followed Turner’s defense of the non-Nicene character of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. However, exactly which brand of non-Nicene theology...
produced the text is an open question. Various non-Nicene sub-groups have been suggested: “Arian,”76 “Neo-Arian” (Eunomian);77 “Apollinarian,”78 or simply a generic “non-Nicene.”79 The *Apostolic Constitutions’* sister corpus, the letters of Pseudo-Ignatius, are similarly given a wide variety of attributions.80 Part of the difficulty of pinpointing the editor’s theology is that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were not always precise with the specific theological terms which divided the various Nicene and non-Nicene parties. Another explanation81 is that the editor, seeing himself as the representative of the true church of Antioch, followed what he saw as traditional Antiochene theology and practice in order to help preserve or draw together the various factions in Antioch under the leadership of his church.82 Much like


78. Funk XV-XX.

79. *SC* 329.11.


82. In particular, the editor seems to be drawing on the influential Antiochene theologian Lucian of Antioch, whose discourses could be found in a spectrum of non-Nicene thought. *SC* 320.60.
Leontius maintaining the peace by mumbling the theologically sensitive portion of the liturgy, the editor’s vague theology supported his overriding concern to unite the church under the leadership of his bishop in Antioch.

While the editor’s theology is not clear from the *Apostolic Constitutions*, many believe that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were not the only document which came from the editor’s hand. Two other documents have enjoyed wide support as being done by the same person, the letters of Pseudo-Ignatius and Julian’s *Commentary on Job*.83

The identification of Pseudo-Ignatius with the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* started to build as a scholarly consensus in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.84 Lightfoot, while not accepting the identification, did demonstrate that at the least, Pseudo-Ignatius was dependent upon the *Apostolic Constitutions*.85

Despite the growing scholarly consensus, as late as the 1970s, Hagedorn claimed that there was no unified view on whether Pseudo-Ignatius and the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* were the same individual.86 Hagedorn believed the issue would remain unresolved in the absence of another document from the editor’s hands which would give a better idea of the editor’s preferred style, vocabulary, and theology. Hagedorn argued that Julian’s *Commentary on Job* was such a document. His thesis was that by analyzing the three documents, one could see that all three came from the same hand.

84. Funk, XIX-XX.
86. Hagedorn, *Der Hiobkommentar des Arianers Julian*, XLI.
Hagedorn was the first to suggest the same authorship for the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Pseudo-Ignatius, and Julian’s *Commentary on Job*. Hagedorn gives 35 parallel passages between the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the *Commentary on Job* and 11 between Pseudo-Ignatius and the *Commentary on Job*. The parallels between the three documents suggest that there is a shared milieu if not a shared editor.

Unifying the suggestions on the *Apostolic Constitutions’* editor, date, and location, two events seem promising as events that provoked the editing of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. As will be discussed in detail later, the *Apostolic Constitutions* are noteworthy among eastern texts in its treatment of the emperor. The *Apostolic Constitutions* and their sister document Pseudo-Ignatius stand as the only two documents in the east from this period to articulate a theory of the bishop being above the emperor. The editor’s views on the emperor, as well as his insistence on the unity of the city under one bishop, could plausibly be a reaction to the recall of exiled Nicene bishops by Valens in 377/8 CE by emphasizing the power and authority of the still official non-Nicene church. The second event is Eunomius’ “attempt to reconstitute

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87. That he is the first is unsurprising, since he is also the first to publish a critical edition of the *Commentary on Job*.
89. Mueller argued that there is no evidence for the existence of a “workshop” which could produce the text. Ibid., 89. However, there is no need for the existence of an explicit “workshop” to suggest similarity in theology and practice. For the purpose of this dissertation, I accept Hagedorn’s conclusion that the *Commentary on Job*, Pseudo-Ignatius, and *Apostolic Constitutions* all originate from the same hand. Even if one accepts, for the sake of argument, that they are from different people, their similarities in language and thought show a unity of theology which allows one document to supplement evidence from the others. While my conclusions do not require the identification to be accepted, my conclusions derive further support from such an identification.
90. What follows is admittedly speculation.
91. For an account of this event, see Rochelle Snee, “Valens’ Recall of the Nicene Exiles and Anti-Arian Propaganda,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 26 (1985): 395-419. Though ultimately speculative, I find this possibility the most satisfying when combined with dating the letters of Pseudo-Ignatius. According to Lightfoot, the letters of Pseudo-Ignatius appear to be compiled after the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 250-3. I would then place Pseudo-Ignatius immediately after Valens’ death or early in the
the “shadow hierarchy” in 380 CE, which had its special focus in and around Antioch.\textsuperscript{92} The Apostolic Constitutions’ obsession with hierarchy and rituals would fit naturally into Eunomius’\textsuperscript{93} desire to establish a supplemental hierarchy to the non-Nicene church.\textsuperscript{94} This would also help explain the editor’s theology of the emperor under the bishop as well as his focus on unity under the non-Nicene bishop, which was being threatened by Theodosius favoring the Nicenes in Antioch.

Based on the above, Apostolic Constitutions can be placed accurately to a non-Nicene milieu in Antioch within a few years of 380 CE. The social, political, and religious dimensions of that context will briefly be examined to better understand the milieu from which the Apostolic Constitutions was compiled. Fortunately, there is an abundance of extant primary sources for Antioch in the mid to late fourth century.

Antioch

As one of the chief cities of the east and residence of the emperor, Antioch was a great cultural and social center. Its prestige as a center for education was one of the main factors

\textsuperscript{92} Vaggione, Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution, 318. Particularly noteworthy in the context of the Antiochean Apostolic Constitutions is the meeting in Antioch between the major ecclesiastical leaders—Eunomius, Arrianus, Euphranius, Julian of Cilicia, John of Jerusalem, and Theophilus of Antioch—to “regulate affairs in the entire East” in 380 CE. Kopecek, A History of Neo-Arianism II (Cambridge: The Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1979), 496. Against this view, Williams holds that Apostolic Constitutions 8.47.50 represents “damaging” evidence to the theory of Eunomian provenance. Williams, “Baptism and the Arian Controversy,” 164. Independently (presumably since William’s article is not listed in his bibliography), Mueller argues that the Apostolic Constitutions, while non-Nicene, does not have explicitly Eunomian characteristics, offering Apostolic Constitutions 7.41.5 as the decisive piece of evidence. Mueller, “The Trinitarian Doctrine of the Apostolic Constitutions.”

\textsuperscript{93} It would also fit into Julian’s, the possible Eunomian bishop of Antioch and possible author of the Commentary on Job and Pseudo-Ignatius—though Williams, “Baptism and the Arian Controversy,” 163 argued that Hagedorn’s identification of Julian as Eunomian rests on flimsy evidence.

\textsuperscript{94} Vaggione, Eunomius of Cyzicus, 318.
that led to Antioch being known as a center for culture. Libanius, who was regarded as the
greatest rhetor and teacher of his day, taught in Antioch from 354-ca. 393 CE. He came from
a strong tradition of Antiochene pagan philosophers, such as Ulpian, Prohaeresius, and
Zenobius.95 The educational system helped transmit the traditions of the city, most
significantly its Greek culture, which formed one of the pillars of the city’s self-identification
as a colony founded by Athens.96

Fourth-century Antioch was generally considered the third or fourth largest city after Rome,
Constantinople, and perhaps Alexandria.97 Both Libanius and Chrysostom gave rough
estimates of the population of the city: Libanius suggested 150,00098 while Chrysostom gave
three different numbers. At different points, Chrysostom claimed that the city contained
100,000 Christians;99 that the population of Antioch during Ignatius was 200,000;100 and that
approximately 10% of Antioch was poor, while the church took care of 1/5 of the poor,
which numbered 3,000, which would give the total population at 150,000.101

As mentioned, Chrysostom placed the proportion of the very poor at 10% of the population,
in the same homily he estimated the upper class as also comprising about 10% of the
population.102 The upper class in Antioch was a landowning class, who either gained their

95. Eunapius, *Vita Philosopherum* 486-7 (LCL 134.482-4). Eunapius praised Prohaeresius in particular as
the “divine Prohaeresius (θειότατος Προαιρέσιος).”
96. For the role of the educational system in preserving Greek tradition, see Glanville Downey, “Ancient
98. Libanius, *Epistula* 122.4 (LCL 479.235). For further discussion on all the passages mentioned below,
Philological Association* 89 (1958): 87-90.
99. Chrys., *Hom. in Mt.* 85.4 (*PG* 58.762).
101. Chrys., *Hom. in Mt.* 66.3 (*PG* 58.630).
102. Ibid., 66.3 (*PG* 58.630).
wealth through inherited land or invested their newly made wealth into land.\textsuperscript{103} Despite owning a large amount of land, the upper class preferred living in Antioch, or one of its suburbs, rather than in the countryside.\textsuperscript{104} Those who were newly wealthy usually made their money through the imperial service or a job connected to it, such as advocacy. Shopkeepers and craftsmen made up a class comprised of people who usually, though not always, both made and sold their goods.\textsuperscript{105} While there were guilds, Libanius’ client list showed that the guilds were ineffective for protection. Shopkeepers faced an oppressive tax, the \textit{collatio lustralis}, and had few legal rights.\textsuperscript{106} They needed a patron to help them with taxes and legal issues.

**Imperial Relationship with the Church**

From 362 CE, with the Emperor Julian, until 378 CE, with the death of Valens, Antioch served as the residence for the emperors of the east. The imperial presence in Antioch influenced the editor of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}.\textsuperscript{107} Considering the anti-imperial theology of the editor of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}, which is discussed in Chapter 5, it is useful to consider the emperor’s authority more broadly, and his authority within the church more specifically. In the relationship between the emperor and the church, there is a time before


\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., 51, based on the absence of any mention of the countryside in Libanius as well as the luxury villas excavated in the Antioch suburb of Daphne.

\textsuperscript{105} Libanius, \textit{Oratio} 11.255-7, (Foerster, 1.2.527-8).

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., 46.22-3 (Foerster, 3.389-90).

\textsuperscript{107} “Although the church as implied in the AC might not be fully conformed to the pagan world around it, it has nevertheless taken on the structures and features of the imperial government.” L. Bloomquist et al., “Prolegomena to a Sociological Study of Early Christianity,” 229-30.
Constantine and after Constantine. Though trends predated Constantine, his rule provided such a decisive change in the relationship between the church and imperial politics, that it is most helpful to focus on him.108

Constantine, thanks to his comparatively long reign and political instincts, changed the relation between the Christian church and the imperial government. He used his personal auctoritas as well as his imperial potestas to decisively shape both the Roman state and Christian churches. While it is a panegyric, and thus followed the rhetorical conventions of exaggeration, Eusebius of Caesarea’s Vita Constantini is a helpful example of imperial authority viewed from a pro-imperial perspective. Constantine had the auctoritas as one who is a “friend of God.”109 He was the greater Moses.110 Much like many highly-regarded ascetics, Constantine received visions from God as God chose to speak personally and directly to him.111

108. I acknowledge that what follows is a simplification, perhaps even an oversimplification, of a complex issue. I treat emperors closer to the editor’s own life in more depth in Chapter 5.

109. Eus. V.C. 1.3.3-4 (SC 559.182). Drake compared this title with the “man of God,” a title which Constantine used, to suggest that Constantine saw himself as wielding more authority than Eusebius was willing to acknowledge. Harold Drake, “The Emperor as a ‘Man of God’: The Impact of Constantine the Great’s Conversion on Roman Ideas of Kingship,” História 35 (2016): 6-8.

110. Eus. V.C. 1.12 (SC 559.194-6). For a full discussion of the Constantine-Moses comparison, see Michael Hollerich, “Myth and History in Eusebius’ De vita Constantini”: ‘Vit. Const. 1.12’ in its Contemporary Setting,” The Harvard Theological Review 82 (1989): 421-45; Claudia Rapp, “Imperial Ideology in the Making: Eusebius of Caesarea on Constantine as ‘Bishop,’” The Journal of Theological Studies 49 (1998): 685-695. The comparison with Moses is all the more interesting considering that one of the favorite comparisons of the Apostolic Constitutions is that between Moses and the bishop. Cf. Apostolic Constitutions 2.18.6, 27.5, 30.1, 32.2, 44.4; 6.1.2, 2.2-3.2; 7.10.1-2; 8.16.4, 46.17 (SC 320.192, 242, 248, 250, 284; SC.329.294, 296-300; SC 336.38, 218, 274; Funk 67, 107, 113, 115, 139, 303, 305-7, 398, 523, 562). The passage in 2.29.1 (SC 320.248, Funk 111) is particularly noteworthy, as there Moses (the bishop) is both “king and high priest.” While the editor might not directly have a comparison with Eusebius’ Constantine in mind, it is undoubtable that his theology represents a complete rejection of it. Each has a starkly different view on interpreting Moses’ authority. For Eusebius, Constantine is the Moses with kingly potestas and priestly auctoritas. For the Apostolic Constitutions, the bishop is the Moses with priestly potestas and kingly auctoritas. The editor’s position, where he is against imperial authority in the church, would have caused him to firmly reject Eusebius’ comparison. See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of the editor’s view of imperial auctoritas in the church.

111. Eus. V.C. 1.28, 47 (SC 559.218-20, 246-8). Reading the superlatives that Eusebius used to describe Constantine’s character, one could be forgiven for thinking he also had the auctoritas of an ascetic that came
Constantine arrived at the Council of Nicaea like a “heavenly messenger (οὐράνοις ἄγγελος) from God.” According to Eusebius, it was the emperor who was the decisive character in the Council of Nicaea. Constantine, through arguments and persuasion, brought unanimity to the assembled bishops. In perhaps the most famous passage of the Vita, Constantine claimed: “I also am a bishop, appointed by God to whatever is external to the Church.” It was not only Constantine who compared himself to a bishop, Eusebius, in de Vita Constantini 1.44.2, stated that Constantine was like a “universal bishop (κοινὸς ἐπίσκοπος) appointed by God.”

To modern sensibilities, Constantine’s claim of the title of bishop seems ironic, considering he was unbaptized and was never recorded as attending a church service. Drake suggested that in Constantine’s claim to be a bishop, he was trying to emulate Augustus’ relationship with the Senate through his own relationship with the church. Augustus claimed to have equivalent potestas as his Senate colleagues, but rule thanks to his superior auctoritas.

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112. Ibid., 3.10 (SC 559.362-4).
113. Ibid., 3.13 (SC 559.368).
114. Ibid., 4.24 (SC 559.480). Seston argues that this passage is not from Eusebius, as it has a different theology of emperor-church relations. In his estimation, this is an attempt at limiting the power of Constantine, giving him religious potestas but only among the pagans, not among Christians. W. Seston, “Constantine as a ‘Bishop,’” The Journal of Roman Studies 37 (1947): 127-31.
115. SC 559.242. Constantine proved to be more ambitious in death. He was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles, as if equating himself not just with a bishop but with the apostles. Eventually, he became known as “Isapostolos,” equal to the Apostles.
Constantine may have been trying to make an equivalent rhetorical move, laying claim to an equality of *potestas* with the bishop while attempting to rule them through *auctoritas*. Such a view fits within the *de Vita Constantini* passages discussed above. Constantine sat as an equal among the bishops, choosing to discuss and suggest rather than command.\footnote{118}{118. Eus. *V.C.* 1.44 (*SC* 559.242-4).}

Tied to Augustus’ *auctoritas* was his status as primary patron for the Empire.\footnote{119}{119. I realize I am using the term “Empire” here anachronistically, as Augustus himself would argue that the Republic still existed. For the link between *auctoritas* and patronage, see Drake, *Constantine, and the Bishops*, 42ff.}

\*Auctoritas*, as much as resources, determined the desirability of a potential patron. The *Apostolic Constitutions* applied this lesson to its regulation of Christian patronage. Constantine again followed in Augustus’ footsteps. Eusebius recounted the significant patronage which Constantine bestowed upon the church and the poor.\footnote{120}{120. Eus. *V.C.* 1.42-3 (*SC* 559.240-2).}

Undoubtedly, this patronage of the churches and their favored cause earned him *auctoritas* in the eyes of many in the churches, both lay and clergy.\footnote{121}{121. Certainly Eusebius, in the passages quoted above, seemed to indicate it by placing Constantine’s patronage directly before his interaction with bishops in assemblies. In those assemblies, Constantine’s *auctoritas* is recognized by the bishops who listen to him.}

### Other Political Offices in Antioch

Scholars often point to the fourth century as the era of the decline of the Roman municipalities, such as Antioch.\footnote{122}{122. See, for example, Allan Johnson, “The Decline of Roman Municipalities,” in *Municipal Administration in the Roman Empire*, ed. Frank Abbott and Allan Johnson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1926), 197-231, which is primarily concerned with the fourth century.}

This view is supported by much fourth-century evidence. However, it is more accurate to say the municipality, and especially municipality politics, were evolving rather than declining.\footnote{123}{123. While the historical view might show evolution, however, those who lived during that time, such as Libanius, certainly seemed to think there was a decline.} One of the main causes of the evolution was the...
increasing centralization of the state apparatus in the fourth century at the expense of non-imperial forms of government. The increasing cost, due to the increasing size of the imperial bureaucracy, army, and imperial building projects, led to the need for more money. Antioch’s municipal lands, in theory, gave it the money needed to continue its expenditures, but by the fourth century, most of the income from these properties was going to the imperial, rather than municipal, treasury. Thus, the municipal costs were increasingly borne by the curiales, the men who made up the city council, the curia.

The curiales was a hereditary position to the city council. Libanius gave an idealized description of the curiales in Antiochicus, his account of the functions of the government of Antioch.\(^{124}\) By Libanius’ day, however, all power had gone out from the curiales, and only responsibilities remained. The curiales responsibility fell into two categories: the maintenance of civic services and maintenance of public order. In the first realm, curiales were expected to fulfill the ideal of maintaining and promoting “civilization,” especially Greek civilization. In Libanius’ idealized portrayal of the curiales, they are men who were engaged in public competition with others in their class to see who could best fulfill, maintain, and expand this civilizing ideal.\(^{125}\) This public competition led them to provide food during famines, maintain the public baths and other city improvements, provide entertainment for the populace, and advise governors.\(^{126}\) Their authority was encapsulated by their duties; it was limited to auctoritas gained by being monetary patrons to the city and advisors to the ones with real decision making authority.

\(^{124}\) Libanius, Oratio 11 (Foerster 1.2.437-535).  
\(^{125}\) Ibid., 11.134, 139, 146 (Foerster 1.2.480-1, 482-3, 485).  
\(^{126}\) Ibid., 11.134-43 (Foerster 1.2.480-4).
Despite their lack of “actual” authority, the imperial government treated the curiales as collectively responsible for the city. Two local events, the 303 CE mutiny of an imperial unit and the 387 “Riot of the Statues,” were local disturbances of the peace. In both, the curiales were blamed for the disturbances. In the first, Emperor Diocletian executed several leading curiales. In the second, a general imperial pardon prevented the execution of curiales. Despite lacking the authority to stop or prevent the disturbances, it was the curiales, not those with actual power such as the governor, who were held responsible.

By the mid-fourth century, many sought to avoid the curiales’ duties due to its costs and lack of real authority. Joining the imperial service was the most common way to avoid the duties. High ranking imperial servants enjoyed hereditary immunity from the duties of the curiales, most significantly the prohibitive costs of maintaining the city and its culture. They also held the ability to claim oversight from Constantinople rather than the local governor. From the letters of Libanius, it is clear that wealthy men ensured that even their infant sons were given imperial positions to avoid the curiales’ duties. Approximately around the same time that the Apostolic Constitutions were being edited, Libanius would claim that while once there were 1,200 members of the curia, now there were fewer than 60. With the decline of the curiales class, the church took more of its duties and responsibilities, especially as patrons.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the Apostolic Constitutions saw the bishop’s role as patron as granting him auctoritas against the potential alternative authority of lay patrons.

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127. Ibid., 19.45 (Foerster 2.405).
128. Ibid., 19.32-5 (Foerster 2.400-1).
129. Libanius, Epistulae 300, 358-9, 362, 365-6, 875-6 (Foerster 10.281-2, 339-42 344-6, 349-51; 11.31-2).
130. Libanius, Oratio 48.4 (Foerster 3.430). In 49.8 (Foerster 3.456-7), Libanius makes an even more drastic drop: from 1200 to 12. Liebeschuetz correctly noted that the numbers Libanius gives are intended to form a rhetorical pair and so should not be regarded as precise. However, what is certain is that by the end of the fourth century the curia had shrunk significantly. Liebeschuetz, Antiocch, 182.
Christian Schisms in Antioch

Few churches were as contested in the Nicene controversies as the church at Antioch. Sometime between 326-330 CE Eustathius was deposed, sparking a schism in Antioch. During much of the Nicene controversies, there were three bishops, each claiming to properly represent “the church”: the non-Nicene Euzoius (bishop from 361-78 CE); the Eustathians, led by Paulinus; and, after 360 CE, the Meletians, led by Meletius. Euzoius was the officially recognized bishop by the imperial government, though, under the brief reign of Jovian, Meletius was allowed to occupy the so-called “Great Church.”

Sometime after 326 CE, the Nicene bishop of Antioch, Eustathius, was deposed and eventually replaced by the non-Nicene Euphronius. A small group of Eustathius’ partisans continued to meet while in schism with the non-Nicene bishop of Antioch. Eventually, that group was headed by the priest Paulinus. After Euzoius became bishop, he permitted Paulinus and the Eustathian partisans to meet in a small church in the city. In an Egyptian meeting, held after Julian’s recall of exiled bishops, Eusebius of Vercelli and Lucifer of

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131. The dates vary due to differing accounts in Socr. H.e. 1.24.1 (SC 477.212); Soz., H.e. 2.19.1 (SC 306.306); and Thdt., H.e. 1.21 (SC 501.282-6). For scholarly treatment of these see the following scholars: Chadwick, who held to a date of 326 CE (Henry Chadwick, “The Fall of Eustathius of Antioch,” Journal of Theological Studies 49 [1948]: 27-35); Hanson, who argued for 328-9 CE (R. P. C. Hanson, “The Fate of Eustathius of Antioch,” Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 95 [1984]: 179); and Sellars, who placed the date at 330 CE (R. V. Sellars, Eustathius of Antioch and his Place in the Early History of Christian Doctrine [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928], 39ff.).


133. Thdt., H.e. 4.25.3 (SC 530.294-6).

134. The date is here following Chadwick’s reconstruction in Henry Chadwick, “The Fall of Eustathius of Antioch,” 27-35. Between Eustathius and Euphronia were the very brief reigns of two bishops, Paulinus of Tyre and Eulalia. I would argue that Euphronia’s Christology would be close to Eusebius of Caesarea. Eusebius himself was apparently the first choice for the bishopric but declined in order to avoid violating the canons of Nicaea regarding transferring bishops. Eus. V.C. 3.60.3 (SC.559.436); cf. Nicaea Canon 15 (SEA 95.26). He was also the presider at the councils at Antioch, showing his influence in the city. Because of this influence, it seems likely that he would use it to get someone theologically close to his own views made bishop.

135. Soz., H.e. 5.13.3 (SC 495.154).
Cagliari attempted to get Paulinus recognized as the Nicene bishop of Antioch.\textsuperscript{136} Lucifer, perhaps wanting to present the council with a \textit{fait accompli}, consecrated Paulinus as bishop sometime before the council.\textsuperscript{137} The council itself recognized Paulinus as the bishop of Antioch while using Nicene Christology as the unifying theology between Paulinus and Meletius. Paulinus eventually received support from Athanasius and most of the Western churches.

Meletius was the other Antiochian bishop who received some support from the Nicene party, primarily from eastern bishops. Meletius had previously been bishop of Sebaste, following the deposition of the famous ascetic-bishop Eustathius.\textsuperscript{138} However, he did not remain bishop of Sebaste long, as the populace refused to abandon the popular Eustathius and drove Meletius out.\textsuperscript{139} As canon 15 of Nicaea forbade the translation of bishops, his brief stint as bishop of Sebaste might have disturbed the more pro-Nicene elements in the east after his appointment to the bishopric of Antioch in 360 CE.\textsuperscript{140} At the time of his ascension to the bishopric of Antioch, Meletius’ Christological views were indeterminate: Sozomen and Theodoret suggested he was in the party of Eudoxius, though they recounted rumors that he already held to the Nicene creed.\textsuperscript{141} Philostorgius reported that he at first followed the emperor’s preference of “other in substance,” but once bishop became a staunch defender of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{136} So argues C. B. Armstrong, “The Synod of Alexandria and the Schism at Antioch in A.D. 362,” \textit{Journal of Theological Studies} 3 (1921): 208. Armstrong argues that a meeting in the Thebaid was held between Lucifer of Cagliari and Eusebius of Vercelli (and others), who were there as exiles before the much more famous council of Alexandria in 362. Ibid., 206.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 212-13.
\item \textsuperscript{138} Soz., \textit{H.e.} 4.28.3 (SC 418.346); cf. Socr. \textit{H.e.} 2.44.1 (SC 493.230); Philost., \textit{H.e.} 5.1 (SC 564.341-4); Thdt., \textit{H.e.} 2.32.12 (SC 501.494).
\item \textsuperscript{139} Thdt., \textit{H.e.} 2.32.12 (SC 501.494).
\item \textsuperscript{140} \textit{SEA} 95.26.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Soz., \textit{H.e.} 4.28.4-5 (SC 418.346); Thdt., \textit{H.e.} 2.32.3-4 (SC 501.488).
\end{itemize}
“consubstantialist” doctrine.142 Spoerl’s evaluation of his Proverbs 8.22 sermon led him to the conclusion that Meletius’ theology was “a Homoiousian one couched in cautious Homoian terms.”143 Daly suggested that Meletius is best understood as embodying a self-consciously moderate and traditional position widespread in Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor.144

The non-Nicene party in Antioch could trace its lineage through a virtually unbroken succession of bishops since the deposition of the pro-Nicene bishop Eustathius. Already mentioned was the non-Nicene Euphronius, who was succeeded by another one of Eusebius of Caesarea’s partisans, Flacillus.145 After Flacillus was the anti-Athanasius bishop Stephen, who was deposed due to the failure of an attempt to scandalize two bishops, Euphratas and Vincentius, by smuggling a prostitute into their bedchambers.146 A more moderate non-Nicene, Leontius, succeeded the disgraced Stephen. Leontius was one of the disciples of the very influential Lucian.147 Leontius sought to maintain peace in the Antioch church by mumbling the theologically sensitive portion of the liturgy: the traditional “through the Son, in the Holy Ghost,” which was preferred by the non-Nicenes, versus the Nicene “and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.”148 His sympathies, however, may have been revealed when he made the non-Nicene Aetius an Antiochene deacon.149 The diplomatic Leontius was replaced

142. Philost., H.e. 5.1, 5 (SC 564,360).
145. Flacillus’ relationship to Eusebius is confirmed by Eusebius’ dedication to him in the preface of Ecclesiastical Theology (EW 4.60) and the placement of him in the Eusebian party in his letter to the East. Ath., Apol. sec. 21.1 (Opitz 2.3.102).
146. Thdt., H.e. 2.8.54ff. (SC 501,374ff.)
148. Thdt., H.e. 2.24.3 (SC 501,446).
149. Ibid., 2.24.6 (SC 501,448); Philost. H.e. 3.17 (SC 564,290).
by the court-bishop Eudoxius. After Eudoxius was transferred to the bishopric of Constantinople, he was replaced in Antioch by Meletius. Finally, after Meletius’ own deposition, Euzoiius became bishop of Antioch. Euzoiius was an old ally of Arius. He was deposed by both Alexander of Alexandria, as well as by the Council of Nicaea with Arius. Along with Arius, he submitted a confession of faith to Constantine and was readmitted into communion. Euzoiius was a major figure in the Empire, influencing Valens’ religious policies while the emperor resided in Antioch from 371 CE until Euzoiius’ death in 376.

The non-Nicenes also held significant support of the population. Sozomen, in an account of the triumphs of the Nicene party during this time period, admitted that the non-Nicenes were “very numerous” and had possession of the churches. Sometime between 364-373 CE, Euzoiius seemed to have encouraged the martyrdom cult of Ignatius of Antioch by “discovering” his bones. Smith sees this discovery as part of efforts to cultivate Ignatius as a non-Nicene Antiochene saint to compete with the popular Meletian Antiochene saint, Babylas. The Pseudo-Ignatian letters, the Apostolic Constitutions’ sister document, may also be a part of that process.

As even the summary of the history of the church in Antioch given above shows, the church in Antioch was facing a crisis of religious authority. Bishops served at the whim of the

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150. Socr., H.e. 1.6.8 (SC 477.66); Soz., H.e. 1.15.7 (SC 306.186); Thdt., H.e. 1.4.61 (SC 501.188).
151. Socr., H.e. 1.26.2 (SC 477.220); Soz., H.e. 2.27.12-4 (SC 306.354).
152. Snee, “Valens’ Recall of the Nicene Exiles,” 416. Euzoiius’ influence with the emperor is notable in light of the Apostolic Constitutions’ anti-imperial polemics which will be discussed further in Chapter 5.
155. Ibid., 24-26. Against Smith, Gilliam argues that Ignatius was already a figure of dispute between the various Nicene and non-Nicene factions, and he did not have to be “rediscovered” by the non-Nicenes. Paul Gilliam III, Ignatius of Antioch and the Arian Controversy (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2011), 14-56.
emperor, who deposed several bishops during this time. People, who would call themselves Christians, recognized the authority of different bishops. As the example of Leontius shows, even in the same church the bishop’s authority was questioned as members of the clergy and congregation strained to make out whether his doxology was orthodox or heretical. Leontius’s decision to mumble the key phrase illustrates his diplomacy, but also the practical limits of his potestas. Even in his own church, he was not free to express his own theology. Whatever the rhetorical claims of the bishop’s potestas, the laity held just as much auctoritas to determine the theology of the church. It is little wonder with such a turbulent history that the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions developed such a strong view of the potestas of the bishop as a solution to end the controversies in Antioch.

**Judaism in Antioch**

In addition to Christianity, Judaism was popular in Antioch. The writings and sermons of both the pagan Libanius and the Christian Chrysostom highlight the political and religious importance of the Jews in fourth-century Antioch. When Julian arrived in Antioch, he had, by political necessity and religious preference, formed an alliance with the Jews. After Julian’s death, there was an anti-Jewish backlash, perhaps provoked by the Julian-Jew alliance. This backlash resulted in Christians seizing synagogues. At the same time, John Chrysostom produced the rhetorical, if not actual, pinnacle of anti-Jewish thought in his anti-

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156. Though I argue against it in Chapter 3, other scholars see Jewish prayers as a source for the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions.

Jewish sermons.\textsuperscript{158} Chrysostom’s sermons used pejorative anti-Jewish rhetoric: Jews and their buildings are haunts of demons;\textsuperscript{159} they are the “Christ-killers”;\textsuperscript{160} and their festivals are excuses for gluttony, drunkenness, and sexual promiscuity.\textsuperscript{161}

Behind their invective, however, what Chrysostom’s sermon suggest was that many Christians were attracted to Jewish practices and worship. Many Christians watched or participated in Jewish festivals and fasts.\textsuperscript{162} Some Christians viewed synagogues as a place of the holy. Oaths taken there by Christians were weightier,\textsuperscript{163} and the miraculous healings which were reputed to happen there drew sick Christians.\textsuperscript{164} At least one Christian was personally known by Chrysostom to have been circumcised.\textsuperscript{165} So many Christians in Antioch were attracted to Judaism that Chrysostom worried that if the exact number became known it would harm the church’s reputation.\textsuperscript{166} Competing authorities were present in the practices that Chrysostom critized. Jewish festivals, fasts, and synagogue worship provided alternate liturgical authorities to those in the church. Meanwhile, the alleged miracles were providing a counterpoint to the Christian miracle workers, who primarily gained their miracle-working ability through their ascetic practices. For some Christians, Judaism provided an acceptable alternative to both Christian potestas and auctoritas. Jewish liturgical and ritual practices threatened Christian potestas, which were at least partially constructed through ritual. Jewish

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{158} Meeks and Wilkens, Jews and Christians in Antioch, 30.  \\
\textsuperscript{159} Chrys. Jud. I-8 (PG 48.847; 852B; 851A; 940B).  \\
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid. (PG 48.849A).  \\
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., 1.2; 3; 6.6; 7.1; 8.1 (PG 48.846B; 848B; 912B-13A; 916; 927).  \\
\textsuperscript{162} Ibid., 1.1 (PG 48.844).  \\
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid., 1.3 (PG 48.847B-848A).  \\
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid., 1.6 (PG 48.852A).  \\
\textsuperscript{165} This circumcision evidently was not part of a rite of conversion, as the one who was circumcised still regarded himself as a Christian, and even Chrysostom called him a “brother.” Ibid., 2.2 (PG 48.858B-860A); cf. ibid., 1.8 (PG 48.855B).  \\
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid., 8.4 (PG 48.933).
\end{flushleft}
miraculous claims threatened those whose *auctoritas* was based on their reputation for performing miracles. Like Chrysostom, the *Apostolic Constitutions* responded negatively to these competing claims and its editor shaped his sources to better compete with them.
Chapter 2

Auctoritas and Potestas in the Early Church

The Pre-Nicene Church

The editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* was not the first to discuss issues of personal authority within the church. Issues of authority were prominent in the writings of the early church from the earliest known Christian writings to the time of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Some of these writings described the situation as it was in their context. However, most, like the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, sought to promote their own idealized views of personal authority.\(^{167}\) Both consciously and unconsciously, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* was in dialogue with both the earlier and contemporary discourses over personal authority. He copied, modified, expanded, and argued against these competing views of authority. Sometimes he incorporated these views into his own idealized church. Sometimes he intentionally built in views to combat opposing views. Regardless, it is impossible to understand the editor’s task and unique contributions made to the issues of personal authority without recognizing the traditions he was inheriting and rejecting.

Post-Constantinian churches inherited much of their ideas about authority from the pre-Constantinian church. All sides of the Christological controversies of the fourth century saw themselves as defending the “traditional” church from later innovative errors. Ignatius, Irenaeus, Origen, and others were claimed by both the Nicene and non-Nicene alike. The

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\(^{167}\) This should especially be kept in mind in reading the following: what the discussed authors wanted to happen did not always conform to what actually happened. In this dissertation, I am more interested in the editor’s theology and rhetoric, not the results of his theology in his church. As such, in this chapter I am also more concerned with the theology and rhetoric of the various Christian authors and only secondarily concerned with their success in imposing their theology on the broader church.
editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* not only saw himself as continuing in the tradition of the apostles but also continuing in the traditions of the early church. He saw himself as following not only in their general theology but also in the *auctoritas* and *potestas* wielded by those in the early church.

The pre-Constantinian church, however, was not a monolithic unity that could bestow upon the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* one uniform practice. The pre-Constantinian church exhibited a plurality of both descriptive and prescriptive positions regarding personal authority. Various authors or regions emphasized ecclesiastical authority, expert authority, or “charismatic” authority and appealed to their *auctoritas* and *potestas* in different ways. The editor attempted to creatively shape the mass of occasionally conflicting views of authority he had inherited in order to create the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ view of personal authority.

**Ignatius of Antioch**

One of the earliest writers to deal with personal authority outside the New Testament in the eastern portion of the Roman Empire was the bishop Ignatius of Antioch. Ignatius died, according to Eusebius, during the reign of Trajan. Ignatius is significant for an understanding of the context of the *Apostolic Constitutions* since a non-Nicene editor, perhaps even the same editor who edited the *Apostolic Constitutions*, later added

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Ignatius is best known for his emphasis on the potestas of the clergy, and especially the bishop.\footnote{Ignatius has been called the “earliest ideologue of episcopal government.” Peter Kaufman, Church, Book, and Bishop: Conflict and Authority in Early Latin Christianity (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 17. All of Ignatius’ letters, except the one to the church of Rome, with whose situation he is obviously unfamiliar, mention and praise the local bishop. Ignatius was one of the first witnesses to the monepiscopacy,\footnote{There is some hesitation to place Ignatius as the first witness. In particular, the Pastoral Epistles may be the first, depending upon their dating and exegesis of the relevant passages. Campenhausen, for example, argues that the “monarchical episcopacy is by now [the writing of the Pastoral Epistles] the prevailing system, and that the one bishop has already become the head of the presbyterate, even if his supreme position is not nearly so strongly emphasised as it is in the Epistles of Ignatius.” Hans von Campenhausen, Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power, Translated by J. A. Baker (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969), 107. Meanwhile, it is ambiguous whether Ignatius’ contemporary Polycarp even knows of a title called bishop. While Brent’s claim that Polycarp saw himself as a presbyteros not an episcopos based on his Letter to the Philippians seems to be reading too much into the available evidence, it is true that presbyteros is the only church office mentioned in the letter. Alan Brent, “The Ignatian Epistles and the Threefold Ecclesiastical Order,” Journal of Religious History 17 (1992): 19.} and in some ways his letters were propaganda for it.\footnote{There is a large debate among Ignatian scholars whether Ignatius is describing a reality or constructing his ideal. Brent’s description of Ignatius’ description of the monepiscopacy as a “mystical vision” seems to be more exaggeration than truth. Brent, “The Ignatian Epistles,” 19. Schoedel seems to have presented the most balanced view when he argued that while authority of one bishop was recognized and the threefold ministry of bishop, elders, and deacons was in place, Ignatius gave greater weight to episcopal authority than most of his peers. William Schoedel, Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, edited by Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 22.} The potestas of the bishop offered a solution to Ignatius’ major concern, the unity of the church.\footnote{“The theme of unity may well represent the central concern of the letters of Ignatius.” Schoedel,}
Smyrnaeans 8.1, Ignatius wrote, “All you follow the bishop as Jesus Christ [followed] the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles. Honor the deacons as the commands of God (θεοῦ ἐντολήν).” In this passage, the authority of Ignatius’ threefold hierarchy are compared to three of the most foundational authorities in Christianity: God himself, the apostles, and the commands of God, possibly a reference to the Scriptures. Elsewhere, Ignatius underscored this command to obey the bishop as coming from God himself, “When I was with you, I called out in a loud voice, God’s voice, ‘Pay attention to the bishop and also to the presbytery and deacons.’ ...but the Spirit was preaching and saying this, ‘Without the bishop do nothing.’” Here the auctoritas of Ignatius’ ecstatic utterance, to which he gave the status of prophecy from God, reinforced the potestas of the clergy, and especially the bishop.

Smyrnaeans 8 draws attention to another key theme of Ignatius’ corpus, the bishop’s control over Christian rituals, particularly baptism and the Eucharist. Christian rituals such as baptism and the Eucharist were central to the self-identity of the early Christians. Ignatius’ own sacramental theology saw these rituals, especially the Eucharist, as the main instruments of unity within the church. By giving control over the rituals to the bishop, or one he

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Ignatius of Antioch, 21. Here, unity is not primarily concerned with the unity of the church or individual believers with God, but rather the social interaction within the church body.

175. Holmes, 254.

176. Ignatius’ command for “all” to follow the presbytery as the apostles is especially noteworthy in light of the fact that he himself explicitly denied himself the authority of the apostles in his letter writing campaign. Ignatius could not write to the various churches with the authority of an apostle because he was not bishop over them; it is his audiences’ own bishop and presbytery who could claim that authority over them. *Trall. 3.3* (Holmes, 216); cf. *Eph. 3.1* (Holmes, 184) and *Rom. 4.3* (Holmes, 228). Stoops’ suggestion that Ignatius believes apostolicity authority only comes from groups (thus, as an individual he could not claim it) seems an undue complication. Robert Stoops, “If I Suffer... Epistolary Authority in Ignatius of Antioch,” *Harvard Theological Review* 80 (1987): 168-9.


179. Cf. *Did. 9.5* (Holmes, 358).
Ignatius effectively denied that splinter churches could even function as churches, for they could not, by definition, engage in church rituals.

The bishop was not the only personal authority recognized by Ignatius, but all other personal authorities support the potestas of the clergy as the highest good. Ignatius used several rhetorical strategies in order to construct auctoritas around his own personage. By investing himself in different sources of auctoritas, Ignatius ensured that even those who did not accept the potestas of the clergy would accept his auctoritas, and thus obey his commands to obey the clergy. Already mentioned was Ignatius’ belief in himself as a divinely inspired-speaker. As an itinerant among the Philadelphians, Ignatius did not appeal to his potestas as a bishop, perhaps because he was not a bishop above the Philadelphians. Instead, he appealed to his auctoritas as a person who has prophet-like divine utterances. The prophetic utterances Ignatius gave before the Philadelphians underlined the importance of the bishop and the necessity to obey him. Ignatius’ report of his prophetic utterances given in Philadelphians 7 commanded the Philadelphians to obey the bishop, presbytery, and deacons. The unity of the church under the bishop was emphasized as he added, “Without the bishop, do nothing.”

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180. Smyrn. 8.1 (Holmes, 254).

181. The fullest account of Ignatius intentionally constructing a persona of authority is Alexei Khamin, “Ignatius of Antioch: Performing Authority in the Early Church” (PhD diss., Drew University, 2007), 198-205. Khamin directly critiqued earlier scholarship, especially Campenhausen, who located Ignatius’ own authority as innate to him. Instead, Khamin argues, Ignatius holds no inherent authority but rather uses rhetorical techniques to “borrow” authority from other recognized authoritative sources, including but not limited to Christ, Paul, apostles, prophets, patrons, gladiators, and martyrs.


183. Philad. 7.2 (Holmes, 242).
Meanwhile, in the *Letter to the Ephesians* 20.2, Ignatius implied that Jesus would reveal, presumably through a vision, whether or not the Ephesians had followed his commands towards unity; specifically the commands to obey the bishop and presbytery and partake in one Eucharist under them.\(^{184}\)

Connected to Ignatius’ status as a prophet was his *auctoritas* as an “expert” in religious knowledge. In an extended passage in *Letter to the Trallians*, Ignatius bluntly claimed great spiritual knowledge, writing:

> I have much knowledge\(^{185}\) in God, but I take the measure of myself in order that I do not perish in my boasting. For now, it is far better for me to be afraid and not to listen to those who flatter me. For they speak to me to torture me.... Am I not able to write to you about heavenly things? But I am afraid that I should do you harm seeing you are infants. Forgive me, for I refrain lest you be choked by what you cannot swallow. For I myself, though I am in chains and can understand heavenly things, and the ranks of angels and the hierarchy of principalities, and things seen and unseen, despite all this, I am not a disciple even now, for much is lacking to us, that we may not lack God.\(^{186}\)

Despite his rhetorical protestations of humbleness throughout the passage, Ignatius clearly saw himself as a holder and distributer of specialized spiritual knowledge that was withheld from the “babes.” Ignatius had *auctoritas* because of his own spiritual knowledge, which determined that the readers of his letter were unable to handle his advanced knowledge. Yet he went out of his way to underline his own knowledge, thereby separating himself from his readers. For Ignatius, his readers were babies, while he was mature enough to handle advanced knowledge. He also saw himself as able to ascertain the maturity level of others, and so determined whether to teach his knowledge or keep silent. The Ephesians might be a

\(^{184}\) Holmes, 198.

\(^{185}\) I here follow Schoedel, who sees “πολλὰ φρονῶ” to refer to great spiritual knowledge, citing Herodotus 9.16 as support. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch*, 144.

\(^{186}\) *Trall.* 4.1; 5.1-2 (Holmes, 216-8).
group whom Ignatius judged as able to understand his teaching.\textsuperscript{187} In Ephesians 19.1-3, Ignatius began speaking of the Incarnation; in 20.1-2, he promised that he would write more latter “especially if the Lord reveals anything to me.”\textsuperscript{188} Again, Ignatius’ \textit{auctoritas} allowed him to act as arbiter of whom was worthy of his knowledge; in this case predicating it upon the Ephesians recognizing the \textit{potestas} of the bishop and obeying him.\textsuperscript{189} Lastly, in Letter to Polycarp 2.2, Ignatius counseled Polycarp to pray that “unseen things be revealed.” Maier linked this to Ignatius’ comments in \textit{Trallians} 5.1-2 that he had knowledge of unseen things.\textsuperscript{190} Thus, Maier argued, Ignatius believed that his own advanced spiritual knowledge came from a direct revelation from God and counseled that Polycarp pray for the same so that he too might have advanced spiritual knowledge.\textsuperscript{191} Ignatius believed that the \textit{auctoritas} which he wielded as an expert on spiritual things came directly from God, and thus he gained divine legitimacy. Ignatius united the \textit{auctoritas} of a prophet (his knowledge came from God) with the \textit{auctoritas} of a teacher (he determined what to teach and to whom).

Ignatius was also the first extant author to utilize the growing \textit{auctoritas} of martyrs. Ignatius’ march from Antioch to Rome evolved into a sort of sacred pageantry with himself, as the “sacrifice,” taking center stage.\textsuperscript{192} Visitors, even those who were not along Ignatius’ travel

\textsuperscript{187} Schoedel states that what Ignatius describes in \textit{Trallians} as knowledge that they are unable to grasp consists of “ideas similar to that found in Eph. 19.1-3.” Schoedel, \textit{Ignatius of Antioch}, 145.

\textsuperscript{188} Holmes, 198.

\textsuperscript{189} Eph. 20.2 (Holmes, 198).

\textsuperscript{190} Holmes, 218.


route, went out of their way to visit him. Ignatius bragged, “My spirit greets you, and the
love of the churches which have received me in the name of Jesus Christ, not as a mere
passerby, for even those which did not lie on my way according to the flesh went before me
from city to city.”193 This sacred pageantry ended with, to use Ignatius’ own words, “a
sacrifice.”194 Ignatius became this “sacrifice,” which imbued him with a martyrs’ auctoritas.
There are several elements in the letters of Ignatius which served to create and reinforce the
auctoritas of his status as an impending martyr. Ignatius believed that the Holy Spirit called
him to submit to the martyrdom, making the role of martyr a divinely instituted role for
Ignatius to fulfill.195 By fulfilling this role, Ignatius was imitating Jesus and Paul.196 Through
imitation, he also imitated that which gave them their auctoritas and thus shared a similar
auctoritas.197 Through suffering for Christ,198 Ignatius placed himself in a privileged status of

193. Rom. 9.3 (Holmes, 234). Maier correctly noted the great expense incurred by the churches in their
efforts to meet with Ignatius and carry out his requests: a messenger to Rome (Rom 10.2); messengers went
ahead of him in Asia Minor (Eph. 1.2); five representatives were sent from Ephesus, four from Magnesia, and
some from the Trallians; funds were given for a deacon to accompany Ignatius to Troas (Eph 2.1); two men
followed Ignatius to Troas to give him the news of the peace at Antioch (Phil. 11.1; Smyr. 10.1); and churches
sent letters to congratulate those in Antioch for attaining peace (Polycarp, Phil 13.1). Maier, “The Charismatic
Authority of Ignatius,” 187.
194. Rom. 4.2 (Holmes, 228). The Letter to the Romans is filled with sacrificial language applied to
Ignatius’ impending death. In a rhetorical strategy, Ignatius continually compared his impending martyrdom
with Jesus’ death. In addition to explicitly drawing this connection in 6.3, Ignatius created an extensive
metaphor in 4.1 where he becomes the Eucharistic elements during his death, a ritual imbued with sacrificial
imagery and meaning.
195. Rom. 7.2 (Holmes, 232). He wrote, “water living and speaking in me and saying to me from within
‘Come to the Father.’” Schoedel convincingly argued on the basis of the Gospel of John, especially 7.39, and
Odes of Solomon 11.6 that the water is to be identified with the Holy Spirit. Schoedel, Ignatius of Antioch, 185.
196. Throughout his letters, Ignatius implicitly and explicitly drew parallels between himself and both Paul
and Jesus. The connection between imitating Christ and his impending martyrdom was explicitly mentioned in
Rom. 6.3 (Holmes, 233), and Smyrn. 4.2 (Holmes, 252), and perhaps implicitly in Eph. 1.1, (Holmes, 182); 10.3
(Holmes, 190). Trall. 1.1 (Holmes, 214), seemed to suggest that Ignatius was modeling his letter writing on
Paul. More explicitly in Eph. 12.1-2 (Holmes, 192), Ignatius claimed to be following in the footsteps of Paul.
For a complete discussion on Ignatius’ imitation of Paul, see Khamin, Ignatius of Antioch, 68-81. On Ignatius’
negative comparison of himself to Paul as a culturally conditioned way to paradoxically highlight his
similarities to Paul and engage in self-boasting, see Ritva Williams, “Charismatic Patronage and Brokerage:
197. For a discussion of authority in an mimetic relationship, see Elizabeth Castelli, Imitating Paul: A
198. E.g., Trall. 12.2 (Holmes, 222); Philad. 5.1 (Holmes, 238).
Christianity. He saw himself as one with the apostles, who thought it worthy to suffer for Jesus.\footnote{Cf. Acts 5.41.} Through his imitation of Christ and the apostles, and his status as sacrifice, Ignatius elevated himself through his impending martyrdom. With the elevation in his personal status came the corresponding increase in his auctoritas. This increase in auctoritas was confirmed by his readers’ celebration, which turns his journey to martyrdom into a sacred pageantry.

Irenaeus

Most of Ignatius’ positions on authority were in response to Docetic teachings. Another theologian, Irenaeus, also formed positions on personal religious authority in response to perceived heretical teachings. Irenaeus’ most significant contribution to the notions of religious authority was his conception of the bishops as direct successors to the apostles.\footnote{Iren., Haer. 3.3 (SC 211.30-46). Irenaeus is not the first to argue for the bishops as the direct successors to the apostles. In a now lost work partially quoted by Eusebius, Hegesippus (ca. 180 CE) claimed to have developed a succession of bishops of Rome from the apostles to his present time. Eusebius, H.e. 4.22.3 (SC 31.200). It is probably this list which Irenaeus then quotes from in Haer. 3.3.3 (SC 211.32-8). For a further discussion of Hegesippus see Campenhausen, Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power, 163-9.} Irenaeus developed this thought specifically in an anti-“Gnostic” polemic.\footnote{I am here following Irenaeus’ own label of his opponents and make no claims on how accurately it conforms to reality.} Irenaeus portrayed the Gnostics as claiming that Scripture was ambiguous.\footnote{Irenaeus portrayed their motivation for seeing the Scriptures as ambiguous as an attempt to justify why their theology does not match Scripture. Iren. Haer. 3.2.1 (SC 211.24-6).} Because of the Scripture’s ambiguity, it cannot be properly understood, the Gnostics claim, apart from the “tradition” which has been preserved by their teachers. In response to the Gnostics’ claim of being the true guardians of tradition, Irenaeus argued that true tradition originated from the apostles. The apostles then passed the “tradition” to their disciples, who became the presbyters of the church.\footnote{Ibid., 3.2.2 (SC 211.26-8). Ireneus here appears to be using “presbyters” (presbyteris) as equivalent to...} The crux of his argument comes in 3.2.1; if the apostles were to...
give any secret teaching, they would give it to the same people to whom they entrusted the church. Irenaeus then gave the succession list of Rome, and the example of Polycarp, who was instructed by the apostles and himself instructed his successors. Irenaeus used Polycarp and Rome as examples of how the Christian church could claim an unbroken line of master-disciples/teacher-students from the apostles to his own day.\footnote{“bishops” (episcopi) in 3.3.1 (SC 211.30). 204. Ibid., 3.2.1 (SC 211.24-6).}

Irenaeus emphasized not the \textit{potestas} of the episcopal office itself, but rather the \textit{auctoritas} which came from an unbroken succession of the individuals who hold the office with the teachings of the apostles. In his concern to combat what he saw as false teachers, Irenaeus was concerned that individuals who held the ecclesiastical office be able to demonstrate that their teachings conformed to the teachings of the apostles. Each holder of the episcopal office did not need to show a direct succession from the apostles. He did need to show how his teaching conformed to the teachings of the churches that did hold an unbroken teacher-student line from the apostles, such as the churches in Rome, Asia Minor, and Ephesus. The bishop’s \textit{auctoritas} trumped any \textit{potestas} as the bishop’s \textit{auctoritas} was based on his “expertise” in the exegesis of the Scriptures, which lent authority to his words and actions. The \textit{auctoritas} of the bishop as exegete was then verified by appeal to the common teachings of the church. If the teachings conformed to the teachings held by the apostles, as verified by men who could trace a direct student-teacher relationship back to the apostles, then the teaching was correct, and the person’s expertise in exegesis was confirmed.
Clement of Alexandria

The *auctoritas* of the teacher received one of its greatest defenses by Clement of Alexandria. Clement himself stood in a long tradition of high respect for the function of teachers.\(^{205}\) Similar to Justin Martyr, Clement was an independent teacher/philosopher divested of any *potestas* conferred by church rank or official status.\(^{206}\) In his extant writings, Clement showed a distinct ambivalence towards the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Instead, Clement’s focus was on the “gnostic” teacher. Clement was using “gnostic” in a manner different from Irenaeus. Instead of referring to a perceived heretical sect, Clement used the term to refer to one who was truly spiritual, the “perfect” Christian.\(^{207}\) As the perfect Christian, the gnostic was also the perfect teacher about Christ. The gnostic taught others as a natural outworking of his perfect love and faith.\(^{208}\) The gnostic stood in direct continuation of the Old Testament prophetic office as an instrument of the divine voice and followed in the prophetic tradition when teaching.\(^{209}\) Teaching thus became the characteristic mark of a true gnostic.\(^{210}\)

Clement conceived of every individual Christian as having a gnostic as a teacher. There was no progress without instruction, and no instruction without a teacher; thus to make progress towards perfection one needed a teacher.\(^{211}\) There are two things unique in Clement’s vision

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205. The so-called “school of Alexandria” traditionally traced itself to Mark. Teachers were respected enough that Clement’s teacher, Pantaenus, was requested by Indian Christians to travel to India where he taught before returning to Alexandria. Eus., *H.e.* 5.10.2-4 (*SC* 41.39-40). Other prominent early Christian teachers included Justin Martyr and Tatian.

206. The tradition that Clement was the head of a “catechetical school” is most likely wrong. See, for example Johannes Munck, *Untersuchungen über Klemens von Alexandria* (Kohlhammer, 1933), 273 and H. Koch, “War Klemens von Alexandrien Priester?” *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 20 (1921): 43.


209. Ibid., 6.168.3 (*SC* 446.398).

210. Ibid., 2.56.1 (*PG* 8.973); cf. 2.73.4 (*PG* 8.978).

211. Ibid., 6.57.2 (*SC* 446.176).
of the teacher-student relationship. First is the individualized care Clement viewed as the ideal. Each Christian, for Clement, would voluntarily seek out a gnostic and place themselves under him or her. The second is that the teacher-student relationship had no relationship to the official ecclesiastical structure of the church. In this sense, it shared some similarities with the later master-disciple relationships between monks. While the gnostic may have an official ecclesiastical rank, for Clement any office held by the gnostic was purely incidental and conferred no meaningful potestas. The Old Testament priesthood was an allegory, not for the current ecclesiastical hierarchy, but the gnostic teacher.

The gnostic’s authority was thus entirely based on the auctoritas held by the gnostic. The auctoritas itself was based on two elements of the person, their purity of faith, which led to a holy life, and their exegetical expertise in interpreting Scripture. For Clement, Scriptural expertise was not merely a matter of knowledge, but a matter of faith. Only a truly spiritual man or woman, the gnostic, could properly interpret Scripture. Clement built a hermeneutical chain of biblical interpretation in which the gnostic teacher is crucial: Scripture could not be understood without faith, but faith could not come without teaching. This chain began with Christ, who taught the apostles, giving them faith, and thus Scriptural expertise. The apostles then taught others, who taught succeeding generations, creating an unbroken chain of true gnostics. This process was similar to Irenaeus’ view of the

212. cf. Ibid., 7.3.3 (SC 428.44).
213. Ibid., 5.39.4, 40.1 (SC 278.88, 90); 7.36.2 (SC 428.132). Such an interpretation of the Old Testament fits within Clement’s general neglect of the institutional church and its ecclesiastical hierarchy. For the true gnostic, the gathering together of the church, as well as its public rituals, have no real significance. Strom. 7.35.3, 40.3, 43.1, 49.2, 57.2 (SC 428.130, 142, 148-50, 166, 186). As such, it is perhaps unsurprising that Clement, who undoubtedly saw himself as a true gnostic, does not spend any time thinking or discussing the institutional church.
214. Strom. 6.166.3 (SC 446,392-4).
215. Ibid., 7.95.5 (SC 428,288).
216. Ibid., 1.12.3 (PG 701A-B).
transmission of tradition. The main difference, where the teacher was unconnected to the institutional church or its ecclesiastical structures, is crucial. The transmission of teaching authority was not through the *potestas* of an office, such as bishop, but a person’s *auctoritas* based on their faith, holiness, and teaching ability. The teacher was apart from the church and its rites, and was freely chosen by an individual to act as their teacher. That teacher, because of their *auctoritas*, became the paramount personal religious authority in that individual’s life, above any ecclesiastical *potestas*.

**Origen of Alexandria**

In Clement’s possible student, Origen of Alexandria, Clement’s high view of a teacher’s *auctoritas* was united with a high view of the *potestas* of the clergy. Origen started his ecclesiastical career as a teacher, before eventually becoming a presbyter. For Origen, the ideal situation was that those who held the spiritual gifts of teaching and exegesis should be appointed to an ecclesiastical office. While in practice it might differ, in Origen’s ideal church, teachers were clergy and clergy were teachers. Any ecclesiastical titles given to any person should only be recognitions of the spiritual gifts already possessed by that person. In some ways, it can be said that for Origen there was no *potestas* for a clergy member, only the individual’s *auctoritas*. Ordaining a person gave the person no new *potestas*. Instead, it recognized and formalized the *auctoritas* the individual already possessed due to their spiritual gifts, especially their abilities in teaching and exegesis. Similar to Clement’s true

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218. Eusebius seems to imply that Origen had long sought to be made a cleric but was frustrated by his bishop in Alexandria. It was only after getting away from the bishop of Alexandria by moving to Caesarea that he was finally ordained. *H.e.* 6.8.1-5 (*SC* 41.95-6).
219. According to Campenhausen, the only time Origen distinguishes between *presbyteri* and *magistri*, in *Hom. Ezeh* 3.7 (*SC* 138-40), was an occasion on which the biblical text forces him to do so. Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power*, 250.
gnostic, Origen’s ideal cleric was the paragon of spirituality. The congregation would ideally be able to look upon their deacons, presbyters, and bishops as the spiritual models to emulate, thus becoming more spiritual themselves. Origen takes Clement’s true gnostics and subsumed them into the institutionalized church.

Origen’s strong emphasis on the auctoritas of the clergy left little room for clerical potestas. What potestas existed was like the authority given to a badge or medal. Clerical positions, at least in Origen’s ideal church, served as a distinctive medal or uniform by which both believers and unbelievers could see who truly held virtue and learning that they should be emulating. The potestas of the clergy thus supported auctoritas; in the absence of auctoritas borne from virtue and learning, the potestas had nothing to support and was thus useless.

Confessors and Martyrs

Though it was not until the fourth century that the cult of the martyrs began to flourish, already in the pre-Nicene period martyrs and “confessors,” those who had been persecuted for their faith but lived, had gained auctoritas within the Christian community. As early as Ignatius of Antioch, one can see the beginning of the exploitation of the auctoritas of martyrdom, or more specifically in his case, impending martyrdom. The mid-second century Martyrdom of Polycarp gives evidence for the early development of the cult of

221. In general, three main dates are proposed for the Martyrdom of Polycarp: an early date circa 155 CE based on the internal mention of the proconsulship of Statius Quadratus in Martyrdom of Polycarp 21, a middle date circa 166 CE based on Eusebius’ dating of it during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and a post–second century date based on the assumption that it is a forgery. The two earlier dates are preferred due to internal evidence, in particular the author’s use of “we” in portions of the narrative which seems to indicate it is a first-hand account. For a more extensive defense of this position, see Sara Parvis, “The Martyrdom of Polycarp,” The Expository Times (2006): 105-12.
martyrdom. The document illustrates what gave a martyr auctoritas, as well as how Christians treated the martyrs. While Polycarp already had auctoritas as a teacher and prophet, his martyrdom conferred on him the distinct auctoritas of a martyr. Martyrs’ auctoritas came from their close association with Christ. Christ was standing by Polycarp during his martyrdom and talked with him. Christians saw Polycarp as imitating Jesus, and thus sharing in part in his auctoritas. The community demonstrated its recognition of the special auctoritas of the martyr by the special value they imparted on his bones and their promise to meet at his tomb to celebrate the day of his martyrdom.

Prophets

Martyrs and bishops were not the only groups which were imbued with notions of auctoritas and potestas in the pre-Constantian church. Prophets also held auctoritas thanks to their status as people who communicated with the Divine. Many people thought that the office of prophet would continue to exist until the parousia. The best-known prophetic movement, Montanism, illustrates the auctoritas imbued in the prophet. Montanism was named after its

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222. Martyrdom of Polycarp 19.1 (Holmes, 326).
223. Ibid., 5.2 (Holmes, 310) with fulfillment in 12.3 (Holmes, 318).
224. The status of martyrs is seen throughout the martyrdom account; martyrs are “no longer men but already angels” (ibid., 2.3 [Holmes, 308]), whose status is high enough that some believe the Christians will worship Polycarp after his death (ibid., 17.2-3 [Holmes, 324]).
225. Ibid., 2.2 (Holmes, 308).
226. Direct comparisons of Polycarp’s and Jesus’ deaths were explicitly stated in 1.1 (Holmes, 306), 17.3 (Holmes, 324), and 19.1 (Holmes, 326). Additional non-explicit similarities include withdrawing to pray before his “betrayal” (5.2 [Holmes, 310]); prophesying his death (5.2 [Holmes, 310]); the presence of a man named Herod (6.2 [Holmes, 312]); betrayal by a “Judas” (6.2 [Holmes, 312]); entering the city on an ass (8.1 [Holmes, 314]); the weakness of the Roman authorities who wished to release him (9.2-3 [Holmes, 314-6]) but who gave in to the crowd, who demand the death penalty (12.2-3 [Holmes, 318]); being stabbed in the side (16.1 [Holmes, 322]); and Polycarp’s described using sacrificial imagery (14 [Holmes, 320-2]), especially his self-comparison to Eucharistic elements.
227. Ibid., 18.2-3 (Holmes, 326).
228. Eus., H.e. 5.17 (SC 53-4). The text was not unique among early church writings when it stated, “For the prophetic gift must continue in the whole Church until the final coming, as the Apostle insists.”
founder Montanus, though it was also known as “New Prophecy” or “Phrygian,” after their place of origin. It was a prophetic movement within Christianity that began around 171 CE. The movement was based heavily on the book of Revelation and was often identified as a millenarian movement. Eusebius gave a critical version of the rise of Montanism whereby Montanus, frustrated in his desires to attain church leadership, began to “prophesy” contrary to the custom and traditions of the church. Eusebius was quick to blame the devil for Montanus’ prophecies. Eusebius was not alone in thinking that Montanus and his followers were demonically possessed. According to Eusebius, at least twice bishops attempted to exorcise Maximillia and Priscilla, two of Montanus’ most influential followers and fellow prophets. Evidently, the early Montanist prophecy involved a frenzy with a complete departure of reason, which for the “mainline” church was more a function of demonic possession than true prophecy.

229. Evidence suggests that prophecy, or at least the acknowledged possibility of prophecy, existed within the mainstream church prior to Montanism. In addition to the already discussed Ignatius, Irenaeus claimed that prophecy still existed in his day. Iren., Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching 99 (SC 406.218).


232. H.e. 5.16.6-9 (SC 41.47-9). Throughout the passage, Eusebius used words and terminology drawn from pagan sources to describe Montanus and his followers to delineate how far away he was from “true” Christianity. Aune, Prophecy in Early Christianity, 313. However, Aland has proven that Montanus had nothing to do with pagan prophetic traditions. Kurt Aland, Kirchengeschichtliche Entwürfe: Alte Kirche Reformation und Luthertum Pietismus und Erweckungsbewegung (Gütersloher Verlagshaus: Gerd Mohn, 1960), 137.

233. Eus., H.e. 5.16.17; 19.3 (SC 41.50-1, 60).

Despite the hostility of the “mainline” church, the *auctoritas* of Montanus, Maximilla, and Priscilla was significant. The anti-Montanist writer Hippolytus wrote that “They allege that they have learned something more through these, than from the Law, and prophets and the Gospels. But they magnify these wretched women above the apostles and every gift of grace.” In this statement, Hippolytus made clear the contention over authority between the Montanists and the “mainline” church. It is tempting to see Hippolytus as evidence that the main contention over authority was between prophecy and the settled Scriptural canon, but Ash has demonstrated that the struggle between Montanism and the “mainline” church was not the authority of prophecy versus Scripture, but rather the *auctoritas* of the prophet versus the *potestas* of the bishop. Hippolytus’ polemic highlighted, though exaggerated, the *auctoritas* of prophets within the movement. Their *auctoritas* was so great that Hippolytus could plausibly claim that those with the greatest authority in Christianity, the apostles, were perceived by the Montanists as having less authority than the *auctoritas* of their own prophets.

The prophets’ *auctoritas* was rooted in their links, not with the apostles, but with the Holy Spirit. It is through the Holy Spirit, the Montanists contended, that their prophets lost all

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235. Hipp. *Haer.* 8.12 (*GCS* 3.232). The prominent place Hippolytus gives to the two women has led Huber to argue that the conflict between Montanism and the “official” church can be explained at least partly with reference to a power struggle between the ecclesiastical authorities and the threat of women authorized by the Holy Spirit through prophecy. While I agree that there is an undercurrent of sexism in the institutionalized church’s response to the Montanists, I think theological differences and incompatible views of authority were larger causes of the conflict. Elaine Huber, *Women and the Authority of Inspiration: A Reexamination of Two Prophetic Movements from a Contemporary Feminist Perspective* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 20-46.

reason and were possessed by the divine, which led directly to the utterance of prophetic oracles. The prophets gained and maintained their *auctoritas* through their direct interaction with the divine. Their words were authoritative because they came from the source of all authority, God. In some Montanist circles, the *auctoritas* from the prophetic gift was combined with the *auctoritas* from ascetic living. Here, the Montanists were doubly in the tradition of the apostles and prophets. They shared the same Holy Spirit, who gave them the same prophetic gifts, and mimicked the apostles’ holy lives. The movement’s geographic spread, as well as the number of councils and synods which were called to condemn them, demonstrated the popularity of their claims to authority.

**The Nicene Church**

With the rise of the so-called “Arian controversy,” a loosely allied group which later became identified as the Nicene church began developing its own views of authority to meet the demands of the splintered church. The early Nicene church had two dominant streams of thought towards *auctoritas* and *potestas*: one rooted in the *potestas* of the

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239. The term “Nicene church” is admittedly being used anachronistically here. I am making no claims that everyone whom later scholarship would deem as “Nicene” would have seen themselves as part of a “Nicene church.” As Ayres wrote, “In the west detailed knowledge of Nicaea was far patchier. In all cases, however, we should not necessarily identify knowledge of the council with detailed knowledge of its creed…. There is no reason to think that Nicaea would be remembered for its creed in the years which immediately followed.” Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 87. Parvis gave Marcellus of Ancyra as an example of a “Nicene Christian” who explicitly rejected the Nicene creed. Sara Parvis, *Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy:* 325-345 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5.
ecclesiastical hierarchy and the other rooted in the *auctoritas* of the “charismatic,” the later increasingly identified with monastics. These two streams were sometimes apart, sometimes synthesized depending upon the theologian. However, it was not until the Cappadocians, and especially Basil the Great, that the ecclesiastical *potestas* and “charismatic” *auctoritas* achieved a lasting synthesis in Nicene thought.

**Monasticism**

While the monastic movement had its roots within the pre-Constantinian church, it was in the post-Constantinian church that monasticism as a mass movement began to flourish.²⁴⁰ Many of the early monastics who were recognized as the “fathers” of monasticism, such as Antony and Pachomius, straddled the period between the pre- and post-Constantinian church. These early monastics saw themselves as the direct spiritual successors to Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles.²⁴¹ They, like Old Testament prophets, had no official status in the cultic rituals of their day. Instead, like the prophets, monastics depended upon their *auctoritas* to give them authority outside their monastic groups.

Different monks held different manifestations of *auctoritas*. In general, however, monks were expected by their peers to have *auctoritas*, which imitated the *auctoritas* of Old

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²⁴⁰ From a cultural standpoint, the monks played a similar role to the earlier Cynics. Both groups were held in a mixture of religious awe and suspicion; at their best, both represented a popular reaction and even rejection of traditional authorities and values. Ramsay MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967): 59-61.

²⁴¹ Athanasius has Antony say that the ascetic should see in the conduct of Elijah his own conduct, as if “looking into a mirror.” *V. Anton.* 7.13 (*SC 400.154-6*).
Testament prophets and New Testament apostles. Monks imitated the prophets and apostles through miraculous works, power over demons, holy life, and ascetic living.

Claims of miraculous works were not new in the ancient world. Non-Christians and early Christians alike claimed to do works beyond the scope of normal humanity. Non-Christian religious figures, philosophers, and ritual experts were all categories which held reputed miracle workers. Christian monastics did not need to go to the pagan tradition to find examples of humans doing the miraculous; their own Christian tradition held plenty of examples. There were many examples in the Old Testament of people who could perform miracles through the power of God. The Old Testament mantle of prophetic miracles was inherited by the apostles in the New Testament. The New Testament, especially the *Acts of the Apostles*, was filled with miracle workers. After the New Testament, martyrs and their tombs were focal points for the miraculous.

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242. For a discussion of the concept of mimesis in antiquity, see Castelli, *Imitating Paul*, 59-88. In particular, Castelli argues that the notion of authority of the one being imitated plays a fundamental role in the mimetic relationship.

243. The distinctions between these are overdrawn for the sake of categorization; indeed, as will be demonstrated, for many monks each one both depended upon and fed into the others.

244. Apollonius, the so-called “pagan Jesus,” is perhaps the best known, though not the only, of the pagan miracle workers. According to his *vita*, written in the early third century, Apollonius raised the dead (*vita Apollonii Tyanensis* 4.45 [LCL 16.418]), healed the sick (*vita Apollonii Tyanensis* 6.43 [LCL 17.206-8]), and cast out demons (*vita Apollonii Tyanensis* 4.20 [LCL 16.360-2]). In addition, as evidenced by the extensive magical papyri still extant, it is clear that the ability to manipulate reality was believed by many to be possible given the proper rituals and ritual expert. Marvin Meyer, ed., *Ancient Christian Magic: Coptic Texts of Ritual Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Hans Dieter Betz, ed., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

245. To give but one example, Antony’s “great Elijah” caused a drought (1 Kings 17.1), multiplied food (1 Kings 17.14), resurrected a child (1 Kings 17.22), had his sacrifice consumed by a supernatural fire (1 Kings 18.37-8), killed fifty men with fire from heaven (2 Kings 1.10), and divided the Jordan River (2 Kings 2.8).

246. To give a non-exhaustive list of the miracles performed in Acts: the apostles spoke in languages they did not previously know (2.6); Peter healed many (3.7-11; 5.12-16; 9.32-35), saw visions (10.9-22), and raised the dead (9.39-42); Paul also healed many (14.8-18; 16.18; 28.8-9) and raised the dead (20.8-12).

Monks and ascetics self-consciously followed in the miraculous tradition of the prophets and apostles. Monks were thought to have the ability to do “miracles and acts of power like those of the apostles and prophets.”\(^{248}\) As Peter Brown states, “above everything, the holy man is a man of power.”\(^{249}\) The monks’ miracles demonstrated their close connection with the apostles and prophets. More importantly, their miracles demonstrated monks’ close connection with God, who worked miracles through them. Monastics had teaching *auctoritas* because of their close relationship with God. Antony, for example, reputedly taught his disciples information he received from miraculous visions.\(^{250}\) In addition, by placing themselves within the historical continuity of prophets and apostles, monks were also placed within their sphere of *auctoritas*. As Christians listened to the words of prophets and apostles because of their *auctoritas*, so too they were to listen to the words of the monks because of their *auctoritas*.\(^{251}\)

Tied into the monastic’s miraculous power and imitation of prophets and apostles was their power over demons. Just as Jesus and his apostles displayed the *auctoritas* to command and cast out demons, so too monastics were seen, by some, as holding that same *auctoritas*. Athanasius’ literary Antony was perhaps the most famous, though not only, monk to command demons.\(^{252}\)

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248. *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* Prologue 9 (*SH* 53.7-8). The author throughout the prologue links the monks to the prophets and apostles. He also emphasized their miraculous power. In the Prologue alone, the author mentions that God provides for the monks’ physical needs in a “miraculous way” (8; [*SH* 53.7]); they have stopped rivers, crossed the Nile without getting wet, slain wild beasts, performed healings and other miracles, kept the world in being because of their prayers, and preserved human life (9 [*SH* 53.7-8]).


250. Ath. V. Anton. 66 (SC 400.308-10).

251. Of course, just because the monks sought to imitate the *auctoritas* of prophets and apostles, I do not intend to say either that they were successful or that they completely imitated all authority. Apostles still had *potestas* which could not be imitated, a fact that the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* used to his advantage, as discussed in Chapter 4.

252. A non-exhaustive list can be found in Despina Iosif, “‘I saw Satan fall like lightnning from heaven.’ Illness as Demon Possession in the World of the First Christian Ascetics and Monks,” *Mental Health, Religion,*
Contemporaries of the monastics saw their ascetic practice as imitating the prophets and apostles. Sozomen, who probably projected how he expected early monks to have behaved, wrote of the first monks in Syria that they “had no homes, ate neither bread nor meat and drank no wine, but dwelt constantly in the mountains.”253 This lifestyle would no doubt bring to mind their biblical forebears.254 The ascetic principle that the monastics employed varied in details but remained centered on imitating the life of Jesus or the apostles.255 It is perhaps in third-century Syria that monastics first self-consciously began practicing homelessness, celibacy, and poverty in conscious imitation of the precedent set by Jesus and his apostles.256 These early monastics, as well as those who followed in their footsteps, drew their inspiration from Jesus. By imitating Jesus, they showed their greater spirituality, and thus greater auctoritas, in spiritual matters.

The greater spirituality that was borne from the ascetic practice of the monks manifested itself in a perception that monks led a particularly holy life. Their ascetic practices, their


254. It was the Old Testament prophets who wandered in deserts, mountains, caves, and holes in the ground (Heb. 11.38). Jesus himself had no place to lay his head (Matt. 8.20), while his disciples were to give no thought to what to eat or drink (Matt. 6.25). The lack of basic shelter and diet highlights an aspect of similarity between the monks and apostles which proved popular during the fourth century. Each group was seen as showing the triumph of the foolish and poor over the wise and rich. Brown speaks at length of the rhetoric used by mostly powerful and educated Christians about the triumph of the foolish and poor in the guise of the apostles and monks over the powers of the world. Peter Brown, Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 71-117.

255. So the author of Historia Monachorum in Aegypto Prologue 5 (SH 53.7).

prayers, readings, and manual labor all strengthened the monk to resist sin, and thus become more holy. It was from their holy life that the monks saw themselves as gaining their teaching *auctoritas*. The ascetic teaching *auctoritas* had a different basis than that of the academic Christian teachers who gained their authority from exegetical expertise. The monastic’s teaching authority was instead based on their own ascetical virtues, which led to their holier lifestyle. Through a holy lifestyle, ascetics showed themselves to be closer to God, and thus gained an insight into God and his works. He became something of a patron. His close access to God, which he gained through his ascetic works and holy life, allowed his prayers special access to God, which he then used for the community.

**Bishops**

The *potestas* of bishops underwent an evolution during the period from Constantine to the creation of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. The office of bishop held enough prestige that Constantine claimed the office. Constantine was not the only one who was attracted to the office of bishop. Rich *curiales* and senators found the office of bishop to be a viable career path. The office of bishop held enough *potestas* to be an attractive career option to those who had both governmental and ecclesiastical career paths open to them.

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260. Gilliard states “the number of fourth-century bishops whose lower-class backgrounds are attested in the sources can be counted on a few fingers.” While he also argues that senatorial bishops are equally rare, and almost always from Gaul, he does mention several rich *curiales* in the east who became bishops. Frank Gilliard, “Senatorial Bishops in the Fourth Century,” *Harvard Theological Review* 77 (1984): 153-75.
Athanasius

Though Athanasius was not the first anti-Arian bishop and polemicist, he was by far the greatest. His career and theology demonstrate how the Christological controversies of the early fourth century challenged the pre-existing ideas of personal authority. He also illustrates how the “Nicene” church began to modify its theology and practices during the controversies. Athanasius became bishop of Alexandria in 328, just three years after the Nicene Council. The bishopric of Alexandria was highly influential. The sixth canon of Nicaea reads, “Let the ancient customs rule, which are in Egypt, and Libya, and Pentapolis, namely, the bishop of Alexandria has authority (ἐξουσίαν) over all these places.” However, authority recognized by the Council of Nicaea was much different from authority recognized by Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis. The Alexandrian church of Athanasius’ day faced significant challenges to the authority of the bishop. The two main challenges to his potestas were from the auctoritas of the confessors led by Meletius of Lycopolis and the auctoritas of the exegetical experts represented by the challenge of Arius. Added to these conflicts was the ever-present auctoritas of the early monastics who represented an auctoritas that all sides sought to claim.

Meletius’ auctoritas began challenging the potestas of the bishop of Alexandria due to the so-called “Great Persecution.” While the bishop of Alexandria was in hiding from the persecution, Meletius ordained bishops and priests in posts left vacant by imprisonment and martyrdom. Though it began as a dispute on how to lead the church during the persecution,

261. SEA 95.22.
262. As I discuss below, this is a slightly reductionistic way of looking at Arius. In addition to his auctoritas as an exegetical expert, he has auctoritas from a holy life and potestas as a presbyter.
the controversy expanded to include the issue of how to readmit those who lapsed during the persecution. Meletius clearly used his auctoritas gained from his status as confessor, along with the auctoritas of the recent martyrs, to challenge the potestas of the Alexandrian bishop who set light requirements for readmission into the church. The more rigorous makeup of the Meletian churches also attracted some Egyptian ascetics, who added their own auctoritas to the anti-Alexandrian authority. Further, by ordaining bishops and presbyters, Meletius created a direct competition over clerical potestas. The schism demonstrated various competing authorities to the bishopric of Alexandria during Athanasius’ reign. It also, however, illustrated the increased willingness by the church, in this case, Athanasius, to involve governmental power and force. Athanasius oversaw violence, imprisonment, and banishment of his rivals.

The second challenge to the bishopric of Alexandria came from Arius. A fuller account of Arius’ use of auctoritas will be discussed below, in the discussion of the non-Nicene church. For the purposes of understanding the challenges Athanasius faced to his potestas, it suffices

263. Williams argues that the issue of the lapsed was an ex post facto justification by Meletius to explain his behavior in ordaining priests outside his jurisdiction. Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 35.
265. It is probably no coincidence that later Meletians described themselves as the “church of the martyrs” Epiph., *Haer.* 68.3 (PG 42.188A).
266. Goehring rightly warns against drawing too firm a distinction between “Meletian” and “orthodox” monks, arguing that monks self-identified as monks first and only secondarily as Meletian or non-Meletian based primarily on their surrounding community. As he concludes, “One suspects that there is little if anything that would distinguish them [Meletian monks] from monks in a non-Meletian monastery. What in fact distinguishes them and makes them Meletian is the location of their community.” James Goehring, “Monastic Diversity and Ideological Boundaries in Fourth-Century Christian Egypt,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 5 (1997): 72.
267. Socr., *H.e.* 2.22-5 (SC 493.96-118). Here it is helpful to remember Arendt’s maxim (the use of force only occurs in the absence of authority) to see how Alexandrian claims to potestas and auctoritas were not recognized by everyone. Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 93.
to highlight two main issues. First, Arius combined *potestas* as a presbyter of Alexandria with *auctoritas* of an exegetical expert. Secondly, Arius managed to rally several bishops to his side, which caused the *potestas* of the bishop of Alexandria to be opposed by the *potestas* of several other bishops. The powerful bishop of Nicomedia was Arius’ most notable ecclesiastical supporter. In addition, at least two bishops of Libya, which Nicaea recognized as being under the authority of Alexandria, chose to be exiled with Arius.

It is these two controversies, both inherited by Athanasius from his predecessors, that shaped both the practical and idealized notion of authority by Athanasius. Athanasius’ most significant success in the conflict over authority was his co-opting of the *auctoritas* of ascetics and monastics under the episcopal *potestas*. Prior to Athanasius, various ascetic movements supported Meletius and Arius. Throughout his episcopate, Athanasius worked to undermine the support Arius enjoyed among monastics and strengthen his own monastic support. Athanasius attempted to add the *auctoritas* of the monastics to his theological cause, and by extension, to his own *potestas* as bishop of Alexandria. The success of his task can be measured by his periods of greatest weakness. In his last three exiles (356-62, 362-3, 365-6 CE), Athanasius could count on enough support within the monastic community that he was

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269. Williams, *Arius*, 82-91. The authority of the expert in exegesis in Alexandria should not be underestimated. Not only was this most likely the earliest form of authority in the Alexandrian church, but even after Origen, when the bishops of Alexandria gained a measure of control over the private catechetical schools, the role of teacher held enough authority to produce several bishops. Stewart-Sykes, “Origen, Demetrius, and the Alexandrian Presbyters,” 428-9.


271. Haas argued that so many ascetics were drawn to Arius’ cause due to the proximity of Arius’ church to the martyrium of St. Mark and a network of tombs where a number of early Christian ascetics lived. C. Haas, “The Arians of Alexandria,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1993): 237-8. It probably did not hurt Arian recruitment of ascetics that Arius himself was noted for his ascetic demeanor and monastic style of dress. Epiph., *Haer.* 69.3.1 (*PG* 42.206C).
able to hide among them, despite the limits on his *potestas* brought about by imperial displeasure and exile.

There were two main ascetic groups which Athanasius focused his attentions on: the urban ascetics, mostly female “virgins,” and, after 350 CE, the desert monks.\textsuperscript{272} The female virgin was a significant tool in the construction of Athanasius’ *potestas*. By this time, consecrated virgins were employed by bishops in their retinue to demonstrate their power and prestige.\textsuperscript{273} Athanasius described how the “Arians” stripped and scourged Alexandrian virgins. The attacks demonstrated that virgins were seen as part of Athanasius’ power base, and thus appropriate targets for political violence.\textsuperscript{274} Virgins, however, had not always been such a strong addition to Athanasius’ *potestas* as bishop; they had become that way only as part of a determined campaign by Athanasius.\textsuperscript{275} Academic Christianity centered around schools had long flourished in Alexandria. One of the hallmarks of the academic system was the participation of women, especially virgins.\textsuperscript{276} In the climate of theological controversy, it would not be surprising if Athanasius saw teachers outside his control as dangerous, especially since Arius was one of those teachers. Epiphanius recorded that Arius managed to draw seven hundred virgins from “the church.”\textsuperscript{277} Athanasius’ forebear Alexander claimed

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\textsuperscript{272} For the periodization of Athanasius’ work among the ascetics, see David Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 8-11.


\textsuperscript{274} Apologia ad Constantium 33.3-5 (Opitz, 2.8.307). Carlton Badger Jr., “The New Man Created in God” (PhD diss., Duke University, 1990), 231.

\textsuperscript{275} Brakke records five letters, one oration, and *de Virginitate* as the extant works of Athanasius written to Alexandrian virgins. Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism*, 19.

\textsuperscript{276} Both Origen and Clement had women in their schools; Eusebius suggests that Origen castrated himself to avoid scandal because of the presence of women in his classroom. Eus., *H.e.* 6.8.2 (SC 41.95-6). Clem., *Paed.* 1.4.10.1 (SC 128). For virgins’ roles as students in academic Christianity in the fourth century see Brown, *Body and Society*, 122-39, 183-9, 276-7.

\textsuperscript{277} Epiph. *Haer.*, 69.3.2 (PG 42.208A).
that these “Arian” virgins impiously walked around the city;\textsuperscript{278} while Athanasius accused “Arian” virgins of hurling insults.\textsuperscript{279} To combat Arian virgins, Athanasius sought to seclude virgins from public life. This would limit virgins’ ability to manipulate their \textit{auctoritas}, as well as reduce the potential rival \textit{auctoritas} of Christian teachers who depended upon virgins for support.

Athanasius attempted to strictly regulate the public life of the virgins. Athanasius wanted them to live either at home or in a community of female-only virgins. A socially acceptable third option, to live chastely with an ascetic man, was vigorously attacked by Athanasius.\textsuperscript{280} Athanasius wanted virgins to leave the home or community as few times as possible.\textsuperscript{281} He also wanted virgins to speak as little as possible, and only to certain people.\textsuperscript{282} By attempting to seclude virgins, Athanasius tried to negate their ability to publicly use the \textit{auctoritas} gained through their ascetic endeavors. The goal was to transfer the individual virgin’s \textit{auctoritas} to the ecclesiastical structure. The presence of female virgins in “approved” churches implicitly gave their endorsement to the ecclesiastical structure. Virgins’ presence

\textsuperscript{278} Thdt., \textit{H.e.} 1.4.5 (SC 501.156).


\textsuperscript{280} For a full listing of the texts and discussion of Athanasius’ attack on “spiritual marriage” see Brakke, \textit{Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism}, 31-4.

\textsuperscript{281} \textit{Ep. virg.} 1.13,15 (Brakke 277-8); 2.14 (Brakke 297). The primary purpose for leaving the home or community would be to go to church, which is the only place virgins were allowed to go by Athanasius. However, even in the midst of public worship, the virgins were still seclude. They were to greet people as little as possible, be silent during the service, and not talk with lay people. \textit{Ep. virg.} 2.4, 8-10 (Brakke 293, 294-5).

\textsuperscript{282} \textit{Ep. virg.} 2.14 (Brakke 297).
around theologically inspired violence showed both the limit of virgin *auctoritas*, as well as the limited success Athanasius’ program enjoyed.\(^{283}\)

The second strategy Athanasius employed to protect the *potestas* of the bishop was to attack the *auctoritas* of the academic Christian teacher. He employed these attacks both as part of neutralizing or winning the *auctoritas* of the virgins, but also as part of a wider campaign to discredit Arius’ *auctoritas* as an exegetical expert. Athanasius attempted to isolate and silence virgins. Virgins, as the brides of Christ, were only allowed to learn about their bridegroom from approved people, those who, “speak about God just as Scriptures do.”\(^{284}\)

Athanasius told virgins to avoid other men and encouraged virgins to only be in public when going to church.\(^{285}\) Since academic teachers were almost always men, virgins who followed Athanasius’ instructions were effectively cut off from any teaching that did not originate from the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The separation of virgins from academic Christian teachers was part of a wider assault on the *auctoritas* of the teachers. Athanasius believed that, as shown by the example of Arius, Christian teachers could not be trusted as they were full of “the fancies of human

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\(^{283}\) Remember Arendt’s maxim that where violence is, authority has already failed. Arendt, *Between Past and Future*, 93. The fact that virgins were in the middle of theological violence showed their *auctoritas* had failed in that instance (because otherwise there would be no violence) as well as the fact that Athanasius’ attempts at isolating them failed. For an account of violence by virgins in the Christological controversies, see Richard Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 76-7, 212.

\(^{284}\) *Ep. virg.* 1.37 (Brakke 286). At the very least, this is an attack on Arius’ *auctoritas* as an exegetical expert, if not part of a broader attempt to tie virgins exclusively to approved clergy.

\(^{285}\) Ibid., 1.30, 41 (Brakke 284, 287). Elsewhere Athanasius writes, “For you already have nourishment from your parents, from whom you have received the seeds of the desire for virtue.... Moreover, you likewise have the way of life of Mary as a pattern and image of the heavenly life.” Ibid., 1.45 (Brakke 288). Parents and the Virgin Mary were sufficient teachers and models for virgins to follow. Thus, they needed no further instruction from academic teachers.
invention.” Unlike the invention of academic teachers, truth was the unchanging deposit given by Christ to his disciples. The disciples then transmitted the truth, through the canon, to the church. As such, Christ “alone is the Teacher.” Where the apostles and disciples ”teach,” it is not them who are teaching, but “Christ who is speaking in him.” For Athanasius then, there was no auctoritas given by the teacher-student relationship. There was only one teacher-student relationship, between Christ and the individual believer. Priests and bishops appeared to teach, just like the academic teachers. However, they were not teaching at all. Instead, Athanasius claimed, they were merely conduits of truth. In their teaching, they were only handing on what they had received from Christ, as mediated by the Scriptures, without change or addition. Athanasius disguised his own innovations by insisting that he was merely a conduit for traditional teaching. Simultaneously, he argued that everyone who disagreed with him was guilty of novelty, and thus of heresy, or at least error. For those who accepted Athanasius’ premises, the auctoritas of the academic Christian teacher was reduced; teachers only have auctoritas as far as they reproduced the unchanging truth, i.e. agreed with Athanasius.

Athanasius tried to turn female ascetic virgins into silent trophies, their auctoritas supporting the ecclesiastical structure by their silence and presence. However, he had a different view for how to co-opt the auctoritas of male ascetics, the monks. The monks occupied a luminous stage; their withdrawal put them in part beyond the potestas of the bishop, yet the same withdrawal limited the practical implementation of their own auctoritas among the community. Athanasius attempted to extend the authority of the bishop over the monks.

286. Ep. fest. 2.7 (PG 26.1370).
287. Ibid., 39 (PG 26.1436ff).
Ascetic practices were redefined to place them in the realm of dogma, and thus under the purview of the bishop’s *potestas*. Athanasius’ main tactic was to take a folk practice and link it to a Scriptural passage. He then argued that since the folk practice was a misunderstanding of the Scriptural passage, the practice was invalid.\(^{289}\) Bishops, as guardians of the truth and true exegetes of Scripture, were the ones able to properly exegete the Scriptures. Bishops alone could determine for monastics what ascetic practices were permissible.\(^{290}\) One of the grounds for monastic *auctoritas* was thus based on the bishops’ own *auctoritas* as exegetical experts and guardians of the truth.

While Athanasius attempted to impose ecclesiastical oversight over monks by subordinating them to the bishop’s exegesis, he also attempted to support the bishop’s *potestas* by allying it with the monk’s *auctoritas*. The monks were drawn into the theological battle Athanasius waged against the “Arians.” The borders between “orthodoxy” and “heresy” were fluid in many monastic groups. Athanasius worked towards setting up rigid boundaries, while attempting to ensure that his supporters were the largest group. Thus, Athanasius condemned those who worshipped with “Arians,” even if their own orthodoxy was unquestioned.\(^{291}\) Adding to the degree of separation, monks were to avoid even those orthodox who did not completely separate themselves from perceived heretics.

Athanasius’ greatest rhetorical staging of monastic support of episcopal authority was in the *Vita Antonii*. The *Vita* represents Athanasius’ reimagining of the ascetic hero to conform to

\(^{289}\) Brakke observes that it did not matter whether any ascetic actually justified his or her practice by an appeal to Scripture. Athanasius’ main purpose was to tie together ascetical practices and Scripture so that ascetical practices became a matter of sound Scriptural exegesis, and thus fell under the purview of the bishop. *Brakke, Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism*, 86-7.

\(^{290}\) Notice here again the implicit attack on the *auctoritas* of non-clerical teachers.

\(^{291}\) *In epistolam ad monachos monitum* (PG 26.1157A).
his own view of the ideal ascetic.\textsuperscript{292} Athanasius’ version of Antony embodied those aspects of monastic life which Athanasius supported. Like Athanasius, Antony was represented as belonging to a strict Alexandrian orthodoxy which shunned the perceived heretics: Meletians, Manichaeans, and especially Arians.\textsuperscript{293} Just as importantly, Antony represented the idealized monk-bishop relationship. It was two bishops, Athanasius and Serapion, who inherited Antony’s clothing, which acted as a representative handing over of his spiritual legacy.\textsuperscript{294} Elsewhere he displayed submission to the bishops while encouraging others to likewise submit. Antony held every cleric in higher regard than himself; he bowed his head to the clerics; and saw the bishops, not himself, as the true instructors.\textsuperscript{295} Athanasius represented Antony as deemphasizing aspects within himself which might lead to competing claims of authority between monks and bishops. His miracles were done by Christ, not Antony.\textsuperscript{296} Athanasius also cast doubt on the value of prophecy by mentioning it could come from demons.\textsuperscript{297} This provided an excuse for rejecting any “prophet” who did not fit into Athanasius’ ecclesiastical system. Finally, as part of his greater anti-academic Christianity polemic, Antony was depicted as without education. Despite his lack of education, Antony confounded the philosophers and Arians through his wisdom.\textsuperscript{298} Athanasius used Antony to emphasize that one did not need an academic teacher in order to learn about God. The expert in exegesis, such as Arius, was unneeded at best and dangerous at worst.

\textsuperscript{293} Ath. \textit{V. Anton.} 68-9, 82-91 (SC 400.314-6, 344-70).
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid., 91 (SC 400.366-70). Brakke, \textit{Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism}, 246-7.
\textsuperscript{295} Ibid., 67, 90 (SC 400.310-4, 364-6).
\textsuperscript{296} For example, ibid., 37, 48, 56, 58, 62, 65, 84 (SC 400.234-6, 264-6, 286-8, 300, 304-6, 352-4).
\textsuperscript{297} Ibid., 31-3 (SC 400.220-8).
\textsuperscript{298} Ibid., 1, 26,72-80, 93 (SC 400.130, 208, 320-40, 372-6).
Basil the Great

After Athanasius, the most significant Nicene theologians in constructing a Nicene view of authority were the Cappadocians. These bishops were instrumental in merging the ascetic auctoritas and episcopal potestas into their ideal ecclesiastical leader, the monk-bishop. Athanasius seems to have appointed monks to the bishopric because they were pro-Nicaea. Other bishops continued to have an ambivalent relationship at best, and tension filled relationship with monks at worst.299

A more lasting monastic-ecclesiastical synthesis was developed by the Cappadocians, in part because of their concern over those inhabiting the ecclesiastical offices. One major problem was conflict with the non-Nicenes. The non-Nicenes enjoyed imperial support under Constantius II (337-61 CE) and Valens (364-78 CE), and thus controlled many bishoprics. Even within the Nicene church, however, Basil complained of inter-faction fighting 300 and a lack of qualified candidates for ecclesiastical offices.301 Basil’s solutions to these problems all revolved around ascetic practices. Basil thought that ascetic practice was for all Christians, especially ecclesiastical leaders.304 An unintended consequence of this stance was both a minimizing of the auctoritas of the monk, and an increase in the auctoritas of the ecclesiastical leader. The monk’s auctoritas was lessened in Basil’s ideal world because monks no longer could claim a monopoly on ascetic practice or holy living. While some

300. Bas., Ep. 82, 92.3, (Courtonne 1.191-2, 201-3) 258.1 (Courtonne 3.137-8)
301. Ibid., 56.2 (Courtonne 1.143); 121; 122 (Courtonne 2.26-8); 237.2; 239.1 (Courtonne 3.56-7, 59-60); Basil De spiritu sancto 30.77 (SC 17.522-6).
304. Sterk regarded this theology that the ascetic life should be the norm for all Christians to be the reason Basil so rarely uses the words “monk” or “monastery.” Andrea Sterk, “Basil of Caesarea and the Rise of the Monastic Episcopate: Ascetic Ideals and the Episcopal Authority in Fourth-Century Asia Minor” (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1995), 54.
especially ascetic or holy person might still hold special *auctoritas*, their *auctoritas* was only different in degree, not in kind, with every other Christian. In addition, by placing the expectation of ascetic living upon ecclesiastical leaders, the ecclesiastical leaders gained some measure of the *auctoritas* which was attached to ascetic and holy living.

Finally, Basil consolidated the monastics into communal living.\textsuperscript{305} This helped bolster the *potestas* of the ecclesiastical structure in several ways. First, by consolidating and ordering the monks, Basil made it easier to exert his personal authority over the monks. Monks were now, as Rousseau stated, constantly dependent “on the personal presence and supervision of Basil himself.”\textsuperscript{306} Basil’s monastic regulations went further than Athanasius’ regulations. While Athanasius sought to place ascetics under the bishop’s control by regulating the ascetic practice, Basil gathered ascetics together in one place. This made it easier for Basil to ensure that all ascetics were under his ultimate authority. In addition, Basil tried to cultivate the virtue of obedience among the ascetics. Monks were commanded to obey the immediate ascetic superior, and give their ultimate obedience to the bishop. Basil divided the ascetic community into two groups: “those who are entrusted with leadership and those whose place it is to yield and to obey.”\textsuperscript{307} Elsewhere, he stated that only those who were of the appropriate age and rank could criticize the ascetic superior.\textsuperscript{308} Basil attempted to centralize the ascetic *auctoritas* of the monks into the *potestas* of an appointed superior through these efforts. By requiring obedience to a superior, most ascetics abandoned the use of any *auctoritas* they

\textsuperscript{305} I am not trying to argue that what follows are the main reasons Basil advocates communal living, only that they are secondary reasons or implications which arose from communal living. For Basil’s main reasons, see *Asketikon* 185 and its analysis in Joseph Ballan, “Basil of Caesarea on the Ascetic Craft: The Invention of Ascetic Community and the Spiritualization of Work in the *Asketikon*,” *Heythrop Journal* 52 (2011): 559-68, especially 562-3.


\textsuperscript{307} Reg. br. 235.

\textsuperscript{308} Reg. fus. 27, 48, 54.
might have gained through their ascetic deeds and holy life. The centralization of authority ensured that the ascetics’ *auctoritas* was unified behind their leaders, and ultimately unified behind the bishop.

Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus

The other Cappadocians, the two Gregorys, built upon Basil’s ideals, using Basil himself as their model of a monastic-bishop.³⁰⁹ For Gregory of Nyssa, holding ecclesiastical office strengthened the ascetic virtues in a person, as evidenced most clearly by Basil and Peter.³¹⁰ The person who performed ascetic virtues while holding an ecclesiastical office was the greater ascetic. The monastics’ *auctoritas*, gained through their ascetic tasks, was always lesser than the bishops’ *auctoritas* because the bishop had more ascetic virtue by definition. Gregory developed this idea in length in *in Laudem Basilii Fratris*, his eulogy to Basil. In the speech, Gregory gave a flattering comparison between Basil and various Old and New Testament figures which included Paul, John the Baptist, Elijah, Samuel, and Moses.³¹¹ As a result of these comparisons, Basil was portrayed as an idealized leader, who combined ascetic virtues with ecclesiastical leadership.³¹² A favorable comparison to Moses was also used in his *de Vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi*. Both Moses and Gregory Thaumaturgus were leaders who spurned pagan learning in favor of an ascetic life, but then were called by God to an active leadership role over God’s people.³¹³

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³¹². See especially his comparison between Moses and Basil; both were portrayed as men who left a pagan education to take up the monastic way of life only to be called by God to lead his people. Gr. Nyss. Laud. Bas. 1, 4, 20-1, 23 (SC 573.230, 236, 270-4, 280).
Just like Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus used Basil as the idealized bishop in order to promote the ascetic life among ecclesiastical leaders. Basil’s ascetic life was recounted in detail, showing Basil’s mastery of the ascetic life. This ascetic life was intimately tied to his ecclesiastical office as Basil “brought them together and united them, in order that the contemplative spirit might not be cut off from society, nor the active life be uninfluenced by the contemplative.” Through their emphasis on the ascetic lifestyle for ecclesiastical leaders, which itself produced holy living, the Cappadocians would provide what would become the dominant idealized portrait of ecclesiastical leadership in the Nicene church.

The Non-Nicene Church

Arius

Arius “started” the Christological controversies which now bear his name, thanks in large part to Athanasius’ propaganda. Arius himself had possibly three sources of authority which allowed him the prestige and power to defy bishops and gather supporters: his own potestas as presbyter in Alexandria, his auctoritas as exegetical expert, and his auctoritas as ascetic. Presbyters in Alexandria were partially independent of the bishop. This gave them more potestas than presbyters in other cities. Traditionally, Alexandrian presbyters chose from their own number the next bishop and consecrated him themselves. There is some ambiguous evidence which might suggest such a practice was still in place during the first stages of the

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314. Most fully in his panegyric of Basil in Oration 43.
315. Ibid., 43.60-3.
316. Oration 43.62. The English translation is from Sterk, Renouncing the World, 134.
317. For an account of how the Cappadocians influenced the views of ecclesiastical leadership in the East, see Sterk, Renouncing the World, 163-246; Sterk, “On Basil, Moses, and the Model Bishop,” 251-3.
“Arian” controversy. During the time of Arius and Alexander there were signs of presbyter independence. The presbyter Colluthus, for example, had engaged in schismatic practices due to perceived episcopal heresy before Arius’s own schism. The exact limits of presbyter and episcopal potestas were not finalized and remained fluid, at least during the first stages of the controversy. That said, Arius’ own potestas was limited. While he appeared to have some support among the presbyters of Alexandria, that support did not prevent him from being deposed. After his deposition, Arius appealed to the bishops outside of Egypt for assistance, a tacit admission that his own potestas was not enough within the Egyptian church to reverse his status. In this appeal, as will be discussed in more depth below, he did not appeal to his potestas as presbyter. Instead, he appealed to his auctoritas as teacher, which shows the inherent limits of his potestas.

Added to Arius’ potestas as an Alexandrian presbyter was his auctoritas as an exegetical expert. Arius explicitly appealed to his status as an exegetical expert in the introduction to the Thalia. In this passage, Arius developed two points of his teaching auctoritas: appealing to a succession of student/teacher to justify his own teachings and proclaiming himself as a student of God and thus “no stranger to wisdom and knowledge.” As Williams argued, Arius’ own ideas about Jesus did not come from philosophical speculation but from his own exegesis of Scripture. Williams’ own interpretation of the conflict was as one between the “academic” tradition represented in Alexandria by Clement and Origen and a

319. Epiph., Haer. 69.2 (PG 42.205A).
320. According to Theodoret, Arius was licensed as an expositor of Scripture; Thdt., H.e. 1.2.9 (SC 501.148).
321. As preserved in Athanasius, Oratio I contra Arianos 5.1 (Opitz, 1.2.113).
322. Williams, Arius, Heresy, and Tradition, 110-111.
more rigorous and unified “episcopal” tradition which Alexander of Alexandria was trying to impose on Alexandria.\(^{323}\) The exegetical expert, in this case Arius, stood in some sense above, or at least outside, the bishop’s own \textit{potestas}. Because of this, Arius saw himself as able to criticize the perceived heresy of his bishop. However, the limits of his \textit{auctoritas} as exegetical expert was on full display in the First Creed of the Council of Antioch in 341 which began “We have not been followers of Arius, for how can bishops, as we are, follow a presbyter?”\(^ {324}\) While a presbyter of Alexandria, in Arius’ day, still might hold a measure of \textit{potestas} within the city, outside the city he was merely a presbyter. No bishop would admit to learning from him, no matter his exegetical expertise.

Finally, Arius held the \textit{auctoritas} borne from asceticism. This \textit{auctoritas} came both from his ascetic supporters as well as his own life. Arius’ ascetic followers were discussed at some length under the discussion of Athanasius. Here, it will suffice to summarize a couple of points. First, during most of Arius’ lifetime, and especially the early years of the controversy, Arius enjoyed widespread support, or at least neutrality, from various ascetics. Epiphanius records that seven hundred female virgins followed Arius, in addition to whatever male ascetics he could attract.\(^ {325}\) The bishops of Alexandria saw the “Arian” female virgin ascetics, in particular, as a threat. Both Alexander and Athanasius recorded with horror the virgins’ public defense of Arius.\(^ {326}\) As previously mentioned, Athanasius spent a great deal of thought and effort into separating female virgins from Arius’ cause. In addition to his ascetic supporters, Arius drew \textit{auctoritas} from being a notable ascetic.\(^ {327}\)

\(^{323}\) Ibid., 82-91.  
\(^{324}\) Athanasius, \textit{De synodis} 22.3 (Opitz, 2.7.248).  
\(^{325}\) Epiph., \textit{Haer.}, 69.3.2 (PG 42.208A).  
\(^{326}\) Thdt., \textit{H.e.} 1.4.5 (SC 501.156); Athanasius, \textit{Historia Arianorum ad Monachos} 59.2-3.  
\(^{327}\) Epiph., \textit{Haer.} 69.3.1 (PG 42.206C).
Eustathius

Eustathius represented the best known non-Nicene monk. On a journey to Egypt, he apparently became a student of Arius and was latter labeled an “Arian.” Despite the label, Eustathius was eventually ordained a priest by the Nicene bishop Hermogenes. The new association with the Nicene party did not prevent him from becoming an acquaintance of the non-Nicene Eusebius of Nicomedia after Hermogenes’ death. This acquaintance soon ended, presumably because of Eusebius’ anti-ascetic stances. The non-Nicene Council of Gangra condemned Eustathius and his teachings. However, he still became bishop in Sebaste by 357 CE, a post he held until his death. Eustathius is significant in the evolution of authority in the fourth century. His career showed the ambiguity and permeability of the various theological labels. According to rumors, he was a student of Arius. Despite those rumors, he was ordained by a Nicene bishop and influenced Basil of Caesarea. He also, however, was one of the last of the notable non-Nicene ascetics. Under the influence of the ascetic Arius, the non-Nicene party had embraced the ascetic movement. This position changed under the leadership of Eusebius of Nicomedia. As illustrated by the Council of Gangra, the non-Nicene party embraced a more anti-ascetic position. This new perspective on the ascetic movement influenced the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions*.

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328. For the tradition that Eustathius was a student of Arius, see Bas., *Epistulae* 130.1 (Courtonne 2.42); 263.3 (Courtonne 3.123). For his later association with the category of “Arian,” see Ath., *Ep. Aeg. Lib.* 7.4 (Opitz 1.1.47).
329. Bas., *Ep.* 244.8; 263.3 (Courtonne, 3.81-2, 123).
330. *SEA* 95.296.
As mentioned, the Council of Gangra and Eusebius of Nicomedia helped move the non-Nicene movements away from ascetic Christianity. Those of Gangra’s canons which related to the relationship between ascetics and clergy are especially notable. They were:

- Canon 4, which condemned those who taught the sacraments given by married presbyters were invalid;
- Canon 5, which condemned those who taught that churches should be avoided;
- Canon 6, which condemned private assemblies for sacramental acts without the bishop’s consent;
- Canon 7-8, which condemned those who took from the church’s offerings and benefactions without the bishop’s permission. In addition, Canons 18-20 dealt with ascetics ignoring the church’s calendar.

These canons show a perceived conflict between the ascetics and the ecclesiastical leadership, whereby the ascetics were ignoring or minimizing the church and its institutional leadership. To combat what they saw as an error and to ensure that the potestas of the ecclesiastical leadership was respected, the bishops used the council’s power of pronouncing anathemas to lend coercive force to the natural potestas of their pronouncements. The Council of Gangra represented a schism between the non-Nicenes and the monastic

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331. This paper, though recognizing the great debate surrounding the dating of the Council of Gangra, tentatively upholds an early date and the identification of the presiding bishop “Eusebius” as Eusebius of Nicomedia. The dating controversy partly erupted due to the difference between the accounts of Sozomen and Socrates. Henry Gwatkin, Studies of Arianism: Chiefly Referring to the Character and Chronology of the Reaction which Followed the Council of Nicaea (Cambridge: Deighton Bell & Co., 1900), 189-92. If Eusebius of Nicomedia was the “Eusebius” from the Council of Gangra, it is the second time he had condemned Eustathius’ teachings. According to Sozomen, Eustathius had been excommunicated and deposed by a council headed by Eusebius in Neocaesarea. Soz., H.e. 4.24.9 (SC 418.324-8).

332. It is important to note that the other canons are on curbing ascetic excesses. Athanasius’ position that bishops have the right to regulate the severity of ascetic disciplines is here enforced by a council of bishops.

333. For the text of Canons 1-6 see SEA 95.290; Canons 7-14 see SEA 95.292; Canons 15-20 see SEA 294.
movement broadly conceived. Under the reign of non-Nicene emperors, according to Nicene authors at least, the ascetic movement developed into a strong Nicene force, which the imperially sanctioned non-Nicene authorities persecuted. As both the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the *Commentary on Job* show, however, there remained an ascetic element within the non-Nicene church, though they promoted a different strand of asceticism than existed in the Nicene church.

Pseudo-Ignatius

Pseudo-Ignatius and the non-Nicene *Commentary on Job* are the most significant non-Nicene documents for the study of the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. As discussed in Chapter 1, there is compelling evidence for both documents being written by the same person, or at the very least same “school,” who edited the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Thus, both documents represent further evidence for the editor’s own beliefs, or, at the very least, the beliefs of a close community.

Ignatius’ own views of religious authority formed the bedrock upon which Pseudo-Ignatius erected his own views. Pseudo-Ignatius never changed or omitted any of Ignatius’ references to the superiority of the bishop or clergy. In the climate of Pseudo-Ignatius’ Antioch, with at least three competing bishops, Ignatius’ call for a united church under the

334. Even in Basil’s day, ascetics were under suspicion by the populace and clergy, a fact which Sterk links to the “ghost of Gangra.” Sterk, “Basil of Caesarea and the Rise of the Monastic Episcopate,” 48-9.


bishop appealed to the non-Nicenes. The non-Nicenes, as the official church, saw themselves as the ones with the best claim to be the bishop under which the others should unify. Pseudo-Ignatius’ concerns for authority are shown by the fact that some of the most heavily interpolated passages in the Long Recension were the ones which deal with unity through the bishop.\footnote{Magnesians 3; Philadelphians 3, 4.}

Pseudo-Ignatius defended the personal authority of the bishop in two ways: by retaining and expanding upon Ignatius’ pro-bishop statements; and by ensuring that competing religious authorities, especially competing lay authorities, such as ascetics and the emperor, were subjected to the bishop. For Pseudo-Ignatius, the bishop was divinely instituted over his congregation.\footnote{Ephesians 4; Trallians 7; Antiochians 8.} Perhaps because the schism in Antioch provided so many examples of people who did not listen to the self-identified “real” bishop of Antioch, Pseudo-Ignatius emphasized the need for obedience to the bishop. In addition to keeping Ignatius’ own commands for obedience to the bishop, Pseudo-Ignatius added his own call for obedience to the potestas of the bishop in Ephesians 5; Magnesians 3; Trallians 7; Philadelphians 4; Smyrneans 9; Tarsians 8; Hero 3; and Philippians 13. While some of these statements are mere commands, in others Pseudo-Ignatius defended his commands by an appeal to a high conception of the role of a bishop. In Smyrneans 9, for example, the bishop was to be obeyed because he imitated God in ruling over man and imitated Christ by being a high priest. In Trallians 7, Pseudo-Ignatius appealed to the natural order: the bishop was one whom God gave power and authority beyond all other men. Because the bishop naturally had this
potestas, to disobey the bishop was to disobey God, while to submit to the bishop was to submit to God.\(^{339}\)

The second way Pseudo-Ignatius supported the religious authority of the bishop was by ensuring that competing lay authorities of the time, namely ascetics and the emperor, were safely under the potestas of the bishop. Pseudo-Ignatius’ attack against the auctoritas of the ascetics revolved around two points: an attack on stereotypical behaviors traditionally condemned by non-Nicene authorities, combined with allowing moderate ascetical practices under the bishop’s direction. In particular, Pseudo-Ignatius followed the non-Nicene Council of Gangra, the Apostolic Constitutions, and Commentary on Job in attacking the same ascetical excesses and promoting the same ascetical virtues.\(^{340}\) Partially following the canons of Gangra, Pseudo-Ignatius condemned those who fast on Sunday;\(^{341}\) condemned those who are against marriage;\(^{342}\) condemned those who avoid certain foods;\(^{343}\) and condemned idleness in the guise of holiness.\(^{344}\) Those who practiced these things had Satan dwelling in them.\(^{345}\) While condemning what he saw as ascetical excesses, Pseudo-Ignatius left room for a moderate asceticism. Virgins were dedicated to Christ,\(^{346}\) which made them a sort of priestesses of Christ.\(^{347}\) Virgins followed in an extensive line of saintly ascetics: Elijah, Joshua, Melchizedek, Elisha, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Timothy,

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339. Ephesians 5; Magnesians 3.  
341. Magnesians 9; cf. Gangra Canon 18, SEA 95.294.  
342. Philadelphians 4, 6; cf. Gangra Canon 1, 9, 14, SEA 95.290, 292.  
343. Philadelphians 6; Hero 1; cf. Gangra Canon 2, SEA 95.290.  
344. Antiochians 11; Magnesians 9.  
346. Antiochians 8.  
347. Tarsians 9.
Titus, Evodius, and Clement. Pseudo-Ignatius explicitly commanded a moderate asceticism in *Hero* 1, “Devote yourself to fasting and prayer, but not beyond measure lest you destroy yourself thereby.” Pseudo-Ignatius saw a moderated asceticism as beneficial, an “honorable” state.

However, their honorable state did not give them added spiritual *auctoritas*. In *Polycarp* 5, Pseudo-Ignatius explicitly denied that true ascetics could operate as competing authorities with the bishop: “If anyone can continue in a state of purity, to the honor of the flesh of the Lord, let him so remain without boasting. If he shall boast, he is undone, and if he seeks to be more prominent than the bishop, he is ruined.” Asceticism may lend a small measure of *auctoritas* to the ascetic, but that authority was still firmly under the bishop’s *potestas*.

Ascetical virtues did not enable one to question the bishop, a policy no doubt born from the active Nicene ascetics in and around Antioch. *Hero* 2 underscored this point, “Every one that teaches anything beyond what is commanded, though he be deemed worthy of credit, though he fasts, though he work miracles, though he have the gift of prophecy, let him be in your sight as a wolf in sheep’s clothing, laboring for the destruction of the sheep.” The topic of the preceding passage, *Hero* 1, was on living a moderate ascetical life. From context, it is clear that *Hero* 2 deliberately deflated the *auctoritas* of the Nicene ascetics, and to a lesser extent non-Nicene ascetics, who competed with the non-Nicene bishop.

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350. In particular, the ascetics around Antioch seemed to favor the Meletians. Theodoret highlights the work of the ascetics Aphraates and Julian in supporting the Meletians in Antioch. Thdt., *H.e.* 4.26.1-27.4 (*SC* 530.300-6).
The emperor of Pseudo-Ignatius’ day was a powerful religious figure. The emperor exerted a profound influence on determining orthodoxy and heresy by calling church councils and exiling bishops. However, in two passages, *Philadelphians* 4 and to a lesser extent, *Symrneans* 9, Pseudo-Ignatius made the claim that the emperor was subject to the bishop, a claim which is unique among eastern texts. In *Letter to the Philadelphians* 4, Pseudo-Ignatius wrote “the presbyters, and the deacons, and the other clergy together with all the people, and the soldiers, and the rulers, and Caesar [be obedient] to the bishop.” Pseudo-Ignatius here placed the bishop over not only the clergy, but the entire laity, listing them in order from the least powerful to the most powerful. Meanwhile, in *Symrneans* 9, Pseudo-Ignatius stated that the laity, without differentiating in the stations within that group, were to be subject not only to the bishop but to the deacons and presbyters as well. Earlier in the same passage, the bishop was compared to the king, with the bishop gaining the better of the comparison. Compared to the king, the bishop demanded greater honor and obedience.

What caused Pseudo-Ignatius to take the previously unknown position of emphasizing the authority of the bishop above the emperor? Smith, in his article on the issue, suggested that it was a result of the non-Nicene bishop Euzoius’ horror at the persecutions by the non-Nicene Valens. However, the dating of the document makes this position unlikely. It is preferable to accept Lightfoot’s assertion that Pseudo-Ignatius was dependent upon the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Following the conclusions of Chapter 1, if the *Apostolic Constitutions* were written prior to Pseudo-Ignatius, Smith’s dating cannot be right. It is more plausible that the

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351. Smith, “On Pseudo-Ignatius’ Assertion of Supremacy,” 234-5. While Smith identifies Pseudo-Ignatius as the only one to explicitly assert episcopal supremacy over the emperor, he also identifies the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the mythos of the Antiochene bishop Babylas as implicitly asserting it. As I argue in Chapter 5, I believe that Smith underestimates the anti-Imperial passages in the *Apostolic Constitutions*.


editor compiled Pseudo-Ignatius as a defense of the privileges of the “official bishop” in the face of possibly losing said privileges early in the reign of Theodosius.

Commentary on Job

Perhaps the best-known feature on authority in the non-Nicene Commentary on Job is its views on asceticism, and, by extension, the auctoritas of asceticism. Like contemporary Nicene commentaries on Job, the non-Nicene Commentary on Job reimagined the biblical figure into the example par excellence of the ascetic lifestyle. As Vaggione identified him, Job was “a sage with eyes as ‘winged’ as any philosophical rhetor, yet one unfailingly just to the demands of everyday life.” Job was certainly portrayed as an ascetic, but his was a moderate asceticism which was lived within a community. He did not give up his possessions, like the Nicene hero Antony, but rather kept them to use them rightly. Unlike the famously chaste fourth-century virgins and ascetics, Job enjoyed sexual relations with his wife. These elements show the author’s understanding of asceticism. Asceticism was not extreme denial, nor withdrawal from community. Rather, true asceticism, as exemplified by Job, was a restrained asceticism which properly used goods, passions, and pleasures within the community. This ideal is seen again in the Apostolic Constitutions where these moderate virtues were given to the bishop as part of the editor’s defense against ascetical auctoritas.

355. Ibid., 195.
357. Ibid. (PTS 14.27.14-18). Though this enjoyment of sex was combined with a rejection of inappropriate sexual expression. Ibid. (PTS 14.190.2-4; cf. 6.14-17; 19.2-3).
358. See Chapter 5.
Chapter 3

Auctoritas and Potestas in the Sources

The “Church Order” Genre

The Apostolic Constitutions were not created ex nihilo by the author. Instead, they contain a combination of ancient texts united by the editor, who then edited the texts before him to suit his own purposes better. The most significant of these source texts are the Didache, the Apostolic Tradition, and the Didascalia. These, as well as the Apostolic Constitutions themselves, are often given the label of “church order.”359 Because “church order” is an anachronistic title born from a genre developed during the Reformation, individual scholars have meant different things when applying it to the earlier patristic texts. Metzger, for example, published three distinct criteria for a church order. In his introduction to the Sources Chrétienes critical edition of the Apostolic Constitutions he listed three characteristics of a church order: 1) the presence of a variety of instructions concerning ecclesiastical institutions; 2) a compiling of earlier traditions and documents; 3) a

pseudepigrapha style.\textsuperscript{360} Later he expanded it to five characteristics: 1) intent to be used by Christian communities and their leaders; 2) treatment of a variety of aspects of ecclesiastical life; 3) compilation of earlier traditions; 4) pseudepigraphy; 5) direct literary links to prior church orders.\textsuperscript{361} Finally, Metzger decided that church orders had only two hallmarks, 1) the presence of church regulations; 2) claim of apostolicity, usually through pseudepigraphy.\textsuperscript{362} Adding to the difficulty of defining “church order” is the fact that the term is used to cover texts from the first century Didache to the fourth-century Apostolic Constitutions,\textsuperscript{363} with obvious changes and developments to the genre in that time span. The confusion caused by the anachronistic term “church order” has led to some proposals for an alternate category, though none yet have gained wide acceptance.\textsuperscript{364}

Lacking a widespread alternative, despite its shortcomings, the term “church order” will be used to label the genre shared by the Didache, the Apostolic Tradition, the Didascalia, and the Apostolic Constitutions. In doing so, I wish to highlight the following shared components: 1) the increasing importance of apostolic authorship to add authority to the document as the genre “develops;” 2) the creative reworking of past sources, usually earlier “church orders,” to meet the editor’s needs; 3) the expansion of ecclesiastical concerns and

\textsuperscript{360} Metzger, Les Constitutions Apostoliques, 13.
\textsuperscript{363} As well as even later texts, though those are outside the scope of this dissertation.
the importance of the clerical orders as the genre “develops.” These three shared components
are significant to auctoritas and potestas found in the various church orders.365

**Didache**

The earliest source for the *Apostolic Constitutions* is the first century *Didache.* It is possible
that, like the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the *Didache* came from or around Antioch.367 The
*Didache’s* view of authority is significant; it was the probable source for *Apostolic
Constitutions 7* as well as influenced the main source of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the
*Didascalia.*368

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365. Even if, for the sake of argument, it is determined that the documents share no common genre, it is still
useful to compare them. The editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* chose these documents to use as his primary
sources. Thus, the editor saw them as sharing a commonality, even if modern scholarship rejects the editor’s
claim.

366. Scholars are fairly divided over the date of the *Didache*, a question made even more complicated by
the fact that the text of the *Didache*, in the form that we have it, probably underwent several redactions. For the
sake of this paper, I assume a first-century, maybe even a mid-first-century, date for some of the material
contained in the *Didache* for the following reasons. First, there appears to be a dependence upon oral tradition
instead of the written canonical gospels. See Aaron Milavec, “Synoptic Tradition in the *Didache* Revisited,”
*Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11 (2003): 443-80, which is an updated version of the argument found in
Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, and Life of the Earliest Christian Communities* (New York: Paulist
Press, 2003), 693-739. Second, the Eucharistic service in the *Didache* does not use the last supper narratives,
and especially the words of institution, from the Gospels and Paul. See Did. 9-10 (Holmes, 356-60); 3. The
ecclesiastical structure appears to be in flux, with not only bishops but also itinerant prophets and apostles: *Did.
10-13, 15* (Holmes, 358-64, 366).

The Church in Antioch in the First Century CE: Communion and Conflict. New York: T&T Clark International,
2003. The evidence supports Niederwimmer, who claimed that the arguments for Syria-Palestine/Antioch are
“not very strong.” Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. Linda Maloney (Minneapolis:
Fortress Press, 1998), 54. The case for the placement of the *Didache* in Antioch is dealt a blow due to the more
recent arguments which, in my estimation, prove the independence of Matthew and the *Didache*. See, for
example, Milavec, “Synoptic Tradition in the *Didache* Revisited,” 443-80. That said, while the case for Syria is
weak, the case for the proposed alternatives, such as Egypt, are even weaker; thus, Antioch may be seen as the
default position despite its weaknesses.

368. R. H. Connolly, “The Use of the *Didache* in the *Didascalia,*” *Journal of Theological Studies* 24
(1923): 147-57.
The *Didache* came from a community where personal religious authority was in flux. Itinerant prophets, bishops, and apostles were significant personal authorities within the community. One of the more significant areas of conflict between these groups, as portrayed by the *Didache*, was over the *potestas* of bishops and prophets. *Didache* 10.7 hints at a community conflict over the control of the liturgical rites between the settled bishops and the itinerant prophets.\(^{369}\) Whoever was able to control the liturgical rites would gain *potestas* by overseeing Christian rituals.\(^{370}\) The main Christian rituals in the *Didache* were baptism, fasting, and the Eucharist, the last of which formed the main battleground between prophets and bishops. *Didache* 9 and 10 gave the rubric for the Eucharistic service.\(^{371}\) At the end of the rubric, the *Didache* stated, “permit the prophets, however, to eucharistize as much as/as often as they desire (ὡς θέλουσιν).”\(^{372}\) Niederwimmer argued this phrase gave prophets permission to formulate the Eucharistic prayers without reference to the preceding rubric.\(^{373}\) However, on the basis of second and third-century evidence, it seems that bishops also had the ability to devise their own liturgies, so it is probable that is not what the editor was highlighting.\(^{374}\) More likely, it was giving liturgical permission for the prophets to speak for as long or as little as they wished.\(^{375}\) While the one who presided over the Eucharistic service had a regularized service which followed, to a greater or lesser degree, the rubric given by

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369. Holmes, 360. I am here using “liturgical” anachronistically to refer primarily to the text’s treatment of baptism (*Did.* 7 [Holmes 354]) and the Eucharistic prayers (*Did.* 9, 10 [Holmes 356-60]).
370. *Potestas* gained through ritual control will be discussed at length in Chapter 4.
371. I am aware that not everyone believes that the service in *Didache* 9 and 10 is Eucharistic. Rordorf, *The Eucharist of the Early Christians*, 8; Niederwimmer, *The Didache*, 142-3; Gregory Dix, *The Shape of Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1945), 48; A. Hilhorst, *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought* (Boston: Brill, 2004), 11-27. While a full defense of the passage referring to the Eucharist is beyond the scope of this dissertation, I will note that the document itself calls it a “εὐχαριστίας” four times (9.1, 5; 10.1, 7) and like the more familiar forms of the Eucharist involves bread and wine (9.2-3) and is limited to the baptized (9.5) (Holmes, 356-60).
372. *Did.* 10.7 (Holmes, 360).
the *Didache*, the prophet would operate according to their own schedule. Prophets were thus given space to operate their pneumatic gifts in the Eucharistic service. By extension, their *auctoritas*, which was based on their perceived status as God’s mouthpieces, was conflated with the bishop’s liturgical *potestas*. The prophet, not the bishop, maintained ultimate control over the ending of the liturgical ritual. The Eucharist only ended with the prophet and whether he was silent or spoke. The bishop’s *potestas* in the liturgy was thus subject to the prophet’s *auctoritas*.

While the editor of the *Didache* recognized the prophet’s *auctoritas* in the Eucharist, it strove to otherwise limit the practical expression of their *auctoritas*. Prophetic miracles, which form the basis for prophetic *auctoritas* elsewhere, are absent from the text. The editor of the *Didache* followed the introduction of the prophetic office in 10.7 with restrictions upon those who hold the prophetic office in 11. The *Didache* itself was the theological standard by which the teachings of the prophets were to be evaluated. The *potestas* of the teaching of the apostles, as mediated by the editor, thus stood above any self-proclaimed spiritual *auctoritas*. More important in the editor’s eyes, judging from the amount of text he devoted to it, was the conduct of itinerant prophets and apostles. While in *Smyrnæans* 8.1, Ignatius

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376. Holmes, 360.
377. Ibid., 362.
378. Did. 11.2 (Holmes, 360).
379. There is some ambiguity regarding to whom “apostles” refers. Niederwimmer represents the consensus when he argued that “apostles” and “prophets” are two distinct groups, the first of which refers to “the first and most venerable group of Christians” and not the twelve apostles to which later Christianity restricted the word. Niederwimmer, *Didache*, 175. However, Milavec argues that the apostles and prophets are the same group due to the following features: the article-noun-kai-noun construction, which Milavec argued the *Didache* used to indicate that the second term functions as an attributive modifier to the first (cf. Did. 15.1, where the *Didache* uses the same construction to refer to “prophets and teachers”); the context of the passage, where false apostles are explicitly called “ψευδοπροφήτης”; and the lack of duplication in giving instructions about apostles and prophets, which one would expect if they were two distinct categories. For example, the *Didache* speaks of the treatment of itinerant “apostles” (11.4-6) but does not speak of the treatment of itinerant prophets; likewise, it talks about “prophets” settling in the community (13.1) but not “apostles” settling in the community. Milavec,
said that the bishop was to be obeyed “as the Lord,” for the Didache, it was the apostle-prophets\textsuperscript{380} who were to be received as “the Lord,”\textsuperscript{381} though only as far as their teachings and conduct conform to the Didache.\textsuperscript{382}

The editor of the Didache accepted the auctoritas of apostles-prophets and prophets but, whether intentionally or unintentionally, offered teachings which limited the expression of their auctoritas among the community. Apostle-prophets could stay for one or two days, but any longer and they were false prophets.\textsuperscript{383} In practice, while the office of apostle-prophet’s auctoritas could present an alternative to the bishop’s potestas, no “true” itinerant apostle-prophet would be able to stay long enough among the Didache community to be able to act as a viable long-term alternative authority.\textsuperscript{384} That said, the Didache demonstrates that the prophets wielded considerable authority in its community. Foundational to the auctoritas of the prophetic office was prophets’ ability to “speak in the Spirit.”\textsuperscript{385} So significant was the auctoritas that speaking in the Spirit confers, that the Didache forbade anyone from examining or testing the prophet’s words, underlying it with a command from what was likely part of the oral tradition about Jesus, “for all sins will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven.”\textsuperscript{386}

\textit{Didache}, 438-41.

380. Due to the overlap between apostles and prophets, as well as the possibility that the Didache meant them to be understood as one group, I use the term “apostle-prophets” when the Didache uses “ἀπόστολος” and “prophets” when the Didache uses “προφήτης.”
381. Did. 11.4 (Holmes, 363).
382. Ibid., 11.2 (Holmes, 360).
383. Ibid., 11.5 (Holmes, 363).
384. Non-itinerant prophets are discussed later.
385. Did. 11.7 (Holmes, 362).
386. Ibid. Cf. 11.11 (Holmes, 362); Mark 3.28-29; Matt. 12.31-32; Luke 12.10. This statement is from an oral tradition, not Matthew or Q. Milavec, “Synoptic Tradition in the Didache,” 459; Niederwimmer, Didache, 178-9.
However, while the prophet’s spiritual utterances were beyond all judgment, the prophets themselves were not beyond judgment. The Didache advocated examining the behavior of a prophet to determine whether they were a true prophet or false prophet. Only those who had the “behavior of the Lord” were true prophets.\(^{387}\) The Didache was not explicit on what the “behavior of the Lord” meant; some scholarly suggestions include: voluntary poverty;\(^{388}\) mimicking Jesus’ earthly life;\(^{389}\) and following the Didache’s “Way of Life.”\(^{390}\) In addition to the “behavior of the Lord,” the Didache gave three other behavioral signs of a false prophet. Despite the Didache’s earlier command not to test the prophet’s spiritual utterances, all three tests were based on the prophet’s words. False prophets, according to the Didache, order a meal in the Spirit and eat from it;\(^{391}\) speak the truth but do not do it;\(^{392}\) and ask for money or gifts for themselves in the Spirit.\(^{393}\) The Didache was technically following its own command not to judge the words of a prophet. It was the actions of the prophet that were under judgment. However, at least the first and third can be recast to be a judgment on the words of a prophet. No true prophet would say “give me food” or “give me money,” but only give others food or money.\(^{394}\) The prophetic utterances of the prophet at first appear to be so authoritative as to be unassailable. In reality, the prophet’s utterences were accepted as authoritative by the community based on the prophet’s auctoritas borne from his virtue and behavior.

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387. Did. 11.8 (Holmes, 362).
388. Rordorf, The Eucharist of the Early Christians, 55
389. Niederwimmer, Didache, 179.
390. Milavec, Didache, 461.
391. Did. 11.9 (Holmes 362).
392. Ibid., 11.10 (Holmes 362).
393. Ibid., 11.12 (Holmes 362).
394. Ibid., 11.12 (Holmes 362).
Itinerant prophets, by their very nature of being able to only stay one or two days, did not provide a sustained threat to the *potestas* of the bishops and deacons. The same was not true of settled prophets. The “true prophet” who settled among the community was highly regarded by the *Didache*. The settled prophet was the community’s “high priest.”395 Because of their status as “high priest,” they were to be given the “first fruits” from all the community’s possessions;396 whether wine, grain, oxen, sheep,397 bread,398 oil,399 money, or clothes.400 The recognition of the true prophet as the community’s high priest may go back to the liturgical tensions discussed above between the prophet and bishop. If true, it would reinforce the contention that the prophets held enough control over the liturgical rite that their status was conflated with the status of the group which controlled the liturgical rites in the Old Testament, the high priests.

In contrast to the long discussion of prophets, bishops and deacons got a relatively short treatment in *Didache* 15.1-2. Their comparatively minor *potestas* within the community was highlighted by the fact that the *Didache* felt it necessary to “borrow” the *potestas* and *auctoritas* of others for the bishops and deacons. Bishops “also minister to you the ministry of the prophets and teachers.”401 It seemed as if the bishops’ and deacons’ *potestas* in their communities were so weak that they needed to share in the *auctoritas* of prophets and teachers. The bishop’s low status within the community was reinforced by the next part,

395. Ibid., 13.3 (Holmes 364).
396. Ibid., 13.7 (Holmes 364).
397. Ibid., 13.2 (Holmes 364).
398. Ibid., 13.5 (Holmes 364).
399. Ibid., 13.6 (Holmes 364).
400. Ibid., 13.7 (Holmes 364).
401. Ibid., 15.1 (Holmes 366).
“therefore do not despise them.” The command indicates that the opposite was true in the community, that bishops and deacons were being despised. Even here, however, where the Didache fought to make the office of bishop and deacon equal to the auctoritas of prophets, there was a tacit acknowledgment that the prophets had greater authority from their auctoritas. Unlike the prophets, who as high priests deserved the first fruits of the community, the deacons and bishops evidently were not paid. Regardless, the perception of the bishops and deacons in the community was clear; comparing them to prophets and teachers was meant to bolster their potestas, and perhaps correspondingly place limits on the potestas of the prophetic office.

Apostolic Tradition

Apostolic Constitutions 8 was dependent upon the Apostolic Tradition. Apostolic Tradition had a complicated history. Originally it was known only in Coptic, and thus called the “Egyptian Church Order.” Connolly argued so persuasively that the document was written by Hippolytus of Rome that it became identified with his undiscovered work, Apostolic Tradition. More recently, the identification with Hippolytus has fallen out of scholarly

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402. Ibid., 15.2 (Holmes 366).
403. Niederwimmer, Didache, 201-2.
404. Ibid., 202. Granted, this is an argument from silence. From the fact that the Didache does not give instructions on the payment of bishop and deacons it does not necessarily follow that they were unpaid. Perhaps because they share in the ministry of the prophets and teachers (Did. 15.1 [Holmes 366]), they are also to share in the payment of the prophets and teachers (Did. 13.1-2 [Holmes 364]).
405. Prior to the early 1900s, the exact relationship between the various discovered church orders, including what became later known as the Apostolic Tradition and the Apostolic Constitutions, was unknown. Thus, some, such as Funk (Didascalia et Constitutions Apostolorum, Volume 2, xiii) argued for the priority of the Apostolic Constitutions over the Apostolic Tradition. Richard Connolly, The So-Called Egyptian Church Order and Derived Documents (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916) helped forge a scholarly consensus for the priority of the Apostolic Tradition which remains to this day.
407. Connolly, The So-Called Egyptian Church Order, 135-49.
favor, but the name *Apostolic Tradition* remains. The Greek original is lost, and the
document exists in Latin, Sahidic, Bohairic, Arabic, and Ethiopic and in interpolated form in
church orders such as the *Apostolic Constitutions*, *Canons of Hippolytus*, and *Testamentum
Domini*. Earlier scholarship preferred to depend upon the Latin version as the oldest and
best witness. The Latin version lost its privileged place due to its errors and
inconsistencies. More recently, *Apostolic Tradition* has been viewed as a product of a
multitude of editors from different liturgical traditions. This makes detailed redaction
criticism for the *Apostolic Constitutions* nearly impossible. There is no “original” *Apostolic
Tradition*, nor clear evidence to suggest which, if any, of the extant versions of *Apostolic
Tradition* the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* used. Thus, while for simplicity sake, I

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408. Marcel Metzger, “Nouvelles perspectives pour le prétendue *Tradition apostolique,*” *Ecclesia Orans* 5

409. For a complete discussion of the various translations, see Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, 6-11.

410. Bernard Botte, *La Tradition apostolique de saint Hippolyte: Essai de reconstitution* (Münster:

158-62.

412. Jean Magne, *Tradition apostolique sur les charismes et Diataxeis des saints Apôtres* (Paris: Magne,
1975), 76-7; Alexandre Favier, “La documentation canonico-liturgique de l’Eglise ancienne,” *Revue des
sciences religieuses* 54 (1980): 286; Metzger, “Nouvelles perspectives,” 241-59; Metzger, “Enquêtes autour de la
prétendue *Tradition apostolique,*” 7-36; Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, 14-5. Stewart-Sykes builds off the
work of Allen Brent, *Hippolytus and the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the
Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), and sought to unite the traditional view of
Hippolytus authorship with the more recent contention of multiple editors by arguing that there were three
distinct strata of the *Apostolic Tradition*: an older Roman “core” and two different Roman editors who were part
Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2001), 22ff. Against Stewart-Sykes, Bradshaw argued that the different strata come
from different geographical areas over a longer period of time. Paul Bradshaw, “Who Wrote the *Apostolic

413. See, for example, the parallel column method used in the critical edition by Botte. Unless otherwise
noted, all references to the *Apostolic Tradition* are to the Latin version and follow the Botte numbering. Bernard
will speak of “Apostolic Tradition” as if it had one unified text and theology, it must be recognized that there were more likely a multitude of Apostolic Traditions each different from the others to varying degrees.

While in the Didache the bishop was fighting to be recognized as holding potestas equal to the auctoritas of the prophets, by the time of the Apostolic Tradition, the bishop’s potestas was established, though it had not developed to the lengths found in the Apostolic Constitutions. The evolution of the bishop’s potestas was seen in the ordination prayers. In the Apostolic Tradition, the presence, and sometimes participation, of other bishops in the ordination passages were uneven and usually awkwardly placed in the different versions. This indicates that the original strata neglected other bishops and later editors “corrected” it to bring it in line with their contemporary practices.414 Ordination of the bishop was primarily a local communal action, the local community chose the bishop, laid hands on him, and prayed for him.415 Later additions gave more of a role to the visiting bishops, but even still they were in a subordinate role to the community, a situation which was reversed by the time the Apostolic Constitutions was edited.416 In the Apostolic Tradition, therefore, the office of bishop had not yet gained the potestas over the consecration of nearby bishops.

While there will be further development of the potestas of the bishop, already the potestas of the bishop was significant. The episcopal ordination prayer contained the distilled theology of potestas for the bishop.417 The bishop was chosen by God and given the same “spirit of

415. Trad. ap. 2 (SC 11.40-2).
417. Trad. ap. 3 (SC 11.42-6).
leadership” which was given to Jesus, and through him to the apostles. While for the *Didache* the prophets were the high priests, by the *Apostolic Tradition* it was the bishops who inherited the *potestas* of the Old Testament high priesthood. The powers held by the bishop, as enumerated by the ordination prayer, included the power to forgive sins, assign lots, loose every bond (inherited from the apostles), please God, and offer the sacrifices. The comparison between the office of bishop and the Old Testament high priesthood is unusual. Brent may have overstated the case when he claimed that this is the earliest usage of the comparison, making it “absolutely unique,” though it is undoubtedly rare. Also rare was the list of episcopal powers given by the *Apostolic Tradition*. Other episcopal prayers emphasized the bishop’s role as shepherd, teacher, healer, or his ethical characteristics rather than the priestly and pastoral powers given in the *Apostolic Tradition*. The ordination prayer thus emphasized the bishop’s liturgical and priestly role, hinting at these elements contributing the most to his *potestas* in the community.

While not the only liturgical actor, the bishop was the primary liturgical actor, with presbyters and deacons assisting him. The liturgical power of the bishops was clear by the fact that the bishops had the right to depart from the rubric and create their own prayers.

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418. Ibid., 3.5 (SC 11.44). This was not the only place where the *Apostolic Tradition* gave powers to the bishop which in the *Didache* were reserved for the prophets. In *Trad. ap.* 31 (SC 11.110-2) it was the bishops who received the “new fruits,” whereas in *Did.* 13.3-7 it was the prophets who received the first fruits of the community.
419. *Trad. ap.* 3.4-5 (SC 11.44).
421. Bradshaw et al. list *I Clement, Did.* 13.3 (though without drawing attention to the difference and significance between understanding prophets as high priests and understanding bishops as high priests), Tertullian, *De Bapt.* 17.1, and *Didascalia* 2.26.4 as documents earlier than *Apostolic Tradition* or contemporary with it that also relate the high priest with bishops. Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, 33.
There is evidence from the second and third centuries which suggests that the ability to extemporize prayer was widespread.\textsuperscript{424} In the \textit{Apostolic Constitution}, however, the practice has stopped, judging from the editor omitting the passage found in the \textit{Apostolic Tradition}.

As mentioned, the bishops were the chief liturgical actors of baptism and the Eucharist. In baptism, it was the bishop who exorcised the catechumens;\textsuperscript{425} blew on them; and sealed their foreheads, ears, nostrils.\textsuperscript{426} The bishop also gave thanks over oil and exorcised other oil to create the oil of thanksgiving and oil of exorcism.\textsuperscript{427} Post-baptism, the bishop did the imposition of hands, anointing with oil, and signed the baptized on the forehead.\textsuperscript{428} In addition to the above rituals which were done exclusively by the bishop, the bishop also did the baptism proper, though he could be replaced by a presbyter.\textsuperscript{429}

In addition to his ecclesiastical \textit{potestas} and liturgical \textit{potestas}, the bishop in the \textit{Apostolic Tradition} also had \textit{auctoritas} borne from his status as community patron. In the meal described in 28, the bishop controlled the meal. Only the bishop could speak during the meal. Where the bishop asked someone a direct question, the guest could speak. Otherwise, he or she is to sit silently, “praising him [the bishop] with modesty.”\textsuperscript{430} The bishop’s control over the meal reflected the traditional patron’s role in a meal and may reflect the bishop’s usurping the \textit{auctoritas} of early Christian patrons.\textsuperscript{431} Another area in which the bishop exerted

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{425} \textit{Trad. ap.} 20.3, 8 (SC 11.78-80).
\item \textsuperscript{426} Ibid., 20.8 (SC 11.78).
\item \textsuperscript{427} Ibid., 21.6-7 (SC 11.82).
\item \textsuperscript{428} Ibid., 21.21-3 (SC 11.90).
\item \textsuperscript{429} Ibid., 21.11 (SC 11.82).
\item \textsuperscript{430} Ibid., 28.4 (SC 11.108).
\item \textsuperscript{431} Alistair Stewart-Sykes, “The Integrity of the Hippolytean Ordination Rites,” \textit{Augustinianum} 39 (1999): 97-127.
\end{itemize}
communal patronage was overseeing the burial of the Christian dead. The bishop supported the caretaker of the cemetery in order that it might be affordable for the poor to bury their dead. The bishop additionally was in charge of directing the deacons in taking care of the sick. When the bishop was able he was to visit the sick. Patronage was diffused throughout the community, the duty of those who had the means. Now it was unified under the direction of the bishop. By taking over the function of patron, the bishop gained for his office nearly exclusive control over spiritual and material benefits, with corresponding enlarged honor and potestas.

In addition to the bishop, the *Apostolic Tradition* contained two other ecclesiastical ranks: the deacon, which was also known to the *Didache*, and the presbyters. The ordination prayers for the presbyters and deacons contained a very different theology than the ordination prayers for a bishop. Where the bishop’s prayer was filled with priestly language, the

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433. The Sahidic just says “those... who take care [of it],” while both the Arabic and Ethiopic elaborate “the guard who is in the place and looks after it.” Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, 192.


435. Ibid., 34 (SC 11.116).


439. Perhaps not so different in the earliest strata of the *Apostolic Tradition*. The Latin version contains a very debated saying introducing the ordination prayer for the presbyter: “let him say according to those things that have been said above, as we have said above about the bishop, praying and saying.” Then follows a prayer that is very different from the bishop’s prayer, leading to debate over how exactly the prayers for bishop and presbyters were seen as having the exact same wording. Turner suggested that the bishop’s ordination prayer would be said for the presbyter until the point where the word “bishop” explicitly occurs, at which point it would switch over to the ordination prayer for the presbyter. Cuthbert Turner, “The Ordination of a Presbyter in the Church Order of Hippolytus,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1915): 543. Bartlet argued that the bishop and presbyter prayer were originally the same, with the presbyter prayer added by a later hand who could not accept that the two offices would be ordained using the same prayer. J. Vernon Bartlet, “The Ordination Prayers in the Ancient Church Order,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 17 (1917): 255. Bradshaw et al. argued for a textual addition, that the original reading was for the presbyters to lay hands on the presbyter just as they did the bishop. When the practice of presbyters laying hands on the bishop died out, an editor added “and let him say” to make sense of what to the new editor would be a confusing direction. Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*,
presbyter’s prayer was centered on the leadership. With the bishop compared to the high priest, the natural Old Testament imagery for the presbytery would be priests or Levites. However, the Old Testament example given in the prayer was Moses’ appointment of elders to serve and lead Israel. It was possible this imagery was chosen to emphasize the subordination of the presbytery to the bishop, just as the elders were subordinate to Moses.\footnote{440} This is unlikely as the bishop was never mentioned or otherwise alluded to in the prayer.\footnote{441}

More significantly for our purposes, while the \textit{potestas} of the bishop was tied to their identity as functioning priests, their liturgical and sacerdotal roles, the presbyter, and by extension the presbyter’s \textit{potestas}, was here conceived in terms of governance leadership.

The authority of the presbyter was filled out by the reference to the office in the rubric for the ordination of deacons.\footnote{442} The long, repetitive, and defensive rubric took great pains to highlight the fact that only bishops, and not any of the presbyterate, may ordain a deacon. The length and repetition highlight that the \textit{Apostolic Tradition} was defending a practice, or trying to enforce a practice, against an alternative practice where the presbyterate had the power of ordaining deacons. The theological justification given for forbidding the presbyters to ordain deacons was that presbyters have “the power...[to] receive, but he does not have the power to give.”\footnote{443} While presbyters did lay hands on other presbyters, this action “sealed” while the bishop’s hand-laying ordained. While limiting the authority of the presbyterate to a

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{441}{David Power, \textit{Ministers of Christ and His Church} (London: Chapman, 1969), 33-6.}
\footnotetext{442}{Trad. ap. 8.1-8 (SC 11.58-60).}
\footnotetext{443}{Ibid., 8.7 (SC 11.60).}
\end{footnotes}
status of confirming the bishop’s authority to ordain, the rubric did, in passing, refer to
presbyters as “priests,” in contrast to their ordination prayer.

The priestly character of the presbyters was reinforced by their liturgical role, and primarily
their ability, in certain rites only, to functionally replace the bishop. Elsewhere the
presbyter played a significant role in rituals, especially in the baptismal ritual. In baptism the
presbyter could replace the bishop at parts. He also did the pre-baptismal exorcistic
anointing and post-baptismal anointing. In the Eucharist which follows, the presbyters
hold three cups of water, milk, and wine.

Finally, the presbyters could act as a modified patron. While the bishop retained the most
patron-like qualities, the presbyters could take on some of the bishop’s duties and privileges
in the absence of a bishop. During a meal in the absence of a bishop, the presbyter took on
the same authority as the bishop, controlling the conversation during the meal and giving the
blessing at the end of it.

Deacons were the lowest ordained clergy. His duties, as described during the discussion on
deacon ordination, were “taking care of and indicating to the bishop what is necessary.”
While bishops were explicitly linked to the priesthood, the ordination prayer in the Ethiopic

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444. Ibid., 8.2 (SC 11.58).
446. Ibid., 21.11 (SC 11.82).
447. Ibid., 21.9 (SC 11.82).
450. Ibid., 28.5 (SC 11.106).
451. For reference to them being ordained, see the discussion around the ordination prayer in Apostolic Tradition 8. However, the text makes it clear that while deacons were ordained, they were not ordained “to the priesthood but to the service of the bishop.” Apostolic Tradition 8.2.
452. Trad. ap. 8.3 (SC 11.58).
compared the deacons to the Old Testament Levites. Their role, like the Levites, was to assist the priests (in the *Apostolic Tradition*, the one who fulfills the office of priest, namely the bishop). Because of this, the *potestas* of the office of deacon operated under the *potestas* of the bishop and did not receive the same “Spirit” that was possessed by the presbyters. As such, there is an inherent gulf between the *potestas* of the presbyters and deacons.

While deacons do not have the same liturgical *potestas* as bishops or presbyters, they still had a significant place in liturgical rites in their role as assistants to bishops. They were the ones who held the pre-baptismal and post-baptismal oil. The deacon was also the one who gave the baptismal interrogation to the one being baptized. In the post-baptismal Eucharist, the deacon brought the elements to the bishop for the blessing and could replace the presbyters in holding the cups if there were not enough presbyters present.

Finally, the deacons could act as a limited patron. While the bishop retained the most patron-like qualities, followed by the presbyters, the deacons could take on some of the bishop’s duties and privileges in the absence of a member of either of those groups. During a meal in the absence of a bishop or presbyter, the deacon took on the same authority as the bishop,

453. I refer here to the Ethiopic even though it may be a later addition, because at this point the Latin text has a lacuna.
454. Bradshaw et al. also saw the prayer as making Christ the model for the deaconate. While possible, at most this is an implicit model. The proposed model is part of the opening to the prayer, “Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom you sent to serve your will and manifest to us your desire” (8.10). While the “service” of the deacons might have caused the prayer writer to think it appropriate to mention the “service” of Jesus, there is not an explicitly drawn connection between Jesus and deacons. Bradshaw et al., *Apostolic Tradition*, 65.
456. Ibid., 21.12 (SC 11.84).
457. Ibid., 21.27 (SC 11.90).
controlling the conversation during the meal and giving the blessing at the end of it. In addition, the deacon acted as a limited patron to those who were sick by taking down their names and reporting them to the bishop for visitation.

In addition to the more formalized offices of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, who all receive hand-laying and an episcopal prayer, there were readers and sub-deacons who were ecclesiastically regulated but did not receive the hand-laying. The reader received the “book of the apostle” and had an episcopal prayer said over him, while the subdeacon was merely named “to follow the deacons.” Their potestas, as envisioned by the Apostolic Tradition, was negligible.

The clergy were not the only ones with potestas recognized by the Apostolic Tradition. One source of potestas outside the normal ecclesiastical hierarchy were the confessors. According to the Sahidic, which contains the best reading, a confessor had the same status as a presbyter by virtue of his confession. Confessors did not need hand-laying for ordination to the deaconate or presbyterate. However, if he was made bishop, then he was to have hands laid on him. These commands subsume the auctoritas of the confessors gained

459. Ibid., 28.5 (SC 11.106).
460. Ibid., 34 (SC 11.116). The Sahidic version of Apostolic Tradition 8 is even more explicit, stating that their job is to “take care of those who are sick.” Bradshaw et al., Apostolic Tradition 60, 176.
461. Ibid., 11 (SC 11.66).
462. Ibid., 13 (SC 11.68).
463. All of the alternate authorities given below are found only in some versions of the Apostolic Tradition. However, because they are also given in Apostolic Constitution 8, it is likely that the copy of the Apostolic Tradition used by the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions also contained these passages. For the content in the various versions, see the parallel columns in Bradshaw et al., Apostolic Tradition, 68-81.
464. Ibid., 67.
465. However, only those meeting a certain threshold of persecution were included. Those who were only “greatly scorned” or “placed under house arrest” were not given the same privileges.
through their suffering into the ecclesiastical structure. Their *auctoritas* gives them equal status to the *potestas* of a presbyter, but less than the *potestas* of a bishop.

Female ascetics, widows, and virgins were another perceived threat to the *potestas* of the clergy. The *Apostolic Tradition* was concerned with highlighting the fact that widows were not to be ordained. *Apostolic Tradition* forbade ordination or the associated rituals for widows three times and insisted that they were only “appointed” (καθιστάναι) rather than ordained four times. The *Apostolic Tradition* justified its stance by claiming that ordination was for the clergy so they might do the liturgies while widows were only appointed to pray. This stance continued the document’s primary association of the clergy with their pastoral and liturgical functions. Some scholars have suggested that the repetition of denying widows ordination was a sign that widows were, in fact, being ordained, or at the very least had *auctoritas* and honor equivalent to the *potestas* of the clergy. Unlike widows, who were appointed, and thus operated under a measure of ecclesiastical regulation and control, virgins operated independently of the ecclesiastical structure. Virgins did not receive hand-laying or appointment to virginity, rather virginity was “her choice alone.”

Just as virgins operated outside of the ecclesiastical structure, so too did the recognized healers. The “gift of healing” was elsewhere recognized as a gift given by the Holy Spirit. In *Apostolic Tradition*, the gift was said to come through “revelation,” highlighting the divine

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466. Ibid., 10.1-5 (SC 11.66).
467. Ibid., 10.5 (SC 11.66).
469. Trad. ap. 12 (SC 11.68).
470. Ibid., 14 (SC 11.68).
471. 1 Cor. 12.9.
origin of the gift. Ecclesiastical hand-laying was not needed, according to the *Apostolic Tradition*, because the healing gift would be publicly seen through its use if the person spoke the truth about having the gift. Meanwhile, its absence and lack of use would indicate publicly that they were lying. Miraculous powers, which were prominent during the Montanus controversy of the late second century, still conferred *auctoritas* outside the ecclesiastical framework. They later reappeared as a significant alternative to ecclesiastical *potestas* in the guise of late third and fourth-century ascetics. It may be significant for the conception of “healers’” *auctoritas* in the *Apostolic Tradition*, that chapter 14 was the only place which mentioned people with the gift of healing. In other passages which deal with the sick, it was the deacons and bishops who were mentioned as visiting, not a healer. This might suggest that the gift of healing was more a theoretical reality than an actual reality in the community. Alternatively, it might mean that the clergy were beginning to take over responsibilities formerly done by charismatics, such as taking care of the sick.

Finally, there is the alternative exegetical expert to the clergy, the lay teacher. The primary lay exegetical expert in the *Apostolic Tradition* was the one in charge of instructing the catechumens. The lay teacher instructed the catechumens for up to three years, the length of the catechesis process as prescribed by *Apostolic Tradition* 17.1. In addition to the *auctoritas* given by the teachers through their exegetical expertise, the lay catechumen teachers were also allowed a rare power, the ability to lay hands on the catechumens after teaching. In the

473. *Trad. ap.* 19.1 (SC 11.76). The teacher does not need to be a lay teacher based on the text. However, as a clerical teacher would not provide an alternative authority to the ecclesiastical structure, only the lay teacher will be discussed here.
474. Ibid., 19.1 (SC 11.76).
Apostolic Tradition, hand-laying was otherwise reserved for bishops, or more rarely presbyters. In Turner’s discussion of the hand-laying rite in connection with catechesis in the early church, the Apostolic Tradition was the only extant witness for hand-laying by a person other than the bishop. In his exhaustive treatment of the hand-laying rite in the early Western church, Whitehouse noted that in this rite “the teacher is establishing/affirming his intimate and unique relationship with each of these individuals and physically connecting his prayer to each of them.” In other words, in the rite, the teacher was both affirming and strengthening the teacher-student relationship which forms the basis for his auctoritas. The hand-laying rite may be a vestigial rite from when the auctoritas of exegetical experts was more influential within the Apostolic Tradition’s community. Presbyters, and later bishops, took over the roles formerly done by the exegetical experts. Eventually, the exegetical expert’s auctoritas was limited to overseeing the catechetical process. There, they retained enough auctoritas to avoid complete ecclesiastical control. Two later documents based on this passage in the Apostolic Tradition end the practice of lay hand-laying: Apostolic

475. Ibid., 2.3.5, 7.1, 8.1, 20.8, 21.21 (SC 11.40-2, 56, 58, 78, 92).
476. Ibid., 7.1, 8.6 (SC 11.56, 60).
479. See Stewart-Sykes, On the Apostolic Tradition, 38-45, for the scholastic church in Rome. My argument would be considerably weakened if it could be proven that this stratum comes from a locale other than Rome or Alexandria, where it is known strong lay teachers existed.
480. Granted, because of the paucity of pre-Apostolic Tradition evidence for the hand-laying rite, this is purely speculative. The most notable early evidence for laity performing hand-laying in some areas is the North African Tertullian, who placed a hand-laying rite in the baptismal rite and then states that lay people could baptize, and so by implication also do the imposition of hands that is part of the rite. De Baptismo 17. Even with Tertullian, however, there was a distinct preference for bishops, presbyters, or deacons to perform the rite, which is different from the passage here in Apostolic Tradition which does not indicate that a lay teacher gives hand-laying only in the absence of qualified clergy, as Tertullian may be interpreted to say.
Constitution 8.32.17 dropped the imposition of hands altogether, while Testamentum Domini 2.5 explicitly mentioned that either a bishop or presbyter performs the imposition of hands. In Apostolic Tradition 41.1-3, the catechesis teacher was again mentioned. The exegetical expertise of the teacher was such that when the catechumens heard the teacher speak, they were, in fact, hearing God speak. If the catechetical teacher in 41 is the same as in 19, it is significant to note that a lay teacher was just as much the mouthpiece of God as a bishop or presbyter. His words were imbued with an auctoritas which came from God himself.

Didascalia

The Didascalia was the most used source by the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions, who used it as a source for Apostolic Constitutions 1-6. Since Connolly, the view that the Didascalia had only one editor has been the majority opinion. More recently, like the Apostolic Tradition, scholars have questioned whether the Didascalia is, in fact, really a function of multiple editors over time. Stewart-Sykes, for example, argued that there were at least three editors of the text: the original editor, who united the different sources; the “deuterotic” editor, who edited the text to make it more distinctly anti-Jewish; and the “apostolic” editor, who added material to highlight and support the alleged apostolic authorship. The redaction poses fewer difficulties than the Apostolic Tradition, however, as the Apostolic Constitutions appear to have used a version similar to the one currently extant.

481. Trad. ap. 41.2 (SC 11.124), referenced again in 42.3 (SC 11.136) where it is the Holy Spirit who is speaking through the teacher.
482. In particular, see Funk, which helpfully places the text of the Didascalia and Apostolic Constitutions in parallel.
484. Stewart-Sykes, Didascalia apostolorum, 6-49.
The source material may be as early as first century,\textsuperscript{485} with the final redaction possibly occurring in the late third or early fourth century.\textsuperscript{486} The document most likely originated from Syria or possibly Palestine.\textsuperscript{487}

The key figure in the \textit{Didascalia} was the bishop. Thirty percent of the \textit{Didascalia}, eight of the twenty-seven chapters, was devoted to discussing the office, responsibilities, and behavior of the bishop. The bishop was clearly the locus of both \textit{potestas} and \textit{auctoritas} in the \textit{Didascalia}. The bishop was to be feared like a father and master, and loved like God.\textsuperscript{488} The office of bishop combined the \textit{potestas} of virtually every type of authoritative personage known. In 2.25.7 alone, the \textit{potestas} of a bishop was compared to the \textit{potestas} of a priest, prophet, leader, noble, and king.\textsuperscript{489} The comparison between bishop and king is especially interesting. In 2.34.2, the editor gave a lengthy quotation of 1 Samuel 8.10-17 and applied it to the office of bishop.\textsuperscript{490} However, 1 Samuel 8.10-17 was a warning from Samuel that Israel would regret asking for a king because the kings would reign over them in tyranny. Thus, for the editor, it was entirely reasonable to link the \textit{potestas} of a bishop to the rule of a tyrannous king!

Just in case the \textit{potestas} of a despot was not enough of a comparison, the \textit{potestas} of the bishop was also compared to a high priest,\textsuperscript{491} a Levite, father, chief, master, powerful king, and even a “type of God.”\textsuperscript{492} Lay people could not approach the bishop except through the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{stewart-sykes} Stewart-Sykes, \textit{Didascalia apostolorum}, 51-5.
\bibitem{connolly} Connolly, \textit{Didascalia apostolorum}, lxxxix.
\bibitem{didascalia20} \textit{Didascalia} 2.20.1 (Funk 70).
\bibitem{didascalia22} Ibid., Funk 94-6.
\bibitem{didascalia23} Ibid., 116.
\bibitem{didascalia26} Ibid., 2.26.3 (Funk 102).
\bibitem{didascalia24} Ibid., 2.26.4 (Funk 104). For the bishop as a “type of god” see Georg Schöllgen, \textit{Die Anfänge der

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deacons because “one cannot approach the Lord God Almighty except by means of Christ.”

An absolute hierarchy was in full effect. Those without potestas, namely the lay people, could only approach the full holder of potestas, the bishop, through an intermediary, the potestas of the deacon. The comparison between the bishop and God was not a one-time literary exaggeration. Didascalia frequently compared the bishop to God. The bishop’s potestas was second only to God himself.

Unlike Apostolic Tradition, which emphasized the liturgical function of the bishop, the Didascalia emphasized the bishop’s social leadership and patronage. As suggested by the list of comparisons given above, the bishop was most comparable to a king. Both were rulers who received and distributed gifts. After a mostly stereotypical list of the virtues of the bishop drawn from the New Testament, especially 1 Timothy 3, the editor dwelt specifically on characteristics related to patronage. The bishop oversaw patronizing orphans, widows, poor, and strangers. He was to judge the potential recipients; his patronage was based on the recipient’s wealth, health, number of children, and character. Bishops were “stewards of God,” which the editor related specifically to the bishop’s role in managing ecclesial finances. While the editor was certainly concerned with the overconsumption of resources by the bishop himself, the focus was on the bishop as a functioning patron. The bishop was the

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493. Didascalia 2.28.6 (Funk 108-10).
494. Ibid., 2.26.4; 2.28.6; 2.30; 2.31.3; 2.34.5 (Funk 104, 108-10, 112, 112, 118).
495. Ibid., 2.33.1 (Funk 114).
496. As discussed later, the bishop’s authority is based on more than his social leadership. Social leadership, which includes things such as patronage and discipline, has the greatest focus in the Didascalia.
497. Didascalia 2.3-6; cf. 2.24 (Funk 34-42, 90-2).
498. Ibid., 2.4.1 (Funk 34-6).
499. Ibid., 2.4.2-3 (Funk 36).
500. Ibid., 2.24 (Funk 90-2).
501. Ibid., 2.25.1-6 (Funk 92-4).
one responsible for distributing the church’s wealth. Overconsumption of resources by the bishop was primarily a problem because it lowered the amount of wealth the bishop could redistribute.

The Didascalia made it clear that only the bishop was to be a patron. It was forbidden to give to widows and orphans, two of the main recipients of patronage, except by the bishop or with his permission. The editor reinforced this command by frequent reference to those receiving patronage as the “altar of God.” Only Levites and high priests were allowed to offer sacrifices on the altar. In the church, only the “new” Levites and priests, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, were allowed to “offer sacrifices,” which the editor interprets as distributing patronage. Not only was the bishop the sole patron, but his patronage potestas was beyond questioning by the laity. No matter to whom the bishop distributed his patronage, nor how well or badly he did it, he could not be questioned by lay people, but only God.

Didascalia 2.5.1 was the first in a series of passages which warn the bishop not to be a “respects of persons.” These commands were tied in with the bishop’s social leadership and distributing of patronage. The bishop was not to treat the rich, the ones who were the givers, in such a way as to neglect the poor, the ones to whom he had patronage responsibilities. Didascalia 2.6.1 placed the command not to be a “respects of persons” in

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502. Ibid., 2.25.2 (Funk 92).
503. Ibid., 2.25.3 (Funk 94).
504. Ibid., 2.26.8; 2.31.1-2 (Funk 104, 112).
505. Ibid., 2.26.8; 3.6.3; 3.14.1; 4.3.3; 4.5.1 (Funk 104, 190, 212-4, 220, 222-4).
506. Ibid., 2.27.1-4; cf. 2.28.7ff (Funk 106, 110ff.). For a history of the term “altar of God” to refer to patronage, see Carolyn Osiek, “The Widow as Altar: The Rise and Fall of a Symbol.” Second Century 3 (1983): 166.
507. Didascalia 2.35.4 (Funk 120).
508. Ibid., 2.5.1; 2.6.1; 2.17.1-2; 2.42.1; 2.43.5 (Funk 36, 38, 62, 132, 136).
the context of the bishop refraining from accumulating money or looking for profit. The editor saw two dangers with a bishop being a “respecer of persons.” The first danger was that the bishop would neglect his patronage duties towards the poor in favor of flattering the rich and using his position to accumulate personal wealth. A second danger was that it could undermine the bishop’s disciplinary powers. The Didascalia warned against the bishop using his disciplinary powers for monetary gain.\textsuperscript{509} By basing penitential decisions on the person and their wealth or status, the bishop would lose auctoritas, which would weaken his potestas to rebuke others and enforce his disciplinary directives.\textsuperscript{510}

The largest difference between the Apostolic Tradition’s view of episcopal potestas and the Didascalia’s view of episcopal potestas was the centrality of the bishop’s disciplinary powers in the Didascalia.\textsuperscript{511} By virtue of these disciplinary powers, the bishop sat in the place of “God the Almighty” and was “like Almighty God.”\textsuperscript{512} His potestas, primarily in the context of disciplinary powers, was “heavenly and divine.”\textsuperscript{513} The bishop had the authority to judge on behalf of God,\textsuperscript{514} a position justified by an appeal to Matthew 18.18.\textsuperscript{515} In fact, the

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\textsuperscript{509} Ibid., 2.9-10, 2.42 (Funk 44-6, 132-4).
\textsuperscript{510} Ibid., 2.17.1-2 (Funk 62-4).
\textsuperscript{511} Five of the twelve chapters devoted to bishops are dominated by the theme of bishop as judge: 4-7; 11-12. Karen Torjesen, “The Episcopacy—Sacerdotal or Monarchical? The Appeal to Old Testament Institutions by Cyprian and the Didascalia,” Studia Patristica 36 (2001): 399. The document’s position on discipline is slightly contradictory because of the various redaction layers. At points it appears to be a rigorist document and at others a more “lax” document. Schwartz suggested that the document had originally been rigorist, which had been “softened” by the various editors. Eduard Schwartz, Bußstufen und Katechumenatssklassen, Schriften der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft in Strassburg 7 (Strassburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1911), 18-25. Cf. Didascalia 2.6.16-2.7.1; 5.9.4.
\textsuperscript{512} Didascalia 2.11.1; cf. 2.18.1 (Funk 46, 64).
\textsuperscript{513} Ibid., 2.34.4 (Funk 118).
\textsuperscript{514} Ibid., 2.11.2 (Funk 46).
\textsuperscript{515} Ibid., 2.18.2-3 (Funk 64).
\end{flushleft}
potestas of the bishop was so great that he had the ultimate disciplinary power to choose to either condemn someone to everlasting fire or grant them eternal life.\textsuperscript{516}

Didascalia 2.20, which gave its expectations of the bishop, demonstrates the centrality of discipline in the construction of a bishop’s potestas. Teaching received only two passing mentions.\textsuperscript{517} The liturgical function of the bishop, which was so central to the Apostolic Tradition, was not mentioned. Almost all of the passage was concerned with how and when the bishop exercised his disciplinary powers. The climax of the passage, with regards to the potestas of the bishop, was 2.20.11. There, the bishop was compared to a physician. The metaphor was clear in its assigned power roles: the bishop actively diagnosed the illness and offered the cure; the laity unquestioningly took the cure.

However, the potestas gained through being a judge was tied to the bishop’s character. Only the bishop oversaw the penitential system. Thus, it was connected to the office divorced from the person. However, the Didascalia was clear that an unworthy bishop lost the auctoritas to rebuke and set penitence.\textsuperscript{518} Even then, however, the loss of auctoritas was only in the eyes of the congregation. It was not an actual loss of potestas, for, the editor claimed, it was dangerous to ignore the words of even an unworthy bishop.\textsuperscript{519} Even an unworthy bishop, by virtue of his office, held the potestas to judge the laity.

Auctoritas stemming from an exegetical expertise of the bishop was minimized. Only if it were possible should the bishop be able to read, a fundamental skill to develop exegetical

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{516} Ibid., 2.33.3 (Funk 116).\textsuperscript{517} Ibid., 2.20.2, 3 (Funk 72).\textsuperscript{518} Ibid., 2.17.1-2 (Funk 62).\textsuperscript{519} Ibid., 2.17.3 (Funk 62).}
expertise.\footnote{520} Perhaps contradictorily, 2.5.3-5 declares that the bishop needed to be an assiduous reader of Scripture.\footnote{521} In particular, the editor of the passage was concerned that the bishop be able to rightly exegete the law and the prophets so as to harmonize it with the gospel.\footnote{522} Later in 2.28.9-2.29, the bishop’s interpretive authority was more fully on display. There, the bishop was the “mouth of God,” who should be worshipped as God since he proclaims the words of God.\footnote{523} Teaching was reserved for the ecclesiastical structure, as 3.5-3.6.2 made clear in its polemic against lay, and particularly widow, teachers. Widows were to send those who asked for instruction to the “ruler,” a reference to the bishop and, perhaps, deacons.\footnote{524}

After the bishop, the deacons were the greatest authority in the Didascalia. Where bishops were often compared with God, deacons were frequently compared with Christ.\footnote{525} Like Christ, deacons existed to serve others,\footnote{526} especially the bishop.\footnote{527} The deacons were primarily assistants to the bishop and frequently occur in couplet with them.\footnote{528} It appears that the deacon’s role, and thus their source of potestas, overlapped with the bishop, except in those areas the Didascalia specifically reserved for the bishop.\footnote{529} While bishops were the primary

\footnotetext{520}{Ibid., 2.1.2 (Funk 30-2).}
\footnotetext{521}{Stewart-Sykes considered this entire section as the work of the “deuterotic” redactor, which would explain the deep concern for the bishop being a good exegete in this section compared to the lack of concern displayed in 2.1.2. In addition to the passage covering the concerns of the later “deuterotic” redactor, it also seems to break up the natural flow of the passage which covers money both before and after 2.5.3-6. Stewart-Sykes, Didascalia Apostolorum, 28.}
\footnotetext{522}{Didascalia 2.5.3 (Funk 36).}
\footnotetext{523}{Ibid. (Funk 110).}
\footnotetext{524}{Ibid., 3.5.3 (Funk188). Charlotte Methuen, “Widows, Bishops and the Struggle for Authority in the Didascalia Apostolorum,” Journal of Ecclesiastical History 46 (1995): 199.}
\footnotetext{525}{Didascalia 2.26.5; 2.28.6; 2.31.3; 2.44.2.3 (Funk 104, 108-10, 112, 138).}
\footnotetext{526}{Ibid., 3.13.2-7 (Funk 214-216).}
\footnotetext{527}{Ibid., 3.13.1.7 (Funk 212-14, 216).}
\footnotetext{528}{Ibid., 2.44.1ff. (Funk 138ff.).}
\footnotetext{529}{“The deacon should settle such matters as he is able, and the bishop should determine the other, remaining matters” (ibid., 2.44.3 [Funk 138]).}
judges for the Christian community, deacons were directed to always be present at hearings and judgments, presumably in order to be able to give the bishop advice. Deacons were to stand by the offering and stand at the door to ensure people sat in their proper seating during the service. Deacons also played a key role in the patronage system administered by the bishop. Deacons visited and assessed those in need, reporting their findings to the bishop. Deacons played an important role in advising the bishop about who needed ecclesiastical patronage.

Several other ecclesiastical offices exist, though they received only passing mention. The office of presbyter seemed to have been absent from the original sources and only added by later editors. The presbyters were introduced in 2.1.1 with the brief mention that the bishop was the head of the presbytery. They were not mentioned again until 2.26.7, in a list of ecclesiastical offices. In that list, they were a “type of the apostles,” which indicates some measure of potestas. Their potestas was less than the potestas of the bishop, who was compared to God, the deacon, who was a type of Christ, and even the deaconesses, who were a type of the Holy Spirit. In 2.28.4-5, in the context of receiving gifts, the presbyter received the same portion as deacons and readers. In 2.34.3 presbyters were called

530. Ibid., 2.47.1 (Funk 142).
531. Ibid., 2.57.6 (Funk 162). Stewart-Sykes observed that the source for this passage attributed this job to presbyters; the redactor changed it to be a function of the deaconate. Stewart-Sykes, Didascalia Apostolorum, 61.2.
532. If Stewart-Sykes’s reading of 3.12.1 is correct, this is perhaps the most explicit connection of deacons to the patronage system. Ibid., 192.
533. Didascalia 3.13.7 (Funk 216).
534. The bishop as head of the presbytery would fit well with the source used in Didascalia 2.57 (Funk 158-66). There, the bishops (plural) sit in the midst of the presbyters. That this section was from a source different from the rest of the document is obvious, as deacons, who were prominent throughout the document, were not mentioned; while presbyters, who were rarely mentioned, are central. Connolly, Didascalia apostolorum, 119; Stewart-Sykes, Didascalia Apostolorum, 175 fn. 2.
535. I am assuming a theology where Christ and the Holy Spirit have more authority than the apostles do.
536. As readers are only mentioned once in the Didascalia, in the passing mention in 2.28.5 (Funk 108), it
“counselors” and “assessors” to the bishop. 2.45.6 suggests that they, like the bishop, had potestas to judge. In addition to the once-mentioned ecclesiastical office of readers, the office of subdeacon was also only mentioned once, as the bishop’s servants.537

The first auctoritas outside of the ecclesiastical hierarchy mentioned by the Didascalia was the potential lay patron. The Didascalia, either intentionally or unintentionally, minimized the lay male as a public figure imbued with auctoritas. The Didascalia made several commands to avoid dress and behavior common to male patrons in its commands regulating their interactions with females who were not the man’s wife. For example, 1.3.9 stated that the male should avoid fine clothes and golden rings. Wearing displays of material wealth in clothing and jewelry was one sign by which patrons advertised their wealth and status to those seeking patronage.538 Later, in 1.4-5, Christians were commanded to avoid loitering in market places, while rich Christians were told to spend all their time among Christians. If they followed the Didascalia’s command, the male Christian would be partially secluded, spending time in the home, work, and church. This would limit their ability to act in a public manner and keep them under the watch, and partial control, of the clergy. Connected to the weakening of the lay patron, the Didascalia also moved to weaken the layperson’s judgment. Patrons, by virtue of their position, were in a unique position to mediate disputes and enforce behavior. However, the Didascalia was clear that lay people could judge neither the bishop nor their fellow lay people.539 Judging, along with giving out discipline, was solely reserved

537. Didascalia 2.34.3 (Funk 116-8).
539. Didascalia 2.35.7-37.2 (Funk120-4).
for the bishop, due to his *potestas*. No matter how much *auctoritas* a lay person held, because he did not have the *potestas* of a bishop, he was unable to judge or discipline others. Lay people who attempted to usurp what was reserved for the bishop opened themselves up to eternal judgment.\(^{540}\)

Finally, in an off-hand comment while instructing about widows, the *Didascalia* was clear that lay men were to have restricted teaching authority. Lay men were unable to teach on punishment, “the rest,” the kingdom of the name of Christ, and the divine plan.\(^{541}\) The *Didascalia* did not explicitly say what lay men could teach. If they could teach the same things as widows, they were permitted to teach on the destruction of idols and the existence of one God. Teaching authority was thus concentrated in the ecclesiastical structure, with the potential alternate *auctoritas* of lay exegetical experts severely curtailed.

Widows were another significant source of *auctoritas* treated by the *Didascalia*. In fact, widows received more attention in the *Didascalia* than either presbyters or deacons.\(^{542}\) In contrast to female virgins, who were at least theoretically still under the male control of their father, widows were separate from any kind of patriarchal control. The editor saw widows as taking full advantage of their freedom, viewing widows as threats to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Most of the instruction regarding widows occurred between 3.1-3.11, though there were passing mentions made elsewhere. Widows appear to be a quasi-ecclesiastical group. Widows required an appointment; it was not enough to simply be a woman whose husband

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540. Ibid., 2.37.3 (Funk 124).  
541. Ibid., 3.5.4 (Funk 188).  
died.\textsuperscript{543} The appointment consisted of more than being placed on the charity roles. Even those who were not officially appointed widows could receive charity.

The content of 3.5ff indicated that widows had greater \textit{auctoritas} than the compilers of the Didascalia wished. From the restrictions the Didascalia placed on widows, it is obvious that widows often wielded exegetical \textit{auctoritas}. The editor emphatically attacked widows who teach.\textsuperscript{544} The attack presupposed that widows were known for their exegetical expertise. The discussion began with widows teaching doctrine when they were asked by others from the laity.\textsuperscript{545} The Didascalia did not even attempt to prevent widows from being consulted; rather, it placed the onus on the widows themselves to direct the questioners to the bishop. This suggests that in the community widows were accepted by the people as exegetical experts alongside, or perhaps in place of, bishops. The Didascalia sought to limit the widows’ pre-existing \textit{auctoritas} in order to eliminate rivals to ecclesiastical \textit{potestas}.\textsuperscript{546} This fits within the editor’s larger efforts in the Didascalia to centralize religious authority under the \textit{potestas} of the bishop.

Widows even appear to have some liturgical \textit{auctoritas} within the community. Didascalia 3.9 spoke of women baptizing.\textsuperscript{547} The editor was against the practice, justifying male-only baptizers by appealing to the precedent of Jesus’ baptism. Those who ignored the editor and were baptized by a woman put their own soul in danger, as well as the soul of the baptizer. However, despite the editor’s clear disapproval, he did not outright forbid the action, but only

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{543} Ibid., 3.1.1; 3.2.1 (Funk 182-4).
\item \textsuperscript{544} Ibid., 3.5.3-3.6.2 (Funk 188-90).
\item \textsuperscript{545} Ibid., 3.5.3 (Funk 188).
\item \textsuperscript{546} See especially Methuen, “Widows, Bishops and the Struggle for Authority,” 198-206.
\item \textsuperscript{547} Though it uses the word “women,” the fact that the context both before and after the passage is particularly addressed to widows seems to suggest that widows are also the focus here.
\end{itemize}
counsels against it. The editor’s reluctance to forbid the practice might suggest that many in the congregation had been baptized by widows. The Didascalia was concerned that widows were acting as a kind of ecclesiastical mercenary, fulfilling functions the editor believed should be reserved for bishops and deacons. The editor complained that widows engaged in fasting, prayer, entertaining, and laying on of hands for those under ecclesiastical discipline in exchange for money. The context, especially Didascalia 3.8.5, seemed to indicate that widows were undermining the disciplinary potestas of the bishops. Widows were ignoring excommunication, and perhaps even went as far as acting as ecclesiastical substitutes for people who were expelled from the church.

While it is not explicitly mentioned in the text, it is reasonable to assume that the widow’s ascetical practices formed part of their appeal as an alternative to the bishop. In addition to their “chastity to God,” the Didascalia mentioned widows engaging in the ascetical practice of fasting. Evidently, the fasting of the widows was endowed with power, which led people to request widows to fast on their behalf. Later, the Didascalia condemned extreme ascetical groups, with widows perhaps a part of those groups. It is plausible that widow’s prayers were recognized as having special power because of their fasting and other ascetical practices.

548. Didascalia 3.9.1 (Funk 198-200).
550. Didascalia 3.8.3 (Funk 198).
551. Ibid., 3.2.1 (Funk 184).
552. Ibid., 3.8.1-3 (Funk 196-8).
554. Didascalia 3.7.2ff. (Funk 192ff.).
Finally, as one of the underlying concerns of the *Didascalia*, widows figure prominently in patronage. The *Didascalia* condemned rich widows who engaged in patronage. Instead of giving their money to the bishop, they were using and distributing their patronage themselves.\textsuperscript{555} The *Didascalia* was also worried about those who received patronage. As already mentioned, the *Didascalia* saw bishops alone as the ones with the responsibility to ensure widows received patronage. Widows who complained about how the bishop administered patronage received a particularly scathing rebuke.\textsuperscript{556} The bishop’s *potestas* prevented widows from questioning bishops’ decisions on how they administered patronage. The *Didascalia* also condemned those who went to non-episcopal patrons.\textsuperscript{557} As discussed above, it is possible one of the reasons the *Didascalia* was so concerned about alternate patronage sources was because widows were acting in lieu of clergy in exchange for patronage.\textsuperscript{558} More broadly, the *Didascalia* attempted to centralize the patronage system, and thus the authority gained from it, under the bishop. To accomplish that goal, the *Didascalia* condemned both ends of the patronage system: the lay patrons who bypassed the bishop in their giving; and the recipients who bypassed the bishop in their receiving.

While widows may have offered an alternative to the ecclesiastical system, the *Didascalia* worked towards incorporating and subsuming widows under the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Methuen correctly noted that the *Didascalia*’s prohibitions on women, including widows, only make sense within the framework of episcopal control over the church, and especially

\begin{footnotes}
\item[555] Ibid., 3.7.3 (Funk 192-4).
\item[556] Ibid., 3.10.8ff. (Funk 202).
\item[557] Ibid., 3.6.4ff. (Funk 190ff.).
\item[558] Ibid., 3.8.3-5 (Funk 198).
\end{footnotes}
the laity, both men and women. The editors used the primary metaphor of widows as the “altar of God” to justify ecclesiastical control over the widows. In the Old Testament, only the Levites could approach the altar. In the church, only those of the appropriate office, namely the bishops, could approach the new altar, the widows. In Didascalia 3.6.3 the editor expanded upon the implications of the imagery. Just as altars were stationary furniture, unmoving from the temple, so too should widows stay within their own homes. Through the metaphor, the editor effectively cut off widows from all but bishop-approved visitors. This limited any attempt by widows to cultivate, or use, their auctoritas in non-bishop approved ways. Limiting widows’ activity and personal contacts form one of the main themes of the sections on widows. Unworthy widows were marked by public activity, while “true” widows were virtually cut off from the outside world. The widows’ isolation did not deny widows’ auctoritas, but effectively co-opted it under episcopal control. Bishops controlled the widows’ demonstration, and use of, auctoritas, ensuring that it could not be utilized outside their control.

In contrast to the assault upon traditional widow practices, the editor of the Didascalia introduced as an innovation the increased importance of deaconesses. Deaconesses were equal, or nearly equal, in authority to deacons. In the ecclesiastical metaphor referenced

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560. Didascalia 2.26.8 (Funk 104).
561. Ibid., 2.27.1 (Funk 106).
562. Ibid., 3.6.4; 3.7.1, 3-4 (Funk 190-4).
563. Ibid., 3.7.6-8; 3.8.1 (Funk 194-8).
previously, the deaconess was compared to the Holy Spirit. While limiting widow’s auctoritas and increasing deaconess’ potestas seems contradictory, it centralized both auctoritas and potestas within the clerical system under ultimate episcopal control. Based on the parallels between the duties given to deaconesses and the duties forbidden of widows, it seems that deaconesses were, at least partially, intended as the ecclesiastical replacement for widows who were operating outside the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Widows were to stay within their own houses while deaconesses were to visit the women of the church; widows could not baptize while deaconesses were to assist in the baptizing of women; widows had limited teaching authority while deaconesses were in charge of the catechizing of women. In general, whatever the male deacon did for the male laity, deaconesses did for the female laity. By replacing widow’s activity with deaconesses, the editor took auctoritas away from the widows, who were outside the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and thus at least partly suspect, and attempted to replace it with deaconesses’ potestas. Since deaconesses were part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, they were more firmly under the purview and control of bishops.

565. Didascalia 2.26.6 (Funk 104).
568. Didascalia 3.7.6-8; 3.8.1 (Funk 194-8).
569. Ibid., 3.12.1 (Funk 208).
570. Ibid., 3.9 (Funk 198-200).
571. Ibid., 3.12.2 (Funk 208-10). Bradshaw demonstrated that the role of the deaconess here was a later addition and that, in earlier strata, any woman could have done the task. Paul Bradshaw, “Women and Baptism in the Didascalia Apostolorum,” Journal of Early Christian Studies 20 (2012): 642.
572. Didascalia 3.5.3-3.6.2 (Funk 188-90).
573. Ibid., 3.12.3 (Funk 210).
574. Ibid., 3.13.1 (Funk 21).
Jewish Prayers

A brief mention must be made of a last disputed source for the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Kohler was the first to suggest that *Apostolic Constitutions* 7 and 8 were based upon Jewish prayers,\(^{575}\) a suggestion which was expanded by a succession of scholars.\(^{576}\) The most significant treatment of the Jewish source for the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ prayers was Fiensy’s *Prayers Alleged to be Jewish*. In his monograph, Fiensy discussed in detail passages thought by other scholars to be based on Jewish prayers.\(^{577}\) In his conclusions, he argued the *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.33-38 were originally Jewish,\(^{578}\) while the *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.37-39 were “quite possibly originally Jewish.”\(^{579}\) The following discussion is based on the alleged Jewish source for *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.33-8, as reconstructed by Fiensy.\(^{580}\)

The proposed Jewish prayer had little to say about a religious authority other than God. The people’s prayer was a corporate prayer. In the prayer, Israel was portrayed as an

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\(^{575}\) This was first suggested in K. Kohler, “Über die Ursprünge und Grundformen der synagogalen Liturgie,” *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 37 (1893): 441-51, 489-97, but was given more complete argument in K. Kohler, “The Origin and Composition of the Eighteen Benedictions with a Translation of the Corresponding Essene Prayers in the *Apostolic Constitutions*,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 1 (1924) 387-425.


\(^{577}\) For a complete list of passages, including the scholars who argue for them, see Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to be Jewish*, 11.

\(^{578}\) Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to be Jewish*, 129-50.

\(^{579}\) Ibid., 151-3. At the same time, Fiensy argued that even if they were originally Jewish, the redactor has changed them so much that it would be impossible to obtain the original form of the prayers. Ibid., 153.

\(^{580}\) Ibid., 198-202.
undifferentiated unity.\textsuperscript{581} The one explicit mention of authority was likewise a corporate unity: “all men” have power over “all things.”\textsuperscript{582} Two other oblique references may point to authorities: 7.36 had a reference towards gathering for teaching, while 7.37 asked for the political authority of the throne of David to be exalted.\textsuperscript{583} Neither is clear enough to act as the basis of authority from which the editor of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} could legitimately borrow. Thus, even if one grants the debatable position that \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} drew from Jewish prayers, the content of those prayers has little bearing on the topic of \textit{auctoritas} and \textit{potestas} in the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}.

\textsuperscript{581} Ibid., 199 reconstructed 7.35.  
\textsuperscript{582} Ibid., 199 reconstructed 7.35.  
\textsuperscript{583} Ibid., 201.
Chapter 4

Potestas in the Apostolic Constitutions

Several groups were endowed with religious authority by the populace in the Apostolic Constitutions’ milieu. Bishops, of several different sects, clergy, and lay people, including the emperor and ascetics, all represented potential or actual religious authorities in their communities. For the editor, what united these various potential religious authorities was their ultimate obedience to the potestas of the clergy, especially the potestas of the bishop. While the editor did not completely dismiss auctoritas, potestas represents the foundation for how he understands religious authority.

Apostolic Potestas

If clerical potestas is foundational for the editor’s view of religious authority, then the potestas of the apostles is the foundation for clerical potestas. The Apostolic Constitutions borrowed the potestas of the apostles to give rhetorical weight to its demands to be obeyed.\(^5\)

In the Apostolic Constitutions, the rhetorical weight of its polemic was carried by its appeal that it was written by the apostles. The source of the document’s claims to be binding was not found in its argumentation or logic, but rather in its pseudepigraphic attribution to the

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584. For the purpose of this chapter, I am using “apostles” to refer to those whom the editor sees as the foundational authors of the Apostolic Constitutions, namely the twelve apostles and Paul. Depending upon the context, James the brother of Jesus and bishop of Jerusalem was also numbered among them. However, in Apostolic Constitutions 8.38.1 (SC 336.250, Funk 546), James was said to have been appointed bishop by “his lord and the apostles” (see also 8.46.13 [SC 336.270, Funk 560], cf. the apostles who are ordained by “our Savior” alone). This seems to indicate, at least in some contexts, that James gained his potestas through the rest of the apostles, and not through Jesus alone. Clement, the scribe for the Apostolic Constitutions, also seemed to have quasi-apostolic authority; his two letters and the Apostolic Constitutions are all deemed scriptural (8.47.85 [SC 336.308, Funk 592]). However, like James, he too gained his potestas through the rest of the apostles (8.46.13 [SC 336.270, Funk 560]).
In times of crisis, such as the breakdown of order in the Nicene controversies, the desire to reclaim the past becomes particularly acute. Reclaiming the past maintains the status quo in the midst of change and gives a traditional framework from which to interpret changes. The *Apostolic Constitutions*, along with its sister documents the Pseudo-Ignatian corpus, reclaimed the past but also laid claim to the past. It did this by using the recognized *potestas* held by those in the past, namely the apostles, to ground its present claims to *potestas* and *auctoritas*.

The past held significant meaning for the contemporary construction of Roman authority. Arendt argued, “at the heart of Roman politics, from the beginning of the republic until virtually the end of the imperial era, stands the conviction of the sacredness of foundation, in the sense that once something has been founded, it remains binding for all future generations.” According to Arendt, the act of founding carried a “binding power” that connected the present generation to the past. While Arendt was primarily concerned with political authority, she also argued that Roman religious authority followed the same pattern, quoting Cicero and Livy in support. Roman religion was always “tied back, obligated, to

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585. This makes it even more ironic that the editor inserts in *Apostolic Constitutions* 6.16 a warning against accepting pseudopigrapha (*SC* 329.344-6, Funk 339). However, his argument gave him the rhetorical room to argue against those “apostolic” teachings that disagree with him. They only contain the names of the apostles and not their teaching, unlike the *Apostolic Constitutions*.

586. Douglas Edwards, *Religion and Power: Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greek East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 29. Though Edwards had in mind the more general social upheavals that accompanied the coming to power of Augustus and the Flavians, he does add in a footnote that the same pattern can be observed whenever there is social upheaval in the Roman Empire.


589. “In no other realm does human excellence approach so closely the path of the gods as it does in the founding of new and in the preservation of already founded communities.” Ibid., 18.

590. “While I write down these ancient events, I do not know through what connection my mind grows old and some *religio* holds me.” Ibid., 18.
the enormous, almost superhuman and hence always legendary effort to lay the foundations, to build the cornerstone, to found for eternity.”\textsuperscript{591} For Arendt, the Christian church evolved rather than replaced the Roman conception of authority. In Arendt’s words, the apostles became the “founding fathers of the Church, from whom she would derive her own authority as long as she handed down their testimony by way of tradition from generation to generation.”\textsuperscript{592}

The milieu of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} shows the fragility of that view of authority. In the absence of a universally recognized interpretation of the apostles’ testimony, the church fragmented into competing claims. Each group argued that it alone held the proper apostolic teaching, and thus were the true inheritors of apostolic \textit{potestas}. The so-called “Council of Heresies,” called by Theodosius in June 383, illustrates Arendt’s point with a near contemporary of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}.\textsuperscript{593} There, Nectarius suggested that unity among the churches could be attained through an agreement on the witness of Christian antiquity. Nectarius’ suggestion, and the editor of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}, proposed a return to the apostolic foundations for an authoritative grounding, which would solve their contemporary problems. Nectarius’ suggestion was rejected, showing both the promise and limits of his approach. The limit of his approach was getting the various groups, each of whom saw themselves as faithful witnesses of apostolic teaching, to agree on what “apostolic teaching” meant. The promise of his approach was that it would ground the church’s common faith in a

\textsuperscript{591} Ibid., 18. \\
\textsuperscript{592} Ibid., 20. \\
stronger *potestas*, the *potestas* of the apostles. Since all factions recognized apostolic *potestas*, it held promise as a theoretical means of unity.

What Nectarius proposed, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* attempted. The editor deployed the apostles to rebuild the *potestas* of his church through the church’s past.\footnote{The editor, or an associated school, did the same thing by editing the long recension of the Ignatius letters. While Ignatius was not the founder of the Antioch church, his early letters and status as martyr-bishop provided a direct link between the apostles and later Antioch bishops. *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.46.4 stated that Ignatius was directly ordained by Paul (SC 320.108, Funk 453). The editing of his letters by both pro-Nicene and non-Nicene factions highlights how both sides saw him as a crucial figure in the transmission of authority from the apostles to the current (disputed) office of bishop of Antioch. The fact that, ironically, the longer recension became the more popular version of the Ignatian corpus demonstrates the extent to which the battle over the memory of Ignatius influenced later understanding of Ignatius. For a history of the use of Ignatius in the Nicene controversies, see Paul Gilliam III, “Ignatius of Antioch and the Arian Controversy” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2011).} The very fact that the editor felt it was necessary to use pseudepigraphy shows his own lack of authority; just as Nectarius’ proposal shows the lack of an agreed upon contemporary authority who could solve the problem of church division. By using the names of the revered “ancestors” as authors, the editor intended to exploit the apostles’ *potestas* in a context which the editor’s own *potestas* and *auctoritas* were questioned.\footnote{Georg Schöllgen, “Der Abfassungszweck der frühchristlichen Kirchenordnungen. Anmerkungen zu den Thesen Bruno Steimers,” *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 40 (1997): 76.}

The *Apostolic Constitutions* were a natural extension of a conflict over the “authoritative ancestors” between the non-Nicenes and Nicenes demonstrated by Nectarius’ suggestion. The office of “ἀπόστολος” is prominent within the text. Funk recorded twenty-seven uses of “ἀπόστολος.”\footnote{Funk, 647, gave the following as occurrences: title inscription, 2.24.4; 26.7; 28.4; 39.1; 6.9.4, 12.1, 14, 15; 16.1; 7.41.7; 8.1.2, 10, 21; 2.8; 4.1; 5.3, 5, 7; 12.43; 15.11; 32.1; 33.8; 35.1; 41.5; 46.13; 47.85.} Of these uses, seven were direct appeals to apostolic authorship of the *Apostolic Constitutions*,\footnote{Based on Funk’s list of occurrences, I have identified the inscriptions (2.39.1; 6.16.1; 8.4.1; 8.15.11; 8.32.1; 8.35.1) as being direct appeals to apostolic authorship.} such as *Apostolic Constitution* 2.39.1, “For I Matthew, one of the
twelve, who speak to you in this Didascalia, I am an apostle (εἰμὶ ἀπόστολος).”⁵⁹⁸ “I am an apostle” was an insertion into the editor’s source and thus represented the editor’s own words. In fact, of the seven direct appeals to apostolic authorship, all were editorial insertions, and thus represented the editor’s own words. An additional eight occurrences were indirect appeals to apostolic authorship where the author used first person language when describing the words or actions of the apostles.⁵⁹⁹ The deployment of the office “apostle” by the editor highlighted the potestas the editor saw in the office. It was not Matthew who was writing the text, but Matthew as apostle; the Apostolic Constitutions were not written by individuals, but members of the office of “apostle,” acting in their capacity as apostles.

The apostolic potestas extends to the document itself. The Apostolic Constitutions were intended to have the same status as the other founding documents of Christianity. This is seen most clearly in Book 8. Apostolic Constitution 8.3.2-4.1 affirmed not only that the Apostolic Constitutions derived directly from the twelve apostles, but also that they ultimately had a divine origin.⁶⁰⁰ Later, in 8.47.85, the editor took the divine origin of the Apostolic Constitutions to its logical conclusion when the Apostolic Constitutions were listed as one of the books of the New Testament.⁶⁰¹ The Apostolic Constitutions viewed itself as one of Christianity’s founding documents, with all the authority which comes from being a part of the biblical canon. The editor immediately followed this claim with his view on the document’s authority in 8.48.1-2, “And concerning these canons established to you by us, o

⁵⁹⁸ SC 320.266, Funk 127.
⁵⁹⁹ Apostolic Constitutions 2.24.4; 6.9.4; 6.12.1; 6.12.14; 8.1.2; 8.2.8; 8.46.13; 8.47.85. In addition, the editor throughout deploys the fiction that the document was written by the apostles without explicitly mentioning the office of “apostle.”
⁶⁰⁰ SC 336.139-141 (Funk 470-2).
⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 336.308 (Funk 590-2).
bishop. But if you remain true to these things, you will be saved and will have peace; but the one who is disobedient will be punished and will have eternal war with one another, and undergo a penalty suitable to your disobedience.”  

602 If the readers ignored the editor’s words, they faced punishment and internal division. These punishments functioned as a convenient explanation for the troubles that plagued Antioch during the editor’s lifetime. The wider church, and especially the church at Antioch, was plagued with internal conflict and punishment from God. All of these problems, for the editor, can be traced to the church ignoring the apostles’ authority, as mediated through the *Apostolic Constitutions*. Only by returning to the teachings of the apostles, as described by the *Apostolic Constitutions*, would the internal divisions be healed and peace return to the church. The editor turned the authority of the apostles to bear on the current church situation. Following the editor’s party in the current dispute was to follow the apostles; to separate from the editor’s party was to reject the apostles’ teachings, bringing conflict and punishment. The presence of multiple bishops in Antioch was a sign, for the editor, of those not from his party rejecting apostolic teaching. This shows again how, for the editor, the *Apostolic Constitutions* were never merely a description of his own church’s practice, but always contained a polemical intent.

The *Apostolic Constitutions* visualized a firm transmission of authority from Jesus to the office of apostles. In *Apostolic Constitutions* 5.7.30 the apostles said:

We, the ones who have eaten and drunk with him, and who have seen the beginning of his prodigious works, and of his daily life, and of his words, and of his suffering, and of his death, and of his resurrection from the dead, and who spoke with him forty days after his death, and who received a command from him to preach the gospel into the whole world, and to make disciples of all nations and baptize them into his death by the authority of the God of everything, who is his father, and by the testimony of the Spirit who is the comforter; we

602. Ibid., 336.308 (Funk 592).
teach you all these things, which appointing to us before he was taken up in front of our faces to heaven to the one who sent him.603

Only the very beginning of the passage was inherited from the editor’s sources; the rest represented the editor’s own thoughts.604 At the top of the transmission of authority was God. The three members of the Supreme Triad605 work together to bestow authority upon the apostles. Jesus directly taught the apostles and commanded them to teach others what they learned from him. God the Father authorized the apostles’ actions, especially their preaching and baptizing. The Holy Spirit confirmed by his presence that the apostles had God’s authority. Apostolic Constitutions 5.7.30 supports Arendt’s category of the apostles as the “founding fathers.” The main emphasis in the apostles was their special and unrepeatable relationship with Jesus. They ate with Jesus, witnessed his miracles, heard his words, witnessed his death and resurrection, and received his teaching and commands directly from him. The importance of their unrepeatable relationship with Jesus was highlighted by the editor. Even though he inherited the basis of their relationship from his source, he expanded it, adding more unrepeatable, relational elements to the list. By doing so, the editor demonstrated, through the unnecessary expansion, its importance to his thinking. The apostles, because of their unique relationship with Jesus, were unable to completely pass their potestas to any follower.

In fact, in many of the passages where the apostolic claim to authorship was made most strongly, their authority rests upon their relationship with Jesus and their special and

603. Ibid., 329.238, Funk 263.
604. According to Funk, only the words between “ἡμεῖς... γενόμενοι” were found in the editor’s source. Thus, the most significant elements of the passage for our present purpose represents the editor’s own words.
605. I am using “Supreme Triad” as a convenient shorthand to refer to the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Thus, my usage of the phrase should not be seen as making any claims to the editor’s Trinitarian theology or lack thereof.
unrepeatable position in the church. In *Apostolic Constitution* 2.55.2, the apostles base their own claim for authoritative utterances upon their status as direct witnesses to Jesus. “We, therefore, who have been deemed worthy to be witnesses of his appearance...have heard from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by precise knowledge declare what is the will of God.”

While the key idea expressed by the editor was drawn from his source, the *Didascalia*, it is in a highly editorialized section. Funk identified 168 out of the 219 words in 2.55 as being original to the editor (76%). That the editor chose to preserve the idea of apostles having a precise knowledge of God’s will because they heard Jesus, even though the section shows signs of heavy editorializing, suggests the importance of the concept to his own theology.

Because the apostles had a unique and unrepeatable *potestas*, the apostles in the *Apostolic Constitutions* transmitted their *auctoritas* to their successors via two mechanisms: through the ecclesiastical structure; and through the *Apostolic Constitutions* itself. The ecclesiastical structure tied the apostles as founders to the successive generations of the church. The *Apostolic Constitutions* drew a direct, physical line between the apostles and succeeding bishops. In the *Apostolic Constitution* 7.46, the editor listed nineteen cities or regions where the bishops were directly ordained by the apostles: Jerusalem, Caesarea, Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Philadelphia, Cenchrea, Crete, Athens, Tripoli, Laodicea, Colosse, Beroea, Galatia, Asia, and Aegina. The editor ended his list by

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608. SC 336.108-110, Funk 452-4. Many of the names appear to be drawn from biblical texts. For example, Crispus (Acts 18:8 and 1 Cor. 1:14) is in the Bible associated with Corinth and here is placed as bishop of Aegina.
conflating the bishop’s teaching *auctoritas* with the apostle’s *potestas* by admonishing the readers: “always remembering their [the bishop’s] teaching [and] keeping our [the apostle’s] words.” The teachings of the apostles were transmitted through the bishops. Thus, the bishop’s doctrine had equal authority to the apostle’s own words.

Antioch, the home church of the editor, occupied a notable place in the transmission list. Antioch was the first city mentioned where the apostles directly identified which apostle ordained the bishop; the others being Rome, Ephesus, Philadelphia, and Cenchrea. Antioch, Rome, and Ephesus were also the only three cities where two different apostles were mentioned as having a hand in the ordination of the bishop. Considering the relationship between the *Apostolic Constitutions* and Pseudo-Ignatius, it is probably not accidental that Ignatius of Antioch was one of the bishops whose ordainer, Paul, was directly named. By engaging in pseudepigrapha under both the apostle’s name and Ignatius’ name, the editor ensured that he was standing in the tradition of the revered ancestors because he was the one manipulating the voice of the ancestors. The origin of the teaching’s *potestas*, the apostles, and transmission in the editor’s church at Antioch, Ignatius, are both, in fact, the editor! By controlling their voice, the editor controlled the apostolic *potestas*, which they have through their office of apostleship. He also controlled the transmission of the apostolic *potestas* to the

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610. The person ordaining the bishops of Alexandria are also mentioned, Mark and Luke, though they are called “evangelists” (*εὐαγγελιστοῦ*), not apostles.
611. It perhaps might be significant that when Theodosius published his edict on orthodoxy in July 381, he left out Ephesus, despite its regional importance, while mentioning several surrounding bishoprics. Thds. Imp. *cod.* 16.1.3 (SC 497.116).
612. Cf. the Nicene Theodoret, who claims that Ignatius was directly ordained by Peter. *Eran.*, 1.4.33a (PG 83.82A.).
613. I am here using “pseudepigrapha” as a convenient shorthand to describe the editor’s actions, and I make no claim as to whether the editor himself would have viewed what he was doing as “pseudepigrapha.”
episcopal potestas through the apostolic teachings. Thus, the editor could call on the apostolic potestas to support his own cause, while denying it to his opponents.

The transmission of authority from apostles to bishops was not an adequate solution to the problem facing the Antioch church. Bishops, who could claim direct descent from the apostles, disagreed on fundamental issues, even to the point of claiming another bishop as a heretic. One solution to this problem was represented by the imperial edict, Cunctos populos. The edict represented an imperial claim to the proper apostolic succession. All the people of the Empire were, by imperial decree, to recognize that the apostle Peter transmitted his theology to the Roman people as represented by the Pontiff Damasus and Peter, bishop of Alexandria. Those who disagreed with the imperially sanctioned apostolic succession were “insane (dementes)” and in danger of judgment from both God and the emperor. The editor of the Apostolic Constitutions could not agree with this solution. It favored a Nicene interpretation of apostolic teaching and proclaimed that only Nicene churches were true churches, a position the non-Nicene editor could not hold. It also, however, represented an attempt to use imperial auctoritas to solve the churches’ issues. Considering the editor’s anti-imperial stance, he could not agree with a transmission of apostolic potestas which was determined by the emperor.

The editor’s solution to the problem was to use the Apostolic Constitutions themselves as conduits for apostolic potestas. In Apostolic Constitutions 6.13, the editor expanded upon his source material on the topic of heresy. Following his expanded list of heresies, he

615. For the editor’s anti-imperial stance, see Chapter 5.
616. SC 329.336-8, Funk 333-5.
immediately launched into the apostolic response to heresy in in 6.14.1.\textsuperscript{617} Apostolic Constitutions 6.14.1 began with an editorial insertion which listed, by name, the fourteen “apostles,” the traditional twelve plus James, bishop of Jerusalem, and Paul. By inserting the names of the apostles, the editor was explicitly linking what followed the names with the communal \textit{potestas} of the apostles. This highlighted the seriousness with which the editor viewed the material that followed his insertion. Returning to his source, these apostles “write to you this catholic teaching.” The editor then added the purpose for the writing in an editorial insertion, “for the oversight (ἐπισκοπὴν) of the Catholic faithful.” The “catholic teaching” the apostles gave was the content of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}, which was given for overseeing the church. Through his editorial insertion, the editor showed the close connection between his compiling of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} and the issue of authority.

The connection between the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} and its role as transmitting the \textit{potestas} of the apostles was reaffirmed in book 8. In \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 8.3.2 the apostles, again naming themselves by individual name, declared that the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} were intended as an ecclesiastical guide.\textsuperscript{618} \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 8.3.1 concluded the editor’s discussion on miracle workers. In 8.3.2, the editor moved to what he viewed as his main point, discussing the ecclesiastical system (ἐκκλησιαστικῆς διατύπωσις), which the readers learned about from “our constitutions (διάταξιν).” Here “διάταξιν” was the exact word from which \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} derived its name and was used by the editor to refer to the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}. Thus, in 8.3.2, the editor identified the apostolic teaching with the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} and asserted that its primary purpose was to discuss the ecclesiastical

\textsuperscript{617} SC 329.338, Funk 335.  
\textsuperscript{618} SC 336.138-40, Funk 470.
system. The editor created a transmission of potestas. The apostolic potestas lent authority to their teachings, the “διάταξιν” of 8.3.2, the content of which established clerical, and especially episcopal, potestas.

Further support is found in Apostolic Constitutions 8.47.85, which functioned as the conclusion to the entire work.619 The editor ended the work with a list of canonical books which both clergy and laity were to hold as “venerable (σεβάσμια)” and “holy (ἅγια).” Already mentioned is the fact that the editor placed the Apostolic Constitutions in his list of canonical books, demonstrating the authority which it was intended to wield amongst its listeners.620 The issue of canon is closely tied with issues of authority, especially in the fourth century. Jefford argued that the Apostolic Constitutions represented “an act of resistance to the growth of imperial power. While the empire (and via Theodosius, the church) sought a unified vision of orthodoxy through an accepted canon, the Editor clearly resisted such efforts, employing alternative textual authorities.”621 The inclusion of an explicitly non-Nicene document in Scriptural canon demonstrated a rejection of imperial auctoritas and a consolidation of potestas in the editor.

Of the list of canonical books, only one, the Apostolic Constitutions, contained further description.622 It is the Apostolic Constitutions which were “not fit to proclaim (χρὴ) before

620. Interestingly, the editor does not just place the Apostolic Constitutions at the end of an accepted list of canonical books. Instead, it is placed with the other Clementine literature, listed before the book of Acts. This demonstrates that the Apostolic Constitutions was not merely added to a pre-existing list haphazardly, but rather the editor’s canon was intended as an integrated whole.
621. Clayton Jefford, “Power and Tradition in Apostolic Constitutions 7,” in Sacred Scripture and Secular Struggles, ed. David Meconi (Boston: Brill, 2015), 63. Jefford here had in mind specifically the editor’s use of his sources, especially the Didache, though his point can be naturally connected with the editor’s canonical list in book 8 as well. Jefford’s argument only strengthens the argument of Chapter 5, that the editor is explicitly rejecting the auctoritas of the emperor in the church.
622. The Wisdom of Sirach also contains a gloss, but there the gloss implies that the book is not equal in
all, because of the mysteries (μυστικά) in them.”\textsuperscript{623} While the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} were canonical, unlike the other canonical books, it was not fit for public reading and consumption but rather to be reserved for only a select few. The editor gave his intended audience just before the quoted text, “the bishops (τοῖς ἐπισκόποις).” The document was, therefore, primarily a document intended for those in ecclesiastical positions, especially those in the highest ecclesiastical office, the bishops.

Taken together, these elements show that the editor saw the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} as the rule to which bishops had to conform to keep their apostolic authority. Those who ignored the document’s teaching would cut themselves off from the apostles, the source for their \textit{potestas}. Thus, the editor intended for the document to enforce conformity upon the ecclesiastical structures by setting itself up as the dispenser of apostolic authority.

Due to its similarity to Irenaeus’ view of apostolic succession, a comparison between Irenaeus’ views and the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} views will help show how the editor shaped his pre-Nicene heritage. For Irenaeus, the key to apostolic succession was the apostolic teachings.\textsuperscript{624} Bishops had to show that their teachings followed the teaching of the apostles. The focus was on the \textit{auctoritas} that individual bishops wielded as exegetical experts. This was guaranteed by other bishops with recognized \textit{auctoritas}, thanks to their unbroken student-teacher relationships, which they could trace back to the apostles. The milieu of the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} demonstrated that Irenaeus’ view was being strained by the Nicene controversy. Different bishops, who could claim to follow apostolic teaching and claim an

\begin{itemize}
\item authority to the other listed books.
\item \textsuperscript{623} In the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}, “mystery” can refer generally to anything reserved for the baptized. So, for example, the Eucharist is called the “mysteries” (8.5.7), but mystery can also refer to the gospel (8.1.1). Here, it seems best to take it as referring generically to the “mysteries” of the Christian faith.
\item \textsuperscript{624} Iren. \textit{Haer.} 3.1-4 (SC 211.20-52).
\end{itemize}
unbroken student-teacher relationship to the apostles, came to radically different views on the content of apostolic teaching. What was needed, for the editor, was an authoritative reformation of apostolic teachings to make it clearer and less debatable. In Irenaeus’ own view the apostolic teaching was primarily transmitted through teachers to students. For the editor, apostolic teachings were primarily transmitted through the *Apostolic Constitutions* to its readers.625 The editor built upon the inherited understanding of apostolic succession. For the editor, apostolic succession was guaranteed through fidelity to the apostolic teaching, as found in the *Apostolic Constitutions*. This is in contrast to Irenaeus, where apostolic succession was guaranteed through fidelity to a generic rule of faith. By making the claim that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were written for bishops,626 the editor reserved its authority for the bishops. Unlike a rule of faith which could be accessed by any Christian, the editor’s means of transmitting the *potestas* of the apostles to future generations was restricted to bishops.627

In addition, the editor was able to use the “apostles’” teachings to more firmly establish the *potestas* of the clergy. The editor used individual apostles as the voice through whom he gave instructions which supported clerical *potestas*. While this occurred throughout the document, it is most concentrated in *Apostolic Constitution* 8. Beginning in 8.4.1, the document expressed direct commands on behalf of “apostles,” made up of the twelve, Paul, and James. Peter, in 8.4.2 began the sequence of commands, “I Peter say” (ἐγώ φημι Πέτρος). What follows were commands regarding the bishop and the liturgy.628 The *potestas* and *auctoritas*

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626. Ibid., 8.47.85 (SC 336.308, Funk 592).
627. And presumably anyone the bishops designated.
found in these commands were grounded in the utterance of a specific apostle. After Peter’s constitution came constitutions by Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Thaddaeus, Simeon the Canaanite, Matthias, Paul, Peter and Paul together, and James, the brother of Christ. The rest of book 8 was given by “all in common,” referring to the twelve, Paul, and James the brother of Christ.

The specific contributions to clerical auctoritas and potestas will be discussed later. For now, the main point is that the editor used the apostolic voices to create an unassailable authority on which to build his views of contemporary ecclesiastical potestas. In fact, the status of the apostle loosely correlates with the ecclesiastical office he describes. Peter’s status was shown both by coming first in the list, as well as being, along with Paul, the only one who was mentioned twice. He began the list by giving instruction on bishops. Less well-known

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629. Ibid., 8.6-11 (SC 336.150-76, Funk 478-94).
631. Ibid., 8.16 (SC 336.216-8, Funk 520-2). John is not given by name, but it seems clear that “I whom the Lord loves” (ἐγὼ ὁ φιλούμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου) refers to John based on parallels with the Gospel of John (though he is usually the “ὃν ἠγάπα ὁ Ἰησοῦς” or some derivative [John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20]; in John 20:2 he is the “μαθητὴν ὃν ἐφίλει ὁ Ἰησοῦς”).
634. Ibid., 8.21 (SC 336.222, Funk 524-6).
635. Ibid., 8.22 (SC 336.224, Funk 526).
636. Ibid., 8.23-4 (SC 336.224-6, Funk 526-8).
637. Ibid., 8.25-6 (SC 336.226-228, Funk 528).
638. Ibid., 8.27-8 (SC 336.228-32, Funk 530).
640. Ibid., 8.32 (SC 336.234-40, Funk 534-8).
642. Ibid., 8.35-45 (SC 336.246-64, Funk 542-56). The order in which the apostles give their constitutions is based on the order of the apostles as listed in Matthew 10:2-4, with Matthias replacing Judas, and with the addition of Paul, Peter and Paul for the second time each, and James at the end.
644. And possibly also Clement, as he gets a brief autobiographical mention in 8.47.85 (SC 336.308, Funk 592).
apostles, such as Thaddaeus, gave instruction on the lesser ecclesiastical offices such as the office of exorcist.\textsuperscript{645}

**Ritual Potestas**

The editor does not always construct *potestas* and *auctoritas* explicitly, he also used unspoken structures.\textsuperscript{646} The most prominent unspoken structure was authority embodied through Christian ritual elements such as baptism and the Sunday liturgy, which included the Eucharist.\textsuperscript{647} These rituals were central to the editor’s purpose. Rituals did not just reflect an abstract, hidden cultural system but also created, reproduced, or challenged that system.\textsuperscript{648} In fact, the liturgical elements were the core of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. To ignore how these elements contributed to the construction of religious authority is to fundamentally misunderstand the editor.\textsuperscript{649} The modern discipline of ritual studies helps show how the editor

\textsuperscript{645} As I mentioned, there is only a loose correlation here. Bishops occur with enough frequency in the various constitutions that even “lesser” apostles talk about them. For example, Simeon the Canaanite, who does not even appear on some of the biblical lists of the twelve apostles, gave instruction on bishops in 8.27-28 (SC 336.228-32, Funk 530). This again, however, reinforces the importance of the bishops. Where lesser ecclesiastical offices were mentioned by only one apostle, due to their importance, the office of bishop was mentioned by several apostles.

\textsuperscript{646} What follows is based on preliminary research: Paul Smith, “Ritual Authority and the *Apostolic Constitutions*” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the North American Patristic Society, Chicago, May 26-8, 2016).

\textsuperscript{647} Mueller gave a short defense of the importance of liturgy to the understanding of the editor’s theology in Joseph Mueller, *L’Ancien Testament dans L’Écclésiologie des Pères: Une Lecture des Constitutions Apostoliques* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004), 57. As strong a defense as it is, if anything, I think Mueller underestimated the influence of liturgy.

\textsuperscript{648} Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 73.

\textsuperscript{649} One of the difficulties here is the relative paucity of comparable sources on contemporary rituals to determine how much the editor is creating, how much is existent but has its theology reinterpreted, and how much the editor reflects his church’s practice. Kopecek, for example, thought that the *Apostolic Constitutions* were the only extant source for what he labels “Neo-Arian” rituals. Thomas Kopecek, “Neo-Arian Religion: The Evidence of the Apostolic Constitutions,” in *Arianism: Historical and Theological Reassessments: Papers from the Ninth International Conference on Patristic Studies*, ed. Robert Gregg (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1985), 153. He highlighted *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.5.1-2, a prayer which introduces the Eucharist, as containing elements from Arius and Aetius. Ibid., 162-3. Williams, however, offered the counter argument of a (not extant) common liturgical source. Rowan Williams, “Baptism and the Arian Controversy,” in *Arianism After Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, eds. Michel Barnes and Daniel Williams (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 164. The argument illustrates the difficulty of
of the *Apostolic Constitutions* used his community’s rituals to help construct his ideal hierarchy of religious authority: centralized in the person of the non-Nicene bishop.650

The editor’s own appropriation of the apostles as the vehicle of his ritual changes falls into a common pattern of ritual changes. In this common pattern, a ritual’s authority is grounded in its “invention” of a traditional past to ground itself in the prestige (and thus power) of tradition.651 Using pseudepigrapha as a vehicle for liturgical change is a classic sign of what Grimes called “liturgical erectitude,” whereby ritual change is portrayed as ancient and unchanging to benefit selected power structures.652 Thus, rituals even influenced the document’s genre. This fits within the editor’s larger purpose discussed above in using the apostles as literary devices to ground the *potestas* of his contemporary church in its past.

**Baptism**

In the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the absolute authority of the bishop over the community was grounded in his role in the ritual of baptism. In the firmest declaration of the religious authority of the bishop, the editor wrote:

The bishop is the minister of the word, the keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in your divine worship. He is the teacher of piety; and, next after God, he is your father, who has begotten you again to be adopted sons by water and the Spirit. He is your

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651. Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, 120.

ruler and governor; he is your king and master; he is your earthly god after God, who has a right to be honored by you. For about him, and like him, God said, “I have said, ‘You are gods, and you are all children of the Most High.’ And, ‘You shall not speak evil of the gods.’”

Here, the editor tied together the Roman conception of *patria potestas* with the bishop’s ritual role in baptism. In fact, the bishop replaced fatherhood based on blood relations; he was “after God, your father” (μετὰ θεόν πατήρ ύμων). It was the bishop who “has begotten you again” (ἀναγεννήσας) through baptism, which gave him the rights and responsibilities of being the congregation’s father. While the editor was keeping these statements from his source, the editor showed it followed his own theology as he inserts language which further tied together baptism with sonship. In the editor’s expansion, the bishop has birthed the baptized to be “adopted sons” (εἰς νοθεσίαν). The editor’s preferred imagery for baptism was Jesus’ death, as illustrated by the editorial insertions in *Apostolic Constitutions* 3.17. It may therefore be significant that the editor here expands upon the image of baptism as new birth in order to justify the bishop’s paternal authority.

Clearly, the bishop’s fatherhood was expected to add to his authority as it came in a sequence of authority based relationships: teacher (διδάσκαλος), ruler (ἄρχων), governor (ἡγούμενος), king (βασιλεὺς), master (δυνάστης), and god (θεός μετὰ θεόν). While the editor inherited all the titles, his editorial insertions only further strengthened the most authoritative title, that of

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653. *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.26.4 (SC 320.238, Funk 105). For convenience, I have underlined the text which Funk identifies as being from the editor’s own hand.


655. A similar point is made about the paternal authority of a bishop gained through baptism in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.33.2 (SC 320.254, Funk 115).

“god.” 657 Showing his agreement with the title, the editor added quotations from twobiblical

By keeping, and expanding, the language of fatherhood to describe the bishop’s rule over the
Christian congregation, the editor was theoretically giving the bishop extensive control over
individual Christians in his churches. The father’s patria potestas dictated the limits of
kinship; one was only in the familial unit if one was under the father’s patria potestas. 658 By
law, if not in practice, Roman fathers had complete control over their children, including the
legal right to kill them. 659 Apostolic Constitutions 2.33.3, which the editor inherited from his
source, parallels that Roman practice. There God gave the bishop, in his role as father of the
baptized, the power over life and death (παρὰ θεοῦ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου ἐξουσίαν) over the
baptized. 660

The editor clearly saw the father-son relationship through the lens of power. In an editorial
insertion in 2.30.2, the editor borrowed the father-son imagery from the Divine Triad to
explain the relationship between the deacon and the bishop. 661 Just as “the Son without the
Father is nothing,” so “the deacon is nothing without the bishop.” Furthermore, just as “the
Son is dependent upon (ὑπόχρεως) the Father,” so “all deacons are to the bishop.” The

657. Cf. Apostolic Constitutions 2.29.1 (SC 320.248, Funk 111), where the editor adds that “Moses was
Pharaoh’s God as king and high priest.” Considering the liturgical background of “high priest,” we see the
editor connecting ritual potestas with divine potestas.

Christian Mediterranean during Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages,” Journal of Family History 39

659. At most there are two known cases in the entirety of Roman history where this law was used. William
Harris, “The Roman Father’s Power of Life and Death,” in Studies in Roman Law: In Memory of A. Arthur
Schiller, eds. Roger Bagnall and William Harris (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 86. Certainly by the time of the Apostolic
Constitutions it was merely a “dead letter,” though it was not definitively abolished until the Theodosian Code,
a near contemporary of the Apostolic Constitutions. Ibid., 92.

660. Apostolic Constitutions 2.33.3 (SC 320.254, Funk 117).

context of the editor’s sources here shows that in no way was the editor’s language suggested by his source. Instead, the editor’s source was making a comparison between Aaron/deacons and Moses/bishop.\textsuperscript{662} The editor was the one who inserts “Christ” into the comparison, though after using the title “Christ” once as an introduction, he reverted to using “Son” and “Father” in the rest of his insertion. This shows that it is not the Divine Triad itself which he was interested in using for the comparison, but the concepts of “Son” and the “Father.”

The context of the passage further illustrates the \textit{patria potestas} of the bishop. The passage occurs in larger discussion of the economic and patronage responsibilities of the bishop.\textsuperscript{663} It is notable that the economic control over the children is one of the best attested elements of the \textit{patria potestas} in the eastern portions of the Empire in the fourth-century.\textsuperscript{664} The editor’s interest in limiting the congregation’s use of money, both personally and through the patronage system, might be a natural outgrowth of the bishop’s \textit{patria potestas} over his “children’s” economic affairs.\textsuperscript{665}

Unsurprisingly, since the ritual of baptism entered the baptized into a father-child relationship with the baptizer, the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} was clear that baptizing was reserved to the bishop, or at most a delegated presbyter.\textsuperscript{666} The editor’s justification for who could baptize was couched in authoritative language. In \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 3.9, women were

\begin{footnotes}
\item[662] Ibid., 2.30.1 (SC 320.248, Funk 113).
\item[663] Ibid., 2.25, 32 (SC 320.226-34, 250-2, Funk 93-101, 113-5).
\item[665] \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 1.3-4 (SC 320.110-4, Funk 9-13). While this passage is based on his sources, the editor made enough edits to demonstrate that he is clearly interested in applying his source’s concern for regulating the wealth of individuals to his own community.
\item[666] Ibid., 3.10-11 (SC 329.144-6, Funk 201), which represents an editorial insertion in its entirety. Ibid., 3.16.4 (SC 329.156-8, Funk 211) is interesting because his source had the presbyter baptizing while the editor amended this to have the bishop baptize with a presbyter only as specifically allowed by the bishop.
\end{footnotes}
forbidden from baptizing due to their subordinate position vis-à-vis men. The editor took what had been an almost mild condemnation from his source and transformed it, through his editorializing, into a strong defense of male authority over females. *Apostolic Constitutions* 3.9.2-3, and virtually all of 3.9.4, which contain the majority of the authoritative language, come from the editor’s hand. Man is the “head (κεφαλὴ) over the woman.” The fact that woman was taken from the side of the man indicated, for the editor, her submissiveness (ὑποκείμενον) to the man. The editor defended this claim with an appeal to Genesis 3:16, “he will rule over you,” understanding the post-fall curse as a command from God. The editor’s rationale for his strong condemnation of women baptizing only makes sense with the understanding that the editor saw the ritual of baptism as actually creating an authoritative relationship. The very act of baptism granted the baptizer *auctoritas* over the baptized. The editor did not want non-clergy to gain this *auctoritas*. By editing his sources, he made the bishop the baptizer instead of a presbyter. This shows that even among the clergy, the editor had a strong preference to reserve the baptism-created *auctoritas* for the office of bishop.

The prerogative of the bishop and presbyters to baptize was reinforced through divine threats. After expanding his source’s prohibition of women baptizing, the editor followed with his own editorial insertion in *Apostolic Constitutions* 3.10. His insertion turned it into a general prohibition on any laity, whether male or female, to baptize. Lay people who baptize faced punishment from God. King Uzziah provided the example of God’s punishment when he was afflicted with leprosy when he attempted to take on the office of priest. As the editor

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667. Ibid., SC 329.142-4, Funk 199-201.
668. Ibid., 3.9.2 (SC 329.142-4, Funk 201).
669. Ibid., 3.10.3 (SC 329.146, Funk 201).
continued his editorial insertion in *Apostolic Constitutions* 3.11, the prohibition was expanded to cover even the lower orders of the clergy.\textsuperscript{670} Any clergy, except bishops or presbyters, who try to baptize would be punished like Korah.\textsuperscript{671}

The editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* viewed the ritual of baptism through the lens of power.\textsuperscript{672} Baptism did not merely reflect existing power structures, but actively created them. Engaging in the ritual bound the baptized to the baptizer in a hierarchical power relationship similar to the Roman *patria potestas*. As such, the editor strictly reserved the ritual authority to the bishop or a delegated presbyter. This ensured that the ritual of baptism reinforced a clear hierarchy of the children/congregation to the father/bishop. A person usurping the bishop’s control over baptism obscured the authority relationship, placing someone else in the role of father. This would challenge the bishop’s authority, which the hierarchy obsessed editor could not allow.

**Sunday Liturgy**

The other major ritual in the *Apostolic Constitutions* which undergirded the editor’s hierarchical view of authority was the Sunday liturgy, the rituals surrounding the church’s celebration of the Eucharist. The service itself constructed and supported the regimented ecclesiastical hierarchy found in the rest of the book. The liturgical geography of the Sunday ritual found in 2.57 displayed the community’s power structure.\textsuperscript{673} To assign proper places to

\textsuperscript{670} Ibid., 3.11.1 (SC 329.146, Funk 201).
\textsuperscript{671} Ibid., 3.11.2 (SC 329.146, Funk 201).
\textsuperscript{672} As in other rituals in the category of “liturgical erectitude,” the editor’s view of baptism both empowers (in this case the bishop, and to a lesser extent presbyters) and disempowers (here lower clerical orders, lay people, and especially women). Grimes, “Liturgical Supinity, Liturgical Erectitude,” 152-3.
\textsuperscript{673} SC 320.310-20, Funk 159-67. Though on a different scale, Shepardson’s article on Chrysostom’s construction of “Christian” spaces is helpful here. Christine Shepardson, “Controlling Contested Places: John
everyone in the building, the *Apostolic Constitutions* divided the congregation according to categories of power. Following its source, in the middle of the congregation sat the bishop on his “throne” (θρόνος), with all its connotations of authority. Around the bishop sat presbyters. Here the editor departed from his source to add deacons standing around the throne. Then comes the laity. While the general structure followed his sources, the editor added some details which further develop the authoritative underpinnings of the passage. For the laity, the editorial insertions show the editor was primarily concerned with their silence. The male laity were to sit with “good order (εὐταξίας) and quietness (ἡσυχίας).” The female laity, meanwhile, unlike the source material, were to be separate from the male laity, and were also to “keep silent” (σιώπην). Throughout, deacons and deaconesses were assigned to ensure the behavior of the congregation and to make sure that every person is in their assigned place.

The liturgical geography was supported by two metaphors, the metaphor of a ship and the metaphor of a shepherd. In the first metaphor, which appears in an editorial insertion in 2.57.2, the church was a great ship (νηὸς μεγάλης), with the bishop as its pilot (κυβερνήτης). Continuing the metaphor in 2.57.2 with an additional two editorial

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674. *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.57.4 (*SC* 320.312, Funk 161).

675. The same word, ἡσυχίας, is again used in an editorial insertion about the laity a little later in 2.57.8, where they are to be silent during the reading of the Gospels (*SC* 320.314, Funk 163) as well as in an editorial insertion in 2.57.15 (*SC* 320.316, Funk 165), where the deacons ensure that the laity are silent during the Eucharist.

676. This is shown throughout the passage, but the editor’s own theology is demonstrated most clearly in the editorial insertion in 2.57.10 (*SC* 320.314, Funk 163).

677. *SC* 320.312, Funk 159. It is interesting that the metaphor of “κυβερνήτης” is more often used of Christ;
insertions, the deacons were the sailors (ναύταις), while the laity were the passengers (ἐπιβάταις). The editor supported his metaphor with an appeal to the architecture of the church. The architecture should, he added in his own words, be long, shaped like a ship. In later editorial insertions, the editor returned to his metaphor. Deacons were “sailors (ναύταις), and boatswain (τοιχάρχαις)” and “officers in command of the bow (προφέρων)” Bishops were again the pilot (κυβερνήτης) while deaconesses were the ship’s stewards (ναυστολόγων). The metaphor was clearly hierarchical, like a pilot, the bishop gave commands to the deacons, who did most of the work; while the laity, like passengers, passively allowed themselves to be taken where the pilot directed.

While the ship metaphor was entirely from the editor’s own hand, the editor inherited the second metaphor from his source. The second metaphor, which betrayed an equally low view of the laity, was of the church as animal fold (μάνδρη). In this metaphor, the deacons were the shepherds (ποιμένες) while the laity were “irrational animals,” (τῶν ἀλόγων), goats (πιγῶν), and sheep (προβάτων). The purpose of this metaphor was to explain that the deacons, as shepherds, were to separate the laity according to their “kind and age.” The source material then discusses the various segregations in the church by age, sex, and marital status, all under the watchful gaze of the deacon who controlled the seating.

Lampe lists M. Polyc. 19.2; Clem. Q.d.s. 26 (PG 9.632A); Clem. Paed. 1.7 (PG 8.313B); Eus. E.th. 1.13 (PG 24.852A); Gr. Naz. Or. 4.78 (PG 35.604B); Mac.Aeg. Hom. 44.7 (PG 34.784B). This would fit in well with the editor’s normal pattern of using exalted titles to refer to the bishop.

678. Apostolic Constitutions 2.57.3 (SC 320.312, Funk 161).
679. Ibid., 2.57.4 (SC 320.312, Funk 161).
680. Ibid., 2.57.11 (SC 320.314, Funk 163).
681. Ibid., 2.57.9 (SC 320.314, Funk 163).
682. Ibid., 2.57.10 (SC 320.314, Funk 163). Cf. Clem.Ep. 14 (PG 2:49), where the deacons were the “ναυστολόγων” for the catechumenates.
683. Ibid., 2.57.12 (SC 320.314, Funk 163).
In both the editor’s metaphor of the church as ship and his source’s metaphor of the church as animal fold, the physicality of the church service created and reinforced the hierarchical structure. To an almost obsessive degree, both the editor and his source were concerned with the physicality of the church. They were especially concerned that the laity were silently sectioned off apart from the clergy. The bishop oversaw this process, though in a delegated way through the deacons. Deacons spent much of the church service policing the laity for signs of poor behavior and laity sitting in the wrong location. Every church service thus became a physical re-enactment of the editor’s hierarchical structure, with the bishop giving orders, the laity obeying, and the deacons enforcing obedience.

While there were several events during the Sunday liturgy, two are noteworthy for how they interact with clerical potestas: the ritual kiss and the Eucharist. The ritual kiss enjoyed a long history in Christianity, existing at least by the second century throughout the Roman Empire. In the Greco-Roman context, kissing was frequently seen as occurring between relatives. Christian writers frequently co-opted the familial expectations of kissing by expressing that their own ritual kisses showed the new familial relationship enjoyed by fellow believers. Tertullian, for example, argued that a pagan husband of a Christian wife would misinterpret his wife’s kissing the “brothers” as evidence of her sexual unfaithfulness;

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686. Unsurprisingly, the most common use for kissing is between lovers. Kissing between relatives is the second most common use of kissing in non-Christian literature. Of the instances of kissing between relatives, the most common is between parents and children (60%), followed by spouses (26%), siblings (9%), and other extended family (5%). Ibid., 159.
while a Christian husband would recognize it was not sexual, but like kissing blood relatives.  

John Chrysostom, a near contemporary to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, wrote, “The kiss is given so that it may be the fuel of love, so that we may kindle the disposition, so that we may love each other as brothers [love] brothers, as children [love] parents, as parents [love] children.” However, like most rituals, the ritual kiss did not only reflect the pre-existing familial relationship between Christians but helped to create and reinforce it.

*Apostolic Constitutions* contain two different ritual kiss events, showing the editor’s usage of multiple sources, in 2.57.17 and 8.11.9. The second mention, 8.11.9, is more significant for the issue of *potestas*. This passage represents the first recorded instance of limiting clergy to kissing other members of the clergy; while limiting laity to kissing laity. In 8.11.9, the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ rubric stated, “and let the deacon say to all, ‘Greet one another with the holy kiss.’ And let the clergy greet the bishop, the male laity the laity, the women the women.” Due to the possible sexualized overtones of the ritual kiss, the Christian community had already moved to preventing the different sexes from kissing each other.

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687. Tertullian, *Ad Uxorem* 2.4.3.
690. SC 320.318, Funk 165. Funk sees it as coming from the editor’s own hand and not the *Didascalia*, which may imply a greater coherence to the practice in the editor’s own church.
691. SC 336.174, Funk 494. I am not suggesting that the passages are reproduced from the editor’s main sources. Indeed, both are identified by Funk as being a result of editorial insertion. It is however interesting to note the differences between them, despite both being editorial insertions, most likely due to an editorial insertion of two different minor liturgical sources. The most significant difference for our purposes is the exclusions inherent in the second occurrence of the ritual kiss. It may be, since the command for clergy to only kiss other clergy is first attested here, that the practice might represent the editor’s own innovation which he is trying to get adopted as a practice in the wider church.
692. The liturgy of book 8 presents many interpretive difficulties. For our purposes, it is enough to mention that the liturgy here betrays extensive signs of editing by the editor. It appears to be an amalgamation of several different liturgies. For example, 8.12 contains exact phrasing that led into the ritual kiss in book 2, which might be evidence of the remnants of a kiss of peace which had been deleted by the editor due to the presence of a ritual kiss in 8.11.9.
693. See for example *Apostolic Tradition* 18, which is one of the sources for the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions*.
However, in addition to male laity being forbidden to kiss female laity, male laity were now forbidden from exchanging the ritual kiss with male clergy. Instead, there were three exclusive groups: the clergy who exchanged the ritual kiss with the bishop; male laity who exchanged the ritual kiss among themselves; and female laity who exchanged the ritual kiss among themselves. In the ritual kiss, the one who kisses proclaimed themselves family with the one whom they kissed. By restricting the kiss, the editor made a performative claim, which was clear to all who engaged in the rite: there were two “families” the lay family and the clerical family.

The creation of these two “families” was, at its core, an expression of power. The ritual kiss by itself was not necessarily an egalitarian rite. In the Greco-Roman world, the most common example of familial kissing was between parents and children. Considering the power parents, and especially fathers, held over their children, a kiss did not necessarily show equality. There still could be a hierarchical power structure underlying a kiss. However, the creation of two groups of kissers here in the *Apostolic Constitutions* rests on an implicit, if not explicit, understanding of power. As Michael Penn wrote, “The exclusive kiss is an example *par excellence* of difference as a political matter...the kiss’s exclusion of one group from another helped create superordinate and subordinate.” Thanks to the liturgical geography of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the kiss’s exclusion was broadcast to the entire congregation. The bishop, at the center of the church, would be visible to all. The congregation would be able to see the creation of the clerical “in-group” as they kissed each other in the center of the church and the implicit creation of the “out-group” by the

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694. Penn, “Performing Family,” 166.
intentional exclusion by the clergy of the laity.

Thus, the editor’s innovation in the ritual kiss created a breakdown of meaning which had previously associated the ritual kiss with familial relationship. No longer were clergy siblings, or even parents, to their lay congregations for both of those relationships involved exchanging kisses. If one insists on keeping the familial metaphor for the ritual kiss in the *Apostolic Constitution* the only interpretation that makes sense of the data is the creation of two family groups, one consisting of the bishop and clergy and the other consisting of the laity. The divide was based on *potestas*. However, this divide did not interfere with traditional pre-Constantinian authority structures. In the church, government leaders and craftsmen, masters and slaves, still exchanged the kiss of peace. The wider societal power structures were still partially inverted through the creation of a non-blood, familial community. The ritual kiss partially subverted expected behavior by those with and without power. However, this subversion of power and authority only occurred with select power structures. The religious and societal *potestas* of the bishop and clergy were not subverted but reinforced. In contrast to some prevailing trends which deemphasized the *potestas* of the clergy in favor of monastic or imperial *auctoritas*, the *Apostolic Constitution* reimagined the common ritual kiss to deny any figurative, ritual, or actual loss of clerical *potestas*. It placed the clergy in a privileged ritual place, which was unapproachable by the laity.

In addition to its other meanings, clerical kisses also helped to create and maintain a rule of

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696. It is extremely rare in non-Christian sources for slaves and masters to kiss in a non-sexual setting, and when it does occur, it is almost always accompanied by societal surprise at what was an extremely unusual act. See, for example, Seneca, *Ep.* 47.13 (LCL 75.308), where he relates the intentional scandal he causes when he sometimes kisses the hands of other people’s slaves.
orthodoxy. By kissing, a Christian expressed, and created, the boundaries of an “orthodox family.” Heretics were the “unkissable others,” while the orthodox were the “kissable family.” By having the bishop publicly kiss the rest of the clergy in the liturgy, the bishop was making a public expression of the orthodoxy of the rest of the clergy. Vice-versa, the weight of the presbyters’ kisses attested to the orthodoxy of the bishop. In the climate of competing bishops in Antioch, every liturgical event was a ritual re-enactment of the loyalty of the clergy to their chosen bishop. By excluding the laity, the ritual highlights who had the potestas to declare the bounds of orthodoxy, the clergy. It pushed out competing lay claims to have that authority, such as from monks or emperors.

The Eucharist liturgy, of which the ritual kiss was usually a part, also undergirded the religious authority of the clergy. The Eucharist itself functioned as a ritual signifier and creator of various “in-groups” and “out-groups.” Dramatically, before the Eucharist proper portion of the liturgy, an editorial insertion had the catechumens and unbelievers stand and leave the church building. This very visible portion of the ritual subdivided the church between the unbaptized listeners and the “true” in-group of those allowed to partake in the Eucharist. However, the separation of baptized and unbaptized was not the only enforced social boundary. In an editorial insertion, during the Eucharist proper, the “Lord’s body and blood” are distributed by “each rank (τάξις) by itself [to partake of] the Lord’s body and precious blood, in rank (τάξις).” Thus, the Eucharist was another ritual display of the church’s hierarchy.

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698. This has added weight when one considers the Nicene mythology which had the monastic movement at the forefront of declaring the bounds of orthodoxy in Antioch.
700. Ibid., 2.57.21 (SC 320.320, Funk 167).
The editor further reinforced the hierarchy by reserving the celebration of the Eucharist to the bishop, with the deacons assisting him. *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.46, for example, built upon the identification of the Eucharist with Jesus’ role as high priest to preserve the Eucharistic celebration for the clergy.\(^{701}\) The passage is part of the editor’s attempts to create and maintain clerical privileges and *potestas*. As part of this attempt, the editor described some of the functions of the priesthood and the punishment which awaited those who attempted to usurp those functions without proper authority. Central to his argument was the Eucharistic worship. Eucharistic worship was a major element of the Christian’s imitation of Jesus Christ’s role as high priest.\(^{702}\) If people outside the clergy attempted to lead the Eucharistic worship, it would lead to the “neglect” ( ámbλειαν) of the “sacrifices and Eucharist” due to the impiousness of a lay led Eucharistic celebration.\(^{703}\) In fact, the purpose of the ecclesiastical hierarchy leading the Eucharist was for the “purity of the divine service (θρησκείας).”\(^{704}\) That rituals were the primary reference of “divine service” was clear as the editor immediately followed by announcing that deacons were not to offer the “sacrifice” (θυσίαν) nor to “baptize” (βαπτίζειν).\(^{705}\)

The editor made clear that who may preside over the rituals, especially the Eucharist and baptism, was primarily an issue of *potestas*. The editor gave a quotation of 1 Corinthians 14:33, “For he is not the God of confusion,” which he interpreted as reinforcing the hierarchical *potestas*.\(^{706}\) The editor interprets this passage to mean that the one who is

\(^{701}\) Ibid., SC 336.264-74, Funk 556-62.
\(^{702}\) Ibid., 8.46.4 (SC 336.266, Funk 558).
\(^{703}\) Ibid., 8.46.4 (SC 336.266, Funk 558).
\(^{704}\) Ibid., 8.46.10 (SC 336.270, Funk 560).
\(^{705}\) Ibid., 8.46.11 (SC 336.270, Funk 560).
\(^{706}\) Ibid., 8.46.12 (SC 336.270, Funk 560).
subordinate (ὑποβεβηκότες) should not seek to take what belongs to their betters (κρειττόνων). Indeed, this hierarchy of clerical potestas was instituted by Jesus Christ. To usurp the clerical potestas would be to attempt to usurp Christ himself.\textsuperscript{707} Usurping Christ would anger both God and Jesus Christ, whose potestas as the author of the present constitution was emphasized, as well as grieve the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{708} The one who does not respect the hierarchy would be punished. The editor defended this position through the biblical examples of Korah, Uzziah,\textsuperscript{709} Saul\textsuperscript{710} and another mention of Uzziah.\textsuperscript{711} The crime of improperly overseeing the Eucharist was a serious sin, a sign of their larger usurping of a potestas which was not theirs. Reflecting the seriousness of the sin, the punishment for improperly overseeing the Eucharist was death.\textsuperscript{712} The editor, following a pattern in the early church, placed the emphasis in the Eucharist on the agent, the one who acts, rather than the action.\textsuperscript{713} The Eucharist, along with other rituals, acted as a signifier to the officiant’s potestas, but also helped create it. This explains why the editor made the punishment for laity and lower orders officiating over the Eucharist or baptism death. For the editor, the hierarchy of potestas must be preserved.

While baptism created a parent-child bond between the bishop and the baptized, the Eucharist reinforced those bonds. The Eucharist, like baptism, supported the bishop’s right to patria potestas. One of the clearest passages of the bishop’s patria potestas is Apostolic

\textsuperscript{707} Ibid., 8.46.12 (SC 336.270, Funk 560). One of the titles the author used for Christ in this passage is “Lord,” further emphasizing the potestas on which he is basing his ecclesiastical hierarchy.
\textsuperscript{708} Ibid., 8.46.4 (SC 336.266, Funk 558).
\textsuperscript{709} Ibid., 8.46.3 (SC 336.266, Funk 558).
\textsuperscript{710} Ibid., 8.46.7 (SC 336.268, Funk 558).
\textsuperscript{711} Ibid., 8.46.8 (SC 336.268, Funk 560).
\textsuperscript{712} Ibid., 8.46.6 (SC 336.268, Funk 558).
The basis of patria potestas came from the editor’s source. Whereas elsewhere, baptism created the bonds of parent-child, in this passage, following his source, it was the bishop’s imposition of hands. Because of the bishop’s imposition of hands, the person became “a child of light.” The source supports its position with the biblical quotation, “My son are you, today I have begotten you.” The source continued, “Through your bishop God adopts you for his child, o man. Recognize son, the right hand which is your mother and love also, after God, the one who became your father. Revere him (σέβου)! The editor’s intention is clear from how he handled his source. The only major addition he made to his source was the imperative to revere (σέβου) the bishop. The word “σέβου” was intimately tied to authority and power. It was most often used to refer to mankind’s posture towards the gods, and more rarely, children’s posture towards their parents.

The editor followed in 2.33.2 with an editorial insertion. If the Bible commanded us to obey and honor our parents, the editor claims, how much more should we obey and honor our spiritual parents, the bishop? The editor then gave a list of reasons to justify the bishop being honored as a parent; some inherited from his source and some from the editor’s own hand. Twice in 2.33.2, the Apostolic Constitutions used the bishop’s distribution of the Eucharist to emphasize the bishop’s patria potestas. The second instance was inherited from his source. Despite the mention of the Eucharist in his source, the editor decided to add another mention of it before his source’s own mention. The editor’s addition emphasized the bishop’s control over the Eucharistic elements, “He [the bishop] has deemed you worthy (ἀξιώσαντας) of the

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714. Ibid., SC 320.252-4, Funk 115-7.
715. Ibid., 2.32.3 (SC 320.252, Funk 115).
716. Ibid., 2.33.1 (SC 320.252, Funk 115).
717. LSJ9 1588.
saving body and precious blood.”

The Eucharist thus functions to bestow potestas on its distributors, especially the bishop. In the already mentioned list of authoritative terms given for the bishop in 2.26.4, the bishop was the “mediator between God and you in the liturgy (μεσίτης θεοῦ καὶ ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν λατρείαις).” The authoritative connotations of “mediator” (μεσίτης) were clear in the context of 2.26.4. These connotations were strengthened by considering that in the New Testament “mediator” referred to Christ and angels. The editor’s edits show his theology. His source reads only “mediator between God and you.” It was the editor who transformed a general statement of ontology into a liturgical claim. In the ritual of the Eucharist, the bishop took on the authoritative role of “mediator,” bridging the ontological gap between God and his people. To bridge the gap between God and his people, the bishop must functionally be greater than the people for whom he is mediating. Through the liturgy, the bishop’s performance created, strengthened, and displayed his potestas as mediator for the people before God. Every Eucharistic liturgy, therefore, included an element of potestas, a constant reminder of the bishop’s potestas over the congregation.

After the Eucharistic service, the potestas of the various clergy continued to be on display. In Apostolic Constitutions 8.31, the remains of the Eucharistic elements were distributed to the

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718. Apostolic Constitutions 2.33.2 (SC 320.254, Funk 117). What makes the editor’s insertion even more interesting is that his other insertions in this passage are clustered at the beginning of 2.33.2. From the time that the editor’s source mentions baptism to the end of the passage, the editor only makes one edit, the insertion of this clause.

719. SC 320.238, Funk 105.
721. Gal. 3:19. Moses was also seen as a mediator between man and God, such as in the Assumption of Moses 1.14 (SVTP 10.6). The editor makes frequent parallels between the authority of Moses and the bishop’s own authority (e.g. 2.27.5 [SC.320.242, Funk 107]), so this is a possible source for his thinking.
clergy.\textsuperscript{722} The deacons distributed the elements under the command of the bishop or presbyter.\textsuperscript{723} Each member of the clergy received the left-over elements according to their own rank; the bishop the most, then presbyters, then deacons, then the rest of the lower orders.\textsuperscript{724} The editor finished this section by explicitly linking the distribution of the left-over elements with the \textit{potestas} of the various clerical ranks. To distribute them otherwise would bring shame to the bishop and create disorder among the hierarchy.\textsuperscript{725}

Ordination

Finally, while a more infrequent ritual, the rituals surrounding the ordination of the clergy reinforced the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The bishop laid his hands on the presbyters,\textsuperscript{726} deacons,\textsuperscript{727} deaconesses,\textsuperscript{728} and sub-deacons.\textsuperscript{729} The ritual demonstrated and created the hierarchical bonds. The bishop was over the other offices, and their authority ultimately came through him.\textsuperscript{730} The hierarchy was reinforced with the rituals of blessing.\textsuperscript{731} The various levels of clergy could only bless those equal or under them. Interspersed with the blessings were two explicit commands regarding ordination, the bishop laid hands and ordained,\textsuperscript{732} while the presbyter could lay hands, but could not ordain.\textsuperscript{733}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[722] SC 336.234, Funk 532-4.
\item[723] \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 8.31.2 (SC 336.234, Funk 532).
\item[724] Ibid., 8.31.2 (SC 336.234, Funk 532).
\item[725] Ibid., 8.31.3 (SC 336.234, Funk 534).
\item[726] Ibid., 8.16.2 (SC 336.216, Funk 522).
\item[727] Ibid., 8.17.2 (SC 336.218, Funk 522).
\item[728] Ibid., 8.19.2 (SC 336.220, Funk 524).
\item[729] Ibid., 8.21.2 (SC 336.222, Funk 524). The bishop possibly also laid hands on the reader, though the identity of the hand-layer is not explicit. Ibid., 8.22.2 (SC 336.224, Funk 526).
\item[730] See also ibid., 8.46.11-12 (SC 336.270, Funk 560), where the editor grounded his prohibition against presbyters ordaining in the nature of God.
\item[731] Ibid., 8.28 (SC 336.228-32, Funk 530).
\item[732] Ibid., 8.28.2 (SC 336.228-232, Funk 530).
\item[733] Ibid., 8.28.3 (SC 336.232, Funk 530).
\end{footnotes}
Christian rituals were important tools which the editor used to promote his hierarchical view of Christianity. The performance of these rituals embodied, and eventually normalized, the bishop having ultimate religious authority, including over alternate authorities such as the emperor and ascetics. Performance, not argument, provided the basis for the editor’s rhetorical strategy. Thus, participants in these rituals would find themselves continually recreating and reinforcing the editor’s power structures in baptism and the Sunday liturgy.

**Judicial Potestas**

In the editor’s sources, one of the most crucial elements of clerical potestas was their authority as judges. This concern was inherited by the editor and expanded. Most of 2.7-24 and 2.37-56 dealt with the bishop’s role as judge. The bishop had the power to bind and loose. Therefore, in the editor’s own words, bishops should be aware of their greater standing, as ones who will have more required from them.\(^{734}\) The editor expanded his source’s concern that the bishop not allow his conduct to weaken his auctoritas, which would limit his potestas to make judgements. After repeating his source’s warning against taking bribes in 2.9.2, the editor preceded, in an editorial insertion, to state that command came from “the voice of God.”\(^{735}\) He then immediately presented five different biblical texts for his position.\(^{736}\) The amount of biblical support the editor provided indicated its importance to him.\(^{737}\) Just in case his five separate biblical commands were not enough, the editor followed

\(^{734}\) Ibid., 2.18.3 (SC 320.190, Funk 65).
\(^{735}\) SC 320.162-4, Funk 45.
\(^{737}\) Perhaps the post-Constantinian church provided the editor with real life examples of bishops who failed to uphold the original command to avoid bribes, thus provoking the editor to strengthen the command.
with the insertion of a warning in 2.10.1, the one who judges unworthy is like Saul.\textsuperscript{738} By following Saul, he would bring shame, not just on himself, as in the editor’s source, but also the house of God. This would ultimately cause a failure in the potestas of the bishop. The failure of the potestas led the editor to add in his favored biblical example of the one who ignores clerical potestas, Korah.\textsuperscript{739} The editor’s inclusion of the example of Korah shows that he was not merely concerned with the bishop’s failure on moral grounds. Instead, a bishop’s failure would weaken his auctoritas and, in the editor’s worry, provoke the people to unjustly rebel against his potestas, just as Korah unjustly rebelled against the potestas of Moses.

Meanwhile, if the bishop did not fail, and his auctoritas was not weakened, yet the person still rebelled against the bishop’s potestas, the editor had that person be immediately punished as in the biblical examples of Uzza, Achan, and Gehazi.\textsuperscript{740}

Both the editor and his source returned to the problem of bishop’s sin weakening his auctoritas, which interfered with his potestas as judge, in Apostolic Constitutions 2.17.\textsuperscript{741} The editor’s source began with a rhetorical question. The answer to the rhetorical question suggested that a sinning bishop ruined his auctoritas, making him unfit for judgement in the eyes of his congregation. The editor expanded on the source with the insertion of a proverb on bribery, “for when a ruler asks and the judge receives, judgment is not brought to completion.”\textsuperscript{742} Because of this state, the people who were “under the bishop”\textsuperscript{743} would not be able to support the bishop. The editorial insertion is significant to the editor’s theology. The

\textsuperscript{738} SC 320.164, Funk 45.
\textsuperscript{739} Ibid., 2.10.2 (SC 320.164, Funk 47).
\textsuperscript{740} Ibid., 2.10.3 (SC 320.166, Funk 47). So, in the end, anyone who rebels against the potestas of the bishop is punished, whether with the punishment of Korah or the punishment of Uzza, Achan, and Gehazi.
\textsuperscript{741} SC 320.186-90, Funk 63-5.
\textsuperscript{742} Apostolic Constitutions 2.17.2 (SC 320.186, Funk 63).
\textsuperscript{743} This phrase is an editorial insertion to the rest of the sentence, which is from the editor’s source.
weakening of *auctoritas* because of the bishop’s sin might cause a change in how he was viewed by those under him; but did not change the ontological fact that they were still under him. The bishop’s *potestas* ensures, no matter how weak his *auctoritas* was because of his sin, that he remained over the laity as judge. Despite the editor’s theology of the bishop’s *potestas*, or perhaps because of his theology, the editor believed that a wicked bishop would lead to a wicked congregation. The editor supplied three Bible verses, Galatians 5:9, Ecclesiastes 10:1, and Proverbs 29:12, to support his argument that sin from the bishop would spread throughout the entire church. The Proverbs 29:12 quote is particularly instructive given the authoritative metaphor used, “When a king listens to unrighteous words, all those under him become evil.” The editor tied the spread of wickedness in the church directly to the bishop’s *potestas*. The bishop was the one with the power to halt, or cause, the spread of sin in his church.

The connection between the bishop as judge and his *potestas* comes to the forefront in the editorial insertion in 2.11.1. According to the editor, the bishop, while sitting as judge, “rules (ἄρχειν) over all men, priests, kings, rulers, fathers, sons, teachers, and all who are your subjects (ὑπηκόων).” The *Apostolic Constitutions* followed this statement with its source’s words, “sit in the church and speak as one who has authority (ἐξουσίαν) to judge the one who does wrong. Therefore judge, bishop, with the authority (ἐξουσίας) as God.”

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744. I say “perhaps” because it may be on account of the bishop’s *potestas* that the sin spreads, based on the editor’s own views of the bishop as leader and laity as followers. In Chapter 5 I discuss how the editor saw the bishop’s virtues as almost automatically implanting themselves within the laity because of the bishop’s authority over them. Here we have the reverse, where the bishop’s wickedness almost automatically spreads to the laity as they follow their bishop, even to the point of following him into sin.

745. *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.17.4 (SC 320.188, Funk 63-5).

746. See especially ibid., 2.17.4-5 (SC 320.188-90, Funk 63-5), which, though containing the same general idea from the editor’s source, is intensified by the editor’s insertions.

747. Ibid., SC 320.166, Funk 47.

748. Ibid., 2.11.2-12.1 (SC 320.166, Funk 47).
editor’s source had a high view of the *potestas* of the bishop to judge. Twice it used “ἐξουσίαν” to describe the bishop’s ability to judge. The second time the source tied the bishop’s authority to judge with God’s own authority. The editor did not innovate the connection between judging and *potestas*. However, the editor’s addition makes it clear that it fits with his own theology. He made even more explicit that this “authority” his source speaks of was the *potestas* to “rule” over all men. Even those with considerable *auctoritas* and *potestas* themselves, priests, kings, fathers, and teachers were under the *potestas* of the bishop.\(^{749}\)

The editor and his source returned to the same theme a little later in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.14.12. Continuing the context of the bishop’s *potestas* as judge, the editor’s source began, “For it is not just that you the head, o bishop, should take heed (προσέχειν) to the tail, that is a rebellious man in the laity… but to God alone.”\(^{750}\) Already this was a strong statement about the *potestas* of the clergy over the laity in the context of the bishop’s role as judge. The only one who had standing to criticize or advise the bishop in his judgements was God alone. The editor, however, immediately inserted his own words to strengthen the already strong statement on the bishop’s *potestas*. “For it is necessary to rule (ἀρχεῖν) over your subjects (ὑπηκόων) but not to be ruled (ἀρχεσθαι) by them. For neither does a son, according to the rule of birth, rule (ἀρχεῖ) over his father, nor slaves, according to the rule of authority (ἐξουσίας), [rule] over their master, neither a disciple his teacher, nor a soldier over the king, nor any of the laity over the bishop.” The pairings which the editor compared: father-son, slave-master, student-teacher, soldier-king; were some of the most powerful examples of

\(^{749}\) The editor making the bishop the judge over kings here is significant in light of his larger anti-Imperial theology, which will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5.  
potestas known to the editor. The point of the insertion is clear: the editor saw the bishop’s potestas as over all laity, no matter who they were or what auctoritas they held.

While the bishop was the primary beneficiary of the potestas as judge, he was not the exclusive beneficiary. Deacons had a reflective potestas in their role as helpers for the bishop. This is seen most extensively in Apostolic Constitutions 2.44. Following his source, the editor had the deacons be submissive to the bishop in the realm of judgment, as Christ is to the Father. However, the editor’s source allowed the deacons to take care of certain matters, “as much as he has the strength to govern of himself.” The source was clear, that while under the authority of the bishop, the deacons were able to handle smaller issues themselves so as not to burden the bishop. However, the editor felt the need to make an addition to clarify the “strength (δύναμις)” of the deacon. The deacons “receive from the bishop the authority (ἐξουσία), just as Christ received provision from the Father.” The deacons, as both the source and editor agree, let the bishops handle the more difficult cases while taking the less difficult for themselves. The editor, however, felt the need to make the relationship explicit. The deacons only took care of the less difficult cases in order to avoid overburdening the bishop and not from any attempt to usurp the bishop’s authority.

Mirroring the growing judicial potestas of the bishop in the fourth century, the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions stressed the judicial powers of the bishop, giving him potestas among the community. Their judgments gave bishops, and to lesser extent deacons, potestas “as

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751. Ibid., SC 320.282-4, Funk 139.  
752. Ibid., 2.44.3 (SC 320.282, Funk 139).  
753. Ibid., 2.44.3, (SC 320.282-4, Funk 139).  
754. Ibid., 2.44.3, (SC 320.284, Funk 139).  
755. Ibid., 2.44.4 (SC 320.284, Funk 139).
from God.” However, the editor was deeply concerned about any potential weakening of the bishop’s potentia to judge due to a loss of auctoritas. Because of this, the editor continually advocated that the bishop be virtuous and just. To do otherwise would be to corrupt the bishop’s potentia, causing it to be used to increase sin in the church.

**Potestas in the Clerical Offices**

**Bishops**

Finally, in the editor’s theology, there was potentia linked to nothing except the clerical office itself, apart from any other role or responsibility. At its most basic level, even if a bishop completely isolated himself from all responsibilities, he would still have potentia of a bishop. The editor frequently used the examples of Korah and Uzziah to highlight the powers of the bishop compared to the lack of power of others, especially the laity. For example, in 2.27.4-5, the editor used Korah and Uzziah to support the source’s position that “you without the bishop, do nothing” (ὑμεῖς ἄνευ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε). The editor’s frequent deployment of Korah and Uzziah illustrated the threat he saw to the clerical potentia from alternative authorities, especially lay authorities.

However, the editor had a problem with his high view of the potentia of the clergy. In the

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756. Ibid., 2.11.2-12.1 (SC 320.166, Funk 47); cf. 2.44.3 (SC 320.284, Funk 139).
757. This also applies to a lesser extent to deacons and presbyters as well. Of course, there are limits to this. Because of the potentia of the office, the editor was concerned that unworthy people not occupy it, and thus lead the congregation astray. This explains Apostolic Constitutions 8.47 (SC 336.274ff., Funk 564ff.) in which the Apostolic Constitutions gave itself the potentia (via the apostles) to judge bishops and clergy.
758. Funk listed ten occurrences for “Korah”: 2.10.2; 2.27.5; 3.11.2; 6.1.2; 6.2.2, 5, 6; 6.3.2; 7.10.1; 8.46.3. See Funk 635. Of those ten occurrences, only three (6.1.2; 6.2.6; and 7.10.1) are from the editor’s sources, the rest are from the editor’s own hand.
759. Funk lists five occurrences for “Uzziah”: 2.27.4; 3.10.2; 6.1.3; 8.46.3, 8 (see Funk 636). All five occurrences are from the editor’s own hand.
760. Apostolic Constitutions 2.27.1, 4-5 (SC 320.240-2, Funk 107).
churches in his own home city of Antioch, there were multiple people with the title of Christian bishop. If bishops had inherent potestas, how were the laity supposed to differentiate between competing bishops? To put another way, was there a standard by which the bishops could be judged; or did their potestas excuse the laity so that a lay person could claim innocence since they were just obeying the “bishop?” The editor’s clearest position on this issue came in Apostolic Constitutions 2.19.2-3, which was entirely from the editor’s own hands.761 Previously, in 2.19.1, the editor signaled his attack on bishops by inserting a speech from God, “and to the shepherds he [God] says, ‘You will be judged for your lack of skill (ἀπειρίας) and the corruption (διαφθορᾶς) of the sheep.’” This fit with the editor’s earlier theology whereby the bishop’s evil deeds, because of his potestas, spreads throughout his congregation.

The editor’s additions in 2.19.2-3 further clarified his thinking. The layperson’s status as laity, or to use the editor’s metaphor, the sheep’s status as sheep and not shepherd, did not excuse them from responsibility for their actions. Instead, the lay person had a responsibility to follow a good shepherd lest he be destroyed by following a bad shepherd. What made a good shepherd was deliberately ambiguous. Contextually, it makes the most sense to understand it as referring to the character of the bishop.763 However, it could equally apply as an anti-Nicene polemic, where it was the Nicene bishops who were the bad shepherds.764 Thus, there was an unresolved tension: the bishop’s potestas made any rebellion against his

761. Ibid., SC 320.196, Funk 71.
762. Ibid., SC 320.196, Funk 71.
763. Specifically, 2.18.8-12 (SC 320.194-6, Funk 69-71), which contains the origins of the sheep-shepherd metaphor, is primarily concerned with sins and repentance in the church.
764. Cf. 2.20.1 (SC 320.196, Funk 73), where the editor inserts a claim that the laity are to honor the “good shepherd” as one who is a “teacher of piety.” This illustrates that in the editor’s mind there is a link between the status of “good shepherd” and his teaching.
authority a sin; yet, the status of bad shepherds required the lay person to be able to make a judgment on the bishop.

A partial resolution to this problem occurred in *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.2.4-6. In *Apostolic Constitutions* 8.2 contained a polemic against miracle workers. Not everyone who did miracles was holy, but only those who submitted to the ecclesiastical leadership. In the middle of his polemic, the editor began a digression on evil clergy. The discussion was bracketed by the repetition of the word “falsely called (ψευδόνυμος)” in 8.2.4, to refer to bishops, and in 8.2.6, referring to both bishops and presbyters. These “falsely called” bishops were not from God but from man. They were related to a whole list of biblical characters: Ananias and Samaias, Sedecias and Achias, two false prophets in Babylon, Balaam, Caiaphas, the sons of Sceva, and many kings of Israel and Judah. The editor drew on these biblical examples to support his way of resolving the tension over obeying the *potestas* of a rival bishop. These rival bishops were not bishops at all. True bishops were given authority by God, whereas these bishops only had authority from man. Just as in Jeremiah’s day, where there were people who called themselves prophets but were not from God, so now in the editor’s day there were people who called themselves bishops but were not from God. The editor believed that they did not deserve the names “bishop” and “presbyters,” and held none of the *potestas* of those offices. Instead, they were like Jeroboam’s “priests,” made by man and not by God.

Thus, the editor had a simple solution to the problem of alternative clergy, such as the Nicene

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767. Ibid., 8.2.4, 6 (*SC* 336.138, Funk 468).
768. Ibid., 8.2.4 (*SC* 336.138, Funk 468).
769. Ibid., 8.46.9 (*SC* 336.268, Funk 560). This text deals with a different issue, the “rebellion” of lower clergy against their bishop, but could be equally applied to this situation.
clergy in Antioch who refused to recognize the authority of the non-Nicene bishop. They were false bishops and false presbyters. Even though they held the title, it came from man, rather than God, and thus held no authority.\textsuperscript{770}

Presbyters

In the editor’s ecclesiastical hierarchy, presbyters came immediately below the bishop. To give one example, \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 8.13.14 gave the very public re-enactment of the ecclesiastical order in the receiving of the Eucharistic elements. First, the bishop partook, immediately followed by the presbyters.\textsuperscript{771} As previously mentioned, the liturgy both reflected but also created clerical \textit{potestas}. Thus, in the weekly Eucharistic service, the partaking of the Eucharistic elements reflected the hierarchical order, but also reinforced that order, through constant repetition. Earlier in the Eucharistic liturgy, the presbyters were to stand on either side of the bishop, “as a disciple before his teacher.” The liturgical geography demonstrated a repeated, public acknowledgement of the bishop’s authority over the presbyters.\textsuperscript{772}

The editor was consistent in linking the presbyter’s \textit{potestas} with their liturgical function. In the 2.26.7, presbyters were, following his source, “esteemed as apostles.” The source for his authority as apostles was given through an editorial insertion; it was due to their teaching and liturgical function.\textsuperscript{773} This mirrors some of the bishop’s sources for \textit{auctoritas} and \textit{potestas},

\textsuperscript{770} Compare with the ordination of bishops, which occurs immediately after this passage, and especially the theology of the ordination prayer in 8.5.1-7 (\textit{SC} 336.144-8, Funk 474-6). The prayer, especially 8.5.6-7, makes clear that the bishop gains his \textit{potestas} directly from God.
\textsuperscript{771} \textit{SC} 336.208, Funk 516.
\textsuperscript{772} \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 8.12.3 (\textit{SC} 336.178, Funk 496).
\textsuperscript{773} \textit{SC} 320.240, Funk 105. It is interesting that the editor does not change his source’s comparison of deacons with Christ (2.26.5) and the presbyter’s comparison with the apostles (2.26.7). His expansion, however,
making presbyters similar to mini-bishops.\textsuperscript{774}

Some of these themes reoccurred in the ordination prayer for presbyters found in \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 8.16.\textsuperscript{775} The prayer specifically emphasized the presbyter’s teaching role; the prayer asked that they have the “word of teaching” and “instruct your people.”\textsuperscript{776} Thus, the \textit{auctoritas} of teachers was united with the \textit{potestas} of the office of presbyter. Surprisingly, however, the prayer seemed to deemphasize the presbyter’s liturgical role. Elsewhere, presbyters were the continuation of the Old Testament priesthood.\textsuperscript{777} Here, however, while the bishop reprised one of the editor’s favorite illustrations as Moses, the presbyters were not the priests, but the elders whom Moses appointed.\textsuperscript{778} Considering the close connection between presbyters and rituals, its absence in the ordination prayer is noteworthy.\textsuperscript{779}

\textbf{Deacons}

Unlike the presbyters who, though under the bishop, had a limited independent \textit{potestas}, the deacons only had \textit{potestas} as a reflection of the bishop. In 2.26.5, the deacons were,

\textit{Trad. ap.} 7 (SC 11.56-8).

\textsuperscript{774} For examples of the presbyter’s and bishop’s teaching function, see \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 3.6.1 (SC 329.132, Funk 191); 3.20.2 (SC 329.164, Funk 217). For examples of their liturgical function, see \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 2.57.4 (SC 320.312, Funk 161); 3.10-11 (SC 329.144-6, Funk 201), especially 3.11.2 (SC 329.146, Funk 201); 3.16.4 (SC 329.156-8, Funk 211).

\textsuperscript{775} SC 336.216-8, Funk 520-2.

\textsuperscript{776} \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 18.16.5 (SC 336.218, Funk 522).

\textsuperscript{777} Ibid., 2.26.3 (SC 320.236, Funk 103), which follows the editor’s source; 8.46.10 (SC 336.268-70, Funk 560).

\textsuperscript{778} Cf. \textit{Trad. ap.} 7 (SC 11.56-8).

\textsuperscript{779} The fact that the editor may have been following one of his sources, \textit{Trad. ap.} 7, does not by itself explain the omission. The editor had shown throughout the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} that he freely edits material to emphasize his theology. Jefford, for example, gives several instances where the editor changed his source in \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 7 to better fit his non-Nicene theology (Jefford, “Power and Tradition in \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 7,” 65-78). That he does not do so here is noteworthy.
following the editor’s source, “like Christ.” The rationale for this identification was added by the editor. For the editor, Christ served and obeyed the Father. So too, the deacon served and obeyed “the Father,” who in the Apostolic Constitutions’ analogy was the bishop. The editor’s expansion of the analogy made clear that while the deacon had authority, it was derivative, associated with their status as servants of the bishop. While the metaphor might appear to be reflecting a high status of the deacon, that high status was intimately tied to being servants to the bishop. The deacon’s potestas was contingent upon their submission to the office of bishop. The office of deaconess in 2.26.6 was similarly derivative. They were to be honored as the “Holy Spirit,” following the editor’s source. Again, however, the editorial expansion gave the rationale behind the identification, rooting it in service. Just as the Holy Spirit served Christ, so the deaconesses served the deacons. Likewise, just as the church could not come to Christ except by the Holy Spirit, so women could not come to the deacons (or the bishop) without the intercession of the deaconesses. The editor, by giving the rationale behind the metaphor, made the metaphor reaffirm his hierarchical ecclesiology.

The editor of the Apostolic Constitutions based his theology of religious authority on the potestas of the clergy, especially the bishop. In the polemical climate of fourth-century Christianity, the editor returned to the apostolic potestas to ground his ideals in a mythic past beyond argumentation. The apostolic potestas was then transmitted through the Apostolic Constitutions, ensuring the transmission of the editor’s theology. The editor’s partial success was shown by the transmission of book 8 as apostolic throughout the church.

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780. SC 320.238, Funk 105.
781. Ibid.
The content of the editor’s theology of the *potestas* of the clergy shared similarities with his sources, but also expanded upon them.\textsuperscript{783} The bishop, thanks to his *potestas*, was the ultimate religious authority.\textsuperscript{784} His *potestas* was reflected, reinforced, and even created through the Christian rituals in the life of the church.\textsuperscript{785} In addition, practical developments made the *potestas* of the bishop as judge a significant part of the editor’s theology of authority. Because of his *potestas*, the editor believed the bishop could even judge kings.\textsuperscript{786} Finally, though the bishop was the main recipient of *potestas*, other clergy also wielded a lesser *potestas*. In particular, the presbyter’s teaching *auctoritas* and ritual *potestas* make them almost “mini-bishops” with independent *potestas*. In contrast, deacons and deaconesses, while wielding *potestas*, only had delegated *potestas* from the bishop. The deacon, apart from the bishop’s own *potestas*, had no authority in the editor’s eyes.

\textsuperscript{783} In some respects, it also reflects an expansion on Ignatius of Antioch, which is unsurprising considering the sister documents of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the Pseudo-Ignatius letters.

\textsuperscript{784} As with Ignatius, the bishop was the unifying factor of the church, the one without whom no one acts. Consider the similarities between *Philad.* 7.2 (Holmes, 242), and *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.27.1, 4-5 (SC 320.240-2, Funk 107).

\textsuperscript{785} Here again there are similarities between Ignatius and the editor. Cf. Ignatius’ vision of unity via the bishop’s control of the Eucharist and baptism in *Smyrn. 8.1-2* (Holmes, 254-6).

\textsuperscript{786} *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.11.1 (SC 320.166, Funk 47).
Chapter 5

Auctoritas in the Apostolic Constitutions

While the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions was primarily concerned with the potestas of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the editing process took place in a milieu in which clerical potestas was viewed as in competition with, or enhanced by, various expressions of auctoritas. In fact, the church histories, which described the period in which the Apostolic Constitutions were edited, gave great weight to the deployment of auctoritas by all sides of the debate as central to the outcome. Theodoret, for example, throughout the Historia Ecclesiastica illustrated how auctoritas of various actors on all sides of the controversy initiated, prolonged, and eventually helped end the conflict in Antioch. For Theodoret, it was the auctoritas of the emperor which helped turn the city of Antioch from a firm supporter of the Nicene doctrine to an ally of the “Arians.”787 Meanwhile, Theodoret attributed the success of the Nicene party in Antioch to the auctoritas of local ascetics.788 For Theodoret, the theological battle between Nicenes and non-Nicenes over the city of Antioch was not won by clergy but by various lay people using their auctoritas to sway the theological preferences of the city. Since all sides of the controversy mobilized auctoritas, the Apostolic Constitutions were forced to insulate its potestas dominated ecclesiology from potential auctoritas threats which can be mobilized by his opponents.

787. Thdt., H.e. 1.21-2 (SC 501.282-8). The story as recounted by Theodoret clearly shows the limits of ecclesiastical potestas. Theodoret made it clear that “Arian” bishops were behind the plot, especially their ringleaders Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea. However, it was only through an appeal to the emperor that their plot was successful and Eustathius was exiled from Antioch. This was the continuation of a pattern. Immediately before in 1.20 (SC 501.276-80), the pro-Nicene party had managed to get the emperor to exile both Eusebius and Theognis, only to have the emperor later retract the exile and restore both to their former positions.

788. Theodoret implied that during the exile of the Nicene bishop Meletius, the orthodox flourished due to the miracles and the example of the monastics’ ascetic virtue, especially Aphraates and Julianus. Thdt., H.e. 4.26.1-27.4 (SC 530.300-6).
**Imperial Auctoritas**

One source of *auctoritas* which hangs over the churches in this period was held by the Roman emperor. The emperor occupied a unique position in the church of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. On the one hand, he held no formal position nor status within the church. In theory, the emperor held the same position and status as any other lay person in the church. Nor was it usual for the emperor to be able to claim special holiness, as would the ascetics. Nevertheless, in the various church histories covering the period, the emperor was always present. Sometimes he was in the background, but usually he was an active participant with power, which all sides in the controversies tried to co-opt. As such, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* could not ignore the emperor’s *auctoritas* over the church; his theology had to fit in the emperor.

Augustus believed that the foundation of the imperial power lay in his *auctoritas*. According to the *Res Gestae* 34.3: “After this time, in *auctoritas* I surpassed everyone, but in *potestas*, I possessed no more than those who in the magistrate were my colleagues.”

Augustus’ propaganda here articulated that his power did not lie in any formal office or

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military command; he stated that his *potestas* was equal to his colleagues. Instead, he argued, his power lay in his *auctoritas*. Because of his *auctoritas*, Augustus’ argued, the Senate listened to him and followed his advice, and not because of the legions he commanded.

In his relationship with the church, the emperor straddled a blurred line between *potestas* and *auctoritas*. As someone who was not usually baptized,

791 the emperor had no officially recognized status within the church. Nevertheless, he held *potestas* over his subjects in the empire, including churches.

792 This granted the emperor judicial powers, which the various emperors used throughout the Nicene controversies.

793 Philostorgius’ account of Constantius’ interactions with the non-Nicene church in Book 4 of his church history gives a surviving example of how one non-Nicene interpreted imperial action in ecclesiastical affairs.

794 Book 4 illustrated the efforts of all sides of the Nicene controversy to gain imperial favor and deploy its *potestas* for their cause. Theophilus the Indian, a non-Nicene bishop and wonderworker, functioned as a mediator between Constantius and Gallus, acting as a “guarantor of their good relations.”

795 When Theophilus interfered with an attempt by a general sent by Constantius to exile Gallus, Constantius

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791. For example, Soz., *H.e.* 2.34.1 (*SC* 306.380) recounts Constantine as not being baptized until just before his death, despite his involvement in church issues. Interestingly, one of the emperors who had been baptized early on in life was Julian, who ended up rejecting his baptism. Ibid., 5.2.2 (*SC* 495.84). One of the candidates for the emperor reigning while the *Apostolic Constitutions* was edited is Theodosius, who had been baptized before becoming emperor.

792. For the purpose of this dissertation, I am only referring to churches in the Roman Empire, though of course acknowledging the existence of churches outside the Roman Empire with which the emperor would naturally have a different relationship.

793. In what follows, I am not primarily concerned with articulating a historical understanding of the emperor’s *auctoritas* within the church but a rhetorical understanding. For the purpose of this dissertation, it does not matter whether the various ecclesiastical historians and the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* accurately understood the emperor’s use of the *auctoritas* in the church, but how the editor viewed the threat (whether assumed or real).

794. Of course, the non-Nicene history only survives in summary form from a Nicene author.

banished Theophilus. Here, the emperor’s banishment of Theophilus was portrayed as a natural consequence of the political rivalry between Gallus and the eunuch Eusebius, who received the blame for Gallus’ exile and eventual execution. Afterward, when Constantius’ wife became sick, he was forced to reconcile with Theophilus so that Theophilus would miraculously cure Constantius’ wife. Theophilus did not manage to stay in the emperor’s good graces for long, as in the narrative he was immediately caught up in the attacks of Basil of Ancyra.

For Philostorgius, Basil of Ancyra was one of the chief villains. At the end of Book 3, Basil persuaded Gallus to execute Aetius. His plan failed when Leontius, bishop of Antioch, provided evidence directly contradicting Basil. In Book 4, Basil, whom Philostorgius accused of wanting to become bishop of Antioch, accused Aetius, Eudoxius, the bishop of Antioch, and the miracle-working Theophilus of conspiring with the now dead Gallus to overthrow the emperor. Philostorgius believed that it was due to the support of women at court for Basil that Constantius decided to exile Theophilus and Eudoxius. Here in the narrative Constantius receded, it was Basil who exiled Eunomius, Aetius, and seventy others and then proceeded to use speeches and force to promote the Homoiousian faith. Basil’s actions, however, caused a reaction, as two non-Nicene bishops appealed to the emperor. The emperor was portrayed as ignorant of Basil’s actions. When the non-Nicene bishops tell the emperor what had happened, the emperor reversed all the exiles and ordered the convocation of two synods. One synod did not meet due to an earthquake, an event interpreted by

796. Ibid., 4.7 (*SC* 564.322).
797. Ibid., 3.27 (*SC* 564.304).
798. Ibid. 4.8-9 (*SC* 564.324-6). The role of the bishop in the judiciary is treated in Chapter 4.
Philostorgius as showing which side God favored. The other synod was fractured into two competing synods, a situation Philostorgius blamed on Basil. The emperor was forced to intervene and summoned the bishops to Constantinople. Here Acacius, bishop of Caesarea, had the emperor’s ear. Acacius’ advice led to the deposition of Basil, Eustathius, Macedonius, bishop of Constantinople, and “many other bishops,” along with Aetius, but not Eunomius, who was consecrated bishop of Cyzicus.

In Philostorgius’ interpretation of the historical events, imperial control and influence over the church were minimal. The overriding theme of the relationship between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the emperor was that powerful men, usually bishops, used their influence to dictate imperial actions. So, Eusebius the eunuch, Basil of Ancyra, and Acacius of Caesarea by turns used imperial power to exile both their political and theological opponents. In the account, Constantius appeared as a weak-willed plaything subject to the whims of his more powerful advisors. Philostorgius thus gave himself some rhetorical cover. Bad advisors, not the emperor’s actual desires, were what caused unwise imperial actions. These advisors were portrayed as motivated by politics and personal jealousy as much as religion. The solution to the problem of bad advisors was to replace them with good advisors. Philostorgius illustrated his ideal advisors through the example of Leontius of Antioch, who gave advice to the emperor which saved Aetius’ life, and the example of two non-Nicene bishops, whose advice stopped Basil.

799. Ibid. 4.10-11. (SC 564.326-30).
800. Ibid. 4.12-5.1. (SC 564.330-44).
801. It is important to highlight that I am here interested in how Philostorgius interpreted their actions more than their actual motivations. Philostorgius fits comfortably within the tradition in church history in ascribing non-religious motivations to his enemies. For example, Theodoret claimed that Arius started his heresy because he was passed over for the office of bishop of Alexander. Compare this with Philostorgius’ claim that Basil’s being passed over for bishop of Antioch provoked his enmity against Aetius, Eudoxius, and Theophilus. Thdt., H.e., 1.2.9 (SC 501.148); Philost., H.e. 4.6 (SC 564.322).
In Book 4, Philostorgius gave a non-Nicene view of both the extent and limitations of imperial potestas and auctoritas within the church. The emperor’s judicial potestas, particularly his ability to exile, though more rarely the ability to enforce capital punishment, was a tool to be used by others to advance their cause. According to Philostorgius, the Nicenes portrayed their opponents as political dissidents to gain imperial potestas for their side. Basil used the falling out between Gallus and Constantius to charge Aetius, Eudoxius, and Theophilus as part of a plot against Constantius centered on Gallus. In return, non-Nicenes caused the fall of Basil from imperial graces by accusing him of abusing the judicial powers Constantius had given him. The trial of Aetius in Constantinople was decided, according to Philostorgius, by the fact that Constantius still believed that Aetius had plotted against him. Despite not understanding Aetius’ theology, Constantius used Aetius’ theology as an excuse to depose him from his episcopate, though he needed Acacius’ help to do so. However, due to Constantius’ dependence upon his advisors, his judicial decisions were always under threat to be reversed. The emperor’s own judicial potestas undermined itself. While it was a significant factor in the ecclesiastical controversies, exile was never permanent. The case of Liberius, bishop of Rome is an example. Liberius was exiled, but due to the “clamor” of the Romans, Constantius revoked the exile. Rather than being an unyielding power, it was the source of a flexible negotiation between Constantius, his advisors, the church, and the people.

The emperor was not explicitly mentioned in the Apostolic Constitutions. Without an ecclesiastically recognized potestas, the emperor had no place in the editor’s conception of

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802. Ibid., 4.8. (SC 564.324-6).
803. Ibid., 4.3 (SC 564.316-8).
Christianity. However, taken in conjunction with its sister documents, the Pseudo-Ignatian letters, the *Apostolic Constitutions* provided a picture of how the editor viewed the imperial *auctoritas*. As discussed in Chapter 2, in two passages, *Philadelphians* 4 and *Symrneans* 9, Pseudo-Ignatius made the claim that the emperor was subject to the bishop. In *Letter to the Philadelphians* 4, Pseudo-Ignatius wrote “the presbyters, and the deacons, and the other clergy together with all the people, and the soldiers, and the rulers, and Caesar [be obedient] to the bishop.” Meanwhile, in *Symrneans* 9, Pseudo-Ignatius stated that the laity were to be subject not only to the bishop but the deacons and presbyters as well. These passages show Pseudo-Ignatius understood the emperor to be firmly under the bishop.

Smith argued that while Pseudo-Ignatius was unique in its view of the relationship between the bishop and emperor in Greek literature, it was unique in its explicitness, not content.\(^{804}\)

Unsurprisingly, considering the links between Pseudo-Ignatius and the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Smith saw Pseudo-Ignatius’ position supported by *Apostolic Constitution* 2.26.4-5 which stated,

>The bishop is the minister of the word, the keeper of knowledge, the mediator between God and you in your divine worship. He is the teacher of piety; and, next after God, he is your father, who has birthed you to be adopted sons by water and the Spirit. He is your ruler and governor; he is your king and master (οὗτος ἄρχει καὶ ἡγούμενος ὑμῶν βασιλεᾶς καὶ δυνάστης); he is your earthly god after God, who has a right to be honored by you. For about him, and like him, God said, “I have said, ‘You are gods; and you are all children of the Most High.’ And, ‘You shall not speak evil of the gods.’” For let the bishop preside over you as one honored with the dignity of God, which he exercises over the clergy and rules over all the people (τοῦ λαοῦ παντός ἄρχει).\(^{805}\)


\(^{805}\) *SC* 320.238, Funk 105. For convenience, I have underlined the text which Funk identified as being from the editor’s own hand.
In the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the editor intentionally chose what to keep from his sources, which he then intensified by his own additions. The key phrases are the two pairs of titles of power, “ἄρχων” and “ἡγούμενος” and “βασιλεὺς” and “δυνάστης,” which the editor imported from his sources. The phrase “τοῦ λαοῦ παντὸς ἂρχει,” which came from the editor’s own hand is also significant. The two pairs of titles of power were deliberately tapping into titles of secular government, “ἡγούμενος” was used by Roman governors while “βασιλεὺς” was used by Roman emperors. The terms were borrowed from the Roman government to describe the power which the bishop held over the people. Considering the theology of Pseudo-Ignatius, the editor might have intentionally used the imperial titles from his source as a subtle rebuke; it was not the emperor who was the true “βασιλεὺς “ but the bishop.

The rhetoric of power which the editor drew upon mirrored the situation of at least some of the more powerful bishops. In Socrates’ *Historia Ecclesiastica*, the Emperor Julian commented on how the governor of Egypt feared George, the bishop of Alexandria, more than the Emperor Constantius. The passage undoubtedly contains rhetorical exaggeration. Julian had to demonstrate why the governor allowed George to pillage the temples, a sacrilege in Julian’s eyes. The episode does highlight the interplay between political and ecclesiastical structures. The editor’s co-opt of political titles for the bishop revealed not only his idealized view of clerical potestas, but perhaps an underlying reality of the authority that...

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806. LSJ9 763 II.3.b lists the following examples: *POxy*. 1020.5 and Luc. *Alex.* 44.
809. Cf. ibid., 2.29.1 (*SC* 320.248, Funk 111), where the editor added that Moses (representing the bishop) was “Pharaoh’s God as king (βασιλεὺς) and high priest.” Here Constantine’s claim of being a “bishop” was reversed (whether intentionally or not), with the editor claiming for the bishop the title of “king.” Cf. Eus. *V.C.* 4.24 (*SC* 559.480).
some powerful bishops wielded. Powerful bishops, such as the bishop of Alexandria, or perhaps even the editor’s favored Antioch, could potentially have amassed as much power as their political counterparts. Though it occurred after the compilation of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the example of how Ambrose treated Theodosius gives a theoretical model of the power of a powerful bishop vis-a-vis a compliant emperor.\(^811\) Instead, the editor’s contribution lies in his expansion of who holds such power. It was not just powerful and well-connected bishops who were the “ἡγούμενος” and “βασιλεὺς,” but every bishop, no matter where they were located.\(^812\)

It also served as an expansion of the Christian teaching where Christians held citizenship on earth and in heaven.\(^813\) Citizens were organized under a political hierarchy, with governors and emperors standing near the top of that hierarchy. So too, for the editor, Christian citizenship entailed organizing under a hierarchy. In the Christian citizenship, the bishops were at the top and exercised their authority over those below. This is not a thought out, explicit two sphere theology, where the church and state serve as separate but equal authorities. However, the editor at least was using political titles to imply equality between bishops and governors and emperors.\(^814\)

\(^811\). Thdt., *H.e.* 5.17.3-18.25 (*SC* 530.402-14).
\(^812\). Compare this to Theodosius’ speech, which ends the Ambrose-Theodosius pericope where he proclaims that “Ambrose alone deserves to be called bishop.” Ibid. 5.18.24 (*SC* 530.414).
\(^813\). Eph. 2:19; Phil. 3:20.
\(^814\). Cf. 2.34 (*SC* 320.254-256, Funk 117-119), discussed later, where any reading of two “separate but equal” spheres completely falls apart. With the two passages taken together, the editor is not “stealing” the political titles to grant equality, but he has the much more ambitious project of making the argument that the titles actually belong to the bishops instead of the emperor. If the emperor was king, how much more, in the editor’s eyes, was the bishop a king.
Key to resolving this issue is the editorial insertion of the phrase “τοῦ λαοῦ παντὸς ἂρχει” into his source material. This is an ambiguous phrase, contextually it could refer to “all people” or “all the people [in the bishop’s church].” *Altercatio Heracliani* offers a possibility for the editor’s thinking. This document purports to be a dispute between the non-Nicene bishop Germinius and the layman Heraclianus in 366 CE, shortly before the compilation of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. In it, the equivalent Latin phrase, “*omni populo,*” was used to describe the entire city, both Christian and non-Christian, before whom the Christological debate occurs. With the emperor taking an active role in the Christological debates, the question of what was a church no longer was a matter solely for the church, but had civic consequences. When Heraclianus refused to recant his Nicene beliefs, the crowd cried for him to be taken to the secular government to be executed because he “made out of one people two” (*et de uno populo duos fecerunt*). There are several noteworthy elements here. The entire city, both baptized and unbaptized, was invested in the Christological controversy. Despite being a mixture of baptized and unbaptized, the crowd rhetorically made itself out to be one. The distinctions between the two Christological positions were rhetorically made to be a more significant division than the distinction between baptized and unbaptized. The crowd, made up of those inside and outside the church, eventually listened to bishop Germinius’ desires. Here, we see an example of the bishop as “ruling over all the people.”

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815. There is some doubt about the authenticity of the document as a historical record of the event. Manlio Simonetti argued that it provides a core of historical reliability, though a later redactor has edited it to emphasize its Nicene hero. Manlio Simonetti, “Osservazioni sull’ *Altercatio Heracliani cum Germinio,***” *Vigiliae Christianae* 21 (1967): 39-58.
816. *Altercatio Heracliani* (*PLS* 1.345).
817. Ibid., (*PLS* 1.350).
Germinius had the *auctoritas* in the city to gather together both baptized and, more significantly, the unbaptized over which he had no formalized *potestas*.818

In the ambiguity of the bishop’s position in the city rising from post-Constantinian trends, the editor certainly could be making a grander claim here than the bishop ruled over the baptized in his bishopric. After all, the editor inserted the phrase “all the people” for a reason. Adding the phrase would be unnecessary if he only intended it to refer to “ruling over all the people in the church.” That implication was already clear in his sources. However, the greater involvement of the bishop in unbaptized lives was a development which occurred after his source. Thus, it seems more likely that the editorial insertion is to be read as referring both to baptized and unbaptized. This reflects post-Constantinian trends, as well as fits the editor’s normal pattern of pushing the extent of the *potestas* of the bishop. This interpretation would also fit well within the editor’s anti-imperial polemic. The emperor was not, as Constantine claimed, “a bishop, appointed by God to whatever is external to the Church.”819 For the editor to acknowledge such a claim would represent a limit to the bishop’s own power to be over “all the people.” By inserting the phrase “all the people,” was the editor making a subtle rebuke to Constantine’s heirs regarding their true status in the church?

The editor might also be using his sources to critique the imperial cult. The editor could be responding to the recent pagan revival under Julian. It could also be a response to Christian

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818. Flower demonstrated the parallels between *Altercatio Heracliani* and earlier martyrdom acts with the bishop substituting for the governmental official in martyrdom acts. Richard Flower, *Emperors and Bishops in Late Roman Invective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 4. If true, it has several implications for understanding how the writer wants his audience to view *auctoritas* and *potestas*. Germinius is meant to have the *potestas* in the story but, as is normal in martyrdom accounts, is rhetorically powerless in front of the martyr’s *auctoritas* and God’s overarching, providential control. Thus, *Altercatio Heracliani* can be read as supporting the *auctoritas* of laity against the *potestas* of the corrupt clergy.

practices. Philostorgius accused Christians of worshiping, with sacrifices, the image of
Constantine and praying to it as a god. The emperor who was god, but the bishop,
who was, “after God, god” (θεός μετὰ θεόν). The editor supported this claim from his source
with the editorial insertion of two biblical quotations: Psalm 82:6 and Exodus 22:28. By
supplying biblical support, the editor showed that even though the phrase “after God, god”
was from his source, he had fully embraced its theology. These two quotations justified the
bishop as deserving to be treated, and more specifically obeyed, as God. The emperor was
one of those who was to treat the bishop as God. Not only the clergy, but “all the people”
were under the authority of the “divine” bishop. Whatever auctoritas the emperor wielded
in the church or potestas of his office, he could only operate under the potestas of the bishop.

While not mentioned by Smith, an even stronger comparison between kings and bishops is
Apostolic Constitution 2.34. The passage is in the context of giving to the clergy. As one
justification for why bishops deserve to be paid by the congregation, the Apostolic
Constitutions used an extended comparison between the office of king, established by
Samuel, the office of priesthood, established by Moses, and the office of bishop, as
determined by the Apostolic Constitutions (who was using the apostles as spokespeople).
As in other passages, the editor strengthened, and expanded upon, the core text of his source.

The comparison started on an ironic note. The basis of comparison was Samuel’s speech in 1
Samuel 8:10-18 where Samuel stated that the king would take a tenth of the people’s goods

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820. Philost. H.e. 2.17 (SC 564.232).
822. SC 320.254-256 (Funk 117-119).
823. Apostolic Constitutions 2.34.2 (SC 320.254, Funk 117-119).
824. The editor’s self-conception of his own authority (or rather the authority of the apostles whose voice
he is using) is clear in this passage, as he places his commands on the same level as commands from Samuel
and Moses, two of the most influential figures in the Old Testament canon.
and make the people his slaves. Where Samuel intended this as a warning of the tyranny of
the future king, the source read it as what kings were owed. Therefore, when the editor
inserted the claim that bishops were owed even more, he was making the claim that bishops
deserved more obedience and tribute than what a tyrant demands!

While not the only focus of the passage, the editor provided an explicit framework with
which to measure the emperor’s auctoritas in the church through his expansion of his source
in 2.34.4.825 In his editorial insertion, the editor had the king’s authority limited to certain
realms, primarily war, “στρατιωτικὰ μόνα.” As the editor continued his editorial insertion, he
made the claim that the king was only responsible for the preservation of men’s body through
peace and war (πόλεμον καὶ εἰρήνην ἀναδεδεγμένος εἰς φυλακὴν σωμάτων). Meanwhile, the
bishop preserved both body and soul from danger (ὁ δὲ τὴν εἰς Θεὸν ἱερωσὺνην σῶμα καὶ
ψυχὴν παρατούμενος κινδύνων). This has two implications. The first was made explicit by an
editorial insertion. As the soul is greater than the body, so the priest is greater than the king.826
Going back to the editor’s source, the bishop was to be treated “as your king” (ὡς βασιλέα)
and “as your lord” (ὡς κύριον).827 Here is an explicit arrangement of the hierarchical order.
The bishop was more important than any earthly ruler. The bishop thus deserved more honor
and held more authority. The second is implicit. The king was responsible for man’s body,
but the bishop was responsible for both his body and soul. This was a direct rebuke towards
any attempt by the emperor to use his auctoritas in the church.828 Not only did he have no
authority over the soul, but even his authority over the body was jointly shared with the

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825. SC 320.256, Funk 119.
826. Apostolic Constitutions 2.34.4 (SC 320.256, Funk 119).
827. Ibid., 2.34.5 (SC 320.256, Funk 119).
828. Such as Cunctos populos, where the emperor attempted to force conformity on Christian churches by
declaring that all true churches must conform to the Nicene theology held by the bishops of Rome and
bishop, who also held authority over the body. The emperor could not even claim interference of the church on “bodily” grounds, since his authority there was matched by the bishop’s potestas. The bishop’s influence over the “bodily” was reinforced by the source in Apostolic Constitutions 2.34.6. The person who gave to the bishop would receive “bodily” blessings: the work of their hands will prosper, and the good things of the land will multiply. The source finished this passage with an appeal to Proverbs 11:26, “Blessings on the head of the one who gives.”

While the editor inherited the framework of 2.34 from his sources, his additions demonstrated not a passive acceptance, but an expansion, of his source material. The central part of his argument on authority, 2.34.4, was almost entirely from the editor’s own hand. The editor lived in a post-Constantinian world that his source could not envision. An emperor could use his auctoritas to interfere in the church and its dominion over the “souls” of the people. The editorial insertion firmly rejected the basis for such imperial meddling in the church. It was not the king, but the bishop who had the most power. The emperor’s power was derivative from the universal power of the bishop, who ruled over both body and soul.

The bishop as over both baptized and unbaptized is supported by another anti-imperial text overlooked by Smith. In 2.11, the Apostolic Constitutions discussed the responsibilities of bishops as judges. Departing from his sources, the editor added: “ruling over all men (τῷ πάντων ἂρχειν ἀνθρώπων), priests, kings (βασιλέων), rulers (ἀρχόντων), fathers, children, teachers, and all who are united as subjects (πάντων ὁμοῦ τῶν ὑπηκόων).” The anti-

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829. Apostolic Constitutions 2.34.5 (SC 320.256, Funk 119).
830. See also Apostolic Constitutions 8.47.30 (SC 336.282, Funk 572), where any bishop who got his position by the “rulers of this world (κοσμικοίς ἄρχοντι)” was to be stripped of his position. This possibly could be a direct reference to the recall of the Nicene bishops into Antioch by Valens.
831. Ibid., 2.11.1 (SC 320.166, Funk 47).
imperial polemic of the insertion is clear; even kings and rulers must submit themselves to the judgment of the bishop. As shown above, the judicial *potestas* of the emperor was one of the main tools the emperor used to influence the church. Therefore, to label a bishop as a higher judge than the emperor was an intentional attack on the emperor’s authority in the church. But the emperor was only one of several categories of people under the authority of the bishop. As he did elsewhere in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the editor saw the bishop as over all people. While there is some allowance for polemical exaggeration, he highlighted terms which connote *potestas*: priests, kings, rulers, fathers, and teachers. Rhetorically, if even those who hold some measure of *potestas* must submit to the bishop, then likewise those without *potestas*, such as children, must also submit.

The editor’s view of the relationship between the emperor and the church discussed above is distinct from what Azkoul832 and Williams833 saw as the “Arian” view of imperial authority over the church. In their understanding, the “Arians,” were “easily converted into an uncritically positive evaluation of the imperial *polis*” because of their Christology.834 The emperor became God’s viceroy on earth, over both church and state. Whatever the merits of their description as applicable to other non-Nicene theologians, it fails to describe the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. For the editor, the bishop, not the emperor, was the highest

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834. Ibid., 5. “In contrast, the Arians, having a comparatively low Christology were pleased to find in their Emperor a divine epiphany or instrument or indeed a demigod like Christ himself.” Ibid., 14. Cf. Azkoul, “Sacerdotium et Imperium,” 442.
spiritual authority, the one most like God.\textsuperscript{835} The bishop, not the emperor, was both “king and high priest.”\textsuperscript{836}

The editor combated the ever present \textit{auctoritas} of the emperor with an even stronger appeal to the \textit{potestas} of the bishop. The editor makes the bishop’s \textit{potestas} so great that there is no room for the alternative \textit{auctoritas} of the emperor to operate. The expressions of imperial authority, whether through titles, claims, or actions, are transferred by the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} to the bishop. In the editor’s binary world of authoritative clergy and laity who obey, the emperor, despite the \textit{auctoritas} he could wield, was firmly in the category of laity who were to obey the bishop.

\textbf{Ascetical Auctoritas}

If the later church histories, especially Theodoret, are believable, the local ascetics proved to be a significant opponent for the editor’s community.\textsuperscript{837} One might expect that the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} would display anti-ascetical characteristics to minimize the influence of its rivals. In fact, the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} does contain undertones of being anti-ascetic, while allowing for certain ascetical forms and practices to be maintained. This balancing act allowed the editor rhetorical room to criticize his ascetical opponents while clothing himself with the \textit{auctoritas} ascetical practices conferred.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{835} I say God, rather than Christ, as in the editor’s subordinationism, Christ was more like the deacons. \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 2.26.5 (SC 320.238, Funk 105).  
\textsuperscript{836} \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 2.29.1 (SC 320.248, Funk 111).  
\textsuperscript{837} The following is based on preliminary research: Paul Smith, “Anti-Asceticism, Authority, and the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}” (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies, St. Catharines, Ontario, May 24-6, 2014).}
Later Nicene writers were united in ascribing the authority of ascetics to their own cause while quite explicitly denying that their opponents had any ascetic virtues. While perhaps not the first, the most famous example is Athanasius’ interpretation of Antony in Vita Antonii 68-9, 82. Athanasius’ Antony became important in the later self-conception of the Nicene monastic movement.838 In Athanasius’ retelling, the Arians attempted to co-opt Antony’s auctoritas for their cause. Their plan came undone when Antony left his mountain retreat and confronted them in Alexandria.839 Antony’s auctoritas was so influential, that his presence was enough to spark a pro-Nicene revival in Alexandria.840 Meanwhile, the Nicene church historian Theodoret stated that the ascetical community of Antioch were the arch-opponents of the non-Nicene bishop. In particular, Theodoret highlighted the ascetics Aphraates and Julian, who supported the Meletians in Antioch.841 In the Nicene’s self-identity, the auctoritas of the ascetics represented a strong tool in their fight against the non-Nicenes. In addition to their ascetic support, Nicene authors denied the same ascetic support to their opponents. Epiphanius complained that a non-Nicene movement, “doesn’t care for holiness of life, for fasting, the commandments of God, or anything else God commanded us for our salvation.”842 The pro-Nicene party used a simple polemic in their struggle for authority against their opponents. The ascetical masters, who held a large measure of auctoritas thanks to their holy life, supported their cause. Their opponents practiced a life far from the ascetical ideal and could not claim any ascetical auctoritas to their cause.843

839. Ath., V. Anton. 69 (SC 400.314-6).
840. Ath., V. Anton. 70 (SC 400.316-8).
841. Thdt., H.e. 4.26.1-27.4 (SC 530.300-6).
842. Epiph., Haer. 76.4.4 (PG 42.522D).
843. Vaggione, “Of Monks and Lounge Lizards,” 190-202, convincingly argues that the Nicene attacks on
In the *Apostolic Constitutions*, a more nuanced approach to the ascetical life emerged. In general, the editor condemned what he saw as ascetical excesses, while advocating for a more moderate asceticism. Above all, the editor was concerned with ensuring that ascetical *auctoritas* was firmly under the hierarchical powers of the church.

The editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* strove to present a moderated ascetic ideal. He employed two main strategies to support his ascetic ideal: condemning what he saw as ascetical excesses; and proclaiming the virtues of a certain kind of “limited” asceticism. Both of these strategies can be seen in 4.14, which consists entirely of an editorial insertion into his source. In *Apostolic Constitution* 4.14.2, virginity was shown to be an honorable state, the female virgin was “holy in body and soul” and was likened to “the temple of God,” “the house of Christ,” and the “habitation of the Holy Spirit.” She held certain ascetical virtues; she was grave, sober, and pure. Alternatively, the editor worked to moderate her asceticism. The virgin was forbidden from implying through word or action that her virginity was a superior state to marriage. In case it was unclear, the editor later had the apostles

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844. The editor’s position in the *Apostolic Constitutions* draws a striking parallel to the Pseudo-Ignatian corpus discussed in Chapter 2. The editor’s “moderate” or “urban” asceticism was one reason why Chadwick’s deployment of the *Apostolic Constitutions* to support the “tensions between monks and ‘secular’ clergy” in the fourth century was lacking. It failed to consider the impact of the non-Nicene character of the document on creating a unique perspective on the ascetic-ecclesiastical hierarchical “tension” in favor of lumping in the *Apostolic Constitutions* with Nicene developments. It also flattened both the ascetical movement and the ecclesiastical hierarchy into monolithic bodies. While undoubtedly, as I argue here, the editor would have sharp disagreements with some forms of ascetic discipline, especially those forms which would claim for themselves (or have others claim for them) religious *auctoritas*, he still makes room for the urban asceticism which he encourages in his own churches. Henry Chadwick, “The Role of the Christian Bishop in Ancient Society,” in *The Role of the Christian Bishop in Ancient Society: Protocol of the Thirty-Fifth Colloquy, 25 February, 1979*, eds. Edward Hobbs and Wilhelm Wueßner (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1980), 12.

James specifically address the situation in 8.24.2, “Do not ordain virgins for we have no command from the Lord, it is a voluntary trial, not to criticize marriage.” She was restricted in the realms in which she might personally wield auctoritas borne from her ascetical reputation; the editor counseled the virgins to stay in her house and avoid conversations. The one possible concession to female ascetics added by the editor was his preference that deaconesses be drawn from the virgins, or less preferably the widows. This was in contrast to the rest of the clerical orders, which could be held by a married person. As shown in 8.24.2, quoted above, ascetics were not to be ordained into an ecclesiastical office of “virgin.” They could not lay claim to institutionalizing their auctoritas into a potestas, which an ecclesiastically recognized office would bestow.

Like the similar Pseudo-Ignatius, the Apostolic Constitutions seemed to follow the Council of Gangra in its criticism of “extreme” asceticism. As noted above, virgin ascetics had to be particularly careful not to allow their actions or words to criticize marriage since marriage was a gift of God. Apostolic Constitutions 6.8 was particularly noteworthy in its anti-ascetic teachings. Apostolic Constitutions 6.8.1 started off with a stereotypical anti-heretical formula inherited from its sources. However, very quickly the editor expanded the inherited anti-heretical polemic, with the end of 6.8.1 and the entirety of 6.8.2 his own additions. There, the editor lumped in those who reject marriage with those who abstain from certain foods. Both were following in the footsteps of the father of heretics, Simon the Magician.

849. SC 336.226, Funk 528.
851. Ibid., 6.17.4 (SC 329.348, Funk 341).
852. Ibid., 6.8.2 (SC 329.316, Funk 319); 6.14.3 (SC 329.338-40, Funk 335); cf. Gangra Canon 1, 9, 14 (SEA 95.290, 292).
853. Cf. Gangra Canon 2 (SEA 95.290).
In the passage, rejection of marriage and rejection of food were heresies equal to polytheism. Later, in a different list of heresies, rejection of marriage and abstaining from meat and wine were added by the editor to a list of heresies which included worshipping many gods, disbelief of the resurrection, and belief that there was no final judgment. All alike, according to an editorial insertion, were “instruments of the devil” and “children of wrath.” Both bishops and laity were to avoid all contact with heretics, according to yet another list of heretics which included those who speak evil of marriage.

Like virginity, which was not bad in and of itself but only as far as it was taken to the extreme, fasting was also good in certain situations. Temporary abstaining from meat and wine for the purpose of self-discipline was allowed. However, anyone who takes the discipline too far, so as to question the goodness of creation, was excommunicated. Following the Council of Gangra, completely abstaining from either meat or wine was a sign of heresy. While drunkenness was condemned, abstaining from wine was also condemned among both clergy and laity. The editor’s belief system was clear; while a moderate asceticism might be helpful for spiritual training, extreme asceticism brought into question the goodness of God’s creation, and thus was heresy.

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855. Ibid., 6.10.3 (SC 329.322, Funk 325).
856. Ibid., 6.26.1, 3 (SC 329.376, Funk 367-9). Though the core of this teaching is found in his source, the editor expands it by explicitly mentioning bishops and laity in 6.26.1 and in 6.26.3, adding that heretics condemn having children in marriage. Cf. Gangra Canon 1, 9, 14 (SEA 95.290, 292).
858. Ibid., 6.8.2 (SC 329.316, Funk 319); 6.10.2 (SC 329.322, Funk 323); 6.26.1, 3 (SC 329.376, Funk 367-9); cf. Gangra Canon 2 (SEA 95.290).
In what appears to be a polemic against the miracle-working holy man, the editor began book 8 with an extended discourse on the role and power of miracles. The editor’s overriding concern was that the people not recognize undue auctoritas in those who could perform miracles. This was made explicit in 8.1.8, “but these things we say to you not that the ones who received the gift [of doing miracles] might not be lifted up against those who did not receive [the gift].” The editor supported his claim through several biblical examples: Moses did not despise Aaron; Joshua did not despise Phineas or Caleb; Samuel obeyed David; Elijah did not despise Obadiah; Daniel did not despise his fellow Israelites. The conclusion of the editor was that miracle-working holy men were not exempt from being firmly under the potestas of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and held equal auctoritas to the rest of the laity.

As the Apostolic Constitutions continued, a potential anti-Nicene polemic takes shape. In Apostolic Constitutions 8.2, the editor undercuts potential Nicene arguments for their cause based on the miracle-working holy man. Apostolic Constitutions 8.2.1, flatly stated, “Not everyone who prophesizes or casts out demons is holy.” Even if the editor’s community were to accept the historicity of the Nicene’s miraculous claims, for the editor it does not follow that the Nicene miracle workers would thereby have a claim to a special auctoritas. Instead, for the editor, it merely demonstrated the demonic influence of those who falsely claimed to be holy. Throughout 8.2, the editor used one of his favored tools of quoting or citing Scripture after Scripture to support his claim. These so-called miracle workers were

860. Ibid., 8.1.8 (SC 336.128, Funk 462).
862. Ibid., 8.1.17 (SC 336.134 Funk 466). Philostorgius represents an interesting non-Nicene parallel, as most of the heroes of his narrative—Aetius, Eunomius, and especially Theophilus the Indian—are miracle workers who also hold ecclesiastical offices. Philost. H.e. 9.1 (SC 564.458).
863. SC 336.134-8, Funk 466-70.
864. SC 336.134, Funk 466.
865. Apostolic Constitutions 8.2.2 (SC 336.134-6, Funk 466-8).
like Balaam, Caiaphas, Ananiah, Samoeah, Zedekiah, Achiah, the sons of Sceva, and the wicked kings of Israel and Judah. The editor even worked in a possible anti-Nicene polemic against the “so-called bishops and presbyters” who will be judged by God, just as the false prophets Zedekiah and Achiah. Soon, however, he returned to his main point of the proper relation between miracle workers and the ecclesiastical structure. The main virtue of the miracle workers needed to be their humility, which allowed them to be content with their proper place under the clergy. In doing so, they followed the examples of Silas and Agabus, who, despite being miracle workers, submitted to the authority of the apostles.

In his anti-ascetical attacks against what he saw as ascetical excess, the editor mainly followed the Council of Gangra. He targeted ascetics who implied, through action or deeds, that marriage was not a desirable state and that certain foods and drink were to be avoided. By following the Council of Gangra, the editor not only could claim to be following in established ecclesiastical tradition, but also appeal to a populace who remained skeptical of ascetics. Even if the number of ascetics who practice what the Apostolic Constitutions condemned was small, as the fourth-century Christological debates showed, polarized enemies would portray their opponents in the most radicalized light possible. Accusations, even if only based on half-truths could be just as damaging as reality.

866. Ibid., 8.2.2-5 (SC 336.134-6, Funk 466-8).
867. Ibid., 8.2.6 (SC 336.136, Funk 468).
868. Ibid., 8.2.8 (SC 336.138, Funk 468).
While the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* warned against what he saw as the extremes of asceticism, he did leave room for ascetics to have a valued role in the church. The ascetics were pictured as being part of the bishop’s retinue. However, they were viewed as occupying a lesser position. In the retinue they came after all the ecclesiastical offices: bishops, presbyters, deacons, sub-deacons, readers, and singers, but before any of the female offices: deaconesses, virgins, and widows. Similarly, the virgins were like the Old Testament Levites, along with the deacons, readers, singers, porters, deaconesses, widows, and orphans, though virgins only come before orphans on that list. These lists were consistent in beginning with the highest office, the bishop, and continuing in descending order. Male ascetics were consistently placed in the mediating place between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the rest of the baptized while female virgins were consistently placed after deaconesses but switched places with widows depending on the list. Thus, the lists illustrated the editor’s view that clerical *potestas* was greater than ascetic *auctoritas*. The editor found it easier to fit the female ascetics into his church than the male ascetics. Often, when listing various stations in the church, female ascetics were mentioned while keeping silent about male ascetics. In an extended comparison between the Old Testament and the church, the editor added to his source that female virgins were “honored as the altar of incense and the incense itself” while male ascetics did not rate a comparison with any Old Testament feature. It is unclear whether the editor’s focus on female ascetics was due to there being more female ascetics in his community or his ability to exert greater control over female ascetics. However,

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872. Ibid., 2.26.3 (*SC* 320.236, Funk 103-5). Of the immediate relevant titles, both “widow” and “orphan” are from the editor’s sources, with “virgin” as an editorial insertion between them. Thus, to add the title where he did was a deliberate insertion and not merely adding new material to the end of his source material.
873. So in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.26.3, mentioned above, the editorial insertion of “virgin” (αἱ παρθένοι) refers to female, and not male, ascetics.
considering that the editor frequently inserted female virgins into his sources, his theology and context were determining their presence, and not his sources.

The final element against what the editor saw as ascetical excesses was his ecclesiology. For the editor, the church’s hierarchy was set by God and thus could not be changed nor usurped. One of the editor’s favorite examples was Korah. For the editor, Korah was the example *par excellence* of the one who disrupts God’s ordering of the church. The *Apostolic Constitutions* mention Korah ten times, all in the context of a person seeking authority and power they do not possess. Of the ten times, only three were from his sources. The rest were a result of editorial insertions. For the editor, Moses was the bishop, and Korah was anyone who worked against the bishop. Following in the sin of Korah will provoke the anger of Christ and receive judgment. While the warnings about Korah were not directed specifically against ascetics, they applied to any who tried to wield authority that was not theirs. They appear especially relevant to ascetics who could, and according to Theodoret did, operate apart from, and directly against, the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ approved bishop.

The editor tied his view of the *auctoritas* of the ascetics, gained through their holy life, to the holy life he mandated in his clergy. His goal was to help the clergy gain *auctoritas* similar to the *auctoritas* held by the ascetics by mandating a holy life for the clergy. The first reference to clergy was in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2. The editor began with a lightly edited section on the qualifications for bishop. He inherited this section from the *Didascalia*, but it reflects his own interests in clerical *auctoritas*. In one of the few editorial insertions in 2.1, the editor

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875. Ibid., 2.10.2; 2.27.5; 3.11.2; 6.1.2; 6.2.2; 5, 6; 6.3.2; 7.10.1; 8.46.3.
876. Ibid., 6.1.2, 6.2.6, and 7.10.1.
877. Ibid., 8.46.3 (*SC* 336.266, Funk 558).
strengthened the *Didascalia*’s teaching. In the edit, the qualifications for the bishop come directly from the Lord himself.878 This editorial insertion highlighted the editor’s commitment to the *Didascalia*’s teaching, which he reproduced. It was so central to the editor’s theology that he considered it as coming from Jesus himself. The ecclesiastical mirror to ascetics’ *auctoritas* followed. Just as the ascetics gain *auctoritas* from their holy lives, the editor saw the holy lives of the clergy as giving *auctoritas*. Clerical *auctoritas* reinforced the *potestas* of his ecclesiastical structure. Bishops must be blameless (ἀνέγκλητον), of unassailable character (ἀνεπίληπτον), and free from all the unrighteousness of man (ἀνέπαφον πάσης ἀδικίας ἀνθρώπων).879 Education880 and age881 are both optional qualities for the potential bishop, as long as he has virtues: meekness, humbleness, peacemaking, a good conscience, and pure of heart.882

After a digression, the editor resumed listing the bishop’s ascetical virtues in 2.5.3. Again, this was a lightly edited section, but the editor’s changes show his acceptance of his source. Here, the majority of the editor’s insertions were Scriptural support for the positions he inherited from his source. Just as he did in 2.1, the editor showed his approval of his sources by strengthening the force of the arguments. Here, he justified his source’s positions with Scriptural references from Leviticus 19:15, Exodus 23:3, John 5:29, John 5:46, and Hosea 10:12. In contrast with the increased wealth of the post-Constantinian church, the editor retained the pre-Constantian situation of his source. Bishops were to be frugal, content with

880. Ibid., 2.1.2. (SC 320.144, Funk 31).
881. Ibid., 2.1.3. (SC 320.146, Funk 33).
882. Ibid., 2.1.5-8. (SC 320.146, Funk 33).
little meat and drink (τροφῇ καὶ ποτῷ λθσιτελῆς καὶ αὐτάρκης ύπαρχέτω ὁ ἐπίσκοπος). Bishops were not to be extravagant; not devoted to pleasure; not living pleasantly; and not fond of delicacies (μὴ δάπανος, μὴ τρυφητής, μὴ ἡδύβιος, μὴ χρηστοφάγος). The point was reinforced by 2.6.1. Here, for the first time, the editor does not merely support his source’s virtues but added some of his own. Bishops were not to be greedy (μὴ πλεονέκτης); not robbers (μὴ ἅρπαξ); not a defrauder (μὴ ἀποστερητής); not one who hated the poor (μὴ μισόπτωχος); not bound together with the business of this life (μὴ τὰς τοῦ βίου πραγματείαις συμπεπλεγμένος); and not someone who gave an oath or who pleads in court about money (μὴ ἐγγυώμενός τινα ἢ συνηγορῶν δίκαις χρηματικαῖς). Here again, the editor’s ecclesiastical virtues overlap with ascetical virtues. Ascetical auctoritas was partially supported by renunciation of the world. The editor’s bishop, with his financial and “worldly” obligations, could not make a complete break from the world. Nor, as suggested by the sister document the Commentary on Job, would the editor necessarily view that as desirable even if it was possible. Nevertheless, the editor showed in his edits his concern with how a bishop’s use of money could undermine his auctoritas. The bishop’s actions could make alternate authorities more attractive, especially to the poor. The editor’s treatment of money was ultimately concerned with the bishop’s status with the poor. The editor makes his source explicit in his edit of 2.6.1. There, the bishop should not admire the rich, nor hate the poor.

883. Ibid., 2.5.3 (SC 320.152, Funk 37). In the only non-Scriptural insertion of 2.5, the editor adds “ὁ ἐπίσκοπος” here, again showing by his edits his acceptance of his source’s claims.

884. Ibid., 2.5.3. (SC 320.152, Funk 37).

As shown in the context of 2.6, the editor’s virtues were performative. All of the editor’s virtues assume an observer. *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.6.2 made the performative aspect clear. The editor assumed a watching laity, who were to imitate the bishop’s own virtues. For the editor, virtue was a public, not private, act. This assumption highlighted the battle for *auctoritas*. The laity would judge for themselves, based on the actions of the bishop, whether they would bestow upon him *auctoritas* or turn to ones with holier lives, such as the ascetics. The connection between the bishop’s *auctoritas* and his performative virtues was made explicit in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.17. There, in a passage which the editor expanded from his source, the editor drew together the theme of the bishop’s holiness with his authority as a judge. 2.17.2, a passage which the editor added to his source, stated, “For whenever a ruler asks and the judge receives, the judgment is also not brought to completion.” He supported this statement with a reference to Isaiah 1:23, “But when both are companions of thieves and regardless of doing justice to the widows.” The editor’s other additions to the passage all support a similar point. Without the *auctoritas* which comes from the bishop’s holy life, his judgments will be ignored, and sin will spread throughout the church.

*Apostolic Constitutions* 2.2 continued the editor’s light editing on the virtues of the bishop. Here, however, his source material deviated from the ascetic ideal which undergirded the ascetical *auctoritas*. While other virtues in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2 overlap with the virtues which contributed to an ascetic’s *auctoritas*, the virtues discussed starting in 2.2.2 departed

886. In 2.6.5 (SC 320.156, Funk 39-41), the editor makes a similar point: the bishop’s holy life will compel his disciples into holiness as well.
887. SC 320.186-90, Funk 63-5.
888. SC 320.186, Funk 63.
889. The majority of his edits bring his source material more in line with the Scriptural qualifications of a bishop, especially as found in 1 Tim. 3 and Eph. 6:4.
from the ascetic ideal. While one of the hallmarks of ascetic virtue was their celibacy, the 
*Apostolic Constitutions*, following the Pauline corpus, saw the bishop as a married man.\(^890\)

This fits with the *Apostolic Constitutions*’ sister document, the anonymous commentary on 
Job. In it, the author had Job as his idealized “ascetic,” one who was married.\(^891\) Like the 
*Apostolic Constitutions*’ bishop, Job was a family-oriented person, one who rejected celibacy 
in favor of a full married life.\(^892\)

This fits within the editor’s more moderate views on asceticism. Unlike the Nicene synthesis 
of asceticism and ecclesiology, where prominent men like Basil the Great practiced the 
ascetic virtue of chastity while bishops, the non-Nicene editor promoted a more family 
centered asceticism. While reinforcing some of the ascetical virtues which gave ascetics 
much of their *auctoritas*, the editor saw these virtues as operating in the family and 
community. The three insertions the editor made into 2.2 all reinforce the family, dealing 
with the bishop’s marriage and children.\(^893\) This shows that the editor was not merely 
uncritically reproducing his sources on the lifestyle of the bishop. The editor intentionally 
supports familial virtues for the bishop over explicitly ascetical virtues, such as chastity. This 
was a departure from the parallel developments in Nicene ecclesiastical structures, which 
were occurring at the same time. Prominent figures such as Athanasius and the 
Cappadocians were synthesizing the office of bishop with explicitly ascetical virtues, such as 
chastity.

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\(^890\). Cf. 1 Tim. 3.2, Titus 1:6; Gangra Canon 4 95.290.  
\(^893\). “μονογάμου” is the addition to his teaching on marriage, while the editorial insertions “πιστὸς καὶ 
κόσμιος” and “ἐν νοθεσίᾳ κυρίου” refer to the bishop’s children.
Similarly, in 2.14.3-11, the editorial insertions made it clear that the editor’s ideal was not ascetic withdrawal but rather living in a society with unbelievers. While the main idea was found in his source, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* expanded it into a strong attack on ascetic withdrawal. The editor’s attack began with an editorial insertion in 2.14.3, the one who tried to separate himself completely from sinners was ignorant of God because “he does not know that we guard ourselves from fellowship with sinners not by our words but by our actions.” The editor supported his point with a quotation from Ezekiel 18:20, “For the righteousness of the righteous will be on him, and the lawlessness of the lawless will be on him.” Fitting in with the editor’s urban asceticism, he taught that interaction with sinners did not corrupt the Christian. Only the Christian’s own sinful actions matter. In a later editorial insertion, the editor clarified that “in this world, the righteous and unrighteous together are mixed together in communion of life.” This communion should not be avoided through ascetic withdrawal. Instead, Christians should follow the example of the Father who, in a quotation from Matthew 5:45 supplied by the editor, “makes His sun to rise on the righteous and unrighteous, and sends His rain on the evil and on the good.” The editor continued his argument in *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.14.6-9, which were almost entirely from the editor’s hand. The editor provided several examples of biblical characters who lived his idealized life in the world: Noah, Lot, Rahab, and Israel in Egypt. For the editor, these characters showed that the way to live a holy life was not through ascetic withdraw, but through engagement.

897. Ibid., 2.14.5 (*SC* 320.174, Funk 51).
The editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* inherited the concerns of his sources for the holy lives of the clergy, especially the bishop. However, rather than uncritically passing along what was found in his sources, the editor reshaped them for his purposes. In the more lightly edited sections, this reshaping involved adding Scripture, or his own pseudepigraphal authority, to the source material. By adding to its authority, the editor showed his own commitment to the content of the material he reproduces. While setting up the bishop as a holy man to help bolster his *auctoritas* compared to alternate “holy men,” such as ascetics, the editor did not represent a full merging of the ascetic/clerical ideals. His bishop’s virtues were communal virtues. His bishop does not withdraw from the world, as in some ascetical movements. By adding in new material on the bishop’s marriage and family life, the editor demonstrated his commitment to a decidedly non-ascetic virtue. The bishop did not completely replace the ascetic, but his *auctoritas* was more oriented around an urban and familial setting.

The *Apostolic Constitutions* treated the *auctoritas* of the widow similarly. Widows operated much like the ascetics, using their *auctoritas* gained from their holy lives and especially their chastity. However, like in the *Didascalia*, in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, widows were also a quasi-ecclesiastical group. Following its source, widows were appointed, it was not enough for their husband to die, and required a vow of perpetual chastity. Widows must have been sixty years or older, could only have been married once, and had to be known for their good deeds. Perhaps as a result of its more moderate view of ascetical discipline, unlike the

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900. Ibid., 3.1.1 (*SC* 329.121, Funk 183).
901. Ibid., 3.1.1 (*SC* 329.121, Funk 183).
902. Ibid., 3.3.1 (*SC* 329.124, Funk 187).
Didascalia which saw a second marriage as a sin and a third marriage as harlotry, the Apostolic Constitutions saw a second marriage as allowable and only the fourth marriage as harlotry.

The editor was clear that being enrolled as a widow did not entitle one to greater charity. In 2.35, the editor expanded upon his source’s quotation of Matthew 5:20, found in 2.35.1, that only by exceeding the righteousness of the Pharisees could one go to heaven. The editor interpreted the verse to mean that one fulfilled Jesus’ command by taking care of the priests, orphans, and the widows. While discussing the topic of widows, the editor inserted a digression into his source. This digression emphasized that widows were not the only recipients of charity. Instead, charity was shared with the orphans, the friendless, and those with affliction. A widow’s auctoritas did not entitle her to special favor in the dispensing of charity. Instead, she shared the exact same charity as those who held no auctoritas; orphans, the friendless, and the sick.

Following its source, the Didascalia, the Apostolic Constitutions warned against women baptizing. However, the editor was not content merely to reproduce the Didascalia’s teachings. The careful warning of the Didascalia, which merely “counsels” against women baptizing, was transformed into a full polemic in the Apostolic Constitutions. The practice was wicked and impious (παράνομον καὶ ἀσεβές). For the editor, the prohibition against women baptizing was rooted in creation.

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903. Didascalia 3.2.2 (Funk 184).
904. Apostolic Constitutions 3.2.2 (SC 329.124, Funk 185-7).
905. Ibid., 2.35.2 (SC 320.258, Funk 121).
906. Ibid., 3.3.1 (SC 329.124, Funk 187).
907. Ibid., 3.9.1 (SC 329.142, Funk 199-201).
908. Ibid., 3.9.2 (SC 329.142-4, Funk 201).
the woman, to rule over her. The editor reinforced his words with an appeal to Genesis 3:16, “He shall rule over you,” taking the post-curse statement as prescriptive rather than descriptive. For a woman to baptize would be to exert *auctoritas* over the man, which would be a reversal of created order. Secondly, the editor believed that allowing women to baptize would be to follow pagan religions which allowed for female priests. Since, for the editor, the priest’s liturgical functions contributed to his *potestas*, a female baptizer would make her a female priest. The editor saw this as something that pagans did for female deities. Female priests (ἱερείας) were for female divinities (θεαῖς), not for the male Christ.

Finally, the editor expanded upon the main reason in the *Didascalia* for forbidding female baptizers: that Jesus was baptized by John, not Mary; Jesus did not send out women with the apostles; and Jesus did not command women to baptize. Following its pretension to have been written by the apostles, the editor inserted an explicit statement by the apostles. Jesus was not baptized by women, as in the *Didascalia*. Using the first person, the editor has the apostles illustrate the lack of women baptizers. The apostles did not have women with them to baptize. Nor did the apostles ever hear Jesus say that women were able to baptize.

Returning to the editor’s theme of women’s lack of *auctoritas* rooted in creation, he ended with another appeal to nature. Female baptizers were against the order of nature and human decency.

The editor’s expansion of his source shows his commitment to limiting widow’s *auctoritas*. However, the editor used the limit on widow *auctoritas*, with its origin in his source, to launch a more general attack on laity *auctoritas*. In 3.10, which had no parallel in his sources

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909. Ibid., 3.9.3 (SC 329.144, Funk 201).
910. Ibid., 3.9.4 (SC 329.144, Funk 201).
and contained exclusively the editor’s own words, the editor demonstrated his overriding concern. The gendered arguments of 3.9 were not solely an attack on female auctoritas. For the editor, it was not primarily their gender which provoked his attacks on their auctoritas, but the fact that they were not clergy. The editor was concerned about widows’ auctoritas as a threat to the clergy’s potestas. However, this concern was part of a wider concern where non-clergy would attempt to use their auctoritas to take over clerical privileges. In emphatic language, the editor forbade laity from doing the work of a priest; which included such tasks as the Eucharist, baptism, the laying on of hands, and greater and lesser blessings. He supported his claim with a quotation of Hebrews 5:4, “For no one takes for himself this honor but the one called by God.” Considering the editor’s beliefs about the role of liturgical elements, such as baptism and the Eucharist, in constructing the potestas of the clergy, this passage had a clear intent on restricting the auctoritas of the laity. The editor ended his polemic against lay auctoritas with a reference to the punishment of Uzziah. In 2 Chronicles 26, King Uzziah tried to burn incense on the altar of God and was punished by leprosy. This could perhaps be another anti-imperial polemic. Uzziah was a king who tried to interfere in the business of the temple was punished. This would function as a warning for those emperors who would attempt to use their auctoritas in the church. More broadly, the editor applied it to any lay person who tried to do the work of bishops and presbyters. Considering the potestas the editor saw clergy gaining from their work, this was a clear attempt at protecting the potestas of the clergy from potential competition.

911. Ibid., 3.10.1 SC 329.144, Funk 201.
912. Ibid., 2.10.2 SC 329.144, Funk 201.
913. While I am not arguing that it was a direct response, it does provide an interesting counterpoint to Thds. Imp. Cod. 16.1.2 (SC 497.114). There, the emperor sets the limits for orthodox belief and threatens divine judgment on those who do not submit to it.
The editor’s use of the *potestas* of the deaconesses to erode the widow’s *auctoritas* demonstrated his wider concern for diminishing non-clerical *auctoritas* in favor of clerical *potestas*. In the *Didascalia*, widows were still engaged in a public ministry: teaching, fasting, laying hands, and blessing.\(^{914}\) For the *Didascalia*, the main concern was that widows were using their public ministry to become mercenaries. Widows were doing ministry, or not doing ministry, based on the money they received for it. Their mercenary ministry undercut the ministry of the clergy and threatened clerical *potestas*. Following the *Didascalia*, the widow in the *Apostolic Constitutions* was the “altar of God.”\(^{915}\) Like the altar, the widow was immovable. The widow was to stay in her house and not travel to another house for any reason, even to engage in ministry. She did not fast, lay hands, bless, and she especially did not teach.\(^{916}\) Instead, the widow was to stay in her house to pray and listen to the bishop’s or presbyter’s sermons.\(^{917}\) The editor was clear in his intentions for the role of the widow. He added to his source, which only had widows praying, to have the widows listen to the clergy’s sermons. Widows were not to teach, but be taught. As discussed in Chapter 4, the deaconess had taken on the public ministry that used to be done by the widows. The editor saw the widows as isolated, only interacting with the deaconesses who distributed their charity, and other clergy. Thus, any possible *auctoritas* they might hold was limited in its use.

The editor was consistent in his concern for widow’s speech, which she could use to wield her *auctoritas*. In 3.5.1, in a list of widow’s virtues, the editor added only three virtues to his

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\(^{914}\) *Didascalia* 3.6.1, 3.7.1-8.1 (Funk 190, 192-8).
\(^{915}\) *Apostolic Constitutions* 3.6.3 (*SC* 329.132, Funk 191).
\(^{916}\) Ibid., 3.6.1 (*SC* 329.132, Funk 191).
\(^{917}\) Ibid.
source’s list. Two of the three involved speech: not a slanderer (μή κατάλαλος) and not double-tongued (μή δισσόλογος). The widow’s teaching was also a concern. The Didascalia already was suspicious of widows’ teaching. The editor transmitted that suspicion and added to it. In one of the longer editorial insertions in 3.5, the editor warned to be cautious in teaching the mysteries of the faith. If they did, and here the editor picked up his source again, there was a danger that the Gentiles, hearing the Scripture so poorly explained, would mock it. The warning which the editor inserted in 3.5.5 was intensified by another editorial insertion in 3.5.6. The old woman (πρεσβῦτις) who taught was guilty of committing a sin and inherited a woe. The editor supported his warning with a quotation of Isaiah 52.5, “Woe to him by whom my name is blasphemed among the Gentiles.” The editor’s insertions demonstrated his interest in preventing widows from exercising auctoritas by teaching.

Teaching Auctoritas

The auctoritas of all non-clerical teachers concerned the editor, not just the widow’s teaching auctoritas. From the beginning of Christianity, teachers operated in an ambiguous relationship to the official ecclesiastical hierarchy. The Nicene controversies themselves were partially the outworking of a struggle over Arius’ auctoritas as a teacher-exegete and his bishop’s potestas. Despite that history, the non-Nicene editor displayed as much suspicion of a non-clerical teacher-exegete as any of Arius’ opponents.

918. SC 329.128, Funk 189.
919. Apostolic Constitutions 3.5.5 (SC 329.130, Funk 189).
920. SC 329.130, Funk 191.
Tied to the editor’s concern against widows teaching was a broader concern that all women were to refrain from teaching. The editor saw a close connection between auctoritas and teaching. The editor partially inherited this concern from his sources. In a wider prohibition on women teaching, the editor inserted “For ‘if the head of the woman is the man,’ it is not right that the rest of the body should rule/teach the head (τὸ λοιπὸν σῶμα τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐξάρχειν).” The implication that the editor drew out was that the one who teaches wields auctoritas and that it was improper for the body to wield auctoritas over the head. Instead, it was the head which should wield auctoritas over the body.

There was still a place for male lay teachers, though as an unusual case. In Apostolic Constitutions 8.32.17, the editor, via the apostle Paul, gave instructions on teaching. Anyone, even a layperson, was permitted to teach, assuming he was skillful in “the Word.” He justified this stance with a quotation from John 6:45, “all will be taught of God.” However, this passage was the exception in the Apostolic Constitutions. Everywhere else, it was the bishop or the presbyter who took on the teaching function. The Apostolic Constitutions thus took as normative the merging of the teacher’s auctoritas with the potestas of the clergy.

The editor found his model for the clergy as teachers in Jesus Christ. In Apostolic Constitutions 2.6, the editor discussed the virtues which the bishop must hold. As already discussed, the editor saw such virtue as connected with auctoritas. The laity were compelled

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922. Apostolic Constitutions 3.5.6 (SC 329.132, Funk 191).
923. SC 336.240, Funk 538.
924. Another possible exception is Apostolic Constitutions 2.11.1 (SC 320.166, Funk 47), discussed earlier. Since “teacher” was mentioned without any context, it is impossible to say for certain whether a lay teacher or even a religious teacher at all was in mind. Nevertheless, if it did refer to a lay teacher, it is further evidence of the editor’s pattern of treating alternative authorities. The teacher, whatever auctoritas he might have due to his teaching and exegetical abilities, was still firmly under the potestas of the bishop.
to follow the bishop in his holy life. However, the *auctoritas* of the holy life was only part of the editor’s conception. In an editorial insertion in 2.6.6, the editor viewed Jesus as the bishop *par excellence*. Jesus was the “Lord and Teacher,” who both does and teaches.\(^\text{925}\)

Thus, in the person of Jesus, the editor found his model for the one who united the *auctoritas* of the holy man, with the *auctoritas* of a teacher, and the *potestas* of a priest. The editor supported the union of a holy life with the role of a teacher with two biblical quotations, Acts 1:1 and Matthew 5:19. While Acts 1:1 referred to Jesus, the editor used Matthew 5:19 to refer to the bishop, “Whoever does and teaches, he will be called great in the kingdom of God.” The reference to the bishop was clarified by the source material, which encouraged the bishop to follow the example set by Jesus.\(^\text{926}\)

Though it was from the editor’s source, *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.24.7 made a similar point.\(^\text{927}\) There, as in 2.6.6, Jesus was the idealized bishop who combined virtue with teaching. In that passage, the *Apostolic Constitutions* explicitly stated that Jesus was the pattern for bishops to follow in his virtue, and in his role as teacher.

Teaching was central to both the office of bishop and the office of presbyter. Throughout the *Apostolic Constitutions*, but especially in book 2 which contained the most concentrated teachings on the ecclesiastical hierarchy, teaching was linked with ecclesiastical responsibilities. Occasionally, teaching was linked with the ministry of presbyters. In an editorial insertion to justify his source’s identification of them with apostles, the presbyters were “teachers of divine knowledge.”\(^\text{928}\)

\(^{925}\) *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.6.6 (SC 320.156, Funk 41).  
\(^{926}\) Ibid., 2.6.7 (SC 320.156, Funk 41).  
\(^{927}\) SC 320.226, Funk 93.  
\(^{928}\) *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.26.7 (SC 320.240, Funk 105). The author follows with a quotation from
discussed the limitations of the *potestas* of presbyters and deacons. In his list of proper spheres for presbyters’ actions, he began with teaching.\(^{929}\) More often, however, it was the bishop who was the primary teacher. In an editorial insertion, bishops were responsible to “teach the ignorant”\(^ {930}\) and, following his source, should be “apt to teach.”\(^ {931}\) One of the editor’s favorite phrases to describe the bishop’s teaching role was “teacher of piety” (διδάσκαλος εὐσεβείας). Three times the phrase is used: 2.20.1, 2.26.4,\(^ {932}\) and 7.31.1.\(^ {934}\) Both occurrences in book 2 were an editorial insertion.\(^ {935}\)

In the potential conflict between the *auctoritas* of the teacher and the *potestas* of the bishop, it was the teachings of the bishop which were to take precedence. The heavily edited *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.44 discussed how to resolve disputes. The immediate context of the passage was disputes which stemmed from false teaching, though other potential avenues for dispute were in the background. In the *Apostolic Constitutions* 2.43.4, which immediately preceded the discussion in 2.44, the editor made mention of “those who work to disperse the lambs of God.”\(^ {936}\) This editorial insertion served as a bridge. It connected his source’s concern with holiness, with the editor’s concern for what he viewed as orthodoxy. The editor strengthened this connection with his addition in 2.44.1, which called on the clergy, led by the bishop, to “rightly divide the word of truth.” This represents a clear reference to teaching

\(^{929}\) Ibid., 3.20.2 (SC 329.164, Funk 217).
\(^{930}\) Ibid., 2.6.12 (SC 320.158, Funk 41).
\(^{931}\) Ibid., 2.57.1 (SC 320.310, Funk 159).
\(^{932}\) Ibid., 2.20.1 (SC 320.196, Funk 73).
\(^{933}\) Ibid., 2.26.4 (SC 20.238, Funk 105).
\(^{934}\) Ibid., 7.31.1 (SC 336.62, Funk 420). Here the phrase is slightly different: “διδάσκειν τὸν λόγον τῆς εὐσεβείας.”
\(^{935}\) In 2.26.4 (SC 20.238, Funk 105), “διδάσκαλος” is in the source, but the editor adds the modifying adjective “εὐσεβείας.”
\(^{936}\) SC 320.282, Funk 137.
and preaching Scripture to combat false teachings.937 Continuing his edits in 2.44.2, the editor exhorted the bishop to be a teacher. He supplies two biblical quotations to support his point, 1 Corinthians 1:10 and Ephesians 4:4. According to the editor, the bishop’s role as teacher provides the unifying strand which protects the churches from schism. In a situation where a teacher disagreed with the bishop, such as between Arius and Alexander, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* saw the bishop’s *potestas* as triumphing. A skilled teacher might gain some *auctoritas* from his personal skill with the Bible and teaching. However, such *auctoritas* never rises to the level to threaten the bishop’s *potestas*. It was the bishop, and his teachings, which remained the ultimate arbiter of church doctrine. It was the teaching of the bishop which formed the official doctrine of the church. Deviations against this standard were schismatic.

### Auctoritas and Patronage

The last alternative *auctoritas* which the editor combated was the *auctoritas* of the lay patron. Patronage was important to the editor’s sources, and the editor imported most of its theology of patronage. Bishops were to be “honored as father (πατέρας), lord (κυρίους), as benefactor (εὐεργέτας) and causes of your wellbeing (τοῦ εὖ εἶναι αἰτίους).”938 “Benefactor” was introduced by two other authoritative positions, “father” and “lord,” which illustrated the *Apostolic Constitutions* saw the status of patron as also granting authority.

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937. Ibid., Funk 139.
More significant is an editorial insertion in 2.33.2. There, Christians were to love their bishops as “benefactors (εὐεργέτας) and ambassadors to God.”939 Here, the editor was picturing the bishop not merely as a patron as in 7.31.2. Instead, the bishop was a divine broker, bridging the gap between God and the laity.940 In Roman practice, a broker was needed if the difference in status between the client and patron were too great. A broker had to be close enough to both individuals to be able to intercede with the patron on the client’s behalf. The client treated both the broker and ultimate patron as having the auctoritas of being his patron.941 The editor’s addition to his source drew attention to the auctoritas of the bishop. The bishop took on the status of a patron in the laity’s quest for God’s ultimate patronage.942 This was a direct rebuke to other alternative spiritual brokers that the laity might be tempted to use, such as ascetics. It was the bishop who was the human broker par excellence and deserved to be treated by the laity as their spiritual patron.

Though it was from its source, Apostolic Constitutions 6.3.1 further developed the idea of bishop as patron.943 In 6.2, in an almost entirely new addition to his source, the editor returned to one of his favorite themes, comparing the bishop to Moses. Because the bishop is a Moses, one should avoid rebelling against the bishop to avoid the punishment of Korah.944 Apostolic Constitutions 6.3 further developed the editor’s point. Korah’s sin was even more terrible

939. SC 320.254, and Funk 115.
942. For the patronage of God and Christ, see Apostolic Constitutions 5.7.23 (SC 329.234, Funk 261); 6.30.3 (editorial insertion) (SC 329.390, Funk 381); 7.30.1 (SC 336.60, Funk 418); 7.35.7 (SC 336.78, Funk 430); 7.36.7 (SC 336.86, Funk 436); 8.40.4 (SC 336.254, Funk 550).
943. SC 329.298, Funk 305.
944. SC 329.296-8, Funk 305.
because of the character, status, and actions of Moses. Moses was portrayed as Israel’s patron, and to rebel against his patronage was ingratitude. Ingratitude was one of the most serious sins against patrons.945

Just as Moses was Israel’s patron, so the bishop was the church’s patron. Much like the Didascalia, the Apostolic Constitutions sought to centralize the church’s patronage network into the hands of the bishop. Post-Constantinian changes meant that the bishops of the Apostolic Constitutions had access to a much larger patronage network than that of the bishops of the Didascalia. However, the Didascalia still provided the basis for the editor’s thinking on patronage.

Following the Didascalia, the bulk of the Apostolic Constitutions’ teachings on patronage occurred in books 2 and 3. Like the Didascalia, the bishop should be a patron to the widows specifically, but also anyone who has a need.947 The expansion of the Christian patronage system since Constantine might have motivated the editor’s insertions into 3.4. His source acknowledged that widows were not the sole recipient of the bishop’s patronage in 3.4.1. The editor expanded upon that theme in 3.4.2, 4, 6-9, which were almost entirely from the editor’s own hand. In 3.4.4 the editor was explicit, proclaiming, “it is necessary to do this [giving] for all men not preferring one over another. For as the Lord says, ‘Give to everyone who asks you.’”948 To this support, and the support from Isaiah offered by his source, the editor added Daniel 4:24, Proverbs 16:6, Psalm 40:2, Psalm 111:9, Proverbs 19:17, and

945. Seneca, in his treatise on patronage, said of ingratitude that “there is nothing that so effectually disrupts and destroys the harmony of the human race as this vice.” Seneca, De beneficiis, 4.18.1 (LCL 310.241).
946. See Apostolic Constitutions 2.4.2 (SC 320.150, Funk 37), and an editorial insertion in Apostolic Constitutions 3.3.2 (SC 329.124, Funk 187).
947. Ibid., 3.3-4 (SC 329.124-8, Funk 187-9).
948. SC 329.126, Funk 187.
Proverbs 21:13. By adding biblical proof-text after biblical proof-text, the editor shored up the biblical support for the post-Constantinian expansion of the Christian patronage system.

As part of effective auctoritas in his role as patron, the Apostolic Constitutions tied together the bishop’s role as patron with his obligation to virtuous living. In Apostolic Constitutions 2.25, the editor repeated his source’s teaching on a bishop’s virtues which link the bishop’s character with his status as patron. The editor supported his source’s teachings by inserting Luke 10:7, Isaiah 5:8, and Leviticus 19:18 as biblical evidence. As discussed earlier, the editor’s additions in the list of virtues in 2.6.1 reflected the bishop’s growing role as patron.

Bishops were not to be greedy (μὴ πλεονέκτης), not robbers (μὴ ἅρπαξ), not a defrauder (μὴ ἀποστερητής), not one who hates the poor (μὴ μισόπτωχος), not bound together with the business of this life (μὴ τὰς τοῦ βίου πραγματείαις συμπεπλεγμένος), not someone who gives an oath or who pleads in court about money (μὴ ἐγγυώμενός τινα ἢ συνηγορῶν δίκαις χρηματικῶς). The church’s growing wealth, which helped fuel its growing patronage network, required a renewed emphasis on virtues tied to money. These virtues were explicitly tied to the auctoritas of the patron. If the bishop was greedy or wasteful, he took away from the goods which could be distributed. This would weaken the bishop’s auctoritas among the poor.

The Apostolic Constitutions were clear. Even if the bishop was an unworthy patron, he was above criticism. Following its source, Apostolic Constitutions 2.35.4 forbade anyone from

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950. Ibid., 2.25.3 (SC 320.228, Funk 95).
951. Ibid., 2.6.1 (SC 320.154, Funk 39).
criticizing the bishop’s patronage, no matter how lax he was in its distribution.\textsuperscript{952} \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 3.14.2-5 presented a similar scenario.\textsuperscript{953} Despite some light editing, the main point of the source remained, the ecclesiastical hierarchy had the \textit{potestas} to distribute patronage as it wished. No one, not even recipients or potential recipients of the patronage, could question how the hierarchy fulfills its function as patron.

In a teaching which limits the power of alternative \textit{auctoritas} of lay patrons, the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} made it clear that widows were not allowed to access alternative patronage sources without the bishop’s express permission. In \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 3.8.1, widows were to be obedient to the bishop and deacons.\textsuperscript{954} The editor, through an editorial insertion, added that widows also needed to be obedient to presbyters and deaconesses. By obedience, the editor meant, according to his slightly edited source, that widows must not do anything without a deacon’s permission or face punishment. This sets up the \textit{Apostolic Constitutions}’ main point. As an expression of this obedience, widows were to accept patronage only from those to whom the bishop gave permission.\textsuperscript{955} As the editor’s source stated, she was to obey the bishop’s regulation of her patrons as if it came from God.\textsuperscript{956} Alternative lay patrons were thus crowded out. Unless the widow wanted to face ecclesiastical punishment, she could only accept patronage from sources pre-approved by the bishop.

Twice in \textit{Apostolic Constitutions} 3.14.2, the editor inserted a clarification that deaconesses were the ones who directly distributed patronage.\textsuperscript{957} This fits with the rest of the editor’s

\textsuperscript{952} Ibid., 2.35.4 (SC 320.258, Funk 121).
\textsuperscript{953} Ibid., 3.14.2-5 (SC 329.150-2, Funk 205-7).
\textsuperscript{954} Ibid., 3.8.1 (SC 329.140, Funk 197).
\textsuperscript{955} Ibid., 3.8.2-3 (SC 329.140-2, Funk 197-9).
\textsuperscript{956} Ibid., 3.8.3 (SC 329.142, Funk 199).
\textsuperscript{957} Ibid., 3.14.2 (SC 329.150, Funk 205).
ecclesiology. In an editorial insertion in Apostolic Constitutions 2.26.6, women could not
directly address the bishop, or male deacons, except through female deacons. Deaconesses
were the brokers between women and deacons (and through deacons eventually the bishop).
Much like the bishop was the broker between the people and God (and deacons the broker
between deaconesses and the bishop), the deaconess’s role gave the office some auctoritas as
patron while maintaining the bishop as the ultimate patron. In Apostolic Constitutions 3.13,
which the editor reproduced from his source without any editing, the widow took on the
traditional role of client. Seeing the bishop’s patronage to herself and other widows, she
publicly praised him. Public praise was one of the ways the client acknowledged and
reciprocated the patronage of their patron. Public praise gave a demonstration to the bishop’s
auctoritas as a patron.

In the fourth-century Christological debates, all sides saw auctoritas as significant. The
auctoritas of the emperor caused a competition as all sides tried to influence him for their
cause. Pro-Nicene figures attribute their ultimate victory to the auctoritas of ascetics. The
competition between a teacher’s auctoritas and a bishop’s potestas helped launch the
controversy. Even though clerical potestas formed the ideal authority for the editor of the
Apostolic Constitutions, the ongoing threat of alternative auctoritas forced him to counter
them. No matter the individual source of the alternative auctoritas, his strategy revolved
around two main points. The first was to strengthen the potestas of the clergy to such an
extent that there was no room for alternative auctoritas. This strategy is illustrated by how
the editor dealt with the auctoritas of the emperor. The Apostolic Constitutions, along with
its sister document the Pseudo-Ignatius corpus, represented the strongest defense of episcopal

958. SC 320.238, Funk 105.
supremacy over the emperor in the Greek language. The editor demonstrated the second strategy in how he dealt with the *auctoritas* of ascetics and teachers. The editor took what granted *auctoritas*, holy lives or exegetical skill, and imbued them in the individual bishop. Thus, the bishop theoretically had the same *auctoritas* as the ascetic, as both gained *auctoritas* by their holy lives. However, unlike the Nicene synthesis between the bishop and ascetics, modeled by such figures as Basil the Great, the editor’s synthesis did not represent a full embrace of ascetic ideals. Instead, the editor reshaped the ascetic ideals into ideal virtues which fit within an urban or familial setting. So, for example, rather than the virtue of chastity, the editor preferred his bishop demonstrated virtues in his marriage and family life. Lastly, the editor remained consistent that uniting *auctoritas* to a bishop’s *potestas* was not strictly needed. Even a bishop with no *auctoritas* was still, by virtue of his *potestas*, above competing authorities. Joash, though seven, governed the people, not because of who he was, but his office. So too, the bishop, no matter the qualities of the person who held it, still governed the people.959

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Conclusion

On February 27th, 380 CE, Theodosius I promulgated *Cunctos populos*. In it, the emperor claimed that the true apostolic teaching came from Peter to the current bishops of Rome and Alexandria. All who disagreed with him were insane, heretical, and not a true church. *Cunctos populos* represented an acknowledgment of the collapse of religious authority in the church. Lay people, presbyters, and bishops all claimed to be part of the one, true, apostolic church. Despite this, or perhaps because of this, factionalism and schisms were rampant. Antioch, for example, had at least three bishops who each claimed to lead the “true church” and have authority as that leader. Yet despite their claims of authority, they could not unite the churches in their city under their leadership.

The fourth-century church struggled with these issues. The Christological controversies, which started in Egypt with Arius but quickly spread out, divided the church, fracturing it into competing churches under competing bishops. The Constantinian revolution helped move the church from being under threat of persecution to a position of prominence and even power at the imperial court. It introduced new possibilities, but also new problems, as imperial desires, and ecclesiastical desires worked together in an uneasy alliance in even the best cases. The ascetic movement, which predated the fourth century but became increasingly influential, added an unpredictable element that many bishops sought to co-opt and control.

It was this milieu in which the *Apostolic Constitutions* was written. The editor saw himself as the champion of the true church, fighting against all the threats, both internal and external,

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which he perceived as threatening it. For the editor, issues of authority were not an academic exercise, but a matter of survival for the church. In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the editor meets these challenges by creating a church grounded in apostolic potestas and governed by an unassailable bishop.

Chapter 1 discussed the editor and the historical background of the text to argue that it was a response to a particular historical situation. The non-Nicene character of the text makes it an important witness to one response within a diverse non-Nicene movement. While historically, the document’s compilation ca. 380 CE placed it at the end of the non-Nicene churches’ influence, such an end was not obvious at the time. Indeed, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* can, in one sense, be seen as part of a high point in non-Nicene theology and practice. The editor was responsible for three significant documents, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the letters of Pseudo-Ignatius, and Julian’s *Commentary on Job*. At least the first two of those documents ended up having a long life of influence within Christianity, even within Nicene circles. Despite the editor’s anonymity, his literary output and lasting influence make him a prime candidate for study into the plurality of positions on authority in the fourth-century church, and a valuable witness to a non-Nicene perspective on the nature of religious authority.

Before the fourth century, Christian churches had a plurality of views of religious authority. Part of this plurality came from geographical distance, some came from the influence of individual leaders and theologians, while still other parts of the plurality could be explained

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961. I am here oversimplifying the issue by calling it a “non-Nicene movement.” Many of the figures we would anachronistically place in this “movement” would have recoiled from being associated with each other.

962. Or at least a group of people with similar enough ideas and theology as can be treated as a “school of thought.”
by the evolution demanded by local situations. Chapter 2 provided a brief overview of how
various pre-Nicene authors wrestled with the challenges to their, or their communities’,
religious authority. Most of their views, much like the views of the editor of the *Apostolic
Constitutions*, were forged in the fires of polemical warfare. While in the editor’s case that
fire was the Nicene controversies, for many of the pre-Nicene theologians examined, it was
controversies surrounding Docetism, Gnosticism, and other perceived heresies. In addition to
external threats, the pre-Nicene church developed its theories of religious authority in
internal struggles for authority. Martyrs, prophets, and teachers all used their *auctoritas* to
provide for an alternative religious authority from the regular ecclesiastical hierarchy.
Occasionally a figure, like Ignatius of Antioch, who proved to be a major influence on
Antiochene Christianity even in the fourth century, would combine the *auctoritas* of martyrs,
prophets, and teachers, with the *potestas* of the clergy in their own personage.

This mass of contradictory theologies was bequeathed to all the participants of the fourth-
century debates. Various churches struggled with how to resolve the plurality of views on
religious authority which they had inherited with the changing ecclesiastical landscape. Arius
represented a challenge of the *auctoritas* of the exegetical expert/teacher who sought to
remain independent from the bishop. Meanwhile, the almost concurrent developments
represented by the ascetic movement and the changes to churches because of Constantine’s
religious policies created more alternative religious authorities which needed to be
synthesized.

What became the Nicene consensus, as perhaps best exemplified by Basil, was a slow
consensus and does not discount the diversity of Nicene positions in the intervening years.
However, eventually, the Nicene churches began to marry the *auctoritas* of the ascetics with
the potestas of the bishops, at least in an idealized way. They attempted to gather ascetics into communities, which, in theory, made the ascetics’ auctoritas easier to manage with the bishop’s potestas. Meanwhile, the Nicene church, especially through the influence of the Cappadocians, made the bishop the natural end for the practice of ascetic virtues, thereby uniting the ascetic auctoritas with the bishop’s potestas.

Meanwhile, the non-Nicene churches embarked on a variety of different, but parallel responses to the changing situation. While in its initial stages Arius depended upon his auctoritas, both as a teacher and as an ascetic, most non-Nicene churches abandoned his reliance upon auctoritas in favor of ecclesiastical potestas. The break was strongest with the response to ascetic auctoritas. Non-Nicene churches represented by the Council of Gangra, Pseudo-Ignatius, and the Commentary on Job all rejected what they saw as ascetic excesses. Their asceticism was a self-conception of a moderate, urbane asceticism. These more moderate ascetics had no auctoritas on their own but were firmly under the potestas of the bishop. The most radical divergence from contemporary conceptions of religious authority was the complete rejection of the spiritual authority of the office of emperor found in Pseudo-Ignatius.\footnote{Whereas many people in this period argued against an individual emperor meddling in the church, Pseudo-Ignatius and the Apostolic Constitutions represented the most explicit critique of the entire system found in the East at this time.} The emperor, no matter who he was or where his religious leanings lay, was firmly under control of the bishop.

Chapter 3 went into more detail on the views of religious authority which influenced the Apostolic Constitutions. Fortunately, most of the editor’s sources which he used in his compilation of the Apostolic Constitutions survive, though not always in the form in which
the editor had access. The Didache, the Apostolic Tradition, and above all the Didascalia form the basis from which the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions either confirmed or departed. The Didache, because of its early date, influenced the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions’ view on religious authority the least. Indeed, the primary issue for the Didache was the auctoritas of the prophet, a concern which did not interest the editor at all.

With the Apostolic Tradition, you begin to see the concerns about religious authority which dominate the Apostolic Constitutions. While not developed to the extent found in the Apostolic Constitutions, some of the Apostolic Constitution’s concerns were present in an embryonic form. In the Apostolic Tradition, the office of bishop was placed uneasily in the text, demonstrating that it was a relatively new development within the community. However, there were still elements which would be familiar to the editor of the Apostolic Constitutions, namely supporting the potestas of the bishop through an appeal to his status as patron and liturgical expert. However, the difference between the Apostolic Tradition and the Apostolic Constitutions demonstrates the evolution which occurred between the two documents. While similar in kind, the Apostolic Constitutions are different in degree and development. The threats to the clerical potestas the editor faced were different as well. In the Apostolic Tradition, one of the chief threats to clerical potestas were confessors, who have equal status to the presbyters, female widows and virgins, and lay teachers. By the time of the Apostolic Constitutions, the threat of the confessors and lay teachers had been virtually eliminated, replaced by threats from the emperor and ascetics.

Finally, the concerns of the Didascalia, as the most used source for the Apostolic Constitutions, are of obvious interest for constructing the uniqueness of the editor’s own theology of authority. The Didascalia, much like the Apostolic Constitutions, was chiefly
interested in the *potestas* of the bishop. In a startling theology which the *Apostolic Constitutions* reproduces, the bishop is god!\(^{964}\) However, unlike the *Apostolic Tradition* which focused on the *potestas* of the bishop as patron and liturgical expert, the *Didascalia* emphasized the bishop’s social leadership and patronage.

While the editor’s sources were undeniably influential on the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the different context, the Nicene controversies and the post-Constantinian development, forced the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* into innovation. Chapter 4 demonstrated how the editor constructed the *potestas* of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to meet his ideal of the church as a unified group submissive to the bishop. To an extent unseen in his sources, the editor used the apostles as mouthpieces for his theology, capturing their *potestas* to support the *potestas* of the bishops. The editor united the various streams of ecclesiastical *potestas* found in his sources, liturgical, social leadership, and judicial oversight. However, the editor was no mere copyist. His edits show he was unafraid of “improving” his sources to bring them in line with his theology and meet the specific challenges of his context.

The editor’s response to the threats of alternative *auctoritas* demonstrate how he adapted his sources to meet new challenges. Chapter 5 demonstrated how the editor took seriously the *auctoritas* of the emperor and ascetics. His response relied on an even more explicit defense of the *potestas* of the bishop combined with investing the idealized bishop with the virtues of an urban ascetic.

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\(^{964}\) *Didascalia* 2.26.4; 2.28.6; 2.30; 2.31.3; 2.34.5 (Funk 105, 109-11, 113, 119).
Overall, the editor of the *Apostolic Constitutions* represented a creative synthesis of his tradition, his sources, and his contemporary context to create a defense of the religious authority of his church in the face of various potential alternative authorities. To an extent unseen in his eastern contemporaries, he defended the *potestas* of the clergy against any kind of imperial influence. Contrary to the Nicene synthesis of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the ascetic movement, the editor pictured a more urbane, and he would argue, a less extreme union of ascetic virtues and clerical offices. In the end, the editor showed himself willing to use any tool, whether pre-Nicene tradition, earlier church orders, or even the apostle’s own voices, to strengthen the *potestas* of the bishop. His goal was to create an idealized church with the non-Nicene bishop as an unassailable, inarguable, almost tyrannical religious authority.

In the end, perhaps *Cunctos populos* and the editor had more in common than either would have liked to admit. Each saw themselves as guardians of apostolic teaching in a time when that teaching was under attack. Each saw themselves as part of a true church, fighting against the false churches who disagreed with their Scriptural interpretation. Each tried to unify the fractured church, *Cunctos populos* through the emperor, the editor through the *potestas* of the bishop. In the end, though the editor’s church faded away, generations of Nicene copyists “improved” the *Apostolic Constitutions* just as the editor “improved” his own sources. Such “improvement” captured the *Apostolic Constitutions* for the Nicene church, ensuring that the vision of his idealized church would be transmitted to future generations.
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