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Weber, Theissen, and “Wandering Charismatics” in the *Didache*

J. A. DRAPER

Despite telling critiques of both the theoretical and empirical basis of Theissen's theory of Christianity as a movement of wandering charismatics, it remains influential and has taken on new life in the theory of Jesus as a Cynic wisdom teacher. Theissen's theory has deep unseen roots in Adolf von Harnack's theory of the emergence of “early Catholicism,” and in Max Weber's theory of charisma. Theissen applies Weber's model of charisma to the *Didache*, but Weber was dependent on Harnack, whose theory is dependent on his interpretation of the *Didache*. This essay critiques the circularity of Theissen's reasoning and examines the way Weber's model would work if applied consistently to the data in the *Didache*.

1. INTRODUCTION

The sociological interpretation of the New Testament has become increasingly popular since 1977, when Gerd Theissen first published *Soziologie der Jesusbewegung: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums*, translated into English in England and America respectively as *The First Followers of Jesus: A Sociological Analysis of Earliest Christianity* or *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*.¹ He understands early Christianity as a movement of wandering charismatics called into being by Jesus as Son of Man and the Bearer of Revelation, who were dependent for sustenance on sympathetic local communities. The sociological foundations of Theissen's theory of early Christianity have been repeatedly critiqued, for instance, by W. Stegemann,² J. G.

1. Translated by J. Bowden and published in 1978 in London: SCM and Philadelphia: Fortress.

2. “Wanderradikalismus im Urchristentum? Historische und theologische Auseinandersetzung mit einer interessanten These” in W. Schottroff and W. Stegemann, eds., *Der Gott der kleinen Leute: Sozialgeschichtliche Bibelauslegungen II: Neues Testament* (Munich: Kaiser, 1979), 94–120; translated into English as “Vagabond Radicalism in

Gager,³ B. Malina,⁴ and J. H. Elliott.⁵ R. A. Horsley has mounted a sustained attack on Theissen's theory, both on the basis of his sociological methodology and, still more, on its very limited empirical base, offering an alternative interpretation of the same data.⁶ The only real evidence provided by Theissen is the account of the sending of the twelve/seventy (Mk 6.6–56; Mt 10.1–11.1; Lk 9.1–11; Lk 10.1–24), which seems instead to provide evidence of a purposeful strategy of Jesus, a mission of sending and returning, rather than of radical itinerancy.⁷ After two decades of such critique, it is surprising that Theissen's thesis remains as popular as ever.⁸

The characterization of Jesus as founder of a movement of wandering charismatics has taken on new life in alliance with the notion of Jesus as a Cynic wisdom teacher.⁹ Theissen did not explicitly see Jesus himself in

Early Christianity? A Historical and Theological Discussion of a Thesis Proposed by Gerd Theissen" in *God of the Lowly: Socio-Historical Interpretations of the Bible* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1984), 148–68. Stegemann critiques Theissen's confusion between sources and redaction, especially within Luke and Q. He sees poverty and homelessness not as the choice of ethical radicalism, however attractive such voluntary renunciation might be to the modern, comfortable, western middle class, but as imposed by circumstances.

3. "Social Description and Sociological Explanation in the Study of Early Christianity: A Review Essay" in N. K. Gottwald, *The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983), 428–40. Gager laments the lack of theoretical discussion and finds Theissen's model "highly eclectic" (430–31).

4. "The Social Sciences and Biblical Interpretation" in *Bible and Liberation*, 11–25 (esp. 15–17); cf. his critique of structural functionalism in "Normative Dissonance and Christian Origins" in *Social Scientific Criticism of the New Testament and its Social World*, ed. J. H. Elliott, *Semeia* 35 (1986): 35–59 (esp. 40–44).

5. "Social Scientific Criticism of the New Testament and its Social World," *Semeia* 35 (1986): 1–33. Elliott also notes the theoretical vagueness and conservative bias of the structural-functionalist sociology on which Theissen's model depends.

6. *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York: Crossroads, 1989).

7. J. A. Draper, "Wandering Radicalism or Purposeful Activity? Jesus and the Sending of Messengers in Mark 6:6–56," *Neotestamentica* 29.2 (1995): 187–207.

8. The paper offered here in a revised form was originally presented to the 1989 meeting of the SBL, before Horsley's book became available, and his critique seemed to render mine obsolete. However, far from the matter having been settled, Theissen continues to be cited as an authority in recent work, without any further substantiation of his thesis. See, for example, Crossan's recent reaffirmation of the fundamental thesis, albeit with some modifications ("Itinerants and Householders in the Earliest Jesus Movement" in W. E. Arnal and M. Desjardins, *Whose Historical Jesus* [Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1997], 7–24, esp. 7–12).

9. Although Theissen's work has two parts, the "analysis of roles" and the "analysis of factors," it is his theory on wandering radicalism derived from the former that has caught the imagination of New Testament scholars and which we shall examine in this paper. In any case, it seems that his "factors" are determined by his "roles."

this way, but only made an “analogy” between the Jesus movement and Cynic philosophers.¹⁰ Nevertheless, his followers have seen a direct connection. Downing,¹¹ Mack,¹² Crossan,¹³ and Vaage¹⁴ have all seen Jesus as some kind of Galilean Cynic, pointing to the Hellenistic influence on the Galilee as evidence for the familiarity of Jesus and his people with this philosophy, something H. D. Betz describes as “mostly fanciful conjecture.”¹⁵ Highlighting the problems inherent in any attempt to find evidence for a Cynic Jesus, Betz argues that the reception history of this idea up to and after Nietzsche reveals a longing for “stepping out of history and renewing the timeless existence discovered by Jesus,”¹⁶ a longing entirely understandable in those trained in the Bultmannian tradition.¹⁷ In any case, the theory of Theissen continues to operate seen and unseen on the New Testament stage, as Horsley points out:

Despite the lack of evidence for it in the synoptic Gospels, the hypothesis of the Cynic Jesus is rooted deeply in the established assumptions, concepts, and methods of New Testament studies as a field.¹⁸

This paper attempts to explore just what those assumptions are, and where they come from.

Part of the reason for the tenaciousness of Theissen’s model is that its roots reach deeply into the History of Religions theory of emerging

10. “The Wandering Radicals: Light Shed by the Sociology of Literature on the Early Transmission of Jesus Sayings” *Social Reality and the Early Christians* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 33–59, esp. 43–44. Horsley argues that it was the analogy which offered the model, rather than the other way around (*Sociology and the Jesus Movement*, 46–47).

11. F. G. Downing, *Jesus and the Threat of Freedom* (London: SCM, 1987); *Christ and the Cynics* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988).

12. B. L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988); *The Lost Gospel: The Lost Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993).

13. J. D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991).

14. L. E. Vaage, *Galilean Upstarts: Jesus’ First Followers According to Q* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1994).

15. H. D. Betz, “Jesus and the Cynics: Survey and Analysis of a Hypothesis,” *JR* 74 (1994): 453–76, esp. 471. Compare M. Hengel’s caustic dismissal of the Cynic hypothesis as “post-modern New Age Jesus veneration” in his preface to the new edition of *The Charismatic Leader and his Followers* (Edinburgh: Clarke, 1996), xi. Theissen’s work is not mentioned, although he mentions Hengel’s work as one of the pillars of his thesis (*Sociology*, 121 n. 6).

16. *Ibid.*, 469.

17. R. A. Horsley, “Jesus, Itinerant Cynic or Israelite Prophet?” in J. H. Charlesworth, ed., *Images of Jesus Today* (Valley Forge: Trinity, 1994), 68–97, esp. 74.

18. *Ibid.*, 74.

Christianity developed by Adolf von Harnack on the basis of the *Didache*, which has become an unrecognized consensus in New Testament scholarship.¹⁹ From the beginning, Harnack saw the potential of this text to provide the missing piece of the puzzle in the development (or rather “degeneration”) from a “charismatic” early Christianity with its “ministry of the Word” into the “early Catholic Church” based on priests, rituals, and hierarchy.²⁰ This concept of *Frühkatholizismus* was (and to some extent remains) central to German Protestant thinking. In 1902 Harnack formulated this theory in his work of pivotal importance in Western scholarship, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*.²¹ Harnack saw in the *Didache* a threefold order of itinerant charismatics—apostles, prophets, and teachers as the earliest form of Christian ministry, operative in the “period of Christianity,” which was gradually replaced by local hierarchical bishops, priests, and deacons as the earlier order became corrupt, in the “period of the Church.”²² The assumption that Word comes first and that Structure comes as a secondary feature of decline derives, of course, from Lutheran theology. It is quite possible to read the evidence the other way round in the *Didache* and argue that prophets are an intrusion into a settled and structured community.²³

Harnack’s thesis was developed prior to the theory of charisma propounded by Max Weber in his *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (published posthumously).²⁴ It seems that Weber both read and utilized Harnack’s celebrated work, as he worked on his *magnum opus* between 1916 and his death in 1920. Harnack is cited as an authority for the delineation of Christianity as an urban religion.²⁵ Harnack is also mentioned in a reference to the *Didache* in the context of charismatic

19. A. von Harnack, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel*. TU 2.1–2 (Leipzig: Hinrichse, 1884). The text discovered and published first by Bryennios in 1883 caused a sensation, but it was in the version and commentary of Harnack that most western scholars read it.

20. *Lehre*, 94f., 157.

21. Leipzig: Hinrich, 1902. This was translated into English as *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* (London: William & Norgate, 1908).

22. *Mission and Expansion*, 319–68.

23. As I have attempted to do in “Torah and Troublesome Apostles in the *Didache* Community” in *The Didache in Modern Research*, ed. J. A. Draper, AGAJU 37 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 340–63.

24. English translation: M. Weber, *Economy and Society* I–II, trans. and eds. G. Roth and C. Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

25. *Ibid.*, 472.

teachers.²⁶ Weber's thesis of the routinization of charisma is, in some respects, a sophisticated restatement of the concept of *Frühkatholizismus*. The application of Weber to the wandering charismatics of the *Didache* may thus be a species of circular reasoning. Weber's theory is developed on the basis of Harnack's interpretation of the *Didache*, and is then applied by Theissen to the same work (interpreted under the continuing influence of Harnack mediated through Kretschmar, as we shall see) to obtain his "analysis of roles."²⁷ The fit is perfect, needless to say, which may be why Theissen's "analysis of roles" has its apparently "self-evident" character for many modern scholars schooled in both Harnack and Weber as independent traditions in theology and sociology.²⁸

2. THE HISTORY OF "WANDERING RADICALISM" IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE *DIDACHE*

The ascetic-charismatic interpretation of the *Didache* rests on the combination of 6.2–3 with 11.3–12. As early as Harnack²⁹ and Knopf,³⁰ *Didache* 6.2–3 was understood as referring to ascetics who kept the "whole yoke" of the Lord and became "perfect," while ordinary Christians did the best they could. The passage is interpreted on the basis of Matthew's redaction of the story of the Rich Man in 19.21: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."³¹ This is then combined with speculation about homeless radicalism and possible

26. Ibid, 511. The absence of footnotes in the original work, which was in any case only a first draft, make the identification of the work(s) of Harnack which Weber is using difficult. The editors of the English edition refer to *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1909) and *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums* (see *Economy and Society*, 480 n. 3; 517 n. 4).

27. Theissen also cites as a theoretical basis for his study the work of the Swedish social psychologist H. Sundén, and his theory of roles in religious experience (*Sociology*, 121 n. 6). There are grave problems with his use of this model, but that would be the subject for a further study.

28. For an overview of the history of research into the *Didache*, see my introduction to J. A. Draper, *Didache in Modern Research*, 1–42. Part of this is taken up and modified here.

29. *Lehre*, 19–22.

30. *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel; Die zwei Clemensbriefe*, HNT.E 1 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1920), 20–21.

31. Interpreting *Did.* on the basis of Matthew would be problematic if, as is likely, *Did.* is independent of Matthew. See J. A. Draper, "The Jesus Tradition in the *Didache*" in *Didache in Modern Research*, 72–91; for a contrary opinion see C. M. Tuckett, *ibid.*, 92–128.

spiritual marriage of the charismatics in 11.3–12. The scene is set for a continuing interest in asceticism and itinerant radicalism.

Harnack's suggestions were taken up by E. Peterson,³² who also argued that the original text of the *Didache* stands within the stream of Syrian asceticism, something which has found resonance with a number of critics. He sees a twofold development of asceticism: a philosophical dualistic asceticism in the West, which had already been taken up within western diaspora Judaism, and an eschatological asceticism in Syria and the East, which sees the kingdom as already in the process of realization in the present world.³³ A. Vööbus also gave an impulse to a revival of interest in the origins of asceticism in Syria.³⁴ Vööbus argues that Syrian Christianity is a product of the mission of the Palestinian church. He sees the development of asceticism as passing from Essenism through Aramaic-speaking Jewish Christianity into the Syrian Church, strengthened in the time of Tatian and Marcion by ascetic trends coming from the West, though he sees the *Didache* as a product of Egyptian Christianity.

In 1957 A. Adam published an important and influential essay taking up again the question of the ascetic origins of the *Didache*.³⁵ He argued that the Coptic version of the *Didache* was a translation exercise from a Syriac original. This suggestion is further supported on the basis of *Didache* 11.11, which Adam sees as referring to the ancient ascetic practice of "spiritual marriage," linked to the concept of syzygy, the spiritual union between Christ and the church, which is present in Eph 5.26–32. The prophets were those who realized on earth this heavenly reality by an ascetic marriage.³⁶ This concept is understood by Tatian's *Oratio ad Graecos* (esp. 15.1) as referring to the reunion of the human body and the (female) holy spirit forfeited at the Fall, and allegorized by Hermas in *Similitudes* 10.6–11.8. Since this practice was rejected at an early time (e.g., Ps.-Clement, *Ad. virg.*), Adam dates the *Didache*

32. "Über einige Probleme der *Didache*-Überlieferung," *RivAC* 27 (1951): 37–68, also in *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis: Studien und Untersuchungen* (Rome: Herder, 1959), 146–82.

33. "Einige Beobachtungen zu den Anfängen der christlichen Askese" in *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis*, 209–20.

34. "Celibacy a Requirement for Admission to Baptism in the Early Syrian Church," *ETSE* 1 (1951); See also *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient* I, CSCO 184 = subs. 14 (1958).

35. "Erwägungen zur Herkunft der *Didache*," *ZKG* 68 (1957): 1–47. Adam's interest is in the origin of monasticism; cf. his "Grundbegriffe des Mönchtums in sprachlicher Sicht," *ZKG* 65 (1953/4): 209–39.

36. "Erwägungen," 20–25.

between 70, or more likely 90, and 100 C.E. and places it in Adiabene. He speculates that it was composed as a manual for this young Christian church by the Jerusalem church, which had been driven out to the Galilee or Pella.

Adam's work has been taken further by G. Kretschmar.³⁷ Kretschmar emphasizes the diversity of ascetic origins in different areas. He believes that the ascetic impulse was earlier in Syria than in the West, since abstinence from marriage or virginity within marriage came to be a requirement for baptism in some circles in the second century C.E. He tests the hypotheses of Peterson and Adam by bringing into the picture the itinerant prophets and ascetics, which Peterson had seen as aberrations from the great church.³⁸ He sees *syneisactum*, the spiritual cohabitation of prophet and prophetess, already in *Didache* 11.11, and finds chs. 11–13 as evidence for itinerant apostles, prophets, and teachers, whom he sees to be self-evidently ascetics.³⁹ These three groups are subsumed under the designation "prophets." In the period of the *Didache*, he argues, these itinerant charismatics were supported by "settled" Christians in the villages, for whom they constituted the pastors and community officials. While the text allows for the possibility that a prophet may wish to settle, they are expected from outside. This is very different from the Pauline communities, where the charismatics were local and settled. It is only at the end of the developmental process of the text that the communities become self-sufficient and appoint their own officials in the bishops and deacons, who gradually replace the declining order of charismatics.⁴⁰

Kretschmar sees the Two Ways, despite its undeniable Jewish origins, as a Christian composition, the oldest Christian rule of life disseminated by teachers through the villages of the Galilee, Samaria, and Judaea. These teachers are still to be regarded as "charismatics," although the spirit is receding in the face of the didactic emphasis found also in Matthew. Kretschmar seeks to trace this development from the first circle

37. "Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem Ursprung frühchristlicher Askese," *ZThK* 61 (1964): 27–67; now also in *Askese und Mönchtum in der alten Kirche*, ed. K. S. Frank, WdF 409 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), 129–79; cf. "Das christliche Leben und die Mission in der frühen Kirche" in H. Frohnes and U. W. Knorr, eds., *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte I: Die alte Kirche* (München: Kaiser, 1974), 94ff.

38. "Ein Beitrag," 32f.

39. While asceticism is not expressly described, it is, he argues clearly implied ("aber es versteht sich wohl von selbst": *ibid.*, 36).

40. *Ibid.*, 36ff.

of disciples, for whom personal union to Jesus means following him in a life of wandering. He sees in the question as to what discipleship means in the post-Easter time the origin of the Syrian form of early Christian asceticism.⁴¹ In the connection between following (ἀκολουθεῖν) and the “Way” as a binding rule of life, we see the importance of a Two Way teaching. The Christian response to the breaking in of the eschaton is a new way of “walking” or conduct. This walking is seen as “perfection” (τέλειος), as in the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, discipleship as “perfection” is contrasted with keeping the law as fulfilled in the Double Love Command in Mt 19.16–26 (cf. *Did.* 1.2 and 6.2). This means ultimately that there is a double way to life: law and discipleship, in which discipleship is irreversible progress to the fulfillment of the law in the “perfection” of discipleship. Matthew remains still strongly within the Jewish community. However, the *Didache* presupposes the separation of church and synagogue and seeks to order the life of the settled local Christian communities which now emerge. The “disciples” of Matthew live on in the itinerant apostles, prophets, and teachers of the *Didache*, but the settled members of the local communities are no longer called to this life of “discipleship” in the narrow sense. The *Didache* merges the double way of Matthew into one: the way of the Double Love Command is merged with and explicated by the teaching of Jesus and the Decalogue as a first and second διδαχή. *Didache* 6.2 is not a two-tier ethic, but rather preserves the gospel freedom. However, since perfection is something which can be gradually learned and achieved, it is understood quantitatively and not qualitatively. “Perfection” does not yet seem to have an ascetic coloring in the *Didache*, though it is understood that way in the *Liber Graduum*.⁴²

These studies all argue that the origin of Syrian asceticism lay in a continuation of primitive Christian itinerant discipleship among the charismatic prophets and teachers who worked as missionaries in the Palestinian-Syrian Jewish communities under the new apocalyptic conditions inaugurated by the Messiah. After the separation of church and synagogue, Syrian Christianity sought to reshape the call of Jesus to discipleship into a rule of life, which in the end produced a destructive and unresolved tension between radical asceticism as a requirement for all Christians and the compromise of a two-tier ethic. The influence of Kretschmar and the earlier studies of the *Didache* on Theissen’s thesis is obvious, and in his *Öffentlicher Habilitationsvortrag* given in Bonn in

41. *Ibid.*, 41–49.

42. *Ibid.*, 49–62.

1972, he describes his thesis as a “development (*Weiterentwicklung*) of Georg Kretschmar’s ideas.”⁴³ Indeed, the evidence of the *Didache* is decisive to the success or failure of his reconstruction.⁴⁴ This paper proposes to examine whether the evidence for wandering charismatics in the *Didache* can bear this weight.

The question of wandering charismatics is taken up again in the important paper of K. Niederwimmer, published in the same year as Theissen’s book, but already utilizing his earlier paper.⁴⁵ However, unlike Theissen, Niederwimmer makes use of a redaction-critical analysis to distinguish the ancient tradition he finds in *Didache* 11.4–12 from the redactional material in 11.1–3 and 12.1–13.7 (and a later gloss in 13.4). He observes that the standpoint of the redaction is that of the local communities and not that of the itinerant radicals. The ancient tradition points to a time when two different kinds of itinerant charismatics moved from one community to another in a dense network of local Christians, dependent on their support. The apostles in the text are a larger group than the “twelve”: itinerant missionaries pledged to homelessness and the renunciation of possessions and marriage. The prophets are also itinerants whose task is ecstatic speech in the Spirit. They may have been accompanied by a prophetess in a spiritual marriage. However, the rules in this ancient tradition are not so much intended to describe their function as to provide criteria to correct abuses. In other words, decay had corrupted the institution of itinerant charismatics.

According to Niederwimmer, the material provided by the redactor presents a different picture. The local hosts for the itinerant charismatics are solidifying into formally constituted local communities who elect

43. “Wanderradikalismus: Literatursoziologische Aspekte der Überlieferung von Worten Jesu im Urchristentum” in *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums*, WUNT 19 (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1989³), 79–195, esp. 86 n. 90; published in English as “The Wandering Radicals” in *Social Reality and the Early Christians*, 33–59, esp. 40 n. 20.

44. E.g., Theissen (*First Followers*) uses *Didache* 13.1f; 11.3ff.; 15.2 on p. 9; 12.5; 11.8 on p. 10; 11.5 on p. 11; 11.3ff. on p. 13, to define “wandering charismatics.” He uses 6.2 on p. 19; 15.2, 11.2, 6; 13.1ff., 3, 4 on p. 20; 11.9, 12; 7; 11.1 on p. 21 to define the “local communities,” and 11.7 on p. 28 to define the Son of Man. Finally, he uses 11.3ff. twice; 13.2 on p. 33; 13.4 on p. 39; 13.3ff. on p. 44 to define his “socio-economic factors.”

45. “Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Wanderradikalismus im Traditionsbereich der *Didache*,” *WSt* 11 (1977): 145–67, translated into English as “An Examination of the Development of Itinerant Radicalism in the Environment and Tradition of the *Didache*” in Draper, *Didache in Modern Research*, 321–40, esp. 321.

their own officials (15.1f.). Ordinary “non-charismatic” itinerant Christians are also now visiting the communities (12.1ff.), often with the intention of settling. Apostles fade from the scene, and while prophets continue to visit the community, alongside teachers (13.1–7), they are now in the process of settling and stand in need of provision. This means that tensions between the local emerging bishops and deacons and the prophets and teachers need to be resolved. The solution is that both groups are engaged in the same *leitourgia* and should receive the same honor (15.1–2). In other words, the leadership of worship, which was in the hands of the charismatics, is now shared by the local functionaries. A process of integration and stabilization between the itinerant charismatics and the local officials is taking place, which is none other than the process of early catholicization. The thesis of Harnack is reaffirmed!⁴⁶ A more recent restatement of this thesis on the basis of textual reconstruction has been provided by S. J. Patterson.⁴⁷

There have been attempts to reverse this trend, most notably by A. de Halleux,⁴⁸ who challenges the assumption that the prophets are itinerant by nature, rather than simply occasionally coming from outside as guests. He sees the “ones teaching” of 11.1–2 as none other than prophets. The instructions concerning apostles are more concerned to warn the community against impostors than to describe their nature and ministry. While the rules presuppose some degree of travel and poverty for apostles, they do not need to be interpreted as requiring asceticism and permanent vagabondage. As with the titles “teacher” and “prophets,” the title “apostle” does not so much describe an office as a function. Indeed, the absence of the definite article before *προφητῶν* in 11.3 indicates that the *Didache* does not envisage two groups here, but one group designated in two different ways. Thus there is no ministerial trilogy of ministers: apostles, prophets, and teachers. De Halleux also denies that the prophet is an ecstatic, but instead is concerned with

46. See also by W. Rordorf and A. Tuilier, eds., *La Doctrine des Douze Apôtres (Didachè)*, SC 248 (Paris: Cerf, 1978), 49–64.

47. “*Didache* 11–13: The Legacy of Radical Itinerancy in Early Christianity” in C. Jefford, ed., *Didache in Context* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 313–29. Patterson takes up the thesis elaborated earlier in C. N. Jefford and S. J. Patterson, “A Note on *Didache* 12.2a (Coptic),” *SCe* 7 (1989–1990): 65–75. However, his textual reconstruction based on the Coptic manuscript has been challenged by F. S. Jones and P. A. Mirecki, “Considerations on the Coptic Papyrus of the *Didache* (British Library Oriental Manuscript 9271),” in Jefford, *Didache in Context*, 47–87.

48. “Les ministères dans la *Didachè*,” *Irenikon* 53 (1980): 5–29, translated into English as “Ministers in the *Didache*” in Draper, *Didache in Modern Research*, 300–320.

prayer, teaching and charity. The rules of ch. 13 do not show an order of itinerant charismatics settling down, although in the case of the apostolic function of the prophet this might be so, but are only concerned to ensure sustenance for the prophets. Nothing suggests that the bishops and deacons are a new institution. De Halleux's work has not found many supporters, but indicates that the evidence can be read differently. In my own study, "Torah and Troublesome Apostles in the Didache Community," I have also argued against the interpretation of the apostles and prophets as wandering charismatics on redaction-critical grounds.⁴⁹

3. THEISSEN AND WEBER

Theissen, following Kretschmar, has made extensive use of the theories of Weber, but eclectically and rarely with proper acknowledgement. This leads to confusion, since aspects of Weber's theory of "charisma" are adopted outside of his conception as a whole. Weber's thesis has been attacked or modified by many sociologists and anthropologists, but continues to be influential. The second section of this paper attempts to explore the implications of Weber's theory in its own right, as a critique of Theissen.⁵⁰ Theissen has, in particular, used Weber's sociological theory of "charisma." He does acknowledge this in his essay on sociological exegesis⁵¹ and again in a later article, "Jesusbewegung als charismatische Wertrevolution."⁵² However, he never discusses his use

49. *NT* 33 (1991): 347–72; revised and reprinted in *Didache in Modern Research*, 340–63.

50. In his analysis of the continuing use of Weberian categories and theories, G. Roth writes, "In many instances it may be neither necessary nor feasible to follow Weber's path but, whatever strategy a scholar may want to adopt, it should be informed by a clear understanding of what Weber and others have tried to accomplish in the past. Such understanding may be useful for the clarification of his own purposes." G. Roth, "Essay on the Continuing Use of Weber," in *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber*, eds. R. Bendix and G. Roth (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 110. My use of Weber does not, in itself, imply that his theory is without problems or that I accept it in toto.

51. G. Theissen, "Zur forschungsgeschichtlichen Einordnung der soziologischen Fragestellung," in *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentum* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1979), 3–34 (esp. 23–24). This essay is not translated in the English version of the studies, which provides fresh essays in sociological theory. However, in his introduction to *Social Reality* (20), Theissen still says of Weber's theory of charisma that "it has proved so useful in connection with so many phenomena that we cannot now get along without it."

52. *NTS* 35 (1989): 343–60 (esp. 356 n. 1).

explicitly. Thus, he uses Weberian categories of *charismatic*, *traditional* and *functional legitimation* to define the quarrel between Paul and his opponents at Corinth, even though he does not say that he is using them in the essay itself.⁵³ It is clear also that Weber's "charismatic" typology lies behind Theissen's theory that Jesus founded a movement of "wandering charismatics" who "handed on what was later to take form as Christianity,"⁵⁴ although, again, it is never specifically stated. According to his "analysis of roles," Jesus as Son of Man is the charismatic "bearer of revelation," his disciples are "wandering charismatics" and both depend on settled groups of supporters, or "local communities."⁵⁵

When Theissen's thesis is compared with Weber's model, certain obvious problems emerge. Theissen treats Weber's typology in a static fashion, whereas Weber conceives of it dynamically as part of an evolutionary process.⁵⁶ He also groups both apostles and prophets together in an undifferentiated and distorting way.

4. THE "CHARISMATIC" IN WEBER'S SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

4.1 *Charismatic Legitimation*

Weber's discussion of "charisma" comes in his thesis concerning the three different kinds of "legitimate domination" he sees at work in society.⁵⁷ The first two are *traditional* and *legal-rational*, which characterize most normal societies. However, in times of upheaval and stress,

53. G. Theissen, "Legitimation and Subsistence: An Essay on the Sociology of Early Christian Missionaries," in *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* by Gerd Theissen (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 27–67.

54. Theissen, *First Followers*, 8; cf. "Wanderradikalismus: Literatursoziologische Aspekte," 79–104.

55. *First Followers of Jesus*, 7–30.

56. Cf. J. H. Schütz, "Charisma and Social Reality in Primitive Christianity," *JR* 54 (1974): 51–70; *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, MS.SNT 26 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); B. Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), and M. Y. MacDonald, *The Pauline Churches: A Socio-historical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). These scholars have attempted to follow through the sociological suggestions of Theissen concerning authority in Paul in a more consistent fashion. Holmberg and MacDonald combine Weber's developmental theory of charisma with the concept of institutionalization drawn from the sociology of knowledge.

57. Weber's theory has been criticized on a number of grounds by recent sociologists. P. Worsley's empirical study of "Cargo Cults" in Melanesia (*The*

Weber discerns a third kind of legitimation, *charismatic*. A leader arises from *outside* the normal channels of authority in a given society, “considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities” which are not available to ordinary people.⁵⁸ S/he claims a special destiny and demands a unique overriding loyalty of her/his followers, validated by signs and wonders, which attest that s/he is invested with divine power. This *charism* “is a highly individual quality” so that “the mission and the power of its bearer is qualitatively delimited from within, not by an external order.”⁵⁹

Charismatic domination is the opposite of orderly income and acquisition, it is the opposite of a continuous institution: “In order to live up to their mission the master as well as his disciples and immediate following must be free of the ordinary worldly attachments and duties of

Trumpet Shall Sound [New York: Schocken, 1957], esp. 266–72) challenges Weber’s confusion of the “rational” with the status quo. While most of Weber’s characteristics of charismatic leadership occur in the Melanesian movements, matters are not as clear-cut as his theory suggests. This results from Weber’s use of “ideal types,” which he himself acknowledges may never have existed in their pure state. Worsley rightly points to the reciprocal role played by the followers in conferring or withdrawing charismatic authority. M. Hill (*A Sociology of Religion* [London: Heinemann, 1973], 163f.) refers to this as “recognition”; J. C. Scott (*Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990]) suggests that charisma results from the public breach of the official transcript by the hidden transcript of the oppressed. A. Weights (“Weber and ‘Legitimate Domination’: A Theoretical Critique of Weber’s Conceptualisation of ‘Relations of Domination,’ *Economy and Society* 7.1 [1978]: 56–73) has pointed out the problematic areas in Weber’s thesis, i.e., his individualism, idealism, and evolutionism. Nevertheless, Weber’s category of charismatic leadership is a valuable theoretical model, as even Worsley allows (272). Its continued vitality can be seen in the reformulations of E. Shils (“Charisma, Order, and Status,” *American Sociological Review* 30 [1965]: 199–213) and J. Cohen, L. E. Hazelrigg, and W. Pope (“De-Parsonizing Weber: A Critique of Parsons’ Interpretation of Weber’s Sociology,” *American Sociological Review* 40 [1975]: 229–41). K. Burrige (*New Heaven-New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities* [New York: Schocken, 1969]) has offered a revision based on his understanding of millenarian movements as an attempt to formulate the “New Human Being” in the face of social disintegration. It is used here for the light it throws both on Theissen and, more importantly, on the social dynamic of earliest Christianity.

58. *Economy and Society*, 241.

59. *Ibid.*, 1113. Schütz (*Paul*, 19) has noted that there is a deeper quality to Weber’s charisma, in that it seems to function as the fundamental legitimating factor in society, deriving from some ultimate source outside of society itself (cf. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 241). Hills suggests that Weber himself moved away somewhat from the emphasis on the charismatic as heroic individual in his later work (*Sociology*, 164).

occupational and family life.”⁶⁰ The charismatic is often a force for revolutionary change in society in a time of crisis. On the other hand, there is a commensurate instability in charismatic legitimation. It is retained by the charismatic leader continuing to prove her/his miraculous power and is forfeited by her/his failure.⁶¹ This authority is by nature unique to the leader her/himself. The social structure of such a group consists of: the leader, her/his personal staff constituting a “charismatic aristocracy,” united by discipleship and loyalty, and a wider, loosely defined circle of supporters. Their economic livelihood is characterized by communism and opportunism.⁶²

4.2 *The Routinization of Charisma*

The final and crucial feature of Weber’s theory of charismatic legitimation is that it is fundamentally transformed by the death or removal of the leader. Charismatic domination is extra-ordinary and so is effective only *in statu nascendi* and, when the tide wanes, it either dies or turns into an “institution”: “It cannot remain stable, but becomes either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both.”⁶³ This is caused by the desire to transform it from the unique and transitory into a permanent possession of everyday life. The crisis for charismatic authority becomes acute with the disappearance of the charismatic leader. This precipitates a problem of *succession*,⁶⁴ which the community may solve in various ways, including *acquisition* of legitimacy by a designated successor nominated by the *charismatic leader her/himself* before s/he dies.⁶⁵

Weber’s model envisages the inevitable routinization of the administrative staff of the charismatic movement immediately after the death of the

60. *Economy and Society*, 1113.

61. *Ibid.*, 1114f.

62. “The preservation of authentic heroism and saintliness appears to the adherents dependent upon the retention of a communist basis and the absence of the striving for individual property. And correctly so, since charisma is basically an extraordinary and hence necessarily non-economic power, and its vitality is immediately endangered when everyday economic interests become predominant, as it threatens to happen everywhere” (*ibid.*, 1120).

63. *Ibid.*, 246.

64. *Ibid.*, 246–49; cf. R. Bendix, “Charismatic Leadership,” in *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber*, eds. R. Bendix and Roth (1971); H. P. Becker, *Through Values to Social Interpretation: Essays on Social Contexts, Action, Types and Prospects* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968).

65. The community may “manipulate the tradition” to place such a designation on the lips of the leader before he dies, e.g., Mt 16.18; Jn 20.22.

leader.⁶⁶ The followers and disciples of the leader appropriate the powers and economic advantages of the movement, as well as the regulation of recruitment. They settle down and transform the movement originated by the charismatic leader into an institution. This may take various forms, including ritualized begging in the case where “the administrative staff [of the charismatic leader] may seek and achieve the creation and appropriation of *individual* positions and the corresponding economic advantages for its members.”⁶⁷

The model of the Bearer of Revelation, the Wandering Charismatics, and the Local Communities, found already in Kretschmar, taken up by Theissen and Niederwimmer, obviously develops this possibility in Weber’s description of the succession crisis. However, the difference is that they do not really envisage ritualized begging as a right of the successors of the charismatic leader. Instead, they envisage the local communities in control of the process of providing strictly controlled rations for a strictly defined period. In other words, these hypothetical wandering charismatics are bound by rules and regulations. The question it raises is what to do with the only accounts we have of the behavior of the post-Easter followers of Jesus in Paul and Acts, namely, that they settled in Jerusalem and busied themselves with financial organization, as Weber’s model would lead us to expect. Theissen, who is inordinately uncritical of the historical value of the evidence of Luke-Acts elsewhere,⁶⁸ at this point rules the evidence of Acts out of court, on the grounds that it reflects Hellenistic influence.⁶⁹

4.3 *Religious Virtuosi in Weber*

A greatly neglected aspect of Weber’s theory of the routinization of charisma is his typology of the *religious virtuoso*,⁷⁰ which he provides in his discussion of methodologies of religious salvation, where “the gap between the unusual and routine religious experiences tends to be

66. This point is obviously overlooked also by R. P. Martin (“Patterns of Worship in New Testament Churches,” *JSNT* 37 [1989]: 59–85), using Weber at second hand, and it distorts his perspective on both Luke and the *Didache*. He envisages “routinization of charisma” only “beginning to set in” at the time when Luke writes (79), presumably fifty years after the death of Jesus! This highlights the danger of a loose appropriation of sociological concepts to bolster conclusions drawn from elsewhere.

67. *Economy and Society*, 250.

68. As Horsley shows, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement*, 45–46.

69. *First Followers*, 8.

70. Cf. Roth “Charismatic Community,” 149; I. M. Zeitlin, *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 47–48.

eliminated by evolution towards the systematization and rationalization of the methods for attaining religious sanctification.”⁷¹ The systematization of charisma can take the form of “world-rejecting asceticism” or of “inner-worldly asceticism.” The former seeks to transform the world by ascetic activity in fulfilment of the perceived will of God. The latter renounces the world, flees from it, and seeks to “find rest in god and in him alone.”⁷² Unfortunately, there is a lack of clarity in Weber about the exact location of the *religious virtuoso* in the unfolding process of routinization and how it relates to the model of the charismatic leader. It appears to be located primarily in the advanced stage of routinization, since it is rule bound.

Theissen builds on the model of the *ascetic virtuoso* when describing the later history of *Wanderradikalismus* in the church.⁷³ Such *virtuosi*, he argues, have their value in times of “social fluidity” where there is the “urgency of social change.” Again, the influence of Weber is unacknowledged. But what is the relationship between such later wandering charismatics and the earlier wandering charismatics Theissen describes? The goal of the *religious virtuoso* in Weber is rule-oriented preservation of charisma “to provide a secure and continuous possession of the distinctive religious acquirement.”⁷⁴ Theissen’s *wandering charismatics*, whom he describes as “ethically motivated heroes of renunciation” (*ethisch motivierte Verzichtleistler*),⁷⁵ really seem to fit the description Weber provides for *religious virtuosi*. A standing feature of the wandering charismatics, as Theissen has defined them, is extreme ascetic behavior governed by rules. But charisma in its *statu nascendi*, which is how the Jesus-movement should be characterized during Jesus’ lifetime as the “Bearer of Revelation,” is, by its very nature, opposed to rules. Hence, following Weber’s model, Jesus himself could not have started a “movement of wandering charismatics” in the sense of providing rules for them which they continued to keep after he died. The rules would be an attempt to recapture and preserve the departed glory of the charismatic power revealed in the charismatic leader in a time of crisis among his followers.

Weber’s *ascetic virtuosi* withdraw from the “world,” from social and psychological ties with the family, from the possession of worldly goods,

71. *Economy and Society*, 541–44.

72. *Ibid.*, 544–51.

73. *First Followers*, 119.

74. *Economy and Society*, 538.

75. *Ibid.*, 117.

and from political, economic, artistic, and erotic activities.⁷⁶ Nevertheless, they maintain a dialectic with the world, since it is the area of the exercise of their vocation.⁷⁷ Such *virtuosi* inevitably become a closed group, with special religious status and privileges, an exclusive class.⁷⁸ The *ascetic virtuoso* has an ambivalent attitude towards money: s/he is forbidden to earn, ask for, or accumulate it, yet when it comes to her/him, it is a sign of God's blessing.⁷⁹ A further mark of the world-rejecting ascetic is a lack of concern with theological issues, or questions of ultimate meaning. Ultimate meaning is not her/his responsibility but his God's.⁸⁰ S/he is an agent of the will of God, which is unsearchable in its ultimate significance.⁸¹ S/he is God's "tool" and the success of her/his action is the success of God's self.⁸²

4.4 *Between Priest and Prophet*

This model of religious *virtuosi* also connects with Weber's description of the competitive relation between priest and prophet. The *virtuosi* are by nature prophetic and charismatic, although in the process of routinizing charisma. Weber confuses the issue somewhat by failing to distinguish between the prophet as a revolutionary charismatic leader, such as set out in his forms of domination, and the prophet as part of a prophetic renewal movement. He does, nevertheless, envisage such a prophetic movement as a constant phenomenon in early Christianity.⁸³ This raises the inevitable question of the place of such a prophetic movement in the process of routinization. Weber argues that "primarily, a religious community arises in connection with a prophetic movement as a result of routinization."⁸⁴ Yet he allows also that a prophetic movement may be a renewal movement in an established community.⁸⁵ Since the Christian prophet is not the "founder" of the Christian community, it is legitimate to suppose that s/he must be rather a "renewer" in Weber's terms.

76. Ibid., 542.

77. Ibid., 543.

78. Ibid., 542.

79. Ibid., 543.

80. Ibid., 548.

81. Ibid., 548.

82. Ibid., 548–49.

83. Ibid., 440. Hill (*Sociology*, 172–80) develops this in terms of "latency," where an institution emerging from forms of charismatic legitimation will "retain in its structure of roles a latent form of charisma which is always available as a source of legitimacy for office-holders who are involved in the process of innovation" (172).

84. Ibid., 452.

85. Ibid., 439.

The emergent prophet, for Weber, represents a threat to the existence and livelihood of the settled traditional leaders of the community,⁸⁶ whom Weber calls “priests” in contrast to “prophets.” The competition between prophet and priest ensures the formation of a corpus of teaching, oral or written, since the priest’s material survival depends on it.⁸⁷ In terms of the development of early Christian tradition, one would expect that the emergence of prophetic *virtuosi* in the community would be accompanied by the collection and codification of the tradition, whether the preprophetic tradition or the prophetic tradition itself or a combination of both.

4.5 *Routinization of Charisma and Religious Virtuosi in Early Christianity*

I would like to suggest that there is an important distinction to be made between the figure of the apostle and that of the prophet in the application of Weber’s model. The apostle has a derivative charismatic authority while the prophet claims a direct charismatic authority.

4.5.1 *Apostles*. The apostle is properly a feature of the succession crisis accompanying the disappearance of the revolutionary charismatic leader, since s/he has a representative function. There seems to have been a Jewish legal practice of designating proxies to act on behalf of another, the so-called office of the *shaliach*, although there is considerable debate over when it first originated. C. K. Barrett, with characteristic restraint, concludes correctly that “it is not unreasonable to suppose that the sending out of שליחים in some form and for some limited purposes does go back to the New Testament period.”⁸⁸ “A man’s *shaliach* is as himself” (שליחו אדם כמוהו): m. Ber 5.5; b. Ned 72b; b. Kidd 41b; b. Hag 10b; b. Nazir

86. These traditional leaders themselves represent ossified remnants of routinized charisma from an earlier period.

87. *Ibid.*, 457.

88. “*Shaliach* and Apostle” in *Donum Gentilicum: New Testament Studies in Honour of David Daube* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978), 88–101, esp. 96. The debate has a long pedigree: see J. B. Lightfoot (“The Name and Office of an Apostle,” in *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians* [London: MacMillan 1865], pp. 93–94); A. von Harnack (*The Mission and Expansion of Christianity I* [London: William and Norgate, 1908], 327ff.); K. H. Rengstorf (s.v. ἀπόστολος, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament I* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964], 407–47); cf. E. Käsemann (“Die Legitimität des Apostels,” *ZNW* 41 [1942]: 33–71); *contra* A. Ehrhardt (*The Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries of the Church* [London: Lutterworth, 1953], 17); W. Schmithals (*The Office of Apostle in the Early Church*, trans. J. E. Stealy [London: SPCK, 1971], 98–110); Schütz (*Paul*, 28–29).

12b; b. BM 96a; b. Men 93b). The principle in Jewish law is that “the apostle is as the one who sent him,” he is a plenipotentiary. He is inextricably linked to the person and authority of the one who sends him.⁸⁹

This role seems to have been the model adopted by early followers of Jesus as a device by which succession was effected from Jesus himself to the leaders of the post-Easter Christian community. I do not intend in any way to enter into the controversy over “apostolic succession” as a criterion for the legitimacy or otherwise of modern Christian ordination, only to indicate the implications of the use of the word by the successors of Jesus. In itself the appearance of this word in early Christian writings does not settle the question as to whether Jesus designated apostles or whether they nominated themselves his successors (legitimately or illegitimately), or whether this was a title invented for them much later by others. However, the letters of Paul indicate that the battle over the title was joined already in the earliest years following the death of Jesus. In other words, in the context of a succession crisis occasioned by the death of a charismatic leader, the designation of his followers as “apostles” would indicate that they have charisma as *representatives* of the charismatic leader, not as something inherent in themselves. This representative charisma may be “transferred” to his successors by the charismatic prophet himself or it may be “appropriated” by them on his unexpected demise, but it remains derivative. This is, in fact, quite clear from the Christian tradition. The use of the word “missionary” to render ἀπόστολος by Barrett seems to me to be misleading, with all its modern connotations.⁹⁰

The apostle is initially linked to the resurrected Christ, who is depicted handing over his authority to the disciples (Mt 28.15–20; cf. Lk 24.48–49). It is most clearly expressed in John’s Gospel, where the handing on of the charisma is linked with the Holy Spirit, as in Luke, “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, even so I send you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (20.21–22). In John’s Gospel, the figure of the apostle has been Christologized and is developed as a legitimation of mystic *virtuosi*, but its roots are clear. In the Synoptic gospels, also, the tendency is to retroject this postresurrection transfer of charismatic authority to the staff of the charismatic leader

89. I have left the masculine here, since that appears to be the intention in the text.

90. “*Shaliah* and Apostle,” 99.

back into the earthly life of the leader (Mk 6.7–13; Mt 10.1–11; cf. 28.16–20; Lk 9.1–5; 10.4–11; cf. 24.48–53).⁹¹ The staff of the departed leader claim their authority over the institutionalized charismatic community on the basis of designation by the charismatic leader himself, whether or not the New Testament texts are a post facto rationalization.

It seems that the charismatic office of the Jerusalem apostles in succession to Jesus was extended to a secondary office of apostle.⁹² This derived office of apostle extended to those who represented the Jerusalem apostles in their dealings with other Christian communities, in the emerging network of contacts and authority of the nascent church.⁹³ They, like the Jerusalem apostles who sent them, must be treated “as the Lord,” but only for the duration of their mission, for which they carried letters of authorization (II Cor 3.1–3; cf. Acts 28.21). Their task would be the collection of moneys for the support of the Jerusalem apostles and the exercise of authority over local communities in the Jesus movement.⁹⁴ There is no decisive evidence that such secondary apostles were “wandering pneumatics,” only that they represented the Jerusalem apostles.⁹⁵

This is why Paul struggles to establish his independent authority as an apostle; he was not designated by the earthly charismatic leader nor by the charismatic leader’s successors. He makes his claim on the basis of an entirely new charismatic revelation, direct from God (Gal 1.11–12; I Cor 15.8), hence his refusal to accept the determinative significance of direct personal knowledge of the earthly Jesus (II Cor 5.16). The implication is that the commission of the earthly Jesus would also have no particular significance, compared with the commission of the heavenly *Kyrios*. Paul is not the representative of the earthly Jesus, but an apostle of the heavenly *Kyrios*. Paul functions as a new charismatic leader at odds with the Jerusalem apostles and their designated emissaries, also called “apostles.”⁹⁶

91. Cf. R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. J. Marsh (London: Blackwell, 1972), 142–43.

92. Lightfoot, “Office of an Apostle,” 92–101; Schütz, *Paul*, 4–9; C. K. Barrett, *The Signs of an Apostle* (London: Epworth, 1970), 71–73. It seems to me that Barret, “*Shaliah* and Apostle,” 98, unnecessarily complicates matters by envisaging eight groups, but he is right to point to the complexity of the use of the term.

93. Cf. Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 46, 52–53.

94. Lightfoot, “Office of an Apostle,” 93 n. 3; Harnack, *Mission*, 327ff.; K. Holl, “Der Kirchenbegriff des Paulus in seinem Verhältnis zu dem Urgemeinde,” in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte II* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1928), 44–67.

95. Cf. E. Käsemann, “Die Legitimität des Apostels,” *ZNW* 41 (1942): 33–71.

96. This is why it is problematic to take Paul as the starting point for the definition of an apostle (*contra* Schütz, *Paul*, 34). However Paul himself may have seen it, the

4.5.2 *Prophets*. The prophet, in contrast to the apostle, regardless of whether s/he is founder or a renewer, is “a purely individual bearer of charisma, who by virtue of her/his mission proclaims a religious doctrine or divine commandment.”⁹⁷ The prophet is not properly a figure of the early stages of routinization. The charismatic leader is the prophet par excellence, and the claim of her/his designated successors to be prophets in the same sense would be *ultra vires* (*pace* Acts 2.16–18). Thus the re-emergence of prophets would most likely be a feature of the advanced routinization of charisma, perhaps even a reaction against encroaching institutionalization. They would reflect a period of social crisis and distress, in which their prophetic or ethical radicalism seems to offer a way forward.

Prophets of a renewal movement in an existing community would be most aptly described by Weber’s religious *virtuosi*. The need to promote the continuous and stable possession of the charismatic experience led to the development of a methodology of salvation. In view of the differing religious abilities of members of religious communities, “the religious *virtuosi* who work methodically at their salvation now became a distinctive religious ‘status group’ within the community of the faithful, and within this circle they attained what is specific to every status group, a social honor of their own.”⁹⁸ It seems to me that this model of routinized charisma within a “status group” of religious *virtuosi* offers the best perspective on the “wandering charismatics” who seem to lie behind the “Q-tradition” and the *Didache*, which is closely related to the “Q-tradition,” but probably independent of the present written gospels.⁹⁹

Jerusalem “superlative apostles” probably saw him as having a derived apostleship, dependent on their authority for its legitimacy (Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 53–56). Paul is the innovator and not his opponents. Cf. N. Taylor, *Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem: A Study in Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity*, JSOT supp. 66 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992).

97. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 439.

98. *Ibid.*, 539.

99. J. A. Draper, “The Jesus Tradition in the *Didache*,” in *Didache in Modern Research*, 72–91. Stegemann (“Vagabond Radicalism,” 160–64) allows that “wandering Christians” may be a feature of the “Q” tradition, but argues that this was simply economic necessity. It is in Luke-Acts, who may be influenced by the Cynicism he knew from his Hellenistic background, that we find clearest descriptions of such itinerant disciples. Horsley denies that they exist even in Q (*Sociology and the Jesus Movement*, 45–46).

5. APOSTLES AND PROPHETS IN THE *DIDACHE*5.1 *Form Critical Analysis*

It has been observed by several scholars, particularly since the epic study of J.-P. Audet,¹⁰⁰ that the *Didache* is not a unitary but a composite work. It has, in fact, evolved over a period of time. This is true of the instructions concerning apostles and prophets in *Didache* 11–13. However, it should be noted that the *Didache* is a community rule, intended to regulate the behavior of a community. It is not a romantic reconstruction of a bygone era, nor is it “advice on a wide variety of practical subjects by an unknown author who uses the pseudonyms of the twelve apostles.”¹⁰¹

Secondly, it should be noted that it is in the nature of community rules that they are continuously edited and updated to conform to the changing needs of the community. An example of a community rule from the first century C.E. is the Qumran *Manual of Discipline*, where a penalty may be changed from six months to one year as the severity with which it is regarded by the community changes (1QS 7.8), by the simple expedient of scratching out the first and inserting the second above the line. Elsewhere, circumstances in the Qumran community seem to have led to the reformulation of rules to take account of backsliding.¹⁰² The *Manual of Discipline* itself seems to have been composed by the accumulation of traditional elements around a central core.¹⁰³ The *Didache* probably was composed in a similar fashion.¹⁰⁴ The instructions in a community rule will continue to evolve for as long as it remains authoritative as a community rule.¹⁰⁵ The process can be seen at work in the reformulation of the *Didache* in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, as well as in the continuing use of the Two Ways instruction in *The Epistle of*

100. J.-P. Audet, *La Didachè: Instructions des Apôtres* (Paris: Gabalda, 1958).

101. D. E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 208; cf. 190, 225. He is clearly drawing on the now discredited theories of J. A. Robinson, J. Muilenburg, R. H. Connolly, and E. Vokes. See my Introduction to *Didache in Modern Research*, 10–16.

102. Cf. J. M. O'Connor, “La genèse littéraire de la règle de la communauté,” *RB* 76 (1969): 528–49.

103. O'Connor, “Genèse.”

104. See G. Schöllgen, “The *Didache* as a Church Order: An Examination of the Purpose for the Composition of the *Didache* and its Consequences for its Interpretation” in Draper, *Didache in Modern Research*, 43–71.

105. Cf. R. A. Kraft, *The Apostolic Fathers III: Barnabas and the Didache* (London: Nelson, 1965), 19–22; J. A. Draper, “Barnabas and the Riddle of the *Didache* Revisited,” *JSNT* 58 (1995): 89–113, esp. 90–92.

Barnabas, Doctrina apostolorum, and the Coptic and Ethiopic Church Orders.

Our first task, then, is to examine the *Didache* from a form-critical point of view to determine the extent of editorial activity in the text. Form criticism has, in any case, been the closest of the New Testament tools to the social sciences by virtue of its examination of the *Sitz im Leben* of a text.¹⁰⁶ *Didache* 1–6.1 forms a distinct entity within the work, consisting of primitive prebaptismal catechetical material. *Didache* 6.2–11.2 provides the ritual material for initiation of Gentiles into a Jewish Christian community.¹⁰⁷ 11.3–15.4 consists of instructions concerning reception of outsiders, tithes, and discipline. *Didache* 16 consists of an apocalypse, providing an eschatological warning to re-enforce the provisions of the community rule.¹⁰⁸

Each set of instructions in 11.3–15.4 is introduced by a set formula: *περὶ δὲ τῶν . . . οὕτω ποιήσατε*.¹⁰⁹ The formula in 6.3 is slightly different, and may, indeed, come from an earlier stage of the text, as the use of the second person singular suggests.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, there is a consistency:

περὶ δὲ τῆς βρώσεως, ὃ δύνασαι βάστασον (6.3)
περὶ δὲ τοῦ βαπτίσματος, οὕτω βαπτίσατε (7.1)
πρὸ δὲ τοῦ βαπτίσματος προνηστευσάτω (7.4)
περὶ δὲ τῆς εὐχαριστίας, οὕτως εὐχαριστήσατε (9.1)

106. Theissen, “Forschungsgeschichtlichen Einordnung,” 3–9.

107. See J. A. Draper, “The Role of Ritual in the Alternation of Social Universe: Jewish-Christian Initiation of Gentiles in the *Didache*,” *Listening* 32 (1997): 48–67.

108. E. Bammel, “Pattern and Prototype of *Didache* 16” in *Didache in Modern Research*, 364–72.

109. There has been much debate concerning the function of the *περὶ δέ* formula, especially with regard to its use in the letters of Paul. The debate has been well summarised by M. M. Mitchell (“Concerning PERI DE in 1 Corinthians,” *NT* 31.3 [1989]: 229–56), who concludes that the formula functions “as a topic marker introducing a readily known subject” (251). My conclusions concerning its use in the *Didache* support her contention. However, she examines only its background in classical Greek literature, koine Greek, and other New Testament passages. It has a background in Semitic usage, also, where the Greek formula *περὶ δέ* probably reflects the formula *על זה* or *על זה*. It is used this way in the Damascus Document, to introduce a new topic of halakah (CD 9.8; 10.10, 14; 16.10, 13), and in the rabbinic writings: *על זה נאמר*, *על זה* (W. Bacher, *Die exegetische Terminologie der jüdischen Traditionsliteratur* I–II [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlicher Buchgesellschaft, 1905], I: 5f.; II: 148).

110. Since the second person singular is associated with the intimate catechetical form of *Didache* 1.1–6.1, reflecting the close relation between teacher and catechumen. However, it could also be that *ὃ δύνασαι* is a redaction, modifying the rigorous application of the Jewish food laws in the community (cf. also *ὃ δύνῃ, τοῦτο ποίει* in 6.2).

μετά δὲ τὸ ἐμπλησθῆναι οὕτως εὐχαριστήσατε (10.1)
 περὶ δὲ τῆς εὐωδίας, οὕτως εὐχαριστήσατε (10.8)¹¹¹

The regularity of this pattern makes it extremely likely that the existing text of *Didache* 11.3 has been edited from an original *περὶ δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων, οὕτω ποιήσατε*, providing instructions only about the reception of apostles, to *περὶ δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, κατὰ τὸ δόγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὕτω ποιήσατε*, on grounds of the formal criteria we have identified. The clumsiness of the insertion of the reference to prophets, and to the gospel as a source of authority outside of the text itself, is reflected in a textual variant, where *δέ* has crept into 11.4 to compensate.¹¹² The form usually contains only one subject in the title, and certainly makes no reference to the gospel. Moreover, in the instructions which follow in 11.4–6, there is no reference to prophets. The word *ψευδοπροφήτης* is used repeatedly, but this is common in the Septuagint, and has come to have a general reference in the intertestamental literature to anyone who falsely claims divine authority.¹¹³ *ψευδαπόστολος*, on the other hand, is only attested in II Cor 11.13; Justin, *Dialogue* 35.3; Eusebius *H.E.* 4.22.5; Ps.-Clement, *Homily* 16.21, and was probably coined by Paul himself. It seems likely, then, that *καὶ προφήτων κατὰ τὸ δόγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* was added to the title of these instructions at a later stage.

It is important, from a redaction-critical perspective, that the *δόγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* is associated with this prophetic stage of the text. This is particularly so in the light of Weber's insistence that the intrusion of a prophetic movement into a "priestly" community (i.e., one in which charisma has been routinized already) would result in the formation of a corpus of tradition. The emergence of "the gospel" as the criterion of authority in the community has a subversive effect on the community rule itself. This can be seen especially in 15.4: "But concerning your

111. It seems likely that this instruction concerning *εὐωδίας*, translating the Coptic, as argued by L. T. Lefort (*Les Pères Apostoliques en Copte*. CSCO 135, ScrCop 17 [Louvain: Durbecq, 1952], 26; τοῦ μύρου), most probably referring to the "incense" used in worship, is part of the original text of the *Didache*, since it is supported by the Coptic version and the *Apostolic Constitution*, which otherwise represent different textual traditions.

112. The reading is found in H, but omitted in c, e.

113. See K. Niederwimmer, "Itinerant Radicalism," 329 n. 26; Rordorf and Tuilier, *La Doctrine*, 52. E.g., Philo, *De spec. leg.* 4.51; Josephus, *Ant.* 9.133; 8.236; 318; 10.111; *B.J.* 6.185f.; *TJud.* 21.9; Mt 7.15; 24.11, 24; Mk 13.22; Lk 6.26; Acts 13.6; II Pet 2.1; I Jn 4.1; Rev 16.13; 19.20; 20.10; *Herm. Mand.* 11.1f., 4, 7; *Act. Thom.* 79. Cf. K. O. Sandnes, *Paul—One of the Prophets?* WUNT 2/43 (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1991), 216 n. 124, 223.

prayers and alms and all you do, act in this way, as you have it in the gospel of our Lord.” The *Didache* purports to be offering rules on prayers and alms, etc., so that to refer beyond it to “the gospel” ultimately undermines its own authority and importance as “teaching of the apostles.”

The short instruction concerning apostles in 11.3–6 bears the same casuistic structure and tone as the instructions in *Didache* 6, 7, 9–10: first the statement of the general principle in the imperative, then particular specifications and qualifications of the general principle, followed by a statement of the limit of what is permissible. The casuistic style is marked by expressions reflecting underlying semitisms: *πᾶς*, *ἐὰν* *δέ*, as well as a negative formulation.¹¹⁴ It has a restrained and undeveloped tone very different from the instructions about the prophets, which bear the stamp of a burning issue.¹¹⁵

The instructions in *Didache* 12, on the other hand, follow the same pattern and use the same language as 11.4–6. This makes it probable that they come from the same redactional stage as 11.3–6, and followed directly from that instruction, to clarify the procedure when someone arrives from outside the community who is not an apostle. The original text would then read as follows:

περὶ δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὕτω ποιήσατε:
 πᾶς ἀπόστολος ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς δεχθήτω ὡς Κύριος·
 οὐ μενεῖ εἰ μὴ ἡμέραν μίαν
 ἐὰν δὲ ᾖ χρεία, καὶ τὴν ἄλλην
 τρεῖς δὲ ἐὰν μείνη, ψευδοπροφήτης ἐστίν·
 ἐξερχόμενος δὲ ὁ ἀπόστολος
 μηδὲν λαμβανέτω εἰ μὴ ἄρτον ἕως οὗ ἀυλισθῆ
 ἐὰν δὲ ἀργύριον αἰτῆ, ψευδοποφήτης ἐστί.
 πᾶς δὲ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου δεχθήτω
 ἔπειτα δὲ δοκιμάσαντες αὐτὸν γνώσεσθε,
 σύνεσιν γὰρ ἔξετε δεξίαν καὶ ἀριστεράν.
 εἰ μὲν παροδῖός ἐστιν ὁ ἐρχόμενος,
 βοηθεῖτε αὐτῷ ὅσον δύνασθε
 οὐ μενεῖ δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰ μὴ δύο
 ἢ τρεῖς ἐὰν ᾖ ἀνάγκη.

114. G. Schille (“Das Recht der Propheten und Apostel—gemeinderechtliche Beobachtungen zu *Didache* Kapitel 11–13,” *Theologische Versuche* I, eds. P. Wätzel and G. Schille [Berlin: Evangelische Verlaganstalt, 1966], 89–90) sees these reflecting the semitic *כָּל* and *אִם* *וְ*.

115. So that the instructions on apostles have been seen as belonging to a past age: Schille (“Recht,” 88); Niederwimmer (“Itinerant Radicalism,” 334); Rordorf and Tuilier (*Doctrine*, 51f.).

εἰ δὲ θελεῖ πρὸς ὑμᾶς καθῆσθαι, τεχνίτης ὢν
 ἐργαζέσθω καὶ φαγέτω
 εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἔχει τέχνην,
 κατὰ τὴν σύνεσιν ὑμῶν προνοήσατε
 πῶς μὴ ἀργὸς μεθ' ὑμῶν ζήσεται χριστιανός.
 εἰ δὲ οὐ θελεῖ οὕτω ποιεῖν, χριστέμπορος ἔστι·
 προσέχετε ἀπὸ τοιούτων.

These brief instructions could be described as a hospitality code. The instructions concerning prophets which intervene, on the other hand, contain no reference to travel or sustenance. They refer to the activity of prophets within the cult of the community, where they speak “in the Spirit” and issue authoritative demands to the community. This makes it clear that the instructions concerning prophets are an insertion into an earlier text, attracted by the *Stichwort* ψευδοπροφήτης and by their claim to an authority equivalent to that of the apostles.

The chief function of the apostles that could be gleaned from the sparse information is that they have a representative function, since they are to be received ὡς κύριος,¹¹⁶ unlike ordinary Christian travelers who come ἐν ονόματι κυρίου (12.1) but are simply received and tested. There is no indication that the apostles are limited to a particular number, twelve. Apart from that, apostles are clearly traveling persons who may not stay longer than the minimum possible time in the community. They would usually be unknown personally to the community in which they arrive seeking accommodation, so that strict rules were needed.¹¹⁷ It is not clear why Niederwimmer considers these instructions to be apologetic for the creeping decay of the institution.¹¹⁸ Hospitality with coreligionists or conationals was a crucial question for any traveler in the Greco-Roman world.¹¹⁹

There is no suggestion that the apostles are wandering to and fro,¹²⁰ nor that they have any charismatic or ecstatic function beyond that of

116. Cf. Niederwimmer, “Itinerant Radicalism,” 330.

117. *Ibid.*, 322.

118. *Ibid.*, 333.

119. See R. MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations 50 B.C. to A.D. 284* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 83–85. Cf. III Jn 5–8.

120. Although this is widely taken for granted since Harnack (*Lehre der zwölf Apostel*, 104) described them as “von Ort zu Ort wanderten.” Cf. Theissen (“‘Wir haben alles verlassen’ (Mc. X, 28). Nachfolge und soziale Entwurzelung in der jüdisch-palästinischen Gesellschaft des 1. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.,” *Studien zur Soziologie*, 106–41); G. Kretschmar (“Beitrag,” 27–67); Niederwimmer (“Itinerant Radicalism,” 328, 329f., 333) gives no evidence for his confident assertion: “What is envisaged is obviously not an isolated event, but a repeated and regular one.”

representation. No mention of special endowment with the Spirit is made. The instructions would serve those on a specific embassy, with letters of recommendation from the community which sent them. The important feature of the Jewish שלוחים is that they were appointed for a specific task, and only for the duration of that task did they have their plenary function. They were not missionaries (in our modern sense of religious evangelism) nor necessarily even teachers, although rabbis seem usually to have been chosen for religious delegations. Hospitality towards such *talmid hachamim* was enjoined as especially meritorious (b. Ber. 10b; b. San. 92a). They were not regular officers of the community, yet they must have been a common feature of life in the Jewish Diaspora, keeping communities in touch with one another and with the center of Jewish religious life in Palestine.

Christian apostles, like their Jewish counterparts, would have need of hospitality from coreligionists in their journey to their destination. Their purpose would also vary: it could be administrative, disciplinary, instructive, or financial. It is sheer speculation to suggest that their task was “eschatological proclamation, call to repentance, exorcism.”¹²¹ Of course, at their final destination, their letters of introduction would also guarantee their right to stay until their business had been completed. In the communities through which they passed on their journey, however, they could command only one night’s accommodation and provision for the next day’s journey. The necessity to which the instructions refer, which would make two days’ stay imperative, is probably the Sabbath (or later, perhaps, Sunday) when travel is prohibited. A longer stay than that would show that the apostle was not in earnest in his journey.¹²²

121. Niederwimmer, “Itinerant Radicalism,” 330. Barsabbas and Silas in Acts 15.22–35 represent such apostles (they are ἀπεστάλακαμεν, v. 27), delegates who carry a letter of authorization from those who send them. In this case, the letter itself then authorizes these delegates to add further instruction by word of mouth (διὰ λόγου ἀπαγγέλλοντας τὰ αὐτά, v. 27). Such a letter might also instruct the community to collect their tithes to send back with the delegates. Since the delegates have a specific task in the community to whom the letter is addressed, they are authorized to spend whatever time is necessary to complete the task (ποιήσαντες δὲ χρόνον ἀπελύθησαν μετ’ εἰρήνης ἀπὸ τῶν ἀδελφῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστείλαντας αὐτούς, v. 33). However, the letter would not authorize them to spend long periods in other communities on their journey to and from Antioch! From Christians along the road from Jerusalem to Antioch they could expect overnight hospitality. My analysis here does not imply that I consider this letter to be historically authentic, simply that it provides an unambiguous example of what such apostolic activity involved.

122. There seems to be no justification for Aune’s assertion that these instructions “reflect the suspicious attitudes of rural peasants toward outsiders, even if those

The tradition-history of the *Didache*, where at least the first six chapters are described as διδαχή τῶν ἀποστόλων or διδαχή κυρίου διὰ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in the titles of the work, shows that the apostles were regarded as the earliest sources of authority in the community. If the second title is authentic, then their authority derives from the Jerusalem community. There is no reason to suppose that the reference to the “twelve” is pseudonymous, unless the critic starts out with the a priori assumption that everything outside of the New Testament is late (at the earliest second century C.E., the great chronological dumping ground for extracanonical texts), and that the *Didache* is a forgery. However, the exact reference of “apostles” in the title remains unclear. Audet has argued persuasively that δώδεκα has been added to the original title.¹²³

Ordinary Christian travelers, who come in the Lord’s name, are given slightly more leeway, since the occasion and circumstances of their travel could be diverse. Moreover, the possibility that they might wish to settle is accepted, although with stringent controls to prevent them becoming parasitic on the community. Since, however, the community is not obliged to provide them with hospitality, it can afford to be flexible!

5.2 *Economic Distribution in the Didache Community*

The reference to financial matters in *Didache* 13, namely the first fruits, may well have a logical connection to instructions concerning apostles and travelers. In Jewish communities, the main task of the apostles (*shaluchim*) of the Jerusalem Temple and later the rabbis, was to collect the tithes and taxes.¹²⁴ It may indicate that the Jerusalem apostles in the first Christian community supported themselves by means of the transfer of these resources to themselves. Paul’s well-known collection for the “poor saints in Jerusalem” may point in the same direction.

If our analysis is correct, then our redaction-critical analysis could be extended to *Didache* 13, where there are clear signs of editorial activity. Here the mark of the primary stage of the tradition is the use of the

outsiders are Christians” (*Prophecy*, 225). Similar strict rules are laid down by the rabbis for the travelling poor (העוברי ממקום למקום לוי: m. Peah 8.7; t. Peah 4.8; j. Peah 21a). These rules would clearly be needed, regardless of whether the community involved was rural or urban.

123. *Didachè*, 91–103.

124. Cf. Holl, “Kirchenbegriff,” 44–67; S. Freyne, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian* (Wilmington: Michael Glazer, 1980), 281–87; Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 54.

second person singular (cf. 1.5), since it was originally an instruction to individuals to pay tithes. We could reconstruct it on that basis as follows:

Πᾶσαν οὖν ἀπαρχὴν γεννημάτων ληνοῦ καὶ ἄλωνος,
 βοῶν τε καὶ προβάτων λαβῶν δώσεις τὴν ἀπσρχὴν·
 Ἐὰν σιτίαν ποιῆς,
 τὴν ἀπαρχὴν λαβῶν δὸς κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν·
 Ὠσαύτως κεράμιον οἴνου ἢ ἐλαίου ἀνοίξας,
 τὴν ἀπαρχὴν λαβῶν δος·
 Ἀργυρίου δὲ καὶ ἱματισμοῦ καὶ παντὸς κτήματος
 λαβῶν τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ὡς ἂν σοι δόξη, δὸς κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν.

In the redacted form it has become an instruction to the community as to the correct recipients of their financial resources, namely the prophets, hence the use of the second person plural in the redaction.

The tithes have become the τροφή of which the prophet is worthy, an instruction which finds repeated expression in the “gospel,” on which the prophets base their authority (11.3; cf. 15.3–4). In the original instructions, on the other hand, the authority for the collection of tithes is not gospel but Torah (ἐντολή; 13.5, 7; cf. 1.5; 4.13). There is evidence that the tithes were collected anyway in the community, whether there were prophets around or not, since a destination for the revenues must be specified in the absence of prophets. The earlier Two Ways teaching is sharply critical of the rich, and enjoins scrupulous almsgiving to the poor (e.g., 5.2), which makes it striking that they must take second place here. The text of the instruction could then be analyzed as follows, with the italics indicating the earliest stage:

- XIII.1 Πᾶς δὲ προφήτης ἀληθινός, θέλων καθῆσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἄξιός ἐστι τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ.
 2. Ὠσαύτως διδάσκαλος ἀληθινός ἐστιν ἄξιος καὶ αὐτὸς ὡσπερ ὁ ἐργάτης τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ.
 3. Πᾶσαν οὖν ἀπαρχὴν γεννημάτων ληνοῦ καὶ ἄλωνος, βοῶν τε καὶ προβάτων λαβῶν δώσεις τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῖς προφήταις· αὐτοὶ γὰρ εἰσιν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ὑμῶν.
 4. Ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἔχητε προφήτην, δότε τοῖς πτωχοῖς.
 5. Ἐὰν σιτίαν ποιῆς, τὴν ἀπαρχὴν λαβῶν δὸς κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν.
 6. Ὠσαύτως κεράμιον οἴνου ἢ ἐλαίου ἀνοίξας, τὴν ἀπαρχὴν λαβῶν δὸς τοῖς προφήταις·
 7. ἀργυρίου δὲ καὶ ἱματισμοῦ καὶ παντὸς κτήματος λαβῶν τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ὡς ἂν σοι δόξη, δὸς κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν.

This change in the distribution of economic resources of the community may reflect a crisis in the allocation of revenues. Seemingly, their earlier beneficiaries were no longer receiving them for some reason.

If, at the earliest stage of the tradition, the traveling apostles (delegates of Jerusalem) were responsible for the collection of tithes for delivery to the apostles (delegates of Jesus) in Jerusalem, then we may deduce the concrete historical circumstances behind the change in destination of the tithes. After the collapse of the apostolic Jerusalem community in the events leading up to and following the Jewish War, a crisis must have been experienced by those communities depending on the authority of Jerusalem.¹²⁵ In particular, the execution of James the Brother of the Lord in 62 C.E. must have led to an immediate crisis, especially as it was followed shortly afterwards by the withdrawal of the Jerusalem community to Pella (*H. E.* 2.23; 3.2–3).¹²⁶

In any case, the prophets, who have succeeded the apostles as the source of authority in the community, have obtained control of the economic resources of the community also. It seems likely that a later stage still is reflected by the appearance of teachers into the picture in 13.2. The emphatic καὶ αὐτός indicates something of a struggle in this regard. The prophets seem also to have obtained authority over the cultic acts of the community. At least the codicil to the instructions on the eucharist give the prophets *carte blanche*: τοῖς δὲ προφήταις ἐπιστρέψαιτε εὐχαριστεῖν ὅσα θέλουσιν. Nevertheless, through the persons of the teachers, the settled traditional leaders of the community (“priests,” according to Weber) reassert themselves, particularly by means of their compilation of the “gospel.”¹²⁷

5.3 *The Charismatic Prophets of the Didache*

If the instructions concerning prophets represent a redaction of the instructions concerning apostles, then it also follows that the redaction deliberately associates prophets with the apostles (perhaps Matthew does the same in attaching 10.40–42 to the account of the Commissioning of the Twelve by Jesus). The present form of the text uses the archaic authority of the apostles to legitimate the emergent prophetic class.¹²⁸ The confusion occasioned by the title of the section is more or less *intentional*.

125. Cf. W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 317–25; Aune, *Prophecy*, 208–9.

126. Though the evidence for this event is far from certain.

127. J. A. Draper, “Social Ambiguity and the Production of Text: Prophets, Teachers, Bishops and Deacons and the Development of the Jesus Tradition in the Community of the Didache” in Jefford, *Didache in Context*, 284–312.

128. *Contra* the assertion of Hill (*New Testament Prophecy*, 186) and others that *Didache* is typical of the decline of prophecy.

The instructions of the *Didache* allow the following characteristics of the prophets to be determined. Firstly, their authority is no longer *representative*, as was that of the apostles. It is directly inspired by the Spirit (λαλοῦντα ἐν πνεύματι), so that the prophet may not be tested or judged. This would be a sin against the Holy Spirit (11.7).¹²⁹ The prophet's authority is *directly* charismatic.

The only test of the prophetic vocation which is permitted is that s/he must possess the "lifestyle of the Lord" (τοὺς τρόπους τοῦ κυρίου: 11.8), which Theissen, without much ado, identifies with Christ's renunciation of home, family, and regular income.¹³⁰ The prophet is prohibited from demanding food or money, or indeed anything else from the community (11.9, 12). The prophet of the *Didache* conforms with the picture of the ascetic *virtuoso* offered by Weber. It is not stated that s/he would also be subject to the limited stay allowed to visitors to the community, nor that s/he would be entitled only to the provision specified in the hospitality rules of 11.4–6 and 12.1–5. According to ch. 13, at least, the prophet is entitled to the first fruits if s/he chooses to settle in the community.

Complete consistency between lifestyle and teaching is required of the prophet (11.10). This reflects the "ethic of sheer commitment" required of the "exemplary prophet," in Weber's terms. Compromise and failure may be expected from the ordinary member of the local community, but is not permitted in one who claims the prophet's charismatic authority. This demand for conformity to rules involves what Aune calls "certification," i.e., the prophet must be "tested" (δεδοκιμασμένος) and found to be "genuine" (ἀληθινός: 11.11), presumably on the basis of the "lifestyle of the Lord" (11.8), before s/he is allowed to practice.¹³¹

Bizarre and extreme forms of behavior are permitted and even expected from the prophet, which are not permitted to the average member of the local community. The prophet is not permitted to extend such behavior to ordinary members either (11.11). This extreme kind of charismatic behavior is defined as ποιῶν εἰς μυστήριον ἐκκλησίας, which is not subject to the judgment of the community but only to the judgment

129. Cf. I Thess 5.19–20. Mk 3.28–29 could find its original *Sitz im Leben* in the kind of setting envisaged by the *Didache*. See M. E. Boring, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus: Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 162; *contra* Aune, *Prophecy*, 240–42.

130. Theissen, "Forschungsgeschichtlichen Einordnung," 91; Cf. Niederwimmer, "Itinerant Radicalism," 331–32. In "Social Ambiguity and the Production of Text," 306–7, I have suggested that τοὺς τρόπους τοῦ κυρίου refers more to the possession of the Jesus tradition by the prophets.

131. Aune, *Prophecy*, 226.

of God.¹³² It is compared to the behavior of the prophets of the Old Testament. The prophets in the community of the *Didache* are thus beyond the authority of the established leaders of the community. Such a scenario would reflect the tension of the conflict between “priest” and “prophet” in Weber’s schema. In this case, the “prophets” have succeeded in supplanting the “priests.” Even in the matter of the cult, the thanksgiving meal of the community, the prophets are permitted to celebrate as they wish (ὅσα θέλουσιν: 10.7), thus supplanting the carefully codified eucharistic prayers of the community (*Did.* 9–10).

Finally, the prophets are severely restricted in terms of financial matters. They may order food for others, but not eat of it themselves (11.9). They may not directly ask for financial support for themselves, though they may ask it on behalf of others in need (11.12). In this matter they may not be judged. The interesting thing is the ambiguity which is introduced into their economic situation by *Didache* 13.

It seems that, at a certain point, prophets began a transition from the status of outsiders to a settled status within the community. This, at least, is the implication of *Didache* 13, where they are not only given the right to settle, but the right to be supported by the community. They are to receive the first fruits of the community, which were probably already collected in the Jewish fashion. That they could do this indicates that a major social upheaval has occurred in the wider Christian scene. If the apostles of 11.4–6 had ceased to visit the community, to collect money, and to give instructions from Jerusalem, then this would have provided the sociological conditions for such a transition from the status of the prophets as outsiders to that of settled community leaders. It still does not confirm that such prophets were itinerants prior to settling, only that they came from outside the community. It also does not settle the question as to whether prophets might also have emerged from within the community. However, since this possibility is not mentioned, it seems that the burning issue relates to prophets coming from outside.

132. There is no evidence for the idea of “spiritual marriage” which is widely seen behind this text, e.g., Niederwimmer, “Itinerant Radicalism,” 331–32; Knopf, *Lehre*, 32–33; G. Bornkamm, ΜΥΣΤΕΡΙΟΝ, *TDNT* 4: 824–25; H. von Campenhausen, “Early Christian Asceticism,” in *Tradition and Life in the Church*, 90–122 (London: Collins, 1968). It is of course quite possible that the shocking behavior to which the text refers might have included such a “spiritual marriage,” but that is mere conjecture. It could equally well refer to running naked through the town like Ezekiel (or like Bockelson at Münster!) or castrating himself to become a eunuch for the sake of the Kingdom as in Mt 19.12 (or perhaps like Origen).

This would not have been without consequences, in terms of a struggle with the settled leaders of the community, as 15.2 shows. Bishops and deacons, the original local leaders, are in danger of being despised and their authority overlooked: “For they exercise the ministry of the prophets and teachers, even they (καὶ αὐτοί). Do not despise them, for they too (αὐτοί) are your honourable ones, with the prophets and teachers” (15.2). It is more usual to see this text as evidence of emergent settled leadership in the local communities,¹³³ but it should, in my opinion, be read the other way around! Certainly Phil 1.1 and *I Clem.* 42 show that bishops and deacons were mentioned together as the local leadership at a very early time.

On the other hand, “teachers” emerge alongside the prophets, sharing in the financial provision of the community (13.2). Here it would seem that the “teachers” are the class responsible for producing the body of tradition which, according to Weber, the irruption of charismatic prophets into the community would stimulate. This would account for their success in maintaining their position vis-à-vis the prophets, which the bishops and deacons were clearly struggling to do. One could imagine that the author of Matthew’s Gospel would have been one such “teacher,” collecting and codifying the prophetic material and relating it to the tradition of the community.

5.4 *Prophets of the Didache and Weber’s Virtuosi*

While there is no evidence at all that the apostles of the *Didache* are charismatic figures, the prophets clearly are. They fit the description of the ascetic *virtuosi* of Weber’s model. We could tabulate the characteristics of the ascetic *virtuoso* in Weber with the information in the *Didache* as follows:

| Virtuosi | Weber’s Description | Prophets in the <i>Didache</i> |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Charismatic | Secure and continuous possession of charisma | ἐν πνεύματι (11.7, 8, 9, 12) |

133. So Niederwimmer (“Itinerant Radicalism,” 336–38) sees a crisis reflected as charismatics are confronted by the office-bearers and functionaries arising in the local communities (*aufkommenden Orts-klerus*): “That obviously means that the execution and the leadership of the worship service, functions which had lain in the hands of the pneumatics since the establishment of spirituals in the community, should now be shared by the groups of functionaries coming from the local communities themselves” (ibid., 337–38).

| Virtuosi | Weber's Description | Prophets in the <i>Didache</i> |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Instrumental | God at work in them as a tool | λαλοῦντα ἐν πνεύματι (11.7, 8); ὀρίζων . . . ἐν πνεύματι (11.9); ποιῶν εἰς μυστήριον (11.1); εἶπη ἐν πνεύματι (11.12) |
| Rules | Systematic regulation of life to religious end; Methodological sanctification | κατὰ τὸ δόγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (11.3) |
| Renunciation | Radical ethico-religious critique of the relation to society, the conventional virtues of which are unheroic and utilitarian | ἔχη τοὺς τρόπους κυρίου (11.8); οὐ φάγεται ἀπ' αὐτῆς (11.9); ποιῶν εἰς μυστήριον κοσμικὸν ἐκκλησίας (11.11); ὃς ἂν εἶπη ἐν πνεύματι· δός μοι ἀργύρια ἢ ἕτερα τίνα, οὐκ ἀκούσεσθε αὐτοῦ (11.12) |
| Economic Ambivalence | Enjoyment of wealth forbidden, but economic success is God's blessing | ὃς ἂν εἶπη ἐν πνεύματι· δός μοι ἀργύρια ἢ ἕτερα τίνα οὐκ ἀκούσεσθε αὐτοῦ (11.12); πᾶς δὲ προφήτης ἀληθινός . . . ἄξιός ἐστι τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ (13.1); ἀργυρίου δὲ καὶ ἱματισμοῦ καὶ παντὸς κτήματος λαβῶν τὴν ἀπαρχὴν ὡς ἂν σοι δόξη δὸς κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν (13.7) |
| Vocation | Religious charisma proved by rational ethical conduct within the world | δεδοκιμασμένος, ἀληθινός (11.10); ὀρίζων τράπεζαν (11.9); ἐὰν δὲ περὶ ἄλλων ὑστερούντων εἶπη δοῦναι (11.12); τὴν λειτουργίαν τῶν προφητῶν (15.1) |
| Class | Closed status group or "aristocracy" in the community | ἐπιτρέπετε εὐχαριστεῖν, ὅσα θέλουσιν (10.7); οὐ πειράσετε οὐδὲ διακρινεῖτε (11.7); ποιῶν εἰς μυστήριον κοσμικὸν ἐκκλησίας, μὴ διδάσκων δὲ ποιεῖν, ὅσα αὐτὸς ποιεῖ, οὐ κριθήσεται ἐφ' ὑμῶν· μετὰ θεοῦ γάρ |

| Virtuosi | Weber's Description | Prophets in the <i>Didache</i> |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Lack of Theological Development | Happy closure of mind about the meaning of the world | ἔχει τὴν κρίσιν (11.11); μηδεὶς αὐτὸν κρινέτω (11.12); αὐτοὶ γὰρ εἰσιν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ὑμῶν (13.3); οἱ τετιμημένοι . . . μετὰ τῶν προφητῶν (15.2) |
| | | Lack of theological development |

It seems that there is a widespread agreement between Weber's schema of the religious *virtuosi* and the prophets of the *Didache*, which may help us to grasp the social dynamic of the community. They are figures of the advanced process of routinization, renewers rather than direct successors of the charismatic leader.

6. CONCLUSION

The confusion of the different redactional layers of the text by Theissen and Kretschmar has led to the confusion of apostles and prophets.¹³⁴ Their characteristics are read together to produce a “wandering charismatic” which fits their selective use of Weber's model. However, our study has shown that the apostles and prophets have a different social function. If we are to use Weber's model, the apostles are not wandering vagabonds, but representatives of the successors of the charismatic leader settling in Jerusalem, who claim authority on the basis of their representation of Jesus' delegated charisma. Paul stands out as a glaring contradiction to this, but then he himself acknowledges his own unique position in polemical fashion on repeated occasions. He concedes that others deny that he is an apostle: εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος (I Cor 9.2); his commission from the Lord is an exception to the rule: ἔσχατον δὲ πάντων ὡσπερὶ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ὄφθη κάμοί (I Cor 15.8). It is Paul who redefines the meaning of the word for the communities in which he claims authority, and since he has no basis on which to claim the title *de jure*, he claims it *de facto* on charismatic grounds (II Cor 12.11–13). This is clearly an innovation: the word originates in the semantic field of delegated authority. The prophets, on the other hand, are originally

134. Niederwimmer's reconstruction is more sophisticated and based on a different description of the process of redaction.

(itinerant?) outsiders, a phenomenon on the fringes of the Christian communities, claiming to live as Jesus lived and cultivating knowledge of the Jesus tradition, which they enlarged on in their prophecy. Their emergence into prominence comes as a renewal movement, a response to a crisis. This is not a Palestinian phenomenon, either, but probably a Syrian movement linked to Antioch. Here, in the wider Hellenistic environment, the influence of the Cynic wandering philosophers cannot be excluded. With Luke, at least, this influence becomes pronounced and is probably conscious. The Cynic influence may, however, have been at work already in the “Q” tradition. If I am right in my analysis, then the “Q” tradition first took concrete shape as a body of teaching in the period after the collapse of the Jerusalem community, i.e., 62–80 C.E. Earlier Jesus tradition was remolded under the influence of these “wandering prophets,” who are actually refugees from the turmoil in Palestine.

Thus the prophets represent a new phase in the history of the *Didache* community, in which a time of crisis has removed the previous source of authority in the community, namely, the apostles. In their place come the prophets, who already had a place on the fringes of the Christian communities and claimed to represent a radical continuity with the origins of the Jesus movement. They fill the gap caused by the crisis of legitimacy posed by the removal of apostolic authority. They represent a radical challenge to the settled order of the communities, but a challenge based on uncompromising insistence on its original norms. The settled leaders of the community, the bishops and deacons (cf. Phil 1.1; *I Clem.* 42), are in danger of being despised.

On the other hand, the emergence of the prophets seems to have led to the emergence of a class of teachers, responsible for the collection and editing of a corpus of tradition associated with the prophets, which is called “the gospel.”¹³⁵ The gospel now becomes the norm for the community, and the community rule itself is in danger of becoming irrelevant. This partly explains the disappearance of the *Didache*.

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135. Cf. K. Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew*, ASNU 20 (Uppsala: Gleerup, 1954), who comes to the conclusion on other grounds that a “circle of teachers” was responsible for the composition of Matthew. See also Kretschmar, “Beitrag,” 44.