

CHARISMATIC PROPHECY AS LOYAL OPPOSITION IN THE SECOND-CENTURY CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

Among the many reasons for honoring Professor Robert Lyon, one is the model he has set for so many students and indeed for more distant admirers (such as myself) as a dedicated advocate of "Loyal Opposition" in the Church and in the academy. From his example, I have come to understand "Loyal Opposition" as a spirit that opposes institutional compromise and lethargy, on the one hand, but on the other hand elects to work within the system for change. I am grateful for Professor Lyon's example, and pray that what follows may be helpful in continuing his work in making "Loyal Opposition" a living alternative for contemporary Christians.

The notion of a "Loyal Opposition" has been illustrated throughout the history of the Christian church by a train of brilliant (if sometimes eccentric) saints, including early Christian monks, the followers of Francis and Clare of Assisi, the Reformers of the sixteenth century, early Pietists, Moravians and Methodists, and a host of others. What I wish to offer in the essay that follows is an attempt to connect this on-going tradition of "Loyal Opposition" with its roots in the New Testament. The connection is made by way of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy, which appeared in the New Testament period and continued to challenge early Christian communities through the end of the second century.

The subject bears particular interest, I think, because in the second century the Christian communities began to face in a critical way the crises of institutional compromise and lethargy which would beset the Church so many times thereafter. The letters of Ignatius of Antioch and Polycarp of Smyrna (ca. the 110s C.E.) reveal a developing institutional structure to the churches of Asia Minor, where a three-fold order of deacons, elders, and bishops had emerged, with submission to the bishops seen as a key to church stability.¹ On the other hand, the *Didache* (its date is much

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disputed; probably from the first half of the second century) presupposes the existence of itinerant prophets who were expected to preside at eucharists, and the *Shepherd of Hermas* (written the 140s C.E.) is in itself an account of prophetic visions received by a Roman Christian. By the time the Montanist movement emerged (ca. the 170s) charismatic prophecy had begun to be regarded as eccentric by many second-century Christians, but even later writers such as Irenaeus of Lyon and Hippolytus (both writing around 200 C.E.) presumed that the gift of prophecy was still exercised in some quarters of the churches. An examination of the phenomenon of charismatic prophecy, then, will illuminate a significant transition in the life of the Christian communities, a transition in which a "Loyal Opposition" became necessary.

CHARISMATIC PROPHECY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In order to make clear the role of charismatic prophecy as a "Loyal Opposition" in the second century, it will be worthwhile to consider for a moment the role that charismatic prophecy had played in the New Testament age. Here we are in danger of belaboring a rather obvious point, namely, that the religion of the New Testament included charismatic prophecy as a central and distinctive element.

Jewish author Geza Vermes has made an intriguing suggestion about the character of Jesus: Vermes points out that although Jesus did not fulfill the typical image of the first-century rabbis of Jerusalem, he did in fact reflect the image of what we know of first-century Galilean rabbis, a circle to which Vermes refers as first-century "charismatic Judaism."² Jesus appeared both in the role of *rabbi* (teacher) and of *nabi* (prophet) and his identification with the movement of John the Baptist solidified his identification with the prophetic tradition in tension with the institutional Judaism of his day.

Instances of Christian prophecy after Jesus are numerous in the New Testament. The prophet Agabus mentioned in the Acts, for instance, predicted a famine (Acts 11:28); Paul himself records an ecstatic vision in which he (or the person whom he describes) was "caught up into Paradise" (2 Cor 12:1-4). Perhaps more importantly, Christian "prophets" (so called) were consistently enumerated as constituting a recognized caste or office within early Christian communities, typically enumerated immediately after the rank of "apostles" (1 Cor 12:28, Rom 12:6, Eph 4:11, Acts 13:1).³ The consistency in these lists suggests that these designations (including that of "prophet") were not merely *ad hoc* designations of leadership roles, but were early on recognized as common positions across widely different Christian communities. The book of the Revelation, moreover, stands as an intact example of New Testament prophecy, and its position within the canon (not undisputed) signifies the importance of visions and prophecy within the continuing Church well beyond the New Testament period.

Although the prophets of the New Testament age existed within the structure of the early communities as a distinctive caste or office, it is easy to see how their ministry took on an "oppositional" character. For Jesus, this oppositional character was expressed in tension with both ruling elites (Sadducees) and rabbinic experts (Pharisees), setting off the lowly and humble (the *ptochoi*, "spat upon"; Matt 5:3) against the high and mighty. In the Revelation, especially the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor (Rev 2-3), prophetic opposition is directed against the churches' lethargy ("lukewarmness") and their compro-

mises in the face of Roman oppression and Roman civil religious demands. In this we may see prophetic opposition in the context of second- or perhaps third-generation Christian communities, reacting no longer against the institutions of Judaism but rather against the existing institutions of Christian communities.

It is important to note, however, that the Revelation's positive reliance on charismatic prophecy does not seem to have characterized all of the communities represented in the later New Testament literature. If the Revelation stands as an affirmation of charismatic and "oppositional" prophecy, the Pastoral Epistles and the letters attributed to Peter bear a different character. In these letters, "prophecy" (when used positively) seems to denote only the writings of the Old Testament (or perhaps an occasional pagan "prophet," Tit 1:12). There are consistent warnings about "false prophets" (2 Pet 2:1-3), but the contemporary offices of the church listed in these works were deacons, "widows," and presbyter-bishops. The office of contemporary Christian "prophet" that had appeared prominently in the Pauline lists is notoriously absent in these letters. In this we may see a development that foreshadows Ignatius of Antioch's more institutional church structure in the early second century.

The New Testament literature, then, indicates that charismatic prophecy was at first a central element of the Christian movement, typified in the ministry of Jesus himself, with a caste or office of "prophet" recognized consistently in the early Christian communities associated with Paul. The later New Testament literature suggests a growing division between those communities in which visionary prophecy was normative (*viz.*, the community represented by the Revelation) and those other communities in which Christian prophets no longer appeared as recognized leaders (*viz.*, the Pastoral Epistles and the first and second letters attributed to Peter).

CHARISMATIC PROPHECY IN THE EARLY SECOND CENTURY

This divergence over the role of Christian prophecy continued into the early second century, and the literature of the so-called "Apostolic Fathers" reflects both sides of the divergence.⁴ On the more institutional side, continuing the tradition of the Pastoral Epistles, are the letters attributed to Ignatius of Antioch, generally dated from the 110s C.E.⁵ It would be wrong to characterize Ignatius himself as "compromised," since the letters we have from him were written while he was being conveyed to Rome, under guard, to face martyrdom. The letters stand as a critical development in the polity of the early Christian communities, though, because in them the three-fold order of deacons, presbyters (*presbuteroi*, "priests" or "elders") and bishops appears plainly. Absent in them are the "widows" of the Pastoral Epistles, and the offices of "presbyter" and "bishop," confused or perhaps identical in the Pastoral epistles, appear in Ignatius as clearly distinct offices. The Ignatian letters presuppose throughout a congregational structure in the churches of Asia Minor in which there were many deacons and presbyters in each city-church, but a single bishop for each:

Since, then, in the persons already mentioned I have seen your whole community in faith and have loved it, I exhort you: be eager to do all things in godly concord, with the bishop set over you in the place of God, and the presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles, and the deacons, most sweet to me, entrusted with the service of Jesus Christ....⁶

We should note Ignatius's reference to "the bishop set over you in the place of God" in this quotation from his letter to the Magnesians (6:1). If there is a consistent theme to the Ignatian correspondence, it is the necessity of unity in the church grounded in obedience to a single bishop in each community. Ignatius consistently utilizes the parallelism given above, with the bishop in the place of God and presbyters and deacons subject to the bishop.⁷

In one place (Philadelphians 5:2) Ignatius acknowledged his love for "the prophets," presumably Christian prophets (although this has been disputed). At this point, though, Ignatius affirmed the role of the prophets so long as they remained within the unity of the church.⁸ Thus, although there may have remained Christian prophets in the churches of Asia Minor in Ignatius's time, they were never given a consistent place in Ignatius's understanding of the authoritative offices of the church, and he understood that their conduct and teaching had to be subject to local bishops.

The situation is very different with the ancient Christian text called the *Didache* or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." The date of this text is much disputed—estimates range from the middle of the first century to late in the second century—but the work is probably an early second-century compilation of earlier written and oral traditions, some of which may date from the first century.⁹ On the one hand, the community described in the *Didache* had deacons and bishops (apparently multiple bishops) answering to the pattern of the Pastoral epistles, and a distinction between bishops and presbyters is not made in the work (15:1). On the other hand, the *Didache* describes a number of traveling Christian leaders: "apostles," "prophets," and "teachers," and gives fairly lengthy descriptions of these (11-13). The bishops and deacons can be described as "your honorable men together with the prophets and teachers" (15:2).¹⁰ Since the prophets and teachers (and itinerant "apostles") are described separately, this passage indicates two different types of leadership in the *Didache* community: local deacons and bishops, and traveling (or "itinerant") apostles, prophets, and teachers. Although local congregational leaders are warned to test the itinerants carefully to be sure of their validity, there seems to have been a sense in which, once tested, the itinerants held authority over local officials. After a discussion of the method of celebrating eucharist, the *Didache* concludes, "but [allow] the prophets to hold Eucharist as they will" (10:7).¹¹

The fact that the *Didache* is concerned to root out false itinerants (apostles, prophets, and teachers) should indicate some level of tension between local and itinerant leaders in the community. But the community of the *Didache* seems to have integrated this tension in a different way than the communities of Asia Minor depicted in the Ignatian epistles. For the community of the *Didache* the "loyal opposition" of the itinerant prophets had become a part of the on-going life of the community. On the one hand, it can be argued that the *Didache's* community is closer to that of the Pauline churches of the New Testament, since the same sets of "primitive" offices appear in both (apostles, prophets, teacher, etc.; this makes the case for an early dating of the *Didache*). On the other hand, it could be argued that the *Didache* represents a "Montanist" community because of the prominent role played by the prophets (this would make the case for a late second-century dating of the work). Neither of these extremes is necessary, however, if we recognize an on-going tradition of charismatic prophecy that extended from the Pauline period

through the early second century right up to the Montanist movement (probably in the 170s C.E. and thereafter). This would conform to the most consistent scholarly datings of the *Didache*, and would indicate the importance of the work as presenting a picture of a more "charismatic" early second-century community that stands in rather sharp contrast to the community represented in the epistles of Ignatius of Antioch.

One other work reckoned among the "Apostolic Fathers" can be considered here, and that is the "Shepherd of Hermas." Mentioned in the Muratorian fragment as having been written

quite recently, in our own time in the city of Rome, by Hermas, while his brother Pius was sitting on the throne of the church of the city of Rome¹²

the work may be dated rather accurately to 148 C.E. (or the months immediately before and after it) in Rome. The work bears significance in our discussion because, like the Revelation in the New Testament, it is an intact example of early Christian prophecy.

The "Shepherd of Hermas" contains a sundry collection of divine revelations given to Hermas involving a number of divine beings representing Christ (one figure for Christ is a shepherd, hence the title of the work) or the personification of the Church (the figure is of a woman, the "Bride" of Christ). The work seems to presuppose the rather rigorous doctrine of many early Christian communities, that post-baptismal sins could not be forgiven (cf. Heb 6:4-6). One of the primary (and first) revelations of the work is that

After you have made known these words to them, which the Master commanded me to reveal to you, all the sins which they have formerly committed shall be forgiven them, and they shall be forgiven to all the saints who have sinned up to this day, if they repent with their whole heart, and put aside doublemindedness from their heart.¹³

That is to say, Christ makes a one-time offer of forgiveness for post-baptismal sins if the church will repent sincerely. It is interesting to consider this as a prophetic message, for it does, in a sense, "liberalize" the church's earlier rigorism, and could be taken as a first sign of growing laxity in the early church regarding moral life. Nevertheless, the issue was apparently taken so seriously that only by a divine revelation such as this one could the church consider changing its approach. The "Shepherd of Hermas," then, shows how prophecy could influence the early church to change its accepted ways, even in a less rigorous direction.

The early second century in general, then, presents a varied picture with respect to charismatic prophecy. Some communities seem to have been moving towards a formalized local structure in which prophecy was pushed to the periphery of the community's life. The communities in Asia Minor represented by Ignatius of Antioch represent this situation. In other areas, though, prophecy seems to have persisted. We do not know of Hermas's influence in the Roman church (the Muratorian fragment treats it skeptically), but in the community represented by the *Didache* itinerant charismatic leaders seem to have played a central, perhaps defining role. We should be safe in concluding, I think, that

through the end of the second century the two strands represented in the New Testament and in these communities both continued as vital forms of Christian religious life.

CHARISMATIC PROPHECY AND THE MONTANIST MOVEMENT

By the end of the second century, though, the more institutional and less prophetic tradition represented by Ignatius of Antioch seems to have been winning the day. The rise of Montanism, or perhaps we should say the isolation of charismatic prophecy in the Montanist movement, gives clear evidence that by the 180s charismatic prophecy was seen as increasingly "eccentric," i.e., outside of the centers of Christian thought and life.

The Montanist movement was described by Eusebius of Caesarea, Epiphanius, Hippolytus, Tertullian, and other ancient Christian writers.¹⁴ A consensus of ancient and modern scholarship places the origins of the movement in the 170s C.E.¹⁵ The movement was centered in Phrygia, headed by a prophet named Montanus and prophetesses Prisca (or Priscilla) and Maximilla. Attempts to prove that Montanism was grounded in a pagan Phrygian cult, or that the Montanists perpetuated theological or christological heresies have not received wide acceptance.¹⁶

The distinguishing mark of the Montanist movement, then, lay not in the area of doctrine, but in the claim that the gift of prophecy through the Holy Spirit was truly given to Montanus, Prisca, Maximilla, and other "prophets" of the movement. Not surprisingly, the movement was referred to by some ancient authors as "the new prophecy." Secondly, at least in the Montanist community known to Tertullian, the movement stood for a rigorous Christian morality reminiscent of older eras of the Church's life. In both of these respects, however, Montanism appears within the development of Christian polity not as an aberration from an originally institutional Christian church, but rather as a local expression of a tradition of Christian prophecy which, as we have seen above, extended from the age of Paul through the communities represented by the Revelation in the New Testament, and then by the *Didache* and the "Shepherd of Hermas" in the early and middle parts of the second century. Thus, Hans von Campenhausen refers to Montanism as "a reactionary phenomenon" insofar as it reflected this earlier strand of Christian prophetic tradition.¹⁷

If this is true, though, it remains to be explained why the movement should have received such a consistently negative response from those communities that in retrospect have been identified as orthodox. Eusebius of Caesarea noted that the movement was condemned very early on:

For when the faithful throughout Asia had met frequently and at many places for this purpose, and on examination of the newfangled teachings had pronounced them profane, and rejected the heresy, these persons were thus expelled from the Church and shut off from its communion.¹⁸

But these councils did not carry weight beyond Asia, for Tertullian noted that at one point the Bishop of Rome (in the early third century) had briefly acknowledged the validity of the movement.¹⁹

Two more likely explanations for the isolation of Montanism as a "heresy" excluded

from communion with the orthodox can be offered. First, the ecclesiastical power structure centered in monarchical bishops and represented by Irenaeus of Lyons seems to have prevailed by the end of the second century in those communities that were also reckoned to be theologically orthodox.²⁰ The older pattern involving itinerant prophets, which had been a living option up until the middle of the second century, seems to have been increasingly “eccentric,” i.e., outside of the center of the churches’ life, from that time. Second, the very use of charismatic prophecy by the Montanists seems also to have been regarded as unusual. Although some early Christian writers from the third century and beyond preserved the memory that prophecy had at one time been exercised in the Church, others frankly acknowledged that the age of prophecy had passed. Tertullian’s contemporary Origen wrote,

Moreover, the Holy Spirit gave signs of His presence at the beginning of Christ’s ministry, and after His ascension He gave still more; but since that time these signs have diminished, although there are still traces of His presence in a few who have had their soul purified by the Gospel, and their actions regulated by His influence.²¹

In both of these respects then, both in its rejection of episcopal authority and its continuing use of the *charismata* such as prophecy, the Montanist movement represents a strand of earlier Christian tradition that had become dissociated with the communities reckoned as orthodox.

But Montanism, perhaps especially as represented in Tertullian’s later career, did function as a kind of “Loyal Opposition” in the later second century and beyond. It serves to remind us—and perhaps it should serve to remind the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches today—that the consistent three-fold ministerial orders of deacon, presbyter, and bishop were not established in the churches without considerable time, and not without considerable loss. The loss I refer to was the loss of living prophecy as a “normal” part of the life of the Church. The Montanist movement shows, if nothing else, the tragic reality that by the end of the second century the exercise of this kind of “loyal opposition” was regarded eccentric (at best) and heretical (at worst) for most Christian communities.

CONCLUSION: CHARISMATIC PROPHECY AND “LOYAL OPPOSITION”

But the story of “Loyal Opposition” in the Christian community did not end with Montanism. Within months of Constantine’s conversion to Christianity, St. Anthony and others in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria began withdrawing to the deserts where they could pursue a more radical vision of Christian faith. Francis and Clare of Assisi would call Christians in the twelfth century to obedience to the “apostolic poverty” of Christ and the earliest disciples. Sixteenth-century Reformers of whatever party (including many Catholic Reformers) would call for a return to “primitive” Christian conditions.

The witness of ancient Christian prophecy as “loyal opposition” was not lost on all of these later reformers. John Wesley, for example, was well aware of the role of prophets in the early Christian communities, and in his sermon on “Prophets and Priests” he called upon the model of ancient Christian prophets to justify his use of laymen and laywomen

as preachers in the Methodist movement:

I cannot prove from any part of the New Testament, or from any author of the first three centuries, that the office of an evangelist [which Wesley elsewhere identifies with early Christian "prophets"] gave any man a right to act as pastor or bishop. I believe these offices were considered as quite distinct from each other till the time of Constantine.²²

Moreover, Wesley believed that the Montanist movement, with its continued exercise of the prophetic office, reflected the true Christian faith in the later second century:

By reflecting on an odd book which I had read in this journey, *The General Delusion of Christians with Regard to Prophecy*, I was convinced of what I had long suspected: (1) that the Montanists in the second and third centuries, were real, scriptural Christians; and (2) That the grand reason why the miraculous gifts were so soon withdrawn, was not only that faith and holiness were well-nigh lost, but that dry, formal, orthodox men began even then to ridicule whatever gifts they had not themselves, and to decry them all as either madness or imposture.²³

Thus, although his understanding of the chronology of the decline of prophecy and other details about ancient Christian prophecy may have differed from our understanding, Wesley nevertheless had a clear sense of the continuity between the Methodist movement's "loyal opposition" within the Church of England, and the "loyal opposition" represented by itinerant teachers and then by Montanists in the ancient Christian communities.

The Christian church is an "incarnational" institution: bearing the marks of its origins in Christ and the apostles, it lives from age to age in "the flesh," i.e., in the realities and vicissitudes of history, and it faces the crises of an on-going human institution. But from time to time, God raises up brilliant women and men to challenge the institutional dilemmas that the Church faces. They are the "loyal opposition" that adorns and enlivens the life of the Church from age to age. They appeared even in the New Testament period, and as we have seen above, in the second century and then beyond.

But the "loyal opposition" also appears in our own time, and we are blessed indeed when we come into the presence and under the influence of one of these brilliant and faithful pioneers of the Church. Such a person is Robert Lyon, and we offer thanks and praise for his consistent witness of loyal opposition, and for the challenge that his witness lays before us.

NOTES

1. Each of the authors or communities dealt with in this paragraph will be discussed in detail later.

2. Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew* (London: Fontana, 1976), chapter 3, "Jesus and Charismatic Judaism," pp. 58-82.

3. Gerhard Friedrich, "prophetes" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 6:850 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968). Quotation marks are used with the term "apostles" here to

denote that the term, in these passages, may not denote so much "the twelve," but a larger group of disciples who were "sent out" (*apostalmenos*) by Jesus.

4. "Apostolic Fathers" (or "Apostolical Fathers") is the designation dating from seventeenth-century European scholarship (Jean Cotelier and then William Wake) to denote a diverse group of writings generally reckoned to date from the first half of the second century. On the designation, see Simon Tugwell, *The Apostolic Fathers* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1989), p. viii. Robert M. Grant, *An Introduction "The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary,"* (6 vols.; New York, NY: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964) deals with the history of the texts of the Apostolic Fathers (pp. 13-33) but seems unaware of the Cotelier edition in which the expression "Apostolic Fathers" originated (actually, "fathers who flourished in the times of the apostles" in the title of Cotelier's edition).

5. On the dating of the Ignatian epistles and the controversies over their authenticity, see Tugwell, pp. 104-105; Robert M. Grant, *Introduction*, pp. 47-63; Edgar J. Goodspeed, *The Apostolic Fathers: An American Translation* (New York, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1950), pp. 203-205; and most definitively William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Hermeneia commentary series; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1985), pp. 1-7. In what follows I have accepted a modern consensus (recognized since the middle of the seventeenth century) that holds seven epistles of Ignatius to be genuine (what Schoedel calls the "middle recension" [of 31] although earlier works referred to it as the "shorter recension" [of 21]).

6. Magnesians 6:1; translation is that of Schoedel, p. 112. See also Schoedel's comments on the three-fold order, pp. 22-23. The three-fold order found in Ignatius has been recognized as forming the basis for contemporary discussions of Church polity, most notably in the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission document entitled *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (Faith and Order paper no. 111; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), III:A:19-21, p. 24.

7. For similar passages urging obedience to the bishop, see Ignatius's letters to the Ephesians 2:2, 3:2, 4:1-2, 5:1-3; Magnesians 6:1-2, 7:1; Trallians 7:2; Philadelphians 3:2, 4:1, 7:1-2, 8:1; Smyrnaeans 8:1-2, 9:1; and to Polycarp 6:1. The theme of obedience to bishops does not appear prominently in the letter to the Romans, where Ignatius's primary concern was the preparation for his approaching martyrdom there. Not surprisingly, we might note, the authenticity of the Ignatian epistles was defended in the seventeenth century by Anglican bishops, defending episcopacy against the presbyterianism of Puritans (three principal Anglican defenders of the Ignatian epistles were James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, John Pearson, Bishop of Chester, and William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury).

8. The very next passage (Philadelphians 6:1) goes on to state that prophets should not be accepted if they "interpret Judaism"; on this see Schoedel, pp. 201-203.

9. On the dating of the *Didache*, see Robert A. Kraft, *Barnabas and Didache*. "The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary," vol. 3 of 6 vols.; (New York, NY: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1964), pp. 76-77. Kraft argues that *Didache* is composed of a number of earlier documents and oral traditions (divisions between these can be seen easily in the text), and although much of this material dates from the first century, the present form of the *Didache* dates from no earlier than the early second century. To this may be contrasted Tugwell (p. 1), who asserts that the *Didache* was composed in the first century; but Tugwell consistently gives surprisingly early dates for the literature of the Apostolic Fathers.

10. Translation is that of Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers* (2 vols.; Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, and London: William Heinemann Ltd.; 1912), 1:331.

11. Lake, 1:325. Lake has "suffer" for *epitrepete*. The expression he translates "hold Eucharist" is simply *eucharistein* ("to give thanks"), although following the first six verses of chapter 10, it does seem to denote presidency of the weekly eucharistic celebration.

12. Muratorian fragment; translation in Lake, 2:3.

13. "Shepherd of Hermas," *Visions* 2:4; translation of Lake, 2:19-21.

14. The principal sources for the study of Montanism are the following: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5:16-19 (PG 20:465-484; NPNF 2:1:229-337); Epiphanius, *Panarion* 12:1:148-49 (PG 41:855-882); Hippolytus, *Refutation of All Heresies* 8:12 (ANF 5:123-124). There is also a letter attributed from Firmilian to Cyprian preserved among the letters of Cyprian (Cyprian *Epistles* 75; FC 51:295-313), and many of Tertullian's later works (from his Montanist period) describe the movement.

15. On the dating of Montanism, see Timothy Barnes, "The Chronology of Montanism," *Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (October 1970): 403-408. To his conclusions, in general, one may compare Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Power and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 181, n. 15; Eusebius A. Stephanou, "The Charismata in the Early Church," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 21 (Summer 1976): 132; and E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton Co., 1965), p. 63, n. 3.

16. On the former (the notion of a Phrygian cult origin of the movement), see Wilhelm Schepeler, *Der Montanismus und die phrygischen Kulte* (1929); also with Schepeler in rejecting this theory are Hans von Campenhausen (p. 181, n. 16) and E. R. Dodds (p. 63, n. 2). The latter theory, that the Montanists reflected theological or christological heresies, may have some grounding in the fact that later Montanists might have reflected such teachings, but ancient orthodox writers themselves admitted the theological orthodoxy of the earliest Montanists: Epiphanius, *Panarion* 48:1; Firmilian's letter to Cyprian; Hippolytus, *Refutation of all Heresies* 8:12; Tertullian *De Ieiuniis* 1 and *De Monogamia* 2 (although of course these latter works date from Tertullian's own Montanist period, so it should come as no surprise that he would defend the Montanists' doctrinal orthodoxy).

17. Von Campenhausen, p. 181.

18. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5:16:10; translation of Hugh Jackson Lawlor and John Ernest Oulton, *Eusebius: The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine* (2 vols.; London: SPCK, 1954), 1:160.

19. Tertullian, *Adversus Praxean* 1; cf. ANF 3:597.

20. James L. Ash, Jr., "The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church," *Theological Studies* 37 (June 1976): 230.

21. Origen, *Contra Celsum*; translation of Crombie in ANF 4:614.

22. The sermon "Prophets and Priests" was called "The Ministerial Office" in earlier editions of John Wesley's works; in Albert Cook Outler, ed., *Sermons* (Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley; Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984) 4:77. Here Wesley supposes that the separate office of "prophet" or "evangelist" continued through the age of Constantine; our own conclusions in this article would suggest the late second century as the time for the diminishing of the office of charismatic prophet.

23. *Journal* for 15 August 1750; in W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., *Journals and Diaries* (Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley; Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1988), 3:356-357.