

NOTE ON THE TITLE OF THE
*DIDASCALIA APOSTOLORUM**

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The *Didascalia Apostolorum* no longer exists in its original Greek form. It is, however, extant in early Syriac (complete) and Latin (fragmentary) translations, and in later Arabic, Ethiopic, and Greek paraphrases (essentially complete), which paraphrases comprise the first six books of the respective versions of the *Constitutiones Apostolorum*.

The aim of this note is to ascertain the form of the title of the original Greek text. Our evidence consists of (i) the ancient Syriac title;¹ (ii) the author's references to his work within the document itself; (iii) the vestigial remains of the original title preserved in the versions of the *Constitutiones Apostolorum*; and (iv) the comparable titles of related early Christian documents.

The Syriac title, as given in codex *Sangermanensis*, reads *dydsqly' 'wkyt mlpnw' qtwylyq' dtr'sr šlyh' wtlmyd' qdyš' dprwqn*.²

* Abbreviations employed in this note, which are not spelled out on the back cover of this journal, indicate the following series: *ALCS* = *Ancienne Littérature canonique syriaque*; *GCS* = *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*; *HS* = *Horae Semiticae*; *SAKDQ* = *Sammlung ausgewählter kirchen- und dogmengeschichtliche Quellenschriften*; *TU* = *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*.

¹ Unfortunately, the rubricated title of the Latin translation no longer exists. E. Hauler (*Didascalie Apostolorum: Fragments Veronensia Latina* [Leipzig, 1900], p. 1, n.) conjectures that it probably read *Doctrina Apostolorum*; but E. Tidner (*Didascalie Apostolorum, Canonum Ecclesiasticorum, versiones Latinae, TU*, 75 [Berlin, 1963], p. ix) proposes that it probably read *Catholica doctrina duodecim apostolorum*.

² So codex *Sangermanensis*. See P. de Lagarde, *Didascalia Apostolorum Syriace* (Leipzig, 1854 [reprint, Osnabrück/Wiesbaden, 1967]), p. 1.

F. Nau,³ M. D. Gibson,⁴ H. Achelis and J. Flemming,⁵ and F. X. Funk⁶ interpret this Syriac title as meaning, "The Didascalia, that is/or, the Catholic Teaching of the Twelve Apostles and Holy Disciples of our Savior." They understand the adjective *qtwlyq'* ("Catholic") as intended to modify the noun *mlpnwt'* ("Teaching") and, consequently, the phrase *'wkyt mlpnw't qtwlyq' dtr'sr šlyh' wtlmyd' qdyš' dprwqn* ("that is/or, the Catholic Teaching of the Apostles and Holy Disciples of our Savior") as intended to modify the noun *dydsqly'* ("Didascalia"). They also understand the adjective *qdyš'* ("Holy") as intended to modify *tlmyd'* ("Disciples") alone.

Connolly,⁷ on the other hand, interprets the Syriac title as meaning, "The Catholic Didascalia (that is, Teaching) of the Twelve Holy Apostles and Disciples of our Savior." He understands the adjective *qtwlyq'* ("Catholic") as intended to modify the noun *dydsqly'* ("Didascalia") and, consequently, the phrase *'wkyt mlpnw't* ("that is, Teaching") as intended to explain (with an indigenous Syriac term, *mlpnwt'* ["teaching"]) the meaning of the transliterated Greek term *dydsqly'* = $\delta\upsilon\delta\alpha\sigma\eta\alpha\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\alpha$ ("Didascalia"). Furthermore, he understands the adjective *qdyš'* ("Holy") as intended to modify both the noun *šlyh'* ("Apostles") and the noun *tlmyd'* ("Disciples").

I am persuaded that Connolly is correct when he contends that the adjective *qtwlyq'* ("Catholic") was intended by the Syriac translator to modify the noun *dydsqly'* ("Didascalia"), and not the noun *mlpnwt'* ("Teaching"). I would conjecture that

³ *La Didascalie, c'est-à-dire l'Enseignement catholique des douze Apôtres et des saints Disciples de notre Sauveur traduite du Syriaque pour la première fois*, ALCS, 1 (Paris, 1902), p. 1.

⁴ *The Didascalia Apostolorum in English: Translated from the Syriac*, HS, 2 (London, 1903), p. 2.

⁵ *Die ältesten Quellen des orientalischen Kirchenrechts*, 2: *Die syrische Didaskalia*, TU, n.f., 10.2 (Leipzig, 1904), p. 1.

⁶ *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum* (Paderborn, 1905 [reprint, Paderborn, 1964]), 1: 2.

⁷ *Didascalia Apostolorum: The Syriac Version Translated and Accompanied by the Verona Latin Fragments with an Introduction and Notes* (Oxford, 1929 [reprint, Oxford, 1969]), p. xxviii.

his Greek exemplar read simply καθολικὴ διδασκαλία (“Catholic Didascalia”). I am also persuaded that he is correct when he contends that the expression *’wkyt mlpwt’* (“that is Teaching”) was intended by the Syriac translator as a parenthetical note to explain (with an indigenous Syriac term) the meaning of the transliterated Greek term *dydsqly’* (“Didascalia”). I am not persuaded, however, that he is correct when he argues that the adjective *qdyš* (“Holy”) was intended by the Syriac translator to modify the noun *šlyh’* (“Apostles”) and the noun *tlmyd’* (“Disciples”). I would conjecture that his Greek exemplar read simply τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων (“of the Twelve Disciples”) (which he translated with *dtr’sr šlyh’* [“of the Twelve Disciples”]) and that he himself added the further modifying phrase *wtlmyd’ qdyš dprwqn* (“and the Holy Disciples of our Savior”).

I base these conjectures on the following evidence:

1. With respect to the formulation καθολικὴ διδασκαλία = *dydsqly’ qtwlyq’* (“Catholic Didascalia”), it should be noted (a) that on three occasions within the document itself (*Didasc.* 6. 12. 1 f.; 6. 13. 1; and 6. 14. 11), the author refers to his work as “*this Catholic Didascalia*”: ([i] “When therefore the entire church was in peril [on account of heresy] we, the twelve apostles [*tr’sr šlyh’* = *duodecim apostoli* = δώδεκα ἀπόστολοι], gathered at Jerusalem and conferred on what should be done. And it seemed good to us [we were all of one mind] to write *this Catholic Didascalia* [*dydsqly’ qtwlyq’* = *catholicam doctrinam* = καθολικὴν διδασκαλίαν] for your confirmation [*Didasc.* 6. 12. 1 f.]⁸ . . . [ii] and we remained in Jerusalem for some days conferring concerning the common good with the aim of rectifying [the situation], and, at the same time we wrote *this Catholic Didascalia* [*dydsqly’ qtwlyq’* = *catholicam doctrinam* = καθολικὴν διδασκαλίαν] [*Didasc.* 6. 13. 1]⁹ . . . [iii] and

⁸ See Lagarde, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, p. 102, 1. 7 (for the Syriac text), and Tidner, *Didascaliae Apostolorum*, p. 73, 11. 20-21 (for the Latin text).

⁹ See Lagarde, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, p. 104, 1. 28 (for the Syriac text), and Tidner, *Didascaliae Apostolorum*, p. 74, 1. 8 (for the Latin text).

we have left *this Catholic Didascalia* [*dydsqly' qtwlyq'* = *catholicam doctrinam* = καθολικὴν διδασκαλίαν], worthily and justly, as a memorandum of the confirmation for the believers [*Didasc.* 6. 14. 11]),¹⁰ and (b) that all that remains of the original title of the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, as preserved in the rubric which introduces the first "book" of the Greek *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, is the formulation καθολικὴ διδασκαλία ("Catholic Didascalia").¹¹

2. With respect to the formulation τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων = *dtr'sr šlyh'* ("of the Twelve Apostles"), it should be noted (a) that within the document itself (*Didasc.* 6. 12. 1 f.) the author implies that his work was composed by "the Twelve Apostles" without any further qualification such as "and the Holy Disciples of our Savior," and (b) that several other comparable Christian documents of the early church are similarly titled (so, for example, Διδαχὴ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων [the title of the *Didache* as given in the index of codex *Hierosolymitanus*];¹² Διατάξεις τῶν ἀποστόλων [the title of a work (probably a "revised" and "expanded" form of the *Didascalia Apostolorum* and the "immediate" basis of the *Constitutiones Apostolorum*)]¹³ cited by Epiphanius];¹⁴ and Διαταγαὶ τῶν ἀγίων ἀποστόλων [probably the original title of the *Constitutiones Apostolorum*]).¹⁵

I conjecture that the original Greek title, if it is preserved at all in the translations and paraphrases of the *Didascalia*, probably read καθολικὴ διδασκαλία τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων ("The Catholic Didascalia of the Twelve Apostles").

¹⁰ See Lagarde, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, p. 106, l. 28 (for the Syriac text), and Tidner, *Didascalie Apostolorum*, p. 78, ll. 7-8 (for the Latin text).

¹¹ See Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, 1: 3.

¹² See F. X. Funk and K. Bihlmeyer, *Die Apostolischen Väter*, SAKDQ, 2. 1. 1 (Tübingen, 1956), p. 1.

¹³ See Bartlet, *Church-Life and Church-Order*, pp. 93-96, 148, 151.

¹⁴ *Panarion*, 70. 10-12; 70. 6; 80. 7. See K. Holl, *Epiphanius, Werke*, 3: *Panarion*, GCS, 37 (Leipzig, 1915ff.), 70. 10-12; 70. 6; 80. 7.

¹⁵ See Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, 1: 3.