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Situating the *Recognitions* in Fourth Century Syria

Mohr Siebeck

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For Henry

Preface

This book began in 2001 as a dissertation project at Harvard University, under the direction of François Bovon and Karen King. Up to that point I'd been interested primarily in questions of ancient Jewish and Christian identity, and issues revolving around Jewish-Christian relations in the ancient world. I had not worked on much of anything past the third century C.E. when François suggested that I consider Pseudo-Clementine literature as a dissertation topic. In many ways, this made perfect sense. The Pseudo-Clementines are perhaps the most famous example of "Jewish-Christian" texts that survive from antiquity, so what better way to study the construction and maintenance of religious identities than to look at the work of an author who finds himself betwixt and between Judaism and Christianity? These texts also had another very important thing going for them – one thing sought after by every prospective dissertation writer. They're neglected. Hardly anyone talks about the Pseudo-Clementines these days. This sounded like a potential contribution to scholarship.

Soon I began to meet people at conferences who, when they found out I'd decided to work on the Pseudo-Clementines, told me the story of someone else who had also written a dissertation on these texts at Harvard, and (as they told the story, anyway) the experience apparently did him in. After he finished the dissertation, he decided that the academic path wasn't for him. One day he loaded up all of his academic books and sold them out of the back of his vehicle, right in the parking lot in front of Andover Hall. The implication seemed to be that I, too, might find myself being driven away from an academic career by a set of late antique documents. I began to understand their concerns for my mental health as I became more familiar with modern scholarship on the Pseudo-Clementines. Much of it is at least one hundred years old, preoccupied with source-critical questions or arcane theological issues that hardly seem useful or even relevant today. The same might be said of the ancient texts themselves, which are long and repetitive and contain material that is not particularly original. Maybe this wasn't such a good dissertation idea after all.

As I began to write, however, I quickly realized that the Pseudo-Clementines were fascinating in ways that had not been addressed by

modern scholars. For instance, there was plenty of literature on hypothetical first- and second-century sources that were thought to lie behind the texts, but remarkably little investigation of the fourth-century *Homilies* and *Recognitions*. Almost no one was looking at what these texts have to say, and how they fit into a broader understanding of early Christian history. Moreover, it seemed that people interested in the Pseudo-Clementines were not particularly curious about the fourth century, and very few people interested in the fourth century were concerned with the Pseudo-Clementines: most investivations of fourth-century Syria discuss the usual suspects such as Ephrem and Arianism and mention the Pseudo-Clementines briefly or skip them altogether. I started to wonder what might happen if these texts were brought into conversation with their fourth-century context. What do the Pseudo-Clementines tell us about fourth-century Syria, and how can fourth-century Syria help us to understand the Pseudo-Clementines? These are the initial questions that drove me to write this book.

As my research progressed, it became clear that the Pseudo-Clementines are important for understanding the history of how Christians constructed their own identities and orthodoxies and negotiated them in conversation with other groups. The *Recognitions* is particularly useful, because it gives us a window onto a rather complex religious, social and political situation that involved not only Jews and pagans but also a variety of Christian groups. The multifaceted rivalries reflected and embedded in the text, and the text's interests in authentic tradition and correct belief that lie behind its portrait of Peter, often have not been appreciated. This book seeks to bring some of these issues to light.

I am grateful to François Bovon for his gentle guidance and unfailing support, and his unparalleled knowledge of early Christian apocryphal literature, all of which have helped me tremendously. I thank Karen King too, for helping to shape the questions I ask of texts both ancient and modern, for being a great conversation partner, and for inspiring me – you make your students want to be as smart and talented as you are. I am grateful to those who have read the manuscript at various stages of its life and given me helpful feedback and criticism, especially Stanley Jones, Ellen Aitken, AnneMarie Luijendijk, Laura Beth Bugg, and Catherine Playoust.

Much of the writing of this book was made possible by a Graduate Society Dissertation Fellowship at Harvard University. The remainder of the project was completed in the company of several wonderfully supportive colleagues and friends in the Department of Religion at Florida State University, whose kind words of encouragement have meant a great deal to me. I am especially indebted to David Levenson, both for his

friendship and for his generosity as a colleague. Two FSU graduate students also played essential roles in the production of this book. Jeff Petsis graciously helped with correction of my Latin translations, and Jason Staples worked tirelessly as a fact-checker and indexer. I am grateful to Jörg Frey and Henning Ziebritzki for their interest in the manuscript, and to Jana Trispel at Mohr Siebeck for her corrections and helpful suggestions. Finally, I thank Carol Birnbaum and Matt Day, for reasons they know.

Tallahassee, Florida, April 2006 *Nicole Kelley*

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Chapter 1

Studying the Pseudo-Clementines

Introduction

The historian Adolph von Harnack has said that "the Pseudo-Clementines contribute absolutely nothing to our knowledge of the origin of the Catholic Church and doctrine."[1] In his *History of Dogma*, von Harnack insists that the Pseudo-Clementines – a group of ancient Christian writings falsely attributed to Clement of Rome[2] which detail his travels with the apostle Peter, their ongoing disputes with Simon Magus, and Clement's eventual reunion with long-lost members of his family – are interesting only insofar as they contain remnants of earlier traditions about church origins. In von Harnack's estimation these texts do not preserve such ancient traditions about catholic Christianity, and as a result they are

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[1] Adolph von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 1, transl. from the 3rd German edition by Neil Buchanan (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1974) 315. This view is affirmed by John Chapman, "Origen and the Date of Pseudo-Clement," *Journal of Theological Studies* 3 (1902) 441; and Hans Lietzmann, *The Beginnings of the Christian Church*, transl. Bertram Lee Woolf (rev. ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949) 188. Cf. George Howard, "The Pseudo-Clementine Writings and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew," *New Testament Studies* 40 (1994) 622: "It is doubtful that the Pseudo-Clementines contribute nothing to our knowledge of the origin of the Catholic Church. They have certainly influenced the study of early Jewish Christianity, and this can hardly be separated from the study of early Catholic Christianity." Portions of Chapter 1 appeared in an earlier publication: Nicole Kelley, "Problems of Knowledge and Authority in the Pseudo-Clementine Romance of Recognitions," *JECS* 13.3 (2005) 315-348.

[2] For a discussion of the relation between the "Clement" of the Pseudo-Clementines, Clement the bishop of Rome, and Flavius Clemens, see Bernard Pouderon, "Clément de Rome, Flavius Clemens et le Clément Juif," *Studi su Clemente Romano: Atti degli Incontri di Roma, 29 marzo e 22 novembre 2001*, ed. Philippe Luisier (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 268; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 2003) 197-218; idem, "Flavius Clemens et le proto-Clément juif du roman pseudo-clémentin," *Apocrypha* 7 (1996) 63-79, esp. 66; F. Stanley Jones, "Clement of Rome and the *Pseudo-Clementines:* History and/or Fiction," *Studi su Clemente Romano*, 139-61; Meinolf Vielberg, *Klemens in den pseudoklementinischen Rekognitionen: Studien zur literarischen Form des spätantiken Romans* (TU 145; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000); and Georges Ory, "Réflexions sur les écrits clémentins: Qui était Clément?" *Cahiers du Cercle Ernest-Renan* 32 (1984) 33-38.

altogether unremarkable.[3] Most authors have disagreed with von Harnack's assessment of the *historical* value of the traditions preserved in these texts, arguing instead that the Pseudo-Clementines do contain traditions that can be traced to the formative period of the church.[4] However, by focusing largely on these older traditions that lie behind the Pseudo-Clementines, they have upheld one of von Harnack's *theological* presuppositions: these texts are valuable if and only if they are repositories of earlier Christian materials.[5] Because they are thought to preserve more ancient sources, these texts have been mined by contemporary scholars who hope to shed light on Christian origins.[6] As recently as 2003, for example, F. Lapham introduced his treatment of the Pseudo-Clementines by saying that "the value of such purportedly historical works lies...in their ability to throw into relief the traditions that lie behind their sources."[7] As a result of this perspective, the *Homilies* and *Recognitions* – the two major works of

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[3] Von Harnack's argument rests on two observations. The first is doctrinal: Jewish Christianity, defined by its nationalistic and legalistic proclivities, had very little influence on the rest of Christianity, which was universalistic in scope (*History of Dogma*, 1.289-90). The "immediate sources" of the Pseudo-Clementines reveal "a Jewish Christianity strongly influenced by Catholicism and Hellenism" (1.315). Because of his assumption about the mutual incompatibility of Jewish and catholic Christianity, von Harnack doubts that this kind of accommodating Jewish Christianity exists; he suggests that it may be a "Catholic literary product" (1.314-315). The second is chronological: even if the Pseudo-Clementines may be used "to determine the tendencies and inner history of syncretistic Jewish Christianity" – not catholic Christianity – "[i]t cannot be made out with certainty, how far back the first sources of the Pseudo-Clementines date" (1.315).

[4] To give but one example, the Pseudo-Clementines have been studied as part of the search for the historical Jesus; see Leslie L. Kline, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (SBLDS 14; Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1975).

[5] This has been noted as well by Annette Yoshiko Reed, "'Jewish Christianity' after the 'Parting of the Ways,'" in *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Adam H. Becker and Annette Yoshiko Reed (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 199-201, 218 n. 91.

[6] In particular, they have been used by F. C. Baur and the Tübingen school as evidence of conflict between two competing doctrinal trajectories in earliest Christianity: Petrine "Jewish" Christianity and Pauline Christianity. The classic formulation of this thesis is F. C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christenthums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Petrus in Rom," *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie* 5 (1831) 61-206. In this context one might also mention the elusive search for the *Kerygmata Petrou* – thought to be an early source with gnosticizing Jewish-Christian tendencies that was used by the author of the *Grundschrift* – undertaken by Georg Strecker and others. G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen* (TU 70; 2nd ed. rev.; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981) 92-96.

[7] F. Lapham, *Peter: The Myth, the Man and the Writings. A Study of Early Petrine Text and Tradition* (JSNTSS 239; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003) 83.

Pseudo-Clementine literature – have often been reduced to textual husks to be discarded in the search for historical or dogmatic kernels of earliest Christianity.

The narratives of the Pseudo-Clementine writings have been neglected even when the project of Christian origins is not so clearly at stake. This disregard seems to be a product of what might be termed "the lousy book factor." Richard Pervo says of the *Recognitions* and its treatment of Paul *qua* Simon Magus, "This is a smear-piece no less dreadful than it is tedious."[8] Pervo's wry comment hints at one frequent criticism of the *Recognitions*: it seems to be poorly edited, a series of juxtaposed and inadequately integrated sources rather than a coherent narrative. M. J. Edwards makes a typical assessment of the author's editorial prowess: "The editor of the *Recognitions* (one whom it would be equally uncritical and unkind to style the author) convicts himself of incompetence when he recapitulates a series of homilies as though they occurred in the novel, though in fact he has retailed the plan and content of a rather different work (3.85 [*sic*])."[9]

To be sure, many ancient novels have been criticized repeatedly, in antiquity and in modern scholarship, for their stylistic and literary faults. For example, Brigitte Egger has noted the frosty reception of the ancient novel in general and Chariton's *Callirhoe* in particular: "Scholarly opinions of the genre as a whole have tended to be low since nineteenth-century philologists dismissed it as popular and trivial, and *Callirhoe* was seen as a simple book aimed at 'the poor in spirit'."[10] Other works are held in even less esteem. David Konstan notes that Xenophon of Ephesus' *Ephesian Tale* is "universally regarded as the worst of the lot."[11] But the *Recognitions* arguably stands out even in such illustrious company, because it is long, boring, repetitive, and full of chronological and theological difficulties. To give an example of a chronological

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[8] Richard I. Pervo, "The Ancient Novel Becomes Christian," in G. Schmeling, ed., *The Novel in the Ancient World* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996) 707.

[9] M. J. Edwards, "The *Clementina*: A Christian Response to the Pagan Novel," *Classical Quarterly* 42 (1992) 461. Edwards, who is not particularly interested in the traditions behind the *Recognitions* or the text's relationship to the larger Pseudo-Clementine corpus, seems to misunderstand the function of the "table of contents" given in *Rec* 3.75.1-12.

[10] Brigitte Egger, "Looking at Chariton's *Callirhoe*," in *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context*, ed. J. R. Morgan and Richard Stoneman (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) 31, quoting B. E. Perry, *The Ancient Romances* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1967) 177.

[11] David Konstan, "Xenophon of Ephesus: Eros and narrative in the novel," in *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context*, 49.

inconsistency, *Rec* 1.27-71,[12] which has been identified as the *Anabathmoi Jakobou* mentioned by Epiphanius in *Haer.* 30.16,[13] contains a chronology that differs from the rest of the *Recognitions*. *Rec* 1.7.3 leads the reader to believe that Jesus is still alive when Clement arrives in Caesarea, but *Rec* 1.43.3 says that seven years have already passed since Jesus' death.[14] This same source also makes it difficult to reconstruct the *Recognitions*' position on astrological knowledge. *Rec* 1.32.3 indicates that astrology led Abraham to knowledge of God,[15] but *Rec* 9.17ff (which itself belongs to another source layer) is an extended discourse against the possibility of astrological knowledge. At points like these, the *Recognitions*' willingness to place different sources side by side,[16] with seemingly little concern for the chronological and theological contradictions created in the process, suggests its author's lack of interest in the editorial process. This would seem to confirm Stanley Jones' observation that "R [the author of the *Recognitions*] is generally viewed as a redactor whose tendency can be broadly determined but whose system of thought does not merit extensive discussion."[17] On this reading, the *Recognitions* is hardly a book at all, but merely a vessel for the sources it contains.

Critiques of the Pseudo-Clementines' editorial finesse are also criticisms of their originality. These charges of unoriginality begin not

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[12] There has been a great deal of debate on the extent of this source and its precise identification, but there exists little doubt that this section of the *Recognitions* comes from a separate source. On this question see Robert E. van Voorst, *The Ascents of James: History and Theology of a Jewish-Christian Community* (SBLDS 112; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989) 1-46.

[13] The *Recognitions* uses this source by virtue of its inclusion in the *Grundschrift*. While van Voorst supports the identification of *Rec* 1.33-71 with the *Anabathmoi Jakobou* (van Voorst, *Ascents of James*, 43-46), Stanley Jones argues against this connection (F. S. Jones, *An Ancient Jewish Christian Source on the History of Christianity: Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions 1.27-71* [Atlanta: Scholars, 1995], 146-48).

[14] F. S. Jones, "The Pseudo-Clementines: A History of Research Part I," *The Second Century* 2 (1982) 24 n. 177. As Jones notes, this chronological inconsistency was first observed by G. Uhlhorn, *Die Homilien und Recognitionen des Clemens Romanus nach ihrem Ursprung und Inhalt dargestellt* (Göttingen: Dieterische Buchhandlung, 1854) 314-315.

[15] This was a common trope in ancient literature, probably owing to the mention of Abraham's Chaldaean heritage in Genesis 11.27. On this see J. L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible As It Was at the Start of the Common Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) 249-51.

[16] Although in many cases the *Grundschrift* originally combined the various sources in question, there are also a number of instances (e.g. the two astrology passages just listed) where the *Recognitions* appears to be responsible for the juxtaposition.

[17] F. Stanley Jones, "The Pseudo-Clementines: A History of Research Part II," *The Second Century* 2 (1982) 77.

with the *Recognitions*, but with the *Grundschrift*, the hypothetical common source for the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*.[18] Bernhard Rehm, Hans Joachim Schoeps, and Georg Strecker each have argued that the author of the *Grundschrift* was not really an author, but a compiler who contributed almost nothing original. In Rehm's words, "Die Grundschrift ist nur zum geringsten Teil ein originales Werk."[19] Rehm goes on to show that virtually all of the *Grundschrift*'s ideas may be traced to other sources. This criticism of the *Grundschrift*'s originality applies to the *Homilies* and *Recognitions* as well, since these extant texts seem to be little more than tendentious copies of their predecessor. Because none of these authors added much that was new, source criticism does not really ignore the narratives by looking *behind* the texts – after all, the narratives themselves have nothing to offer but a mishmash of sources. In this model, source criticism produces most of (if not all) the information anyone could want to know about the Pseudo-Clementines, and is consequently more worthwhile than other modes of analysis.[20]

These criticisms might lead one to wonder if the Pseudo-Clementines are worth reading, or if they contribute anything new to our knowledge of the ancient world. To my way of thinking, however, such criticisms of the Pseudo-Clementines' editing and originality have never addressed one of the fundamental questions they raise: Why would anyone go to the trouble of creating a text that included all of these sources in the first place?[21] Why

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[18] The *Grundschrift* is much like Q in the Two-Source Hypothesis of the New Testament Synoptic Problem.

[19] B. Rehm, "Zur Entstehung der pseudoclementinischen Schriften," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37 (1938) 157. See also H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1949) 38-42; and Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 256, 259.

[20] A quick read of Stanley Jones' important review of the history of Pseudo-Clementine scholarship suggests that this view has prevailed throughout much of the history of scholarship on the Pseudo-Clementines; virtually all of the discussion centers around source critical issues.

[21] As Kate Cooper notes, although "the literary art of the *Recognitions* is by no means breath-taking," it remains important to understand how the *Recognitions* uses sources and generic conventions in support of its apologetic agenda. Kate Cooper, "Matthidia's Wish: Division, Reunion, and the Early Christian Family in the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions*," in *Narrativity in Biblical and Related Texts/La narativité dans la Bible et les texts apparentés*, ed. G. J. Brooke and J.-D. Kaestli (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000) 244-45. Indeed, as is the case with other areas of research, this shift toward redaction-critical and narrative-critical studies of the Pseudo-Clementines is characteristic of more recent scholarship; see e.g. Reed, "'Jewish Christianity,'" 203; Frédéric Amsler, "Les *Reconnaissances* du Pseudo-Clément comme catéchèse romanesque," in *La Bible en récits: l'exégèse biblique à l'heure du lecteur*, ed. D. Marguerat (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2003) 443; Dominique Côté, *Le thème de l'opposition entre Pierre et Simon dans les Pseudo-Clémentines* (Études Augustiniennes,

produce and reproduce a text in which practically every idea is derivative, either because it has been adopted from another specific source or because it is a commonplace in ancient thought? More specifically, why would someone be interested in placing a philosophical treatise alongside an astrological one, and why should these two sets of material belong with a story about Jesus and the apostles or a romance of recognitions? Might such juxtapositions reveal something about the Pseudo-Clementines' socio-historical and theological context? This book seeks to answer precisely these kinds of questions.

It would be impossible, however, to ask these questions of the entire Pseudo-Clementine corpus in a single study. I have chosen to focus on the *Recognitions* rather than the *Homilies* or the *Grundschrift* for three main reasons.[22] First, the *Recognitions* generally has been given less attention than its sister text, probably because it lacks the very qualities that have made the *Homilies* interesting (specifically, its preoccupation with Arianism as well as its "Jewish Christian" elements, which define correct religious belief and practice in the language of late antique, possibly rabbinic,[23] Judaism). This makes the *Recognitions* an ideal prospect for a new study. Second, the *Recognitions* (more so than the *Homilies*) places special emphasis on the romance of recognitions and the astrological materials, which I regard as intimately connected with its larger epistemological concerns. This emphasis allows me to make a stronger case for the sources' integral connection to the author's main ideas about knowledge. Third, the *Recognitions*' interest in establishing and maintaining a particular vision of orthodoxy[24] allows me to connect my

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Série Antiquités 167; Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2001) 3; idem, "La fonction littéraire de Simon le Magicien dans les Pseudo-Clémentines," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 57 (2001) 513-23; and William Robins, "Romance and Renunciation at the Turn of the Fifth Century," *JECS* 8 (2000) 531-57.

[22] My treatment of the *Homilies* is in most cases limited to citations of parallels it shares with the *Recognitions*.

[23] On this see Albert Baumgarten, "Literary Evidence for Jewish Christianity in the Galilee," in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. Levine (New York, 1992) 41-47.

[24] For example, the *Recognitions* eliminates many of the Jewish Christian and anti-Pauline elements of the Grundschrift, even though these have been preserved to some degree; it downplays the syzygy principle and the doctrine of false pericopes. See F. J. A. Hort, *Notes Introductory to the Study of the Clementine Recognitions: A Course of Lectures* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1901) 120; G. Strecker, "The Pseudo-Clementines: Introduction," in *New Testament Apocrypha, Volume Two: Writings Related to the Apostles; Apocalypses and Related Subjects*, rev. ed., ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher and trans. R. McL. Wilson (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989) 485; and Rehm, "Zur Entstehung," 161-63. I use the term "orthodoxy" advisedly here: my intention is not to suggest that one set of beliefs was universally accepted by fourth-century Christians, but rather to indicate that many Christians of this era – whatever specific set of beliefs they may have held – were interested in the project of constructing

argument about knowledge to the text's claims about its own authority. By arguing that the author of the *Recognitions* uses diverse materials in the service of a coherent narrative agenda about knowledge and authority, I hope to use the *Recognitions* as a case in point to demonstrate why the Pseudo-Clementines should no longer be neglected, but rather should be considered as a valuable resource for the study of ancient Christianity. In order to begin this process of looking at the narrative of the *Recognitions* in its own right, we must first become more familiar with the entire corpus of Pseudo-Clementine literature.

Overview of Pseudo-Clementine Literature

The Pseudo-Clementines consist primarily of two lengthy works of approximately the same size: the *Recognitions*, which is divided into ten books, and the *Homilies*, which consists of twenty "sermons." Both works claim to be written by Clement of Rome, and include first-person accounts of his conversion, his adventures with Peter, and his separation and eventual reunion with long-lost members of his family. The subplot of Clement losing and later finding his family members belongs to a specific genre known as the *romance of recognitions*, of which the Pseudo-Clementines are the first extant Christian example.[25] The title of the *Recognitions* reflects this generic categorization, while the *Homilies* are so called because they consist mainly of addresses given by Peter.

In addition to the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*, there are two epistles that claim to be written by Peter and Clement, both addressed to James. These are called the *Epistula Petri* and the *Epistula Clementis*, respectively. At the end of the *Epistula Petri* there is a brief appendix,

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an orthodoxy. This desire to bring ideas, texts and the like in line with beliefs perceived to be correct is clearly behind the Recognitionist's appropriation and modification of its predecessor the *Grundschrift*.

[25] F. Stanley Jones, "Clementines, Pseudo-," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 1.1061. There has been extensive scholarly discussion of the relationship between the romance of recognitions and the pagan novel. See e.g. Wilhelm Bousset, "Die Wiedererkennungs-Fabel in den pseudoklementinischen Schriften, den Menächmen des Plautus und Shakespeares Komödie der Irrungen," *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 5 (1904) 21; Hans Waitz, *Die Pseudoklementinen Homilien und Rekognitionen: Eine Quellenkritische Untersuchung* (TU 10.4; Leipzig: J. Hinrichs, 1904) 250-51; Werner Heintze, *Der Klemensroman und seine griechischen Quellen* (TU 40.2; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1914) 114-38; cf. Erwin Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* (5th ed.; Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms, 1974) 507, and Karl Kerényi, *Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung: Ein Versuch mit Nachbetrachtungen* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962) 77.

usually called the *Contestatio*, in which James instructs his hearers about the transmission of the books of Peter's preaching. In the manuscript tradition the letters typically are attached to the beginning of the *Homilies*. There is also a translator's preface to the Latin edition of the *Recognitions* that was written by Rufinus of Aquileia.

The Pseudo-Clementine Narrative

Before we examine the Pseudo-Clementine texts' individual tendencies and characteristics, we need to take a closer look at the narrative outline they all share.[26] The *Recognitions*, which presents itself as an autobiographical account written by Clement and addressed to James, begins with Clement's recollection of his concerns about philosophical and religious problems during his boyhood in Rome.[27] He continues to be vexed because philosophical reasoning provides no definitive answers to his questions, until one day he hears rumors that a Judean is preaching the kingdom of the invisible God and promising eternal life to his disciples. This rumor is confirmed when Barnabas preaches in Rome, where he is inhospitably received by the populace and finds refuge with Clement.

Barnabas returns to Judea for a feast; Clement is detained momentarily but soon follows Barnabas and is introduced to Peter. Peter teaches Clement about the True Prophet, who will bring an end to all the uncertainty troubling Clement. The narrative then says that Clement wrote down Peter's teaching and sent the book to James. Peter and Simon, a magician from Samaria, are scheduled to dispute with one another soon after Clement arrives in Judea, but Simon postpones the debate. This allows Peter an opportunity to tell Clement about God's actions from the beginning of the world until the present day. Peter's account includes a story about a disputation on the temple steps between the apostles and members of various Jewish groups (priests, Sadducees, Samaritans, scribes and Pharisees, and disciples of John the Baptist). The apostles are just about to prevail when the disputation is interrupted by a ruckus – the instigator is unnamed but obviously Saul/Paul – during which James is thrown down the temple steps and the crowd is dispersed. The disciples flee to Jericho, and the nameless enemy goes to Damascus in pursuit of

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[26] In choosing which materials to include here, I consulted the summaries of C. Bigg, "The Clementine Homilies," in *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica: Essays Chiefly in Biblical and Patristic Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1890) 2.158-60; G. Salmon, "Clementine Literature," in *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1877) 568-70; and J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and their Literature," *Theological Studies* 16 (1955) 346.

[27] Clement's search for knowledge is, of course, one example of a common literary trope. See e.g. Justin, *dial.* 1-8; Plutarch, *Moralia* 410a-b, 421a-b; Josephus, *BJ* 2.8.14; *AJ* 13.5.9; 18.1.3; Lucian, *Pisc.* 11-12; Philostratus, *VA* 1.7; 6.11.

Peter and intent on causing havoc. In Jericho, James is informed by Zacchaeus that Simon is causing trouble at Caesarea. James then sends Peter to Caesarea to refute Simon, and Peter is instructed by James to report his activities every year.

The *Recognitions* then introduces two disciples of Peter, Niceta and Aquila, who are former associates of Simon. They tell Peter about Simon's activities and magical powers, noting that Simon believed his powers to have come from the soul of a murdered boy whose image was preserved in Simon's bedroom.[28] Peter then begins a three-day-long dispute with Simon that centers around problems of theodicy – namely, does the presence of evil in the world necessitate belief in a God different than the Creator? – and the question of the soul's immortality. Peter, knowing the skeletons in Simon's closet, offers to settle the debate by interrogating the soul of the murdered boy. Simon realizes his secret is out and humbles himself, but recants when he learns that Peter came by this knowledge through his associates rather than through prophetic ability. By this time the audience is indignant and Simon is driven away; Simon explains to his followers that he must leave because divine honors await him in Rome. Peter decides to follow Simon among the gentiles in order to expose his corruption. He sets out for Tripolis (the center of Simon's activity) after remaining in Caesarea for three months, having worked to further establish the church and having ordained Zacchaeus as its bishop. At this point the narrative says that Clement sent to James an account of Peter's discourses in ten books, giving a brief summary of each of these books.

When Peter arrives in Tripolis, he learns that Simon has again evaded him by fleeing to Syria. Peter then takes the opportunity to instruct the folks in Tripolis. These discourses, which contain a lengthy polemic against paganism, continue over the course of the next three books of the *Recognitions*. Book six ends with the baptism of Clement and the ordination of a bishop at Tripolis. Peter leaves for Antioch after these events, having spent three months in Tripolis.

Book seven begins the story of Clement's "recognition" of his family. Through a series of miraculous incidents, Clement is reunited with his mother and brothers. In books eight and nine Peter, Clement, Niceta and Aquila (the latter two turn out to be Clement's long-lost brothers) are involved in a disputation against one Faustinianus, who says that prayer is useless, that God and providence do not exist, and that everything is governed by astrological fate. Together with his brothers, Clement argues on behalf of providence and discusses the evidence for astrology. As a rejoinder, the man tells the story of his astrologically-determined and

[28] This may be compared to Lycomedes' portrait of John in *A. Jo.* 26. I am grateful to François Bovon for bringing this to my attention.

tragic separation from his entire family. Peter then recognizes this story as the same sad tale mentioned by Clement's family, and is able to simultaneously reunite Clement's father with his family and win the dispute by showing the complete falsification of Faustinianus' astrological prediction. Book ten contains discourses that are designed to bring about Faustinianus' conversion to Christianity.

At this point in the story, Simon comes back into the picture. While in Antioch, he succeeds in performing wondrous deeds and stirring up the people's hatred of Peter. One of Peter's friends, however, has devised a plan to get rid of Simon. This friend tells Cornelius the centurion to say that Cornelius had been sent by the emperor to destroy Simon and other sorcerers in the area. A Christian spy, pretending to be Simon's friend, informs Simon of this development. Simon retreats to Laodicea, where he meets Faustinianus, who had come to visit their mutual friends Appion and Anubion. The devious Simon then uses his magical powers to make Faustinianus look just like him, so that the sorcerer-hunter might arrest Faustinianus instead of Simon himself. Peter uses this device to his advantage, however, by sending Faustinianus *qua* Simon to Antioch, where he pretends to be Simon and makes a public confession of both his own imposture and the divine inspiration of Peter's mission. When the real Simon arrives back in Antioch and desires an audience, he's driven away in disgrace. The *Recognitions* ends with Peter being received honorably in Antioch and baptizing Faustinianus.

The *Homilies* tells largely the same story, with a few major differences. Here Clement meets Barnabas in Alexandria instead of Rome.[29] Peter's initial instructions to Clement are different, as is Peter's disputation with Simon at Caesarea, because both include an almost Marcionite outlook on the corruption of scripture. Peter, anticipating the scriptural problems Simon is likely to address in the debate, teaches to Clement a secret doctrine that should not be discussed in public. Peter tells Clement that Simon will probably bring forward texts that seem to speak of many gods, or indicate that God is imperfect and mutable, or accuse the patriarchs of sinning. While it would be unwise to publicly question the authority of these passages, Peter tells Clement the secret truth: these scriptures have been corrupted. Every text that speaks against God or questions the righteousness of the patriarchs is to be rejected as a spurious addition. Though this doctrine is initially presented as esoteric, Peter goes on to repeat it in the public disputation with Simon that follows his instructions to Clement.

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[29] For a discussion of this geographical discrepancy see Jones, "Clement of Rome and the *Pseudo-Clementines*," 146-47 n. 16, 148.

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