

ODD MAGNE BAKKE

»Concord and Peace«

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

143

Mohr Siebeck

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Herausgegeben von
Jörg Frey, Martin Hengel, Otfried Hofius

143



Odd Magne Bakke

“Concord and Peace”

A Rhetorical Analysis of the First Letter of Clement
with an Emphasis on the Language
of Unity and Sedition

Mohr Siebeck

ODD MAGNE BAKKE, born 1962; 1998 Doctor theologiae, University of Oslo; 1991–94 Research fellow, 1995–98 Lecturer in Church History, The School of Mission and Theology, The Faculty of Theology, Stavanger; since 1998 Associate Professor in Church History, The School of Mission and Theology, The Faculty of Theology, Stavanger.

Die Deutsche Bibliothek – CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

Bakke, Odd Magne:

“Concord and Peace”: a rhetorical analysis of the first letter of Clement with an emphasis on the language of unity and sedition / Odd Magne Bakke. – Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001

(Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament: Reihe 2; 143)
ISBN 3-16-147637-9

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This book was typeset by Progressus Consultant KB in Karlstad (Sweden) using Minion MM and SymbolGreek typefaces, printed by Gulde-Druck in Tübingen on non-aging paper and bound by Buchbinderei Heinr. Koch in Tübingen.

Printed in Germany.

ISSN 0340-9570

For
KRISTIN

Acknowledgements

This book is a revised version of a dissertation accepted as a partial requirement for the degree of *doctor theologiae* by the University of Oslo in March 1998.

Many friends, colleagues, and mentors have contributed both to the original dissertation and to the product presented here, and I wish to thank them all for their help. In particular, I would like to mention Prof. David Hellholm at the University of Oslo, Norway, who supervised my dissertation and who continued to give generously of his time and advice during the revision of the manuscript. His wisdom, constructive criticism, personal support, and active interest have been invaluable during the years in which this book was being researched and written. I owe him a great debt of gratitude! I would also like to thank the other members of the New Testament Research Group at the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo, for valuable criticism and feedback: Prof. Halvor Moxnes, Prof. Turid Karlsen Seim, and my fellow doctoral students Inger Marie Lindboe, Reidar Aasgaard, Jorunn Økland, and Tor Vegge. I have also received valuable advice and support from colleagues and friends at the School of Mission and Theology, Stavanger, Norway. I especially want to thank Prof. Torstein Jørgensen for his engagement in the project and for encouragement in time of difficulties, and Prof. Tor Hauken (now at the University of Bergen, Norway) for checking the Greek at an earlier stage; thanks are also due to the staff at the library of the School of Mission and Theology, most efficiently headed by the Rev. Arne B. Samulesen, for providing me with all the necessary literature.

Most of the work with this book was made possible through a generous research fellowship granted by the School of Mission and Theology for the period 1991-1994. Let me also express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Bruce C. Johanson of Walla Walla College (USA) for improving the English text, to Mr. Christer Hellholm of Progressus Consultant KB, Karlstad (Sweden) for technical assistance, for doing the typesetting of the final manuscript, including the composition of the indexes, as well as to the Research Council of Norway for a grant covering the printing of this book.

I am also in great debt to the editor of WUNT, Prof. Martin Hengel, for accepting the volume into this series.

Last, but definitely not least, I want to thank my wife Kristin for her loving support and encouragement despite the fact that she has had so often to compete with a rival named Clement. I dedicate this book to her.

Note on Texts, Citations and Abbreviations

The text of *1 Clement* used in this work is the one edited by J. A. Fischer. As a standard English translation we have chosen K. Lake's edition.

This investigation follows the following standards for abbreviations, citations, texts and translations:

Abbreviations of biblical, apocryphal, and early patristic writings follow those listed in the *Journal of Biblical Literature's* "Instructions for Contributors" (Membership Directory and Handbook [1993], 386-388). Abbreviations of other patristic writings follow those listed in G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Abbreviations of Philo and Josephus follow S. M. Schwertner, *Abkürzungsverzeichnis, Theologische Realenzyklopädie*.

References to classical texts follow the abbreviations listed in N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. Where texts and authors are not found in that list, the lists in H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, and in P. G. W. Glare, *Oxford Latin Dictionary* are used.

Classical texts are cited according to the text and translation of the Loeb Classical Library editions where available. The editions we have used regarding quotations from texts not included in Loeb Classical Library are indicated in the bibliography.

Abbreviations of periodicals and series follow those listed in S. M. Schwertner, *Abkürzungsverzeichnis, Theologische Realenzyklopädie*.

In this work there are notices such as "See chap(s). nn" and "See p(p). nn" that occur in footnotes. These notices always refer to chapter(s) and/or page(s) in the present volume.

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1. Introduction

1.1. *First Clement – Some Introductory Remarks*

The primary object for the present study is the so-called *First Letter of Clement*. The main aim is to identify its genre, function and composition. We shall attempt to demonstrate that a thorough analysis will lead to new insights with regard to some of the main questions in the research on *1 Clement*, i.e. the question of genre, the use and meaning of several terms and *topoi*, the composition of the letter, and the underlying cause of the conflict in the Corinthian Church from Clement's perspective. Before stating the purpose of the study in greater detail and discussing methodology, it is appropriate to make some general remarks about authorship, date, and the main purpose of the letter.

1.1.1. *Authorship*

The document known as *1 Clement* is one of the oldest extant Christian writings outside of the New Testament canon and is therefore one of our most significant sources with regard to the life and theology of Early Christianity. At a very early stage in the ancient tradition, this letter from the Roman Church to the Church in Corinth was attributed to a person named "Clement".¹ Although not much can be said with certainty about the identity of this person, ancient sources offer some information that can shed light on the issue. The name of Clement occurs in the so-called bishop lists, the first of which dates from the late second century. Irenaeus, as recorded in Eusebius' Church History, maintains that Clement was the third in the succession of Roman bishops after Peter, following Linus and Anacletus (or Cletus).² The same order is to be found in different lists from the fourth Century.³ On the basis of the fact that we know that Irenaeus visited Rome and on the basis of the almost unanimous information given in the bishop lists it is a fair supposition that these men were significant leaders of the Roman Church at that time.

¹ Eusebius refers twice to the "epistle of Clement" which he wrote "in the name of the Church of the Romans" (*h.e.* 3.16.1; 3.38.1), and twice he designates the letter "the epistle of Clement to the Corinthians" without mentioning the entire Roman Church (*h.e.* 4.22.1; 4.23.11). The same author also refers to a letter of Dionysius of Corinth, Bishop of Corinth ca. 170 C.E. who speaks of the letter "formerly sent to us through Clement" (*h.e.* 4.23.11).

² Iren. *haer.* 3.3.3.

³ For text references and a thorough discussion of the lists, see J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 63f.; 201-345.

Nevertheless, this fact does not mean that we accept the concept of the office reflected in the lists, namely the implication that monarchical episcopacy was established at this point of time and that Clement was a bishop according to this understanding of the office. On the contrary, there is no indication in *1 Clement* that the monarchical episcopacy was established in Rome at the time of the composition of the letter.⁴ Irenaeus' motive for presenting the so-called bishop lists seems to be obvious. At a time of increasing heresy, gnosticism in particular, the succession of bishops in Rome functioned as a guarantee of the unbroken transmission of the original faith proclaimed by Peter and Paul. The succession of bishops should demonstrate that heretical doctrine was a recent development. However, when Irenaeus and others give the impression that a monarchical episcopacy was established in the first century C.E. this is an anachronism. They project their own understanding of office back to the time of Clement.⁵ This does not imply that the men who appear on the lists were not bishops and prominent leaders in the Church. They were indeed bishops. However, at that point of time one did not yet distinguish between bishops and presbyters. In other words, it seems more correct to call them presbyter-bishops. Since Irenaeus and others specifically mentioned these presbyter-bishops, it is likely that they were first among equals. In spite of the anachronistic character of the bishop lists, we have no reason to doubt that the actual persons were significant leaders of the Roman Church at the time stated in the lists. The literary tradition associated with Clement⁶ in addition to *1 Clement* also indicates that Clement was a well-known and significant figure during his lifetime.⁷ Therefore, in accord with the early tradition, there is no reason not to believe that this significant figure in the Roman Church was the author of the letter.

Many scholars are of the opinion that the man named Clement in *Hermas Vis.* 2.4.3 is identical with the author of *1 Clement*. According to this passage, which includes the

⁴ The terms *presbyteros* and *episkopos* are used interchangeably in the epistle. J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) rightly remarks that "the term 'bishop' is still a synonym for 'presbyter'" (69). D. A. HAGNER designates Clement as a "presbyter-bishop" ..., not essentially different from other presbyter-bishops in the early Church", *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 3. Cf. also H. E. LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief* (1998) 446.

⁵ So J. LAWSON, *A Theological and Historical Introduction to the Apostolic Fathers* (1961) 27.

⁶ The first of a large number of scriptures which came to be attributed to Clement at an early stage was *2 Clement* which is not really a letter, but a homily. For a recent commentary, see A. LINDEMANN, *Die Clemensbriefe* (1992) 184-261. Also connected with Clement are the legendary *Clementine Recognitions* and *Clementine Homilies* from the second or third century. Among other things, they deal with the history of Clement's family. A summary of this history is given by J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 14-16. Considering the legendary character of this story Lightfoot questions "whether its author ever intended it to be accepted as a narrative of facts" (*ibid.* 16). Further works written in the name of Clement are the two *Epistles of Virginity*, probably from the beginning of the third century, the *Apostolic Constitution* (fourth century) and five Latin letters that constituted a main part of the ninth century *False Decretals*. For further consideration of the literature associated with Clement, cf. J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 100-103; 406-420; B. ALTANER - A. STUIBER, *Patrologie* (1966) 47.

⁷ Cf. D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 2f.; H. E. LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief* (1998) 72.

earliest reference to a man named Clement belonging to the Roman Church, it is the duty of this man to send letters abroad. He apparently functions as a foreign correspondent or a church secretary.⁸ Therefore it is likely, according to many scholars, that this person was the author of *1 Clement* as well.⁹ The question of the composition and date of *Hermas* is complicated and extensively discussed in the research. It is reasonable to argue, however, that *Vis.* 2.4.3 belongs to a part of *Hermas* which was composed during the first decades of the 2nd century, that is to say between 100-120 C.E.¹⁰ When one operates with the traditional date of *1 Clement*, i.e. 95-96 C.E., the chronology makes it somewhat difficult to agree with many scholars who argue that the Clement in *Hermas* and the author of *1 Clement* are one and the same person.¹¹ In this work we shall argue that one must operate within a broader frame of time when considering the date of the composition of *1 Clement*, namely 95-110 C.E.¹² If we are right, this implies that we can argue more plausibly with respect to chronology that the Clement mentioned in *Hermas* is the author of *1 Clement*.

We should note, however, that the letter itself, in contrast to many of the epistles in the NT, neither mentions an individual author nor refers to any individual authorities within the Church. The reverse is the case. The letter states that the author is “the Church of God which sojourns in Rome”.¹³ This collective aspect of the authorship is also reflected throughout the letter in the many first person plural forms. We should also note that this collective aspect of the authorship is reflected in early Christian tradition. In a letter which Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, sent to Rome around 170 E.C., he refers to it as the letter “sent to us through Clement”.¹⁴ Irenaeus similarly describes the sender of the letter as the whole Church when he says that “the Church in Rome despatched a most powerful letter to the Corinthians, exhorting them to peace”.¹⁵ Also,

⁸ P. LAMPE, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten* (1989) depicts this person as a “Aussenminister” of the Church (336).

⁹ So for example H. LIETZMANN, “Zur altchristlichen Verfassungsgeschichte” (1914) *ZWTh* 55 (1914) 138; M. DIBELIUS, *Der Hirt des Hermas* (1923) 422; A. VON HARNACK, *Einführung in die alte Kirchengeschichte* (1929) 50; H. VON CAMPENHAUSEN, *Kirchliches Amt und geistliche Vollmacht in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (1963) 103; R. M. GRANT, *The Apostolic Fathers. Vol. I. An Introduction* (1964) 39; P. VIELHAUER, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (1975) 539; K. WENGST, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (1987) 106; J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 32; G. SCHNEIDER, *Clemens von Rom* (1994) 16f. and partly N. BROX, *Der Hirt des Hermas* (1991) 107f.; C. OSIEK, *Shepherd of Hermas* (1999) 18ff., 59.

¹⁰N. BROX, *Der Hirt des Hermas* (1991) 24. See further the discussion of “Komposition und Verfasserschafts-Problem” 25-33.

¹¹Cf. P. LAMPE, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten* (1989) 172 n. 157: “Ihn [the author of 1 Clem.] mit dem Clemens von Herm Vis II 4,3 gleichzusetzen ... ist verlockend, kollidiert aber ein wenig mit der wahrscheinlichsten Datierung des Hermasbuches (1. Hälfte bzw. gegen Mitte des 2. Jh.)”, and similar H. E. LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief* (1998) 66.

¹²See the present study pp. 8-11.

¹³*Praescript.*

¹⁴Eus. *h.e.* 4.23.11.

¹⁵Iren. *haer.* 3.3.3.

Clement of Alexandria refers to it in one passage as "the Epistle of the Romans to the Corinthians".¹⁶

When we speak of a collective aspect, we do not mean that the whole community participated in the composition of the letter. It is more likely that one individual composed the letter on behalf of the entire congregation. The unity in style and content also indicates that the letter is a product of a single author.¹⁷ In other words, the collective aspect is not a contradiction of the opinion that Clement had the main responsibility for the content and the writing of the letter.

Concerning the identity, and the social and religious background of this significant figure in the Roman Church, it is difficult to say anything with certainty except that his acquaintance with and use of the Septuagint reflects a Hellenistic-Jewish tradition.¹⁸ Eusebius maintains that the author of *1 Clement* was identical with the co-worker of Paul named Clement, as mentioned by Paul in Phil 4:3.¹⁹ With respect to the chronology, it is possible that Clement as a young man, let us say at the age of twenty-five, had been a fellow-worker of Paul when the latter wrote to the Philippians in 61-62 C.E. Thirty years later the same person could have become a leader in the Roman Church. However, the remarks in *1 Clem.* 63:3 about the messengers, that they have "lived

¹⁶Clem. *str.* 5. 12. Cf. also Eus. *h.e.* 3.16.1; 3.38.1.

¹⁷A. STUIBER, "Clemens Romanus I", *RAC* 3 (1957) 192; K. WENGST, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (1987) 105f.

¹⁸For the use of the Septuagint in *1 Clement*, see G. BRUNNER, *Die theologische Mitte des ersten Klemensbriefs* (1972) 75-89; D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 21-132; H. E. LONA, *Der erste Klemensbrief* (1998) 42-48. Lona concludes by stating that "Die Sprache von I Clem im allgemeinen, aber auch die massive Verwendung der griechischen Bibel deuten auf einen präzisen traditionellen Ort: das hellenistische Judentum" (58). Lona is of the opinion that both the vocabulary and certain aspects of the content of the letter show that Clement shares the same tradition as Philo. He emphasizes that elements in the letter that commonly have been regarded as Stoic are to be found in Hellenistic Judaism, particularly in works by Philo, and draws the conclusion that Clement's use of the alleged "Stoic" element is not a product of Clement's acquaintance with Stoicism, but must be explained by the fact that he draws heavily on Alexandrine Judaism. Lona states that the importance of Philo is not primarily connected with his authorship, "sondern um seine Rolle als Vertreter des alexandrinischen Judentums und somit auch als Zeuge des für die alte Christenheit – natürlich auch für 1 Clem – entscheidenden Versuches der Vermittlung zwischen dem überlieferten Glauben und der hellenistischen Kultur" (58-61, quotation 58). In my opinion there are some problems with Lona's argumentation. For if Philo functions as a "Zeuge", and thereby as an example for Clement in the attempt to communicate the Christian faith within a Hellenistic context, this does not exclude the possibility that Clement himself could have integrated Hellenistic elements independent of Hellenistic Judaism. Furthermore, in my opinion Lona draws too hasty a conclusion when he says that, since no Stoic elements are to be found in *1 Clement* which are not to be found in Alexandrine Jewish literature, this tradition is the source of the "Stoicism" in the letter. For what reason can one take it for granted that Clement so exclusively should have made use of a Hellenistic-Jewish tradition when one finds many striking parallels in Hellenistic sources regarding terminology, topics and motifs? In my opinion as I have stated above, though Clement clearly reflects a Hellenistic-Jewish tradition, it is significant to focus also upon Hellenistic sources in order to understand certain terms, *topoi*, the genre, the composition, and the general strategy of argumentation.

¹⁹Eus. *h.e.* 3.15.

among us without blame from youth to old age” seems to indicate that Clement had known them personally for more than thirty years and thus must have been a member of the Roman Church before the composition of Paul’s letter to the Philippians. Another feature that indicates that the suggestion of Eusebius is quite improbable is the fact that Clement was a common name in the first and second centuries.²⁰ Likewise, the assertion of Tertullian that Clement was consecrated by Peter himself is not probable. On the other hand, the information given by Irenaeus that Clement “had seen the blessed apostles [Peter and Paul], and had been conversant with them”²¹ is more likely to be historically correct. So, it is possible that Clement met Paul and Peter during their visits to Rome.²²

The considerations above show that the evidence of early Christian literature offers little help regarding the background of Clement. Apart from the information given by Irenaeus that Clement met Paul and Peter in Rome, the literature offers no adequate information at all. Nothing is recorded about his religious and social background, except that he was a Christian at the time Paul and Peter visited Rome. Some scholars, however, have paid attention to other sources and other kinds of evidence that may connect Clement to the Roman aristocracy. One suggestion that would link Clement to the aristocratic elite is that the author of the letter may be identical with the consul Titius Flavius Clement, the cousin of Domitian. In 96 C.E., this consul was put to death, while his wife Domitilla was banished by the emperor. The sources mention different reasons for Domitian’s treatment of his relatives. According to Dio Cassius the charge against them was “atheism (ἄθεος), a charge on which many others who drifted into Jewish ways were condemned”.²³ Suetonius does not mention the charge, but gives what he considers to be the underlying motive for the action against Flavius Clement, i.e. a groundless suspicion of treason against Domitian. He does not mention Domitilla.²⁴ According to Eusebius, who does not record the death of Flavius Clement, Flavia Domitilla “was banished with many others to the island of Pontia as testimony to Christ”.²⁵ This is not the place to consider in detail what light these passages throw on

²⁰J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 22f.

²¹Iren. *haer.* 3.3.3.

²²Cf. J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 73 n. 3, who maintains that the expression τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀποστόλους in *1 Clem* 5:3 indicates that Clement met Paul and Peter, and D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 3.

²³Dio Cass. 67.14.1f.

²⁴Suet. *Dom.* 15.1.

²⁵Eus. *h.e.* 3.18.4. Eusebius points out that his source for this information is a pagan writer, a fact which corresponds with Eus. *Chron. Domitianus* 16, (Ed. R. HELM, *Die Chronik des Hieronymus* (1956) 192), where he says that the Roman author Bruttius (2nd or 3rd century) has recorded that a niece of the consul Flavius Clement, Flavia Domitilla, was banished to the island Pontia because of her Christian faith. For the discussion whether the actual sources record two different women with the same name or not, see P. LAMPE, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten* (1989) 168. In our view, his suggestion that Bruttius is confusing Domitilla’s connection with Flavius Clement seems plausible. It seems probable that Domitilla was not a niece of Flavius Clement, but his wife.

the religious status of these members of the Roman aristocracy.²⁶ So we will restrict ourselves to expressing our opinion that it is not likely that Flavius Clement was a Christian. If a person with the social rank of Flavius Clement were a Christian, we should expect that the sources would have mentioned this explicitly. He could, however, have been a Jewish convert or a Jewish sympathiser,²⁷ but that is also uncertain.²⁸ Concerning Flavia Domitilla it is more likely that she had converted to Christianity or at least was a Christian sympathiser.²⁹ Since we are of the opinion that it is probable that Flavius Clement was not a Christian, it follows that the consul Clement and the leader in the Roman Church would be different persons.

This fact, however, does not exclude the possibility that the author of *I Clement* was connected to the imperial house. J. B. Lightfoot maintained that Clement was "a man of Jewish descent, a freedman or the son of a freedman belonging to the household of Flavius Clement the emperor's cousin".³⁰ He based his opinion on the following: the supposition that Flavius Clement and Domitilla were Christians; the similarity of names; the fact that at the time a large number of Jews were found among the slaves of the great houses; and Clement's acquaintance with the Greek Bible. Several scholars, while not rejecting this hypothesis, have rightly pointed out its lack of hard evidence.³¹ J. S. Jeffers, however, has recently reinforced the view of a connection between *I Clement* and the imperial family of Flavius Clement and Flavia Domitilla. His arguments are largely based on archaeological evidence. Jeffers pays attention to inscriptions from the first century which demonstrate that Flavia Domitilla donated burial land to her dependants. Although none of the inscriptions reflect Christian use of the burial land, Jeffers argues that it is likely that Domitilla had also donated land to the Christian members of her household. The original users of the known catacombs of Domitilla were pagans,³² but archaeological evidence shows that one part of them, the "Flavian" *hypogeum* was taken over by Christians (probably descendants of Domitilla) from the

²⁶For a detailed discussion on this subject, see, e.g., J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 25-35; E. T. MERRILL "The Alleged Persecution by Domitian", *Essays in Early Christian History* (1924) 148-173; R. L. P. MILBURN, "The Persecution of Domitian", *CQ* 139 (1945) 154-164; P. LAMPE, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten* (1989) 166-172; J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 25-28.

²⁷So J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 27.

²⁸R. L. P. MILBURN, "The Persecution of Domitian", *CQR* 139 (1945) 160.

²⁹Regarding the religious status of Flavius Clement and his wife Domitilla we have basically adopted the conclusions reached in the sober investigation by P. Lampe.

³⁰J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 61.

³¹A. VON HARNACK, *Einführung in die Alte Kirchengeschichte* (1929) 51; A. STUIBER, "Clemens Romanus I" *RAC* 3 (1957) 189; D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and the New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 4; J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 33.

³²J. S. JEFFERS underlines that the pagan character of the actual inscription should not lead one to draw any conclusion regarding the religious belief of the donator. They show only that Domitilla donated burial land to her dependents, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 54.

early third century.³³ Furthermore, Jeffers attempts to demonstrate a connection between the warehouse beneath the San Clemente complex and the house church of Clement on first-century Flavian property. He argues that the warehouse was probably the site of this house church at one time.

Later traditions, Jerome's comment being the most important, connect this site and probably the first-century warehouse with the author of *1 Clement*, a leader of the Christian congregations in Rome. No other explanation satisfactorily explains the strength with which early Christians connected this site with Clement. Although no Christian remains have been discovered on the first-century level of San Clemente, it is possible that the warehouse was used for Christian worship.³⁴

Definitive evidence regarding both the religious status of Domitilla and Clement's affiliation with the Flavian household is still lacking.³⁵ On the other hand, Jeffers has substantiated the hypothesis that the author of *1 Clement* was an imperial freedman of the house of Flavius Clement and Domitilla. Although none of the available sources definitively confirm Jeffers' hypothesis, we find much of Jeffers' argumentation reasonable and plausible.

If this hypothesis is correct, we may also be able to say something about the social background of Clement. Usually an imperial slave boy went to school and learned the basics necessary for public service: Latin, Greek, and applied mathematics. After he had spent about ten years in the civil service, he would receive his freedom at around the age of thirty and could hold posts such as record officer, correspondent, accountant, or paymaster. In his forties he could move on to more responsible posts such as chief accountant, chief record officer, or chief correspondent. The freedmen's education and experience of the imperial bureaucracy gave them qualifications and abilities to exercise leadership in Rome's private associations.³⁶ In other words, if Clement was an imperial freedman – which is likely – he would have had an education that was better than average for a Greek-speaking resident in Rome. Also, it is highly probable that he would be familiar with rhetorical theory of the handbooks from his education and with rhetorical practice and letter writing from his work in the imperial bureaucracy. Besides the assumption that he had reached this level of education, as an imperial freedman, the letter itself reflects literary skills not common for a Greek-speaking resident in Rome.³⁷ Stephan Lössch even makes the assertion, based on a comparison of *1 Clement* with the *Letter of Claudius to the Alexandrians*, that Clement must have been

³³J. S. Jeffers is conscious of the problem regarding the great intervening period: "The first Christians using this land would have to be at least the grandchildren of Domitilla's Christian dependents. But surely a story as dramatic as that of Domitilla, Clemens, and the Emperor Domitian would have survived several generations of family storytelling. The memory of a grant of burial land also would have been preserved from parent to child as part of the story" (*ibid.* 62).

³⁴*Ibid.* 88.

³⁵Cf. the review of D. J. BINGHAM, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 1 (1993) 87 f.

³⁶J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 30.

one of the imperial slaves who composed official letters.³⁸ A. Stuiber maintains that Clement "besitzt rhetorische Bildung u. verwendet massvoll die Mittel der zeitgenössischen Kunstprosa",³⁹ W. Jaeger asserts that Clement's method of argumentation, i.e. proof by accumulated examples, is taken from current rhetorical practice and from rhetorical handbooks,⁴⁰ and J. A. Kleist holds that "Clement was doubtless an educated Roman and conversant with the requirements of good prose style".⁴¹

1.1.2. Date

We stated above that we have no reason to distrust the ancient tradition that ascribes the letter to Clement, a significant leader in the Church of Rome. According to the above-mentioned bishop lists Clement was a bishop during the last decade of the first century.⁴² However, bearing in mind the anachronistic character of the lists, they tell us only that Clement was a significant bishop-presbyter at the time. Together with the men recorded in the so-called bishop lists and others, Clement may have been an influential leader of the congregation for a longer period than he functioned as the bishop of the Roman Church, according to the lists. This means that he may have written the letter either before or after the last decade of the first century.⁴³

Clement's apology for not having written before has been a focal point, if not the focal point in the discussion relating to the date of the letter. The reason for the delay is that "sudden and repeated misfortunes (συμφορά) and calamities (περίπτωσις)" had befallen the Church in Rome (1:1). Since the fundamental work of J. B. Lightfoot, who interpreted συμφορά and περίπτωσις as referring to a persecution of the Roman Church under Domitian's reign (81-96 C.E.),⁴⁴ the majority of scholars have followed

³⁷J. S. Jeffers remarks "that those who could write, such as Clement, must have been very unusual, even in the late first century" (*ibid.* 32). And K. WENGST, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (1967) is of the opinion that the author's "knowledge and his capacity for expressing himself in writing" indicate that he was a member of the higher social classes" (109).

³⁸S. LÖSCH, "Der Brief des Clemens Romanus", *Studi dedicati alla memoria Paola Ubaldi* (1937) 181-186.

³⁹A. STUIBER, "Clemens Romanus I", *RAC* 3 (1957) 195.

⁴⁰W. JAEGER, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (1965) 13; 113f. n. 3. Cf. also W. C. VAN UNNIK, "Studies over de zogenaamde eerste brief van Clemens", *Mededelingen* (1970) 31f. who asserts that Clement must have been familiar with the same rhetorical tradition of which Dio Chrysostom was the most famous exponent. This opinion is adopted by B. E. BOWE, *A Church in Crisis* (1988) 65.

⁴¹J. A. KLEIST, *The Epistles of St. Clement of Rome* (1946) 6.

⁴²Eusebius, for instance, writes that Clement was bishop of Rome from the twelfth year of Domitian to the third year of Trajan, that is a period of nine years, 92-101 C.E. (*h.e.* 3.15; 3.34). On the chronology of the various bishop lists see J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 339-343.

⁴³It seems that scholars who rightly point out that the monarchical episcopate was not yet established at the time when *1 Clement* was written, are not aware of this problem. D. A. HAGNER, for example, who although he calls Clement a "presbyter-bishop", maintains that external evidence, especially the bishop lists, indicates that the date of *1 Clement* is "almost certainly to be placed at 95 or 96 A.D.", *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 4.

⁴⁴J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first pr. 1889) 58. See further 346-358.

his understanding. In combination with internal evidence such an interpretation led to what we may call the traditional view, i.e. that the letter must be dated to 93–96 C.E.⁴⁵

For various reasons, however, there have been voices among scholars that have questioned the main assumption behind the traditional dating, maintaining that *συμφορά* and *περίπτωσης* refer instead to internal strife within the Roman Church.⁴⁶

⁴⁵E.g. A. VON HARNACK, “Der erste Klemensbrief”, *Sitzungsberichte* (1909) 38–63 who even maintains that the date of the letter “zu dem Sichersten in der altchristlichen Literaturgeschichte gehört”, 62; E. MOLLAND, “Clemensbriefe”, *RGG* 1 (1957) 1837; A. STUIBER, “Clemens Romanus I”, *RAC* 3 (1957) 191; L. W. BARNARD, “St. Clement of Rome and the Persecution of Domitian”, *Studies in the Apostolic Fathers* (1966) 10–12; D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 4f; P. VIELHAUER, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (1975) 540; H. KÖSTER, *Einführung in das Neue Testament* (1980) 727; A. LINDEMANN, *Die Clemensbriefe* (1992) 12. J. FUELLENBACH rightly underlines the strong position of the traditional view in the research: “If there is any agreement among recent studies concerning the first epistle of Clement Romanus, it seems to be the date when the letter was written. Almost all scholars date the letter between 93 and 97 A.D”, *Ecclesiastical Office and the Primacy of Rome* (1980) 1. However, other suggestions have also been put forward. For an earlier date, around 70 C. E. G. EDMUNDSEN, *The Church in Rome in the First Century* (1913) 189ff.; A. E. W. HOUIJBERG, “A Different View of Clemens Romanus”, *HeyJ* 16 (1975) 266–288; J. A. ROBINSON, *Redating the New Testament* (1976) 327–335; and for a later date, E. T. MERRILL, “On ‘Clement of Rome’”, *Essays in Early Christian History* (1924) 217–241 argues for a date in the neighbourhood of 140 C. E. and C. EGGENBERGER, *Die Quellen der politischen Ethik des 1. Klemensbriefes* (1951) 182, for a date between 118–125 C.E. However, none of these alternative suggestions has been received with considerable favour among scholars. For a survey of the research until ca. 1970 regarding the question of date, see J. FUELLENBACH, *Ecclesiastical Office and the Primacy of Rome* (1980) 1–3, and for a recent survey see H. E. LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief* (1998) 75–78. On the basis of internal and external evidence Lona dates the letter to the second half of 90s.

⁴⁶As far as we know, E. T. MERRILL, “The Alleged Persecution by Domitian”, *Essays in Early Christian History* (1924), was the first scholar who questioned the traditional view and asserted that Clement’s language in the apology for delay indicates that nothing very terrible had shaken the Roman Church: “It sounds curiously like an apologetic introduction to a modern letter” (160). R. L. P. MILBURN, “The Persecution of Domitian”, *CQR* 139 (1945) 154–164, followed Merrill and questioned the assumption that a persecution took place under Domitian at all. He concluded by maintaining that the Roman Church was prevented from writing earlier because it was suffering from the same problem that was now facing the Church at Corinth. L. W. BARNARD, “St. Clement of Rome and the Persecution of Domitian”, *Studies in the Apostolic Fathers* (1966) 5–18, opposes both Milburn’s suggestion regarding domestic troubles as the reason for the delay and the suggestion that a persecution under Domitian had not taken place at all. Barnard argues, however, that a full scale persecution did not take place, but that the strategy of Domitian was to hit “persons of eminence whom he might suspect of undermining his authority” (8) and “he singled out individual Christians who were prominent members of the Church of Rome” (15). So also P. KERESZTES, *Imperial Rome and the Christians* vol. I (1989) 96f. The suggestion that the language of delay in *1 Clement* refers to domestic affairs in the Roman Church has had a few advocates more recently. G. BRUNNER, *Die theologische Mitte des ersten Klemensbriefes* (1972), who builds upon K. BEYSLAG, *Clemens Romanus und der Frökatholizismus* (1966), argues that since *συμφορά* “gehört ‘traditionsgeschichtlich’ (im Sinne Beyschlags) in die Begriffsreihe Auf-ruhr, Verfolgung, Krieg, Gefangenschaft”, it is likely that *συμφορά* in *1 Clement* refers to circumstances within the Roman Church, 102; further, in particular, L. L. WELBORN, “On the Date of first Clement”, *BR* 29 (1984) 35–54, and K. ERLEMANN, “Die Datierung des ersten Klemensbriefes”, *NTS* 44 (1998) 591–607.

In our opinion, the latter view has not yet been sufficiently demonstrated.⁴⁷ We have, however, been able to identify a comparatively large number of passages that deal with the evil of internal strife where *συμφορά* is used to designate either the strife itself or the cause of the strife or the consequences of it.⁴⁸ We hope that our contribution will sufficiently demonstrate that the language of delay in *1 Clem.* 1:1 does not refer to persecution of the Church, but to internal strife and sedition.⁴⁹ Hence, the main assumption for the traditional date has to be rejected. This means that we must look for other evidence concerning the date of the letter.

Apart from the bishop lists the external evidence is rather scant. The most significant evidence is that presented to demonstrate a literary dependence between *1 Clement* and Polycarp's second letter to the Philippians.⁵⁰ Polycarp has on several occasions made use of *1 Clement*. It is a fair supposition that *Pol. Phil.* 13, the first letter of Polycarp, was written shortly after Ignatius had left Philippi on his way to Rome, while *Pol. Phil.* 1-12, 14, the second letter of Polycarp, was written about 140 C.E., and was possibly directed against Marcion.⁵¹ In addition, when Ignatius recalls that "you taught others" in *Ign. Rom.* 3:1, this is perhaps an allusion to *1 Clement* and thus a possible item of external evidence.⁵² In other words, the letter's *terminus ad quem* is 120-140 or perhaps 115-140 C.E.

In addition, as has been pointed out by scholars, there is internal evidence that sheds light upon the issue.⁵³ The references to the deaths of Peter and Paul and "a great

⁴⁷This is also the case with regard to L. L. WELBORN, "On the Date of First Clement", *BR* 29 (1984) 35-54. We agree with his hypothesis that *συμφορά* and *περίπτωσης* refer to internal strife, and that these terms ought to be understood in the light of ancient texts that deal with the issue of unity and sedition. However, the number of passages Welborn has put forward are rather few, and some of them seem not to be adequate at all regarding his hypothesis.

⁴⁸See the texts and discussion in chap. 3.5.2.1, pp. 100-105.

⁴⁹Our opinion on this point is not a contradiction of the fact that a persecution directed against the leaders of the Roman Church probably took place under Domitian. However, we assert that the language of delay in *1 Clement* does not allude to this persecution, but to domestic affairs in the Roman Church.

⁵⁰J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 149-152; A. VON HARNACK, "Der erste Klemensbrief", *Sitzungsberichte* (1909) 40, followed by P. MIKAT, *Die Bedeutung der Begriffe Stasis und Aponoia für das Verständnis des 1. Clemensbriefes* (1969) 10; P. VIELHAUER, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (1975) 564; D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 4; J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 92 and most recently; J. B. BAUER, *Die Polykarpbriefe* (1995) 28-30.

⁵¹See for example R. M. GRANT, *The Apostolic Fathers. Vol. 1. An Introduction* (1964) 64f; M. SYNNEs, "Polykarps Brev", *De Apostoliske fedre* (1984) 83f.; J. B. BAUER, *Die Polykarpbriefe* (1995) 18.

⁵²So A. STUIBER, "Clemens Romanus I", *RAC* 3 (1957) 191; P. MIKAT, *Die Bedeutung der Begriffe Stasis und Aponoia für das Verständnis des 1. Clemensbriefes* (1969) 11; D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 4.

⁵³For internal evidence in general, see, e.g., J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers I: Clement I* (1989, first printed 1889) 348-358; A. VON HARNACK, "Der erste Klemensbrief", *Sitzungsberichte* (1909) 62f; D. A. HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome* (1973) 4-6; J. S. JEFFERS, *Conflict at Rome* (1991) 91f.; A. LINDEMANN, *Die Clemensbriefe* (1992) 12; K. ERLEMANN, "Die Datierung des ersten Klemensbriefes", *NTS* 44 (1998) 605f.

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