In Search of Truth in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies

Edited by
BENJAMIN M. J. DE VOS
and DANNY PRAET

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament
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In Search of Truth in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies

New Approaches to a Philosophical and Rhetorical Novel of Late Antiquity

Edited by
Benjamin M. J. De Vos and Danny Praet

Mohr Siebeck
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# Abbreviations

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<td>BAH</td>
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<td>Collection de la Maison de l’Orient méditerranéen ancien</td>
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<td>DTC</td>
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<td>DWJ</td>
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<td>EAA</td>
<td>Encyclopædia dell’ Arte Antica</td>
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JEH Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JESHO Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JHS Journal of Hellenic Studies
JMMJS Journal of the Jesus Movement in Its Jewish Setting
JJS Journal of Jewish Studies
JLA Journal of Late Antiquity
JMR Journal of Mosaic Research
JÖB Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
JR Journal of Religion
JRS Journal of Roman Studies
JSP Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
JSQ Jewish Studies Quarterly
JSRC Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture
JSS Journal of Semitic Studies
JTS Journal of Theological Studies
LAHR Late Antique History and Religion
LCL Loeb Classical Library
LECTIO Lectio. Studies in the Transmission of Texts & Ideas
LTP Laval théologique et philosophique
MAAR Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome
MAS Mainzer Althistorische Studien
MdB Le Monde de la Bible
MMS Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften
MTSR Method and Theory in the Study of Religion
Mus Muséon: Revue d’études orientales
NedTT Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift
NGG Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse
NHMS Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
NHS Nag Hammadi Studies
NovT Novum Testamentum
NovTSup Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NPNF² Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2
NTOA Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTD Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTS New Testament Studies
OCP Orientalia Christiana Periodica
OECS Oxford Early Christian Studies
OLA Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OrChr Oriens Christianus
OrChrAn Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OTP Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (edited by James H. Charlesworth)
ParOr Parole de l’Orient: Revue semestrielle des études syriaques et arabes chrétiennes
PASCH Papers of the American Society of Church History
PhA Philosophia Antiqua
PIASH Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities
PIRSB Publications de l’Institut Romand des Sciences Bibliques
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The Pseudo-Clementines: Title, Genre and Research Questions

Benjamin M. J. De Vos and Danny Praet

The work this collective volume discusses is known by many titles. Traditionally it is referred to as the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies, and we will continue to use this title for the sake of scholarly tradition but not without a critical caveat. The history of research on the Pseudo-Clementines extends over almost two centuries. In these two hundred years of research, the date in which the Homilies are thought to have been composed has also moved two centuries: from the second to the fourth century. In 1831 Ferdinand Christian Baur discussed the Homilies as an important witness for his Hegelian view on the early stages of Christianity. He thought this text – in which, by the way, the words ‘Christ’, ‘Christian’ or ‘Christianity’ do not occur – allowed us to study the early dialectic between two factions. He interpreted the character of Peter as the ‘persona’ of the ‘Petrine’, Law-observant, Jewish-Christian party and recognised in the figure of

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Simon Magus the ‘Pauline’ faction of gentile Christians who rejected the Law. Much has changed since then, but scholars are still debating the origins of this complex work, the time and place from which it came, its possible redactional levels over the centuries and the way we should interpret the text as edited from the manuscripts. No one now will argue that the Homilies bring us back to the second century, but there is no consensus on many other questions. This volume will explore some new approaches and ask new questions. It is a collective volume and does not aim at ‘unisono’ answers. We hope it at least reflects the fact that the academic community reading and writing about the Pseudo-Clementines has become much more interdisciplinary: including not only New Testament scholars and specialists of different religious traditions, but also students of the ancient novel, rhetoric, and philosophy.

As already noted, the appropriate title to refer to this work is under discussion. Both the traditional use of ‘pseudo’ and of ‘Homilies’ have been questioned. The title Homilies sometimes causes confusion because it refers to a very complex work consisting, in its present form, of three introductory writings and of the narrative proper. It includes Peter’s letter to James [EpPt], the so-called Diamartyria or Adjuration [Adj], and Clement’s letter to James [EpCl]. These are followed by 20 books which are also individually called ‘Homilies’ [Hom.]. These books then offer some homilies or sermons, but also other types of speeches, disputationes, and narrative sections, all presented within the framework of a first-person narrative by Clement of Rome. Confusion on a generic level with homilistic literature caused the deeply rooted idea in the history of scholarship that the Homilies would have better preserved the sermons of Peter whereas the Recognitions [Rec.] were supposedly influenced more heavily by the novelistic framework of recognition scenes: that it would be closer to the classic novel. When we use the general title Homilies, we also include the three introductory writings. These letters have often been approached as separate, older sources, thought not to have been written by the Homilist. Walter Ullmann saw the EpCl

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3 For a brief discussion: Duncan, Novel Hermeneutics, 3–4, n. 12.

as an early Christian literary witness of apostolic succession, and as a legal document concerning the papal legacy of Rome. More recently, Matthew R. Crawford supposed that the letter of Peter to James “need not have been originally tied to the Homilies which now follow it” and that it can be studied “largely in isolation from the remainder of the Pseudo-Clementine corpus.” This is just one example of the many questions we will discuss infra of how the academic study of the Homilies has dissolved this work into separate pieces.

Regarding the traditional use of “pseudo”, scholars have argued with good reasons for simply Clementina and for the Greek title found in important manuscripts: Klementia. This discussion reflects a deeper lying lack of consensus on the genre of the text we want to study here, on the way it should be approached by scholars, and even on the disciplines in which it should be studied. In 1992 Mark J. Edwards proposed Clementina as a title and interpreted it as “a Christian response to the pagan novel.” In a previous collective volume on the Pseudo-Clementines, István Czachesz defended the view that there is little ground to call it an ancient novel. The genre of the ancient novel or romance is notoriously difficult to define, and so is the category of ancient fiction. But our continued
use of “pseudo” in this volume does not imply the editors and authors approach the work as anything else than imaginative or inventive prose.11 Eliminating the “pseudo” from the title would have the advantage of avoiding too straightforward associations with forgery or deception which seem out of place when discussing a work of fiction. Truth, falsehood, and deception are important themes in the debates and in the narrative of the Homilies, but in the course of its narrative the work offers sufficient markers of fictionality which would have guided the ancient reader and should also point the modern reader into the direction of make-believe. Erwin Rohde only discussed the Pseudo-Clementines in a footnote, but he already listed a number of plot-features the Christian work has in common with the classical novel.12

We agree with Mark J. Edwards who observed that modern scholars do not refer to other ancient first-person narratives by the name of their first-person narrative voices and characters such as pseudo-Socrates for the Republic or pseudo-Encolpius for the Satyricon. Nobody now believes the first-person narrative voice should really be identified with Clement of Rome, hence the work is pseudepigraphic. In the case of Plato or Petronius we are quite confident about the identity of the authors, in the case of the Clementina we can only guess who its author or authors, redactor or redactors were, although we can exclude contemporaries of Petronius. This volume will address questions about the intended audience, but it is probable that the educated reader would realise that what he or she is reading, is inventive prose and not the true history of Clement’s conversion. The ancient reader of Plato or Petronius, the audience of rhetorical showpieces and even the student of speeches in biographical and historiographical works approached these texts as literary creations with very different and complex relations to truth.

Academic compartmentalisation has also had an impact on the modern way the Clementina have been studied. Edwards noted they were absent from the collection of English translations published by Bryan P. Reardon as Collected Ancient Greek novels.13 The same could be said about the Romans grecs et latins published by Pierre Grimal in the Collection de la Pléiade in 1958. Grimal did cut through the divide of ‘pagan’ versus ‘Christian’ material. He included another first-person hagiographical narrative: the so-called Confession of Saint Cyprian. Gregory Nazianzen (Oratio 24) and Prudentius (Peristephanon 13) fused the imaginative figure of Cyprian, the magician of Antioch with the his-

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11 This broader terminology is suggested by Tim Whitmarsh in: Tim Whitmarsh and Stuart Thomson, The Romance between Greece and the East (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1.
13 But see supra: note 8.
torical Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage. In this hagiographical novella the magus from Antioch was hired by a client to put a love spell on the virgin Justina, but he became infatuated by her and her religion. The character of Cyprian of Antioch has some similarities with Simon Magus, pace the conversion, and is also seen as one of the possible sources of the Faust-legend. Grimal briefly compares this hagiographical romance with the *Pseudo-Clementines* but did not include the latter since his volume had to be selective.\(^{14}\) The new French translations of *Romans grecs et latins* published by Romain Brethes and Jean-Philippe Guez in 2016 exclusively offer the texts of Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Petronius, Achilles Tatius, Apuleius, Longus and Heliodorus.\(^{15}\) The two French volumes offer, respectively, more than 1500 and 1200 pages, so simple practical considerations might explain the absence of the *Pseudo-Clementines* from both. The same practical reasons, probably combined with generic considerations,\(^{16}\) have caused the marginal position of the *Pseudo-Clementines* in collections of New Testament Apocrypha. In classic collections such as Hennecke-Schneemelcher or James Keith Elliott the *Clementina* are only presented in excerpts.\(^{17}\) We will see more examples infra of how the *Clementina* have often been cut up and studied in parts rather than being addressed as a whole. Full French translations of the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions* were published in 2005 by Gallimard in that same Collection de la Pléiade as *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens* under the direction of Pierre Geoltrain and Jean-Daniel Kaestli, and under the auspices of the Association pour l’Étude de la Littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne (AELAC) which has done so much for the study of the *Pseudo-Clementines*. A team of six scholars translated and annotated the Homilies.\(^{18}\) But when one looks at second-

\(^{14}\) Pierre Grimal, *Romans Grecs et Latins* (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 134; Paris: Gallimard, 1958); 1385–1413 for "La Confession de Saint Cyprien", and XXII for a short comparison with the *Pseudo-Clementines*. Grimal also did not include the *Ephesiaca* by Xenophon of Ephesus, which he saw as "un résumé maladroit du roman primitif": XX.


\(^{16}\) Jones (Pseudo-clementina, 36) remarked: “When the *Klementia* is compared with other New Testament apocryphal literature, the author’s quite exceptional literary abilities cannot be overlooked.”


\(^{18}\) See Pierre Geoltrain and Jean-Daniel Kaestli, *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens, tome II* (Collection Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 516; Paris: Gallimard, 2005). The text is presented by Alain Le Boulluec (1195–1214). The translation and annotation (1215–1589) was done by Marie-
ary works on the ancient novel, even recent ones, the *Clementines* are again virtually absent or only discussed in relation to the hypothetical influence from the *Historia Apollonii regis Tyrii*. The study of ancient narrative should not be divided on the basis of the divinities which feature in them, but this implies different scholarly traditions, each operating from within their long history of secondary literature, should interact. More and more academic borders are crossed, insights exchanged, and methodologies combined. This does not always mean the reputation of the *Pseudo-Clementines* has improved. Theologians have traditionally been very negative about this work. Charles Bigg, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Oxford from 1901–1908, did not appreciate the *Pseudo-Clementines* as a literary work:

As regards composition, let us observe that the work, though cast in dramatic form, exhibits not the least vestige of dramatic ability. The characters are merely wooden puppets, left lying in a corner until they are wanted, and then shuffled awkwardly on to the stage. Personality they have none.

And on its religious views he wrote in poetic terms:

When the Light of the World had arisen they turned aside after the marsh-fires of an idle antiquated mysticism and a gross and barbarous superstition and so fell deeper and deeper into the mire.

Bigg also sharply criticised the inconsistencies he found in the theological and philosophical doctrines about God in the *Homilies*, which he qualified as “the farthest point in the realm of nonsense ever reached by any human being.”

Many specialists of the ancient novel have also complained about the inconsistencies in the narrative and about its tedious verbosity. Graham Stanton wrote recently: “Anyone who has read the full text of either the *Homilies* or the *Recognitions* will readily understand why epitomes of their rambling, loosely organised narratives were made.”

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22 *Hom.* 17.9.3–4; Bigg, “The Clementine Homilies”, 163.

23 Graham Stanton, “Jewish Christian Elements in the Pseudo-Clementine Writings.” In *Jew-
(Rec. 3.75) summarises ten books or volumes which do not correspond to either the content of the Recognitions or the Homilies. The general appreciation of the work by Mark J. Edwards was positive: “The Clementina have therefore been compiled with no small art.” But he was not blind to its problems and he commented that the editor is seen to “convict 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.” He concluded about the editor of the Recognitions: “one whom it would be equally uncritical and unkind to style the author.”24 From the early nineties onwards, the Society for Biblical Literature (SBL) organised conference-sessions on “Ancient Fictions and Early Christian and Jewish Narrative” which have stimulated the cross-over between disciplines in the Anglo-Saxon world.25 On the other hand, the International Conferences on the Ancient Novel (ICAN) also increasingly include panels on Jewish and Christian narrative texts. This does not mean the reputation of the Pseudo-Clementines as a literary text has improved much. One of the pioneers of this cross-over, Richard Pervo, characterised the long-winded storyline and the drawn-out disputes of the Pseudo-Clementines as “a smear-piece no less dreadful than it is tedious.”26

The literary study and the scholarly appreciation of the Pseudo-Clementines has improved and this has gone hand in hand with a more profound analysis of certain motifs, such as Pascal Boulhol has done for the motif of the ‘anagnorismos’. There still is a tendency to harmonise the reading of the Recognitions and the Homilies instead of studying them independently, but scholars have found deeper meaning in the Clementina. The recognition motif is no longer considered to be just an ‘embellishment’: Boulhol’s analysis revealed how the motif is adapted to the theological and didactic goals of the Basic Writer.27 Two years later, in 2010, János Bolyki also gave a theological interpretation of the function of this same theme and its metaphorical dynamics within the work as an act of recognition of others, of oneself and of God. In this way it is emphasised how

the Basic Writer has clearly linked the family romance, the recognition scenes included, to the doctrinal theses defended throughout the reconstructed Grundschrift or Basic Writing.²⁸

In a recent contribution, Stanley Jones suggested that the Homilies are a non-idealistic novel, even a parody. He writes, “The Klementia, […], noticeably diverges from the ‘idealistic’ to present a parody, as also happened among the ancient Greek and Roman novels; here comic elements grab the upper hand.”²⁹ He further specifies:

This author not only allows the leading characters, including Peter, to engage in intrigue and prevaricate (Hom. Clem. 20.18–22; 5.2–28), but also introduces fantastic elements such as the magic that Simon uses to avoid apprehension when he transforms the face of Clement’s father to appear to be Simon’s own (Hom. Clem. 20.11–23; Peter’s eyes alone are impervious to this magic: Hom. Clem. 20.12.6–7). When an earthquake occurs upon Peter’s entry to Beirut, Peter does not initially deny the charge that he caused the tremor but instead asserts that he is ready to overturn the entire city unless the inhabitants obey what he says (Hom. Clem. 7.9). Terrified, the inhabitants immediately agree to do whatever Peter commands (Hom. Clem. 7.10.1), soon grabbing sticks violently to chase Simon and his companions from the city (Hom. Clem. 7.10.2).³⁰

We have come a long way since the conclusion that the Homilies are tedious. Irony, parody, and playfulness are being studied and found at work in the Homilies.

We could not possibly discuss all the changes in the study and in this introduction but suffice it to say that this volume tries to bring together specialists from different departments and faculties, and will study this text from research questions which arise from various disciplines.

1. Textual Stages and Versions of the Pseudo-Clementines

A much-debated question in the 19th and 20th centuries dealt with the mutual relationship between the Homilies and the Recognitions: to which text should be given priority? Did one influence the other? These questions belonged to the so-called Benutzungshypothese.³¹ In 1844, Adolph Schliemann stated that the Rec-

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Ognitions were a later revision of the Homilies.¹² Four years later, Adolf Hilgenfeld responded that the Homilies were a later reworking of the Recognitions.³³

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³³ Hilgenfeld, Die clementinischen Recognitionen, 45, 57.
In the last quarter of the 19th century, Richard Lipsius was the main pro-
omotor of the Grundschrifthouse.34 This theory suggests that the Homilies and Recon-
Nosions depended on a common, but lost Grundschrift: in English called Basic Writing, in French Écrit de Base. One could combine this with the question whether or not there was also an additional relation of dependency between the Homilies and Recon-
Nosions.35 Most scholars agreed with the hypothesis of a Grundschrift, but they never reached an agreement about what this Grundschrift would have looked like or when and where it was supposed to have been written.

In older studies which are no longer followed, scholars approached the Homilies as dated to the second or early third century, written in either Ebionite or Elchasaitic circles as a reaction against Greek philosophy and Gnosis.36 Others labelled the Homilistic narrative as a Gnostic Jewish Christian witness.37 In 1901, Fenton J.A. Hort considered the Homilies to be an abridged version of the original Grundschrift in order to propagate the doctrine of its Elchasaitic group in the second, early third century.38 Only a year later, Charles Bigg suggested that the Homilist was a “Catholic convert to Ebionitism” who made the orthodox Grundschrift into an unorthodox work.39 In 1938, Bernhard Rehm argued that the EpPt, Adj and the Ebionite, anti-Pauline material in the Homilies were added by an Ebionite redactor.40 The Homilist has also often been approached as an anti-Marcionite and/or anti-Appelian writer, which was still relevant in the fourth century.41 Another (increasing) point of focus is the approach of

34 Richard A. Lipsius, Die Quellen der römischen Petrus-Sage (Kiel: Schwers'sche Buchhand-
lung, 1872), e. g., 14.
35 For an overview of the several points of view, see Jones, Pseudo-clementina, 17.
36 August Neander, Genetische Entwicklung der vornehmsten gnostischen Systeme (Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmler, 1818), 368–370.
37 Gerhard Uhlhorn, Die Homilien und Recognizitonen des Clemens Romanus nach ihrem Ur-
sprung und Inhalt dargestellt (Göttingen: Verlag der Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1854), 431.
39 Bigg, “The Clementine Homilies”, 175, 185–188.
41 Kelley, Knowledge and Authority, 187–189. Think of works such as the Vita Abercii, or Ephraim’s Third Discourse to Hypatius. See for a more elaborate overview of the scholar-
the Homilies as a fourth-century reaction against Gnostic traditions.\textsuperscript{42} There is no consensus on the contemporary context of the Homilies and hence several researchers have approached it as a witness to different more or less ‘marginalised’ groups in the religious history of the first centuries.

The lost Grundschrift was presumably known as the Periodoi Petrou. This Greek title should probably be taken as a double entendre since it can refer to both travel and astrology: so, a possible translation is the Circuits or Orbits of Peter. Stanley Jones has made many contributions to which we can refer the reader for a more extensive discussion of earlier research and for a possible reconstruction of this Grundschrift.\textsuperscript{43} Some contributions to this volume will continue these discussions, but we generally join Frédéric Amsler in the hope he voiced in 2008 that the study of the Pseudo-Clementines should not be held hostage by a focus on its sources and the reconstruction of the Grundschrift.\textsuperscript{44} In this volume Sergio Basso challenges the Lachmannian approach to the Pseudo-Clementines and offers an alternative approach to the Clementine corpus as different instantiations of something comparable to a canovaccio. He also reflects on the impact rhetorical education and, more in particular the theory and practice of staseis as found in Hellenistic and Roman rhetoric, could have had on the creation of narrative texts. This implies a completely different goal for researchers dealing with the Pseudo-Clementines: the instantiations are no longer instrumentalised for the reconstruction of one Urtext, hence our focus on the way it was composed and read in the fourth century.

Another important way of dealing with the Pseudo-Clementines was the Quellenkritik. Scholars tended to dissect the Homilies and Recognitions, and the hypothetical Grundschrift, into older, mostly hypothetical sources, which would be important witnesses for a better understanding of the earliest stratum of ‘Jewish-Christianity’. The goal was not to understand how the Homilies functioned as a text, but to reconstruct other texts supposedly used by one or more of the


\textsuperscript{43} Jones, “Eros and Astrology”, 114–137. For the methodological principles of such a reconstruction, Jones, Pseudoclementina, 119.

Pseudo-Clementine redactors such as a lost pagan novel, a lost Jewish-Hellenistic novel, a Jewish Disputationsbuch, the Kerygmata Petrou or the Syntagma of Hippolytus to name but a few. As a very recent result of this approach in which the Homilies are not read in their entirety but cut up in parts and studied from the angle of real or hypothetical sources, we can refer to the English translation published by Curtis Hutt and Jenni Irving, who made a selection of passages concerning the women in the Clementina and gave it their own, imaginative title: The Sorrows of Mattidia. On the one hand, the focus on women’s history is very ‘now’, but on the other hand, the lack of respect for the literary unity of the Homilies, selecting and reshuffling passages at will, is very nineteenth-century. Curtis Hutt commented in the introduction: “It is critical to note that the text I label the ‘The Sorrows of Mattidia’ is not equivalent to the Grundschrift but is instead a hypothetical source that the composer of the base-text relied upon. The Sorrows of Mattidia is the family narrative, roughly isolated from the other elements of the base-text.” Hutt admits this “runs against the spirit of some recent work” but argues that scholars have been deconstructing this text for more than 150 years. That last statement is very accurate.

The literary competence of the Homilist as a writer or even as a compiler has often been questioned. Werner Heintze criticised inconsistencies in the narrative. Wilhelm Bousset thought the Clementina were based upon an older, pagan novel, but in his view the author of the Grundschrift made some mistakes in his reworking of the pagan original, and these mistakes remained unnoticed by the Homilist and the Recognitionist. Among other things, Bousset denounced the lack of psychological motivation for why Clement’s mother, Mattidia, should lie to Peter about her provenance. Before the recognitions start, Mattidia is sitting in front of the temple on the island of Aradus and claims her husband is a Sicilian (Hom. 12.19.4). Aradus is also an important location in Chariton’s novel about Callirhoe and Chaereas, in which the eponymous characters originate from Syracuse. Bousset also could not understand how Mattidia, who had left Rome for Athens, had washed up after the shipwreck in Aradus, an island off the Syrian coast, nowhere near a believable route from Italy to Greece. He also deplored that the role of the twin Faustinus and Faustinius, renamed Nicetas and Aquila, was not further worked out in the story: in a decent novel, respectful of literary topoi, they should have been separated and then reunited, and something more should have been made of their similar

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47 Werner Heintze, Der Klemensroman und seine griechischen Quellen (TUGAL 40.2; Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1914), 10.
names. Werner Heintze chided the author for not making Clement hug his brothers after the recognition. Such negative views were combined with the search or rather the hypothetical reconstruction of the original, pagan novelistic Quelle. Heintze thought of a novel used in rhetorical schools which gave a central role to astrology and horoscopes. Another hypothesis was put forward by Karl Kerényi in the context of his search for the link between the ancient novel and Greek and Oriental mystery-cults. He noted several parallels with preserved novels and assumed a lost pagan novel, a family-story not unlike the Historia Apollonii regis Tyrii, which had connections with the myth and rituals related to Isis. He especially saw a parallel between the story of Mattidia sitting in front of the temple at Aradus, and Isis fleeing from her mythical brother-in-law Seth, and travelling to Byblus in search of her husband Osiris. This thesis of indirect religious influence was further developed by Reinhold Merkelbach for most of the ancient novels, again including the Clement-novel, but has not won acceptance from most of the specialists of the ancient novel. There can be no doubt that the Pseudo-Clementines are a religious novel explicitly promoting a certain form of Jewish-Christian religion, but whether the ‘pagan’ novels are also religious texts (primarily or even to a certain extent) is not so clear. The Adjuration in front of the Homilies puts the themes of initiation and selective information explicitly in the mind of the reader, but it is perhaps more economical to look for inspiration in the writings of Plato than in the cult of Isis or a hypothetical ‘pagan’ Isis-novel. The hypotheses of Kerényi and

48 Heintze, Der Klemensroman, 116–118; see Hom. 13.3.
49 Hans Waitz, “Die Pseudoklementinen und ihre Quellenschriften.” ZNW 28 (1929): 241–272, here 250–251. According to Heintze (Der Klemensroman 134, 138), the original novel was used in rhetorical schools and gave a central role to the horoscope and astrology; Oscar Cullmann, Le problème littéraire et historique du roman pseudo-clémentin: Étude sur le rapport entre le gnosticisme et le Judéo-Christianisme (Études d’histoire et de philosophie religieuses publiées par la faculté de théologie protestante de l’Université de Strasbourg 23; Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1930), 140; Rohde does not argue for a particular novel, but he rather suggests the use of several pagan adventure motives; Rohde, Der griechische Roman, 507. See for a discussion, Jones, “Eros and Astrology”, 125–132.
Merkelbach are typical of a more general line of inquiry in which a non-Christian novel supposedly served as a model for the Clementine material, and this approach has proven persistent, especially among specialists of the ancient novel. The identification of which sources have contributed to the genesis of the Pseudo-Clementine corpus can be very different – all sorts of texts have been proposed – but a persistent focus on the origins and on the presumed constitutive parts rather than on the end-product remains common to many recent contributions. Josep Rius-Camps, Jürgen Wehnert, Luigi Cirillo, and Bernard Pouderon show a continuing dissensus theologorum ac philologorum on various source-critical points concerning the possible genesis and textual history of the Pseudo-Clementine corpus. We are not suggesting that attempts at reconstruction are not legitimate, but the focus of this source-oriented research was not on the Homilies themselves and on the way that text functions as a text. Several contributions in this volume will discuss sources, such as Jeffery Aubin on Bardaisan’s Book of the Laws of the Countries, but they will try to do so from the perspective of how these sources operated within their new context in the Homilies.

A well-known difference between the Homilies and the Recognitions is the so-called Apion section or Apiondisputationen. The long passage of Hom. 4–6 is

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not present in the translation made by Rufinus. There are also some clear differences between the Apion-section and the rest of the Homilies. Peter is absent from these books, they do not refer to the True Prophet or to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and so on. William Adler has connected this passage with a popular Hellenistic Syrian romance about a young prince Antiochus who was in love with Stratonice: unfortunately, the wife of his own father. Such themes were very popular as rhetorical exercises in Hellenistic and Roman times. Adler further argued that this section was adapted from a Jewish polemical work, probably from Alexandria and from the second-century CE. Bernard Pouderon too recently stated that “la lettre amoureuse d’Appion est un pastiche forgé par un adversaire du paganisme, qu’il fût juif ou chrétien.” He sees this letter as a remnant of the Jewish-Hellenistic novel on which the Grundschrift was based, and which was preserved by the Homilistic redactor.57

Clement and an old acquaintance of his family, the grammarian Appion, discuss the value of Greek paideia versus Jewish traditions: of Greek myth but also of rhetorical and philosophical education. In a flashback, Clement tells the audience that Appion was a friend of his father’s who, during a visit, noticed that the young Clement was ill. Appion suspected Clement was lovesick: a common theme in novelistic literature and the subject of William Adler’s contribution to our volume.58 The Greek-Alexandrian sophist tried to help the Roman youth by offering him the so-called ‘encomium on adultery’ meant to convince a Roman matrona of all the benefits of committing adultery; Appion used many arguments: the behaviour of the gods in Greek myth but also the views of leading Greek philosophers such as Socrates or Zeno of Citium who rejected monogamy.59 Later, during their disputes in Tyre, Clement uses this encomium as an example of the morally corrupt Greek paideia. However, this is not just a straightforward refutation, but a sophisticated, multi-layered game interwoven with deception and dissimulation, which fits in well with the rest of the novel. The matrona, to whom this letter was written, did not exist at all because Clement was lying about his lovesickness. It should be stressed that the ‘response’ to this encomiastic letter, a refutation of Appion’s encomium, is also added to the story. This is said to be written by the Roman matrona who, mainly because of her marital fidelity, is identified as a matron-philosopher converted to Judaism. The reader realises it is actually Clement pretending to be this matrona/philosopher. In this way the Clement character is portrayed as someone

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58 Pages 55–83.
59 Hom. 5.9–19. See George A. Kennedy, Progymnasmata. Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric (Leiden: Brill, 2003), here 50.

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who is consciously arranging the style and content of the speeches of certain other, ‘invented’ characters. He is engaging in the rhetorical exercise of *ethopoiia*. In other words, the Clement character displays his Greek *paideia* in his counter-attack against Appion, and so does the author or redactor of the *Homilies*.

In a recent contribution, De Vos has argued that the passage of *Hom. 4–6* is not as isolated from the rest of the *Homilies* as previous research had suggested.\(^6\) It ties in nicely with the overall structure. A rhetorical and narrative analysis of the disputes between Appion and Clement, including some philosophical insights, show how this passage is part of Clement’s educational progress within the *Homilies* and how it elaborates on several philosophical themes concerning truth and deception, which are important within the *Homilistic* construction. The parody and humour from these books also find an echo in the rest of the *Homilies*, and for this surely the *Homilist* himself needs to be credited as a *pepaideumenos* in his own right.

For too long scholarship has “mined” the *Pseudo-Clementines* for fragments of older texts or studied isolated passages. The premise of this book is to read the *Homilies* as it was available in the Greek redaction edited by Bernhard Rehm and revised by Georg Strecker,\(^6\) and which is generally dated in the (early) fourth century. We agree with György Geréby when he wrote: “I will deal with the texts only in their available form, and will refrain from entering the thorny problem of the *Grundschrift*, or the issues related to Jewish-Christianity, let alone the dating. I take it for granted that we possess the texts in their end of third- or early fourth-century form, and consider the redaction work as an expression or a reflection of a particular philosophical-theological position.”\(^6\) Different contributions in this volume will take different views on which decade in the fourth century, but the approach to this text has shifted from instrumentalising it for the reconstruction of older material or earlier phases in the religious history of the Roman world to an attitude in which we try to understand how the text worked as a text in the fourth century. The social context of the *Homilies* has been important for a reconsideration of the concept of late antique Jewish-Christian relations. A considerable amount of work has been done, primarily by Annette Yoshiko Reed, who approached the *Homilies* in their fourth-century context and asked how to define its social religious identity in relation to late antique Rabbinic traditions. This way, Reed paid attention to the nuance of the construction of ‘Judeo-Christianity’, the so-called ‘Parting of the Ways’, and the *Homilies’* place in the history of Christianity. Reed has also examined how the *Homilistic* narrative tried

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61 See infra ‘Editions and Translations Used’.
to define and present its own orthodox view on the relations between Jews and Christians as two equivalent ways towards salvation.  

Studying the works independently also builds up resistance against “the temptation to harmonize” the different versions of the texts. The Recognitions and the Homilies each follow their own narrative logic. We focus on the Homilies because during the last two decades, the Recognitions as an independent Clementine version have received a fair share of studies. In 2000, Meinolf Vielberg dedicated his monograph to an examination of the literary and rhetorical dynamics, which make the Recognitions into a well-constructed Bildungsroman. Vielberg did not find the same intellectual and moral development or unity in the Homilistic narrative. A year later, Dominique Côté presented a systematic analysis of the theme of opposition between Peter and Simon in the Recognitions, besides a comparison with other, late antique narrative texts and models. In 2005, Nicole Kelley offered an examination of the Recognitions and its author as active participants of the fourth-century social and intellectual field of philosophy, astrology, and theology. She also paid attention to the Recognitionist’s individual choices as compared to the presumable Grundschrift, as for example with regard to baptism and fate.

Naturally, scholars in this volume will make occasional or structural comparisons with the Latin Recognitions: the translation made by Rufinus of Aquileia in 406. Patricia Duncan will compare passages from Homilies 15 with Recognitions 10 and try to understand the literary choices in each text from its presumable context. The reader will also find references to the Syriac versions of parts of the Homilies and the Recognitions which are preserved in a manuscript written in Edessa in 411. But the main subject of the chapters in this book is the Greek text and its interpretation. We approach this Homilistic tradition as a narrative in its own right with its own redactive choices. We pay attention to the literary, rhetorical, and philosophical qualities of the Homilies in order to better understand

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64 Amsler, “Peter and his Secretary”, 177–188, here 178.
65 Vielberg, Klemens in den pseudoklementinischen Rekognitionen.
66 Vielberg, Klemens in den pseudoklementinischen Rekognitionen, 188: “Diese roman-immanente Teleologie ist an der Klemensgestalt des Homilisten (selbst wenn man die EpCl einberechnet) nicht erkennbar; vielmehr ist sein Verhältnis zu Petrus weniger gestört als kaum vorhanden; es existiert kein Gleichmass im contubernium und damit keine intellektuelle und moralische Entwicklung.”
67 Dominique Côté, Le thème.
69 Jones notes that this manuscript British Museum add. 12,150 already contains “quite a few scribal errors”, which means that the actual translation from the Greek was made a bit earlier, Pseudo-Clementina, 11.
stand the internal dynamics of the narrative as well as the conceptualization of claims of truth and authority by the author. Since there is no consensus about where and when exactly the Greek work was composed, this volume sets out to explore different intellectual contexts. It will perhaps never be possible to come to a consensus, but we believe it is possible to study the way the Homilist reflects on his self-definition as an author, rhetorician, and philosopher, as a member of the community of pepaideumenoi.

2. New Approaches

The diachronic and Quellenkritische approach has turned the Pseudo-Clementines into a hodgepodge of older sources. And in their turn, the Pseudo-Clementine writings have been read, not as literary writings, but used as sources for later developments. Gershom Scholem considered the Homilies as a fourth-century envelope of early Jewish mystical traditions and Ebionite material, and called the Homilies a “strange Jewish-Christian-Hellenistic hodgepodge.”\(^{70}\) Both the supposed Grundsschrift and Homilies as well as the Recognitions were studied as compilations of sources.\(^{71}\) Even the author of the Grundsschrift was seen as a compiler.\(^{72}\) The Homilist too is often not considered as an author but as a redactor and a compiler, who ‘re-arranged’ various sources into the Homilies. We want to take a different, new approach, although it is not as new as one would think. As early as 1908, John Chapman asked for a renewed appreciation of the Homilies in their fourth-century contemporary context.

A long study is needed of the Clementines in the light of the fourth century. They have long since lost their importance as witnesses to primitive days. But they have an interest of their own as witnesses to the views of another date, and a date of great importance. It is to be hoped that students will not be waiting to examine them afresh, and so to reach more detailed and more certain results than those which I have been trying to sketch.\(^{73}\)

What this specific context was, remains however a subject of debate. The opposition towards allegories and allegorical interpretations of Scripture and of Greek myths as tools used by Simon Magus to deceive people (Hom. 2.22.6;


The Pseudo-Clementines

2.25.3) has been connected to the Antiochene exegetical school by Karl Shuve\textsuperscript{74} and Donald Carlson.\textsuperscript{75} Jan N. Bremmer gives new arguments in this volume for fourth-century Edessa as the immediate context for the Homilies.\textsuperscript{76} Syria seems to be the consensus. The manuscript from Edessa, dated to 411, and the continued presence of this text in Syria all point in this direction. As Bremmer already noted: the eighth-century East Syrian Nestorian Theodore bar Koni could still read a complete copy of the Homilies,\textsuperscript{77} but whichever city in Syria one prefers, scholars increasingly support such a synchronic reading of the Recognitions and the Homilies as independent texts in their own contexts. Bremmer commented in the volume he edited previously, that such a contextual study still happened very rarely, given scholar’s fascination with the origin of our texts, but this is evidently the future for the study of the Clementines. Like all other literary works, they have to be studied in the context of their own time and place. It is clear that much remains to be done in this area, […].\textsuperscript{78}

Both the volume edited by Bremmer and the one edited by Frédéric Amsler contain valuable contributions to such a new approach.\textsuperscript{79} The volume we present here hopes to do the same. The contribution by Luise Marion Frenkel contextualises the Syriac version and studies the other texts contained in the manuscript in order to better understand how the Clementines were read and used in that particular intellectual context of Syria 411 CE. This volume also chooses not to focus on source-critical analyses or on hypothetical reconstructions, unless it is useful for the understanding of the redactive choices of the Homilist. We do not deny philosophical and literary sources were used but we in fact consider these to be a valuable factor as it shows that the Homilist was engaged in a broad social dialogue with other players of social and intellectual capital. The Pseudo-Clementine corpus offers scholars valuable insights in the dynamics of writing and reading late antique literature, and also in the politics of religious identities.


\textsuperscript{75} Carlson refers to similarities between the Homilies and ‘Antiochene’ authors such as Diodorus of Tarsus, and Theodorus of Mopsuestia: Donald H. Carlson, *Jewish-Christian Interpretation of the Pentateuch in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* (Minneapolis [MN]: Fortress Press, 2013), here 22.


\textsuperscript{79} Amsler et al., *Nouvelles intrigues*; Jan N. Bremmer (ed.), *The Pseudo-Clementines* (SECA 10; Leuven: Peeters, 2010).
3. Paideia and Rhetoric in the Homilies

In 1908, John Chapman, who proposed a late date for the Grundschrift and read it as a reaction against the Neoplatonic philosophy of Porphyry and Iamblichus, argued that the author of the Grundschrift was “perhaps a former sophist.” He so emphasised the Greek paideia of this former sophist that he minimalised other possible factors of his social identity: “there is no reason to think he was a Judæo-Christian, an Elchasaïte, or anti-Pauline, or anti-Marcionite, that he employed ancient sources, that he belonged to a secretive sect.” He was probably “a convert from heathenism to the Imperial religion” and he “though an Arian, probably belonged nominally to the Catholic Church.” The Homilist, in turn, then appeared to be a reviser who must have abridged the Grundschrift between 360–410 in response to “the momentary resurrection of polytheism, mythology, theurgy, and idolatry,” which was promoted by the Roman Emperor Julian (361–363).

Recent insights into the context of the Grundschrift and the Homilies nuance Chapman’s view on the date, the aim, and the role of the Homilies, as well as his rejection of anti-Marcionism. Chapman’s approach, however, of the social identity of the Basic Writer (as an ex-sophist) and of the relation of the Homilist to Greek paideia (in the double sense of culture and education), deserves a re-evaluation and reappreciation. Many contributions in this volume will explore the social identity of the Homilist as a pepaideumenos, and in particular his rhetorical and philosophical qualities. This introduction will first discuss earlier contributions including several re-evaluated methodological axes which might be fruitful for future contributions. We believe the Homilist has left us a conscious self-definition as a pepaideumenos. The ancient reader was expected to pick up on this. We will not use terminology such as ‘ex-sophist’ but see the author as a pepaideumenos who uses Greek paideia to redefine his cultural capital from within his own community.

In his contribution to this book, Dominique Côté describes the Homilist as belonging “to a writing and thinking elite, given his education and religion. Culturally, he is a Greek because of his education, not his religion. He seeks to define himself in relation to the παιδεία.” While Côté focuses on the philosophical aspect of this self-definition, Meinolf Vielberg, in turn, focuses on the literary and rhetorical techniques of how the Homilist uses his knowledge of paideia in order to construct a narrative world. Vielberg, moreover, points out

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80 Chapman, “On the Date of the Clementines”, 147–159; here 155. According to Chapman, and in contrast to other scholars, the Grundschrift, as well as the Homilies and the Recognitions, were written after the Council of Nicaea: John Chapman, “On the Date of the Clementines.” ZNW 9 (1908): 21–34, here 27–34.
82 See in this volume, 299.
some similarities and differences with Petronius’s *Satyricon*. Concerning the content of the *Homilies*, it is indeed worth noting that *paideia* is omnipresent, for example in the characterisation of the several characters. This is true for opponents such as Simon Magus, Appion the grammarian, Athenodorus the Epicurean and Annubion the astrologer, but also for the positive protagonists: explicitly for Clement and implicitly for Peter. They both in fact breathe Greek *paideia*. In his contribution to this volume, Joseph Verheyden discusses the *Homilist’s* strategies of characterising Peter as a gifted orator, who tackles philosophical, theological and (semi-)scientific topics, such as demonology (in the underexamined passage of *Hom.* 8–11). ‘Hellenism’ in the religious sense of the word is vehemently rejected and so is Greek *paideia*, or at least certain aspects of it are seen as immoral. But this ‘Kulturkampf’ is fought with the weapons provided by Greek *paideia*. It is interesting to note that both the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions* explicitly state in the narrative that the characters Nicetas and Aquila as Jewish converts learned Greek philosophy in order to refute pagan *paideia*. All the characters operate within a cultural space and are able to understand each other. They all are capable of using rhetorical and philosophical techniques: even if, as in the case of Peter, they had the privilege of receiving a formal education. The *Homilist* clearly portrays a world in which the role of Greek *paideia*, is examined and re-evaluated, discussing literary, rhetorical, and philosophical capital, and his audience was expected to recognise this re-evaluated capital.

This volume discusses from several different perspectives how the *Homilist* plays an active, conscious role in late antique social-ideological dialogues in which Christian and non-Christian *pepaideumenoi* participated. This will also offer a better understanding of the relationship between the *Homilist*, his claim of authority and the role of truth. In order to evaluate these dynamics and to better understand the *Homilist as a pepaideumenos*, it is important to first have a look at the rhetorical, literary, and philosophical abilities and interests of the *Homilist*, which were not taken for granted in earlier research. We will try to point out some innovative methodological approaches, which could prove useful for further research into the *Homilist’s* literary-rhetorical and philosophical abilities and interests.

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83 See in this volume, 145–162.
85 See his contribution in this volume, 163–187.
87 See the contribution of Meinolf Vielberg to this volume, in particular 145.
4. The Homilist: From a Failed Compiler towards a Respected Pepaideumenos?

We have seen several examples of the negative attitude towards the intellectual qualities of the people thought to have created the various versions of the Pseudo-Clementines. Recently, however, an increasingly positive appreciation can be noted. Researchers are starting to appreciate the different versions as original and unique narratives in their own right. The Grundschrift still commands most of the attention. Bernhard Rehm, Mark J. Edwards, Paolo Liverani, Dirk Uwe Hansen (albeit more moderately positive), and mainly Stanley Jones, have highlighted the literary qualities of the Basic Writer as positive and original. They have also argued that there is no need to assume a non-Christian novel as basis of this Grundschrift. Focus on the Grundschrift still implies a harmonising tendency when reading the Homilies and the Recognitions: seeing them as two versions of one original novel is slightly different from reading them as two individual novels. But the presumed author of the Grundschrift has outgrown the stage of merely being a compiler. In multiple contributions to the Clementine field Stanley Jones has held that: “The author of the Basic Writing might have actually known what he was doing.” He also concluded that the “Basic Writer was a very creative author, the one who wrote the first (and last) Christian novel, and by no means a paltry one – the one at the root of the entire Western

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91 Dirk Uwe Hansen, “Die Metamorphose des Heiligen Clemens und die Clementina.” In GCN 8, ed. Heinz Hofmann (Groningen: Egbert Forseen, 1997), 119–129, in particular 120, 125 (he considers the Pseudo-Clementines as a reaction against Heliodorus, which was also already argued by Kerényi); Kerényi, Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur (1962²), here 76–78. See also Jan N. Bremmer, “Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus in Christian East Syria.” In All Those Nations: Cultural Encounters within and with the Near East, ed. Herman L. J. Vanschiphout et al. (Groningen: Styx, 1999), 21–29.

92 “Es wird sich zeigen, dass er bei dieser Transtextualisierung [meant is the intertextual link with Heliodorus] zwar kaum die künstlerische Raffinesse eines Achilles Tatius oder Heliodor erreicht, aber doch mehr literarische Fertigkeit verrät, als für eine einfache Kolportage aus einer Predigtsammlung und einer stereotypen Romanhandlung nötig gewesen wäre”, Hansen, “Die Metamorphose”, 120.


94 Jones, Pseudoclementina, 134.
Faust saga.”

According to Jones, in his examination of the possible structure of the *Grundschrift*, the central theme of the *Grundschrift* was astrological fate as having control over human life, as long as it is not mitigated through chaste behaviour and annulled by baptism.

Patricia Duncan recently published an interesting study of the *Homilies* as a narrative whole. She approached the hermeneutics of reading and the interpretation of texts such as Scripture and the Gospels as key for the narrative: “Along the way, she [the reader] will have been trained – sometimes explicitly, sometimes by implication only – to read a variety of other literatures with new eyes.”

The reader has to deal with the discussions between Peter and Simon about the Scriptures, as well as with sometimes implicit reinterpretations of passages from the Gospel. This way, Duncan calls it a “revisionist historical fiction.” In this sense, correct hermeneutics is an important, and moreover unique, thread throughout the *Homilies* in contrast to the *Recognitions*.

Moreover, as De Vos argues in his contribution to this volume, “From the Dark Platonic Cave to the Vision of Beauty and the act of ὁμοίωσις θεῷ: The Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* as a Late Antique Philosophical Narrative,” the *Homilies* are built upon a particular set of Platonic threads, which functions as the philosophical spine of the narrative. Three closely related Platonising patterns support the narrative structure of the *Homilies*, namely the Platonic pattern of true vision and noetic contemplation of God combined with the philosophical theme of images and their model (referring to the Platonising lecture of Gen 1:26–27) and the Platonic theme of becoming as closely like God as possible. This Platonising framework is well-structured by Peter’s deeds and teachings along which Clement’s journey develops. Clement has to learn to contemplate what is real and to understand what is not. In this way, based on the Platonising threads Clement’s journey is fashioned as a Platonising one and, moreover, the characterisations of Peter and the True Prophet are represented as modified Platonic philosophers by explicit and implicit references to Platonic philosophy and Plato’s dialogues. This way, this philosophical capital is used in order to structure and support the narrative structure, and complements in fact the texts of the Old and New Testaments as hermeneutical lenses in order to represent the Christian, philosophical and spiritual life.

This contribution, moreover, nuances a common criticism. Compared to the multi-coloured narrative worlds of several Roman and Greek novels, as Meinolf Vielberg and Beate Klein have noted, the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature

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literally offers a more ‘black and white’ worldview in which the themes of darkness and light are emphasised.\(^9\) The Homilist consciously avoids rhetorical techniques of evoking colourful ekphraseis or physiognomic descriptions, which causes the Homilies to be an imageless novel as the rhetorical analysis shows.\(^{10}\) The rhetorical showpieces turning visual perception into words are consciously avoided and replaced by a Platonising approach to understanding, seeing and contemplating. This implies that there is a higher level of literary construction in the Homilistic narrative and also that the Homilist is not just a compiler or redactor but, to quote Stanley Jones, “actually knew what he was doing.”

5. The Homilist as a Philosopher

György Geréby wrote in 2008 on philosophy in the Pseudo-Clementine traditions: “[…], recognition of the philosophical qualities of the author (whatever the original form of the Clementina might have been), his level of philosophical expertise, or a closer analysis of the philosophical content of this corpus against the backdrop of contemporary philosophical culture remain desiderata.”\(^{101}\) In older research,\(^{102}\) the role of philosophy in the Homilies (and the Recognitions) has often been approached in a negative way. It should come as no surprise that it was also studied from the point of view of Quellenanalyse. Again Werner Heintze’s Der Klemensroman und seine griechischen Quellen from 1914 has been a defining work in this respect. He believed the authors/redactors of the Basic Writing, the Homilies as well as the Recognitions had access to a Jewish Disputationsbuch from ca. 200 CE which in turn had used lost works attributed to Aristotle, Carneades, Posidonius and others.\(^ {103}\) A similar approach can be found more recently in a contribution by Jürgen Wehnert who wants to trace certain


\(^{101}\) Geréby, “Reasons and Arguments”, 212.

\(^{102}\) For a general overview of the search for philosophical sources in earlier research (until Georg Strecker and Bernhard Rehm), see Jones, “History of Research”, 77–78.

Platonic elements in *Hom.* 17 back to a hypothetical second-century treatise.104 Little to no attention is paid in such approaches to the way philosophical themes function within the narrative structure. We can illustrate this with the way the character of Clement’s father has been discussed in the *Recognitions.* Heintze believed he mixed up the Stoic doctrine of fatalism and the Epicurean doctrine of atoms, which he both seems to defend in *Rec.* 8.17, while also referring to Plato’s *Timaeus* in *Rec.* 8.20.105 Almost a century later, Jonathan Barnes wrote that the author and the first person narrator, Clement, show some knowledge of philosophy but only to a certain degree, and that the author had only a superficial knowledge of philosophy, probably obtained from an anthology rather than from first-hand contact with philosophical treatises.106

Christoph Jedan offered a solution for the inconsistent combination of Stoicism and Epicureanism by paying attention to the rhetorical-literary context in which these views are presented.107 It is part of the characterisation of Clement’s father: he is portrayed as a deluded student of several philosophical schools. Jedan also re-examined different levels of determinism in Stoicism and concluded the author of the *Recognitions* did not envisage the Stoics in particular, but all those players in the epistemic field who rejected divine providence and who questioned full human free will. Epicurean and Stoic theories are refuted, together with astrological determinism and fatalism. By making Faustus into a spokesperson of such a deluded construct Peter can correct a whole range of pagan worldviews.

Jeffery Aubin has offered a comparable re-evaluation of the way the character Nicetas discusses the properties of atoms in the *Recognitions.*108 Nicetas argues that some atoms fly upwards or some fall downwards, that some are warm and some are moist. This character also establishes a link between coincidence and astrological determinism. Barnes concluded: “il s’agit d’une erreur grossière.”109 Jeffery Aubin, in turn, has approached Nicetas’s criticism of Epicureanism and

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105 Heintze, *Der Klemensroman,* 97–100.
106 Jonathan Barnes, “[Clément] et la philosophie.” In Amsler, *Nouvelles intrigues,* 283–302, here 289, 291, 293 and 298: “En effet, [Clément] était un homme éduqué, jusqu’à un certain niveau; et tout homme éduqué de son époque avait fait un peu de philosophie. […] En tout état de cause, il est évident que [Clément] n’était pas un fan de la philosophie grecque. […] Si [Clément] se moque de la philosophie païenne, il n’est pas tout à fait étonnant qu’il n’en montre qu’une compétence imparfaite. [Clément] n’était pas trop doué pour la philosophie. […] Je suis prêt à parier qu’une recherche étendue le confirmerait.”
109 Barnes, “[Clément] et la philosophie”, 293.
of his father as an attack on the heritage of Bardaisan. Aubin noticed several similarities between the testimony of Nicetas and what fourth-century sources tell us of the doctrines of Bardaisan and his pupils. The reference to ‘Epicureans’ can be understood within an apologetic context, where opponents were rhetorically often linked with ‘Epicurus’ as the arch-atheist. Such methodological approaches are also important for the *Homilies*, and this volume wants to contribute to this methodological shift with a new analysis by Jeffery Aubin, this time of Bardaisan and/in the *Homilies*. Aubin thus sheds new light on philosophical themes such as the origin of evil and the role of free will in the *Homilies*.

György Geréby has been another voice in the renewed, positive interest in the importance of philosophy for the *Pseudo-Clementine* versions. He argued one should not approach the *Homilies* or the *Recognitions* as clear-cut frameworks for theoretical discussions and analyses of philosophical doctrines. Both *Clementine* versions offer independently a rhetorical, novelistic framework built around Clement’s search for truth and his witness of many rhetorical and philosophical disputes between Simon and Peter. In such a framework what we are reading is not “a professional treatise on philosophy as a commentary on Plato or Aristotle” but “applied philosophy” in “a rhetorical dress.” The claim of true gnosis is made throughout the literary-rhetorical construction of the *Homilies*, as well as in many implicit allusions and explicit references throughout the narrative. These too deserve the attention of historians of ancient philosophy.

When looking at the narrative in itself, the *Homilist* clearly has no problem with the portrayal of his main characters Clement, Peter, Simon Magus or the latter two’s students as rhetorically and philosophically gifted. Peter, even though he has not received any education, is capable of discussing philosophical topics such as the physical origin of Evil (20.1–10), the concept of providence (14.2–8), or philanthropy (12.25–33). Nicole Kelley has already pointed out the similar dynamics of the master-disciple relations (between Peter and his students) and the late antique, philosophical master-disciple relationship as is explained by Pierre Hadot. Peter is not an anti-cultural representative, even though he

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112 See his contribution to this volume, 301–316.

113 Geréby, “Reasons and Arguments”, 211–222.

114 “They show the signs of ‘applied’ philosophy adopted to the struggles (agon) for winning over the heart and mind of their audience. The arguments narrow themselves down to the most important points, and are clad in rhetorical dress.” Geréby, "Reasons and Arguments", 212.


utters harsh criticisms. On the contrary, he extensively uses the capital related to *paideia*, including rhetoric and philosophy, in order to support his own points of view.\textsuperscript{117} Moreover, as Dominique Côté examined earlier, the characters of Peter and Simon show several affinities with recurrent literary-philosophical models in other late antique (philosophical) literature, namely the ‘philosophus’ and the ‘magus’.\textsuperscript{118}

Platonic patterns throughout Peter’s expositions are built up within the framework of Clement’s initiation and further development towards true vision and truly seeing. In this way, the *Homilistic* philosophical narrative journey fits in with other philosophical narratives in and points of view on philosophy in Late Antiquity. By adopting the form of a travel novel, the *Homilistic* narrative is literally represented as a philosophical way of life, besides the philosophical ascent explained step by step in Peter’s discourses, and Clement’s philosophical first steps. In her contribution to this volume, Judith Hack explores the different nuances of the central motif of the ‘way’ from a philological and literary angle.\textsuperscript{119} The framework of an ego-narration is, moreover, an ideal framework for discussing and comparing philosophical attitudes and adapted to several literary-philosophical models. Peter and Simon are clear examples of this, as other *Homilistic* characters are too. In *Hom. 6*,\textsuperscript{120} in his disputes with the young but cunning Clement, Appion is portrayed as a failing *pepaideumenos*, even with Sophistic pretensions. Clement shows himself to be the better *pepaideumenos* of the two.\textsuperscript{121} De Vos has also shown how the *Homilist* has incorporated a rhetorical ring structure in these disputes, and, moreover, he structured the rhetorical and philosophical disputes and the way how Clement and Appion use and manipulate their sophisticated rhetoric around this particular structure. Clement, moreover, also presents himself as the better in philosophical subjects such as allegorical interpretations of myths and the Orphic Cosmogony. As was said, Clement deceives Appion by performing, as a rhetorical *ethopoiia*, as a converted Jewish matrona-philosopher who wins against the failing *pepaideumenos* Appion. Such an approach reveals how philosophy is processed by the *Homilist* in function of the design of his work and the representation of philosophical lives.


\textsuperscript{118} Côté, *Le thème*.

\textsuperscript{119} See in this volume, 85–106.

\textsuperscript{120} For a discussion of the pre-*Clementine* career of Appion in comparison to his representation in the *Pseudo-Clementines*: Jan N. Bremmer, “Appion and Anoubion in the *Homilies*”, 251–265.

In 2019, Philippe Therrien compared the theme of syzygies to Platonic and Pythagorean philosophical theories. In his contribution to this volume he examines the well-structured use of the syzygetical theme throughout the Homilistic narrative in order to support its claim of true knowledge or gnosis. With exception of John Chapman, quoted earlier, it is only recently that Neoplatonism and Neopythagoreanism are taken into account as a fruitful ground for comparison. Nicole Kelley and, in particular, Dominique Côté paid attention to this context. Kelley approached the rejection of (animal) sacrifices as a fourth-century refutation of Syrian Neoplatonic defences of this practice. She did not reject the idea that this theme could be a Jewish-Christian remnant from the first or second century, but she suggested a different purpose of this theme in function of its later, fourth-century context and of a wider context of piety in the late antique world. Dominique Côté also took a Neoplatonic context into account in his examination of the Apion section, and in particular, the subject of the Orphic theogony in the last part of the disputes between Appion and Clement. Moreover, in his contribution to this volume, Côté further clarifies how the Homilies engage into the same social dialogues and discussions of similar topics such as the relationship between philosophy and revelation, as Neoplatonic philosophers do. The contribution of De Vos will further support this by looking at how the Homilist not only uses Platonic patterns as the structure for Peter’s teachings but for the whole narrative.

In her contribution to this volume, Karin Hedner Zetterholm argues that the Homilistic view of the Law of God (as originally true, unwritten, eternal, and rational) is influenced by Graeco-Roman (Stoic) ideas of natural law. This way, she also reflects further on the social dialogue of which the Homilist is a member. The relation between ancient philosophy and medicine is also of importance. In a contribution from 2015, Giovanni Battista Bazzana examined

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123 See this volume, 37–54.
126 According to Strecker (*Das Judenchristentum*, 179–184), the anti-sacrifice stance originates from the KP.
128 See this volume, in particular, 283–297.
129 See her contribution to this volume, 317–334.
Peter’s character in the *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* and *Homilies*, and the late antique, Graeco-Roman social models and networks of itinerant physicians in these *Pseudo-Clementine* traditions. Peter travels from city to city and heals many people, but he clearly does this within anchored networks of influential patrons, which can be compared to practices and networks of itinerant doctors who stayed with families and wealthy citizens. For example, in Tripolis, Peter is staying at the house of the wealthy Maroones in whose garden he is giving public discussions about the health of body and soul and the corrupting influence of demons.\(^{130}\) The social setting of Peter’s activities is quite remarkable: he is presented here as a late antique itinerant physician who gives public speeches without any fear of or reference to persecutions, as Bremmer also stresses in his contribution to this volume. Kendra Eshleman recently devoted a work to the formation of social identity by sophists, philosophers and Christians. The physician Galenus wrote philosophical treatises and moved in the same social networks as Philostratean sophists and philosophers. He used the same strategies of self-promotion: “his ambition to capture the cultural prestige of philosophy for medicine is encapsulated in the title of his treatise: *That the Best Doctor Is Also a Philosopher*.”\(^ {131}\) The way in which Peter is presented here offers a further look at the social milieu of the *Homilies* and their author. In fact, the *Homilist* himself is heavily engaged in all kinds of important themes of *paideia* and philosophy and of strategies of self-promotion as *a pepaideumenos* and as a philosopher. The contribution by Danny Praet studies the way in which Peter and the True Prophecy – identified with true philosophy – are directly and indirectly opposed to Simon Magus and his consort Helen, who are in a sophisticated intertextual way characterised as a Sophist and as the bringers of false *sophia*. As several scholars have clarified,\(^ {132}\) the social identity of the ‘philosopher’ is not an absolute standard, but rather a differential category. It is the content and the framework of this differential category that the *Homilist* is exploring throughout his work and also with his work in the contemporary context.

This way, the view on the social identity of the *Homilist* has moved from a second-century secluded or marginalised group towards a role within a fourth-century dynamic intellectual landscape of which the boundaries are constantly discussed and socially and intellectually redefined. This also makes clear how the *Homilist* is not someone who harshly refutes every aspect of Greek *paideia* from an external point of view, but he is redefining elements from this *paideia*.


just as he is renegotiating the social role of philosophy and philosophers as this collection of contributions examines further. Moreover, a detailed look at how the Homilist uses this capital of paideia even shows his remarkable abilities as well as his interesting relation with the themes of truth and authority.

6. The Functions of the Homilies

The Pseudo-Clementines, in particular the Homilies, have often been considered as a work of apologetics, or even as a Bekehrungsschrift within a general, fierce Kulturkampf against pagan culture. One can find strong criticism of Greek culture, education, and customs in the Pseudo-Clementine corpus, and this has influenced many scholars in their take on the Homilies. Hans Waitz approached the Pseudo-Clementine corpus, in particular the Grundschrift, as “eine Apologie bzw. Polemik des Christentums gegen Häresie und Heidentum im weitesten Sinn des Wortes.” The primary function for him was the education of catechumens.133 Howard Teeple defined the purpose of the Pseudo-Clementine corpus as “to aid Christian missionaries in their encounters with pagan philosophers.”134 One of the hypothetical sources of the Homilies, the Jewish Disputationsbuch, has also been considered to be a Bekehrungsschrift, as Werner Heintze argued.135 Almost 80 years later, William Adler stated that this source “wished to exhort potential converts to abandon the depravity of Greek culture and to pursue a higher calling in Judaism.”136 In 2010, James Carleton Paget defined the purpose of this second-century source as ‘conversion’-intent.137 The Homilist’s choice to include this section thus seems to be in line with the original intent of the Basic Writer or the author of the hypothetical Jewish Disputationsbuch. Likewise, the general novelistic framework of the recognition scenes has been approached as an embellishment of the purpose to ‘convert’ readers, or at least to edify ‘pagans’ as stated by Sophie Trenkner138 or Tomas Hägg.139 In this sense, Ben Edwin Perry called the novelistic framework “non-functional” and “superfluous”: it is not a “real” novel but only uses topos to make theological doctrines more attractive.140

134 Howard M. Teeple, The Prophet in the Clementines (Religion and Ethics Institute Occasional Papers 2; Evanston [IL]: Religion and Ethics Institute, 1993), here 25.
135 Heintze, Der Klemensroman, 42–51.
139 Hägg, The Novel in Antiquity, 164.
140 Perry, The Ancient Romances, 291.
This way, the *Homilies* and their relationship with *paideia* are given a straightforward function: elements of *paideia* are used for conversion or for apologetical purposes within a *Kulturkampf*. This fierce stance is reinforced by the *Homilist*’s harsh attitude. In the *Homilies* there are clearly two sides: the good one versus the evil one. This is supported, among other things, by the rhetorical use of colours. As mentioned before, Beate Klein and Meinolf Vielberg have already examined how dark colours represent ‘the enemies’, and the light or light colours represent the ‘good’.

This is reinforced by the aforementioned doctrine of *syzygies*, which highlights the *Homilist*’s attempt of claiming truth and true *gnosis* as Philippe Therrien thoroughly examines in his contribution to this volume. According to this theory, the world is divided into two realms, with a good and a bad king, offering a true and a false line of prophecy, a right and a false *gnosis*. People also can be divided into two opposing identities, as Peter states in *Hom.* 11.16:

For he is a worshipper of God, of whom I speak, who is truly pious, not one who is such only in name, but who really performs the deeds of the law that has been given him. If any one acts impiously, he is not pious; in like manner as, if he who is of another tribe keeps the law, he is a Jew; but he who does not keep it is a Greek. For the Jew believes God and keeps the law, by which faith he removes also other sufferings, though like mountains and heavy. But he who keeps not the law is manifestly a deserter through not believing God; and thus as no Jew, but a sinner, he is on account of his sin brought into subjection to those sufferings which are ordained for the punishment of sinners.

While Jones argued that the *Basic Writer* counts himself a member of the third group of the *theosebeis*, besides ‘Jews’ and ‘Greeks’, the *Homilist* uses a different strategy of self-identification of ‘Jews’ against ‘Greeks’. There is no ‘Christian’ supersessionist attitude towards the Jews. In addition, the identity of the ‘Jew’ or ‘Hebrew’ becomes a more flexible category in an inclusive and apologetic perspective. This flexible category is also a universal one since both Christian Jews and non-Christian Jews are envisaged, as well as Gentile converts (pagans and/or Gentile Christians) who have to follow a few extra laws reflecting the Jewish concern of purity.

But the way the *Homilist* deals with philosophical and rhetorical capital shows a conscious and sophisticated self-identification, and his expectations of the intended audience reach further than advice about following purity laws. This

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141 Klein, *Der Farbegebrauch* and Vielberg, “Farbausdrücke”.
142 Cf. note 123.
can be concluded from the central role given to intellectual games and deceptive frameworks.146 We have given the example of Clement deceiving the grammarian Appion in a sophisticated game of rhetorical dissimulation and deceptive ethopoia. Clement is not alone in using rhetorical techniques and performances in order to play a profound, paideutic game of irony, deception, and dissimulation. Peter also consciously explores the boundaries of truth-telling. As Clement used Greek rhetorical ethopoia against a Greek grammarian, so Peter uses Simon’s literal, magical face swap at the end of the Homilies against Simon himself. And the accusations Simon had voiced against Peter (Hom. 7.9) are turned against Simon. Mattidia also plays with deception and her lies include meta-literary allusions to the Greek novel of Callirhoe and Chaereas, which the author intended the readers to recognise and to appreciate. When Mattidia distorts the truth of her life-story during her first contact with Peter she rhetorically disguises herself as a Greek heroine of another novel. The reader who notices this intertextual play with a pagan romance, will also appreciate the humour of this intertextual game. We cannot know whether the Homilist introduced this, or whether it was already present in the Grundschrift. But these details keep the reader alert during his/her reading process and enhances the appreciation for the author as a member of the educated class.147 So, there seems to be more at play than apologetics or conversion. And the same goes for the references to the Gospels. There are subtle changes to New Testament quotes and allusions: the author clearly expects his readership to be able to recognise implicitly corrected episodes of the Gospel traditions. But it does not end there: rabbinic traditions, Platonic references, and the heritage of Bardaisan point to a very diverse readership. This brings us to the important question of who actually read this work? The reader is expected to be familiar with Gospel readings, Scriptures, as well as references to other Greek novels, rhetorical traditions, philosophy, mythology, and theories of magic.148 In this volume, Giovanni Battista Bazzana discusses these theories of magic in the Homilies, and gives further reflections on the incorporation of such theories in the literary episode of Faustus’s transformation.149 The Homilist has clearly constructed his work around an educated implied reader. In the literary


148 This also raises the question if there was a shared reading audience of the Homilies and the ‘pagan’ Greek novels. For a discussion of the audience of Greek novels, see e.g., Ewen Bowie, “The Ancient Readers of the Greek Novels.” In The Novel in the Ancient World (Mnemosyne Supplementum 159), ed. Gareth Schmeling (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 87–106 (for the theory of an erudite readership); Perry, The Ancient Romances, 5 (for the idea of an audience ‘poor-in-spirit’).

149 See his contribution to this volume, 395–411.
terminology of Wolfgang Iser, the implied reader fits into a “network of response-inviting structures, which impel the [actual] reader to grasp the text.” This is a set of formal and rhetorical textual data that establishes contact with the actual reader. This reader has to be aware of a rich context and has to read the text as a pepaideumenos, which nuances the harsh and strict Kulturkampf suggested. This approach nuances the idea of a Bekehrungsschrift as well as the harsh division between ‘Jew’ and ‘Greek’. The Homilist consciously deals with paideia in his approach of truth and authority, not only as a kind of refutation of others or ‘Hellenes’ and a claim of authority within a broader epistemic and social field, but also concerning a self-definition of the Homilist as a pepaideumenos, a redefinition of paideia as religious paideia, and an extensive display of this paideia. In that sense, authority and truth are also approached and substantiated from that angle and the identity of the ‘Jew’ includes the recognition of this redefinition of the social identity of a pepaideumenos.

The metafictional aspect becomes apparent in the various ways in which the reader must learn to read ‘the truth’. Patricia Duncan has already shown in her published dissertation how the Homilies fundamentally deal with hermeneutics of texts (Gospels, Scripture):

The novel is, in my view, fundamentally hermeneutical, and the prefatory documents forefront a suspicion about texts, and especially about scripture that renders right reading a matter of critical importance.

The reader has to ‘interpret’ false pericopes regarding the Scriptures as well as implicit discussions of the Gospels. Tobias Nicklas studies free variations and adaptations of Gospel material from the conceptual framework of “re-enactments” (Neuinszenierungen) of canonical logia, stories and characters in the Homilies. It is also becoming clear that the Homilies have a gradual structure regarding the noetic contemplation and the recognition of the true forms based on Platonising patterns and references. Also references to other philosophers, Greek novels, or mythological traditions function as frameworks of Clement’s story and the search of truth. In this way, Platonic references, Greek novels, in addition to Scriptures and Gospels, act as lenses of how to read Clement’s life story. Moreover, the Homilist also reflects, in a meta-literary sense, on reading the truth of his own work itself and the dangers in being misled, in particular, in one’s role as pepaideumenos.

151 As Nicole Kelley has examined in her work on the Recognitions (Authority and Knowledge) concerning philosophers and astrologers.
152 Duncan, Novel Hermeneutics, 7.
153 See in this volume, pages 131–144.
This way, we are dealing with a more sophisticated approach to the late antique rhetorical, literary, and philosophical context. The *Homilist* is more than a ‘compiler’, but also an original author who has well-structured his narrative and who has interwoven it with a broad network of displays of *paideia* and reflection on this paideutic capital and accompanying social implications. The *Homilies* contain the famous theory of the false pericopes in Scripture and states both the Bible and the *Homilies* can only profitably be read by those trained to understand it fully. In the *Letter from Peter to James*, Peter himself is made to declare

[…]. I beg and beseech you not to communicate to any one of the Gentiles the books of my preachings which I sent to you, nor to any one of our own tribe before trial; but if anyone has been proved and found worthy, then to commit them to him, after the manner in which Moses delivered his books to the Seventy who succeeded to his chair (§ 1).

Peter’s proclamation of the True Prophet’s teaching is only meant for those who are considered worthy. He compares his own teaching and their written record to the books of Moses and to the way Jews live even in his own time: Jews cannot be led astray by the false passages in the Scriptures, but these are dangerous for uninitiated people/readers. What then is the position of the *implied reader* of these *Homilies*? They are part of a select in-group, or rather they become part of this group through reading the novel. He or she stands between those who supposedly heard Peter’s teachings; James, who here functions as someone who has to authenticate Clement’s report, and an initiate, since the *implied reader* is seemingly given the privilege to continue without being put on trial as mentioned in the prefatory letter. The literary work which follows the three introductory writings is clearly more than a haphazard compilation: it is a work which wants to constitute a community and which does so by reflecting on a meta-level about what it means to write, to read, to interpret, to make-believe and to believe.

### 7. Editions and Translations Used

The Greek text used in this volume will be the most recent critical version as edited by Bernhard Rehm and revised by Georg Strecker. This provides a good basis for studies of the Greek *Homilies*. In addition, this edition can also be found in the online *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.

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There are several English translations of the Homilies. The English translation by Thomas Smith, dates back to 1886, but it is still the most important one because it is the only English translation of the complete text. Unless indicated otherwise, this translation will be used in the contributions to this volume. Where contributors have altered this translation or where they used a different version, this will be indicated in the appropriate footnotes. Fragments were translated by Robert McL. Wilson from the original German translation by Johannes Irmscher and Georg Strecker. Excerpts about the women in the Homilies were recently translated by Curtis Hutt and Jenni Irving.

There are three French translations. The most recent French translation of both the Homilies and the Recognitions was published in the series of Écrits Apocryphes Chrétiens in 2005. This will be used by the French contributions in this volume. There is an earlier French translation by Auguste Siouville (1933) and a fragmentary version by Abbé Maistre from 1883–1884. In 1902, Hajo Uden Meyboom provided the only complete Dutch translation: in a synoptic version with a translation of the Recognitions. The most recent (complete) German translation is edited by Jürgen Wehnert in 2010 and revised in 2015. Some selected fragments of the Homilies have been translated into Italian, by Marco Zambon. A Norwegian translation of selected passages is available from Reidar Hvalvik and Karl Olav Sandnes in 2011.

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The Syriac version of (a part of) the *Homilies* or *Klementia* has received ample attention from Joseph G. Gebhardt and F. Stanley Jones, and in particular from Luise Marion Frenkel in this volume.\textsuperscript{166}

«Je vais te donner la connaissance de ce qui est» (Hom. 1.17.5):
La règle des syzygies comme cadre de la quête de la connaissance véritable

Philippe Therrien

La quête de la connaissance religieuse et philosophique véritable – la gnose – est au cœur des Pseudo-Clémentines.1 Si cet enjeu est commun aux deux versions du Roman pseudo-clémentin, ses modalités d’expression présentent des nuances importantes.2 Dans la perspective de mettre en évidence la cohérence d’ensemble des Homélies, de même que leur habile construction, nous voudrions exposer comment la règle des syzygies est un élément structurant de l’œuvre, non seulement au niveau théologique et gnoséologique, mais également narratif. En effet, elle permet aux Homélies de mener leur campagne pour la connaissance véritable dans un contexte de haute complétion religieuse.3 La règle des syzygies supervise aussi les retrouvailles des membres de la famille de Clément à travers le passage de l’ignorance à la connaissance (Hom. 2.15.2: πρώτη ἄγνοια, δευτέρα γνώσις), évoquant la définition aristotélicienne de la reconnaissance (Poétique 1452a: ἐξ ἀγνοίας εἰς γνῶσιν μεταβολή). Dans ce contexte, le terme ἐπίγνωσις est employé pour désigner à la fois la reconnaissance romanesque et la reconnaissance de la vérité. Ceci met en lumière l’étroite relation entre la trame narrative et la trame doctrinale, et expose comment chaque élément constitutif des Homélies travaille à l’accomplissement de leur programme gnoséologique.

1 Nous tenons à remercier Benjamin De Vos et Danny Praet pour leurs commentaires dans la révision de cet article, de même que Paul-Hubert Poirier et Frédéric Amsler pour leurs remarques.
3 Suivant Kelley, Knowledge, 206–207; Meinolf Vielberg, Klemens in den Pseudoklementinischen Rekognitionen. Studien zur literarischen Form des späantiken Romans (TUGAL 145; Berlin: Akademie, 2000).
1. Une narration gnoséologique

1.1. Les attentes de lecture et les paramètres de la quête de la connaissance

C’est la promesse d’une connaissance véritable, préservée en secret depuis les temps apostoliques, qui cherche à attirer l’attention des lecteurs, et non pas l’intrigue romanesque elle-même, qui ne survient qu’au milieu du récit.4 Les trois documents liminaires participent activement à créer cette attente:5 L’Épître de Pierre à Jacques et l’Engagement solennel établissent les différentes modalités avec lesquelles a été contrôlée la transmission de l’authentique prédication de Pierre, alors que l’Épître de Clément à Jacques institue Clément en tant que successeur de Pierre et dépositaire de ses enseignements. Puis, le récit autobiographique de Clément attise ces attentes, un récit qui s’amorce alors que les lecteurs en connaissent déjà l’issue: sa conversion, énoncée par l’Épître de Clément à Jacques, est également mentionnée au début d’un témoignage composé, dans la fiction pseudépigraphique, par le Clément évêque de Rome.6 D’un point de vue narratif, l’attente n’est donc pas de savoir si Clément pourra apaiser ses angoisses, mais bien quand et comment. Sur le plan philosophique et théologique, le texte s’engage aussi, dès les premières pages, à fournir aux lecteurs une connaissance supérieure à celle des différentes écoles philosophiques, qui n’est nulle autre que l’authentique enseignement du vrai Prophète, préservé de toute corruption grâce à Pierre.

Dans ces conditions, la connaissance religieuse et philosophique véritable7 – la gnose – est le leitmotiv, la clé de voûte de l’œuvre. Elle se construit positivement à travers les discours de Pierre, mais aussi négativement à travers les positions erronées des antagonistes, à savoir les écoles philosophiques, mais également Si-

4 Comme le souligne Duncan, Novel Hermeneutics, 24: «When we allow ourselves to enter the narrative project through the Epistula Petri, the Diamartyria and the Epistula Clementis, we find ourselves in possession of a “secret” document, and we are motivated to read further not by a promise of an entertaining romance (for not a hint of that story will appear until more than half of the novel is behind us), but by the lure of esoteric doctrine.»


6 Hom. 1.2.2: «Et j’en étais accablé, n’étant pas conscient (οὐκ εἰδός) que j’avais pour compagnon un noble souci, devenu pour moi une cause excellente d’immortalité, comme plus tard l’expérience me l’a fait reconnaître (ἐπέγνων) – et j’en ai rendu grâces à Dieu, Maître de toutes choses.»

mon le magicien plus tard dans le récit. Plus encore, comme le souligne Patricia Duncan, le secret dont est entourée la transmission de la connaissance participe à cette définition en creux, puisqu’en affirmant que celle-ci est restée cachée depuis les temps apostoliques, les Homélies sous-entendent que le reste de la tradition chrétienne n’est pas authentique, permettant de raffermir leur prétention à divulguer les réels enseignements de Jésus. Et cette vérité est transmise exclusivement par ce canal: si Jésus, le vrai Prophète, est le seul capable de dire « comment sont les choses dans la réalité », sans qui « il est impossible qu’aucune certitude arrive à la portée des hommes » (1.19.3–8), et si Pierre est le meilleur disciple de Jésus et celui qui peut se rappeler avec le plus de précision ses enseignements, dès lors toute personne qui est en désaccord avec Pierre est en réalité en désaccord avec Jésus. La prétention des Homélies est donc de s’instituer comme les dépositaires du seul modèle gnoséologique valable, une prétention qui sera appuyée, comme nous le verrons, par la règle des syzygies, qui sera présentée comme un principe au fondement du réel.

Au sein du récit même des Homélies, la connaissance constitue le moteur de l’intrigue: c’est parce qu’il ne la possède pas que Clément s’agite de tout côté, pour finalement se rendre en Palestine lorsqu’il entend parler du ministère du Christ. De toute sa vie, Clément ne s’est pas complu dans son état d’ignorance

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9 Duncan, Novel Hermeneutics, 24: «The esoteric conceit of the novel and the interplay of public and private discourses within it condition us to perceive that the majority view of «Christianity» is not entirely to be trusted, and the narrative genre itself provides an effective framework for the corrective exegesis of competing narratives.»

10 Duncan, Novel Hermeneutics, 39 qualifie les Homélies de «revisionist historical fiction.» En outre, elle écrit (8): «By conducting its exegesis through its own construction of the apostolic eyewitness Peter, the Klementia can seamlessly dislodge authority from the Gospels and present its own interpretations of Jesus and his teachings as both more original and more authoritative.»

11 Voir aussi Hom. 2.54.1: «Aussi est-il impossible, sans son enseignement, de parvenir à la vérité qui sauve, même si l’on passe cet âge à chercher là où l’objet cherché n’est pas. Or il était et il est dans la parole de notre Jésus.»

12 Hom. 1.15.2; 4.5.2; 17.18. Pierre se souvient des paroles de Jésus: Hom. 3.50.1; 8.4.1; 17.7.1; 20.9.2. Sur la mémoire de Pierre dans les Reconnaissances, voir Kelley, Knowledge, 160–168 et Vielberg, Klemens, 91–92.

13 Duncan, Novel Hermeneutics, 27–33; En ce qui concerne les Reconnaissances, Kelley, Knowledge, 168 soulève: «Secure knowledge is impossible for those without access to Jesus and the prophetic truth he imparts, and hence impossible for those who disagree with the protagonists’ understanding of God, the world, and human events.»
(sur lequel le texte insiste à plusieurs reprises), car il sait qu’un apprentissage solide lui permettrait d’apaiser ses angoisses. Ce n’est toutefois pas n’importe quelle connaissance qu’il cherche, mais une connaissance religieuse, puisque l’objet de son enquête « sera d’apprendre (περὶ τοῦ μαθεῖν) si l’âme est immortelle » (1.5.2), et concerne plus largement la nature de l’être humain, le sort du monde et la justice qui plait à Dieu. Toutes ces questions convergent vers un point central, celui de la piété: il ne s’agit pas simplement de connaître pour connaître, de manière à satisfaire quelque curiosité, mais bien d’acquérir le savoir nécessaire pour vivre pieusement.\footnote{15}\footnote{15 \emph{Hom.} 1.4.3; 4.4; 5.7; II.2.}

Or, sa fréquentation des écoles philosophiques, « en vue d’acquérir quelque connaissance sûre (1.3.1: τοῦ μαθεῖν τι βέβαιον) », ne mène nulle part. En 5.2.2, dans le cadre de la discussion avec Appion, Clément se souvient de cette période troublée de sa vie:\footnote{16 Pour une récente analyse de ce passage \emph{(Hom.} 4–6) et des enjeux gnoséologiques qui le traversent, voir Benjamin M. J. De Vos, « The Role of the Homilistic Disputes with Appion \emph{(Hom.} 4–6) », \emph{VC} 73 (2019): 54–88. De Vos montre que la critique des sources n’est pas un passage obligé pour interpréter cette section, puisqu’elle contient la plupart des thèmes-clés des \emph{Homélies}, comme la valeur de la \emph{paideia}, mais aussi les oppositions entre vérité et erreur, piété et impiété, pureté et impureté, \emph{Juif} et \emph{Grec.} De la même manière, Reed, \emph{Jewish-Christianity}, 134 montre à juste titre comment ce passage, qu’il s’agisse d’une source plus ancienne ou non, participe activement aux objectifs théologiques de l’œuvre: « Part of the effect of integrating the Debate with Appion, then, is to develop the \emph{Homilies}’ distinctive dichotomy of true prophecy and false prophecy (e. g., the Rule of Syzygy) to include the more familiar binary contrast of Hellenism and Judaism.»}

dès mon enfance, moi, Clément, j’ai désiré la vérité; je cherchais ce qui importe à l’âme et je passais mon temps à ruiner et à construire des arguments, sans être capable de rien trouver de concluant; j’en tombais malade de chagrin.\footnote{17 ἐκ παιδὸς ἐγὼ Κλήμης ἀληθείας ἐρῶν καὶ ζητῶν τὰ ψυχῇ διαφέροντα καὶ εἰς ἀνασκευὰς καὶ κατασκευὰς δαπανῶν τοὺς χρόνους καὶ μηθὲν τέλειον εὑρεῖν δυνάμενος, ὑπὸ τῆς ἀνίας ἐξώκειλα εἰς νόσον.}\footnote{17 \emph{Hom.} 2.8.3: διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων φιλόλογοι (οὐ φιλόσοφοι) διὰ στοχασμῶν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐπιβάλλοντες πολλὰ καὶ διάφορα ἐδογμάτισαν; I.II.7: φιλόλογοι ἔστε καὶ οὐ φιλολήθεις φιλόσοφοι.}

Aucune réflexion venue de lui-même ne l’aide à se tirer d’affaire (1.4.7), et ceci est d’autant plus sérieux que les prétendus des amis de la sagesse sont en réalité des amis de la parole.\footnote{18 \emph{Hom.} 2.8.3: διὰ τοῦτο καὶ οἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων φιλόλογοι (οὐ φιλόσοφοι) διὰ στοχασμῶν τοῖς πράγμασιν ἐπιβάλλοντες πολλὰ καὶ διάφορα ἐδογμάτισαν; I.II.7: φιλόλογοι ἔστε καὶ οὐ φιλολήθεις φιλόσοφοι.} Les philosophes prétendent faussement posséder la vérité, alors que la futilité de leurs syllogismes et de leurs arguments montrent leur profond état d’ignorance:

Comme [si les philosophes grecs] connaissaient la vérité (εἰδότες ἀλήθειαν), alors qu’ils la cherchent encore, ils rejettent certaines des conceptions qui se présentent à eux et en confirment d’autres comme s’ils savaient (ὡσπερ εἰδότες), alors qu’ils ne savent pas (μὴ εἰδότες), lesquelles sont vraies et lesquelles sont fausses. Ils décident de la vérité, eux qui αὐτοὶ ἑαυτοῖς ἐπιτίθενται, καὶ ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἐφεξῆς ἄρητον, ἂν ἄλλως ἐπιτίθεντο, ἀληθηθεὶς ἡ τύχη ἐνίκησεν.}\footnote{18 \emph{Hom.} 1.1.2; 2.1; 2.2; 2.4; 3.5; II.2. διὰ ἄγνοιαν: \emph{Hom.} 1.2.4; γινώσκω οὔτε: \emph{Hom.} 1.4.6–7.}