

# THE ORDERING, RHETORICAL FUNCTION AND PURPOSE OF *EXEMPLA* IN *FIRST CLEMENT*

CLARE K. ROTHSCHILD

**Abstract.** *First Clement* deploys numerous historical *exempla* comprising central proofs in the argument of this letter. Elsewhere I have investigated the privileged position of the Golden Calf tradition among these *exempla*, even suggesting a specific historical occasion. This essay offers a general overview of the ordering, rhetorical function, and purpose of all *exempla* in this text.

**Keywords:** First Clement, *exempla*, rhetoric, Apostolic Fathers.

## I. Introduction

*First Clement* deploys numerous historical *exempla* comprising central proofs in the argument of this letter. Elsewhere I have investigated the privileged position of the Golden Calf tradition among these *exempla*, even suggesting a specific historical occasion.<sup>1</sup> This essay offers a general overview of the ordering, rhetorical function, and purpose of all *exempla* in this text.

## II. What is an *exemplum*?

In *Inst.* 5.11.6 Quintilian defines an *exemplum* (Gk. παράδειγμα) as: *rei gestae aut ut gestae utilis ad persuadendum id quod intenderis commemoratio*.<sup>2</sup> Heinrich Lausberg helpfully parses this definition as follows:

Thus *exemplum* has a source for its content (*res gesta, res ut gesta*), a function of *utilitas (utilis ad persuadendum)*, and a literary form (*commemoratio*).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. K. ROTHSCHILD, “Golden Calf Incident in 1 Clement,” in *New Essays on the Apostolic Fathers*, WUNT 1/375 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 81-96. I wish to thank R. Matthew Calhoun for comments on a prior version of this essay.

<sup>2</sup> Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, Vol. 3: Books 6-8, ed. and trans. Donald A. RUSSELL, Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, ed. D. E. ORTON, R. Dean ANDERSON (Leiden, Boston, and Köln: Brill, 1998), 196-198, here: 196.