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GOD AS FOUNDER IN 1 CLEMENT 19:2

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1. *Introduction*[1]

Clement of Rome's dependence on both the early Jewish Scriptures as well as contemporary culture, including Stoic philosophy, has long been recognized within the interpretative history of First Clement. Scholars have attempted to characterize the degree to which Clement's description of the orderly nature of creation in 1 Clem. 20 is reflective of Hellenistic-Jewish or Stoic influence.[2] Due to the former interest in tracing the history of religions origin of this passage, however, interpreters have overlooked Clement's portrayal of God as the founder (κτίστης) of the universe and his

1. This paper was presented on June 22nd, 2018 to the Neutestamentliches Kolloquium at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and later at the Annual Meeting of the SBL 2024 (San Diego). All translations are mine unless otherwise indicated; the Greek text of First Clement comes from Lindemann and Paulsen, eds., *Die Apostolischen Väter*.

2. In his study on the character of the oldest form of gentile Christianity (i.e., that which is found in First Clement), Adolf von Harnack claimed that 1 Clem. 20 bears a Stoic imprint ("Der erste Klemensbrief," 60 [ET: *Letter*, 165]). Von Harnack's student Knopf (*Die Lehre*, 76–83) expanded on this thesis in his commentary on the letter, offering parallels from Stoic authors (ET: *Commentary*, 108–16). The most extensive parallels in support of this thesis can be found in the later work Sanders, *L'Hellénisme*. The most sustained response to von Harnack, Knopf, and Sanders's contention came almost a decade after Sanders's monograph from van Unnik ("Is 1 Clement 20 Purely Stoic?"). Van Unnik contends that, although 1 Clem. 20 is indeed indebted to Stoic vocabulary and concepts, it is a scripturally determined form of Hellenistic Judaism that functions as the framework for the author's cosmology. To this day, van Unnik's study remains the scholarly consensus, as is reflected, e.g., in Maier, "Law," 264–65.

people as citizens therein.[3] The argument of this paper is that Clement's use of κτίστης as a title for God in 1 Clem. 19:2 draws on Greco-Roman political terminology, wherein the ruler founds an entity, establishes its constitution, and has the authority to rule on the basis of that work. This usage corresponds well with the author's rhetorical aim of convincing the Corinthian Christ-believers to put an end to their schism (1:1; 46:9) by reinstating their deposed leaders (57:1; 63:1) to their rightful place (44:4–5), in accordance with God's will and the order he has established among his people (44:1–4). To demonstrate this, I will look at the term's usage in Hellenistic literature as well as in the Greek Old Testament. Then I will turn to the broader context of 1 Clem. 19:2 and show that it is filled with language drawn from the political world, making it more likely that Clement intended for his readers to understand it in light of a political context. Finally, I will demonstrate that Clement's rhetorical aim was to highlight God's role as the founder of his cosmos and people, his corresponding authority to order it how he sees fit, and his expectation that God's people live in harmony with one another according to the order God has established.

2. *Κτίστης in Greco-Roman Literature*

Though it was also used to describe the founding of the games, feasts, altars, and other institutions central to the socio-political

3. Modern English translations have rendered κτίστης in 1 Clem. 19:2 rather consistently as "Maker" (Lightfoot, trans. and ed., *Apostolic Fathers*; Holmes, trans. and ed., *Apostolic Fathers*) or "Creator" (Lowther Clarke, *First Epistle of Clement*; Grant, *Apostolic Fathers*; Ehrman, trans. and ed., *Apostolic Fathers*; Brannan, trans. and ed., *Apostolic Fathers*). This tendency holds true as well for both French and German translations, which offer *créateur* (Jaubert, *Clément de Rome*) and *Schöpfer* (von Harnack, *Einführung*; Fischer, *Die Apostolischen Väter*; Schneider, *Clemens von Rom*; Lindemann, *Die Clemensbriefe*; Lindemann and Paulsen, trans. and eds., *Die Apostolischen Väter*; Lona, *Der erste Clemensbrief*) respectively. To my knowledge, the only exception is in the translation section of Knopf's commentary, where he translates κτίστης as *Gründer* ("Founder"). Despite recognizing this nuance in his translation, Knopf does not develop its significance in his commentary, reverting instead to language of *Schöpfer* (*Die Lehre*, 74–75).

and religious life of the day,[4] the term κτίστης was predominately used as a designation for the "founder"[5] of a city.[6] The significance of κτίστης within the Greco-Roman world is not to be underestimated. James Hanges writes, "When the ancient Greeks used the word κτίστης they usually had a specific paradigmatic figure in mind, the 'founder of cities.'"[7] The founder of a city was incorporated into the broader (mythological/legendary) history of the foundation of that city, the cult established therein, and even the name the city bears.[8] In *Historia romana*, for example, Appian writes, ὧν ὁ πρῶτος κτίστης τε Ῥώμης καὶ οἰκιστὴς γεγονώς, ἄρξας τε πατρικῶς μᾶλλον ἢ τυραννικῶς ("The first of these [Romulus, the first of the seven kings of Rome] was both founder and builder

4. Hanges ("Greek Foundation-Legend," 496n13) includes the founding of altars (e.g., Pindar, *Ol*. 7.42), a school of philosophy (e.g., Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *1 Amm*. 5), and medical arts (e.g., Diodorus Siculus, *Bib*. *hist*. 5.74.6) among some of these institutions. Eder and Frateantonio ("Ktistes") include the use of the term for the founding of games and other public institutions.

5. LSJ provides a number of glosses such as "founder," "builder," "restorer," and "Creator." Although BDAG recognizes the use of the word as a "designation of rulers and others of high rank," it provides no gloss for these uses and only records the gloss "the creator," noting that the designation is only used in that way within the literature it covers. That is not at all to say that κτίστης had become a *terminus technicus* used exclusively for God as the Creator during the Koine period. Numerous works such as Sib Or (11.274), Philo (*Flacc*. 46), and Josephus (*Ap*. 2.39; *War* 2.266; *Life* 37; *Ant*. 20.173) use the term to the describe human "founders" of cities.

6. E.g., Diodorus Siculus, *Bib*. *hist*. 1.2.1; 1.20.2; 2.38.5; 2.29.3; 3.60.4; 5.83.1, 5; 5.84.3; Strabo, *Geogr*. 5.2.6; 6.2.3; 12.3.41; 12.8.5; 14.1.3; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *1 Amm*. 3.28.10; Plutarch, *Cam*. 1.1; 31.2; *Luc*. 29.4; *Mar*. 27.5; Appian, *Basil*. 2. Authors also used κτίστης to speak of the first settler (see, e.g., Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *1 Amm*. 1.50.3, which calls Zacynthus the first settler of the colony that bore his name) or to speak of "all the nations of Italy" (see, e.g., Appian, *Hist*. *rom*. 1.13, which reports that Gaius Gracchus was the founder not only of a city but of all the nations of Italy).

7. Hanges, "Greek Foundation-Legend," 494.

8. On the significance of the "founder" within the context of the "foundation-legend," see Hanges, "Greek Foundation-Legend," 494–509. On the naming of a city in relationship to its founder, see, e.g., Diodorus Siculus, *Bib*. *hist*. 5.83.1, 5 (Tenedos was named after its founder Tennes); 5.84.3 (Erythrae is named after Erythrus); Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *1 Amm*. 1.50.3 (Zacynthus named after its founder); see also Malkin, "What's in a Name?"

of Rome, governing more as a father than a tyrant"). Rome bore the name of its legendary founder, Romulus, and honored him there with his own cult. The socio-political and religious significance of the foundation-legend and the founder himself can be readily seen by the fact that the founders of cities were by and large gods, mythological heroes, humans who had died but had been posthumously accorded with the status of a hero on the basis of their deeds, and less frequently living humans.[9]

The infrequency of living rulers being granted the title κτίστης during the period of colonization can be explained by the connection between the foundation-legend and the civic cult. Hanges writes,

> The founder of cities was so pervasive a paradigm that nearly every Greek city in the ancient world sponsored a civic cult in honor of its legendary or mythical founder . . . The devotion of Greeks to the memory of their founders does not rest only on legend or myth, it is rooted firmly in the long history of colonization which characterizes the dynamic relationships within and between the independent Greek city-states, and later, as well, the imperial powers of the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[10]

This is not to say that there were no living rulers during the age of colonization that claimed for themselves the title κτίστης and the accompanying cultic honors and naming rights of the cities they founded. Irad Malkin, writing against the idea that Philip II Macedon and Alexander the Great were the first to claim for themselves heroic honors, the title of κτίστης, and the naming right to the cities they founded, documents several places where rulers claimed these things for themselves before Philip and Alexander. Malkin provides an example of this phenomenon: the colony Apollonia, which had been a colony commissioned by Corinth and

9. Eder and Frateantonio, "Ktistes." For more on the founding of cities, their naming after the mythic heroes, humans turned heroes, and the gods, along with the incorporation of these figures into the (local) cult, see Leschhorn, *«Gründer der Stadt»*, 1–5. See also within this work the extensive catalogs of historical personalities (346–59) and divine, heroic, or mythical figures (360–86) accorded with the titles *ktistes*, *oikistes*, or *archegetes*.

10. Hanges, "Greek Foundation-Legend," 494.

founded by Gylax. As the founder of the city, Gylax named the city Gylakeia only to later have his name completely erased after the citizens consulted the oracle of Delphi about the "true" history of its foundation (Diodorus Siculus, *Bib*. *hist*. 35.3). The oracle revealed that Apollos was the true founder: ὁ θεὸς ἔχρησεν αὐτὸν δεῖν κτίστην νομίζεσθαι. τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ λυθείσης τῆς ἀμφισβητήσεως τὸν Ἀπόλλω κτίστην τῶν Θουρίων ἀπέδειξαν ("The god responded that it was necessary to recognize himself has founder. In this way, resolving the dispute, they proclaimed Apollo the founder of Thurii").[11] Malkin lists further examples of human rulers claiming for themselves the role of "founder" and the accompanying τιμαί ("honors")[12] while living, and the city's ultimate rejection of the ruler by renaming the city and obliterating or erasing all mention of their role as founder.[13] He concludes that the reason for this was socio-political: citizens viewed the tyranny of one of its members to be unacceptable.[14]

But if the attempts of rulers to seize heroic honors and incorporation into the civic cult[15] by claiming the title "founder" and naming the city after themselves failed during the age of colonization, what had changed for Philip II Macedon and Alexander the Great? Within the Hellenistic period, there was a political shift from independent city states to empire.[16] This political shift created an environment in which it was possible for rulers such as Philip and Alexander the Great to make such bold claims. Whereas the independent-city state rejected the tyrant during the era of coloniza-

11. Malkin, "What's in a Name?" 124.

12. Malkin, "What's in a Name?" 126.

13. Malkin, "What's in a Name?" 126–27.

14. Malkin ("What's in a Name?" 127) writes, "The reaction against the names of the tyrants Kypselos and Hippias, or of the oikists Gylax and Hagnon, seems to have been a political reaction, i.e., a reaction of the citizens of the polis-community against the overbearing pre-eminence of one of its members."

15. Zimmermann (*Die Namen des Vaters*, 359) notes that there is copious *numismatic* evidence that attests to the honoring of "founders" within the civic cult.

16. Hanges ("Greek Foundation-Legend," 495) writes, "To be sure, a major change occurs in the Hellenistic period. The impetus for the founding of colonies no longer comes from the independent πόλις, but from the supreme monarch." See also Malkin, "What's in a Name?" 129.

tion, the Hellenistic age had more in common with the age of heroes. Malkin writes, "[T]hat which characterized the *heros* of cult and epic, his free realm of action, rematerialized, as it were, in the unrestricted power of the Hellenistic monarch and eponymous *ktistes*."[17]

Along with the change within the political milieu of Hellenism, the word κτίστης began to be used in the broader sphere of religious and political life. This expansion, says Hanges, can be accounted for on the basis of the implicit relationship of the authority the κτίστης has over the object he (re)founded or created.[18] Plutarch offers several examples of this connection between a κτίστης and his authority. Within his works, he speaks of three founders of Rome. Romulus, the legendary and eponymous founder of Rome, was the first (Plutarch, *Cam*. 31.2). His authority over and connection to the cult of the city permeated it (cf. *Cam*. 31.2–3). Plutarch mentions a "second founder of Rome" (κτίστης δὲ τῆς Ῥώμης . . . δεύτερος) in *Cam*. 1.1. He writes that Furius Camillus was made dictator five times, was honored with a triumph four times, was victorious in battle many times, and was inscribed as the second founder of Rome (1.1). He did all of these things even though he was never appointed consul. This was possible, Plutarch explains, because the people were at odds with the Senate and preferred military leaders. Though Camillus was endowed with great authority and power over the people, Plutarch notes that he ruled with moderation and shared his command instead of ruling as a tyrant, ensuring that the people did not become envious of him (1.3). Finally, in *Mar*. 27.5, Plutarch reports on how the people of Rome attempted to hail Marius as its "third founder" (κτίστην τε Ῥώμης τρίτον) on account of his victory in battle and his rank as consul (Plutarch, *Mar*. 27.5). Since he was a modest man, he chose to share the honor of the military victory with Catulus and not to accept such honors.

We find a similar usage of κτίστης in Dionysius of Halicarnassus. In book 12 of his *Antiquitates romanae*, Dionysius records

17. Malkin, "What's in a Name?" 129.
18. Hanges, "Greek Foundation-Legend," 498.

the story of a young, wealthy eques[19] named Spurius Maelius, who was also known as Felix on account of his wealth (12.1.1). Spurius, though he was not a part of the ruling class, wished to acquire for himself a public office and sought to accomplish this goal through benevolence and dissension (12.1.1–2). Along with his friends, Spurius plotted to distribute food purchased from his own funds to the people during a time of famine at either a sixth of the cost, when the people could afford it, or completely free for those who were too destitute to pay the reduced sum (12.1.2). Having gained the people's favor, he began offering speeches openly, even sitting upon the tribunal and delivering advice to anyone who would ask about the distribution of corn (12.1.5). Dionysius tells us that this would have been the task of the prefect appointed by the Senate, an individual whom Spurius apparently relieved of his duties (12.1.5). In addition to this, Spurius continued to convene meetings and denounced the sitting magistrate Minucius, claiming that he did nothing useful for the people and provided no aid for the poor (12.1.6). Spurius continued to curry favor among the populace by his speeches (12.1.6), by leveraging his funds and inheritance (12.1.7), and by having his friends speak well of him openly (12.1.8). Dionysius tells his readers, "Those who were in league with him were always calling him the savior and father and founder of the fatherland (σωτῆρα καὶ πατέρα καὶ κτίστην . . . τῆς πατρίδος) and declared that giving him the position of consul would be too small a gift in comparison to the greatness of his deeds, but rather that he should be adorned with some greater and more brilliant honor, which would be inherited by his children" (12.1.8–9).[20] The patricians perceived the people's desire to grant Spurius whatever title he desired (12.1.9) and eventually brought the plot to a halt, which resulted in the death of Spurius himself (12.2.8).

19. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. rom.* 12.1.1) reports that he was of the "τάξιν . . . ἱππικήν." As such, he would have been one rung below the magisterial or senatorial class on the social hierarchy.

20. οἱ δὲ περὶ αὐτὸν συνεστῶτες ἀεὶ σωτῆρα καὶ πατέρα καὶ κτίστην ἀπεκάλουν τῆς πατρίδος καὶ τὴν μὲν ὑπατικὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐλάττονα χάριν ἢ κατὰ τὸ μέγεθος τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ γενήσεσθαι δοθεῖσαν ἀπέφαινον, ἄλλῃ δέ τινι μείζονι καὶ λαμπροτέρᾳ τιμῇ κοσμεῖν ἠξίουν αὐτόν, ἣν καὶ γένος ἕξει τὸ ἐξ ἐκείνου.

In each of the examples offered above, there is a close connection between the deeds and benevolence of an individual, according to that person with the title κτίστης, and the corresponding authority. This connection between the act of (re-)founding a colony or city (especially by a king or emperor) and the founder's political claim to power or authority fit well with the Hellenistic-Jewish and early Christian understanding of God's "creation" of the universe and therefore his inherent right to rule it according to his will.[21] This is evident in the use of the word within the Greek Old Testament.

3. *The Septuagint and Κτίστης*

Several others before me such as Christiane Zimmermann in *Die Namen des Vaters* and Barbara Schmitz in her article "Does κτίστης Mean 'Creator'?" have provided a more comprehensive look at the usage of κτίστης in the Greek Old Testament. Therefore, the discussion of the term here will be restricted to a few select examples.[22]

The first relevant example comes from Jdt 9:12. The book of Judith recounts the Assyrian king Nebuchadnezzar's military conflict with Israel. Holofernes, Nebuchadnezzar's commander in chief, went to war against Israel and besieged the city of Bethulia.

21. According to Zimmermann (*Die Namen des Vaters*, 359), "In this respect, in the Hellenistic period, the term κτίστης seems to have been accepted as a suitable term among the Jewish names of God because he lived up to the political claim that was associated with the creator terminology and it could be demonstrated that YHWH was the true ruler because of real qualities as the creator" (Insofern scheint auch die Bezeichnung κτίστης in hellenistischer Zeit deswegen als geeigneter Terminus unter die jüdischen Gottesbezeichnungen aufgenommen worden zu sein, weil er dem politischen Anspruch gerecht wurde, der mit der Schöpferbezeichnung verbunden war und JHWH als den wahren Herrscher aufgrund seiner eigentlichen Schöpferqualitäten erweisen konnte).

22. A search for κτίστης in Rahlfs's edition of the Septuagint reveals only eight total results. Seven of these eight occurrences appear in later, apocryphal works that have no Hebrew *Vorlage* but were originally composed in Greek (Jdt 9:12; 2 Macc 1:24; 7:23; 13:14; 4 Macc 5:25; 11:5; Sir 24:8); see Schmitz, "Does κτίστης Mean 'Creator'?" 36. For a discussion of the sole exception in 2 Sam 22:32 see below.

After cutting off the city's water supply (Jdt 7:17), conditions worsened in the city and drastic measures needed to be taken. Judith offered to go into the enemy encampment to deliver the city because the city's elders were too afraid to act. In ch. 9, Judith prays to God before she departs for the Assyrian camp to seduce Holofernes. She recalls God's previous acts of deliverance, overthrowing rulers, princes, and kings for those who called upon him for his aid and asks that he will do likewise now for her (9:3–5), because his power is greater than her enemies and he is able to deliver her (9:6–11). Judith then addresses God with a string of epithets, saying in v. 12, "Yes, yes, God of my father and God of Israel's inheritance, Master of the heavens and of the earth, founder of the waters, king of all your foundation. Hear my prayer." Each of the terms Judith uses has close ties to ruler ideology: God is the δέσποτης of the heavens and earth, the κτίστης of the waters (note here Judith does not say the founder of the seas but of the waters that had previously been shut off due to the Assyrian siege), and the βασιλεῦς of his foundation. As both Schmitz and Zimmerman have observed, Judith establishes here a conflict between two kings: God and Nebuchadnezzar.[23] Terminology usually ascribed to earthly, political rulers is transferred to God in order to highlight that God is superior to rivals.

The connection between God's role as founder and king also occurs in 2 Macc 1:24 where the text reads, "God, the κτίστης of all, the feared and strong and righteous and merciful one, the only true God." The same connection appears in 2 Macc 7:9 and 7:22 where the two designations are separated but appear in the same context. In 7:9, God is "the king of the universe," and, in 7:22, he is "the κτίστης of the universe." According to Zimmermann, these designations are intentionally contrasted with the earthly king and

23. Jdt 9:12 (ναὶ ναὶ ὁ θεὸς τοῦ πατρός μου καὶ θεὸς κληρονομίας Ισραηλ, δέσποτα τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ τῆς γῆς, κτίστα τῶν ὑδάτων, βασιλεῦ πάσης κτίσεώς σου, σὺ εἰσάκουσον τῆς δεήσεώς μου). Zimmermann (*Die Namen des Vaters*, 349–50) notes that the use of ὑδάτα instead of θάλασσα, which would be expected in statements about God's creation of the heavens, earth, and sea, is motivated by Assyria's siege of the city. They had cut off the water supply (Jdt 7:17) and thereby threatened its destruction. See also Schmitz, "Creation Theology."

highlight the necessity of following God's laws (2 Macc 7:11).[24] Like in Jdt 9:12, the martyred brothers' belief in God as founder and king is not just connected to his right to rule and the importance of obeying his laws, but also with God's ability to deliver them.[25] This becomes explicit in 7:23 when, after the death of several of her sons, their mother confesses that God is the "founder of the world" and that he will restore those who would be tortured to death by their captors because they disregarded themselves on account of God's laws.[26]

The conceptual link between God's role as founder of the universe and his right to rule it according to his laws is not confined to these passages. This same motif appears in 2 Macc 13:14; 4 Macc 5:25;[27] and 4 Macc 11:4–5.[28] Second Maccabees 13:14 is of particular significance for this study. There, Judas prepares for an upcoming battle against King Antiochus and exhorts the people of Judah to stand against Antiochus. Verse 14 reads, "And giving the outcome [of the battle] to the founder of the universe, [Judas] exhorted those with him to fight bravely to the death for the laws,

24. Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters*, 350–51.

25. Zimmermann, *Die Namen des Vaters*, 351. First Peter 4:16 presents a very similar idea where God's elect are exhorted to entrust themselves to the will of "a faithful founder" (κτίστης), even in the face of suffering.

26. 2 Macc 7:23 (τοιγαροῦν ὁ τοῦ κόσμου κτίστης ὁ πλάσας ἀνθρώπου γένεσιν καὶ πάντων ἐξευρὼν γένεσιν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν ζωὴν ὑμῖν πάλιν ἀποδίδωσιν μετ' ἐλέους, ὡς νῦν ὑπερορᾶτε ἑαυτοὺς διὰ τοὺς αὐτοῦ νόμους, "Now, then, the founder of the universe, the one who formed the family of humanity and who devised the generation of all things will restore to you your spirit and your life with mercy since you are now disregarding yourselves on account of his laws").

27. διὸ οὐ μιαροφαγοῦμεν, πιστεύοντες γὰρ θεοῦ καθεστάναι τὸν νόμον οἴδαμεν ὅτι κατὰ φύσιν ἡμῖν συμπαθεῖ νομοθετῶν ὁ τοῦ κόσμου κτίστης ("Therefore, we do not eat unclean food, for, because we believe that God appointed the law, we know that according to nature the founder of the universe has sympathy for us by making the law").

28. ὦ μισάρετε καὶ μισάνθρωπε, τί δράσαντας ἡμᾶς τοῦτον πορθεῖς τὸν τρόπον; ὅτι τὸν πάντων κτίστην εὐσεβοῦμεν καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἐνάρετον αὐτοῦ ζῶμεν νόμον; ("O, you who hate virtue and who hate humanity, for what deed are you destroying us in this way? Because we honor the founder of all things and we live according to his virtuous law?").

temple, city, fatherland, and their way of life."[29] Once again, 2 Maccabees connects God's role as founder with his laws and the Israelites' obligation to obey those laws in contrast to the laws of their oppressors. However, the laws of the founder are not the only things in view. Mentioned along with them are the temple, the city, the fatherland, and their way of life. All of these are part and parcel to the ancient Greco-Roman use of κτίστης, wherein the founder possesses not just the right to rule but also establishes the very constitution of the new colony/city, including its temple and cult.[30] All these things are at stake, and Judas appeals to the divine founder for his protection and for the preservation of the way of life God established. The people's commitment to the founder of the universe and his constitution of the nation of Israel (and all it entails) is punctuated by God's act of deliverance on their behalf. After having attacked Antiochus's camp at night, killing 2,000 men, and causing confusion in their camp (2 Macc 13:15–16), the author summarizes, "And this had already taken place before the break of day because the protection of the Lord came to his aid."[31] Within 2 Maccabees's presentation of God as κτίστης, God has the

29. δοὺς δὲ τὴν ἐπιτροπὴν τῷ κτίστῃ τοῦ κόσμου παρακαλέσας τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ γενναίως ἀγωνίσασθαι μέχρι θανάτου περὶ νόμων, ἱεροῦ, πόλεως, πατρίδος, πολιτείας.

30. This is not at all to make the case that the author of Second Maccabees wished to recast Israel's foundation in the undifferentiated terms of an ancient Greek foundation-legend. For in such legends, the goal is to secure the religious and political legitimacy of the newly established colony/city and its cult. Its founder is a divine entity or has been commissioned as a divine agent and thus the cult erected therein has legitimacy. On this point, see Hanges, "Greek Foundation-Legend," 504–5. Philo recasts the Exodus story and the origin of the nation in these terms (Hanges, "Greek Foundation-Legend," 505–6). Such an *interpretatio Graeca* is not meant to enlist Judaism into the civic cult, but to establish its antiquity and legitimacy as one of the respectable religions within the broader culture (505–6). Second Maccabees's use of this terminology, however, works at a counter purpose. Its purpose is to demonstrate that God is the ultimate founder of all that is and that adherence to his laws and to his cult by his people will be vindicated. Accordingly, as Zimmermann observes, the depiction of God as κτίστης in these texts is an intentional polemic against the earthly king (*Die Namen des Vaters*, 350).

31. ὑποφαινούσης δὲ ἤδη τῆς ἡμέρας τοῦτο ἐγεγόνει διὰ τὴν ἐπαρήγουσαν αὐτῷ τοῦ κυρίου σκέπην.

right to rule his universe and his people according to his laws and according to his will, and his people have faith that he will protect and deliver them because of their faithful adherence to those same laws.

The sole instance of κτίστης within the Greek version of the canonical Old Testament appears in 2 Sam 22:32. The Greek translation of this verse reflects a certain freedom in rendering the Hebrew *Vorlage*:

כִּי מִי־אֵל מִבַּלְעֲדֵי יְהוָה וּמִי צוּר מִבַּלְעֲדֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ׃
τίς ἰσχυρὸς πλὴν κυρίου; καὶ τίς κτίστης ἔσται πλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν;

The Septuagint faithfully translates the first clause of the MT as "Who is strong except the Lord?" Whereas the second clause of the MT reads, "And who is a rock except our God?" the LXX eliminates the metaphorical speech about God (God as a rock), preferring instead, "And who will be a creator/founder except our God?" The translator, here, has not been influenced by an underlying understanding of ברא (i.e., "creation") but is concerned with eliminating metaphorical language and chooses κτίστης instead, likely due to contextual material related to God's strength and power in protecting his appointed ruler, David, from his enemies and from Saul (2 Sam 22:1; 31–33). Thus, even here one can see a Hellenistic influence and not a "creation" related theology driven by the *Vorlage*.

4. *First Clement and Κτίστης*

Having provided a brief overview of how "non-Jewish" authors as well as the deuterocanonical works and the translator of 2 Samuel have used the designation κτίστης, it is necessary to assess how Clement uses the term for God in 19:2 and to what end. The task is to explore the context in which Clement uses the term and to demonstrate that the Greco-Roman image of a founder of a city, which remains prominent in the Septuagint, has not receded but remains the predominant connotation of the term.[32] To do this,

32. It is not necessary to demonstrate whether Clement has inherited this usage of the term from Hellenistic texts or the Septuagint. His familiarity with

I will first situate 1 Clem. 19:2 within its context, then demonstrate how chs. 19–21 as well as the broader epistle are saturated with terminology and topics commonly found in political discourses of the time, and finally offer an interpretation of Clement's use of κτίστης in 19:2 that accounts for its immediate context as well as its significance to resolving the Corinthian conflict.

4.1 *Situating 1 Clem. 19:2 in its Context*

The letter opens with a greeting from the Roman congregation to the Corinthian congregation and with a blessing of grace (χάρις) and peace (εἰρήνη) upon the Corinthian believers through the almighty God and Jesus Christ.[33] The Roman congregation is writing to Corinth because they have heard it reported that an unholy rebellion has broken out among the Corinthian believers (1:1).[34] This was not always the case. There was once a golden era when the Corinthians adhered to God's will, walked according to his commandments, submitted to their leaders, had a full outpouring of the Holy Spirit, hated every schism, and lived as respectable and virtuous citizens (1:2–2:8).[35] This golden age, however, has passed and been replaced with qualities that are diametrically op-

both the Greek Old Testament and pagan literature has been thoroughly demonstrated in previous studies; see von Harnack, *Letter*, 65–69; Welborn, "Early Christianity at Rome," 165–81; Cerone, "First Clement." Illustrating the prominence of the meaning "founder" for κτίστης in Hellenistic literature and the Septuagint, as well as demonstrating that Clement activates this semantic frame through the usage of related terminology should be sufficient; on frames, see Busse, *Frame-Semantik*.

33. The author lays out key themes even in the prescript of the letter. The Corinthians are in need of peace through almighty God and Jesus Christ. God's almighty power functions as both a warning to those who will not repent as well as a comfort because God alone, through his almighty will, has made it possible through Jesus Christ to repent and to be forgiven.

34. It is significant that Clement characterizes the dispute as an ἀνοσίου στάσεως ("unholy rebellion"). Rebellions were an existential threat to the order and existence of a city. Rulers sought to snuff out any signs of rebellion to prevent it from spreading and destroying the city (cf. 1 Clem. 6:4). On the rhetoric against and political implications of rebellion in the ancient world, see Mikat, *Die Bedeutung*.

35. On living as respectable and virtuous citizens, see the expression τῇ παναρέτῳ καὶ σεβασμίῳ πολιτείᾳ in 1 Clem. 2:8.

posed to the virtues that once ruled God's people in Corinth: they are filled with schisms, envy, strife, and they have become hard of seeing with regard to God's commandments (3:1–4). Jealousy has overtaken the congregation, and those who persist in their jealousy are in danger of suffering the deadly consequences of jealousy (4:1–6:3). All hope is not lost, however. God has provided an opportunity for repentance that the Corinthians should accept, and he has demonstrated God's willingness to forgive by pointing to many past examples (7:1–8:5). The Corinthians, therefore, should not only repent of their rebellion but follow the models of obedience found in the lives of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot, and Rahab (9:1–12:8). Clement then ties his exhortation to obey God's will with the virtue of humility (13:1–18:17). Without humility, the Corinthians will not be able to sacrifice their pride and perceived place of honor in favor of the peace and harmony of the congregation, which God had established by his will and which they had destroyed through their rebellion.

The use of κτίσης in 1 Clem. 19:2 appears within the broader framework of chs. 19–21.[36] This verse serves to provide a transition[37] between Clement's previous exhortation toward humility

36. While Clement scholars generally agree that a new section begins in ch. 19, they are not agreed on precisely where that section starts. Lona (*Der erste Clemensbrief*, 243) and Lindemann (*Clemensbriefe*, 23) argue that the new section begins with 19:1, while Bakke (*"Concord and Peace"*, 247), Knopf (*Die Lehre*, 41), and Grant (*Apostolic Fathers*, 14) place it at 19:2. While both verses have the conjunction οὖν, which can function as a discourse marker that indicates a new unit, Bakke notes that the second use of οὖν coupled with πολλῶν οὖν καὶ μεγάλων καὶ ἐνδόξων μετειληφότες πράξεων ("having shared in many great and glorious deeds") provides a summative reference back to the previous section on humility while pointing forward to the new unit (*"Concord and Peace"*, 247).

37. Knopf (*Die Lehre*, 74) suggests, "Der Uebergang ist schroff; von den Wohltaten der Geschichte, die in den Beispielen von Demut begründet sind, wird übergegangen zu den Schöpfungswohltaten" ("The transition is abrupt; from the good deeds of history, which are grounded in the examples of humility, to the good works of creation"). However, the conceptual link between the two is clear when one realizes that the discourse on creation is intended as a reflection of who God is—a God of order, harmony, and peace—and God's expectation that his people live in harmony and peace, not asserting themselves over one another but rather living according to the order he himself established, a task that requires humility from his people.

and his exhortation that the Corinthians strive toward peace and harmony in ch. 20.[38] As an example of the peace and harmony the Corinthians should imitate, Clement directs their gaze to the "Father and founder (κτίστην) of the entire world." Clement singles out specific aspects the Corinthians should notice about the κτίστην: (1) they should "hold fast to his magnificent and superior gifts of peace and benefactions (εὐεργεσίαις)" (19:2); (2) "look upon his patient will with the eyes of the soul" (19:3); and (3) "realize how he feels no anger toward his entire creation" (19:3). After these exhortations, Clement transitions to his example of God's work as founder of the universe as a paradigm of order, harmony, and peace (20:1–10), and then summarizes, "The great Craftsman and Master of all appointed all these things to exist in peace and harmony, bringing great benefactions to all things, especially to us who flee to his compassion through our Lord Jesus Christ" (20:11).[39] This order, harmony, and peace within God's foundation of the cosmos is itself a reflection of the order, harmony, and peace that exists in God and which should also exist within his people.[40]

38. Lona, *Der erste Clemensbrief*, 248: "In the structure of the argument, 1 Clem 19.2 has an important connecting function. It leads from the large section on the obedience of faith, illustrated by historical examples (9.1–10.6) and attitudes of hospitality (10.7–12.7) and humility (13.1–19.1), to two parallel argumentative steps that demonstrate God's power over his creation. In the first step, the consideration of the Creator's benefits (ch. 20) is the foundation of order and relationships in the church (ch. 21), as attested in Scripture (ch. 22). In the second step, the power of God and the power of his promise, which excludes all doubt, are set forth by the question of the resurrection (chs. 24–26)."

39. ταῦτα πάντα ὁ μέγας δημιουργὸς καὶ δεσπότης τῶν ἁπάντων ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ ὁμονοίᾳ προσέταξεν εἶναι, εὐεργετῶν τὰ πάντα, ὑπερεκπερισσῶς δὲ ἡμᾶς τοὺς προσπεφευγότας τοῖς οἰκτιρμοῖς αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

40. The connection between the expected order, peace, and harmony within the church and the established order in creation is immediately made in 21:1, where the Corinthians are exhorted to be careful to not allow God's acts of kindness to lead to judgment by not conducting themselves worthy of him and doing everything that is pleasing to him in harmony.

4.2 *Political Language in 1 Clem 19–21 and Beyond*

With this broader context in mind, it is necessary to highlight the political language found in chs. 19–21. First, the Corinthians are exhorted to "hold fast to [God's] magnificent and excellent gifts and benefactions (εὐεργεσίαις) of peace" (19:2). Benefactions were an integral part of the patron-client system in the ancient world, wherein the patron would bestow favor and benefactions on their clients and would expect in return loyalty and honor. Rudolph Knopf writes,

> εὐεργέτης, next to σωτήρ, is one of the most beloved epithets for God: because of the benefactions of the course of nature, of agriculture and viticulture, of manifold inventions, the gods are praised as εὐεργέται and also the earthly rulers, the visible gods, are affectionately called εὐεργέται; in the enlightened absolutism of the Hellenistic kingship εὐεργεσία and φιλανθρωπία are the main virtues of the ruler.[41]

That Clement conceives of God as a benefactor (εὐεργέτης) who bestows benefactions (εὐεργεσίαι) is stated explicitly later in the epistle in 59:3. Thus, it seems as if Clement's description of God's "magnificent and excellent gifts and benefactions of peace" is intended to call to mind the image of the benevolent ruler.[42] This image is reinforced by 19:3, where God is characterized as being patient and feeling no anger toward his creation.

Second, the entire section revolves around the concepts of peace (εἰρήνη; 19:2 [2x]; 20:1, 9, 10–11) and harmony (ὁμόνοια; 20:3, 10–11). As numerous scholars such as Bowe,[43] Breytenbach,[44] and Bakke[45] have demonstrated, 1 Clement is constructed as deliberative rhetoric, wherein both peace and harmony are virtues that the author impresses upon the reader in order to urge them toward concord.[46] This is a well-known genre used within the political sphere in order to discourage/quell rebellion

41. Knopf, *Commentary*, 107.
42. See correctly the arguments made by Hager, "Argumentative Function of the Gift."
43. Bowe, "Church in Crisis," 78.
44. Breytenbach, "Civic Concord and Cosmic Harmony," 196.
45. Bakke, *"Concord and Peace"*, 247–49.
46. Bakke, *"Concord and Peace"*, 15.

(στάσις).[47] Furthermore, Breytenbach explores numerous examples from Hellenistic thought that draw upon the order and harmony of the cosmos as an example of the order and harmony that should exist within the *polis*.[48] He demonstrates that "the association between civic concord and cosmic harmony . . . was not uncommon"[49] and that such an association was not just present within Greco-Roman literature but also observes that "the practice of giving ethical instruction by appealing to cosmic concord was not unfamiliar to Greek-speaking Jews."[50] Thus, when Clement speaks of creation as an example of peace and harmony—rooted in the character of God—as a means of exhorting his readers toward the same, he draws from a well-established tradition within the political sphere.[51] In so doing, he not only provides his readers with an ethical paradigm for how all things within the created order should function, but particularly how they should behave as believers within the context of the congregation. This dual connection is clear not only from the fact that restoring harmony and peace to the schismatic congregation by reinstating their deposed leaders is the main theme of the letter, but also from the fact that 19:1–20:12 is framed on both sides by exhortations: (1) the Corinthians should imitate those who lived humbly before them (13–19); and (2) the call to perceive God's benefactions and good will, flee to his compassion (20:11),[52] and live according to his exhortations (20:12). First Clement 21:1 is especially important

47. Bakke, *"Concord and Peace"*, 33–62.

48. Breytenbach, "Civic Concord and Cosmic Harmony," 184–94.

49. Breytenbach, "Civic Concord and Cosmic Harmony," 192.

50. Breytenbach, "Civic Concord and Cosmic Harmony," 193.

51. Breytenbach writes, "[Clement] urges the church in Corinth to overcome their internal strife, caused by the conflict between the younger men and the elders. When he takes up the notion of concord in this respect, he links up with a rhetoric tradition dating back to Antiphon, Isocrates and Demosthenes. The specific example of 20:3, where cosmic order is depicted in terms of concord, draws on this rhetorical tradition in a manner very similar to Dio Chrysostom" ("Civic Concord and Cosmic Harmony," 196).

52. 1 Clem. 20:11 ("The great Craftsman and Master of everything ordered all these things to exist in peace and harmony, thereby doing good for all things, but beyond all measure for us, who have taken refuge in his compassion through our Lord Jesus Christ").

because it clearly connects the author's reflections on the foundation of the cosmos with his exhortation for the Corinthians to live as citizens in God's kingdom: "Beware, beloved, that his many benefactions (εὐεργεσίαι) do not turn into judgment against all of us, if we do not live as citizens (πολιτευόμενοι) worthy of him and fail to do what is good and pleasing before him in harmony."

Clement does not limit his application of political-related language for God to chs. 19–21. Throughout the letter, Clement draws from language used in ideal, royal ruler contexts. He describes God as the master, master of all, and the master of the universe (7:5; 8:2; 9:4; 11:1; 20:8, 11; 24:1; 24:5; 33:1–2; 36:2, 4; 40:1, 4; 48:1; 49:6; 52:1; 55:6; 56:16; 59:4; 60:3; 61:1–2; 64:1). God alone is the king (61:2) and, by contrast, the rulers of this world are only "the sons of men" (τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων) whose authority to rule on earth is granted by God (61:2).[53] Clement's use of the title "king" is not devoid of significance, for he also conceives of God's people as citizens of his *polis* (54:4; cf. 2:8; 3:4; 6:1; 21:1; 44:6; 51:2), founded (19:2; 59:3; 62:2), ruled, and governed by God. They experience his goodness, in part, in the form of his role as benefactor (59:3; cf. 21:1), savior (59:3), and helper (36:1; 59:3–4).

4.3 *First Clement 19:2*

Having demonstrated that the material within 1 Clem. 19–21 is strongly shaped by political terminology and discourses, we can now more confidently state that the author's use of κτίστης in 19:2 is likewise determined. The common Greco-Roman usage of the term, also reflected in the Greek Old Testament, is still present and has not receded in favor of a simple understanding of God as creator. Clement uses other titles and phrases for God to that end.[54] His use of κτίστης, on the other hand, retains its political associations.

53. On the polemical use of "sons of men," not "sons of the gods" as Roman rulers often claimed, see Bowe, "Prayer Rendered for Caesar?" and Cerone, "First Clement."

54. E.g., the participial form of ποιέω (7:3; 14:3; 59:3) or δημιουργός (20:11; 26:1; 33:2; 35:3; 59:2).

Attributing this title to God would have been evocative for the Corinthians, especially since Julius Caesar refounded Corinth as a Roman colony in 44/43 BCE.[55] First Clement draws on this idea when giving God the title founder in 19:2, connects it with the idea of God's benefactions of peace (τῆς εἰρήνης εὐεργεσίαις, 19:2), and then describes in detail how God established the cosmos according to his will, order, and decrees (20:1–12).[56] The heavens obey him (20:1); day and night do not transgress their domains (20:2); sun, moon, and stars do not deviate from the courses he assigned (20:3); the earth bears fruit and gives sustenance to living creatures according to God's decree and without dissension (μὴ διχοστατοῦσα, 20:4); God's ordinances constrain the depths of the abyss (20:5); the seas do not flow beyond the boundaries he ordered (20:6); the master directs the oceans by his commandments (20:8); the seasons follow one another in peace (20:9); the winds, springs, and all living creatures operate in harmony and peace according to God's will (20:10). All these elements of creation adhere to the will of their founder and master. There is no dissension, no disobedience, no disorder. Clement has already characterized the dispute over ecclesiastical leaders in Corinth as rebellion, division, disorder, and transgression of God's will (see above at section 4.1). The Corinthians should be careful that God's goodwill and benefactions do not turn to judgment if they fail to live as citizens worthy (ἀξίως . . . πολιτευόμενοι) of him (21:1; see also 3:2). A similar thought is taken up in ch. 33, where God's work in creating the cosmos is presented as one of his many good works and serves as a model for his creation: "Therefore, having this example, let us unhesitatingly approach his will" (33:8). According to Clement, God's work of founding/creating the cosmos is a benefaction to his creatures and a good work that should serve as an example to motivate them to live according to his will. Like an earthly ruler who founds a city and expects its citizens to live according to the constitution he establishes, God

55. On the history of ancient Corinth, see Harrison, "History of Roman Corinth."

56. Almost each statement about the creation within ch. 20 contains a verb related to obedience to God, his will, or his order.

also founded the cosmos and expects believers (i.e., citizens of his kingdom) to live according to his rule.

5. *Conclusion*

This study has demonstrated that the Greco-Roman idea of the founder, also attested to in the Greek Old Testament, is a part of the author's conception of God. Although this interpretation does not greatly affect the overall sense of the passage, it does have broader implications for how the author conceives of God and his people. Throughout the letter, he draws from language used in ideal, royal ruler contexts: in 1 Clement, God is king, Lord, master, benefactor, savior, helper, and founder. His people are conceived of as citizens in his *polis*, founded, ruled, and governed by God. The schism in the congregation/*polis* is nothing less than rebellion against God (στάσις, 1:1; 2:6; 3:2; 14:2; 46:9; 51:1; 54:2 57:1; 63:1) and can be severely punished (14:2; 41:4; 47:7; 55:5–6; 59:1). But God is gracious and compassionate and will forgive his people if they restore the peace and harmony that should govern them, as it governs the cosmos he founded (19:2; 21:1–2).

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