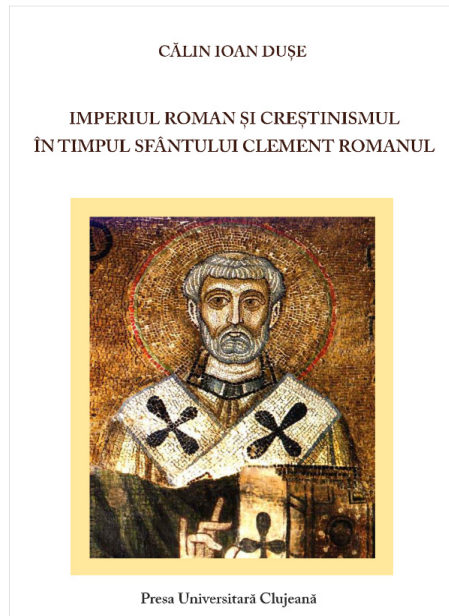

**Călin Ioan Dușe, *Imperiul Roman și creștinismul în timpul Sfântului Clement Romanul*. [Foreword by Rev. Prof. Dr. Cristian Barta, University of Cluj Press, Cluj-Napoca, 2021, 572 pp.]
Cuvânt înainte Pr. Prof. Univ. Dr. Cristian Barta, Cluj-Napoca,
Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2021, 572 p.**

The book of Fr. Univ. Lect. Dr. Călin Ioan Dușe, entitled *The Roman Empire and Christianity in the time of St. Clement of Rome*, is dedicated to the connection between the study of patristics and the historical-cultural context in which Christian literature developed during the first centuries. The current approach continues another work written by the author, namely *The Roman Empire and Christianity in the time of Apostolic Fathers*, published by Cluj University Press in 2019, in line with the author's field of research and specialisation, aiming to analyze the symbiosis between the historical events, the cultural evolution of the Roman Empire and the development of Christianity over the centuries.



The novelty element consists in the approach of history and patristics in a pedagogical vision, adequate for teaching and learning in specialized courses, a context conducive to the education of both mind and spirit.

The author analyses rigorously the bibliographic sources in order to revive the image of early Christianity. The usage and the interpretation of various images and thematic maps bring a new contribution to the specialized literature, proving the originality as well as the necessity of this research.

In Chapter I, entitled “The Roman Empire in the First Century AD”, the author makes an extensive presentation of the Roman Empire, offering the uninitiated reader a good guide in the beautiful journey of knowledge for the understanding of

the evolution of the Roman Empire in the first century AD, and the specialist, a good tool for an even better acquaintance with subtle nuances of the organization and existence of the above-mentioned empire in the specified period.

Chapter II presents the situation of Christianity in the first century AD in the Roman Empire. With a meticulous effort, the author manages to capture the rather complex organization of the new religion in a polytheist empire that has not always been a good partner in creating a well-defined collective identity. The image of Christianity in the first century AD is presented from a triple perspective: Christianity in the time of the Holy Apostles; the missionary activity of St. Paul the Apostle and the Apostle of the Gentiles; the state of Christianity in the capital city of the Empire. All these directions of research complete the general overview imperatively necessary for the presentation of Christianity in the first century after Christ.

In the third chapter, the author focuses all his attention on presenting the results of the research undertaken by him on one of the outstanding personalities of the early Christianity in the first century – St. Clement of Rome. The analysis is focused on the life of St. Clement the Roman, as well as on his work and teachings. The monographic approach proves to be very useful for the understanding of the general context of the period in which the Apostolic Fathers lived and carried out their work. St. Clement the Roman, under the influence of St. Paul, deepens the mystical society around Christ, the point of union of the innocent and the righteous.

We consider that this work, as a whole, represents an important contribution to the rediscovery of the values and landmarks of the period of the Apostolic Fathers both through the life and feelings of this great saint and through the legacy left by his teaching, from which, as a source, all Christians can quench their spiritual thirst. This fact deserves to be appreciated because through the author's efforts, we discover in the teachings, life, and work of St. Clement, a good tool and help in our spiritual life.

The annexes published at the end of the book are very valuable as well. They contribute effectively to a better understanding of the historical context. The annexes and the extensive bibliography prove once more the accuracy of the current scientific research.

Taking into account the contributions brought to the field of research, the logical and analytical thread of the approach, I warmly recommend the book *Roman Empire and Christianity during the time of Saint Clement the Roman*, by the author Rev. Fr. Lect. dr. Fr. Ioan Călin Dușe, to be read.

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