

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA AND THE BEG-  
NINGS OF CHRISTIAN PLATONISM

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ONE of the most fruitful branches of recent patristic study has been the effort to determine the relation between early Christian theology and Greek philosophy. Starting from the assumption that the affinities between the two were many and close, scholars have found themselves able to draw detailed inferences of literary and intellectual dependence, and in the case of many Christian authors to discover the exact sources from which they drew their philosophic ideas, or at least to assign these to some contemporary school. Without such work an accurate estimate of the fathers' views and ways of thinking is impossible, but it must be remembered that an author is not explained, or even fairly represented, by showing how much he may have derived from others, for in the last analysis his finished thought is his own, however extensive the foreign material employed in its construction. It is not, therefore, at the end but at the beginning of his work that the historian of thought can expect most help from the investigation of sources, since even an author who differs from his contemporaries in his answers to current problems must usually begin by seeing them as they do. The background of an author's thought must have supplied the starting point for many of his ideas.

Clement of Alexandria is one of those writers in whose works the search for sources has met with greatest success. A glance at the elaborate notes in Stählin's edition will show how often it is possible to identify his quotations from pagan authors, and in the religious and philosophic literature current at his time to find parallels to his ideas. In describing his conception of God it is frequently necessary to indicate these borrowings and to elucidate obscure ideas by a reference to contexts hinted at but not expressly mentioned. The value of this is undeniable,

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but it is on the whole less important than the knowledge thus obtained of the way in which Clement regarded the fundamental problems of theology, and particularly those of the being of God and the knowledge of God.

A characteristic of Greek philosophic theology was its lively interest in ontology. The early differences between the Ionians and Eleatics were prophetic of conflicting tendencies in Greek thought which were destined to determine the structure of its whole history. This conflict first becomes of great importance for theology in the writings of Plato.

In the discussion concerning being and non-being between Theaetetus and the Stranger in the *Sophist*, the Stranger says that two main views about the nature of reality are held by contemporary philosophers:

Some drag everything to earth from heaven and the unseen, clumsily seizing rocks and oaks with their bands. For they lay hold of all such things and insist that only that exists which can be perceived and touched, and they define reality and body as identical (ταῦτόν σῶμα καὶ οὐσίαν ὀρίζομενοι). But if any of their opponents shall say that something exists that has no body, they altogether despise him and will not listen to anything else.

*Theaetetus.* These are terrible fellows you speak of and I have already met many of them.

*Stranger.* Therefore those who oppose them cautiously defend themselves from above, maintaining that intellectual essences and immaterial ideas constitute the true (νοητὰ ἄττα καὶ ἀσώματα εἶδη βιαζόμενοι τὴν ἀληθινὴν οὐσίαν εἶναι). And by arguments they break into small bits the ‘bodies’ of these other men and their alleged truth, insisting that these are becoming rather than being (γένεσιν ἄντ’ οὐσίας φερομένην τινὰ προσαγορεύουσιν). And on this subject, *Theaetetus*, there has always been an endless war, between these two parties.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of this distinction for a general conception of the universe is made clear by Plato in the *Timaeus*, where *Timaeus* prefaces his exposition of cosmology by saying:

First, then, in my opinion, this distinction must be made: what is that which always exists but is never in process of becoming, and what is that which has always been in process of becoming but never has real existence? The former is comprehensible by thought with the help of reason, the latter is to

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be grasped by opinion with the aid of irrational sensation, since it is in the process of becoming or perishing and thus never really exists.<sup>2</sup>

He goes on to argue that since the Creator must have selected a beautiful model for his work and only Reality is beautiful, it must be that eternal Reality is the pattern, of which the material world is but the imperfect image. The place of the Creator in the scheme of things Plato admits is difficult to determine, but it is clear that he is to be included in eternal Reality, for it is later stated that God supplies not only the energy but also the pattern of creation, so that the world can be described as “the image of the Creator, a god which can be perceived, the greatest and most excellent and most beautiful and most perfect.”<sup>3</sup>

The philosophic materialism to which Plato refers received its first great development in Stoicism, and his description of those who “define reality and body as identical, and if anyone says that something exists that has no body, they altogether despise him and will not listen to anything else,” is equally applicable to Zeno and Chrysippus. These philosophers maintained that all reality was material, and that the only four things which were immaterial - empty space, time, place, and τὰ λεκτά - were strictly unreal.<sup>4</sup> In the category of material things they placed God, whose nature was the physical element πνεῦμα. πνεῦμα was both substantial and rational, and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Plato, *Sophist*, pp. 246-47. Aristotle used this distinction as a principle of classification of the philosophers who went before him. Cf. *De anima*, 404b, 30-405a, 7 (*Simplicius*, *Comm.* pp. 30-31), *Meta.* A, 7-8, p. 988; he was followed in this by the later doxographers, e.g. *Galen*, *Hist. Phil.* 14 (*Diels*, *Dox. Graeci*, 608, 18).

<sup>2</sup> *Timaeus*, pp. 27D-28A

<sup>3</sup> *Timaeus*, p. 92C

<sup>4</sup> Unreal’ but not ‘non-existent’, cf. *Zeller*, *Phil. der Griechen*, 4te Aufl. iii. 1, pp.89, n. 1, 119, 125.

being the subtlest form of existence, it permeated the whole universe, endowing the cosmos with its own rational properties.<sup>5</sup>

On the principle of affinity so potent in ancient thought, Plato's immaterial Reality could only be known by an immaterial mind, whose nature shared in that of the objects of its knowledge. Reality could be described ontologically as *ἄσώματος*,<sup>6</sup> or epistemologically as *νοητός*. In Stoicism material reality could only be known by material means, so that the

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mind of the individual was conceived also as *πνεῦμα*, a fragment of the ultimate existence which made the universe an ordered and intelligible whole.

In the third century B.C. these two systems were in open rivalry. Platonism had yielded something to the, criticism of Aristotle but had lost none of its radical immaterialism, for in spite of his objections to Plato's formulation of the doctrine of ideas, Aristotle was in no sense a materialist. Stoicism was at the height of its classical development in the system of Chrysippus, who not only systematized but enormously enlarged the substance of Zeno's thought. One of his most important contributions was the substantial support he gave to the materialism of his predecessor by an elaborate epistemology, unequalled in ingenuity in the succeeding history of materialistic philosophy. Yet no sooner was this splendid structure completed than it was subjected to the sharpest criticism. Carneades, a pupil of Chrysippus and a former Stoic, came out against the system he had earlier accepted, and conducted an attack on the very citadel which Chrysippus felt he had made most sure, the Stoic theory of knowledge.

The two main supports of this theory were sensation, which provided the materials of thought, and comprehension, which arranged the materials in proper order and made knowledge possible. A direct contact of the mind with reality was thus secured, and the problem of error was solved by an appeal to the experience of certainty accompanying some ideas and to the common assent given to some notions, both of which served as the norm for determining truth. Carneades proceeded to abolish all these criteria. He showed first of all that sensation was the least reliable of witnesses, and that, so far from connecting us with reality, it constantly deceives us in the most

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ordinary experiences of everyday life. Against the experience of certainty he pointed to the profound conviction with which error was often maintained, and against the argument from general consent he objected that such assent could never be shown to exist, and in any case could only be a multiplicity of fallible judgments, the validity of which in each case could never be proved.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hans Leisegang, *Der heilige Geist*, i. Berlin, 1919.

<sup>6</sup> *ἄσώματος* came to be the catchword of Platonic metaphysics. A history of the word and the ideas lying behind it is much needed. Something of its importance can be seen from the following passages: Plato, *Soph.* pp. 246-157; *Polit.* 286A; *Phileb.* 64B; *Phaedo* 85E; Aristotle, *De anima* 404b, 30-405a, 7; 405a, 27; 405b, 11; 409b, 21; *Meta.* A, 7, 988a, 25; A, 8, 988b, 25; *De gen. et corr.* 5, 320a. 80; *Topica* vi. 12, 149b, 1; *Nat. Auscult.* iv, 1, 209a, 16; *idem* iv. 4. 212a, 12; *idem* iv, 8, 215b, 5, 10; Plutarch, *Moralia*, pp. 1073e, 424e, 926a-b, 718 f., 1014b-c, 1029d, 1085c, 894c, 602f, 905b, 1074a-c, 1073e, 1080-1081, 960c, 1002c, 1086a, 63c; *Vitae, Marcellus* c. 14, p.305e; Seneca, *Ad Helviam* viii, 3; *Epistulae* 90. 29; 89. 16; 58. 11-15; Cicero *de nat. deor.* i, 12, 30; Diels, *Doxographi Graeci*, pp. 606 6, 13.12, 615, 387.10, 409.26, 308, 288, 449, 395, 608.18, 305, 460.27.

These objections to the possibility of knowledge in general were urged with special force against Stoic theology. The ground was cut from under theological belief, but more than this, all the implications of the problem of evil were developed in telling opposition to the Stoic theory of a universal purpose animating the world and favorable to man.

Roused by these objections, the Stoics were not slow to make spirited replies, but in reality their position was much weakened; and their appreciation of this fact is witnessed in the revision of the older systems by the philosophers of the Middle Stoa. Chrysippus believed that he had made sure of the contact of mind with reality from the premises of a thoroughgoing materialism; but Carneades' polemic aimed to show that this supposed contact was an illusion, and that there was no assurance of the mind's relations with a reality outside itself. To avoid this difficulty and to gain once more the certainty of truth, the Stoics turned for help to their old opponent Plato. Posidonius, who led in this movement, abandoned Chrysippus' assumption that the mind was both functionally and substantially a unit, and substituted for it Plato's trichotomy, intending thereby to avoid the objections raised against the old Stoic sensationalism. Reason, he maintained, was above sensation and akin to the nature of the Universe and God. In determining truth reason was dependent on sensation only for the raw stuff of knowledge; the truth of its judgments proceeded from its own inherent capacity for determining the right relations of things. Truth thus came to be a function of the mind and only indirectly a property of judgments.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of the concessions made to Platonism, Posidonius remained a materialist as did his successors in the Stoic school.

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He identified the rational principle, God, with the ether, the finest and most remote of the elements, but ether, however rare and pure, remained *σωματικός*. In the rise of Neo-pythagoreanism a similar attempt to reconcile Stoicism and Platonism was made, but this time from the premises of Platonic immaterialism. The movement in its earliest stage is difficult to follow, but it probably began in Alexandria, where it received its most elaborate and successful development. The influence of Posidonius on the early Neo-pythagoreans was apparently considerable,<sup>8</sup> but unlike him the latter freely admitted the existence of immaterial reality, and took as their principal metaphysical problem the relations between the material and immaterial worlds.

One of the ablest of this new school was Philo of Alexandria. in his treatise *De opificio mundi*, he follows Plato in assuming an immaterial pattern invented by the divine mind and realized so far as possible by the divine energy in creation, but he lays much more emphasis than Plato on the continued activity of God in the world. By a brilliant stroke he identified the immanent and active Reason of Stoicism with the transcendent divine Mind of Platonism, and making the necessary accommodations to Platonic anthropology and epistemology obtained the advantages of the two rival systems.

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<sup>7</sup> Schmekel, *Philosophie der mittleren Stoa*, pp. 353 ff.

<sup>8</sup> The question of Posidonius's influence has been much discussed. Cf. K. Gronau, *Poseidonius und die Jüdisch-christliche Genesis-exegese* (1914); K. Reinhardt, *Poseidonios*, Munich, 1921.

Whether this solution of the ancient problem was completely satisfactory may be questioned, but of its historical importance there can be no doubt. The history of later Stoicism shows no striking advance in thought, and for the early enthusiasm for speculative issues is substituted an earnest desire to find comfort and reconciliation with the divine in a world of discomforting change and sadness. Neo-pythagoreanism, however, led straight to Neo-platonism and to a revival on a grand scale of the philosophy of immaterialism. The climax came with the school of Ammonius Saccas<sup>9</sup> at Alexandria and the writings of Plotinus.

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The period in which this revival of Platonism took place saw also the beginnings of Christianity, and in the second century it became apparent that Christian theology, if it were to survive, must justify itself philosophically. In doing so it had to make its choice between the materialism of the Stoa and the immaterialism of Plato. That it ultimately chose the latter may in part be attributed to the influence of men like Philo and Numenius,<sup>10</sup> who had shown the possibility of interpreting Jewish theology by Platonic metaphysics; but two other factors must also be considered. In the first place Platonism had the vigor of a renewed youth, which attracted to it the keenest minds of that generation; but more than this a certain natural affinity existed between Christianity and Platonism. It can be no accident that the early Christian Platonists were men on whom the genius of Paul and John had made the deepest impression. The Christian philosophy developed in Alexandria by Clement and Origen, contemporaries of Plotinus, was associated with a Christian mysticism to which Paul, John, and Plato all contributed. In rejecting under its impulse the Christian Stoicism of Tertullian in favor of the Alexandrine philosophy, the church fell heir to the last great product of Greek thought.

Clement's writings are a clear indication of his wide interests and of his insight into theological problems.<sup>11</sup> Apart from sermons and treatises on various theological topics and questions of the day, fragments of correspondence, and reading notes for forthcoming works, there remain portions of his great exegetical work, the *Hypotyposes*, which include commentaries on the Catholic and Johannine Epistles, and his "great trilogy," which comprises the *Protrepticus*, *Paedagogus*, and *Stromateis*. The *Protrepticus* appeared shortly after his appointment to the catechetical School, and contains a refutation of paganism and a proof of the superiority of Christianity over other religions and philosophies. Some years later the *Paedagogus* was issued

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as a manual of Christian morals and ethics, and this was followed by the *Stromateis*, most of which was written after he left Egypt. This work can best be described as prolegomena to the study of systematic theology. In these three works Clement traced the work of the Logos, both in leading men from paganism to Christianity and in training them in the hard practice of Christian life.

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<sup>9</sup> The figure of Ammonius Saccas remains in the same obscurity as that of Pantaenus. The relations of Clement to Pantaenus were similar to those of Plotinus to Ammonius. Origen is supposed to have been a pupil of Ammonius; cf. Zeller, *Kleine Schriften*, ii. pp. 91 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Euseb., *Praep.* ev. ix. 7; xi. 9-10; Nemesius, *De natura humana* ii.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchl. Literatur*, II. 2te Aufl. 1914, pp. 43 ff.

In his original plan for the great trilogy is apparent the outline of Clement's life and of the lives of converts he had known. Its execution, however, did not wholly fulfill his own program, which was to end the series by a real system of dogmatic and speculative theology. It is his great merit that he saw the possibility and urgent necessity of such a system, but his mind was naturally unsystematic, and though he could keep himself in hand when discussing pagan errors and Christian morals, the organization of Christian philosophy proved too interesting in its details, too bewildering in its complexity, to be accomplished in a closely written volume of exposition and debate. The passage in Strom. vi. 1, where he asserts the sufficiency of the rambling treatment of great themes for those who are really capable of understanding; must be taken partly as an admission of defeat. As he proceeded in his task, its magnitude grew upon him and new questions arose which had to be settled before he could take up the great issues which still beckoned him from a distance. In the prefaces to the Paedagogus and to Books iv and vi of the Stromateis can be seen how the perspective changed as he advanced, and how little any one of his programmatic statements can be taken as sure prophecies of his actual results.<sup>12</sup> At the end of the seventh book he promises more Stromateis and is still far from that κατὰ τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας κανόνα γνωστικῆς παραδόσεως φυσιολογία which was to be the last stage of initiation into the mysteries of Christianity.<sup>13</sup>

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Though Clement's goal was never reached by the path which he had determined, the main outlines of his thought are clear enough to his reader. In discussing his idea of God it will be well to follow his own course of exposition, taking the Protrepticus, Paedagogus, and Stromateis in order and introducing relevant passages from his other works as they serve to illustrate points raised by the three major treatises.

The idea of God forms the centre of discussion in the Protrepticus. Clement, like Aristides, makes it the touchstone of true religion, and shows that to disparage paganism and glorify Christianity all that is needed is a comparison of the ideas of deity which each professes. Clement's objections to the pagan gods are those which had become familiar in Christian apologetic in the second century. The imperfect nature of the gods is inconsistent with the perfect divine nature; their motives and behavior as described in mythology are unworthy of the character of God. His originality in dealing with the defects of paganism does not, therefore, lie in new motives of polemic but in the elaboration with which he develops familiar themes. Earlier apologists had been content with casual references to the most flagrant and familiar of the scandals of Jove's court, but Clement adorns his attack on the old religion with a wealth of detail and heaps count upon count in his indictment of the gods.<sup>14</sup>

A considerable portion of his material is drawn from Greek literature, with which he was more familiar than most of his pagan contemporaries. A comparison of the Protrepticus with Plutarch's *De audiendis poetis* or *De superstitione* is favorable to Clement's erudition. He knows the attacks

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<sup>12</sup> The loss of the prefaces to Strom. Bk. i. prevents us from knowing exactly his intentions when he began to write it. How difficult he found it to stop can be seen from Protrept. xii, 123.

<sup>13</sup> Clement calls it ἡ ἐποπτεία, technical term for initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries, cf. Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encycl. XI. 1, 248-249. Ziegert draws attention to the fact that in the mysteries ἐποπτεία was used of seeing the sacred symbols exhibited by the priests to the initiates, and maintains that Clement transferred it to the vision of truth revealed by mystic intuition, cf. Studien u. Kritiken, lxvii, 1894, pp. 728ff.

<sup>14</sup> Clement's treatment of paganism may be compared in this respect with Irenaeus's treatment of Gnosticism.

of philosophers on popular theology, and cites with approval those who risked the charge of atheism by their attacks on the gods.

Therefore I cannot conceal how it surprises me that they called atheists Euhemerus of Agrigentum and Nicanor of Cyprus and Diogenes and Hippo the Milesian and besides these that Cyrenian, Theodorus by name, and many

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more who lived soberly and perceived more clearly than other men the error about the gods. For if they did not know the truth, they at least suspected error, which is no small seed and grows up as a spark of wisdom unto truth.<sup>15</sup>

in one passage he reproduces the Stoic theory of the sevenfold origin of the gods which is found also in Cicero's *De natura deorum* and in the Epitome of Pseudo-Plutarch.<sup>16</sup>

More important than these literary allusions is his treatment of the mysteries. He says:

I will not mockingly betray them, as they say Alcibiades did,<sup>17</sup> but I will lay bare the witchcraft concealed in them and expose your so-called gods to whom belong the mystic rites; I will display them<sup>18</sup> as on the stage of life to the spectators of the truth.<sup>19</sup>

What follows is particularly interesting to us because much of it cannot be paralleled in other extant literary sources, but its interest to his earliest readers was of a different order. The attack on mythology was a familiar theme of the philosophers and popular preachers and no longer produced the shock that Xenophanes' verses had once done, but the polemic against the mysteries was an assault on a living faith. The Phrygian rites still had their devotees, the worship of Dionysus was widespread and popular, the wails of Osiris' mourners could be heard each year in the streets of Alexandria, and the Serapeion was frequented by pious worshippers. The criticism of Zeus also was aimed at an existing religion, for his name was often used to reconcile popular religion and philosophy, and in connection with Serapis and other deities Zeus still held a place in popular devotion.<sup>20</sup>

From the religion of the multitude Clement passes to the religion of educated men. His objection to philosophy is the

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common Christian one that it involved God in matter and led its adherents to worship Creation instead of the Creator. According to him not only the Milesian physicists and the Stoics but even

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<sup>15</sup> Protrep. ii. 24.

<sup>16</sup> Protrep. ii. 26. Wendland refers the three versions to a common source in *περι θεῶν*, *Archiv f. Gesch. der Phil.* i, 1887, pp. 200-210.

<sup>17</sup> The reference is to a famous incident recorded in Plutarch's *Alcibiades* 19. Note the peculiarly appropriate ἐξορχήσομαι.

<sup>18</sup> ἐκκυκλήσω: an ἐκκυκλήμα was a stage device for showing interiors. It was used by Aeschylus (*Ag.* 1372), Sophocles (*El.* 1466, *Ant.* 1294), and Aristophanes (*Ach.* 408).

<sup>19</sup> Protrep. ii. 12, 1.

<sup>20</sup> On the place which these deities held in the world to which Clement addressed his writings, cf. J. Geffcken, *Der Ausgang des griechisch-romischen Heidentums*, Heidelberg, 1920, chaps. 1-2.

Theophrastus<sup>21</sup> was a materialist and advocated opinions unworthy of God's nature, though some others, Anaximander, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus, were led by speculation to views much nearer the truth. Plato, Cleanthes, the Pythagoreans, and some of the poets give evidence of real inspiration, and their utterances, like those of the prophets, can be taken as true statements of the doctrine of God.

Clement's selection of quotations from poets and philosophers is significant as showing what he believed they reflected of his own thought. For the most part they are eloquent statements of universal theism, like the passage from Plato's epistle, "Around the King of all are all things, and he is the cause of all things good,"<sup>22</sup> with which Clement compares Deut. 25, 13-15, or the Pythagorean dictum, "God is one and is not, as some suppose, outside creation but in it, existing wholly in the whole cycle, cause and guardian of all, the blending of the universe<sup>23</sup> and fashioner of his own power and of all his works, the giver of light in heaven, and father of the universe, mind and animating principle of the whole cycle, mover of all."<sup>24</sup> The verses from Cleanthes are notable, for although Clement quotes them as a statement of Cleanthes' theology, he is almost certainly wrong. They really contain a definition of the notion of good, and Clement's use of them shows that he, not Cleanthes, identified God with the idea of the Good.<sup>25</sup>

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This treatment of paganism was much more forceful than any provided by previous apologists of Christianity. The polemic was not aimed at a man of straw but at contemporary pagan customs and ideas. It compares favorably both in substance and strategy not only with Christian writings of the same type but with apologetic works of pagans like Celsus and Porphyry. It could command, as no other Christian writing had done, the attention and respect of educated men. Its polemic was, however, only a means to a greater end, the preparation for his principal task, which was to expound in a convincing way the truth about God that Christianity offered in place of the pagan errors.

Clement begins his exposition with a chapter on the Old Testament. The inspiration of the poets and philosophers is real, but limited, and is sometimes obscured by interest in literary form and

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<sup>21</sup> Protrept. v-viii. The statement about Theophrastus is noteworthy. ὁ δὲ Ἑρέσιος ἐκεῖνος Θεόφραστος ὁ Ἀριστοτέλους γνώριμος πῆ μὲν οὐπανόν, πῆ δὲ πνεῦμα τὸν θεόν, Protrept. v. 66, 5. With this is to be compared Cicero, *De nat. deor.* 1. 35: *Nec vero Theophrasti inconstantia ferenda est; modo menti divinum tribuit principatum, modo caelo, tum autem signis sideribusque caelestibus.* Cf. i. 33 where it is said of Aristotle: *modo enim menti tribuit omnem divinitatem, modo mundum ipsum deum dicit.* Behind Cicero's 'menti,' however, is to be read *vῆ* not *πνεύματι*. Clement (and probably his source) makes Theophrastus into a Stoic.

<sup>22</sup> Plato, *Epist.* ii. p. 312 E.

<sup>23</sup> κρᾶσις τῶν ὄλων, cf. *Exc. ex. Theod.* § 17, von Arnim, *Fragm. vet. Stoic.* ii. 145, 151. Cornutus, *De nat. deor.* c. 3. Zeller, *Phil. der Griech.* 4te Aufl. iii. 1, p. 129.

<sup>24</sup> Protrept. vi. 72, 4-5.

<sup>25</sup> The verses begin: τὰγαθὸν ἐρωτᾷς μ' οἶόν ἐστ'; ἄκουε δῆ. Clement quotes them later as if from a treatise of Cleanthes *περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ*, *Strom.* v. 14, 110, 2, but no other fragment of Cleanthes justifies this platonizing interpretation of τὰγαθόν; cf. A. C. Pearson, *Fragments of Zeno and Cleanthes*, pp. 299-301; A. B. Krisehe, *Die theologische Lehre der griech. Denker*, pp. 420 ff. Whether Clement is responsible for the error or was deceived by a source from which he derived the quotation cannot be determined. He had, however, a considerable knowledge of Cleanthes (cf. *Strom.* v. 3, 17; viii. 9, 26; v. 8, 48; vii. 6, 88), and in one passage (*Strom.* ii. 22, 131) quotes chapter and verse of his work on pleasure. The equivalence of God and τὸ ἀγαθόν is frequent in Clement, cf. Protrept. ix. 88, 1 οἱ τὰγαθοῦ προσκυνηταί, *ibid.* iv. 49. 2.



style. The prophetic writings are “the short cut to salvation.”<sup>26</sup> “With unadorned simplicity they present us with the clearest possible ideas as the starting-point for piety, and lay the foundations of truth.”<sup>27</sup> The passages from the Old Testament which follow are selected by the same principle that determined the choice of quotations from the philosophers and poets. They are not obscure utterances of the prophetic spirit which must be interpreted by allegory, but are general statements of monotheism and protests against idolatry. The relevance of Jewish sayings for gentile readers is explained by the universality of all wisdom which has its ground in God and is the content of his reason (λόγος). Upon the foundation of prophetic revelation Clement erects his Christian edifice.

In his later works Clement deals objectively with the idea of God, defining and describing ultimate Reality in terms of

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epistemology and metaphysics; but, in the *Protrepticus* the idea of God is built up from religious and moral experience. Man is in a fallen state, having lost the vision of truth by his own fault. To achieve salvation he must regain that vision by his own efforts and by the help which God freely gives to those who willingly turn to him.<sup>28</sup> The goal of salvation is the Truth and the Truth is God, but truth is moral as well as intellectual and its possession can never be gained without piety.<sup>29</sup> Truth and piety therefore are complementary in experience, as truth and goodness are inseparable aspects of the nature of God. In the struggle for salvation various stages can be distinguished, and various elements indicated which contribute to success. In all these stages and elements God is present. In them his purpose, his character, and certain aspects of his nature are revealed. Clement’s description of these is unsystematic, not to say confused, but the reader can see beneath the disorder of enthusiasm the beginnings of a brilliant and coherent doctrine of God.

The moral of his polemic against paganism is the same as Paul’s in Rom. 1, 18 ff. Man is without excuse, for he has heard the “preaching of justification.” The Logos has unfolded the truth, and has shown to men the height of salvation, how by repentance they may be saved or by disobedience they will be judged. Repentance and obedience are the first condition of salvation.<sup>30</sup> Clement is emphatic in his insistence that man’s fault is the result of his own free will and thought,<sup>31</sup> and like Paul he will admit no ultimate distinction between these two faculties. When the mind errs, the will follows; when the will transgresses, the mind turns from truth. The fallen stage can be described indifferently as one of ignorance<sup>32</sup> or of disobedience,<sup>33</sup> since each term includes the other, and the process

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<sup>26</sup> σύντομοι σωτηρίας ὁδοί, *Protrept.* viii. 77. 1; cf. *Paed.* i. 8, 9.

<sup>27</sup> *Protrept.* viii. 77, 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Protrept.* xi. 117.

<sup>29</sup> The definition of piety is given in *Protrept.* ix. 86, 2. θεοσέβεια δὲ ἐξομοιοῦσα τῷ θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν τὸν ἄνθρωπον; cf. *Hermes Trismeg.* ed. Parthey, p. 62, εὐσέβεια δὲ ἐστὶ θεοῦ γνῶσις.

<sup>30</sup> *Protrept.* xi. 116, 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Protrept.* x. 99, 4.

<sup>32</sup> *Protrept.* x. 100, 2; 108, 4; xi, 113, 3; 114, 1; ii. 23, 1; ii. 10, 3; v. 65, 4.

<sup>33</sup> *Protrept.* i. 9, 5; ix. 85, 1; x. 95, 2-3; i. 8, 3; cf. *Paed.* i. 4, 10, 1.

of redemption begins with a change of mind (μετάνοια),<sup>34</sup> which is inevitably accompanied by a response of will.

In the conversion from good to evil, from ignorance to knowledge, man is helped by the grace of God. Grace, however, is not conceived by Clement as a special force which is instituted by God to repair the weakness brought in by sin. The grace of God is a natural grace, and its activity is a part of the normal functioning of man's spiritual organism.<sup>35</sup> Without the grace of God man is not truly himself, and when in conversion he again feels the surge of new power, it is the thrill of normal health regained.<sup>36</sup> The beginnings of the cure may be painful. Clement does not hesitate to admit with Augustine that fear is a powerful tonic,<sup>37</sup> but the artificial stimulus is not needed for long and is soon followed by the normal activity of grace in faith, knowledge, and love.

By means of grace and in the exercise of faith man arrives at both truth and piety and finds himself in the presence of God. Faith like truth is a complex experience involving the mind, will, and affections. It expresses in dynamic terms man's attitude to the truth, and indicates his normal capacity for receiving and holding it.<sup>38</sup> Clement's idea of truth is unintelligible unless it be understood that it is for him not a concept, but an aspect of the nature of God; like John he thinks of it not as a picture of reality but as reality itself.<sup>39</sup> Its content is invariable and exhaustive, but faith grasps only those of its infinite forms and aspects which the believer is fitted to appreciate and use. As truth demands a volitional as well as an intellectual response, so it is revealed through moral as well as through intellectual channels. In the practice of Christian

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virtue and in obedience to the commandments, the believer's faith is expressed and at the same time truth is impressed upon him.

The natural capacity of man to receive truth and so to gain direct access to God is the basis of Clement's universalism.<sup>40</sup> It is God's constant purpose to save mankind, and if they only will to believe and repent they can be saved.<sup>41</sup> This fixed intention on God's part is the sure proof of his friendly concern for man, his φιλανθρωπία. It is displayed in the means and opportunities offered to men for salvation; and since, as we have seen, these belong to man's natural state, God's benevolence is rooted and grounded in the order of things. "The Lord, since he is man's friend, summons all men to the knowledge of the truth and sends forth the Paraclete."<sup>42</sup> Man has

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<sup>34</sup> Protrept. 1. 4, 3; x. 92, 2; x. 104, 8.

<sup>35</sup> Protrept. i. 6, 3; i. 8, 1; i. 8, 8; x. 95, 1.

<sup>36</sup> The metaphor of the physician was a favorite one with Clement as with the Stoics: Protrept. x. 91, 3; cf. Paed. i. 2, 6. 1; i. 1, 3, 1-3.

<sup>37</sup> Protrept. i. 8, 2; i. 8, 8; ix. 87, 3; x. 95, 1-2; Ecl. proph. 9, 1-3; 20, 4; Strom. ii. 7.

<sup>38</sup> This aspect of Clement's idea of faith appears clearly in Protrept. x. 95, 3.

<sup>39</sup> Clement's idea of truth can be studied in the following passages: Protrept. 1. 2, 1-2; 1. 4, 2; i. 6, 2-3; ii. 10, 1; ii. 12, 1; ii. 24, 2; vi. 68, 2; vi. 69, 1; vi. 71, 1; vii. 74-77; viii. 77, 1; viii. 80, 4; ix. 85, 3; x. 89, 2; x. 95, 2; x. 109, 1; xi. 114, 3; xii. 121, 3.

<sup>40</sup> Clement, like Jesus and unlike most Christian thinkers in the interval, held that salvation was open to all but achieved by few. This type of pessimism held no implications unfavorable either to the justice or to the mercy of God; cf. Exc. ex Theod. 27, 4-7.

<sup>41</sup> Protrept. xi. 116, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Protrept. ix. 85, 3.

the promise, has God's friendship; his only task is to receive the grace offered.<sup>43</sup> When this is done he immediately comes into his natural state as one of God's children.

Those who are still faithless are called children of wrath, being inclined to error. But we who have laid error aside are no longer nurslings of wrath, but are turning eagerly to the truth. Therefore we who were once sons of lawlessness have now through the benevolence of the Logos become sons of God.<sup>44</sup>

Oh supreme benevolence! Not as a teacher to pupils, not as a master to his slaves, not as a God to men, but as a kind father he admonishes his sons.<sup>45</sup>

In the interval between Paul and Clement, 'father,' as a divine title, usually indicated either that God was the benevolent creator of the universe or that he stood in a special relation to Christ.<sup>46</sup> Clement is familiar with these usages, but he also emphasizes the Pauline conception that God is the father of Christ and Christians in virtue of their common possession of his Spirit. In the *Protrepticus* 'father' is used in an

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overwhelming majority of cases in connection with the process of salvation.<sup>47</sup> It is the function of the Logos to reconcile disobedient sons to the Father.<sup>48</sup> They must receive ὕδωρ λογικόν, and having washed in it mount up pure into heaven.<sup>49</sup> "Thou art a man in thy generic nature, seek him who created thee; thou art a son in thine individual character, recognize thy father."<sup>50</sup> In a significant passage Clement says that God wishes to be called father only by Christians.

It is true for us to say that only the pious Christian is rich and prudent and well born, and therefore to say and believe that he is an image of God with his likeness who has by Christ Jesus become righteous, holy with prudence, and in so far forth is now like unto God. Indeed the prophet does not conceal the favor when he says, "I say that ye all are gods and sons of the Highest." For it is we, even we, whom he has adopted, and he wishes to be called 'father' only by us and not by the disobedient.<sup>51</sup>

Here, as elsewhere, God's will must not be taken in too anthropomorphic a sense. It describes not God's arbitrary choice but the nature of things, which are ultimately the expression of his being.<sup>52</sup> God wishes to be called father by Christians only because by them alone has that natural relationship between God and man been resumed which the metaphor of 'father' and 'son' expresses. God is their 'real father' (ὁ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν πατήρ),<sup>53</sup> just as he is the only real God.

<sup>43</sup> *Protrept.* i. 6, 3.

<sup>44</sup> *Protrept.* ii. 27, 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Protrept.* ix. 82, 2.

<sup>46</sup> The classic example of this is in the Apostles' Creed.

<sup>47</sup> *Protrept.* i. 6, 1; viii. 82, 2; x. 89, 2; x. 91, 3; x. 94, 1; x. 95, 2; x. 99, 3; xi. 113-114; xi. 115, 4; xii. 123, 1; *Paed.* i. 5, 21, 2. Clement does not hesitate to attribute maternal as well as paternal care to God; *Protrept.* x. 91, 3; *Quis dives salv.* 37.

<sup>48</sup> The care of the Logos is said to be paternal: *πειράζει σε ὁ κύριος ἐκλέξασθαι τὴν ζωὴν, συμβουλεύει σοι ὡς πατήρ πείθεσθαι τῷ θεῷ*, *Protrept.* x. 95, 2.

<sup>49</sup> *Protrept.* x. 99, 3.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Protrept.* xii. 122, 4-123, 1.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Strom.* iv. 6. 27, 2, *θέλημα δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπίγνωσις τοῦ θεοῦ*

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Protrept.* x. 89, 2, ii. 25, 2.

Behind the relations which are dependent upon the circumstances of the phenomenal world is the eternal relation between humanity and the Godhead, and in this consists the fatherhood of God and the sonship of man.<sup>54</sup>

These descriptions of salvation operate inevitably with analogies from human experience. The relations of friendship and

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sonship approximate as well as any can do to the conditions of redemption, but they imply a duality which is eliminated from the clearer expressions of Clement's thought on the subject. It is true, humanly speaking, that man's experience of God is comparable to these high moments of earthly life, but in reality the analogy is reversed, and the relation of God to man is the fundamental one, from which the truth and beauty of its human counterparts are derived. In *Protrept.* i. 8, 4, Clement defines his thought more accurately. The kenosis of *Phil.* 2, 6-7 is due to God's eagerness to save man.

And now the Logos himself clearly speaks to you, putting faithlessness to shame. Yea, I say, the Logos of God became man that henceforth you might learn from a man how man may become divine (θεός).<sup>55</sup>

Similar expressions occur in the *Epistola Apostolorum*, in Irenaeus, and in Athanasius, but in them the divinity to which man attains is physical ἀφθαρσία.<sup>56</sup> Clement also claims that salvation furnishes a release from death, but for him death is more a moral than a physical concept.<sup>57</sup> The result of the incarnation in the passage just quoted is the victory over ἀπιστία, so that the divinity in which man shares is the truth which he confidently grasps and realizes in his life when he has returned to his natural attitude of faith.<sup>58</sup>

The best commentary on the passage from the *Protrepticus* is a fragment from the *Hypotyposes* preserved by Photius:

λέγεται μὲν καὶ υἱὸς λόγος, ὁμωνύμως τῷ πατρικῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' οὐχ οὕτως ἐστὶν ὁ σὰρξ γενόμενος, οὐδὲ μὴν ὁ πατρῷος λόγος, ἀλλὰ δύναμις τις τοῦ θεοῦ οἷον ἀπόρροια τοῦ λόγου αὐτοῦ νοῦς γενόμενος τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων καρδίας διαπεφοίτηκε.<sup>59</sup>

The meaning of this statement is not altogether clear, but its chief difficulties lie in its first part.<sup>60</sup> A connection between the mind of man and the reason of God is declared unambiguously,

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<sup>54</sup> Conversion is, strictly speaking, a return to sonship, the resumption of a previous relation temporarily severed; cf. *Protrept.* ii. 27, 2-3; i. 6, 4; ii. 25, 3; x. 91, 3; 92, 2.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. *Protrept.* i. 5, 2-4; i. 6, 4; ii. 25, 3.

<sup>56</sup> *Epist. Apost.* ed. Schmidt, pp. 66 ff.; *Iren.* iii. 22, 2: v. 1, 3; iv. 20, 2; Athan., *De incarnat.* 54, 3. See Loofs, *Dogmengeschichte*, 4te Aufl. pp. 141, 231-233.

<sup>57</sup> *Θάνατος γὰρ ἀίδιος ἀματία*, *Protrept.* xi. 115, 3, cf. xi. 112, 3; x. 96, 3; xii. 120, 1-5; *Strom.* iv. 3, 8, 4; iv. 3, 12, 1.

<sup>58</sup> See above, p. 51.

<sup>59</sup> Stählin, iii. p. 202.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. *Journal of Theol. Studies*, Oct. 1928, pp. 43ff.

and is said to depend on a power, or kind of emanation, of God's reason which becomes human νοῦς, as that Reason itself once became flesh.<sup>61</sup> Such a theory harmonizes perfectly with the passage in the Protrepticus. Since ἀπιστία represents man's deliberate refusal to realize his capacity for receiving truth, the πίστις to which he is converted involves a freer use of his potentially divine reason (νοῦς).<sup>62</sup> The lesson of the Incarnation is that it reveals the significance of man's highest intellectual powers. It teaches man to become fully himself and in doing so to become divine.

This doctrine is the key to Clement's whole conception of the relation of God to man. It is the explanation of his views of faith, truth, and piety, and makes clear his thought on the divine benevolence. It is the foundation of that intellectual mysticism which he first developed to grand proportions in a form consistent with the premises of Christian theology.

Hear now ye that are afar off and hear ye that are nigh. The Logos has not been hidden from any. He is a common light and shines upon all men. None is a Cimmerian in reason (ἐν λόγῳ). Let us hasten to salvation, to rebirth. Let us who are many hasten to be gathered unto one love in the unity of the monadic essence. Since we do good, let us in like manner pursue unity, searching for the good monad. And the unity of many, arising out of a multitude of separate voices, takes on a divine harmony, and becomes one concordant sound following one director and teacher, the Logos, and coming to rest at the same Truth, saying, "Abba, Father." God welcomes this true utterance, receiving it as the first fruits from his children.<sup>63</sup>

Clement's doctrine of God as Creator is in agreement with the thought of his time, though it is relatively less prominent in his writings than in those of the other apologists of the second century. It is stated in its most general terms in Protrept. iv. 63, where he contrasts the creative power of the Greek artists, who make only images, with God, who has created the heavens and everything in them: -

Therefore some are deceived, I know not how, and worship the divine creation, the sun and the moon and the rest of the starry host, irrationally assuming that these, the instruments of time, are gods. For by his word were

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they established and by the breath of his mouth is all their power. Now human art creates houses and ships and cities and writings, but how shall I say what God makes? Surely the whole world! It is his work. Heaven and sun and angels and men are the works of his fingers. How great is God's power! Creation is only his will. For God alone created, since he alone is really divine (θεός). He fashions by his mere will, and creation follows him at his simple wish. Here is where the band of philosophers is led astray, for they admit that man was nobly created for the contemplation of the heaven, but they worship the heavenly bodies and objects which can be grasped by sight. For although the heavenly bodies are not human creations, they have been indeed fashioned for men. And let not any of you worship the sun, but let him desire the Maker of the sun; nor let him deify the cosmos, but let him seek the Creator of the cosmos. For it seems that the only refuge left for him who is to reach the gates of salvation is divine wisdom. There, as from a sacred refuge, the man who is pressing on to salvation can no longer be torn away by any of the demons.

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. Protrept. x. 98, 1-3; xii. 122, 2-3.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Paed. i. 13, 101, 1-2; 102. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Protrept. ix. 88, 2-8; cf. i. 6, 8; i. 8, 8; iv. 56, 2.

It is possible to see latent in this general exposition the outline of Clement's more precise thought. In a more technical statement of his doctrine of creation a theory of the Logos would appear, and in this passage it is clearly assumed. It lurks behind the 'word' (λόγος) and 'breath' (πνεύματι) of Ps. 23, 6 and in the expressions 'his will' and 'divine wisdom.' Yet it is characteristic of Clement's apologetic method that he does not confuse the readers of his "Exhortation" by an abstruse metaphysical theory, and it is symptomatic of his sensitiveness to the fundamental unity of the divine nature that he does not always sharply distinguish between God and his Logos either in the creation or government of the world. When such distinctions become necessary for a clear theory, he draws them with a firm hand, but ordinarily he assumes them and lays his emphasis on the divine unity which embraces all the modes and activities of the Godhead and in which man himself may be included.

The biblical elements in Clement's doctrine of God are frequently a source of difficulty to the student of his thought, for their vivid expressions of God's personality and their lively anthropomorphism are strangely unsuited to express Clement's conception of the divine nature.<sup>64</sup> This problem is discussed

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formally in later works, but even in the *Protrepticus* Clement gives a clue to his position. He describes the stages of progress in theology by saying, "Faith will lead the way, experience will teach, Scripture will instruct,"<sup>65</sup> and in this aphorism his theological method is summarized. By faith truth is perceived and appropriated; by experience it is tested and used; with the help of Scripture it is formulated and expressed. Clement comes to the Bible for the authoritative statement of a truth already perceived. Its lessons are not the substitute for faith or experience, but complement both by adding to their substance and aiding their expression. In its pages he could find much that was congenial to his spirit and temper, and where its thought was not his own, the allegorical exegesis learned from Philo extracted new meanings by which the unity of all Christian knowledge was maintained.

The premise of all Clement's thought was that God is Reality, and by this he did not mean only that God actually exists or that he is responsible for the whole of creation.<sup>66</sup> With Plato and Plotinus he took the phenomenal world more or less for granted, and felt the problem of reality to lie deeper as he sought for meaning and value in the swirl and confusion of sensible existence. But while the minds of Plato and Plotinus roamed at large through the universe, trying eagerly and hopefully every road and by-path that might lead them to their goal, Clement's interest was concentrated on the religious and moral experience of Christianity, which seemed to offer the surest proof, the closest analogy, or better the finest realization, of the divine unity in all things. The unity of Christians with each other, with Christ, and with God, the opportunity for which lay in the divine character of the enlightened human νοῦς, could be described with equal correctness

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<sup>64</sup> This difficulty, which is common to all Christian Platonists, was made easier by the pioneer work of Philo in showing how by the allegorical method of exegesis biblical verses could be given a meaning appropriate to any theological context. On Clement's indebtedness to Philo in this respect, see C. Siegfried, *Philo v. Alex. als Ausleger des Alten Testaments*, Jena, 1875, pp. 343-851, and Stählin's notes *passim*.

<sup>65</sup> *Protrept.* ix. 88, 1.

<sup>66</sup> *Protrept.* ii. 28, 1; ii. 25, 2; iv. 51, 6; iv. 63, 8; vi. 68, 8; iv. 69, 1-3; vi. 71, 1; cf. i. 7, 3.

as one of love or of the primary substance. Inge says of Plotinus that it was for him “a matter of faith that the hierarchies of existence and

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of value must ultimately be found to correspond”;<sup>67</sup> for Clement such a correspondence was a clearcut conviction.

The confident appeal to philosophic ideas in the *Protrepticus* and the ready use of philosophic terms indicate even more clearly than does the apologetic value attached to Greek philosophy a new departure for Christian theology. This becomes more striking in the *Paedagogus*, which is addressed to Christian and not to pagan readers, for, with the exception of Tertullian, the apologists used philosophy as little more than a common meeting-ground with pagans, and they leave the impression that their real affinities are with such exponents of uninstructed piety as Clement of Rome and Hermas. Clement’s philosophy is a natural and inevitable part of his religion, and he assumes that it is, or may become, so to many of his readers. The *Paedagogus* and the *Stromateis* are thus the first pieces of early Christian literature that assume the existence of an educated Christian public.

The greater part of the *Paedagogus* is devoted to a detailed exposition of Christian life, which is treated not as obedience to a prescribed law, but as the fulfilment of the purpose of the Logos. The goal of morality is to live according to reason, and this kind of living acquires a religious value from the divine potentialities inherent in the human νοῦς. The life of perfect virtue is an instance of the principle stated in the *Protrepticus* that God became man that man might become divine, for the educative influence of God’s own reason can be detected in all rational human behavior.

The first book of the *Paedagogus* is a general discussion of the Logos and his educative work. The treatment is topical and discursive, but as a whole contains a fair exposition of the ethic upon which the practical moral instruction of the later books is based. Its bearing on the doctrine of God is close, since Clement’s interest in Providence is keenest when it is concerned with the inner life and dispositions of mankind, and it is a significant part of his contribution to the Christian idea

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of God that he extended its application to so many individual aspects of human life.

The book opens with a chapter on the functions of the Logos. It is constructed upon an elaborate pun on the word λόγος, in which various types of discourse (λόγος) distinguished by Stoic rhetoricians are taken over to describe the activity of the divine reason (λόγος). A passage in one of Seneca’s letters says that Posidonius considered it necessary for a rhetorician to have mastered not only the art of instruction (*praeceptio*) but also persuasion (*suasio*), consolation (*consolatio*), and exhortation (*exhortatio*).<sup>68</sup> Each of these genres had its special function. Clement says that exhortation (προτρεπτικὸς λόγος) dealt with habits and customs (τὰ ἤθη) and that similarly it is

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<sup>67</sup> Philosophy of Plotinus, i. p. 132. A striking example of this in Clement is Ecl. proph. 25, 3.

<sup>68</sup> Epist. moral. 95, 65.

the office of the divine Logos to lead men from their old habits and opinions to the new and better ones of Christianity. Persuasive discourse (ὑποθετικός λόγος) is concerned with a man's conscious acts, the products of his deliberate choice (αἱ πράξεις), and the divine Logos also presides over the voluntary behavior of Christians. Consolation (παραμυθητικός λόγος) heals the wounds of passion and grief (τὰ πάθη), and the divine Logos also acts as a physician settling the emotional disturbances which threaten the healthy calm of man's soul. Instruction (διδασκαλικός λόγος), too, has its counterpart in the revelation of doctrine made by the Logos. The function of the Logos as προτρεπτικός has already been dealt with in the treatise of that name, Clement warns his readers that the office of teacher (διδασκαλος) lies beyond the scope of his Paedagogus, which will describe the methods of the Logos in practical moral education.

The Logos became our παιδαγωγός because we were sinners and the remedy for sin is education. The kind of education Clement had in mind was, however, not classroom training; that was the business of a διδασκαλος. The παιδαγωγός was a companion-teacher, a kind of private tutor who was the pupil's constant attendant and disciplined both his mind and character.<sup>69</sup> Now for Clement sin meant two things: misuse of reason and instability of the emotions, and he understood that

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the Logos taught the Christian how to use his mind correctly and to keep his impulses under control.

The first of these tasks is described in Paed. 1. 13. The main thesis of this chapter is that "everything which is contrary to sound reason (παρά τὸν λόγον τὸν ὀρθόν) is sin, and that virtue is a disposition of the soul in agreement with reason throughout the whole of life." When man does not live according to reason, he becomes an irrational animal and is like one of the beasts. His salvation therefore lies in obedience to reason, which for a Christian is the equivalent of obedience to the commandments. Christian life is defined as a system of rational behavior, the continuous active fulfilment of the teachings of reason.<sup>70</sup> 'Reason' in this connection is ambiguous, since it may refer either to the mind of man or to the divine Logos, but it is probable that both are intended and that the Logos is conceived as guiding men by the natural processes of their thought and by the commandments he has issued in Scripture for them to obey.

The goal (τέλος) of Christian life, which is reached by the performance of its appropriate duties (καθήκοντα, προσήκοντα) and requirements (ἀναγκαίοντα), is that rest in God which comes from a perfect unity of divine and human wills.<sup>71</sup> The immediate purposes of these obligations are various, since some relate to the ordinary conduct of life, some to the art of living well, some only concern life here, and others pertain to future happiness after death. All, however, have one ultimate goal, to make life rational and so divine, for the reason of man and the reason of God are fundamentally one.

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<sup>69</sup> Cf. Plutarch, *Moralia*, p. 489 C-F; Plato, *Lysis*, pp. 208 C, 223 A.

<sup>70</sup> καὶ γὰρ ὁ βίος ὁ χριστιανῶν ὃν παιδαγωγούμεθα νῦν, σύστημά τί ἐστι λογικῶν πράξεων, τουτέστιν τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου διδασκομένων ἀδιάπτως ἐνέργεια, ἣν δὴ πίστιν κεκλήκαμεν, Paed. 1. 13, 102, 4.

<sup>71</sup> καὶ ἔστιν ἡ μὲν πράξις ἡ τοῦ χριστιανοῦ ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια λογικῆς κατὰ κρίσιν ἀστείαν καὶ ὄρεξιν ἀληθείας διὰ τοῦ συμφυοῦς καὶ συναγωνιστοῦ σώματος ἐκτελουμένη. καθήκον δὲ ἀκόλουθον ἐν βίῳ θεῷ καὶ χριστῷ βούλημα ἐν, καταρκούμενον ἀ□δίῳ ζωῆ, Paed. i. 13, 102, 3.



The other kind of sin is emotional and to this the Logos is especially attentive. Clement is a sufficiently good psychologist to see that this is the easier and more dangerous type of sin, and that it is quite different in character from the other. The sin which is contrary to reason is the product of deliberate but

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misguided choice, while the sins of passion are due to an inability to control the sudden inrush of feeling which allows no time for consideration or reflection on its direction and consequences. This type of sin Clement rightly terms 'involuntary' (ἀκούσιος),<sup>72</sup> for though it is in flagrant violation of the will of God, it involves the will of man as little as it does his reason. The harmful emotions which cause it are in Clement's view contrary to human nature,<sup>73</sup> so that when affected by them the soul becomes sick and is in need of a physician.<sup>74</sup> At these times the friendly Tutor abandons his preceptive discourse and offers consolation. He turns physician, and applies the necessary remedies to cure the illness, so that by his ministrations the soul becomes again well and strong.

As a wise physician the Logos not only cures the present malady but teaches his patient how to avoid the moral diseases which constantly threaten his health. Perfect sinlessness is the prerogative of God alone, but all Christians can seek to avoid voluntary sins and he who is well trained learns to overcome involuntary sins and to achieve the ideal state of ἀπάθεια.<sup>75</sup>

The similarity of this ethic to that of the Stoa is apparent, and accounts for the liberal use of Stoic material in the literary composition of the Paedagogus. What distinguishes Clement's ethic from Stoicism is the place assigned to the incarnation. The Stoics had been content to prove that the universe was by nature rational, and that man, though often misled by unreasoning impulses, could turn at will to a life guided by intelligence and good sense. Clement agreed to this, but as a convert to Christianity he knew the difference which the new religion had made in his own life, and was prepared with Paul to

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find a similar change reflected on a grander scale in history. To him, therefore, the incarnation marked a definite historical turning-point in the moral education of humanity. To the sporadic manifestations of divine truth and power in prechristian times had finally succeeded a perfect example of all that humanity was able either to attain or to receive 'of the divine life.

Clement's conception of the incarnation has much in common with the Stoic notion of the perfect Sage. The substance of this was that the nature of things provided the possibility that all might

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<sup>72</sup> Paed. i. 2, 5, 1.

<sup>73</sup> ἔστιν οὖν ὁ παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν λόγος διὰ παραίνεσεων θεραπευτικὸς τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τῆς ψυχῆς παθῶν, Paed. i. 2, 6, 1.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., κυρίως μὲν γὰρ ἡ τῶν τοῦ σώματος βοήθεια ἰατρικὴ καλεῖται, τέχνη ἀνθρωπίνη σοφία διδακὴ, λόγος δὲ ὁ πατρικὸς μόνος ἐστὶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἰατρὸς ἀρρωστημάτων παιώνιος καὶ ἔπωδος ἅγιος νοσοῦσης ψυχῆς. It is interesting to find in Clement this term 'sick soul' which has had such vogue among psychologists of religion since James's Varieties of Religious Experience; cf. Eclog. proph. 11, 2. In Strom. i. 7, 3 there is a reference to healthy-mindedness.

<sup>75</sup> Paed. i. 2, 4, 2-3.

truly be wise, but that in practice few, if any, were likely to become so.<sup>76</sup> The main function of this ideal figure, therefore, was to mark out the far limits of human moral capacity, and to show men what they might be if only they tried hard enough. The weakness of the Stoic teaching lay in its lack of examples, for the philosophers were modest in claiming such a distinction for themselves and skeptical as to recognizing it in others. Several noted ancients were thought to have reached the goal, but it was not certain, and little practical use was made of their supposed achievement.<sup>77</sup> For Clement, the sage was not only an ever present possibility, but an accomplished fact in the life of Jesus Christ, and this fact guaranteed to all Christians the practicability of the ideal. The soul of Jesus had been really 'impassible', and he alone had gone sinless through life, which proved his right to be our judge, and constituted an obligation to make our souls as much like his as possible.<sup>78</sup> That complete sinlessness was a prerogative of godhead Clement admits, but he says that the Christian sage can at least avoid all conscious misdemeanors.<sup>79</sup>

In spite of their similarity the Stoics' idea of the sage and Clement's idea of Christ were significantly different, for the sage had no other business than to be his own impassible self, while it was the nature of Christ to impart to others his unique characteristics in proportion as they were able to receive them and unite themselves with him. This difference is indicative of a corresponding distinction in the idea of God. In Stoicism

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even divine benevolence was a passive virtue, a component of individual perfection, but in Christianity God shared his very life with humanity and sealed his love by a miracle of self-surrender. The purpose of the incarnation was not only to demonstrate the divine possibilities in human nature, but also to reaffirm a quality of God's character already expressed in creation.

The creation of man was only partly an end in itself; he was made in the image and likeness of God that God might appropriately love him. God was all goodness, and man must share in his nature, for God could only love what was good.<sup>80</sup> The incarnation reaffirmed God's love, since it was designed to recreate the divine element in man which sin and neglect had been allowed to cripple. It also manifested God's goodness, for his love is simply his goodness in action; in Clement's words, "As there is no light which does not shine, no mover which does not set in motion, and no friend who is not friendly, so there is no goodness which does not help or guide to salvation."<sup>81</sup>

It was a characteristic tenet of Valentinian theology that not all who were saved had the same status and enjoyed an equal measure of divine favor. This distinction in rank was referred back to a primary difference in native capacity which allowed some men to grasp more of the truth and thus to assimilate more of the divine nature than others. Basing their theory on 1 Cor. 15, these theologians divided Christians into ψυχικοί and πνευματικοί.<sup>82</sup> In this there was much that was

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<sup>76</sup> Zeller, *Gesch. der Phil.*, 4te Aufl. iii. 1, pp. 254 ff.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 259-260; *Strom.* vii. 2, 7, 4-5.

<sup>78</sup> *Paed.* i. 2, 4, 1-2.

<sup>79</sup> *Paed.* i. 2, 4, 3.

<sup>80</sup> *Paed.* i. 3, 7, 1-2.

<sup>81</sup> *Paed.* i. 8, 9, 3.

<sup>82</sup> *Excerpt. ex. Theod.* 56.

attractive for one who was impressed by the widely different types of achievement produced by the same divine grace. Paul had seen something of the problem when dealing with the variety of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 12, and had given his answer in the metaphor of Christ's body with its many members. Clement rejected the Valentinian view,<sup>83</sup> for he felt that it implied a fundamental injustice in God's dealing with men; and his

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own solution was a development of Paul's which nevertheless reckoned with the facts that Valentinus had wrongly explained.

In Paed. i. 6 Clement shows that all Christians are in reality equal and perfected in the sight of God. His starting point is baptism.

Now when we were reborn, we received straightway that perfect thing (τὸ τέλειον) for which we were striving. For we are enlightened, which is to know God (ἐπιγινῶναι τὸν θεόν),<sup>84</sup> hence he cannot be imperfect who has known that which is perfect. And do not be offended with me when I profess to have known God, for this manner of speech was pleasing to the Logos and he is free. When the Lord was baptized, a voice called out of heaven to him, a witness of the Beloved, saying, "Thou art my beloved Son, this day have I begotten thee." Let us therefore ask the wise whether Christ who is reborn to-day is now perfect or - monstrous thought! - imperfect. If he is imperfect, there is still something he must learn, but that he should learn anything more is most unlikely, since he is one with God and no one could be greater than the Logos nor a teacher of the only Teacher. Will they not then unwillingly admit that the Logos, begotten perfect from the perfect Father, is reborn perfectly according to the plan of the dispensation. And if he were perfect, why was the perfect one baptized? They say it was necessary in order to complete the announcement to humanity. Very good, I admit that. Did he therefore become perfect when he was baptized by John? Clearly. Therefore he learned nothing from him? Nothing at all. And was he made perfect merely by the washing, and sanctified by the descent of the Holy Spirit? Exactly.<sup>85</sup>

And the same thing happens also in our case, for the Lord has become our example. When we are baptized we are enlightened, when perfected we are made immortal. "I say," he says, "ye are all gods and sons of the Most High." And this act is called by various names, favor (χάρισμα) and illumination (φώτισμα) and perfection (τέλειον) and washing (λουτρόν). We call it a washing because we are cleansed thoroughly from our sins; a favor because the penalties of our sins are remitted; an illumination because that holy saving light is directly seen,<sup>86</sup> that is, because we clearly see God; perfection since it lacks nothing, for what is lacking to one who has known God? Besides, it would be absurd that anything which has not been completed should be truly called a favor of God. Now he who is perfect will presumably bestow perfect gifts, and as all things occur at his command, so the fulfilment of his favor follows upon his mere desire to bestow it, for the future is anticipated by the power of his will. Furthermore release from evil is the begin-

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<sup>83</sup> Paed. i. 6, 31, 2; i. 6, 52, 2. The σοφοί referred to in i. 6, 25, 2 are probably also Valentinians.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Harnack, *Die Terminologie der Wiedergeburt und verwandter Erlebnisse in der ältesten Kirche* (T. U. xlii), pp. 127-128.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. C. Gore. *Dissertations*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>86</sup> φώτισμα δὲ δι' οὗ τὸ ἄγιον ἐκείνο φῶς τὸ σωτήριον ἐποπτεύεται, τουτέστιν δι' οὗ τὸ θεῖον ὄξυποῦμεν.

ning of salvation, and only we who have reached the frontiers of life are now perfect, and we being separated from death now live.<sup>87</sup>

Moreover salvation is following Christ. “For in him was life.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you,” he says, “he who hearkens to my word and believes on him that sent me, *has* eternal life and comes not into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” Thus perfection (τελείωσις) consists only in having faith and being born again. For God is never weak. For as his will is deed and this deed is called the world (κόσμος), so also his will is the salvation of men and this has been called the church. Therefore he knows whom he has called, and whom he has called he has saved. And he has called and saved at the same moment. “For ye are taught of God,” the Apostle says. it is not then permissible for us to regard what we have been taught by him as imperfect, but the lesson is the eternal salvation of an eternal Saviour, to whom be thanks for ever and ever, Amen. And he who has only been reborn, since he has the Name, has been enlightened, has been released from darkness, and has straightway received the light.

In this passage Clement avoids the defect of Valentinian theology, that God might be considered a respecter of persons,<sup>88</sup> and leaves no room for favoritism in the plan of salvation. He also gives a fresh statement of that intellectual and moral mysticism which is the culminating point of his idea of God. In the *Protrepticus* he was concerned with pointing out to all men the universal opportunity of faith. The strength of his appeal lay for pagans in the possibility open to them of sharing in the divine Nature by receiving and absorbing Christian truth; its proof was the incarnation, in which God became man that man might become divine by realizing his own divine potentialities. In the *Paedagogus* a different audience is addressed. The readers are now baptized Christians, whose business is to know the dignity of their calling and the responsibilities implicit in the opportunity they have embraced. Clement tells them that they are all children of God, since all know him, possess his Spirit, and share in his life. In baptism their minds were enlightened, and this experience was both the seal and instrument of their salvation. By it they came to know God, who is perfect, and in their knowledge to share in his perfection.

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Both the knowledge and the perfection which are the products of baptismal illumination deserve special attention. To know God is not to know about God but to have that direct vision of his Being which in the Johannine phrase is itself ‘eternal life.’ Such knowledge is a divine favor, bestowed through the intellect, but its effects are not only intellectual, for they permeate the whole moral nature of the believer, and Christians become not only “taught of God” but “gods and sons of the Most High.” The finest example of this process is in the incarnation, for, like Christians, Jesus Christ became perfect at his baptism. The notion of this perfection is one of Clement’s subtlest thoughts, for in spite of the assertion that Christians share in the perfection of Christ, the meaning is not that Christ and Christians are exactly alike. τέλειος is here used not in an absolute but in a strictly relative sense. The “equality of salvation”<sup>89</sup> does not exclude important differences between Christ and the believers and between one believer and another, for their equality and perfection are estimated from the point of view of God’s purpose, which varies

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<sup>87</sup> μόνον δὲ ἄρα οἱ πρῶτον δραζόμενοι τῶν ὅπων τῆς ζωῆς ἤδη τέλειοι; cf. with this, and with the reference below to baptism, Excerpta ex Theodoto 22.

<sup>88</sup> Whether this was a legitimate criticism of the Valentinian position is another question.

<sup>89</sup> αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος σαφέστατα τῆς σωτηρίας τὴν ἰσότητα ἀπεκάλυψεν εἰπὼν . . . (John 6, 40), Paed. i. 6, 28, 5.

in different cases. Christians are alike perfect, not because they all have the same capacities and functions, but because in knowing God they have equally realized his will and can fulfil with equal acceptability his purpose for them. Such perfection excludes false pride and a mistaken sense of inferiority. Against both is set the consciousness that in the life of every saved Christian, whatever may be its circumstances, pulses a divine energy which is the living expression of God's will and character.

Clement finds it necessary to make one qualification of his notion of perfection in view of the improved state of Christians after death. Although from the point of view of God's will they may be perfect here, it is certain that when they are rid of the encumbrances of the flesh and dwell as pure spirit, they will have attained a higher stage of perfection. How then can a state be called perfect which is only the first of an ascending series? Clement's answer is that the future blessedness is contained potentially in the present life, so that it can now be pos-

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sessed and even enjoyed, though it has not been fully realized.<sup>90</sup> This power of effective anticipation is a property of faith, which from this point of view may be defined as the perfection of learning, for in it the matter of instruction is transmuted into the living experience of the believer.<sup>91</sup> Nothing is lacking in faith, and those who possess it share either directly or through a lively expectancy the security and joy which it promises. Since salvation, whether present or future, is always conceived by Clement in terms of participation in the divine nature, this theory may be taken as a further explanation of the activity of God in man.

Chapters VIII-XII of the first book of the *Paedagogus* deal with a problem in theodicy. In Chapter VII the work of the *Paedagogus* has been described, and the means and aim of his instruction outlined. The goal of this education is the vision of God; its mark is the persistent endeavor to lead a holy life.<sup>92</sup> Since the Logos is the guide of humanity,<sup>93</sup> he must train all men in his régime and to do this different pedagogic methods are required, for though some men will listen to the gentle voice of persuasion, others must be sternly threatened and inspired with fear and awe before they can be led to repentance and faith.<sup>94</sup> To this second course objections have been raised, and it is maintained, in manifest disregard of the wholesome influence of fear in conversion, that the disciplinary measures of the Logos are really signs of God's anger and dislike.<sup>95</sup> Clement insists that such a view is founded on a complete misunderstanding of God's nature and motives. The nature of God is love, and every act of his will is an expression of this fundamental aspect of his character. All existence, being the product of his design, is also the manifestation of his love, so that the bare fact that anything exists is a proof that God loves it. God hates nothing, for hatred is contradictory to his nature.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> *Paed.* i. 6, 28, 3-5.

<sup>91</sup> *Paed.* i. 6, 29.

<sup>92</sup> ἔστι δὲ ἡ κατὰ τὸν θεὸν παιδαγωγία κατευθυσμὸς ἀληθείας εἰς ἐποπτεῖαν θεοῦ καὶ πράξεων ἁγίων ὑποτύπωσης ἐν αἰωνίῳ διαμονῇ, *Paed.* i. 7, 54, 1.

<sup>93</sup> ὁ πάσης τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος καθηγεγὼν λόγος, *Paed.* i. 7, 55, 2.

<sup>94</sup> *Paed.* i. 8, 66, 5 ff.

<sup>95</sup> *Paed.* i. 8, 64, 3.

<sup>96</sup> *Paed.* i. 8, 62-65.

Of all creation man is the most loved of God, partly because he is its noblest work, partly because he is able to respond to the affection God so lavishly showers upon him.<sup>97</sup> Since, therefore, God is goodness itself and goodness issues inevitably in love, and since God's love for man is doubly sure, it follows that all his dealings with man must be actuated by a supreme benevolence in which no drop of malice could possibly be mingled.<sup>98</sup> Thus God's seeming anger is in reality an expression of his love, and his wrathful acts are all designed to cure men of sin and are signs not of ill will but of good will. What we regard as our punishment is either necessary to our moral education or incidental to the realization of God's moral purpose, which works against us only because we have set ourselves against it in deliberate disregard of its sovereign rights.

Clement is particularly concerned to defend God from the charge of petty vengeance. He admits that divine punishment visits the disobedient; for such punishment is a corrective and of great benefit to its recipient, but this is not revenge, which is, on the contrary, a return for evil advantageous to him who has been wronged.<sup>99</sup> It is evident how far Clement is removed from the Old Testament, where God's wrath is regularly considered to be his natural and righteous attitude toward all who offend against his majesty.<sup>100</sup> Clement sees in the wrath of God hardly more than a metaphor, useful in distinguishing an important aspect of divine love but open to grave misunderstanding and often in need of qualification.<sup>101</sup> Like all analogies from personality it must be used cautiously, as the only human attribute which can be assigned to God with perfect confidence is love. In him "the passion of wrath - if indeed it is right to call his admonishing 'wrath' - is friendly to man (φιλόανθρωπον), since God condescends to emotion for man's sake, for whom also God's Reason became man."<sup>102</sup>

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From the literary point of view the *Stromateis* is the weakest of all Clement's works, but in its thought it is the most important one. Its public was to be a limited and select one, composed of those whose soundness in faith was assured and whose special capabilities and training had shown them ready for advanced instruction in speculative theology.<sup>103</sup> One might think that in addressing such an audience, Clement would have had no difficulty in plainly speaking his mind. Yet even in such congenial company he was obsessed with nervous caution lest his book fall into the hands of some uninstructed person and serve as a cause of downfall to one unprepared to grasp its real meaning.<sup>104</sup> To lessen this danger he proposed to develop his material in a deliberately unsystematic way, confident that such a method would prove wearisome and confusing to the uninitiated, but would stimulate those who desired knowledge to search the more

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<sup>97</sup> Paed. i. 8, 63, 1.

<sup>98</sup> Paed. i. 8, 70, 1.

<sup>99</sup> Paed. i. 8, 70, 3.

<sup>100</sup> In Clement's view God is above taking personal offence, partly because he is essentially above the category of personality. Neither Jehovah's outbursts of fury nor that colder resentment which Anselm conceived to be God's response to man's violation of his honor is consistent with Clement's conception of the divine nature.

<sup>101</sup> Paed. i. 8, 68, 3.

<sup>102</sup> Paed. i. 8, 74, 4, cf. 62, 2.

<sup>103</sup> Strom. vi. 1, 1, 3-4; vi. 1, 2, 2, καὶ δὴ ὧδε ἔχοντες ἐμοὶ τε ὑπομνήματα εἶεν ἂν ζώπυρα, τῷ τε εἰς γνῶσιν ἐπιτηδείῳ εἴ πως περιτύχοι τοῖσδε, πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον καὶ ὠφέλιμον μετὰ ἰδρώτος ἢ ζήτησις γενήσεται. Cf. Strom. iv. 2; vi. 8, 66, 1; vi. 10, 80, 5-81, 1.

<sup>104</sup> Strom. i. 1.

diligently in the labyrinth of his pages for the truth concealed therein.<sup>105</sup> That he had some native talent for such a procedure he had made clear in his previous writings, but the *Stromateis* is easily his masterpiece of rambling obscurity. The value of the book, therefore, lies in its ideas, and these appear especially significant when considered from the point of view of the people to whom, with some trepidation, they were addressed.

These differed from the mass of Christians in that they had learned the lessons of their Tutor and were ambitious candidates for the higher education which he could give them as a διδάσκαλος. They had faith and could translate their faith into virtuous conduct, but in doing so they had discovered that this medium was inadequate to render all that demanded expression in their souls. Clement realized that the knowledge which their faith called for was of a different variety from that which seemed adequate to most Christians. He saw in their demand for wider learning and deeper understanding the capacity for

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a perfection markedly different from that of the average pious Christian. From the premises of his own intellectual mysticism, the greater knowledge of God to which they aspired involved not only a better comprehension but also a more complete assimilation of the divine life, so that these gnostics in achieving their goal would become a kind of divine aristocracy, representing the maximum degree of divinity which man was capable of absorbing, and entering therefore into a relation with God peculiar to their own special talents and attainments.<sup>106</sup>

At first sight the existence of such a group might seem to imperil Clement's theory of the equality of salvation, and to reopen all those difficult problems in theodicy which he had seen latent in Valentinus's explanations of the inequalities of men's spiritual lives. Surely, if man's faith was the god-given measure of his capacity to receive truth, and if in faith he came to a knowledge of God and to the perfection of that purpose which God had ordained in him, then these men, more perfect than the perfect, possessing a knowledge better than their fellows, constituted a grave anomaly in God's absolutely just economy.

The difficulty is a real one, and from Clement's premises strictly insuperable, since he could not deny the superiority of the gnostic over the average Christian, and had to admit that what distinguished him was a difference in the structure of his faith for which God was ultimately responsible.<sup>107</sup> Clement's only course was to evade the difficulty, and he does this with such skill that his system betrays hardly a sign of the danger to which it had been exposed. His method is time-honored in theology; he uses the same words in different senses. In the *Paedagogus* all faithful believers are said to be perfect and to know God; but, as we have seen, that perfection is a

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<sup>105</sup> *Strom.* iv. 2, 4, 1 ff.

<sup>106</sup> This is clear from *Strom.* vi. 12 and vi. 14, 109, 1-2: πλέον δέ ἐστι τοῦ πιστεῦσαι τὸ γινῶναι, καθάπερ ἀμελεῖ τοῦ σωθῆναι τὸ καὶ μετὰ τὸ σωθῆναι τιμῆς τῆς ἀνωτάτω ἀξιοθῆναι. vi. 14, 111, 3: ὡςπερ οὖν τὸ μὲν ἀπλῶς σῶζειν τῶν μέσων ἐστίν, τὸ δ' ὀρθῶς καὶ δεόντως κατόρθωμα, οὕτως καὶ πᾶσα πράξις γνωστικοῦ μὲν κατόρθωμα, τοῦ δὲ ἀπλῶς πιστοῦ μέση πράξις λέγοιτ' ἄν, μηδέπω κατὰ λόγον ἐπιτελουμένη μηδὲ μὴν κατ' ἐπίστασιν κατορθουμένη, πᾶσα δὲ ἔμπαλιν τοῦ ἐθνικοῦ ἀμαρτητική. Cf. *Strom.* vi. 15, 115, 1; vi. 12, 96, 3.

<sup>107</sup> Clement sees a similar difficulty in the system of Basilides (*Strom.* ii. 3), but is unable to escape entirely from sharing it.

relative, or rather functional, concept and qualifies human life only from the point of view of its particular destiny, that is, the specific purpose which God had intended for it. Thus all men who acted by the faith that was in them were perfect instruments of the divine will. In the *Stromateis* a different perfection is considered. The standard here is not God's purpose in individual human lives but the ultimate capacity of the human φύσις to participate in the divine life. When this ultimate capacity has been realized - the conditions of the individual subject including the structure of his faith being favorable - then perfection has been attained.<sup>108</sup> There are then two kinds of perfection, measured by different standards; and whereas all faithful Christians possess the one, only the Christian gnostic attains the other.

The case of knowledge is similar. All the faithful have the knowledge of God which is given to them in baptism. Since that knowledge is of perfection, it is from one point of view impious to say that one Christian's knowledge is better or greater than another's. Nevertheless there are various ways of knowing God. The average man knows him chiefly through his will, which he lovingly obeys and makes his own. It is possible, however, to know him intellectually, and since God is himself an intellectual Substance, such knowledge is purer, freer, and more direct than that which is mediated through the material complexity of moral struggle. This is the gnostic's knowledge, and for it Clement adopts the Platonic term *Ὁβωπτα*, holding that in this direct vision of intellectual reality the noëtic essence of God and man unite. This union does not destroy either the human or the divine φύσις, for man does not cease to be man nor God to be God, but the νοῦς of man becomes explicitly, as it has always been implicitly, divine, and the purpose of the incarnation has been fulfilled. Man has become the god for whom God became man.<sup>109</sup>

Since the gnostic vision affords the best knowledge of God which man can achieve, it is in this vision that Clement's conception of deity must be sought. It must not be forgotten, however, that in arriving at contemplation the gnostic has travelled far, and that each step of the way has brought fresh revelation of the true character and nature of God. First had been the recognition of faith, and of the divine possibilities in man which its new discovery of personal worth and power revealed; then followed a period of discipline, when that power, conformed to the will of God, had to be used to redeem and renew the soul; finally, and this only in the case of the true gnostic, faith might take the subordinate, almost mechanical, place of an adjustment to the accepted duties

<sup>108</sup> This thesis is developed, *Strom.* iv. 21-23; cf. especially iv. 21, 130, 1 ff.; iv. 23, 150, 2 ff.

<sup>109</sup> *Strom.* iv. 23, 149. 8-152, 3; iv. 25, 155, 1-157, 2; vi. 12, 103, 4-104, 3; vii. 11, 68. "The cause of these things (i.e. of the gnostic's moral achievements) is love, surpassing all knowledge in holiness and sovereignty. For by it the gnostic, owing to his worship of the best and highest, the stamp of which is unity, is made 'friend' and 'son' at once, and 'perfect man' indeed, grown 'to the full measure of stature.' Aye. and concord also is defined to be agreement about the same thing, and by 'the same thing' we mean unity; and friendship is brought about by similarity, because fellowship lies in unity. The gnostic, therefore, being naturally disposed to love God who is truly One, is himself a truly 'perfect man' and a 'friend of God,' being ranked and reckoned 'as a Son.' These are names expressive of nobility and knowledge and perfection in accordance with that vision of God which is the crowning height attainable by the gnostic soul, when it has been perfectly purified, being now deemed worthy to behold forever the Almighty 'face to face.' For having been made entirely spiritual it departs to its kindred sphere, and there, in the spiritual church, abides in the rest of God." Quotations from Book vii of the *Stromateis* are given in Mayor and Hort's translation.



of existence, while life's best vigor passed into the intellect, glowingly absorbed in fresh visions of the divine Being.

It is now time to ask what is the content of the gnostic's heavenly vision and how he conceived the object of his contemplation. Early in the *Stromateis* Clement warns his readers that they must prepare to learn philosophy if they would follow the gnostic path,<sup>110</sup> and though he is careful not to attach too much importance to what he considers only an instrument of knowledge, it is nevertheless clear that the tasks of the gnostic and of the philosopher have much in common.<sup>111</sup> Yet the gnostic differs from the philosopher in having his goal already fixed. Any philosophy will not do, he is not free to pick and choose, since philosophy comes at a late, not at an early stage of his pilgrim's progress and must lead him straight and true

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to the desired end. Even in the *Protrepticus* Clement leaves his readers in no doubt about the kind of metaphysics to which he is addicted, for Platonism is written large on every page of that treatise. It is less apparent in the *Paedagogus*, where speculation plays a minor role, though one passage gives the most extreme of all his definitions of divine transcendence. It is in the *Stromateis* that the doctrine of God rests solidly upon a philosophic foundation, for here it is intelligible and significant only from the premises of Platonic immaterialism and in contrast to the materialist philosophy of religion held by the Stoics or by Christian Stoics like Tertullian.

Clement's conception of God's transcendence is from the historical point of view probably the most significant portion of his theology. It appears in its most extreme form in *Paed.* i. 8, 71, 1, where, commenting on John 17, 21 ff., Clement says:

□ν δὲ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἐπέκεινα τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν μονάδα. διὸ καὶ το ' σὺ ' (17, 21) μόνιον δεικτικὴν ἔχον ἔμφασιν τὸν ὄντως μόνον ὄντα, ὃς ἦν καὶ ἔστιν καὶ ἔσται, δείκνυσιν θεόν, καθ' ὧν τριῶν χρόνων ἓν ὄνομα κεῖται ὁ ὧν.

But God is one and beyond the One and beyond the Monad itself. Therefore also the 'thou' (17, 21), a particle having demonstrative force, indicates the only really existent God, who was and is and shall be, to which three tenses the single expression ὁ ὧν (cf. *Exod.* 3, 14) applies.

Inge, in his *Philosophy of Plotinus*, says that "Clement of Alexandria, as a Christian, feels the same objection [as Philo] to saying that God is 'beyond Reality.' Accordingly, he declares that God is or has οὐσία, but outdoes the Platonists by saying that He is 'beyond the One and above the Monad,' a phrase which seems to have no meaning;<sup>112</sup> but a comparison of this passage with other statements of Clement about divine transcendence shows the idea expressed here to be a consistent and necessary part of Clement's doctrine. In *Protrept.* ix. 88, 2-3 it is said that reason is a common light which shines on all men, by which they should press on to rebirth:

εἰς μίαν ἀγάπην συναχθῆναι οἱ πολλοὶ κατὰ τὴν τῆς μοναδικῆς οὐσίας ἔνωσιν σπεύσωμεν, ἀγαθοεργούμενοι ἀγαλόγως ἐνότητα διώκωμεν, τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐκζητοῦντες μονάδῃ, ἢ δὲ ἐκ πολλῶν ἔνωσις ἐκ πολυφωνίας καὶ διασποράς. ἀρμονίαν λαβοῦσα θεοκὴν μία γίνεται συμφωνία, ἐνὶ ξορευτῇ καὶ διδασκάλῳ τῷ λόγῳ

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<sup>110</sup> *Strom.* i. 1, 18.

<sup>111</sup> *Strom.* 1, 2.

<sup>112</sup> *Philosophy of Plotinus*, 2d ed., ii, p. 111.

ἐπομένη ἐπ' αὐτὴν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἀναπαυσομένη, "Ἀββά, λέγουσα, ὁ πατήρ. ταύτην ὁ θεὸς τὴν φωνὴν τὴν ἀληθινὴν ἀσπάζεται παρὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ παιδῶν πρώτην καρπούμενος.

Let us who are many hasten to be gathered unto one love according to the unity of the monadic essence. Since we do good, let us in like manner pursue unity by seeking the good Monad. But the unity of many arising out of a multitude of separate voices takes on a divine harmony and becomes one concordant sound, following one director and teacher, the Logos, and coming to rest at the Truth itself saying "Abba, Father." God welcomes this true utterance, receiving it as the first fruits from his children.

It is clear from this passage that the cry 'Abba, Father' mounts up to God from those united to the Monad itself, so that whatever may be its nature the Monad certainly does not embrace the entire godhead.<sup>113</sup> What it does include is the Logos and those who are united with him in the perfect realization of his presence in their own reason. This unity is an organic unity,, dynamic and energetic rather than natural or substantial. It is not alienated from God and is truly divine, but it is not the whole of divinity, for beyond this celestial unity of reason and love are still the lofty heights of God, which even the gaze of the true gnostic can only vaguely distinguish.

The matter is stated more clearly in Strom. v. 11, 71, 2-3, where Clement compares the gnostic faith with the mysteries. These require purification and instruction in the minor mysteries before culminating in the great mysteries, in which learning is abandoned for the contemplation and immediate apprehension of reality (ἐποπτεύειν δὲ καὶ περινοεῖν τὴν τε φύσιν καὶ τὰ πράγματα). He continues:

λάβοιμεν δ' ἂν τὸν μὲν καθααρτικὸν τρόπον ὁμολογία, τὸν δὲ ἐποπτικὸν ἀναλύσει ἐπὶ τὴν πρώτην νόησιν προχωροῦντες, δι' ἀναλύσεως ἐκ τῶν ὑποκειμένων αὐτῷ τὴν ἀρχὴν ποιοῦμενοι, ἀφελόντες μὴν τοῦ σώματος τὰς φυσικὰς ποιότητας περιελόντες δὲ τὴν εἰς τὸ βάθος διάστασιν, εἶτα τὴν εἰς τὸ πλάτος, καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις τὴν εἰς τὸ μήκος. τὸ γὰρ ὑπολειφθὲν σημείον ἐστὶ μονάς ὡς εἰπεῖν θέσιν ἕξουσα, ἧς ἐὰν περιέλωμεν τὴν θέσιν, νοεῖται μονάς, εἰ τοίνυν ἀφελόντες πάντα ὅσα πρόσεστι τοῖς σώμασιν καὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις ἀσωμάτοις, ἐπιρρίψαιμεν ἑαυτοὺς εἰς τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ χριστοῦ κάκειθεν εἰς τὸ ἀχανὲς ἀγιότητι προϊόμεν, τῇ νοήσει τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἀμῆ γε πῆ προσάγοιμεν ἂν, οὐχ ὅ δὲ μὴ ἐστὶ γνωρίσαντες.<sup>114</sup>

And we should take the way of purification by confession but that of vision by analysis; advancing to the primary act of intelligence, we obtain our first principle by analysis from the elements that underlie this way, abstracting from body its physical properties and removing the dimensions of depth, then of width, and then, after these, that of thickness. Now what is left is a point, a monad so to speak, having position, but if we remove its position, it is conceived simply as a monad. If we should then abstract all the material properties and those called immaterial, we should cast ourselves on the greatness of Christ and thence advance by holiness into Immensity, and we should approach in some way the conception of the Omnipotent, understanding not what he is but what he is not.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Strom. iv. 25, 156, 1-2.

<sup>114</sup> Stählin cites the following parallels; Aristotle, De anima i. 4, 409a, 6; Anal. post. i. 27, 87a, 36; Nicom. Geras., Introd. arithm. ii. 8, p. 84, 8 Hoche. To these add Sextus Empir., Adv. phys. ii. 281.

This argument proceeds easily and in definite steps up to the words ἐπιρρίψαιμεν ἑαυτούς, where the sequence is broken and the terminology suddenly changes. The analysis begins with σῶμα, the unit of the phenomenal world, and abstracts from it all the attributes peculiar to its nature including the three spatial dimensions. All that remains after this drastic treatment is a geometric point, the sole attribute of which is position. When position is abstracted, the last vestige of material content disappears, leaving an absolutely simple unity. Such a unity is achieved by the gnostic when in contemplation he has stripped his soul of all its material interests, abandoning sensation and acquiring that ἀπάθεια which is the sign of his union with Christ. The difficulty now remains for Clement that whereas the language of metaphysics is exhausted, the mystic experience has not been fully described. The final goal can be indicated as the νόησις of God, in which comprehension is so perfect that the distinction between subject and object becomes unreal, but for the steps between the μονάς and νόησις Clement resorts to the language of religion. From unity with the Logos in salvation the soul passes to the μέγεθος τοῦ χριστοῦ, transcending not only matter but the realm of immaterial reality in which it had found its own true nature; then gathering to itself the essence of holiness it leaps into the void, where it may perhaps catch some glimpse of the heavenly vision which, from inexperience in those lofty regions, it can only apprehend by contrast with lower forms of reality and so define only in negative terms.<sup>115</sup>

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A comparison of this passage with Plotinus, *Ennead.* v. 8, 17, is instructive. For Plotinus the goal is the One (τὸ ἓν), which since it is shared by all reality without sharing in anything other than itself, he does not hesitate to place beyond existence (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας). To reach the One it is necessary to transcend both the senses and the discursive reason (διανόησις), where the distinction between subject and object is still possible. When it comes to the description of the union with the One, Plotinus, like Clement, abandons metaphysics for metaphor:

τότε δὲ χρὴ ἑωρακέναι πιστεύειν, ὅταν ἡ ψυχὴ ἐξαίφνης φῶς λάβῃ. τοῦτο γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ φῶς, παρ' αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτός. καὶ τότε χρὴ νομίζειν παρεῖναι, ὅταν ὡσπερ θεὸς ἄλλος, ὅταν εἰς οἶκον καλοῦντός τινος ἔλθῶν φωτίσῃ, ἢ μηδ' ἔλθῶν οὐκ ἐφώτισεν οὕτω τοὶ καὶ ψυχὴ ἀφώτιστος ἄθεος ἐκείνου. φωτισθεῖσα δὲ ἕξει ὃ ἐζήτει, καὶ τοῦτο τὸ τέλος τὸ ἀληθινὸν ψυχῆ ἐφάψασθαι φωτὸς ἐκείνου, καὶ αὐτῷ αὐτὸ θεάσασθαι, οὐκ ἄλλου φωτι, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ δι' οὗ καὶ ὄρα, δι' οὗ γὰρ ἐφωτίσθη, τοῦτο ἐστὶν ὃ δεῖ θεάσασθαι· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἥλιον διὰ φωτὸς ἄλλου, πῶς ἂν οὖν τοῦτο; - ἄφελε πάντα.

And at the moment when the soul is suddenly illuminated, then it is proper to believe that it has the vision, for this is indeed the light, is from God, and is God. And you must know that He is present when, like any other god, as some one calls him into a house, He comes and illuminates it, or does not come and does not illuminate it and so the soul is unilluminated and godless so far as he is concerned. But when the soul is illuminated, it possesses what it sought, and this is the true end of the soul, to come into contact with that light and to see it by the light itself; beholding it not by another light but by the very light by which also it sees. For the light that illuminated it is the very one it must see, for neither is the sun beheld by the light of another. How can this come to pass? Abstract everything.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Plotinus, v. 3, 14; Inge on *via negativa*, op. cit. ii, pp. 145 ff.

An easy source of confusion in comparing these two passages lies in identifying Clement's One, or Monad, with Plotinus's One, but this is clearly wrong and is excluded by Clement's definition of the Monad. Plotinus's τὸ ἓν is Clement's ὁ παντοκράτωρ, and the experience described by Plotinus under the image of light Clement indicates by his advance into the void. The intermediate stage marked by Clement as τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ χριστοῦ has no parallel in the Plotinian passage but was natural for Clement, since he conceived the unifying power of the Monad to be that of Christ, the Logos. The actual phrase may have been suggested by Eph. 1, 19.

Inge believes that Clement was reluctant to place God beyond *οὐρανία*, because such an abstraction would have violated

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his Christian sentiments. The only justification for this view, however, seems to be that Clement does not use the words ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας. This expression was adopted by Plotinus from a famous passage in Plato's Republic (p. 508 C ff.) where the Good is denied existence (οὐσία) since it is beyond existence in dignity and power. It is true that Clement does not use the phrase, but the thought expressed in it is definitely implied in the soul's transcendence of immaterial reality (τὰ ἀσώματα) in its progress toward the πρώτην νόησιν.

As Inge points out, the passage in the Republic is an isolated one, and the reason is simple: Plato is more concerned with finding the Good in reality than in following it by mystic paths to its ultimate source beyond the realm of being. Clement also deals much more fully with the aspects of God which lie within reality than with those which are inaccessible even to the gnostic save for occasional moments of ecstasy. The centre of Clement's interest is, like Plato's, in the world of immaterial reality which is the true home of thought. In the Platonism of the period τὰ ἀσώματα was a regular equivalent of τὰ νοητά, emphasizing the nature rather than the origin of intellectual reality, so that in conceiving God as ἀσώματος Clement not only followed his intellectual mysticism to its logical conclusion but also formulated a theory of God's being, comparable, but opposite, to those of Tertullian and the author of the Fourth Gospel.<sup>116</sup>

The word ἀσώματος does not occur for the first time in Christian literature in Clement; it appears in Justin, Athenagoras, and Tatian. In the Dialogue with Trypho, Justin refers to the time when he studied with a Platonist, and says that the understanding of immaterial reality profoundly attracted him, and that reflection on the ideas gave wings to his mind.<sup>117</sup> Elsewhere he combats the views of some who held that because the soul is immaterial and immortal, and since immaterial reality is incapable of feeling (ἀπαθὲς γὰρ τὸ ἀσώματον). therefore the soul could not be punished after death and has no need of God.<sup>118</sup>

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In a passage of the Second Apology of Justin Martyr, directed against the Stoics, the author maintains that the doctrine of εἰμαρμένη is incompatible with a belief in the freedom of the will. All real philosophers, he says, imply such a belief when they claim that some things should be

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<sup>116</sup> The Stoic background of the Fourth Gospel is clear from John 4, 24.

<sup>117</sup> Dial. c. Tryph. 2, 6, ed. Otto p. 8.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 1, 5, ed. Otto p. 6.

done and some avoided, and this is true even of the Stoics, though it is inconsistent with what they teach about first principles and immaterial reality.<sup>119</sup>

In the *Supplicatio pro Christianis* Athenagoras argues that some of the philosophers, as well as the Christians, defend the resurrection of the body. The Platonists and Pythagoreans maintain the primacy of immaterial, intellectual reality and hold that sensible reality is derived from it, so that nothing they say is contrary to the belief that our bodies, when dissolved, are capable of reconstruction and resuscitation.<sup>120</sup>

Tatian seems to foreshadow Clement and Origen when he writes, “One of you claims that the perfect God is material (σῶμα), but I say he is immaterial,”<sup>121</sup> but he immediately betrays how little he really understands by introducing scenes from the judgment and an argument for the resurrection of the flesh.

The use of ἀσώματος by these writers is important only as an indication of how easily they could use a philosophic term without understanding its meaning or perceiving its implications. Justin’s reference to the Stoics shows no considerable knowledge of their thought, and it is evident that the attraction which the pursuit of immaterial truth formerly exercised upon him was successfully overcome when he turned his attention to theology, for the wings with which reflection once endowed his mind no longer support him gracefully in the high altitudes of metaphysics. It can hardly be regretted that Athenagoras did not resume his discussion of immaterial reality, and even Tatian’s claim that God is ἀσώματος signifies no more than a casual reference to a well-known controversy.

With Clement the situation is quite different. God’s imma-

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teriality is not a baseless postulate but the result of an analysis of knowing and knowledge. That God is ἀσώματος follows from the fact that he is νοητός, for the nature of the intellect and of its objects is immaterial.<sup>122</sup> The realm of God is the realm of the Platonic ideas, and there the mind, purified of the distractions of the senses, is perfectly at home.<sup>123</sup> It is true that this world of immaterial reality does not exhaust the being of God, just as it is true that the contents of individual human minds do not exhaust the world of ideas; nevertheless, the being of God can best be understood and assimilated where it is closest in form to the true nature of man. Above this world of immaterial reality is the sphere of God’s transcendence, to which the soul occasionally rises in ecstatic vision, and below is the sphere of common life, where the presence of God is communicated sacramentally, in moral choice, in obedience to the divine will, in the perception of beauty, and in the cultivation of divine love. These three spheres are of course ultimately not three but one, as God is one and all in all, but their plurality is a genuine phenomenon, for it proceeds not from an accommodation to an arbitrary theory but from the experience of the human mind and soul. For the gnostic, whose mind is normally fixed on the

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<sup>119</sup> Apol. vii. 8; ed. Otto p. 186.

<sup>120</sup> Supplic. pro Christianis 36 B; cf. Geffcken, *Zwei griechische Apologeten*, Berlin, 1907, pp. 236-237.

<sup>121</sup> Oratio ad Graecos 25, 2, ed. Goodspeed p. 291.

<sup>122</sup> Strom. iii. 17, 103, 3; v. 3, 4-5; v. 11, 67, 1-3; v. 14, 109, 1; v. 11, 71, 1-5; De provid. Stählin, iii. pp. 219-220.

<sup>123</sup> Strom. v. 11, 72-73; iv. 25, 155, 2.

world of immaterial reality, God is best conceived as οὐσία ἀσώματος καὶ νοητός.<sup>124</sup> but this conception in no way denies the validity of transcendent visions, nor excludes the presence of God from the lives of the simplest and least instructed believers.

Hardly less significant than Clement's idea of God's fin-materiality is the form in which he expresses it. It must be remembered that Clement was in this connection a pioneer. The problem of ontology had interested none of the biblical writers, and though the early fathers accepted the prejudices of the philosophers as to what does and does not befit the perfection of the divine nature, few of them understood the real

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meaning of the high-sounding language they so freely borrowed. The author of the Fourth Gospel had made the difficult statement that God was πνεῦμα, and Tertullian, who was the first to be seriously concerned with the meaning of that text, pointed out that πνεῦμα, however rare and ethereal might be its constitution, was undeniably σῶμα. Clement could never have admitted this contention, though it was amply justified by current usage and thought, for it would have been fatal to his position. He had, therefore, to find a way to oppose the usual view and make it plausible that πνεῦμα was immaterial. His method was simple but ingenious. In current psychology πνεῦμα was a general term for the higher faculties of the soul, and might therefore be used in some contexts as a less accurate equivalent for νοῦς.<sup>125</sup> It is occasionally used in this way by Paul.<sup>126</sup> Paul also uses τὰ πνευματικά to mean those things which are known not by the natural human reason alone, but by the aid of the divine πνεῦμα, which works in and through the human πνεῦμα, enlarging its powers and rendering it capable of attaining truth inaccessible to unaided natural reason. Clement differed from Paul in substituting for the latter's somewhat incoherent doctrine of πνεῦμα a Platonic epistemology and metaphysic, but like Paul he could hold that τὰ πνευματικά were the things known by πνεῦμα, taking πνεῦμα, however, not in the characteristic Pauline sense, but as the equivalent of the Platonic νοῦς. Now the things which are known by νοῦς have an intellectual reality (τὰ νοητά) and, as πνεῦμα and νοῦς are taken to be identical in this connection, and νοῦς is ἀσώματος, therefore πνεῦμα must also be ἀσώματος and τὰ πνευματικά the equivalent of τὰ νοητά and τὰ ἀσώματα.<sup>127</sup>

The importance of this doctrine of God and of the adaptation to it of the biblical conception of πνεῦμα can hardly be over-emphasized. Its immediate effect is evident in the writings of Origen, who must often have heard it expounded in Cle-

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ment's lecture-room. It was he who gave it a permanent place in Christian dogmatics by including it in his own epoch-making treatise on systematic theology, the *De principiis*.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Cf. De prov. Stählin, iii. pp. 219-220. These fragments have a late attestation, but as they contain nothing at variance with Clement's teaching elsewhere there is no reason to suspect them.

<sup>125</sup> Reitzenstein, Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen, 2te Aufl., pp.48 ff., 185 ff.; Hatch, Essays in Biblical Greek, pp. L26-127; E. Rohde, Psyche, 2te Aufl. ii, p. 258, n. 2.

<sup>126</sup> Rom. 1,9; 8, 16; cf. Rom. 12, 2 14, 5; 1 Cor. 2, 11.

<sup>127</sup> Eclog. Prophet. 7-8; Strom. vi. 8, 61, 1 ff.; vii. 7, 44, 4 ff.

<sup>128</sup> On the importance of this work for the development of systematic theology, cf. Grabmann, Geschichte der scholastischen Methode, i. pp.80 ff.

Origen's development of Clement's thought is characteristically thorough and systematic. He acknowledges that the doctrine of God's immateriality is, at least formally, new, and asserts that the word ἄσώματος has been unknown alike to biblical writers and to Christian theologians before his time.<sup>129</sup> A passage in the *Doctrina Petri* where the risen Jesus says to his disciples "I am not an immaterial spirit (*non sum daemonium incorporeum*),"<sup>130</sup> he rightly dismisses as irrelevant, and goes on to impress upon his readers that σώματος in theology must have a philosophic, that is a Platonic, sense. This borrowing from philosophy he justifies by a theory which is programmatic for the whole of the *De principiis*. In the preface a distinction is made between two kinds of truth, one of which is the faith Christ taught by the apostles, necessary for all believers, while the other is evident only to those who are endowed by the Holy Ghost with the special grace of wisdom and knowledge, that is, the class of men to which Clement's true gnostics belonged. The task of the *De principiis* is to deal with the second type of truth, and to advance theological knowledge by rational investigation. For the doctrine of God Origen admits that revelation supplies much that is the common property of all the faithful, but he maintains that because of the allegorical character of Scripture room is left for rational inquiry into the sense and implication of biblical passages. The statement that God's nature is immaterial is the result of such an investigation, for it is not expressly declared but only implied in biblical verses, the real sense of which is first discovered by reasoning and study.

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Origen gives the elements of the idea of God that are plainly stated by revelation in his summary of faith (*quae per praedicationem apostolicam traduntur*) in Praef. 3-4 and develops his rational arguments throughout the first chapter of his work. Revelation teaches

that God is one, who created and ordered all things, and who, when nothing existed, called the universe into being, God from the first creation and foundation of the world, God of all the righteous - Adam, Abel, Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets; and that this God in the last days, as he had before promised through his prophets, sent the Lord Jesus Christ, first indeed to call Israel, but secondly the gentiles also after Israel's faithlessness. This just and good God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, himself gave the Law and the Prophets and the Gospels; and he is God of the apostles also, and of the Old and New Testament.

In the chapter following various points are taken up for discussion but the thesis that God is σώματος constantly recurs.

(1) There are some who maintain that God is material (*deum corpus esse*) on scriptural grounds. They quote "God is a consuming fire" (Deut. 4, 24); "God is (a) Spirit and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4, 24).<sup>131</sup> But the Scriptures say, "God is light, and

<sup>129</sup> Origen like Clement takes ἄόρατος as the biblical equivalent of σώματος. *Contra Cels.* vii. 27, ed. Koetschau, ii. p. 178; *Comm. on John* xiii, 22 ed. Preuschen, p. 246.

<sup>130</sup> On this passage see E. von Dobschütz, *Das Kerygma Petri* (T. U. xi.), pp. 82-84. For our purpose passages like Justin, *I Apol.* 63, 10, where ἄσώματος is used of angels or demons, are irrelevant. Cf. Otto's note, i. p. 173, n. 13; Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 11<sup>2</sup>, pp. 294, 296.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. *Comm. on John* xiii, 21, ed. Preuschen, p. 244.

there is no darkness in him” (John 1, 5). The light referred to is not physical light, like that of the sun, but intellectual light, as is shown by “In thy light we see light” (Ps. 35, 10).<sup>132</sup>

(2) A similar reasoning applies to “God is a consuming fire.” God consumes the evil thoughts of our minds and the evil desires of our souls by his (immaterial) influence. So with “God is spirit”; in Scripture ‘spirit’ is the antithesis to matter (*aliquid contrarium corpori huic crassiori et solidiori*), and in the text, “The letter kills, the spirit makes alive” (92 Cor. 3, 6), ‘letter’ is equivalent to material things, ‘spirit’ to intellectual reality (*per litteram corporalia signijicat, per spirillum intellectualia, quae et spiritalia dicimus*).

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(3) The Holy Spirit must not be thought to be material because all the saints share in it, as if it could be divided up into material parts and distributed. That would be as foolish as to suppose that people who took part in the medical profession did so by having particles of medicine in their possession. What they have in common is an understanding of their science (*intellectum artis ipsius disciplinaeque percipiunt*).<sup>133</sup>

(4) The point of Jesus’ reply to the Samaritan woman was that the worship of God does not depend on the prerogatives of material places (*recedendum esse a praesumptione corporalium locorum huic qui vult deum sequi*).

(5) Then the argument apparently takes a new turn. Having refuted the materialist argument, he now maintains that God is incomprehensible and inconceivable (*incomprehensibilem inaeestimabilem*); but after a brief discussion of the superiority of thought over sensation, because the objects of thought are immaterial, he concludes:

What in the whole world of reason, that is of *immaterial reality*, is so superior to everything else, so ineffably and inconceivably excellent as God? (*Quid autem in omnibus intellectualis, id est incorporeis, tam praestantia omnibus, tam ineffabiliter atque inaeestimabiliter praecellens quam deus?*)

(6) Just as the eye knows the sun by the splendor of its rays and not by direct vision, so the mind knows God by contemplation of the works of nature and providence, without being able to know God as He is. *Therefore* God is in no way material but simple, rational nature admitting no foreign admixture:

*Non ergo corpus aliquod aut in corpore esse putandus est deus, sed intellectualis natura simplex, nihil omnino in se adjunctionis admittens, uti ne majus aliquod et inferius in se habere credatur, sed ut sit ex omni parte, μονάς et ut ita dicam ένάς, et mens ac fons, ex quo initium totius intellectualis naturae vel mentis est.*

As mind requires no bodily place or form, so the nature of God consists in absolute unity and simplicity, devoid of all material admixture.

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<sup>132</sup> Cf. Origen, Comm. on John i, 26, ed. Preuschen, p. 31, ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ ἡ φῶς ἃν ἡ τοῦ κόσμου ἡ φωτίζει οὐ σώματα ἀλλὰ ἀσωμάτω δυνάμει τὸν ἀσώματον νοῦν, ἵνα ὡς ὑπὸ ἡλίου ἕκαστος ἡμῶν φωτιζόμενος καὶ τὰ ἄλλα δυναθῆ βλέπειν νοητά. Cf. Origen. Comm. on John xiii, 22, p. 246.

<sup>133</sup> For the view which Origen combats, cf. Tertullian, De baptismo 4.



Sea-sickness is no argument against the mind's independence of space, for when a man goes on the water he is transgressing

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the natural conditions of his existence, and his body through which the mind works is disturbed. Least of all does such an objection apply to God, who is not, as we are, composite by nature, made up of body and soul.

The mind is not like the body in requiring material growth to increase its effectiveness. The mind grows by intellectual exercises. (*Indiget sane mens magnitudine intelligibile, quia non corporatiter, sed intelligibiliter crescit*).

(7) Let those who hold the mind to be material explain how it understands difficult and subtle arguments, whence its powers of memory, of observing invisible and understanding immaterial reality, and of comprehending the divine teachings which are clearly immaterial.

Underlying every bodily sense is some corresponding reality, as color corresponds to sight, sound to hearing, etc. Is it then possible that mind, which is so superior to sense, has no such reality and is only an accident of matter (*non videtur absurdum ... esse intellectualis naturae virtutem, corporibus accidentem vet consequentem*)? Those who speak in this way doubtless wrong the higher power within themselves, but they also cast an insult on God in thinking that he can be understood by a bodily nature. For according to them that which can be understood by matter is material. They will not understand that there is a kinship between the minds of men and God, whose rational image the mind is, and that through this something of the nature of the Godhead can be perceived, especially if the mind be purified and isolated from matter.

(8) For those who require scriptural proof to believe that the nature of God transcends matter there are the texts, "Who is the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1, 15), and "No one hath seen God at any time." If any one should urge that the Only Begotten, though an image of the invisible God, might himself be material, there is the text, "No one knoweth the Father but the Son and the Son but the Father." The relations between Father and Son are shown here to consist in the power of thought (*per virtutem scientiae, non per visibilitatis fragilitatem*). The word 'know' instead of 'see' is chosen in order to show that immaterial, not material, natures are in question.

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(9) The text, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Matt. 5, 8), only strengthens the position, since it is not physical sight but intellectual vision which is meant.<sup>134</sup>

In all this, system and development are due to Origen, but the multiplication of texts and the addition of arguments only substantiate Clement's main ideas, namely that God is immaterial intellectual reality, and that this reality may be called πνεῦμα (i.e. τὰ νοητά) because it is apprehended by πνεῦμα (i.e. νοῦς).

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<sup>134</sup> Cf. Clem. Alex., Strom. v. 1, 7.

An important undercurrent in Origen's development of the idea of God is his opposition both to the supporters of a biblical anthropomorphism and to those theological materialists who stood for a Christian Stoicism rather than for a Christian Platonism.<sup>135</sup> Similar polemic is to be found in Clement's work.

Anthropomorphism was a particularly difficult problem, for it was one of the chief objections raised against Christianity by philosophers<sup>136</sup> but was strongly supported by a large number of pious and simple believers in the church.<sup>137</sup> In their view the authority of Scripture involved the acceptance of its plain sense, so that when the Bible refers to God's hands and feet and eyes and to his throne and footstool, they regarded these terms as literal descriptions of the being of God, arguing from Gen. 1, 26 that as man was made in the image of God, the divine Creator must closely resemble the noblest of his creatures.<sup>138</sup>

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So extreme a position was apparently not encouraged by theologians of the church, but there is evidence to show that it was common among the uninstructed.<sup>139</sup>

As a Platonist Clement found such crudities intolerable, and he rejects them summarily. Even though the Bible appears to ascribe human characteristics to the Godhead it must not be so understood. Beneath the words which to the ignorant suggest such impieties, lie hidden meanings consistent with the true philosophic doctrine of God's nature.<sup>140</sup>

An example of this, adapted from Aristobulus, is given from the story of God's appearance on Mt. Sinai. The truth which this story presents in allegorical form is the coming into the world of the divine power which pervades the universe and proclaims the inaccessible light. The enormous multitude and the size of their encampment about Sinai indicate that God's presence is not confined to one locality, for he is everywhere.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> It is the latter that is prominent in the *De principiis*; cf. *Comm. on John* xiii, 21; *Contra Cels.* vi. 70-71; iii. 47; *Comm. on Rom.* iii, 1, ed. Lommatzsch, pp. 168-171 (cf. Harnack, *Der kirchengeschichtliche Ertrag der exegetischen Arbeiten des Origenes* (T. U. xlii), pp. 93-94); for the former cf. *Sel. in Genesim on Gen. 1, 26*, Migne P. G. xii. 93-95; *Hom. in Gen.* i. 13--15, ed. Baehrens, pp. 15-19; iii. 1 ff., pp. 39 ff.; *Contra Cels.* vii. 27; iv. 5, may have been based on popular Christian ideas (Loofs, *Dogmengeschichte*, 4te Aufl., p. 125, n. 1).

<sup>136</sup> Origen, *Contra Cels.* vii. 27 and 36 ff.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. Origen's *τινων ἀπλῶν καὶ ἀκεραίων καὶ μὴ εἰδόντων τὸ τοῦ λόγου βούλημα*, *Contra Cels.* vii. 27.

<sup>138</sup> Anthropomorphism of this kind was current at the time of Celsus (177-178 A.D.), who took it to be common Christian belief (*loc. cit.*). It must have been known to Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* ii. 13, 3-4), who treats it with his usual caution, and to Tertullian, who made dangerous concessions to it. The first whom we know to have defended this position was Melito (Origen, *Selecta in Gen.* 1, 26; Jerome, *De viris illustr.* c. 24; Gennadius, *De dogm. eccles.* c. 4; cf. Harnack, *Überlieferung der griechischen Apologeten* (T. U. i), pp. 243 ff.), and the first to conduct a sustained attack upon it was Origen, although Clement also condemned it in strong terms. Anthropomorphism became a menace in the 4th century. The Egyptian monks found Origen's immaterialism one of the most objectionable parts of his teaching. Socrates relates an amusing incident about Theophilus of Alexandria. A mob of fanatical ascetics stormed his residence, threatening his life because he maintained that God was immaterial and man not made in God's physical image. The tactful bishop found no difficulty in condemning Origen, and dodged the theological issue by a graceful compliment. Turning to the infuriated monks who sought his life he remarked: οὕτως ὑμῶς εἶδον ὡς θεοῦ πρόσωπον. The incident is significant in showing that among the educated clergy the influence of Origen's immaterialism was paramount. *Socr. H. E.* vi. 7, Migne P. G. 67, 684; cf. Epiphanius, *Haer.* 70; Augustine, *Conf.* vi. 3; Augustine, *Epist.* cxix; cf. Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 4te Aufl., ii. p. 122, n. 2.

<sup>139</sup> Harnack, *Dogmengesch.*, 4te Aufl., ii. p. 122, n. 2.

<sup>140</sup> *Strom.* vi. 16, 186, 3; v. 11, 71, 4-5; ii. 16, 72, 1-3; ii. 19, 102, 6.

<sup>141</sup> *Strom.* vi. 3, 32, 3-34, 3.

Clement objects even to a more refined form of anthropomorphism that ascribes to God not the physical characteristics of men but their emotions and passions.<sup>142</sup> We have already seen how, in defining the wrath of God as a condescension to emotion, he insists that God's anger is only a manifestation of his love and in no way incompatible with his natural ἀπάθεια. It might be objected that this very love in which the nature of God was most adequately expressed was an emotion of no mean force, but Clement would maintain that such a criticism ignored the divine nature of love and mistook the real

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meaning of ἀπάθεια. Love, he would say, is not a desire of the lover's but his experience of perfect satisfaction in unity with the beloved. It is a relation not limited by space and time, though it conditions the behavior in space and time of those who are bound by it. Love is so full and self-sufficient that no room is left in it for lower feelings, which, though harmless and pleasurable, imply a necessity for striving and a state of incompleteness and unrest foreign to love's nature.<sup>143</sup> From this point of view ἀπάθεια is a positive, not a negative, conception. The πάθη are not eliminated from the nature of God and of the Christian gnostics who are, like him, in favor of an empty simplicity, but are rendered unnecessary and impossible by the realization of all that is ultimately desirable. Thus God's love is not inconsistent with his ἀπάθεια, and his impassible nature does not interfere with the manifold expression of his affection for mankind.

To the anthropomorphist exegesis of Gen. 1, 26 Clement opposes the view that the image of God is his Logos, and its reflection in man is the human νοῦς.<sup>144</sup> This interpretation was not new with Clement and may have been suggested to him by Philo but he lays great emphasis upon it. Occasionally he distinguishes between εἰκῶν and ὁμοίωσις, using the first to mean man's natural endowment of reason, the second to denote the perfection of that endowment in a well-rounded knowledge and character.<sup>145</sup> It was, however, necessary to use caution in dealing with this verse, as the Gnostics had already employed the allegorical method to extract meanings favorable to their heretical anthropology.<sup>146</sup> The most important use which Clement made of it was in his doctrine of the imitation of God.

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The beginnings of this doctrine are to be found in the gospels, for Jesus in common with the Rabbis had taught that the moral ideal could best be realized by imitating God's ways and character.<sup>147</sup> In the interval between Jesus and Clement the idea occasionally reappears;<sup>148</sup> but with

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<sup>142</sup> Strom. ii. 16, 72, 1 ff.; iv. 23, 151, 1-2; vi. 8, 64. 1.

<sup>143</sup> Strom. vi. 9, 71; vii. 11, 67; vii. 14, 84.

<sup>144</sup> Protrept. x. 98, 3. 'εἰκῶν ἔμὲν γὰρ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ . . . εἰκῶν δὲ τοῦ λόγου ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ νοῦς ὁ ἐν ἄνθρωπῳ, ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν.' διὰ τοῦτο γεγενῆσθαι λεγόμενος τῇ κατὰ καρδίαν φρονήσει τῷ θεῷ παρεικαζόμενος λόγος καὶ ταύτη λογικός. Cf. Protrept. iv. 59, 2; i. 5, 3; xii. 122, 4; Paed. i. 3, 9, 1; i. 12, 98, 2-3; iii. 2, 5, 3; iii. 12, 101, 1; Strom. ii. 8, 38, 5; ii. 19, 97, 1; ii. 19, 102, 2; ii. 19, 102, 6; iv. 6, 30, 1.

<sup>145</sup> Paed. i. 12, 98, 2-3; Strom. ii. 22, 131-186; cf. Stählin, Clem. Alex. u. d. Septuaginta, pp. 12 f.

<sup>146</sup> Hippol., Refutatio vi. 14; cf. Irenaeus, Adv. haer. i. 18, 1, 2; iii. 23, 2. Cf. F. C. Baur, Lehre von der Dreieinigkeit, i. p. 188, n. 2.

<sup>147</sup> I. Abrahams, Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, II, Index, 'Imitation of God.'

the penetration of Jewish-Christian monotheism by Greek philosophy it came to share in the confusion into which all theology was betrayed by an attempt to reconcile two fundamentally incompatible systems. When Clement abandoned the refined anthropomorphism which ascribed to God personality and its attributes, he deprived the theory of its original meaning but he did not for that reason give up the principle that the perfection of man lay in the imitation of God. The philosophy which had raised the difficulty in this case contributed generously to its solution. Plato had described man's moral struggle as an effort to resemble God, signifying not, as did the Jews, the imitation of one individual personality by another, but that participation in the eternal ideas which moral effort brought about in man.<sup>149</sup> In later Greek philosophy, when the doctrine of ideas had been somewhat discredited by the criticism of Aristotle, imitation of the Divine was made possible by the assumption that divine and human reason were ultimately one, and that by a right use of human intelligence in thought and action the characteristics of its divine original might be acquired.<sup>150</sup> This again was not an imitation in the Jewish sense, for in the last analysis a successful imitation did away with the distinction between the imitator and his model. Philo brought Jewish and Greek

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teaching together in his exegesis of Gen. 1, 26, where he retained the Jewish form, but imported into it a Greek sense;<sup>151</sup> and Clement followed him, making certain necessary Christian additions to his thought.

For Clement the imitation of God is essentially intellectual; the truth of Gen. 1, 26 is realized when the mind of man has become the clear reflection of the divine Logos.<sup>152</sup> It is true that this reflection is visible in behavior as well as in thought,<sup>153</sup> but it is not fundamentally a matter of behavior or even of moral motive, but proceeds from man's natural capacity to become divine and so to be like God. Philo, however, distinguishes in this connection between the transcendent God and the intelligible Logos, and says that only the latter can be imitated by man,<sup>154</sup> and Clement would have agreed to this qualification. Man becomes like God when he enters into the divine life by the presence of the Logos in his own reason.<sup>155</sup> Unlike Philo, Clement has in Jesus Christ a living example of man's power to resemble God, and can encourage his gnostic to become by contemplation and moral effort that which Christ was by nature.<sup>156</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Cf. I Clem. 14, 3; 33. 5-7, Justin, I ApoL 10, 1; 10, 25; 15, 13; II Apol. 4, 2; 13, 6, Dial. c. Tryph. 96; Epist. ad Diognet. 10,4-6; Tatian 15. In Ignatius imitation of God is usually imitation of Christ, cf. Eph. 1, 1; 10, 3; Philad. 7, 2; 8, 2; cf. Martyr. Polyc. 1, 2.

<sup>149</sup> Theaet., p. 176 (cf. Phaedrus 253 A), where the moral life inspired by the vision of heavenly reality is called *ὁμοίωσις θεῶν κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν*. See I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, 2d series, 1924, pp. 153-159.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Epictetus, *Diss.* ii. 14, 12ff.; i. 3, 1; ii. 8, 11; A. Bonhöffer, *Die Ethik des Stoikers Epiktet*, 1894, pp. 2-4, 82ff.; A. Bonhoffer, *Epiktet u. das Neue Testament*, Giessen, 1911, p. 311; Seneca, *De benefleis* 4, 25; Dial. 7, 15, 4-5; Epist. 31, 8-11; 41, 1-5.

<sup>151</sup> *De opoficio mundi*, Mangey pp.15 ff., Cohn and Wendland pp. 23 ff.; cf. Abrahams, *Studies* ii. Pp. 153-159.

<sup>152</sup> Strom. ii. 19, 102, 6; cf. Paed. iii, 1, 1, 5; Protrept. x. 98, 3; xii. 121, 1.

<sup>153</sup> Strom. ii. 19, 102, 2.

<sup>154</sup> Euseb., *Praep. evang.* vii. 1, ed. Gifford iii. P. 349. Abrahams, *Studies*, ii. p. 158.

<sup>155</sup> Strom. ii. 19, 97, 1: *ὁδοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα καὶ ὁμοίωσιν, ὁ γνωστικός, ὁ μιμούμενος τὸν θεὸν καθ' ὅσον οἶόν τε, μηδὲν παραλιπὼν τῶν εἰς τὴν ἐνδεξομένην ὁμοίωσιν, ἐγκρατευόμενος, ὑπομένων, δικαίως βιούς, βασιλεύων τῶν παθῶν, μεταδιδοὺς ὧν ἔξει, ὡς οἶός τε ἐστὶν, εὐεργετῶν καὶ λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ;* cf. Protrept. iv. 59, 2-8; Paed. i. 3, 9. 1-2.

<sup>156</sup> Paed. i. 12, 98, 1 ff.

Against Stoic materialism Clement raises an uncompromising front.<sup>157</sup> Much that he says of the incompatibility of this philosophy with the true conception of God's nature had been said before by the apologists, but he sees the issues involved more clearly than they, and his more consistent Platonism gives

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an added point to his remarks. He does not develop his antagonism into a systematic polemic like Origen's, but the seeds are present of the conflict which in the next generation made forever impossible the union of Stoic physics and Christian theology.

One instance will suffice to show the effect of Clement's Platonic theology on his religion, for in his doctrine of prayer the religious implications of his immaterialist philosophy clearly appear. The essence of prayer he believes not to lie in external acts, or even in petitions for good of any kind, but rather to be a special aspect of that perfect companionship with God which is realized in the life of the Christian gnostic. Ritual and petitionary prayers are too limited in their application to be satisfactory, and tend, by their emphasis on the time and place of worship and the specific objects desired, to misrepresent the true nature of God and the character of his providence. Since God needs nothing, being absolutely sufficient, and since he is everywhere, the only prayer which is worthy of him is a quality of life which penetrates all thought, feeling, and behavior, endowing it with a divine purpose and directing its every motion towards God.

Wherefore it is neither in a definite place or special shrine, nor yet at certain feasts and days set apart that the gnostic honors God, returning thanks to him for knowledge bestowed and the gifts of the (heavenly) citizenship; but he will do this all his life in every place, whether he be alone by himself or have with him some who share his belief.<sup>158</sup> And if the presence of some good

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<sup>157</sup> Strom. i. 11, 51, 1: ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ Στωϊκοί, ὧν καὶ αὐτῶν μέμνηται, σῶμα ὄντα τὸν θεὸν διὰ τῆς ἀτιμοτάτης ὕλης πεφοιτηκέναι, λέγουσιν, οὐ καλῶς. Cf. Protrept. v. 66, 3; Strom. vii. 7, 37, 1-2; Cf. Mayor and Hort, Clement of Alexandria, Book VII of the Stromateis, pp. 254-255. My exposition of Clement's doctrine of prayer is based chiefly on Stromateis vii. 7. I have therefore omitted references to special points except in the case of quotations.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. Strom. vii. 5, 29, 3-8: "And if the word holy is taken in two senses, as applied to God himself and also to the building raised in his honor, surely we should be right in giving to the church, which was instituted to the honor of God in accordance with sanctified wisdom, the name of a holy temple of God, that precious temple built by no mechanic art, nay, not embellished even by an angel's hand, but made into a shrine by the will of God himself. I use the name of the church now not of the place but of the congregation of saints. This is the shrine that is best fitted for the reception of the greatness of the dignity of God. For to Him who is all-worthy, or rather in comparison with whom all else is worthless, there is consecrated that creature which is of great worth owing to its pre-eminent holiness. And such would be the gnostic who is of great worth and precious in the sight of God, he in whom God is enshrined, i.e., in whom the knowledge of God is consecrated. Here too we should find the likeness (τὸ ἀπεικόνισμα), the divine and sanctified image (τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἅγιον ἄγαλμα) - here in the righteous soul, after it has been itself blessed as having been already purified and now performing blessed deeds. Here we find both that which is enshrined and that which is in process of enshrinement, the former in the case of those who are already gnostics, the latter in those who are capable of becoming so, though they may not yet be worthy to receive the knowledge of God. For all that is destined to believe is already faithful in the eye of God and consecrated to honor, an image of virtue dedicated to God."

man always moulds for the better one who converses with him, by reason of the respect and reverence which he inspires, with much more reason must he who is always in the uninterrupted presence of God by means of his knowledge and his life and his thankful spirit be raised above himself on every occasion, both in regard to his actions and his words and his temper. Such is he who believes that God is everywhere present, and does not suppose him to be shut up in definite places, so as to be tempted to incontinence by the imagination, forsooth, that he could ever be apart from God whether by day or night. Accordingly all our life is a festival; being persuaded that God is everywhere present on all sides, we praise Him as we till the ground, we sing hymns as we sail the sea, we feel this inspiration in all that we do. And the gnostic enjoys a still closer intimacy with God, being at once serious and cheerful in everything, serious because his thoughts are turned towards heaven, and cheerful as he reckons up the blessings with which God has enriched our human life.<sup>159</sup>

The gnostic's life is thus a continuous prayer and thanksgiving, not only when he turns his thoughts to transcendent realities, but even in the common tasks of daily routine.

Nevertheless it is in contemplation that the ultimate significance of prayer is realized. Although Clement is always careful to indicate the practical consequences of his mysticism, and to show that the life of God is revealed no less in simple duty than in rapt ecstasy, he must in the end explain the lower by the higher and so resort to that closest contact of mind with Mind in which the human experience of God culminates.

Every place then and every time at which we entertain the thought of God is truly hallowed; but when he who is at once right-minded and thankful makes his request in prayer, he in a way contributes to the granting of his petition, receiving with joy the desired object through the instrumentality of his prayer. For when the Giver of all good meets with readiness on our part, all good things follow at once on the mere conception in the mind. Certainly prayer is a test of the attitude of the character towards what is fitting. And if voice and speech are given to us with a view to understanding, how can God help hearing the soul and the mind by itself, seeing that soul already apprehends soul, and mind apprehends mind. Wherefore God has no need to learn various tongues, as human interpreters have, but understands at once the minds of all men, and what the voice signifies to us, that our thought utters to God, since even before the creation he knew that it would come into

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our mind. It is permitted to man therefore to speed his prayer even without a voice, if he only concentrates all his spiritual energy upon the inner voice of the mind by his undistracted turning to God.<sup>160</sup>

With all this Clement does not deny the legitimacy of corporate worship or the desirability of praying with set objects in view. He accepts these data of religious life, desiring only to interpret them in the light of what he believes to be the true theology. Behind the acts of ritual must lie the persistent effort of the soul to abandon the sensible world for the world of intellectual reality, where it may contemplate God with direct vision; and in setting fixed hours for prayer, it must not be forgotten that all life is a prayerful effort toward fellowship with God. The example of

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<sup>159</sup> Strom. vii. 7, 35, 3-7.

<sup>160</sup> Strom. vii. 7, 43. 1-5.

Jesus shows the desirability of praying with specific intentions,<sup>161</sup> but this must not be thought to imply that God is ignorant of our needs or requires encouragement for his benevolence. The essence of this kind of prayer is that it fixes the mind on objects the qualities of which are transmitted in contemplation to the soul of the believer. Prayer is thus a matter of grave importance in the formation of character, since it exposes the most sensitive portions of the soul to influences which determine its ultimate quality and its permanent relations with God. When the objects of prayer are good, their excellence is gradually assimilated into the habits of the suppliant and eventually become an integral part of his nature, but when they are bad, havoc is wrought in the soul.<sup>162</sup> The prayer of the Christian gnostic is directed toward a more complete knowledge of God, and results in a fuller participation in the divine life. This participation, though it results in ἀπάθεια does not produce quiescence, for divine

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Reality is instinct with the inexhaustible energy of infinite love, and this energy is communicated without diminution to all those who share in the vision of truth. The measure of participation, and therefore of communicated energy, depends on the capacity of the worshipper, and as he advances along the path of perfection, he constantly grows in both the knowledge and the power of God.<sup>163</sup>

The importance of Clement's idea of God may be estimated from the point of view either of its originality or of its influence on posterity, and a sound judgment of his achievement must take account of both these factors. It may be paradoxical to claim a high degree of originality for a doctrine which has been shown to consist very largely of fragments of Greek philosophy combined with some of the traditional elements of ancient Catholic Christianity. It is nevertheless true that Clement's dependence on previous thought is only a necessary condition of his work,

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<sup>161</sup> "Yet the petition is not superfluous, even though good things be granted without petition made. For instance, thanksgiving and prayer for the conversion of his neighbors are the duty of the gnostic. Thus the Lord also prayed, returning thanks for the 'accomplishment' of his ministry and praying that 'as many as possible might share in knowledge' in order that God 'who alone is good,' alone is the Saviour, 'may be glorified through his Son' in those who are being saved through the salvation which is according to knowledge, and that the knowledge of him may grow from age to age. Howbeit the mere faith that one will receive is itself also a kind of prayer stored up in a gnostic spirit." Strom. vii. 7, 41, 6-8.

<sup>162</sup> Strom. vii. 7, 38, 1 f. and 7,34 f.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Strom. vii. 3, 13, 1 ff.: "As to the rest I keep silent, giving glory to God: only I say that these gnostic souls are so carried away by the magnificence of the vision (θεωρίας) that they cannot confine themselves within the lines of the constitution by which each holy degree is assigned and in accordance with which the blessed abodes of the gods have been marked out and allotted; but being counted as 'holy among the holy' and translated absolutely and entirely to another sphere, they keep on always moving to higher and yet higher regions, until they no longer greet the divine vision in, or by means of, mirrors, but with loving hearts feast forever on the uncloying never-ending sight, radiant in its transparent clearness, while throughout the endless ages they taste a never-wearying delight and thus continue, all alike honored with an identity of pre-eminence. This is the apprehensive 'vision of the pure in heart.' This, therefore, is the life-work of the perfected gnostic, viz., to hold communion with God through the great High Priest, being made like the Lord, as far as may be (ἐξομοιούμενον εἰς δόνασιν τῷ κυρίῳ), by means of all his service towards God, a service which extends to the salvation of men by his solicitous goodness towards us, and also by public worship and by teaching and by active kindness. Aye, and in being thus assimilated to God (ἐξομοιούμενος θεῷ) the gnostic is making and fashioning himself and also forming those who hear him, while, so far as may be, he assimilates to that which is by nature free from passion that which has been subdued by training to a passionless state: and this he effects by 'undisturbed intercourse' and communion 'with the Lord.' Of this gnostic assimilation (ἐξομοιώσεως) the canons, as it appears to me, are gentleness, kindness, and a noble devoutness." Cf. Strom. vi. 12, 102, 1 ff.

which, so far from detracting from its merit, accentuates it by revealing some of its main difficulties.<sup>164</sup> In a

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comparison of Clement's theology with that of his predecessors, what is remarkable is not only his superior understanding of philosophy, but also his profound appreciation of the peculiar genius of Christianity. Clement is an eclectic in all his thinking,<sup>165</sup> but his eclecticism is guided by a fine instinct for religious as well as intellectual values, and he is drawn irresistibly to the original sources of inspiration. Among the philosophers it is Plato whom he knows best and from whose thought and writing he most frequently borrows.<sup>166</sup> Of Christian literature he is most at home in the New Testament,<sup>167</sup> and he has a broader appreciation of Paul and John than any of his predecessors.<sup>168</sup> With all this he has a sense of what is logically possible, and makes a real effort to unite within a single system the carefully wrought ideas of philosophy and the spontaneous notions of religion. The result is a real philosophy of religion, controlled by the ontological and epistemological premises of Platonism, but also inspired by the less formal mysticism of early Christians like Paul and John.

If Clement's combinations of philosophy and tradition are more satisfactory than many current in his time, it is because

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he was able to see the affinities between the authors whom he used. By adopting the allegorical method of exegesis he was dispensed from taking into account many of the Jewish elements in Christianity that were fundamentally irreconcilable with his view of ultimate reality, and he could thus concentrate his attention on aspects of Pauline and Johannine thought which could easily be harmonized with his own system and made to enrich it. A modern critic would undoubtedly quarrel with his assumption that all that was valuable in Platonism was implied in the New Testament, yet it must be admitted that apart from formal expression there are real affinities

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<sup>164</sup> Christian philosophy can never be wholly free from the restraint of Christian history and tradition, and is in constant danger either of breaking too definitely with them, as the Gnostics did, or of allowing itself to be oppressively bound by them. Some of these difficulties are made admirably clear by Lebreton, 'Le désaccord de la foi populaire et de la théologie savante dans l'Église chrétienne du IIIe siècle, *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, 1923, pp. 481 ff., 1924, pp. 5 ff.; and Batiffol, *Primitive Catholicism*, pp. 246 ff.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Strom. i. 7, 37, 6 and de Faye's comment, *Clement d'Alexandrie*. Paris, 1906, pp. 153-154.

<sup>166</sup> A brief study of Stählin's critical notes shows this. I have verified a considerable number of Clement's quotations from Plato, and have found that he quotes with that same facile inaccuracy that characterizes his use of the New Testament, though in occasional instances a real difference in text is possible.

<sup>167</sup> It must be remembered that whereas in the exegesis of the Old Testament Clement is sometimes dependent on Philo, in the New he is often breaking fresh ground.

<sup>168</sup> This seems to me certain, though the proof would require a long discussion. In spite of the beautiful rendering of 1 Cor. 13 in I Clem. 49-50 and occasional passages in Ignatius and Hermas, Paul's mysticism was as little understood as his theory of justification. In Irenaeus he receives more attention, but Irenaeus is no mystic, and uses Paul chiefly to support his "physische Erlösungslehre" (Loofs, *Leitfaden*, 4te Aufl., pp. 146 ff.). John fared even worse. A measure of the popular understanding of his gospel can be taken from the *Epistola Apostolorum*; Irenaeus understands him no better than Paul, and Ignatius turned John's thought into an emotional, not an intellectual, mysticism. Of Justin, who is probably nearest to Clement in his conception of Christianity, it cannot be certain that he knew the Fourth Gospel.



between Paul, John, and Plato which Clement was the first to see and to make use of.<sup>169</sup> Of these related elements, which were due to a common experience of religion, a common conception of its functions, and a similar estimate of life as a whole, Platonism offered a possible philosophic interpretation, and Clement was the first to take full advantage of the offer.<sup>170</sup> In doing so he became the founder of Christian Platonism and the father of Christian intellectual mysticism.

In making this claim it is necessary to stop for a moment and ask what distinguishes Christian Platonism from its two parents, and particularly in what way its idea of God differs from traditional Christian conceptions and from the thought of Platonists who were not influenced by Christianity. It is easy to see what Platonism brought into the partnership, for it supplied Christianity with an immaterialist philosophy that sustained and clarified its finest moral and religious aspirations, interpreting them in the light of a general view of the universe. Christianity's contribution was more subtle, and consisted fundamentally in a modification and extended application of

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the Platonic conception of divine love. Dean Inge believes the difference between Neoplatonic and Christian philosophy to be concentrated in the doctrine of the incarnation,<sup>171</sup> but this doctrine is only an instance of a general tendency, in which the influence of Pauline and Johannine mysticism is apparent, the tendency to make the divine love real and concrete in the lives of all sorts and conditions of men.<sup>172</sup>

In non-christian circles the difficulty in which philosophic religion, then as always, was involved was conflict with popular religion. It was clear to the philosophers that current notions of the gods were altogether inconsistent with the perfection of the divine nature, but it was no less plain to the mass of believers that their primitive theology was adequate to their needs, so that while religion persisted among the masses and was cultivated by philosophers, it took two different and scarcely related forms.<sup>173</sup> In reality this cleavage was only accentuated by such attempts at mediation as the Stoic *φυσιολογία*, or the theory of mythological, civil, and philosophical religion so popular among Panaetius's pupils at Rome.<sup>174</sup> But in the church Christian Platonism succeeded in bridging a similar gap between the religion of uninstructed and educated men, and in bringing home to the simple believer and to the theologian the perception that what united them was a common bond of divine knowledge and love, which expressed and communicated itself in different ways but proceeded ultimately from the same source.

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<sup>169</sup> The following passages illustrate this, though of course it is not maintained that Clement gives the correct exegesis in each case: *Protrept.* ix. 84, 6-85, 1; ix. 88, 2-8; x. 92, 4-93, 1; x. 98, 3; x. 100, 4; 101, 2; xi. 112, 2-113, 1; xi. 115, 4-5; *Paed.* ii. 1, 5-6; iii. 1, 2-8; *Strom.* ii. 4, 12, 1; vi. 13, 107, 3-14; 108, 5; vi. 12, 102, 1-2; i. 1, 4, 1-4; i. 1, 7, 1-4; i. 5, 32, 4; i. 8, 41, 6-42, 4; i. 9, 45, 1-6; i. 11, 53, 4; ii. 5, 21, 1; ii. 5, 22, 5-8; ii. 22, 136, 1-6; iv. 7, 42, 3; vii. 2, 9, 4-11, 3; vii. 3, 16, 6; vii. 7, 46, 3; iv. 18, 111, 1-4; iv. 7, 52; iv. 21, 132-133.

<sup>170</sup> For instance, Clement's insistence that the value of salvation is inherent and absolute; *Strom.* iv. 6, 29, 3-4 and iv. 22, 136-138; iv. 23, 147, 4 ff.

<sup>171</sup> *Philosophy of Plotinus*, 2d ed., ii. pp. 206-209.

<sup>172</sup> This is the point of Clement's theory of the equality of salvation, of his emphasis on the value of *εὐσέβεια* and good conduct as the response to God's love, and of his theodicy.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. S. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, pp. 289-626; 1. Geffcken, *Der Ausgang des griechisch-romischen Heidentums*, Heidelberg, 1920, pp. 4-89.

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Schmekel, *Philosophic der mittleren Stoa*, pp. 446 ff.

Clement's influence on posterity is difficult to estimate, for it was for the most part indirect. He was apparently little read throughout the Middle Ages, and it was not until the sixteenth century that interest in his writings revived.<sup>175</sup> Grabmann

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attributes his lack of popularity to the fact that his works were early put on the Index,<sup>176</sup> but a deeper reason is the difficulty to minds trained in systematic theology offered by the peculiar discipline required for understanding Clement's thought and by the mazes of careless writing through which his winding ideas have to be followed. Catholic theology has in the main shown sharp outlines, easily reflected from the thinker's mind to the poet's imagination, lightly transferred from the scholar's page to the artist's canvas; and to such sharp outlines Clement's mystical spirit was opposed. To be understood by many, Clement from the first needed interpretation, and this interpretation was the task of Origen.

It is singular that the difference between these two men, who had so much in common, should be so great. Though both were philosophic theologians, theology for Clement was only the direct way to the vision of truth, while with Origen it entered upon a new stage as a science *suo jure* possessing a method and rationale of its own. The systematizing genius of Origen profoundly affected the way in which he reproduced Clement's thought. Clement's ideas can be recognized in many of Origen's

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pages, but the image is not absolutely true; the medium of reflection has contributed too much for perfect accuracy. An example of this has already been given in Origen's development of Clement's thesis that God is *ἁσώματος*. Equally striking is his version of Clement's doctrine of prayer in the *De oratione*.

In this treatise Origen maintains with Clement that the principal benefit of prayer is communion with God,<sup>177</sup> that petitionary prayer for earthly goods is inappropriate, since the true Christian

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<sup>175</sup> Early mentions of Clement given by Stählin, i. pp. ix-xvi. The first printed edition of Clement's work was a product of the revival of patristic learning inspired by Marcellus Cervinus, librarian of the Vatican and later Pope Marcellus II. Petrus Victorius, who undertook the work at Marcellus's suggestion and under Cosmo de' Medici's patronage, intimates that it was not carried through without opposition. "Haec igitur sunnt, quae praesidio fuerunt optime auctori pereunti ac pene jam e manibus elapso: in quo certe ut dolendum est tam utilem gravemque scriptorem tam diu latuisse: acriterque accusandi, qui tam egregios ae fructuosos veterum labores supprimunt, its magnopere laetandum ipsum in vitam rediisse, atque omnem impetum fortunae evasisse; amandique ac toto pectore celebrandi, qui hujuscemodi monumenta, magna superiorum hominum curs, beneficioque Deorum e tot incendiis bellorum tampestatibusque, erepta, pervulgant, et ab anni huiuscemodi iniuria in perpetuum vindicant," ed. Victorius, Florence, 1500, p. 4. On the succeeding editions of Clement's works see Stulilin, i. pp. lxxv ff. The question of Clement's orthodoxy was much discussed in the sixteenth century, when his name was dropped from the Roman martyrology on the recommendation of Baronius. In meeting a protest against the act Benedict XIV treated the questions of Clement's status and theological position with discretion and impartiality, though he was probably as much influenced by moderns like Petavius and Berbeirac as by Photius and Cassiodorus. In spite of this undercurrent of suspicion Clement has continued to have many admirers within the church.

<sup>176</sup> The Index contains the following item: "Opuscula alterius Clementis Alexandii apocrypha," which has often been taken to refer to the author of the Stromateis. That this is far from certain has been shown by Cognat, Clément d'Alexandrie, pp.464-466, and Bigg, Christian Platonists, 2d ed., p. 317, n. 1.

<sup>177</sup> De oratione 8.

accepts all life as God's gift,<sup>178</sup> and that prayer in the best sense is a fixed habit of mind giving a single direction to all behavior.<sup>179</sup> With Clement also he insists that love and charity are the best preparation for prayer,<sup>180</sup> that its most precious result is the divine power communicated from God to man in moments of contemplation and ecstasy,<sup>181</sup> and that those are in error who say that since God's will is fixed and the order of nature unchangeable, prayer is therefore superfluous.<sup>182</sup> What is not to be found in Clement is anything corresponding to Origen's long disquisition on the meaning of εὐχή and προσευχή,<sup>183</sup> his careful exegesis of the Lord's prayer,<sup>184</sup> his long discussion of the times for prayer and the postures appropriate to it,<sup>185</sup> and his classification of prayers into four types based on 1 Tim. 2, 1.<sup>186</sup> Here Origen is the systematic theologian finishing and retouching Clement's bold, free sketch.

The motive of Clement's theology is an irresistible impulse to seek God in every aspect of experience and to recognize his presence and love in that unity of goodness which embraces all things. Origen, on the other hand, in the *De principiis* explains his conception of his task by pointing to the quarrels of his contemporaries and affirming the necessity for a definition of the faith which will take due account of the functions of revelation and rational inquiry: "*propter hoc necessarium videtur*

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*prius de his singulis certam lineam manifestamque regulam ponere, turn deinde etiam de ceteris quaerere*"<sup>187</sup> The bloom of Clement's enthusiasm tends to wither in this pedantic atmosphere of the schoolroom, and the divine unity of all thought, to him so certain, seems broken by this *certa linea manifestaque regula* within which Origen would confine the mysteries of revelation; yet it must be admitted that without some such modification, Clement's philosophic conception of God would never have found a place in official Christian theology. Not only did Origen's influence and prestige give Clement's doctrine a currency otherwise unattainable, but his adaptation of the doctrine to the nascent scholastic system made possible its survival within the church. Henceforward Christian Platonism with its idea of God as an immaterial, intellectual substance, its characteristic piety, and its fine mysticism was a permanent element in Christian theology, exercising a refining influence which neither the crushing weight of traditional conservatism nor the disintegrating forces of speculative radicalism have succeeded in destroying.<sup>188</sup> In the century which followed Origen's death his teachings became the centre of a storm of theological debate, the echoes of which were heard even in the anathemas of mediaeval councils. Many of his views, such as the periodic conflagration of the world and the impossibility of the fleshly resurrection, were condemned, but his belief about the divine nature emerged triumphant. While the anthropomorphists fought earnestly against the banishment of their material God whose piercing gaze no

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 11, 18, 19.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 9, 1; 11.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 8, 13.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 5-7. These skeptics are probably the followers of Prodicus mentioned by Clement, Strom. vii. 7, 41.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 18-30.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 31-32.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 14, 31.

<sup>187</sup> De principiis I, Praef. 2.

<sup>188</sup> The influence of Christian Platonism can be seen in such studies as Inge's *Christian Mysticism* (Bampton Lectures), 1899, and Dom Cuthbert Butler's *Western Mysticism*, London, 1922.

act of theirs escaped, whose throne was the heavens, and upon whose glorious form their eyes would one day be permitted to rest, the Christian doctrine of God was becoming inextricably involved in a trinitarian theory, the substance and form of which would have been impossible but for Clement and Origen, whose immaterialist teaching it presupposed. In the East Athanasius and Eusebius of Nicomedia represent divergent tendencies within

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the Origenist school, while in the West the thought of Augustine followed paths suggested by classical Neoplatonist works which drew their inspiration from Alexandrine sources. Even in the Scholastic period, when the philosophy of Aristotle gave new directions to Christian theology, the doctrine of God did not lose the Platonic stamp first deeply impressed upon it by Clement of Alexandria.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* i. 8,1-2; i. 6, 1-2; i. 89, 1; ii. 1, 4. Even in Protestant scholasticism its influence survived; cf. E. Troeltsch, *Vernunft und Offenbarung*, pp. 15 ff.