Wisdom and Dialogue: Clement of Alexandria and Franz Rosenzweig

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A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Religious Studies

University of Virginia
December, 2013

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The inquiry of my dissertation proceeds in two main parts. The first is focused on the life and work of the German-speaking Jewish philosopher and educational visionary, Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929). The second is focused on the work of the Greek-speaking Christian theologian and pedagogue, Clement of Alexandria (c.150 – c.215).

Rosenzweig and Clement present two great, poignant examples of wise theological teaching that dialogically engages with secular pagan learning, modern and ancient, Jewish and Christian. Both of these thinkers are remembered for the way in which they devoted their impressive intellects to the study of the reigning philosophies of their day – the Kantians, Hegelians and idealists for Rosenzweig; the Platonists, Stoics, and Gnostics for Clement. Although they found these philosophies inadequate in themselves to answer ultimate questions of value and meaning, they did not abandon them in their theological pursuits. Instead, they brought them along with them, transforming them and putting them into the service of scriptural inquiry and theological reflection.

I believe these two thinkers are important because, by their example, they provide a model for how to bring together two sides of us, which are often viewed in contradistinction. On the one hand, they serve as models of religious persons who maintain an unswerving faith in the reality of God. On the other hand, they serve as models of for wise pedagogues, who exude faith in the power of reason; not the kind of reason they found inadequate in the popular philosophies of their day, but the reasoning of their times enlisted into the service of re-forming people in relation to God.

PART 1 - ON FRANZ ROSENZWEIG

I begin this dissertation with an introductory study of the life and thought of the German-speaking Jewish philosopher, Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929). Specifically, I examine two decisive turning points in Rosenzweig's life. The first is Rosenzweig's decision to "remain a Jew" after contemplating conversion to Christianity. The second is Rosenzweig's decision to turn away from academic life in the German university system to assume the directorship of the new *Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus* (free Jewish house of learning) in Frankfurt.

In my study of Rosezweing, I challenge the traditional narrative of Rosenzweig's so-called "conversion" to Judaism and rejection of academic life presented by Nahum Glatzer, which has been widely accepted and retold by Rosenzweig scholars. I argue that Glatzer's portrayal remains beholden to a dichotomous understanding of revelation and reason, which Rosenzweig firmly rejects. Contrary to Glatzer's portrayal, I contend that Rosenzweig's decision to embrace his Jewishness was not motivated by an inscrutable experience of "unmediated relation with God." Rather, according to Rosenzweig's re-telling, his decision was motivated by the rejection of his early "neo-Marcionite" assumption that faith was a private matter, which could remain separate from his public life as a German intellectual.

Rosenzweig's decision to turn away from academic life in the German university system should not be seen as a rejection of intellectual life. Rather, the prejudices of the German academy at the time would not have allowed for Rosenzweig to be openly and unapologetically Jewish in his philosophical work. Rosenzweig did not reject intellectual life when he decided to become the founding director of the *Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus.* Rather, he saw the Lehrhaus as a place where he could actively pursue his envisioned methods of "New Thinking" and "New

Learning," while simultaneously addressing the educational needs of the Jewish community in Frankfurt at the time.

In my study of Rosenzweig, I argue that the pedagogical model of "New Learning" at the Lehrhaus is the practical outworking of the philosophical and theological form of dialogical, "New Thinking," presented in his opus, *The Star of Redemption.* Moreover, I argue, that Rosenzweig's method of "New Thinking" emerges from his critical engagement with German idealism, following from Friedrich Schelling's mature critique of Hegelian idealism and proposed system of "positive" philosophy.

PART 2 – ON CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

In the second part of my dissertation, I turn my attention to the early Greek-speaking Christian theologian and pedagogue, Clement of Alexandria (c.150-c.215). Almost nothing is known about Clement's biography. In my study, I focus on the writing for which he is the most well-known, the *Stromateis.* My study proceeds in two sections. In the first, I focus on questions pertaining to the peculiar genre and literary form of the *Stromateis.* In the second, I examine Clement's often neglected notes on logic and semiotics in "Book VIII" of the *Stromateis*.

At first glance, the *Stromateis* appears to be a haphazardly arranged collection of notes and extracts on a wide variety of topics, lacking a coherent organizing principle or thematic connection. In my first chapter on Clement, I show how the *Stromateis* reflects the literary form of a genre of popular writings common at the time, which we now call "miscellanies." I argue that in the *Stromateis,* Clement has not simply adopted the literary fashions of his era. Rather, he has deliberately chosen the literary form of the *Stromateis* to engage with cultural and intellectual environment in which he was writing – which contemporary classicists commonly referred to as the "Second Sophistic" – by simultaneously affirming and contesting popular

assumptions about Greek cultural/intellectual authority and the means by which knowledge is communicated.

In my second chapter on Clement, I offer a three-part analysis and discussion of Book VIII of the *Stromateis,* which has received little attention in contemporary Clement scholarship. In part 1, I provide an overview of the contents of *Stromateis* 8, and its relation to arguments made around the time in which Clement was writing by philosophical skeptics, like Sextus Empiricus. In part 2, I offer a more detailed study of specific topics in book 8; specifically, those passages in which he talks about issues related to semiotics, including his explication of the meaning of "cause," and his theory of causal relations. In part 3, I reconstruct a "non-binary relational semiotic" using insights derived from parts 1 and 2. I then use this reconstructed semiotic to help clarify and explain two controversial issues among Clement scholars – whether Clement thinks it is acceptable to "lie" to someone for their own benefit (and why he talks about concealing the meaning of things from people) and the authenticity of the so-called "Secret Gospel of Mark" letter attributed to Clement.

The Story of this Study

I am preparing for ordination to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church and I am primarily interested in modern Christian thought and in issues concerning the contemporary Church. Why, then, have I chosen to write a dissertation about a pre-modern Christian thinker and a 20th century Jewish philosopher? To help my readers better understand what I aim to accomplish in this dissertation, allow me to briefly narrate the details of how I came this topic.

The project of this dissertation emerges from a trajectory of thought that stretches back to my time as an undergraduate at UVA. Early on in my work I was bothered by two tendencies that I observed in popular articulations of Christian thought and in the practices of the Church. The first was the presumption of an exclusive disjunction between faith and reason. The second was what I then called "supersessionism." Although the specific focus of my research has evolved over the years, these animating concerns have remained more or less constant throughout my work.

In my undergraduate thesis, I wrote about the contemporary "Postliberal" Christian theologian George Lindbeck and the 20th century Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig. I argued that both Lindbeck and Rosenzweig were responding to analogous problems within their respective communities and that their work could be mutually enriching. Without going into detail, and for the purposes of situating the project of this dissertation, it is sufficient to say that although Lindbeck provides a strong theological argument for why Christians should repudiate the logic of supersessionism, I found his work lacking in terms of the integration of faith in reason. I argued Rosenzweig's theory of "speech-thinking" could supplement this deficiency by adding a missing level of epistemological reflection to Lindbeck's work.

Toward the end of my graduate course work, I was introduced to the writings of the early Church Father, Clement of Alexandria, and found in him a much more satisfying and robust model for the integration of faith and reason from which I believed contemporary Christian thought could benefit. However, I also saw in his writings latent tendencies toward triumphalism and supersession and I was concerned that a recovery of Clement as a resource for contemporary Christian theology would require non-supersessionist corrective to avoid those latent tendencies. Around the same time, while examining the potential benefits of Schelling's mature critique of German Idealism for contemporary theological reflection, I noticed some unexpected comments in Rosenzweig's correspondences and journal entries that prompted me to reconsider the popular story of his so-called "conversion" to Judaism. As I delved deeper into this new project, I found that what I had previously identified as "supersessionism" in modern Christian thought was more closely related to the heresy of "Marcionism" and that modern Christian proclivities toward "neo-Marcionism" were intimately intertwined with the presupposition of an exclusive disjunction between faith and reason. To my surprise, I also realized that the exercise of reconstructing Rosenzweig's intellectual biography provided a compelling way to identify the interrelationship between these two tendencies and an argument against them.

For my dissertation proposal, I outlined a project in which I would offer a contemporary re-evaluation of Clement of Alexandria's theological epistemology and pedagogical theory presented in conjunction a study of Franz Rosenzweig as a corrective to the potentially problematic tendencies I had initially identified in Clement's work. At the time, I proposed that I would show that when combined with Rosenzweig's corrective, "Clement's writings can provide a viable model for thinking about religious/philosophical multiplicity in a way that may prove useful for some contemporary theologians and 'professional' Christian ministers, for whom

having a Christian understanding and appreciation for religious/philosophical difference is an important concern." However, over the next two years, the shape of my dissertation project significantly changed.

Clement's chosen form of literary presentation often appears strange and inaccessible to modern readers. For that reason, if I was going to commend Clement's writings as a potentially fruitful resource for contemporary Christian theology, I would need to say something about the peculiar character of Clement's text. Coming to Clement again after working on Rosenzweig, I was much more attuned to the dialogical character of Clement's writing. Guided by insights gleaned from studies of Rosenzweig, I realized that an examination of the ways in which Clement's writing aims to dialogically engage with readers in his cultural milieu might help clarify some of the confusion surrounding his peculiar literary methods.

While re-evaluating Clement's often overlooked writings on logic in the eighth book of the *Stromateis,* I made a surprising discovery. Contrary to the common consensus among contemporary Clement scholars, I found that *Stromateis* 8 is not only a unified and internally coherent book, it is also significantly related to what Clement writes in the first seven books of the *Stromateis.* Moreover, within the text of book 8 I found an embryonic articulation of a "non-binary relational semiotic," which I believe underlies many of Clement's arguments throughout the *Stromaties.* I therefore realized that Clement's writing already includes a resource for correcting its own latent potential to re-enforce modern logics of "supersessionism" and "neo-Marcionism." As such, it no longer seemed necessary for me to introduce Rosenzweig as a "corrective" to Clement. Rather, a contemporary re-appraisal of Clement's writings as a potentially useful resource for Christian theology need only include the corrective that Clement himself provides in book 8 of the *Stromateis.*

I nevertheless decided to include my work on Rosenzweig in this dissertation for two reasons. First, I believe my analysis Rosenzweig's intellectual biography and his programmatic vision for the *Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus* helps to establish the context, as a kind of "preparatory exercise," in which my study of Clement can be received and appreciated. Second, I think the juxtaposition Rosenzweig and Clement helps to bring out some important overarching themes which may be helpful for contemporary theologians to consider—namely, the importance of attending to the relationship between epistemology and pedagogy, and a potential need to reconsider common assumptions about the purpose and function of texts in pedagogical formation.

<u>Rosenzweig: An Introductory Survey</u>

After the publication of his dissertation *Hegel and the State* following his return from service in

World War I, Franz Rosenzweig's doctoral adviser, Friedrich Meinecke, offered to arrange a

university lectureship for him. To Meinecke's surprise and apparent dismay, Rosenzweig

declined this offer, choosing instead to assume the directorship of the new *Freies Jüdisches*

Lehrhaus (free Jewish house of learning) in Frankfurt. Viewing his pupil's decision as an

expression of despair and a retreat from culture and universal fidelities, Meinecke later remarked

that after making a contribution of "enduring value to German intellectual history," Rosenzweig

"fled into the world of his blood."[1]

What Meinecke viewed as a "retreat," Rosenzweig's first major proponents in the

English-speaking world called a "return." Following Nahum Glatzer's hagiographic presentation

of Rosenzweig's life and thought, Rosenzweig was heralded as an emblematic representative of

the modern *ba'al teshuvah* (returnee to Judaism).[2] Glatzer's account of Rosenzweig's personal

spiritual journey has since become legendary among Rosenzweig's readers.[3] Few introductions

to Rosenzweig's thought or commentaries on his writings can be found today that do not include

a retelling of the story of Rosenzweig's near conversion to Christianity and subsequent embrace

of his Jewish identity. By adopting this interpretive framing of Rosenzweig's work, many have

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[1] Friedrich Meinecke, "Franz Rosenzweig--Nachruf," *Historische Zeitschrift* 142, no. 1 (1930): 219–220.

[2] For an account of the reception history of Rosenzweig's writings see Peter Eli Gordon, "Rosenzweig Redux: The Reception of German-Jewish Thought," *Jewish Social Studies* 8, no. 1, New Series (Autumn 2001): 1–57.

[3] Nahum N. Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought* (New York: Schocken Books, 1953).

uncritically accepted Glatzer's suggestion that "the story of Franz Rosenzweig is the story of a rediscovery of Judaism."[4]

More recently, however, scholars have begun to challenge the common perception popularized by Glatzer's "storied" interpretation that within Rosenzweig's intellectual development there is a radical break between the German research of the young academic and the Jewish works of the mature thinker.[5] These new interpretations profess to take seriously Rosenzweig's provocative suggestion that his opus, *The Star of Redemption*, is "merely a system of philosophy."[6] Several works published within the last two decades have advocated for a renewed appreciation of Rosenzweig's philosophic insights and the necessity to view his intellectual contributions within the broader intellectual horizon of Weimar Germany. In doing so, many also seek to unsettle the idea that Rosenzweig's *Star* can be relegated to an "isolable canon of modern Jewish thought."[7] By returning *The Star* "to the playing field of systematic philosophy upon which Rosenzweig suggests his book should be placed,"[8] these works have shed new light on the philosophical significance of the text.

One of the perhaps unintended consequences of these reconsiderations of Rosenzweig's work as "philosophy," however, is that they no longer possess a readily accessible or compelling explanation for Rosenzweig's vocational shift from the Academy to the *Lehrhaus*. If

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[4] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, x–xi.

[5] See,Peter Eli Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 119–120.

[6] Franz Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," in *Franz Rosenzweig: Philosophical and Theological Writings*, ed. Paul W. Franks and Michael L. Morgan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2000), 110; This claim, along with Rosenzweig's balking rejection of the categorization of the Star of Redemption as a "nice Jewish book" are conspicuously absent in Glatzer's translation of "The New Thinking." For a commentary on this ommision and its affects on interpretation, see Gordon, "Rosenzweig Redux: The Reception of German-Jewish Thought," 15–17.

[7] Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy*, 120.

[8] Benjamin Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task of Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 8.

Rosenzweig viewed himself as a player in the field of systematic philosophy offering not only a critique but a valuable contribution to pressing intellectual developments in Germany during his life, why would he refuse a prestigious university lectureship? Why would he choose, instead, to become head of an institution devoted to the cultivation of learning among common Jewish adults who possess little to no philosophical training, a position which Rosenzweig himself admits is filled with "inevitable annoyances" and "nerve-wracking, picayune…struggles with people and conditions"?[9] For those who view Rosenzweig as a modern *ba'al teshuvah*, who renounced the totalizing ideology of western philosophy in pursuit of a self-affirming defense of Jewish particularity, the answer is clear. For the scholars who promote the reappraisal of Rosenzweig as a philosopher, however, the rationale for Rosenzweig's turn to the *Lehrhaus* is less apparent.

Advocates of Rosenzweig's philosophical merit, like Paul Mendes-Flohr, who attempt to challenge Meinecke's claim that Rosenzweig "fled into the world of his blood," have done so by trying to demonstrate the "continuity between his deep involvement in the philosophical tradition of German idealism and his later theocentric affirmation of Judaism."[10] The primary approach in these demonstrations is to show how the issues discussed in relation to the portrayal of Jewish religious life in *The Star of Redemption* "have a bearing on the most ultimate questions of human existence."[11] It is worth noting, however, that Rosenzweig finished writing the manuscript of *The Star of Redemption* in February 1919, roughly a year and a half before he became the founding director of the *Lehrhaus*. To highlight the philosophical significance of Rosenzweig's argument

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[9] Franz Rosenzweig to Friedrich Meinecke, August 30, 1920, 96-97, Glatzer, Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought.

[10] Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Introduction: Franz Rosenzweig and the German Philosophical Tradition," in *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1988), 1–2.

[11] Mendes-Flohr, "Introduction: Franz Rosenzweig and the German Philosophical Tradition," 13.

in *The Star* would thus appear to be a question-begging illustration of the continuity between Rosenzweig's early commitment to German intellectual life and his later devotion to Jewish education and learning after he refused Meinecke's offer in 1920. Moreover, if it is the case, as Mendes-Flohr argues, that "Rosenzweig's theology led him to abandon his erstwhile pursuit of an academic career…and devote himself exclusively to the community of his fellow Jews," this would not be a refutation of Meinecke *per se*. It would simply be a theoretical justification for why Rosenzweig "fled into the world of his blood." To put it bluntly, having a reason for retreat does not make it any less of a retreat.

Similar to the now-contested belief that there is discernible break between Rosenzweig's work as a young German academic and his mature philosophy presented in *The Star,* there is a widespread but infrequently acknowledged assumption that there is a radical shift in the nature of Rosenzweig's work between the intellectual endeavors of *The Star* and his later efforts at the *Lehrhaus.* Even the defendants of the philosophical integrity of *The Star* effectively take its last words, "into life," as the parting remarks of a profound thinker set to embark upon a fundamentally different career path. A recent article on Rosenzweig's educational essays by Alan Levenson and Jeffrey Schein provides a paradigmatic example:

> Rosenzweig was no ivory-tower figure. Having completed a stellar dissertation on *Hegel and the State* (1913), which could have opened the door to a distinguished university career, Rosenzweig opted instead for a career in Jewish education. In a majestic "Goodbye to All That" gesture, Rosenzweig ended his Jewish philosophical magnum opus, *The Star of Redemption,* completed in 1919 and published in 1921, with the phrase "Into Life."[12]

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[12] Alan Levenson and Jeffrey Schein, "Will the Real Franz Rosenzweig Please Stand Up? Two Reflections on Two Educational Essays," *Journal of Jewish Education* 76 (2010): 152.

Levenson and Schein are certainly not alone in their interpretation of the book's conclusion. Rosenzweig's cousin, Hans Ehrenberg, also read the closing phrase of *The Star* as a call to quit philosophy in favor of life. But, as Peter Gordon contends, "such a reading is clearly incorrect." Gordon notes:

> In a 1921 letter to Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig explained that the closing phrase was not meant as a principled rejection of all further philosophy: *"The 'Life' of the ending word is hardly the opposite of 'philosophy.'*…In this life there can also be philosophizing; and why not? (I do it myself)." The aim of *The Star,* he concludes, is "anti-mystical, but not anti-intellectual."[13]

What Rosenzweig means by "anti-mystical" will receive further consideration in the next chapters. For now, it is important merely to note that Rosenzweig did not see himself as saying "goodbye" to philosophy after he completed *The Star*.

The misleading portrayal of Rosenzweig's conclusion to *The Star* aside*,* Levenson and Schein do make a significant observation. We know Rosenzweig devoted a significant amount of his life to the furtherance of Jewish learning. "Given that demonstrable interest," they aver*,* "Rosenzweig's contributions as a philosopher of Jewish education have received surprisingly little scholarly attention."[14] Moreover, I might add, the limited attention that exists has also been somewhat questionable.

Leora Batnitzky presents Rosenzweig's educational texts under the purview of her broader argument about Rosenzweig's conception of the "world-historical mission" of Judaism

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[13] Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy*, 177.

[14] Levenson and Schein, "Will the Real Franz Rosenzweig Please Stand Up? Two Reflections on Two Educational Essays," 153.

which requires the diaspora Jewish community to become a "self-contained world of its own."[15] However, her attempt to place Rosenzweig's writings on education within the rigid framework of this interpretation makes for an uncomfortable fit. In support of her broader thesis, Batnitzky claims that for Rosenzweig, "the foremost goal of Jewish education [is] the self-contained, interconnected wholeness that comes from Jewish language, learning, and life."[16] Since, according to Batnitzky, "wholeness means separation and isolation," she argues the aim of Rosenzweig's educational vision must be the repossession of a "Jewish world separate from the rest of the world."[17]

Rosenzweig's writings on education seem to resist Batnitzky's interpretation. Take, for example, Rosenzweig's clarification that when he speaks of "the Jewish human being" "this does not mean a line drawn to separate us from other kinds of humanity. No dividing walls should rise here."[18] Or, his sardonic critique of Zionist attempts to isolate the Jewish human being:

> Since all salvation is seen in the establishment of an isolated state, in the meantime, Zionism reckons, let the Jewish human beings be isolated already here. Let there be interior as well as exterior forms of artificial exterritorialy here in Europe. Let there be opportunities for him to hike Jewishly, exercise Jewishly, speak Jewishly, and read Jewishly – *although* he lives in Germany.[19]

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[15] Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 99.

[16] Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation*, 186.

[17] Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation*, 182.

[18] Franz Rosenzweig, "Bildung Und Keine Ende' Translated into English as 'Towards a Renaissance of Jewish Learning," in *On Jewish Learning*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (Madison, WI.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1955), 56.

[19] Franz Rosenzweig, "'Of Bildung There Is No End' (Eccl. 12.12): Wishes Concerning the Bildungsproblem of the Moment, Especially Concerning the Question of Adult Education.," in *Textual Reasonings: Jewish Philosophy and Text Study at the End of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter Ochs and Nancy Levene, trans. Michael Zank (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002), 235.

Similar to Mendes-Flohr, Batnitzy accounts for Rosenzweig's mature attention to Jewish education by trying to show how the turn to Jewish particularity follows naturally from the theoretical arguments presented in *The Star*. In doing so she likewise leaves unchallenged Meinecke's assumption that Rosenzweig abandoned the broader demands of German intellectual history to devote himself, to use Mendes-Flohr's phrase, "exclusively to the community of his fellow Jews," i.e. to "the world of his blood," an isolated "Jewish world separate from the rest of the world."[20] This assumption, however, seems inconsistent, not only with what Rosenzweig says in his programmatic vision for the Lehrhaus, but also with what he actually did while serving as its director. In the winter semester of 1921, for example, Rosenzweig offered a course entitled "An Introduction to Jewish Thinking" to which he added the significant descriptive subtitle "A Summary Statement of the Totality of Philosophy."[21] This course was accompanied by a seminar on the foundations in the history of philosophy, especially German idealism from Kant to Hegel. If, as Batnitzky claims, the aim of the Lehrhaus was to encourage "an ongoing conversation about things Jewish," for Rosenzweig, this apparently meant more than "simply introducing adults to Hebrew and to Jewish texts and history."[22]

To be sure, Batnitzky and Mendes-Flohr help make clear that Rosenzweig was particularly resistant to the categorization of *The Star of Redemption* as a "nice Jewish book." Of course, this is not to say that *The Star* is not a Jewish book. It is simply not a "Jewish book" in

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[20] Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation*, 182.

[21] Franz Rosenzweig, *Franz Rosenzweig: Der Mensch und sein Werk. Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rachel Rosenzweig and Edith Rosenzweig-Scheidmann, vol. 1: Brief und Tagebücher (Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), pt. 1, 2:692f.; See Otto Pöggeler, "Between Enlightenment and Romanticism: Rosenzweig and Hegel," in *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1988), 188.

[22] Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation*, 184. According to Batnitzky, "The *Lehrhaus* would begin modestly by simply introducing adults to Hebrew and to Jewish texts and history…The aim of discussion would not be to find a solution to a particular problem posed by Jewish texts, history, or existence, but rather to produce a conversation. For Rosenzweig, the essence and core of Jewish life is precisely an ongoing conversation about things Jewish, a conversation to which the Enlightenment had put a stop" (184).

the conventional sense. When he initially published *The Star,* Rosenzweig was worried that it would obstruct his influence within the Jewish community. He was both surprised and disappointed by the praise and popular acceptance it received among his Jewish audience. In his impression, they either did not read the book or woefully misunderstood its intentions. To his cousin Hans Ehrenberg, he writes "again and again I am amazed at how little its readers know it. Everybody thinks it is an admonition to kosher eating."[23] He elsewhere reflects that *The Star* has been received "as a book of that part of the Jewish youth which by various paths seek to find its way back to the old law."[24] Trying to account for this, he suggests that both the popularity and misunderstanding of *The Star* has more to do with the author's life and deeds than what the text itself contains. Rosenzweig thus published the essay, "The New Thinking" in an attempt to dispel some of the confusions surrounding the reception of *The Star.* Concerning this essay he later admits to Ehrenberg that it is "really addressed to the Jewish reader" and that in it he "deliberately exaggerate[s]" in the "general philosophical" direction.[25] Against this backdrop, we can and should view his famous claim in "The New Thinking" that *The Star* is "merely a system of philosophy" as a deliberately exaggerated attempt to correct those who think *The Star* is merely "an admonition to kosher eating."

To repeat Rosenzweig's corrective description abstracted from the context of its intended audience can lead to a different set of confusions. *The Star* is not a "Jewish book" in the conventional sense, but neither is it a conventional "system of philosophy." What he purports to

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[23] March 11, 1925 to Hans Ehrenberg, in Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 146.

[24] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 110.

[25] March 11, 1925 to Hans Ehrenberg, in Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 145.

do in *The Star* is more radical that Kant's "Copernican Revolution" of thinking.[26] It is "a philosophy which wants to bring about the total renewal of thinking."[27]

Context of Rosenzweig's Critique

We should note that Rosenzweig's critique of the "Old Thinking" is not simply a matter of abstract intellectual debate. For him, the issue is a matter of existential import for Jews living in Europe. He also suggests that the "Enlightenment" ethos of tolerance, which allowed for their political emancipation, was directly related its philosophical devotion to universals.[28] As such, tolerance was predicated on a notion of sameness. It appealed to the "common humanity" of the Jews as justification for granting them equal civil rights. Yet, the champions of Enlightenment, while promoting the tolerance of Jews because of an assumed notion of the universality of human nature, were for the same reason decidedly intolerant of the Judaism of those Jews. Immanuel Kant, for example, in his description of *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone,* writes:

> Judaism fell so far short of constituting an era suited to the requirements of the *church universal*…as actually to exclude from its communion the entire human race, on the ground that it was a special people chosen by God for Himself—[an exclusiveness] which showed enmity toward all other peoples and which, therefore, evoked the enmity of all.[29]

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[26] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 110.

[27] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 110.

[28] Franz Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," in *Cultural Writings of Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Barbara E. Galli (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 105–112.

[29] Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, trans. Theodore M. Greene and Hoyt H. Hudson (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), 117.

For Kant and others, Judaism was seen to be the antithesis of everything the philosophy of the Enlightenment idolized. Opposed to the ideal of autonomous freedom, it was seen to be constituted in heteronomous obedience. Against their search for eternal, necessary, and universal truths, Judaism was portrayed as inherently particular and historically contingent. In short, Judaism seen as fundamentally irrational and it came to represent everything the new philosophy of the Enlightenment stood against. As such, the "Jewishness" of the Jew was portrayed as something which needed to be shed in order for the Jews to fully participate in German society. As a case in point, consider Johann Gottlieb Fichte's bold assertion: "I see absolutely no way of giving them [the Jews] civic rights, except perhaps if one chops off all of their heads and replaces them with new ones, in which there would not be one single Jewish idea."[30]

The widespread cultural assimilation of Jews that arose after their political emancipation in Europe was seen by many to be a precursor to the inevitable disappearance of the specific existence of the Jews as Jews. In fact, this was arguably part of the rationale for emancipating the Jews.[31] The historian, Theodor Mommsen, for example, argued that just as the separate Germanic tribes had been absorbed into a single nation, and the seventeenth-century French Huguenots had been assimilated, so would the Jews become an absorbed part of the new homogeneous German nation.

According to Rosenzweig, Moses Mendelssohn was "the first German Jew in the difficult sense that accounts for both words in which we German Jews take our German Jewishness."[32] Mendelssohn's story is important for Rosenzweig's understanding of his own situation as a Jew

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[30] Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "A State Within A State," in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 309.

[31] "trusting that human nature is the same in all people, I am convinced that in a few generations the Jews will be just like all other citizens in those states which will give them equal rights…" Dohm, 36.

[32] Franz Rosenzweig, "A Pronouncement for a Celebration of Mendelssohn (1929)," in *Cultural Writings of Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Barbara E. Galli (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 103.

living in Germany, both in the sense of assessing the difficulties that he faced and also as a cautionary tale for how to move through those difficulties in light of the ways in which Mendelssohn responded to the various challenges he encountered.

The Story of Moses Mendelssohn

The first challenge directed against Mendelssohn's Jewishness came from the young Johann Caspar Lavater. The story of Lavater's encounter and subsequent controversy with Mendelssohn can be briefly recounted as follows: In 1763, after finishing three years of theological education, the twenty-two-year-old Lavater set off on an extended tour through the German states with some of his friends. While in Berlin, he and his friends participated in several conversations with Mendelssohn, whose well known philosophical acuity had by that time earned him the popular title: "Socrates of Berlin." The group was impressed by the way in which Mendelssohn spoke of Jesus and criticized the treatment Jesus received at the hands of the Jews of his time. On the basis of these conversations, the young Lavater left Berlin with the impression that Mendelssohn was primed for conversion to Christianity. Six years later, when Charles Bonnet published, *La palingénésie philosophique ou idées sur l'état passé et sur l'état future des êtres vivans,* Lavater hurriedly translated into German its second part—a purported historical demonstration of the truth of the Christian religion, and sent the first copy to Mendelssohn, to whom he had dedicated the work with the following provocation:

> I make bold to ask, in the presence of the God of truth, your Creator and Father and my own, not that you read this work with philosophical impartiality, for this you will certainly do without my requesting it, but that you refute it publically insofar as you find yourself unable to accept the essential argumentation by which the facts of Christianity are proved; or, if you find this argumentation valid, that you do what wisdom, love of

truth, and honesty dictate, that you do what Socrates would have done if he had read this work and found it irrefutable.[33]

Despite the fact that Lavater, before receiving a reply, recanted of his importunity and directly apologized to Mendelssohn, the lasting impact of his public challenge could not be undone. Lavater had openly suggested what we can assume the majority of Mendelssohn's "Enlightened" peers must have been thinking—namely, that Mendelssohn's Jewish commitments seemed incompatible with the ideals of a true *Aufklärer.*

Though praised at the time for its grace and exemplary display of the Enlightenment's spirit of tolerance, Mendelssohn's official response to Lavater was essentially a dodge. He assures Lavater that he has not left his adherence to Judaism unexamined during his lifetime (as the language Lavater's challenge might suggest). To drive this point home, and to tacitly admonish Lavater's naïveté, he writes "I cannot comprehend what could bind me to so strict a religion, and one so generally despised, if I were not convinced in my heart of its truth."[34] Mendelssohn, however, refrains from offering an account of his convictions to the world; indicating that not only would engaging in polemics over religious questions be contrary to the spirit of tolerance, it would be unwise for a Jew. For, as he reminds Lavater, "I belong to an oppressed people that must rely on the good will of the dominant nation and beseech its protection and succor…Should they [the Jews], then, not be reluctant to contest the religion of the dominant majority, that is, to fall upon their protectors on the side that must be the most sensitive for virtuous men?"[35]   While confidently affirming that he could, if necessary, easily

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[33] Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Jubiläums-Ausgabe, ed. I. Elbogen, J. Guttmen, and E. Mittwoch (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1930), CII, 3. Cited in "Lessing and the Lavater-Mendelssohn Controversy," 202

[34] Moses Mendelssohn, "Open Letter to Deacon Lavater of Zurich from Moses Mendelssohn," trans. Richard Levy, *German History in Documents and Images* 2: From Absolutism to Napoleon, 1648–1815 (n.d.): 2.

[35] Mendelssohn, "Open Letter to Deacon Lavater of Zurich from Moses Mendelssohn," 6.

offer a riposte to Bonnet's arguments, Mendelssohn nevertheless ends his letter with a deliberately humble request:

> I hope you will free me from this unpleasant step and rather let me return to my natural peaceful situation. Were you to put yourself in my place and see the circumstances from my point of view rather than your own, you would grant the justice of my inclination. I would not willingly be tempted to overstep the limits that I have imposed upon myself with all due deliberation.[36]

As evidenced by the contents of his private correspondence, Mendelssohn could have indeed easily dispatched Bonnet's poorly reasoned arguments. That he chose not to do so publically is indicative of his prudent awareness of what would most likely follow if he took the bait and allowed Lavater to "draw [him] out of the crowd and lead [him] to a public arena that [he] very much wished never to enter." To be sure, Bonnet's so-called "proofs" for the factual basis of Christianity were laughably bad.[37] Nevertheless, the connotative thrust of his ultimate conclusion when accompanied by Lavater's enthusiastic commendation leaves a lasting impression. At the summation of his treatise, Bonnet boldly proclaims that if one were to reject his proofs, "[one] would have to invalidate the surest rules of logic and deny the most common maxims of reason."[38] Without endorsing Bonnet's specific arguments, Lavater's German audience could still accept the implication of this concluding pronouncement as it applied to Mendelssohn. That a philosopher schooled in the Enlightenment would remain a committed Jew (and thus reject

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[36] Mendelssohn, "Open Letter to Deacon Lavater of Zurich from Moses Mendelssohn," 7.

[37] For a summary of Bonnet's argument and the response Mendlessohn withheld, see Edward Flajole, "Lessing's Attitude in the Lavater-Mendelssohn Controversy," *PMLA* 73, no. 3 (1958): 202–206.

[38] *Herrn Carl Bonnets, verschiedener Akademien Mitglieds, philosophische Untersuchung der Beweise für das Christenthum: Samt desselben Ideen von der künftigen Glückseligkeit des Menschen*. Aus dem Französischen übersetzt und mit Anmerkungen herausgegeben von Johann Caspar Lavater. Nebst dessen Zueignungsschrift an Moses Mendelssohn, und daher entstandenen sämtlichen Streitschriften zwischen Hrn. Lavater, Moses Mendelssohn und Hrn. Dr. Kölbele…Frankfurt am Mayn, 1774. Gedruckt und zu finden bey Johannes Bayrhoffer, auf der kleinen Gallengass (p. 281 f.) in Flajole, "Lessing's Attitude in the Lavater-Mendelssohn Controversy," 204.

Bonnet's "proofs") would indeed seem to patently contravene "the surest rules of logic and the most common maxims of reason" in the eyes of his contemporaries. To openly defend his Judaism, against the dominant religious prejudice of his day, would invite attention and critique from opponents not nearly so sheepish or naïve as Lavater and Bonnet, which Mendelssohn understandably sought to avoid.

Though possessing a powerful mind, apparently Mendelssohn had a rather frail physique. Shortly after the Lavater affair abated, he suffered a paralytic episode which many suspect was induced by the stress he suffered during the controversy.[39] Mendelssohn's slow recovery kept him from engaging in any serious intellectual efforts and led to an eight-year hiatus in publishing. After re-emerging onto the public intellectual stage at the bequest of the Jewish community in Alsace (who sought his assistance in petitioning for Emancipation), the peace Mendelssohn had requested in his response to Lavater was short-lived.

For a second time, Mendelssohn found himself the recipient of a public summons to defend his commitment to Judaism or convert to Christianity; this time more aggressively stated than the first. In Lavater's challenge, the critique of Judaism was merely implicit. In the anonymously published "Search for Light and Right: An Epistle to Moses Mendelssohn," the Enlightenment prejudices against Judaism were explicitly stated. We now know that the author of this essay was the German satirist, August Friedrich Cranz. The prompt for Cranz's argument was Mendelssohn's renunciation of the right of excommunication for the Jewish community in his writings intended to accompany Christian Wilhelm Dohm's essay "Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews," which Mendelssohn had commissioned to aid the cause of the Jews in Alsace. Dohm had suggested that emancipated Jewish communities be

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[39] See Michael L. Morgan, "Mendelssohn," in *History of Jewish Philosophy*, ed. Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman, Routledge History of World Philosophies 2 (New York: Routledge, 1997), 592.

allowed to maintain a certain level of internal self-governance, including the right of excommunication. Mendelssohn, however, opposed the practice of religious coercion all together. In keeping with the spirit of tolerance, he argued that individuals have an absolute right to their own opinions and ideas, which they do not lose upon their entrance to any society, religious or civil. "True divine religion," Mendelssohn writes, "assumes no authority over ideas and opinions, gives and makes no claim to earthly goods, no rights of usufruct, possession and property. It knows no other power than the power to win and convince through reason and to render happy through conviction."[40] In Cranz's eyes, by making this statement, Mendelssohn obviated any claims to Judaism's continuing validity. For that reason, he issued his challenge to Mendelssohn, beginning with the following address:

> There was a time, when I could not help blaming Lavater's obtrusion…now, however, I scarcely can resist the temptation of wishing that Lavater would make another attack on you with all the force of his emphatic adjuration, so as actually to make a convert of you, or provoke you to refute a religion, which it seems, you are neither willing, nor (from conviction) able to embrace.[41]

Cranz's open letter to Mendelssohn is over 40 folio pages long, but the crux of his argument can be briefly re-stated as follows: Mendelssohn's claims to adhere to the "faith of his forefathers." Christianity *is* the faith of Mendelssohn's forefathers, "weeded of rabbinical institutions," improved and extended to a universal scope. What makes Judaism distinct and also separates Jews from all other people is their adherence to an "ecclesiastical system of statutory laws"

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[40] Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften Jubiläumsausgabe*, vol. 8 (Berlin and Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1972), 18 quoted in; Allan Arkush, "The Liberalism of Moses Mendelssohn," in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Jewish Philosophy*, ed. Michael L. Morgan and Peter Eli Gordon (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 38.

[41] August Friedrich Cranz, "Search for Light and Right: An Epistle to Moses Mendelssohn (1782)," in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 91.

which they believe to be divinely ordained. "Then good Mr. Mendelssohn," Cranz writes, "how can you profess attachment to the religion of your forefathers, while you are shaking its fabric, by impugning the ecclesiastical code established by Moses in consequence of divine revelation? The public, whose attention you have excited, is entitled to both an explanation of—and instruction in—so important a point…"[42] As it seems to Cranz, "if the ecclesiastical laws, assumed to have been given by revelation, form a part of the Jewish religion, we must admit those Rabbinisms also to do so: and, in that case, you, good Mr. Mendelssohn, have renounced the religion of your forefathers. One step more, and you will become one of us."[43]

To this instigation, Mendelssohn could not remain silent. In 1783, he published *Jerusalem,* to provide the explanation and instruction Cranz had demanded on behalf of the public. In the book, Mendelssohn attempts to show how Judaism is consonant with the religion of reason and makes a case for the acceptable rationality of remaining faithful to its "revealed legislation." Among other things, he also argued that Christianity is built upon Judaism, and thus reasons "if the latter falls, it must necessarily collapse with it into *one* heap of ruins."[44]

While scholars continue to debate the intellectual merits of Mendelssohn's position in *Jerusalem,*[45] for Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, it seems, Mendelssohn argued his case all too well. Yet, Mendelssohn's success at marrying Judaism with the religion of reason is, according to Jacobi, all the more reason to reject both. Lavater and Cranz attacked Mendelssohn from the standpoint of rationality, arguing that Mendelssohn's commitment to reason has brought him within a step from becoming "one of us," and that if he were truly consistent in his use of reason

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[42] Cranz, "Search for Light and Right," 93.

[43] Cranz, "Search for Light and Right," 94.

[44] Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem, or, on Religious Power and Judaism*, trans. Allan Arkush (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1983), 87.

[45] See, for example, Arkush, "The Liberalism of Moses Mendelssohn"; Steven Kepnes, *Jewish Liturgical Reasoning* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 23–44.

he would convert. Jacobi argued for the same conclusion, but from an opposite standpoint. Championing the "irrationalist" position of the *Strung und Drang*, Jacobi claimed the religion of reason, to which Mendelssohn had committed himself in *Jerusalem,* is really a veiled form of "nihilism," a term Jacobi coined. His argument, as Frederick Beiser summarizes, is that "if we were to be consistent and pushed our reason to its limits, then we would have to embrace atheism, fatalism, and solipsism. We would have to deny the existence of God, freedom, other minds, the external world, and even the existence of our own selves."[46] The only way to save ourselves from this fate, according to Jacobi, is a "leap of faith," a *salto mortale.*

The initial context for this final challenge to Mendelssohn was a dispute conducted through private correspondence between Jacobi and Mendelssohn over the implications of Gottfried Ephraim Lessing's confession to be a "Spinozist," which Jacobi claims to have heard shortly before Lessing's death. When the debate entered the public arena, it initiated the so-called "pantheism controversy" that shook the intellectual world of eighteenth-century Germany, engaging many of its most prominent minds for years to come. In his first letter to Mendelssohn, Jacobi claims to have had a conversation with Lessing about Spinoza in which Lessing revealed himself to be a believer in the *hen kai pan,* the "One and All," which he identified with the infinite, all-encompassing God of Spinoza.[47] In the ensuing debate between Mendelssohn and Jacobi, the strictly factual question about whether Lessing had confessed Spinozism was, as Beiser argues, rarely at issue. Rather, "Lessing was essentially a vehicle for Jacobi's criticisms of

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[46] Frederick Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 46.

[47] See Bruce Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question: Mendelssohn, Rosenzweig, and Beyond* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 80.

the Berlin *Aufklärer,* and in particular Mendelssohn, whom he rightly regarded as their leader."[48]

Tracing out the philosophical significance of the controversy, Beiser continues:

> If Lessing were shown to be a Spinozist, then every self-respecting *Aufklärer* would have
> to concede that reason was heading toward atheism and fatalism, an admission that in
> turn would threaten the most important dogma of the *Aufklärung:* the authority of
> reason.[49]

In Jacobi's interpretation, the guiding principle behind Spinoza's philosophy is the same governing principle behind all mechanistic or naturalistic philosophy: the principle of sufficient reason. According to Jacobi's reading, the principle states that "there must be some condition or set of conditions for everything that happens, such that given this condition or set of conditions, the thing occurs of necessity."[50] As Beiser contends, for Jacobi, "Spinoza's philosophy is the paradigm of metaphysics, the model of speculation, precisely because it consistently and universally applies the principle of sufficient reason, which is the basis of all rationality and discursive thought."[51] Along these lines, it would seem that we can conceive or understand something, only insofar as we can grasp the conditions of its existence. For that reason, if we are to be consistent, we must also assume that everything that exists is explicable or conceivable according to reason.

Despite all of Spinoza's talk of God and discussions of freedom, Jacobi nevertheless contends that consistent Spinozism necessarily leads to atheism and fatalism. If we believe in God, Jacobi argues, we must also believe that God is the cause of his own existence as well as

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[48] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 75.

[49] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 80.

[50] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 83.

[51] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 84.

everything else that exists. Similarly, if we believe in freedom, then we must suppose that the

will is spontaneous, acting as a cause without any prior cause to compel its action. In both cases,

then, it would seem that we would need to assume the existence of some unconditional or

spontaneous cause, which is precisely what a universal and consistent application of the principle

of sufficient reason would preclude. Thus, if we assume that God and freedom exist, we must

accept that they are completely inexplicable and incomprehensible through reason. As Beiser

writes, "we cannot explain or conceive them since that is tantamount to assuming that there is

some condition for the unconditioned, which is absurd. If we believe in God and freedom, then,

we have no choice but to admit that they are a mystery."[52]

Bruce Rosenstock offers another helpful account of Jacobi's critique of Spinozism and

the use of the principle of sufficient reason:

Jacobi's target is the idea that for every existing thing, there must be an explanation for

why it is the thing it is…Confusing conditions of explanation with conditions of

existence, philosophers then seek for a single cause of each thing's existence. Since each

source calls in turn for explanation, philosophers look for a single source for the

existence of *all* things. Spinozism, at least as Jacobi interprets it, is the position that there

can only be one ultimate source for all objects and that nothing exists independently of

this one source. According to this position, each finite object is a dependent part of an

infinite whole. The identity and existence of the part is entirely determined by the whole.

Self-determination is a chimera. Philosophy thus begins by trying to explain the unique,

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[52] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 84–85.

individual identities of things and, with Spinoza, it ends by denying the independent

existence of any individual. Put differently, explanation cancels *free* existence.[53]

If it is the case, as Beiser argues, that Jacobi's use of Lessing and invocation of Spinoza is

symbolic of "the consequence of all rational inquiry and criticism" and that "Jacobi might have

taken some other metaphysical system to illustrate his point (for example, Leibniz's) since he

believed that all metaphysical systems are ultimately identical (if they are only consistent), and

that they all have damaging consequences for morality and religion,"[54] then we might ask, what

is the symbolic significance of his use specifically of Spinoza to critique the rationalism of the

Enlightenment? According to Rosenstock, the answer has to do with Spinoza's Jewish heritage.

Jacobi argued for the connection between Spinoza's God and the Jewish God to evince the claim

that the hidden face of the God of the Enlightenment's religion of reason was that of the God of

Judaism.[55] In doing so, he gladly accepts Mendelssohn's argument, in *Jerusalem,* that Judaism

exemplifies the ideal form of the religion of reason; for he uses it to show precisely what he

thinks is wrong with the religion of reason.

      Bruce Rosenstock argues that Jacobi's assault on the Enlightenment's commitment to the

authority of reason and the so-called "Spinozism" to which it leads arises from a form of

"modern Gnosticism." He writes:

      What we see in Jacobi is the reappearance of a number of common gnostic motifs at an

      historic moment where the dominant religious world picture mirrored that of Greco-

      Roman antiquity, the matrix in which Gnosticism first arose. Specifically, the world

      pictures of both the Greco-Roman period and the Enlightenment pushed God into the

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[53] Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question*, 80–81.

[54] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 80.

[55] See Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question*, 86–87.

extramundane distance and left nature to be governed by inexorable laws—Fate—that

offered little room for human agency. The gnostic rebellion in both antiquity and the

Enlightenment took place in order to discover a path towards freedom and away from

fatalism…In the name of freedom and homecoming, Gnosticism posits a saving

knowledge that will lift the human beyond nature, and perhaps even lift nature itself

beyond its mechanized unfreedom, to a realm of Spirit. And in both antiquity and the

Enlightenment, the gnostic rebellion was launched against a God who stood apart from

the world and commanded its inhabitants to obey his laws, a God unlike the pagan deities

but very much like the God of the Jews.[56]

"Gnosticism," we should note, has come to be used as a catchall term for a wide ranging and

multi-faceted set of diverse independently organized groups. There did not exist a single and

unified gnostic church, canon, normative theology, or rule of faith.[57] With that in mind, it would

seem important to specify that Jacobi's position appears closest to the second century "gnostic"

leader Marcion. Mendelssohn had argued in *Jerusalem* that Christianity rests on a Jewish

foundation, making its fate dependent on the validity of the other's claims to revelation. Like

Marcion, however, Jacobi sought to distance the God revealed by Jesus Christ from the God of

the Jews. By connecting Spinoza's use of the principle of sufficient reason with naturalistic

philosophy, similar to Marcion, Jacobi suggests that the Enlightenment's God (i.e. the Jewish

God) is the God of the known world of creation, who rules through a system of unbending and

unmerciful laws. Likewise, Christ, according to Jacobi, comes from beyond the known (i.e.

conditioned), and therefore determined mechanistic empirical world to offer humanity salvation

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[56] Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question*, 87.

[57] See Antonia Tripolitis, *Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002), 119–142.

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and freedom from their enslavement to creaturely existence. This Christ, known only through the personal experience of faith, is the representative of the benevolent unconditioned God who exists beyond the world which is explicable to reason. The so-called "leap of faith" required for this salvation necessarily involves a leap away from reason, which, for Jacobi, like Marcion, entails the rejection of the God of Judaism. Bruce Rosenstock writes:

> Modern Gnosticism, like its ancient precursor, posits a two-tiered vision of the world, with the lower tier ruled over by a tyrannical deity who holds humans captive to the illusion that no other world exists and that they live to serve him and him alone. The upper tier is the realm of true deity, the one who offers redemption from enslavement to the false god of the lower realm. In order to gain redemption, all that is necessary is to recall one's authentic identity, to remember that one's home is in the higher realm of freedom, life, and light. The gnostic redeemer brings the knowledge (*gnosis*) necessary to shatter the illusions of this world, a knowledge that is really a reawakening of one's own inner power, one's inner divinity. In Jacobi's interpretation of Christianity, Christ is the gnostic redeemer figure.[58]

In Mendelssohn's response to Jacobi, he claims that Jacobi's intent in publishing his conversations with Lessing is to "convince him (Mendelssohn) of the dangerous consequences of all philosophy and to convert him to the party of faith (Christianity)."[59] In Mendelssohn's eyes, "Jacobi was just another *Schwärmer,* another pietistic mystic who wanted to debunk reason and to convert him to an irrational form of Christianity."[60] Apparently, he was so eager to publish his response and be finished with "Herr Jacobi," that he rushed out to his publishers after finishing

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[58] Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question*, 85.

[59] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 78.

[60] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 79.

his final draft without wearing a coat. He caught a chill after exposing himself to the cold and damp weather of Berlin and died a few days later. Some suggested that Jacobi was responsible for Mendelssohn's untimely death. As Frederick Beiser writes:

> According to reliable reports, Mendelssohn was so upset by Jacobi's *Briefe* that his health began to deteriorate. He had suffered from a nervous debility ever since his traumatic dispute with Lavater two decades earlier; but he became much worse after Jacobi's book appeared. So fragile was his health that only the slightest setback, the smallest imbalance, would mean death. It was for this reason that Mendelssohn's chill proved fatal. Even if Jacobi were not the incidental cause of Mendelssohn's death, he certainly had created its essential preconditions. As one report put it, perhaps too dramatically, 'He became a victim of his friendship with Lessing and died as a martyr defending the suppressed prerogative of reason against fanaticism and superstition. Lavater's importunity dealt his life its first blow; Jacobi completed the work.'[61]

Lavater and Cranz attacked Mendelssohn from a rationalist standpoint, with Lavater implying and Cranz explicitly stating that traditional observance of Judaism is irrational and contrary to the aims of the Enlightenment and that, if he were to be consistent as a philosopher in his application of reason, Mendelssohn would convert to Christianity. Jacobi took an opposite tack. He argued that the consistent use of reason, to which Mendelssohn had committed himself, inevitably leads to atheism, fatalism, and solipsism, and that the only escape is the "leap of faith" offered by his construal of Christianity, and thus Mendelssohn should convert.

It should be noted that at the heart of both the rationalist challenge (from Lavater and Cranz) and the irrationalist critique (represented by Jacobi) aimed at Mendelssohn is a presumed

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[61] Beiser, *The Fate of Reason*, 74.

dichotomy between law and gospel. According to Cranz, "armed ecclesiastical law still remains the firmest groundwork of the Jewish polity."[62] Despite the fact that Jews are no longer able to strictly enforce them, "still, it will not be denied, that Moses puts prohibitions and positive punishments on the neglect of religious observances. His statues ordain that the Sabbath-breaker, the reviler of the divine name, and other infringers of his law shall be stoned, and their souls exterminated from amongst his people."[63] He then contrasts Judaism with Christianity, claiming "that servile awe, extorted by penalties, cannot be an acceptable offering on the altar of the God of Love."[64] Significantly, Cranz suggests that the statutes in the Old Testament come not from Christianity's God of Love, but from "your [Mendelssohn's] law-giver, Moses...the drover, with the cudgel, who leads his people with a rod of iron, and would be sharp after anyone who had the least opinion of his own, and dared to express it by word or deed."[65] Jacobi's attack likewise moves within this Marcionitist antinomian vein. For Jacobi, the law-giver is the tyrannical (Jewish) god of the Enlightenment's religion of reason, who enslaves humanity within an illusory world governed by naturalistic determinism. He contrasts this god of the deterministic world venerated by "the Jews of speculative reason"[66] with the Christian God of Love who offers humans the salvation of freedom through inscrutable faith.

Tragedy Revisited: The Fate of Mendelssohn's Descendants

The story of Mendelssohn's engagements with German philosophy is a touchstone for Rosenzweig's own intellectual endeavors. Though he disagrees with Mendelssohn's solution to

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[62] Cranz, "Search for Light and Right," 93.

[63] Cranz, "Search for Light and Right," 92.

[64] Cranz, "Search for Light and Right," 92.

[65] Cranz, "Search for Light and Right," 92.

[66] A term used by Jacobi in his open letter to Fichte in 1799 to describe the philosophers who he views as descending from Spinoza, including Leibniz, Wolff, and Fichte. See Rosenstock, *Philosophy and the Jewish Question*, 95.

the challenges faced by those who are at once both German and Jewish, he nevertheless clearly uncovers the dangers inherent to the dilemma. That Mendelssohn's efforts failed, Rosenzweig contends, can be seen in the fact that his children chose to convert to Christianity. In his words:

> That which has happened to him [Mendelssohn] posthumously, in the heirs of his blood and of his name, out of whose brilliant rank, still blooming today in proud names, not a single one belongs to our community, this is the symbol of the menace into which he led the existence of our, his, spiritual descendants.[67]

Mendelssohn nevertheless remains important, for Rosenzweig, because it is Mendelssohn who makes clear the belief that "the fighting through and the living through of this danger are given to us as a task."[68] In Rosenzweig's depiction, the story of the relationship between Mendelssohn and Lessing is the story of the "tragedy of the Jew until today."[69] Yet, the children of a different "un-Mendelssohnian" era "must again venture upon new paths."[70]

Rosenzweig articulates the problem he sees in Mendelssohn's position in a series of lectures he gave in 1919 on Lessing's *Nathan the Wise.* In Lessing's play, Nathan, the Jewish protagonist intended to represent Mendelssohn, is challenged by a Christian (analogous to Lavater and Cranz), and in his response issues the famous question: "Are Jews and Christians first and foremost Jews and Christians, and human only second?" The whole thrust of Lessing's argument in *Nathan the Wise,* which Rosenzweig also identified with Mendelssohn's position, was predicated on the notion that one's adherence to particular religious traditions and practices

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[67] Rosenzweig, "A Pronouncement for a Celebration of Mendelssohn (1929)," 103–104.

[68] Rosenzweig, "A Pronouncement for a Celebration of Mendelssohn (1929)," 104.

[69] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 109.

[70] Rosenzweig, "A Pronouncement for a Celebration of Mendelssohn (1929)," 104.

is only a secondary and incidental aspect of one's primary identity as a human being.[71] The "tolerance" advocated therein, as Rosenzweig restates it, is "because we are all the same, therefore let us mutually concede to each other the harmless difference of dress, food, and drink."[72] The friendship between Lessing and Mendelssohn, according to Rosenzweig, was founded on the "basis of the common abstraction of their positive religions."[73] However, in the demand of the present time, Rosenzweig contends, "we can no longer *want* to remain naked human beings." Rather, "we must know it and make it come true that we are…living Jewish human beings." As he writes, "the Jewish human being—he has (or must have), himself the power of a fact."[74]

With this discussion of "living Jewish human beings" needing to have "the power of fact," it may seem as though Rosenzweig is simply making an assertion of the need for Jewish particularity over and against the totalizing aims of philosophical rationality. That is why it is important to remain aware, as Rosenzweig certainly was, of the dispute between Jacobi and Mendelssohn. Rosenzweig has often been interpreted as a kind of Jewish "existentialist" who rejected philosophy for the sake of religion, and reason for the sake of revelation. However, we should note, that is precisely the position advocated by Jacobi. To be sure, Rosenzweig largely

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[71] An example of this type of thinking can be clearly seen in the letter written by Abraham Mendelssohn, son of Moses Mendelssohn, to his daughter Fanny upon her confirmation into the Lutheran Church: "The outward form of religion your teacher has given you is historical, and changeable like all human ordinances. Some thousands of years ago the Jewish form was the reigning one, then the heathen form, and now it is the Christian…We have educated ou and your brothers and sister in the Christian faith, because it is the creed of most civilized people, and contains nothing that can lead you away from what is good, and much that guides you to love, obedience, tolerance, and resignation…By pronouncing your confession of faith you have fulfilled the claims of society on you, and obtained the name of a Christian. Now be what your duty as a human being demands of you…" Abraham Mendelssohn, "Why I Have Raised You as a Christian: A Letter to His Daughter (c. July 1820)," in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 258.

[72] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 108.

[73] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 109.

[74] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 107.

accepts Jacobi's assessment that unchecked philosophical rationalism leads to a kind of nihilism, however, he does not follow Jacobi's proposed leap of faith into irrational fideism. As he writes in the introductory paragraph of *The Star*, "man does not at all want to escape from some chain; he wants to stay, he wants—to live."[75] Against "the Jews of speculative reason," Jacobi had argued that if we rely on the principle of sufficient reason, "we remain, as long as we grasp things conceptually, in a chain of conditioned conditions," and there is no way at arriving at what is not conditioned (i.e. God and freedom). The only means of escape, for Jacobi, comes from beyond the world known to reason, and is made available only through an inscrutable experience of faith. In contrast, Rosenzweig argues that the creature that fears for its life in this world, wants to know nothing of the "world beyond," and against the "Gnostic" tendency to posit a dualism between matter and spirit in modern philosophy, he writes "the fear of death knows nothing of such a separation in body and soul…and wants to know nothing about a deflection of the fear onto a mere 'body.'"[76]

Schelling suggests that Jacobi had a "panic-stricken terror of nature" and utter incomprehension of even "the thought of matter as living," which doomed his speculations about the supernatural to a vitiated one-sidedness, connected with nothing real or living.[77] Rosenzweig, in contrast to Jacobi, maintains that "man should not cast aside from him the fear of the earthly; in his fear of death he should—stay…as long as he lives on earth, he should also remain in fear of the earthly."[78] Though Jacobi may have correctly identified a problem with rationalism, both

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[75] Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. Barbara E. Galli (Madison, WI.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 9.

[76] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 9.

[77] See Dale E. Snow, *Schelling and the End of Idealism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), 212.

[78] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 10.

Rosenzweig and Schelling reject his attempt to escape these limitations and dangers through a "leap of faith" beyond the known world.

Schelling claims that Jacobi's proposed solution, the reliance on faith (*Glaube*), or "this comfortable immediate knowledge, by means of which one is lifted over all difficulties with One Word," was "the worst present Jacobi gave to philosophy."[79] As Dale Snow writes, in Schelling's portrayal of the history of modern philosophy, Jacobi is the paradigmatic example of "all those who wanted to skip the hard work of philosophizing and rush unimpeded into the arms of the highest reality"[80] As Rosenzweig contends, the task is not to find an escape from the earthly, but to remain and live.

With this discussion of Jacobi in mind, we are better equipped to understand the meaning of Rosenzweig's statements in the letter to Hans Ehrenberg, mentioned above, concerning the end of *The Star*:

> The "Life" of the ending word is hardly the opposite of "philosophy."…In this life there can also be philosophizing; and why not? (I do it myself). [The aim of *The Star*] is anti-mystical, but not anti-intellectual.[81]

Given the work of scholars like Yudit Kornberg Greenberg and Moshe Idel, which has brought to light significant affinities and influences of the Kabbalistic tradition in Rosenzweig's thought, it is important to clarify here what Rosenzweig means by "anti-mystical." The "mysticism" to which Rosenzweig is opposed here is the pietistic mysticism of the *Schwärmerei,* who reject rationality and claim a certainty of faith from immediate experience. According to Rosenzweig, with the rise of historical criticism, "miracle…lost its credibility as historical fact." "But," he

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[79] F. W. J. Schelling, *Schellings Werke*, ed. Mandred Schröter, vol. 10 (Munich: Beck, 1927), 172; in Snow, *Schelling and the End of Idealism*, 211.

[80] Snow, *Schelling and the End of Idealism*, 212.

[81] Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy*, 177.

continues, "since the end of the seventeenth century, the new pietist mysticism had prepared a new notion of faith that was as good as independent of the historical objectivity of miracle."[82] According to Rosenzweig, despite its continuing use of Luther's language, this "pietist mysticism" constituted a "new faith." For, he writes:

> on the one hand, it sacrificed Luther's anchoring of living faith in the solid foundation of the past and tried to concentrate faith entirely in the present of lived experience; and on the other hand, through an emphasis quite opposite to Luther's teaching, it let this present experience flow into the future of "practical" life, and moreover…it expected to give incontestably to faith the objective support that Luther had tried to give it by founding faith on the past attested to in Scripture.[83]

Since we might assume that Jacobi and other advocates of similar forms of "pietist mysticism" are not terribly concerned with maintaining "orthodoxy," Rosenzweig's suggestion that their new faith departs from its Lutheran roots would not be a significant criticism in itself. However, Rosenzweig also maintains that "For any normal sensibility, there is…in [this] mysticism something disquietingly and even objectively dangerous."[84] For Jacobi, faith is a matter of personal unmediated experience that is beyond the scope of rational inquiry. When describing the apparent dangers of mysticism, Rosenzweig writes, "[the mystic's] soul is open to God, but because it is open only to God, it is invisible for the rest of the world and cut off from it."[85] In other words, just as Jacobi's immediate certainty of faith remains inscrutable and ineffable, the mystic's soul remains invisible to and cut off from the world (i.e. the realm of rational inquiry).

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[82] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 109.

[83] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 110.

[84] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 223.

[85] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 223.

For that reason, Rosenzweig writes, "to see nothing other than the one track running from God to him and from him to God, he [the mystic] must deny the world, and since it will not let itself be denied, he must actually dis-own it." Rosenzweig elaborates, "he must treat it as if… it were not a creation of God, as if it had not been placed there for him by the same God whose love he claims; it is not that he can, but that he must treat it like a world created by the devil."[86] As noted above, there are striking similarities between the teachings of Jacobi and Marcion, which Rosenzweig here suggests are likewise found, at least implicitly, within "pietist mysticism."

Already in Rosenzweig's time, to find oneself in league with Marcion would not in itself be universally regarded as a problem. In fact, many, like Adolf von Harnack, proudly took up the banners of Marcionitism and became champions of its cause.[87] To be sure, these "neo-Marcionites" would not say the world was the creation of an evil god, but that is simply because they could no longer conceive of the world as *creation* at all in any meaningful sense. As Schelling suggests, "Jacobi's concept of God…is incapable of explaining creation, since a God completely perfect in itself could only be lessened in perfection by the act of creation."[88] Without being able to account for the world's being-created (by God or the devil), as Rosenzweig claims, "[the mystic] must treat it as if it were not created, but instead put at his disposal, just to provide for needs of the immediate moment when he grants it a glance." And "this relationship of the pure mystic with the world," Rosenzweig notes, "is fundamentally an immoral relationship."[89]

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[86] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 223.

[87] Adolf von Harnack, *Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God*, trans. John Steely and Lyle Bierma (Durham, N.C.: Labyrinth Press, 1990).

[88] Snow, *Schelling and the End of Idealism*, 210.

[89] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 223–224.

Rosenzweig's "Return" Revisited

Much attention has been paid to Rosenzweig's near conversion to Christianity. The provocation for his initial decision to convert came from a heated conversation with Eugene Rosenstock in Leipzig in 1913. Throughout his correspondences and personal reflections, Rosenzweig frequently refers to this *Leipziger Nachtgespräch* (Leipzig night conversation) as a transformative event in his life. Until very recently,[90] scholars have almost unanimously accepted and repeated the account of this conversation given by Nahum Glatzer.[91] Glatzer's account adopts the hagiographic framework of popular re-tellings of (Christian) conversion stories in which a dogmatic zealot (e.g. Saul of Tarsus) or hubristic intellectual (e.g. Augustine) has a powerful personal religious experience that convinces them to abandon their former lives and the things of this world for a higher "spiritual" life devoted to God.

Glatzer's two-part rendition of the story of Rosenzweig's return to Judaism is as follows: Rosenzweig entered the Leipzig conversation as a fully assimilated Jew, "trained in the sciences, in logical criticism, and in methods of modern historical research, could not conceive of a Western scholar 'accepting religion.'"[92] During the conversation Rosenzweig took up a position "defending a belief in autonomous scholarship and the relativist position of philosophy against Rosenstock's faith based on revelation." Yet, Rosenzweig found his intellectual equal in Rosenstock, who was "not a naïve believer and not a romantic, but a scholar and thinker, [who] was able to accept religion as his personal answer." Being so impressed with Rosenstock's

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[90] The following analysis closely parallels the argument presented by Benjamin Pollock in his recent paper "World-Denial and World Redemption: Franz Rosenzweig's Early Marcionism" presented at Boston University in 2011. A video of the paper presentation is available on "youtube."

[91] Gordon, "Rosenzweig Redux: The Reception of German-Jewish Thought."

[92] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, xiv.

simple faith, Rosenzweig then realized the poverty of his position; and decided that he must convert to Christianity.

The climactic reversal in the second part of the story, for which there is no convincing evidence, has become the standard interpretive key for countless introductory presentations of Rosenzweig's thought: Wanting to come to Christianity "as a Jew" and not "a Pagan," Rosenzweig, so the story goes, decided to attend a Yom Kippur service at a small orthodox synagogue in Berlin before his baptism. According to Glatzer, during the liturgy he had a profound religious experience and "left the services a changed person." Glatzer writes, "this event came about with that suddenness and in that spirit of absolute finality reported in great conversions…what he had thought he could find in the church only—faith that gives one an orientation in the world—he found on that day in the synagogue."[93] Though he acknowledges the fact that "[Rosenzweig] never mentioned this event to his friends and never presented it in his writings," Glatzer, counter-intuitively, suggests this silence is a sign of the immense personal significance of the event for Rosenzweig. As he writes, "the very communicative Rosenzweig, who was eager to discuss all issues and to share all his problems with people, did not wish to expose the most subtle moment of his intellectual life to analyses and 'interpretations.'"[94]

We need not doubt the possibility that Rosenzweig had a profound experience during a Yom Kippur service in 1913 to question Glatzer's interpretation of the meaning of that event for Rosenzweig. Given the previous discussion of Jacobi and Mendelssohn, we should note that there are striking similarities between Glatzer's interpretation and Jacobi's description of the certainty of faith provided by an immediate experience which is beyond the realm of rational inquiry. When informing Ruldolf Ehrenberg that he has taken back his decision to convert to

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[93] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, xviii.

[94] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, xviii.

Christianity, Rosenzweig writes: "It seems to me no longer necessary and, therefore, in my case, no longer possible. So I am remaining a Jew." In Glatzer's re-telling of this, he adds the commentary: "'No longer necessary' might still imply an intellectual decision; 'no longer possible' hints at a radical personal experience…this conviction betrays a certainty that does not come to a man through thinking; it points to a profound, instantaneous event."[95] Like Jacobi, Glatzer not only invokes the idea of a non-rational immediate experience giving certainty to faith, he presents it as a means of escape from the deterministic world of law. As he writes:

> In the concrete historical world in which Rosenzweig started to think philosophically and theologically 'there seemed to be no room for Judaism.' But then, again, in the world, subjected to historical laws, conditioned by historical forces, there was no room for an unmediated free relation between man and God. In this dilemma, Rosenzweig discovered metahistoric Judaism.[96]

This reference to "metahistoric Judaism" comes from Glatzer's interpretation of certain themes found in Part 3 of *The Star*. Without going into further detail, let it suffice to say that there are good reasons to suspect that whatever Rosenzweig may mean in his discussions of Judaism's relationship to time and history in part 3 of *The Star*, it is not a Jacobian "leap of faith" that escapes from the limitations of the world through an unmediated relation to God. As we have seen above, such world-denial is precisely what Rosenzweig views as the immoral inevitability of "pietist mysticism." In fact, according to Rosenzweig's own account of the *Leipziger Nachtgespräch,* it appears as though what Rosenstock convinced him to reject was not philosophy, but exactly that Jacobian form of dangerous "neo-Marcionitism." As he recalls:

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[95] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, xix.

[96] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, xxii.

In that night's conversation Rosenstock pushed me step by step out of the last relativist

positions that I still occupied, and forced me to take an absolute standpoint. I was inferior

to him from the outset, since I had to recognize for my part too the justice of his attack. If

I could then have buttressed my dualism between revelation and the world with a

metaphysical dualism between God and the Devil, I should have been unassailable. But I

was prevented from doing so by the first sentence of the Bible. This piece of common

ground forced me to face him. This has remained even afterwards, in the weeks that

followed, the fixed point of departure. Any form of philosophical relativism is now

impossible to me.[97]

From this and other references, it appears as though what unsettled Rosenzweig that night was

not Rosenstock's inspiring display of simple personal faith, but an insistent and unyielding

"attack" which "forced" Rosenzweig to take a stand and face him. The language Rosenzweig

uses to speak of it contrasts starkly with Glatzer's pietistic depiction.[98] In a letter to Rosenstock,

Rosenzweig suggests that what offends Rosenstock is that Rosenzsweig has not given an account

for "the bond between your correspondent and the Jew." He then tells Rosenstock:

You have made too light of it before (the *skandalon* is an old story with you), because

you simply put "the Jew" in inverted commas and lay him on one side as a kind of

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[97] *Judaism Despite Christianity: The 1916 Wartime Correspondence Between Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy & Franz Rosenzweig* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 32–33.

[98] Glatzer writes: "In the course of a conversation between the two friends, the problem was brought up of the man in *The Miracles of Antichrist* by Selma Lagerlöf. Rosenzweig asked: What would you do when all answers fail? Rosenstock replied, with the simplicity of faith: I would go to the next church, kneel and try to pray. These simple words did more than all the previous discussions concerning reason and faith, history and revelation, Hegel and Nietzsche, to convince Rosenzweig that Christianity was a living power in the world" (xv).; At the end of Lagerlöf's story, the "old pope" looks through "the veil of chance which shrouds future events and saw what was hidden behind it" -the "antichrist" is really socialism, which the church will let run its course in the world and then, in the end, lead it to Christ. I suspect that what Eugen and Franz were fighting about was whether Christians can claim an exclusive view of the future to the extent that they know all things will be led to Christ. So, Eugen asks Franz why he remains a Jew when Judaism's fulfillment is found in Christianity. Later, after much consideration, Rosenzweig realizes that he does not need to convert, and so will "remain a Jew."

personal idiosyncracy, or at best, as a pious romantic relic of the posthumous influence of

a dead great-uncle. You make it difficult for us both, because you ask me to lay bare a

skeleton that can only prove through its organic life that flesh and blood grow and flow

round it. You can force a living being to commit this anatomical Hara-kiri simply from a

moralistic compulsion and not from friendly interest; you did once rightly compel me to

do it in Leipzig in 1913, when you would not seriously believe me, and did not allow

anything I said to be really my own words, until I myself was horrified at how rotten was

my flesh and how torpid my blood; then I myself had to turn to an examination of my

anatomy.[99]

What "really happened" the during the conversation that night is not for us to know, but we can

nevertheless construct a narrative (as a hypothesis) from what we do know that makes better

sense of the language used in Rosenzweig's various references to the *Leipziger Nachtgespräch*

and helps to correct the confusions about Rosenzweig's thought promulgated by Glatzer's story.

Rosenzweig and Rosenstock met at a conference in Baden-Baden during which Rosenzweig

offered a sweeping Hegelian reconstruction of European history that his peers found "thoroughly

intolerable."[100] Re-evaluating his position while working on his dissertation (on Hegel and the

State), in a letter to Hans Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig mentions Hegel's tendency to see the hand of

God in history and, in contrast, asserts: "God does not redeem man through History, but actually

as the God of Religion."[101] In the letter preceding Rosenzweig's response given above,

Rosenstock insinuates that Rosenzweig views his religion as a "private matter" in a way

comparable to the model offered in Lessing's *Nathan.* The problem with such a model, he then

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[99] *Judaism Despite Christianity*, 98.

[100] See David N. Myers, *Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 80.

[101] See Myers, *Resisting History*, 80.

argues, is that "private religion leads to a privation of religion" by placing religion within a secret "inner sanctuary" into which "not even the individual himself" has access. In so doing, it keeps one from "the most decisive matter…i.e. the meaning of this our life."[102] In Rosenzweig's response, before the passage quoted above, he tells Rosenstock that "I grant you frankly everything that you say about the public side of religion, right up to the details of your way of putting it"; and admits: "it is only thanks to you that it is obvious to me today."

From these details we can imagine a situation in which, during the *Leipziger Nachtgespräch,* Rosenzweig found himself in a position, where, much like Mendelssohn, he was challenged to provide an account for his Jewish life, i.e. why he remains a Jew. This demand is analogous to the request that "the Jew" commit anatomical Hara-kiri (the Japanese form of ritual suicide committed to protect the honor of one's clan) insofar as it asks him to lay bare his "skeleton," i.e. that by which his fleshly life is structured and organized. Rosenzweig tried defending himself with a relativistic position akin to Jacobian "pietist mysticism," which makes faith a "private matter" of inscrutable immediate experience. However, when pressed, he could not maintain its implied dualism between revelation and the world or his separation between History and the redemption offered by the "God of religion." The first line of the Bible, "in the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth," prevented him from falling back into the Marcionite metaphysical dualism between God and the Devil, which, Rosenstock's prodding had made clear, follows directly from his Jacobian world/revelation dualism. In his "Paralipomena," Rosenzweig in fact writes: "What it means that God created the world and is not just the God of

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[102] Rosenstock-Huessy, *Judaism Despite Christianity*, 94.

revelation – this I know precisely out of a Leipzig night conversation on 7.7.13. I was at that time on the best path to Marcionitism."[103]

So what does it mean, for Rosenzweig, that God created the world? In our narratival revision, it becomes apparent that what Rosenzweig came to see was *not* that he could escape the limitations of the law-governed historical world through the acceptance of "religion" as his "personal answer"; but precisely that he *could not* and *should not* try to escape from worldly limitations or accept that his "religion" is nothing more than a "personal answer." Such a flight from things earthly is precluded by what is revealed *in the beginning* —God created the heavens and the earth. And precisely for that reason, the redemption promised through revelation cannot simply be the redemption of the individual's soul; it must be*, in the end*, the redemption of the world. This, in short, meant Rosenzweig, as he would later write to Rosenstock, had to "take the world seriously."[104]

In the notes for his lectures on Lessing's *Nathan,* Rosenzweig suggests that Mendelssohn had been "covering up" the fact that he is a Jew prior to his public dispute with Lavater. With the Lavater controversy, however, he claims we can see "the emergence of the Jewish consciousness in Mendelssohn."[105] Rosenzweig could have very well said the same about himself after the *Leipziger Nachtgespräch.* Yet, to be sure, in his eyes, the emergence of his Jewish consciousness did not constitute the beginning of his Jewish life. In fact, in the same letter to Rosenstock mentioned in the preceding paragraph, he explicitly denies what Glatzer suggests in his depiction of Rosenzweig's "act of conversion," which is that he broke from his past in 1913 and "had to

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[103] (Rosenzweig, Paralipomena, 1916)

[104] Rosenzweig to Rosenstock-Heussy 6.30.19

[105] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 111.

become a Jew."[106] On the contrary, Rosenzweig maintains, "I am a Jew neither through nor since 1913, but rather actually, insofar as I am, from 1886 [the year of his birth]…My Judaism was *never* reborn. My worldliness was reborn at that time, this is correct."[107]

As it would seem, Rosenzweig, no longer able to hide behind a relativistic notion of religion as a "personal answer", felt compelled during the Leipzig night conversation to explain the relevance of his Judaism for his life in the world. In doing so, he was horrified at how moribund his Jewish life appeared. This prompted him to turn to an examination of "his anatomy," i.e. to make "his Judaism" an object of study. Like human anatomy, Rosenzweig speaks of his Judaism as something he has always had; and thus, becoming aware of it is not at all the same as becoming it.

We find confirmation for this re-telling of events Rosenzweig's later reflections on the significance of that night in 1913. In the summer of 1920, Rosenzweig met with Friedrich Meinecke in Berlin to explain why he had turned down Meinecke's offer to help him secure university lectureship. Feeling as though he had failed to convey the "personal necessity of [his] recent course of life," he wrote to Meinecke shortly after his return to try again, and, in his words, to "spread myself out before you so that you may see me as I am."[108] As he describes it: "In 1913 something happened to me for which *collapse* is the only fitting name. I suddenly found myself on a heap of wreckage, or rather I realized that the road I was then pursuing was flanked by unrealities." In the wake of this "collapse," which we can assume was prompted by his Leipzig conversation with Rosenstock, Rosenzweig tells Meinecke that he began a search for his self by descending into the "vaults of [his] being." Continuing, he explains:

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[106] Glatzer describes Rosenzweig as "a man who broke with his personal history, and—in an act of conversion—had to become a Jew."

[107] Rosenzweig to Rosenstock-Heussy 6.30.19

[108] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 98.

I approached the ancient treasure chest whose existence I had never wholly forgotten, for

I was in the habit of going down at certain times of the year to examine what lay

uppermost in the chest: those moments had all along been the supreme moments of my

life. But now this cursory inspection no longer satisfied me; my hands dug in and turned

over layer after layer, hoping to reach the bottom of the chest. They never did. They dug

out whatever they could and I went away with armfuls of stuff—forgetting, in my

excitement, that it was the vaults of myself I was thus plundering! Then I climbed back

again to the upper stories and spread out before me what treasures I had found: they did

not fade in the sheer light of day. These, indeed, were my own treasures, my most

personal possessions, things inherited, not borrowed! By owning them and ruling over

them I had gained something entirely new, namely the right to live.[109]

This letter to Meinecke is one of the most frequently cited pieces of Rosenzweig's

correspondence and, more often than not, it is woven into the concluding segment of the great

story about Rosenzweig's "conversion" in which he rejects the abstract intellectual life to devote

himself exclusively to the community of his fellow Jews. I intend to challenge this popular

narrative in the next section of my dissertation.

At this point, it would be helpful to briefly restate the key points of our re-examination of

Rosenzweig's life and thought thus far. To the extent that the revelation that God created the

world forced Rosenzweig to see that he must "take the world seriously" after the *Leipziger

Nachtgespräch,* this means that Rosenzweig could not ignore the significance of his worldliness,

i.e. his everyday embodied life, in relation to his "faith." That also means that his "faith," or

more properly stated, in a term he will later use, his "being-Jewish" (*Judesein*), cannot be

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[109] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 95–96.

delimited within a "private" realm separated from his "public" life; and it cannot be a secondary or merely incidental aspect of his primary identity as a human being (or national citizen). Nor can such a dualism (between private and public life or particular faith and universal humanity) be buttressed with a modern "neo-Marcionite" dualism between revelation and the world, which proposes "faith" grounded in an irrational and inscrutable "subjective" experience of revelation as a means of escape from the "objective" law-governed world. Additionally, as we have already begun to see, collapsing this dualism leads to a necessary critique of the liberal ideal of "tolerance" (which, in practice, actually proves to be highly intolerant of genuine difference). In fact, if we continue tracing out the implications, we discover that taking seriously the belief that the God made known in revelation is also the God of creation, not only precludes Marcionitism and the privatization of "religion," it also suggests that a thinking oriented in the world by revelation cannot be separated from all other disciplines which seek to disclose something true about the world. That would apply not only to the "humanities," e.g. philosophy, literature, and art, but also to the so-called "objective sciences" as well, e.g. biology, psychology, and medicine. This latter point is often overlooked, but it is one which I believe Rosenzweig took very seriously. The "new thinking," he says, aims to bring about a "total renewal of thinking," but few seem to have taken him at his word. Yet, included within the examples he provides which he claims share a similar "method" are works in Applied Psychology,[110] Theoretical Biology,[111] and the Philosophy of Medicine.[112]

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[110] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Angewandete Seelenkunde* (Applied psychology), in *Die Sprache des Menschengeshlects: Eine leibhaftige Grammatik in vier Teilen* (The language of the human race: An incarnate grammar) (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1963) I, 739-810.

[111] Ruldolf Ehrenberg, *Theoretische Biologie vom Standpunkte der Irreversibilität* (Theoretical biology from the standpoint of irreversibility) (Berlin: Springer, 1923)

[112] Viktor von Weizsäcker, *Philosophy of the Physician,* in *Gesammelte Schriften,* ed. Peter Achilles (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1988)

Turning from the Academy

Given the ambitions aims of Rosenzweig's proposed "new thinking" to bring about a "total renewal of thinking," it would seem as though we have cause to question the common assumption, articulated by Richard Cohen, that "Rosenzweig did not give up his academic career for academic reasons." According to Cohen:

> It is as a Jew, in his new-found appreciation for the all-embracing character of an authentic Judaism, that Rosenzweig turned away from the academy… Rosenzweig was no longer tempted by the unlimited openness of the university, no longer tantalized by its forever uncommitted freedom… A deeper undercurrent was drawing Rosenzweig into a more turbulent ocean, making demands that could no longer be met with intellectual abstractions alone. That ocean was Jewish life, flesh and blood interactions within the community, which was his own, a living Jewish life in the Jewish community.[113]

It is certainly true that Rosenzweig dedicated himself to the formation and renewal of Jewish life in Germany, specifically the Jewish community in Frankfurt; and the desire to respond to the needs and concerns of this living Jewish community was undoubtedly a central motivation in Rosenzweig's decision to change his career paths. It is therefore safe to say that it was not *only* for academic reasons that Rosenzweig turned down an academic career. The problem with the common story of Rosenzweig's "conversion" re-told by Cohen, however, is that it can make it seem as though there were not *any* academic reasons for why Rosenzweig turned down Meinecke's offer. The story suggests that there was nothing inherently wrong with the way academic scholarship and education were being conducted during Rosenzweig's day, he was simply called to another vocation. More significantly, the story of Rosenzweig's "turn" from the

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[113] Richard A. Cohen, "Rosenzweig's Rebbe Halevi: From the Academy to the Yeshiva," *Judaism: A Quarterly Journal of Jewish Life and Thought* (September 22, 1995).

academy implicitly conveys the problematic assumption that those who want to be involved in the service of "real life" must abandon the intellectual abstractions of the scholarly world. Cohen, in fact, explicitly refers to the existence of "fundamental dichotomies" that structured Rosenzweig's mature understanding of Judaism and Jewish education:

> between objective and the personal; between the objective resources of historiography and an ineffable but rich inheritance; between the autonomy of cognition, its open questioning and possibilities, and the specific demands of and hence the service required by time, place, and person; between the abstraction and tentativeness of history and philosophy and the immediacy and commitment of Judaism; between the fashions and tendencies of scholarship and the real demands of flesh and blood persons.[114]

It is still common today for people to accept as a given the apparent disconnection between the "real life" of religious communities and the intellectual work of academic scholars. That separation is precisely what Rosenzweig sought to overcome in his vision for the Lehrhaus. In what follows I will attempt to show that it was not a loss of interest in the "unlimited openness" and "uncommitted freedom" of the academy which preceded Rosenzweig's turn to the service of "real life" in his Jewish community. Rather, the lack of openness and freedom, fostered by the separation of specialized disciplines and the prevalence of "Enlightenment" prejudices, would have precluded the possibility of Rosenzweig pursuing his revolutionary "new thinking" in the existing university system of his day. It was precisely that method of "new thinking" which Rosenzweig sought to promote through the method of "new learning" offered at the Lehrhaus. And integral to Rosenzweig's method(s) is the necessary engagement with the unexpected questions, concerns and comments of "real" living human beings. Put simply, Rosenzweig did

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[114] Cohen, "Rosenzweig's Rebbe Halevi."

not abandon the pursuit of intellectual life when he became the founding director of the

Lehrhaus, rather, he saw the Lehrhaus as the place where his envisioned new life of thinking and

learning could begin.

Let us return to look at exactly what Rosenzweig turned down when he turned away from

the academy. Almost all of Rosenzweig's interpreters refer to the fact that after the publication of

Rosenzweig's dissertation, Friedrich Meinecke made an unsolicited offer to help him secure an

academic post. To the best of my knowledge, none have commented on the oddity of Meinecke's

gesture or questioned the motivation or implicit meaning underlying his action. The fact that

contemporary academics see nothing strange in Meinecke's unsolicited offer to help Rosenzweig

secure a university lectureship is itself strange. Is it normal for dissertation directors to make job

arrangements for their students without even being asked to do so? Most interpreters simply say

something akin to this: "[Meinecke] was most impressed with Rosenzweig's philosophical and

historical acuity, and offered to arrange a university lectureship for him."[115] Yet, if Meinecke

really did think the scholarship in Rosenzweig's recently published book (which, presumably, he

had already read as a dissertation) was so impressive, why would he think that Rosenzweig

needed his help to secure an academic position?

The fact of the matter is that Meinecke's offer was probably not so innocently beneficent.

The reality of the academic environment in Germany at that time was incredibly hostile toward

Jews and Judaism. Though the so-called "lex Gans,"[116] which debarred unbaptized Jews from

academic posts, was officially suspended in 1847, only a small number of unbaptized Jews held

university positions in Germany during Rosenzweig's lifetime. Moreover, "most of the

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[115] Myers, *Resisting History*, 93.

[116] Article 8 of the Prussian Emancipation Edict of 1812 admitted Jews to academic positions, but this right was suspended in 1822 after the legal philosopher Eduard Gans applied for a Chair at Berlin by a hasty change in the law. Gans converted in 1825 and was appointed to the Chair in 1828.

appointments were in ideologically neutral subjects, such as the natural sciences and medicine,

not in culturally or politically sensitive ones such as Classical Philology, German Literature,

History or Law."[117] The very few unbaptized Jews who received academic appointments in the

more "sensitive" subjects all needed the assistance of powerful political figures or well respected

non-Jewish scholars (among whom Meinecke must have considered himself) to attain their post.

As Ritchie Robertson explains:

> The distinguished neo-Kantian philosopher Hermann Cohen was appointed to the Chair
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> of Philosophy at Marburg only at the second attempt, thanks to intervention by Prussia's
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> liberal Minister of Education, Adalbert Falk. Another philosopher, Ernst Cassirer, needed
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> the support of Wilhelm Dilthey to become even a *Privatdozent* in 1906,[118] and had to
>
> wait till the advent of the Weimar Republic to obtain a Chair in 1919. The sociologist
>
> Georg Simmel, though a second-generation convert, had to wait even longer for a Chair:
>
> he was in his mid-fifties when appointed professor at Strasbourg in 1913, and his
>
> professional isolation resulted from a bias against sociology in general, a distrust of his
>
> unorthodox and literary approach to the subject, and an anti-Semitism which was at times
>
> made explicit: his appointment at Heidelberg was prevented, in part, by a letter from a
>
> fellow-academic describing him as "an Israelite through and through."[119]

Given the fact that Rosenzweig had developed a close relationship with Hermann Cohen during

the last years of Cohen's life, he would have known of the difficulties Cohen faced with his

appointment at Marburg. He also would have been well aware of the prevalent anti-Semitism in

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[117] Peter Pulzer, *Jews and the German State: The Political History of a Minority, 1848-1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992), 93.

[118] A "*Privatdozent*" is a non-stipendiary lecturer, which is presumably the position Meiecke had offered to help Rosenzweig attain.

[119] Ritchie Robertson, *The "Jewish Question" in German Literature 1749-1939: Emancipation and Its Discontents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 243–244.

German academia during his life. Others certainly were. In 1918, Max Weber had suggested that

a commitment to an academic career was a "mad hazard" for any young scholar, but "if he is a

Jew, of course one says *lasciate ogni speranza* [the opening words above the gates of Hell in

Dante's *Inferno*: 'Abandon all hope…']"[120] Describing the situation of acculturated Jews who

remained unbaptized in German society at that time, Robertson writes:

> Acculturation without integration made it often difficult for Jews to avoid feeling uneasy
>
> in the company of non-Jews. Sooner or later one would be reminded that one was a Jew
>
> and that, in many people's eyes, this was incompatible with being a German. And the
>
> individual's experience were overshadowed by the assumptions of the "emancipation
>
> contract", whereby Jews were accepted into German society on condition that they
>
> behaved themselves properly—that is, did not behave in an obviously "Jewish" way.[121]

Around the same time Rosenzweig refused Meinecke's offer, Edmund Husserl's phenomenology

was already being denounced as "Jewish."[122] For Rosenzweig, then, who had come to the

realization that his being-Jewish could not remain a merely private matter for him, that he had to

take his worldly embodied Jewish life seriously, and who desired to bring about a total renewal

of thinking in relation to his (Jewish) understanding of the world's createdness, holding an

academic post in Germany was no longer a viable option. Explaining the change that occurred in

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[120] Weber, "Science as a Vocation"

[121] Robertson, *The "Jewish Question" in German Literature*, 285–286.

[122] According to Ritchie Robertson: "Edmund Husserl, who had supported the War and whose younger son had been killed on the French front in 1916, now heard his life's work, phenomenology, denounced as Jewish and felt he was being denied membership of the German nation. 'From my childhood I have been absorbed with infinite love in the intellectual life (*Geistigkeit*) of the German nation and its endless magnificent horizons,' he wrote in 1921; now he felt deprived of a fatherland and a nation (vaterland -und volklos), unable to help the Germans in their hour of need." Letter of 17 Oct. 1921 to Dietrich Mahnke in Husserl, *Briefweschsel*, v. 432-3; Robertson, *The 'Jewish Question' in German Literature,* 244.

his life after 1913, Rosenzweig thus tells Meinecke: "I had turned from a historian (perfectly 'eligible' for a university lectureship) into an (utterly 'ineligible') philosopher."[123]

What Rosenzweig sought to promote at the Lehrhaus was a new thinking and learning that did not neglect but rather cultivated a sense of the "wholeness" of Jewish persons. It would not seek to begin from the "objective" or "neutral" standpoint of a common foundation universally shared by all humans. To do so would repeat what Rosenzweig found problematic in Mendelssohn, whose friendship with Lessing could only be formed on the "basis of the common abstraction of their positive religions."[124] Such an illusory basis of relation, though posited for the sake of "tolerance," actually fails to respect the genuine differences of living human beings and inevitably places Jews in a position where, either through polemics or apologetics, they must defend the rationality of their continuing Jewish identity (which has been construed as only a secondary and incidental aspect of one's primary identity as a human being).[125] In an open letter to Martin Buber, Rosenzweig writes: "From Mendelssohn on, our entire people has subjected itself to the torture of this embarrassing questioning; the Jewishness of every individual has squirmed on the needle point of a 'why.'"[126] The problem with such defenses, and with apologetic thinking in general, according to Rosenzweig, is that they "let their theme be determined by the attack."[127] In other words, they accept the presuppositions and standards of a

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[123] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 96.

[124] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 109.

[125] In the text of an essay written in 1919 which remained unpublished until much later, Rosenzweig writes: "Enough time and strength have been wasted with bad blending, with extrinsic combinations of what cannot be combined, with a tolerance, before which the created and developed differences became blurred in a fog of emptiness of thought and feeling…Long enough had Nathan's word about the love that everyone should emulate for himself, been changed according to the spirit of the times to a lovelessness, though free of 'prejudices,' and to indifference of everyone toward everyone." "Hic et Ubique! A Word to Readers and Other People," in *Cultural Writings of Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Barbara E. Galli (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 96–97.

[126] Rosenzweig, "The Builders," 78.

[127] Apologetic thinking 108

rationality which is hostile to what they seek to defend; and from which they can never provide a fair representation of the matter called into question, i.e. of the life of a living Jewish human being. Recall that in his correspondence with Rosenstock, Rosenzweig suggests that his interlocutor was upset because Rosenzweig had not provided an adequate account of "the bond between your correspondent and the Jew," but to do so, according to Rosenzweig, would be tantamount to an act of "anatomical Hara-kiri" because "you ask me to lay bare a skeleton that can only prove through its organic life that flesh and blood grow and flow round it." Accordingly, in his programmatic vision for the Lehrhaus found within the essay addressed to Eduard Strauss concerning "the *Bildungsproblem* of the moment," Rosenzweig writes of "the Jewish human being" that: "between his Jewishness and his humanness there are no 'connections' that would first need to be discovered or brooded on, that would first need to be experienced and created. Here it is different: as a Jew he is a human being, as a human being he is a Jew."[128]

The problem with assuming that one must first locate or create a connection between one's Jewishness and one's humanity is that it reinforces the problematic assumption that they are actually separate and distinct aspects of one's identity, which, more often than not, are conceived to exist in an oppositional relationship. Insofar as the majority of academic disciplines during Rosenzweig's day were associated with the "universal" (human) side of that relationship, the Jewish human being was, in a sense, forced to deny part of his self when pursuing a field of study. Rosenzweig suggests that even the clerics of his day have accepted the premise of Kant's claim that one "has to deny knowledge in order to make room for faith."[129] He argues against this

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[128] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 230.

[129] Kant, Preface to the 2nd edition of the Critique of Pure Reason, BXXX

thesis and its "reverse," i.e. that one has to deny faith in order to make room for knowledge.[130]

According to Rosenzweig, there should be no Jacobian *salto mortale* which requires one to sacrifice the intellect to have "faith," nor should one have to sacrifice their "faith" in order to pursue knowledge. In his opening address to the members of the Lehrhaus, Rosenzweig proclaims that "in being Jews we must not give up anything, not renounce anything…" and he highlights the fact that among those offering courses on their prospectus, "you will find…a chemist, a physician, a historian, an artist, [and] a politician."[131] He explains:

> They have come together here as Jews. They have come together in order to "learn"—for Jewish "learning" includes Jewish "teaching." Whoever teaches here—and I believe I may say this in the name of all who are teaching here—knows that in teaching here he need sacrifice nothing of what he is.[132]

Rosenzweig tells Meinecke that when he claimed ownership of what he found in his inherited "treasure chest" he gained "something entirely new, namely the right to live." It is not that he realized that he "had to become a Jew," but rather, Rosenzweig realized that he did not have to deny the fact of his being-Jewish in order to become a philosopher, albeit one who would be "utterly ineligible" for a university lectureship.

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[130] In the notes for Rosenzweig's course on "Faith and Knowledge" given at the Lehrhaus, he writes: "Against Kant's thesis (which as a just punishment has been taken over by all clerics) 'I had to—remove, in order to gain—.' Neither the reverse." 100

[131] Franz Rosenzweig, "Upon Opening the Judisches Lehrhaus: Draft of an Address," in *On Jewish Learning*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer (Madison, WI.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1955), 99.

[132] Rosenzweig, "Upon Opening the Judisches Lehrhaus," 99.

CHAPTER 2

CONTINUING SCHELLING'S PROJECT

In a letter written to Hans Ehrenberg, Rosenzweig reflects that if Friedrich Schelling's *Ages of the World* had been completed, "then *The Star* would not merit anyone caring a fig about it, outside of the Jews."[1] From this passing statement we can surmise at least three things: first, given the fact that Schelling did not complete the *Ages of the World,* Rosenzweig thought that *The Star* deserved the attention of those outside the Jewish community; second, he imagined the broader intellectual contribution of *The Star* to be somehow in line with the envisioned project sketched out in Schelling's later philosophy; and finally, aside from whatever general contribution it makes to intellectual discourse, *The Star* is still of specific interest to Jews.

It is perhaps not coincidental that at the same time in which we have seen a revival in Rosenzweig scholarship, there has also been an independently renewed interest in Schelling among contemporary philosophers. According to Andrew Bowie, "in the light of the contemporary concern with the end of 'Western metaphysics' and with 'post-metaphysical thinking', Schelling's work is in need of re-assessment."[2] As he argues, "rather than being merely a foil to Hegel, Schelling in fact helps define key structures in modern philosophy by revealing the flaws in Hegel in ways which help set the agenda for philosophy even today."[3] At the end of his impressive study of Schelling's work, Bowie concludes that, while Schelling's attempts to find a convincing theological solution ultimately fail, the problems for reason in modernity which he reveals nevertheless remain relevant and applicable today. "The real issue for philosophy after Schelling," he contends, "is what ensues from the undermining of absolute

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[1] March 18, 1921 to Hans Ehrenberg in FM 38

[2] Andrew Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 1.

[3] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 1.

reflection."[4] To the extent that Rosenzweig viewed his work as a continuation of Schelling's

project, it would, in fact, seem to merit the attention of those outside the Jews. Moreover, in what

follows, I will attempt to show that Rosenzweig's proposed "new thinking" is inextricably

connected to the "new learning" he sought to offer at the Lehrhaus.

UNDERMINING ABSOLUTE REFLECTION

Rosenzweig launches into his critique of the "Old Thinking," which he generally equates with

"idealism" and the "philosophy of the All," with a sense of existential urgency. Beginning, "from

death," or more specifically, "from the fear of death," in the opening paragraph of *The Star*,

Rosenzweig indicts all philosophical attempts to arrive at "cognition of the All" with the charge

of deliberately ignoring the "cry of frightened humanity."[5] As he writes:

> [T]he reality of death that cannot be banished from the world…announcing itself in its
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> victim's cry that cannot be stifled, it is this that makes a lie of the basic thought of
>
> philosophy, the thought of the one and universal cognition of the All, even before it is
>
> thought.[6]

The philosophy of the All "buries its head in the sand before cry of mortal terror," according to

Rosenzweig, because it must "exclude from the world that which is singular," and yet every

mortal life, in the end, is singular.[7] "[W]ith its denial of all that separates the single from the

All," he continues, "'idealism' is the tool with which philosophy works the obstinate material

until it no longer puts up resistance against the fog that envelops it with the concept of the One

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[4] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 177.

[5] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 9–11.

[6] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 11.

[7] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 10.

and the All."[8] While parsing through this emphatic language, it is important to note that, for Rosenzweig, although "the cry of frightened humanity" before which philosophy "stops up its ears," may make a lie of thought of a one and universal cognition of the All, it does so as a kind of counterfactual condition. In other words, the negligent disregard for death's terrible reality is a symptom of what is wrong with the "Old Thinking," not the problem itself. In that sense, we must step back and address the cause in order to find a cure.

The underlying problem Rosenzweig identifies and challenges in the philosophical tradition "from Parmenides to Hegel" is the assumption of a unity between thinking and being. In his characteristically grandiose style, Rosenzweig claims to "[throw] the gauntlet to the whole venerable brotherhood of philosophers from Ionia to Jena," by questioning "the totality of being" and in so doing, refuting "the unity of thinking."[9] To be sure, when Rosenzweig speaks of the history of philosophy "from Parmenides to Hegel," he is really directing his critical gaze at Hegel. For it is Hegel who, in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy,* writes that "Thinking [for Parmenides] is thus identical with its Being; for there is nothing outside of Being, this great affirmation," and thus concludes that, "genuine philosophizing began with Parmenides."[10]

Rosenzweig's criticism of "idealism" is aimed at Hegel's attempt to construct a philosophical system grounded in itself which aims to encompass the totality of being and which presupposes nothing external to itself. The trouble with this, as Schelling has argued, is that such a system cannot account for the fact of its own existence. In a letter to Rudolf Ehrenberg, a letter which Rosenzweig would later identify as the "Urzelle" (germ cell) of *The Star*, he hints at this problem:

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[8] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 10.

[9] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 18.

[10] Hegel, *Samtliche Werke*, XII: 274; as cited in Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger,* 158.

Not only is reason the ground of actuality, but rather there is also an actuality of reason

itself. That reason grounds *itself*…indeed explains how reason can make the claim to

ground actuality…; thinking must ground itself, if it is supposed to be able to ground

being; the self-grounding of thinking is thus necessary only for the sake of willing the

thinkability of being; but there remains against it the suspicion that, *apart* from this

relation to being, the self-grounding of thinking is a mere logical playing-around.[11]

When Rosenzweig refers to the suspicion that "the self-grounding of thinking is a mere logical

playing-around," he is following along the lines of Schelling's critique of Hegel. As Paul Franks

and Michael Morgan write, "Schelling had argued that the Hegelian dialectic could articulate the

systematically intelligible structure of the world, but only as a system of relations, incapable of

comprehending living existence. If one regarded that system as self-contained and self-sufficient,

one's thinking would be reduced to a game played with lifeless abstractions."[12]

To a certain extent, Schelling's critique of Hegel can be seen as a version of the Kantian

critique of the ontological argument.[13] One reason for Hegel's attempt to generate a self-bounded

system of philosophy is a desire to overcome the Kantian critique of positive notions of

transcendence within philosophy. Yet, according to Schelling, Hegel's philosophy presupposes

an identity between thought and being which cannot be justified within that system of

philosophy. As he argues, in his later lectures on positive philosophy, it is impossible to

demonstrate the identity of the two sides of the relationship between thought and being from

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[11] Franz Rosenzweig, "'Urzelle' to the Star of Redemption," in *Franz Rosenzweig: Philosophical and Theological Writings*, ed. Paul W. Franks and Michael L. Morgan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2000), 55.

[12] Paul W. Franks and Michael L. Morgan, *Franz Rosenzweig: Philosophical and Theological Writings* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2000), 37.

[13] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 172f.

within that relationship.[14] Moreover, he reasons, any attempt to work solely within pure thought, even where pure thought inherently involves its Other, is open to the objection to the ontological proof. In other words, Schelling, similar to Kant, criticizes Hegel's attempt to extend through reason from the Thought to Being, i.e. from a concept to existence. According to Schelling, the indication of the fundamental flaw in Hegel's system of reason is that it cannot finally explain the fact of its own existence. With Kant, he grants that "the idea of a 'highest being' follows of necessity from the 'nature of reason,' but this does not make the existence of such a being necessary." Schelling writes:

> I deny that any kind of being [Wesen] will be realized as necessary on account of its concept. For if this being should be God, then it is to be realized from its *concept* not that he necessarily exists, but, rather, that he *can only be* that which necessarily exists, and, thus, that he is necessarily that which necessarily exists—that is, *if* he exists—but it does not follow that he exists.[15]

Following Kant, Schelling maintains that existence (or Being) is not a "real predicate," which means that the fact of being is not something that can be established by reason. It can only established by "experience" (in Kant's terms, the synthesis of an intuition with its concept).

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[14] Andrew Bowie explains: "In Hegel's *Logic* the…process beings with (1) 'being' as the 'indeterminate immediate', which is then (2) 'reflected' in the subject, that thereby becomes reflexively determinate *as* subject because being becomes *its* object; in a further movement the mediation between subject and object is grasped in (3) the 'concept', which is the subject's realization that the process of mediation, in which the opposition of subject and object is finally overcome, is the truth of its own development as both subject and object.

In the Hegelian conception the knowledge which reveal the truth of the beginning at the end is the truth of what at the beginning was 'immediate', and, importantly, *knows* it is that truth. The concept of being, when it has been fully articulated, is the truth of being and reveals that its beginning is 'negative', dependent…The problem…is that in moving from (1) the initial immediacy of being, to (2), the stage of reflection, Hegel fails to deal with the difficulty of how what is mediated can know itself to be identical with what is immediate without simply presupposing this identity. The fact is that the truth of being, which is supposed to be a *result,* would have already to be there at the beginning, thereby posing the question of how it could be known at all as itself (i.e. in the way I see myself, rather than a random object, in a reflection)." Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy,* 132.

[15] F. W. J. Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy: The Berlin Lectures*, trans. Bruce Matthews (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007), 207.

Bowie comments that for Schelling, "experience" cannot ensue from an *a priori* necessity. "Reason can legislate what must be the case *if* something exists, but not whether something does exist."[16] As mentioned above, though Hegel presumes to offer a self-enclosed system of reason which depends upon nothing outside itself, according to Schelling it ultimately fails in its totalizing aim because, in the end, it cannot account for the fact of its own existence. Rosenzweig echoes this critique in *The Star*, when he writes:

> Philosophy always disputed God's very existence. The most sublime form of this dispute is none other than the ontological proof of God—again an idea as old as philosophy. Whenever, with their insistence on God's existence, the theologians became troublesome to the philosophers, the latter escaped by taking the track of that "proof"; the nurse philosophy placed into the mouth of the hungry infant theology, as a soother, the identity of thinking and being, so that it wouldn't cry. With Kant and Hegel, there occurs a twofold end of this centuries-old swindle. Kant is an end to the extent that he shifts the proof of the critique by rigorously separating being and existence; but Hegel praises the proof: doesn't it coincide with the basic concept of the whole philosophical view of the world, with the idea of the identity between reason and reality, and mustn't it therefore be just as valid for God as for everything else? And precisely in the naïveté of this praise, without suspecting it, philosopher that he is, he deals it the deathblow in the eyes of theology…. God must have existence before any identity of being and thinking; if a deduction is to be pre-supposed here, then that of being from existence is preferable to that of existence from being, which is attempted over and over again in ontological

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[16] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 163; Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy*.: "I deny that any kind of being [*Wesen*] will be realized as necessary on account of its concept. For if this being should be God, then it is to be realized from its *concept* not that he necessarily exists, but, rather, that he *can only be* that which necessarily exists, and thus, that he is necessarily that which necessarily exists—that is, *if* he exists—but it does not follow that he exists" (207).

proofs. With these considerations, we are following the path of Schelling's later

philosophy.[17]

If reason is incapable of extending itself from thought to existence, as Schelling suggests, the

implication is that Hegel's system's not only fails in its totalizing aim, it is ultimately self-

referential and tautological. Rosenzweig suggests this conclusion when he writes in the

"*Urzelle*":

> Thus, I say: philosophizing reason stands on its own feet, it is self-sufficient. All things
>
> are grasped in it, and ultimately it grasps itself (the only epistemological act, against
>
> which nothing can be said because it is the only one that occurs not according to the form
>
> A=B, which is the form of knowing actuality and of actuality, but rather according to the
>
> form of *logical* knowing A=A). After it has thus taken up everything within itself and has
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> proclaimed its exclusive existence, man suddenly discovers that he, who has long been
>
> philosophically digested, is still there.[18]

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[17] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 24–25.

[18] Rosenzweig, "'Urzelle'," 52–53 In an editors' footnote, Franks and Morgan provide helpful a clarification of what Rosenzweig means when he speaks of "A=B" and "A=A" and it is worth quoting them at length: According to the Idealist logical tradition which Rosenzweig is following here, "A=A" expresses the fundamental principle of logic— the principle of noncontradiction—and "A=B" expresses the form of every predication in which a property is ascribed to an object. Contemporary logicians distinguish sharply between the "is" of predication and the "is" of identity, and would not express either noncontradiction or predication in terms of identity. However, the following may help explain the thinking behind Rosenzweig's usage. First, the principle of noncontradiction is formulated by contemporary logicians in terms of propositions or contents of claims about states of affairs—"not both p and not-p"—not as an identity-statement about entities—"A=A." But traditional metaphysics takes all propositions to be ultimately about entities and thus view the principle of the noncontradiction of propositions as equivalent to the principle of the self-identity of entities…Second, according to the Idealist tradition, everything is the self-identical entity it is by virtue of its difference from, and similarities to, other entities. Thus, to characterize an entity A by ascribing a property to it is in one respect to identify A with any other entity, B, that also has that property— "A=B"—although A must also be in some other respect nonidentical with B, if they are distinct entities. A third idea required to understand what Rosenzweig is saying here is that, according to Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831), genuine knowledge always involves the identity of the knowing subject and the known object. Thus "A=A" may express not only the logical principle of noncontradiction but also the epistemological relationship between subject and object. Rosenzweig's point may now be understood as follows. Insofar as philosophy achieves self-knowledge, it is epistemologically unproblematic because it inevitably takes the form "A=A," expressing the identity of subject and object. However, knowledge of actuality always takes the form "A=B." So, as self-knowledge, philosophy may attain the epistemologically unproblematic status of logical knowledge, a status as

Explicating the consequences of such self-referential systems of reason, Schelling writes, "Once you begin with [conceptual] content divorced from existence, you discover with consternation after an interval of intoxication that you have no vessel to contain this content"[19]

TOWARDS A "POSITIVE" PHILOSOPHY

For Schelling, "negative" philosophy eventually reaches its own limit when it asks: why is there anything at all? Why is there not nothing? According to Schelling, the fact of being, the fact that there is something and not nothing, is not something which can be explained within a closed system of reason. The sheer fact of its own existence, for which even the most complete system cannot account, requires "negative" philosophy to admit a cause outside itself (i.e. outside thought). As he writes, philosophy "can only begin from being which is *absolutely* outside thought…absolutely transcendent being."[20] It may seem as though Schelling is proposing exactly what he criticized in Jacobi. But, for Schelling, this "absolutely transcendent being" is not, and cannot, be an object of knowledge or experience; it can only be, and indeed must be, presupposed. What "negative philosophy" provides, when carried to its limits, is the simultaneous recognition of its limits and the awareness of the need for a ground beyond those limits if it is to account for the fact of its own existence. Of this ground, precisely because it is beyond the limits of thought, we can know nothing. However, *knowing* that of this ground one can know nothing is *itself* a kind of knowledge, a *docta ignorantia* (learned ignorance), which Schelling calls "knowing non-knowledge." As Andrew Bowie explains, this is:

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unproblematic as the principle of noncontradiction, but it attains that status at the cost of giving up any claim to knowledge of actuality, including any claim to knowledge of the actual philosophizing subject. (fn 12,.

[19] Schelling, "Uber die Quelle der ewigen Wahrheiten,' in *Gesammelte Werke,* pt. 2 (1856), 1 : 590

[20] (ii/3 p.127).

not a dogmatic assertion involving knowledge of the transcendent basis of thought: the

realization is a product of reflection's attempt internally to ground itself, not of a primary

mystical intuition of the Oneness of being…One cannot positively say what being is, but

this does not mean that it disappears from philosophy: it is the dependence of reflection

on what cannot appear as knowledge that means that being must be prior to knowledge.[21]

Thus, in the end, negative philosophy gestures toward something beyond its limits; and this "last

thought" of negative philosophy becomes the "first" in Schelling's "positive" philosophy.

However, just as in the negative, the *prius* of positive philosophy cannot itself be the object of

reflection. Anticipating the Kantian criticism, Schelling writes:

One could object: an actuality that precedes all possibility cannot be *thought.* One can

concede this in a certain sense and say that for precisely this reason it is the *beginning* of

all real thought—for the *beginning* of thought is not yet itself thought.[22]

With its last question, negative philosophy reaches a limit *beyond* which it can proceed no

further. Positive philosophy is the "inversion" of the negative insofar as it takes this "end" of

negative philosophy as its "beginning," which no less transcends the limits of thought, but these

limits are now seen as limits for what lies *behind* the extent of positive philosophy. As Schelling

writes:

The *prius* is always the point of departure, that is, it always remains the *prius.* The *prius*

will be known from its consequences, but not in a way such that the consequences had

preceded it.[23]

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[21] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 136.

[22] Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy*, 203.

[23] Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy*, 180.

When Schelling claims we will know the *prius* from its consequences, he is not suggesting a

form of reasoning back from effects to a cause as if they were related by a necessary law, or,

what is the same, in a merely logical relationship (e.g. through the principle of sufficient reason).

Such would be the method of negative philosophy which reaches its limit at the point in which it

seeks, through this method, to find a cause for its own existence and thus attempts, in one form

or another, an ontological proof. In its most basic form, the ontological argument hinges on the

belief that existence *necessarily follows* from the concept of a necessary being—i.e. that which

cannot not exist. However, for Schelling, that which follows from the *prius* is precisely that

which could not be, and so does not follow by necessity. As such, with the inversion of the last

thought of negative philosophy into the first of positive philosophy, Schelling argues, that which

follows from the *prius* is fact.

  According to Schelling, the common error found in the history of rationalist philosophy is

the assumption of a "merely logical relationship of God to the world," which entails "a reflexive

relationship of the two, in which the world necessarily follows from the nature of God, and God

and the world are therefore the 'Other of themselves.'"[24] In contrast, Schelling denies any

attempt to show that the world emerges through logical necessity. There is no necessary reason

why there could not be nothing rather than something. The *fact* that there is something rather

than nothing, makes the fact of existence just that—a *fact,* which, by definition, is something that

could *not be* and nevertheless *is.* In that sense, according to Schelling, we must regard it as a

"free creation." [25]

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[24] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 143.

[25] In his more "theological" writings, as Bowie notes, "Schelling moves towards the idea that God makes a free decision to create the world but that He does not have to make the decision: it is only the fact of the manifest world that is our evidence of the decision"(107). Instead of the "merely logical relationship of God to the world" employed by rationalist philosophy, Schelling proposes the analogy of "love." As Bowie writes, "opposed to the Hegelian

Any attempt to make the truth of being a necessary consequence of thinking is subject to the Kantian refutation of the ontological proof as we saw above. Importantly, however, Schelling emphatically maintains that a closed system of reason, in which each proposition follows necessarily from the preceding proposition cannot, by definition, be wrong within itself. It simply fails to fulfill the aim of philosophy. If all the propositions follow as axioms in a system, the system is ultimately nothing more than a grand tautology. Schelling writes:

> Knowing a truth whose opposite is impossible cannot be called knowledge, e.g., that A=A. Everyone will say that they thereby know just as much as they did before: nothing. In knowing a truth, then, the opposite must be possible, A=B cannot also =C; and by saying A is not =C but =B, I know something.[26]

Schelling thus explains that what "positive" philosophy has over "mathematics" is "the concept of the subject of that which *can be* something *and can also not be something.*"[27] "Positive" philosophy "has as its object that of which one can only say that it is."[28] However, precisely because this existence is a *fact,* it is not *necessary* existence; which means, positive philosophy cannot proceed by a method of deduction.

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dialectical model of love as a relationship of free mutual dependence, which enables me to be myself by the reflection in the other, in this model the relationship is not reflexive" (108). In Schelling's words:

> God Himself is linked to nature through voluntary (*freiwillige*) love, He does not need it, and yet does not want to be without it. For love is not when two beings need each other, but where each could be for themself…and does not see it as a privation to be for themself, and yet does not wish to be, morally cannot be without the other. This is also the true relationship of God to nature – and it is not a *one-sided* relationship (i/7 p.453).

A relationship in which one needs the other to be oneself, even when the need is mutual, is not a relationship of "love," but of utility, which compromises the freedom of both parties precisely because the relationship is one of necessity. "There is no *reason* for an autonomous person to love somebody," Bowie explains, "precisely because they are autonomous, and love is seen as only fully realized when it is not a result of dependence."[25] For Schelling, to say that God's relationship to nature is one of "love," then, is to say that the world is a "free creation"—a creation which "did not have to happen and cannot be deduced from anything we know about the world, apart from the undeniable fact that it is" (159).

[26] Schelling, *System der Weltalter*, 18.

[27] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 148.

[28] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 144.

Schelling suggests that what is known in the positive philosophy will not be logically demonstrated, but narrated. For it is precisely the concern of narrative to disclose facts.

TOWARDS A METHOD OF "SPEECH-THINKING"

Though he articulated the need for transition, Schelling was never able to develop a satisfactory formulation of his envisioned positive philosophy before the end of his life. As mentioned in the introduction above, Rosenzweig suggests that what he wrote in *The Star*, in some sense, picks up where Schelling left off. He says this not only in his personal correspondence (e.g. the letter to Hans Ehrenberg cited in the introduction), but also in his published essay "The New Thinking." As he writes: "In his preface to his ingenious fragment *The Ages of the World,* Schelling prophesied a narrative philosophy. The second volume [of *The Star*] attempts to provide it."[29]

In many ways, the method of new thinking which Rosenzweig presents in the second volume of *The Star* is developed far beyond what Schelling envisioned. Schelling, so to speak, foresaw the importance of taking time seriously; of the significant irreducibility of past, present and future. According to Rosenzweig, however, to really take time seriously one must also take seriously the necessity of others who are genuinely different from us. As he writes, "To need time means: being able to anticipate nothing, having to wait for everything, being dependent on the other for one's own."[30] The category of narrative provides a structure for sequentiality and the noninterchangeable ordering of beginning, middle, and end; past, present and future. In order to take seriously our place in the "middle" of time, i.e. the present, Rosenzweig expands from the idea of "narrative philosophy" as the method for new thinking to the broader notion of "speech-thinking." "The new thinking's method," he writes, "originates out of its temporality":

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[29] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 121.

[30] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 126.

Speaking is time-bound, time-nourished; it neither can nor will abandon this, its

nourishing environment; it does not know in advance where it will arrive; it lets its cues

be given by others. It lives in general from the life of the other, whether the audience of

the narration or the respondent in the dialogue or the cospeaker in a chorus.[31]

Contrasting this method of "speech-thinking" with the method of Socratic dialogue, in which the

philosopher already knows ahead of time what he thinks and what he is going to say,

Rosenzweig writes:

In actual conversation, something happens; I do not know in advance what the other will

say to me because I myself do not even know what I am going to say; perhaps not even

whether I am going to say anything at all; it could well be that the other begins.

Tracing out some of the implications of Rosenzweig's method of new thinking, Harold Stahmer

explains:

For such speech thinkers, speech precedes thought and needs time: *I think because I have

been addressed at a certain moment*. This is quite the opposite understanding of the

relationship between thought and language where language is but an imperfect tool for

articulating ideas thought to have been previously conceived in the mind.[32]

In light of Stahmer's explanation and with the preceding discussion of the method of

Rosenzweig's "speech-thinking" in mind, we are better equipped to understand certain aspects of

the rationale displayed in Rosenzweig's letter to Meinecke. Rosenzweig tells Meinecke that

"Cognition [*Erkennen*] no longer appears to me as an end in itself…not every question seems to

me worth asking…Now I only inquire when I find myself *inquired of*. Inquired of, that is, by

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[31] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 126.

[32] Harold Stahmer, *"Speak That I May See Thee!": The Religious Significance of Language* (Macmillan, 1968), 170 (emphasis mine).

men rather than by scholars."[33] These statements should not be taken as a confirmation, as some suggest, that Rosenzweig decided to simply abandon the intellectual rigors of academic scholarship to devote himself to a form of (anti-intellectual) service of "real life." Rather, they indicate the recognition of the Schellingian insight that "If philosophy is concerned with pure thought, it can only be a reflection of itself,"[34] and a commitment to a method of thinking which takes seriously the responsibility, i.e. the need to respond, to the other who addresses me at a certain moment. It is not that Rosenzweig thinks scholars are not human beings. He simply thinks that, as representatives of modern academic disciplines, scholars assume that cognition must be autonomous, i.e. unaffected by empirical reality and the needs of actual embodied individuals, and so their questions arise to feed a disembodied "scientific curiosity and omnivorous aesthetic appetite" which tends to be inimical to the concerns of actual living human beings. As he writes:

> There is a man in each scholar, a man who inquires and stands in need of answers. I am anxious to answer the scholar *qua* man but not the representative of a certain discipline, that insatiable, ever inquisitive phantom which like a vampire drains him whom it possesses of his humanity. I hate that phantom as I do all phantoms. Its questions are meaningless to me. On the other hand, the questions asked by human beings have become increasingly important to me.[35]

The necessarily *responsive* nature of Rosenzweig's method of speech-thinking challenges the classic assumption that abstract "wonder" is the proper starting point of philosophical reflection.

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[33] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 97.

[34] Bowie, *Schelling and Modern European Philosophy*, 167.

[35] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 97.

Rather, it carries the implication that intellectual reflection begins (or should begin) from a sense of responsibility to the actual living other whose call to me commands a response.

According to Rosenzweig, the difference between the old method of "thinking" and the new method of "speaking" "does not rest on loud versus quiet, but rather on needing the other and, what amounts to the same, on taking time seriously." He elaborates:

> To think here means to think for no one and to speak to no one (for which one may substitute everyone, the famous "universality," if it sounds better to someone). But to speak means to speak to someone and to think for someone; and this Someone is always a quite definite Someone and has not only ears, like the universality, but also a mouth.[36]

Given the responsive character of Rosenzweig's speech-thinking, it can never take the form of autonomous cognition divorced from its given context. It must also eschew the pretense of "universality" in the form of its thinking and address. As Rosenzweig's argument suggests, a thinking or speaking which aims at universality and addresses itself to "everyone," is really a thinking for no one which addresses no one, insofar as it thinks for and speaks to no one in particular. In contrast, the method of speech-thinking, which knows "it cannot cognize independently of time" and thus recognizes its dependence on the other, always occurs in relation to "a quite definite Someone" who not only has ears, i.e. a passive recipient of one's thought and speech, but also a mouth, i.e. the ability to actively respond and to question what one says. In the "dialogical" relation inherent to the method of speech-thinking, the other is more than a mere "particular" he, she, or it (i.e. an instantiated representative of a general or universal category), but a personally identified "Thou," whose significance is not defined in relation to a

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[36] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 127.

general abstract category, but in the actual existing relation to my self, i.e. in the qualitatively distinct relationship of "I and Thou."

INTO LIFE AT THE LEHRHAUS

Rosenzweig's corrective suggestion that *The Star* is "merely a system of philosophy" is, in a certain sense, related to Schelling's discussion of the limits of "negative" philosophy. Like all systems of philosophy, *The Star*, in the end, reaches a limit beyond which it can go no further. He therefore speaks of its last pages as a "gate" which marks the transition to what is beyond the book, toward the "no-longer-book," where the "limit of humanity is entered." As he explains in "The New Thinking":

> This step of the book into the limit can only be atoned for through—ending the book. An ending that is at the same time a beginning and a middle: to enter into the middle of everyday life…The book is not a goal that has been reached, not even a preliminary one. It must be answered for [*Verantwortung*] …This responsibility [*Verantwortung*] happens in everyday life.[37]

We have already discussed the fact Rosenzweig did not want the last words of *The Star*, "Into Life," to be read a anti-intellectual call to abandon philosophical thinking. He re-asserts that point in a similar fashion in "The New Thinking." As he suggests, his readers must try to overcome "the danger of interpreting the new thinking…in the sense or, better, the nonsense, of 'life-philosophical' or other 'irrationalist' tendencies. Today, everyone who is clever enough to avoid the jaws of the idealistic Charybdis seems to be pulled down into the dark whirlpool of this Scylla."[38] While it is true Rosenzweig criticizes the totalizing aims of the 'old' philosophy of

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[37] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 136–137.

[38] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 132.

idealism and advocates a method of thinking which seeks to be responsive to the real concerns of "life," this does not mean he endorses the binary categorization assumed by the *Lebensphilosophie* which only concerns itself with "practical demands of life, rather than the theoretical demands of reason."[39] On the contrary, as suggested above, Rosenzweig maintains that the new thinking is still thinking; but, to be sure, it is a form of thinking in response to the questions and concerns of living human beings.

Insofar as the new thinking's method of "speech-thinking" requires one to take time seriously and to recognize the necessity of others, to actually do it, after describing its method and providing paradigmatic examples, Rosenzweig had move beyond the limits of his written text and, in a sense, bring it into life. From the end of the book, Rosenzweig had to step into the "middle of everyday life" and to assume the kind of "responsibility" he describes in the text.[40] Accordingly, he tells Meinecke that he is only interested in "cognition and knowledge as service," by which he means "a readiness to confront such questions [from living human beings], to answer them as best I can out of my limited knowledge and my even slighter ability."[41]

For Rosenzweig, the major problem faced by the Jewish community of his day was one of education, or rather, the lack of education. As Michael Brenner explains, at the time in which Rosenzweig was writing, "Jewish knowledge in Germany had become increasingly

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[39] In a footnote to "The New Thinking," the editors explain that "A significant trend within late-19th- and early-20th-century philosophy was known as *Lebensphilosophie,* an approach to philosophy, influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche…and developed notably by Wilhelm Dilthey…that concerned itself with the practical demands of life, rather than with the theoretical demands of reason." (fn. 42 p. 132). Surprisingly, Michael Brenner, whose work *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) offers the only major academic study in English of Rosenzweig's work at the Lehrhaus, suggests, "Most important…was the influence of *Lebensphilosophie*. Like non-Jewish educational reformers, Rosenzweig despised the 'old university,' with its purely academic program," 75.

[40] It may already be apparent that this notion of "responsibility" intentionally plays on the multiple senses conveyed by the word: the dialogical sense of providing a "response" or "answer" to the one who calls or address me, the moral sense of taking or accepting "responsibility" and the more judicial sense of "answering for" something.

[41] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought*, 97.

professionalized and concentrated in the hands of rabbis, teachers, and a few Orthodox Jews."[42]

The dichotomous separation between intellectual scholarship and the "real life" questions and concerns living Jewish human beings proves to be mutually detrimental to both sides of the relationship according to Rosenzweig. He asserts that "research and teaching, science and education: amongst ourselves, these are dead."[43] "They are so," he explains, because they are lacking "what alone makes knowledge and instruction come alive, i.e. – life."[44]

The "real life" of the Jewish community suffers from this dichotomous separation, according to Rosenzweig, because it lacks a "center," or "home," in which the "being-Jewish" of the Jew can be formed. Most Jews from acculturated families at that time received little to no Jewish formation or education at home. In line with the broader cultural paradigm, Jewish learning and knowledge was relegated to the domain of the "expert," the "specialist" in things Jewish whom Rosenzweig sometimes calls "professional Jews." According to Rosenzweig, the fact that "only future rabbis receive a theological education" inevitably leads to "an intellectual impoverishment, or, least, onesidedness" in the rabbinical profession and is one of the main reasons for "the lack of an intelligent Jewish public."[45] Moreover, as Michael Brenner explains, at that time, "rabbinical seminaries concentrated on medieval and ancient topics."[46] For that reason, in Rosenzweig's view, most rabbis were unfit, or at least, unprepared, to meet the "demand of the day," i.e. the challenges and concerns of contemporary living Jewish human beings. Given the prejudicial standards of the German academic system discussed above, it is

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[42] Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (Yale University Press, 1998), 79.

[43] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 232.

[44] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 232.

[45] Franz Rosenzweig, "Zeit Ists," in *Zweitstromland. Kleinere Schriften Zu Glauben Und Denken. .*, ed. Reinhold Mayer and Annemarie Mayer, Franz Rosenzweig: Der Mensch Und Sein Werk. Gesammelte Schriften 3 (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), 46.

[46] Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, 92.

perhaps needless to say that German universities at that time offered no significant resources for the study or formation of contemporary Jewish learning. Finally, according to Rosenzweig, the synagogue, which was once "the augmenting member within the body of a living life," no longer serves as a viable locus for the formation of "whole" Jewish human beings:

> Rather, very much in keeping with the culture-drunken nineteenth century that put everything in its proper drawers, the synagogue has become a 'place' of 'religious' 'elevation' (or claims to have become such); it is where 'religion' seeks the safe and undisturbed niche denied it by life – rightfully! For it rightfully resists against such lifeless partial claims! – a niche, indeed: life passes it by without care.[47]

Rosenzweig resists the various modern attempts to reduce or compartmentalize the "Jewishness" of the Jewish human being to the relativistic categories of 'denomination,' 'religion,' 'confession,' 'ethnicity,' 'nationality,' etc. In contrast, he speaks of Judaism as the 'being Jewish' [*Judesein*] of the Jewish human being. In the programmatic essay concerning "the *Bildungsproblem* of the moment," Rosenzweig writes:

> What we call Judaism, the being Jewish of the Jewish human being, is nothing that could be captured in 'religious' 'literature,' not even in 'religious life', and also nothing that could be 'testified' as a 'confession' before a civil magistrate. *It is really not a something at all*, not a compartment among other compartments, not a sphere of life among other spheres of life…

Significantly, in Rosenzweig's understanding, the Jew's 'being-Jewish' is, we might say, both something the Jew *is,* and also something the Jew *has*. This is evident in the following sentence from *The Star*, of which the German wordplay is impossible to translate: "*Jude sein Judesein in*

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[47] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 234.

sich selbst von seiner eignen Geburt her besitzt und mit sich traegt," which Barbara Galli translates as: "the Jew possesses in him and carries with him his being-Jewish before his own birth."[48] The spacing and proximity of the first words "*Jude sein Judesein*" already suggests what the sentence claims, namely, that 'being-Jewish' (*Judesein*) is an inherent possession of the Jew (*Jude*), i.e. it is 'his' (*sein*) 'Jewish-being' (*Judesein*). Moreover, 'being-Jewish' is something the Jew has '*in* his self' (*in sich selbst*) and carries '*with* his self' (*mit sich selbst*) simply by the fact of his 'being-Jewish,' which actually precedes his being born. In other words, the "being-Jewish" of the Jew is, in a sense, given *prior* to the fact of the Jew's existence.

To a certain extent, Rosenzweig's understanding of the "being-Jewish" of the Jewish human being is similar to Schelling's notion of the *prius* of positive philosophy. In the context of the current discussion, we might say that, for Rosenzweig, 'being-Jewish' is something the Jew has as his *prius,* which precedes his life (i.e. he 'has' it 'in his self' before his birth). At the same time, however, by living, what follows from his 'being-Jewish' is the *fact* of a living Jewish human being:

> What I mean by Jewish is no 'literature.' It is neither grasped by the making of books nor
>
> by the reading of books. It cannot be – may the modern spirit forgive me! –'encountered'
>
> [*erlebt*]. At the most, it is lived [*ge-lebt*]. Perhaps not even this. One *is* it.

Simply by being a living Jewish human being, the 'being-Jewish' of the Jew becomes a fact. Recall that Rosenzweig, in his lectures on Lessing's *Nathan*, asserts: "the Jewish human being— he has (or must have), himself the power of a fact."[49] A fact, as we saw above, is something that is not necessary, which could not be, and nevertheless is. Thus, for one's 'being-Jewish' to "have the power of a fact," in this sense, is to say that one *is* it.

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[48] Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, 419.

[49] Rosenzweig, "Lessing's Nathan," 107.

Continuing the explanation of his sense of the prior givenness of the "being-Jewish" of the Jewish human being, Rosenzweig writes:

> One *is* it. But, to be sure, *it* also is. And because it is, because it is already there, because it was already there before I was, and will be even when I shall be no longer, therefore – but *only* therefore – it is also literature.[50]

Rosenzweig's word-play and phrasing in this discussion of 'being-Jewish' can lead to certain confusions which Schelling's notion of the *prius* helps clarify. As the *prius*, 'being-Jewish' precedes the existence of the living Jewish human being, hence Rosenzweig can say "it was already there before I was." When he claims that "it is also literature," he is not making a strict identification of Jewish literature with the *prius--*'being-Jewish.' Rather, literature *is* it in the same sense that we can say that the fact of the living Jewish human being *is* it.

Recall that for Schelling, "the *prius* is always the point of departure, that is, it always remains the *prius*. The *prius* will be known from its consequences, but not in a way such that the consequences had *preceded* it." Accordingly, Schelling elaborates, "through its consequence the *prius* is known."[51] In this light, we might therefore say that both the existence of the living Jewish human being and the existing body of Jewish literature are "consequences" which follow from the *prius,* "being-Jewish."

In Rosenzweig's understanding, literature is, in a sense, a consequence that has come into being which also aims to facilitate the coming into being within individuals of that which would also be regarded as a consequence of the *prius*. He writes, "All literature has been written only for the sake of those who are coming into being. And for the sake of that which in each individual is still coming into being." Moreover, he suggests: "The Jewish language which

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[50] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 231.

[51] Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy*, 180.

knows no 'reading' that is not called 'learning' spills this secret of all literature...that the sole

purpose of books is to pass on what has come into being [*Gewordenes*] to what is becoming

[*Werdendes*]."[52] In other words, for Rosenzweig, literature is written to pass on something which

has already come into being, a consequence of the *prius* (e.g. the "being-Jewish" of existing

Jewish life), to that which is still coming into being (e.g. the unformed "being-Jewish" of

individuals) which is not-yet a consequence, i.e. not yet a fact.

This notion of literature serving to pass on what has come into being to what is becoming

presents a potential problem for the conceptual possibility of Jewish formation/education

[*Bildung*]. If "being-Jewish" is something that the living Jewish human being already "is," in

what sense then can literature facilitate the coming into being of the Jew's "being-Jewish"?

Addressing this issue, Rosenzweig writes:

> If I am...[why] do I ask for what could '*bild*' me? After all, I am. But children come and
>
> ask – and within myself the child awakens that 'is' not yet, that 'lives' not yet, and it asks
>
> and wants to be *gebildet,* wants to become – what? Well, [it wants to become] a living
>
> being, [it wants to become] that which it – is.

From this description, there is a sense in which we can view Rosenzweig's conception of

'*Bildung*' as that which facilitates the birth of something which is latent within an individual,

insofar as he uses the image of a "child" within himself that 'is' not yet and 'lives' not yet that

wants to become a living being. One may notice a certain similarity with this idea and the

classic method of Socratic "midwifery" (*maieutics*), however, that is decidedly not what

Rosenzweig is after. To understand the difference, we should first recall why Rosenzweig

distinguishes the "dialogical" nature of his method of "speech-thinking" from the method of

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[52] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 231.

Socratic dialogue. In Rosenzweig's characterization, the "dialogues" of Socrates recorded by Plato do not share the form of actual conversation. "The thinker knows exactly his thoughts in advance" and the so-called "partner" of the dialogue "merely raises objections which I myself [as the thinker] would really have to raise." Moreover, consider the paradigmatic example of Socratic midwifery, which is found in the *Meno.* Through his questioning, Socrates leads a "slave boy" through a series of steps in a geometric proof at the end of which the boy is able provide a solution to a mathematical question that he was previously unable to answer. During this "dialogue" with the slave boy, it is clear that Socrates asks no questions for which he does not already know the answer. This is evidenced by the fact that the majority of his "questions" simply ask whether or not the boy affirms the truth of his statement (e.g. "And four times four is sixteen, is it not?"). Moreover, because Socrates' questioning follows the method of mathematical demonstration, in his answers the boy can never say anything unexpected, but rather, only that which is already known to be "correct" or "incorrect." The only opportunity for "surprise" made possible in this method of "dialogue" would be the unexpected instance in which the other incorrectly responds to a question for which the answer is assumed to be obvious (which, to be sure, does not happen in the *Meno*).[53]

As we have seen, that which follows from the *prius* is fact, which means the "consequences" do not follow by logical necessity. As such, in Rosenzweig's understanding, the coming into being of the not-yet consequence of the *prius* cannot be circumscribed within a clearly delineated and foreknown step-by-step procedure (like a mathematical proof). He is

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[53] One might say that there remains the possibility surprise by *non sequitur.* However, insofar as a *non sequitur* would not actually be a response to the question asked but an apparently random statement, it would not be part of the dialogue *per se,* but actually something outside of the dialogue which itself indicates the end of dialogue. Were the "conversation" to continue (without a resolution or erasure of the *non sequitur*), the participants would be talking *past* each other and not *to* each other. In that sense, it would no longer be a dialogue but a concurrence of two independent monologues.

extremely critical of "recipes" and "formulas" for the *Bildung* of Jewish human beings: "All formulas, be it the orthodox one, the Zionist one or the liberal one, create caricatures of human beings that are the more ridiculous the more they are followed like formulas."[54] This leads to Rosenzweig's seemingly counterintuitive suggestion that what he proposes for the renewal of Jewish education at the Lehrhaus is to have no plans. As he writes, "Every plan is here wrong to begin with because it is – a plan."[55] The only thing that can be "organized" in advance, he claims, is *Sprechraum* and *Sprechzeit* [a "speaking space" and "speaking time," or, "space to speak in" and "time to speak in"] in which the only thing needed is "readiness" [*Bereitsein*] (which is made possible by having "confidence" [*Vertrauen*]). It may sound as though Rosenzweig is proposing something akin to a Quaker meeting—especially when he declares "Let us, for once, have 'confidence.' Let us relinquish all plans. Let's wait and see."[56]—however, given the wide variety of course offerings in the actual prospectus for the Lehrhaus, it is safe to say that what Rosenzweig had in mind was not that members of the Lehrhaus would gather in the *Sprechraum* and *Sprechzeit* and then silently "wait and see" if/until someone felt inspired to share something. Rather, Rosenzweig's call to "relinquish all plans" is better understood in relation his dialogical method of "speech-thinking." In contrast to the form of "dialogue" utilized in the method of Socratic midwifery, Rosenzweig claims that "in actual conversation, something happens: I do not know in advance what the other will say to me because I myself do not even know what I am going to say."[57] The not-yet consequence of the *prius,* i.e. the 'child' in an individual that wants to become a living being, does not come into being through a foreknown step-by-step procedure.

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[54] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 236.

[55] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 235.

[56] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 237.

[57] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 126.

Rather, in Rosenzweig's understanding, it comes into being through a method of formation that is analogous to the method of actual conversation employed by the new thinking. He suggests that through a method of "new learning," the Lehrhaus might become a new "centerpoint" and "point of germination" for "the Jewish life of the Jewish human being." In his words:

> It attempts to be the form, certainly only the empty, first – next form for such a life. Instead of establishing a planned and fully designed whole that those eager to learn would approach in order to traverse it step by step...it confines itself to a mere beginning, to the mere opportunity of a beginning. And it begins with its own mere beginning: with speaking space and speaking time.[58]

If "being-Jewish" is brought into being through a process akin to actual conversation, in what sense then can a written text serve the purpose of passing on that which has come into being to that which is becoming? The answer is presumably related to what Rosenzweig calls, "The Secret of Biblical Narrative Form,"[59] which is also the title of an essay he published in 1928. In the essay, Rosenzweig claims that the portions of the Bible which comprise the law, the Psalms, and the prophets display the Bible's uniquely dialogical character:

> Writing drapes them only lightly: when the Psalms are spoken in prayer, when the laws are followed, when the prophecies are believed, they lose immediately their monologic dumbness and gain a voice to call the eternal interlocutor to dialogue: dialogue between man who listens and God who hears.

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[58] Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There Is No End," 237.

[59] There is probably a relation, for Rosenzweig, between this "secret" and his reference to the "secret" of all literature "spilled" the "Jewish language" which knows no distinction between "reading" and "learning."

Implicit within this description is Rosenzweig's understanding that the Bible's uniqueness can only be demonstrated "with respect not to the book as written but to the book as read."[60] The unique dialogical character of the Biblical text is thus displayed in the performance of the community of readers who do not simply *read* the text but *speak* and *hear* the text; and in so doing, understand themselves to be the ones addressed by the law and the prophets, summoning them to obey and to believe, and themselves as the speaker in the Psalms when they pray its words as their own.

Within the narrative portions of the Bible, the uniquely dialogical character of the Biblical text is harder to see (hence why Rosenzweig calls it a "secret"). In the essay, "The Secret of Biblical Narrative Form," Rosenzweig describes several unique aspects of the Biblical text, like the linked words and formulaic sentences which serve as "ties and clamps" joining together different passages of text, to show the ways in which the narratives disclose "an alternation of question and answer, speech and counterspeech, proposition and qualification." However, he also claims that the narratives' "dialogical element" will only really be appreciated by those who are already engaged in a performative dialogical reading of the Bible, i.e. those who also participate in the speaking and hearing of the law, Psalms, and prophets; and thus those who would read and hear the creation story, for example, not simply as a story about how the world was made, but also "learn from it why we are to work six days, and why on the seventh, when our work is complete, we are to celebrate."[61] According to Rosenzweig, while "again and again the Psalms awaken us to pray, the laws awaken us to obey, the prophecies awaken us to

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[60] Franz Rosenzweig, "The Secret of Biblical Narrative Form," in *Scripture and Translation*, ed. Lawrence Rosenwald and Everett Fox (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 140.

[61] Rosenzweig, "The Secret of Biblical Narrative Form," 134–135.

believe…this regeneration of audience is not something that biblical narrative can count on." He concludes:

> Biblical narrative must content itself with the hearers whom the law, the prophecies, the
> Psalms bring it, from among those they have newly awakened to action, to hope, to
> love…it catches these hearers who are distant from it in the net of the secret dialogue that
> is extended through it; it *transforms distant hearers into collaborators*, in a conversation
> that…offers those who are awakened to action, to hope, to love the one thing they still
> lack, and offers it to them so unassumingly that action, hope and love are not
> dogmatically crippled but spiritually winged: it offers them knowledge, it offers them
> teaching, it offers them revelation.[62]

Rosenzweig claims that the new thinking's method of "speech-thinking" is most clearly displayed in the middle volume of Part 2 of *The Star*, which is doubly titled: "'Revelation' or 'The Ever Renewed Birth of the Soul.'" In that section of *The Star*, Rosenzweig implicitly invokes several of the so-called "ties and clamps" found in the Biblical narratives to describe the dialogic process through which the individual is transformed from an isolated "Self" into the "beloved Soul." Several key parallels can be identified between Rosenzweig's description of this process and what he says in his programmatic essay for the Lehrhaus which help us understand how Rosenzweig thinks his new method of learning might help facilitate the coming into being of the "being-Jewish" of living Jewish human beings, i.e. to help give birth to new/renewed life in the Jewish community.

The transformation Rosenzweig describes in *The Star* begins with the call or summons by name, which followed by the initial response of self-presentation ("Here am I") in which the one

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[62] Rosenzweig, "The Secret of Biblical Narrative Form," 142.

who has responded to "the invitation to listen" is "still totally receptive, still only opened, still empty, without content, without essence, pure readiness, pure obedience, all ear." In writing about what can be prepared in advance for the formation of Jewish human beings, Rosenzweig claims:

> The Jewish human being needs nothing but readiness. He who wants to help him cannot give him anything but the empty forms of readiness…

These "empty forms" Rosenzweig proposes to offer are the *Sprechraum* and *Sprechzeit* of the Lehrhaus. In a sense, we might say, opening the *Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus* is the call or summons by name. Following this, Rosenzweig predicts: "people will be coming, people who, by the very act of coming into the speaking space [of the Jewish Lehrhaus]…give testimony to the fact that the Jewish human being is alive in them. Otherwise they would not come." In other words, those who come to the Lehrhaus, simply by presenting themselves (who say "Here am I"), have made the initial response to the call or summons by name, and so "testify" to the existence of the "being-Jewish" *in* them that *is* and also wants to *become* a living being.

For what will happen after people enter the speaking space of the Lehrhaus, Rosenzweig maintains nothing can be planned in advance. However, as mentioned above, when he proposes that the members of the Lehrhaus "relinquish all plans," be open and ready to listen, and then "wait and see," he is not suggesting that they come together and do nothing but listen while they wait. Rather, he is inviting them into the beginning of a conversation, an actual conversation in which they do not know in advance what others will say and so they cannot plan in advance how they will respond.

Over what were the members of the Lehrhaus to converse? In actual practice, the majority of courses and seminars offered at the Lehrhaus focused on the traditional Jewish

"sources"—i.e. the Bible, Talmudic-midrashic literature, Jewish theology and "mysticism," Jewish history, and Jewish liturgy. There was also a strong emphasis in the program of the Lehrhaus on teaching/learning Hebrew. In what sense, then, could Rosenzweig say that what the Lehrhaus offers is "new"? Perhaps, more significant than *what* was being discussed at the Lehrhaus is *who* participated in the discussion.

In Rosenzweig's assessment, the Jewish community in Germany had all but lost its vitality. "Research and teaching, science and education: amongst ourselves these are dead," he claims. The traditional center-points and carriers of Jewish life—law, home, and synagogue—no longer provide a fertile platform for Jewish life. Moreover, the major forms of response to the modern challenges Jews have faced since their emancipation—liberal/reform, Orthodox, and Zionist—have not provided a viable means for cultivating or sustaining the living 'wholeness' of the Jewish human being. Insofar as the purpose of books is to pass on what has come into being to that which is becoming, given the dire situation of Jewish life in Germany at the time, Rosenzweig insists that making of new books on Jewish subjects will not help (and, in fact, suggests it should come to an end). How can they pass on what they do not have? As he says, "we are lacking what alone makes knowledge and instruction come alive, i.e. – life." To the extent that the "being-Jewish" of the Jew comes into being through a transformative process akin to actual conversation, which is closely related to the performative dialogical reading of the Biblical text, the so-called demand of the day is to return to the original sources of Jewish life. This is not to be understood in an Orthodox or fundamentalist sense of "getting back to basics." Rather, for the process to be genuinely dialogic, the participants must not sacrifice anything of themselves when they come to the text. As Rosenzweig tells the members of the Lehrhaus in his opening address: "we take life as we find it. Our own life and the life of our students; and

gradually (or, at times, suddenly) we carry this life from the periphery where we found it to the center."[63] For Rosenzweig, the process of transformative dialogue occurs not only in the relationship of the individual and the text, but also in the relationship of the various individuals engaged in actual conversation together in relation to the text. Both the living Jewish human being and the existing body of Jewish writings are "consequences" of the same "center," i.e. the same *prius*, which is to say that "being-Jewish" is something each has and is. Rosenzweig tells the members of the Lehrhaus, "whoever gathers—and all of us are 'gatherers'—must seize upon that which is to be gathered wherever he finds it. And more than this: he must seize upon himself as well, wherever he may find himself."[64] The implication is that each person who comes into the Lehrhaus, and so testifies to the fact of the living Jewish human being within himself, has only a portion of what can and has come from the *prius*. To us Rosenzweig's imagery, they are only a segment within the "circumference" of what has expanded out from the "center." He explains, "seen from the periphery, the center does not appear invariably the same. In fact, the center of the circle looks different from each point of the periphery. There are many ways that lead from the outside in." The members of the Lehrhaus are "gatherers" in the sense of coming together in the same space and time, but also in the sense of collecting from various places the necessary resources of life. In "gathering" together, the members of the Lehrhaus both gather *from* one another and *with* one another. Each has something to contribute and also something gain—which means, as in actual conversation, there will be both giving and receiving among those involved. Rosenzweig acknowledges that at the outset many of the courses (and members) of the Lehrhaus will appear distinct and unrelated, but maintains "the contrasts are put in solely for the purpose of being bridged." He explains:

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[63] Rosenzweig, "Upon Opening the Judisches Lehrhaus," 100.

[64] Rosenzweig, "Upon Opening the Judisches Lehrhaus," 99.

Today what is classical, historical, and modern in Judaism may be placed side by side,

but this ought not to be so and in the future will not be so. It is up to us to discover root-

fibers of history in the classical phase, and its harvest in the modern.

Something analogous might be said for Rosenzweig's understanding of the distinctions between

the members of the Lehrhaus. Despite his disagreements and criticisms of the various

expressions of Liberalism, Orthodoxy, and Zionism, all were invited and encouraged to not only

be students of the Lehrhaus but also teachers there as well. As we saw above, Rosenzweig denies

the suggestion that Zionism alone is *the* Jewish life, but he still acknowledges Zionism's

significance as something *in* Jewish life, which means that it still has something to offer (which

is potentially not found elsewhere) to the *rest* of Jewish life. So too does it have something to

gain from the rest of Jewish life. According to Rosenzweig, none of the major forms of Jewish

life have been able to independently offer a viable way to move *through* the serious problems

facing the Jewish community. His proposal for the Lehrhaus is that they gather and search

together, from the "periphery back to the center."

The list of people who taught at the Lehrhaus spanned the spectrum of notable Jewish

intellectuals in Germany at the time.[65] The conversations held in its *Sprechraum* fostered

relations not only between disparate professional thinkers, but also bridged the gap between

members of the academic intelligentsia and "real life" members of the Jewish community in

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[65] As Michael Brenner writes, this roster included: "Leo Baeck, the leader of Liberal German Judaism, and Nathan Birnbaum, a representative of the Orthodox group Agudat Israel (and former Zionist). Zionist Gershom Scholem taught a seminar on the Zohar (a classical text of Jewish mysticism), and German nationalist Alfred Peyser spoke on the *Verband nationaldeutscher Juden*. Psychologist Erich Fromm instructed his students on the Jewish sect of the Karaites, and future sociologist Leo Loewenthal taught a course on figures at the margins of Jewish history. Galician-born Hebrew writer and later Nobel Prize winner Shmu'el Yosef Agnon recited from his writings, and non-Jewish German writer Alfons Paquet told of his impression of Palestine. The famous leader of the German Jewish women's movement, Bertha Pappenheim (the president of the Jewish Women's League in Germany and Freud's Ann O.), read from the memoirs of Glueckel von Hameln (a Westphalian Jewish widow of the seventeenth century), and philosopher Leo Strauss taught a seminar on Spinoza. Father Hermann Schafft led a lecture group on attitudes of Christians to the Old Testament, and journalist Siegreid Kracauer spoke on modern religious trends" (86-87).

Frankfurt. At its high point, the Lehrhaus had over 1100 registered participants. During that time, other institutions began to spring up around Germany bearing the name "Lehrhaus," a term which Rosenzweig had coined. A small level of dialogue with Christians was initiated at the Frankfurt Lehrhaus. At the Stuttgart Lehrhaus, it was much more actively pursued. In fact, it was one the participants at the Stuttgart Lehrhaus, Lambert Schneider, a young Christian publisher, who initiated the new Jewish translation of the TANAKH, which is now popularly known as the "Buber-Rosenzweig Bible." It was on this commissioned translation of scripture that Rosenzweig spent his last years working together with Martin Buber.

Tragically, the innovative experiment in "new learning" at the Lehrhaus was short-lived. Two years after the opening of the Lehrhaus, Rosenzweig was diagnosed Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis with progressive paralysis of the bulba (Lou Gehrig's disease), which forced him to step down from his position as director of the Frankfurt Lehrhaus. By the end of the following year, he was no longer able to physically write or speak. Amazingly, though one could never tell by its tone or style, Rosenzweig actually "wrote" the clarification of his method of "speech-thinking" (in the essay "The New Thinking, published in 1925), by "dictating" it to his wife through a laborious system of eye movements and facial gestures. After he stepped down, Rosenzweig was replaced by Rudolf Hallo, who later resigned for personal reasons the following year. The Lehrhaus remained open for a few more years under the combined leadership of Martin Buber, Richard Koch, and Eduard Strauss with the young lawyer, Rudolf Stahl, serving as its executive secretary. However, under the mounting pressures created by the rising levels of anti-Semitism and the political and social influence of the movement that would lead to the reign of the Nazi party, and without the guidance of its visionary leader, active participation at the Lehrhaus progressively dwindled until the early 1930s, when its doors officially closed.

Despite its short existence, there are many important lessons we can gain from Rosenzweig's experiment in "new learning" at the Lehrhaus. His proposed method of learning through the process of "speech-thinking," offers a model dialogical engagement which is relational without being relativistic; and thus has the potential to offer a viable alternative to the totalizing universality found in philosophical rationalism which does not require the sacrifice of the intellect through the *salto mortale* of relativistic fideism. It can appreciate the importance of genuine difference, the ability to give and receive from others with whom we disagree, and the necessity of taking time seriously, and thus of having patience. Patience in this sense means more than simply waiting. It means accepting our incompleteness, not as an aporia which must be resolved as quickly as possible, but as a fact of reality for living human beings. It is comfort with our not-yet knowing, and with the fact that the coming into being of our knowing cannot occur independently of time and thus cannot be coerced into being (in ourselves or in others) by logical (or political) necessity. It recognizes that for finding a way *through* our greatest problems, there are no preset formulas or plans that can provide a viable solution. All that we can prepare in advance is our preparedness—which is to say, our readiness, our openness to others, and willingness to enter an exchange (of giving and receiving) with others. Finally, we can the confidence that comes from the belief that in our gathering together, we are not alone.

Among the great men of the German classic, Lessing is the least understood. He was

such a thoroughly *oral* human being that, in order to understand his true meaning, one

has to keep in mind in every utterance at any given time its place in the actual

conversation to which it belonged for Lessing himself.

–Franz Rosenzweig, "On Lessing's Style of Thinking"[1]

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA: SURVEYING THE FIELD

Clement is an "exuberant and dynamic thinker."[2] The content of his teaching is nearly

impossible to summarize. As Judith Kovacs writes:

> Clement is an explorer of uncharted territory, who lays the foundation for a new Christian
>
> literature intended for the wider world and is one of the first to address questions that
>
> have engaged Christian thinkers through the centuries: what is the relation of faith and
>
> reason, of divine revelation and human thinking, of scripture and philosophy?...His
>
> theology has the character of dynamic exploration rather than a well worked-out
>
> theological system.[3]

Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski echoes Kovacs' sense that Clement's work does not read like a well

polished theological system. He writes:

> It is quite hard to discuss Clement's theology by reading his oeuvre in a 'systematic' way.
>
> From the first line of the first chapter to the last line of the last chapter, Clement has

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[1] "Zu Lessings Denkstil" appeared in the *Lessing-Nummer C.V.-Zeitung* of 18 Jan. 1929. Reprinted in *Kleinere Schriften*, 1937 and *Zweitstromland*, 1984, page 455 in Franz Rosenzweig, "On Lessing's Style of Thinking," in *Cultural Writings of Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Barbara E. Galli (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 113.

[2] Judith L. Kovacs, "Clement (Titus Flavius Clemens) of Alexandria," *The Expository Times* 120, no. 6 (March 1, 2009): 261.

[3] Kovacs, "Clement (Titus Flavius Clemens) of Alexandria," 266.

justly earned the reputation of being a difficult author, as he often chose to hide his

thoughts in allegories, the specific construction of his narrative and endless indirect

references to other authors.[4]

Clement's chosen form of literary presentation often appears strange and inaccessible to modern

readers. His most famous work, the *Stromateis* has a notorious reputation for being a difficult

and obscure text. This is in no small part due to its seemingly haphazard arrangement of material

and numerous digressive references to other writers.[5] Clement cites widely from the available

Greek writings of his era, especially from the Bible, "classic" Greek literature and philosophical

writings.[6] According to Eric Osborn:

> Clement tempts the collector of parallels, who could assemble a bulging album of
>
> fragments from Homer, Plato, Philo and a hundred other ancient writers, not to mention
>
> thousands of scriptural references…But no sense whatever can be made of the
>
> Clementine mixture unless one asks the question: "What problems was Clement trying to
>
> solve?" When that question is asked, Clement emerges as a thinker of note.[7]

Taking into account Osborn's advice about how to make sense of Clement's writing,

Rosenzweig's comment about Lessing's "Style of Thinking" also provides a sense of orientation

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[4] Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria: A Project of Christian Perfection* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 12.

[5] See Annewies van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria. A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods," *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996): 223.

[6] Accoring to Eric Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 4–5; D. Rankin, "Apologetic or Protreptic ? Audiences and Strategies in Clement of Alexandria's Stomateis and Protrepticus," *Sacris Erudiri* 44, no. -1 (January 1, 2005): 5–35, doi:10.1484/J.SE.2.3017515.

[7] Eric Osborn, "Clement of Alexandria: A Review of Research, 1958-1982," *Second Century* 3 (1983): 219.; See also Choufrine, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, 4–5, who writes: "Within the horizon limited by the notion of "dependence"—where virtually all studies of Clement's background, known to me, belong… Clement just has to think in the idiom of his milieu (he 'depends' on it). But thinking—that kind of it, at any rate, which is worthy of this name—is defined (like any activity that is specifically human) not so much by its material (the 'sources') as by its purpose…To grasp the *question* to which the ancient author's thought came to be an *answer* is in this case part of the hermeneutic task of an historian."

for my exploration of Clement's thinking. Like Lessing (in Rosenzweig's portrayal), Clement could be called "a thoroughly *oral* human being." To understand his writing, one has to consider the manner in which his claims would have functioned within the context of an actual conversation.

Scholars have long recognized the importance of situating Clement's work within the socio-political context of Alexandria and the Greco-Roman empire more broadly during his lifetime (c.150-c.215). According to Ashwin-Siejkowski, "a direct and substantial connection exists between Clement of Alexandria and his cultural milieu. These two aspects are inseparable: Clement outside of Alexandria would not offer us the same theological project."[8] The question, of course, is in what ways does Clement's thinking relate to his cultural milieu?

Following Salvatore Lilla's influential study of Clement, published in 1971, Clement's thought commonly has been presented as a meeting point of three distinct intellectual traditions: the Jewish-Alexandrine philosophy (exemplified by Philo), the Platonic tradition (now called "Middle Platonist"), and Gnosticism (which some have called "hetero-Gnostic," and others "heterodox Christian").[9] According to Lilla, "No part of Clement's thought can actually be adequately understood without taking these three factors duly into account."[10] Without denying the significance of these aspects of Clement's Alexandrian background,[11] I have tried to situate his work within a different constellation of distinct intellectual currents.

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[8] Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria*, 12.

[9] Salvatore R. C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); See also, David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Uitgeverij Van Gorcum, 1993); Annewies Van Den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis: An Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model* (Brill Archive, 1988); Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria*; Choufrine, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*.

[10] Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 227.

[11] Osborn, Runia, and others have faulted Lilla's study for its reductionistic approach. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 153, writes "Precisely on account of its predominant emphasis on Clement's sources…this study, for all its competence, has remained rather controversial. The method is surely excessively reductionistic.

In this chapter I aim to highlight the manner in which the literary form of the *Stromateis*

exemplifies the manner in which Clement's reasoning simultaneously affirms and contests deep

seated assumptions within his cultural milleu, specifically with respect to the role of

cultural/intellectual authority and conventional means and methods of communicating

knowledge. I organize the exploration of this dissertation chapter around three progressively

specific foci: 1) Popular trends within Clement's cultural and intellectual environment, which

contemporary classicists refer to as "Second Sophistic"; 2) The literary form and ostensive

purpose of ancient compiliatory writings, now generically classified as "miscellanies"; 3) Two

exegetical issues in the *Stromateis,* which are of specific interest to Clement scholars – the

relationship between the literary form of the *Stromateis* and Clement's comments about

"concealment," and Clement's argument about the so-called "theft of the Greeks."

CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT: THE SECOND SOPHISTIC

Clement wrote during a time shaped by the Greco-Roman cultural phenomenon called the

"Second Sophistic." Contemporary scholars use the term "Second Sophistic" in different ways.[12]

For the purposes of this study, I will use it in a broad sense, to identify a confluence of cultural

and intellectual trends of the burgeoning Greek culture of the Roman Empire centered in the

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Clement's thought is almost fully reduced to its component parts, for the most part taken over from other traditions and then covered with a thin topping of Christian adaptation and application. There is no central locus which guides and determines his thought."; See also Osborn, who argues that Lilla's work exemplifies the problematic "doxographical approach" to the history of philosophy, giving little attention to the problems that motivate the thinker. Eric Osborn, *The Beginning of Christian Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 281.; Also, Choufrine, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis*, 4–5.

[12] Timothy Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4. The phrase "Second Sophistic has been used to refer to: a historical period (c. 50 – 250 AD), a literary zeitgeist within that period, and, more specifically, to the popular performances of rhetorical oratory such as those described in Flavius Philostratus' *The Lives of the Sophists*. The name itself comes from Philostratus' division of the sophists into two categories: the "first sophistic," refers to those who dealt with abstract philosophical themes, e.g Gorgias, Critias, and others. The "second sophistic," in Philostratus' usage, refers to the practice of delivering rhetorical declamations in the guise of other figures, the most popular form of which (the melete) being a "speech given in the persona of, or addressed to, a famous figure from myth or ancient history (from the classical period)" (*ibid,* 20. See also 4-10 for an overview of variant usages of the term).

second and third centuries A.D.[13] Of central importance to the culture of the Second Sophistic is

the attainment of *paideia*, "which may be translated as education, or culture, or sophistication

(the German *Bildung* comes perhaps closest of single-word translations)"[14] At the time, *paideia*

was closely allied with Greek cultural identity—both as an expression of "Greekness" and as a

means of attaining "Greek" identity.[15]

It would be out of place to try to provide a detailed overview of the many different

educational practices and goals of learning in the early Roman Empire.[16] Instead, I will limit the

following analysis to a selection of two characteristic trends of the Second Sophistic which help

account for some of the distinctive features of Clement's writing. Borrowing from Gerald

Sandy's playful terminology, those themes are "The Cult of the Past" and "Bibliomania."

THE CULT OF THE PAST

In this section I will attempt to show how Greek-speaking intellectuals during the first three

centuries AD display an obsessive interest in the past, particularly the past of "classical" Greece

(roughly 500 years prior). This preoccupation with the past appears to be related to a sense of

dissatisfaction with the political realities of the present. The sense of past political power and

authority possessed by the Greeks of the classical era is sublimated into a presumed sense of

cultural authority possessed by Greek-speaking intellectuals who intentionally identify

themselves with the Greeks of a bygone age. Prevalent among Greek-speaking intellectuals of

the Second Sophistic is the deliberate effort to make an outward show of their connection to the

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[13] See Simon Goldhill, "Rhetoric and the Second Sophistic," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rhetoric*, ed. Erik Gunderson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 229.

[14] Goldhill, "Rhetoric and the Second Sophistic," 231.; "The man who achieved this prized attribute is called *pepaidemenenos*, 'cultured,' 'educated,' 'sophisticated.'"

[15] People who were not nationally or ethnically Greek, living outside the geo-political domain of Greece, could nevertheless come to be identified as "Greek" through the mastery of Greek *paideia*.

[16] See Henri Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1956).

Greeks of the "classical" age through two external markers—the use of attic diction, and the use of quotations and allusions to demonstrate one's familiarity with an established literary canon of classic Greek writings.

The preoccupation with the past appears to have permeated all levels of intellectual culture during the Second Sophistic. In relation to the study of religion, Robert Wilken writes:

> Unlike our culture, which seems to thrive on the new and up-to-date, Greco-Roman society revered the past. The older something was, the better it was thought to be. This was especially true in matters of religion, because the men and women of earlier times, especially those who lived very long ago, were thought to have been closer to the gods.[17]

The desire to ground one's position in ancient authority was also prevalent within philosophic schools at the time. As Pierre Hadot explains:

> There was a constant effort to return to the origins of tradition…The older a philosophical or religious doctrine was, the more true and venerable it was. Historical tradition was thus the norm for truth; truth and tradition, reason and authority were identified with each other.[18]

Similarly, in a survey of the popular forms of literature of the time, Ewen Bowie comments:

> Alongside prolific philosophical writing…and oratory that in its sophistic colours has so high a profile, histories continued to be written. It is a symptom of imperial Greeks' preoccupation with their classical past that much historiography was a reworking, often in elegant Atticist idiom, of earlier writers' accounts.[19]

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[17] Robert Louis Wilken, *The Christians As the Romans Saw Them* (Yale University Press, 2003), 122.

[18] Pierre Hadot, *What is ancient philosophy?* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 152–153.

[19] Ewen Bowie, "Literature and Sophistic," in *The Cambridge Ancient History: The High Empire, A.D. 70.-A.D. 192*, ed. Alan Bowman, Peter Garnsey, and Dominic Rathbone (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 909.

Bowie relates the "Greeks' preoccupation with their past to their dissatisfaction with the political situation of the present."[20] Along similar lines, Claudia Strobel argues that language became one of the ways the Greek elite tried to maintain a sense of independence under Roman rule, by showing their 'Greekness' or 'cultural identity.' "The attempt of many Greeks to 'purify' their language, even prospectively the spoken language, by going back to its roots in Attic was essentially an attempt to recreate the language of Athens at its moment of supreme authority and power."[21]

According to Sandy, the prevalence of "Atticism," i.e. "the academic attempt to revive a literary language that, in the case of Greek, had not been practiced for half a millennium," is one of the most fundamental expressions of the Second Sophistic's "cult of the past"; "it is best exemplified in the lexicons of authorized Attic diction that are known from the period."[22] He suggests the "Atticist" obsession in the 2nd century can be viewed as a reflection of broader, underlying trends in intellectual culture at the time. It is certainly more than a linguistic curiosity

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[20] Ewen Bowie, "Greeks and Their Past in the Second Sophistic," *Past and Present* 46, no. 1 (1970): 4.

[21] Claudia Strobel, "The Lexica of the Second Sophistic: Safeguarding Atticism," in *Standard Languages and Language Standards: Greek, Past and Present*, ed. Alexandra Georgakopoulou and Michael Silk (Ashgate Publishing, 2009), 98.

[22] Gerald N. Sandy, *The Greek World of Apuleius: Apuleius and the Second Sophistic* (BRILL, 1997), 50. Eleanor Dicky's comments about the composition of Attic lexicons help to clarify and support Sandy's claim: "The second century was also a good era for lexica. Many of these were Atticist lexica that provided lists of words acceptable in Atticizing writing, though often they included material from authors such as Homer or Herodotus who would not today be considered Attic. There was considerable debate among the Atticists as to which authors should be admitted to their canon, and we can see the results of that debate both in the work of broad-based lexicographers such as the 'Anti-atticist,' who took pains to justify by citation of Attic authors the use of words that were intelligible to second-century Greeks, and in the lexica of strict Atticists such as Phrynichus, who rejected such words in favor of obscurer alternatives gleaned from Old Comedy." Eleanor Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship: A Guide to Finding, Reading, and Understanding Scholia, Commentaries, Lexica, and Grammatical Treatises:From Their Beginnings to the Byzantine Period: From Their Beginnings to the Byzantine Period* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 9. Dickey, whose work has the broader aim of introducing ancient Greek scholarship in the second century AD, makes the following specific observation about the Second Sophistic: "It is probably not coincidental that this century was the period of the Second Sophistic, a movement that involved widespread revival of interest in the language of the classical writers. Second-century authors like Lucian learned to produce literary works in nearly flawless imitations of fifth-century Attic, and even in other classical dialects. The perfection of these imitations is especially impressive considering that non-literary Greek (as seen for example in documentary papyri) had undergone considerable evolution in the intervening five or six centuries, becoming a language markedly different from that of Plato or Herodotus." Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, 9.

that imperial intellectuals decided to recreate and use an obsolete dialect for its standard form of discourse. Bowie argues that a purely literary explanation is not sufficient to account for the prevalence of Atticism; instead he sees it as "part of a wider tendency, a tendency that prevails in literature not only in style but also in choice of theme and treatment, and that equally affects other areas of cultural activity."[23] According to Strobel:

> The defining quality symbolized by the use of Attic during the Second Sophistic is not social rank as such (though money buys education), but the *educatedness* summed up by the Greek word *paideia.* Correct performance marks an effort to maintain a certain aspect of *Greekness* – whereas incorrect performance is viewed as contributing to the decay of language and an acquiescence in imperfect Greekness.[24]

Accompanying the popularity of Atticism among the intellectual elite, we see the standardization of a set literary canon of authoritative works used both in the educational curriculum and also by authors at the time when they quote or paraphrase earlier writers. This has been shown convincingly by Fred Householder's statistical survey of quotations and allusions in the writings of Lucian and 14 other Imperial authors, ranging from Aelian, to Marcus Aurelius, to Plutarch, and Dio Chrysostom.[25] Despite the great differences of genre, subject, and "school" among the compared authors, the range of their use of earlier authorities is remarkably consistent. The same "top" fourteen authors comprise over 80% of the total number of quotations

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[23] Bowie, "Greeks and Their Past in the Second Sophistic," 3.

[24] Strobel, "The Lexica of the Second Sophistic," 104–105.

[25] Fred Walter Householder, *Literary Quotation and Allusion in Lucian* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941)

and allusions in the writings of the period, with over 70% coming from the top three: Homer, Plato and Euripides.[26]

Like other educated elites, philosophers at the time also maintained the belief that the truth and authority of the past was conveyed to the present through a mediating canon of authoritative texts. According to Hadot:

> It was believed that the truth had been "given" in the master's texts, and that all that had to be done was to bring it to light and explicate it. Plotinus, for example, writes: "These statements are not new; they do not belong to the present time, but were made long ago, although not explicitly, and what we have said in this discussion has been an interpretation of them, relying on Plato's own writings for evidence that these views are ancient."[27]

Note how Plotinus stresses the antiquity of the statements contained in the texts as a way of bolstering a sense of their authority and legitimacy, and thereby his own. Hadot explains:

> Truth was contained *within these texts*; it was the property of the authors, as it was also the property of those groups who recognized the authority of these authors, and who were consequently the 'heirs' of this original truth.[28]

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[26] According to Householder's study, the overwhelming percentage of quotations found in authors of imperial date come from Homer (55%), with the second, Euripides, trailing behind at (13%), all others in the "top 14" are in the 1 to 3 percent range. The full list of the 14 most quoted authors is as follows: Homer, Euripides, Plato, Herodotus, Hesiod, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Xenophon, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Aristotle, Aeschylus, Pindar, and Menander. See Householder, *Literary Quotation and Allusion in Lucian,* 44. That these authors also feature prominently in Clement's writing is, I suggest, not coincidental; rather, to foreshadow the discussion below, it exemplify Clement's critical engagement with his environment, through the subversive appropriation of the established canon of Greek intellectual and cultural authorities.

[27] Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life : Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 74, the quotation from Plotinus is from Enneads 5 1, 8, 11–14.

[28] Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 73.

Interestingly, according to Hadot's depiction, authority appears to be passed down in an almost monarchic fashion, with each successive generation being considered 'heirs' to the truth, which is communicated to them by right of their possession and mastery of authoritative texts.

During this period, Hadot observes, "philosophical teaching itself essentially took on the form of textual commentary."[29] He writes:

> Philosophers and their students did not talk about the problems themselves, or about things themselves; instead, they talked about what Plato, Aristotle, or Chrysippus had said about such problems or things. The question "Is the world eternal?" was replaced by the question, "Can we admit that Plato considered the world to be eternal, if he allows for an Artisan of the world in the *Timaeus*?"[30]

Two things can be said thus far about the Second Sophistic's "cult of the past" which are important for understanding the context in which Clement was writing. First, the educated elite looked to the past as a source of authority and power, which is mediated through a privileged canon of authoritative writings. Second, the desire of some to imitate the dialect found in these authoritative writings (and thus emphasize one's shared cultural identity with the authors), leads to an obsessive concern for the "correct" use of language and style.[31]

Whether it culminated in the study of philosophy or rhetoric, knowing what was said in a body of authoritative canonical texts became an integral part of Greek education during this time

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[29] Hadot, *What is ancient philosophy?*, 150.

[30] Hadot, *What is ancient philosophy?*, 151.

[31] Although many philosophers at the time were adamant in their disavowel of concern for style, they nevertheless display concern for the meaning and "correct" usage of specific philosophical terminology.; See, for example, Hadot, *What is ancient philosophy?*, 73, who writes of Plotinus' concern to correctly interpret the terminology used by Plato in his *Theaetetus*. According to Hadot: "The famous battle over universals, which divided the Middel Ages, was based on the exegesis of a single phrase from Porphyry's *Isagoge*."

period. This emphasis on possessing knowledge obtained from books brings us to the second distinctive feature of the Second Sophistic to be discussed—bibliomania.

BIBLIOMANIA

In this section, I intend to show how the possession and transmission of cultural power and authority during the Second Sophistic came to be associated with the possession and transmission of texts. Books were regarded as a privileged means of communicating *paideia*. To a certain extent, the possession of books was equated with the possession of what those books were thought to contain—i.e. education and knowledge.

Gerald Sandy writes that, "bibliomania, which has its roots in post-classical Greece, dominates the intellectual affairs of life during the Second Sophistic."[32] More than the simple love of books (bibliophilia), bibliomania is characterized by the obsessive collection of books. Sandy observes:

> The Greek sophist Philemon advised that the budding sophist should read prose authors by the armful and verse writers by the wagonful; the sophist Proclus of Naucratis set himself up in Athens as a book agent; and Favorinus bequeathed his collection of books to Herodes Atticus, who was the kind of man who "had everything."[33]

Additionally, Sandy writes:

> At a time when scarcely a word could be uttered without someone else's authority, it comes as no surprise that there was an authority on which books should be acquired, Philo of Byblos' twelve-volume *The Acquisition and Choice of Books.*[34]

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[32] Sandy, *The Greek World of Apuleius*, 68.; citing Philostr. VS 539, 604 and 490

[33] Sandy, *The Greek World of Apuleius*, 61.

[34] Sandy, *The Greek World of Apuleius*, 61.; For a satirical portrayal of the popular phenomenon of 'bibliomania,' see Lucian's *The Ignorant Book Collector.*

Prominent figures from the time express a strong sense of attachment and pleasure derived from the possession of books. A story from Libanius (c. 314-394 AD), a "chaired professor" of rhetoric in Antioch, is worth quoting in full:

Another occurrence deserves mention also. Although a trivial matter, it is significant. Some of you perhaps will regard me as a mere pedant, but I, smitten to my very heart, know that my emotion arose because of a calamity great indeed. I had a copy of Thucydides' History. Its writing was fine and small, and the whole work was so easy to carry that I used to do so myself, while my slave followed behind: the burden was my pleasure. In it I used to read of the war between Athens and Sparta, and was affected as perhaps others have been before me. Never again could I derive such pleasure from reading it in another copy. I was loud in praise of my possession, and I had more joy in it that Polycrates did in his ring,[35] but by singing its praises so, I invited the attention of thieves, some of whom I caught in the act. The last of them, however, started a fire to prevent capture, and I gave up the search but could not grieve at the loss. In fact, all the advantage I could have gained from Thucydides began to diminish, since I encountered him in different writing and with disappointment. However, for this discomfort, Fortune provided the remedy, a tardy one, admittedly, but, none the less, the remedy. I kept writing to my friends about it, so grieved was I, and I would describe its size and what it was like inside and out, and wonder where it was and who had it. Then a student, a fellow citizen of mine, who had purchased it, came to read it. The teacher of the class set up the cry, 'That's it', recognizing it by its tokens, and came to ask whether he was right. So I took it and welcomed it like a long-lost child unexpectedly restored. I went off rejoicing,

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[35] This allusion to a story, recounted by Herodotus, about a 6th century B.C. tyrant of Samos, is indicative of the "cult of the past" as well as the rhetoricians tactic of incorporating small signs of erudition in one's orations.

and both then and now I owe my thanks to Fortune. Let him who likes laugh at me for

making a mountain out of a mole hill. I have no regard for the laughter of boors.

From this story, it would seem as though Libanius is more concerned about the book as a

physical object than as a medium of communication. Consider his suggestion that his ability to

gain advantage from Thucydides began to diminish because when he encountered the same

words in different copies of the book.

In the *Life of Plotinus*[36], Porphry (c. 234-304 AD) reports that he received a letter from

his former teacher Longinus, in which Longinus requests copies of Plotinus' writings:

> It would be a great satisfaction to me if you would send me faithful transcripts for
>
> collation and return – though again I suggest to you not to send but to come in person,
>
> bringing me the correct copies of these treatises and of any that Amelius may have passed
>
> over. All that he brought with him I have been careful to make my own: how could I be
>
> content not to possess myself of all the writings of a man so worthy of the deepest
>
> veneration.[37]

Longinus' last statement is telling—he cannot be content unless he personally possesses all of

Plotinus' writings. Notice that the emphasis is placed on owning copies of the books, not directly

on learning from the contents of Plotinus' writings, let alone what he aimed to communicate

through them.

Of course, not everyone had the ability to obtain the books thought to be worth having.

The simple physical constraints of book production and distribution during that time limited

access to specialized literature. In the same letter, Longinus explains to Porphyry:

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[36] Porphyry, "On the Life of Plotinus and the Arrangement of His Work," in *The Enneads*, by Plotinus, ed. John M. Dillon, trans. Stephen Mackenna, Abridged ed (New York: Penguin, 1991), cii–cxxv.

[37] Porphyry, "Life of Plotinus," cxvi–cxvii.

Whatever else you may be expecting, do not hope for anything new of my own, or even

for the earlier works which you tell me you have lost; there is a sad dearth of copyists

here. I assure you it has taken me all this time to complete my set of Plotinus, and it was

done only by calling off my scribe from all his routine work, and keeping him steadily to

this one task.[38]

As Longinus' letter indicates, many elite intellectuals had their own personal scribes (slaves),

who could make copies of books or they could hire the services of a "professional" copyist (most

likely a slave owned by a book dealer), nevertheless, the copying process was time consuming

and subject to error. For example, in the same letter, Longinus complains about apparent scribal

errors in the manuscripts he has received from Porphry.[39]

In addition to the physical constraints of book production at the time, the financial costs

of hand-copied manuscripts significantly limited access to book ownership. Another story from

Libanius is revealing. He recounts an instance in which he saw that a student was in tears

because he could not afford to pay for both food and books. He then wrote to the young man's

father:

If you were in financial difficulties, I would ask you to borrow from friends to help your

child. But since you are doing very well and you are among the wealthiest, I suggest that

you should spend some of your money for your most valuable possession. Excessive

poverty perhaps is not particularly advantageous to a young man, but in this case we are

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[38] Porphyry, "Life of Plotinus," cxvi.

[39] Porphry denies this, claiming "his notion…that the transcripts he acquired from Amelius were fault sprang from his misunderstanding of Plotinus' style and phraseology; if there were ever accurate copies, these were they, faithful reproductions from the author's own manuscript" ("Life of Plotinus," cxvii) – Longinus' letter and Porphry's response nevertheless suggest that scribal errors and less-than-faithful reproductions of manuscripts were a common phenomenon at the time (common enough that it would be a default explanation for one's difficulty in understanding a text).

not even talking about the needs of his belly, but about this young man's books. Without

them, he will be like a man learning to do archery without a bow.[40]

It seems fairly clear that Libanius thought books were essential to education. The archery

analogy conveys the sense that *literature* was precisely what his students were being taught *to*

use or, better, *to wield*. In other words, his pedagogy was directed not towards the attainment of

knowledge per se, but *skill*.[41] Libanius was, after all, a professor of rhetoric. What his students

learned, then, was the skill of using words, an integral part of which was the technique of

cleverly incorporating the words of classical literature—not just by imitating the Attic diction of

the classic authors, but also by including passing references and allusions to their writings to

highlight one's erudition (e.g. Libanius' reference to Polycrates' ring in the previous story).

Even for those who may be capable of purchasing a wide selection books (or, who have

fathers or wealthy patrons who will do so for them), not everyone possesses the motivation or

time to actually read the variety of manuscripts to which they have access. Yet, this was an era in

which members of the societal elite were encouraged to draw upon the "classics" for useful

words, phrases, and allusions that could be enlisted into the service of one's rhetorical repertoire.

There was also a pervasive sense among the Greco-Roman intelligentsia that one could, and

indeed should, draw upon the perceived authority of past authors to support what one says. It is

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[40] Libanius, *Autobiography and Selected Letters*, trans. A. F. Norman, The Loeb Classical Library 478-479 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1992), 376–377 (Ep. 10).

[41] This emphasis of the skill of *wielding* ancient words can also be found in the Latin West. For example, after criticizing Marcus Aurelius for lapses in diction, Fronto advises him to "return to words that are suitable, appropriate and imbued with their own vigor…Pursue the old currency." Paralleling the combative connotations of Libanius' archery analogy, Fronto likens the collection and deployment of classical language to military conscription:
> Just as in war when it is necessary to enroll a legion we select not only volunteers but seek out the slackers of military age, just so when we need a garrison of words from the population of all words, so to speak, we will make use not only of the volunteer words that present themselves without any effort on our part but will also call forth and search out for military service the words that lie in hiding. (Fronto, Letters, II, 52-3Sandy, *The Greek World of Apuleius*, 51.

Fronto's encouragement of Marcus Aurelius to "search out words" as he would for men to fill his armies is not unusual for that time period. Numerous examples can be found of intellectuals feverishly collecting and searching though old books from which they might excerpt new "recruits" to add to their legions of words.

not surprising, then, that during this era there emerged "a special class of ancient literature, as it often presents itself, for a special class of readers—those deeming themselves too busy to engage in leisurely and voluminous reading."[42] During this time period there was a preponderance of ready-made collections of "classic" words and sayings, condensed "lives of the philosophers," brief synopses of different "dogmas," and various other interesting tidbits of information, culled from a variety of "authoritative" sources and made readily available in an easily digestible form –i.e. the "miscellany."

LITERARY CONTEXT: "MISCELLANY" AS A GENRE

Amiel Vardi argues that during the second and third centuries AD, the time period in which Clement composed the *Stromateis,* "miscellanies were in their heyday."[43] Although earlier examples can be found,[44] from the first century AD on, compiliatory works "appear to have enjoyed a remarkable increase of popularity, and from that time on miscellanies of various types continued to be very common in the Graeco-Roman world, for which we have ample secondary evidence as well as a number of extant examples."[45] Vardi writes:

> Modern scholarship tends to regard this flourishing of miscellaneous collections, together
>
> with a similar increase in the production of other types of selective compilations of
>
> learned material, such as *excerpta*, epitomes, and all sorts of compendia, lexicographic,

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[42] Amiel D. Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," in *The Worlds of Aulus Gellius*, ed. Leofranc Holford-Strevens and Amiel D. Vardi (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 165.

[43] Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 165.

[44] Vardi cites the 5th century BC work, *Synagôgê,* attributed to Hippias. It is worth noting that our knowledge of Hippias' writing comes from a passing reference to the *Synagôgê* by Athenaeus (a. 2nd-3rd centuries AD) and from Clement, who 'quotes' Hippias, without naming a work, as 'proof' "the propensity of the Greeks to plagiarism in expressions and dogmas" (*Strom.* 6.2.15.1); See Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 166, fn 26; See also Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Clarendon Press, 1968), 51–54.

[45] Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 166.

gnomologic, doxographic, or mythographic, as reflecting a cultural moment in which,
even among the *litterati,* mastering all the knowledge accumulated through the ages in
the various disciplines of Hellenic research was felt to be beyond the abilities of an
average individual.[46]

Clement was certainly not unaware of what was going on around him, and his writing can be
seen as an adaptation to the "cultural moment" of which this flourishing of miscellaneous
collections is a reflection. Clement does not simply adopt a literary fashion of the time. As I seek
to show, he deliberately chose the literary form of the *Stromateis* to challenge the assumptions
and expectations of its readers, not only about the nature and purpose of its literary genre, but
also, more broadly, about cultural and intellectual authority and the manner in which knowledge
is transmitted and received.

It is important to note that the generic classification of "miscellany" is a somewhat
anachronistic designation. Vardi, for example, points out that "unlike the poetic genres, for
which we have a fairly standard generic system reiterated in school-books and works of literary
theory, we possess no evidence for an ancient attempt to establish a systematic classification of
prose works of the sort Gellius writes [i.e. prose works which modern scholars classify as
"miscellanies"]."[47] Moreover, according to Jason König, "It is hard to isolate any clearly

[46] Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 166–167.

[47] Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 161.; Gellius's work, *Noctes Atticae,* is often upheld as the exemplar of the miscellaneous genre, particularly because its preface includes a list of thirty Latin and Greek titles of works which are commonly classified together with it as representative members of a shared literary category. Gellius's work is also mentioned frequently in discussions of the *Stromateis'* literary form.; See, for example, Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: "Grammatica" and Literary Theory 350-1100* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 164, who writes, "Clement's major work, the *Stromateis* (*Miscellanies*), is a grammatical genre popular in the Hellenistic period. Like Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae* and Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistai,* it is a product of a literary culture in which commentaries, exegesis, miscellanies, and anthologies had become dominant literary genres."; Contemporary classicists, writing about the genre of Gellius' *Noctes Atticae,* also mention Clement's *Stromateis* as a representative example of the genre. For example, Leofranc Holford-Strevens, *Aulus Gellius an Antonine Scholar and His Achievement.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, UK, 2003), 29, who remarks, "so popular was the genre [of miscellanies, akin to Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*] that the Christian

bounded ancient genre of the 'miscellany'. It seems more fruitful instead to recognize the recurring presence of a range of miscellanistic characteristics across many different kinds of writing."[48]

A recent dissertation by Eleanor Rust, on the use of miscellaneous knowledge in Gellius' *Noctes Atticae,* introduces some helpful clarifications for thinking about the different characteristics ancient "miscellanistic" or "compilatory" works. Most useful is her observation that works can be "miscellaneous" on different levels. Compilations can display variegation in terms of sources, range of fields, subject matter, and organization.[49] And, as Rust suggests, most works which are commonly called "miscellanies" display disorder, or variation, on some, but not all, of these levels.[50] For example, Pliny the Elder's *Naturalis Historia* collects information on a variety of topics from a wide range of different sources, but presents it all in a deliberately planned, categorically organized, hierarchical arrangement. Similarly, other works sometimces classified as "miscellanies," like the *Episulae Morales* of Seneca and the *Antiquae Lectiones* of

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Clement of Alexandria adopted it for a work imparting not a general culture but a specific message."; See also, Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 164, 171.; Nigel Wilson similarly refers to Clement's *Stromateis* in the context of a discussion about Aelian. Nigel G. Wilson, "Introduction," in *Historical Miscellany*, by Claudius Aelianus, Loeb Classical Library 486 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 16.; Significant also is the fact that Gellius' list of titles includes the name "*Stromateis*" (but it most likely refers to a now lost work by Plutarch with the same name).

[48] Jason König , "Fragmentation and coherence in Plutarch's Sympotic Questions," in *Ordering Knowledge,* 43.; For König, miscellanistic works "are marked primarily by the disparateness of the material they accumulate. In some cases that quality of disparateness is supplemented by other markers: for example, many miscellanistic texts claim that their primary aim is to give pleasure to their readers, rather than to instruct or to be comprehensive; many make claims about the randomness of their own structures. Sometimes, for sure, all of these characteristics are combined with each other."

[49] Rust identifies three "levels" at which a work can be "miscellaneous": content, style, and organization. Here I expand upon her categories.

[50] Eleanor M. Rust, "Ex Angulis Secretisque Liborum: Reading, Writing, and Using Miscellaneous Knowledge in the Noctes Atticae" (PhD dissertation, University of Southern California, 2009), 31.

the grammarian Caeslius Vindex, are specifically dedicated to a single field of learning (philosophy and philology/rhetoric, respectively).[51]

Despite the differences between works commonly identified as "miscellanies," most, if not all, seem to share at least one commonality: what they claim are to provide for the reader, namely, the avoidance of tedium. They propose to do this in one of two ways. Systematically organized collections of materials, on the one hand, offer to help the reader avoid tedium by conveniently and efficiently facilitating access to specific information. Unsystematic miscellanies, on the other hand, deliberately composed with a novel variety of memorable content, offer a pleasurable distraction for 'busy people' who are unable or unwilling to devote their time and attention to substantive reading.

SYSTEMATIC AND UNSYSTEMATIC COMPILATIONS

Of the systematically organized compilations, authors such as Pliny the Elder (d. 79 AD), boast about the toilsome labors they have undergone to make the fruits of erudition easily accessible to their readers. In the dedicatory preface of *Naturalis Historia*, Pliny mentions the extraordinary efforts undertaken to produce the work:

> By reading around 2,000 volumes from 100 choice authors - few of which scholars handle on account of their arcane subject matter- I have included 20,000 worthwhile facts in 36 volumes, and added many other things which earlier authors were either ignorant of or which a later age discovered.[52]

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[51] Interestingly, Vindex also is said to have written a work titled "*Stromateus.*"See, Herbert Jennings Rose, *A Handbook of Latin Literature: From the Earliest Times to the Death of St. Augustine* (Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1966), 451.

[52] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia,* pr. 4, See Rust, "Ex Angulis Secrestique Liborum," 136.

At the end of the preface, Pliny attaches a *summarium* (akin to a "table of contents") with the following explanation:

> I have added to this letter what is contained in the individual books, and have worked with the greatest care so that you will not have to read them. In this way you will be responsible for others not having to read them through, but as each reader wants any item, he will only search for it to know where to find it.[53][54]

Pliny wants his reader to know that he has put care into the overall design of this collection and its individual books to spare his readers the tedium of having to read through the entire work. Somewhat akin to modern encyclopedias, the systematic arrangement of materials in his compilation is designed to help the reader quickly and easily find information about a specific topic without having to sift through a heap of extraneous information pertaining to different subject-matters.

On the other end of the spectrum, authors of deliberately unsystematic "miscellanies" often claim that the haphazard organization of materials in their work is intended to maintain the reader's interest. For example, Clement's rough contemporary, Aelian (ca. 175 – ca. 235), says of his playful compilation, *On the Characteristics of Animals*:

> I know that some people will find fault with my decision not to devote a separate entry to each animal or to group together everything that is to be written of each animal. Instead, I have mingled the various animals indiscriminately…the variety of my reading-matter is intended to attract the reader and avoid the tedium arising from monotony.[55]

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[53] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia,* pr. 33 (translation from Rust 2009); See Rust, "Ex Angulis Secrestique Liborum," 122.

[54] Pliny, *Naturalis Historia,* pr. 33 (translation from Rust 2009).

[55] Aelian, *On the Characteristics of Animals,* epilogue.

A similar rationale for the indiscriminate mingling of various materials seems to have governed

one of the most influential ancient miscellanies, the *Istorika Hypomnemata* of Pamphile of

Epidaurus, composed during Nero's reign, and cited by several later "miscellanists." [56] The work

is now lost, but Photius' description in the *Bibliotheca* provides a sense of what it was like:

> The book is valuable for its erudition. One can find in it a large number of essential
>
> historical facts; there are also some witty sayings, precepts of rhetoric, philosophical
>
> ideas, thoughts about poetic style, and other matter of the same kind.[57]

Significantly for the present study, Photius also describes Pamphile's rationale for the variously

intermixed organization of materials in her book:

> All this material, whatever she thought notable and worthy or record, she compiled in her
>
> 'varied notes,' not assigning each item to a particular category, but putting facts together
>
> at random as they occurred to her; not that she thought it difficult to classify according to
>
> subject-matter, but she reckoned that mixture with its variety would be more pleasant and
>
> agreeable. [58]

From Photius' account, we also know that Pamphile was born in Egypt and wrote in Greek.

Given how well known her work was to later intellectuals, it does not seem unreasonable to

imagine Clement might have been familiar with her varied notes. Even if that is not the case,

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[56] Rust writes, "One work often posited as the definitive model for the organization of the *NA* is that of Pamphile, a Greek miscellanist of the 1st c CE. Her collection of ὑπομνήματα (memoirs) are largely lost but they are mentioned in Photius's 8th c. Bibliotheka and cited twice by Gellius himself (NA 15.17, 23). Eight other fragments are preserved by Diogenes Laertius." Rust, "Ex Angulis Secrestique Liborum," 106–107. Vardi also suggests that her work may have been invoked by Favorinus, and through a note referring to a work by O. Regenbogen, suggests that her influence may have extended to Plutarch, Aelian, Athenaeus, and Sopatros. Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 170. Vardi's reference is to: Otto Regenbogen, "Pamphila 1", RE xviii/2 (Stuttgart, 1949), 318-26.

[57] Photius, *The Bibliotheca: A Selection*, trans. Nigel Guy Wilson (London: Duckworth, 1994), 119b–120a.

[58] Photius, *The Bibliotheca*, 119b–120a.

Clement nevertheless makes statements that appear to parallel and perhaps even parody the self-described working methods of authors like Pamphile.

AESTHETIC AIMS: GARLANDS AND MEADOWS

In unsystematic collections like Pamphile's, the reason given for the intentional variation of materials is primarily aesthetic. As Photius notes, it is not as if Pamphile was incapable of systematically organizing her notes according to subject-matters (as Pliny does in his encyclopedic collection), but rather, she reckoned that mixture and variation would be more pleasant and agreeable.

A similar regard for the aesthetic charm of variation is also repeated by Aelian, who writes: "I have judged it necessary to weave into my narrative a pattern of animals, as it were, in place of flowers, like a meadow or a garland picked out with flowers of many colors."[59]

Aleian's allusion to garland weaving trades on an established literary convention of using flowery nomenclature to refer to poetic anthologies.[60] By the time of Clement and Aelian, the imagery of flowery "meadows" and plaited "garlands" had become a common literary trope to

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[59] Aelian, *On the Characteristics of Animals,* epilogue.

[60] In fact, our English word, "anthology," comes from the Greek *anthos*: "flower," and *logia*: "collection, collecting" (from *legein*: "gather.") So, etymologically speaking, an "anthology" is literally a "flower collection." The Latin name for similar forms of literature, i.e. *florilegium,* also shares the same etymological meaning—*flos*: "flower" and *legere:* "to gather."; Arguably, Meleager (c. 1st century BC) was one of the first to publish an *anthologia*, an assortment of poetic epigrams which he entitled *Garland* (Στέφανος). In keeping with the theme of flower collecting, in the proem he mentions the names of the included poets and identifies each with a type of flower or fruit:

> The work was Meleager's and he labored threat to give it as a keepsake to glorious Diocles. Many lilies of Anyte he inwove, and many of Moero, of Sappho few flowers, but they are roses; narcissus, too,…and from the meadow (ἐν δὲ καὶ ἐκ λειμῶνος) where grows her perfect celery he plucked but a few blooms of Parthenis to inweave with the yellow-eared corn gleaned from Bacchylides, fair fruit on which the honey of the muses drops…(William R. Paton, trans., *The Greek Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916).[60]

Later authors adopted Meleager's methods (and metaphors) of literary compilation. Philippus of Thesalonica (c. 1st century AD), for example, published a *Garland* of his own, proclaiming in the dedication:

> Plucking for thee flowers of Helicon (Ἑλικώνια) and the first-born blooms of the famous Pierian forests, reaping the ears of a newer page, I have in my turn plaited a garland to be like that of Meleager (*The Greek Anthology,* IV.2).

describe compiliatory works beyond the field of poetry. Among the various works of Herodes Atticus known to Philostratus, for example, there were "handbooks and epitomes containing in small compass the plucked flowers of classical learning."[61]

Clement deliberately evokes this established literary convention in relation to his chosen form of written presentation in the *Stromateis.* In the introduction to book 6, he writes:

> In a meadow the various flowers in bloom, and in a park the plantations of fruit trees, are not separated each according to their species from other kinds (as in the *Meadows* [*Leimônas*], and *Helicons* [*Helikônas*], and *Honeycombs* [*Kêria*], and *Robes* [*Peplous*] some have composed, making varied erudite collections). With material as it chanced to come to recollection, not organized or stylistically embellished, but purposely scattered, the form of my *Stromateis* is variegated like a meadow.[62]

In this passage, Clement asks his reader to consider the variety of flowers that naturally grow in the meadow, and then, the types of fruit-bearing trees in a "park" (*paradeisos*).[63] He points to the fact that the flowers of the meadow and the fruit-bearing trees in *paradeisos* are not separated and arranged according to their species. He specifically refers to authors who have composed collections by culling together selections of different varieties of erudition, bearing titles like "Meadows," "Helicons," "Honeycombs," and "Robes." These four titles also appear in the list of titles for different compiliatory works recorded in Gellius' preface to *Noctes Atticae.*[64] Pliny the

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[61] VS 565; reference from Sandy, *The Greek World of Apuleius,* 73.

[62] *Strom.* 6.1.2.1.1 – 6.1.2.2.: Ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ λειμῶνι τὰ ἄνθη ποικίλως ἀνθοῦντα κἀν τῷ παραδείσῳ ἡ τῶν ἀκροδρύων φυτεία οὐ κατὰ εἶδος ἕκαστον κεχώρισται τῶν ἀλλογενῶν (ᾗ καὶ Λειμῶνάς τινες καὶ Ἑλικῶνας καὶ Κηρία καὶ Πέπλους συναγωγὰς φιλομαθεῖς ποικίλως ἐξανθισάμενοι συνεγράψαντο)· τοῖς δ' ὡς ἔτυχεν ἐπὶ μνήμην ἐλθοῦσι καὶ μήτε τῇ τάξει μήτε τῇ φράσει διακεκαθαρμένοις, διεσπαρμένοις δὲ ἐπίτηδες ἀναμίξ, ἡ τῶν Στρωματέων ἡμῖν ὑποτύπωσις λειμῶνος δίκην πεποίκιλται. (ANF, significantly modified).

[63] παράδεισος is the Greek word used in the LXX for "garden" in the "Garden Eden."

[64] See *Noctes Atticae,* pr. 6-10.

Elder also mentions the titles "Meadow" and "Honeycomb" in a similar list of compilations in the preface to *Naturalis Historia*.[65]

Clement also claims that he has arranged the materials in his collection as they chanced to come to mind, not separating each item according to its species, but purposely scattering them throughout the work. This closely resembles the description of Pamphile, who put facts together at random as they occurred to her, not assigning each to a category or classifying materials according to subject matter. We find similar claims made by other prominent authors of collections and miscellanies around the time.[66] Although we do not have enough information from Pamphile to judge the accuracy of her claim, Vardi and others have shown that similar claims by other authors, such as the younger Pliny, Plutarch, and Gellius appear "manifestly false."[67]

DIDACTIC REDUCTIONS: BEES AND HONEYCOMBS

Another popular literary convention that Clement evokes is trend of philosophers at the time likening their endeavors to the honey production of bees (as a way to differentiate their working methodology from the aesthetic aims of the anthologists). Plutarch (c. 46-120 AD), for example, advises:

> One ought therefore to strip off the superfluity and inanity from the style, and to seek after the fruit itself, imitating not garland-weavers, but the bees. The former, pluck

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[65] See *Naturalis Historia,* pr. 24.

[66] Pliny the Younger (c. 61 – 112 AD), for example, claims that he compiled his collection of letters "just as each came to hand"; Ep. 1.1.1. in Pliny, *The Letters of the Younger Pliny*, trans. John B Firth (London: Walter Scott, 1900), Ep. 1.1.1.; Plutarch similarly writes that the contents of his "sympotic" work, *Quaestiones Convivales,* "are promiscuously set down, not in any exact method, but as each singly occurred to memory." Quaest. Conv. 2.0.1. in Plutarch, *Moralia*, trans. Frank C. Babbitt, 15 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927).; Gellius likewise suggests that the arrangement of the *Noctes Attica* reflects indiscriminate and random order in which he originally encountered and recorded the various pieces of information that comprise its contents. See *Noctes Attica,* pr. 2.

[67] Vardi, "Genre, Conventions, and Cultural Programme in Gellius' Noctes Atticae," 173.

flower-clusters and sweet-scented leaves, intertwine and plait them, and produce

something that is pleasant enough, but short-lived and fruitless; whereas the bees in their

flight frequently pass through meadows of violets, roses, and hyacinths, and come to rest

upon the exceeding rough and pungent thyme, and alight there "intent on yellow honey";

and when they have got something of use, they fly away to get on with their work.[68]

Seneca (c. 4 BC-65 AD) gives similar advice when speaking about the relationship between

reading and writing:

> We should imitate the bees, as they say, which wander and harvest from flowers suited to
>
> making honey and then organize whatever they have brought back and distribute it over
>
> the honeycombs, and as our dear Virgil says:
>
> > pack the flowing honey
> >
> > And fill the cells swollen with nectar sweet.
>
> …we too should imitate these bees and separate out whatever we have accumulated from
>
> the variety of our reading (for they are preserved better if kept apart), then, by applying
>
> the care and skill of our intellect, fuse those different tinctures into one flavour.[69]

The difference between the methods of these philosophers, here symbolized by the bees, and that

of the anthologists, is that one must first digest the content of the "flowers" and then transform

one's varied selections into a unified composition. Macrobius (c. 385-430 AD), who essentially

repeats the passage above from Seneca, suggests just that when commending the imitation of

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[68] Plutarch, *De Recta Ratione Audiendi,* 41.E-41.F: Διὸ δεῖ τὸ πολὺ καὶ κενὸν ἀφαιροῦντα τῆς λέξεως αὐτὸν διώκειν τὸν καρπὸν καὶ μιμεῖσθαι μὴ τὰς στεφανηπλόκους ἀλλὰ τὰς μελίττας. αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιοῦσαι τὰ ἀνθηρὰ καὶ εὐώδη τῶν φύλλων συνείρουσι καὶ διαπλέκουσιν ἡδὺ μὲν ἐφήμερον δὲ καὶ ἄκαρπον ἔργον· αἱ δὲ πολλάκις ἴων καὶ ῥόδων καὶ ὑακίνθων διαπετόμεναι λειμῶνας ἐπὶ τὸν τραχύτατον καὶ δριμύτατον θύμον καταίρουσι καὶ τούτῳ προσκάθηνται
     ξανθὸν μέλι μηδόμεναι,
καὶ λαβοῦσαί τι τῶν χρησίμων ἀποπέτονται πρὸς τὸ οἰκεῖον ἔργον.
[69] Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Selected Letters*, trans. Elaine Fantham, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 84.2–5.

bees in the *Saturnalia.*[70] In the preface, Macrobius explains that he wants to transmit the benefits

of his lifetime of learning to his son and that the work is meant to be a distillation of all the he

has acquired in the varied course of his reading.[71] Macrobius thus offers the *Saturnalia* as the

"honey" of his bee-like efforts.

Authors like Macrobius and Seneca may liken their work to honey production rather than

floristry, but the stated purpose of their composition still conveys a sense that they have already

done the hard work *for* the reader, digesting a variety of materials ahead of time and

transforming the incoherent multiplicity into a unified whole. Not unlike the encyclopedic

collections, their honeycombed compendia are designed to make it *easier* for the reader to

partake of the refinements of erudition, and to remove the difficulty of collecting and digesting

literature on various topics from a multiplicity of different authors and eras. As Macrobius

explains to his son, he prefers "the short cut to the roundabout rout."[72]

There are a few passages of the *Stromateis* which makes it seem as though Clement is

emulating the philosophic authors of his era. In one of the few instances in which Clement shares

information about his personal biography, he describes one of the "blessed and truly remarkable

men," through whom he learned what he now aims to convey in the *Stromateis,* as a "true

Sicilian bee." Most scholars share Eusebius' belief that the person described in this passage is

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[70] Although Macrobius falls outside of the general time period of the "Second Sophistic" here discussed, I included mention of him for two reasons. First, his work, the *Saturnalia,* exemplifies many of the characteristics of the kind of compiliatory literature which was prominent during the "Second Sophistic" (and this appears to be intentional, given Macrobius' numerous allusions to literary compilers such as Seneca and Aulus Gellius). Second, the *Saturnalia* has been directly associated with Clement's *Stromateis* as a representative example of a work with a similar literary form. See Louis Roberts, "The Literary Form of the Stromateis," *Second Century* 1 (1981): 211–222.

[71] Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, trans. D. P. Vaughan, First Edition (Columbia University Press, 1969), 27 "We ought in sort sort to imitate the bees; and just as they, in their wanderings to and fro, sip the flowers, then arrange their spoil and distribute it among the combs, and transform the various juices to a single flavor by in some way mixing with them a property of their own being, so I too shall put into writing all that I have acquired in the varied course of my reading, to reduce it thereby to order and to give it coherence."

[72] Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, 26.

Pantaenus,[73] who Eusebius says preceded Clement as head of the catechetical school in Alexandria. Clement's description of his teacher seems to parallel the activity of the ideal scholar described by Seneca, Plutarch and Macrobius. In Clement's description, this true "Sicilian bee," drawing from the flowers of "the meadow of prophets and apostles," engendered in the souls of his hearers a pure [something][74] of knowledge.[75]

Similar to other authors at the time, Clement uses the image of the bee as model of ideal scholarly practice, but Clement does not identify the bee's production of "honey" with the production of written compositions. Rather, the true "bee," according to Clement, engenders something within the souls of his hearers.

CONTRASTS WITH CLEMENT'S *STROMATEIS*

As noted above, what seems to unify the miscellaneous compendia and compilations of the time is the intended goal of their design—the avoidance of tedium, either by efficiently facilitating the retrieval of specific information through a clearly organized categorical arrangement of materials, or by providing a varied selection of novel curiosities, poetic verses, and witty sayings, which is pleasurable to read. The former is useful when one already has a topic in mind (about which one wants to know more). The latter is useful when one does not, i.e. when 'busy people'

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[73] Eusebius, *The History of the Church: From Christ to Constantine*, ed. Andrew Louth, trans. G. A. Williamson, Revised (Penguin Classics, 1990), 157. According to Eusebius, "In his Outlines he refers to Pantaenus as his teacher, and it seems to me that in Book I of the Stromateis there is a covert allusion to that scholar." Curiously, the passage quoted by Eusebius from the Stromateis leaves out the sentence about the "true Sicilian bee."

[74] The Greek text in the passage is hard to translate. I find Ferguson's translation: "a pure *substance* of true knowledge" too misleading because of the significant philosophical and theological connotations of the term "substance," (Greek: *ousia*), which is not in the text. Also, the editorial decision to attach "true" to "knowledge" when Clement speaks of "gnosis" is, in my opinion, misguided. The ANF translation: "a *deathless element* of knowledge" is puzzling. For now, "a pure [something] of knowledge," seems preferable, albeit inelegant, in relation to Clement's epistemological concerns, to be discussed in the next chapter. The Greek text of this passage reads, in full: Σικελικὴ τῷ ὄντι ἦν μέλιττα προφητικοῦ τε καὶ ἀποστολικοῦ λειμῶνος τὰ ἄνθη δρεπόμενος ἀκήρατόν τι γνώσεως χρῆμα ταῖς τῶν ἀκροωμένων ἐνεγέννησε ψυχαῖς. (*Strom.* 1.1.11.2).

[75] Clement also commends the imitation of bees elsewhere in the *Stromateis,* as an analogy for training the mind with a variety of preparatory exercises. There too, the figurative "honey" would be something produced *in* a person, not *by* a person.

would like to learn something novel or interesting without having to go through the tedious labor of finding such things on their own.

Clement makes clear that the *Stromateis* is not meant to be convenient or aesthetically pleasing. In fact, it aims toward the opposite. Far from reducing the amount of effort required to find information, the *Stromateis* "sow their doctrines imperceptibly and not in a plain, unmistakable manner, seeking to exercise the diligence and ingenuity of the readers."[76] Like other miscellanies at the time, the variegated contents of the *Stromateis* are "intentionally mingled together" and "purposely scattered."[77] Unlike other miscellanies, however, the purpose of this variation is not aesthetic, i.e. it is not meant to make the compilation more pleasant and agreeable. Instead, Clement claims "[the] *Stromateis* are not to be compared to ornamental parks with rows of ordered plantings to please the eye, but rather to some thickly wooded hill, overgrown with cypresses and planes and bay-tree and ivy, and at the same time planted with apple-trees and olives and figs, the cultivation of fruit-bearing and of woodland trees being intentionally mingled together."[78] Moreover, Clement suggests in several different passages of the *Stromateis* that the aim of his deliberately scattered organization of materials is not for appearance, but concealment.

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[76] *Strom.* 7.18.111.3: τὴν τῶν δογμάτων ἐγκατασπορὰν λεληθότως καὶ οὐ κατὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν πεποίηνται, φιλοπόνους καὶ εὑρετικοὺς εἶναι τοὺς <ἀναγιγνώσκοντας> εἴ τινες τύχοιεν παρασκευάζοντες (Chadwick).

[77] See *Strom.* 7.18.111.1; *Strom.* 6.1.2.2.

[78] *Strom.* 7.18.111.1: ἐοίκασι δέ πως οἱ Στρωματεῖς οὐ παραδείσοις ἐξησκημένοις ἐκείνοις τοῖς ἐν στοίχῳ καταπεφυτευμένοις εἰς ἡδονὴν ὄψεως, ὄρει δὲ μᾶλλον συσκίῳ τινὶ καὶ δασεῖ κυπαρίσσοις καὶ πλατάνοις δάφνη τε καὶ κισσῷ, μηλέαις τε ὁμοῦ καὶ ἐλαίαις καὶ συκαῖς καταπεφυτευμένῳ, ἐξεπίτηδες ἀναμεμιγμένης τῆς φυτείας καρποφόρων τε ὁμοῦ καὶ ἀκάρπων δένδρων (Chadwick, modified).

ON CONCEALMENT[79]

In book 7, Clement explains that the form of his writing intentionally mixes together fruit-bearing and non-fruit-bearing trees, because it "wishes to escape notice on account of those who have the daring to pilfer and steal the fruits."[80] In book 4, Clement says the *Stromateis* have a varied character of arrangement on account of "those that consult [these notes] carelessly and unskillfully."[81] Moreover, in book 1, he anticipates the question: "How then did it seem good that this arrangement should be adopted in your notes?" and Clement offers the following response:

> Because great is the danger in betraying the truly ineffable word of the real philosophy to those who wish to speak recklessly and unjustly against everything, and who hurl forth quite inappropriately all sorts of names and words, deceiving themselves and bewitching their followers.[82]

From these explanations, it appears as though Clement has at least three identifiable groups of people in mind: pilferers, those who are careless and lazy, and those who unjustly criticize what they do not understand. I will discuss each in turn.

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[79] The topic of Clement's "method of concealment" will be further analyzed in the next chapter. Here I only discuss Clement's explicit comments about his rationale for concealment. In the following chapter, I will engage with other scholars' interpretations of the comments (albeit in the context of a different investigation).

[80] *Strom.* 7.18.111.1: διὰ τοὺς ὑφαιρεῖσθαι καὶ κλέπτειν τολμῶντας τὰ ὥρια, ἐθελούσης λανθάνειν τῆς γραφῆς (Chadwick, modified).

[81] *Strom.* 4.2.4.1: Ἔστω δὲ ἡμῖν τὰ ὑπομνήματα, ὡς πολλάκις εἴπομεν, διὰ τοὺς ἀνέδην ἀπείρως ἐντυγχάνοντας ποικίλως, (ANF).

[82] *Strom.* 1.2.21.2: τί δή ποτ' οὖν ὧδε διατετάχθαι φίλον ἔδοξεν εἶναι τοῖς ὑπομνήμασιν; ὅτι μέγας ὁ κίνδυνος τὸν ἀπόρρητον ὡς ἀληθῶς τῆς ὄντως φιλοσοφίας λόγον ἐξορχήσασθαι <τού>τοις, <οἳ> ἀφειδῶς πάντα μὲν ἀντιλέγειν ἐθέλουσιν οὐκ ἐν δίκῃ, πάντα δὲ ὀνόματα καὶ ῥήματα ἀπορρίπτουσιν οὐδαμῶς κοσμίως, αὑτούς τε ἀπατῶντες καὶ τοὺς ἐχομένους αὐτῶν γοητεύοντες. (Osborn 2005).

PILFERERS: SEED SNATCHING JACKDAWS

Pliny the Younger's description of the working habits of his uncle, Pliny the Elder, provides an example of the working methods of ancient compiliatory scholars. According to the younger Pliny, Pliny the Elder made excerpts while books were read aloud at any possible moment:

> Often in summer after taking a meal…he would lie in the sun if he had any time to spare, and a book would be read aloud, from which he would take notes and extracts. For he never read without taking extracts, and used to say that there never was a book so bad that it was not good in some passage or another.[83]

From the younger Pliny's description of his uncle's working habits, we do not get the impression that the elder Pliny devoted much time to contemplating or carefully considering the content of the books being read to him. Indeed, according to the younger Pliny, when a dinner guest wished a reader to pause and repeat a few lines, the elder Pliny begrudged the lost seconds in which more lines could have been read.[84]

The prominent miscellanist, Aulus Gellius (c. 130-180 AD), describes his own working habits in a way that suggests more care and attention, but still for the purposes of "plucking out" interesting tidbits of information. In *Noctes Attica,* Gellius recalls how he compulsively bought a bundle of cheap books in Brindisi, which were written in Greek "filled with marvellous tales, things unheard of, incredible; but the writers were ancient and of no mean authority," and then stayed up all night to read them:

> And while reading, I plucked out and made notes of certain things that were marvelous and almost unknown to our writers, and sprinkled them in these commentaries. . .[85]

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[83] Pliny, *The Letters of the Younger Pliny*, 3.5.

[84] See Pliny, *The Letters of the Younger Pliny*, 3.5; Rust, "Ex Angulis Secrestique Liborum," 143.

[85] NA 9.4.6 (translation Rust 2009).

In light of such descriptions, we might imagine that Clement had someone like Pliny or Gellius in mind when he claims he has chosen his obscure method of presentation "to avoid the attention of those who pick up ideas like jackdaws"[86]

It is actually not unreasonable to imagine that someone like Pliny or Gellius might come across a copy of Clement's writing and make excerpts which may be utilized for purposes unintended by the author. As Annewies van den Hoek writes, "An example of notes in the form of excerpts, as described by Pliny has come to light in modern times. The papyrus of Toura discovered in 1946 contains a collection of excerpts from several works of Origen, some of which stem from his *Contra Celsum*."[87] While it is unclear what purpose the abbreviated version of *Contra Celsum* served, its existence seems to be indicative of the fact that Christian writings were subjected to the same practices of note-taking and excerpting that had become popular among pagans at the time.

THE LAZY: AND THE LURE OF THE SECRET

Though it seems plausible that Clement may have been trying to avoid the attention of novelty hunters like Pliny and Gellius, his chosen form of arrangement is designed for more than mere concealment. Simply put, if Clement really wanted to keep the "seeds of knowledge" hidden, he would not openly tell readers that he is trying to hide something, let alone remind them, repeatedly. Doing so could very likely have the rhetorical effect of arousing within the reader a desire to find what is hidden, perhaps even to diligently search for it, and that seems to be precisely what Clement intends.

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[86] *Strom.* 1.12.56.3: ὅπως ἂν λάθοι τοὺς δίκην κολοιῶν σπερμολόγους.

[87] Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria. A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods," 225..; The excerpts from Contra Celsum have been published by Jean Scherer, *Extraitsd es livresI et II du ContreC elsed 'Orignèd 'apresl e papyrus no 88747 du Musie du Caire* (Institut francais d'Archeologie Orientale, Bibliotheque d'etude, XXVIII, Cairo, 1956), 26-29.

In fact, in nearly every passage in which Clement tells the reader that he is hiding something, he also says something commending the value of laborious investigation. Consider what he tells the reader after the introduction to book 1:

> For I am silent on the point that the *Stromateis,* being the embodiment of much learning, wish to hide skillfully the seeds of knowledge. As he who loves the chase, after seeking, searching, tracking and hunting with dogs, takes the quarry, so truth when sought and gained through hard work seems a sweet thing.[88]

Note the fact that Clement is actually not "silent" about his aim to hide the seeds of knowledge in the *Stromateis*. By explicitly stating that he is trying to imperceptibly sow the seeds of knowledge throughout his writing, Clement appears to be utilizing the rhetorical technique of *paraleipsis—* i.e."stating and drawing attention to something in the very act of pretending to pass it over." Telling the reader that he is not going to talk about the fact that his composition has been arranged to conceal something, in effect, makes the reader aware that there may be something more than what appears on the 'surface' of the text, thereby sparking the reader's interest in discovering what it might be.

Clement was familiar with the idea that the awareness of something being hidden might arouse the curiosity of readers. The first reason the Scriptures hide their sense, according to Clement, is "that we may become inquisitive, and be ever on the watch for the discovery of the words of salvation."[89] And, as others have argued, we have good reason to believe that in composing the *Stromateis* Clement tries to imitate the manner in which scripture conveys its

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[88] *Strom.* 1.2.20.4.-1.2.21.1: σιωπῶ γὰρ ὅτι οἱ Στρωματεῖς τῇ πολυμαθίᾳ σωματοποιούμενοι κρύπτειν ἐντέχνως τὰ τῆς γνώσεως βού λονται σπέρματα. καθάπερ οὖν ὁ τῆς ἄγρας ἐρωτικὸς ζητήσας, ἐρευνήσας, ἀνιχνεύσας, κυνοδρομήσας αἱρεῖ τὸ θηρίον, οὕτω καὶ τἀληθὲς γλυκύτητι φαίνεται ζητηθὲν καὶ πόνῳ πορισθέν. (Osborn 2005).

[89] *Strom.* 6.15.126.1: Διὰ πολλὰς τοίνυν αἰτίας ἐπικρύπτονται τὸν νοῦν αἱ γραφαί, πρῶτον μὲν ἵνα ζητητικοὶ ὑπάρχωμεν καὶ προσαγρυπνῶμεν ἀεὶ τῇ τῶν σωτηρίων λόγων εὑρέσει.

meaning.[90] One of the constant refrains throughout the *Stromateis* is the assurance from scripture: "seek and ye shall find"[91]

CRITICS: UNFAMILIAR AND FAMILIAR

In much the same way that openly saying that one is trying to conceal something from the careless and the lazy appears to serve a purpose contrary that aim, admitting that one has deliberately composed one's work to hide something from critics would seem an ineffective means of actually avoiding the attention of "those who have an immeasurable desire to contradict everything" or those who exalt in finding "calumnies against our words."[92] As discussed above, the former can be seen as a deliberate attempt to anticipate and shape the response of the reader, to inspire inquisitiveness and arouse the desire to seek out something non-apparent – i.e. to not be careless and lazy. So too, I argue, Clement's statements about avoiding the attention of critics actually contribute to his broader aim of engaging and responding to antagonistic readers.

Among the educated 'pagans' at the time, there are two types of critics of relevant to the present examination of Clement's literary presentation—those who are not directly familiar with the discourse and practices of Christian communities at the time and those who are. Naturally, critics from the latter group are more significant, in terms of the types of criticisms they raise and the role they play in Clement's literary project. The latter portion of this chapter will be devoted to a critique of early Christians articulated by one such critic, the 'Platonist' philosopher, Celsus. Criticisms from the former reveal more about the misperceptions and misunderstandings of the critics than they do about problematic issues in early Christian communities, but they are nonetheless important.

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[90] Cite Hagg, Kovacs

[91] See Strom 4.2; Matt 7:7; Luke 11:9.

[92] *Strom.* 1.2.21.2. (Ferguson); *Strom.* 1.3.22.2. (Ferguson).

Robert Wilken explains that early Christians were accused of "clandestine rites involving promiscuous intercourse and ritual meals in which human flesh was eaten, the so-called Thystean banquets…and Oedipean unions" and that "by the late second century such charges had become widespread."[93] Though it is unclear how such rumors got started, it seems plausible that they could have come from misunderstood reports of Christians heard talking about eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ, using familial terms for church members (e.g. "brothers" and "sisters"), including spouses, and referring to their communal "love feasts." To that extent, it also seems highly possible that such misunderstandings were picked up and spread by the "Jackdaws," i.e. authors like Pliny and Gellius who spent their time searching through whatever writings they could get their hands on, hoping to find novel tidbits of information to include in their miscellaneous collections; unheard of curiosities and marvelous tales that might help keep the attention of busy Graeco-Roman elites.

Compilers like Pliny and Gellius obtain much of the information they report from other books and not from direct, first-hand, experience. Not only does this allow for the possibility of misunderstanding the meaning of important words and phrases as they are used within a particular community – e.g. "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:53, NRSV). – once a misinformed report is recorded, it is likely to be repeated and embellished in other writings, particularly if what it communicates appears provocative and exotic. There is ample evidence to suggest that authors during the Second Sophistic frequently cribbed from one another, reworking many of the same marvelous, factually inaccurate, bits of information to serve their own ends. For example, Aelian (who reportedly never left Italy or set foot on a boat) writes in *On the Characteristics of Animals*

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[93] Wilken, *The Christians As the Romans Saw Them*, 17. "Thystes, who seduced his brother's wife, was invited to a banquet in which his sons were served up to him" (Wilken, 17); See Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians,* 3.1; 31-32.

of the Moray, a sea-snake, which copulates with the viper, a land-snake to make a point about how desire brings together those that seem far apart; and Achilles Tatius uses the same exact story as an example of how nature is full of the erotic.[94]

Pagans who were actually familiar with Christianity at the time presented more substantive criticisms. The Greek philosopher Celsus, for example, published a major book, entitled *True Doctrine* (*Alêthês Logos*) around 170 AD criticizing Christians. The work appears to have made a significant impact in the early Greek-speaking Christian community, as evidenced by the fact that roughly eighty years later, Origen thought it important enough to merit the detailed and direct response found in the eight books of his work *Contra Celsum*. Though Clement does not directly refer to him, it certainly appears as though he was familiar with the criticisms of Christians expressed by Celsus, if not the work of Celsus himself. One criticism in particular is especially important for Clement's writing—that Christians teach nothing significant that is new, and merely less sophisticated articulations of what others have said earlier; things which "have been better expressed among the Greeks."[95]

From what we can tell, Celsus argued that what had been said by Moses and Jesus was nothing more than a counterfeit and misunderstanding of some of the doctrines of Greek philosophy, and he apparently tried to demonstrate this by comparing certain expressions found in Christian writings with a selection of Greek philosophical texts, e.g. Celsus claims that "to him who slaps thee offer the other cheek" is simply an ignorant imitation of the passages of

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[94] Aelian, *On Animals,* 1.50; Tatius, *Leucippe and Cleitophon,* 1.18.3; See Goldhill, "Rhetoric and the Second Sophistic," 235–236.

[95] C. Cels. 6.4-5; Also important for Clement is the claim, articulated by Celsus, that Christians are irrational; that they claim to rely on faith instead of reason and eschew appeal rational argumentation. These would be the so-called "simpliciores," who disapproved of philosophical speculation. As others have noted, many passages of Clement's writing can be seen as a response both to the *simpliciores* and to pagan critics of Christianity, who attribute the behavior of the *simpliciaores* to all Christians.; Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 119–131, who acknowledge van den Brock as a source.

Plato's *Crito,* in which Socrates maintains that injustice should not be repaid by another injustice.[96]

Hadot explains how accusations of theft between pagans and Christians around the second century AD arise from assumptions about the authority of the past and the manner in which knowledge is transmitted to successive generations. Hadot writes:

> As both pagans and Christians recognized affinities between their respective doctrines, they accused each other of theft. Some claimed Plato plagiarized Moses, while others affirmed the contrary; the result was a series of chronological arguments designed to prove which of the two was historically prior…Pagans and Christians explained in the same way the difference which, despite certain analogies, persisted between their doctrines. They were the result of misunderstandings and mistranslations – in other words, bad exegesis – of stolen texts.[97]

Behind these arguments about plagiarism are two key assumptions (prevalent in the culture of the Second Sophistic). The first is that the 'origin' of teaching is closely identified with a person or community in the past. Even if it is the case that there exists a temporally antecedent divine source, the teaching was transmitted to a single (or community) and it is not the case that this divine transmission is repeated to non-identical communities at the same time or to any community at a different time. The second is that the transmission of teaching within a community is a causal chain, akin to biological reproduction or monarchic succession, which can be mapped genealogically.

Given these two assumptions, when it appears as though there are analogies between doctrine taught in two distinct communities, the inference is that one teaching must have

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[96] Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 35–36.

[97] Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 74.

somehow come from the other, either by theft or illegitimate reproduction, sometime in the past. The objective, then, is to show how the teaching of one's own community pre-dates that of the other community – and thus, that the other community must have illegitimately obtained their teaching from one's own.

There are several passages where it appears as though Clement directly adheres to this form of argumentation – particularly in the sections demonstrating the antiquity of the Old Testament tradition in contrast to the Greeks, and those passages in which he explicitly claims that 'Greeks' (like Plato) 'stole' their teachings from 'Barbarians (like Moses).[98]

Salvatore Lilla argues that Clement likely was familiar with Celsus' polemic and had his criticisms in mind when he wrote the *Stromateis,* and that "the sections of the *Stromateis* dealing with the topic of the 'theft of the Greeks' represent, in Clement's intentions, the answer of Christianity to the charges which Celsus, on behalf of the non-Christian world, had addressed against it."[99] In Lilla's portrayal (reiterated by Hadot and others), Clement presents the inverse of Celsus' criticism – i.e. using the same assumptions and form of argumentation, but stated in the reverse – that the 'Greeks' actually stole from 'us.' I suggest, however, that Clement does more than simply parrot the arguments of pagan critics. He actually challenges the assumptions about authority and the transmission of knowledge underlying those arguments. This is most clearly seen in book 6 of the *Stromateis*.

In Clement's interpretation of the Decalogue in book 6, about the command respecting theft, Clement writes:

As, then, he that steals what is another's, doing great wrong, rightly incurs ills suitable to his deserts; so also does he, who arrogates to himself divine works by the art of the

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[98] See, for example, *Strom.* 1.21; *Strom.* 1.25

[99] Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 37.

statuary or the painter, and pronounces himself to be the maker of animals and plants.

Likewise, those, too, who mimic the true philosophy are thieves.[100]

In this passage, Clement suggests that philosophers commit "theft" by mimicking the true

philosophy in a manner akin to the way in which artists copy the images of animals and plants.

The problem is not that they copy these images, but that they falsely claim responsibility for

divine works– i.e. the creation of what they have copied. Earlier, in book 6, Clement writes:

> …the philosophers copy the truth, after the manner of painting. And always in the case of
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> each one of them, their self-love is the cause of all their mistakes. Wherefore one ought
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> not, in the desire for glory that terminates in men, to be animated by self-love; but loving
>
> God, to become really holy with wisdom.[101]

According to Clement, it is "the self-love of the Greeks" that leads them to proclaim certain men

as their teachers. Recall that at the time in which Clement was writing, Greek-speaking

intellectuals often thought of themselves, as Greeks, as "the sole originators of, and primary

experts in, human civilization."[102] Clement appears to be alluding to this socio-cultural

phenomenon with this reference to the "self-love of the Greeks." Their error, according to

Clement, is that, out of their inordinate "self-love," they claim responsibility for that of which

God is truly responsible. About these Greeks, Clement writes:

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[100] *Strom.* 6.16.147.3: ὡς οὖν ὁ κλέπτων τὰ ἀλλότρια μεγάλως ἀδικῶν εἰκότως περιπίπτει τοῖς ἐπαξίοις κακοῖς, οὕτως ὁ τὰ θεῖα τῶν ἔργων σφετεριζόμενος διὰ τέχνης ἤτοι πλαστικῆς ἢ γραφικῆς καὶ λέγων ἑαυτὸν ποιητὴν εἶναι τῶν ζῴων καὶ φυτῶν, ὁμοίως τε οἱ τὴν ἀληθῆ φιλοσοφίαν ἀπομιμούμενοι κλέπται εἰσί. (ANF).

[101] *Strom.* 6.7.56.1 -6.7.56.2: οὕτω δὲ καὶ οἱ φιλόσοφοι ζωγραφίας δίκην ἀπομιμοῦνται τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Φιλαυτία δὲ πάντων ἁμαρτημάτων αἰτία ἑκάστοις ἑκάστοτε. διόπερ οὐ χρὴ τὴν εἰς ἀνθρώπους δόξαν αἰρούμενον φίλαυτον εἶναι, ἀλλὰ τὸν θεὸν ἀγαπῶντα τῷ ὄντι «ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως» γίνεσθαι. (ANF)

[102] Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic*, 13–14.

They think that they have hit the truth perfectly; but as we understand them, only

partially[103]… If, then, one treats what is particular as universal, and regards that, which

serves, as the Lord, he misses the truth, not understanding what was spoken by David by

way of confession: 'I have eaten earth like bread.' Now, self-love and self-conceit are, in

his view, earth and error.[104]

These Greeks, according to Clement, may have obtained a partial grasp of the truth, "by human

conjecture and reasoning" and "in consequence of being moved."[105] However, they have not

fully worked out the implications of the partial truth which they grasp and out of self-conceit

claim to not only possess the whole, but to be the sole possessors and originators of it.[106]

Clement most clearly draws out the problematic aspects of the Greeks' presumption to be

the originators of culture (*paideia*) and their accusations of plagiarism in the section of book 6 in

which Clement purports to demonstrate how the Greeks frequently steal from one another.

ON THE "THEFT" OF THE GREEKS

The argument that the Greek philosophers stole their teachings from Moses is not unique to

Clement. Philo of Alexandria and Justin Martyr made similar claims before Clement.[107]

However, to the best of my knowledge, the argument that the Greeks steal from one another is

unique to Clement. In the section of the Stromateis in book 6, purporting to expose the theft of

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[103] *Strom.* 6.7.55.4-6.7.56.1: ἐπιβάλλειν δ' οἴονται τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὗτοι μὲν τελείως. ὡς δ' ἡμεῖς αὐτοὺς καταλαμβανόμεθα, μερικῶς.

[104] *Strom.* 6.7.57.1-6.7.57.2: ἂν οὖν τις τοῖς μερικοῖς ὡς τοῖς καθολικοῖς χρώμενος τύχῃ καὶ τὸ δοῦλον ὡς κύριον καὶ ἡγεμόνα τιμᾷ, σφάλλεται τῆς ἀληθείας οὐ συνιεὶς τὸ τῷ Δαβὶδ κατ' ἐξομολόγησιν εἰρημένον· «γῆν <καὶ> σποδὸν ὡσεὶ ἄρτον ἔφαγον.» ἡ φιλαυτία δὲ καὶ ἡ οἴησις αὐτῷ γῆ ἐστι καὶ πλάνη. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, ἐκ μαθήσεως ἡ γνῶσις καὶ ἡ ἐπιστήμη. (ANF).

[105] See *Strom.* 6.7.55.4.

[106] See *Strom.* 6.7.55.4.

[107] Daniel Ridings, *The Attic Moses: The Dependency Theme in Some Early Christian Writers*, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia 59 (Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1995), 12–27.

the Greeks from one another, Clement, I would argue, is trying to do more than simply prove a factual claims – he is trying to show how and why the 'theft argument' is itself problematic.

What one finds in the passage is essentially a long catalogue of literary extracts in which Clement has grouped together small collections of nominally similar phrases from a variety of classic Greek authors. To give an example, the collection begins with a pairing of similar lines from Orpheus and Homer:

Orpheus, then, having composed the line:

"Since nothing else is more shameless and wretched than woman."

Homer plainly says:

"Since nothing else is more dreadful and shameless than a woman."[108]

More than a hundred selections like this from different Greek authors can be found in this section of the *Stromateis,* similarly grouped into clusters of two or more juxtaposed quotations.[109] Ostensibly, the collection is meant to show how the Greeks have "plagiarized" and "stolen" expressions and thoughts from one another. However, if we look beyond what Clement says it is meant to do and consider how such a collection (and explanation) might affect readers in his context, the passage would seem to do more than simply demonstrate the "theft of the Greeks." It challenges popularly accepted assumptions about the legitimacy of the Greek literary canon, the presumed authority of the past, and the role of texts in the transmission of knowledge.

Clement prefaces this section of juxtaposed quotations with the following explanation:

Come, and let us adduce the Greeks as witnesses against themselves to the theft. For, inasmuch as they pilfer from one another, they establish the fact that they are

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[108]Strom. 6.2.5.3.-6.2.5.4.

[109] A rough tally shows that Clement includes roughly 135 quotations from 56 authors in *Strom.* 6.2. Many thanks to Jeremy Hollingshead for his help in counting these quotations.

thieves…For if they do not keep their hands from each other, they will hardly do it from

our authors…after availing myself of a few testimonies of men most talked of, and of

repute among the Greeks, and exposing their plagiarizing style, and selecting them from

various periods, I shall turn to what follows.[110]

The reference to "the Greeks" in this passage is ambiguous. Keep in mind that at the time many

Greek-speaking intellectuals were trying to self-identify with "the Greeks" of a bygone age. As

mentioned above, there appears to have been a fairly well established Greek literary canon at the

time from which most popular authors quoted heavily.[111] Recall that, according to Housholder's

statistical survey, the same "top" fourteen authors comprise over 80% of the total number of

quotations and allusions in the writings of the period, with over 70% coming from the top three:

Homer, Plato and Euripides.[112] Significantly, in this section, Clement includes explicit references

to all of the "top fourteen" classical authors, including 25 quotations attributed to Euripides, 13

from Homer, 8 from Sophocles, and 6 from Plato.

What Clement is doing, then, is bringing charges against contemporary Greek-speaking

intellectuals (like Celsus) using the "testimonies" of classical Greek authorities (like Homer,

Euripides, Sophocles, and Plato). In other words, Clement intentionally draws upon the Greeks'

own cultural authorities to support an argument designed precisely to undermine their claims to

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[110] *Strom.* 6.2.4.3- 6.2.5.2: ἀπεδείξαμεν, φέρε μάρτυρας τῆς κλοπῆς αὐτοὺς καθ' ἑαυτῶν παραστήσωμεν τοὺς Ἕλληνας· οἱ γὰρ τὰ οἰκεῖα οὕτως ἄντικρυς παρ' ἀλλήλων ὑφαιρούμενοι βεβαιοῦσι μὲν τὸ κλέπται εἶναι… οἱ γὰρ μηδὲ ἑαυτῶν, σχολῇ γ' ἂν τῶν ἡμετέρων ἀφέξονται… ὀλίγοις δὲ τῶν καθωμιλημένων καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εὐδοκίμων ἀνδρῶν χρησάμενος μαρτυρίοις, τὸ κλεπτικὸν διελέγξας εἶδος αὐτῶν, ἀδιαφόρως τοῖς χρόνοις καταχρώμενος, ἐπὶ τὰ ἑξῆς τρέψομαι. (ANF).

[111] See discussion of Fred Housholder's statistical survey above.

[112] According to Householder's study, the overwhelming percentage of quotations found in authors of imperial date come from Homer (55%), with the second, Euripides, trailing behind at (13%), all others in the "top 14" are in the 1 to 3 percent range. The full list of the 14 most quoted authors is as follows: Homer, Euripides, Plato, Herodotus, Hesiod, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Xenophon, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Aristotle, Aeschylus, Pindar, and Menander. See Householder, *Literary Quotation and Allusion in Lucian,* 44. That these authors also feature prominently in Clement's writing is, I suggest, not coincidental; rather, to foreshadow the discussion below, it exemplifies Clement's critical engagement with his environment, through the subversive appropriation of the established canon of Greek intellectual and cultural authorities.

cultural authority. The Greek-speaking intellectuals of his era sought to bolster their own legitimacy by identifying themselves with the cultural authorities of the past. In this passage in book 6, Clement claims that those "classic" authorities are all guilty of "plagiarism" (the charge pagans like Celsus brought against Christians) and, by the logic of Celsus' argument, be shown to have "stolen" their material from earlier sources.

Later, in book 6, Clement introduces a train of reasoning that exposes a fundamental problem with the Greeks' preoccupation with the authority of the past. The argument is essentially a demonstration of the impossibility of infinite regress:

> And if there is instruction you must seek for the master. Cleanthes claims Zeno, and Metrodorus Epicurus, and Theophrastus Aristotle, and Plato Socrates. But if I come to Pythagoras, and Pherecydes, and Thales, and the first wise men, I come to a stand in my search for their teacher. Should you say the Egyptians, the Indians, the Babylonians, and the Magi themselves, I will not stop from asking their teacher. And I lead you up to the first generation of men; and from that point I begin to investigate: Who is their teacher? No one of men; for they had not yet learned.[113]

After showing the problem with trying to identify the source of one's learning with a human teacher in the past (which simply begs the question: well, where did that person get it from?),[114] Clement offers the following theological response:

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[113] *Strom.* 6.7.57.3-6.7.57.4: μαθήσεως δ' οὔσης ζητεῖν ἀνάγκη τὸν διδάσκαλον. Κλεάνθης μὲν γὰρ Ζήνωνα ἐπιγράφεται καὶ Θεόφραστος Ἀριστοτέλη Μητρόδωρός τε Ἐπίκουρον καὶ Πλάτων Σωκράτην· ἀλλὰ κἂν ἐπὶ Πυθαγόραν ἔλθω καὶ Φερεκύδην

καὶ Θάλητα καὶ τοὺς πρώτους σοφούς, ἵσταμαι τὸν τούτων διδάσκαλον ζητῶν κἂν Αἰγυπτίους εἴπῃς κἂν Ἰνδοὺς κἂν Βαβυλωνίους κἂν τοὺς Μάγους αὐτούς, οὐ παύσομαι τὸν τούτων διδάσκαλον ἀπαιτῶν, ἀνάγω δέ σε καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν πρώτην γένεσιν ἀνθρώπων, κἀκεῖθεν ἄρχομαι ζητεῖν, τίς ὁ διδάσκαλος; ἀνθρώπων μὲν οὐδείς, οὐδέπω γὰρ μεμαθήκεσαν (ANF).

[114] Clement similarly problematizes the notion that the teachings of philosophy originally came from angels (since the same question would still seem to apply – i.e. where did the angels get it from?) *Strom.* 6.7.58.1: "And we also

Since the unoriginated Being is one, the Omnipotent God; one, too, is the First-begotten,

"by whom all things were made, and without whom not one thing was made." […] And

He is called Wisdom by all the prophets. This is He who is the Teacher of all created

beings, the Fellow-counselor of God, who foreknew all things; and He from above, from

the first foundation of the world, "in many ways and many times" trains and perfects;

whence it is rightly said, "Call no man your teacher on earth."[115]

Of importance for the present analysis is the fact that Clement claims that the Teacher of

all created beings was not only active in the past "from the first foundation of the world," but has

continued "in many ways and many times" to train and perfect, and is still presently active. In

other words, for Clement, God is the ultimate source of all true teaching and learning; and

although it is true that God acted as Teacher in the past, God continues to act as Teacher in the

present. Clement, thus, reiterates the point that God is the ultimate source of the teaching of all

good things:

As, then, the whole human family is traced back to God, the creator, so the teaching of

good things is traced back to the Lord – that teaching which makes righteous, leads us to

this and gives us aid.[116]

This theological affirmation, in a sense, subverts the prevalent assumption about the inherent

authority of the past (mentioned above) – that the 'origin' of teaching is to be identified with a

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have already heard that angels learned the truth, and their rulers over them; for they had a beginning. It remains,
then, for us, ascending to seek their teacher" (ANF).

[115] *Strom.* 6.7.58.1-6.7.58.2: ἐπεὶ δὲ ἓν μὲν τὸ ἀγέννητον ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεός, ἓν δὲ καὶ τὸ προγεννηθέν, δι' οὗ τὰ
«πάντα ἐγένετο καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν» («εἷς γὰρ τῷ ὄντι ἐστὶν ὁ θεός, ὃς ἀρχὴν τῶν ἁπάντων
ἐποίησεν»…σοφία δὲ οὗτος εἴρηται πρὸς ἁπάντων τῶν προφητῶν, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τῶν γενητῶν ἁπάντων διδάσκαλος,
ὁ σύμβουλος τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ τὰ πάντα προεγνωκότος. ὃ δὲ ἄνωθεν ἐκ πρώτης καταβολῆς κόσμου »πολυτρόπως καὶ
πολυμερῶς» πεπαίδευκέν τε καὶ τελειοῖ. ὅθεν εἰκότως εἴρηται· «μὴ εἴπητε ἑαυτοῖς διδάσκαλον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.» (ANF).

[116] *Strom.* 6.7.59.1: Ὡς οὖν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιητὴν τὸν θεὸν πᾶσα ἀνατρέχει πατριά, οὕτως καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον ἡ τῶν καλῶν
διδασκαλία [καὶ] ἡ δικαιοῦσα καὶ εἰς τοῦτο χειραγωγοῦσά τε καὶ συλλαμβάνουσα (ANF).

person or community in the past, and that the transmission of an 'original' teaching is not repeated to non-identical communities at the same time or to any community at a different time. It also challenges the assumption that the transmission of teaching is passed down in through a causal chain, akin to monarchic succession.

Finally, the form of Clement's argument itself calls attention to the tendency among Greek-speaking intellectuals at the time to identify teaching with texts. In effect, Clement's juxtaposition of nominally similar expressions shows the absurdity of trying to demonstrate the plagiarism of ideas by such means – i.e. comparing excerpted expressions from different authors is an unreliable way to demonstrate a commonality of meaning or relationship of dependence. Clement makes the reader aware of this problem by choosing quotations from authors with which many Greek-speaking intellectuals at the time would be familiar. Because readers at the time likely would have recognized the authors and quotations which Clement cites, they would also likely recognize that though the words may appear similar, this does not necessarily imply that those words convey the same meaning within their original context.

Clement provides arguments about the nature of linguistic communication elsewhere in the *Stromateis* (to be discussed in further detail in the next chapter) which shows that the meaning of words and expressions cannot be reduced to the level of words and expressions, but requires one to also consider the pre-existing understanding of the people for whom those words and expressions have meaning. As Clement points out later in book 6: birds can imitate human voices, having no conceptual grasp of the (*pragmata*) which they say.[117] Moreover, he claims,

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[117] See *Strom.* 6.17.151.4: ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ κόρακες ἀνθρωπείας ἀπομιμοῦνται φωνὰς ἔννοιαν οὐκ ἔχοντες οὗ λέγουσι πράγματος,; cf. Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians,* 8.275-6 (=LS 53T): οἱ δὲ δογματικοὶ πρὸς ἕκαστον μὲν τῶν οὕτως ἐπικεχειρημένων πεφίμωνται, τοὐναντίον δὲ κατασκευάζοντές φασιν, ὅτι ἄνθρωπος οὐχὶ τῷ προφορικῷ λόγῳ διαφέρει τῶν ἀλόγων ζῴων (καὶ γὰρ κόρακες καὶ ψιττακοὶ καὶ κίτται ἐνάρθρους προφέρονται φωνάς). "They [the doctrinaire philosophers] say that it is not uttered speech but internal speech by which man differs from non-rational animals; for crows and parrots and jays utter articulate sounds."

Homer can say, "Father of men and gods," without perceiving *who* the Father is, or *how* He is

Father.[118] Accordingly, he argues: "We must occupy ourselves, not with the expression (*lexis*),

but with the meaning (*semainomena*)."[119]

CLEMENT'S ADAPTATION TO CONTEXT: AFFIRMATION AND ADMONITION

Writing within this context, Clement does not simply refute the accusations of pagan critics of

Christianity like Celsus (or merely respond in kind), he challenges their underlying assumptions,

calling into question common ideas about what can (or, cannot) be inferred on the basis of words

and expressions alone. Moreover, he does this by inviting the Greeks to consider what Celsus-

like criticisms might look when applied to words and expressions from their own "canonical"

writings. Elsewhere, when discussing the rationale for making a similarly subversive critique,

Clement explains that he does so:

> …not to defend ourselves against our accusers, (for that is far from being the case with
>
> those who have learned to bless those who curse, even if they bring unfounded slanders
>
> against us), but with a view to their conversion; perhaps these 'all-wise' might show a
>
> sense of shame at being brought to their senses by Barbarian cross-examination; so as to
>
> be able, although late, to see clearly the quality of the learning to which they are directing
>
> their overseas expeditions.[120]

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[118] *Strom.* 6.17.152.1: οὕτως καὶ Ὅμηρος εἶπεν «πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε», μὴ εἰδὼς τίς ὁ πατὴρ καὶ πῶς ὁ πατήρ.

[119] *Strom.* 6.17.151.4: οὐ τοίνυν περὶ τὴν λέξιν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τὰ σημαινόμενα ἀναστρεπτέον

[120] *Strom* 2.1.2.2: οὐκ ἀμυνομένων ἡμῶν τοὺς κατηγόρους (πολλοῦ γε καὶ δεῖ, τοὺς εὐλογεῖν μεμαθηκότας τοὺς καταρωμένους, κᾂν βλασφήμους κενῶς καταφέρωσιν ἡμῶν λόγους), ἀλλ' εἰς ἐπιστροφὴν τὴν ἐκείνων αὐτῶν, εἴ πως ἐπαισχυνθεῖεν οἱ πάνσοφοι δι' ἐλέγχου βαρβάρου σωφρονισθέντες, ὡς διιδεῖν ὀψὲ γοῦν δυνηθῆναι, ὁποῖα ἄρα εἴη τὰ μαθήματα, ἐφ' ἃ στέλλονται τὰς ἀποδημίας τὰς διαποντίους. (Ferguson, modified).

The idea that Clement's effort to "expose" the errors of the Greeks is not aimed at defending Christianity, but at facilitating their conversion is important for understanding the manner in which Clement seeks to engage with his readers.

In an apparent allusion to the public performances of rhetorical oratory that were popular at the time, Clement writes:

> Let us handle those things as they are capable of hearing. For intelligence or rectitude this great crowd estimates not by truth, but by what they are delighted with. And they will be pleased not more with other things than with what is like themselves.[121]

Echoing the sentiments of other philosophers at the time, Clement laments that most people in the crowd will evaluate someone's speech, not by truth, but by its ability to produce delight. Yet, by suggesting that one should focus on what the audience is capable of hearing, he is not saying that one should simply pander to the desires of one's audience. Rather, his point is that, adopting a form of discourse with which one's audience is familiar will increase the likelihood that they might actually hear and pay attention to what one is trying to communicate. This is a pedagogical technique Clement associates with Paul:

> Wherefore also, to those that ask the wisdom that is with us, we are to hold out things suitable, that with the greatest possible ease they may, through their own ideas, be likely to arrive at faith in the truth. For "I became all things to all men, that I might gain all men (1 Cor 9:22)"[122]

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[121] *Strom.* 5.4.19.1- 5.4.19.2: ἐγχειρῶμεν αὐτοῖς, ὡς ἀκούειν πεφύκασι· τὸ γὰρ συνετὸν ἤτοι τὸ δίκαιον ὁ πολὺς οὗτος ὄχλος οὐκ ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας, ἀλλ' ἐξ ὧν ἂν ἡσθῇ, δοκιμάζει. ἥδοιτο δ' ἂν οὐχ ἑτέροις μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς ὁμοίοις αὐτοῦ· (ANF)

[122] *Strom.* 5.3.18.6-5.3.18.7: διὸ καὶ τοῖς τὴν σοφίαν αἰτοῦσι τὴν παρ' αὐτοῖς ὀρεκτέον τὰ οἰκεῖα, ὡς ἂν ῥᾷστα διὰ τῶν ἰδίων εἰς πίστιν ἀληθείας εἰκότως ἀφίκοιντο· «τοῖς γὰρ πᾶσι πάντα ἐγενόμην,» λέγει, «ἵνα τοὺς πάντας κερδήσω,»

This Pauline explanation echoes Clement's claim that to accomplish the proposed task of his writing requires adaptation to his environment.[123] In the analysis thus far I have tried to build a case showing how the peculiar literary form of the *Stromateis* reflects Clement's attempt to adapt to his environment.

For Clement, the model for what he is doing is the Logos; specifically, the Incarnation and the "parabolic" style of scripture. Clement is also imitating Paul, who "becomes all things to all people," and according to Acts, simultaneously affirms and contests certain practices and sayings of the Greeks at the Areopagus. Clement's aim is not to overthrow or replace, but beginning with what is "like," lead one's audience to what is "unlike," from what is "known" to things "unknown," "believed" to "not-yet believed." Part of this process of leading will entail the overturning of assumptions, chastening of desires, and re-training of the mind.

As I have tried to show in this chapter, there is a sense in which the *Stromateis* is designed to induce readers to begin the process of transformation, by adopting conventions, tropes, and authorities with which they are familiar, and then drawing out unexpected, unfamiliar, and potentially unsettling meanings and conclusions from them. To actually give the reader a desire to examine and alter her underlying habits, Clement has to do more than say "change your habits" he has to make the reader aware of those habits and, more specifically, of the fact that there might be something wrong with them. As I mentioned above, Clement draws upon the Greek's own cultural authorities to support an argument designed precisely to undermine their claims to cultural authority. If he is successful, the argument would lead the reader to begin a process of transformation, not simply in terms of the specific content of *what*

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[123] *Strom.* 1.1.17.3: οὐκ εὐθὺς δ' εἴ τις μὴ προηγουμένως ἐπιτελεῖ, κατὰ περίστασιν αὐτὸ ποιεῖ, ἀλλὰ οἰκονομούμενός τι θεοσόφως καὶ συμπεριφερόμενος ἐνεργήσει. "It does not follow that if a person who has planned carefully fails to bring a task to an immediate conclusion, he is thereby acting under force of circumstances. If he disposes it according to God's wisdom, adapting himself to his environment, he will achieve his end." (Ferguson)

she thinks, says and does, but, more importantly, in terms of the habits which govern *how* she thinks, communicates, and behaves. In the next chapter, I will show how this movement from the "known" to "unknown," "believed" to "not-yet believed" is integral to Clement's discussion of logical "investigation" and "demonstration." There too, we are guided by the maxim of the Logos—"seek, and ye shall find."

PART 1 – ON BOOK 8 OF THE *STROMATEIS*

In this chapter, I offer three-part analysis and discussion of Book VIII of the *Stromateis,* which has received little attention in contemporary Clement scholarship. In part 1, I provide an overview of the contents of *Stromateis* 8, and its relation to arguments made around the time in which Clement was writing by philosophical skeptics, like Sextus Empiricus. In part 2, I offer a more detailed study of specific topics in book 8; specifically, those passages in which he talks about issues related to semiotics, including his explication of the meaning of "cause," and his theory of causal relations. In part 3, I reconstruct a "non-binary relational semiotic" using insights derived from parts 1 and 2. I then use this reconstructed semiotic to help clarify and explain two controversial issues among Clement scholars – whether Clement thinks it is acceptable to "lie" to someone for their own benefit (and why he talks about concealing the meaning of things from people) and the authenticity of the so-called "Secret Gospel of Mark" letter attributed to Clement.

BOOK 8: PROLEGOMENA (FOR CLEMENT SCHOLARS)

Among Clement scholars, the status and role of "book 8" of the *Stromateis* is controversial. Its relation to Clement's other extant writings is not only disputed, it is commonly denied. Not all, to be sure, have shown such explicit disdain as Albert C. Outler, who, in 1940, blithely remarked: "The last book of the *Stromateis* pretends to treat logical questions but is, for the most part, pompous and obscure jargon."[1] However, the assessment, expressed by Matayáš Havrda in 2011, is still common: "the text of *Stromata* VIII is obviously a fragment or rather a

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[1] Albert C. Outler, "The 'Platonism' of Clement of Alexandria," *The Journal of Religion* 20, no. 3 (July 1940): 227.

series of fragments whose interconnecting link or continuity with the preceding *Stromata* is neither explicit nor clear."[2] For that reason, before discussing how its contents are related to Clement's broader theo-pedagogical project, I must first offer a response to what some Clement scholars call "The Problem of Book VIII."[3]

Others have provided detailed histories of the scholarly debate(s) about the "problem" of book 8.[4] Here I approach the issue from a different perspective. Instead of recounting the genealogical evolution of the debate, I will seek to clarify the *status quaestionis* using a more (logically) formal method of division, akin to the one Clement describes in book 8 as a means for clarifying a subject of inquiry.[5]

The issues involved in each debate can be divided into two categories: I) Questions pertaining to the work considered in itself, i.e. about its structure and coherence. II) Questions pertaining to the work considered in relation to other writings, subdivided into II.a) Materials *not* written by Clement, but from which Clement's writing draws, i.e. its source(s); II.b) Materials written by Clement, further subdivided into II.b.1) Programmatic statements, which, presumably,

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[2] Matyáš Havrda, "Galenus Christianus? The Doctrine of Demonstration in Stromata VIII and the Question of Its Source," *Vigiliae Christianae* 65, no. 4 (2011): 344; but cf: Silke-Petra Bergjan, "Logic and Theology in Clement of Alexandria. The Purpose of the 8th Book of the Stromata," *Zeitschrift Für Antikes Christentum* 12, no. 3 (January 2008): 398"The text of the extant 8th book is coherent with the preceding seven Stromata. The links between them are obvious and have long been observed." .

[3] See, for example, Havrda, "Galenus Christianus?," 345; See also Antonio Servino, "Clemente Alessandrino: Il Problema Di Stromata VIII," *Quaderni Del Dipartimento Di Filologia, Linguistica e Tradizione Classica "Augusto Rostagni"* 17 (2001): 97–104; Marcelo Merino, "El Stromata VIII De Clemente De Alejandria," *Scripta Theologica* 37, no. 1 (2005): 13–51.

[4] Pierre Nautin, "La Fin de Stromates et Les Hypotyposes de Clément d'Alexandrie," *Vigiliae Christianae* 30 (1976): 268–302; Alain Le Boulluec, "Extraits D'œuvres de Clément d'Alexandrie: La Transmission et Le Sens de Leurs Titres," in *Titres et Articulations Du Texte Dans Les Œuvres Antiques. Actes Du Colloque International de Chantilly 13-15 Décembre 1994*, ed. Jean-Claude Fredouille et al., Collection Des Études Augustiniennes 152 (Paris, 1997), 287–300; Servino, "Clemente Alessandrino"; Merino, "El Stromata VIII"; Andrew C. Itter, *Esoteric Teaching in the Stromateis of Clement of Alexandria* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 59–76; Bogdan Gabriel Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses* (Leiden: BRILL, 2009), 10ff.

[5] See *Strom.* 8.6.17.2; 8.6.18.2*ff;* see also discussion of these passages below. Examples from existing scholarly literature will be provided in the footnotes and not the main body of the text.

pertain to books he had planned to write (or had already written); II.b.2) The actual content of Clement's other extant writings (as we have received them), specifically *Stromateis* 1-7.

Generally speaking, the various contributors to this debate can be divided into two groups, whose arguments appear to follow (to a greater or lesser extent) the following steps:

Group A

1) Beginning with (II.b.1), in light of (II.b.2), they evaluate (I).

AND[6]

2) They make a negative assessment with respect to (I), i.e. that it is not-structured and not-coherent.

THEN

3) On the basis of (1) and (2), they conclude that the work does not correspond to Clement's programmatic statements (II.b.1) and, moreover, that it does not 'follow' from the other writings in Clement's corpus (II.b.2), which precede it (according to the schema proposed in [II.b.1]).

To account for the conclusion in (3):

4) They assert that (or propose to show how) the various contents of Clement's writing 'comes from' notes and extracts of (II.a).[7]

AND / OR

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[6] Aside from the "AND / OR" between (4) and (5) below, these intra-linear connectors are not meant to convey logically distinct operations, but rather serve the purpose of linguistically connecting the enumerated steps. Like English translations of the Greek "καί," "AND" and "BUT" stand for the same logical operator, (the conjunction), but are here selected for their variant linguistic connotations. The "THEN" below is not meant to convey the sense of "implication," but "temporal sequentially." It is worth noting, however, that failures to distinguish implication from sequentially often underlie common confusions of "cause and effect" with what is merely "before and after." See below.

[7] Christiana de Wedel, *Symbola ad Clementis Alexandrini stromatum librum VIII interpretandum* (Berlin: Interpretandum, 1905); Reginald E. Witt, *Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937).

5) They entertain, and/or try to defend, hypotheses about the purpose of the text, e.g. that it was composed in preparation for a different work that would have followed from (II.b.2), which either: Clement did not write, or, is now lost (or some combination of the two, i.e. he partially wrote it and/or it is partially lost).[8]

Slight variations of the specific details of this progression can be found, but the formal structure remains more or less the same. Members of the opposing group begin with the same basic steps:

Group B

1) Beginning with (II.b.1), in light of (II.b.2), they evaluate (I).

AND

2) They agree with the negative assessment of (I), that the work is not structured and not coherent.

BUT

3) They also cite a *different* set of programmatic statements, which we will call (II.b.1.ii) to distinguish them from those previously indicated by (II.b.1; now II.b.1.i).

THEN

4) On the basis of (II.b.1.ii), they argue *that* the work follows from Clement's other writings (II.b.2) according to (II.b.1.i).

BUT

5) They do not demonstrate *how* the work follows from (II.b.2), i.e. they do not show *how* the actual content of the work in question (I) is non-superficially related to the actual content of

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[8] Theodor Zahn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons und der Altkirchlichen Literatur* (Erlangen, 1884); Hans Friedrich August von Arnim, *De octavo Clementis Stromateorum libro* (Rostock, 1894).

Clement's other works (II.b.2), or how the actual content of the writing fulfills the role proposed in (II.b.1.i).[9]

Of course, not every contributor to the debate about the "book 8 problem" falls neatly within the formal categorizations described above. There are notable exceptions to these generic classifications.[10] These formalized generalizations nevertheless help to identify the "step" in which my approach to the materials differs from others involved in this debate.

Common to both (A) and (B) is the assessment of (I), that the work is fragmentary and incoherent.

For the purposes of this study, I will "bracket" questions pertaining to Clement's programmatic statements (II.b.1.i and II.b.1.ii). Instead of beginning with an assumption about what Clement planned to write, I begin with what he actually wrote, by which I mean, the content of the text (as we have it). The general steps of my argument will proceed as follows: 1) Beginning with (I), i.e. book 8 considered in itself, in light of (II.a), i.e. materials not written by Clement, I endeavor to show that 2) the text is, in fact, internally coherent and arranged in a intelligible sequence. I will then 3) select a few paradigmatic examples which display how the content book 8 is non-superficially related to the content of (II.b.2), specifically *Stromateis* 1-7, but with some references to the broader corpus of Clement's extant writings.

Of the scholars who write about book 8, and believe the text is fragmentary and incoherent, most attempt to "explain" its contents using the methods of "source criticism,"

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[9] See, for example, Itter, *Esoteric Teaching*, 54: "I am not concerned with the detail [sic] of the logic set out within the treatise, but with the simple fact that the treatise is concerned with logic and that it holds the last position in Clement's divine pedagogy." ; See also Merino, "El Stromata VIII."

[10] Bergjan, "Logic and Theology."

specifically the method of investigation commonly called *Quellenforschung*.[11] They seek to explain (or give an account for the existence of) the specific content in a text by trying to identify the antecedent source(s) of that content. Since this is not what I intend to do, it would be helpful to briefly explain how I intend to relate (I), i.e. questions pertaining to the coherence and structure of Clement's text, to (II.a.), i.e. writings not composed by Clement.

I believe Jaap Mansfeld correctly assesses the benefits and limitations of *Quellenforschung* for the study of philosophy (which, I would add, also applies to the study of theology):

> This procedure may be of help in understanding passages which remain in part obscure when studied in isolation, and also in eliminating errors. Furthermore, noticing correspondences brings out the differences much more clearly, and so helps to determine the stance of an individual author. It goes without saying, however, that *pinpointing a source, or shared tradition, is not equivalent to interpreting a thought*. Source-criticism

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[11] Jaap Mansfeld provides a useful explanation: "We may distinguish between two main models, or forms, of *Quellenforschung*. The first is the tracing back of a single extant work, for instance the Iliad or the Odyssey, to a plurality of sources; the hypothesis that these epics have been combined from a number of independent shorter poems, to which other material was added later, was already formulated in the seventeenth century. The second is the tracing back of a plurality of extant texts, or parts thereof, to a hypothetical single source. Just as all lagers are the offspring of Pilsener Urquell, so a plurality of manuscripts may derive from a single lost ancestor, the so-called archetype." Jaap Mansfeld, "Sources," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, ed. Keimpe Algra et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 14; For an example of the latter applied to book 8, see: Havrda, "Galenus Christianus?", 345 ff: "The intricate cobweb of issues called 'the problem of Stromata VIII' may be summarized by two questions: (1) What is the role of this text in the context of Clement's extant writings? (2) what are its philosophical sources? The following paper is an attempt to reenter the debate from the perspective of the source-critical approach..." As far as I can tell, Havrda does not address the first question in this article, unless the supposed identification of Galen's lost treatise *On Demonstration* as Clement's "source" is meant to answer the question about the role of book 8 in the context of Clement's writings. ; See also Witt's argument for Antiocus of Ascalon (for whom we have no extant writings) as Clement's "source." Reginald E. Witt, *Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937), 31–41; Arguably, Lilla's project exemplifies the former model: Salvatore R. C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism* (Wipf & Stock Pub, 2005); For a blend of the two, see: Matyáš Havrda, "Categories in Stromata VIII," *Elenchos* 33 (2012): 197–225.

should be no more than an unavoidable means to an end, that is, the understanding of ideas in philosophy.[12]

In my analysis of book 8, and in light of its contents, I proceed with a somewhat atypical understanding of what it means for something to be a "source." Akin to Clement's understanding of a "procatartic" cause,[13] I think the "source" of book 8, or at least Clement's motivation to write it, should not be identified with the materials he uses, but rather with an observed state of affairs to which his writing is a response. Specifically, the text of book 8 makes sense as a response to certain skeptical arguments articulated by Sextus Empiricus (though its intelligibility does not depend on this). Others have made mention of the fact that the introduction (chapter 1) to book 8 frames the discussion as a response to skeptical and eristic arguments,[14] and that chapters 5 and 7 explicitly respond to specific arguments and methods employed by the Skeptics for the suspension of judgment (*epochê*). I intend to show how the other chapters of book 8 also offer responses to skeptical arguments akin to those found in the writings of Sextus.

With respect to the *materials* out of which book 8 is composed, it certainly appears as though Clement has included a variety of terms and phrases that can be found in the writings of different philosophers. Nearly all of the scholars, to my knowledge, who have written about book 8 *qua* book 8 of the *Stromateis,* say something about how it appears to be a mix of Stoic and Aristotelian materials. In their interpretation of specific passages, however, these same scholars appear to disregard the "Stoic" character of Clement's arguments, and often claim that he is simply "following Aristotle." I do not share this assessment. One of the most prominent themes

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[12] Mansfeld, "Sources," 15 (emphasis mine).

[13] See *Strom.* 8.9.25.2

[14] See, for example, Havrda, "Galenus Christianus?," 346; Witt, *Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism*, 32; Laura Rizzerio, "Foi, Gnosis, Dialectique, Logique: Notes à Propos de Stromates VIII de Clément d'Alexandrie," *Studia Patristica* 31 (1997): 522–529; Karel Janácek, *Studien zu Sextus Empiricus, Diogenes Laertius und zur pyrrhonischen Skepsis* (Walter de Gruyter, 2008).

found throughout book 8, which is characteristically Stoic, is the importance of maintaining a distinction between words, concepts, and the subjects, or existing state of affairs, of which the concepts are concepts. In my interpretation of book 8, I intend to show that, despite the fact that many *words* appear similar to those used by Aristotle, the *concepts* appear to be much more closely related to the teachings of the 'Stoics,' or at least, to contemporary reconstructions of those teachings.[15]

In my discussion of book 8, I will be using some philosophical terminology (not found in Clement or his sources) to help interpret the text. I will flag these terms along the way, and offer a brief explanation of how I am using them in a given context.

To begin, the basic distinction between "first-order discourse" and "second-order discourse" helps to clarify one of the more confusing aspects of the text of book 8, because, in a sense, Clement is speaking on two 'levels' at the same time. With this distinction between 'orders' or 'levels', I do not intend to suggest something overly technical, or ambiguously 'mystical.' I simply mean to distinguish between domains of reference, i.e. what the discourse is about.[16] Second-order discourse is identified -in terms of its logic, function, and self-

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[15] Admittedly, there is a degree of circularity to this claim. The contemporary re-presentations of Stoic teachings to which I refer all incorporate interpretations of, or references to, passages in book 8 (see below for discussion and references). To the extent that a significant amount of what we know of the Stoics' teachings (on the issues I will discuss) actually comes from the portions of book 8 which I will discuss, the argument is tautological: 'What Clement says in these passages is closely related to (our current understanding of) the Stoics' theories about certain topics, which have been largely reconstructed from what Clement says in these passages. So, what Clement says in these passages is closely related to the current philosophical understanding of what Clement says in these passages.' Nevertheless, the rationale for exploring the relationship between Clement and the Stoics is not entirely circular. Given the fact that those polemics in Sextus' *Against the Logicians* and *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (to which, I argue, book 8 offers a response), are primarily directed against Stoics, it would make sense for Clement's arguments to reflect the influence of Stoic teachings. Moreover, according to Eusebius, Clement's most influential teacher was a Stoic: "We know that Pantaenus was one of the most eminent teachers of his day, being an ornament of the philosophical system known as stoicism." *HE,* 5.10.1 (G. A. Williams translation).

[16] For a critical evaluation of how these distinctions can be misappropriated within the discourse of "academic theology," see: Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Fortress Press, 1997), 72 ff.

understanding- by the fact that it speaks *about* first-order discourse.[17] For example, articulating

the rules of grammar in a given language would constitute a "second-order discourse" in relation

to the "first-order discourse" of linguistic communication in that language. Similarly, *The*

Chicago Manual of Style is a work of "second-order" discourse in the sense that it is writing

about how to write. To the extent that it also adheres to the rules and guidelines *about* which it is

speaking, e.g. its footnotes are formatted in "Chicago Style," it also operates on the "first-order"

level as well. In the instances in which it refers to itself for examples of writing that adheres to

the guidelines about which it is speaking, it operates on both levels at once.[18]

Similarly operating on two levels at once, book 8 is both *about* "demonstration"

(*apodeixis*), but it also is itself a demonstration, i.e. it follows the rules and guidelines about

which it is speaking. Since "demonstration" is a *process,* and not simply a static articulation of

what one thinks or believes, a demonstration of "demonstration" will also follow the progressive

stages of that process.

DEMONSTRATING "DEMONSTRATION"

"Demonstration," according to Clement's demonstration in book 8, is a three stage process,

which roughly corresponds to three types of question: 1) "*if* it is" (*ei esti*) then 2) "*what* it is," (*ti*

esti) then 3) "*because of what* it is" (*dia ti estin*).[19] These three stages roughly correspond to the

Stoic theory of concept formation: *prolepsis, katalepsis,* and *episteme,* and, to a certain extent,

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[17] See John G. Gunnell, *The Orders of Discourse: Philosophy, Social Sciences, and Politics* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), 22 ff.

[18] I do not mean the provided examples, which are set apart from the primary text (e.g. "a proper table of contents looks like this…") but the primary text pointing to itself as an example (e.g. "see the table of contents of this book, i.e. *The Chicago Manual of Style,* for an example of what a proper table of contents looks like).

[19] *Strom.* 8.6.17.8: ἥ τε ἀπόδειξις τὰ τρία, τό τε εἰ ἔστιν καὶ τὸ τί ἐστιν καὶ τὸ διὰ τί ἐστιν, σαφηνίζει. As will be discussed below, this third "stage" also involves two additional questions (*ti autôi sumbebêken* and *dioti estin*). See *Strom.* 8.6.17.2-3: ἔπειτα ζητητέον…, ἐπὶ τούτοις, εἰ ἔστι, τί ἐστι, τί αὐτῷ συμβέβηκεν, ἢ καὶ οὕτως, εἰ ἔστι, τί ἐστι, διότι ἐστίν.

the stages by which the believer progress from faith (*pistis*) to knowledge (*gnosis*). This language of "steps" or "stages" is not meant to suggest that moving from one to another constitutes a departure from what came before, but rather the process through which one comes to have a clearer understanding, or firmer "grasp," of the same "thing."[20]

Linguistic communication differs from empirical investigation. In the case of the latter, if that about which I am speaking is a sensible object, I could physically show it to you to answer the question "*if* it is" (but not yet "*what* it is"). Within the confines of writing, however, I can only use more words to "show" you what my words are about. And if what I am speaking about is not a sensible object, but a cognitive *process,* like "demonstration," simply stating a proposition about "*what* it is" will not satisfactorily answer the question, "*if* it is," especially if you do not believe *that* it is, or, do not believe that it is possible. Instead, if I want to show you that the process is, in fact, possible, I must lead you through the steps of that process (preferably in a way that invites you, i.e. the reader, to "follow along") The confirmation "*that* it is," will only come at the *end* of the process (not the beginning), provided the demonstration proves successful.

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[20] As will be discussed below, this "thing," which Clement refers to with the term "concept" (*noema*), and also "thing" (*pragma*) and "sayable" (*lekton*), is akin to what Charles S. Peirce will later call, the "Immediate Object." About the latter, Joseph Randsell explains: "[T]he immediate object is the object as it appears at any point in the inquiry or semiotic process. The [dynamic] object, however, is the object as it really is. These must be distinguished, first, because the immediate object may involve some erroneous interpretation and thus be to that extent falsely representative of the object as it really is, and, second, because it may fail to include something that is true of the real object. In other words, the immediate object is simply what we at any time suppose the real object to be." Joseph Ransdell, "Some Leading Ideas in Peirce's Semiotic," *Semiotica* 19 (1977): 169 : "[T]he immediate object is the object as it appears at any point in the inquiry or semiotic process. The [dynamic] object, however, is the object as it really is. These must be distinguished, first, because the immediate object may involve some erroneous interpretation and thus be to that extent falsely representative of the object as it really is, and, second, because it may fail to include something that is true of the real object. In other words, the immediate object is simply what we at any time suppose the real object to be."

At one point,[21] Clement defines "demonstration" as an "argument (or "reasoning," Greek:

logos) which has the power to produce belief in what is not yet believed from that which is

already believed."[22] Now, if what is not yet believed is *that* this definition corresponds to

something real, i.e. that there is such a thing as "demonstration" to which this definition applies,

then one would have to do more than simply define it (though that is certainly important), one

would have to *demonstrate* it. This, I argue, is what Clement aims to do in book 8, to provide a

demonstration of "demonstration" for those who think that such "demonstrations" do not exist.

We need not assume that Clement actually intended to convince skeptics like Sextus of

the possibility of demonstration with his treatise. In fact, the introduction makes it clear that

Clement's "intended audience" are members of his own community, those who already apply

themselves to the study of Scripture and find therein the exhortation (and promise): "Seek, and

ye shall find" and thus embark upon the process of examination and investigation, not only in the

divine Scriptures, but in relation to "common notions" as well.[23] For those who may already

believe *that* demonstration is possible, but know not yet *how* the process works (or how to do it),

book 8 provides a tutorial.

Within the scope of this dissertation, it is not possible to offer a detailed commentary on

the contents of book 8.[24] In what follows, I will offer an outline description of the process of

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[21] In chapter 3 of book 8, Clement actually provides several, progressively clarified and increasingly specific, definitions of "demonstration." Here I have selected the one he identifies as indicative of its "*ousia.*" For a discussion about the peculiar way Clement uses the word *ousia* in book 8, see section on definitions below.

[22] *Strom.* 8.3.7.6: ἐὰν οὖν τις εὑρεθῇ λόγος τοιοῦτος οἷος ἐκ τῶν ἤδη πιστῶν τοῖς οὔπω πιστοῖς ἐκπορίζεσθαι τὴν πίστιν δυνάμενος, αὐτὸν τοῦτον εἶναι φήσομεν οὐσίαν ἀποδείξεως (ANF emended).

[23] See, *Strom.* 8.1.2.4: ἐχομένους γὰρ καθήκει οὐ μόνον τῶν γραφῶν τῶν θείων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἐννοιῶν τῶν κοινῶν τὰς ζητήσεις ποιεῖσθαι εἴς τι πέρας ὠφέλιμον τῆς εὑρέσεως καταληγούσης; and surrounding.

[24] Regrettably, the only full English version of book 8, from the Ante-Nicene Fathers series, is, at times, terribly misleading in its translation. Though it is not impossible to get a sense of what Clement is doing in the text, it is almost inevitable that one will miss crucial "steps" in the argument/process (and thereby unable to truly "follow along").

demonstration found in book 8. I will then return to a few selected examples for a more detailed analysis and discussion.[25]

O<small>UTLINE OF</small> B<small>OOK</small> 8

In modern editions, the eighth book of the *Stromateis* is divided into 9 chapters.[26]

C<small>HAPTER</small> 1: By way of introduction, Clement begins with an observation about the contemporary context, and from an interpretation of Mathew 7:7 finds reason for the study of "common notions," using the tools of logical investigation and demonstration.

C<small>HAPTER</small> 2: Clement begins his demonstration of "demonstration," showing that the word itself is not meaningless. Though opponents might claim that "demonstration is not possible," and by implication, "does not exist," there is, at least, something signified (*sêmainomenon*) by the word "demonstration." Since everyone would agree that at least an indefinite 'something signified' (i.e. a meaning) exists, the next step is to come to a basic agreement about what 'something signified' they are talking about, i.e. to formulate a simple definition they can all agree to.

It is worth noting the fact that Clement begins his discussion of "demonstration" with questions and not indicative assertions. The reader is asked to consider the issues and not simply told what they are. For example, Clement introduces the distinction between meaningless utterances and significant speech by asking the reader to consider the question: "Is the term

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[25] I have tried select examples which show how the content of book 8 is related to the content of Clement's other writings (step 3 articulated in the "prolegomena" above) and might be of interest to those who may not specialize in the study of Clement's writings, but may, nevertheless, have an interest in the topics addressed by his writing, which we now refer to with names like "semiotics," "theological epistemology," and "pedagogy."

[26] These chapter divisions are not found in the Laurentianus manuscript, but were introduced, per the suggestion of William Lowth, in John Potter's edition in 1715. Though useful for citation and reference, parsing the text into distinct units conveys an implicit sense of division (not present in the original text), which, I suspect, has contributed to the overall impression of book 8, and the *Stromateis* as a whole, as "fragmentary" texts.

"demonstration" of such a kind as the word *Blituri*, which is only a sound, meaning nothing?"[27]

The method of question and answer is Clement's preferred mode of instruction,[28] and, as he explains elsewhere, one of the major limitations of written communication is the fact that: "it always uses only the one voice, that of writing, and gives no response, beyond what is written, to one who makes inquires."[29] Demonstration can only work if one's interlocutor "follows" the discussion. And Clement begins this chapter with the question: "What better or clearer method, for the commencement of instruction of this nature, can there be than to explain the term proposed for discussion clearly enough so that all who use the same language may follow?"[30]

Clement also acknowledges one of the most common 'modes' of argument used by the skeptics for the suspension of judgment, namely, "the mode throwing one back *ad infinitum*."[31] Clement agrees that it will not suffice to simply state one's opinion, for one's opponent could,

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[27] *Strom.* 8.2.3.1: ἆρ' οὖν τοιοῦτόν ἐστι <τὸ> ὄνομα τῆς ἀποδείξεως, οἷόν περ τὸ βλίτυρι, φωνὴ μόνον οὐδὲν σημαίνουσα. A similar example is found in Diogenes Laertius 7.57 (=LS 33A), in which Diogenes introduces the Stoic's distinction between vocal sounds, meaningless utterances, and significant speech. "Utterance and speech are different, because vocal sound is also an utterance but only articulated sound is speech. And speech is different from language, because language is always significant, but speech can lack significance, e.g. *blituri,* whereas language is not so at all. Furthermore, saying is different from voicing. For utterances are voiced but it is states of affairs [*pragmata*] which are said—they are, after all, actually sayables [*lekta*]" (ibid). Long and Sedley explain in a note on this text that *blituri,* along with *skindaphos,* "was the standard example of a meaningless word." They cite both Sextus (S.E. M. 8.133) and Galen (Galen 8.662) for support (LS vol 2. p.197). Havdra cites the parallel in Galen in support of his thesis that Galen was Clement's "source." However, Clement was aware of the Stoic *lekta* (see discussion below). He also seems to be using the Stoic's distinction between "voicing" and "saying" in his solution to the Sophism about "what passes through your mouth" in Strom. 8.9.26.1, although this point is debated. For a defense of the Stoic character of this passage, see Graeser Andreas, "The Stoic Theory of Meaning," in *The Stoics*, ed. John M. Rist (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 85–86 (and my discussion below); for a contrasting interpretation of the passage, see Catherine Atherton, *The Stoics on Ambiguity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 284–286. The sophism, in a nearly identical version, is attributed to Chrysippus in *Diogenes Laertius* 7.187 (=LS 37R).

[28] See Strom. 8.4.10.1 ff (and discussion below).

[29] Strom. 1.1.14.4 (translation Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy")

[30] Strom. 8.2.3.1: 8.2.3.1 Τίς ἂν οὖν ἄλλη βελτίων ἢ ἐναργεστέρα μέθοδος εἰς ἀρχὴν τῆς τοιᾶσδε εἴη ἂν διδασκαλίας ἢ τὸ προταθὲν ὄνομα λόγῳ διελθεῖν οὕτω σαφῶς ὡς πάντας ἀκολουθῆσαι τοὺς ὁμοφώνους.(ANF emended).

[31] Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism,* 1.164. Henceforth abbreviated *PH.* Book and section division follow the standard divisions first proposed by J. A. Fabricius in 1718. Unless otherwise noted, English translations come from Sextus Empiricus, *Sextus Empiricus: Outlines of Scepticism*, ed. Julia Annas and Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

with equal force, assert whatever he likes to the contrary. Moreover, if the decision about it (i.e. the definition of that which is signified by a disputed term) is carried back to something likewise disputed, and that to something which is also disputed and this continues *ad infinitum,* it will be incapable of demonstration.[32] For that reason, Clement argues, every term advanced for discussion must be first converted into an agreed 'account' (*logos*) that is clear and shared by all parties involved in the investigation.[33]

CHAPTER 3: Clement offers a simple definition of "demonstration" to which all people will agree. He then applies the method of division (described later, in chapter 6) to distinguish "demonstration" from "persuasion": demonstration is a syllogism, then from 'deictic syllogism' (i.e. an inference from a single premise)—it must have at least two premises; then, generically, from unsound syllogisms—the premises must be true; then specifically, they must not only be true, the parties involved in the discussion must *agree* that they are true; and again, it is not enough for people to agree that they are true (as in the case of hypotheticals, e.g. "let us agree that x is y"); the premises must be evident.

At this point, Clement provides a mini demonstration of the possibility that some things are indemonstrable and some evident to sense and understanding.[34] The "mini demonstration," is

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[32] See *Strom.* 8.2.4.1; See also *PH* 1.122: "if he makes his assertion simply and without proof, he will not be convincing. But if he wants to use a proof… and if he says that the proof is true, he will be required to give a proof of its being true, and another proof of that (since it too has to be true), and so *ad infinitum*. But it is impossible to establish infinitely many proofs."; See also *PH* 1.166: "In the mode deriving from infinite regress, we say that what is brought forward as a source of conviction for the matter proposed itself needs another such source, which itself needs another, and so *ad infinitum,* so that we have no point from which to begin to establish anything, and suspension of judgment follows."

[33] *Strom.* 8.2.4.2: πᾶν οὖν τὸ προβληθὲν ὄνομα μεταλαμβάνειν χρὴ εἰς λόγον ὁμολογούμενόν τε καὶ σαφῆ τοῖς κοινωνοῦσι τῆς σκέψεως, ἀρχὴν μὲν τῆς διδασκαλίας ἐσόμενον, ἐξηγησόμενον δὲ τὴν τῶν ζητουμένων εὕρεσιν.

[34] Clement's 'demonstration' is essentially a disjunctive syllogism, adhering to the following form: either the first₁ or the second₁; but [sub-syllogism: if the first₁ (the first₂ and the second₂; not the second₂ if the first₁; therefore: not [the first₂ and second₂])] therefore: the second₁ and also (not-the-first₁). Verbally stated, Clement's argument is – either "all things require demonstration" *or* "some things are evident"; if "all things require demonstration" then *ad infinitum* and there can be no beginning-of-demonstration; if "there can be no beginning of demonstration" it cannot

itself, what logicians call a "disjunctive syllogism." One of the things it "demonstrates" is the

possibility that there are "indemonstrables," i.e. valid syllogistic forms, which "the philosophers"

call "indemonstrable" (*anapodeiktous*). As Long and Sedley report, "[the Stoic] analysis of

arguments centers around five allegedly primary types of syllogism, the 'indemonstrable'

arguments."[35] Here, Clement appears to be following suit.[36]

Returning to the process of division, Clement distinguishes demonstration from invalid

syllogisms (ones in which the premises are not properly related to the conclusion)—the premises

must be properly related to the conclusion; and from tautologies—the premises must be different

from each other (but both properly related to the conclusion). Combining these, he arrives at a

more precise definition: demonstration is a syllogism, with at least two premises, that the parties

of a discussion agree are both true and evident, which are also different from each other, and

properly related to the conclusion (in such a way that when combined they lead to the conclusion

as a valid inference). From this, Clement then distinguishes between "demonstration" and

"analysis."

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be the case that "all things require demonstration"; as the philosophers say – not all things require demonstration, some things are "indemonstrable" and also things "evident to sense and understanding." Evident to sense are sensory impressions – (though we may not know *what* it is that is responsible for producing a given sensory impression, it is evident *that* we are having a sensory impression (even in cases in which we misunderstand or misidentify that of which the impression is an impression, and *what* is responsible for our having of the sensory impression, e.g. as in the cases of a hallucination)

[35] A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers: Translations of the Principal Sources, with Philosophical Commentary* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 219. Hereafter referred to as *LS,* using Long and Sedley's reference schema (section number, source letter) for citations of *LS* translations of primary sources (e.g. =*LS* 36A, for Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers,* 7.76-81). Citations of page numbers refer to Long and Sedley's philosophical commentary, (e.g. *LS,* p. 219) for the quotation here cited.

[36] Some suggest Clement is making an "argument for faith" here, where "faith" is understood to be an "un-provable belief," and by "philosophers," he is referring to Aristotle. I disagree. Clement's use of the uniquely Stoic convention of referring to propositions with cardinal numbers – e.g. "the first", "the second" – and not letters "a or b" "p or q" etc. - supports my interpretation that Clement is drawing from the Stoics here (through whatever form of mediation via another person/text) in his discussion of syllogism and demonstration and *not* Aristotle or some "peripatetic source."; cf. Eric Osborn, "Arguments for Faith in Clement of Alexandria," *Vigiliae Christianae* 48, no. 1 (1994): 1–24; Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 40–58.

Though he doesn't use the term at this point, "demonstration" and "analysis" are what he will later call (in chapter 8) "heteronyms," i.e. different "names" with different definitions (i.e. concepts) that refer to the same external object (*hypokeimenon*), for which he provides the examples "ascent" and "descent," for the way is the same whether upwards or downwards."[37]

Analysis, as he defines it in this chapter,[38] is regressive, i.e. reasoning back to things that are evident to sense and understanding. Demonstration is progressive, i.e. reasoning forward from what is evident to sense and understanding to what is non-evident (or, better, not-yet-evident).

With this latter distinction, Clement implicitly differentiates between what later philosophers will call "analytic" (not to be confused with Clement's "analysis") and "synthetic" judgments. If a syllogism produces an analytic judgment, it has not moved from the evident to the not-yet-evident, since the conclusion is already contained in the antecedent, e.g. "if he is a bachelor, he is unwed; he is a bachelor, therefore he is unwed." In other words, one does not demonstrate that a man is "unwed" by claiming he is "a bachelor," since if one agrees that it is true and evident that the man is a "bachelor," one would already agree that it is true and evident

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[37] *Strom*. 8.8.24.4: ἑτερώνυμα δὲ ὅσα περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑποκείμενον ἐν διαφόροις ἐστὶν ὀνόμασιν, οἷον ἀνάβασις καὶ κατάβασις·

[38] He also refers to "geometrical analysis" later in book 8, chapter 6. There he compares "geometrical analysis" to "dialectical division," which are both means of arriving at what is simple (i.e. specific) and primary. Though similar, this description of "geometrical analysis" differs from the description of "analysis" here, in chapter 3. The sense in chapter three is regressive (reasoning back to things which are accepted as true and evident without demonstration), geometrical analysis is "intensive," seeking specificity by conceptually diving complex things into more precisely differentiated categories until one arrives at what is simple (i.e. no longer divisible). The complement to this process are the analogous methods of "geometrical synthesis" and "dialectical definition," through which one combines the continuative categorizations (which analysis/division derives) into one formula, e.g. the definition of "a man" through the categorizations: "animal, mortal, terrestrial, walking, rational." (See *Strom.* 8.6.18.4; 8.6.14.7). He also refers to "analysis" in this geometrical sense in book 5, but there he pairs it not with "synthesis," but "abstraction" (or, "subtraction"). Describing the process of beginning with a concept of definite thing, e.g. a body, and then progressively removing from it the specific categorizations that comprise its definition (derived from analysis), e.g. of "a body," "first taking away its physical properties [thus abstracting to the definition of a "body," in general. And according to the purportedly Stoic definition: "a body is what has threefold extension –length, breadth and depth." See DL 7.135 =LS 45E, and Galen, *On incorporeal qualities,* 19.483,13-16 =LS 45F] then the dimension of depth [i.e. abstracting to 2d, a plane], then breadth [1d, a line], then length, and thereby arriving at what is referred to by the sign of a "unit" [i.e. a point]…" See *Strom.* 5.11.71.2-3.

that he is "unwed," and vice versa. Synthetic judgments are those that say something which is not already contained within the definition of the term/concept about which one is speaking, i.e. something we do not already know when we know the definition of the term/concept.

It may sound as if Clement is describing something akin to Cartesian foundationalism, (by which I mean, the search for something which one cannot doubt which will, in turn, provide a foundation, or starting point, for all further investigation, knowledge and belief). However, the ensuing discussion shows that this is not the case.

CHAPTER 4: The start of this chapter picks up where the last left off,[39] but the language directly echoes the theme introduced in the first chapter from Matthew 7:7: "Seek, and ye shall find" (*zêteite kai heurêsete*).[40] In the transition to chapter 4, Clement explains that in all questions (or, "seekings") there is something already known beforehand (*ti proginôskomenon*) and which is believed without demonstration. Then, in the first line of chapter 4, he explains: "For every seeking is found from pre-existing knowledge" (*Pasa gar zêtêsis ek proüparchousês heurisketai gnôseôs*). Whenever we "seek" something, or, ask a question, we already have at least some sense, however vague, of what it is we are looking for, or, about which we are asking. To illustrate this point, Clement describes three forms (*eide*) of investigation,[41] each of which is formed by knowing at least one (or two) of the following three things and seeking to know one

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[39] The explanatory *γάρ* in the first sentence signaling that its claim follows from the preceding one at the end of chapter 3

[40] I must disagree with Havrda's suggestion that after the first chapter "Clement's Christian interests recced to the background, only to come to surface again much later in the text in the form of brief marginal comments" (he cites material in chapter 9) and that "Clement's religious interests are still clearly present in the first chapter of *Stromata* VIII, but this line of thought is abandoned, and what is developed instead is a scholastic introduction to the doctrine of demonstration that, in the way it is presented, has no obvious relevance to the project outlined at the beginning of the book." Havrda, "Galenus Christianus?," 346, 353.

[41] See *Strom.* 8.4.14.1, where he claims to have shown the first of the three forms of investigation.

of the others: 1) *ousia,* 2) active attributes, e.g. *ergon, energeia, dunamis,* and 3) passive

attributes, e.g. *pathos, pathemata*

It is important to note Clement's usage of terms here. It has been suggested that Clement

uses the "essence" and "energies" distinction that would later become prevalent among Orthodox

theologians like Gregory Palamas.[42] However, the way he uses the term *ousia* in this passage and

in chapter 6 (and, I suspect elsewhere) is not what later theologians mean when they speak of

ousia (typically translated into English as "essence"). What Clement means by *ousia* in this

passage is akin to what medieval scholastics, and later Peirce, meant by the Latin term *haecceity*

(from the Latin *haec,* meaning "this").[43] "It is *haecceity* which enables objects to be

unambiguously distinguishable," but "does not denote any properties or qualities of objects."[44] If

by "*ousia,*" Clement means something like *haecceity,* his description of the three forms of

investigation is much more intelligible than it would be if he meant something like "essence," or

quiddity (from the Latin, *quid,* meaning "what"). According to Clement:

1) Sometimes we have knowledge of a mere *ousia* and are ignorant of its "works" (*tôn*

ergôn), "as in the case of stones, plants, or animals whose activities (*tas energeias*) we do

not know, or their affections or powers (*ê pathôn ê dunameôn*) or, generally speaking, the

'properties' of the *ousia.*"[45]

2) Sometimes we may know one or more of these powers or affections – as, for example,

the desires and affections of the soul– but be ignorant of the *ousia,* and make that the

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[42] Henny Fiska Hagg, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 238–251.

[43] It is not possible, here, to fully explore the theological significance in this difference in meaning.

[44] Jeffery R. DiLeo, "Charles Peirce's Theory of Proper Names," in *Studies in the Logic of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Nathan Houser, Don D. Roberts, and James Van Evra (Indiana University Press, 1997), 589.

[45] *Strom.* 8.4.9.1.: εἶναι δὲ <δυνατὸν> τὴν γνῶσιν τὴν προϋπάρξασαν τοῦ ζητουμένου παντὸς ποτὲ μὲν τῆς οὐσίας ψιλῶς ἀγνοουμένων [δὲ] τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς, οἷον λίθων, φυτῶν, ζῴων, ὧν τὰς ἐνεργείας ἀγνοοῦμεν, ἢ παθῶν ἢ δυνάμεως ἢ ἁπλῶς εἰπεῖν [ἓν] τῶν ὑπαρχόντων τοῖς οὖσιν

object of our investigation. Or, as is often the case, we have already formed conceptions

of these in our mind, of different activities and *ousia*, and we ask: to which *ousia* do these

activities belong?[46]

3) Finally, we may know the activities along with the *ousia,* but be ignorant of the affects

(*pathemata*).[47]

Clement provides an example of how and why it is important to first clarify the terms of a

question in a given investigation, to make known what is being asked.[48] Since, often, the way a

question is stated can "confuse and disturb the mind, in such a way that it is not easy to discover

the kinds of distinctions it involves."[49] Clement then walks the reader through a hypothetical

scenario outlining the variety of ways a discussion might unfold if one were to be asked: "is an

embryo an animal?" What he describes primarily adheres to the method of question and answer,

but Clement admits that one could also use a method of exposition (but it seems clear that he

favors the former). Of primary concern throughout the imagined exchange is the manner in

which words can be used, since before one can begin to answer the question, it must be made

clear what is being asked. For example, one must know what the questioner means by the term

"animal" and to what he is referring by the term "embryo" (literally, in Greek, "the thing

conceived"). Does he mean, the "seed" at the moment it has been implanted, or the developing

"fetus"?

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[46] *Strom*. 8.4.9.2-4: ἐνίοτε δὲ γιγνώσκεσθαι μέν τι τούτων τῶν δυνάμεων ἢ παθῶν ἤ τινα τούτων, ὡς τῆς ψυχῆς τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ τὰ πάθη, ἀγνοεῖσθαι δὲ καὶ ζητεῖσθαι τὴν οὐσίαν· ἐν πολλοῖς δέ, τῆς νοήσεως αὐτῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας ὑποτιθεμένης ἑαυτῇ ταῦτα πάντα, τὴν ζήτησιν εἶναι, τίνι τῶν οὐσιῶν ἂν οὕτω μὲν ὑπάρχῃ· ἀμφοτέρων γάρ, τῆς τε οὐσίας τῆς τε ἐνεργείας, τὰς ἐπινοίας ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ λαβόντες οὕτως ἐπὶ τὴν ζήτησιν ἐρχόμεθα.

[47] *Strom*. 8.4.9.5: ἔστιν δὲ ὧν καὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας εἰδότες ἅμα ταῖς οὐσίαις ἀγνοοῦμεν τὰ παθήματα.

[48] Strom. 8.4.9.7: ἀρκτέον γὰρ ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ γνωρίζειν τὰ προβλήματα. The term "πρόβλημα" is, most likely, being used in the sense of a "question as to whether a statement is so or not." (LSJ entry, with reference to Aristotle, *Topics,* 101b28).

[49] Strom. 8.4.9.7: πολλάκις γοῦν ἐξαπατᾷ τὸ τῆς λέξεως σχῆμα καὶ συγχεῖ καὶ ταράττει τὴν διάνοιαν, ὥστε μὴ ῥᾳδίως εὑρίσκειν ἐκ ποίας ἐστὶ διαφορᾶς

In the course of this discussion, Clement implicitly draws attention to certain concerns about language and relations of signification that he will explicitly address later, in chapter 8, namely: distinguishing between the meanings of homonyms, and the distinction between a word, what is signified by the word (which here he calls: a *noema* "concept," *pragma* "thing," or *lekton* "sayable"), and the external subject (of which the concept is a concept). I will return to this passage in my discussion of semiotics below.

At the end of the chapter, Clement briefly reiterates the main steps of the investigation and explains what he was trying to show the reader through the imagined discussion. It was an exhibition in the first of the three different forms of investigation mentioned at the start of the chapter, i.e. the one in which "(the *ousia* is known) but some one of its works or affections is unknown."[50]

To briefly recap: in chapter 3, Clement has provided a definition of demonstration which begins with that which is evident and accepted without demonstration, from which it 'moves forward' to produce belief in that which is not-yet-evident. In chapter 4, he has shown that something which is believed and accepted without demonstration is already presupposed in every form of investigation, and exhibited a method for discovering the object of investigation (n.b. not the thing itself, but the as-yet-unknown thing toward which the investigation is directed).

After the presentation, thus far, skeptics like Sextus would still raise an objection. Demonstration, according to Clement, begins with something evident, which is accepted without

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[50] *Strom.* 8.4.14.4: τὸ μὲν οὖν πρῶτον εἶδος τῆς τῶν ζητουμένων διαφορᾶς τριῶν ὄντων ἐδείχθη, λέγω δὲ τὸ (τῆς οὐσίας γινωσκομένης) ἀγνοεῖσθαί τι τῶν ἔργων ἢ παθῶν αὐτῆς. (ANF modified). He also reminds the reader that the second is "that in which we know the works and affections, but do not know the *ousia*; as, for example, in which part of the body is the ruling faculty (*hêgemonikon*) of the soul." *Strom.* 8.4.14.4: δευτέρα δ' ἦν διαφορὰ προβλημάτων ἐφ' οὗ τὰ μὲν ἔργα καὶ πάθη γινώσκομεν ἅπαντες, ἀγνοοῦμεν δὲ τὴν οὐσίαν, οἷον ἐν τίνι τοῦ σώματος μορίῳ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν ἐστι τῆς ψυχῆς. (ANF modified) This latter example would suggest that "essence" is not what Clement has in mind when he speaks of *ousia*.

demonstration. However, one of the main tenets of skepticism (at least, as Clement understands it) is that nothing is evident or certain.

CHAPTER 5: Clement now turns to explicitly address the skeptics' claims that nothing is certain and that one should suspend judgment regarding all things. He first explains the self-undermining nature of what some now call the "Liar's Paradox." If we accept the claim that "nothing is certain," then we would also have to admit that the claim "nothing is certain" is uncertain, or accept that it is certain that "nothing is certain," which would mean that it is not in fact the case that "nothing is certain." He then applies this same logic to someone who might claim that he is a skeptic, i.e. that he suspends judgment about everything. If such a man maintains that he suspends judgment, he shows that he does not, in fact, suspend judgment in regards to all things. For he at least affirms the claim that he suspends judgment, and by doing so, shows that he does not suspend judgment about everything. However, Clement reasons, "if we must be persuaded to suspend our judgment in regard to everything, we shall first suspend our judgment in regard to our suspense of judgment itself."[51]

Clement admits that one need not be certain about everything. Not only the skeptics, but everyone who dogmatizes is accustomed to suspend judgment sometimes, in things about which one's knowledge is weak, either for lack of clarity or because opposing arguments seem equally strong.[52] Yet, it is in these things, and about them, that the process of seeking (or investigation) originates.

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[51] *Strom.* 8.5.15.9: <δι'> ὃ καὶ εἰ δεῖ πειθόμενον αὐτοῖς περὶ πάντων ἐπέχειν, περὶ αὐτῆς πρότερον τῆς ἐποχῆς ἐφέξομεν, εἴτε πειστέον αὐτῇ εἴτε καὶ μή.

[52] See *Strom.* 8.5.16.3: Οὐ μόνον οἱ ἐφεκτικοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶς δογματικὸς ἔν τισιν ἐπέχειν εἴωθεν ἤτοι παρὰ γνώμης ἀσθένειαν ἢ παρὰ πραγμάτων ἀσάφειαν ἢ παρὰ τὴν τῶν λόγων ἰσοσθένειαν.

Clement's response to the skeptics is not a refutation (or a polemical defense of a contrary position). Rather, he applies the skeptic's claims to the skeptic's claims. He renders uncertain the skeptical claim that nothing is certain, and he invites the skeptic to first suspend judgment about whether it is the case that we should suspend judgment. There are indeed things about which we are uncertain, but these are the very things that investigation seeks to discover. In the first chapter Clement introduced the theme from Matthew 7:7: "Seek and ye shall find." In this chapter, his response to the skeptics is an encouragement to continue rather than suspend the process of investigation and inquiry.

After this response to the skeptics, the "performative" aspect of the text concludes. From this point on, Clement uses a more straight-forward expository method of instruction.

CHAPTER 6 Clement now re-articulates and briefly explains the basic process and methods of investigation which he has been using (and implicitly displaying) up to this point. For example, echoing the start of chapter 2 and the imagined discussion in chapter 4, Clement states that before anything else, one must examine the language of the question, attending to its various possible senses, and dealing with homonyms and clearly arranging synonyms according to their significations (*kata tas sêmasias*).[53] He also explains that one begins with a general definition which is admitted or stated, and through the method of division, arrives at another, more specific, definition[54] (which is the process he previously displayed in chapter 3 when defining "demonstration").

The main topic of this chapter is "division" and "definition." In the first, densely packed, discussion, Clement conceptually divides and defines various methods of investigation, e.g.

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[53] See Strom. 8.6.17.1-2: Προτακτέον δὴ καὶ τῶν ὅρων καὶ τῶν ἀποδείξεων καὶ διαιρέσεων ποσαχῶς λέγεται τὸ ζητούμενον τά τε ὁμώνυμα χειριστέον καὶ τὰ συνώνυμα εὐκρινῶς τακτέον κατὰ τὰς σημασίας.

[54] See Strom 8.6.17.5: λαμβάνεται γὰρ καὶ πρότερος τῆς διαιρέσεως καὶ ὕστερος ὁ διορισμός

"induction" (*epagôgê*), "division" (*diaireseis*) and "definition" (*diorismos*). He spends the majority of the passage describing the method of "division" through which one can formulate a specific definition, showing, by way of example, the various steps in the process of division that provides a definition for "a human" (*anthrôpos*).

The method of division Clement describes is very similar to Aristotle's method of progressively dividing and classifying things by genus and species. However, Clement significantly diverges from what Aristotle and later Peripatetic writers say about the object and purpose of definition. In terms of the object of definition, according to Aristotle, that which is defined in a proper definition is the essence of a thing. Differentiating himself from Aristotle (as well as Plato), Clement writes: "definitions are neither of things themselves nor of Forms (*tôn ideôn*), but of those things of which we have general notions (*katholikas dianoias*), we say that definitions are formulas for expressing these notions."[55] This understanding of the object of definition is similar to what the Stoics (purportedly) said about definition.[56] David Charles writes:

> Stoic definition appears importantly different from Aristotle's. Its basic goal is not to
> capture essence but… to clarify and elucidate our *preconceptions,* forming in the process
> *conceptions* which can be used in physical and ethical discourse… Definitions are useful
> when they improve our ability correctly to apply individual concepts or assist in
> organizing a number of concepts, revealing their differences and showing how they fit
> together in a harmonious way. The best definitions will be phrased in terms which are

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[55] Strom. 8.6.19.2: οὔτ' αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων οὔτε τῶν ἰδεῶν οἱ ὅροι, ἀλλὰ γὰρ ὧν πραγμάτων [ὧν] ἔχομεν καθολικὰς δινοίας, τούτων τῶν δινοιῶν τοὺς ἑρμηνευτικοὺς λόγους <ὅρους> εἶναί φαμεν·

[56] See, for example, Augustine, *City of God,* 8.7 (= LS 32F): "[The Stoics say that from the senses] the mind forms conceptions – *ennoiai,* as they call them – of those things, that is, which they articulate by definition"; See also David Charles, *Definition in Greek Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 21.: "It is a striking feature of Stoic definitions that they are primarily confined to concepts and do not involve the essences of objects or kinds."

clear and well understood… They are not put forward as accounts of the unitary, causally

basic essences of the objects or kind signified.[57]

That Clement's understanding of "definition" is more closely related to the Stoics than the

Aristotelians can be seen from the following comparison. Commenting on the understanding of

"definition" in Aristotle's *Topics,* Alexander of Aphrodisias (active c. 200 AD), writes:

> Aristotle's (expression) is equivalent to 'the account which brings out the essence of the
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> thing, that by which the thing has its being'. Those who maintain a definition is an
>
> 'account expressed adequately by analysis,' meaning by 'analysis' the unfolding of the
>
> thing defined into simple factors – this under its main headings – and by 'adequately' its
>
> being neither redundant nor deficient, would seem to maintain that definition does not
>
> differ in any way from giving the distinctive property. For 'animal capable of laughter' is
>
> also an account, and signifies man without redundancy or omission, since its extension is
>
> neither larger nor smaller than that of man. But in fact an account given through the
>
> distinctive property is very different from a definition in that it does not signify in what
>
> resides man's being; that this is not in his capacity for laughter is plain from the fact that
>
> what carries a thing to completion (and perfection) are its activities according to what it
>
> is, whereas laughing is not a completion (and perfection) of man.[58]

As mentioned above, Clement does not think that definitions define the essence of things (in

Aristotle's sense), but rather, they are formulas for expressing general notions (or concepts). For

that reason, the distinctive property can, in fact, serve as a sign (*sêmeia*) suitable for the

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[57] Charles, *Definition in Greek Philosophy*, 19.

[58] Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle Topics 1*, trans. Johannes M. Van Ophuijsen (London: Duckworth, 2001), 42.26–43.10.

definition of a thing.[59] And, for the sake of conciseness (or "simplicity"), Clement writes, "we say 'man is the laughing animal.' The special attributes of that which is defined, the distinctive virtue, the distinctive work, and the like, must be assumed."[60]

CHAPTER 7: In chapter 5, Clement admitted that it is customary to suspend judgment in things about which one's knowledge is weak, either because things lack clarity or because opposing arguments seem equally strong. In chapter 6, he re-presented and explained the methods of division and definition, which can be used to clarify and precisely identify the object of one's investigation. In this chapter, he speaks about situations in which opposing arguments seem equally strong. More specifically, he speaks about the skeptic's argumentative technique of pointing out *diaphonia* ("dissent" or "disagreement"), a method of collecting together and juxtaposing examples of various, apparently irreconcilable, beliefs from different philosophic schools and cultural traditions about a particular topic, with the overall intention of showing why there is no rational criteria or convincing reason to favor one over another, which, in turn, supports their conclusion that one should withhold one's belief (or suspend judgment) about the topic entirely. As will be discussed in greater detail below, Clement claims that the problem is not so much related to irreconcilable nature of things as it is to the instability of the human mind.

One of the things contributing to this instability, which is also a sign of it, is that "there are libraries full of books, and compilations and treatises of those who disagree in dogmas and are persuaded that they themselves know the truth that there is in things."[61] Given Clement's

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[59] See *Strom.* 8.6.21.1.

[60] *Strom.* 8.6.21.5.: γίνεται δὲ τοῦτο διὰ συντομίαν. φαμὲν οὖν, ἄνθρωπός ἐστι τὸ ζῷον γελαστικόν. τό τε ἐξαιρέτως συμβεβη- κὸς τῷ ὁριζομένῳ προσπαραληπτέον, ἢ τὴν ἰδίαν ἀρετὴν αὐτοῦ ἢ τὸ ἴδιον ἔργον αὐτοῦ καὶ τοιούτων τινῶν ἄλλων.

[61] See Strom. 8.7.22.4: πλήρεις δ' αἱ θῆκαι τῶν βιβλίων καὶ αἱ συντάξεις καὶ αἱ πραγματεῖαι τῶν διαφωνούντων ἐν τοῖς δόγμασι καὶ πεπεικότων ἑαυτοὺς τὴν ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν ἀλήθειαν γινώσκειν.

emphasis on the importance of clarifying the terms proposed for discussion and of distinguishing between the variant possible meanings in a question's form of expression, one of the problems with such publications is the (perhaps false) appearance that people are talking about the same thing when they use the same words.

CHAPTER 8: Clement explains the distinction between words, concepts, and existing things (or, external subjects). These distinctions will be discussed in greater detail below.

In chapter 6, Clement mentioned the importance of differentiating between homonyms and synonyms according to their significations, (which he had already suggested, albeit implicitly, in the course of the imagined discussion in chapter 4, and in a passing reference in chapter 2). In this chapter, he provides an elaborated and much more specific explanation of the different ways in which words relate to one another in relation to concepts and external subjects. He provides a taxonomy of word-relations, which includes: heteronyms, polyonyms, paronyms, and five subdivided species of homonyms (those that have the same name from: coincidence, resemblance, analogy, activity, and use).

CHAPTER 9: In this chapter, Clement discusses different types of causes and introduces a complex theory of causal relations. Although it is fairly easy to show how the contents of this discussion are related to topics discussed in other books of the *Stromateis,* it is much harder to see how chapter 9 fits together with the other chapters of book 8. However, if we accept the hypothesis that book 8 is offering a response to arguments of the skeptics against demonstration, then it would make sense for Clement to include the discussion of causality found in chapter 9.

One of the arguments articulated by the skeptics against the possibility of demonstration is the fact that contraries appear to hold of the same thing, and that the senses are unreliable because they are moved in contrary ways by external objects. Sextus provides the same example

multiple times in support of these claims: "the same honey appears sweet to me, but bitter to people with jaundice."[62] For example,

> The idea that contraries appear to hold of the same thing is not a belief of the Sceptics but a fact which makes an impression not only on Sceptics but on other philosophers too – and indeed on everyone. For example, no-one would venture to say that honey does not affect healthy people sweetly or sufferers from jaundice bitterly.[63]

And elsewhere:

> [The senses] will nonetheless be found unconvincing with regard to judging external existing objects. After all, the senses are moved in contrary ways by external objects – e.g. taste, by the same honey, is now affected bitterly, now sweetly.[64]

Toward the end of chapter 9, Clement explains, "the same thing becomes the cause of contrary effects sometimes from the magnitude of the cause and its power (*dunamis*), and sometimes from the aptitude (*epitêdeiotês*) of that on which it acts … honey is sweet to those who are well, and bitter to those who are in fever, according to the aptitude of those who are affected."[65]

One of the most important ways in which Clement's discussion of causal theory offers a response to Sextus' skeptical criticism is not directly related process of "demonstration," but rather to the problem of theodicy and the relationship between providence and free will. In Sextus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism,* in the passage immediately preceding the critique of causes, Sextus offers a summary of his criticism of those who believe in god(s):

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[62] *PH* 1.101

[63] *PH* 1.210-211

[64] *PH* 2.51; see also *PH* 2.63: It is impossible that we should judge by both intellect and the senses. "For not only do the senses not guide the intellect to apprehension: they actually oppose it. After all, because honey appears bitter to some people and sweet to others, Democritius said that it is neither sweet nor bitter, and Heraclitus that it is both.

[65] See *Strom.* 8.9.32.1-3, and discussion below

…we deduce that those who firmly state that there are gods are no doubt bound to be

impious: if they say that the gods provide for everything, they will say that they are a

cause of evil; and if they say that they provide for some things or even for none at all,

they will be bound to say either that the gods are malign or that they are weak – and

anyone who says this is clearly impious.[66]

Clement uses the theory of causality articulated in chapter 9 elsewhere in the *Stromateis* to

clarify how the affirmation of divine providence does not lead to the conclusion that God is the

cause (*aition,* literally, that which is responsible for something) of evil.[67]

There are several other instances in chapter 9 in which Clement's discussion of causes

responds to certain skeptical arguments expressed by Sextus (which will be identified and

discussed below). To that extent, the contents of chapter 9 would seem to intelligibly cohere

together with the other materials in *Stromateis* 8, insofar as they are all collectively organized in

response to certain skeptical arguments expressed by Sextus. However, I intend to show that

Clement's discussion of causal theory is much more closely related to other topics addressed in

book 8 than it might at first seem; specifically, it relates to theories of semiotics and

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[66] *PH* 3.12

[67] "We say…that the cause [or "responsibility"] is conceived of as producing, as active, and as doing something" (*Strom.* 1.17.82.3, translation from Frede, "Original Notion of Cause"). Non-prevention is not an action, and for that reason that which does not prevent something from happening cannot be called the "cause" of that which happens. Thus, he reasons, "God is never in any way responsible for the evil in our lives" (*Strom.* 1.17.84.1). Sins have their origin in our free choice and desires. Nevertheless, "it is the work of divine wisdom, excellence, and power not only to create good…but above all to bring a course of action devised through some evil intentions to a good, valuable conclusion, and to make beneficial use of those things which appear to be evil, like the emergence of martyrdom from a time of trial" (*Strom.* 1.17.86.3, Ferguson, modified); See also Clement's discussions of martyrdom in book 4, chapters 9-12, especially 4.12.86.**X**: "Nothing is without the will of the Lord of the universe. It remains to say that such things happen without the prevention of God; for this also saves both the providence and the goodness of God. We must not therefore think that He actively produces afflictions (far be it that we should think this!); but we must be persuaded that He does not prevent those that cause them, but overrules for good the crimes of His enemies." For a discussion of this passage in relation to Clement's discussion of causality in book 8, see Louis Roberts, "Clement of Alexandria: Stromateis VIII and Modal Causality," in *Studia Patristica XVIII: Second Century-Tertullian to Nicea in the West-Clement and Origen, Cappadocian Fathers : Papers of the 1983 Oxford Patristic Conference*, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Kalamazoo and Leuven: Cistercian Publications, 1989), 449f.

epistemology which are present, albeit often only implicitly, throughout the other chapters of this book. I have already flagged some of the passages which pertain to these theories in the outline above. In the discussion below, I examine these passages in greater detail. Before doing so, however, I briefly revisit Clement's explicit discussion of the skeptical "suspense of judgment" and its causes.

BRIEF DISCUSSION OF CONTEXT

By claiming that the contents of book 8 offer a response to certain skeptical arguments articulated by Sextus Empiricus, I do not mean to suggest that Clement actually read the writings of Sextus or even knew of his existence. Sextus himself "acknowledges that his works compile topics and summarize arguments already expounded by other Skeptics, especially Aenesidemus, Agrippa, and Menodotus, but also the academic Clitomachus."[68] Though scholars are certain of almost nothing regarding Sextus' life, most usually place him in the second century AD and many agree that "Sextus' life probably spanned c. 140-160 to c. 220-230, and we may place his acme sometime around 180-190."[69] If that dating is correct, then Sextus would have been active at roughly the same time as Clement. Even if Clement did not read the writings of Sextus, one can imagine that he encountered people, either from within his own community or from without, who would voice the same or similar arguments as those compiled by Sextus.[70] By the time of

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[68] Luciano Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus: The Transmission and Recovery of Pyrrhonism*, American Classical Studies v. 46 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11.

[69] Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus*, 5: Floridi also adds the caution: "The dating remains conjectural."

[70] See Origen's comment, reported by Eusebius, which suggests that Origen along with Clement's purported teacher Pantaenus, were sometimes approached (and likely challenged) by heretics and men trained in Greek learning during their daily lives: "When I was giving all my time to the word, accounts of my ability went about, and brought sometimes heretics, sometimes men who had been trained in Greek learning, particularly philosophy; so I decided to examine the notions of the heretics, and also the supposed qualifications of philosophers for speaking about truth. In doing this I followed in the footsteps of one who helped many before my time – Pantaenus, a real expert in these questions" (*HE* 6.19.18).

Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 330-389), Sextus' methods of argument seem to have become

commonplace among members of the church. According to Gregory:

> Ever since the Sextuses and the Pyrrhos and the practice of arguing to opposites have,
> like a vile and malignant disease, infected the churches, babbling has been regarded as
> culture and – as the Book of Acts says of the Athenians – we spend our whole time in
> speaking or listening to some novelty or other.[71]

The behavior Gregory says has "infected the churches" is similar to what Clement (roughly a

century and a half before) says in the introduction to book 8 about the philosophers of his day: "it

is the more recent of the Hellenistic philosophers who, by empty and futile love of fame, are led

into useless babbling in refuting and wrangling."[72]

The 'practice of arguing to opposites' is characteristic of the form of "skepticism"

espoused by Sextus:

> Skepticism is an ability to set out oppositions among things which appear and are thought
> of in any way at all, an ability by which, because of the equal strength in the opposed
> objects and accounts, we come first to suspension of judgment and afterwards to
> tranquility.[73]

Richard Bett describes what this skeptical "ability" (*dunamis*) looks like in practice:

> One starts…by assembling sets of opposing arguments and impressions on any given
> topic. And the juxtaposition of these opposing arguments and impressions is then said to

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[71] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio 21,* caput 12, PG 35.1096: Ἀφ' οὗ δὲ Σέξτοι, καὶ Πύρρωνες, καὶ ἡ ἀντίθετος γλῶσσα, ὥσπερ τι νόσημα δεινὸν καὶ κακόηθες, ταῖς Ἐκκλησίαις ἡμῶν εἰσεφθάρη· καὶ ἡ φλυαρία παί δευσις ἔδοξε, καὶ, ὅ φησι περὶ Ἀθηναίων ἡ βίβλος τῶν Πράξεων, εἰς οὐδὲν ἄλλο εὐκαιροῦμεν, ἢ λέγειν τι καὶ ἀκούειν καινότερον. (Translation Floridi, *Sextus Empiricus,* insertions mine).

[72] *Strom.* 8.1.1.2: οἱ μὲν γὰρ νεώτεροι τῶν παρ' Ἕλλησι φιλοσόφων ὑπὸ φιλοτιμίας κενῆς τε καὶ ἀτελοῦς ἐλεγκτικῶς ἅμα καὶ ἐριστικῶς εἰς τὴν ἄχρηστον ἐξάγονται φλυαρίαν. (ANF)

[73] *PH* 1.8 (using Bett's "equal strength" in place of "equipollence"); See also *PH* 1.12: "The chief constitutive principle of skepticism is the claim that to every account an equal account is opposed; for it is from this, we think, that we come to hold no beliefs."

lead to suspension of judgment on that topic, because of their "equal strength"

(*isostheneia*). That is, one finds oneself unable to decide in favor of any one argument or

impression on the topic over the others; each one seems equally persuasive, and so one

has no choice but to suspend judgment. "Equal strength" is thus a psychological rather

than a logical notion; the focus is on the effect of these arguments and impressions on the

reader or listener rather than on their evidential or logical merits.[74]

The juxtaposition of opposing arguments describes the method of *diaphonia,* mentioned above as

one of the primary ways the skeptics tried to advocate for the "suspense of judgment" (*epoche).*

Mansfeld explains that the skeptics' method of *diaphonia* is a variant form of the method of

diaeresis employed by philosophers like Aristotle to evaluate and discern which, among a variety

of possible positions, one should choose:

> What, with Aristotle and Theophrastus (and presumably other early Peripatics) began, in
>
> the guise of a *diaeresis*, as the dialectical presentation of other views geared to the
>
> attainment of truth whenever possible, was turned by the Academic Skeptics into a
>
> presentation of other views geared to the suspension of judgment, in the form of an
>
> *antilogia* or *diaphonia*. From a formal point of view, such an *antilogia* still is a *diaeresis*;
>
> it is the different purpose to which it is employed which turns it into a *diaphonia*.[75]

Clarifying the distinction between *diaresis* and *diaphonia,* Mansfeld and Runia write:

> A *diaeresis*, i.e. a division or sorting into to some extent similar but still different or even
>
> contrasting views (one or more of which, *more aristotelico,* may be more or less correct),
>
> turns into a *diaphonia* as soon as it becomes clear that the opposites exclude each other

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[74] Richard Bett, "Introduction," in *Against the Physicists*, by Sextus Empiricus, trans. Richard Bett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), xi.

[75] Jaap Mansfeld, "Chrysippus and the Placita," *Phronesis* 34, no. 1 (1989): 339.

and it is intimated, *more sceptico,* that the conflict precludes that a solution can be reached.[76]

We find several examples of the skeptics' method of *diaphonia* in the writings of Sextus. In *Against the Physicists,* Sextus presents a compilation of examples of those who express differing beliefs about the existence of gods. Organizing them in oppositional terms, (those "for" and those "against") he concludes:

> This is more or less what the dogmatic philosophers' opposing arguments are like, for there being gods and for there not being. And following them the skeptics' suspension of judgment is arrived at – and especially when we add to them the lack of uniformity about gods in ordinary life. For different people have different and discordant suppositions about them, so that neither are all these to be trusted because of the conflict, nor are some of them because of their equal strength.[77]

In the passage from chapter 7 considering the primary reasons for the skeptics' suspense of judgment (*epoche*), Clement say something which seems to parody Sextus' conclusion:

> For, being unable either to believe in all views, on account of their conflicting nature; *or to disbelieve all, because that which says that all are untrustworthy is included in the*

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[76] Jaap Mansfeld and David T. Runia, *Aëtiana: The Method and Intellectual Context of a Doxographer*, vol. 2 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2009), 7.

[77] Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Physicists,* (*Ad Math IX*) 191-192: Ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ἀντεπιχειρούμενα παρὰ τοῖς δογματικοῖς φιλοσόφοις εἰς τὸ εἶναι θεοὺς καὶ εἰς τὸ μὴ εἶναι τοιαῦτά τινα καθέστηκεν. ἐφ' οἷς ἡ τῶν σκεπτικῶν ἐποχὴ συνεισάγεται, καὶ μάλιστα προσγενομένης αὐτοῖς καὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ βίου περὶ θεῶν ἀνωμαλίας. ἄλλοι γὰρ ἄλλας καὶ ἀσυμφώνους ἔχουσι περὶ τούτων ὑπολήψεις, ὥστε μήτε πάσας εἶναι πιστὰς διὰ τὴν μάχην μήτε τινὰς διὰ τὴν ἰσοσθένειαν. Translation from Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Physicists*, trans. Richard Bett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Unless otherwise noted, all further quotations from *Against the Physicists* will follow Bett's translation.

number of those that are so; or to believe some and disbelieve others on account of their

equal strength, we are led to suspend judgment.[78]

As it would seem, Clement has rephrased the skeptics' argument, with the additional sentence

(italicized above) which re-iterates his discussion of the self-undermining nature of the skeptic's

position in chapter 5 (i.e. the skeptics' argument that "because all things are uncertain, one

should suspend judgment about all things" itself includes an assumed belief—that all things are

uncertain—about which one must have to suspend judgment, which would, in turn, render

uncertain the original premise of the argument that one should suspend judgment about all

things).

According to Clement, if it were the case that there exists a variety of differing beliefs

which are fundamentally irreconcilable and yet equally plausible, then that would be cause for

the suspension of judgment. However, he suggests, the primary cause of *epoche* is not the

conflicting nature of things, but instability of the mind. And one main indications of this

instability is the prevalence of apparently different doctrines and beliefs, between which people

are unable to discern and adjudicate:

> Of these very considerations that are most likely to give rise to suspending judgment, the
>
> mind's instability leads to *diaphonia*, and *diaphonia* is the proximate cause for
>
> suspending judgment. This is why life is full of lawcourts and councils and assemblies
>
> and generally of choices <and refusals> regarding things said to be either good or bad.

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[78] Strom 8.7.22.2.1 – 3.1: μήτε γὰρ πάσαις ταῖς φαντασίαις πιστεύειν δυνηθέντες διὰ τὴν μάχην μήτε πάσαις ἀπιστεῖν διὰ τὸ καὶ τὴν λέγουσαν πάσας ἀπίστους ὑπάρχειν ἐξ ἁπασῶν οὖσαν συμπεριγράφεσθαι πάσαις μήτε τισὶ μὲν πιστεύειν, τισὶ δὲ ἀπιστεῖν διὰ τὴν ἰσότητα, κατήχθημεν εἰς ἐποχήν.

These are signs of a mind in doubt and constantly vacillating with regard to the equal

strength of opposing things.[79]

In book 7 of the *Stromateis,* Clement describes how appeals to *diaphonia* with regard to the

diversity of sects (*diaphonian ton haireseon*) have been used to criticize the validity of all groups

claiming to follow Christ. He writes, "the first charge they allege is this very point, that the

diversity of sects shows belief to be wrong, for the voice of truth is drowned amid the din of

conflicting assertions."[80] Clement first responds to this criticism with an analogy: "physicians

also, though holding different opinions in accordance with their particular schools, are still

equally engaged in the practice of healing. Does then anyone who is suffering in body and needs

medical treatment refuse to call in a physician owing to the diversity of medical schools?"[81]

Clement suggests that the emergence of disagreeing sects results from the difficulty of

grasping the truth and the self-love of those who propose to easily answer the questionings (or,

"seekings") that arise from this difficulty. He writes, "For it is evident that the trouble and

difficulty of ascertaining the truth have given rise to questionings, from whence spring the vain

and self-willed heresies of those who have not learned or apprehended truly, but have merely

caught a vague notion of knowledge."[82] From this, Clement's conclusion is not that we should

avoid difficult questions or simply refrain from judgment, but rather to seek all the more

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[79] *Strom.* 8.7.22.3 (Kovacs): τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀρχικωτάτων τῆς ἐποχῆς τὸ μὲν ἀβέβαιον τῆς διανοίας γεννητικόν ἐστι διαφωνίας, ἡ δὲ διαφωνία προσεχὲς αἴτιον τῆς ἐποχῆς, ὅθεν πλήρης μὲν ὁ βίος δικαστηρίων τε καὶ βουλευτηρίων καὶ ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ καθόλου τῆς περὶ τὰ λεγόμενα ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακὰ αἱρέσεως <καὶ φυγῆς>, ἅπερ ἠπορημένης ἐστὶ διανοίας καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀντικειμένων πραγμάτων ἰσοσθένειαν μετοκλαζούσης τεκμήρια

[80] *Strom.* 7.15.89.2: Πρῶτον μὲν οὖν αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσάγουσιν ἡμῖν λέγοντες, μὴ δεῖν πιστεύειν διὰ τὴν διαφωνίαν τῶν αἱρέσεων· παρὰ τίνι γὰρ καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἄλλων ἄλλα δογματιζόντων (Chadwick translation).

[81] *Strom.* 7.15.90.3-4: ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἰατροὶ ἐναντίας δόξας κεκτημένοι κατὰ τὰς οἰκείας αἱρέσεις ἐπ' ἴσης ἔργῳ θεραπεύουσιν. μή τι οὖν κάμνων τις τὸ σῶμα καὶ θεραπείας δεόμενος οὐ προσίεται ἰατρὸν διὰ τὰς ἐν τῇ ἰατρικῇ αἱρέσεις

[82] *Strom.* 7.15.91.2-3: δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι δυσκόλου καὶ δυσεργοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας τυγχανούσης διὰ τοῦτο γεγόνασιν αἱ ζητήσεις· ἀφ' ὧν αἱ φίλαυτοι καὶ φιλόδοξοι αἱρέσεις, μὴ μαθόντων μὲν μηδὲ παρειληφότων ἀληθῶς, οἴησιν δὲ γνώσεως εἰληφότων (Chadwick modified).

earnestly. "We must therefore spend more thought in searching for the very truth, which alone has for its subject the very God…The effect of the heresies should therefore be to make one buckle down to the toil of discovery and not to abandon it altogether."[83]

Seeking the truth, according to Clement, requires one to learn how to discern between apparently similar things:

> If we have set before us on the one hand ripe natural fruit, and on the other fruit of wax made to resemble it as closely as possible, we ought not to abstain from both on account of their similarity, but to distinguish the real from the apparent both intuitively and by strict process of reasoning.[84]

Just as the mere appearance of similarity is no reason to refrain from trying to distinguish the real from the imitative, the mere appearance of "equal force" in opposing arguments should not prevent one from inquiring further. "We must not give up our search because there are different views as to the truth, but must hunt all the more earnestly for the most exact knowledge concerning it."[85]

Skeptical authors like Sextus put together compilations of opposing 'arguments' and claims from different people concerning a given topic and arranged them in such a way that they all appear to be equally persuasive, or at least, leave the impression that the choice between them is purely arbitrary. However, this impression of 'inarbitrability' between opposing views is not

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[83] *Strom.* 7.15.91.3: διὰ πλείονος τοίνυν φροντίδος ἐρευνητέον τὴν τῷ ὄντι ἀλήθειαν, ἣ μόνη περὶ τὸν ὄντως ὄντα θεὸν καταγίνεται […] ἐπαποδυτέον ἄρα τῷ πόνῳ τῆς εὑρέσεως διὰ τὰς αἱρέσεις, ἀλλ' οὐ τέλεον ἀποστατέον.

[84] *Strom.* 7:15:91.4 οὐδὲ γὰρ ὀπώρας παρακειμένης, τῆς μὲν ἀληθοῦς καὶ ὡρίμου, τῆς δὲ ἐκ κηροῦ ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα ἐμφεροῦς πεποιημένης, διὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα ἀμφοῖν ἀφεκτέον, διακριτέον δὲ ὁμοῦ τε τῇ καταληπτικῇ θεωρίᾳ καὶ τῷ κυριωτάτῳ λογισμῷ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἀπὸ τοῦ φαινομένου. This example appears to echo the story retold by both Diogenes Laertius (7.177) and Athenaeus 354E (both = LS 40F): "Sphaerus…went to Ptolemy Philopator at Alexandria. One day a conversation took place on whether the wise man would opine, and Sphaerus said that he would not. Wishing to refute him, the king ordered wax pomegranates to be placed before him. Sphaerus was deceived and the king cried out that he had given his assent to a false impression."

[85] *Strom.* 7.15.91.5: οὕτως ἄλλα ἄλλων περὶ ἀληθείας λεγόντων οὐκ ἀποστατέον, ἐπιμελέστερον δὲ θηρατέον τὴν ἀκριβεστάτην περὶ αὐτῆς γνῶσιν·

necessarily indicative of the fact that such insoluble disagreements actually exist. Rather, it may simply be indicative of the inability of written communication to directly communicate complex meanings coupled with the faulty assumption that when people use the same (or similar) words, they are speaking about the same (or similar) things.

As mentioned before, for Clement, simply juxtaposing excerpted expressions from different authors is an unreliable way to show commonality of meaning. It is also an unreliable way to try to show disagreements as well. "There are libraries full of books, and compilations and treatises of those who disagree in dogmas and are persuaded that they themselves know the truth that there is in things."[86] This would be one of the reasons why it is important to learn how to clarify the meaning of terms proposed for discussion and to distinguish between the possible significations of homonyms and seemingly synonymous expressions. More importantly, Clement also suggests elsewhere in the *Stromateis* that understanding the relationship between words and their significations (and knowing how to differentiate between them) is useful both for the interpretation of Scripture and for clear and effective teaching.[87]

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[86] See Strom. 8.7.22.4: πλήρεις δ' αἱ θῆκαι τῶν βιβλίων καὶ αἱ συντάξεις καὶ αἱ πραγματεῖαι τῶν διαφωνούντων ἐν τοῖς δόγμασι καὶ πεπεικότων ἑαυτοὺς τὴν ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν ἀλήθειαν γινώσκειν.

[87] See, for example, *Strom.* 1.9.44.3: πῶς δὲ οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον περὶ νοητῶν φιλοσοφοῦντα διαλαβεῖν τὸν ἐπιποθοῦντα τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως ἐπήβολον γενέσθαι; πῶς δὲ οὐχὶ καὶ διαιρεῖσθαι χρήσιμον τάς τε ἀμφιβόλους φωνὰς τάς τε ὁμωνύμως ἐκφερομένας κατὰ τὰς διαθήκας. "The person who years to touch the fringes of God's power…must be able to distinguish the ambiguities and nominally similar terms in the two testaments" (Ferguson); See also 6.10.82.3-4: ἡ διαστολὴ δὲ τῶν τε ὀνομάτων τῶν τε πραγμάτων κἂν ταῖς γραφαῖς αὐταῖς μέγα φῶς ἐντίκτει ταῖς ψυχαῖς· ἀναγκαῖον γὰρ ἐπακούειν τῶν τε πλείονα σημαινουσῶν λέξεων καὶ τῶν πλειόνων, ὅταν ἕν τι σημαίνωσιν· ὅθεν καὶ τὸ ὀρθῶς ἀποκρίνεσθαι περιγίνεται. "The distinction of names and things also in the Scriptures themselves produces great light in men's souls. For it is necessary to understand expressions which signify several things, and several expressions when they signify one thing. The result of which is accurate answering."

In this section, after briefly showing how the semiotic distinction between "names" and "things"

appears elsewhere in the *Stromateis,* I look at certain key issues mentioned in the previous

section in further detail: namely, those passages of Clement's writing in book 8 which pertain to

issues of "semiotics," including Clement's analysis of what it means to call something a "cause."

ON THE IMPORTANCE OF "NAMES" AND "THINGS" IN THE *STROMATEIS*

Throughout the *Stromateis,* Clement reminds his readers of the importance of

distinguishing between *pragmata* and *onomata*.[1] "*Pragmata*" can be translated roughly as

"things" or "states of affairs," but etymologically speaking, a *pragma* (the singular of *pragmata*)

is a "deed" or "action" (the concrete of *praxis).* "*Onomata*" are the words used to refer to

pragmata, i.e. they are the "names" of *pragmata.* While the English translators of Clement

render "*onomata*" as "names," it is important to note that "*onomata*" also refers to what we

would call "nouns," and generally to "words" which specifically function as "terms."

Restated in different terms, the distinction Clement makes is one between a *sign* (the

"*onoma*") and the *thing signified* (the "*pragma*"). The question, of course, is: how do we identify

and understand the relation between the two? To be sure, a *sign* is more than a mere verbal

utterance or scribal marking on paper. As Clement points out: birds can imitate human voices,

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[1] To select one example, in book 6 of the *Stromateis,* Clement writes that "the forms of truth are two— the *onomata* and the *pragmata*." Some people, he says, focus only on the *onomata, "*occupying themselves with the beauties of words—such are the philosophers among the Greeks." However, in contrast to those Greeks, Clement claims: "we who are Barbarians have the *pragmata.*" [ἐπεὶ τοίνυν δύο εἰσὶν ἰδέαι τῆς ἀληθείας, τά τε ὀνόματα καὶ τὰ πράγματα, οἱ μὲν τὰ ὀνόματα λέγουσιν, οἱ περὶ τὰ κάλλη τῶν λόγων διατρίβοντες, οἱ παρ' Ἕλλησι φιλόσοφοι, τὰ πράγματα δὲ παρ' ἡμῖν ἐστι τοῖς βαρβάροις] (6.17.151.2.1-3.1).

having no conceptual grasp of the (*pragmata*) which they say.[2] Moreover, he claims, Homer can say, "Father of men and gods," without perceiving *who* the Father is, or *how* He is Father.[3] Accordingly, he argues: "We must occupy ourselves, not with the expression (*lexis*), but with the meaning (*semainomena*)."[4]

The distinctions here are subtle, but important. A bird, amidst its squawking, can utter the sounds "Polly wanna cracker," which it has learned by imitating the sounds of human speech. However, for the bird, those "words" are not meaningfully distinguished from other "sounds," which it hears and makes. However, when *we* hear the bird squawk "Polly wanna craker," to us the "sounds" appear to be identifiable "words" that can be interpreted as meaningful *signs*. Now, when Homer says: "Father of men and gods" it is not a mere meaningless utterance like the squawking of a bird, but that does not imply that Homer's statement "Father of men and gods" has the same *meaning* as the expression "The Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth" when spoken by Christians. Homer's utterance "Father of men and gods" is in fact a meaningful utterance, however, the *pragmata* to which the Homeric expression: "Father of men and gods" refers is not the same *pragmata* to which Christians refer when they confess their belief in "The Father…of heaven and earth," even though on the surface (i.e. on the level of the words, or expressions) the two statements appear to be more or less the same.

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[2] See *Strom.* 6.17.151.4: ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ κόρακες ἀνθρωπείας ἀπομιμοῦνται φωνὰς ἔννοιαν οὐκ ἔχοντες οὗ λέγουσι πράγματος,; cf. Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians,* 8.275-6 (=LS 53T): οἱ δὲ δογματικοὶ πρὸς ἕκαστον μὲν τῶν οὕτως ἐπικεχειρημένων πεφίμωνται, τοὐναντίον δὲ κατασκευάζοντές φασιν, ὅτι ἄνθρωπος οὐχὶ τῷ προφορικῷ λόγῳ διαφέρει τῶν ἀλόγων ζῴων (καὶ γὰρ κόρακες καὶ ψιττακοὶ καὶ κίτται ἐνάρθρους προφέρονται φωνάς). "They [the doctrinaire philosophers] say that it is not uttered speech but internal speech by which man differs from non-rational animals; for crows and parrots and jays utter articulate sounds."

[3] *Strom.* 6.17.152.1: οὕτως καὶ Ὅμηρος εἶπεν «πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε», μὴ εἰδὼς τίς ὁ πατὴρ καὶ πῶς ὁ πατήρ.

[4] *Strom.* 6.17.151.4: οὐ τοίνυν περὶ τὴν λέξιν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τὰ σημαινόμενα ἀναστρεπτέον

Given Clement's statements in the *Stromateis* about the importance of distinguishing between

onomata and *pragmata,* one might assume that, in his semiotic theory, "meaning"

(*semainomena*) is comprised of a two-part relationship (between the "sign" and the "thing

signified"). However, in book 8, Clement makes it clear that the semiotic relationship in which

"meaning" inheres is tripartite:

> In speech (*phônên*) there are three things: -- Names (*onomata*), which are primarily the
>
> symbols of concepts, and by consequence also of subjects (*hypokeimenôn*). Second, there
>
> are Concepts (*noêmata*), which are the likenesses and impressions of the subjects.
>
> (Whence in all, the concepts are the same; in consequence of the same impression being
>
> produced by the subjects in all. But the names are not so, on account of the difference of
>
> dialects). And thirdly, the extant-things (*hypokeimena pragmata*) by which the Concepts
>
> are impressed in us.[5]

As others have observed, some of the words found in this description of speech also appear in the

writings of Aristotle and later Peripatetics.[6] However, Clement uses them in support of a theory

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[5] Τρία ἐστὶ περὶ τὴν φωνήν· τά τε ὀνόματα σύμβολα ὄντα τῶν νοημάτων κατὰ τὸ προηγούμενον, κατ' ἐπακολούθημα δὲ καὶ τῶν ὑποκειμένων, δεύτερον δὲ τὰ νοήματα ὁμοιώματα καὶ ἐκτυπώματα τῶν ὑποκειμένων ὄντα (ὅθεν ἅπασι καὶ τὰ νοήματα τὰ αὐτά ἐστι διὰ τὸ τὴν αὐτὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑποκειμένων ἅπασιν ἐγγίνεσθαι τύπωσιν, οὐκέτι δὲ καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα διὰ τὰς διαλέκτους τὰς διαφόρους)· τρίτον δὲ τὰ ὑποκείμενα πράγματα, ἀφ' ὧν ἡμῖν τὰ νοήματα ἐντυποῦνται. (*Strom.* 8.8.23.1.1 – 8.8.23.2.1)

[6] For example, Wilhelm Ernst, *De Clementis Alexandrini Stromatum libro VIII. qui fertur* (Göttingen: Officina Academica Dieterichiana, 1910), 47 f.; Havrda, "Categories in Stromata VIII," 202.; In *De Interpretatione,* Aristotle writes: "Spoken words are the symbols of mental experience [τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα] and written words are the symbols of spoken words. Just as all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds, but the mental experiences, which these directly symbolize, are the same for all, as also are those things [*pragmata*] of which our experiences are the images" (16a5-8, McKeon translation). Adding a gloss to this passage, the commentator Ammonius, writes : "Here Aristotle tells us what it is that they [nouns and verbs] primarily and immediately signify: his answer is 'thoughts' [*noemata*], but through these as intermediates 'things' [*pragmata*], and it is not necessary to conceive of anything else additional to them, intermediate between the thought and the thing, which the Stoics postulated and decided to name a 'sayable' [*lekton*]" (*On Aristotle's De interpretatione,* 17, 24-8, =LS 33N). As will be discussed below, Clement does, in fact, utilize the Stoic idea of the *lekton*, to close the gap left by Aristotle's theory of meaning, which leaves unclear "how your and my distinct acts of thinking can be the same meaning" (See LS, p.201).

of linguistic communication that significantly differs from the Aristotelian model, and actually appears to be much more closely related to Stoic theories of meaning. To that extent, I would agree with Martin Irvine's observation that Clement offers an "eclectic theory of language, signs, and interpretation," but would not say, as Irving does, that in this passage Clement is "following Aristotle."[7]

In a literal sense, the Greek word *hypokeimenon,* means "that which underlies," and in philosophical usage, it often translated as "substrate" for 'that which underlies qualities,' and "subject" for 'that which underlies predicates.' It also connotes the *existence* of a thing. Long and Sedley explain that for the Stoics: "To place a thing in the first genus, 'substrate', is to attribute existence to it without mentioning its qualities."[8]

The Greek: *hypokeimena pragmata* can be translated into English as "subject matter," "underlying facts," "existing state of affairs" "extant things." The latter rendition seems closest to the sense in which Clement uses the term in this passage. As mentioned above, *pragmata* means "things" or "state of affairs." Without the specifying "extant" (*hypokemena*), what Clement means by "things" (*pragmata*) is somewhat ambiguous elsewhere in the *Stromateis,* e.g. when he speaks of the distinction between "names" (*onomata*) and "things" (*pragmata*).

Clement's use of the term "*pragmata*" is somewhat analogous to Charles S. Peirce's discussions about the "Object" of the sign. In the development of his semiotic theory, Peirce eventually subdivided the Object of a sign into two types: the *immediate* object and the *dynamical* object.[9] In one place, Peirce explains that the former names: "the idea which the sign

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[7] Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 165.

[8] LS, 172

[9] Peirce also uses the terms "real object," "dynamic object" as names for (more or less) the same idea as the "dynamical object."

is built upon," and the latter names: "that real thing or circumstance upon which that idea is founded, as on bedrock."[10] Elsewhere he writes:

> We must distinguish between the Immediate Object, - i.e., the Object as represented in the sign, - and… the Dynamical Object, which, from the nature of things, the Sign *cannot* express, which it can only *indicate* and leave the interpreter to find out by *collateral experience*."[11]

What Clement calls the *hypokeimena pragmata* is similar to Peirce's "Dynamical Object." When Clement speaks only of *pragmata,* however, as he does elsewhere in the *Stromateis,* it is like Peirce's references to the Object of a sign. In other words, it could refer to the "extant thing" upon which the concept of the thing is founded or to the concept of the thing which is represented in the sign (i.e. the *onoma*). Indeed Clement suggests, in a passage that will be discussed below, that the terms *pragma* and *noema* can be used interchangeably, along with the Stoic term *lekton,* to refer to that which is signified by a name.[12]

To understand the triadic relationship between *onomata, noemata, and hypokeimena pragmata*, by way of analogy, imagine the mind to be akin to a soft clay tablet. If one were to take a signet ring and press it into the clay, the *noemata* would be the received "impressions," or "likenesses" which are produced in the clay by the impress of the ring. The *hypokeimena pragmata* would thus be like the ring, by which the *noemata* are "impressed" in the clay. *Onomata* are symbols (*symbola*) which we use to refer to these "impressions." Insofar as *onomata* refer to specific *noemata,* which in turn indicate specific *hypokeimena pragmata* (of

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[10]'Pragmatism', EP 2:407, 1907

[11] A Letter to William James, EP 2:498, 1909

[12] See *Strom.* 8.4.13.2 Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ τὸ σημαινόμενον ἐκ τοῦ «κυούμενον» ὀνόματός ἐστι ζῷον, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο μὲν ἀσώματόν τέ ἐστι καὶ λεκτὸν καὶ πρᾶγμα καὶ νόημα καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ ζῷον. "But neither is that which is signified by the name "embryo" an animal. But that is incorporeal, and a sayavle (*lekton*) and a thing (*pragma*) and a concept (*noema*), and everything rather than an animal."

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which they are impressions), *onomata* can also be said to refer to *hypokeimena pragmata.* Yet, this reference to *hypokeimena pragmata* is always indirect, being mediated by way of the *onomata's* primary reference to the *noemata.*

If different minds are "impressed" by the same *hypokeimena pragmata,* the received "impression" would bear the same "likeness" and thus the same *noemata.* However, it is possible that different people, who speak in different dialects, might use different *onomata* to refer to the same *noemata.* Conversely, speakers of different dialects might also use the same *onomata* to refer to different *noemata.* For instance, the English word "chips" has a different meaning (i.e. is a symbol used to refer to different *noemata*) in the conventional dialects of the U.S. and the U.K.[13]

To be sure, for Clement, all the difficulties of communication cannot be resolved by simply finding a better translation or using clearer speech. There are also important epistemological issues which must be considered, like the receptive capacity (or aptitude) of one's mind to be "impressed" into the "likeness" of certain things, (particularly those which are not easy to "grasp"). Nevertheless, making sure that the different members of a discussion are all 'on the same page' as it were, about the manner in which terms are being used, remains a necessary condition for pedagogically effective communication.

> Every term (*onoma*) advanced for discussion is to be converted into an account (*logon*)
>
> that is admitted (*homologoumenon*) by those that are parties in the discussion, to form the

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[13] Conversely, "fries" and "chips," are different *onomata* which refer to the same *noemata* in the commonly spoken dialects of the U.S. and the U.K., respectively.

starting point for instruction, to lead the way to the discovery of the points under

investigation.[14]

Allow me to digress for a moment to provide what I think is a more readily understandable

example of the issues involved in the tripartite division of language found in Clement.

EXCURSUS: ON NAMES

Today, one often hears the phrase "a rose by any other name" used as an idiomatic expression for

the belief that names, i.e. what we call certain things, are inconsequential. Yet, this seems to be

an inversion of the meaning conveyed by the words originally found in Shakespeare's play,

Romeo and Juliet. It seems highly unlikely that Shakespeare, a poet (whose labor it is to find the

right words for things) widely regarded as one of the greatest "wordsmiths" of the English

language, would say that the words we use to refer to things are unimportant. Set within a

dialogue bemoaning the inescapable power of a name (Romeo's "Montague"), the sentence, in

full, from which the idiomatic expression comes, is: "…that which we call a rose / By any other

name would smell as sweet."[15] The first words—"that which we call…"—add an important

distinction, which the excerpted phrase—"a rose by any other name"—fails to communicate. We

would normally think that the fragrant flower growing in my mother's garden, which we call a

"rose," would have the same fragrant smell regardless of what we may call it.[16] Presumably if I

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[14] πᾶν οὖν τὸ προβληθὲν ὄνομα μεταλαμβάνειν χρὴ εἰς λόγον ὁμολογούμενόν τε καὶ σαφῆ τοῖς κοινωνοῦσι τῆς σκέψεως, ἀρχὴν μὲν τῆς διδασκαλίας ἐσόμενον, ἐξηγησόμενον δὲ τὴν τῶν ζητουμένων εὕρεσιν. (8.2.4.2.1 – 8.2.4.3.1)

[15] *Hamlet,* Act II, Scene II

[16] For the purposes of this discussion, I bracket consideration of the studies in contemporary neuroscience, which suggest that the names we use to refer to certain smells do in fact affect our perception of them. See J. Djordjevic et al., "A Rose by Any Other Name: Would It Smell as Sweet?," *Journal of Neurophysiology* 99, no. 1 (November 21, 2007): 386–393. :"We conclude that the name given to an odor modulates the 'subjective' and the 'objective' emotional reactions to the odor. A rose by the name of 'rotting flower' would not smell as sweet as if it were introduced as 'fresh rose', and it would smell stronger and less invigorating…Taken together, odor names constitute an important determinant of odors' affective properties" (393). I owe this reference to my friend Rachel B. Kay, PhD in Neuroscience from UVa, and specialist in all things olfactory.

decided to refer to "that which we call a rose" by a different name, e.g. a "sweaty sock," it would indeed smell as sweet.[17] However, if I were to say to you, "remember to take time each day to stop and smell the sweaty socks," you would probably think I had gone mad.

The names we use to refer to things do, in fact, matter. In certain instances, deciding to use one word over another can produce a dramatic change in meaning, which is something I think Shakespeare understood.[18]

Redescribed in terms of Clement's tripartite division of language, those *things* (which we call "roses") would be the *hypokeimena pragmata*. Through the sensory impressions I receive by smelling those *things* (which we call "roses"), my mind eventually forms a concept (*noema*) that remains (in my memory) such that, even when I am no longer in the presence of those *things,* I can still recall, or call to mind, the impression (formed in my mind) of what those *things* are like. The word (*onoma*) "rose" is a symbol I can use, when communicating in English, to refer to this concept (*noema*).

Using language alone, I cannot directly share with you the sensory experience of smelling those *things* we call "roses." However, if I know that we both use the word "roses" as a symbol for the same conception which is (more or less fully) formed in our minds, then I can use it to evoke in you the recollected impression, or concept, of what those things we call "roses" are like. This may seem like an overly complicated way to talk about something we normally take for granted (e.g. that when I say "roses," you will understand what I am referring to). However, for

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[17] The study cited above suggests that this is not in fact the case, i.e. that referring to the odor by a different name would most like change our perception of it.

[18] Lord Polonius: What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet: Words, words, words.

Lord Polonius: What is the matter, my lord?

Hamlet: Between who?

Lord Polonius: I mean, the matter that you read, my lord. (Act II, Scene II)

Clement, understanding the manner in which words function to convey meaning can be very useful for those involved in discussions (or debates) about complex (and/or contested) subject-matters.[19]

ON CLARIFYING TERMS

Once it has been established that the different parties involved in a discussion share an agreed upon understanding of the way in which terms are being used, then it is possible for the discussion to lead (by demonstration and/or investigation) from points already believed (and/or understood) to the belief in (or the understanding of) what is not yet believed (or understood). As simple as this may seem, when people engage in a discussion or debate about complex and controversial topics, they often end up speaking past each other, and getting nowhere, because they lack a shared understanding of basic terminology and word use.

For that reason, Clement advises that before launching into a discussion about a proposed issue or offering a response to a question of debate, we must first make sure we know what it is that we are being asked to discuss, because "often the form of the expression deceives and confuses the mind."[20]

To illustrate the manner in which the terms of a question can be clarified, and why such clarifications are important, Clement provides an example outlining the variety of ways a discussion might proceed if one were to be asked the question: "is an embryo (*kuoumenon*,

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[19] Book 8 begins with an observation that "…the most ancient of the philosophers were not carried away to disputing and doubting," which Clement's contrasts against the behavior of his contemporaries: "For it is the more recent of the Hellenistic philosophers who, by empty and futile love of fame, are led into useless babbling in refuting and wrangling." Clement concludes the introduction to book 8 by drawing the attention to the fact that he (and, presumably, his intended readers) live in this environment of contest and debate. "For another place and crowd await turbulent people, and forensic sophistries." This, he suggest, is one of the reasons why it is important to "[apply] ourselves not only to the divine Scriptures, but also to common notions," and to learn how to use the tools of "dialectic" which are found in philosophy –and also, in an abbreviated form, this logic notebook (book 8).

[20] *Strom.* 8.4.9.7: πολλάκις γοῦν ἐξαπατᾷ τὸ τῆς λέξεως σχῆμα καὶ συγχεῖ καὶ ταράττει τὴν διάνοιαν, ὥστε μὴ ῥᾳδίως εὑρίσκειν ἐκ ποίας ἐστὶ διαφορᾶς

literally "the thing conceived") an animal?" The issue may seem simple at first, "for having a

concept of an animal and an embryo, we inquire if it be the case that the embryo is an animal."

However, before one can go about answering this tricky, and potentially ethically charged

question, Clement advises: "The man who proposes the question is to be first asked, what he

calls an animal," adding that "this is especially to be done whenever we find the same name

(*onoma*) applied to various purposes; and we must examine whether what is signified by the term

is disputed, or admitted by all."[21] Clement then walks the reader through the steps of a

hypothetical discussion, illustrating how someone might respond to his request for clarification

and the follow up questions he would ask, depending on what his imagined interlocutor goes on

to say. For example, if one were to respond that an "animal" is "that which is nourished and

grows," Clement would then ask: "do you call a 'plant' an 'animal'?", since a plant "is nourished

and grows." Some philosophers would say that a 'plant' is a kind of 'animal,' but others would

disagree. However, those who would disagree also define 'animal' differently.

The exchange anticipates the way a conversation might unfold in a polemical

environment. In many of the examples, Clement portrays an interlocutor who is disputatious,

recalcitrant, and reluctant to clarify his use of terms. After making a distinction between the

pedagogical method of question and answer, and the method of exposition, Clement says: "if he

wishes us to speak without him answering, let him hear." Interestingly, Clement does not then

answer the question of whether an "embryo" is an "animal," but rather enters into an exposition

on why it is important to learn how "to say distinctly what it is that your question is about."

Clement explains that since the interlocutor will not clarify what he means by the terms in his

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[21] *Strom.* 8.4.10.1-2: εὐθέως οὖν τὸν προβάλλοντα ἀντερωτητέον τί ποτε καλεῖ ζῷον μάλιστα γὰρ τοῦτο ποιητέον, ἐπειδὰν εἰς διαφόρους χρήσεις ἠγμένον ἴδωμεν τοὔνομα· καὶ διερευνητέον εἴτε ἀμφισβητούμενόν ἐστι τὸ σημαινόμενον ἐκ τῆς προσηγορίας εἴθ' ὁμολογούμενον ἅπασιν.

question, he is to be told that what he has done is no different that if he had asked whether a dog is an animal.[22]

> Similarly, I might have said, what sort of dog? Shall I speak of the one of the land [i.e. a canine] and of the sea [i.e. a "dog-fish"], and the constellation in heaven [i.e. the "hound of Orion"], and of Diogenes too [i.e. Diogenes of Sinope, the "dog-like" Cynic], and all the other dogs in order? For I cannot divine whether you inquire about all or about a specific one.[23]

After bringing to light the necessity of distinguishing between the significations of homonyms, Clement then highlights the distinction between a "name" and what is signified by a "name." With respect to the name, he explains:

> Now if you are shuffling about names, it is plain to everybody that the name "embryo" is neither an animal nor a plant, but a name (*onoma*) and a sound (*phônê*), and a body (*sôma*), and a being (*on*), and a something (*ti*), and everything rather than an animal.[24]

On the question of what is signified by the name, Clement writes:

> But neither is that which is signified by the name "embryo" an animal. But that is incorporeal, and a 'sayable' (*lekton*) and a thing (*pragma*) and a concept (*noêma*), and everything rather than an animal.[25]

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[22] *Strom.* 8.4.12.4: Εἰ δὲ ἡμᾶς λέγειν βούλοιτο αὐτὸς μὴ ἀποκρινάμενος, ἀκουσάτω· ἐπεὶ σὺ μὴ βούλει λέγειν καθ' ὅτου σημαινομένου λέγεις ὃ προὔβαλες […],γίνωσκε τοιοῦτόν τι ποιήσας οἷον εἰ καὶ προὔβαλες εἰ ζῷον ὁ κύων.

[23] *Strom.* 8.4.12.5: εἰκότως γὰρ ἂν εἴποιμι· ποίου κυνός; ἐγὼ γὰρ καὶ περὶ τοῦ χερσαίου καὶ τοῦ θαλαττίου καὶ τοῦ κατ' οὐρανὸν ἄστρου, ἀλλὰ καὶ Διογένους καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐφεξῆς δίειμι κυνῶν. οὐ γὰρ ἂν μαντευσαίμην πότερον ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐρωτᾷς ἢ τινός. (ANF modified)

[24] *Strom.* 8.4.12.7: εἰ δὲ περὶ ὀνόματα στρέφῃ, τὸ κυούμενον αὐτὸ δὴ τοῦτο τοὔνομα παντὶ δῆλον ὅτι μήτε ζῷόν ἐστι μήτε φυτόν. ἀλλ' ὄνομά τε καὶ φωνὴ καὶ σῶμα καὶ ὂν καὶ τὶ καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ ζῷον.

[25] *Strom* 8.4.13.2: Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ τὸ σημαινόμενον ἐκ τοῦ «κυούμενον» ὀνόματός ἐστι ζῷον, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο μὲν ἀσώματόν τέ ἐστι καὶ λεκτὸν καὶ πρᾶγμα καὶ νόημα καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ ζῷον.

With this distinction, Clement appears to be drawing upon Stoic understandings of linguistic communication.

The Stoics, we are told, also identified three 'linked together' items: (1) 'the signifier' [*sêmainon*], which is a vocal sound [*phônên*] and a body, for instance 'Dion'; (2) 'the signification' [*sêmainomenon*], which is the thing [*pragma*] made manifest by the vocal sound, and which we grasp as it subsists in accordance with our thought, whereas it is not understood by the Barbarians [i.e., those who speak a different language] although they hear the same vocal sound; and (3) 'the name-bearer' [*tugchanon*], which is the external subject [*to ektos hypokeimenon*], for instance Dion himself. Of these, two are bodies [*sômata*] – the vocal sound, i.e. the signifier, and the external subject, i.e. the name bearer; but one is incorporeal [*asômaton*] – the thing signified and 'sayable' [*sêmainomenon pragma kai lekton*].[26]

David Blank and Catherine Atherton explain, "Stoic metaphysics insists that sounds and words are material objects (primarily, bits of air shaped by speakers; secondarily, their written representations), whereas significations constitute one of the four species of incorporeal: *lekta,* literally 'sayables' (or *pragmata,* 'things (done)', and 'significations', as they are also labeled)."[27] The Greek term *lekton,* "being the neuter gender of the verbal adjective of *legein* ("say") can mean both 'what can be said' and 'what is said.'"[28] And it is important to know that, for the Stoics, "there is a crucial difference between saying (*legein*) something and uttering (*propheresthai*) it: sounds are uttered (or 'pronounced') but things or states of affairs (*ta*

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[26] See Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Professors* 8.11-12, (=LS 33B).

[27] David Blank and Catherine Atherton, "The Stoic Contribution to Traditional Grammar," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 314.

[28] Andreas Graeser, "The Stoic Theory of Meaning," in *The Stoics*, ed. John M. Rist (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 87.; See also Jacques Brunschwig, "Stoic Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 218: "A lekton (which is nowhere called a legomenon, 'what is said') is not (or at least: not only) what is said, but (or: but also) what can be said; that is, we might suggest, a certain type of semainomenon that is available to any speaker, and which is still what it is even if nobody actually makes use of it in order to signify any token of that type."

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pragmata), which indeed are sayables, are said (*legetai*)."[29] According to Andreas Graeser,

Clement draws on the distinction between *uttering* and *saying* in chapter 9 of book 8 to resolve a

sophism attributed to Chryssipus.[30] In the passages from chapter 4, quoted above, Clement

maintains that a name (or word) considered in itself is corporeal (e.g. a vocal sound), but the

thing signified by the name is incorporeal. Elsewhere in the *Stromateis,* Clement seems to have

in mind an analogous distinction with respect to hearing (in the sense that vocal sounds are

perceived through physical sensation, but the incorporeal meaning (i.e. the concept or thing

signified) is apprehended by the mind. The topic comes up in the context of a broader discussion

about prayer. Clement writes (of the 'the holy priest of God'):

> He is convinced that God knows all things, and perceives not only the voice (*phônês*) but
>
> the thought (*ennoias*), since even in our own case, hearing, though operating through the
>
> passages of the body, does not possess the apprehension through bodily power, but
>
> through a certain mental perception and the intelligence which distinguishes the
>
> significations of vocal sounds.[31]

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[29] Marcelo D. Boeri, "The Stoics on Bodies and Incorporeals," *The Review of Metaphysics* 54, no. 4 (2001): 732.

[30] *Strom.* 8.9.26.5 (=LS 33O): "Case is agreed to be incorporeal; and hence the famous sophism is solved as follows: 'What you say passes through your mouth.' This is true. 'But you say: A house. Therefore a house passes through your mouth.' This is false. For what you say is not the house, which is a body, but the case, which is incorporeal and which the house gets."; Graeser, "The Stoic Theory of Meaning," 85–86: "It has been suggested that the solution offered by Clement must be wrong, since what goes through the mouth is not the thought which is expressed by the noun but the noun itself; and that is a body, namely battered air. This may be true, although it is hard to see how the objection can purport to be to the point. For the sophism clearly draws from a Stoic distinction between utter and say. According to this distinction what is being uttered are noises, that is, vocal sounds that are, or course, corporeal, while 'say' was defined as 'utter sounds which signify the thing thought' (cf. Sextus, Adv. Math. 8.80). However, what is said are not corporeal sounds signifying but things that are signified, that is, the incorporeal meaning which in the case of the noun 'house' is a ptosis. In other words, what is said is neither the linguistic sign 'house' nor, of course, some spatio-temporal object to which this term may apply, but the linguistic content of the sign 'house' which itself is not a house. And the house in question which is supposed to 'get the ptosis' is not the external object called house but the linguistic sign 'house' to which the meaning is wedded. Yet the linguistic content of the sign 'house' must, of course, not in turn be called house." .

[31] *Strom.* 7.7.36.5: πέπεισται γὰρ εἰδέναι πάντα τὸν θεὸν καὶ ἐπαΐειν, οὐχ ὅτι τῆς φωνῆς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἐννοίας, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ ἀκοὴ ἐν ἡμῖν, διὰ σωματικῶν πόρων ἐνεργουμένη, οὐ διὰ τῆς σωματικῆς δυνάμεως ἔχει τὴν ἀντίληψιν, ἀλλὰ διά τινος ψυχικῆς αἰσθήσεως καὶ τῆς διακριτικῆς τῶν σημαινουσῶν τι φωνῶν νοήσεως. (Chadwick modified).

Given this distinction between corporal signs (i.e. spoken or written words) and their incorporeal significations, one might question how the two relate to one another. Sextus, for example, criticized the Stoics' distinction on the basis of the assumption that corporeal and incorporeal things cannot interact. Though he dismisses it, Sextus actually reports the Stoics' understanding of how incorporeal *lekta* are received by the 'commanding-faculty' (i.e. the mind):

> For they [the Stoics] say, just as the trainer or drill-sergeant sometimes takes hold of the boy's hand to drill him and to teach him to make certain motions, but sometimes stands at a distance and moves to a certain drill, to provide himself as a model for the boy –so too some impressors touch, as it were, and make contact with the commanding-faculty to make their printing in it, as do white and black, and body in general; whereas others have a nature like that of the incorporeal sayables (*lekta*), and the commanding-faculty is impressed *from* them, not *by* them.[32]

It is worth noting that Clement provides an example in book 6 of the *Stromateis* that is somewhat similar to the one Sextus attributes to the Stoics.[33] However, to better understand the relationship between bodies and incorporeals, the most helpful place to look in Clement's writings is actually

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[32] Sextus, *Against the Professors,* 8.409 (=LS 27E): ὥσπερ γάρ, φασίν, ὁ παιδοτρίβης καὶ ὁπλομάχος ἔσθ' ὅτε μὲν λαβόμενος τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ παιδὸς ῥυθμίζει καὶ διδάσκει τινὰς κινεῖσθαι κινήσεις, ἔσθ' ὅτε δὲ ἄπωθεν ἑστὼς καί πως κινούμενος ἐν ῥυθμῷ παρέχει ἑαυτὸν ἐκείνῳ πρὸς μίμησιν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν φανταστῶν ἔνια μὲν οἰονεὶ ψαύοντα καὶ θιγγάνοντα τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ποιεῖται τὴν ἐν τούτῳ τύπωσιν, ὁποῖόν ἐστι τὸ λευκὸν καὶ μέλαν καὶ κοινῶς τὸ σῶμα, ἔνια δὲ τοιαύτην ἔχει φύσιν <....>, τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς φαντασιουμένου καὶ οὐχ ὑπ' αὐτῶν, ὁποῖά ἐστι τὰ ἀσώματα λεκτά.

[33] See *Strom.* 6.17.160.4: αὐτίκα τρεῖς τρόποι πάσης ὠφελείας τε καὶ μεταδόσεως ἄλλῳ παρ' ἄλλου, ὃ μὲν κατὰ παρακολούθησιν ὡς ὁ παιδοτρίβης σχηματίζων τὸν παῖδα, ὃ δὲ καθ' ὁμοίωσιν ὡς ὁ προτρεπόμενος ἕτερον εἰς ἐπίδοσιν τῷ προεπιδοῦναι, καὶ ὃ μὲν συνεργεῖ τῷ μανθάνοντι, ὃ δὲ συνωφελεῖ τὸν λαμβάνοντα. τρίτος δέ ἐστιν [ὁ] τρόπος ὁ κατὰ πρόσταξιν, ὁπόταν ὁ παιδοτρίβης μηκέτι διαπλάσσων τὸν μανθάνοντα μηδὲ ἐπιδεικνὺς δι' ἑαυτοῦ τὸ πάλαισμα εἰς μίμησιν τῷ παιδί, ὡς [δὲ] ἤδη ἐντριβεστέρῳ, προστάττοι ἐξ ὀνόματος τὸ πάλαισμα. "There are three ways of providing help and conveying something to others. One is, by accompaniment, like the master of gymnastics who arranges the posture of the boy. The second is, by resemblance, as in the case of one who exhorts someone to advance by advancing in front of him. The one actively co-operates with the learner, and the other contributes to the success of the recipient. The third mode is that by command, when the trainer, no longer seeking to shape the movements of his student, nor showing by his own example the moves for the boy to imitate. But the latter now being more proficient, he gives the command for the move simply by the name" (my translation).

his discussion of causality in chapter 9 of book 8. As Julia Annas explains, for the Stoics (and, I would add, for Clement as well), "there is a basic isomorphism between two structures: the structure of causal interrelations, in which the physical states of the world and the perceiver are embedded, and the structure of semantic interrelations, in which is embedded the signification of the content of the physical states."[34]

Graeser notes that "there is evidence to the effect that *lekton* was used in the sense of that which is said or predicated of something as well as in the more general sense of that which is said or meant."[35] In the examples cited above, Clement uses the term "*lekton*" in a general sense, to refer to that which is signified, said or meant, which is incorporeal and has an extension of meaning that overlaps with the terms *pragma* and *noema.* However, in chapter 9, Clement also mentions the fact that *lekton* is sometimes used in a more specific sense, to refer to that which is said or predicated of something. In this latter sense, Clement is referring to what some Stoics call an "incomplete *lekton*", which is synonymous with a predicate (*kategorema*) and which can be combined with a "case" *ptôsis,* to form a proposition (*axiom*), or what some Stoics call a "complete *lekton.*"[36]

Clement refers to this other usage of "*lekton*" in his discussion of causes. After describing how the sculptor is the cause *to* the material *of* becoming a statue, Clement explains that "'becoming,' and 'being cut'—that of which the cause is a cause – since they are activities, are incorporeal." And: "It can be said, to make the same point, that causes are causes of predicates,

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[34] Julia Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind* (University of California Press, 1992), 80.

[35] Graeser, "The Stoic Theory of Meaning," 87.

[36] See Blank and Atherton, "The Stoic Contribution to Traditional Grammar," 315: "Sayables themselves are either complete or incomplete. Of the former, the most important species is that of the prime bearers of truth and falsity, 'propositions' or axiômata. Surviving accounts approach syntax by identifying the proposition's two principal constituents: the 'case' or ptôsis (e.g. 'man', 'Socrates'), and the 'predicate' or katêgorêma (e.g., 'writes', 'sees') which is defined as an incomplete lekton." .

or, as some say, of sayables [*lekta*] (for Cleanthes and Archedemus call predicates 'sayables').

Or else, and preferably, that some are causes of predicates, for example of 'is cut', whose case

(*ptôsis*) is 'being cut', but others of propositions (*axiomata*), for example of 'a ship is built',

whose case this time is 'a ship's being built'."[37] This significance of this understanding of causes

being the cause of predicates (or, of *lekta*) will be discussed in the next section.

CAUSAL THEORY

Clement's discussion of causal theory helps to clarify the interconnected relationship between his

theory of semiotics, epistemology and pedagogy. By providing an account for how the same

thing can be the cause of different, and indeed contrary, effects (which are incorporeal

"predicates" or *lekta*) depending on the receptive capacity of the thing being acted upon, it also

lends theoretical support to the notion of polysemy, i.e. that the same expression can produce

different (and sometimes contrary) meanings (i.e. incorporeal things, or conceptions, signified by

the expression) depending on the receptive capacity of the listener (or reader). This also

undergirds Clement's theory of adaptive pedagogy, by explaining how a student's "learning" is

at least in part dependent upon the capacity of that student to learn (hence why Clement thinks

one must adjust one's speech according to the particular needs and aptitude of one's hearers).

For Clement, 'cause' is closely linked to explanatory accounts of responsibility. The

word translated 'cause,' *aition,* literally means the 'thing responsible,' or 'that which is

responsible.' Clement's theory of causes in book 8 is similar to what we know about the Stoic

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[37] *Strom.* 8.9.26.3-4 (=LS 55C): τὸ γίνεσθαι οὖν καὶ τὸ τέμνεσθαι, τὰ οὗ ἐστιν αἴτιον, ἐνέργειαι οὖσαι ἀσώματοί εἰσιν. Εἰς ὃν λόγον κατηγορημάτων ἤ, ὥς τινες, λεκτῶν (λεκτὰ γὰρ τὰ κατηγορήματα καλοῦσιν Κλεάνθης καὶ Ἀρχέδημος) <αἴτια> τὰ αἴτια· ἤ, ὅπερ καὶ μᾶλλον, τὰ μὲν κατηγορημάτων αἴτια λεχθήσεται, οἷον τοῦ «τέμνεται», οὗ πτῶσις τὸ τέμνεσθαι, τὰ δ' ἀξιωμάτων, ὡς τοῦ «ναῦς γίνεται», οὗ πάλιν [ἡ] πτῶσίς ἐστι τὸ ναῦν γίνεσθαι·; See also Catherine Atherton, *The Stoics on Ambiguity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 284: "Clement asserts that, according to the Stoa, effects are incorporeal, being either predicates, such as <…is cut>, or propositions, such as <a ship comes to be>; and further that the case of the former is to be cut (or being cut) (τὸ τέμνεσθαι), and of the latter a ship's coming to be (τὸ ναῦν γίνεσθαι) (what a modern grammarian might be tempted to call a 'desentential transform')." .

theories of causality. Micahel Frede explains, "the Stoics seem to distinguish a least three uses of 'cause.'"[38] Frede identifies these three uses as the general notion of cause, the narrower notion of cause, and the strict notion of 'cause'. In the general notion, cause is simply a 'because of which' (*di'ho*); and Frede writes:

> Just like the English preposition 'because of' and the German '*wegen*' the Greek '*dia*'
> with the accusative can cover such a variety of explanatory relations that it would rather
> comfortably accommodate anything that had been called a cause, in ordinary discourse or
> by philosophers.[39]

Frede draws on Clement to support his suggestion that the Stoics differentiated between this general notion of cause and a narrower notion of cause, writing:

> When, then, Clement (VIII 9, 20, 3) says: "It is the same thing, then, which is a cause and
> which is productive; and if something is a cause and productive it invariably also is a
> because of which; but if something is a because of which it is not invariably also a cause"
> and then goes on the give antecedent causes as examples of things which are because of
> which, but not causes in this sense,[40] it is natural to assume that he is relying on a contrast
> between a more general notion of a cause according to which any because of which

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[38] Michael Frede, "The Original Notion of Cause," in *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 128.

[39] Frede, "The Original Notion of Cause," 127.

[40] The examples of antecedent causes, which are 'because of which,' but not 'causes,' to which Frede refers, are found in the following passage from *Stromateis* 8:

> Many things, for instance, concur in one result, through which the end is reached; but all are not causes. For Medea would not have killed her children, had she not been enraged. Nor would she have been enraged, had she not been jealous. Nor would she have been this, if she had not loved. Nor would she have loved, had not Jason sailed to Colchi. Nor would this have taken place, had not the timbers been cut from Pelion. For through in all these things there is the case of "because of which," they are not all "causes" of the murder of the children, but only Medea was the cause.

counts as a cause, and a narrower notion which he wants to adopt, according to which a

cause not only has to be a because of which, but also productive.[41]

The narrower notion of a cause, which Frede also finds in Clement, restricts 'cause' to "those

things which actually do something or other to bring about an effect."[42] However, "this narrower

notion of an active cause covers different kinds of causal relations which the Stoics will

distinguish by distinguishing various kinds of causes. And among these kinds they will single out

that which is the cause, strictly speaking."[43]

According to Frede's distinctions, Clement's discussion of causes, in book 8, deals with

all three uses of 'causes,' but primarily focuses on what Frede calls the "narrower notion" and

the "strict notion" of 'cause.' We have already seen above Clement's explanation that not

everything that can be called a 'because of which' (*di'ho*) is a 'cause' (in the narrower sense of

cause). Within the "narrower notion," Clement differentiates between several different types of

causes. The reason for the distinction between different types of causes within the narrower

notion of cause comes from Clement's (and the Stoics') understanding of the "triadic" nature of

causal relations. Frede writes:

> The Stoics thought that the canonical representation of the causal relation was not a two-
>
> place relation between a body and a propositional item, but as a three-place relation
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> between a body and another body and a predicate true of that body. Thus a knife is the

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[41] Frede, "The Original Notion of Cause," 128.

[42] Frede, "The Original Notion of Cause," 128.

[43] Frede, "The Original Notion of Cause," 128.; See also R. J. Hankinson, "Explanation and Causation," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, ed. Keimpe Algra et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 495 ff.

cause for flesh of being cut, fire is the cause for wood of burning. It is in this sense that

the Stoics often are reported as claiming that a cause is a cause of a predicate.[44]

Clarifying the Stoic understanding of the relative nature of causes, (drawing upon an example

provided by Sextus Empiricus, which is also found in Clement) Susanne Bobzien writes:

Cause and effect are relative to each other, and inseparable: a cause is not a particular

thing, but that thing *in so far as it produces its effect.* In fact, for the Stoics, cause is

relative in two respects: 'They say that cause is a relative [*pros ti*]. For it is cause of

something and to something, as the scalpel is the cause of something, viz. the cutting, and

to something, viz. the flesh.'[45]

Clement likewise claims that "cause is a relative" (*to aition tôn "pros ti"*),[46] and, we should note,

he does not attribute this position to what others' say (as Sextus does, attributing this

understanding to the Stoics), but rather, says it himself. Clement explains that every cause,

apprehended by the mind as a cause, is conceived of as a cause *of* something and *to* something.[47]

Moreover, he adds that the something *to* which a cause is the cause *of* some effect must be in

such a condition or possess an "aptitude" to be affected by that cause, i.e. to receive the effect of

which the cause is a cause. He provides two examples. Every cause is conceived of as a cause *of*

something, that is, of an effect (*tou apotelesmatos*), as the sword *of* cutting; and in relation *to*

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[44] Frede, "The Original Notion of Cause," 137.

[45] Susanne Bobzien, "Chysippus' Theory of Causes," in *Topics in Stoic Philosophy*, ed. Katerina Ierodiakonou (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 198–199.

[46] *Strom.* 8.9.29.2

[47] *Strom.* 8.9.29.1

something, possessing an aptitude (*tôi epitêdeiôs echonti*), as fire *to* wood; for it will not burn steel. [48]

On the Stoics' understanding of the relation between causality and aptitude, Marcelo Boeri explains:

> The Stoic account of causality is triadic: there can be a causal relationship between two items A and B if and only if (i) A and B are bodies, and (ii) what receives A's causal action (B) is in such a condition or aptitude (*epitêdeiotês*) that the causal action is possible. For instance, fire (a body) burns wood (another body); the effect C of such a causal relationship is the incorporeal predicate "being burned," which is satisfied by the wood. But this is possible only if the condition or aptitude of the wood allows it (when receiving fire's causal action), that is to say, when it is dry or in a condition that permits combustion. In fact, the wood might be wet with water, in which case fire could not deploy its active force (i.e., to burn); but if the wood is wet with gasoline, the predicate "being burned" will be satisfied by the wood, which is the same as saying that the power or active force of fire can be activated. [49]

According to Clement, "everything that acts produces the effect, in conjunction with the aptitude of that which is acted on." This is why, within the "narrower notion" of cause, Clement suggests that the condition or aptitude of what is being acted upon can be called a 'cause', however, he also clarifies that it is not a cause in the strict sense. [50] Clement remarks, "it would be ridiculous

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[48] *Strom.* 8.9.29.1: Πᾶν αἴτιον ὡς αἴτιον <διπλῇ> διανοίᾳ ληπτὸν τυγχάνει, ἐπεὶ τινὸς καὶ πρός τινι νοεῖται, τινὸς μέν, τοῦ ἀποτελέσματος, καθάπερ ἡ μάχαιρα τοῦ τέμνειν, πρός τινι δέ, [καθάπερ] τῷ ἐπιτηδείως ἔχοντι, καθάπερ τὸ πῦρ τῷ ξύλῳ· τὸν ἀδάμαντα γὰρ οὐ καύσει.

[49] Marcelo D. Boeri, "The Stoic Psychological Physicalism: An Ancient Version of the Causal Closure Thesis," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 10, no. 3 (2010): 116.

[50] Clement writes, "everything without which the effect is incapable of being produced, is necessarily a cause; but a cause not absolutely." Strom. 8.9.28.3: πᾶν γὰρ οὗ χωρὶς οὐκ ἐνδεχόμενον γενέσθαι τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα, κατὰ ἀνάγκην ἐστὶν αἴτιον, αἴτιον δὲ οὐχ ἁπλῶς

to say that the fire was not the cause of the burning but the logs, or the sword of the cutting, but the flesh"[51]

On the distinction between 'cause' in the strict sense, and 'cause' in the more general or narrower sense, Marcelo Boeri, (who cites Clement for support[52]), writes:

Something x is a cause in the strict sense (*kuriôs aplôs*) of an effect (*to apotelesma*) F if x is active (*energoun poioun poiêtikon*), that is, if it is able to produce an effect in an active manner or "in acting" (*energêtikôs en tôi dran*).[53]

This distinction between the narrower notion of 'cause' and 'cause' in the strict sense offers a response to the skeptical criticism, articulated by Sextus, against the intelligibility of relational causality. According to Sextus:

It follows that the power to produce the end-result does not reside in it [the cause] any more than in the thing affected. For example (for what is being said will be clearer with an illustration), if fire is the cause of burning, it is productive of burning either self-sufficiently – that is, using only its own power – or it needs the matter being burned as a collaborator for this purpose. And if it brings about the burning self-sufficiently, making do with its own nature, it should have been continually making things burn, since it holds on to its own nature all the time. But it does not make things burn all the time, but it burns some things and does not burn others; therefore it does not make things burn self-sufficiently using its own nature. But if it does so together with the suitable condition of

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[51] *Strom.* 8.9.28.6: καταγέλαστον δὲ τὸ λέγειν μὴ τὸ πῦρ αἴτιον τῆς καύσεως, ἀλλὰ τὰ ξύλα, μηδὲ τὴν μάχαιραν τῆς τομῆς, ἀλλὰ τὴν σάρκα

[52] Boeri broadly cites *Stromateis* 8.9.25.1—8.9.27.5 and 8.9.32.1; To be sure, all the component parts of Boeri's clarification of the strict sense of 'cause,' can be found in the passages from Clement.

[53] Boeri, "The Stoic Psychological Physicalism," 116–117.

the burning wood, where do we get the right to say that *it* is the cause of the burning, as opposed to the suitable condition of the wood?[54]

For Clement, it is not just the act of producing an effect in an active manner, but the capability of doing so that is important to consider when we speak of something as a 'cause.'

> Now that is properly called a cause, which is capable of effecting something actively; since we say that steel is capable of cutting, not merely while cutting, but also while not cutting. Thus, then, the capability of causing signifies both; both that which is now acting, and that which is not yet acting, but which possesses the power of acting.[55]

This dual signification of the 'capability of acting' recalls a distinction introduced earlier in book 8. In chapter 4, Clement explains that there are two ways one might think about "*dunamis*" (which could be translated as "capability" or "power"). The first is a consideration of present capability (i.e. what something is already able to do, even though it is not necessarily doing it at the present moment, e.g. if it is resting or asleep), the second is the consideration of a thing's potential capability (i.e. what something might be able to do in the future, but which it is incapable of doing at the present moment).[56] This distinction, between present capability and potential capability, can be seen in the following illustration. At the present moment, I *could* bench-press 100 pounds if I so desired (i.e. it is within my "power" to do so), even though I am not presently doing it. Yet, at the present moment, it is not within my power to bench-press 300 pounds, but it is possible that I might be able to do so in the future after a significant amount of

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[54] Sextus, *Against the Physicists,* 1.241-243.

[55] *Strom.* 8.9.25.5: Αἴτιον δὲ κυρίως λέγεται τὸ παρεκτικόν τινος ἐνεργητικῶς, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὸν σίδηρον τμητικόν φαμεν εἶναι οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ τέμνειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μὴ τέμνειν· οὕτως οὖν καὶ τὸ παρεκτικὸν ἄμφω σημαίνει καὶ τὸ ἤδη ἐνεργοῦν καὶ τὸ μηδέπω μέν, δυνάμει δὲ κεχρημένον τοῦ ἐνεργῆσαι.

[56] See *Strom.* 8.4.13.3-5; Also, *Strom.* 8.4.13.7-8: "But having discovered that it [an 'animal'] is distinguished from what is not an animal by sensation and motion from appetency; we again separated this from its adjuncts; asserting that it was one thing for that to be such potentially, which is not yet possessed of the power of sensation and motion, but will some time be so, and another thing to be already so actually; and in the case of such, it is one thing to exert its powers, another to be able to exert them, but to be at rest or asleep."

training and preparation. However, it is not now, nor will it possibly ever be within my power to levitate.[57] Similarly, at present, I am not able to read or understand Mandarin, but it is theoretically possible that I could learn how to do so (and thus gain that ability) through training and instruction.

To foreshadow the discussion in the next section of my dissertation, this notion of *potential* capability is crucially important in Clement's understanding of Christ's pedagogical methods (and, more broadly, of what we might call "theological anthropology"). Consider, for example, his claim in the introduction of book 1 of the *Stromateis*: "And now the Savior shows himself, out of his superabundance, distributing goods among his servants according to the capacity of the recipient (*kata tên tou lambanontos dunamin*), and this ought to be increased by disciplined practice (*sunaskêseôs*)."[58] Also, in book 6, in response to the question of whether Adam was created perfect or imperfect, Clement answers that Adam was created with an aptitude (*epitêdeios*) for the reception of virtue, but did not come into being in an already perfected state.[59] Indeed, all of us are naturally constituted for the acquisition of virtue, but not all attain virtue because not all have applied themselves to the learning and disciplined practice (*askesis*) it requires.[60] Similarly, Clement explains, we are created for the reception of knowledge (*gnosis*), but it is most difficult to acquire and only attained with much toil.[61]

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[57] This is not to dismiss the possible veracity of the various stories of saints who received the "gift of levitation" (e.g. Francis of Assisi, Theresa of Avila, Thomas Aquinas, etc.). However, to the extent that these people are in fact saints, and what the stories describe is in fact a gift, I imagine they all would admit that it was not by *their* power that the reported miracle(s) occurred.

[58] *Strom.* 1.1.3.1: Ἤδη δὲ καταφαίνεται ἐκ περιουσίας ὁ σωτὴρ αὐτός, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ λαμβάνοντος δύναμιν, ἣν δεῖ ἐκ συνασκήσεως αὔξειν, τοῖς δούλοις τὰ ὑπάρχοντα διανείμας. (Ferguson, modified).

[59] See *Strom.* 6.12.96.2: ἀκούσονται γὰρ καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν ὅτι τέλειος κατὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν οὐκ ἐγένετο, πρὸς δὲ τὸ ἀναδέξασθαι τὴν ἀρετὴν ἐπιτήδειος·

[60] See *Strom.* 6.12.96.3-ff.: Πάντες μὲν οὖν, ὡς ἔφην, πρὸς ἀρετῆς κτῆσιν πεφύκασιν, ἀλλ' ὃ μὲν μᾶλλον, ὃ δ' ἧττον πρόσεισι τῇ τε μαθήσει τῇ τε ἀσκήσει,

[61] See *Strom.* 6.12.96.4-ff.: πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον ἢ μεγέθει πασῶν μαθήσεων καὶ ἀληθείᾳ διαφέρουσα γνῶσις χαλεπωτάτη κτήσασθαι καὶ ἐν πολλῷ καμάτῳ περιγίνεται.

Returning to the topic at hand, as mentioned above, for Clement, the triadic relation of causality is comprised of two "bodies" and an incorporeal predicate. More specifically, it is a relation between the active potential possessed by body A, which makes it capable of actively causing effect x, in relation to body B, which possesses an aptitude that renders it susceptible to have effect x become predicated of it (through the active power of body A). A lit match, for example, possesses an active potential which makes it capable of causing the predicate "burning" to be true of a dry piece of paper, but not a dense piece of wood. However, something like an oxy-acetylene torch (which burns at a much higher temperature than a lit match) does, in fact, possess the capability of igniting, i.e. causing the predicate "burning" to be true of, a dense piece of wood.

In Clement's discussion of causality, the relation between something's active potential and the receptive capacity of something else is not represented as merely a 'binary,' or 'scalar,' relationship. One must not only consider whether body-A's active potential is (more or less) capable of causing a particular predicate to be true of body-B, which is (more or less) susceptible to receiving that predication because of body-A. Clement also explains that the same thing can be the cause of *different* effects, "sometimes from the magnitude of the cause and its power (*dunamis*), and sometimes from the aptitude (*epitêdeiotês*) of that on which it acts."[62] In the case of the former, he provides the example of a string on an instrument producing different sounds, depending on its level of tension as well as the magnitude and force with which it is plucked.[63] To illustrate the latter, i.e. how the same thing can be the cause of different effects according to the susceptibility of that on which it acts, Clement provides the following examples: "honey is

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[62] *Strom.* 8.9.32.1: Τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ τῶν ἐναντίων αἴτιον γίνεται, ποτὲ μὲν παρὰ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ αἰτίου καὶ τὴν δύναμιν, ποτὲ δὲ παρὰ τὴν ἐπιτηδειότητα τοῦ πάσχοντος. παρὰ μὲν τὴν ποιὰν δύναμιν· (ANF modified)

[63] See *Strom.* 8.9.32.2: ἡ αὐτὴ χορδὴ παρὰ τὴν ἐπίτασιν ἢ τὴν ἄνεσιν ὀξὺν ἢ βαρὺν ἀποδίδωσι τὸν φθόγγον.

sweet to those who are well, and bitter to those who are in fever. And one and the same wine

inclines some to rage, and others to merriment. And the same sun melts wax and hardens mud."[64]

This explanation of how the same thing can be the cause of different (and indeed

contrary) effects offers a response to the skeptical criticisms of causality found in the writings of

Sextus. As mentioned above, Sextus frequently uses the example of honey tasting different to

healthy and sick people as evidence against the reliability of the senses and the possibility of

demonstration. When directly criticizing the intelligibility of causation, Sextus also writes:

> The dogmatists typically reply to this [the argument that the same thing appears to
>
> produce contrary *apotelesma* ('effects' or 'end results')] by saying that the end-results
>
> (*apotelesma*) that occur by the same cause – such as the sun – are of a nature to vary
>
> depending on the things affected and the distances. For it is close to the Ethiopians, so it
>
> is likely that it should burn; but it is a medium distance away from us, so it is likely that it
>
> should warm; and it is a long way away from the Hyperboreans,[65] so it does not warm at
>
> all but only shines light. And it hardens mud by drawing the watery in the form of vapor
>
> out of the earthy, whereas it melts wax because wax does not have mud's particular
>
> character. Of course, those who employ this sort of reply are agreeing with us, virtually
>
> without a fight, that what acts is not different from what is affected. For if the melting of
>
> the wax occurs not because of the sun, but because of the particular character of wax's
>
> nature, it is clear that neither one of them is the cause of melting for the wax, but it is the
>
> combination of them both, the sun and the wax. And since it is the coming together of
>
> both that produces the end-result (*apotelesma*), that is the melting, the wax is not melted

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[64] *Strom.* 8.9.32.3: παρὰ δὲ τὴν ἐπιτηδειότητα τῶν πασχόντων· τὸ μέλι γλυκάζει μὲν τοὺς ὑγιαίνοντας, πικράζει δὲ τοὺς πυρέσσοντας, καὶ εἷς καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς οἶνος τοὺς μὲν εἰς ὀργήν, τοὺς δὲ εἰς διάχυσιν ἄγει, καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς ἥλιος τήκει μὲν τὸν κηρόν, ξηραίνει δὲ τὸν πηλόν.

[65] The Hyperboreans, "a people supposed to live in the extreme north" (LSJ).

because of the sun any more than the sun does its melting because of the wax. Thus it is

absurd not to attribute the end-result (*apotelesma*) that occurs from the coming together

of two things to the two of them, but to ascribe it to only one of them.[66]

The correspondence between Clement's explanation of causal relations and the passage quoted

above from Sextus helps bring out some of the distinctive features of Clement's position. The

reply which Sextus attributes to the "dogmatists"[67] appears to be somewhat similar to the

explanation offered by Clement. Sextus speaks of "distance" (*diastêma*) being one of the factors

that can alter the effect of a cause. However, the examples make it clear that by "distance" he is

speaking about the distance between the sun and one's location on Earth. In that sense, relative

"distance" corresponds to relative "strength." Since the sun is "closer," i.e. "stronger," in

Ethiopia (compared to the Mediterranean), it would have the effect of "burning" rather than

"warming." The parallel to this in Clement is his reference to "the magnitude of the cause and its

power" (*to megethos tou aitiou kai tên dunamin*). In his example, the same string, when pulled

tightly, will produce a different sound than if it is pulled loosely. The difference arises from the

amount of power (i.e. the "magnitude" of *dunamis*) applied to the string. Sextus' second example

(of the sun hardening mud and melting wax) directly corresponds to one of the examples

provided by Clement. Sextus speaks about the "peculiar character" (*idiotês*) of the affected

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[66] Sextus, *Against the Physicists,* 1.249-251: Ναί, ἀλλ' εἰώθασι πρὸς τοῦτο ὑποτυγχάνειν οἱ δογματικοί, λέγοντες ὅτι παρὰ τὰ πάσχοντα καὶ τὰ διαστήματα πέφυκεν ἐξαλλάσσεσθαι τὰ γινόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ αἰτίου ἀποτελέσματα, καθάπερ τοῦ ἡλίου. σύνεγγυς μὲν γὰρ ὢν τοῖς Αἰθίοψιν ἔοικε καίειν, μετρίως δὲ ἡμῶν ἀφεστηκὼς θάλπειν, πολὺ δὲ τῶν Ὑπερβορέων κεχωρισμένος θάλπει μὲν οὐδαμῶς, καταυγάζει δὲ μόνον· καὶ πήττει μὲν τὸν πηλὸν τὸ ὑδατῶδες τοῦ γεώδους ἐξατμίζων, τήκει δὲ τὸν κηρὸν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν τὴν τοῦ πηλοῦ ἰδιότητα. οἱ δὴ χρώμενοι τῇ τοιαύτῃ ὑποτεύξει σχεδὸν ἀμάχως ἡμῖν συγχωροῦσι τὸ μὴ ἕτερον εἶναι τοῦ πάσχοντος τὸ ποιοῦν. εἰ γὰρ οὐ διὰ τὸν ἥλιον γίνεται ἡ τῆξις τοῦ κηροῦ, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἰδιότητα τῆς περὶ τὸν κηρὸν φύσεως, φανερὸν ὡς οὐδὲ τὸ ἕτερον αἴτιόν ἐστι τῆς τήξεως τῷ κηρῷ, ἡ δὲ ἀμφοτέρων συνέλευσις, τοῦ τε ἡλίου καὶ τοῦ κηροῦ. τῆς δὲ ἀμφοτέρων συνόδου ποιούσης τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα, τουτέστι τὴν τῆξιν, οὐ μᾶλλον διὰ τὸν ἥλιον ὁ κηρὸς τήκεται ἢ διὰ τὸν κηρὸν ὁ ἥλιος τήκει. οὕτω τε ἄτοπον τὸ ἐκ συνόδου δυεῖν γινόμενον ἀποτέλεσμα μὴ τοῖς δυσὶν ἀνατιθέναι, τῷ δὲ ἑτέρῳ μόνῳ προσμαρτυρεῖν.

[67] Sextus uses the term "dogmatist" indiscriminately to refer to anyone who gives their "assent to a non-evident thing of the type investigated by the sciences." See *PH* 1.13: ἀλλὰ μὴ δογματίζειν λέγομεν καθ' ὃ δόγμα εἶναί φασί τινες τήν τινι πράγματι τῶν κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστήμας ζητουμένων ἀδήλων συγκατάθεσιν

thing's "nature" (*phusis*). Clement, however, attributes the difference of "effects" (or "end-results") to the "aptitude" (*epitêdeiotês*) of the affected thing. As mentioned above, within the more general, "narrower notion" of cause, Clement suggests that aptitude is "causative," but he also clarifies that it is not a cause in the strict sense. He certainly would not agree with Sextus' claim that "those who employ this sort of reply are agreeing with us, virtually without a fight, that what acts is not different from what is affected." As we saw, Clement maintains that "it would be ridiculous to say that the fire was not the cause of the burning but the logs, or the sword of the cutting, but the flesh"[68]

The examples discussed thus far might make it seem as though Clement's discussion of causal relations is meant to explain what 'actually happens' when extant things in the world interact. Although Clement does not explicitly say this, it nevertheless appears to be the case that his discussion of causal relations is primarily dealing with issues of how we conceptualize (or, at least, should conceptualize) causal relationships. If that is the case, it would be not unlike his theory of definition. Recall that for Clement, what we define in a definition is our concept of a thing, not the thing itself. Analogously, what Clement is describing when he speaks about causal relations is how our minds can intelligibly conceive of two things being causally related. Consider the stress he places on how causal relations are conceived (and not, directly, on what they are): "Cause belongs to the category of relation, for it is conceived in relation to something else, and so we apply our minds to the two, that we might conceive the cause as cause";[69] "Every cause, apprehended by the mind as a cause, is conceived [as a cause] *of* something and *to*

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[68] *Strom.* 8.9.28.6: καταγέλαστον δὲ τὸ λέγειν μὴ τὸ πῦρ αἴτιον τῆς καύσεως, ἀλλὰ τὰ ξύλα, μηδὲ τὴν μάχαιραν τῆς τομῆς, ἀλλὰ τὴν σάρκα

[69] *Strom.* 8.9.29.2: τὸ αἴτιον τῶν «πρός τι»· κατὰ γὰρ τὴν πρὸς ἕτερον νοεῖται σχέσιν, ὥστε δυεῖν ἐπιβάλλομεν, ἵνα τὸ αἴτιον ὡς αἴτιον νοήσωμεν. (ANF modified)

something",[70] and in other examples as well, what Clement speaks about is how causation is conceived (*noeitai*), not *per se* what it is.[71] I must be careful here not to thrust upon Clement an anachronistic, modern separation between, the "thing in itself," on the one hand, and the "appearance of the thing" and/or the "concept of the thing", on the other. Nevertheless, as discussed above, Clement upholds the distinction between names, concepts, and extant things, and also maintains that "names," or "words," primarily refer to concepts and only secondarily to "extant things" (or, "external subjects"), and this secondary reference to extant things is always mediated by (and through) concepts. Clarifying concepts, i.e. rendering them more precise, in turn helps to clarify and more precisely hone our ability to perceive and conceptually grasp things which "impress" upon the mind. Accordingly, Clement's explanation of causation is meant to clarify and render more precise our concept(s) of causal relations i.e. how a cause is conceived as a cause.

Recognizing that Clement's discussion of causality primarily pertains to the conception of causal relations (and only secondarily to the interaction between extant things) helps to clarify why Clement's treatment of "cause" appears to be an exercise in logico-syntactic analysis. To the extent that the discussion primarily pertains to our concept(s) of causal relations, it is also primarily about "what can be said" about causal relations, i.e. it is about "sayables" (*lekta*). And, as mentioned above, according to Julia Annas "there is a basic isomorphism between two structures: the structure of causal interrelations, in which the physical states of the world and the

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[70] *Strom.* 8.9.29,1: Πᾶν αἴτιον ὡς αἴτιον <διπλῇ> διανοίᾳ ληπτὸν τυγχάνει, ἐπεὶ τινὸς καὶ πρός τινι νοεῖται, (ANF modified)

[71] See, for example, *Strom.* 8.9.27.6: ἐν γὰρ τῷ ἐνεργεῖν καὶ δρᾶν τι τὸ αἴτιον νοεῖται.; *Strom.* 8.9.28.5: πᾶν αἴτιον ἐν τῷ δρᾶν νοεῖται.

perceiver are embedded, and the structure of semantic interrelations, in which is embedded the signification of the content of the physical states."[72]

Recall that Clement claims that "effects" (*apotelesma*) are "predicates," which some stoics call (incomplete) *lekta.* Julia Annas explains:

> A predicate is not a bit of language, but something expressed in language; it is technically an "incomplete sayable (*lekton*)," which can be completed in various ways to form what is expressed in commands, prayers, and so on; and when combined with a subject term produces a statement (*axioma*) expressed in an utterance.[73]

What Annas refers to as "a subject term" is what clement calls a "case" (*ptôsis*), in the grammatical sense, e.g. of something being in the "nominative case."[74] Clement illustrates the idea of a cause being the cause of a predicate with the example of "'is cut', whose case (*ptôsis*) is 'being cut.'" As mentioned above, Sextus attributes an analogous example to the Stoics:

> The Stoics say that every cause is a body which becomes the cause to a body of something incorporeal. For instance the knife (a body) becomes the cause to the flesh (a body) of the incorporeal predicate "being cut."[75]

Interpreting this example, as it is found in Sextus, Annas explains:

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[72] Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 80.

[73] Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 94.

[74] See Francis P. Dinneen, *General Linguistics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1995), 131; 132 : "In classifying lekta, ptôsis opposes katagorêma at the same level of analysis ---if ptôsis is glossed as 'what is meant by' a noun." ; "Stoic ptôsis referred to five related but contrasting noun-shapes, phoneme sequences called lexeis representing roots and morphs that signal case-differences. Stoic ptôsis referred to what was meant by one of those forms when used as subject, a logical function Aristotle had included in the term onoma, while for him, ptôsis labelled derived form-and-meaning-units excluded from functioning as onoma (or rhêma). The Stoics also coined terms we use for verb-forms and the definition and divisions of predicate were central to their theory. Its generic definition is functional: what is 'said of' something. Divisions include (a) personal+active, (b) personal+passive and (c) neutral predicates."   .

[75] Sextus, *Against the Physicists,* 1.211 (translation slightly modified).

Presumably we are to understand "The knife is the cause to the flesh of a predicate" as

follows: the action of the knife will result in a true statement produced by completing a

predicate with the appropriate subject term. In this case the knife causes it to be true that

the flesh is cut, that there is a true *axioma* "The flesh is cut."[76]

Annas then goes on to explain something discussed above, which bears repeating. Although

causal interactions are said to occur between two bodies, as Annas explains:

The causal relation is a three-termed relation; we have not understood that this is a *causal*

relation until we bring in a predicate that is satisfied as a result of the holding of the

causal relation. The predicate is satisfied when one item acts on another. In our examples

it is always described in terms of the effect of this action, rather than the cause (the

flesh's being cut, not the knife's cutting)...although in principle this [the knife's

'cutting'] would seem to be as good an example of a satisfaction of a predicate as in the

more familiar statement that it [the knife] is the cause of the flesh's being cut.[77]

Despite the fact that Annas frequently cites and interprets quotations from Clement's *Stromateis*

had*,* she apparently did not notice the following passage from book 8, which seems to confirm

her speculations about alternative ways to think about predicate satisfaction:

Causes are not *of* each other, but there are causes *to* each other...the virtues are causes to

each other of 'not being separated', owing to their inter-entailment, and the stones in the

vault are causes to each other of the predicate 'remaining', but they are not causes of each

other. And the teacher and the pupil are causes to each other of the predicate 'making

progress'. Things are said to be causes to each other sometimes of the same effects, as the

merchant and the retailer are causes to each other of 'making a profit'; but sometimes of

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[76] Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 95.

[77] Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 95.

different effects, as in the case of the knife and the flesh; for the knife is the cause to the flesh of 'being cut', while the flesh is the cause to the knife of 'cutting'.[78]

The way Clement speaks about something being a "cause" in this passage may seem strange. It is important to keep in mind that the Greek word(s) translated into English as "cause(s)" are all derived from the word *aitios,* which means "culpable" or "responsible." So, more literally speaking, a "cause" is "that which is responsible." Specifically, in Clement's usage, a cause is that which can be said to be responsible for a predicate being true of a *ptôsis* (a subject term). If the predicate 'being cut' is true of some particular flesh, one might ask, what is responsible for the flesh's 'being cut'? In the example above, the answer would "the knife" (i.e. the knife is the cause to the flesh of 'being cut'). However, Clement, somewhat counter intuitively, reasons that: that which is responsible for the predicate 'cutting' being true of the knife is the flesh, since the flesh has an aptitude capable of having the predicate 'being cut' be true of it from the knife's active potential of 'cutting.' A block of concrete, however, does not possess such an aptitude. In that sense, it cannot be said that the knife is solely responsible for it's 'cutting,' because its active potential 'to cut' is relative to the aptitude (or receptive capacity) of that which is (or is not) 'being cut.'

Recall that Clement also says that that of which a cause is a cause is an activity.[79] To the extent that predicates are conjoined to a subject-term by a verb, e.g. '*being* cut', or simply are themselves a verb, e.g. 'cutting', the process by which a predicate comes to be true of a subject-term can be said to be an activity or a doing. (Hence why Clement says 'cause' is conceived in

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[78] *Strom.* 8.9.30.1-3 (=LS 55D): Ἀλλήλων οὐκ ἔστι τὰ αἴτια, ἀλλήλοις δὲ αἴτια. […] καὶ αἱ ἀρεταὶ ἀλλήλαις αἴτιαι τοῦ μὴ χωρίζεσθαι διὰ τὴν ἀντακολουθίαν, καὶ οἱ ἐπὶ τῆς ψαλίδος λίθοι ἀλλήλοις εἰσὶν αἴτιοι τοῦ μένειν κατηγορήματος, ἀλλήλων δὲ οὐκ εἰσὶν αἴτιοι, καὶ ὁ διδάσκαλος δὲ καὶ ὁ μανθάνων ἀλλήλοις εἰσὶν αἴτιοι τοῦ προκόπτειν κατηγορήματος. λέγεται δὲ ἀλλήλοις αἴτια ποτὲ μὲν τῶν αὐτῶν, ὡς ὁ ἔμπορος καὶ ὁ κάπηλος ἀλλήλοις εἰσὶν αἴτιοι τοῦ κερδαίνειν, ποτὲ δὲ ἄλλου καὶ ἄλλου, καθάπερ ἡ μάχαιρα καὶ ἡ σάρξ· ἡ μὲν γὰρ τῇ σαρκὶ τοῦ τέμνεσθαι, ἡ σὰρξ δὲ τῇ μαχαίρᾳ τοῦ τέμνειν.

[79] See *Strom.* 8.9.26.3: τὸ γίνεσθαι οὖν καὶ τὸ τέμνεσθαι, τὰ οὗ ἐστιν αἴτιον, ἐνέργειαι οὖσαι ἀσώματοί εἰσιν.

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acting[80]). Knives and flesh *qua* flesh are inanimate bodies. Clement's causal schema also applies

to animate bodies (i.e. animals), including the ones capable of laughter (i.e. humans) and can be

used to speak about (or conceive of) human actions. Annas writes:

> Acting and doing are a kind of causal activity; and we can see the schema for action as a
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> particular case of the causal schema. Every action will involve an impulse, and impulses,
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> we are told, are directed toward predicates.[81] Intuitively put, we do not want *things,* we
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> want *to bring things about*. As Clement puts it (in terms of desire), "no one desires drink,
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> but to drink the drinkable;[82] not inheritance, but to inherit; likewise not knowledge, but to
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> know, not good government, but to be well governed."[83] Suppose that I desire a drink. On
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> the Stoic view, what I strictly desire is not the drink, considered as a physical object.
>
> Rather, I desire to bring about the satisfaction by me of the predicate *to drink*.[84]

Annas explains that when I drink, I fulfill the causal schema; "for I am the cause to myself of the

predicate *to drink,* that is, I bring it about that I satisfy the predicate *to drink*."[85] More interesting

for Clement is his inclusion of the claim, in the passage quoted above, that what one desires is

not knowledge (*gnosis*), but '*to know*' (or, more literally, '*to come to know*'). The concept of

gnosis, for Clement, has significant theological implications. In Clement's usage, *gnosis*

typically refers not simply to "knowledge" in general, but specifically to the knowledge of God,

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[80] See, for example, *Strom.* 8.9.27.6: ἐν γὰρ τῷ ἐνεργεῖν καὶ δρᾶν τι τὸ αἴτιον νοεῖται.; *Strom.* 8.9.28.5: πᾶν αἴτιον ἐν τῷ δρᾶν νοεῖται.

[81] See Stobaeus 2.88,2-6 (=LS 33I): "They [the Stoics] say that all impulses are acts of assent, and the practical impulses also contain motive power. But acts of assent and impulses actually differ in their objects: propositions are the objects of acts of assent, but impulses are directed toward predicates, which are contained in a sense in the propositions."; For Annas' discussion of this passage see Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 95–96.

[82] Cf. Sextus, *PH,* 2.230; 2.232.

[83] *Strom.* 7.7.38.2-3: διόπερ οὐδεὶς ἐπιθυμεῖ πόματος, ἀλλὰ τοῦ πιεῖν τὸ ποτόν, οὐδὲ μὴν κληρονομίας, ἀλλὰ τοῦ κληρονομῆσαι, οὑτωσὶ δὲ οὐδὲ γνώσεως, ἀλλὰ τοῦ γνῶναι· οὐδὲ γὰρ πολιτείας ὀρθῆς, ἀλλὰ τοῦ πολιτεύεσθαι.

[84] Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 95–96.

[85] Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*, 96.

the attainment of which constitutes the *telos* of human life. As suggested by the passage above, strictly speaking, one does not desire knowledge (considered as an objective thing), but rather *to come to know,* which is an activity (bringing some thing about). Unlike drinking, however, 'knowing', specifically the kind in which one comes to know God, is not an activity for which the individual subject can be said to be the 'cause' (i.e. that which is responsible), in the strict sense, for the predicate '*to come to know God*' being true of the subject. Nevertheless, satisfying this predicate does not happen without the co-operative participation of the individual subject. The distinction between the agency of co-operation and causation (in the strict sense) is apparent in Clement's differentiation between types of 'causes' (in the 'narrower' sense of 'cause'). Clement writes:

> Of causes: some are 'initiating' (*prokatarktika*), some 'sustaining' (*sunektika*), some 'co-operative' (*sunerga*), some are 'necessary conditions' (*hôn ouk aneu*). 'Initiating' are those causes which primarily provide the impulse towards the coming to be of something, as beauty is to those intemperate in love; for when it is seen by them it conditions the erotic disposition, but not however in such a way as to necessitate it.[86]

Other scholars have mentioned that with this differentiation between different kinds of causes Clement appears to be reporting a Stoic view of causality.[87] I would suggest, however, that with respect to the differentiation between 'sustaining' (*sunektika*) and 'co-operative' (*sunerga*) causes, Clement alters the Stoic classification of causes (as reported by Cicero and others) to

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[86] *Strom.* 8.9.25.1-3: Τῶν αἰτίων τὰ μὲν προκαταρκτικά, τὰ δὲ συνεκτικά, τὰ δὲ συνεργά, τὰ δὲ ὧν οὐκ ἄνευ. προκαταρκτικὰ μὲν τὰ πρώτως ἀφορμὴν παρεχόμενα εἰς τὸ γίγνεσθαί τι, καθάπερ τὸ κάλλος τοῖς ἀκολάστοις τοῦ ἔρωτος· ὀφθὲν γὰρ αὐτοῖς τὴν ἐρωτικὴν διάθεσιν ἐμποιεῖ μόνον, οὐ μὴν κατηναγκασμένως. (translation modified from Hankison, "Explanation and Causation")

[87] See, for example, Hankison, "Explanation and Causation," 492; Dorothea Frede, "Stoic Determinism," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 188; Michael J. White, "Stoic Natural Philosophy (Physics and Cosmology)," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 144.

better suit his theological interest in explaining how it is possible that God is responsible (strictly speaking) for an individual human coming to know God, while nevertheless holding the position that it is necessary for each individual to be actively involved in and take responsibility for his or her own acquisition of knowledge. The contrast between the accounts reported by Clement and Cicero is most apparent in the examples they choose to illustrate the different types of causes. Cicero, who claims to be reporting the view of Chrysippus, writes: "'Of Causes, he [Chyrssipus] explains, 'some are complete and primary' (*perfectae et principals*), others 'auxiliary and proximate' (*adiuvantes et proximae*)."[88] In the illustration he provides (which is likewise attributed to Chryssipus),[89] Cicero compares the causal schema of human action to a rolling cylinder or a spinning-top:

> These cannot begin to move without a push; but once that has happened, he [Chryssipus] holds that it is thereafter through their own nature that the cylinder rolls and the top spins. 'Hence,' he says, 'just as the person who pushed the cylinder gave it its beginning of motion but not its capacity for rolling, likewise, although the impression once it has occurred, will leave its imprint and, as it were, stamp its image on the soul, assent will be in our power. And assent, just as we said of the cylinder, although prompted from outside, will thereafter move through its own proper power and nature.[90]

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[88] Cicero, *De Fato,* 41 (=LS 62C):   Chrysippus autem cum et necessitatem inprobaret et nihil vellet sine praepositis causis evenire, causarum genera distinguit, ut et necessitatem effugiat et retineat fatum. 'Causarum enim', inquit, 'aliae sunt perfectae et principales, aliae adiuvantes et proximae. […]'

[89] Cicero, *De Fato,* 42-3; see also Gellius, *Noctes Atticae,* 7.2.10.

[90] Cicero, *De Fato,* 42-3 (=LS 62C, translation modified): Id autem cum accidit, suapte natura, quod superest,

et cylindrum volvi et versari turbinem putat. 'Ut igitur', inquit, 'qui protrusit cylindrum, dedit ei principium motionis, volubilitatem autem non dedit, sic visum obiectum inprimet illud quidem et quasi signabit in animo suam

speciem, sed adsensio nostra erit in potestate, eaque, quem ad modum in cylindro dictum est, extrinsecus pulsa, quod reliquum est, suapte vi et natura movebitur.

In this example, what Cicero calls the "proximate cause" is analogous to what Clement calls an "initiating cause." According to Dorothea Frede, Cicero's example illustrates the Stoics' distinction between the antecedent or external and the principal or 'internal' cause, which the Stoics relied on "to explain how human beings are part of the web of causal interconnections in such a way that there is room for personal responsibility."[91] Frede writes, "The Stoic justification consists in making the internal but not the external causes the principal causes of human actions. Though the environment acts on us in a way that is not subject to our control, our reactions are 'up to us' since they depend on our inner state."[92] So far, the Stoic account is consistent with what Clement says of the initiating cause. As Clement explains, beauty can be a cause of the erotic disposition to someone intemperate in love, but not in such a way as to necessitate it. Frede explains that, though the sight of beauty can be said to be an initiating cause, "the person's reaction is, nevertheless, 'up to him' because his amorous attitude toward physical beauty is, after all, part of his internal makeup and not caused by the external impression."[93] However, unlike Cicero (and by extension Chryssipus), in his own example (of a student's learning) Clement does not identify the nature and power of the learner with what Cicero calls the 'complete and primary' cause (which Clement calls the 'sustaining cause' *sunektikon aition*). Instead, he identifies the nature of the learner as a 'co-operating cause' (*sunergon aition*), which is roughly analogous to what Cicero calls an "auxiliary cause.' According to Clement, in the example of the learner:

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[91] Frede, "Stoic Determinism," 192.

[92] Frede, "Stoic Determinism," 192.

[93] Frede, "Stoic Determinism," 192.

The Father is the 'initiating cause' of learning, the Teacher is the 'sustaining cause,' the nature of the learner is the 'co-operating cause,' and time offers the account of 'necessary conditions.'[94]

For Clement, the 'sustaining cause,' is the 'cause' in the strict sense (i.e. that which is ultimately responsible) within the different types of 'causes' (or 'causal relations') in the narrower sense. Grasping the distinction between a 'sustaining cause' and a 'co-operating cause' is crucially important for understanding the way Clement attributes responsibility for a student's leaning, and how that student might come to know God. According to Clement, the co-operating cause does not, strictly speaking, produce the effect which comes about; rather, it intensifies the effect produced by the sustaining cause. To make this point clearer, Clement distinguishes the 'co-operating cause' from what he calls a 'joint-cause' (*sunaition*):

Whereas the co-operating cause aids the sustaining cause, so as to intensify what comes about through the latter, the joint-cause is conceived jointly with another which is itself likewise incapable of individually producing the effect, since it is jointly that they are causes. The difference between the joint-cause and the auxiliary cause lies in the fact that the joint-cause produces the effect along with another cause which is not individually producing it, whereas the auxiliary causes, in creating the effect not individually but by accruing to another, is acting as co-operative to very cause which *is* individually creating the effect, so that the effect is intensified.[95]

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[94] *Strom.* 8.9.25.4: ὁ μὲν πατὴρ αἴτιόν ἐστι προκαταρκτικὸν τῆς μαθήσεως, ὁ διδάσκαλος δὲ συνεκτικόν, ἡ δὲ τοῦ μανθάνοντος φύσις συνεργὸν αἴτιον, ὁ δὲ χρόνος τῶν ὧν οὐκ ἄνευ λόγον ἐπέχει. (ANF modified).

[95] *Strom.* 8.9.33.7-9 (=LS 55I, translation modified): τὸ μὲν οὖν συνεργὸν αἴτιον τῷ συνεκτικῷ πρὸς τὴν ἐπίτασιν βοηθεῖ τοῦ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γινομένου, τὸ δὲ συναίτιον οὐκ ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτῆς ἐστιν ἐννοίας· δύναται γὰρ συναίτιον ὑπάρχειν, κἂν μὴ συνεκτικὸν αἴτιον ᾖ τι. νοεῖται γὰρ σὺν ἑτέρῳ τὸ συναίτιον οὐδ' αὐτῷ δυναμένῳ κατ' ἰδίαν ποιῆσαι τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα, αἴτιον ὂν σὺν αἰτίῳ. διαφέρει δὲ τοῦ συναιτίου τὸ συνεργὸν ἐν τῷ τὸ μὲν συναίτιον <μεθ' ἑτέρου> κατ' ἰδίαν μὴ ποιοῦντος τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα παρέχειν, τὸ δὲ συνεργὸν [ἐν τῷ] κατ' ἰδίαν μὴ ποιεῖν, ἑτέρῳ δὲ προσερχόμενον τῷ κατ' ἰδίαν ποιοῦντι συνεργεῖ<ν> αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸ σφοδρότερον γίνεσθαι τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα.; I have chosen to translate "κατ' ἰδίαν" as "individually" rather than "independently" (LS's choice), since "independently" gives the sense that

Long and Sedley provide a helpful example for understanding what Clement means by "joint-cause." They write:

> When a choir is the cause of our hearing a harmony, there is no sustaining cause in the form of a single 'breath' characterizing the choir as a unitary entity, only the several qualities of the individual choristers. Each one's talent is therefore a joint-cause, but none a sustaining cause. No one of them is sufficient the produce the sound heard, and no one of them can take credit for it.[96]

The relation between the 'co-operating cause' and the 'sustaining cause' is different. Although, much like the 'joint-cause,' the 'co-operating cause' is not sufficient to produce the effect, nor can it take credit for it, it operates in an assisting relationship to the 'sustaining cause,' which is, in fact, said to be individually responsible for the effect produced (which the 'co-operating cause' is only responsible for "intensifying") and can rightly be given credit for the effect's coming about. In the terms of a by now familiar example, the aptitude of the wood is not, strictly speaking, the cause of its burning, but nevertheless cooperates with the fire (by being dry, or wet with gasoline) to intensify the effect "being burned" which the fire is responsible for bringing about. One might also envision the subordinate form of causation (i.e. responsibility) of the 'co-operating cause' in relation to the 'sustaining cause' through the example of a mirror.

According to Clement, "a 'sustaining' cause is one during whose presence the effect remains and on whose removal the effect is removed."[97] To that extent, one might imagine the relationship between a 'co-operating cause' and the 'sustaining cause' to be akin to the

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the effect could be produced apart from the co-operating "aptitude" of that which is being acted upon, which (as I have explained above) is not the case. I also translate "συνεργὸν αἴτιον" as "co-operating cause" rather than LS's "auxiliary cause" to preserve the sense of 'work' (*ergon*) connoted by the Greek.

[96] LS, p. 342

[97] *Strom.* 8.9.33.1 (=LS 33I): Τῶν μὲν οὖν προκαταρκτικῶν αἰρομένων μένει τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα, συνεκτικὸν δέ ἐστιν αἴτιον, οὗ παρόντος μένει τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα καὶ αἰρομένου αἴρεται.

relationship between a mirror and a figure seen in it. The reflective surface of the mirror "co-operates" in producing the reflection, but if the figure (being reflected in the mirror) were to suddenly disappear, so too would the reflection of that figure. However, the same does not happen in reverse. Had the mirror vanished, the figure would remain unaffected, albeit unreflected.

PEDAGOGICAL PREPARATION

Many years after, Bonaventure likened the soul to a mirror, explaining that for one to more perfectly reflect the image of God, one must actively seek to purify and "polish" the soul.[98] Clement similarly relates one's ability to be a living image of God with one's active care for oneself:

> For the one who serves God, serves himself. In the contemplative life, then, the person cares for himself as he worships God, and through his own absolute purification, he has a pure vision of the holy God.[99]

Like the Stoics, Clement claims that we (individual humans) are only responsible for what is 'up to us' (i.e. what is within our power), and "what is up to us is readiness for education and obedience to the commandments."[100] In other words, it is up to us whether we respond positively or negatively to the 'initiating cause' of the Father (by assenting to the call to faith), and it is also within our power to actively engage in the form of disciplined practice (*askesis*) by which we increasingly render ourselves capable of receiving the knowledge produced by the Teacher, i.e.

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[98] See Bonaventure, *Quaestiones Disputatae de scientia Christi,* q. 7, and ad 19-21.

[99] *Strom.* 4.23.152.2-3: θεὸν γὰρ ὁ θεραπεύων ἑαυτὸν θεραπεύει. ἐν οὖν τῷ θεωρητικῷ βίῳ ἑαυτοῦ τις ἐπιμελεῖται θρησκεύων τὸν θεὸν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἰδίας εἰλικρινοῦς καθάρσεως ἐποπτεύει τὸν θεὸν ἅγιον ἁγίως (translation from Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy").

[100] *Strom.* 2.15.62.4: ἀλλ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν γε ἥ τε πρὸς τὴν παιδείαν ἡμῶν παράστασις ἥ τε πρὸς τὰς ἐντολὰς ὑπακοή. (Ferguson, modified).

the Son. These exercises entail more than simply the work of moral discipline, by re-training one's habitual activities and desires (though that is certainly necessary), also required is the work of mental discipline, by re-training one's cognitive habits and abilities (i.e. re-training one's receptive capacity, or aptitude, *to come to know* God).

Clement often refers to the latter form of mental exercises as *progymnasmata,* which is the name, commonly used in the Greek educational curriculum, for the 'preparatory exercises' in composition given to a child as a prelude to the more advanced forms of literary and rhetorical training. During the period in which Clement was writing, the *progymnasmata* were "crucial in laying the foundations for elite discourse" and "helped to inculcate certain modes of thinking about language, about the classical texts which served as models, and about the relation of the individual to those texts and to language in general."[101] The *progymnasmata* formed the basis of one's "education in how to speak, how to order argument – how to think, that is – how to persuade (interact), and how to evaluate the presentations of others."[102] In a sense, "the *progymnasmata* were a gymnastic training for the mind, true to the root sense of the verb *gymnazô,* shaping it for certain activities just as athletics shaped the body."[103] By using this well known term, Clement invokes these associated connotations of an essential educational foundation in how to think and speak. However, he also says that all of the different disciplines within the Greek educational curriculum (especially philosophy) serve as the *progmnasmata* for the "Gnostic" (i.e. the one who knows God, and Clement's 'ideal type' of the perfect Christian). In doing so, he simultaneously affirms and humbles the valued system of Greek education, suggesting that the most advanced forms of Greek learning (e.g. philosophy) are akin to

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[101] Ruth Webb, "The Progymnasmata as Practice," in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Yun Lee Too (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 290.

[102] Goldhill, "Rhetoric and the Second Sophistic," 231.

[103] Webb, "The Progymnasmata as Practice," 292.

children's "preparatory exercises" in the educational development of the Gnostic. Yet, unlike

other Christians of his era, Clement affirms the indispensable value of learning from the Greek

educational curriculum for people (within his context) seeking to know God more fully, i.e. to

(more fully) become (like) the Gnostic. Clement writes:

> It is our duty to provide the most varied preparatory exercises for the soul so as to make it
>
> impressible for the reception of knowledge. Do you not see how wax is softened and
>
> copper refined that it may receive the stamp impressed upon it?[104]

This analogy between the "varied preparatory exercises" used for the soul and the preparatory

processes of softening wax and refining copper to receive a stamp impressed upon it, recalls the

idea (mentioned above) of increasing one's capacity to receive the "goods" distributed by the

Logos through disciplined practice.

Clement also suggests that the *progymnasmata,* in addition to making a contribution to

one's ability to receive the impress knowledge, also contribute to the Gnostic's ability to

communicate knowledge, i.e. to co-operate in the Son's prevenient activity of revealing himself

(since, according to Clement, the Son *is* the truth, as well as the *gnosis* of God). With respect to

the proper use of Greek education, Clement explains: "The Gnostic makes use of the branches of

learning as joint-causing preparatory exercises (*sunaitiois progymnasmasin*) for the accurate

communication of the truth, as far as possible."[105] To be sure, Clement does not claim that being

trained in the Greek educational curriculum is in itself necessary for all people at all times who

desire to know God; rather, the need to familiarize oneself with the different branches of Greek

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[104] *Strom.* 7.12.71.1-2: Ἀλλ' ἡμῖν γε ὡς ἔνι μάλιστα προγυμναστέον ποικίλως τὴν ψυχήν, ἵνα εὐεργὸς γένηται πρὸς τὴν τῆς γνώσεως παραδοχήν. οὐχ ὁρᾶτε πῶς μαλάσσεται κηρὸς καὶ καθαίρεται χαλκός, ἵνα τὸν ἐπιόντα χαρακτῆρα παραδέξηται (Chadwick modified).

[105] *Strom.*6.10.82.4: οἱονεὶ δὲ συναιτίοις προγυμνάσμασιν εἴς τε τὴν ἀκριβῆ παράδοσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, ὅσον ἐφικτόν, καὶ ἀπερίσπαστον συγχρωμένου τοῖς μαθήμασι τοῦ γνωστικοῦ (ANF modified)

learning is necessary for the aspiring Gnostic within a particular context, namely, the one in

which Clement is writing. Clement explains that the Gnostic "will not be left wanting in that

which promotes learning in the educational curriculum and in Greek philosophy; but not

according to a primary rationale, but, of situational necessity, a secondary one dependent on

circumstances."[106] Clement then offers one account of the kind of circumstantial requirements he

has in mind, suggesting that "what those laboring in heresies use wickedly, the Gnostic will use

rightly.[107] Other Christians writing before and around the same time as Clement shunned the

study of philosophy, claiming that it leads to heresy. These Christians may have thought they

could easily support their claims by simply pointing to multiple examples of how others,

identified as heretics, have used certain things found in the writings of Greek philosophers to

support their own heretical teachings. In the passage quoted above, Clement acknowledges that

heretics may have used Greek learning wickedly. Nevertheless, he reasons, this is no reason to be

frightened away from Greek education (in the way that children are frightened of masks). The

task is to look deeper and more critically at what lies under the mask. For in doing so, Clement

assures us, not only will the study of philosophy no longer appear threatening, one actually finds

that it can make an indispensable contribution to the Gnostic's ability to rightly apprehend and

communicate of the truth.

As will be discussed in further detail in my next chapter, Clement suggests that there is a

way in which we can view the development of philosophy as a work of divine providence; and it

"makes a contribution to grasping the truth" [108] while nevertheless maintaining that,

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[106] *Strom.*6.10.83.1: οὐκ ἀπολειφθήσεται τοίνυν τῶν προκοπτόντων περὶ τὰς μαθήσεις τὰς ἐγκυκλίους καὶ τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν φιλοσοφίαν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατὰ τὸν προηγούμενον λόγον, τὸν δὲ ἀναγκαῖον καὶ δεύτερον καὶ περιστατικόν· (ANF modified)

[107] *Strom.*6.10.83.1: οἷς γὰρ ἂν πανούργως χρήσωνται οἱ κατὰ τὰς αἱρέσεις πονούμενοι, τούτοις ὁ γνωστικὸς εἰς εὖ καταχρήσεται. (ANF modified)

[108] *Strom.* 1.20.97.1: φιλοσοφία πρὸς κατάληψιν τῆς ἀληθείας,

"[philosophy] is not of itself the cause of the grasp, but together with others, is a co-operating cause"; and, moreover, that "while truth is one, many things come together to assist in the seeking of it, but the finding of it depends on the Son."[109] In short, Clement claims that philosophy works together with other things (as 'joint-causes'), which collectively make a contribution (as a 'co-operating cause') toward the apprehension (or, grasping) of truth, for which, strictly speaking, the Son still remains ultimately responsible.

Although there is but one "Teacher" of *gnosis* (the Logos, the Son), Clement claims that the Gnostic participates in the Teacher's pedagogical plan, and acts as a 'co-operating cause' to assist and intensify the prevenient activity by which all people are (being) lead to the knowledge of God. As Judith Kovacs has shown, for Clement:

> Gnostic perfection involves assimilation to the perfect Teacher, the Logos. As the Gnostic imitates the virtues of the Logos and his contemplation of the Father, so he also mimics his pedagogical methods.[110]

Kovacs specifically identifies four interrelated ways in which the pedagogy of the Gnostic follows that of the Logos. The first three are as follows:

1) He adapts his teaching to the capabilities of his various students, considering carefully the abilities and the readiness of each of his students.

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[109] *Strom.* 1.20.97.1: οὐκ αἰτία οὖσα καταλήψεως, σὺν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις αἰτία καὶ συνεργός.; In the context of the passage cited here, Clement uses the examples of the multiple virtues coming together as causes of the singular existence of 'being blessed,' and many things (such as the sun and fire, the baths and clothing) collectively contributing to the one "being warmed." He then explains, "in the same way, while truth is one, many things come together to assist in the seeking of it, but the finding of it depends on the Son."; *Strom.* 1.20.97.2 ὡς δέ, ἑνὸς ὄντος τοῦ εὐδαιμονεῖν, αἴτιαι τυγχάνουσιν αἱ ἀρεταὶ πλείονες ὑπάρχουσαι, καὶ ὡς τοῦ θερμαίνεσθαι ὅ τε ἥλιος τό τε πῦρ βαλανεῖόν τε καὶ ἐσθής, οὕτω μιᾶς οὔσης τῆς ἀληθείας πολλὰ τὰ συλλαμβανόμενα πρὸς ζήτησιν αὐτῆς, ἡ δὲ εὕρεσις δι' υἱοῦ.

[110] Judith L. Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy and the Gnostic Teacher According to Clement of Alexandria," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9, no. 1 (2001): 17.

2) He thoughtfully arranges the order of the curriculum, knowing that certain things must be learned before others, just as in secular education the *egkuklia* (general education) need to be mastered before the student is ready for rhetoric and philosophy.

3) He understands his pedagogical task as care for souls, a training that is not limited to intellectual matters but is concerned about the purification and reorientation of the whole person.

Thus far, this chapter of my dissertation has examined aspects of Clement's more philosophically formal investigation of 'common notions,' (not explicitly discussed in Kovacs' article) which contribute an additional level of theoretical coherence and support to these articulations of Clement's (more theologically driven) understanding of the ways in which the Gnostic participates in the pedagogical activity of the Logos. According to Kovacs, "the use of concealment" is the fourth way in which the pedagogical practices of Clement's Gnostic follows the example set by the Logos. Clement's "method of concealment" is a controversial issue, which deserves further attention, as it involves several theoretically complex issues. In the next part of this dissertation chapter, I will offer an interpretation of it using my reconstruction of Clement's theory of semiotics.

In this section, I reconstruct a "non-binary relational semiotic" using insights derived from

sections 1 and 2. I then use this reconstructed semiotic to help clarify and explain two

controversial issues among Clement scholars – whether Clement thinks it is acceptable to "lie" to

someone for their own benefit (and why he talks about concealing the meaning of things from

people) and the authenticity of the so-called "Secret Gospel of Mark" letter attributed to

Clement.

CONDITIONING: FOR "SENDING" AND "RECEIVING" INSTRUCTION

Clement writes: "There is no benefit in the best instruction if the learner is not ready to

receive it, or prophecy for that matter, or preaching, if the hearers are not open to persuasion."[1]

Clement illustrates this point using imagery similar to what we have seen in the analysis of

causal relations. He likens receptive learners to "fertile soil," "co-operating [*sunergei*] with the

planting of seeds,"[2] and compares those open to persuasion to easily kindled "dry sticks," "ready

to receive 'the power which is capable of burning'[*tên dunamin tên kaustikên*]."[3]

Because these images might give one the wrong impression, it is important to be clear

that for Clement, hearers and learners are not treated like passive objects upon which the

instructor applies his trade. Receiving "instruction" is not like receiving "a burn" which one can

'get' unwillingly. Clement likens the exercise of instruction to the activity of playing catch,

which "depends not only on a person using skill to send the ball, but needs another to catch it

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[1] Strom. 2.6.26.1: οὔτε γὰρ τῆς ἀρίστης παιδεύσεως ὄφελός τι ἄνευ τῆς τοῦ μανθάνοντος παραδοχῆς οὔτε μὴν προφητείας [οὔτε], τῆς τῶν ἀκουόντων εὐπειθείας μὴ παρούσης.

[2] Strom. 2.6.26.1: συνεργεῖ οὖν καὶ γῆ γόνιμος ὑπάρχουσα πρὸς τὴν τῶν σπερμάτων καταβολήν.

[3] Strom. 2.6.26.2: καὶ γὰρ τὰ κάρφη τὰ ξηρά, ἕτοιμα ὄντα καταδέχεσθαι τὴν δύναμιν τὴν καυστικήν, ῥᾷον ἐξάπτεται

rhythmically, so that the exercise may give the players their fulfillment."[4] It is hard to convey in English, what the Greek of Clement's illustration suggests:

ὥσπερ οὖν τὸ σφαιρίζειν οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ τέχνην πέμποντος τὴν σφαῖραν ἤρτηται μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ εὐρύθμως ἀποδεχομένου προσδεῖ αὐτῷ, ἵνα δὴ κατὰ νόμους τοὺς σφαιριστικοὺς τὸ γυμνάσιον ἐκτελῆται (Strom. 2.6.25.4).

- The Greek word translated as "catch" is *apodechomenou*, from *apodechomai*, which has the sense of "accepting" as in, to accept or follow a teacher, and "admitting" as in "admitting into the mind" and more generally to "take" or "understand" a thing.[5]

- The phrase: *technên pempontos,* comes from *techne* (skill), and *pempô*: to "send," as in "send a messenger," "send word" or "send forth [words]."[6]

Clement's description of the "exercise" (*gymnasion*) of "sending" and "catching" a ball, pertains to the medium of language, and more specifically, to the relationship between vocal sounds (*phônê*), "words" (*onoma*) and their significations (*sêmainomena*), which Clement variously calls "things" (*pragmata*), "concepts" (*noemata*), and "sayables" (*lekta*). As mentioned before, vocal sounds are perceived through physical sensation, but when those vocal sounds are perceived as meaningful words, it is "through a certain mental perception [*psychikês aisthêsôs*] and the intelligence [*noêseôs*] which distinguishes the significations of vocal sounds [*diakritikês tôn sêmainousôn ti phonon*]."[7]

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[4] Strom. 2.6.25.4 (Ferguson, modified).

[5] See LSJ entry: ἀποδέχομαι

[6] See LSJ entry: πέμπω

[7] *Strom.* 7.7.36.5: πέπεισται γὰρ εἰδέναι πάντα τὸν θεὸν καὶ ἐπαΐειν, οὐχ ὅτι τῆς φωνῆς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἐννοίας, ἐπεὶ καὶ ἡ ἀκοὴ ἐν ἡμῖν, διὰ σωματικῶν πόρων ἐνεργουμένη, οὐ διὰ τῆς σωματικῆς δυνάμεως ἔχει τὴν ἀντίληψιν, ἀλλὰ διά τινος ψυχικῆς αἰσθήσεως καὶ τῆς διακριτικῆς τῶν σημαινουσῶν τι φωνῶν νοήσεως. (Chadwick modified).

As a vocal utterance or scribal marking, words are corporeal things perceived by our bodily

senses (hearing, sight). The significations of words, however, are incorporeal "things" (*lekta,*

pragmata, noemata), perceived by the mind. The capacity to grasp them is dependent on our

ability to perceive, interpret, and differentiate the meaning of different signs (which requires

prior training and learning). As we saw in the last section, Sextus reports that for the Stoics:

> Some impressors touch, as it were, and make contact with the commanding-faculty to
>
> make their printing in it, as do white and black, and body in general; whereas others have
>
> a nature like that of the incorporeal sayables (*lekta*), and the commanding-faculty is
>
> impressed *from* them, not *by* them.[8]

Although a 'sayable' is said in words, it is not identical with the words through which it is said

(since the same 'sayable' could be said in other words). To say that the commanding-faculty of

the soul (the mind) is impressed *from* and not *by* 'sayables' is simply to say that, no matter what I

do or say, I cannot *make* someone receive the meaning I intend to communicate through my

words. In fact, it is quite possible that they might 'get' something I do not intend, which may in

fact prove hurtful to them, especially if they are not ready to receive it.

Extrapolating from Clement's causal theory, we might say that in the communication of

meaning, spoken or written words are 'bodies' which are the cause to another body (the hearer

or reader) of the reception of incorporeal effects. However, the reception of this incorporeal

effect is dependent on the active potential of the corporeal signs to produce certain effects (i.e.

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[8] Sextus, *Against the Professors,* 8.409 (=LS 27E): ὥσπερ γάρ, φασίν, ὁ παιδοτρίβης καὶ ὁπλομάχος ἔσθ' ὅτε μὲν λαβόμενος τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ παιδὸς ῥυθμίζει καὶ διδάσκει τινὰς κινεῖσθαι κινήσεις, ἔσθ' ὅτε δὲ ἄπωθεν ἑστὼς καί πως κινούμενος ἐν ῥυθμῷ παρέχει ἑαυτὸν ἐκείνῳ πρὸς μίμησιν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν φανταστῶν ἔνια μὲν οἱονεὶ ψαύοντα καὶ θιγγάνοντα τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ποιεῖται τὴν ἐν τούτῳ τύπωσιν, ὁποῖόν ἐστι τὸ λευκὸν καὶ μέλαν καὶ κοινῶς τὸ σῶμα, ἔνια δὲ τοιαύτην ἔχει φύσιν <....>, τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς φαντασιουμένου καὶ οὐχ ὑπ' αὐτῶν, ὁποῖά ἐστι τὰ ἀσώματα λεκτά.

communicate certain meanings) in relation to the aptitude of the recipient.[9] As in causal

interactions, the same word or expression can be the cause of multiple "effects," i.e. received

meanings.[10]

EXTRAPOLATION: FOUR CATEGORIES OF EVALUATION

In this section, I seek to show how, for Clement, words and expressions can have

multiple meanings which are not only different, but also (potentially) valid. I propose the

following four categories of evaluation.

1) "INVALID"

Invalid names a relationship, or better, the lack of valid relationship, within the triad: (1) words

or expressions, (2) signification (*sêmainomenon*), and (3) the "external" or extra-linguistic thing

or state of affairs referred to (*hypokeimena pragmata*). The evaluative categorization "invalid"

can apply to statements made *about* the signification of words or expressions (i.e. statements

which improperly identify something as the signification of a word or expression), or to

expressed statements that do not have a signification that properly denotes the extra-linguistic

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[9] That the reception of "meaning" is relationally determined does not mean that it is arbitrarily relativistic (as Sextus would have us believe). Even though the same thing can be the cause of different effects, it is not capable of producing any effect to any thing. For example,. fire is capable producing the effect of burning in relation to wood, but not to steel, and "cooking" to meat, and warming to most bodies. However, to the best of my knowledge fire is not capable of being the cause to anything of "perceiving a sweet taste" or "remaining" or "being well governed." Similarly, words can have multiple meanings, but not any meaning to any recipient. Words can communicate no meaning to one who does not speak the language, or different meanings to speakers of different dialects. They also can communicate different meanings to speakers of the same language, but not just any meaning, e.g. there is a limited range of possible meanings for the word "dog" for speakers of the same language.

[10] The most simple example is Clement's discussion of clarifying terms, which is not simply identifying the "correct" meaning or definition of a term – e.g. "dog" could refer to canine, shark, constellation, or a person (none of these significations are in themselves "incorrect," but they may be incorrect from the perspective of the speaker if the received signification is not what the speaker "meant" when he said the word "dog.")

thing or state of affairs about which the statement claims to refer.[11] Those Clement calls

"heretics" commit the former, as he claims:

> Though it be true that the heretics also have the audacity to make use of the prophetic
>
> Scriptures, yet in the first place they do not use them all [*ou pasais*], and in the second
>
> place they do not use them in their fullness [*ou teleiais*], nor as the body and inter-
>
> connected-tissue of the prophecy given; but picking out ambiguous phrases, they turn
>
> them to their own opinions, plucking a few scattered utterances [*phônas*], without
>
> considering what is signified by them [*ou to sêmainomenon ap' autôn*], but misusing the
>
> bare expression as it stands [*autêi psilêi apochrômenoi têi lexei.*]. For in almost all the
>
> passages they employ, you will find how they attend to the words alone [*tois onomasi*
>
> *monois*], while they change the meaning [*ta sêmainomena hupallattontes*], neither
>
> understanding them as they are said [*outh' hôs legontai ginôskontes*], nor using the
>
> quotations they collect according to the natural sense that they have [*outh' hôs echein*
>
> *pephukasi chrômenoi hais kai dê komizousin eklogais*].[12]

Clement criticizes the "heretics" for attributing a meaning (*sêmainomenon*) to selected excerpts

of prophetic Scriptures, which he believes they do not have—neither as they are said (i.e. in the

context of the entire prophetic witness understood in its fullest sense), nor according to their

natural, or "plain sense."

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[11] This would characterize common understandings of what it means to "lie," e.g. I say something I believe is not 'true', and not possibly 'true,' irrespective of how you receive it, it has no possible signification that properly denotes the state of affairs about which I claim to be speaking, e.g. "I wrote this sentence in Idaho" There is no sense in which this sentence has a meaning which I could admit is "valid" or "true," since I know that I am sitting in VA.

[12] *Strom*. 7.16.96.2-4: κἂν τολμήσωσι προφητικαῖς χρήσασθαι γραφαῖς καὶ οἱ τὰς αἱρέσεις μετιόντες, πρῶτον μὲν οὐ πάσαις, ἔπειτα οὐ τελείαις, οὐδὲ ὡς τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὸ ὕφος τῆς προφητείας ὑπαγορεύει, ἀλλ' ἐκλεγόμενοι τὰ ἀμφιβόλως εἰρημένα εἰς τὰς ἰδίας μετάγουσι δόξας, ὀλίγας σποράδην ἀπανθιζόμενοι φωνάς, οὐ τὸ σημαινόμενον ἀπ' αὐτῶν σκοποῦντες, ἀλλ' αὐτῇ ψιλῇ ἀποχρώμενοι τῇ λέξει. σχεδὸν γὰρ ἐν πᾶσιν οἷς προσφέρονται ῥητοῖς εὕροις ἂν αὐτοὺς ὡς τοῖς ὀνόμασι μόνοις προσανέχουσι, τὰ σημαινόμενα ὑπαλλάττοντες, οὔθ' ὡς λέγονται γινώσκοντες οὔθ' ὡς ἔχειν πεφύκασι χρώμενοι αἷς καὶ δὴ κομίζουσιν ἐκλογαῖς. (Chadwick modified).

2) Partially Valid: "More / Less"

This evaluative categorization primarily pertains to the relationship between the concepts (*noemata*) signified by words and expressions and the extra-linguistic things or states of affairs (*hypokeimena pragamata*) of which they are concepts. This allows for the possibility of affirming the validity or truth of particular disciplines within their respective domains of discourse. As Clement writes: "Truth is one, but there is a truth of geometry found in geometry, of music in music; there is no reason why there should not be a Greek truth in the best philosophy."[13] The error Clement attributes to the Greeks is that they mistake their partial grasp of the truth for the full possession of all truth. Clement explains: "They think that they have hit the truth perfectly; but as we understand them, only partially…the philosophers copy the truth, after the manner of painting."[14] In the same way that painting uses various techniques to portray three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional plane, philosophy presents a particular view of the truth, but what it presents is not itself the whole truth.[15]

3) Inherently "Superior / Inferior"

This evaluative categorization pertains to the relationship between multiple, fully valid, significations of the same expression. The same expression can have different significations, and those different significations can each be fully valid (or "true"), but hierarchically differentiated in relation to one another. In other words, equally valid significations can be ranked according to their inherent superiority or value. However, the "lower" signification is no less valid than the "higher." This can be seen in the following two examples.

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[13] *Strom.* 1.20.97.4

[14] Strom. 6.7.56.1.1 ἐπιβάλλειν δ' οἴονται τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὗτοι μὲν τελείως. ὡς δ' ἡμεῖς αὐτοὺς καταλαμβανόμεθα, μερικῶς….καὶ οἱ φιλόσοφοι ζωγραφίας δίκην ἀπομιμοῦνται τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

[15] See *Strom.* 6.7.56.1-2; 6.7147.3

EXAMPLE 1) In book 7, Clement suggests the Gnostic understands a "special" meaning

signified by the words of scripture, which most people do not apprehend:

[The Gnostic] lends, not his ears, but his soul, to the things indicated by the spoken words

[*legomenôn*].[16] Accordingly, what he receives through the words are *ousias* and

pragmata, and he brings his soul, as is fit, to his duties, understanding the commands "Do

not commit adultery, Do not kill," in a special sense, as they are addressed to the Gnostic

and not as they are apprehended by others.[17]

Even though these commandments may have a superior, more spiritual meaning, which the

Gnostic understands, the simple "plain sense" of the commandments remains fully valid.

Clement does not think that because a command has a "higher" meaning, the "lower" one is

somehow less true or less important. Whatever other meaning the commands may have, the

meaning most others apprehend still fully applies. The "higher" meaning does not obviate the

"plain sense" of the command, i.e. it is still not acceptable to commit murder or adultery.

EXAMPLE 2) Clement's description of the relationship between body and soul in book 4

displays a similar kind of categorization of hierarchically differentiated fully valid things:

The soul of man is confessedly the superior part of man, and the body the inferior. But

neither is the soul good by nature, nor, on the other hand, is the body bad by nature. Nor

is that which is not good straightaway bad. For there are things which occupy a middle

place (*mesotêtes*), and in the middle (*en toi mesois*) some things are to be preferred

(*proêgmena*), and some things are to be 'dispreferred' (*apoproêgmena*). The constitution

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[16] *Strom.* 7.11.60.3: οὐ γὰρ τὰς ἀκοάς, ἀλλὰ τὴν ψυχὴν παρίστησι τοῖς ὑπὸ τῶν λεγομένων δηλουμένοις πράγμασιν. (Chadwick modified)

[17] *Strom.* 7.11.60.3 -7.11.60.4: οὐσίας τοίνυν καὶ τὰ πράγματα αὐτὰ παραλαβὼν διὰ τῶν λόγων εἰκότως καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐπὶ τὰ δέοντα ἄγει, τὸ «μὴ μοιχεύσῃς, μὴ φονεύσῃς» ἰδίως ἐκλαμβάνων ὡς εἴρηται τῷ γνωστικῷ, οὐχ ὡς παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὑπείληπται. (Chadwick modified)

of man, then, which has its place among things of sense, was necessarily composed of things diverse, but not opposite: body and soul.[18]

In this passage, Clement appears to be drawing upon the Stoics' categorization of "indifferent" things, into those which are "preferred" (*proêgmnena*) and those which are "dispreferred" (*apoproêgmena*). Stobaeus writes:

> Some valuable things have much value and others little. So too some disvaluable things have much disvalue and others little. Those which have much value are called 'preferred' (*proêgmena*) and those which have much disvalue 'dispreferred' (*apoproêgmena*). Zeno was the first to apply these terms to things. That is preferred (*proêgmenon*), they say, which, though indifferent (*adiaphoron*), we select on the basis of a preferential reason (*proêgoumenon logon*). The like principle applies to being 'dispreferred' and the examples are analogous.[19]

4) CIRCUMSTANTIALLY "BETTER / WORSE"

This evaluative categorization pertains to the relationship between expressions, their possible significations, and the specific context and condition of the person(s) hearing (or reading) them. As previously discussed, Clement believes a wise pedagogue adapts his instruction to the needs and capabilities of his students. "It is the prerogative of the Gnostic to know how to make use of

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[18] Strom. 4.26.164.3-5 κρεῖττον μὲν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὡμολόγηται ἡ ψυχή, ἧττον δὲ τὸ σῶμα. ἀλλ' οὔτε ἀγαθὸν ἡ ψυχὴ φύσει οὔτε αὖ κακὸν φύσει τὸ σῶμα, οὐδὲ μὴν ὃ μή ἐστιν ἀγαθόν, τοῦτο εὐθέως κακόν. εἰσὶ γὰρ οὖν καὶ μεσότητές τινες καὶ προηγμένα καὶ ἀποπροηγμένα ἐν τοῖς μέσοις. ἐχρῆν δὴ οὖν τὴν σύνθεσιν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν αἰσθητοῖς γενομένην ἐκ διαφόρων συνεστάναι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξ ἐναντίων, σώματός τε καὶ ψυχῆς. (ANF modified)

[19] Stobaeus, 2.84,18-85,11 (=LS 58E): Τῶν δ' ἀξίαν ἐχόντων τὰ μὲν ἔχειν πολλὴν ἀξίαν, τὰ δὲ βραχεῖαν. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀπαξίαν ἐχόντων ἃ μὲν ἔχειν πολλὴν ἀπαξίαν, ἃ δὲ βραχεῖαν. Τὰ μὲν πολλὴν ἔχοντα ἀξίαν προηγμένα λέγεσθαι, τὰ δὲ πολλὴν ἀπαξίαν ἀποπροηγμένα, Ζήνωνος ταύτας τὰς ὀνομασίας θεμένου πρώτου τοῖς πράγμασι. Προηγμένον δ' εἶναι λέγουσιν, ὃ ἀδιάφορον <ὂν> ἐκλεγόμεθα κατὰ προηγούμενον λόγον. Τὸν δ' ὅμοιον λόγον ἐπὶ τῷ ἀποπροηγμένῳ εἶναι, καὶ τὰ παραδείγματα κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν ταὐτά.

speech, and when, and how, and to whom."[20] To that extent, different expressions (and significations) might be fully valid in themselves, but considered better or worse according to circumstance. This would be akin to Clement's description of "intermediate" things:

> Some things accordingly are good in themselves, and others by participation in what is good, as we say good actions are good. But without things intermediate which hold the place of material, neither good nor bad actions are constituted, such I mean as life, and health, and other necessary things or circumstantials.[21]

Here again, Clement articulates something akin to a position Stobaeus attributes to the Stoics:

> Value has three senses: a thing's contribution and merit *per se,* the expert's appraisal, and thirdly, what Antipater calls 'selective': (*eklektikên*): according to this, when circumstances permit, we choose these particular things instead of those, for instance health instead of disease, life instead of death, wealth instead of poverty.[22]

Clement's reference to "necessary things" (*tôn anagkaiôn*) and "circumstantials" (*peristatikôn*) also resembles language found in Sextus' critique of the Stoic's "preferred indifferents":

> [I]n the face of the different circumstances (*peristaseis*) of the occasions neither those which are said to be preferred prove to be unconditionally preferred, nor are those said to be 'dispreferred' of necessity 'dispreferred'… Just as in writing people's names we put different letters first at different times, adapting them to the different circumstances…not because some letters are given priority over others by nature but because the circumstances compel us to do this (*tôn de' kairôn touto poiein anagkazontôn*), so too in

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[20] Strom. 6.15.116.3: γνωστικοῦ ἄρα καὶ τὸ εἰδέναι χρῆσθαι τῷ λόγῳ καὶ ὁπότε καὶ ὅπως καὶ πρὸς οὕστινας.

[21] Strom. 4.6.39.3: ἀγαθὰ γοῦν τὰ μὲν αὐτὰ καθ' ἑαυτά, τὰ δὲ μετέχοντα τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ὡς τὰς καλὰς πράξεις φαμέν· ἄνευ δὲ τῶν μεταξύ, ἃ δὴ ὕλης ἐπέχει τάξιν, οὔθ' αἱ ἀγαθαὶ οὔθ' αἱ κακαὶ συνίστανται πράξεις, οἷον ζωῆς λέγω καὶ ὑγιείας τῶν τε ἄλλων τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἢ περιστατικῶν.

[22] Stobaeus 2.83,10-84,2 (=LS 58D).

the things which are between virtue and vice no natural priority for some over others

arises but a priority which is based rather on circumstances.[23]

Unlike Sextus, Clement's intention is not to exhibit the incoherence or "relativistic" nature of the

Stoics' theoretical categorizations. Clement maintains that some things are still regarded as

"inherently" superior. This is not obviated by the fact that some things are prioritized solely

because of circumstantial necessity and not an inherently "preferential reason" (*proêgoumenon*

logon). We have seen one example of something Clement "selects" out of circumstantial

necessity:

> [The Gnostic] will not be left wanting in that which promotes learning in the educational
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> curriculum and in Greek philosophy; but not according to a preferential reason
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> (*proêgoumenon logon*), but, of situational necessity (*anagkaion*), a secondary one
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> dependent on circumstances (*peristatikon*).[24]

In fact, it is worth noting that Clement says his use of philosophy is "selective," i.e. "eclectic"

(*eklektikon*).[25] And, as previously mentioned, one of the circumstantial needs Clement identifies

for selecting from the Greek learning is to show how "what those laboring in heresies use

wickedly, the Gnostic will use rightly.[26]

CLARIFICATION: INDETERMINATE VALUE

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[23] Sextus, *Ad. Math,* 11.64-7 (=LS 58F): ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὰς διαφόρους τῶν καιρῶν περιστάσεις μήτε τὰ λεγόμενα προῆχθαι πάντως γίνεσθαι προηγμένα, μήτε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀποπροῆχθαι κατ' ἀνάγκην ὑπάρχειν ἀποπροηγμένα…ὥσπερ οὖν ἐν ταῖς ὀνοματογραφίαις ἄλλοτ' ἄλλα προτάττομεν στοιχεῖα, πρὸς τὰς διαφόρους περιστάσεις ἀρτιζόμενοι…οὐ τῇ φύσει ἑτέρων παρὰ τὰ ἕτερα γράμματα προκρινομένων, τῶν δὲ καιρῶν τοῦτο ποιεῖν ἀναγκαζόντων, οὕτω κἀν τοῖς μεταξὺ ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας πράγμασιν οὐ φυσική τις γίνεται ἑτέρων παρ' ἕτερα πρόκρισις, κατὰ περίστασιν δὲ μᾶλλον.

[24] *Strom.*6.10.83.1: οὐκ ἀπολειφθήσεται τοίνυν τῶν προκοπτόντων περὶ τὰς μαθήσεις τὰς ἐγκυκλίους καὶ τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν φιλοσοφίαν, ἀλλ' οὐ κατὰ τὸν προηγούμενον λόγον, τὸν δὲ ἀναγκαῖον καὶ δεύτερον καὶ περιστατικόν· (ANF modified)

[25] See *Strom.* 1.7.37.6; On Clement's 'eclecticism,' see Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria*, 100–108.

[26] *Strom.*6.10.83.1: οἷς γὰρ ἂν πανούργως χρήσωνται οἱ κατὰ τὰς αἱρέσεις πονούμενοι, τούτοις ὁ γνωστικὸς εἰς εὖ καταχρήσεται. (ANF modified)

Not every fully valid signification of a word or expression will fall within the last two evaluative categories described above. It is possible that words and expressions have multiple fully valid non-hierarchically differentiated significations. These are of "indeterminate" or "equal" value, neither inherently "superior" nor "inferior," and barring some particular circumstantial need, neither "better" or "worse." Examples can be found in Clement's illustrations of exegesis. Here I choose one for the sake of brevity. In a discussion about how studying mathematics and music contributes to the Gnostic's ability to apprehend the Truth, Clement speaks of "David, playing at once and prophesying, melodiously praising God" and explains three possible significations of the "lyre" and one of "music" in quick succession:

> The lyre, according to its primary signification [*prôton sêmainomenon*], may by the psalmist be used figuratively [*allêgoroumenê*] for the Lord; according to its secondary, for those who continually strike the chords of their souls under the direction of the Choir-master, the Lord.[27] And if the people saved be called the lyre, it will be understood to be in consequence of their giving glory musically, through the inspiration of the Word and the knowledge of God, being struck by the Word so as to produce faith.[28] You may take music in another way, as the ecclesiastical symphony at once of the law and the prophets, and the apostles along with the Gospel, and the harmony which obtained in each prophet, in the transitions of the persons.[29]

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[27] Strom. 6.11.88.3-4: εἴη δ' ἂν τῷ ψαλμῳδῷ κιθάρα ἀλληγορουμένη κατὰ μὲν τὸ πρῶτον σημαινόμενον ὁ κύριος, κατὰ δὲ τὸ δεύτερον οἱ προσεχῶς κρούοντες τὰς ψυχὰς ὑπὸ μουσηγέτῃ τῷ κυρίῳ.

[28] Strom. 6.11.88.4-5: κἂν ὁ σῳζόμενος λέγηται λαὸς κιθάρα, κατ' ἐπίπνοιαν τοῦ λόγου καὶ κατ' ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ θεοῦ δοξάζων μουσικῶς ἐξακούεται, κρουόμενος εἰς πίστιν τῷ λόγῳ.

[29] Strom. 6.11.88.5: λάβοις δ' ἂν καὶ ἄλλως μουσικὴν συμφωνίαν τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν νόμου καὶ προφητῶν ὁμοῦ καὶ ἀποστόλων σὺν καὶ τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τήν τε ὑποβεβηκυῖαν, τὴν καθ' ἕκαστον προφήτην κατὰ τὰς μεταπηδήσεις τῶν προσώπων συνῳδίαν.

In this passage, Clement does not suggest that any of the potential significations of the "lyre" or of "music" he presents are taken to be "better" or "worse" than the others. Rather, the differences depend on the "subject" being viewed in place of the "subject," or *ptôsis,* in the "plain sense," e.g. whether the "lyre" is viewed as figure for the Lord, for those who continually strike to chords of their soul, or for people already "saved."

PRELIMINARY IMPLICATIONS: NON-BINARY AND RELATIONAL

If the proposed categorizations are accepted, one of the implications that would follow is that, for Clement, it is not possible to evaluate the significations of expressions using only a "binary" or "two valued" logic (e.g. true or false, good or bad). It is possible to say something which is fully valid, but circumstantially neither prudent nor helpful, and indeed, potentially harmful to the one hearing (or reading) it. This is not because the intended signification of the expression (as understood by the speaker) is itself the cause of harm, but because the recipient might have an "aptitude" in relation to which the speaker's intended signification would not be received from the expression, but rather, something else, which is potentially harmful. According to Clement, one of the reasons why the Scriptures hide the sense (in addition to making us inquisitive) is so others "might not receive harm in consequence of taking in another sense the things declared for salvation by the Holy Spirit."[30]

APPLICATION: "CONCEALMENT," "LYING," AND THE "SECRET" GOSPEL LETTER

Drawing from Kovacs' article, there appear to be three key topics which pertain to the notion of concealment: (1) Clement's preference for oral instruction; (2) the parabolic, symbolic, and enigmatic style of Scripture, specifically the accounts within scripture which provide examples

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[30] Strom. 6.15.126.1: μηδὲ τοῖς ἅπασι προσῆκον ἦν νοεῖν, ὡς μὴ βλαβεῖεν ἑτέρως ἐκδεξάμενοι τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος σωτηρίως εἰρημένα.

of Jesus' methods of communication and instruction; and (3) the morally concerning issue of "lying," whether it is ever acceptable to mislead someone or to knowingly speak an untruth.

It is important to keep in mind that all three of these forms of concealment arise from a concern for the receptive capacity of each individual (whether he or she is ready and/or able to receive instruction or to understand the meaning of certain teachings), which is related to the proper ordering of the curriculum, (to facilitate the progress of the student), both of which pertain to the broader task of caring for the formation of whole persons. Telling someone something which they are not able to understand does not contribute to that person's growth if they do not receive or understand the meaning, but it may be harmful to their intellectual, moral, and spiritual development if they do receive a meaning but one that is significantly different from what was intended or misunderstand what they have been taught. The same holds for teaching things "out of order" offering the learner something which he has not been properly prepared and trained to handle, like "offering a dagger to a child."[31]

DIALOGICAL APPRENTICESHIP AND PARABOLIC WRITING

As Kovac's suggests, Clement's preference for oral instruction is pedagogically motivated and is modeled after the practice of Jesus, the incarnate Logos, who spoke in parables and reserved the highest truths for oral teaching:[32]

> Now he did not reveal to the many what did not belong to the many, but to a few, to whom he knew that these things pertained, to those who were capable of receiving and

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[31] Clement writes in the introduction to book 1 of the *Stromateis* that he has deliberately refrained from committing certain teachings to writing, "not in a spirit of grudging (that would be wrong), but in fear that my companions might misunderstand them and go astray and that I might be found offering a dagger to a child" (*Strom.* 1.1.14.3, Ferguson).

[32] Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy," 17.

being formed by them. But secret things are entrusted to speech, not to writing, as is the case with God.[33]

As mentioned above, Clement maintains that there is no benefit to the best instruction if the learner is not ready to receive it. The problem is not, primarily, a matter of worthiness so much as it is an issue of capability, although, to be sure, moral purification is a necessary condition for the possibility of receiving knowledge:

> For when it is pure and set free from all evil the mind is somehow capable of receiving the power of God and the divine image is set up in it....To attain the knowledge of God is impossible for those who are still under the control of their passions.[34]

The benefit of oral instruction is that it allows a teacher to know his students and, as suggested by the "playing catch" analogy, skillfully send forth words which communicate things the learner can "catch," i.e. understand. E. L. Fortin writes:

> [T]he teacher who addresses an individual or a group is in a unique position to gauge the effect of his words on the hearer. Thanks to the direct contact with his audience, he can usually diagnose with a fair measure of accuracy their native intellectual ability, their moral character, and their degree of preparation.[35] He is thus able to determine what is

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[33] Strom. 1.1.13.2: αὐτίκα οὐ πολλοῖς ἀπεκάλυψεν ἃ μὴ πολλῶν ἦν, ὀλίγοις δέ, οἷς προσήκειν ἠπίστατο, τοῖς οἵοις τε ἐκδέξασθαι καὶ τυπωθῆναι πρὸς αὐτά· τὰ δὲ ἀπόρρητα, καθάπερ ὁ θεός, λόγῳ πιστεύεται, οὐ γράμματι. (Kovacs)

[34] *Strom.* 3.5.42.6: καθαρὸς γὰρ ὢν καὶ πάσης κακίας ἀπηλλαγμένος ὁ νοῦς δεκτικός πως ὑπάρχει τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως, ἀνισταμένης ἐν αὐτῷ τῆς θείας εἰκόνος·... θεοῦ δὲ γνῶσιν λαβεῖν τοῖς ἔτι ὑπὸ τῶν παθῶν ἀγομένοις ἀδύνατον·

[35] Fortin cites *Strom.* 1.1.9.1: "He who addresses those he is with both tests his hearers over a period of time and judges them with discernment and distinguishes the one who is capable of hearing from the others, by observing their words, their manners, their habits, their way of life, their movements, their attitudes, their glance, their voice— the cross-roads, the rock, the well-worn track, the fruit bearing earth, the field overgrown in trees, and the fertile and beautiful and cultivated earth that can multiply the seed." (Kovacs).

best suited for them at any given moment and in so doing lead them by the hand to the perception of the most difficult truths.[36]

Harry Gamble argues that, to a large extent, much of the early Christian interest in orality and the "living voice" has to do with a "preference for personal instruction or demonstration in contexts where it was particularly useful," and is closely related to practices of "apprenticeship."[37]

One of the reasons why Clement prefers the method of question and answer over direct exposition is that it allows one to can check whether one's hearers are 'catching' the significations of one's words, answer questions, and correct misapprehensions.[38]

The trouble with a written work is that "it uses only the one voice, that of writing, and gives no response, beyond what is written, to one who makes inquiries."[39] For that reason, as Kovacs and others argue, Clement models his writing after the "parabolic style" of Scripture, which is capable of simultaneously speaking to different people on different levels, according to their needs and capabilities.[40]

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[36] E. L. Fortin, "Clement of Alexandria and the Esoteric Tradition," *Studia Patristica* 9, no. 3 (1966): 45–46.

[37] Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (Yale University Press, 1995), 31. "Apprenticeship has always been the normal means of training in the crafts because craftspeople recognize that demonstration is more effective than written instruction in the acquisition of manual skills. Yet the sense of the importance of first-hand instruction was also expressed in two other contexts: in rhetoric, where the importance of ex tempore composition and live performance were emphasized, and among the Hellenistic philosophical schools, where the transmission of tradition was thought to be ideally accomplished through personal tutelage and where books were often represented as written compendia of oral instruction best employed under the personal guidance of a teacher. In none of these contexts, however, were texts unavailable, unused, or not valued" (ibid).; Note Clement's comment: "written works of necessity require an assistant, either the author or someone else who follows in his footsteps" (*Strom.* 1.1.14.4. Kovacs).

[38] Even communicating something as simple as "a dog is an animal" may require clarification, how much more so the knowledge of God!

[39] *Strom.* 1.1.14.4 (Kovacs)

[40] Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogoy," 25; See also Hagg, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism*, 146–147.

<u>**ON "LYING"**</u>

Among Clement scholars, the preference for oral instruction and Clement's statements concerning the "parabolic style" of Scripture are not controversial. What is controversial is the question of whether Clement thinks there are certain circumstances in which it is appropriate to intentionally lie, or misrepresent the truth—the so-called "medicinal lie."[41] In book 7, Clement writes:

> Whatever [the Gnostic] has in his mind, that is also on his tongue—to those who by virtue of their assent are worthy to hear it—since he both speaks and lives out his understanding. For he thinks what is true and also speaks it, except, on occasion, in a medicinal way, as a doctor does to those who are sick, he will lie or speak an untruth—as the sophists say—for the deliverance of those who are ill.[42]

From this passage, it is unclear how we should interpret the qualifying phrase "as the sophists say." The Greek: ψεύσεται ἢ ψεῦδος ἐρεῖ κατὰ τοὺς σοφιστάς, might suggest something like "according to what the sophists say," meaning—Clement would not himself describe the activity as "lying" (*pseusetai*) or speaking a "falsehood" (*pseudos*)—but "the sophists" would. Or, that speaking untruths (or falsehoods) is something "the sophists" do, and Clement is here condoning its "medicinal use"; or, that the phrase itself (i.e. "speaking an untruth") is an expression "the sophists" use.

If we consider the examples Clement provides, I would suggest that he does not mean by "lie" what we might typically think. At the very least, one thing seems clear—the Gnostic's use

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[41] See, for example, Bart D. Ehrman, *Forgery and Counter-forgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 542; David Satran, "Pedagogy and Deceit in the Alexandrian Theological Tradition," in *Origeniana Quinta*, ed. Robert J. Daly (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 119–24.

[42] *Strom.* 7.9.53.1-2: Πᾶν ἄρα ὅτιπερ ἂν ἐν νῷ, τοῦτο καὶ ἐπὶ γλώσσης φέρει πρὸς τοὺς ἐπαΐειν ἀξίους ἐκ τῆς συγκαταθέσεως, [καὶ] ἀπὸ γνώμης λέγων ἅμα καὶ βιούς. ἀληθῆ τε γὰρ φρονεῖ ἅμα καὶ ἀληθεύει, πλὴν εἰ μή ποτε ἐν θεραπείας μέρει, καθάπερ ἰατρὸς πρὸς νοσοῦντας ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν καμνόντων, ψεύσεται ἢ ψεῦδος ἐρεῖ κατὰ τοὺς σοφιστάς

of "deception" is motivated by his concern for the well-being of the individual(s) being "deceived," and not, *per se*, for the benefit of others (the "greater good") or to protect a community's "secret." Clement provides the following illustration to explain his comment about medicinal deception:

> For example, the noble apostle circumcised Timothy, although he had proclaimed aloud and had written that circumcision made by hands was of no advantage. But since he feared that, if he were all at once to drag his Hebrew disciples, still restive, away from the law to the "circumcision of the heart through faith," he would force them to break away from the congregation, he practiced accommodation and "became a Jew to the Jews, in order to win all." Therefore the one who condescends to the point of accommodation, in order to save his neighbor—i.e. solely for the salvation of those for whom he accommodates himself—and who does not dissemble because of any danger that threatens the righteous at the hands of those who are jealous of them, is in no way under compulsion; though, solely for the good of his neighbors, he will do some things which would not be done by him in the first instance (*ha ouk an proêgoumenôs autôi prachtheiê*), were it not for them.[43]

To say that the circumcision made by hands is "of no advantage" (*ouden ôphelein*) is not to say that it is necessarily "wrong," or even a "disadvantage." Recall Clement's clarification, quoted above: "that which is 'not good' is not straightaway 'bad.' For there are things which

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[43] *Strom.* 7.9.53.3-5: αὐτίκα Τιμόθεον ὁ γενναῖος περιέτεμεν ἀπόστολος, κεκραγὼς καὶ γράφων περιτομὴν τὴν χειροποίητον οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖν· ἀλλ' ἵνα μή, ἀθρόως ἀποσπῶν τοῦ νόμου πρὸς τὴν ἐκ πίστεως τῆς καρδίας περιτομήν, ἀφηνιάζοντας ἔτι τοὺς ἀκρωμένους τῶν Ἑβραίων ἀπορρῆξαι τῆς συναγωγῆς ἀναγκάσῃ, συμπεριφερόμενος «Ἰουδαίοις Ἰουδαῖος ἐγένετο, ἵνα πάντας κερδήσῃ». ὁ τοίνυν μέχρι τῆς συμπεριφορᾶς διὰ τὴν τῶν πέλας σωτηρίαν συγκαταβαίνων (ψιλῶς διὰ τὴν τῶν δι' οὓς συμπεριφέρεται σωτηρίαν), οὐδεμιᾶς ὑποκρίσεως διὰ τὸν ἐπηρτημένον τοῖς δικαίοις ἀπὸ τῶν ζηλούντων κίνδυνον μετέχων, οὗτος οὐδαμῶς ἀναγκάζεται· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν πλησίον ὠφελείᾳ μόνῃ ποιήσει τινά, ἃ οὐκ ἂν προηγουμένως αὐτῷ πραχθείη, εἰ μὴ δι' ἐκείνους ποιοίη. (Kovacs; Chadwick for lines 4.5-5.1).

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occupy a middle place (*mesotêtes*), and in the middle (*en toi mesois*) some things are to be preferred (*proêgmena*), and some things are to be dis-preferred (*apoproêgmena*)."[44] As it would seem, physical circumcision is something which occupies a "middle place" in Clement's understanding, i.e. something which is, in itself, neither "good" nor "bad." Generally speaking, it is not something Clement would say is "to be preferred" (*proêgmena*), but circumstantially, "for the advantage [*ôpheleiâi*] of his neighbors," he will do things which would not be preferred, if not done for their sake.

In Clement's understanding of moral "responsibility," which is directly related to his theory of "causality," the one "responsible" (*aition*) for something's coming about must be related to the activity: "as the shipbuilder in relation to the coming into being of the hull, or the house-builder in relation to the being built of the house." On that basis, he claims, "non-prevention is quite different from bringing into being."[45] Someone who does not prevent something's coming about has not acted, and so, strictly speaking, cannot be the "cause" (*aition*) of what comes about. And, according to Clement, to say the one who does not prevent something from happening is "responsible" for what happens is like saying "the cause of the wounding is not the arrow, but the shield, which did not prevent the arrow from passing through."[46]

By having Timothy circumcised, Paul does something which is neither good nor bad in itself (i.e. it is "of no benefit"). If his "Hebrew disciples" understand it differently (i.e. as something which is inherently good and beneficial) Paul is not responsible, *per se*, for their grasping of an "inferior" meaning. The ultimate aim is to help them develop to the point in

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[44] Strom. 4.26.164.4 οὐδὲ μὴν ὃ μή ἐστιν ἀγαθόν, τοῦτο εὐθέως κακόν. εἰσὶ γὰρ οὖν καὶ μεσότητές τινες καὶ προηγμένα καὶ ἀποπροηγμένα ἐν τοῖς μέσοις.. (ANF modified)

[45] Strom. 1.17.82.4: ἔτι τὸ μὲν αἴτιον πρὸς τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ ἐστί, καθάπερ ὁ μὲν ναυπηγὸς πρὸς τῷ γίγνεσθαι τὸ σκάφος, ὁ δὲ οἰκοδόμος πρὸς τῷ κτίζεσθαι τὴν οἰκίαν· τὸ δὲ μὴ κωλῦον κεχώρισται τοῦ γινομένου.

[46] 1.17.82.6: εἴ γε τῆς τρώσεως οὐχὶ τὸ βέλος, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀσπίδα τὴν μὴ κωλύσασαν τὸ βέλος διελθεῖν αἰτιάσονται·

which they can grasp the "superior" signification of the sign of circumcision, i.e. the "circumcision of the heart by faith." However, Clement suggests, because they have not yet developed the capacity to grasp what that means, to try to explain it to them in their current condition would be harmful to them, insofar as it might "force them to break away from the congregation." This is not dissimilar from Joseph Trigg's example of Origen's practice of "deception." Kovacs reports that, according to Trigg:

> Origen deceives his reader when he doesn't say openly that scriptural references to
> eternal punishments are not to be taken literally, and also when he does not mention the
> cleansing punishments that follow minor sins—the former because he wants to preclude
> overconfidence and the latter because he does not want his readers to lose heart.[47]

Not openly saying and not mentioning something are not actions. To that extent, within Clement's understanding of "responsibility," strictly speaking, Origen is not the "cause" of his readers not-yet grasping the "superior" significations of scriptural references to different types of punishments. However, if he were to explain the "higher" meaning of these passages to people who are not-yet capable of receiving that meaning, he might inadvertently offer them something with which they harm themselves—like offering a dagger to a child. This rationale appears to lie behind Clement's allegorical interpretation of Exodus 21:33-34, the "plain sense" of which prescribes a penalty for the owner of a pit, should an animal fall into it:

> For fear that one of these [simple believers], encountering the *gnosis* taught by you and
> being incapable of holding the truth, should misunderstand and fall away, Scripture says
> to be cautious how you use the word. To those who are irrational in their approach, fence
> off the living spring that lies deep but offer a drink to those who thirst for truth. Practice

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[47] Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy," fn. 72, p. 18; citing Joseph Trigg, "Divine Deception and the Truthfulness of Scripture," in *Origen of Alexandria: His World and His Legacy*, ed. C Kannengiesser and W. L. Peterson (Notre Dame, IN :: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 162.

concealment, then, toward those who are not able to receive the "depths of *gnosis*," and

cover the pit. The owner of the pit—that is, the Gnostic—shall himself pay the penalty,

the text says, incurring the blame for the one who was scandalized, or drowned, because

of the magnitude of the word, since he was still of slender understanding.[48]

In this example, the image of "fencing off a living spring" and "covering a pit" might give the

impression that the Gnostic *actively* works to prevent simple believers from accessing the depths

of *gnosis*. However, in the allegory, the "pit" which the Gnostic "owns," is not a piece of

property which he possesses, it is *gnosis*. To "cover the pit," then, refers not so much to

something the Gnostic *does,* but to what he does not do—i.e. he does not try to tell simple

believers everything he knows. To not say something, (i.e. to "cover," or "close" one's mouth) is

not an action, and is thus not "lying," if "lying" is taken to mean, actively and intentionally

saying something which is "invalid." Indeed, as Kovacs points out, Clement portrays the Gnostic

as "…never being willing to lie in uttered word."[49]

THE "SECRET GOSPEL" LETTER

There is one example which often appears in discussions about Clement's acceptance of "lying"

which does not fit the paradigm I have outlined above. It comes from the so-called "Secret

Gospel of Mark" letter attributed to Clement, published by Morton Smith in 1973.[50] Scholars are

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[48] Strom. 5.9.54.2-4: ἵνα οὖν μή τις τούτων, ἐμπεσὼν εἰς τὴν ὑπὸ σοῦ διδασκομένην γνῶσιν, ἀκρατὴς γενόμενος τῆς ἀληθείας, παρακούσῃ τε καὶ παραπέσῃ, ἀσφαλής, φησί, περὶ τὴν χρῆσιν τοῦ λόγου γίνου, καὶ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀλόγως προσιόντας ἀπόκλειε τὴν ζῶσαν ἐν βάθει πηγήν, ποτὸν δὲ ὄρεγε τοῖς τῆς ἀληθείας δεδιψηκόσιν. ἐπικρυπτόμενος δ' οὖν πρὸς τοὺς οὐχ οἵους τε ὄντας παραδέξασθαι τὸ «βάθος τῆς γνώσεως» κατακάλυπτε τὸν λάκκον. ὁ κύριος οὖν τοῦ λάκκου, ὁ γνωστικὸς αὐτός, ζημιωθήσεται, φησί, τὴν αἰτίαν ὑπέχων τοῦ σκανδαλισθέντος ἤτοι καταποθέντος τῷ μεγέθει τοῦ λόγου, μικρολόγου ἔτι ὄντος, (Kovacs)

[49] Strom. 7.9.53.6 (Kovacs, p. 19).

[50] Morton Smith, *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973).

divided on the question of the letter's authenticity.[51] The story of its discovery, subsequent

disappearance, and the details of Smith's personal life are no less controversial.[52] Smith argues

for the plausibility of Clement's authorship through a comparison of its linguistic style and

vocabulary with Clement's known writings. A. H. Criddle, using the same approach, argues the

reverse—the style is *too* Clementine and the large amount of Clement's rare words it includes is

statistically improbable.[53] At least three different scholars have independently analyzed the

handwriting of the text in the photographs and each inferred significantly different conclusions.[54]

Bart Ehrman, who doubts the letter's authenticity, wrote in 2003 that we cannot be certain

whether the text is a forgery "until, if ever, the manuscript is found and subjected to a rigorous

investigation, including the testing of the ink. Until that happens, some will continue treating the

piece as authentic, others will have their doubts."[55] My aim here is not to resolve the seemingly

intractable debate about the letter's authenticity and/or the significance of its contents. However,

as a kind of "test" for the theories I have been exploring in this chapter, I suggest that if we

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[51] The literature concerning this controversial topic is extensive. For overviews of the debate (by scholars who take contrasting positions with respect to the letter's authenticity) see: Francis Watson, "Beyond Suspicion: On the Authorship of the Mar Saba Letter and the Secret Gospel of Mark," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 61, no. 1 (March 23, 2010): 128–170; Paul Foster, "Secret Mark: Its Discovery and the State of Research," *The Expository Times* 117, no. 2 (November 1, 2005): 46–52; Stephen C. Carlson, *The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith's Invention of Secret Mark* (Baylor University Press, 2005); Scott G. Brown, *Mark's Other Gospel: Rethinking Morton Smith's Controversial Discovery* (Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press, 2005); Charles W. Hedrick, "The Secret Gospel of Mark: Stalemate in the Academy," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 2 (2003): 133–145; Bart D. Ehrman, "Response to Charles Hedrick's Stalemate," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 2 (2003): 155–163; Morton Smith, "Clement of Alexandria and Secret Mark: The Score at the End of the First Decade," *Harvard Theological Review* 75 (1982): 449–461.

[52] See, for example, Peter Jeffery, *The Secret Gospel of Mark Unveiled: Imagined Rituals of Sex, Death, and Madness in a Biblical Forgery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

[53] A. H. Criddle, "On the Mar Saba Letter Attributed to Clement of Alexandria," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3, no. 2 (1995): 215–220.

[54] Carlson, *The Gospel Hoax*; Venetia Anastapoulou, "Experts Report Handwriting Examination," *Biblical Archaeology Review Online*, October 14, 2009, http://www.bib-arch.org/scholars-study/secret-mark-handwriting-analysis.asp; Agamemnon Tselikas, "Report on the Letter of Clement," *Biblical Archaeological Review Online*, October 14, 2009, http://www.bib-arch.org/scholars-study/secret-mark-handwriting-agamemnon.asp.

[55] Ehrman, "Response to Charles Hedrick's Stalemate," 162–63.

attend to the *sêmainomena* of the writing and not its *onomata* or *lexeis,* the letter does not "sound" like something written by "the most holy Clement, author of the *Stromateis*."[56]

The letter discusses a heretical sect, the "Capocratians," whose doctrine, arguments, and behavior the "undisputed" Clement criticizes in book 3 of the *Stromateis.* The "disputed" Clement says of the Carpocratians in the letter, "such men are to be opposed in all ways and altogether." However, the notion of opposing persons (and not, per se, the arguments, doctrines, and/or behavior of persons) seems inconsistent with the "undisputed" Clement's explanation of "loving one's enemies" in book 4 of the *Stromateis*:

> Loving one's enemies does not meaning loving wickedness, or impiety, or adultery or theft; but the thief, the impious, the adulterer, not as far as he sins, and in respect of the actions by which he stains the name of man, but as he is a man, and the work of God. Assuredly sin is an *energeia*, not an *ousia*.[57]

Recall that, in the other examples from the "undisputed" Clement, the sole motivation for "concealment" and/or the use of "deception" (as the sophists say) is a concern for the well-being of the persons from whom one is concealing *gnosis,* and those whom one's accommodating statements and/or actions may "deceive" (e.g. the Gnostic condescends "solely for the salvation of those for whom he accommodates himself"). In contrast, the "disputed" Clement seems to be motivated by a desire to preserve the purity of the secret "composition" which, he claims, Mark left "to the church in Alexandria, where it even yet is most carefully guarded, being read only to

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[56] I cite the letter according to Smith's translation, in Morton Smith, *The Secret Gospel: The Discovery And Interpretation of the Secret Gospel According to Mark* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); Osborn, "Clement of Alexandria: A Review of Research, 1958-1982." "[F]or Clement true gnosis is not attained by acquaintance with hidden documents, but by faith and love as learned through interpretation of public apostolic writing" (224).

[57] *Strom.* 4.13.93.3-94.1: τὸ δὲ ἀγαπᾶν τοὺς ἐχθροὺς οὐκ ἀγαπᾶν τὸ κακὸν λέγει οὐδὲ ἀσέβειαν ἢ μοιχείαν ἢ κλοπήν, ἀλλὰ τὸν κλέπτην καὶ τὸν ἀσεβῆ καὶ τὸν μοιχόν, οὐ καθὸ ἁμαρτάνει καὶ τῇ ποιᾷ ἐνεργείᾳ μολύνει τὴν ἀνθρώπου προσηγορίαν, καθὸ δὲ ἄνθρωπός ἐστι καὶ ἔργον θεοῦ. ἀμέλει τὸ ἁμαρτάνειν <ἐν> ἐνεργείᾳ κεῖται, οὐκ οὐσίᾳ (ANF)

those who are being initiated into the great mysteries," and what upsets him is that heretic, Carpocrates, has obtained a copy of this esoteric text and has "polluted" it, "mixing with the spotless and holy words utterly shameless lies [*tais achrantois kai agiais lexesin anamignus anaide stata pseusmata*]."[58]

Although he is unequivocal in his opposition to certain behaviors and teachings, Clement typically maintains that his criticisms aim to persuade those who have fallen (or, are falling) into error to seek the truth.[59] There is little indication that the "undisputed" Clement is concerned with preserving the sanctity of *words,* or guarding esoteric *writings* from the unworthy. Rather, he is concerned with encouraging *people* to progress in holiness and of protecting *people*, who are not yet prepared to receive "the full magnitude of the word."

The "disputed" Clement, shows no concern for the well-being or salvation of the Carpocratians and says nothing about doing things for their benefit. Instead, he writes:

> To them, therefore, as I said above, one must never give way, nor, when they put forward
> their falsifications, should one concede that the secret Gospel is by Mark, but should even
> deny it on oath.

The idea of actively saying something which one knows is invalid, and the instruction that one "should even deny it on oath" seems inconsistent with the "undisputed" Clement's portrayal of

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[58] Smith included photographs of the Greek manuscript in his book. Copies and transcriptions of the Greek text are widely available on the internet.

[59] See for example, his comments in 7.16.101-102: "For God does not take vengeance (for vengeance is a retaliation of evil), but he chastens with a view to the good, both public and private, of those who are chastened. These things I have set forth, desiring to turn aside from their proclivity to heresy those who are eager to learn; but as for others, I have used these arguments out of a longing desire to make them cease from the prevailing ignorance or stupidity or ill condition or whatever it is to be called, and endeavoring to persuade and bring over to the truth those who are not yet altogether incurable." He admits that there are some "who absolutely refuse to give ear to those who urge them to seek the truth: aye, and they aim at smartness, pouring out blasphemous words against the truth, while they credit themselves with the possession of the highest knowledge, though they have not learn or sought or laboured or discovered the harmony of truth." But he also makes clear that these people "excite our pity rather than our hate" οὓς ἐλεήσειεν ἄν τις ἢ μισήσειεν (*Strom.* 7.16.103.1.,Chadwick).

the Gnostic who is never willing "to lie in uttered word."[60] It also starkly contrasts with

Clement's description of the Gnostic as:

> [b]eing persuaded that God is always present everywhere, and being ashamed not to tell
>
> the truth, and knowing that, not to speak of perjury, even a lie is unworthy of himself, he
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> is satisfied with the witness of God and of his own conscience only. So while on the one
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> hand he neither lies nor does anything contrary to his agreements, on the other hand he
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> neither takes an oath when it is demanded of him, nor denies what he has done, being
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> resolute to be clear of lying, even though he should die under torture.[61]

In book 4, Clement cautions that one should not *actively* seek physical martyrdom.[62] Here, he

clarifies that if one is forced to choose, "the Gnostic" would rather die under torture than lie. And

not only that, "the Gnostic" is also unwilling to swear an oath when it is demanded of him, even

about things he believes are true. Trust in God's omnipresent witness and providential ordering

of creation and history is sufficient enough for him.

In the conclusion of book 6, Clement explains that whereas the Greek philosophers only

share their teaching with select followers (Socrates to Plato, and Plato to Xenocrates, Aristotle to

Theophrastus, and Zeno to Cleanthes), "the word of our Teacher remained not in Judea alone."[63]

According to his observation, it is diffused throughout the inhabited world (*oikoumenên*), to

Greeks and "Barbarians" alike, and throughout every village and city, whole houses (*oikous*

olous) and separate individuals (including not a few philosophers) are being introduced to the

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[60] Strom. 7.9.53.6.

[61] *Strom.* 7.8.51.7-8: πεπεισμένος οὖν πάντῃ τὸν θεὸν εἶναι πάντοτε καὶ αἰδούμενος μὴ ἀληθεύειν ἀνάξιόν τε αὐτοῦ τὸ ψεύδεσθαι γινώσκων, τῇ συνειδήσει τῇ θείᾳ καὶ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀρκεῖται μόναις· καὶ ταύτῃ οὐ ψεύδεται οὐδὲ παρὰ τὰς συνθήκας τι ποιεῖ, ταύτῃ δὲ οὐδὲ ὄμνυσιν ὅρκον ἀπαιτηθεὶς οὐδὲ ἔξαρνός ποτε γίνεται, ἵνα μὴ ψεύσηται, κἂν ἐναποθνήσκῃ ταῖς βασάνοις.

[62] See *Strom.* 4.10.76-77. Clement suggests the reason for not actively seeking physical martyrdom is not self-preservation, per se, but for the sake of the persecutors—one should not tempt others to commit murder.

[63] Strom. 6.18.167.2-3

truth.[64] Moreover, he claims, wherever a leader resists the philosophy of the Greeks, it soon

disappears, but:

> Our teaching, from the moment of its first proclamation, was resisted by both kings and
> tyrants, together with local leaders and military heads with all their soldiers, not to
> mention a huge crowd of people, warring against us, and trying with all their power to
> eradicate it. But it flourishes all the more, because it is does not die like human teaching
> and does not wither like a feeble gift (for no gift of God is feeble), but remains
> unimpeded, although prophesied to be persecuted until the end.[65]

The teaching with which Clement identifies is not something intentionally reserved for a select

group of followers, but something diffused throughout the inhabited world. One of the signs of it

not being like other, human, teachings, is that it does not disappear under persecution, but

continues to flourish. Although one should not deliberately seek physical martyrdom, Clement

also claims, in book 4, that "the Gnostic" would happily give his life if necessary, not for fear of

divine punishment or desire for heavenly reward, but out of love for the Lord.[66] In book 7, he

extends this claim, arguing that "the Gnostic" would rather die under torture than lie, and will not

even swear an oath to something he believes is true. So, it is hard to imagine that the same

person who wrote the *Stromateis* would then write a letter advising someone to swear an oath,

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[64] *Strom.* 6.18.167.3-4: ὁ δέ γε τοῦ διδασκάλου τοῦ ἡμετέρου λόγος οὐκ ἔμεινεν ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ μόνῃ, καθάπερ ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι ἡ φιλοσοφία, ἐχύθη δὲ ἀνὰ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην, πείθων Ἑλλήνων τε ὁμοῦ καὶ βαρβάρων κατὰ ἔθνος καὶ κώμην καὶ πόλιν πᾶσαν οἴκους ὅλους καὶ ἰδίᾳ ἕκαστον τῶν ἐπακηκοότων καὶ αὐτῶν γε τῶν φιλοσόφων οὐκ ὀλίγους ἤδη ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν μεθιστάς.

[65] *Strom.* 6.18.167.4-5: καὶ τὴν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐὰν ὁ τυχὼν ἄρχων κωλύσῃ, οἴχεται παραχρῆμα, τὴν δὲ ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν ἔκτοτε σὺν καὶ τῇ πρώτῃ καταγγελίᾳ κωλύουσιν ὁμοῦ βασιλεῖς καὶ τύραννοι καὶ οἱ κατὰ μέρος ἄρχοντες καὶ ἡγεμόνες μετὰ τῶν μισθοφόρων ἁπάντων, πρὸς δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀπείρων ἀνθρώπων, καταστρατευόμενοί τε ἡμῶν καὶ ὅση δύναμις ἐκκόπτειν πειρώμενοι· ἣ δὲ καὶ μᾶλλον ἀνθεῖ· οὐ γὰρ ὡς ἀνθρωπίνη ἀποθνήσκει διδασκαλία οὐδ' ὡς ἀσθενὴς μαραίνεται δωρεά (οὐδεμία γὰρ ἀσθενὴς δωρεὰ θεοῦ), μένει δὲ ἀκώλυτος, διωχθήσεσθαι εἰς τέλος προφητευθεῖσα. (ANF modified)

[66] *Strom.* 4.4.14.1: οὗτος οὖν <οὐ> φόβῳ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι Χριστὸν διὰ τὴν ἐντολὴν ἐκκλινεῖ, ἵνα δὴ φόβῳ μάρτυς γένηται· οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ ἐλπίδι δωρεῶν ἡτοιμασμένων πιπράσκων τὴν πίστιν, ἀγάπῃ δὲ πρὸς τὸν κύριον ἀσμενέστατα τοῦδε τοῦ βίου ἀπολυθήσεται

about something he knows is a lie, to prevent people from discovering something true, i.e. the identity of the author of a carefully guarded esoteric text, which is being intentionally kept in a single place, and reserved for a select group of followers.

Some might think my argument about why it is hard to imagine that Clement wrote the "Secret Gospel" letter depends on, what Smith calls, "secondhand trivialities" and "fantastic conjectures."[67] If the question can only be settled by "objective evidence, and above all the details of literary style,"[68] I suggest one clear piece of "evidence" against Clement's authorship is the fact that the author of the letter refers to *lexeis,* i.e. "expressions," as "spotless and holy." As far as I know, nowhere in the "undisputed" Clement's extant writings does he ever call *lexeis* "spotless" or "holy." In fact, I know of no instance in which he uses a particularly positive or "religious" sounding adjective for *lexeis.*[69] I suggest the reason Clement *does not* and indeed *would not* say such things about "expressions" is directly related to his semiotic theory. As I have tried to show, for Clement, an expression can have multiple, valid, significations, which can be inherently "superior" or "inferior," circumstantially "better" or "worse," or of equally "indifferent" value, in relation to the persons or community receiving those significations in a given place and time.

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[67] Smith, "Clement of Alexandria and Secret Mark: The Score at the End of the First Decade," 451.

[68] Smith, "Clement of Alexandria and Secret Mark: The Score at the End of the First Decade," 451.

[69] A search of Clement's corpus on TLG shows that *lexeis,* in its various forms, is fairly common within Clement's vocabulary. However, after a cursory survey of the many instances in which it appears, I found none in which Clement adjoins an adjectival description like "holy" or "pure," or even anything particularly positive. Admittedly, further work would be required to show this convincingly, but my sense is that Clement uses *lexeis* only when speaking about words and phrases on the level of vocalizations or scribal markings (i.e. as corporeal signs), which he regularly differentiates from the incorporeal meaning perceived by the mind. See, for example, his comments in Strom. 6.15.132.3 about those who only see the *lexeis* and *onomata* when they look at the body of Scripture, being like those who only see the body of Moses, in contrast with those who use their mind to see what the words reveal, i.e. Moses with the Angels. To be sure, earlier in the same chapter (6.15), Clement suggests that a passage of scripture shows that "holy words are hidden," but in the Greek, what he calls "holy" are *logoi* (plural of *logos),* not *lexeis*: ἐπικεκρυμμένους τοὺς ἁγίους λόγους εἶναι διδάσκων (6.15.116.1). Whereas he uses the former in a variety of ways, he is fairly consistent in his usage of *lexeis.*

In Clement's semiotic theory, apart from someone's speaking and hearing it, (or, writing and reading it), any word or expression is, quite literally, *meaningless.* To be sure, they are *potentially* meaningful. But, much like his understanding of causal relations, for Clement, the meaning of an expression is always conceived in relation to some-body who 'gets' meaning(s) from the expression. So it simply would not make sense to suggest that expressions, in themselves, could be "spotless and holy."[70]

Most of what Clement says about "expressions" and words *qua* words in the *Stromateis* is that people, especially the Greeks, attribute too much importance to them (without attending to what they signify), and that those who focus *only* on words and expressions miss the "things" (*pragmata*) which are actually important.[71] When Clement criticizes the "heretics" for their treatment of scripture, the problem is not that they corrupt the words themselves, but that they do not attend to the significations of the words, and thereby corrupt the sense. When he thinks the teachings and endorsed behaviors of the "heretics" arise from a misinterpretation of a text, he does not try to correct the problem by concealing the text or its author. Rather, he identifies it and then explains why he thinks the "heretics" have misunderstood its meaning.

In this section I have tried to show how what the "Secret Gospel" letter suggests seems generally inconsistent with Clement's statements about the nature and purpose of concealment, as well as the distinguishing features of the teaching with which he identifies (in contrast to the philosophies of the Greeks). Moreover, it specifically contrasts with the non-binary relational semiotic theory found in the *Stromateis,* which is concerned with evaluating the potential meanings of words and expressions in relation to the receptive capacity and circumstantial needs

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[70] Even though Clement, at times, calls *logoi* (plural of *logos*) "holy," the meaning of *logoi,* for Clement, is distinct from *lexeis.* Somewhat like the Stoics' *lekta* ('sayables'), for Clement, *logoi* can be communicated via *lexeis*, but the two are in no way reducible to one another.

[71] Strom. 2.1.3.2.; see also previous sections of this dissertation on Clement's semiotics

of those receiving the words and expression. Although this does not resolve the broader question about who authored the text of the "Secret Gospel" letter, I think it shows why it is unlikely that Clement of Alexandria penned its words.

Clement's "method of concealment" and the rationale he provides for it could be called "paternalist." The medical imagery certainly suggests a kind of "doctor knows best" mentality. However, it is important to keep in mind that, for Clement, "paternalism" is not necessarily a bad thing, nor is it inherently immoral. Clement is fully cognizant of the fact that the power and authority held by a "physician" could be abused. I suspect that is why he criticizes the teachings and endorsed behaviors of the "heretics" more than anyone else in *Stromateis*. Not only is it harmful for the individuals themselves, insofar as the "heretics" have "hastily published to the world" their teachings, which they have composed without first diligently seeking the truth, they present a potential threat to the well being of "simple" believers, and those who are not-yet-capable of perceiving the problems in the teaching of the "heretics," or who may not be able to differentiate between teachings which are said to come from the same "teacher," i.e. Christ. Clement is also aware that because of their public disagreements, which appear, on the surface at least, to be inarbitrable, some are turning away from all of them, which is like turning away the help of all physicians because of there are disagreements between medical schools, and thus, people are not receiving the care that they need.

For Clement, anyone who endeavors to cooperate in the pedagogy of the Logos is given an awesome responsibility, which should not be taken lightly. This is vividly conveyed in his allegorical exegesis Exodus 21:33-34. As Kovacs writes, "if he is injudicious in his administration of the different levels of education, the teacher might cause the beginning pupil to

lose faith (to "drown"). Should this happen, the teacher, like the owner of the pit, will himself pay the penalty."[72]

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[72] Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy," 22.

In this dissertation I have presented a two-part study of Franz Rosenzweig's intellectual biography and the philosophical underpinnings of his programmatic vision for the *Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus* alongside an examination of the literary form of Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis* and a detailed analysis of his writings on logic in book 8 of the *Stromateis*. Here I add a synoptic "coda" to my dissertation as a whole, which aims to draw together some of the disparate strands of thought in its individual chapters while making a gesture toward some potentially fruitful avenues for further research.

When viewed together, two central motifs emerge in my studies of Rosenzweig and Clement—"Pedagogy" and 'Textuality"; these serve as gathering tropes which help knit together a series of interrelated tendencies and insights.

PEDAGOGY

The theory and practice of pedagogy is of central importance to and Rosenzweig and Clement. It is not merely a scholarly interest or theoretical topic of reflection in their writing. Rosenzweig was the founding director of a new institute for Jewish learning in Frankfurt. Clement was the head of a traditionally significant Christian 'school of sacred learning' in Alexandria.[1] Their understandings of pedagogy appear to share the following tenets.

- *Pedagogy attends to the formation of the whole person.*

Rosenzweig aimed to promote a "new" form of thinking and learning at the Lehrhaus that would help cultivate a sense of the integrated "wholeness" of "being-Jewish" among Jews living

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[1] Though the details about the nature and purpose of this 'school' *vis a vis* the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Church in Alexandria are debated, we know enough to say with confidence that Clement actually engaged in the practice of instruction and had students who would later assume influential roles in the life of the Church, e.g. Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem.

in Germany at the time. Being "whole," for Rosenzweig, means not accepting modern divisions between faith and knowledge, divisions that would make one's Jewishness a separate and distinct aspect of one's primary identity as a human being; it means affirming that one need not leave behind any part of oneself to embrace the fullness of Jewish life. For Rosenzweig, the move "into life" is not a rejection of philosophy and intellectual inquiry. Similarly, for Clement, being Christian does not mean one must reject Greek learning and philosophy; there is no contradiction or separation between faith and knowledge. Clement's pedagogy is concerned with the purification and reorientation of the whole person—moral, spiritual, and intellectual.

In the formation of actual human beings, a "holistic" pedagogy must take in account the "form" a person is already in. This entails not only an evaluation of the person's receptive capacity and level of understanding, it also requires the consideration of the cultural and intellectual context in which the person was previously formed.

- *Pedagogy is integrally related to epistemology*

Rosenzweig and Clement's pedagogical methods are shaped by their respective understandings of epistemology. The model of New Learning which Rosenzweig sought to put into practice at the Lehrhaus emerges from the New Thinking's method of "Speech-Thinking." Being-Jewish emerges through a process akin to actual conversation. Similarly, Clement's method of adaptive pedagogy is informed by his understanding of semiotics and epistemology. Instruction must be tailored in relation to the student's capacity to receive it. Withholding instruction in the "higher" inherently superior meaning of certain things is done not for the protection of an esoteric tradition but for the protection of those who are not-yet capable of receiving the proper understanding of the instruction and who might inadvertently be harmed by it (in terms of their moral/spiritual/intellectual development).

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- *Teaching and learning are collaborative activities*

In Rosenzweig's epistemological and pedagogical theories, thinking and learning happens in and through dialogical process. Participants in an actual dialogue in which new thinking and learning occurs are, in a sense, simultaneously teachers and learners. At the Lerhaus, he claims, there are no teachers who are not also learners.[2]

For Clement, teaching and learning are relational activities, but the exchange appears asymmetric. The instructor must adapt the lessons offered in relation to the receptive capacity of the student, and for that reason, his preferred method of instruction is through an exchange of question and answer (which he likens to the activity of playing catch). However, in Clement's descriptions of this relationally adaptive pedagogy, there is a clear differentiation between instructor and student, of the one giving and the one receiving instruction. To be sure, this is not a simplistic distinction between "active" and "passive" parties. The student must actively co-operate in the exercise. It seems unclear whether the instructor also has a capacity to receive something from the relationship. I address this issue in the excursus below.

EXCURSUS: ON KNOWING GOD

According to Clement, the transcendent God of the universe "can never be handed down in writing, being inexpressible even by His own power (*dynamis*)."[3] That Clement thinks "the Son is the power (*dynamis*) of God"[4] leads to the surprising conclusion that even the Son cannot

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[2] Moreover, he writes, "In the very speaking space and at the same speaking time that the students are found, the teachers will be discovered as well. And perhaps the same person will be discovered at the same speaking time as a master and a student." Rosenzweig, "Of Bildung There is No End," 237.

[3] *Strom.* 5.10 (p. 460) Quotations from books 4-6 come from the 1885 ANF translation with book and chapter as well as page numbers indicated. Books 1-3 come from John Ferguson's translation in The Fathers of the Church (1989). Citations from book 7 come from the translation edited by Henry Chadwick in *Alexandrian Christianity*.

[4] *Strom.* 7.2.7.

express knowledge of the Father in a manner transmissible through writing. If the Son came to the world to lead humans to "the most essential truths of knowledge" and to the knowledge of the Father, as Clement suggests, then such knowledge (*gnosis*) must be other than straightforwardly propositional content.

"Our knowledge," Clement writes, "is the Saviour Himself" and "the Lord…is the Light and the true Knowledge (*gnosis*)."[5] Interestingly, he also maintains that "He alone is Teacher, who is the only Son of the Most High Father, the Instructor of men,"[6] Joining these claims together, it follows that for Clement, the Son is both the Teacher of *gnosis* and *is* himself the *gnosis* he teaches

If the knowledge of God *is* God and we only come to know God *through* God, then it follows that knowledge of God is a form of participation *in* God: "to know Him is eternal life, through participation in the power (*dynamis,* i.e. the Son) of the incorrupt One. And to be incorruptible is to participate in divinity."[7]

This differs markedly from current, familiar epistemology. Yet, according to Peter Candler, it was once absolutely basic to Christian theology. As Candler argues, for theologians like Aquinas, "*sacra doctrina* is a kind of *scientia* which participates in God's knowledge of himself, and is therefore not something superadded to God."[8] Around the time of the Reformation, according to Candler, Christian theology began to abandon the traditional "logic of participation" in favor of the now-dominant "logic of representation." The latter assumes that God is a kind of object which can be depicted, and, like other objects, known objectively,

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[5] *Strom.* 6.1 (p. 480)

[6] *Strom.* 4.25 (p. 439)

[7] *Strom.* 5.10 (p. 459)

[8] Candler, *Theology, Rhetoric, Manuduction: Or Reading Scripture Together on the Path to God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2006),* 34

irrespective of our particular situation. Knowledge of God, in this model, means knowledge

about God, which is understood to be recorded clearly in signs and therefore available to any

reasonable person without prior training (provided one has "evidence" to "support" the validity

of the signs).[9] In contrast, the "logic of participation" uses what we might say is a more

"biblical" idea of what it means "to know:"[10] "to know, under this mode, is an ontological

endeavor—one comes to know more truly only by 'being' more perfectly, and therefore by

loving more rightly."[11] Candler therefore reasons that "to participate in God's self-knowledge is

at the same time to participate in his being."[12]

Clement was aware of the danger of falsely equating the knowledge of God with

knowledge *about* God. As he writes, "There is a difference between declaring God, and

declaring things *about* God."[13] Similarly, he reasons, "Someone talking about truth and Truth

giving an account of herself are very different matters. The first is a shot at truth, the second is

truth."[14] The Word of God, for Clement, is precisely the one who gives an account of 'herself'

saying "'I am the truth.'"[15] And *gnosis* is "the attainment and comprehension of the truth by the

truth."[16] Thus, while it is the case, according to Clement, that "human speech is by nature feeble

and incapable of uttering God," and so cannot "declare God, but only speak about God,"[17] we are

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[9] Candler, *Theology, Rhetoric, Manuduction,* 30.

[10] Remember, Adam "knows" Eve in a way that certainly does not keep the two separate and unaffected by the other. The two are made "one flesh."; See *Strom.* 3.12.81.4.

[11] Candler, *Theology, Rhetoric, Manuduction,* 34.

[12] Candler, *Theology, Rhetoric, Manuduction,* 7 .

[13] 6.17 (p. 515) my italics; Likewise, quoting Heraclitus, Clement asserts that "the knowledge of many things does not educate the mind" (*polumathiê noon echein ou didaskei*) (1.19.93.2).

[14] *Strom.* 1.7.38.4.

[15] *Strom.* 5.2 (p. 448)

[16] *Strom.* 5.1. (p. 444)

[17] *Strom.* 6.18 (p. 519)

blessed because God gives an account of himself, through the Son, who is himself "the person of Truth which is exhibited."[18]

If *gnosis* is a participation in God's self-knowledge (and thus His own being), to attain it, one would need to mimic, as far as one could, the characteristics of God. "It is impossible to attain knowledge by bad conduct."[19] Rather, we must attain the "habit of doing good…so as to pass life after the image and likeness of the Lord." In line with Candler's claim that "one comes to know more truly only by 'being' more perfectly, and therefore by loving more rightly,"[20] Clement writes that "God is known to those who love,"[21] since through love we are made perfect,[22] and by love are assimilated to God, who is himself, love.[23] Because "like loves like"[24] and "love joins us to God,"[25] by loving as God loves, we are "by love allied to God."[26]

Insofar as we know God most fully through Christ according to Clement, this would mean striving to imitate Christ as far as possible. And if Christ is the Teacher, the full imitation of Christ would require one to teach as Christ taught. As Judith Kovacs argues, Clement presents his ideal Christian (the Gnostic) as an image of the Lord who, through the imitation of Christ, participates in the Logos' richly variegated pedagogy.[27] Clement writes:

> Our philosopher clings to these three things: first, contemplation, secondly the
> performance of the commandments, and third the training of good men. When these

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[18] *Strom.* 6.15 (p. 508)

[19] *Strom.* 4.21 (p. 433)

[20] Candler, *Theology, Rhetoric, Manuduction,* 34.

[21] *Strom.* 5.2 (p. 447)

[22] *Strom.* 4.28 (p. 429)

[23] *Strom.* 5.2 (p. 447)

[24] *Strom.* 5.14 (p. 467)

[25] *Strom.* 4.28 (p. 429)

[26] *Strom.* 6.12 (p. 503)

[27] See Kovacs, "Divine Pedagogy," particularly pp. 6-7.

things come together, they complete the Gnostic. But whichever of this is lacking makes knowledge incomplete.[28]

If knowledge is incomplete without any of those components, then the "the training of good men" is a necessary part of what it means to cultivate *gnosis*. This means that we do not first attain knowledge and then teach; rather, we must teach to attain knowledge, i.e. we must co-operate with the prevenient pedagogical activity of the Son in the work of leading people to the knowledge of God. Recall that, for Clement, the Son is both the Teacher of *gnosis* and *is* himself the *gnosis* he teaches, and to know God is to participate in God's self-knowledge. In light of the above, we might also say that to know God is to participate in Son's teaching of himself. Indeed, Clement writes;

> As one teaches, one learns more and more. As one speaks, one is often listening in company with one's class. 'There is only one teacher,' whether of lecturer or student, and he is the source of understanding and the word spoken.[29]

To a certain extent, then, Clement might say with Rosenzweig that there are no (human) teachers who are not also learners.

TEXTUALITY

In different ways, both Rosenzweig and Clement express a preference for oral, i.e. dialogical, teaching and learning. Concomitantly, both express concerns about the inadequacies of writing as a means of transmitting knowledge. They do not, however, reject written communication in favor of the spoken word. Rosenzweig and Clement both affirm the centrality of textual

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[28] *Strom.* 2.10.46.1 (using Kovacs' translation from "Divine Pedagogy").

[29] *Strom.* 1.1.12.3

engagement in the process of pedagogical formation, while nevertheless contesting popular assumptions about the function and value of writing within their respective cultural contexts.

Rosenzweig's conception of "speech-thinking" helps us to see how the text of Clement's *Stromateis* might function dialogically within his cultural/intellectual context.

- According to Rosenzweig, the difference between the New Thinking's method of "speech-thinking" and the Old Thinking's form of logical/mathematical thinking does not rest on the difference between sound and silence, "but rather on needing the other and – what amounts to the same, on taking time seriously." In other words, mathematical thinking (e.g. Idealism) is internally self-referential; whereas speech-thinking requires alterity. The former seeks to be timeless (i.e. not dependent on contingent facts), the latter is time-bound (i.e. context specific and irreversibly sequential).

- Written "dialogues,' like those composed by Plato, are not "dialogical" (in Rosenzweig's sense) because they are the product of a single mind—"the other merely raises objections which I myself would really have to raise."[30] In contrast, "in actual conversation, something happens; I do not know in advance what the other will say to me because I myself do not even know what I am going to say."[31] Moreover, I would add, a recording of an actual conversation (e.g. a transcript) is not "dialogical" because the reader remains outside the conversation as an observer, not an engaged participant.

- Clement's writing aims to imitate the activity and process of oral instruction, which is an activity and process that must extend beyond the text in the life of the reader if it is to be what it is, i.e. instruction. Clement says that his *Stromateis* is not a writing rhetorically

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[30] Franz Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," in *Franz Rosenzweig: Philosophical and Theological Writings*, ed. Paul W. Franks and Michael L. Morgan (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2000), 126.

[31] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 126.

shaped for exhibition, but is rather a sketch an reflection, in outline, of the discourses of

his teachers—the most important of whom, he claims, was like a bee, drawing from the

flowers of "the meadow of prophets and apostles," to engender knowledge within the

souls of his hearers.[32]

- Clement's *Stromateis* prompts its readers to actively participate in an ongoing process,

   through the exercise of reading and re-reading the text, which must itself continue beyond

   the reading of the text in the life of the reader.

In a passage dealing the peculiar literary form of the *Stromateis,* Clement writes, "In the case of

people who are setting out on a road with which they are unacquainted, it is sufficient merely to

point out the direction. After this they must walk and find out the rest for themselves."[33] As

mentioned above, *gnosis* involves more than the mental apprehension of specific content, but a

truly different way of living, and precisely for that reason *gnosis* is not something that can be

contained within a text. At best, a text can point out the way, but after readers have become

oriented as seekers, they must "walk and find out the rest for themselves."

With Clement and Rosenzweig, then, writing ends with a call—"Into Life!"—and a

promise—"Seek, and ye shall find!"

Amen.

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[32] Clement also commends the imitation of bees elsewhere in the *Stromateis,* as an analogy for training the mind with a variety of preparatory exercises. There too, the figurative "honey" would be something produced *in* a person, not *by* a person.

[33] 4.2 (p. 410)

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