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10 filiación

Proverbs 8,22-31:
Text, Context, Reception

Proverbios 8,22-31:
Texto, contexto, recepción

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18TH RESEARCH CONFERENCE
ACTAS DE LAS XVIII JORNADAS DE ESTUDIO

**LA FILIACIÓN EN LOS INICIOS
DE LA REFLEXIÓN CRISTIANA**

Facultad de Literatura Cristiana y Clásica San Justino,
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Abbreviations

Abreviaturas

AnGr _____	Analecta Gregoriana
ANRW _____	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
AW _____	Athanasius Werke
BAC _____	Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos
BPat _____	Biblioteca Patristica
BZ _____	Biblische Zeitschrift
CCSA _____	Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum
CCSG _____	Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca
CCSL _____	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CSCO _____	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DJD _____	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EThL _____	Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses
FuP _____	Fuentes Patristicas
GCS _____	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
JBL _____	Journal of Biblical Literature
JBTh _____	Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie
J ECS _____	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JEH _____	Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JSJ _____	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
JSNT _____	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSOR _____	Journal of the Society of Oriental Research
JThS _____	Journal of Theological Studies
LCL _____	Loeb Classical Library
MCom _____	Miscelánea Comillas: Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales
NDPAC _____	Nuovo Dizionario Patristico e di Antichità Cristiane
NTS _____	New Testament Studies
OW _____	Origenes Werke
PG _____	Patrologia Graeca
PO _____	Patrologia Orientalis

PS _____	Patrologia Syriaca
RET _____	Revista española de teología
SCh _____	Sources Chrétiennes
SVigChr _____	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
ThGl _____	Theologie und Glaube
ThWNT _____	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
TThZ _____	Trierer theologische Zeitschrift
TU _____	Texte und Untersuchungen
VigChr _____	Vigiliae Christianae
VT.S _____	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
ZAW _____	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZNW _____	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

Preface

Presentación

Andrés Sáez Gutiérrez

Universidad San Dámaso (Madrid)

We have the pleasant task of presenting the volume of *Filiación* 10, the second in the series – after *Filiación* 9 – published in the editions of the Universidad San Dámaso, after the editorial change mentioned in the introduction to the previous volume. Its content includes the proceedings of the 18th Research Conference “Filiation at the Origins of Christian Thought” – the coming of age of the Conference! – organized by the Facultad de Literatura Cristiana y Clásica San Justino (UESD, Madrid) in November 15, 16 and 17, 2021.

The conferences of that edition were entirely devoted to a single topic: the study of the text, the context and the history of the reception of *Prov* 8:22-31. Other editions of the Conference had already been dedicated partially or totally to a single theme, as was the case of the day dedicated to Justin and the Conference dedicated to Clement of Alexandria or the Valentinians. However, in these cases, the corresponding papers had appeared together with others in the same volume. This time, on the contrary, the topic, addressed at length, from the meaning of the passage in Proverbs to its reception in the fifth century, offers more than enough material to form a standing volume.

The basis or assumption of all this is the extraordinary relevance of *Prov* 8:22-31 in the first Christian centuries. *Prov* 8:22 – “The Lord created me as a beginning of his ways for his works” – and the passage linked to it played a fundamental role in the first theology about the identity and generation of the Son and in the formulation of the Trinitarian and Christological doctrine of the first centuries, in particular,

around the Arian crisis of the fourth century, at least in its first phase. In this sense, in this volume our usual interest in studying the identity of Jesus Christ as Son in its various and interrelated aspects converges with the preparation of the anniversary of the Council of Nicaea that will take place in 2025. The topic was treated competently, although more synthetically, by Manlio Simonetti almost sixty years ago¹. Taking this work as an incentive and springboard, we have wanted to deepen and update the studies surrounding the history of the interpretation of the aforementioned passage. This volume also serves as a tribute to the great Italian scholar.

Getting down to details, the volume consists of twenty contributions, the work of specialists from various countries, published in Spanish, Italian, English and French, and divided into four sections. The first section, "Text, Context and Jewish Reception", presents in detail the scriptural text of *Prov* 8:22-31 according to the Hebrew text and its various versions, highlighting its characteristics, difficulties and possibilities (Ignacio Carbajosa, Madrid), as well as the context of the passage in the book of Proverbs, its place within the Second Temple Judaism and its Jewish reception (Maurizio Girolami, Padova).

The second section is dedicated to the "Pre-Nicene Christian Reception" of *Prov* 8:22-31. The contribution dedicated to the *Odes of Solomon* (Pilar González, Madrid) gives an account of the first explicit testimony of this scriptural passage among Christians, curiously in a Syriac setting. Next, several studies deal with the interpretation of these verses in a Greco-Latin context, linked in most cases to the explanation of the pre-existing generation of the Son. Andrés Sáez (Madrid) presents the exegesis of *Prov* 8,22-31 in the apologists Justin, Athenagoras and Theophilus; Bogdan G. Bucur (Yonkers, NY) does the same by delving into the work of Clement of Alexandria; Frédéric Chapot offers a paper on *Prov* 8,22-31 in Tertullian, the first author to use the passage in an antiheretical polemical framework, specifically, against Hermogenes and Praxeas; Fernando Soler (Santiago de Chile) exposes the theology of Origen on the Son-Wisdom around *Prov* 8,22-31; and Davide Tomaselli (Madrid), trying to cover the period from Origen to Nicaea, analyzes the documentation related to the controversy between Dionysius

1 M. SIMONETTI, "Sull'interpretazione patristica di *Proverbi* 8,22", en ID., *Studi sull'arianesimo*, Roma 1965, 9-87.

of Alexandria and Dionysius of Rome, as well as the most relevant passages of an author such as Methodius of Olympus. All these ancient authors identified the Wisdom of *Prov* 8,22-31 with the Son-Logos, while witnesses of a different interpretation are Irenaeus of Lyon and perhaps, without renouncing the identity Wisdom = Logos, also Hippolytus, authors studied in our volume by Clara Sanvito (Madrid). This second section closes with a study by Lautaro Roig (Groningen) about the Platonic and Christian reception of *Timaeus* 27d-28a, a passage that invited us to reflect on the relationship between what really exists, that is, the divine realm that does not become, and what only exists apparently, that is, the created world, which suggests various points of contact with Christian reflection on mediation and the nature of the Son.

From the so-called Arian controversy onwards, the interpretation of *Prov* 8:22-31 will be developed in a diverse and controversial, very specific context, where each of the authors had to put their hermeneutical assumptions and exegetical expertise into play, which gave rise to novel interpretations in relation to those witnessed in the previous period. In fact, these will no longer be limited to the intradivine sphere, as had usually been the case in the Pre-Nicene period, but, among ecclesiastics, there will be a tendency to seek a historical-salvific solution to counteract the Arian interpretation of the passage.

The hinge-like nature of this controversy has led us to group together in the third section the contributions of "The Time of Nicaea": Lewis Ayres (Durham) deals with the use that Arius made of *Prov* 8,22-25; Patricio de Navascués (Madrid) studies the interpretation of the passage attested in two authors of monarchian tendency such as Eustathius of Antioch and Marcellus of Ancyra; Mark DelCogliano (St. Paul, MN) delves into the immense work of Eusebius of Caesarea; and Samuel Fernández (Santiago de Chile) studies the presence and relevance of *Prov* 8,22.25 in various synods of the fourth century, from the vespers of Nicaea to the synod of Ancyra in 358.

In continuity with the previous one, the fourth section includes six studies dedicated to the "Post-Nicene Christian Reception" of *Prov* 8:22-31 from the second half of the fourth century to the fifth century, in an itinerary that reflects, in its final stages, the progressive loss of centrality of the pericope. Thus Xavier Morales (Santiago de Chile) offers a study on the Athanasian exegesis of *Prov* 8 in the letter *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, composed approximately four decades after the first

phase of the controversy; Guillermo José Cano (Madrid) deals with the interpretation of *Prov* 8:22-31 in Hilary of Poitiers, who incorporates Nicene dogmatics into his thought without detaching himself from the Pre-Nicene reflection on the intradivine *ante tempus*; Jan Dominik Bogataj (Rome) and Ulise Zarza (Rome) offer the unique, practical, social-political and legal interpretation of Fortunatian of Aquileia; Francisco Bastitta (Buenos Aires) examines the words of the Bishop of Antioch Meletius before emperor Constantius II, in particular, his interpretation of the figure of *Sophia* in *Prov* 8; Emanuela Prinzivalli (Rome) studies the exegesis of this passage in three Latin authors, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine, contemporaries and with reciprocal relationships in various senses; and finally Angelo Segneri (Rome) is in charge of examining exegetical traditions related to *Prov* 8,22-31 from the Cappadocian Fathers to various authors and texts of the fifth century.

Although this judgment will have to be verified by all who read it, we dare to say that the commitment of the speakers, which was already evident during the Conference both in the presentation of their studies and in the lively round tables, makes *Filiación* 10 not only a collection of twenty valuable scientific studies on the topic at hand, but a unitary volume, a *corpus* around *Prov* 8:22ff and its reception, in which the contributions illuminate, complement and enhance one another. Thus, the reader is provided with an overview of the development of the Trinitarian and Christological dogma of the first centuries and with a significant starting material to develop a history of Christian exegesis in the patristic period.

We end this presentation with an appropriate and necessary word of gratitude. First of all, it is evident that the volume would not exist if the speakers had not agreed to participate in our Conference and had not put their efforts into offering careful and innovative works, which they then prepared for publication. Still in times of pandemic, some traveled to Madrid and others, whose presence we could not enjoy, intervened from abroad thanks to the versatility of new technologies. It is an honor to have their contributions in the book that is now published. In particular, we would like to show our gratitude to Professor Samuel Fernández Eyzaguirre, from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, whose friendly and wise collaboration helped Professor Patriocio de Navascués and myself to prepare the program for the Conference and, therefore, the content of this volume.

Thanks to Professor Patricio de Navascués Benlloch, promoter and co-director of the Conference and co-director of the series *Filiación*, always ready to illuminate with his wise advice everything related to the preparation and holding of the Conference and the publication of its Proceedings. Essential has been the work of those who have shared the arduous editing tasks of *Filiación 10*: Professor Clara Sanvito, already an expert in these issues; and Professor Davide Tomaselli, always available, who makes his debut as editor on this project. Thanks to the Universidad San Dámaso, specifically, to its Publishing Department, for their support, and especially to Elena Martín Ariza. A very special thank you goes to the Facultad de Literatura Cristiana y Clásica San Justino: in particular, to its Dean, Professor Pilar González Casado, very attentive to following the preparation of this volume; to their Professors, above all to Luis Flamenco García; and to the secretarial team –especially Carmen García Martón–, with whom it is always a pleasure to work. Nor can we forget to thank Professors Juan José Ayán Calvo, mentor and promoter of the Conference, and Manuel Aroztegi Esnaola; and our friend Jesús Delgado Rodríguez, who in a silent but fruitful way continue to support this project in a thousand ways. Finally, this research would not be possible without the support of the Department of Education of the Comunidad de Madrid, to which we also express our gratitude.

* * *

Nos corresponde la grata tarea de presentar el volumen de *Filiación 10*, el segundo de la serie –tras *Filiación 9*– publicado en las ediciones de la Universidad San Dámaso, después del cambio editorial que reseñamos en la introducción al volumen precedente. Su contenido recoge las actas de las XVIII Jornadas de estudio “La filiación en los orígenes de la reflexión cristiana” –¡la mayoría de edad de las Jornadas!– organizadas por la Facultad de Literatura Cristiana y Clásica San Justino (UESD, Madrid) los días 15, 16 y 17 de noviembre de 2021.

Las ponencias de dicha reunión estuvieron íntegramente consagradas a un único tema: el estudio del texto, el contexto y la historia de la recepción de *Prov* 8,22-31. Ya otras ediciones de las Jornadas habían

sido dedicadas parcial o totalmente a una temática concreta, como fue el caso del día consagrado a Justino y de las Jornadas consagradas a Clemente alejandrino o a los valentinianos. Sin embargo, en estos casos, las ponencias correspondientes habían aparecido junto a otras en un mismo volumen. Esta vez, por el contrario, el tema, abordado con amplitud, desde la composición de *Prov* hasta la recepción del pasaje en el s. V, ofrece material más que suficiente para conformar un volumen *a se stante*.

Base o presupuesto de todo ello es la extraordinaria relevancia de *Prov* 8,22-31 en los primeros siglos cristianos. *Prov* 8,22 –«El Señor me creó como principio de sus caminos para sus obras»– y el pasaje a él vinculado desempeñaron un papel fundamental en la primera teología acerca de la identidad y de la generación del Hijo y en la formulación del dogma trinitario y cristológico de los primeros siglos, en particular, en torno a la crisis arriana del s. IV, al menos en su primera fase. En este sentido, confluye en este volumen nuestro interés habitual por estudiar la identidad de Jesucristo como Hijo en sus diversos e interrelacionados aspectos con la preparación del aniversario del Concilio de Nicea que tendrá lugar en 2025. El tema fue tratado con competencia, aun más sintéticamente, por Manlio Simonetti hace casi sesenta años². Tomando dicho trabajo como acicate y trampolín, hemos querido profundizar y poner al día los estudios en torno a la historia de la interpretación de dicho pasaje. Sirva también el presente volumen como homenaje al grandísimo estudioso italiano.

Descendiendo a los detalles, el volumen consta de veinte contribuciones, obra de especialistas de diversos países, publicadas en español, italiano, inglés y francés, y divididas en cuatro secciones. La primera sección, “Texto, contexto y recepción judía”, presenta detalladamente el texto escriturístico de *Prov* 8,22-31 según el texto hebreo y sus diversas versiones, poniendo de manifiesto sus características, dificultades y posibilidades (Ignacio Carbajosa, Madrid), así como el contexto del pasaje en el libro de los Proverbios y en el ámbito del judaísmo del segundo Templo y su recepción judía (Maurizio Girolami, Padova).

La segunda sección está dedicada a la “Recepción cristiana prenicena” de *Prov* 8,22-31. La contribución dedicada a las *Odas de Salomón*

2 M. SIMONETTI, «Sull'interpretazione patristica di *Proverbi* 8,22», en Id., *Studi sull'arianesimo*, Roma 1965, 9-87.

(Pilar González, Madrid) da cuenta del primer testimonio explícito de dicho pasaje escriturístico entre cristianos, curiosamente en ámbito siríaco. A continuación, varios estudios se ocupan de la interpretación de dichos versículos en ámbito greco-latino, vinculada en la mayor parte de los casos a la explicación de la generación preexistente del Hijo. Andrés Sáez (Madrid) presenta la exégesis de *Prov 8,22-31* en los apologetas Justino, Atenágoras y Teófilo; Bogdan G. Bucur (Yonkers, NY) hace lo propio buceando en la obra de Clemente de Alejandría; Frédéric Chapot ofrece un trabajo sobre *Prov 8,22-31* en Tertuliano, primer autor que se sirve del pasaje en un marco polémico antiherético, en concreto, frente a Hermógenes y Praxeas; Fernando Soler (Santiago de Chile) expone la teología de Orígenes sobre el Hijo Sabiduría en torno a *Prov 8,22-31*; y Davide Tomaselli (Madrid), tratando de cubrir el período que va desde Orígenes hasta Nicea, analiza la documentación relativa a la llamada controversia “de los dos Dionisios”, así como los pasajes más relevantes de un autor como Metodio de Olimpo. Todos estos autores antiguos identificaron la Sabiduría de *Prov 8,22-31* con el Logos Hijo, mientras que son testigos de una interpretación diversa Ireneo de Lyon y tal vez, sin renunciar a la identidad Sabiduría = Logos, también Hipólito, autores estudiados en nuestro volumen por Clara Sanvito (Madrid). Esta segunda sección se cierra con un estudio de Lautaro Roig (Groningen) acerca de la recepción platónica y cristiana de *Timaeus 27d-28a*, pasaje que invitó a reflexionar sobre la relación entre lo realmente existente, es decir, el ámbito divino que no deviene, y lo que solo existe aparentemente, o sea, el mundo creado, lo que podría sugerir diversos puntos de contacto con la reflexión cristiana acerca de la mediación y de la naturaleza del Hijo.

A partir de la llamada controversia arriana, la interpretación de *Prov 8,22-31* se va a desarrollar en un contexto diverso y polémico, muy específico, donde cada uno de los autores hubo de poner en juego sus presupuestos hermenéuticos y su pericia exegética, lo que dio lugar a interpretaciones novedosas en relación con las atestiguadas en el período anterior. De hecho, estas ya no estarán limitadas al ámbito intra-divino, como había sido usualmente el caso en el período preniceno, sino que, entre eclesiásticos, se tenderá a buscar una solución histórico-salvífica para contrarrestar la interpretación arriana del pasaje.

El carácter de gozne de dicha polémica nos ha llevado a agrupar en la tercera sección las contribuciones “En torno a Nicea”: Lewis Ayres

(Durham) se ocupa del empleo que Arrio hizo de *Prov* 8,22-25; Patricio de Navascués (Madrid) estudia la interpretación del pasaje atestiguada en dos autores de tendencia monarquiana como Eustacio de Antioquía y Marcelo de Ancira; Mark DelCogliano (St. Paul, MN) se sumerge en la inmensa obra de Eusebio de Cesarea; y Samuel Fernández estudia la presencia y relevancia de *Prov* 8,22.25 en diversos sínodos del s. IV, desde las vísperas de Nicea hasta el sínodo de Ancira en 358.

En continuidad con la anterior, la cuarta sección recoge seis estudios dedicados a la "Recepción cristiana posnicena" de *Prov* 8,22-31 a partir de la segunda mitad del s. IV y hasta el s. V, en un itinerario que refleja, en sus últimos estadios, la progresiva pérdida de centralidad de la perícopa. Así Xavier Morales (Santiago de Chile) ofrece un trabajo sobre la exégesis atanasiana de *Prov* 8 en la carta *De decretis Nicaenae synodi*, compuesta aproximadamente cuatro décadas después de la primera fase de la controversia; Guillermo José Cano (Madrid) se ocupa de la interpretación de *Prov* 8,22-31 en Hilario de Poitiers, quien incorpora a su pensamiento la dogmática nicena sin desprenderse de la reflexión prenicena sobre el *ante tempus* intradivino; Jan Dominik Bogataj (Roma) e Ulise Zarza (Roma) ofrecen la singular interpretación, de corte práctico, social-político y jurídico de Fortunaciano de Aquileya; Francisco Bastitta (Buenos Aires) examina las palabras del obispo de Antioquía Melecio delante del emperador Constancio II, en particular, su interpretación de la figura de *Sophia* en *Prov* 8; Emanuela Prinzivalli (Roma) estudia la exégesis de este pasaje en tres personajes latinos, Ambrosio, Jerónimo y Agustín, coetáneos y con relaciones recíprocas en varios sentidos; y finalmente Angelo Segneri (Roma) se ocupa de examinar las líneas de tradición exegética relativas a *Prov* 8,22-31 desde los Padres capadocios a diversos autores y textos hasta el s. V d.C.

Si bien este juicio habrá de ser verificado por cuantos lo lean, nos atrevemos a decir que el compromiso de los ponentes, que ya se puso de manifiesto durante las Jornadas tanto en la exposición de sus estudios como en las animadas mesas redondas, hace de *Filiación* 10 no solo una colección de veinte valiosos estudios científicos sobre el tema que nos ocupa, sino un volumen unitario, un *corpus* en torno a *Prov* 8,22ss y a su recepción, en el que unas contribuciones iluminan, complementan y realzan las otras. Se pone así en manos del lector un recorrido por el desarrollo del dogma trinitario y cristológico de los primeros siglos y un material de partida significativo para desarrollar una historia de la exégesis cristiana en el período patrístico.

Terminamos esta presentación con un justo y necesario agradecimiento. En primer lugar, es evidente que el volumen no existiría si los ponentes no hubieran aceptado participar en las Jornadas de Filiación y no hubieran puesto su empeño en ofrecer unos trabajos cuidados y novedosos, que después prepararon para su publicación. Todavía en tiempos de pandemia, algunos se desplazaron a Madrid y otros, de quienes no pudimos gozar de su presencia, intervinieron desde el extranjero gracias a la versatilidad de las nuevas tecnologías. Es un honor contar con sus contribuciones en el libro que ahora ve la luz. En particular, quisiéramos mostrar nuestra gratitud al profesor Samuel Fernández Eyzaguirre, de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, cuya amistosa y sabia colaboración ayudó al profesor Patricio de Navascués y a quien les escribe estas líneas a confeccionar el programa de las Jornadas y, por tanto, el contenido del presente volumen.

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**Pre-Nicene
Christian Reception**

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“Wisdom’s mysteries”: Clement of Alexandria’s Exegesis of Proverbs 8

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ABSTRACT Clement of Alexandria understands the references to Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs as “mysteries” revealed by the Christian proclamation. His Christological exegesis of Proverbs 8, weaving together numerous scriptural references, identifies Wisdom, “the beginning of God’s ways for his works”, as a designation of the Son’s luminous and salvific outpouring in the act of creation, in the continuum of divine revelation, and in the redemption of fallen humanity. The Alexandrian teacher expects a gradual ascent through the curriculum of his writings to grant an ever-deepening grasp of the realities sketched out by the biblical text. Reconstructing Clement’s exegesis of Proverbs 8 must therefore also involve attention to two distinct but related sets of considerations: the archaic imagery of the Son as divine “Face” contemplated by the *protoctists* and establishing a “celestial hierarchy” that also offers the paradigm for perfected Christians *in via*; and the fundamental assumption of a “Christophanic” reading of the Scriptures of Israel – an inherited tradition that Clement would have placed at the very basis of his curriculum – according to which all biblical theophanies constitute manifestations of the Logos-to-be-incarnate.

KEYWORDS Proverbs, Wisdom, Logos, theophanies, *protoctists*, rest, curriculum

RESUMEN Clemente de Alejandría comprende las referencias a la Sabiduría en el libro de los Proverbios como “misterios” revelados por el anuncio cristiano. Su exégesis cristológica de Proverbios 8, entrelazando numerosas referencias escriturísticas, identifica a la Sabiduría, “el principio de los caminos de Dios para sus obras”, como una designación del luminoso y salvífico derramamiento del Hijo en el acto de crear, en el continuo ejercicio de la divina revelación y en la redención de la humanidad caída. El maestro alejandrino desea un gradual ascenso a través del curriculum de sus escritos para otorgar una todavía más profunda comprensión de las realidades

esbozadas en el texto bíblico. Reconstruir la exégesis de Clemente de Proverbios 8 debe, por tanto, prestar atención a dos conjuntos de consideraciones, distintas pero relacionadas: la arcaica imaginería del Hijo como divino “Rostro” contemplado por los *protoctistas* y que establece una “jerarquía celeste” que también ofrece el paradigma para los cristianos perfectos *in via*; y la asunción fundamental de una lectura “cristofánica” de las Escrituras de Israel –una tradición heredada que Clemente habría colocado en la base misma de su currículum–, según la cual todas las teofanías bíblicas constituyen manifestaciones del Logos que habría de encarnarse.

PALABRAS CLAVE Proverbios, Sabiduría, Logos, teofanías, *protoctistas*, descanso, currículum

Understanding Clement of Alexandria's exegesis of Proverbs 8 must start by a careful reading of three texts – *Strom.* 6,16,138,4, *Strom.* 7,2,7,4, and *Protr.* 8,80,1 – in which the biblical character of Sophia is identified with the Logos of the Christian kerygma, that is, with the *Logos incarnatus*. As will become apparent, however, this Christological identification of Sophia can only be understood adequately if one also considers it in conjunction with Clement's inherited Christophanic exegesis – that is, the straightforward Christological identification of the subject in all biblical theophanies as the *Logos incarnaturus*, the Word-to-be-made-man.

Before considering these texts and their larger exegetic-theological context, however, a few observations on Clement's “ascensional” curriculum are imperative.

1. Clement's “Ascensional” Curriculum

Clement of Alexandria sees a concrete manifestation of the Word's love of humanity in the “beautiful arrangement (οἰκονομία)” which leads our unending ascent to perfection, first exhorting, then training, and finally teaching¹. This sequence – προτρέπων, παιδαγωγῶν, ἐκδιδάσκων –

1 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,1,3,3 (H.-I. MARROU – M. HARL, SCh 70, Paris 1960, 112): “Eagerly desiring, then, to perfect us by a gradation conducive to salvation, suited for efficacious discipline, a beautiful arrangement (οἰκονομία) is observed by the all-benign Word, who first exhorts, then trains, and finally teaches”. Cf. *Paed.* 3,12,87,1; 3,12,97,3.

finds its counterpart in Clement's own writings: the Προτρεπτικός πρὸς Ἑλληνας, followed by the Παιδαγωγός, followed by something that would correspond to the Διδάσκαλος. Even though the debate over which writings correspond to the divine Logos as *Teacher* is ongoing in scholarship, there is general agreement on the fact that the *Stromata*, the *Prophetic Eclogues*, and the *Adumbrationes* contain a "higher", more advanced level of initiation into Christian truth than the *Exhortation* and the *Pedagogue*². Later guardians of Orthodoxy perceived this difference in much the same way. For instance, Photius of Constantinople's criticism of Clement grows in direct proportion to the same ascension along his curriculum: the *Pedagogue* contains more wheat than tares; by comparison, a good number of "unsound" ideas appear in the *Stromata*, while the *Hypotyposes* are replete with "impieties", "fables", and "blasphemous nonsense"³. Even though Photius reverses the hierarchy of the Clementine curriculum, such that what was intended as the summit of the theology is deemed an abyss of heresy, his evaluation lends credence to the scholarly hypothesis that the *Stromata* and *Hypotyposes* were designed for advanced readers, and represented, within the program of Clementine works, the highest exposition of the Christian doctrine (the *physics* and *epoptics*)⁴.

These preliminary observations are of some relevance to the way in which we are to read the three texts. Given the "ascensional" character of the Clementine corpus, texts belonging to its "higher" segment, such as the two fragments from the *Stromata*, ought to be given greater weight than texts located on the "lower" end of the pedagogical spec-

2 See B. G. BUCUR, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses*, Leiden – Boston 2009, 6-18; M. RIZZI, "The Literary Problem in Clement of Alexandria: A Reconsideration", *Adamantius* 17 (2011) 154-163; ID., "The End of Stromateis VII and Clement's Literary Project", in M. HAVRDA - V. HUŠEK - J. PLÁTOVÁ (eds.), *The Seventh Book of the Stromateis: Proceedings of the Colloquium on Clement of Alexandria, Olomouc, October 21-23, 2010*, Leiden - Boston 2012, 299-314. Even though Rizzi rejects the threefold partition of Clement's work in favor of a distinction between writings addressed to a general audience (*Protrepticus*, *Paedagogus*, *Quis dives*) and "higher" scholarly works designed to give written expression to his oral teaching (*Stromata*, *Excerpta ex Theodoto*), he retains the conviction that the *Pedagogue* contains a "lower" exposition of Christian doctrine than the *Stromata*.

3 PHOTIUS, *Bib. Cod.* 109-111 (R. HENRY, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1960, II, 79-82).

4 A. ΜΕΪΑΤ, *Étude sur les "Stromates" de Clément d'Alexandrie*, Paris 1966, 516.521-522; P. NAUTIN, "La fin des Stromates et les Hypotyposes de Clément d'Alexandrie", *VigChr* 30 (1976) 268-302, esp. 297-298.

trum, such as the passage from the *Protreptikon*; moreover, if we had relevant texts from the *Prophetic Eclogues*, the *Adumbrationes*, and the *Excerpts from Theodotus*, these would require even greater attention.

2. Text I: *Protr.* 8,80,1

The first reference to Proverbs 8 occurs in an extensive list of biblical passages that Clement invokes in his exhortation to abandon the worship of pagan deities and the cultic use of statues. “It is now time”, he writes, “to go to the prophetic Scriptures”, which “form the short road to salvation” in that they “clearly exhort us to the attainment of the salvation set before us”. Clement begins with “the Sibyl prophetess... the first to sing to us the song of salvation”, continues with a number of texts from the prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Hosea –“the whole prophetic choir, the associates of Moses”–, adds a cluster of passages from Proverbs (which includes *Ier* 10:12 because this, too, refers to Wisdom)⁵, and quotes, finally, *Dt* 6:4-9 (the Shema), some verses from Psalm 2, Psalm 4, Romans (1:21.23.25), *Gen* 1:1, and *Ioël* 2:10⁶.

The text relevant to our discussion is the segment on Wisdom, which is placed roughly in the middle of the chapter:

Why announce to you mysteries of Wisdom, even utterances [gleaned] from a son of the Hebrews himself made wise? – “The Lord made me the beginning of his ways for his works” (*Prov* 8:22) and “The Lord gives wisdom, and from His face [proceed] knowledge and understanding” (*Prov* 2:6). “How long will you lie [in bed], you sluggard, and when will you be aroused from sleep?” (*Prov* 6:9). “But if you show yourself no sluggard, as a fountain your harvest shall come” (*Prov* 6:11), [that is] the fatherly Word (ὁ λόγος ὁ πατρικός), the benign luminary (ὁ ἀγαθὸς λύχνος), the Lord that

5 The next reference, although from Jeremiah (10:12: “It is the Lord that made the earth by his strength, who set up the world by his wisdom”), is determined by Clement’s interest in references to wisdom, which he evidently interprets christologically.

6 The specific passages are the following: *Ier* 23:23; *Is* 40:12; 64:1-2; 66:1; *Dt* 32:39; *Amos* 4:13 + *Os* 13:4 (conflated and ascribed only to Hosea); *Is* 45:19-23; 40:18-19; 10:10-11; 14; *Prov* 8:22, 2:6, 6:9, 11, 23; *Ier* 10:12; *Dt* 6:4, 13; *Ps* 2:12-13; *Ps* 4:3; *Rom* 1:21, 23, 25; *Gen* 1:1; *Ioël* 2:10.

brings light, faith to all, and salvation. For “the Lord who created the earth by His power, as Jeremiah says, has raised up the world by His Wisdom” (*Ier* 10:12): for Wisdom, which is his Word, raises up to the truth us who had succumbed to idols. And this is the first resurrection (cf. *Apoc* 20:5) – [that is, the resurrection] from the transgression (αὕτη πρώτη τοῦ παραπτώματος ἀνάστασις)⁷.

It is quite clear that, for Clement, the references to Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs are “mysteries” about the Logos of the Christian proclamation⁸. The subject matter of Clement’s discourse is identified beyond any ambiguity: “wisdom ... is His word” (ἡ σοφία, ἣ ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ), namely “the Word of the Father, the benign light, the Lord that brings light, faith to all, and salvation”. The Wisdom language of *Ier* 10:12 (“the Lord ... set upright the world by his Wisdom (ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ αὐτοῦ)”) is interpreted in light of Christian dogmatic conviction. As we have seen, it is Christ, the Wisdom or Word of God, who raises to the truth those who had fallen into subjection to idolatry. Clement understands “the first resurrection” (*Apoc* 20:5) to be Christ’s work of lifting up mankind from the primordial transgression (ἡ πρώτη τοῦ παραπτώματος ἀνάστασις) and from subjection to idolatry, to the truth.

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- 7 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Protr.* 8,80,1 (C. MONDÉSERT, *SCh* 2, Paris 1949, 146): τί σοι σοφίας ἀναγγέλλω μυστήρια καὶ ῥήσεις ἐκ παιδὸς Ἑβραίου σεσοφισμένου; «κύριος ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ», καὶ «κύριος δίδωσι σοφίαν καὶ ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ γινώσκει καὶ σύνεσις. ἕως πότε, ὀκνηρέ, κατάκεισαι; πότε δὲ ἐξ ὕπνου ἐγερθήσῃ; ἐὰν δὲ ἄσκνος ᾖς, ἤξει σοι ὡσπερ πηγὴ ὁ ἀμητός σου», ὁ λόγος ὁ πατρικός, ὁ ἀγαθὸς λύχνος, ὁ κύριος ἐπάγων τὸ φῶς, τὴν πίστιν πᾶσι καὶ σωτηρίαν. «κύριος γὰρ ὁ ποιήσας τὴν γῆν ἐν τῇ ἰσχύϊ αὐτοῦ», ὡς φησὶν Ἱερεμίας, «ἀνῶρθωσεν τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ αὐτοῦ». ἀποπεσόντας γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τὰ εἰδῶλα ἡ σοφία, ἣ ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ, ἀνορθοῖ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν. καὶ αὕτη πρώτη τοῦ παραπτώματος ἀνάστασις. We have modified the translation from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, II, Michigan 1971, 194-195.
- 8 On “the mysteries of Wisdom”, cf. ORIGEN, *princ.* 1,2,3 (H. CROUZEL – M. SIMONETTI, *SCh* 252, Paris 1978, 114): “Now, in the same way in which we have understood that Wisdom is the beginning of the ways of God, and is said to be created, that is, forming beforehand and containing within herself the species and reasons of the whole creation, in the same manner must she be understood to be the Word of God, as she discloses to all other beings, that is, to the entire creation, the reason of the mysteries and secrets which are contained within the Wisdom of God, and so she is called the Word, because she is, as it were, the interpreter of the secrets of the intellect”. We quote the English translation by J. BEHR in *Origen, On First Principles. A Reader’s Edition*, Oxford 2019, 22.

order, (1) the Father, beyond the one and the monad, beyond cause, above space, and time, and name, and conception, neither an accident nor described by anything accidental (cf. Plato, *Resp.* 509b: ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας)¹¹; (2) the Logos, who, in relation to the Father, is “the Face of God”¹² and, in relation with the subsequent realities, is the beginning and principle (ἀρχή) that founds the multiplicity and many levels of creation and reassembles it in himself¹³; (3) the seven “first created ones” (πρωτόκτιστου)¹⁴, the archangels, and the angels, through whom

Homilies remains solidly established (see G. KRETSCHMAR, *Studien zur frühchristlichen Trinitätstheologie*, Tübingen 1956, 68 n. 3; M. PELLEGRINO-RONCAGLIA, “Pantène et le Didascalée d’Alexandrie: du judéo-christianisme au christianisme hellénistique”, in R. H. FISCHER (ed.), *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature and its Environment, Primarily in the Syriac East*, Chicago 1977, 211-233. I hasten to say that, although the term “hierarchy” is anachronistic for Clement, its content is definitely not. The term “hierarchy” was coined towards the end of the fifth century by the anonymous author of the Pseudo-Areopagitic Corpus. I have taken the liberty to use it for Clement’s description of the celestial realm because some of the fundamental operating principles of the Clementinian and Dionysian universes are surprisingly similar. See the discussion in B. G. BUCUR, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology*, 32-34.

- 11 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,8,71,1; *Strom.* 7,2,2,3; 5,11,71; 5,12,81,5.
- 12 That the “Face of God” is the Son – *Exc.* 10,6 (F. SAGNARD, *SCh* 23, Paris 1948, 80) – is nothing new: Clement says as much in *Paed* 1,7,57,2 (*SCh* 70, 212), by drawing upon the theophany at Peniel / Ἐἶδος Θεοῦ in *Gen* 32:30. What is new is the rich and detailed description of the principles governing the hierarchy: there is a continual propagation of the Face’s light from one level of the hierarchy to the next down to the lowest level of existence; each rank of spiritual entities is “moved” by the one above it, and will, in turn, “move” the immediately lower level.
- 13 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 4,25,156. According to Salvatore LILLA, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism*, Oxford 1971, 204, “Clement found already formed in Philo the doctrine of the Logos as the totality of powers which are identical with the ideas”. Eric F. OSBORN, *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, Cambridge 1957, 41, affirms that Clement “explained the existence and nature of things by ‘powers’ just as Plato had done by ‘forms’ and the earlier Stoics had done by immanent reason or divine fire”.
- 14 Here Clement echoes Jewish and Christian traditions about the sevenfold highest angelic company. See *Ez* 9:2-3 (seven angelic beings, of which the seventh is more important than the other six); *Tob* 12:15 (seven “holy angels” who have access before the Glory, where they present the prayers of “the saints”); *1 Enoch* 20 (seven archangels); 90,21 (“the seven first snow-white ones”); *Test. Levi* 7,4-8,3 (seven men in white clothing, vesting Levi with the [sevenfold] priestly apparel); *2 Enoch* 19.6 (seven phoenixes, seven cherubim, and seven seraphim, all singing in unison); *Apoc* 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 8:2 (seven spirits / angels before the divine throne); HERMAS, *The Shepherd* Vis. 3.4.1; 5.5.3 (the six “first created ones (πρωτοὶ κτισθέντες)”, who accompany the Son of God as their seventh). For the notion of “first created”, see *Jub.* 2,2; 15,27. See also the discus-

the light of God's Face is channeled and passed on, from one level to the next, in adaptive fashion; (4) finally, as "imitations (μιμήματα) of the angelic glory"¹⁵, "the advancements (προκοπαί) pertaining to the Church here below, namely those of bishops, presbyters and deacons".

Considered through the prism of Clement's "celestial hierarchy", the "mysteries of Wisdom" as "the beginning of God's ways for his works", cascading as benign light to illumine and bring faith and salvation to all¹⁶, give expression, to speak with Osborn¹⁷, to "a very Johannine notion of reciprocity between the Father and the Son": the Logos as "the image of God... the genuine Son of Mind... the archetypal light of light"¹⁸, "the Face of God"¹⁹ contemplated by the *protoclists* and passed on in a way that offers the celestial paradigm for perfected Christians on earth.

3. Text II: *Strom.* 6,16,138,4

The seventh day, therefore, is proclaimed a rest (ἀνάπαυσις) – abstinence from evil things – preparing for the Primal Day, our true rest (τῷ ὄντι ἀνάπαυσιν ἡμῶν), which, in truth, is the first creation of light, in which all things are viewed and possessed. From this day the first wisdom and knowledge illuminate us. For the light of truth – a light true, casting no shadow, is the Spirit of the Lord indivisibly divided (ἀμερῶς μεριζόμενον) to all, who are sanctified by faith, holding the place of a luminary, in order to the knowledge of real existences. By following Him, therefore, through our whole life, we become impassible (ἀπαθεΐς); and this is to rest (ἀναπαύσασθαι). This is also why Solomon says that Wisdom arose in the Almighty before heaven and earth and all existences (cf. *Prov* 8:22-25); the participation of which – [a participation] by power, I mean, not by essence (ἢ κατὰ δύναμιν, οὐ κατ' οὐσίαν λέγω) –

sion of heptadic traditions in Second Temple Judaism in W. F. SMELIK, "On Mystical Transformation of the Righteous into Light in Judaism", *JSJ* 26 (1995) 131-141; R. ELIOR, *The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism*, Oxford 2005, 77-81.

15 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 6,13,107,2 (P. DESCOURTIEUX, *SCh* 446, Paris 1999, 274).

16 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Protr.* 8,80,1.

17 E. F. OSBORN, *Clement of Alexandria*, New York 2005, 150.

18 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Protr.* 10,98,4 (*SCh* 2bis, 166).

19 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,57,2 (*SCh* 70, 212); *Exc.* 10,6 (*SCh* 23, 80).

teaches one to be a knower of things divine and human by apprehension (καταληπτικῶς)²⁰.

As part of a commentary on the ten commandments, this text discusses the proclamation of the Sabbath as “rest” (ἀνάπαυσις). Stating that this cultic rest constitutes the needed preparation for “the Primal Day, our true rest”, allows Clement to take as the object of his reflections not the weekly Sabbath rest but its heavenly prototype – the Primal Day, which is “the true rest”²¹. This Primal Day is the first and everlasting manifestation of light, he tells us, in which all multiplicity of creation is comprised (“in which all things are viewed and possessed”). Leaving aside his use of “light” for Baptism²² and “rest” for the eschatological perfection

20 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 6,16,138,1-4 (SCh 446, 334.336): ἡ ἑβδόμη τοίνυν ἡμέρα ἀνάπαυσις κηρύσσεται ἀποχῆ κακῶν ἐτοιμάζουσα τὴν ἀρχέγονον ἡμέραν τὴν τῷ ὄντι ἀνάπαυσιν ἡμῶν, ἣ δὴ καὶ πρώτη τῷ ὄντι φωτὸς γένεσις, ἐν ᾧ τὰ πάντα συνθεωρεῖται καὶ πάντα κληρονομεῖται. ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἡμέρας ἡ πρώτη σοφία καὶ ἡ γνώσις ἡμᾶς ἐλλάμπεται: τὸ γὰρ φῶς τῆς ἀληθείας φῶς ἀληθές, ἄσκιον, ἀμερῶς μεριζόμενον πνεῦμα κυρίου εἰς τοὺς διὰ πίστεως ἡγιασμένους, λαμπτήρος ἐπέχον τάξις εἰς τὴν τῶν ὄντων ἐπίγνωσιν. ἀκολουθοῦντες οὖν αὐτῷ δι’ ὄλου τοῦ βίου ἀπαθεῖς καθιστάμεθα, τὸ δέ ἐστίν ἀναπαύσασθαι. διὸ καὶ Σολομῶν πρὸ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς καὶ πάντων τῶν ὄντων τῷ παντοκράτορι γεγονέναι τὴν σοφίαν λέγει, ἧς ἡ μέθεξις (ἡ κατὰ δύναμιν, οὐ κατ’ οὐσίαν λέγω) θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων καταληπτικῶς ἐπιστήμονα εἶναι διδάσκει. We have modified the translation from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, II, 512.

21 Clement’s statement that “the seventh day... is abstinence from evil things” and his further positing of a celestial counterpart – the Primal Day, our true rest (τῷ ὄντι ἀνάπαυσιν ἡμῶν) – to the cultic Sabbath, suggests a connection with his equally Platonizing conjunction between the voluntary, ascetical “abstinence from evil things” (ἀποχῆ κακῶν), characteristic of beginners, and the ability of the perfected “Gnostic” Christian, of reflecting and embodying God’s own beneficent work. See *Strom.* 6,7,60,2-3 (SCh 446, 182.184): “But the first purification which takes place in the body, the soul being first, is abstinence from evil things (ἡ ἀποχῆ τῶν κακῶν), which some consider perfection, and is, in truth, the perfection of the common believer, Jew and Greek. But in the case of the Gnostic, after that which is reckoned perfection in others, his righteousness advances to activity in well-doing (εἰς ἐνέργειαν εὐποιᾶς)”. We have modified the translation from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, II, 494.

22 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,6,25,1; 1,6,26,1-3 (SCh 70, 156.158): “Straightway, on our regeneration (ἀναγεννηθέντες), we attained that perfection after which we aspired... Being baptized, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal. «I, says He, have said that you are gods, and all sons of the Highest...». Now we call that perfect which wants nothing. For what is yet wanting to him who knows God? [...] We then alone, who first have touched the confines of life, are already perfect; and we already live who are separated from death”; *Ecl.* 5,2-3 (O. STÄHLIN – L. FRÜCHTEL, GCS 17, Berlin

of the Gnostic and its anticipation in the spiritual sonship²³, Clement is here speaking about the divine outpouring that offers humans the possibility of participating in the divine reality. This participation is not κατ' οὐσίαν but κατὰ δύναμιν, Clement hastens to clarify²⁴, and it grants one "to know things divine and human" ("the knowledge of real existences", as he writes further) in a direct grasp, "by apprehension" (καταληπτικῶς)²⁵. And it is this outpouring that Clement identifies with the divine Wisdom, which, according to Proverbs 8, had arisen in God

1970, 138): "And inasmuch as baptism is a sign of regeneration (ἀναγεννήσεως σημεῖον), is it not itself an escape from matter (τῆς ὕλης ἐστὶν ἔκβασις) through the teaching of the Savior, even while a great and violent stream is constantly sweeping and carrying us away? Drawing us out of disorderliness, the Lord illumines us and leads us to the unshaded light, which is no longer material".

- 23 In the opening section of the *Stromata* – *Strom.* 1,1,11-15 (C. MONDÉSERT – M. CASTER, SCh 30, Paris 1951, 51-55) – Clement tells us that among those "blessed and truly remarkable men" he had met, the foremost in power (δυνάμει πρῶτος) was a man whom he found "concealed in Egypt"; upon meeting him Clement resettled to Egypt and remained there (ἀνεπαυσάμην). I find the use of this verb noteworthy. Literally, Clement tells us that he "found rest" in his relationship with that anonymous elder, who "engendered in the souls of his hearers a deathless element of knowledge (γνώσεως χρῆμα)" (*Strom.* 1,1,11,2 [SCh 30, 51]). Should we not suspect the Alexandrian of deliberately directing his readers' thoughts to the crucial concepts of ἀνάπαυσις and, immediately afterwards, γνώσις? I would venture to propose that, for Clement, a perfected Christian – one who is "living as an angel on earth, already luminous", having "already attained the isangelic condition" – embodies in his very being and offers to those with whom he interacts a foretaste of the 'rest' in God to which the seeker aspires.
- 24 Clement often uses οὐσία and δύναμις to speak about the interplay between divine transcendence and immanence. E.g., *Strom.* 2,2,5,4 (P. Th. CAMELOT – C. MONDÉSERT, SCh 38, Paris 1954, 36): "God is remote in essence, but very near in power (πρόρω μὲν κατ' οὐσίαν... ἐγγυτάτω δὲ δυνάμει)"; *Strom.* 6,18,166,2 (SCh 446, 392-393): "For human speech is by nature feeble, and incapable of uttering God... not his essence (τὴν οὐσίαν), for this is impossible, but the power (τὴν δύναμιν) and the works (τὰ ἔργα) of God". See in this respect Jean PÉPIN, *Théologie cosmique et théologie chrétienne (Ambroise, Exam. I 1, 1-4)*, Paris 1964, 378-379; Cristina TERMINI, *Le Potenze di Dio: Studio su δύναμις in Filon di Alessandria*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 71, Roma 2000) and H. F. HÄGG, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism*, Oxford 2006, 246-251.260-267.
- 25 Elsewhere, cf. *Strom.* 7,10,57,1 (A. LE BOULLUEC, SCh 428, Paris 1997, 184-187), Clement speaks about "the mystical stages of advancement" leading to the place of rest, where those "pure in heart" (*Mt* 5:8) behold God "face to face" (*1 Cor* 13:12), "with knowledge and full comprehension" (ἐπιστημονικῶς καὶ καταληπτικῶς). This is "the gift of the God-given knowledge" (ἡ δόσις τῆς θεοδωρήτου γνώσεως), which shines forth καταληπτικῶς (*Strom.* 8,1,2,1 [O. STÄHLIN - L. FRÜCHTEL, GCS 17, Berlin 1970, 80]).

before the creation of heaven, and earth, and all existences" (cf. *Prov* 8:22-25).

While the text speaks, indeed, about "the first *creation* of light (φωτὸς γένεσις)", Clement's insistence on the fact that the human participation in Wisdom is one "by power, not by essence" implies that the *ousia* in question is inaccessible in its utter transcendence, and therefore no less than divine. At any rate, the luminous outpouring of Wisdom – "the first wisdom and knowledge" that "illuminate us" – may be termed either "light of truth" and "true light", or "Spirit of the Lord"; it is *one* in itself, yet infinitely *apportioned* to those who are being sanctified; divided indeed, yet not thereby disunited: it is, writes Clement, "indivisibly divided"; and its role is that of being the torch that makes possible the knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) leading to dispassion (ἀπάθεια), which, from the perspective of the perfected Christian's ascent, is the concrete content of ἀνάπαυσις.

How does Clement "decipher" the parable of the biblical character of Wisdom? "The Primal Day, our true rest" and "the light of truth – a light true, casting no shadow" are quite likely referring to the Johannine Christ, "light of all mankind", shining in the darkness, and not overcome by it (cf. *Jo* 1:4-5); this supposition is confirmed immediately afterwards, when the text speaks about "following Him – scil. Christ – through our whole life", so as to become impassible. Of course, the Christological framing of the divine outpouring is quite evident in Clement. As a matter of fact, the Wisdom of Proverbs 8 as "the Spirit of the Lord indivisibly divided to all" is elsewhere reprised in a Christological key:

The Son of God is never displaced from His own vantage point; not divided, not dissevered (οὐ μεριζόμενος, οὐκ ἀποτεμνόμενος)²⁶, not passing from place to place; always everywhere, and nowhere contained... He, the fatherly Word, exhibiting a holy administration for Him who put [all] in subjection to Him²⁷.

26 Recall ἀμερῶς μεριζόμενον at *Strom.* 6,16,138,2 (SCh 446, 336).

27 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom* 7,2,5,5-6 (SCh 428, 48.50). On this point, Clement anticipates Origen's interpretation of Wisdom as the "beginning of the ways" (*Prov* 8:22). Cf. ORIGEN, *De principiis* 1,2,2 (SCh 252,114): Wisdom contains "every power and form of the future creation (*omnis virtus ac deformatio futurae inerat creaturae*)"; *De principiis* 1,2,3 (SCh 252, 114): Wisdom "discloses to all other beings, that is, to the entire creation, the reason of the mysteries and secrets which are contained within the Wisdom of God,

The free shifting, repeatedly and without much explanation, between “Logos” and “Pneuma”²⁸, and the parallel between “the Son” as “neither simply one thing as one thing (ἐν ὡς ἓν), nor many things as parts (πολλὰ ὡς μέρη), but one thing as all things (ὡς πάντα ἓν)”²⁹ and “the powers of the spirit, taken together as one thing”, “rolled and united into one”³⁰ are characteristic of Clement’s fusion between Philo’s doctrine of “the Logos as the totality of powers which are identical with the ideas”³¹ and an established teaching on the “powers of the spirit” originating with Jewish or Jewish Christian speculation about angelic “powers”.

and so she is called the Word, because she is, as it were, the interpreter of the secrets of the intellect”.

- 28 E.g., CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,6,43: “The Lord Jesus, the Word of God, that is, the Spirit made flesh”. See M. SIMONETTI, “Note di cristologia pneumatologica”, *Augustinianum* 12 (1972) 201-232; H. A. WOLFSON, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, 3rd, rev. ed. Cambridge, MA 1970, 177-256; R. CANTALAMESSA, *L’omelia in S. Pascha dello Pseudo-Ippolito di Roma. Ricerche sulla teologia dell’Asia Minore nella seconda metà del II secolo*, Milano 1967, 181-183. This seems to be a widespread phenomenon, present in Syria-Palestine, Asia Minor, Alexandria, Carthage, and Rome, in authors speaking Latin, Greek and Syriac.
- 29 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 4,25,156,2 (A. VAN DEN HOEK – C. MONDÉSERT, *SCh* 463, Paris 2001, 318). As H. F. HÄGG, *Clement of Alexandria and the Beginnings of Christian Apophaticism*, 214-215, explains, “Clement distinguishes between God as τὸ ἓν, as simple unity, and the Son as πάντα ἓν, the unity of all things... Just as the interpretation of the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* was applied to the Christian God, so the second hypothesis of the *Parmenides* was interpreted in relation to the Son of God”.
- 30 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 4,25,156,1 (*SCh* 463, 318). Clement seems to be fusing the Logos-speculation with an established teaching on the “powers of the spirit” that originated in Jewish or Jewish Christian speculation about angelic “powers”. It is significant that in the above passage Clement quotes *Apoc* 1:8; 21:6; 22:13 (“the Word is called the Alpha and the Omega...”). What he has in mind is surely the throne-vision of Revelation, depicting the seven spirits or angels in attendance before the throne (*Apoc* 1:4; 8:2). Clement knows about δύναμις as an angelic being –e.g., *Strom.* 2,1,3,5 (*SCh* 38, 34), in reference to the angelic “power” that spoke to Hermas. Like other early Christian writers, he exploits the double (philosophical and Jewish-Christian) affiliation of the concept in order to ascertain his credibility in both areas.
- 31 S. LILLA, *Clement of Alexandria*, 204.

4. Text III: *Strom.* 7,2,7,4

For this was the Wisdom “in which” the Almighty God “delighted” (*Prov* 8:30). For the Son is “the Power of God”, as the Father’s most ancient Word prior to all existents, and may also properly be termed His “Wisdom” and the Teacher of those formed through Him³².

The third passage that discusses Proverbs 8 occurs in *Stromata* 7, as part of a wider argument in favor of divine providence, established on the metaphysical conviction, laid out in a text I have already quoted: the Son, although undivided, unmoved and uncontained, is always everywhere present, seeing, hearing, and knowing all things, and carries out a “holy administration” by means of his “host of angels and gods”³³.

Clement paints a beautiful panorama of divine providence exercised by the Son of God, which encompasses both Israel and the Gentiles, and culminates with the Church³⁴. Implicitly refuted are a variety of conceptions about the deity in its interaction with creation, which he finds incompatible with the Christian revelation: “the Lord does not care”; “he is unable”; “he is evil”; “he is the savior of some, but not of others”; “he is ignorant”. For Clement, it is the incarnation that delivers the irrefutable proof of God’s loving concern with humankind³⁵. Return-

32 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 7,2,7,4 (SCh 428, 54): αὐτὴ γὰρ ἦν <ῆ> σοφία «ἣ προσέχαιρεν» ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεός· «δύναμις» γὰρ τοῦ «θεοῦ» ὁ υἱός, ἅτε πρὸ πάντων τῶν γενομένων ἀρχικώτατος λόγος τοῦ πατρός, καὶ «σοφία» αὐτοῦ κυρίως ἂν καὶ διδάσκαλος λεχθεῖ τῶν δι’ αὐτοῦ πλασθέντων.

33 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom* 7,2,5,5-6 (SCh 428, 48.50).

34 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 7.2.6.1-4 (SCh 428, 50): “Wherefore also all men are His; some through knowledge, and others not yet so; and some as friends, some as faithful servants, some as servants merely. This is the Teacher, who trains the Gnostic by mysteries, and the believer by good hopes, and the hard of heart by corrective discipline through sensible operation. Thence His providence is in private, in public, and everywhere. And that He whom we call Savior and Lord is the Son of God, the prophetic Scriptures explicitly prove. So the Lord of all, of Greeks and of Barbarians, *persuades* those who are willing. For He *does not compel* him who (through choosing and fulfilling, from Him, what pertains to laying hold of it the hope) is able to receive salvation from Him”.

35 See CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 7,2,6,5; 7,2,7,5; 7,2,8,1 (SCh 428, 52.56): “*He who for our sakes assumed flesh* capable of suffering, is far from being luxuriously indolent”; “Nor does He ever abandon care for men, by being drawn aside from pleasure, *who, having assumed flesh*, which by nature is susceptible of suffering, trained it to the condition of impassibility”; “Therefore, a hater of man, the Savior can never be; who, *for His*

ing to Proverbs 8, this verse is quoted in support of Clement's refutation of the dualistic notion of an ignorant God:

Ignorance does not touch the God who, "before the foundation of the world" (*Eph* 1:4), was the counselor of the Father (cf. *Rom* 11:34; *Is* 40:13; *Job* 15:8). For He was "the Wisdom in which the Sovereign God delighted" (cf. *Prov* 8:30: ἐγὼ ἤμην ἣ προσέχαιρε). For the Son is the power of God – as being the Father's most ancient Word before the production of all things – and His Wisdom properly speaking (κυρίως) (cf. *1 Cor* 1:24)³⁶.

One finds here all the elements that have surfaced in the analysis of the previous two passages. The subject-matter of Clement's discourse is the Son: it is the Son that is "found" in Proverbs 8 under the designation of "Wisdom" and, in *1 Cor* 1:24, as "Power" and "Wisdom." Clement himself refers to the Son as "the Word of the Father" and, quite bluntly, as "God". What is interesting in *Strom.* 7,2,7,2 is that Wisdom is both a hypostatic reality – "the counselor of the Father" and the partner in whom the Father rejoices – and that intrinsic quality making God wise and not ignorant – God's "very wisdom" as Athanasius will insist³⁷.

5. Other Things Clement's Students Are Expected to Know about Wisdom

Understanding Clement's exegesis of Proverbs 8 requires moving beyond the observation that Clement identifies the "Wisdom" of Proverbs 8 with the Logos of the Christian kerygma – the Logos made man as Jesus Christ. It is important to consider the further connection with Clement's notion that the same Wisdom and Logos is also the sole subject of all biblical theophanies. This is, of course, neither a peculiar Clementine idea, nor a marginal element of his thought, but a central

exceeding love to human flesh... investing Himself with it, came for the common salvation of men".

36 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 7,2,7,2 (SCh 428, 54).

37 For a good synthesis, see Andrew LOUTH, "The Use of the Term ἵδιος in Alexandrian Theology from Alexander to Cyril", *Studia Patristica* 19 (1989) 198-202.

part of early Christian thought, especially prevalent in anti-Jewish, anti-dualistic, and anti-Modalistic polemics among pre-Nicene writers. "Christophanic exegesis", as this early Christian approach to biblical theophanies has been termed³⁸, was the premise for engaging exegetically with the Scriptures of biblical Israel, including, of course, the text of Proverbs 8.

Since Clement's ideal readers will have come to read *Stromata* 6 and 7 after having learned from the *Protreptikon* and *Pedagogue*, we can be reasonably sure that Clement expected his readers to follow with ease his repeated shifts between the language of "Wisdom", "Word", or Spirit", and to hold together the notions of the Logos-Wisdom as "second God" with its cosmological and revelational role, and that of the same Logos-Wisdom enfleshed:

He who is of David, and yet before him, the Word of God...,
the supramundane Wisdom, the celestial Word the all-harmonious,
melodious, holy instrument of God...,
the Word of God, the Lord, the New Song...

And do not suppose the song of salvation to be new, as a vessel
or a house is new. For "before the morning star" (*Ps* 109:3 LXX) it
was; and in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with
God, and "the Word was God" (*Io* 1:1)...

This very Word has now appeared as man...

The Savior, who existed before, has in recent days appeared. He,
who is in Him that truly is, has appeared; for the Word, who was
with God, and by whom all things were created, has appeared as
our Teacher³⁹.

Moreover, aside from Wisdom as the "undividedly divided" outpouring of light that establishes the multiplicity of creation, and in which that multiplicity returns to unity; and aside from Wisdom become human to embrace suffering, death, and resurrection so as to work out a universal salvation, Clement's students would also have been familiar with the presence of the Logos-Wisdom as "mystical angel" and "preexistent sa-

38 See B. G. BUCUR, *Scripture Re-envisioned: Christophanic Exegesis and the Making of a Christian Bible*, Leiden 2018.

39 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Protr.* 1,5,3 (SCh 2, 58); 1,6,1.3 (SCh 2, 59); 1,7,1.3 (SC 2, 60.61).

vior” in the theophanies that punctuate biblical history. As Clement states, in a long section of his *Pedagogue*, “Jesus, our Pedagogue” is the very one who “formed man of the dust”⁴⁰; this “our Pedagogue, the holy God Jesus” (ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος παιδαγωγὸς ἅγιος θεὸς Ἰησοῦς) is the very “Lord” who appeared to Abraham (*Gen* 17:1), who appeared to Jacob on top of the ladder and in the nightly struggle (*Gen* 28; 32), who led Israel out of Egypt (ὁ ἐξαγαγὼν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου) and guided them (ἦγεν αὐτοὺς) through the desert, who gave the Law through his servant Moses (*Ex* 20:2; *Dt* 32:10-12), who enjoined Israel to “fear God” (*Dt* 6:2), and who spoke to the prophets, in the course of such theophanies as Isaiah 6 and Jeremiah 14⁴¹. The difference between “that hidden angel, Jesus” (ὁ μυστικὸς ἐκεῖνος ἄγγελος Ἰησοῦς) present in Old Testament theophanies and the man Jesus of Nazareth is, quite simply, that the Logos came to be born (γενένηται; τίκτεται)⁴².

This theology, which obviously represents the common tradition to which Clement felt bound, is used, in the very next section of the *Pedagogue* (*Paed.* 1,8,62,1-74,4) as an argument against “those who believe that the just [God] is not the good [God]”⁴³. This is the same polemical stance we encounter in *Strom.* 7,2,7,4, where the dualist disparagement of the creator’s goodness and wisdom leads Clement to quote Wisdom 8:22.

The polemical role of this verse, then, is not only a matter of noting that God is intrinsically wise, but that the Scriptures bear witness to Wisdom’s presence and interaction with the patriarchs and prophets before the same Scriptures also proclaim Wisdom’s coming to dwell among humans in the flesh, as a man. On this point, Clement sounds quite like Justin Martyr, who most explicitly links the Christological interpretation of the Wisdom of Proverbs 8 with the Christological interpretation of Old Testament theophanies, and the Incarnation (*Dial.* 61,1; 129). Underneath both – and still under-researched by students of Patristics – lies the much vaster bedrock of the Christian “Christophanic” tradition.

40 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,12,98,1-2 (SCh 70, 284).

41 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,7,56,1-60,1 (SCh 70, 210-216).

42 Cf. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,7,59,1 (SCh 70, 214-216). See B. G. BUCUR, “Clement of Alexandria’s Exegesis of Old Testament Theophanies”, *Phronema* 29 (2014) 63-68.

43 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Paed.* 1,8,62,1-74,4 (SCh 70, 222-242).

6. Conclusions

Clement's exegesis of Proverbs 8 is, unsurprisingly, Christological, and expresses, to use Osborn's formulation, "a very Johannine notion of reciprocity between the Father and the Son"⁴⁴. Clement is drawing on an archaic Christology, which is expressed in his free shifting, repeatedly and without much explanation, between "Logos" and "Pneuma", and the parallel between "the Son" as "indivisibly divided" or "one thing as all things" and "the powers of the spirit, taken together as one thing", "rolled and united into one"⁴⁵.

Clement is not reflecting on the biblical character of Wisdom to end up with Jesus; rather, he begins with the Gospel as preached by the Apostles and transmitted by those charismatic "elders" he so reveres, and especially by the "Sicilian bee" in whom Clement confesses to have found spiritual ἀνάπαυσις; he then joins in the ecclesial practice of opening of the Scriptures of Israel and, following in the footsteps of distinguished predecessors, but also bringing his prodigious gifts to the table, he finds the luminous face of Christ, "that mystical angel", in all the writings of the patriarchs and prophets of Israel, but also, to some extent, in the wisdom traditions of the Greeks and Barbarians. The point where Clement's view of the Logos appears deeply Christian is this re-envisioning of the Scriptures of Israel as a coherent story leading from Genesis to Jesus, according to the widespread interpretation of biblical theophanies as manifestations of the Logos-to-be-incarnate - "Christophanies".

Proverbs 8 is one of many texts that, to Clement, become Christian "Old Testament". Clement's ideal readers – who are *not* consulting the Clementine corpus like brigands intent on "pilfering and stealing the ripe fruits"⁴⁶, but who approach as students of the Alexandrian master – would have diligently gone through the curriculum so that, by the time they read *Stromata* 6 and 7, they would long since become familiar with the Christological exegesis of theophanies. In short, Clement *assumes* that the reader does not need to be told the obvious: that the "Lord Jesus" is the "Lord God" who revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and

44 E. F. OSBORN, *Clement of Alexandria*, 150.

45 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 4,25,156,1 (Sch 463, 318).

46 CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Strom.* 7,18,111,1 (Sch 428, 330).

Jacob, to Moses and to all the prophets. This assumption, however, marks the difference between Clement and his disciples, on the one hand, and us, his modern readers.