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Clement of Alexandria and the Creative Exegesis of Christian Scripture

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2017

Clement of Alexandria and the Creative Exegesis of Christian Scripture
by Harold Clifton Ward, III

Abstract

How might one describe early Christian exegesis? This question has given rise to a significant reassessment of patristic exegetical practice in recent decades, and the present thesis contributes to this reappraisal of patristic exegesis in two significant ways. First, this thesis attempts to move beyond the idea of exegesis to investigate the textual practices that serve as its *modus operandi*. In order to accomplish this task, I develop the notion of "creative exegesis." I argue that creative exegesis permits one to pay attention in detail to two modes of archival thinking at the heart of the ancient exegetical enterprise: the grammatical archive, a repository of the textual practices learned from the grammarian, and the memorial archive, the constellations of textual memories from which textual meaning is constructed. Second, this thesis examines the textual practices of Clement of Alexandria, a figure whose exegesis has on the whole been neglected in modern scholarship. I argue that an assessment of Clement's creative exegesis reveals his deep commitment to scriptural interpretation as the foundation of theological inquiry, even in his works that cannot be explicitly labeled "exegetical." Clement employs various textual practices from the grammatical archive to read Scripture figurally, though he restricts the figural referents of Scripture to two mysteries, bound up in the incarnation of Christ and the knowledge of God. These mysteries are discovered in an act of rhetorical invention by reading Scripture for the constellations that frame its narrative. For Clement, the plot of Scripture—and the progression from Old Testament to New—is expressed under the dual constellations of "fear," by which God leads his people to faith, and "wisdom," through which God leads his people to the ultimate vision of the divine essence.

Declaration

This thesis is the product of my own work and does not include work that has been presented in any form for a degree at this or any other university. All quotation from, and references to, the work of persons other than myself have been properly acknowledged throughout.

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published in any format, including all electronic formats, without the author's prior written consent. All information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Acknowledgments

"Deserve's got nothin' to do with it." This line proved that Clint Eastwood's character Will Munny was the great theologian of the Western *Unforgiven*, but I also think that it rings just as true for me today. The submission of this thesis marks the culmination of a long and arduous process, but I would be foolish to think its completion was somehow earned or merited by my own efforts. No, I am acutely aware of the fact that I could not have completed this project without the generous help and support of so many others. I should first thank my doctoral supervisor, Professor Lewis Ayres, whose influence on my life and scholarship goes well beyond this thesis. He first introduced me to the theological potency of the Western (a point that I think my dad tried unsuccessfully to convince me of many years ago). And Lewis not only endured draft upon draft of many of these chapters patiently—commenting all the while on the extreme volume of adverbs that needed to be chopped—but he also provided a "full-service" graduate training, complete with advice on publications, grants, job applications, and beyond. The scholarship that I hope is evident in this thesis is modeled on Lewis' own approach to Christian theology.

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Abbreviations

ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
BICS	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies
CH	Church History
CMG	Corpus Medicorum Graecorum
CP	Classical Philology
CQ	Classical Quarterly
DSD	Dead Sea Discoveries
EP	Etudes Philosophiques
GCS	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
GG	Grammatici Graeci (Leipzig: Teubner, 1883–1901)
GNO	Gregorii Nysseni Opera, ed. Werner Jaeger et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1952–)
HDAC	Histoire des doctrines de l'Antiquité classique
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JLW	Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft
JR	Journal of Religion
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	Liddell, Scott, and Jones, eds. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Oxford, 1843; 9th ed., 1940)
MH	Museum Helveticum
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
Pack	Roger A. Pack, <i>The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt</i> (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965)
PCPhS	Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society
PTS	Patristische Texte und Studien
Ph & Rh	Philosophy and Rhetoric
RFNS	Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica
RE	Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft
RhM	Rheinisches Museum für Philologie

RSR	<i>Recherches de science religieuse</i>
RevSR	<i>Revue des sciences religieuses</i>
SC	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i>
SH	Hugh Lloyd-Jones and Peter J. Parsons, <i>Supplementum Hellenisticum</i> (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983)
SLitI	<i>Studies in the Literary Imagination</i>
SP	<i>Studia Patristica</i>
ST	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
SVF	<i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> , ed. H. von Arnim (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–24; reprint, Stuttgart: Teubner, 1964)
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
WUNT	<i>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
ZWT	<i>Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie</i>

1

Introduction

But, just as most people even now believe, as it seems, that Mary ceased to be a virgin through the birth of her child, though this was not really the case—for some say that she was found by the midwife to be a virgin after her delivery;—so we find it to be with the Lord's Scriptures, which bring forth the truth and yet remain virgins, hiding within them the mysteries of the truth.¹

Hans von Campenhausen once claimed that "no Father of the Church has been judged in so many different ways as Clement."² In his analysis, Campenhausen came to the conclusion that the late second century C.E. teacher Clement of Alexandria was "above all an exegete," who "regarded the interpretation of the Bible as his real task and vocation."³ In the passage I quote above from book seven of his *Stromateis*, Clement provides the clearest glimpse of his own approach to Christian Scripture.⁴ Appealing to the cave narrative in the *Protevangelium of James*, Clement compares the Scriptures to Mary, the mother of Jesus. Although Mary had just given

¹Str. 7.93.7–94.1 (GCS 17:66)

²Hans von Campenhausen, *The Fathers of the Greek Church*, trans. Stanley Godman (New York: Pantheon, 1959), 29.

³Campenhausen, *Fathers of the Greek Church*, 30.

⁴For a biographical account of Clement's life, as much as this is possible from the scant evidence, see André Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates' de Clément d'Alexandrie*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966), 42–70; Eric Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1–27; Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria: A Project of Christian Perfection*, (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 19–38. From the vast literature on the "catechetical school" of Alexandria, see Gustave Bardy, "Aux Origines de l'École d'Alexandrie," *RSR* 27 (1937): 65–90; Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 62–70; Robert L. Wilken, "Alexandria: A School for Training in Virtue," in *Schools of Thought in the Christian Tradition*, ed. Patrick Henry (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 15–30; Ulrich Neymeyr, *Die christlichen Lehrer im zweiten Jahrhundert: ihre Lehrtätigkeit, ihr Selbstverständnis und ihre Geschichte*, (Leiden: Brill, 1989); Roelof van den Broek, "The Christian 'School' of Alexandria in the Second and Third Centuries," in *Centres of Learning: Learning and Location in Pre-modern Europe and the Near East*, eds. Jan Willem Drijvers and A. A. MacDonald (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 39–47; Annewies van den Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and Its Philonic Heritage," *HTR* 90 (1997): 59–87; and Alain Le Boulluec, "Aux origines, encore, de l'"école" d'Alexandrie," in *Alexandrie antique et chrétienne: Clément et Origène*, (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2012), 27–57.

birth, she was nevertheless discovered to be a virgin post partum, and Clement sees in this account a powerful analogy to the Scriptures. Although the Scriptures grant truth to the one who reads them, they "yet remain virgins, hiding within them the mysteries of truth." What does such a perspective say about Clement's understanding of Scripture and biblical exegesis? Is he above all an exegete of Scripture? How do the Scriptures present truth and yet still hide away its mysteries? And what are the mysteries of truth? The purpose of this study is to seek an answer to just such questions, in order to understand Clement's practice of scriptural exegesis.

The only way to offer a compelling account of Clement's practice of exegesis and the theology that was shaped by this reading of Scripture is by attempting to understand the ways in which he adapts the technical terminology, tools, and concepts of ancient modes of reading. In order to accomplish this task, this study seeks to bring two conversations from the field of early Christian studies together. On the one hand, it aims to contribute to the burgeoning reassessment of patristic exegesis of the past few decades. I will argue in agreement with this scholarly reappraisal that Clement's exegesis, and that of all early Christian interpreters, is best viewed within the background of ancient Greco-Roman education. Although the terminology and techniques employed by exegetes varied, all ancient readers participated in a discourse first learned in the grammatical and rhetorical schools. On the other hand, this study seeks to provide an account centered on Clement of Alexandria's distinct reading practices, and as a result, will interact with recent scholarly assessments of the Alexandrian teacher. Monographs that have focused on Clement's exegetical enterprise broadly are sparse, but the most compelling readings of Clement offer fruitful perspectives on the idea of his exegesis. Nevertheless, I will question some of the scholarly assumptions about Clement that tend to color our readings of his texts—most pointedly his understanding of Christian figural reading. Allow me to speak briefly by way of introduction to these two scholarly conversations.

As I mentioned earlier, in recent years many scholars have continued to assess the significant role that the ancient classroom, and especially grammatical and rhetorical training, played in the development of early Christian exegesis.⁵ The practices and techniques that

⁵The most significant works in this reappraisal are Christoph Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode und Herkunft der antiochenischen Exegese*, (Köln: P. Hanstein, 1974); Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, (Basel: F. Reinhardt, 1987); Frances M. Young, "The Rhetorical Schools and Their Influence on Patristic Exegesis," in *The Making of*

characterized the ancient classroom can be seen in the strategies of interpretation used by Christian readers. Nevertheless, there is a particular point often missed in this scholarship. While most scholars have rightly noted some of the techniques that these grammatical and rhetorical traditions have bequeathed to Christian readers, they have been content to describe the use of these tools in the literal exegesis of Scripture. Scholars have far less frequently pointed to the fact that these same tools of literary analysis are utilized in the construction of figural readings of Scripture.⁶ I contend, however, that we must account for the fact that, when early Christian readers turned to read the Bible figurally, they employed the very same tools of literary analysis that were used for reading a text in its literal sense. In my view, this feature of early Christian exegesis is often missed because scholars have been overly rigid in their portrayal of the distinct features of the grammatical and rhetorical tradition prior to its adoption in Christian exegesis, primarily stemming from the significance these works assign to the *Art of Grammar* by Dionysius Thrax.⁷

In this study, I will argue that we must move beyond an examination of the idea of early Christian exegesis to an analysis of the practices of early Christian exegesis. The shades of difference between these two concepts may be slight, but a miscalculation of a single shade can completely alter the colors of an entire image. I can best illustrate what I mean here by looking at a clear and brilliant comment on early Christian exegesis by David Dawson.

The overwhelming presumption of classical Christian figural reading, at least as it has

Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick, ed. Rowan Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 182–99; David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Robert L. Wilken, “In Defense of Allegory,” *Modern Theology* 14 (1998): 197–212; Elizabeth A Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); David Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Press, 2002). More recent forays into this arena can be seen in the insightful works of Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Peter W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). The arguments of Lewis Ayres, *Nicæa and its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), have been influential on my own thinking about the relationship between biblical exegesis and theological debate and development.

⁶One notable exception is Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 63–66.

⁷This will be the claim for which I argue more extensively in chapter two.

been characterized in the writings examined in this book, is that the Christian Bible is read Christianly when it is seen to depict the ongoing historical outworking of a divine intention to transform humanity over the course of time. Moreover, Christian figural readers insist that the history of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, his immediate followers, and the Church are all somehow ingredients in this overarching divine intention. That intention and its outworking in history are regarded as alternately clear and obscure, reliable and unpredictable. Figural readers turn to the text of the Bible for clues and models useful for unraveling as much as they can of what they think they discern as the mysterious working of God in the lives of people over time. What is always ultimately at stake is the reality and the proper characterization of a divine performance in the material world of space and time, a performance that defines the personal, social, ethical, and political obligations of Christians in the present, as well as their stance toward past and future.⁸

To be sure, I completely agree with Dawson's claims in the substance of this paragraph. Nevertheless, there are two significant points to consider from Dawson's comments, which I have italicized for easy reference. First, Dawson claims that the Christian Bible is read "Christianly" when the divine intention of human transformation over time is seen to be the framework for its narrative. This intention consists, as Dawson rightly says, of "the history of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth, his immediate followers, and the Church." What is just as significant, however, is what is left unsaid. How do these distinct aspects relate to one another within the outworking of this divine intention? Or, to put it in literary terms, how do the various texts, persons, and events of the Christian Bible relate to its whole? How is Israel to be understood in relation to Jesus of Nazareth and vice versa? The ways that early Christians put together the whole—itself a reading strategy learned from the grammarian—reflect some significant distinctions in early Christian exegesis as much as it displays similarities.⁹

Such distinctions are magnified—but given to observation—in Dawson's astute sentence that claims the events that characterize the divine intention and its historical outworking are "alternately clear and obscure, reliable and unpredictable." Indeed, in this study, I want to suggest that this is the very place that we can observe the function of grammatical reading practices in early Christian exegesis. I will argue that a recognition of the influence of

⁸Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading*, 216.

⁹Perhaps compare this with Dawson's earlier book that distinguishes the reading practices of four Alexandrian readers?

the grammatical and rhetorical traditions upon Christian exegesis may be satisfactory to explain the idea of Christian exegesis, but we will only note its influence on the actual practice of exegesis when we see how readers employ their grammatical repertoires to clarify obscurities that permeate the texts they read. It is the fact that these stages in the divine outworking in history, as they are depicted in the Scriptures, are not always clear and often obscure that provides the impetus for early Christian reading strategies. How does one clarify those events, figures, or texts that are obscure?

Clement of Alexandria makes for an interesting specimen for investigation for two significant reasons. First, scholarly treatments focused broadly on Clement's exegetical endeavors are rare.¹⁰ To be sure, the works of Mondésert, Schneider, and Paget are helpful, and each contribute to our framework for understanding Clement's biblical exegesis. Mondésert for the first time provides a thorough account of the centrality of the Bible for Clement's theological reflection, suggesting that Clement's exegesis can be analyzed from five different senses: the historical sense, the doctrinal sense, the prophetic sense, the philosophical sense, and the mystical sense.¹¹ Paget builds upon Mondésert's typology, emphasizing that for Clement "the symbolic or hidden meaning of the OT" matters most.¹² Indeed, though he notices a "surprisingly frequent" concern by Clement for a literal reading of Scripture, Paget nevertheless claims that Clement "is not interested in the literal sense of the OT as a technical problem."¹³

¹⁰The exceptions I shall note here are Claude Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie: Introduction à l'étude de sa pensée religieuse à partir de l'écriture*, (Paris: Aubier, Éditions Montaigne, 1944); J. N. B. Carleton Paget, "The Christian Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Alexandrian Tradition," in *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation*, Vol. 1: *From the beginnings to the Middle Ages (until 1300)*, ed. Magne Sæbø (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 478–542; and Ulrich Schneider, *Theologie als christliche Philosophie: Zur Bedeutung der biblischen Botschaft im Denken des Clemens von Alexandria*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999).

¹¹See Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, esp. 153–63.

¹²Paget, "Christian Exegesis," 494.

¹³Paget, "Christian Exegesis," 494. I will argue below that the false dichotomies like this one by Paget are the very reasons that ancient readers like Origen are never considered in a holistic fashion in modern scholarship, but either as an figural reader or a literal scholar. For instance, on the one hand, the two most comprehensive monographs on Origen's biblical exegesis have predominantly focused on Origen's figural reading; see R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture*, (London: SCM Press, 1959); and Henri de Lubac, *Histoire et esprit: L'Intelligence de l'Écriture d'après Origène*, (Paris: Aubier, 1950). For an English translation, see Henri de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen*, trans. A. E. Nash and J. Merriell (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007). On the other hand, Origen's literary scholarship was the primary

Even still, a glance at all three works betrays the second justification for a focus on Clement's exegesis. All three of these studies are primarily concerned with what I have termed here as the idea of Clement's exegesis. That is, any extended discussion of textual practices—how Clement does things with Scripture—is lacking. But is this not the very substance of exegesis? What is exegesis if it is not a series of textual practices performed on (or with) an authoritative text as a means of commenting on it? And the most recent collection of essays on Clement's biblical exegesis is cut from the same cloth.¹⁴

A number of the essays in *Clement's Biblical Exegesis* make insightful contributions to our understanding of Scripture in Clement's thought and milieu. Nevertheless, no single essay in the volume deals with the practices that Clement performs on or with the Scriptures. It is telling that, in the conclusion to her fine preface to the volume, Judith Kovacs summarizes the *status quaestiones* of Clement's exegesis—and presumably the *raison d'être* of the collection—by citing Mondésert's title approvingly. It is entirely appropriate and fitting "to describe Clement's thought 'à partir de l'Écriture'—on the basis of Scripture."¹⁵ But describing Clement's thought—the idea of his exegesis—is somewhat different than actually examining the textual practices that he employs within his theological reflection. And it is in this place that the present study seeks to make a contribution to research on Clement—an examination of the textual practices that form the substance of his exegesis.

Therefore, corresponding to the two broad conversations I reference earlier, there are two ways that one may approach this study. On the one hand, those readers who are most interested in my development of "creative exegesis," and why this is an appropriate term by which to describe the early Christian interpretation of the Bible in particular, may begin with

focus of Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*. Yet, Neuschäfer is aware of the state of affairs in Origenian scholarship (which is, in my view, no better in scholarship on patristic exegesis more broadly), when he concludes his book by asking whether the pictures of "Origen the allegorist" and "Origen the scholar" could ever be reconciled (292).

¹⁴Veronika Cernušková, Judith L. Kovacs, and Jana Plátová, eds. *Clement's Biblical Exegesis: Proceedings of the Second Colloquium on Clement Of Alexandria (Olomouc, May 29-31, 2014)* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

¹⁵Judith L. Kovacs, "Clement as Scriptural Exegete: Overview and History of Research," in *Clement's Biblical Exegesis: Proceedings of the Second Colloquium on Clement Of Alexandria (Olomouc, May 29-31, 2014)*, eds. Veronika Cernušková, Judith L. Kovacs, and Jana Plátová (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 37.

Chapters 2 and 3, then proceed directly to Chapters 7 and 8. These four chapters form the two halves of understanding this concept in my thought. In the first two chapters, I emphasize the noun "exegesis." In Chapter 2, I begin with an argument that the traditional account of ancient grammatical interpretation has been portrayed too rigidly in disparate parts. This account often follows the presentation of grammar as it is found in the scholia to Dionysius Thrax's *Art of Grammar*, but the result is a less than holistic account of grammatical interpretation and its aims. I argue that we may remedy this shortcoming by understanding that every reading practice learned from the grammarian—whether applied to figural or literal ends—forms a grammatical archive that is intended to clarify the obscure elements of texts. Thus, all grammatical exegesis is in a significant sense a practice of commentary. Then, in Chapter 3, I offer extended examples of how a variety of tools and techniques from this grammatical archive were employed towards the aim of clarifying obscurity in antiquity. To emphasize that these practices were employed similarly for literal and figural ends, I provide examples from ancient literary scholars, like the Hellenistic Alexandrian Aristarchus of Samothrace, and also figural readers, like the Stoic interpreter Cornutus and the Derveni commentator. Regardless of whether the resolution of the textual obscurity is found in a literal or figural interpretation, the ubiquitous use of these reading practices allow all these readers to discover what I term a textimmanent meaning.

In chapters 7 and 8, I turn attention to the adjective "creative." Chapter 7 investigates the metaphors for memory found in texts discussing literary composition. I argue that the metaphors of a treasury, bees, and digestion, seen in such authors as Plato and Seneca, are found throughout Clement's corpus, which provide us with evidence of a Christian incorporation of memory in the process of writing. The Christian use of memory, however, is not primarily psychological as it is in Aristotle's *De memoria*. Christians like Clement are more concerned with the role of memory in the process of meditation and composition. Thus, in Chapter 8, I compare Aristotle's conception of recollection—how memories are recalled—with Clement's own understanding. Though Clement retains the imagery of hunting and searching that are found in Aristotle's *De memoria*, this imagery is used in a way reminiscent of the locational recollection found in the Cicero and the *Ad Herennium*. For Clement, one's memories

are placed into a "memorial archive," a repository for recollecting texts or events gathered from the entire Scriptures. Moreover, the Pauline building trope from 1 Corinthians 3 provides a scriptural precedent for understanding recollection as a creative discovery of textual meaning.

For those readers who are most interested in Clement of Alexandria's own practice of exegesis, this is the subject matter of Chapters 4–6 and Chapter 9. In Chapter 4, I argue that Clement's description of scriptural exegesis in book five of the *Stromateis* cannot be understood merely as an apology for figural interpretation. While I solidly agree that Clement does articulate a process for the figural reading of Scripture within these pages, I argue here that he actually circumscribes the potential of Scripture for figural meaning. Specifically, grounded in his grammatical archive, Clement restricts the figural referents of Scripture to two "mysteries." On the one hand, there are the prophetic realities fulfilled in the incarnation and ministry of Christ, and on the other hand, there are the mysteries contained in the higher knowledge of God's essence, which Paul refers to as "the depths of God" (1 Cor. 2:10). The bulk of Chapter 4 refrains from identifying the particular practices and skills of the grammatical archive that Clement employs, in order to focus more broadly on his larger argument for figural interpretation. Chapters 5–6, then, zoom in from this forest to examine the trees. Chapter 5 analyzes the tools from the grammatical archive that define the properties of Scripture *qua* text, and Chapter 6 examines those practices from the grammatical archive that Clement applies to the biblical text.

In Chapter 9, I turn to consider the question, what about those scriptural texts that are brought together for no obvious or apparent reason? How can we consider texts that appear to be commented on in an instance of imaginative use of Scripture? I argue that the Christian use of memory offers a solution to this dilemma. In particular, Clement forges a "memorial archive" where texts become gathering places for other texts and permit one to read Scripture under thematic constellations. By gathering disparate scriptural data under such constellations, Clement is able to articulate a path through Christian Scripture—his own creative rendition of the divine intention for which Dawson argued above—that accords with the figural potential he outlines in book five of the *Stromateis*. In fact, for Clement, the constellations of "fear" and "wisdom" not only provide him with a means for approaching the Scriptures, but they also

give him a process of organizing its knowledge. The constellation of fear organizes the working of the Word as recorded in the Old Testament. When the Old Testament is read as a text containing commands and examples, Scripture reveals clearly that the Word uses fear to lead his people to faith. Clement uses the constellation of wisdom, however, to argue that believers move beyond the fear by which they are initially educated to a wisdom that accompanies divine teaching. Thus, when the Old Testament is read as a prophetic text, it points to New Testament realities fulfilled in the incarnation and ministry of Christ and the knowledge of God. The Bible is therefore never a document intended to be read in one way or approached solely from one direction. On the contrary, it is always intended—at least for Clement—to reveal its truth and simultaneously remain virginal, hiding further mysteries for the astute and mature reader.¹⁶

¹⁶Cf. my comments in the epilogue on how we might use the concept of creative exegesis and its archival thinking to understand other various ways that early Christian readers ordered the knowledge contained in the Scriptures. It is only in this larger project of examining the practices of multiple readers that we will reach a point to describe "patristic exegesis" as a phenomenon itself.

Reading as "Creative Exegesis": The Grammarian's Task

Let us begin at once the investigation against the grammarians, first of all since we are handed over to grammar almost since infancy or as soon as we are in nappies, and grammar is, as it were, a point of departure for learning the other studies; secondly, because it is the boldest of the sciences, practically promising the Sirens' promise. For those females knew that man is naturally fond of learning and that the desire for truth within his breast is great. So they promise not only to charm the men sailing past with divine songs, but also to teach them the truth. . . . So grammar, boasting of its practical work dealing with dialects, expert exposition, and critical recitation, in addition to its ability to elucidate by reason the details of myths and histories, creates a great longing for itself in those who hear its claims.¹

The recent reappraisal of early Christian exegesis has rightly emphasized the role played by the ancient grammatical and rhetorical traditions for reading the Bible. Yet, the majority of the insightful studies within this reassessment have argued that the textual practices learned first at the hands of the grammarians were employed by Christian readers to interpret the Scriptures in their literal sense. The result of this argument is that scholars have been unable or unwilling to analyze the figural interpretation of these early Christian exegetes according to the textual practices that drive their readings. Exegesis, however, regardless of whether it is performed toward literal or figural ends, is always driven by textual practices—what one does with texts at hand. We cannot sever the techniques learned in the ancient classroom from the goal for which they are employed.

In this chapter, then, I will argue that the grammatical traditions to which this scholarly reassessment of patristic exegesis points us is best viewed not as an atomistic project with sequential steps that must be followed. Rather, exegesis is itself a holistic project of commentary and interpretation focused on the clarification of a text's obscurity. Thus, I will

¹S. E., M 1.41–43 (LCL 382:24–27)

argue throughout this chapter that the aim of literary analysis as learned in the schools of antiquity, and especially at the hands of the grammarian, was a holistic process of "creative exegesis."² As we progress through the stages of this chapter, I will expand a working definition of "creative exegesis" as I conceive of it, which will serve as the foundation for describing the practice of early Christian biblical interpretation throughout this project.

An Atomistic Understanding of *Γραμματική*

As I mentioned briefly in the introduction, many of the works in the recent reappraisal of patristic exegesis frequently display a common thread. These studies build their analyses on the grammatical framework provided by the *Art of Grammar* (*τέχνη γραμματική*) of Dionysius Thrax (c. 170–90 B.C.E.). In this text, Dionysius introduces the enterprise of *γραμματική* as follows:

Γραμματική is the experiential knowledge of the general usage of language by the

²My use of the expression "creative exegesis" throughout this project is unique. As will become clear throughout the course of this study, I intentionally develop both words in this phrase. "Exegesis" specifically refers to the textual practices of interpretation learned in the ancient classroom, employed toward the clarification of obscurity, as I argue in this chapter. "Creative," on the other hand, refers to the role of memory and imagination in the process of interpretation, which will be the specific subject matter of chapters 7–8. I will defer further discussion of this adjective to that point.

To be sure, one can occasionally come across previous scholarly uses of the term "creative exegesis," but none of them have developed the term as I do here. On the one hand, Jaap Mansfeld, *Prolegomena: Questions to be Settled Before the Study of an Author, or a Text*, (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 26, 155–61, uses "creative exegesis" to describe Galen's interpretation of the medical canon of Hippocrates. It is here that I first came across the expression, and I am grateful to Mansfeld for it. Nevertheless, while I will note some similarities between Clement and Galen in this study, it is important to call attention to the fact that Mansfeld's use of "creative exegesis" is solely focused on the clarification of what is unclear—an idea that I incorporate entirely into the word "exegesis." Mansfeld does not develop the term "creative" in any substantive way. On the other hand, one can find the expression "creative exegesis" in the recent essay of Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski, "Clement of Alexandria's Reception of the Gospel of John: Context, Creative Exegesis, and Purpose," in *Clement's Biblical Exegesis: Proceedings of the Second Colloquium on Clement Of Alexandria* (Olomouc, May 29–31, 2014), eds. Veronika Černušková, Judith L. Kovacs, and Jana Plátová (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 259–76. For Ashwin-Siejkowski, "creative exegesis" seems to mean the collecting and reshaping act within Clement's interpretation, specifically as it pertains to (a) the philosophical tradition of Middle Platonism, (b) the theology and exegesis of Philo, and (c) the Christian Scriptures. Ashwin-Siejkowski never attempts to explain the concept of "creative exegesis," and he comes closest to defining this term when he suggests that the prologue to the Gospel of John and the gospel in its entirety "were subjects of his ongoing intellectual and spiritual reflection, not alienated from other materials such as Philo's commentaries on the Logos or the Middle Platonic notion of the Logos, but as, in Clement's view, coherent notions." Of course, he notes, this "coherence, however, did not mean for Clement that all three sources were of the same value" (272). Thus, "creative exegesis" is the concept that Ashwin-Siejkowski suggests for the reshaping of these traditions in Clement's thought.

poets and prose-writers. It has six parts: first, a skilled reading with due regard for proper pronunciation; second, an exposition of the inherent literary devices; third, a definition of common terms and narratives; fourth, the discovery of etymology; fifth, the consideration of analogies; and sixth, the judgment of the text, which is the finest part of this expertise.³

It is more than clear that, for Dionysius, the grammarian's chief task is the understanding and interpretation of literary texts. More particularly, the grammarian trained his students in the specific skills necessary for proper historical and literary analysis. Here, Dionysius claims that this analysis involves a skilled reading (*ἀνάγνωσις ἐντριβὴς*), attuned to such factors as pronunciation, literary devices, common terms and narratives that a poet uses, etymological constructions, and the presence of analogies, each of which leading to the highest of all activities, the critical judgment of the poem.⁴ In the scholia on Dionysius's handbook, this process of literary analysis is further refined to include four stages: correction (*διόρθωσις*), reading (*ἀνάγνωσις*), exposition (*ἐξήγησις*), and judgment (*κρίσις*).⁵ And it is this four stage presentation in particular that studies of early Christian exegesis have used as the foundation for explorations in the Christian adaptation of grammar and rhetoric.

³Dionysius Thrax, *Gram.* §1 (GG I.1, 5.1–6.3). For a modern edition with French translation, see Jean Lallot, *La Grammaire de Denys le Thrace*, (Paris: CNRS, 1989). An English translation has been provided by Alan Kemp, “The *Tekhne Grammatike* of Dionysius Thrax: English Translation with Introduction and Notes,” in *The History of Linguistics in the Classical Period*, ed. Daniel J. Taylor (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1987), 169–89. The distinction between *γραμματική* as “experiential knowledge” (*ἐμπειρία*) and “expertise” (*τέχνη*), which was frequently discussed in antiquity, is not crucial for my argument. On this question in relation to grammarians and Dionysius Thrax, see Robert H. Robins, “The Initial Sections of the *Techne Grammatike*,” in *Ancient Grammar: Content and Context*, eds. Pierre Swiggers and Alfons Wouters (Leuven: Peeters, 1996), 6–8; and David L. Blank, *Sextus Empiricus: Against the Grammarians (Adversus Mathematicos I)*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), xvii–xxxiv. Cf. S. E., M 1.57–90 (LCL 382:34–53).

⁴The discrepancies between Dionysius's introduction and the body of the treatise have drawn suspicion on the authenticity of the work as a whole, at least as it has been preserved. It is quite likely that what follows after the introduction was composed at a later date, perhaps even as late as the third or fourth century C.E. But Dionysius' definition of *γραμματική* was copied by his younger contemporary Varro, and Sextus Empiricus quotes both Dionysius's definition and the six-part division nearly three centuries later, even if it is to argue against grammatical expertise. Cf. S. E., M 1.57 (LCL 382:34–35). It seems most likely, then, that this initial section to Dionysius's *Τέχνη Γραμματική* is indeed authentic to him. For an overview of the *Τέχνη Γραμματική*, including the issue of its integrity and authenticity, see Dirk M. Schenkeveld, “Scholarship and Grammar,” in *La philologie grecque à l'époque hellénistique et romaine*, ed. Franco Montanari (Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1994), 263–69.

⁵Schol. D.T. (GG I.3, 10.7–9). Cf. H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 165–70.

For instance, in her influential monograph *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, Frances Young offered her own attempt to clarify the influence that pagan grammatical and rhetorical education had on Christian exegesis.⁶ She focused most of her attention on the œuvre of Origen in the third century C.E., and the influence of the Dionysian scholia can be seen clearly. Young maintained an argument built on the four stages of interpretation presented in the scholia, even though she frequently speaks of these stages under Quintilian's famous twofold description of grammar as "methodical" and "historical."⁷ Thus, even her reading of Quintilian's description of *γραμματική* is given through this Dionysian lens. Correction and reading were "methodical" tasks; exposition and judgment were the domain of "historical" investigation. Regardless of the categorization, however, these tasks still, it is suggested, operated in stages, and one must progress one through the next, moving from the grammarians to the rhetor. From Young's point of view, Quintilian's categories can obviously account for the fourfold description of grammar that the Dionysian scholia present.⁸ And to be sure, if this is how one ought to view the grammatical and rhetorical traditions in antiquity, then Young is certainly right to claim that "the advent of Christian scholarship belongs to the early third century," with the work of Origen.⁹

In reaching this conclusion, Young follows Bernard Neuschäfer's magisterial analysis of Origen's literal scholarship, *Origenes als Philologe*. Here, Neuschäfer also leans upon the fourfold depiction of Dionysius' understanding of the grammarians' task for his account of Origen's exegesis. Neuschäfer provides lengthy discussions of Origen's text-critical enterprise (*διόρθωσις*) and his techniques of literal exposition (*ἐξήγησις*) in accordance with the scheme modeled in the scholia.¹⁰ In an effort to classify each facet of Origen's literary-critical

⁶Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 76–96.

⁷See Quintilian, *Inst. 1.9.1* (LCL 124:208–09).

⁸I certainly agree with Young that Quintilian's perspective is crucial, though I think its utility for the present discussion is best viewed in distinction to Dionysius' treatise. I will discuss this below.

⁹Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 82.

¹⁰Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 35–36, admits that this philological model was not followed blindly. Rather, the scholia present the "old system of philology" (altes Lehrgebäude der Philologie), which served as an ideal model of subject areas that could be analyzed when interpreting a text. In a more recent reading of Origen as

scholarship, these four stages of literary analysis become paramount for the structure of Neuschäfer's study. Unfortunately, in his reliance on the Dionysian scholia, Neuschäfer does not seem to discern or explain a key facet of Origen's exegesis—his figural reading. Neuschäfer misses the forest in light of the trees, content to portray Origen's exegesis in an atomistic manner, such that the parts do not seem to cohere in any consistent whole. In fact, Neuschäfer recognizes this shortcoming. At the end of *Origenes als Philologe*, he admits that the impetus for his own study of Origen's exegesis was the preoccupation of earlier scholarship with Origen's figural reading to the detriment of his work as a philologist, and he ends with a crucial question that foregrounds this issue for our purposes. Neuschäfer asks whether the image of Origen the allegorist (painted by earlier scholarship) and that of Origen the philologist (which he had painted) can ever be integrated into a single harmonious portrait. Or is it rather the case that these two profiles of Origen's exegetical enterprise are mutually exclusive?¹¹

For her part, Young characterizes nonliteral readings, like those she finds in Origen, and the (supposed) more literal stance of the Antiochenes, as two distinct approaches to texts, deriving from the philosophical schools and the grammatical and rhetorical schools, respectively.¹² And while she cautions that the line between rhetorical and philosophical

exegete, Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 41–66, follows Neuschäfer's framework of analyzing Origen's exegetical technique through the lens of the scholia on Dionysius' *Tέχνη*.

¹¹Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 292: "Jetzt, wo neben den allegorischen mit scharfen Konturen der philologische Bibelexeget Origenes tritt, stellt sich eine grundsätzliche Frage um so dringlicher: Stehen zwei Bilder in einander ausschliessendem Gegesatz gegenüber, oder lassen sie sich als zwei Hälften verstehen, die harmonisch in ein einheitliches Gesamtbild zusammengefügt werden können?" My criticism of Neuschäfer is not that he is oblivious to this shortcoming; his conclusion suggests that this is not the case. Moreover, Neuschäfer does hint at the capability of the philological textual practices to speak to figural readings. See, for example, his reflections on Origen's prosopological exegesis with two dimensions of meaning (273–76) and Origen's desire to seek clarity from what is unclear (282–85). Nevertheless, Neuschäfer does not ask how such activities might be applicable both to literal and figural readings.

Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 63–66, also calls attention to this unfortunate shortcoming in Neuschäfer's study, and he seeks to establish the argument (rightly, in my view) that Origen's figural readings of Scripture flow as much from his philological practices as his literal readings do: "Ideal philologists pursued a broad education and cultivated a series of exegetical techniques with the intent of deciphering both the literal and the allegorical referents of a passage" (63, emphasis original). A full discussion of this correlation, however, was beyond the scope of Martens' study, and therefore, it occupies only three pages of *Origen and Scripture*. There still remains work to be done on the various ways that these two ideas are integrated into a coherent picture, not simply for Origen but also for a vast array of early Christian exegetes, including Clement of Alexandria.

¹²Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 161–85, where she describes the difference in approach as "ikonic" mimesis over against the philosophical "symbolic" mimesis (191); cf. Young, "The Rhetorical Schools and Their Influence on

exegesis was thin, she nevertheless treats such topics as "allegory," "typology," and "theoria" in entirely separate chapters from her analysis of grammatical and rhetorical interpretation.¹³

Young's portrayal of these grammatical activities are, however, much too clear-cut and neatly packaged. In my view, these areas—figural exegesis and the grammatical and rhetorical tradition—must be analyzed as a coherent whole.

Both Young's and Neuschäfer's portrayals of the literary-critical analysis of early Christians depend upon a particular analysis of Dionysius' *Art of Grammar* that, in following the claims of the Dionysian scholia, describes the grammarian's task of literary analysis in four successive stages. But is this in fact the best way to describe the task of interpretation or the aims of grammatical and rhetorical education in antiquity? On the contrary, the grammatical tradition is much broader than can be seen by the atomistic portrayal of *γραμματική* that these studies presuppose.

It is a significant point that, although Dionysius' definition of *γραμματική* was repeated by his contemporary Varro, it does not seem to appear again until Sextus Empiricus quotes the *Téχνη* in his refutation *Against the Grammarians* three centuries later.¹⁴ And though he cites Dionysius, Sextus prefers to describe *γραμματική* in quite different terms. First, Sextus grants that grammar is composed of three different tasks, a historical task (*τὸ ιστορικὸν*), an expert task (*τὸ τεχνικὸν*), and a special task (*τὸ ιδιαίτερον*). He then claims that each of these activities are composed of specific techniques:

Of these, the expert activity is that in which they make arrangements concerning the elements, the parts of a sentence, orthography, and Hellenism, and what follows from these. The historical task is where they teach about persons, for example, divine, human, and heroic, or explain about places such as mountains or rivers, or transmit traditions about fictions and myths or anything else of this kind. The special task is one through which they examine what concerns poets and writers, where the grammarians

Patristic Exegesis.”.

¹³See Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 140–213. Ultimately, in her discussion of "method," Young articulates five kinds of literal reading (189), eight types of allegory (192), and even four categories of typology (201). Such broadening of the categories, I would argue, does not resolve the difficulties inherent in the allegory/typology contrast as much as complicate the problems.

¹⁴S. E., M 1.57 (LCL 382:34–35)

explain what is unclearly said, judge the sound and the unsound, and sort the genuine from the spurious.¹⁵

Sextus clearly divides the grammarian's expertise into three distinct activities, but he specifically maintains that none of these "tasks" can be fully grasped without reference to the whole of the grammarian's activity. He says, "the expert and historical tasks of *γραμματική* and the part concerning poetry and writings are each very much intertwined and mixed with the rest. In fact, the examination of the poets cannot occur without the expert and historical tasks, and each of these does not stand without being entangled with the others."¹⁶ This is not an entirely new presentation of *γραμματική*. A century earlier, Seneca had offered a similar depiction. He says, "The *grammaticus* occupies himself with attention to language, and if he wants to extend his study more broadly, he turns to history, or, if he would extend his range to the farthest limits, to poetry."¹⁷ Though Seneca does not emphasize the interdependence of the grammarian's tasks as Sextus will, one can easily see that he views the grammarian's activity as a whole when he criticizes the profession *in toto* for failing to inculcate virtue.¹⁸ Sextus and Seneca both furnish their descriptions of the grammarian's expertise in order to mount a refutation against it.

Should we therefore anticipate that this holistic conception of *γραμματική* is only shared by those who would argue against it? On this point, it is striking to see the altogether similar description of *γραμματική* that Quintilian provides as one who is more sympathetic toward the grammarian than either Sextus or Seneca. In the *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian defines the practice of grammar concisely (*cum brevissime*) as "correct speaking and reading and the interpretation of the poets" (*recte loquendi scientiam et poetarum enarrationem*).¹⁹ These two activities are

¹⁵S. E., M 1.91–93 (LCL 382:52–55)

¹⁶S. E., M 1.94–95 (LCL 382:54–57). Of course, Sextus presents the coherence of the grammarian's task not as a tribute to *γραμματική*, but instead to ensure that, if he is successful at refuting one part, "the rest will also be destroyed" (M 1.96).

¹⁷Seneca, *Ep.* 88.3 (LCL 76:350): *Grammaticus circa curam sermonis versatur et, si latius evagari vult, circa historias, iam ut longissime fines suos proferat, circa carmina.*

¹⁸Seneca, *Ep.* 88.2–4 (LCL 76:348–51)

¹⁹Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.4.2 (LCL 124:102–03). Here, I follow Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*

elsewhere described by Quintilian as the methodical and historical tasks of the grammarian.

But just as in Sextus and Seneca, Quintilian reflects on the interconnections between the techniques of *γραμματική* and its goal: interpretation and understanding. "The principles of writing are closely connected with those of speaking, correct reading is a prerequisite of interpretation, and judgment is involved in all of these."²⁰ As Robert Kaster has noted, Quintilian here presents *γραμματική* as the "fundamentum of eloquence," the elements of which are far from insignificant for the purpose of the whole.²¹ It is clear then that Quintilian sees each task interdependently contributing to the interpretive goal of *γραμματική*.²²

So, how best may we conceive of this grammatical tradition? As portrayed by Quintilian, Seneca, and Sextus, *γραμματική* is best viewed as a single holistic discipline that emphasizes the interpretation of texts, heuristically composed of either two or three tasks. Moreover, its techniques of literary analysis, which are never employed independently from the aim of textual understanding, are woven together finely in the hands of a capable grammarian.²³ We must not miss this point. Whatever tools the grammarian applied to a text, his aim was never simply to identify literary devices, list the most common words in a given author, or discover the presence of etymologies. This atomistic portrayal of the grammarian's enterprise is where Dionysius' description falls short and is quite likely one of the reasons that it does not appear elsewhere. On the contrary, the grammarian's understanding of such technical details as the proper construction of sentences and his comprehension of the general

in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 12–13, and imply by my translation that Quintilian means both right speech and right reading in the single phrase *recte loquendi*. Cf. Inst. 1.4.3 (LCL 124:102–05).

²⁰Quintilian, Inst. 1.4.3 (LCL 124:102–05)

²¹Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 54–55. Cf. Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 12–13. See Quintilian, Inst. 1.4.5–6 (LCL 124:104–07).

²²Cf. F. H. Colson, "The Grammatical Chapters in Quintilian I. 4–8," *CQ* 8 (1914): 33–47.

²³Blank, *Against the Grammarians*, 148, is surely right that Sextus' purpose in emphasizing the interdependence of the three grammatical tasks is "to show why, as soon as one part has been destroyed, the rest are destroyed." Regardless of this purpose, Sextus' presentation of *γραμματική* does help one see the coherence of each task in the grammarian's whole expertise.

plot of the poet's narrative—tools of analysis that would ostensibly fall under Sextus' *τὸ τεχνικὸν* and *τὸ ἴστορικὸν*, respectively—are integrated into a common enterprise: the proper interpretation of a given text. One sells *γραμματική* short if he describes it as an enterprise that is comprised of stages that are clearly adjudicated. Instead, the grammarian's expertise is better understood as a holistic enterprise of textual interpretation *tout court*, built upon a constellation of techniques and tools of literary and historical analysis. Thus, Ineke Sluiter provides a clear and simple definition of the grammarian: he is "an interpreter of someone else's work."²⁴

To begin filling out our definition of *γραμματική* in antiquity, then, we may begin with the clear implication of this section. The grammarian's task could not be described adequately by focusing on any one feature of his expertise. Though he was ostensibly concerned *inter alia* with issues of style, verbal usage, semantics, and syntax, this was not the grammarian's goal, the aim to which he taught his students to strive. That place was reserved for a holistic literary analysis. To emphasize the entire process of grammatical interpretation, then, I will use the term "creative exegesis." Permit me here, then, to offer a provisional definition of creative exegesis understood, as I have argued in this section, as the entire process of literary analysis:

Creative exegesis is the task of the grammarians to discover the intention of an author.

Before proceeding further, I do want to emphasize that I am certainly sympathetic to the growing body of scholarship, of which Young and Neuschäfer are only representative examples, emphasizing the influence of the grammatical and rhetorical traditions on early Christian exegesis. Nevertheless, its inability currently to analyze the influence of these school traditions apart from the atomistic divisions I outlined earlier severely limits its effectiveness. As we have seen, this scholarship does often note the stark differences between literal and figural modes of reading, but it has no category in which to discuss the similarities between them. More

²⁴Ineke Sluiter, "The Dialectics of Genre: Some Aspects of Secondary Literature and Genre in Antiquity," in *Matrices of Genre: Authors, Canons, and Society*, eds. Mary Depew and Dirk Obbink (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 202. Sluiter rightly suggests that the grammarian should be seen "in the tradition of commentators, with a specific competence in grammar and exegesis" (187). For a similar definition, see the insightful work of Gerald L. Bruns, *Inventions: Writing, Textuality, and Understanding in Literary History*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 56, who defines the grammarian as "the writer who dwells among texts and who is always discovering in them more things to say."

specifically, we must attempt to relate the nonliteral interpretations prevalent in early Christian exegesis to the grammatical tools of literary analysis on which they also depend. In what way can the reading practices learned in the grammatical and rhetorical schools of antiquity account for the entirety of early Christian exegesis, both literal and figural? Thus, in the remainder of this chapter, I will argue that a broader conception of early Christian biblical interpretation—namely, "creative exegesis"—will account for the grammatical skills and techniques employed by both literal and figural readers of antiquity.

Grammatical Exegesis and The Spectrum of Obscurity

As we saw earlier, Sextus claimed in his refutation *Against the Grammarians* that the grammarian's task was to utilize his expert and historical skills in order "to explain what was spoken unclearly" ($\tauὰ ἀσαφῶς λεγόμενα ἐξηγοῦνται$).²⁵ Whether seeking to distinguish between written word and writer's intention or to choose between multiple significations of a polysemous word,²⁶ both grammar and rhetoric sought to resolve the difficulties, contradictions, problems, and ambiguities that arose from written texts.²⁷ The ultimate aim was a suitable interpretation that led to a resolution of any obscurity, and the literary-critical tools learned in the schools were employed to achieve this end from the outset. It was perhaps the physician Galen of Pergamum that described this exegetical purposes most concretely: "The power ($\etā δύναμις$) of exegesis ($\epsilon̄ξηγήσεως$) is to make clear ($σαφῆ$) everything that is obscure

²⁵S. E., M 1.93 (LCL 382:54–55):

²⁶This distinction between written word (scriptum) and intention (either *voluntas* or *sententia*) is particularly true of forensic rhetoric (*interpretatio scripti*). See Cicero, Inv. 2.40.116–51.154 (LCL 386:284–323); and Quintilian, Inst. 7.6–10 (LCL 126:264–97). For an early account of textual exegesis concerned with the polysemous nature of words, see Plato, Prt. 341A–B (LCL 165:190–91). We will return to each of these examples below.

²⁷In order to preempt an obvious critique, one should discern from this statement that I am defining obscurity in a very general sense, covering terms that could easily be distinguished. It is perhaps helpful to consider that this understanding of "obscurity" aligns more clearly with the traditions of ancient literary criticism, rather than ancient philosophical discussions on ambiguity. For the role of ambiguity in ancient philosophy, see Catherine Atherton, *The Stoics on Ambiguity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Atherton discusses the understandings of ambiguity among various ancient disciplines (15–27), and she provides an extremely helpful appendix noting the varieties of lexical fallacies—the primary use of ambiguity in the grammatical and rhetorical tradition—as identified by Aristotle's *De sophisticis elenchis* (505–06).

(ἀσαφῆ) in these books.²⁸ Thus, any attempt to articulate the role of the grammatical and rhetorical tradition in early Christian exegesis must consider this exegetical aim—namely, the clarification of what is obscure—for which these techniques and strategies were employed. In what follows, I want to suggest that a more fruitful account of the influence of the grammatical and rhetorical traditions on early Christian exegesis lies in the idea of negotiating the spectrum between clarity and obscurity. An examination of the function of this spectrum in the grammatical traditions of antiquity will permit us to extend our working definition of creative exegesis.

Clarifying Textual Obscurity

The aim of the reading practices taught by the *γραμματικός* was to address any difficulties arising from textual obscurity. As the grammarian approaches the text of another, any number of uncertainties could arise. The inherent nature of words can provide ambiguity. After all, words can signify more than one thing, and words may signify in more than one way. For this reason, obscurity, and even apparent contradictions, can be seen both narrowly, at the level of lexeme and sentence, and broadly, at the level of text as a whole. The work of the grammarian, then, is a hermeneutical endeavor from the outset, seeking to determine the most appropriate interpretation for any given text.²⁹ For interpreters trained in the schools of antiquity, obscurity and unclarity must be contextualized, both historically and textually. Only then can one begin to offer an exegetical disambiguation, a creative exegesis that—to use Sextus' words—explains what is unclear.

From his earliest days at the hand of the grammarian,³⁰ a student would learn reading

²⁸Galen, Hipp. Frac. 18.2.318 (Kühn).

²⁹Here, the link between grammar and hermeneutics is emphasized by the brilliant work of Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, esp. 9–62. Copeland understands this hermeneutical task to be the area in which much of the blurring between grammar and rhetoric occurs, especially in late antiquity. Her conclusions are singularly apt for understanding early Christian exegesis: "As if to fill the space left open when rhetoric distanced itself from active application to discourse, grammar assumed an unprecedented importance for the systematic analysis of the text as a discursive system. The grammatical function of *enarratio* becomes itself a metadiscourse. It provides access to all fields of learning, and in many respects constitutes an application of that learning, as inquiry can advance itself through commentary. . . . The once debased activity of the grammarians can now supply the paradigm for the exalted activity of biblical exegesis" (60).

³⁰In order to preempt an obvious question stemming from this phrase, I do not intend here to enter into

practices designed to address the textual obscurity that he confronted in challenging and complex texts, and above all, in those of the poets. Though grammar certainly concerned issues of style and writing, perhaps the first areas of inquiry to which our modern minds turn upon hearing the word, these activities were not ends in themselves. As early as the fifth century B.C.E., we see that the very purpose behind the grammatical endeavors of literary exegetes is the ability to understand the intention of the author.³¹ In fact, in Plato's *Protagoras* 339a–348c proper literary exegesis is prized by Socrates as the very epitome of the virtues of a liberal education.³² And Plato's description of Socrates' literary exegesis against *Protagoras* is an extremely helpful and early portrait of the task of grammatical exegesis. In this episode, we see that the tools of the grammarian—distinguishing the meaning of a polysemous word, comparing passages from elsewhere in the poem, and seeking the general purpose of the poem³³—are never employed in isolation. Rather, the grammarian's activity in the *Simonides* episode, which Hans Baltussen has described as the "practice of clarifying a text," is from first to last an attempt to understand the intention of the poet, his *διάνοια*, through the recognition and

the debate about the structure of primary and secondary schools in antiquity. I want only to emphasize here that the blurring of the lines between "primary" and "secondary" schools, or between the activities of the *γραμματιστής*/magister ludi and the *γραμματικός*/grammaticus, is analogous to the thin line between the strategies of textual exegesis as practiced by grammarian and forensic orator. On schooling in late antiquity, I am persuaded by the insightful arguments of Robert A. Kaster, "Notes on 'Primary' and 'Secondary' Schools in Late Antiquity," *TAPA* 113 (1983): 323–46, and I agree with his conclusion that "there were throughout the Empire schools of all shapes and kinds, depending on local needs, expectations, and resources. And in a world without centralized direction of education of any sort, that is only what we should expect" (346). See also Alan D. Booth, "The Schooling of Slaves in First-Century Rome," *TAPA* 109 (1979): 11–19; and Alan D. Booth, "Elementary and Secondary Education in the Roman Empire," *Florilegium* 1 (1979): 1–14.

³¹For a succinct discussion on the origins and nature of exegesis, see Han Baltussen, "From Polemic to Exegesis: The Ancient Philosophical Commentary," *Poetics Today* 28 (2007), 250–61. It is important to note that my understanding of "exegesis" is along the lines of "commentary activity," of a secondary discourse about someone else's text. In my view, such a broad conception of both "exegesis" and "commentary" is required when speaking about early Christian biblical interpretation (and, perhaps, the writings of the biblical authors themselves). Cf. Sluiter, "Dialectics of Genre," 202–03, who makes a similar point by claiming that the "commentator" always has two professional affiliations. On the one hand, he is doctor, philosopher, astronomer, or—we might say—theologian, and on the other hand, he is also always a "grammarian," since he is always focused on interpreting another text.

³²Plato, *Prt.* 338A–348A (LCL 165:180–213)

³³See Plato, *Prt.* 341A–B; 341E–342A; 344B (LCL 165:190–91; 192–93; 200–01), respectively.

resolution of any textual obscurity.³⁴

This exegetical goal, especially as it relates to the rhetorical tradition, has been examined in two recent books.³⁵ Kathy Eden's short but lucid study *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition* is a particularly helpful narrative of the influence of the school traditions on Christian intellectual history until Renaissance humanism. Eden points to the significance of the rhetorical discussions of *interpretatio scripti*, and she explicitly identifies two exegetical tools that were integral to this task.

Not yet so called, context as a concept developed within *interpretatio scripti* actually represents two interpretive instruments: what we might call historical context, on one hand, and textual context, on the other. Historical context includes all those particularities that routinely define the rhetorical occasion, such as time, place, persons, and so on—the *circumstantiae* of the later rhetorical and grammatical traditions. . . . Textual context, on the other hand, includes not only those passages that precede and follow the questionable text, but also the entire work from which it comes.³⁶

In her book *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, Margaret Mitchell builds on Eden's foundation to develop the concept of an "agonistic paradigm of interpretation," which recognizes the reality that texts can be read in different ways. Both Eden and Mitchell point to Quintilian and Cicero as readers who exemplified most clearly the characteristics of this forensic interpretation. Mitchell argues that early Christian readers must "push" texts at hand "to support a claim of clarity for the present purpose."³⁷ I am broadly sympathetic with

³⁴Baltussen, "From Polemic to Exegesis," 256–57. Cf. Han Baltussen, "Plato *Protagoras* 340–48: Commentary in the Making?," in *Philosophy, Science, and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic, and Latin Commentaries*, eds. Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, and M. W. F. Stone (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2004), 21–22, who recognizes that one cannot call this "commentary" in any formal sense and thus treats the practice of commentary rather than the theory of commentary. This distinction is crucial, in my view, for one can speak of early Christian exegesis as the practice of commentary, even if a formal commentary (that is, commentary as "theory") is not present. On the pursuit of the poet's intention, see Plato, *Prt.* 347A (LCL 165:208–09): *ταῦτά μοι δοκεῖ, ὃ Πρόδικε καὶ Πρωταγόρα, ἦν δὲ ἔγώ, Σιμωνίδης διανοούμενος πεποιηκέναι τοῦτο τὸ ὁσμα*. Notice also that *Protagoras* expresses the need for exegesis by identifying contradictions (*ἐναντία*; 339B) in Simonides' poem, which *Protagoras* believes to imply that Simonides speaks wrongly (*οὐκ ὁρθῶς λέγει*; 339D).

³⁵Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and Its Humanist Reception*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*.

³⁶Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 17–18. For discussions of *interpretatio scripti* in the rhetorical tradition, see Cicero, *Inv.* 2.40.116–51.154 (LCL 386:284–323); and Quintilian, *Inst.* 7.6–10 (LCL 126:264–97).

this understanding of the foundation that the grammatical and rhetorical traditions set for early Christian exegesis, but I think more must be said to emphasize the particularly literary nature of these claims. In Mitchell's case, Cicero is placed on the stand as the key witness to the task of *interpretatio scripti*, while Aristotle falls by the wayside. The result for Mitchell's argument is that rhetorical claims are foregrounded, while the grammatical foundations are rarely referenced. Similarly, it is slightly misleading for Eden to argue that the grammatical endeavor to ascertain an author's intention (*διάνοια*) is "in keeping with the rhetorical art,"³⁸ since this strategy would have first been introduced to students in the grammarian's classroom.³⁹ Indeed, as we saw in Quintilian, the textual basis of the rhetorical *interpretatio scripti* itself emphasizes a blurring between these boundaries. For any educated person, the techniques of literary analysis used towards any professional end—and especially those called to witness by a forensic orator in his interpretations—were first learned not from the orators but as a student of the *γραμματικός*.⁴⁰

At this point, we may extend our definition of grammatical literary analysis a bit further. If we include the emphasis of grammarian's to resolve obscurity, the definition may

³⁷ Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, 21–24; Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 7–19. I am less persuaded by Mitchell's claim that "all texts are potentially ambiguous." This would seem to disregard the point of Cicero, whom Mitchell is so fond of citing. In Inv. 2.40.117, Cicero claims that, although words considered individually might seem ambiguous, "it is not right to regard as ambiguous (*ambigua*) what becomes plain (*perspicua*) on consideration of the whole context." Thus, it is not clear to me that "all texts" are potentially ambiguous, as much as "all words" could be.

³⁸ Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 22n.5. One should, however, note the caution of her earlier article. See Kathy Eden, "Hermeneutics and the Ancient Rhetorical Tradition," *Rhetorica* 5 (1987), 60: "This evidence not only demands and deserves equal attention in the continuing history of hermeneutics, but it also records the longstanding interaction between the grammatical and rhetorical traditions—an interaction that well predates the evidence itself. As Dio Chrysostom reminds us (53.1), Aristotle inaugurates a long line not only of rhetorical theorists, but also of grammarians (*grammatikoi*), then called critics (*kritikoi*), who worked at interpreting poetic intention (*ten dianoian exegoumenoi*). We should not be surprised, then, to find substantial overlapping between Chapter 25 of the *Poetics*, where Aristotle addresses the problems of literary interpretation, and portions of his *Rhetoric*. In ascribing these principles of interpretation to rhetoric, therefore, I do not mean to overlook their early grammatical affiliations."

³⁹ This is the very point that Sextus Empiricus claims to occupy grammarians endlessly. See S. E., M 1.320 (LCL 382:184–87).

⁴⁰ This point was emphasized by Denis Berchem, "Poètes et grammairiens: Recherche sur la tradition scolaire d'explication des auteurs," *MH* 9 (1952), 86: "Puisque tout homme cultivé allait y recevoir sa première formation [i.e., dans les quatre murs de l'école du *grammaticus*], il est impossible que la production littéraire ne se soit pas ressentie de l'esprit et des méthodes qui y étaient en honneur."

now read as follows:

Creative exegesis is the task of the grammarians of clarifying textual obscurity to discover the intention of an author.

We must now consider the methods by which grammarians accomplished this task. How did they teach their students to penetrate such obscurity? What were the textual practices at hand?

Literary-Critical Tools

Though the vast majority of her work, as indicated by the title, focuses on the rhetorical tradition, Kathy Eden admits that grammarians were especially attuned to "address the difficulties arising from textual obscurity."⁴¹ Moreover, Eden highlights the tools to which the grammarian turns for clarifying this obscurity:

The grammatical art, in the interest of resolving these obscurities, taught many of the same hermeneutical strategies [as the rhetoricians] for resolving ambiguities and contradictions and for weighing the competing claims of what the poet said, his *verba* or *scriptum*, and what he meant, his *voluntas*. In fact, the two most powerful interpretive tools of the orator (especially the forensic orator)—namely, historical context and textual context—receive their fullest treatment as part of the grammatical tradition.⁴²

Historical Context

In the grammarian's classroom,⁴³ students were taught that the interpretation of the poets (*ἐξήγησις ποιητῶν* / *enarratio poetarum*), and textual exegesis in general, amounts to the ability of the reader to accommodate the circumstances of the text. To return to the passage

⁴¹Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 21.

⁴²Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 21.

⁴³The best treatment of the grammarian's classroom, on which I am dependent for many details, is Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 185–219. For more classic treatments of grammatical education in antiquity, see Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 160–85; Stanley F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 212–49; and Teresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 152–89. For the role of the grammarian in late antique society, see Kaster, *Guardians of Language*.

from Eden that I quoted above, the ability to situate a text in its historical context can be pictured as asking specific questions of the text. When the grammarian taught students to ask such questions as who, to whom, when, where, and why, he was instilling the sensibilities that would be expanded by the orator.⁴⁴

Grammarians would teach students to identify specific individuals in the text, not only whether these characters were historical or mythological, but they would also scrutinize their personalities and character traits. This scrutiny would allow readers to question whether a figure acted in accordance with his revealed personality. Geographical inquiries would frequently give rise to intriguing questions about a given text, and the locations of events were fastidiously recorded. Students were taught to maintain word-lists, noting the most common words employed by an author, and they often performed glossographical analysis of strange and unfamiliar terms. Along similar lines, etymology could serve the ends of historical analysis. Especially in the case of Homeric interpretation, readers would appeal to etymology as a means of understanding an author's claims about the gods and their corresponding actions.⁴⁵

Above all, students were taught that texts should adhere to the principle of "propriety," called *τὸ πρέπον* as early as Aristotle and *decorum* in the corresponding Latin tradition.⁴⁶ Eden points to Plutarch's example on how texts must be accommodated to a suitable reading.⁴⁷ In his

⁴⁴Cf. Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 26.

⁴⁵Cf. Cornutus, ND 31 (Lang, 64.3–17). Although etymological reading multiplies at the hands of the Stoics, its existence implicitly in the poets and explicitly in such texts as Plato's *Cratylus* provides enough evidence to demonstrate its presence in the grammatical archive of antiquity, even before the Hellenistic period. See Ineke Sluiter, *Ancient Grammar in Context: Contributions to the Study of Ancient Linguistic Thought*, (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1990), 12–13. On the Stoics' use of etymology, see G. R. Boys-Stones, "The Stoics' Two Types of Allegory," in *Metaphor, Allegory, and the Classical Tradition*, ed. G. R. Boys-Stones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), esp. 196–99.

⁴⁶See Aristotle, *Rh.* 1408a–b (LCL 193:376–81); Cicero, *Orat.* 123 (LCL 342:396–99); Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.4.2; 1.8–9 (LCL 124:102–03; 198–213). Cicero, *Orat.* 70–72 (LCL 342:356–59), explicitly draws the comparison between the Greek and Latin traditions of propriety and extends the concept of *decorum* to the realm of the *grammaticus*. Cf. Max Pohlenz, "τὸ πρέπον. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des griechischen Geistes," in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. Heinrich Dörrie (Hildesheim: George Olms, 1965), 100–39; Wesley Trimpi, "Horace's 'Ut Pictura Poesis': The Argument for Stylistic *Decorum*," *Traditio* 34 (1978): 29–73; Helen DeWitt, "Quo Virtus? The Concept of Propriety in Ancient Literary Criticism," (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1987); and Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 63–86. See also, in relation to rhetoric, Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*, (München: Max Hueber Verlag, 1973), §1055–62.

⁴⁷See Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 31–40.

work *How the Young Should Read Poetry*, Plutarch claims that young readers must learn "to adapt the usage of the words to fit the matter in hand, as the grammarians teach us to do, taking a word for one signification at one time, and at another time for another."⁴⁸ Much like Socrates in the *Protagoras*, Plutarch argues that, since words and texts have the inherent capacity for multiple significations, the student's resolution of obscurity and contradiction is paramount to the discovery of a writer's intention (*διάνοια*).

Grammarians used other techniques to emphasize the requisite propriety of texts.⁴⁹ On the one hand, there are better and worse ways to tell narratives. For example, characters should act according to the expectations of the narrative, and though deviation was allowed in this regard, it was always signaled by the author in some way. On the other hand, it is deemed "inappropriate" (*ἀπρεπής*) for an author to give too many details, too early in the narrative. Moreover, texts do not adhere to the principle of propriety in the fullest sense if they provide narratives that are untrue, a point that will become paramount in Christian figurative exegesis.

Textual Context

Alongside his investigation into a work's historical context, then, is the grammarian's inquiry into its textual context, drawing upon his mastery of the "expert" tools of his art. Even the immediate context of a passage contained ambiguities that must be resolved. Grammarians would expect students to master the correct understanding of accentuation, breathing and pauses, pronunciation, and proper word separation. The importance of these techniques to *γραμματική* and literary exegesis can be understood when one simply considers that manuscripts in antiquity were written in *scriptio continua*. There was no spacing between words, which were instead given in continuous blocks with essentially no punctuation. Thus, manuscripts provided to students were inherently "an ensemble of letters in need of

⁴⁸Plutarch, *De aud. poet.* 22f (LCL 197:118–19): *καὶ τὸ τὴν χρείαν τῶν ὄνομάτων συνοικειοῦν τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις πράγμασιν, ὡς οἱ γραμματικοὶ διδάσκοντων, ἄλλοτε πρὸς ἄλλην δύναμιν λαμβάνοντες*

⁴⁹For these and other issues subsumed under discussions of "propriety," see DeWitt, "Quo Virtus? The Concept of Propriety in Ancient Literary Criticism," 32–45.

interpretation.⁵⁰ Thus, a student had to apply the breadth of his syntactical knowledge—his understanding of syllables, punctuation, and tone—in order to divide words coherently, parse out phrases and sentences, and distinguish between interrogatives, declaratives, and imperatives. A task that seems fairly basic for us today was replete with ambiguity and intriguing possibilities, and the grammarian sought to train his students with the skills to rectify these difficulties.

The insightful work of Raffaella Cribiore has pointed to the papyri evidence that reveals many of the teaching strategies that the *γραμματικός* used to instill these skills into his students.⁵¹ For example, on one papyrus that preserves the myth of Hero and Leander, the most noticeable characteristic is the clear spacing between words, surely given as an aid to reading.⁵² On another, not only are words separated by the inclusion of dots, but lectional signs point out such characteristics as accents and breathings, all intended to aid the student's reading of the text.⁵³ And while these skills focused on the immediate textual context and the resolution of lexical ambiguity, challenges could still arise. Aristotle, for instance, gives the following example in his *Sophistical Refutations*. How should one translate *ἐγώ σ' ἔθηκα δοῦλον ὅντ'* *ἐλεύθερον?*⁵⁴ This statement could clearly be rendered as "I made you, a free man, a slave."

⁵⁰ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 190. On the issue of *scriptio continua*, William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire: A Study of Elite Communities*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18–20, argues that its use was deliberate. He claims that "Greeks and Romans knew perfectly well, for instance, the utility of word division—the Greek school texts on papyri bear eloquent testimony to the need for emerging readers to practice syllable and word division." For Johnson, the use of *scriptio continua* was a testament to the elite culture of readers in Greek and Roman society. I think Johnson's picture is compelling, but this does not detract from the arguments I am making in this chapter. If anything, readers trained in elite communities should be expected to adhere to the techniques and tools of the grammarian even more.

⁵¹ For the discussion of papyri evidence, which is a strength of her study, see Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, esp. 137–43.

⁵² P.Ryl. III.486 (SH 951; first century C.E.)

⁵³ P.Lond.Lit. 5 (Pack 634)

⁵⁴ Aristotle, S.E. 166b36–38. Atherton, *Stoics on Ambiguity*, 505, provides a helpful modern example in the sentence "Police found drunk in shop window." The meaning turns on how one understands "drunk" to function in the sentence. Is it an adjectival description of the police themselves, meaning "the drunk police were found in the shop window"? Or is it a substantival adjective, meaning "the police found a drunk in the shop window"? For both Aristotle and modern English, something more must be ascertained from the story in order to interpret the immediate context of this sentence fittingly.

However, it could equally mean "I made you, a slave, a free man." Though a student's syntactical skills could properly dissect a sentence into its parts, further potential ambiguities could still remain. Thus, grammarians also taught students to clarify broader textual obscurity with the reading strategies that attend to the work as a whole.⁵⁵

A crucial tool by which one could ascertain the proper textual context of a specific passage was *oīkonomiā*. This term has no Latin equivalent in the tradition, and, for this reason, it is often left untranslated by Latin authors.⁵⁶ In its correspondence to the concept of propriety in historical context, literary "economy" seeks to comprehend any individual passage in light of the whole poem. Eden offers a beautiful summary of *oīkonomiā*:

A formal property, literary economy works, like its counterpart, *decorum*, to accommodate the particular occasion. Subordinating the individual parts of the discourse to the overall plan of the whole, *oeconomia*, a principle of composition and interpretation, presupposes the whole in the disposition of the parts.⁵⁷

Grounded in this principle of economy, each individual episode, even if it appears irrelevant to the structure of the whole work, is in fact an "architectonic element" that reveals the unified organization of the complex whole.⁵⁸ By using *oīkonomiā* as an interpretive tool, readers would claim to discern the poet's intention for for particular passages.

This principle of economy, then, worked in tandem with a second tool of textual context. Authors who maintained such a unified organization in their work do so, according to the grammarians, in order to preserve the cohesiveness of its subject matter, the *īπόθεσις*.⁵⁹ An

⁵⁵I am not persuaded by Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 215, who suggests that the encyclopedic knowledge and close attention to detail taught by the grammarian inculcated a "myopic ability" in his students to dismember a text but failed to instill a similar appreciation for the whole of the work.

⁵⁶Cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.3.9 (LCL 125:26–27); Cicero, *Att.* 115.(VI.1).1 (LCL 8:104–05).

⁵⁷Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 30. See also her insightful article, Kathy Eden, "Economy in the Hermeneutics of Late Antiquity," *SLitI* 28 (1995): 13-26.

⁵⁸For the significance of *oīkonomiā* in readings of Homer, see N. J. Richardson, "Literary Criticism in the Exegetical Scholia to the Iliad: A Sketch," *CQ* 30 (1980), 266–72. This concept, along with others to which it was related (e.g. variety, foreshadowing, delayed suspense, etc.), was fundamental for the literary scholarship of the Homeric scholia, and we will see the subsequent influence of such concepts in Hellenistic Alexandrian scholarship below.

⁵⁹For detailed discussions of *īπόθεσις*, see Roos Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories in Greek Scholia*,

understanding of the text's *ὑπόθεσις*, therefore, allowed students to note the coherence between individual passages with the work as a whole. Authors were believed to be consciously consistent when telling their stories, so any ambiguous or unclear statements were frequently compared with similar claims elsewhere in the text. As Roos Meijering has noted, this understanding of authorial composition combined with an emphasis on the text's *ὑπόθεσις* meant that readers would anticipate a coherent story without any possible incongruities.⁶⁰ To return to Aristotle's example, then, if a student perceives the author's *ὑπόθεσις* to concern the liberation of a slave community, then the ambiguity inherent to the sentence is resolved. It must mean, "I made you, a slave, a free man." A focus on the overall narrative and theme of the text was useful to resolve any apparent contradictions in more narrow passages.⁶¹

I began this section by asking how grammarians sought to clarify textual obscurity, and we have examined a few of the tools of the trade. Indeed, in what Rafaella Cribiore has termed the grammarian's "mental gymnastics," students were taught "to take apart works of literature by distilling their characteristics with relentless attention to detail," providing techniques by which to examine a work's historical and textual contexts. These analytical exercises performed on the text were geared entirely toward "an elucidation of all its features."⁶² After examining a sample of the tools that characterized his task, we may extend our working definition.

Creative exegesis is the task of clarifying textual obscurity by employing the literary-critical tools of the grammarians to discover the intention of an author.

(Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1987), 99–133; and René Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 23–68. Other discussions may be found in Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome*, 219–20; Richardson, "Literary Criticism in the Exegetical Scholia," 268–69; Rudolf Kassel, "Hypothesis," in *ΣΧΟΛΙΑ: Studia ad criticam interpretationemque textuum Graecorum et ad historiam iuris Graeco-Romani pertinentia viro doctissimo D. Holwerda oblata*, eds. W. J. Aerts et al. (Groningen: E. Forsten, 1985), 53–59. For a similar statement on the interdependence of "economy" and "hypothesis" in early Christian exegesis, with a particular emphasis on Irenaeus of Lyons, see Anthony Briggman, "Literary and Rhetorical Theory in Irenaeus, Part 1," *VC* 69 (2015), esp. 519–23.

⁶⁰Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 133.

⁶¹Cf. Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 108, who notes, "the *ὑπόθεσις* of a text evidently is what the author aims at, his personal and freely chosen *τέλος*."

⁶²The previous two quotes may be found in Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 205.

In the course of the last two sections, I have attempted to show that the grammarian's task is focused on applying specific techniques of literary analysis to clarify any textual obscurity in the process of a holistic creative exegesis. I have also suggested that viewing exegesis in this way as a practice of commentary places us in a better position from which to describe early Christian exegesis. But this surely begs the question. How does this focus on the interpretive aim of the grammatical tradition—the clarification of textual obscurity—place us in any better position than the studies we briefly rehearsed earlier? To put the matter another way, can this account of the exegetical aims of the literary analysis of grammarians and forensic orators account for the literal and figural exegesis of early Christians? In other words, where is such creative exegesis to be found? This will be the subject matter of our next chapter.

3

The "Grammatical Archive": Creative Exegesis in Antiquity

Grammatica as a discursive practice was defined not simply by the objects it was associated with but by a repertoire of rules and models of statement-making—what can be called the grammatical archive—that allowed an endless number of new statements to be formulated from within the discipline.¹

As we saw in the previous chapter, Sextus Empiricus described the greatest attributes of the grammarians as the skills to explain things spoken unclearly (*ἀσαφῶς*), to discern sound narratives (*τά νύγιῆ*), and to distinguish authentic sayings from spurious ones (*τά γνήσια ἀπὸ τῶν νόθων*).² And as the realm of grammatical education focused on the poets above all, one can trace this line of scholarship to the tradition of Homeric commentary prominent in Hellenistic Alexandria. Of course, Homeric scholarship broadly speaking can be shown to have existed even earlier, in the fragments from Aristotle's *Aporematα Homerica* and the related twenty-fifth chapter of his *Poetics*. Though Aristotle offered the initial rebuttal to Plato's rejection of Homer's writings *qua* philosophy, Homeric scholarship in the Hellenistic age was centered in Alexandria. Sadly no commentaries from this period are extant, but we do have a number of examples of literary scholarship in the form of the Homeric scholia. And as René Nünlist has suggested, though the Greek scholia remain an understudied topic of ancient literary criticism, especially in relation to the great treatises of antiquity, they do hold a distinct advantage over the treatises.³ The scholia preserve scholarly interactions—a record of the application of the

¹Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350-1100*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 16.

²S. E., M 1.93 (LCL 382:54–55)

³Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 1–2

grammarian's expertise—on the texts of Homer. For this reason, they provide a more accurate (even if more complex) picture of the literary devices in use, and in many ways, the scholia reveal the critical literary strategies that attempt to come to terms with texts in their entirety. It was this stream of ancient literary scholarship that served as the foundation for the work of modern scholars who first emphasized the role of grammatical techniques in early Christian exegesis.⁴ But, as we have seen, the problem with these studies was their inability to account for early Christian figural exegesis. How is one to move beyond this impasse?

A fundamental flaw in the scholarly analysis of early Christian exegesis is that scholars who examine specifically Christian readers have been plagued by idiosyncratic appeals to terminology that simply has no value in wider scholarly discussions. Whereas our field has described the figurative readings of Christian exegetes under terms like "literal sense," "allegory," and "typology," scholars in other fields make no use of these particular categories. I suggest that the work of these classicists and historians, who attempt to describe the process of reading in antiquity more broadly, will aid us in a more accurate understanding and description of how Christians read their texts.

As a case in point, the recent work of Peter Struck reorients the discussion of ancient figurative interpretation by emphasizing the fact that *σύμβολον* and *αἴνιγμα* were the more significant conceptual terms of nonliteral modes of reading.⁵ At the heart of Struck's reorientation is the emphasis of this alternative narrative to focus on the potential of poetic texts to transcend mere imitation. He claims that, for these figurative readers, "symbolic language has been granted the power to invoke and create the world, right before our eyes."⁶ At home in philosophers and oracles, this mode of reading changes the expectations that one has of poetic texts altogether. The witness of Plutarch suggests that this mode of reading was still in effect in the first century C.E. In his *On the Oracles at Delphi*, Plutarch claims that oracles were

⁴Schäublin, *Untersuchungen zu Methode*; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*

⁵Peter T. Struck, *The Birth of the Symbol: Ancient Readers at the Limits of Their Texts*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). For a good discussion of the technical terminology, see Félix Buffière, *Les Mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque*, (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1956), 45–65.

⁶Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 277.

clothed in poetic language (*τὴν περικεμένην τοῖς χρησμοῖς ποίησιν*) characterized by undermeanings (*ὑπόνοιαν*), enigmas (*αἰνίγματα*), and ambiguities (*ἀμφιβολίας*).⁷ According to Plutarch, the "poetic" character of oracular literature is based on its very propensity towards obscurity. Throughout this tradition of nonliteral interpretation, these texts are believed to contain deep theological and cosmological truths, and poetic language, full of undermeanings, symbols, and enigmas—is understood as the proper medium for the greatest messages.⁸

Of course, it is entirely possible to narrate this tradition of nonliteral reading accurately, as I think Struck has done, and miss a crucial feature that relates this mode of reading to the literal reading strategies of the Homeric scholars in Alexandria. Struck contrasts the symbolic reading he describes in his book as a fundamentally different stance towards texts than that espoused by Aristotelian literary critics.⁹ Whereas Aristotle presented a "poetics of clarity" (cf. Aristotle, *Po.* 1458a18–26), Struck claims that symbolic reading operates within what he terms the "poetics of the riddle." Yet, this position is much too general to accommodate fully all the evidence.

In what follows, I will draw attention to a number of textual practices and techniques that are employed by ancient exegetes of both stripes, literal and figural readers. It is not my intention to provide an exhaustive catalog. Instead, I want only to suggest that each of these ancient exegetes sought to resolve the textual obscurities presented to them by recourse to a

⁷Plutarch, *De Pyth. or.* 407a–b (LCL 306:328–31); cf. Plutarch, *De aud. poet.* 19e–f (LCL 197:100–101). Cf. Maximus of Tyre, *Dial.* 4.5 (Hobein, 45.10), who, at the end of the second century C.E., claims that the work of poets and philosophers are "full of enigmas" (*μεστὰ αἰνίγματων*).

⁸See Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 142–61. A few French scholars have consistently emphasized the transition from Stoic allegory and its propensity to view hidden cosmological and metaphysical truths in ancient texts, to the Neoplatonic allegorists of the third century C.E., who see in the Homeric texts a narrative about the gods and the ability to move through the intelligible realm to the gods. For this narrative on the development of allegorical reading, see Buffière, *Les Mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque*; Jean Pépin, *Mythe et Allégorie: Les origines grecques et les contestations judéo-chrétiennes*, (Paris: Études augustinianes, 1976); and, most recently, Luc Brisson, *How Philosophers Saved Myths: Allegorical Interpretation and Classical Mythology*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). For a more detailed account of the former period that sees two different accounts of allegorical reading in the Stoics, see Boys-Stones, "The Stoics' Two Types of Allegory." The significance of this narrative for early Christian encounters with Valentinian exegesis has been preliminarily examined by Lewis Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians: Toward a Rethinking of Patristic Exegetical Origins," *JECS* 23 (2015): 153–87.

⁹Cf. Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 63–75.

"grammatical archive"—a repository of textual practices, techniques, and tools first learned in the ancient classroom. Although some sought to find the resolution to such obscurity on the surface of the text, while others provided clarification through figural readings, they are all in similar fashion dependent on this "grammatical archive" for the techniques by which they interpret their texts.¹⁰

Stylistic Ambiguity

As we saw earlier, the grammarians taught their students that authors employed customary terms and made their points clearly. Moreover, since the authors were deemed to be consistent, the stories likewise should be free from any incongruities.¹¹ For this reason, an author's style can often hold the key to explaining any difficulties found within a text, and we see this principle of stylistic ambiguity at play in the interpretation of literal and figurative readers alike. As an example of a scholar who sought such stylistic resolution in a literal reading, we need only look to Aristarchus of Samothrace (c. 216–145 B.C.E.), the most renowned scholar in Alexandria.¹² Though none of Aristarchus' compositions are extant,

¹⁰See the comment of Francesca Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," DSD 19 (2012), 435, who notes that "an allegorical approach to a text does not exclude more philological concerns in a commentary or in a commentator." Philological techniques are employed in both modes. Cf. Francesca Schironi, "L'Olimpo non è il cielo: Esegesi antica nel papiro di Derveni, Aristarco e Leagora di Siracusa," ZPE 136 (2001): 11-21.

¹¹Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 133.

¹²Aristarchus was the librarian in Alexandria in the mid-second century B.C.E. He continued the Alexandrian project of editing Homeric texts, which originated with Zenodotus of Ephesus (c. 325–270 B.C.E.). The project was carried forward by Zenodotus' pupil Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 257–180 B.C.E.), who is credited for establishing the Greek accent marks still in use today and refining the system of text-critical signs employed in the editions to Homer; see William Lameere, *Aperçus de paléographie homérique: À propos des papyrus de l'Iliade et de l'Odyssée des collections de Gand, de Bruxelles et de Louvain*, (Paris: Éditions Érasme, 1960), 90–92, for the textual evidence of this attribution to Aristophanes. Aristarchus advanced the system of critical signs that Aristophanes had refined, linking the signs in his editions with sections of his commentaries, wherein he would provide a detailed discussion of the textual issues at hand. On Zenodotus, Aristophanes, and especially Aristarchus, see Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 105–22, and 171–233; Dietrich Lührs, *Untersuchungen zu den Athetesen Aristarchs in der Ilias und zu ihrer Behandlung im Corpus der exegetischen Scholien*, (Hildesheim: Olms, 1992); James I. Porter, "Hermeneutic Lines and Circles: Aristarchus and Crates on the Exegesis of Homer," in *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes*, eds. Robert Lamberton and John J. Keaney (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 67-114; Martin L. West, *Studies in the Text and Transmission of the Iliad*, (München: Saur, 2001); Francesca Schironi, *I frammenti di Aristarco di Samotracia negli etimologici bizantini: Introduzione, edizione critica e commento*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004); Eleanor Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship: A Guide to Finding, Reading, and Understanding Scholia, Commentaries, Lexica, and Grammatical Treatises, from Their*

including his Homeric editions and at least two running commentaries (*ὑπομνήματα*) on a variety of poetic texts, the details of his work can be constructed from the remains of the Homeric scholia.¹³ As a *γραμματικός*, he prized clear (*σαφής*) language and believed that Homer always constructed his sentences in the most lucid ways to promote clarity (*σαφήνεια*).¹⁴ The concept of clarity could come to Homer's defense in a couple of ways. Aristarchus frequently claimed that Homer used terms according to their normal (*κύριον*/*κυρίως*) usage. Yet, when the need arises, Homer is granted the poetic license both to use a word in a way that is "proper" to Homer (*ἰδίως*) or in a metaphorical sense.¹⁵ Perhaps nowhere else does Aristarchus emphasize the clarity with which Homer writes than in his understanding of contradictions or superfluous statements (*περισσός*).¹⁶

Aristarchus frequently used this criterion of redundancy as an argument for athetesis.¹⁷ For instance, in *Iliad* 21, after a quarrel with Poseidon, Apollo yields in shame. Homer then introduces Artemis to the scene in order to confront Apollo and rebuke him for retreating without a fight:

His sister rebuked him harshly, the Queen of the beasts;
Wild Artemis, indeed, spoke a reproachful word.

Beginnings to the Byzantine Period, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5–6; Maren R. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 9–12. Tatian, *Or. 31* (Whittaker, 56), lists Zenodotus, Aristophanes, and Aristarchus as *γραμματικοί*.

¹³Aristarchus emphasized the characteristic expressions of individual authors, and based on this standard, argued that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were creations of a single poet. Moreover, the principle of consistency became paramount for Aristarchus, who used it to argue that Homer would not contradict himself. Thus, the comparison of similar or supposedly contradictory lines became a central tenet of his philology.

¹⁴Cf. schol. A Il. 15.8a

¹⁵See, for instance, schol. A Il. 2.670; 4.141a; 5.266b; 7.146b. For further examples, see Francesca Schironi, "Theory into Practice: Aristotelian Principles in Aristarchean Philology," *CP* 104 (2009), 300–03. On poetic license in the scholia, see Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 174–84. Cf. Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 62–67.

¹⁶On *περισσός* in the scholia, see Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 173–75.

¹⁷See Lührs, *Untersuchungen zu den Athetesen Aristarchi*, 18–148. Note, however, the sympathetic yet cautious use of Lührs by Maren R. Niehoff, "Homeric Scholarship and Bible Exegesis in Ancient Alexandria: Evidence from Philo's 'Quarrelsome' Colleagues," *CQ* 57 (2007), 180. Cf. Schironi, "Theory into Practice," 309, who summarizes the Aristarchean conviction: "Everything that is *περισσόν* is rejected in Homer."

*τὸν δὲ κασιγνήτη μάλα νείκεσε πότνια θηρῶν
Ἄρτεμις ἀγροτέρη, καὶ ὄνειδειον φάτο μῦθον* (Il. 21.470–71)

In the midst of this transition, Aristarchus notices a redundant phrase. The ever-consistent Homer has essentially written the same sentence twice, which, for Aristarchus, is clearly superfluous and perhaps subtly demeaning to his readers. The scholia again preserves Aristarchus' response:

ἀθετεῖται, ὅτι περισσὸς <μετὰ τὸν> „τὸν δὲ κασιγνήτη μάλα νείκεσε πότνια θηρῶν“ (Il. 21.470). τίς δὲ κυνηγετικὴ θεὸς εἰ μὴ ἡ Ἄρτεμις;

[This verse] is athetized, because it is superfluous after "His sister rebuked him harshly, the Queen of beasts" (Il. 21.470). And who is the god of the hunt besides Artemis?

Aristarchus' grammatical sensibilities suggest to him that Homer would expect his readers to identify both the sister of Apollo and the goddess of wild animals as Artemis. Thus, the superfluous quality (*περισσός*) of Il. 21.471 betrays its inauthenticity, and Aristarchus athetizes it as spurious.¹⁸ Such concerns with stylistic ambiguity seem at home in the literal scholarship of Aristarchus, intent as he was to verify Homer's original text. But this concern for stylistic clarity was shared by figurative readers as well.

The Derveni Papyrus is a figurative commentary on an Orphic "enigmatic" poem from the fourth century B.C.E..¹⁹ The commentary situates itself firmly in the figurative mode of

¹⁸Of course, a superfluous statement (*περισσός*) is not inherently negative and did not always demand athetesis. Often, it could even speak positively about the poet. Apollonius Dyscolus, for example, attributes superfluousness to poetic license (*ποιητικὴ ἀδεια*). See A. D., *Conj.* 249.25–30 (Dalimier, 178–81). Cf. *schol. bT Il. 6.377 ex.*, which attributes Andromache's epithet "of white arms" to the poet and not the character (*τοῦ ποιητοῦ τὸ ἐπίθετον, οὐ τοῦ προσώπου*.)

¹⁹On the dating of the Derveni Papyrus, see Maria Serena Funghi, "The Derveni Papyrus," in *Studies on the Derveni Papyrus*, eds. André Laks and Glenn W. Most (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 25–26; Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 29–30; and Walter Burkert, "La genèse des choses et des mots. Le papyrus de Derveni entre Anaxagore et Cratyl," *EP* 25 (1970), 443: "Il semble qu'on puisse faire remonter la composition du texte à une date qui ne doit pas être très postérieure à 400." Cf. Theokritos Kouremenos, George M. Parássoglou, and Kyriakos Tsantsanoglou, *The Derveni Papyrus. Edited with Introduction and Commentary*, (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 2006), 8–9, who claims that "a dating between 340 and 320 B.C.E. on the basis of script is perhaps closer to reality" (9). All citations of the Derveni Papyrus here will follow the numeration from Richard Janko, "The Derveni Papyrus: An Interim Text," *ZPE* 141 (2002): 1–62. I will give the column in Roman numerals, followed by the appropriate line(s) (e.g. I.1–2).

reading we saw earlier, a point that is particularly clear in the following lines:

And it is impossible to articulate the true interpretation of the words, even though they are spoken. The poem is oracular and riddling for people. Orpheus did not wish to utter contestable riddles, but rather to speak great things in riddles. Indeed, he is speaking figurally from his very first word right through to his last.²⁰

[κ]αὶ εἰπεῖν οὐχ οἶόν τ[ε τὴν τῶν ὁ]νομάτων
 [λύ]σων καίτ[οι] ρόηθέντα. ἔστι δὲ μ[αντικὴ ἡ] πόησις
 [κ]αὶ ἀνθρώ[ποις] αἰνι[γμ]ατώδης. [ό δ]ὲ [Ὀρφεὺ]ς αὐτ[ῆ]ι
 [ἐ]ρίστ' αἰν[ίγμα]τα οὐκ ἥθελε λέγειν, [ἐν αἰν]ίγμασ[ι]ν δὲ
 [μεγάλα. ἵερολογ]εῖται μὲν οὖν καὶ ἀ[πὸ το]ῦ πρώτου
 [ἀεὶ] μέχρι οὐ [τελε]υταίου ρήματος.²¹

Though the Derveni Papyrus marks the first instance of figural commentary on record, and as Struck has shown, the commentator concentrates on the fact that Orpheus has composed the poem as a riddle (*αἰνίγμα*). Significantly, the Derveni commentator shows no surprise in the obscurity of the Orphic poem. Inasmuch as he equates the poem with an oracle, he expects the words to be obscure and not straightforward.²² All "great things" (*μεγάλα*) about the gods and the cosmos are best transferred through enigmas,²³ but far from forcing one to believe that

²⁰This is my own translation, based upon that of Richard Janko, "Reconstructing (again) the Opening of the Derveni Papyrus," ZPE 166 (2008): 37–51, and Struck, Birth of the Symbol, 31–33. Both scholars also read *μ[αντικὴ ἡ]* for the gap in line 4, rather than the reading of *ξ[ένη τις ἡ]* offered by Kyriakos Tsantsanoglou, "The First Columns of the Derveni Papyrus and their Religious Significance," in *Studies on the Derveni Papyrus*, eds. André Laks and Glenn W. Most (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 95. In this reading, Janko and Struck both follow the initial proposal of Martin L. West, who had informally suggested the replacement in a letter to Tsantsanoglou in June 1984. For an explanation of the possibility for this reconstruction, see Janko, "Reconstructing," 39–40.

²¹P. Derv., VII.3–8 (Janko, 14). In my translation of *ἵερολογεῖται*, I am intentionally parting from the translation of Janko, "An Interim Text," 15, who renders this as "he is speaking allegorically." I want to emphasize—like Janko—the figural nature of Orpheus's composition, but I think it better to abstain from using the term "allegorical" without the presence of *ἀλληγορία* (or its cognates).

²²That the poem is situated in an oracular context can be seen in P. Derv., V.6–7 (Janko 10), where the commentator suggests that he is serving in the role of a priestly mediator between the gods and the laypeople who "do not understand dreams or any of the other real things" (*οὐ γνώσ[κοντες ἐ]νύπνια οὐδὲ τῶν ἀλλων πραγμάτων ἔκαστ[ον]*).

²³Note the comment of Struck, Birth of the Symbol, 145, that the commentator sees "*αἰνίγματα* as deeply resonant poetic images that carry hidden messages about the gods, the cosmos, or the place of humans in the world." Struck compares the perspective of the Derveni commentator with the reading strategies of the Stoic philosopher Cornutus, whom we will discuss below.

there is an inherent and unavoidable lack of clarity, the poem's riddles in actuality urge the reader to exert even more energy in the search for meaning. Notice how the Derveni commentator emphasizes the importance of textual exegesis in column thirteen: "Since [Orpheus] riddles (*aiνιζεται*) concerning his subject matter throughout the whole poem, one must discuss it word by word."²⁴ If one is to penetrate to the truth of the subject matter, he must reinvigorate his focus on the text one word at a time. The enigmas may very well veil the truth, but this particular veil is meant to be lifted in the hands of a capable interpreter. The Derveni commentator then models a number of strategies that would characterize his capable interpreter.

Similarly to Aristarchus' scholarly efforts on the *Iliad*, one of the exegetical tools for the Derveni commentator is a reflection on the stylistic features of Orpheus. In Column VIII, the commentator notices an ambiguity in Orpheus' poem. Orpheus had composed, "when Zeus took from his father the predicted rule and strength in his arms..."²⁵ Should one therefore understand Zeus to usurp the rule from Kronos ("he takes the rule from his father"), or whether he receives strength from Kronos ("he takes his father's strength")? The commentator points to the transposition of the phrase (*ὑπερβατόν*) and suggests that only an accurate understanding of the syntactical sequence will resolve Orpheus' ambiguous statement.²⁶

One of the most influential figurative readers in antiquity was the Hellenistic Jew, Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 B.C.E.–45 C.E.). Maren Niehoff has provided an insightful study on Philo's exegetical practice in her recent book *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*. Niehoff elegantly presents Philo as a complex interpreter who not only utilizes the Aristotelian literary-critical tools at hand, but quite unlike the Alexandrian scholars before him, applies them within a Platonic framework. For Niehoff, much of Philo's ingenuity is the distinct application of

²⁴P. Derv., XIII.5–6 (Janko, 26): *ὅτι μὲν πᾶσαν τὴν πόνου περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων αἰνίζεται κ[α]θ' ἔπος ἔκαστον ἀνάγκη λέγειν.* Cf. Gábor Betegh, "Exegesis in the Derveni Papyrus," in *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, eds. Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, and M. W. F. Stone (London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2004), 41–42. On consideration of the Derveni Papyrus from the perspective of ancient literary criticism, see Madeleine Henry, "The Derveni Commentator as Literary Critic," *TAPA* 116 (1986): 149–64.

²⁵P. Derv., VIII.4–5 (Janko, 16)

²⁶P. Derv., VIII.6–11 (Janko, 16)

literary scholarship in his figurative readings of the Jewish Scriptures. As Niehoff argues, Philo actually stressed the inherent ambiguities and difficulties on the surface of the text, in order to create a place for his allegorical readings.²⁷ Within this paradigm, however, Philo assumes a strict authorial intention built upon the grammatical teachings of antiquity, and it is this complex fusion of literal reading with figurative reading that Niehoff believes made Philo very attractive to his later readers.²⁸

Philo's strong presumption of authorial intention, itself a grammatical sensibility, leads him to pay close attention to the distinct traits of Moses' style.²⁹ Just as Aristarchus claimed that Homer spoke clearly, Philo argues that Moses has customary usages of words and terms. Philo claims that Moses customarily calls (*εἰωθε καλεῖν*) someone "young" (*νέον*), not as a reference to the youthfulness of his body but rather as a statement on the state of rebellion that accompanies his soul. Similarly, "elder" (*πρεσβύτερον*) does not refer customarily to old age, but Moses intends it to refer to an individual who is worthy of honor.³⁰ Moreover, it is clear that Philo considers Moses' choice of terminology to reflect the clarity of the context. Reflecting on Abram's inquiry of God in Genesis 15:2 ("But Abram said, 'Master, what will you give me?'"),³¹ Philo offers a literary-critical explanation for Moses' use of "master."

But observe on the other hand that confidence is blended with caution. For while the words "what will you give me" reveals (*έμφαίνει*) confidence, the title "master," reveals caution. Moses customarily employs (*εἰωθὼς δὲ χρῆσθαι*) two titles in speaking of the Cause, namely God and Lord (*τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ κύριῳ*). In this case, however, he uses neither, but, with great caution and the desire to speak in proper terms, substitutes "master" (*τὴν δεσπότου*). To be sure, these words are said to be synonyms, namely

²⁷Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 133–51.

²⁸Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 151.

²⁹For further examples of Philo's attention to stylistic traits, see *Det.* 39–40 (LCL 227:228–29), where he reflects on Moses' customary descriptions of Aaron as "mouth," "spokesman," and "prophet"; *Gig.* 6–7 (LCL 227:448–49), where Philo discusses Moses' customary attribution of the term "angel."

³⁰Philo, *Sobr.* 16–17 (LCL 247:450–53), where Philo is reflecting on Moses' description of Joseph in Gen. 37:2 (LXX): "Joseph was seventeen years and, although he was young, was shepherding the flock with his brothers" (*Ιωσηφ δέκα ἑπτά ἐτῶν ἦν ποιμαίνων μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ τὰ πρόβατα ὥν νέος*).

³¹Gen. 15:2 (LXX): *λέγει δὲ Αβραμ Δέσποτα, τί μοι δώσεις;*

"Lord" and "master." But, although the referent of both is one and the same, the nouns express different ideas.³²

Philo here reflects not only on the customary usage of "God" and "Lord" to name the Cause, but he examines Moses' intention in straying from these terms. Culling even more of his grammatical skills, Philo provides a further etymological link to secure his interpretation, namely between *δεσπότης* (master) and *δέος* (fear). For Philo, though Lord and master have God as a referent, the term "master" implies something further. Not only is a *δεσπότης* a Lord, but he is one who is also able to instill fear and terror in his subjects.³³ For Philo, Abram's question in Genesis 15:2 should be understood to express confidence, even before the transcendent Cause of all things.³⁴

The notion that Moses desired clarity and plain speech in the composition of the Torah was paramount for Philo. From this conviction, which is identical to Aristarchus' view of Homer and the Derveni commentator's conception of Orpheus, Philo echoes Aristarchus' earlier arguments and concludes that "Moses spoke nothing superfluously" (*περιττὸν ὄνομα οὐδὲν τιθησιν*).³⁵ Nevertheless, Philo was steeped in the grammatical tradition of Alexandrian literary scholarship, and he recognized the obscurity present on occasion in the Torah. His description of his interpretive method in *On the Confusion of Tongues* explicitly claims to deal with such unclarity.

There are those who will refute on their own account those writing such things and falsifying [the Scriptures], who will have explanations at hand from the outward sense of Scripture for questions as they arise. [But we shall offer a figurative interpretation,]³⁶

³²Philo, *Her.* 22 (LCL 261:294–95)

³³Philo, *Her.* 23 (LCL 261:294–95): *ἀλλὰ καὶ δέος καὶ φόβον ἵκανὸν ἐμποιῆσαι*

³⁴Cf. Philo, *Her.* 24–29 (LCL 261:296–99)

³⁵Philo, *Fug.* 54 (LCL 275:38–39)

³⁶Here, I follow the conjecture of Colson (LCL 261:18n.1) who suggests that an explicit reference to Philo's allegorical method has dropped from the text. For similar arguments in Philo, see *Conf.* 190 (LCL 261:112–115); *Somm.* 1.102 (LCL 275:350–51); *Sobr.* 33 (LCL 247:460–61). The contrast drawn in Colson's reconstruction between Philo's method and that of the critical interpreters of the Babel story described in *Conf.* 1–13 is supported by (a) his conviction that others exist who can refute them from the "outward sense of Scripture" (*Conf.* 14) and (b) the use of *φαμὲν τούνν* in *Conf.* 15 to contrast his own method of refutation. Cf. Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and*

neither in a contentious spirit nor in order to meet sophistry with sophistry, but rather, following the chain of logical sequence, which does not permit stumbling (*προσπταίειν οὐκ ἐῶντι*) but easily removes any stumbling-block that may arise, in order that the course of the narratives may be smooth (*αἱ τῶν λόγων διέξοδοι γίνωνται ἀπταστοι*).³⁷

Philo understood, as did Aristarchus, that texts present ambiguities on the surface.

Aristarchus, as we have seen, chose to athetize such problems with the aim of discerning the Homeric original. In this sense, perhaps, Aristarchus can be likened to Philo's colleagues, whom he trusts will refute his opponents with explanations "from the outward sense of Scripture" (*ἐκ τῆς φανερᾶς γραφῆς*).³⁸ For Philo, however, the presence of such redundancies in the Torah were not superfluous in actuality. Instead, Philo insists that an apparent ambiguity in the Jewish scriptures serves, as Maren Niehoff has argued, "as an instrument to move from the literal to the non-literal level."³⁹ For Philo, the Jewish scriptures contain an underlying consistency from first to last.⁴⁰ All of Moses' instructions are profitable, and athetesis is inappropriate technique. If an ambiguous statement is observed on the surface of the text, then one is directed to consider the consistent figurative meaning that Moses intended. As an example, Niehoff points to the narrative of Genesis 4:16, where Cain is said to depart from God's face (*ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ*).⁴¹ Philo retorts, based on his understanding of God's transcendence, that such an act is impossible (*ἀδυνατον*). Thus, it is signaled that a more figurative (*τροπικώτερον*) interpretation must be provided through the route of allegory (*τὴν δι' ἀληγορίας ὁδὸν*).⁴² Philo then adopts a reading of Genesis 4:16 built upon the Platonic motif of rising above the

Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria, 77–94, who argues that his exegetical opponents were Jewish colleagues who offered a comparative mythology for the Tower of Babel narrative.

³⁷Philo, Conf. 14 (LCL 261:16–19)

³⁸Philo, Conf. 14 (LCL 261:16–19). On the literary scholarship of Philo's colleagues, see Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 75–129.

³⁹Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 140. Niehoff provides a helpful discussion of Philo's approach to resolving "contradictions" and "verisimilitudes" in Scripture. In this chapter, however, I intend the term "ambiguity" to include both of these types of textual obscurities.

⁴⁰Cf. Philo, Det. 81 (LCL 227:256–57).

⁴¹See Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 146–47.

material realm to reach contemplation of the One.

Questions and Answers

We have seen that both literal and figurative readers in antiquity closely analyzed the stylistic features of texts, since their grammatical education had taught them that authors were consistent throughout their compositions. Thus, one could attend to an author's common usage of terms, the presence of superfluous statements, and the transposition of words to uncover the clear meaning behind the apparent obscurity that was intended by the author. Another frequent trait of grammatical interpretation, found in both literal and figurative readers alike, was the presence of a question and answer format of textual analysis.

The Homeric scholia frequently emphasize that the appearance of problems in the text gives rise to the need for answers and/or emendations.⁴³ In order to offer such resolution, the scholia often take this "question and answer" format (*ζητήματα καὶ λύσεις*). They may pose a question directly (*διὰ τί*), or they might instead simply say "the answer is that..." (*λύσις ὅτι*). In both of these strategies, however, the fragments of Aristotle's Homeric Questions (*Ἀπορήματα Ὁμηρικά*) looms in the background, where he regularly introduces questions with the *διὰ τί* formula.⁴⁴ For Aristotle, though an answer could be found by utilizing any number of literary-critical tools, the questions arose first by the realization of textual ambiguity, frequently from apparent contradictions between verses. Any number of textual factors could be used in the

⁴²See Philo, Post. 1–7 (LCL 227:328–31)

⁴³For a helpful overview of the scholia material, see Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship*, 18–23; Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 7–20

⁴⁴Though we cannot now know the scope of Aristotle's work on Homer, Diogenes Laertius knew of six volumes (D. L. 5.26). And of the 36 extant fragments from the Homeric, 24 include a version of the *διὰ τί* formula; see Valentin Rose, ed., *Aristotelis qui ferebantur librorum fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1886), 120–37. On the question-and-answer format more broadly, see Christian Jacob, "Questions sur les questions: Archéologie d'une pratique intellectuelle et d'une forme discursive," in *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context*, eds. Annelie Volgers and Claudio Zamagni (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 25–54; Yannis Papadoyannakis, "Instruction by Question and Answer: The Case of Late Antique and Byzantine Erotapokriseis," in *Greek Literature in Late Antiquity: Dynamism, Didacticism, Classicism*, ed. Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 91–105. Cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 69–71; Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 11–12. One should also note the affinities with the twenty-fifth chapter of Aristotle's *Poetics*, entitled *περὶ δὲ προβλημάτων καὶ λύσεων*. See Aristotle, Po. 1460b6. This tradition is well-attested even into the third century C.E., where we find Porphyry's *Ὅμηρικὰ ζητήματα*.

hands of these capable scholars to offer a resolution to the supposed difficulty.⁴⁵

What gave rise to most of these questions? It was often the case that a comparison of passages led to an apparent contradiction. For example, Aristarchus noticed an apparent contradiction between Iliad 22.208 and 22.251. Do Hector and Achilles circle Troy three or four times? To resolve the discrepancy, Aristarchus culls his grammatical expertise and resolves the tension with a geographical analysis in his comments on Iliad 22.251:

οὐ μάχεται δὲ τῷ „ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ τὸ τέταρτον“ (Il. 22.208)· τρεῖς μὲν γὰρ τελείους κύκλους περιέδραμον, τὸ δὲ τέταρτον ἔως τῶν κρουνῶν ἐλθόντες οὐκέτι περιῆλθον τὴν πόλιν (schol. A Il. 22.251a)

It does not contradict "but when for the fourth time" (Il. 22.208). For they ran three complete cycles, and on the fourth, when they came to the springs, they went no further around the city.

In this instance, Aristarchus smooths the narrative with his geographical knowledge of Troy. Other ancient readers, while retaining the question and answer format refined by the grammatical tradition, provided starkly different resolutions.

In his *Questions and Answers*, Philo continues the line of reasoning in the "question and answer" format from the Homeric scholia.⁴⁶ He frequently begins with a general inquiry, "Why is it written that...?" (*διὰ τί/τι ἔστιν*). His response often comes in a verse-by-verse reflection on a portion of the Torah. Significantly, however, his solutions often appeal to the same categories as those evidenced in the earlier Homeric scholarship. For example, in his reading of Genesis 2:19, Philo notices the oddity that God asked Adam to name the animals. Puzzled, Philo asks, "Why does [Moses] say, 'He led the animals to man to see what he would call them,' since God does not doubt?"⁴⁷ Niehoff has pointed out astutely that Philo's question precludes

⁴⁵Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 11–12, has a brief overview of these strategies as they are found in the scholia.

⁴⁶James R. Royse, "The Works of Philo," in *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, ed. Adam Kamesar (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 34–35.

⁴⁷Philo, QG 1.21 (LCL 380:13)

one from offering a resolution that appeals to God's anthropomorphic features.⁴⁸ But the more interesting point to be seen is the fact that the resolution Philo does provide is built on one of literary criticism's standard forms of resolving textual obscurity—λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου (i.e., "solution from the character").⁴⁹ To be sure, the solution ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου often turns on an identification of the speaker or hearer of a particular phrase.⁵⁰ But here, Philo offers a solution "from the character" in a second sense. He claims that "doubting is foreign to the truly Divine Power."⁵¹ Philo, certain that the narrative cannot imply that God doubted, suggests instead that it presents God as the suitable character who, having given mind (*νοῦν*) to man, allows him to name the animals in accordance with his natural reason. Thus, not only does Philo provide a solution according to which God must not act out of character, but appealing to the grammarian's principle of propriety, he suggests that this is the most appropriate understanding of the text.⁵²

Plausibility

Aristarchus was frequently concerned with the ambiguities that arise in texts with respect to the plausibility of an action or event. His assumption was that Homer presented a text that was true to reality, and any presentation that seemed unrealistic were often rejected on

⁴⁸Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 161–62.

⁴⁹A. Gudeman, "λύσεις," RE 13, ed. G. Wissowa (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1927), 2511–29.

⁵⁰For an introduction to the ancient practice of prosopological exegesis, see Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 1:263–76. For Aristarchus' use of this technique, see Adolf Römer, *Die Homerexegese Aristarchs in ihren Grundzügen dargestellt*, ed. Emil Belzner (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1924), 253–56. For its application in early Christian exegesis of the Psalter, see Marie-Josèphe Rondeau, *Les commentaires patristiques du Psautier: IIIe-Ve siècles*. Vol. 2, *Exégèse prosopologique et théologie*, (Rome: Pont. Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1985).

⁵¹Philo, QG 1.21 (LCL 380:13): Ἀλλότριον γὰρ ὄντως θείας δυνάμεως τὸ ἐνδοιάζειν.

⁵²Philo's argument therefore reveals the blurring of lines between issues of "character" and "fittingness" in these literary-critical strategies. One must not act "out of character" (*παρὰ τὸ πρόσωπον*), for this would not be suitable (*ἀνάρμοστον/οὐκ οἰκεῖον/οὐ πρέπον*). Cf. schol. A. Il. 3.395; schol. A. Il. 8.164–6a; schol. A. Il. 20.180–6a. The recommendation that a character should be suitable or appropriate to the narrative goes back to Aristotle (Po. 1454a16–36). Cf. Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 246–54. To be sure, Philo does not use these terms of "fittingness" to describe God's character in the Genesis narrative. He does, however, describe the activity of naming to be a "suitable example" (*ἐπίδειξιν οἰκείαν*) of the exercise of the reason God had bestowed upon man. For Philo, the issue of naming is a suitable action to follow from God's bestowal of *νοῦς* to man.

this criterion of plausibility.⁵³ Every event recounted in the epic should be believable. If it was not, then Aristarchus either offered a solution to the ambiguity or proposed to athetize the phrase. This principle of plausibility (*πιθανός*) was the foundation for Aristarchus' solution to the famous duals of *Iliad* 9. For Aristarchus, the narrative only makes sense if one understands two specific people to be present, Odysseus and Ajax.

τὼ δὲ βάτην <προτέρω, ἥγεῖτο δὲ δῖος Ὁδυσσεύς>: ὅτι ἐπὶ Ὁδυσσέως καὶ Αἴαντος τὸ δυϊκόν· παρόντος γὰρ τοῦ Φοίνικος ἀπίθανον λέγειν ἥγεῖτο δὲ δῖος Ὁδυσσεύς.
(schol. A Il. 9.192a)

"The two of them came forward, and noble Odysseus led the way: [the diple is] because the dual is for Odysseus and Ajax. For if Phoenix had been present, it would have been implausible to say "noble Odysseus led the way."

For Aristarchus, the ambiguity presented by the duals is resolved by clarifying that Homer meant Odysseus and Ajax. If Phoenix had been in the scene, then Homer's phrase would have been improbable (*ἀπίθανον*). Elsewhere, Aristarchus appeals to the principle of plausibility to adjudicate matters of chronology and to restrict even supernatural episodes to a level of believability, resulting in each case in an athetesis of one or more verses.⁵⁴ Once again, however, the use of this grammatical technique is not limited to a literal exegete like Aristarchus.

In his *Compendium of Greek Theology*, the first century C.E. Stoic philosopher Lucius Annaeus Cornutus aims to uncover the underlying truths expressed in the veneer of ancient poetry, particularly that of Hesiod. Although writing some five hundred years later, Cornutus employs language similar to that of the Derveni commentator. Cornutus uses *aἴνιγμα* (and its cognates) once again to suggest that the poet's composition hints at deeper theological realities.⁵⁵ In

⁵³Schironi, "Theory into Practice," 286–88.

⁵⁴For the use of the couple *πιθανός/ἀπίθανος* in a chronological matter, see schol. A Il. 3.144a. For its use in a supernatural episode, see schol. A Il. 19.416–17a. In each of these cases, Aristarchus uses the principle of probability to suggest that the lines be athetized (*ἀθετέω*). For general considerations on Aristarchean athetesis, see Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 16, esp. 16n.17.

⁵⁵The best study on Cornutus' allegorical interpretation is Glenn W. Most, "Cornutus and Stoic Allegoresis: A Preliminary Report," *ANRW* 2.36.3 (1989): 2014–65. Cf. A. A. Long, "Stoic Readings of Homer," in *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes*, eds. Robert Lamberton and John J. Keaney (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 53; Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 145. Cornutus uses *aἴνιγμα* cognates to describe the power of the poet's images and words to carry a deeper signification on ten occasions throughout his

chapter thirty-two of his *Compendium*, Cornutus writes of the gods Apollo and Artemis in this way:

Next, my child, Apollo is the sun, and Artemis is the moon. And here is the reason that people represented them both as archers: they were hinting (*αἰνίττομενοι*) at their release of far-ranging rays (*πόρρω τῶν ἀκτίνων*). The sun is called the "far-shooter" (*ἔκατος*), as is the moon (*ἔκάτη*), because they release and send forth their light to earth from afar (*ἔκαθεν*).⁵⁶

For Cornutus, the poet's representation of Apollo as an archer is a subtle hint at his epithet "*Ἔκατος*", an enigmatic description of his identity as Helios rather than his skill with the bow. Similarly, by Zeus' expulsion of Kronos as king, the poet suggests (*αἰνίττονται*) the victory of order over chaos in the cosmos.⁵⁷ The enigma, however, is not Cornutus' preferred term for figurative reading. This honor is held by the term "symbol" (*σύμβολον*). As Struck notes, Cornutus especially turns to the idea of the symbol to indicate "the accoutrements of particular deities, which are interpretable codes of their qualities."⁵⁸ The symbol, therefore, becomes the vehicle of theological truth, and Cornutus closes the *Compendium* with an exhortation for his student to read the poets carefully, since they were themselves the harbingers of philosophy.

And so, my child, it is my hope that you may be able in this same way to refer the other things handed down to us in mythical form, seemingly about the gods, to the elementary models I have taught you, convinced that the men of antiquity were not common men, but rather they were well-suited both to understand the nature of the cosmos and to make philosophical statements about it through symbols and enigmas (*πρὸς τὸ διὰ συμβόλων καὶ αἰνιγμάτων φιλοσοφῆσαι περὶ αὐτῆς εὐεπίφοροι*).⁵⁹

To uncover the theology in the myths, Cornutus interprets these symbols on etymological grounds. As a Stoic exegete, it may not be surprising for one to note the

Compendium.

⁵⁶Cornutus, ND 32 (Lang, 65.1–6)

⁵⁷Cornutus, ND 7 (Lang, 7.21).

⁵⁸Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 145–51. Any number of examples could be provided. Zeus' scepter serves as a *σύμβολον* of his reign, see ND 9 (Lang, 10.10). In ND 20 (Lang, 36.9), Athena's virginity is a *σύμβολον* of purity.

⁵⁹Cornutus, ND 35 (Lang, 75.17–76.5)

etymological methodology employed in Cornutus' *Compendium*. Nevertheless, one should not presume that etymology was the sole prerogative of philosophical allegoresis, lest he overlook the correlation between Cornutus' etymology and the literary exegesis of scholars like Aristarchus.⁶⁰ Though etymology was certainly useful in Stoic philosophical speculation of the earliest poetic myths, we have already seen that it was also a skill learned from the grammarian to ascertain a text's historical context.⁶¹

Etymology was built on the same principles of ambiguity and homonymy that allowed words to have more than one potential referent. In an example from chapter thirty-one of his *Compendium*, we find Cornutus reflecting on the literary potential of etymological construction. He suggests that the consort between Heracles and Hebe should be viewed as entirely suitable (*οἰκεῖως*), since this reading etymologically suggests that understanding is all the more complete when reason is paired with youth.⁶² Similarly, Cornutus concludes that Heracles' yearlong service to Omphale was surely "quite plausible" (*πιθανωτέραν*). According to Cornutus, the ancients suggest (*ἐμφανόντων*) that even the strongest men have the need to submit to reason and, if necessary, the feminine voice (*όμφῆς*).⁶³ The term *ἐμφασις* was used in both the rhetorical arts and literary criticism to describe passages where a meaning is

⁶⁰For the Stoic use of etymology and allegorical practices, see Buffière, *Les Mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque*, 60–65; Alain Le Boulluec, "L'Allegorie chez les Stoiciens," *Poétique* 23 (1975): 301–21; Most, "Cornutus"; and Long, "Stoic Readings of Homer." I am persuaded by Long's argument that the Stoic practice of etymology was not intended as a means to discern the poet's intention, rather than a search for the "beliefs about the world held by those who first gave the gods their present names" (54). On Aristarchus' employment of etymology, see Francesca Schironi, "Aristarchus and his Use of Etymology," in *Etymologia: Studies in Ancient Etymology*, ed. Christos Nifadopoulos (Münster: Nodus Publikationen, 2003), 71–78.

⁶¹See chapter two above, 25n.45. Cf. Plutarch, *De aud. poet.* 23a (LCL 197:118–21), who also suggests that meaning may be constructed etymologically from the divine names, and the interpreter must judge whether the name is used to reference the god or rather "certain faculties" that find their origin in the god. Robert Stephen Hays, "Lucius Annaeus Cornutus' 'Epidrome'" (Introduction to the Traditions of Greek Theology): Introduction, Translation, and Notes," (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1983), 23, observes that, "as we come to the age in which Cornutus lived, it is necessary to be clear that detailed study of such matters as etymology and recondite mythological and ethnological details are not matters of interest only to philosophical teachers. They are, rather, topics common to virtually all teachers of higher education, and a component of the education of virtually everyone educated under a *grammaticus*."

⁶²Cornutus, ND 31 (Lang, 64.3–7). Here, Cornutus is reflecting on the maturity of Herakles as *λόγος* with the youthfulness of Hebe ("Ηβη"). Their cohabitation suggests a holistic maturation (cf. *ηβάω*).

⁶³Cornutus, ND 31 (Lang, 64.8–14)

implied rather than stated explicitly, not an altogether surprising feature for a figurative text built upon the concepts of symbol and enigma.⁶⁴ And it was the principle of plausibility, a clear coherence between symbol and implied reality, that made each of these accounts entirely believable for Cornutus. Regardless of whether one finds such etymologies as convincing as Cornutus did, the significant point to note is that these readings were powered by the same conceptual tool as Aristarchus' resolution of Homer's duals.

Propriety

As we noted earlier in the chapter, the crucial aim of the grammarian's task was to clarify any and all ambiguous statements, in order to provide the interpretation most suitable to the author's intention (*διάνοια*). We have already seen Plutarch's argument for the necessity of a proper interpretation, but this principle is cited frequently by ancient readers. Drawing upon Aristotle's link between propriety and character expectations, the scholia disclose Aristarchus' belief that the characters must remain consistent and credible to the narrative as a whole.⁶⁵ Aristarchus will not accept Achilles' cheap insults of Aeneas in Iliad 20, since they are "unsuitable to his character."⁶⁶ For Aristarchus as for Aristotle, a character must act according to common expectations, that is, as their social standing, age, gender, or present situation might dictate. There is, then, a clear distinction between what is appropriate for the gods and what is fitting for humans. For instance, in Iliad 1, in an encounter with Athena, Achilles claims that Agamemnon's arrogance will be his downfall. Yet, Aristarchus mounts an argument against the

⁶⁴One could therefore rightly link *ἔμφασις* with the concept of *ὑπόνοια*; see Ps. Plutarch, Hom. 26 (KL 94–7). On *ἔμφασις* in ancient criticism, see Nümlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 211. Cf. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 225–27, who examines Origen's use of *ἔμφασις*. Neuschäfer notes, however, that the semantic range of the term is broad enough to allow for implied meanings, as Cornutus uses it, but that it can just as easily refer to words that are particularly expressive, much like its usage in modern language: "Was heutzutage unter Emphase und emphatisch verstanden wird, ist somit keine Erfindung der Neuzeit, sondern entspricht antikem Sprachgebrauch, der nicht einseitig an der rhetorischen Schuldefinition abgelesen werden darf." See Lausberg, *Handbuch*, §1246.

⁶⁵On the principle of propriety in Aristarchus, see Schironi, "Theory into Practice," 290–97. On this point, cf. Aristotle, Po. 1454a16–28; Rh. 1408a10–11.

⁶⁶See schol. A Il. 20.180–86a: ἀθετοῦνται στίχοι ἐπτά, ὅτι εὐτελεῖς εἰσι τῇ κατασκευῇ καὶ τοῖς νοήμασι, καὶ οἱ λόγοι οὐ πρέποντες τῷ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως προσώπῳ

reading from Zenodotus' edition. Since the ability to consider the future with such certainty is rather "more suitable to Athena [than Achilles]" ($\tau\hat{\eta}\; \text{Αθηνᾶ}\; \dot{\alpha}\rho\mu\dot{\zeta}\epsilon\; \mu\hat{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega\eta$), Aristarchus suggests an emendation from Achilles' definitive statement ("it will end this way") to the more speculative claim, "I suspect it shall end this way."⁶⁷ In a similar way, there is a fitting portrayal according to social standing. Aristarchus athetizes seven lines from *Iliad* 6 that recount Andromache's counsel to Hector. These words of strategic advice are unsuitable ($\dot{\alpha}\nu\dot{\iota}\kappa\epsilon\iota\omega\eta$) from Andromache's mouth, since she is a woman.⁶⁸ This Aristotelian principle of propriety, however, was equally at home in figurative readings of antiquity.

Nothing much is known of Heraclitus the Allegorist beyond his name. His treatise on Homeric Problems, however, supplies a crucial piece of evidence for the techniques of literary criticism in the imperial period.⁶⁹ From the outset of his treatise, it is clear that Heraclitus intends to defend Homer from critics who charge him with a contempt of the gods ($\pi\epsilon\rho\dot{\iota}\; \tau\hat{\eta}\; \epsilon\iota\omega\eta\; \tau\hat{\eta}\; \theta\epsilon\iota\omega\eta\; \dot{\alpha}\lambda\iota\gamma\omega\dot{\rho}\iota\omega\eta$). Strikingly, Heraclitus agrees with these Homeric antagonists, and in a statement that reveals the purposes of his work, Heraclitus claims, "If Homer spoke nothing allegorically, then he is entirely impious."⁷⁰ Heraclitus recognizes the ambiguities and difficulties in the Homeric text, and like Aristarchus and the grammarians of Ptolemaic

⁶⁷See schol. A Il. 1.204b: $\tau\hat{\eta}\; \delta\epsilon\; \kappa\dot{\iota}\; \tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\dot{\lambda}\epsilon\dot{\sigma}\theta\epsilon\eta\; \delta\hat{\iota}\omega\colon \delta\tau\iota\; \text{Ζηνόδοτος}\; \gamma\dot{\rho}\dot{\alpha}\dot{\phi}\epsilon\; ,\tau\hat{\eta}\; \delta\epsilon\; \kappa\dot{\iota}\; \tau\epsilon\tau\epsilon\dot{\epsilon}\sigma\mu\dot{\epsilon}\nu\eta\; \dot{\epsilon}\sigma\theta\epsilon\eta\; .\; \tau\hat{\eta}\; \delta\epsilon\; \tau\hat{\eta}\; \text{Αθηνᾶ}\; \dot{\alpha}\rho\mu\dot{\zeta}\epsilon\; \mu\hat{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega\eta\; \delta\iota\alpha\beta\epsilon\beta\alpha\iota\omega\eta\hat{\nu}$

⁶⁸See schol. A Il. 6.433–39: $\dot{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\tau\hat{\eta}\nu\eta\tau\iota\; \sigma\tau\iota\chi\eta\; \dot{\epsilon}\pi\tau\hat{\eta}\; \dot{\epsilon}\omega\; \tau\hat{\eta}\nu\; (439)\; \dot{\eta}\; \nu\eta\; \kappa\dot{\iota}\; \alpha\dot{\nu}\tau\hat{\eta}\nu\; \theta\epsilon\mu\dot{\omega}\eta\; ,\delta\tau\iota\; \dot{\alpha}\nu\dot{\iota}\kappa\epsilon\iota\omega\eta\; \eta\iota\lambda\dot{\gamma}\eta\iota\; \tau\hat{\eta}\; \text{Ανδρομάχη}\; \dot{\alpha}\nu\tau\iota\sigma\tau\hat{\eta}\eta\epsilon\; \gamma\dot{\alpha}\rho\; \tau\hat{\eta}\; \text{Ἐκτορί}$

⁶⁹In the Homeric Problems, Heraclitus refers both to Crates of Mallos (All. 27.2) and Apollodorus of Athens (All. 7.1), both contemporaries of Aristarchus in Alexandria. Both Crates and Apollodorus can be dated rather safely to the second century B.C.E., and Heraclitus must have lived, therefore, in the first century B.C.E. or later. It is possible that Heraclitus' desire to employ $\dot{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\eta\gamma\omega\dot{\rho}\iota\omega\eta$ (and its cognates) as a technical term serves as the immediate background to Plutarch's comment that "allegories" ($\dot{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\eta\gamma\omega\dot{\rho}\iota\omega\eta\iota\omega\eta$) had now replaced "undermeanings" ($\dot{\nu}\pi\pi\omega\dot{\iota}\omega\eta$) as a description of poetic texts. If this is the case, then the Homeric Problems may be dated to around 100 C.E. Regardless, we are safe to assign the text broadly to the first or second century C.E., as most scholars do. On the dating of Heraclitus and the Homeric Problems, see Félix Buffière's introductory material to the critical edition, "Introduction" (Budé ix–x); Cynthia L. Thompson, "Stoic Allegory of Homer: A Critical Analysis of Heraclitus' Homeric Allusions," (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1973), 4–5; Pépin, *Mythe et Allégorie*, 159; Long, "Stoic Readings of Homer," 45; and Donald A. Russell and David Konstan, eds. *Heraclitus: Homeric Problems* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), xi–xiii.

⁷⁰Heraclitus, All. 1.1 (Budé, 1): $\pi\dot{\alpha}\nu\tau\hat{\eta}\; \gamma\dot{\alpha}\rho\; \dot{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\beta\eta\sigma\epsilon\eta\; ,\epsilon\iota\; \mu\eta\delta\epsilon\eta\; \dot{\eta}\lambda\lambda\eta\gamma\omega\dot{\rho}\eta\sigma\epsilon\eta$

Alexandria, he seeks to clarify Homer's intentions.⁷¹ For Heraclitus, it is clear (*σαφὲς*) that Homer included no polluted fictions (*ἐναγῶν μύθων*) in his poems.⁷² But Heraclitus' resolution is more Philonic than Aristarchean. From Heraclitus' perspective, Homer had employed allegory in his composition, and the one who reads him must seek to understand the proper intention (*τὸν νοούμενον*) of the words that he spoke (*τὸν λεγόμενόν*).⁷³ Failure to comprehend the poet's intention reveals a flaw, not in the author, but in the reader.

If some ignorant people (*ἀμαθεῖς*) fail to recognize Homeric allegory (*την Ὀμηρικὴν ἀλληγορίαν*) and have not descended into the secret caverns of his wisdom but instead have risked a hasty judgment of the truth without proper consideration, and if then they seize hastily on what they take to be his mythical invention, because they do not know what is said in a philosophical sense (*τὸν φιλοσόφως ῥηθὲν*), let them leave! But let us, who have been hallowed within the sacred enclosure, methodically track down in the deeper sense the grand truth of the poems.⁷⁴

Much like Philo's claim that the Jewish Scriptures contained an underlying consistency,⁷⁵ Heraclitus contends that Homer had intentionally crafted his texts to communicate truths obliquely. In fact, Homer should be expected to use nonliteral modes of communication, since even the greatest philosophers used symbols and unclear words to express their points. As Heraclitus claims, "It is not paradoxical to think that, when those who claim primarily to practice philosophy use allegorical expressions, the professional poet should

⁷¹ Heraclitus, All. 3.1 (Budé, 3), contends that, far from disrespecting the gods, Homer in fact honors them (*νεωκορεῖ*).

⁷² Heraclitus, All. 2.1 (Budé, 2). There is an interesting juxtaposition here with the position of Cornutus, who clearly believed that the poets had included myths that had been fabricated and polluted in their poems. Cf. Cornutus, ND 17 (Lang, 27.19–28.2).

⁷³ On Homer's allegorical composition, see esp. Heraclitus, All. 6.1–2 (Budé, 6). For the distinction between spoken word and intention, see All. 5.16 (Budé, 6). Elsewhere, Homer's intention is referred to as the "clear meaning" (*τὸν δηλούμενον*; 5.16), the "truth of the poems" (*τῶν ποιημάτων τὴν ἀλήθειαν*; 3.3), a "philosophical notion" (*φιλοσοφοῦσαν ἔννοιαν*; 16.5), and the "allegorical intention" (*τοῖς νοούμενοις κατ' ἀλληγορίαν*; 17.3).

⁷⁴ Heraclitus, All. 3.2–3 (Budé, 3). In the final clause, I am reading *ὑπονοίᾳ* ("deeper sense") instead of *ὑπὸ νόμῳ*. See the conjecture by Russell and Konstan, *Heraclitus: Homeric Problems*, 6n.5.

⁷⁵ Philo, Det. 81 (LCL 227:256–57).

practice allegory in a similar fashion to the philosophers.⁷⁶ Heraclitus here stands as a further representative of the stream of figurative interpretation that is powered by enigmatic discourse and which traces back as far as the Derveni commentator.⁷⁷ Yet, here once again, we find that the capable interpreter of these enigmatic truths is the exegete who can clarify Homer's ambiguous statements in order to discern his original intention, and in his creative exegesis, Heraclitus frequently appeals to the principle of propriety.

In Homer's account of Hephaestus ("Ηφαίστος"), Hephaestus is presented as lame ($\chiωλὸν$) and near death. The effect of this presentation, as Heraclitus recounts, is a critique against Homer for damaging Hephaestus's divine nature ($\tauὴν θείαν ἀκρωτηριάζων φύσιν$). Yet, Heraclitus argues that the poet's intention was not to speak of the divine Hephaestus in this passage. Indeed, were Homer to speak of a lame Hephaestus, it would be an "improper account of the gods" ($τοῦτο γὰρ ἀπρεπὲς ὄντως ιστορεῖν περὶ θεῶν$). Readers must realize that, according to the principle of propriety, Homer could not speak of the gods in such a way. He must refer to something else with the term "Ηφαίστος. And, in a move reminiscent of Plutarch's arguments for the necessity of disambiguation for proper interpretation, Heraclitus contends that the ambiguity arises from the term's inherent polysemy. He recalls that the essence of fire is twofold ($\deltaιπλῆ$); that is, there is an ethereal fire ($τὸ μὲν αἰθέριον$), suspended in the heavens, and a terrestrial fire ($πρόσγειος$), which is destructible. It is this earthly fire that is appropriately called "lame."⁷⁸ Heraclitus confirms that this was Homer's intention by appealing to another passage in the *Iliad*, where he avers that Homer spoke clearly, with no need of exegesis.

Indeed, Homer elsewhere calls fire Hephaestus in plain words, not figuratively at all: "They held the entrails, spitted, over 'Hephaestus'." In saying that the entrails are roasted

⁷⁶Heraclitus, All. 24.8 (Budé, 30); cf. All. 24.1–5 (Budé, 29–30).

⁷⁷Struck, Birth of the Symbol, 155, claims that "like the rhetorical critics, Heraclitus believes in Homer's total control over the text's meaning, a position sometimes absent, or at least nuanced, in allegorical readers." In my view, Struck here completely misses the grammatical foundations of any claim to authorial intention, which results in a severe diminishing of the role that such questions play in the very allegorical reading that he wants to foreground.

⁷⁸For this argument, see Heraclitus, All. 26.1–10 (Budé, 32–33).

by "Hephaestus," Homer has transferred the term.

Τὸν γοῦν Ἡφαιστον οὐκ ἀλληγορικῶς ἐν ἔτέροις ἀλλὰ διαρρήδην φησὸν Ὁμηρος εἶναι. Σπλάγχνα δ' ἄρ' ἀμπείραντες ὑπείρεχον Ἡφαιστοιο· μεταληπτικῶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἡφαιστον τὰ σπλάγχνα φησὸν ὀπτᾶσθαι.⁷⁹

Heraclitus recognizes that at times a writer may speak plainly (*διαρρήδην*), with no need of interpretation. Thus, a reader need only compare this clear speech with the ambiguous passage—the very strategy that Heraclitus models here—in order to clarify the latter.

Textimmanence and the Grammatical Archive

I hope by this point that the similarities between literal and figural reading among ancient exegetes has become clear. Inasmuch as they had been invested with the skills of the grammarians, all ancient readers sought to resolve textual ambiguities. This was indeed the aim of creative exegesis, namely, to clarify what was seemingly unclear. We have seen that literal and figurative readers often employed the same techniques to achieve what is in their estimation a suitable and proper understanding of an author's meaning. I want suggest that this general idea—that literal and figurative reading were both characterized by the principles of creative exegesis—may best be understood by the concept of *textimmanence*.⁸⁰

In the last subsection, I suggested that Heraclitus grounded his interpretation of the term "Hephaestus" by comparing an ambiguous phrase with a clear passage elsewhere in the *Iliad*. For Heraclitus, the propriety of his reading was confirmed by an appeal to a grammatical technique that is most often described under the maxim that Porphyry preserves for us:

"Ομηρον ἐξ Ὁμέρου σαφηνίζειν."⁸¹ Of course, this principle as exemplified by Porphyry and

⁷⁹Heraclitus, *All.* 26.11 (Budé, 33)

⁸⁰I have borrowed the helpful terminology of *textimmanence* from René Nünlist, "Aristarchus and Allegorical Interpretation," in *Ancient Scholarship and Grammar: Archetypes, Concepts, and Contexts*, eds. Stephanos Matthaios, Franco Montanari, and Antonios Rengakos (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 8–9. Nünlist does not, however, employ this concept to the ends that I intend here.

⁸¹See Porphyry, *Quaest. Homer.* 2.297.16–17 (Schrader). The most detailed discussion of this maxim to date is Christoph Schäublin, "Homerum ex Homero," *MH* 34 (1977): 221–27. For other reflections on this principle, see Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 225–27; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 276–85; and Porter, "Hermeneutic Lines and Circles," 67–85, who concludes that there is no overwhelming evidence to suggest that the maxim did

Aristarchus, who is at times credited as its originator, concerns resolving obscurity on the surface of the text. But, if my argument is correct, and the entire process of the grammarian's literary analysis can be described as a creative exegesis that clarifies textual obscurity, then Heraclitus' aim to discern the intention (*διάνοια*) of the text in figural fashion is not, in fact, dissimilar from Aristarchus' resolution of obscurity on the surface of the text. In fact, this is the very point made by James Porter, who has claimed that the concept behind the *Homerum ex Homero* principle is centered on "the relationship of ipsissima verba to the recovery of meaning."⁸² Thus, the objective of "*Ομηρον ἐξ Ομίρου σαφηνίζειν*" can be understood as entirely similar to the claims of Cicero and Aristotle that we looked at earlier, but which I reiterate here:⁸³

One gets much closer to a writer's intent (*ad scriptoris voluntatem*) if one interprets it from the writer's own words (*ex ipsius litteris*) than one who does not learn the writer's intention (*sententiam scriptoris*) from his own writing (*ex ipsius scripto*) (Cicero, Inv. 2.128)

One must look (*σκοπεῖν*) not to the letter (*λόγον*) of the law, but to the intention (*διάνοιαν*) of the lawgiver (Aristotle, Rh. 1374b11)

The intention cannot be divorced from the letters. If we miss this subtle but significant point about ancient exegesis, we might come to conclusions that are not fit to the evidence at hand. Consider two examples. On the one hand, a scholar like Aristarchus, who clearly prefers to resolve obscurity on the surface of the text, is erroneously considered an opponent of figural reading. On the other hand, rarely does one ever question whether figural readers like Cornutus or Heraclitus have any limitations on their readings. In my view, however, both of these inclinations miss the mark. On the contrary, I suggest that the use of the *Homerum ex homero* principle in both modes of reading—literal and figural—can be understood as a search for a

not originate with Aristarchus. Whether the maxim was original to Aristarchus or not, Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 436, is certainly right to say that "this easy motto is a very good description of Aristarchus' methodology."

⁸²Porter, "Hermeneutic Lines and Circles," 73–74.

⁸³On these parallels with the *Homerum ex Homero* principle, see Schäublin, "Homerum ex Homero," 222–26. Schäublin (222) also calls attention to Galen's statement in *De com. sec. Hipp.* 1.5 (CMG 5.9.2:182.23ff): *ἐχρῆν γὰρ ἐξ Ἰπποκράτους αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξήγησιν ποιεῖσθαι τῆς λέξεως, ὥστα μὴ μόνον ὅτι πιθανῶς εἴρηται λέγειν ἔχωμεν, ἀλλ’ ὅτι καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐκείνου γνώμην*. It is helpful to note the criterion of plausibility (*πιθανῶς*) within Galen's statement as well.

resolution to the obscurity of a passage that is textimmanent. That is, figural and surface readers alike seek the intention that arises from the very words of the page—the ipsissima verba. Such a perspective will render a more balanced view of these two modes of reading, particularly highlighting the similar grammatical archive that they share. Permit me to illustrate my understanding of a textimmanent resolution by considering in turn the two mistaken inclinations I mentioned above.

Aristarchus and Figural Reading?

First, the general consensus of scholarship has been that Aristarchus was thoroughly opposed to figurative reading. Much of this claim is based on the testimony of a single scholium, which reads as follows:

Ἄρισταρχος ἀξιοῖ “τὰ φραζόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ μυθικώτερον ἐκδέχεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ποιητικὴν ἔξουσίαν, μηδὲν ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ ποιητοῦ περιεργαζομένους” (schol. D Il. 5.385)

Aristarchus demands "that <readers> accept the things said by the poet in a more mythical way in accordance with his poetic licence, without busying themselves about anything outside of the things said by the poet."

The scholium concerns the myth of Otus and Ephialtes in *Iliad* 5, and many have concluded from this apparent verbatim quote of Aristarchus that he never employed figurative readings in order to uncover a second, more fitting sense.⁸⁴ The conclusion of most scholars has been that "Aristarchus's advice has no sense at all unless it is directed against allegorizing interpretations of the passage."⁸⁵ And as James Porter suggests, this view would seem to be supported by a commentary on this same passage from Eustathius of Thessalonica in the twelfth century C.E.⁸⁶

⁸⁴Pépin, *Mythe et Allégorie*, 169–70; Porter, "Hermeneutic Lines and Circles," 70–71; Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 66; Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 21–22.

⁸⁵Porter, "Hermeneutic Lines and Circles," 70.

⁸⁶Porter, "Hermeneutic Lines and Circles," 71. The best edition of Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad* is Marchinus van der Valk, ed., *Eustathii Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem Pertinentes*, 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1971–87).

ἡ δὲ ἀλληγορία, εἰ καὶ ὁ Ἀρίσταρχος ἡξίου, ὡς προεγράφη, μηδέν τι τῶν παρὰ τῇ ποιήσει μυθικῶν περιεργάζεσθαι ἀλληγορικῶς ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων

The allegorical interpretation [of this passage is], even if Aristarchus demanded, as has been written above, that one should not busy oneself with any of the poem's mythical stories in an allegorical way outside of the things that are said . . . (Eustathius, 561.28)⁸⁷

The key point to draw from Eustathius' comments on Iliad 5.385 is his use of the adverb *ἀλληγορικῶς*.⁸⁸ Yet, significantly, this term is not found in the Aristarchean passage in the D-scholia. In Eustathius' account, Aristarchus is portrayed as claiming that the poem's mythical elements (*τι τῶν παρὰ τῇ ποιήσει μυθικῶν*) should not be treated *ἀλληγορικῶς*, which he equates to things "outside of the things said." This reading of Aristarchus results in a particularly restrictive view of the maxim "*Ομηρον ἐξ Ομήρου σαφηνίζειν*". If Aristarchus was anti-allegorical in the sense that Eustathius maintains, then the maxim *Homerum ex Homero* must mean that Homer is clarified solely on the surface of the text.⁸⁹ But is this the intention of either Aristarchus' claim in the D-scholium or the interpretive maxim associated with his scholarship?

Eustathius explicitly draws attention to the contrast between *μυθικῶς* and *ἀλληγορικῶς*, which is altogether not surprising. For Eustathius, these terms are diametrically opposed. They mean "non-allegorically" and "allegorically," respectively.⁹⁰ But this cannot be the case for Aristarchus. As Rene Nünlist has emphasized, the contrast between these two terms certainly postdates Aristarchus. For Aristarchus, *μυθικῶς* must mean something along the lines of "in a fictional way," and according to the Homeric scholia, the ability to treat events *μυθικῶς* may be exercised according to the poet's license.⁹¹ Nünlist gives a more suitable interpretation

⁸⁷Eust. 561.28 (Valk 2:101.13ff)

⁸⁸This is the starting point of the insightful essay of Nünlist, "Aristarchus and Allegorical Interpretation," esp. 107. Nünlist is able to provide numerous pieces of evidence that I cannot here consider to offer a compelling argument, which I follow here.

⁸⁹Cf. Philo, Conf. 14 (LCL 261:16–19), who suggests that he has colleagues who are capable of refuting opponents "from the manifest sense of Scripture" (*ἐκ τῆς φανερᾶς γραφῆς*).

⁹⁰See Nünlist, "Aristarchus and Allegorical Interpretation," 109–10. Cf. Eust. 157.24–30 (Valk 1:242.21–27), where *μυθικῶς* means "non-allegorically"; schol. D Il. 15.18, where *μυθικῶς* seems to mean "allegorically."

⁹¹Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 174–84. It is also questionable whether *ἀλληγορία* (and its cognates) was

of Aristarchus' claim from the D-scholium: "readers should not be bothered by mythical stories that might test their sense of credibility, but accept them as fiction and thus as belonging to the arsenal that is typical of poets (i.e. poetic license). Moreover, they should adhere to an interpretation that is *textimmanent*."⁹² In other words, when a poet speaks *μυθικῶς*, the scholar's task is to discern the "fictional" intention from the words themselves, for it is this intention that rises from the very words employed.

In terms of the maxim "*Ομηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν*, I am not suggesting that Aristarchus understood this to include allegorical interpretations of texts. I am merely claiming that, even if Aristarchus was not an active practitioner of figural reading, to characterize him as an outspoken opponent of nonliteral textual practices stretches the evidence too thinly. Moreover, if this is indeed the case, and the maxim *Homerum ex Homero* is best summarized as a principle that demands an interpretation to be *textimmanent*—drawn from the words themselves—, then it certainly does not rule out *a priori* the possibility that one could apply the maxim towards figural ends, as I have suggested Heraclitus does. Nevertheless, a second point should be made regarding *textimmanence* and the boundaries of nonliteral readings. Rather than look once again at Heraclitus, I want to use Cornutus, a figure who multiplies etymological examples, to make this second point.

Limitations to Cornutus' Allegory?

We have already seen that Cornutus offered etymological readings in his *Compendium of Greek Theology* based on the principle of plausibility. That is, he sought a clear coherence between the textual symbol and the reality to which it pointed. Thus, Heracles' service to Omphale was "quite plausible" (*πιθανωτέρων*), since the ancients implied by this account that even the strongest men have the need to submit to reason and, if necessary, the feminine voice

in use or what it meant in Aristarchus' time. Cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 226–27, who notes Eustathius' "interpolation" of *ἀλληγορικῶς*.

⁹²Nünlist, "Aristarchus and Allegorical Interpretation," 109, emphasis original.

(οὐφῆς).⁹³ Earlier in the chapter, however, I omitted a striking claim that Cornutus makes in the course of his reading of this account. He claims, "It is also possible to refer the twelve labors to [Heracles], as Cleanthes did. But it is not necessary for us always to give priority to that inventor of ingenious arguments."⁹⁴ Cornutus' aim in reading is ostensibly the same as Cleanthes' goal, which is the discovery of philosophical truth subsumed in the text. But in his reading of the Heraclean myth, Cornutus differs quite noticeably from Cleanthes. As J. Tate has observed, Cornutus believes that "etymology should be more restricted in its application than Cleanthes imagined; the myths are so obscure and ambiguous that we ought to be content with the most reasonable interpretation instead of multiplying ingenuities."⁹⁵ We have already seen that ancient readers were seeking the most reasonable interpretation of an author's intention; here, however, Cornutus claims that there is no reason to move beyond the suitable resolution of the obscurity. In other words, the interpretation should be textimmanent; there is no need for "ingenious arguments."⁹⁶

Indeed, the term *ὑπόνοια*, which was Plato's preferred term for what would come to be called allegory, actually implied that the underlying meaning was stored up in the text itself.⁹⁷ N. J. Richardson has shown that the Homeric scholars among the sophists perhaps saw no sharp distinction between philological analysis of a text and the search for interpretations that reveal the text's *ὑπόνοια*,⁹⁸ and the Homeric scholia occasionally provide examples of readers who

⁹³Cornutus, ND 31 (Lang, 64.8–14)

⁹⁴Cornutus, ND 31 (Lang, 64.15–17): τοὺς δὲ δώδεκα ἄθλους ἐνδέχεται μὲν ἀναγαγεῖν οὐκ ἀλλοτρίως ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ὡς καὶ Κλεάνθης ἐποίησεν· οὐ δὲν δὲ δοκεῖ πανταχοῦ εὑρεσιλογον πρεσβεύειν

⁹⁵J. Tate, "Cornutus and the Poets," CQ 23 (1929), 43, emphasis mine.

⁹⁶It is important to note here the argument of Boys-Stones, "The Stoics' Two Types of Allegory," esp., 205–16, who emphasizes that, in addition to the traditional Stoic allegory that survives into this period, with Cornutus (among others) we see the rise of a second type of Stoic allegory. This allegory appears much closer to the later allegory to be found among Neoplatonists and Christians. Boys-Stones emphasizes that this second type of allegory is necessary when an author has chosen to conceal the deepest truths, which only those skilled to interpret may recover. Seen in this light, this second type of Stoic allegory is clearly reminiscent of the symbolic tradition of nonliteral reading that Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, traces to the Derveni Papyrus.

⁹⁷Cf. Nünlist, "Aristarchus and Allegorical Interpretation," 109n.12.

⁹⁸N. J. Richardson, "Homeric Professors in the Age of the Sophists," PCPhS 21 (1975), 67.

still sought to uncover the *ὑπόνοια* of a given passage.⁹⁹ These "undermeanings" are associated with symbols and enigmas throughout the figural tradition that Peter Struck surveys, and I suggest that the concept of "undermeaning"—an intention buried within the words, but carried by the word nonetheless—is a reflection of the desire to provide a textimmanent interpretation.

Thus, we have seen that the concept of a textimmanent intention emphasizes the grammatical archive shared by the literal and figural readers we have looked at in this chapter. It thus provides us with the final phrase for our definition of creative exegesis, which now reads as follows:

Creative exegesis is the task of clarifying textual obscurity by employing the literary-critical tools of the grammarians to discover the textimmanent intention of an author.

Creative Exegesis as Archival Thinking

In the last two chapters, I have attempted to develop a definition for the concept of "creative exegesis" as it is seen in the work of ancient exegetes. I have argued that creative exegesis is a holistic enterprise with a grammatical archive at its foundation—a repository of textual practices that readers were taught to utilize by the ancient grammarian.¹⁰⁰ Permit me to draw out two final observations as it concerns the grammatical foundations of creative exegesis. First, the implications of the definition we have outlined here for describing early Christian

⁹⁹Cf. schol. A Il. 17.153a; schol. bT Il. 1.275a

¹⁰⁰Here, I borrow the term from the quote of Martin Irvine with which I began the chapter. See Irvine, *Making of Textual Culture*, 16. It is important to note that Irvine's employment of the term is for the express purposes of narrating the history of *grammatica* itself. I have augmented this concept to suggest that this archive is a beneficial model for analyzing the ways that readers like Clement actually do things with texts—the way that they employ *grammatica* for hermeneutical ends. The classic use of "archive" as an epistemological category can be seen in the work of Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), esp. 126–31. I agree with the critiques of Foucault's concept given by Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh, *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 30, who question whether the "archive" is best seen as an *a priori* cause with "only limited, localized ability." Surely, they rightly suggest, "societies are more fractured and embattled than Foucault allows." Nevertheless, as König and Whitmarsh claim, the archive still remains a helpful model for understanding the ordering of knowledge one creates from a given text, if it is seen as "a habit of thought, an intellectual genre, an inter-related set of culturally operative, but also embattled, propositions as to the necessary properties and social roles of language."

exegesis are significant. When Christians approach the text of Scripture, they will read it in keeping with the grammatical archive that Aristarchus, Philo, Cornutus, and Heraclitus used, prioritizing the techniques and sensibilities learned at the hands of the *γραμματικός*. Yet, the use of this archive was never intended to preclude figural exegesis. But the grammarian's commitment to poetic license and the belief that an author's intention can be understood from the text *per se*—that is, the principle of textimmanence—results in a restriction of the figural sense. One can read Scripture figurally; its meanings cannot, however, be compounded exponentially. Thus, Christian reflection on the theme, structure, and goal of Scripture—its *ὑπόθεσις*, *οἰκονομία*, and *τέλος*—will not only influence interpretations of the outward sense of Scripture. Sustained reflection on these topics will also restrict their speculation on the figurative meaning of Scripture. We will see this phenomenon at work in Clement's own figural interpretation of the Christian Scriptures in the next two chapters.

Before moving on, however, there is a second important observation to make, which turns on the fact that patristic exegesis is far from monolithic. Any two exegetes will reflect on Scripture in substantially different ways. Given the fact that I have emphasized similarity in textual practices in this chapter, how might we account for interpretive differences? A full reflection on this process must await the second half of this study. As I suggested in the previous chapter, however, the adjective "creative" will allow us to modify our understanding of early Christian exegesis, in order to analyze the unique ways that different readers handle the Scriptures.

Much of our labor, then, in describing patristic exegesis must be concerned with identifying the reading practices and technical terminology—the components of the grammatical archive—employed by Christian interpreters individually. The creative exegesis of Scripture offered by Christian exegetes will differ in many ways, but as I have argued in the previous two chapters, there will be a foundation upon which they all depend. In order to describe a Christian figure's exegetical practice and the theology that results from his reading, one must painstakingly account for the use of this grammatical archive. What terms powered Christian figural reading? Where there ever statements in Scripture that Christians understood to speak clearly (*σαφές* or *διαρροήδην?*) and thus require no exegetical resolution? Did

Christians ever transpose terms from within their own literary lexicon—the language of the Bible—to the broader metalanguage of exegesis inherent to the grammatical archive, and as a result, furnish a new vocabulary, in distinction from pagan readers, that subsequently drive their figural readings of Scripture? The better one understands how this grammatical archive, with its key terms and essential reading practices, were adapted by Christian exegetes in antiquity, the better he will understand early Christian exegesis and theology as a whole.¹⁰¹ For the rest of this project, then, we will turn our attention to a single Christian reader—Clement of Alexandria. Before we can understand the theology Clement constructs through his reading of Scripture, we must first understand how he adapts this grammatical archive of literary exegesis in the construction of a distinct account of Scripture and its place in the Christian life. To this question, we may now turn.

¹⁰¹This point was made cogently by Ayres, *Nicæa and its Legacy*, 39, regarding fourth century Trinitarian theology. Of course, one result of the current project will be to test how well this thesis may be used to characterize Christian exegesis two centuries prior to the subject matter of Ayres' book.

4

"Hidden Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge": On the Reading of Scripture in *Stromata* 5

I remain amazed constantly by that divine statement: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold through the door, but climbs in another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens." Then the Lord gives an explanation and says, "I am the door of the sheep." One must therefore, to be saved, have learned the truth through Christ, even if one seeks wisdom in Greek philosophy. For now it has been shown clearly "what in past generations was not made known to the sons of men, but is now revealed."¹

A little more than halfway through book five of the *Stromateis*, this passage marks a transition in Clement's composition, as he turns to reflect once again on a key theme in his project, the "theft" of Christian ideas by Greek writers.² And while many note the transition that occurs at this juncture in Clement's thought, it is rarely noted that this passage serves as a subtle summary of Clement's argument in the first half of book five. In this short excerpt, Clement affirms that (a) salvation is dependent on learning truth, (b) truth is mediated through Christ, and (c) whatever Clement believes that has been hidden in generations past, it has now been revealed through the Christ. In these brief claims, Clement has rehearsed the very reasons for his focus on the symbolic mode of literature in this book.

In a way reminiscent of Neuschäfer's description of Origenian scholarship, Clement's focus on the potential of symbolic literature for figural interpretation has been the overwhelming fascination of scholars over the years.³ Claude Mondésert, the scholar who first

¹Str. 5.86.4–87.1 (GCS 15:383)

²On this passage as a transition in Clement's thoughts for book five, see SC 279:273. On the theme of pagan larceny of wisdom in Clement (and others), see, especially, G. R. Boys-Stones, *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy: A Study of its Development from the Stoics to Origen*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). Cf. Daniel. Ridings, *The Attic Moses: The Dependency Theme in Some Early Christian Writers*, (Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1995).

³Claude Mondésert, "Le symbolisme chez Clément d'Alexandrie," RSR 26 (1936): 158-80; Willem den

emphasized the role of the Bible in Clement's thought, considered the division of Scripture into five diverse senses best accounted for Clement's interpretation in book five.⁴ In his book *The Letter and the Spirit*, Robert Grant calls book five of the *Stromateis* Clement's "rational defense for the allegorical method."⁵ More recently, Annewies van den Hoek has given extended reflection on Clement's figural reading of the tabernacle and vestments in Str. 5.32–40, in order to draw attention to the philonic material in Clement's reading.⁶ She concluded that Clement's exegesis of the tabernacle "centered on two complementary themes that form two sides of the same coin: the incarnation of Christ and the rise of the Gnostic to the higher regions."⁷

The purpose of the next three chapters will be a close reading of Clement's creative exegesis in book five of the *Stromateis*, and I will draw attention specifically to the textual practices that he employs from the repository of his grammatical archive. In the present chapter, I will examine four significant passages from book five in which Clement interacts with specific biblical texts to outline his distinct account of Scripture's role in Christian theological reflection: Romans 1, Isaiah 45:3, and Colossians 1–2. I will argue that not only does Clement understand Christian exegesis and inquiry as a fundamentally literary project, but the inclinations he develops from the use of the tools of the grammatical archive actually restricts the figural potential he sees in the Scriptures. In coming to this conclusion, I will suggest that Hoek's conclusions on the two themes of Clement's figural interpretation are exactly right. Clement restricts the figural reference of Christian Scripture to the promised

Boer, *De allegorese in het werk van Clemens Alexandrinus*, (Leiden: Brill, 1940), 65–69; Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 131–52; P.Th. Camelot, *Foi et gnose: Introduction à l'étude de la connaissance mystique chez Clément d'Alexandrie*, (Paris: J. Vrin, 1945); Eric Osborn, *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 168–72; Jean Daniélou, "Typology et allégorie chez Clément d'Alexandrie," *SP* 4 (1961): 50–57; Hans Jürgen Horn, "Zur Motivation der Allegorischen Schriftexegese bei Clemens Alexandrinus," *Hermes* 97 (1969): 489–96; Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 183–234; Manlio Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church: An Historical Introduction to Patristic Exegesis*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 36. Cf. Struck, *Birth of the Symbol*, 203.

⁴Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 153–83.

⁵Robert M. Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit*, *Letter and Spirit* (London: S.P.C.K., 1957), 86.

⁶Annewies van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis: An Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model*, (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 116–47.

⁷Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo*, 146.

incarnation of Christ and the higher mysteries of the divine essence that only the mature Christian can discover. Then, in the next two chapters, I will analyze in more detail the different reading techniques on which Clement depends to provide this reading of Scripture in book five.

Knowledge of the Father and the Son (Romans 1)

Clement opens book five with a significant passage on the purpose of Christian inquiry and theological reflection.

After this summary about the *gnostikôs*, let us resume our discussion and return to the careful study of faith. There are some who make the following distinction: whereas our faith concerns the Son, knowledge concerns the Father. But it has escaped their notice that while we must truly believe (*πιστεῦσαι ἀληθῶς*) the Son that he is the Son (*ὅτι τε νιὸς*) (and that he came and how and why and about his passion), it is also necessary to know (*γνῶναι*) who the Son of God is (*τίς ἐστὶν ὁ νιὸς τοῦ θεοῦ*). Now, knowledge is not without faith, nor is faith without knowledge, as indeed neither is the Father without the Son. For insofar as he is "Father," he is "Father of the Son," and the Son is the true teacher about the Father. Moreover, in order to believe in the Son, we must know the Father, with respect to whom is the Son (cf. Jn. 1:1).⁸ And conversely, in order to know the Father, we must believe in the Son, because it is the Son of God who teaches. For one proceeds from faith to knowledge, and the Father is known through the Son. The knowledge of the Son and Father, which conforms to the truly gnostic rule, is the apprehension and discernment of the truth by the Truth. . . . For, in short, the agreement and harmony of the faith of both [the Lord who speaks and the hearer who comprehends what is spoken] contribute to one end—salvation. We have in the apostle an unerring witness: "For I desire to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, in order that ye may be strengthened; that is, that I may be comforted in you, by the mutual faith of you and me" (Rom. 1:11–12). And below this he adds, "The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith" (Rom. 1:17). It is manifest, then, that the apostle proclaims a dual faith, or rather a single faith that admits of growth and perfection; for the common faith lies beneath as a "foundation" (cf. 1 Cor. 3:10–15). Therefore, to those who desire to be healed, moved by faith, the Savior said, "Your faith has saved you" (cf. Matt. 9:22). But the exceptional faith (*ἡ ἐξαιρετός*) completes the believer, constructed upon the foundation (*θεμέλιος*), and together with

⁸In my view, Clement's phrase *πρὸς ὅν καὶ ὁ νιός* is a borrowing from the prologue to the Gospel of John. I discuss this more below, but suffice it to say that this fits with the logic of the passage quoted here at length. Moreover, it coheres with the arguments that Clement will depend on elsewhere that highlight John's prologue to explain the relationship between the Son and the Father. See, for example, Prot. 1.7.3 (GCS 12:7).

it, as a result of instruction, reaches its completion in the performance of the commandments of the Word.⁹

In the most recent examination of Clement's scriptural exegesis as a whole in book five, Judith Kovacs suggests that Clement is thoroughly enmeshed in a critique of a Valentinian misreading of the scriptural terms *πίστις* and *γνῶσις*, which we encounter first in this passage from the outset of book five. According to Kovacs, Clement here argues against the Valentinian "two ways of salvation," wherein the "ecclesiastical Christians" (represented by Clement) are saved by faith (*πίστις*) and the "pneumatics" (the Valentinians) are saved by knowledge (*γνῶσις*).¹⁰ Kovacs understands this background, and the Valentinian use of the *πίστις-γνῶσις* relationship inherent to it, to be the unifying feature of Clement's treatise on symbolic literature in book five. She therefore suggests that Clement's exegesis in book five is concerned "with the same Valentinian ideas about Father and Son, *πίστις* and *γνῶσις*, that he quotes at the beginning of book five."¹¹

While Kovacs is surely right that Clement has Valentinians in mind at many junctures throughout his project,¹² I am not persuaded that this is the predominant reason that he reflects extensively on the *πίστις-γνῶσις* relationship.¹³ In this passage, Clement signals a return to the

⁹Str. 5.1.1–2.6 (GCS 15:326–27)

¹⁰Judith L. Kovacs, "Concealment and Gnostic Exegesis: Clement of Alexandria's Interpretation of the Tabernacle," *SP* 31 (1997), esp. 414–18.

¹¹Kovacs, "Concealment and Gnostic Exegesis," 415.

¹²This is, in fact, the thesis of Lewis Ayres, *As It Is Written: Ancient Literary Criticism, Hellenization, and the Rise of "Scripture" 100–250 CE*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming). For Ayres, the distinct application of reading techniques from the grammatical archive in the generation of second century exegetes—Irenaeus, Clement, and Tertullian—particularly in response to the perceived faulty exegesis of Valentinians is a key juncture in the development of early Christian scriptural interpretation. I am convinced by Ayres' arguments, and I am grateful to him for discussions in person about this important forthcoming book. It is important to note, then, that my arguments about Clement's exegesis throughout this study presuppose the broader narrative as Ayres conceives of it.

¹³Cf. Matyáš Havrda, "Some Observations on Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, Book Five," *VC* 64 (2010), 3; Le Boulluec, *SC* 279:10. I agree with both Havrda and Le Boulluec that the opponents Clement envisions in the initial lines of book five are not Valentinians. As will become clear below, this position is strengthened by the fact that Clement does identify Valentinian opponents for a specific yet different reason within the same chapter (Str. 5.1). If this is the case, there is no clear reason that Clement would not identify his opponents as Valentinian.

proposed order of discussion he outlined in the early stages of book four (Str. 4.1.2),¹⁴ where he suggested that, after the treatise on martyrdom (the subject matter of book four), he would discuss faith and inquiry (*περὶ τε πίστεως καὶ περὶ τοῦ ζητεῖν*) followed by a reflection on the symbolic style (*τὸ συμβολικὸν εἶδος*). As he begins his discussion on faith and inquiry, Clement provides his readers with his own understanding of Scripture's portrayal of the complementary progression between faith and knowledge and its link to the similar relationship between the Father and the Son. More particularly, Clement describes his understanding of *πίστις* and *γνῶσις* through a reading of the Johannine prologue, as it presents the analogous relationship of the Father and the Son.

Now, knowledge is not without faith, nor is faith without knowledge, as indeed neither is the Father without the Son. For insofar as he is "Father," he is "Father of the Son," and the Son is the true teacher about the Father. Moreover, in order to believe in the Son, we must know the Father, with respect to whom is the Son (*πρὸς ὅν καὶ ὁ νιός*). And conversely, in order to know the Father, we must believe in the Son, because it is the Son of God who teaches. For one proceeds from faith to knowledge, and the Father is known through the Son.

For Clement, faith and knowledge are inseparable in a way similar to the manner that one progresses from knowledge of the Son to a knowledge of the Father.¹⁵ Clement employs a reading technique that will gain steam in coming generations, and he emphasizes the

¹⁴See Str. 4.1.2 (GCS 15:248). Le Boulluec (SC 279:9) suggests, rightly I think, that the summary about the *gnostikōs* interrupted the discussion at Str. 4.105.1, with the citation of Clement of Rome.

¹⁵For the various aspects of faith in Clement's theology, the most helpful work is Salvatore R. C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 118–42. Cf. Eric Osborn, "Arguments for Faith in Clement of Alexandria," *VC* (1994): 1-24; Dragos A. Giulea, "Apprehending 'Demonstrations' from the First Principle: Clement of Alexandria's Phenomenology of Faith," *JR* 89 (2009): 187-213; and Matyáš Havrda, "Grace and Free Will According to Clement of Alexandria," *JECS* 19 (2011): 21-48. Lilla rightly draws attention to the three aspects of faith in Clement's work: (1) "the attitude peculiar to the human mind when it believes in the first principles of demonstration"; (2) "the firm conviction which the human mind possesses after reaching the knowledge of something by means of a scientific demonstration"; and (3) "the tendency of believers to accept the truths contained in the teachings of Scripture without attempting to reach a deeper comprehension of them" (119). The passage I am considering here most closely aligns with Lilla's third option, though I am less convinced that those who exercise faith in the truths of Scripture do not "attempt" to penetrate more deeply. In my view, Clement—regardless of whether such an attempt is successful—does expect every believer to make an attempt at deeper understanding. This is the purpose of his scriptural imagery at the outset of book five.

correlative nature of the scriptural titles "Father" and "Son."¹⁶ Inasmuch as Scripture presents God as "Father," it does so as "the Father of the Son."¹⁷ Moreover, the Son is the only true teacher respecting the Father, for he is reciprocally the Son of the Father. In a subtle exegesis of John 1:1, Clement maintains that since the Son is with the Father (*πρὸς ὅν καὶ ὁ νιός*), it follows that apart from the Son the Father cannot be known (cf. Jn. 1:18).¹⁸ Moreover, for Clement, this conception of progression to the knowledge of the Father through the Son is paralleled by his conception of the relationship between faith and knowledge. Thus, Clement's conception of the *πίστις-γνῶσις* relationship is not only governed by his reading of Scripture's letter, but also by his understanding of Scripture's ultimate aim—the knowledge (*γνῶσις*) of God. This will serve as the background for all of his claims about the need for scriptural symbolism later in book five.

In order to illustrate his reading of Scripture's portrayal of *πίστις* and *γνῶσις*, Clement applies in the current passage an Aristotelian epistemological distinction between assuming that something is the case (*ὅτι ἔστι*) and understanding what something is (*τι ἔστι*).¹⁹ For Clement, one must not only "believe that the Son is" (*πιστεῦσαι ὅτι τε νιὸς*), which includes the events of his Incarnation, life, and Passion, but one must also "know who the Son of God is" (*γνῶναι τίς ἔστιν ὁ νιός τοῦ θεοῦ*).²⁰ Just as there is a complementary progression between knowledge of the Son and of the Father, so also is there a similar progression that moves one from faith to

¹⁶Origen will emphasize this logic in arguments for the eternal generation of the Son in the third century C.E. On Origen's use of Father-Son terminology, see Rowan D. Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition*, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2002), 131–48; and Michel René Barnes, *The Power of God: Δύναμις in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology*, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 111–24. For the role Origen's exegesis played in the Trinitarian theology of the fourth century C.E., see Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 20–30.

¹⁷A similar logic can be seen in Clement's reading of "the eternal life which was with the Father" in 1 John 1:2; see *Adumbr. 1 Jn. 1:2* (GCS 17:210): *Patris appellatione significat, quoniam et filius semper erat sine initio.*

¹⁸Cf. Str. 4.156.1 (GCS 15:317)

¹⁹See Aristotle, *APo. 71a11–13*: "It is necessary to know already of things in two ways: (a) of some, one must believe already that they are, and (b) of others, one must grasp what the thing said is" (*διχῶς δὲ ἀναγκαῖον προγνῶσκειν· τὰ μὲν γάρ, ὅτι ἔστι, προϋπολαμβάνειν ἀναγκαῖον, τὰ δέ, τι τὸ λεγόμενόν ἔστι*). Cf. Havrda, "Some Observations," 2–3.

²⁰Str. 5.1.2 (GCS 15:326)

knowledge, from not only believing that the Son is but understanding who the Son of the Father is. Clement concludes that "knowledge of the Son and the Father" (*γνῶσις δὲ νιοῦ καὶ πατρὸς*) is in fact the attainment of the truth that is the goal of all Christian inquiry.

Clement bolsters his claim to this reading of Scripture by emphasizing that this understanding of the progressive relationship of faith to knowledge is not merely a Johannine construct. Clement argues that the most explicit formulation of this teaching is distinctly Pauline. For Clement, this pedagogical process is the agreement and symphony between both sides of faith, most accurately portrayed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:17: "the righteousness of God is revealed *ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν*."²¹ Moreover, Clement understands this harmony asserted by Paul in Romans 1:17 as a clarification of the "spiritual gift" (*χάρισμα πνευματικὸν*) he described in 1:11. For Clement, the double occurrence of *πίστις* in Romans 1:17 signals a movement, a progression to the deliverance of this spiritual gift. And though this might appear on the surface to be a twofold faith (*διπλὴν πίστιν*), especially in light of his use of Romans 1:17, Clement prefers to describe it as a "single faith that admits of growth and perfection."²² Clement therefore understands the Pauline teaching in Romans 1 to suggest that there is a common faith (*κοινὴ πίστις*) that serves as a foundation (*θεμέλιος*) upon which *γνῶσις*—here described as "the exceptional faith" (*ἥξαιρετος*)—is built (cf. 1 Cor. 3:10).²³

Thus, Clement's arguments in the opening sections of book five not only reveal the literary nature of the Christian pursuit of knowledge on the foundation of faith. They also disclose that the predominant concerns of Clement's interpretive project are entirely theological—how one may progress from the common faith to the knowledge of the divine nature.²⁴

²¹Str. 5.2.2–3 (GCS 15:326–27)

²²Str. 5.2.4 (GCS 15:327)

²³For a similar statement elsewhere, see Str. 2.126.3 (GCS 15:181).

²⁴In making this statement, I do not deny that Clement touches on other subjects throughout the course of Str. 5. I am simply suggesting that these other discourses are subsidiary to his theological concerns. Cf. Alain Le Boulluec (SC 278:11), who claims that the various discussions in the latter half of book five all depend on "l'enseignement fondamental . . . que Dieu est créateur, juge et sauveur." Cf. Eric Osborn, "Clement and the Bible," in *Origeniana Sexta: Origène et la Bible = Origen and the Bible; actes du Colloquium Origenianum Sextum, Chantilly, 30 août – 3 septembre 1993*, eds. G. Dorival and A. Le Boulluec (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 129.

Moreover, Clement proposes this investigation explicitly as a search of the Scriptures.²⁵ The discovery of truth, which is the knowledge of the Son and the Father, comes in the Scriptures under the auspices of Providence, and since the Lord himself commands such an inquiry—"Seek (*ζητεῖτε*) and you will find" (Matt. 7:7)—Clement will spend the duration of the second (5.20.3–57.1) and third (5.57.2–89.1) sections of book five concerned to articulate what proper theological inquiry of Scripture looks like.²⁶

It is important to note, then, that this specific conception of Scripture's teaching becomes the background for Clement's reflection on the ambiguous and obscure qualities of symbolic literature. As Clement claims, the agreement and harmony (*ἡ συνωδία καὶ ἡ συμφωνία*) displayed in Scripture's portrayal of faith has one goal (*εἰς ἐν πέρας*): salvation.²⁷ And for Clement, salvation is tantamount to the pedagogical ascent from faith to the knowledge of God.²⁸ Moreover, since the proper aim of this investigation is the knowledge of the Son and the Father, it comes as no surprise when Clement articulates the necessity of obscure and ambiguous language. As we saw in the previous chapter, symbolic language is actually to be expected in the transmission of these highest truths.

²⁵Lilla, Clement of Alexandria, 137, confirms this point: "The *ζήτησις* of which Clement speaks is therefore nothing but the attempt to disclose the hidden and higher meaning of Scripture." Cf. Q.D.S. 5.2–4 (GCS 17:163); Str. 7.95.9 (GCS 17:68), which we will discuss further below.

²⁶Cf. Str. 5.6.2; 5.11.1 (GCS 15:329; 332–33). I follow here the structure advocated by Le Boulluec, SC 278:10–11. The citation of Matt. 7:7 is not surprising, as Le Boulluec, SC 279:69, rightly recognizes the "seek and find" leitmotif in Clement's oeuvre. Cf. Str. 1.51.4 (GCS 15:33). On the maxim itself, see Anniewies van den Hoek, "'You will find if you seek.' Did Clement of Alexandria find this at Delphi (Str. IV 5, 1)?," SP 31 (1997): 546–53. Hoek shows that Clement's intention in citing the Delphic oracle in Str. 4.5.1 was to reinforce his reading of Scripture with a reference to the Greek world. It seems to me that this concern is less pertinent to Clement's argument in books one and five, and the Delphic background seems to have no direct influence on the citations of Matthew in these books.

²⁷Str. 5.2.2 (GCS 15:327)

²⁸Thus, Clement describes the contemplation of the Father as "pure truth" (*ἀγνῆς ἀληθείας*) and suggests that those who have not received understanding from the Savior must remain outside the divine choir (*ἔξω θεόν* *χοροῦ*) Str. 5.19.2 (GCS 15:338). This perspective is certainly not confined to the Stromateis. See Adumbr. 1 Jn. 2:23 (GCS 17:213) Cf. Mondésert, "Le symbolisme," 166, who notes the significance: "cette connaissance de Dieu que Clément poursuit avec tant d'ardeur et dont le désir, comme une flamme, anime toute son œuvre."

"I Will Give You Hidden Treasures" (Isaiah 45:3)

At the height of his discourse on symbolic interpretation, Clement provides numerous illustrations of Greeks and barbarians who have utilized symbolism, even providing an extended illustration of symbolism based on Egyptian grammar.²⁹ This section of book five (5.19–31), which precedes Clement's figurative reading of the Old Testament tabernacle, has often been seen as his general apology for allegory, which Clement, it is claimed, will then apply to the Christian Scriptures. For instance, Manlio Simonetti concludes that in this passage Clement "illustrates his point by reference to the ideographic scriptures of the Egyptians, as an example of symbolic expression in religious language. In this way, allegory becomes the hermeneutical principle by which the teaching of Scripture is divided into two levels."³⁰ Simonetti suggests that the appeal to Egyptian grammar is thus Clement's "treatise on allegory and symbolism."³¹ Robert Grant describes this section of book five as Clement's "rational defense of the allegorical method," in which the religious language of Greeks and barbarians serve as a straightforward example of the symbolism found in Scripture.³² To be sure, the statement that Clement makes to begin this section does seem to draw similarities between Scripture and pagan literature, all of which has sought to transmit divine truth:

Everyone then, in a word, who has spoken of divine things, both barbarians and Greeks, has veiled the first principles of things, and handed down the truth in enigmas, symbols, and allegories, and also in metaphors and such tropes (*αἰνίγμασι καὶ συμβόλοις ἀλληγορίαις τε αὖ καὶ μεταφοραῖς καὶ τοιούτοις τισὶ τρόποις*).³³

²⁹For an analysis of Egyptian hieroglyphic in the Ptolemaic era, see Philippe Derchain, "Les hiéroglyphes à l'époque ptolémaïque," in *Phoinikeia grammata: lire et écrire en Méditerranée*, eds. Claude Baurain, Corinne Bonnet, and Véronique Krings (Namur: Société des études classiques, 1991), 243–56.

³⁰Simonetti, *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*, 36.

³¹Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*, 86.

³²Str. 5.21.4 (GCS 15:340). Kovacs, "Concealment and Gnostic Exegesis," 414, claims this passage as a summary of Clement's basic argument in book five, where "he offers a rationale for symbolic exegesis of the Bible through a survey of the practice of concealment in the Old and New Testaments, in the Greek poets and

But what is the function of Clement's reflection on symbolism, in general, and Egyptian grammar, in particular, at this juncture in book five?³³ Clement takes the time to outline in extensive detail the divisions of Egyptian symbolism, noting that it has three different modes: (a) that which expresses the "proper" meaning by the very appearance of the sign (*κυριολογεῖται κατὰ μίμησιν*), (b) that which is expressed by means of tropes (*τροπικῶς*), and (c) that which is openly figurative (*ἀντικρυς ἀλληγορεῖται*), characterized by the presence of enigmas. Moreover, he provides examples of the ways in which Egyptians operated under each style.³⁴ But is it actually the point of this extended illustration to suggest that the Christian Scriptures should be characterized as operating similarly? I suggest that such a conclusion neglects to consider the function of this extended example in light of Clement's aims articulated earlier in book five, which he significantly reiterates after providing this Egyptian aside in a crucial passage that is often overlooked. I give the passage here in full:

Now, the Spirit through Isaiah the prophet also says: "I will give you dark and hidden treasures" (Isa. 45:3). Now wisdom, which is hard to track, is the "treasures" of God and "unfailing riches." Indeed the poets who were taught theology (*τὴν θεολογίαν*) by these prophets often philosophize in a latent sense (*δι' ὑπονοίας*). I mean Orpheus, Linus, Musaeus, Homer, Hesiod and sages of this sort. But they use the allure of their poetry as a covering against the multitude. As for dream symbols (*ὄνειροι τε καὶ σύμβολα*),³⁵ the fact that all of them are obscure (*ἀφανέστερα*) to human beings is not due to jealousy (for it is not proper (*οὐ θέμις*) to think that God succumbs to passions). Rather, [they are obscure] so that inquiry, by penetrating into the meaning of the enigmas, might ascend to the discovery of truth (*ἐπὶ τὴν εὑρεσιν τῆς ἀληθείας*).... Openly (*ἀντικρυς*), then, it is written in the Psalms respecting all our Scripture, that they are spoken in a parable (*ἐν παραβολῇ*), "Hear, O My people, my Law: incline your ear to the words of my mouth. I will open My mouth in parables (*ἐν παραβολαῖς*), I

philosophers, and among the Egyptians."

³³Curiously, Kovacs, "Concealment and Gnostic Exegesis," 420, provides no discussion on the role of this extended example in book five, except noting that Clement is here concerned with the "principle of concealment."

³⁴Str. 5.20.3 (GCS 15:339). My translation here of the Egyptian modes of symbolism is based on the insightful work of Derchain, "Les hiéroglyphes."

³⁵Here, I agree with Havrda, "Some Observations," 13, that *ὄνειροι τε καὶ σύμβολα* should be read as a hendiadys. This reading therefore heightens the contrast Clement draws between the reasons for obscurity in the ancient poets and in the divine revelation of Scripture. Clement thus connects "symbol" with the motif of "dark and hidden treasures" in Str. 5.23.2.

will utter my problems (*προβλήματα*) from the beginning" (Ps. 77:1–2 LXX). The noble apostle says something similar in this way (*τὰ ὅμοια ὁδέ πως λέγει*): "We speak wisdom among those that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world who are being abolished. But we speak the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery (*ἐν μυστηρίῳ*); which none of the princes of this world knew. For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:6–8). "Philosophers" did not exert themselves in condemning the appearance of the Lord. It is clear then (*ἀπόκειται τούννυ*) that it is the opinion of the wise among the Jews which the apostle inveighs against. Therefore he adds, "But we preach, as it is written, what eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and has not entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those that love Him. For God has revealed it to us by the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God" (1 Cor. 2:9–10).³⁶

Clement's arguments in this passage stem from his reflection on Isaiah 45:3. There, Clement reads that God has promised, since it is the Spirit who speaks through Isaiah, to give hidden treasures (*θησαυροὺς ἀποκρύφους*) to his people. Clement is surely drawn to the Isaianic passage because the treasure is said to be "hidden," and he has already affirmed that those texts which speak of the divine (*τὴν θεολογίαν*) used the symbolic mode. But Clement's arguments in this passage raise two significant points for his account of Scripture in Christian theological reflection.

First, Clement returns to the issue of God's authorship of Scripture. As we saw earlier, Clement has already claimed that God speaks to his people through Scripture, and in this passage, Clement identifies a particular instance where "the Spirit indeed speaks through Isaiah the prophet" (*λέγει δὲ καὶ διὰ Ἰσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου τὸ πνεῦμα*). Yet, the reattribution of scriptural authorship to God has a particular function in this passage. Although Clement once again reflects on the necessity of an underlying sense to texts that speak about the divine, Clement actually contrasts the reason for a latent sense in pagan literature and the Christian Scriptures.³⁷ If God is the author of Scripture, then it must have a fundamentally different

³⁶Str. 5.23.2–25.4 (GCS 15:340–41)

³⁷Though he does not expand on this point, Jean Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973), 253, seems to notice this contrast: "This is not to say that [Clement] sees no difference between scriptural typology and Hellenistic symbolism. Such a conclusion would do him an injustice; he did not rest content with so superficial a view of the matter. His point rather is that in each case symbolism of some kind is used, and that this is sufficient justification for the biblical kind."

reason for the use of symbolism. Contrary to the obscurity of pagan literature, which speaks figuratively as a veil (*παραπέτασμα*) to the multitude in fear of jealousy (*φθόνω*), Clement argues that God speaks ambiguously in the Scriptures to encourage deeper investigation into the meaning of its enigmas.³⁸ For Clement, the Scriptures require veiled language because they speak about the knowledge of God (*τὴν θεολογίαν*), but ambiguity does not mean an inattention to the letter. Rather, it drives a deeper and more relentless inquiry that results in the discovery of truth.³⁹ Moreover, Clement's focus on detailed textual inquiry better accounts for Clement's extended illustration of Egyptian grammar. It is significant that Clement opens the Egyptian illustration by identifying those who are "educated" among them (*οἱ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις παιδευόμενοι*). These are the ones who toil on the literary foundations of interpretation and who have the necessary skill to identify styles of writing or articulate the various ways that their symbols provide signification of realities.⁴⁰ Clement does not hold up the Egyptians as the model allegorists. On the contrary, he points to them as the ideal grammatical readers, who model a deep and relentless inquiry into a text.

The second significant item to note in this passage stems from this realization. Clement

³⁸This account of pagan literature can perhaps be grounded in Plato. In Prot. 316a–e (LCL 165:114–19), in response to Socrates' introduction of Hippocrates, Protagoras discusses the sophistry of Homer, Hesiod, Simonides, and Orpheus, *inter alia*, and concludes that they all practiced their sophistic skills (*τὴν σοφιστικὴν τέχνην*) in fear of ill-will (*φοβηθέντες τὸν φθόνον*). Indeed, Protagoras concludes that it was due to this fear that they all "made use of these arts as outer coverings" (*ταῖς τέχναις ταύταις παραπετάσμασι ἔχρυσαντο*). Here, Clement uses the same terminology to contrast the obscurity of the Scriptures, since it is not proper (*οὐ γὰρ θέμις*) to attribute jealousy to God. Scripture must be obscure for an altogether different reason, in light of its author. If this is true, then Plato's contrast in Theaet. 180cd (LCL 123:142–43), between ancients who veiled (*ἐπικρυπτομένων*) their meanings and later interpreters who demonstrate the meanings openly (*ἀναφανδὸν ἀποδεικνυμένων*) may be a helpful analogy to Clement's perspective on literary discovery of meaning. Cf. Clement's use of *ἀναφανδόν* at Str. 5.80.4; 5.88.3 (GCS 15:379; 384). For a discussion of the Platonic comparison to Galen's exegesis, see Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 155.

³⁹Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*, 85–87, completely misses this contrast in his reading of book five. Cf. Str. 5.56.3 (GCS 15:364), however, where Clement suggests that this inquiry only results in true theology (*τὴν ἀληθῆ θεολογίαν*) for the one who "draws near to the Scriptures often" (*τῶν γὰρ πολλάκις αὐταῖς πλησιαζόντων*). Clement makes a chronological point (i.e., one must approach the Scriptures often) that subverts any *esoteric* point (i.e., truth must be kept from outsiders) that one might draw from the Egyptian example.

⁴⁰That the literary critical nature of this Egyptian example is significant for Clement may be seen later in Str. 5.45.4–46.2 (GCS 15:356–57), where Clement clarifies symbolic interpretation by the comments of two grammarians, Dionysius Thrax and Didymus the Alexandrian. Moreover, in Str. 5.50.2–3 (GCS 15:360–61), Clement claims that "obscure" texts are indeed "proposed as an exercise in the exegesis of letters to children" (*γυμνάσιον εἰς ἔξιγγησιν γραμματικῶν ἔκκειται παισίν*).

presents the deep investigation of the Scriptures to hold the very reasons for its own ambiguity. Indeed, Clement claims that Scripture speaks openly (*ἀντικρυψ*) on its own behalf about its figurative nature. Thus, in order to identify the treasures that God has hidden in Scripture, Clement first links Isaiah 45:3 with Wisd. 7:14 and 8:18, which identifies wisdom with both unfailing treasure (*ἀνεκλιπής θησαυρός*) and unfailing riches (*πλοῦτος ἀνεκλιπής*), respectively.⁴¹ The correlation of these texts allows Clement to identify wisdom as the hidden treasure, but he does not stop there. Clement offers a further gloss on the hidden treasure of Isaiah 45:3 by drawing upon scriptural synonyms of the technical term *aἴνιγμα*.

Clement cites Psalm 77:1–2 (LXX): “Hear, O My people, my law: incline your ear to the words of my mouth. I will open My mouth in parables (*ἐν παραβολαῖς*), I will utter my problems (*προβλήματα*) from the beginning.” This citation highlights the parallelism between *παραβολή* and *προβλήματα*, and it suggests that, for Clement, the parable is the virtual equivalent of the dark riddle in need of a resolution.⁴² More specifically, Clement here expresses the view that *παραβολή* operates similarly to *aἴνιγμα*; each term implies that something more must be said to reach the full meaning of a passage. How one determines what more must be said is left unanswered by Clement, at least at this juncture in his argument. Nevertheless, this citation itself only clarifies half of Clement's use of Isaiah 45:3. If Scripture is full of enigmatic language, then one must hunt for its treasure; this much is clear in the correspondence Clement

⁴¹Le Boulluec (SC 279:108–09) suggests that Clement is here associating Isa. 45:3 with Luke 12:33. However, it seems more likely that Clement is influenced by the use of *ἀνεκλιπής* to modify both *θησαυροί* and *πλοῦτος* in Wisd. 7:14 and 8:18, respectively. This possibility is strengthened by the fact that Clement uses *ἀνεκλιπής* here, rather than Luke's *ἀνέκλειπτος*, a term that Clement happily employs elsewhere (cf. *Paed.* 3.87.3). Clement's description of "wisdom" as *δυσθήρατός* (hard to track) might already anticipate his understanding of it as a term for inquiry into the divine essence. Philo (*Spec.* 1.36) used the same term to describe inquiry (*ζητεῖν*) into the divine essence (*τὴν οὐσίαν*) and the "true God" (*τὸν ἀληθῆ θεόν*). Moreover, Philo uses *διερευνητέον* to describe this search, forging an interesting parallel to the searching (*ἐρευνᾶ*) of the Spirit in 1 Cor. 2:10. Cf. Plato, *Lg.* 654e.

⁴²Here, Clement reads *προβλήματα* in the sense of "riddle." Moreover, it is helpful to note that the exercise of defining terms, which permits Clement to read *aἴνιγμα*, *παραβολή*, and *πρόβλημα* as synonymous in Psalm 77 (LXX), is entirely a grammatical pursuit. Cf. Eleanor Cook, *Enigmas and Riddles in Literature*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 263–65. Moreover, Le Boulluec, SC 279:111, insightfully notes that this reading of *προβλήματα* implicitly recalls Clement's initial arguments on investigation (*ζήτησις*) from the opening to book five, which strengthens my argument that Clement has similar concerns in both passages. Cf. Plato, *Chrm.* 162b; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1283b35.

draws between the Isaianic text and Psalm 77:2 (LXX). But to draw the conclusion that the treasure hidden in Scripture is in fact *σοφία*, and justify his use of the Wisdom of Solomon, Clement makes one further connection.

Clement cites 1 Corinthians 2:6–8 with the statement that Paul speaks similarly (*τὰ ὄμοια ὥδε πως λέγει*) to the Psalmist. For Clement, the Psalmist paved the way for the figurative understanding of Isaiah's wisdom to correspond to Paul's wisdom, hidden in a mystery. But Paul, Clement claims, adds further detail to the identification of Scripture's "hidden treasures." Clement relies on the historical context of the crucifixion to determine the identity of those "who crucified the Lord." With the need to defend wisdom, Clement claims that it was not philosophers in general—the "lovers of wisdom"—who condemned the Lord, but it was clearly the wise among the Jews (*τῶν ἐν Ἰουδαίοις σοφῶν*) who bears the rebuke of the Apostle. Christian philosophers, on the other hand, are those who Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 2:9–10. They contemplate a reality that has not been seen or heard, but one that has been prepared for them: the depths of God. Here, Clement interprets "the depths of God" as a second "hidden treasure" to be discovered in the process of investigation.⁴³ In this way, "the depths of God" becomes synonymous with "the knowledge of God" that Clement had identified as the ultimate aim of Scripture's teaching. In other words, Clement's identification in this passage of the "hidden treasures" of Isaiah 45:3 as "wisdom" and "the depths of God" is a second way of describing the exegesis of Scripture under the imagery of investigation that populated his opening arguments of Stromateis 5, now read figuratively as a hunt for treasure.

"The Mystery of God in Christ" (Col. 1–2)

In the previous passage, Clement connected Paul's mystery language in 1 Corinthians 2:6–8 with the ambiguous figures in Isaiah 45:3. Grounding his argument in the plain statement of Psalm 77:1–2 (LXX), Clement had stressed that God's wisdom "hidden in a

⁴³Cf. Str. 2.7.3 (GCS 15:116); Q.D.S. 20.4 (GCS 17:173). For a similar use of 1 Cor. 2:10, see Theophilus, Autol. 2.34 (SC 20:120). Theophilus employs the Corinthian text under the motif of the search and discovery of truth, though he omits an explicit referent to "depths" (*βάθη*). Clement seems to have extended the use of this verse one further step to suggest that not only must one search for the things of God, but even God in his nature, which he renders as *τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ*.

mystery" (*ἐν μυστηρίῳ τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην*) is identical to the "hidden treasure" (*θησαυρὸν ἀποκρύφον*) that God had promised to disclose. To be sure, however, Clement makes multiple moves to draw his point in subtle and not altogether clear fashion. In Colossians 1–2, however, Clement finds a more explicit statement of the point he wants to draw about symbolic interpretation. Clement's earlier reading of 1 Corinthians 2:7 remains a baseline for his interpretation of Paul's use of *μυστήριον* in Colossians.⁴⁴ Indeed, when he explains the passage from Colossians in our present text, he presupposes that the "wisdom hidden in a mystery" is the aim of scriptural interpretation.

Rightly, therefore, the divine apostle says, "By revelation the mystery was made known to me (as I wrote before in brief, in accordance with which, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed by his holy apostles and prophets" (Eph. 3:3–5). For there is an instruction for the mature, about which he says, writing to the Colossians, "We do not cease to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might" (Col. 1:9–11). And once more he says, "According to the stewardship of God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which was hidden for ages and generations, but now was manifested to His saints. To them God wished to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations" (Col. 1:25–27). Therefore, on the one hand, there are the mysteries which were hidden until the time of the apostles, and were delivered by them as they received from the Lord (mysteries hidden in the Old Testament, which "now are manifested to the saints"). On the other hand, there are "the riches of the glory of the mystery among the nations," which is faith and hope in Christ. He has called this elsewhere the "foundation" (cf. 1 Cor. 3:10). And once more, as if anxious to indicate this knowledge, he writes in this way (*οἶον φιλοτιμούμενος ἐμφῆναι τὴν γνῶσιν ὥδε πως γράφει*): "Warning every man in all wisdom, that we may present *πάντα ἄνθρωπον* perfect in Christ;" (Col. 1:28) not every man simply, since no one would be without faith. Nor does he call every man who believes in Christ "perfect"; but he says "all the man," as if he said "the whole man," purified in body and soul. Indeed, because "all do not possess knowledge," (1 Cor. 8:7) he explicitly adds (*διαρρήδην ἐπιφέρει*): "Being knit together in love, and unto all the riches of the full assurance of knowledge, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God in Christ, in which are hidden all the treasures

⁴⁴That the crux of Clement's passage here turns on his explanation of *μυστήριον* is clear. Cf. Le Boulluec (SC 279:222), who notes that, "L'enjeu essentiel est 'le mystère du Christ'."

of wisdom and of knowledge" (Col. 2:2–3).⁴⁵

Far from legitimizing a myriad of figural interpretations to Scripture's obscurities, Clement here attempts to identify the content of Scripture's mystery by turning to Paul's arguments in Colossians 1:25–27. And, perhaps surprisingly, Clement actually restricts the potential of Scripture's figural referents. In reality, Clement argues, Scripture only holds two "mysteries." The first is christological—that is, those enigmatic references that find their ultimate fulfillment in the incarnation of Christ.⁴⁶ Clement identifies this mystery in the present passage as the "foundation" (*θεμέλιον*), the very term he had earlier used to describe the "common faith" (*κοινὴ πίστις*).⁴⁷ The second set of mysteries to be found in Scripture are theological—namely, those which prefigure the higher knowledge of the divine nature. Clement claims that these were explicitly "hidden in the Old Testament" (*ἀποκεκρυμένα δὲ ἐν τῇ παλαιᾷ διαθήκῃ*) but now are revealed to the saints by the Spirit, who searches "the depths of God."⁴⁸ For Clement, then, all figural interpretation of the Christian Scriptures—including his reading of the tabernacle in book five—can be surmised in these two realities.⁴⁹

Moreover, such a restriction should not shock Clement's audience at this juncture. He anticipated this very position in the opening chapters of book five, which we examined earlier. At the outset of book five, Clement termed the proper outcome of theological investigation as the "structure of knowledge," with *γνῶσις* of the Son and the Father built upon the foundation of *πίστις*. In the present passage, he recalls this gnostic edifice by once again referring to the first mystery found in the Scriptures as "faith in Christ, which elsewhere is called the *θεμέλιον*."⁵⁰ Moreover, he claims that *γνῶσις* is not possessed by all (probably a citation of 1

⁴⁵Str. 5.60.1–61.4 (GCS 15:366–67)

⁴⁶Cf. Str. 5.55.1 (GCS 15:363)

⁴⁷Cf. Str. 5.2.5; 5.26.1 (GCS 15:327; 342). See Le Boulluec, SC 279:222.

⁴⁸Thus, I agree with Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo*, 146, who concludes her investigation into Clement's figural reading of the tabernacle centered on these two complementary themes.

⁴⁹Str. 5.61.1 (GCS 15:367)

Cor. 8:7), and Christians must be unified by love into the knowledge of this "mystery of God."⁵⁰ To be sure, the dual use of *μνστήριον* in Colossians 1:25–27 provides Clement with the textual license to read two realities behind Paul's use of the term, regardless of whether Paul ever intended such an interpretation. For Clement, the obscurity inherent in the repetition must be clarified by clearer statements, and his citation of Colossians 2:2–3 seems to justify the double referent of *μνστήριον* in 1:25–27. There, the hidden treasures (cf. Isa. 45:3) are explicitly (*διαρρήδην*) identified as *σοφία* and *γνώσις*, which Clement has attempted to emphasize throughout the rest of book five.⁵¹

Isaiah 45:3 and Romans 1 Revisited

Clement closes the first half of book five by returning to the arguments that he had utilized earlier to show that the unifying theme of his account of Scripture is the progression from faith to the knowledge of God. In this passage, it is significant that Clement correlates his very specific exegesis of the restrictive symbolism of Christian Scripture from Colossians 1–2 with Isaiah 45:3, Romans 1, and the Aristotelian distinction between faith and knowledge.

Again the prophet says: "And I will give thee treasures, concealed, dark, unseen; that they may know that I am the Lord God" (Isa. 45:3) And David sings about similar things: "For, behold, you loved truth; you have explained to me (*έδήλωσας μοι*) the obscure and hidden things of your wisdom" (Ps. 50:8 LXX). "Day to day utters a word (*ρήμα*)" (what is written plainly), "and night to night proclaims knowledge (*γνώσιν*)" (which is hidden mystically); "and there are no words or utterances whose voices shall not be heard" by God (Ps. 18:2–3 LXX), who said, "Shall one do what is secret, and I

⁵⁰Str. 5.61.4 (GCS 15:367), citing Col. 2:2. I think it possible that Clement here notes the repetition of the term "riches" (*τὸ πλοῦτος*) in reference to a *μνστήριον*, which occurs in both Col. 1:27 and 2:2. It seems likely that Clement would believe that this association provides further evidence to read *μνστήριον* in a double fashion.

⁵¹Cf. Pae. 3.87.4 (GCS 12:284), where Clement claims that "the many treasures orchestrated by the one God are revealed through both through the Law and through the Prophets." Although my purposes in this chapter are directed toward a reading of Clement's exegesis outside his interpretation of the tabernacle, vestments, and high priest in Str. 5.32–40, it seems that the "mystical interpretation" (*τὴν μνστικὴν ἐρμηνείαν*) he offers there is in fact a figurative reading emphasizing the two overarching *μνστήρια* of the biblical text, which he summarizes here through Colossians 2:3: namely, faith and hope in Christ, who is incarnate Wisdom, and the knowledge of the divine nature revealed through Christ. Thus, I am in broad agreement with Hoek, Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo, 145–46, who concludes that "we can infer Clement's own interests in the temple's furnishings and the high priest's vestments. They are centered on two complementary themes that form two sides of the same coin: the incarnation of Christ and the rise of the Gnostic to the higher regions."

shall not see him?" (cf. Jer. 23:24). For this reason, instruction is called "illumination" (*φωτισμὸς*), which reveals hidden things (*τὰ κεκρυμμένα φανερώσασα*), since the Teacher alone uncovers the lid of the ark, contrary to what the poets say, that "Zeus stops up the jar of good things, but opens that of evil." "For I know," says the apostle, "that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ" (Rom. 15:29). The spiritual gift and communication of knowledge, which he desires to give to them face to face (for such things as these should not be disclosed through a letter), he calls "the fullness of Christ" (cf. Eph. 3:19; 4:13), "according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept silent for generations, but now has been manifested (*φανερωθέντος*) through the prophetic Scriptures (*διά τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν*) and made known to all the nations, according to the command of the eternal God, for the obedience of faith;" (Rom. 16:25–26) that is, those from the nations who believe that he is (*πιστεύοντας ὅτι ἐστίν*). And to a few of these is shown also what these things are, which are contained in the mystery (*τό τίνα ταῦτά ἔστι τὰ ἐν μυστηρίῳ δείκνυται*).⁵²

We must first note that Clement cites Isaiah 45:3 once again. However, in distinction from his earlier use of the passage, he now includes the latter half of Isaiah 45:3. Earlier in book five, Clement needed to emphasize the reason for the presence of obscurity and concealment in Christian Scripture, so he omitted the last half of the verse. At this point in his argument, though, having established that he believes the knowledge of God to be the aim of scriptural investigation, Clement includes the final phrase, which gives the purpose for God's revelation of Scripture's treasures: "that they may know that I, the Lord, am God." A seemingly innocuous phrase has now been established as the main goal of scriptural exegesis in Clement's paradigm. Further, Clement correlates this point with a reading of Psalm 50 (LXX) that shows the twofold nature of discerning this knowledge when approaching the Scriptures. Some things are written plainly, and can be understood on a simple reading of the letter. Other things, like knowledge (*γνῶσιν*), are hidden in the text, and they must be discovered by a more precise investigation.⁵³

Clement also returns to the exegesis of Romans, and he connects the "spiritual gift" of

⁵²Str. 5.64.1–6 (GCS 15:369)

⁵³In making this point, Clement emphasizes once again the contrast between symbolism in the Christian Scriptures from the symbolic nature of all other poetic or oracular texts. Scripture differs from these other writings because the Teacher who furnished this text also reveals the truth hidden within it, unlike the gods portrayed in the Greek poets.

Romans 1:11 with Paul's claims in Romans 15:29:

"For I know," says the apostle, "that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ," and the spiritual gift ($\tauὸ πνευματικὸν χάρισμα$; Rom. 1:11), that is, the tradition of knowledge ($τὴν γνωστικὴν παράδοσιν$), which he wanted to give them while present with them, he calls the "fullness of Christ" ($πλήρωμα Χριστοῦ$).⁵⁴

The reference to the "spiritual gift" evokes Clement's earlier argument about theological inquiry in Stromateis 5.2. For Clement, the ability to interpret Scripture in accordance with its two overarching mysteries is tantamount to receiving the "spiritual gift" that he earlier identified as the building of $γνῶσις$ upon common $πίστις$. The correlation of Romans 1 with Romans 15 also allows Clement to identify a number of phrases as essentially synonymous: "spiritual gift" (Rom. 1:11), "fullness of Christ," and the "structure of knowledge."⁵⁵ In this way, Clement shows his reader that his own association of these Pauline texts best expresses the unity of the Scriptures, which all describe theological investigation as the progression from faith to knowledge.

Finally, Clement recasts the progression from faith to knowledge as one of moving from the letter of Scripture to its deeper, latent sense. He does this with a subtle allusion back to the Aristotelian argument of the opening section. What he originally described as a progression from "believing that he is the Son" to "knowing who the Son of God is," Clement here describes as a progression from first "believing that he is" ($πιστεύοντας ὅτι ἐστίν$) to being shown subsequently the "things contained in the mystery" ($τό τίνα ταῦτα ἐστι τὰ ἐν μυστηρίῳ δείκνυται$).⁵⁶ For Clement, a simple reading of Scripture's letter is quite enough to

⁵⁴Str. 5.64.5 (GCS 15:369)

⁵⁵Le Boulluec (SC 279:23) also notes that Clement here renders the terms "spiritual gift" (don spirituel) and "fullness of Christ" (la plénitude du Christ) as essentially synonymous. Although Le Boulluec misses the correspondence of these terms with Clement's earlier reference to the "structure of knowledge" ($τὴν γνωστικὴν οἰκοδομὴν$), he does suggest the possibility that these phrases allude to the "gnostic tradition" ($γνωστικῆς παραδόσεως$) of Str. 5.63.2. On the phrase $πλήρωμα Χριστοῦ$, cf. also Eph. 3:19; 4:13.

⁵⁶Cf. Clement's words from Str. 5.1.3 (GCS 15:326): $γνῶναι δὲ ἀνάγκη τίς ἐστὶν ὁ νιὸς τοῦ θεοῦ$. Le Boulluec, SC 279:230–31, rightly sees Clement's address to two groups in these lines, those who read in a simple manner and those who search more intently. He suggests that the "things contained in the mystery," the deeper things that are shown to those who search more intently, should be identified with the things that "are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations" (Col. 1:27). It seems to me, however, that Clement explicitly reads

elicit Scripture's first mystery, which is faith and hope in Christ. This is the foundation to the structure of knowledge. Upon a deeper reading, however, one may come to be shown the things contained in the mystery, the knowledge of the Father and the Son. This is reading Scripture according to its figural sense.

Faith and Knowledge, or the Letter and the Syllables

We may conclude by looking at a brief illustration that Clement provides in book six of the *Stromateis*. In 6.131.2–3, Clement draws on a passage from the Shepherd of Hermas to contrast reading "according to the letter" and "according to the syllables." When asked to transcribe the book, the Shepherd says, "I took the book, and after retiring to a certain spot in the field, I copied the entirety according to the letter (*πρὸς γράμμα*). For I had not discovered the syllables (*οὐχ ηὕρισκον γὰρ τὰς συλλαβάς*)."⁵⁷ It is significant that, in light of Clement's creative exegesis that we have analyzed from book five, he argues in 6.131 that a simple reading of the letter is "faith" and clear to all, while a "reading of the syllables" is the explication of the Scriptures according to "knowledge." In a comparison of the story from Hermas with Isaiah's "new book" (cf. Isa. 8:1), Clement concludes that "through the exposition of the Scriptures (*διὰ τῆς τῶν γραφῶν ἐξηγήσεως*) there would then come sacred knowledge (*τὴν γνῶσιν τὴν ἀγίαν*)."⁵⁸ Not only then does Clement portray this faith-gnosis progression in book five as a rehearsal of the two mysteries of Scripture (cf. Str. 5.2.5; 5.26.1; 5.61.1), but in book six, he suggests that this progression is also paralleled by a double reading—a straightforward reading capable of engendering faith, followed by a deeper reading that leads to the discovery of sacred knowledge.⁵⁸

this phrase from Col. 1:27 as the "mystery" of faith and hope in Christ, which he understands Paul to call the "foundation" (1 Cor. 3:10) on which *γνῶσις* is built. And though it can never be severed from the knowledge of the Son and the Father that is to be constructed upon it, this "mystery" from Col. 1:27 is the common faith Clement describes earlier. This becomes more clear, I think, when we relate the current passage back to the opening lines of book five and the Aristotelian principle Clement employs there, a point that Le Boulluec does not consider.

⁵⁷Vis. 2.1.3–4 (LCL 25:184–87): ἔλαβον ἐγώ, καὶ εἰς τινα τόπον τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἀναχωρήσας μετεγράψαμην πάντα πρὸς γράμμα· οὐχ ηὕρισκον γὰρ τὰς συλλαβάς

⁵⁸For the role of *Hermas* in Clement's corpus, see Dan Batovici, "Hermas in Clement of Alexandria," SP 66

In the course of this chapter, I have argued that Clement's creative exegesis in book five of the *Stromateis* is surprising in at least two ways. First, Clement actually restricts the figural potential of Christian Scripture. Clement's reflection on the symbolic nature of Egyptian hieroglyphics, Greek philosophy, and the classical poets teases his audience to anticipate a comparison between the Scriptures and these other texts.⁵⁹ Yet, as we have seen, Clement alters his course, and, in a creative exegesis of the Psalms and Pauline material, Clement subverts these expectations by claiming that Scripture only has two "mysteries."⁶⁰

Second, I argued that Clement's identification of faith in Christ as the "foundation" (*θεμέλιον*) and the mysteries hidden in the Old Testament was, in fact, a subtle reference back to the initial arguments of book five on the inseparability of faith and knowledge within the proper narrative provided by Scripture. More provocatively, perhaps, I suggested that this binary account of Scripture's narrative—read analogously at different junctures as (1) *πίστις/γνῶσις*, (2) *θεμέλιος/ἡ ἐξαίρετος*, (3) Son/Father, (4) *ὅτι ἔστι/τί ἔστι*, and (5) Wisdom/the Depths of God—is subsumed in Clement's motivation for reading Scripture: exercising faith upon a simple reading and, by reading more deeply, discovering the knowledge of God. Not only is this purpose illustrated by the *Hermas* example from book six, but Clement draws inspiration at the outset of book five in his citation from the gospels, "Seek and you will find" (Matt. 7:7; *ζητεῖτε καὶ εὑρήσετε*).⁶¹ For Clement, the process of theological inquiry is intimately related to scriptural investigation, and the reading of Scripture therefore takes a central place in his description of the Christian philosophical life.⁶²

This act of double reading, which leads to the understanding of Scripture's two

(2013): 41-51. On this passage in particular, I think Batovici rightly concludes that, for Clement, "the letter by letter reading is the simple faith based on Scripture, who [sic] is accessible to all upon simple reading, while the syllabic reading is for the gnostics whose advanced faith unfolds the Scriptures" (49).

⁵⁹Cf. Str. 5.21.4 (GCS 15:340)

⁶⁰Str. 5.61.1 (GCS 15:367)

⁶¹Str. 5.6.2; 5.11.1 (GCS 15:329; 332–33)

⁶²Cf. Lilla, Clement of Alexandria, 137, who says that "The *ζήτησις* of which Clement speaks is therefore nothing but the attempt to disclose the hidden and higher meaning of Scripture."

mysteries, is the process of figural interpretation that Clement outlines in book five. In my view, scholars have been content to speak of Clement's *idea* of exegesis in book five—that is, we understand that his concerns center around figural reading. However, we neglect Clement's most trenchant claims about exegesis (e.g. Scripture contains only two figural mysteries, which are discovered by a parallel double reading) because he never states these claims explicitly. Instead, Clement's develops these most penetrating claims about scriptural exegesis in the course of his own readings of Scripture. In other words, one must move beyond the *idea* of Clement's exegesis and actually parse his exegetical *practice* to recover these subtle but significant points about figural reading. In the next two chapters, then, I will outline a number of the tools and techniques that Clement employs in the creative exegesis of book five.

5

Clement's Grammatical Archive, Part I: The Properties of a Text

Many are the treasures furnished by the one God, some revealed in the Law, others through the Prophets, and others directly from the mouth of God, and still another in tune with the sevenfold spirit. But the Lord is one, and through all these things, he is the same Educator.¹

As I suggested in concluding the previous chapter, I think it quite probable that the restriction that Clement places on the figural interpretation of Scripture is missed in scholarly accounts of book five because it is itself embedded in an act of creative exegesis. Though all scholars confess that figural reading is the subject matter of book five, rarely does anyone comment on Clement's skill as a grammarian, drawing upon even the smallest details of the scriptural texts to make his arguments.² In other words, to reverse a common idiom, we miss the trees for the forest. Clement's interpretation of the tabernacle and discussions of symbolism throughout book five rightly shows his interest in figural reading. Yet, as we saw in the last chapter, the fact that Clement poses and reposes scriptural lemmata throughout book five to construct the very framework in which a figural reading of the tabernacle is possible is a more

¹Paed. 3.87.4 (GCS 12:284)

²One notable exception is Alain Le Boulluec. This is not altogether surprising, when one considers that Le Boulluec had earlier reflected on the role of exegesis in Clement's heresiological polemic. See, especially, Alain Le Boulluec, "Exégèse et polémique antignostique chez Irénée et Clément d'Alexandrie: L'exemple du centon," SP 17 (1982): 707-13; Alain Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grecque, IIe-IIIe siècles*, (Paris: Etudes augustiniennes, 1985), esp. 2:361-438; and Alain Le Boulluec, "L'écriture comme norme hésiologique dans les controverses des IIe et IIIe siècles (domaine Grec)," in *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum. Festschrift für Ernst Dassmann*, JAC Ergänzungsband 23, eds. Georg Schöllgen and Clemens Scholten (Münster: Aschendorff, 1996), 66-76. Le Boulluec's commentary on Str. 5 does, at times, consider the grammatical exegesis evidenced by Clement's argument; see, for example, Le Boulluec, SC 279:113, where he notes that Clement's use of *πρὸς ἀντιδιαστολήν* is a "formule de commentateur ou de grammairien." Although Le Boulluec notes that Clement employs this technique "several times," he nonetheless does not reflect more extensively on how this textual practice (and others) from the grammatical archive might influence Clement's entire argument on figural reading.

crucial observation for understanding his exegetical practice.

Therefore, in the next two chapters, I will highlight a number of the reading strategies and textual practices that Clement uses in his creative exegesis. Allow me to recall our working definition of creative exegesis from chapter one:

Creative exegesis is the task of clarifying textual obscurity by employing the literary-critical tools of the grammarians to discover the textimmanent intention of an author.

As I described in the first two chapters, the phrase "literary-critical tools of the grammarians" refers to the repository of tools, techniques, and practices that made up the grammarian's set of skills—a repository I have termed the "grammatical archive." Now, to be sure, it would be impossible to discuss the specific techniques and strategies from this archive in an exhaustive manner. We can, however, circumscribe our discussion by using Clement's scriptural exposition from book five of the *Stromateis* as our template. Such a control on our discussion will permit us to identify some of the major techniques to which Clement will consistently return in his exegesis. The examination of Clement's use of the grammatical archive will proceed in two phases.

In this chapter, I will consider the various strategies that Clement uses, which are concerned with the properties of the scriptural text itself. That is, at times throughout his exegesis, Clement calls attention to specific features about Scripture that permit him to make subsequent exegetical moves. Within this category, one could place certain topics as discerning the author of a text, identifying a text's genre, articulating the expectations one has for the ways that a given text will communicate (perhaps based on prior questions, such as its genre), and questions about a text's process of signification—how one arrives at a text's intention from the text's expressions. In the following chapter, I will examine Clement's reading techniques that are concerned with the ways a particular text should be read. In this category, one might consider such issues as the definition of terms, the identification of synonyms or antonyms, patterns that may be discerned within the structure of the text, or, in the case of early Christian exegetes like Clement, whether a preference exists for particular scriptural terminology over a pagan counterpart. These distinctions are entirely for heuristic purposes, since (a) one cannot

distinguish such categories so clearly within the grammatical archive,³ and (b) textual practices from each category may be employed together to make a particular argument.⁴

Properties Assigned to the Text

At the outset of book five of the *Stromateis*, which we will examine in more detail in the next chapter, Clement is concerned to situate his own reading of Scripture's presentation of faith and knowledge in relation to the views of his opponents. As he sets the scene for his reflections on scriptural interpretation in book five, Clement reflects on three properties of Christian Scripture that he emphasizes throughout his oeuvre: the authorship of Scripture, the narrative of Scripture, and the goal of Scripture.

Authorship of Scripture

In the first chapter of the fifth *Stromata*, Clement claims that Christian investigation is at its core a question of theology, a search for the knowledge of the Son and the Father. Moreover, this investigation is entirely dependent on a prior act of revelation. "God is the one who speaks and, concerning each one of the things which I seek, provides an answer in Scripture (*παριστὰς ἐγγράφως*)."⁵ Thus, one may only arrive at the truth inasmuch as he is guided by the revelation wrought by the Son, which Clement describes as understanding truth "through the Truth" (*διὰ τῆς ἀληθείας*).⁶ Clement's reflection on the divine source of Scripture is not only provided in this Johannine language at the outset of book five, but, as I will argue in the

³For instance, though an exegete may ask at a given point either about a text's genre or about how a given text should be expected to communicate, are we to imagine that these questions are mutually exclusive? It seems more likely that a question about genre inherently concerns one's expectations about a text's communicative potential and vice versa.

⁴As an example, an exegete's determination about issues of authorship will inevitably color the expectations one has for the terminology used (or expected) in the text.

⁵Str. 5.5.4 (GCS 15:329). Here, I follow the translation of Voulet (SC 278:33), who renders *ἐγγράφως* as "in Scripture."

⁶Str. 5.1.4 (GCS 15:326). Cf. Jn. 14:6–7.

next chapter, this question of divine authorship provides him with the opportunity to emphasize a distinction between scriptural symbolism and the symbolism of all other literature. For Clement, since the impassible God could never be accused of jealousy, then there must be a different reason than that of the Greek poets for Scripture's symbols.⁷ Moreover, Clement's emphasis on the divine authorship of Scripture implicitly grounds the links he forges between diverse scriptural texts, a reading practice we will consider below. What is important to note here, however, is that the divine production of Scripture becomes a fundamental theme of Clement's creative exegesis.

It comes as no surprise, then, that when Clement quotes from Isaiah 45:3, Clement claims that "the Spirit speaks through Isaiah" (*λέγει δὲ καὶ διὰ Ἰσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου τὸ πνεῦμα*).⁸ Yet, this is not Clement's preferred manner of speaking about divine authorship. Instead, Clement prefers two different images to speak of Scripture's divine arrangement. First, Clement describes God's oversight of the Scriptures as that of the director (*χορηγός*). As a conductor would direct the choir in a musical arrangement, so God has directed the choir of biblical writers in the arrangement of the Scriptures. In Str. 6.42.1, Clement argues that "the same God is the director of both testaments."⁹ Nevertheless, though the Christian Scriptures are composed of two testaments, Clement argues that they must be understood as a unity: "the Law does not fight against the Gospel, but rather it sings in harmony (*συνάδει*) with it. For how could it not, since there is one director (*χορηγοῦ*)—the Lord—for both?"¹⁰ Clement's insistence on the divine authorship of the Scriptures carries an implication for reading the two testaments as a unity. This implication of authorship for a text's readers was not merely a Christian innovation, but as we saw in the Alexandrian grammarians and even Heraclitus, the need for consistency between an author's texts was a fundamental presupposition of ancient

⁷Str. 5.24.2 (GCS 15:340–41)

⁸Str. 5.23.2 (GCS 15:340)

⁹Str. 6.42.1 (GCS 15:452): *οὐτὸς θεὸς ἀμφοῦ ταῦ διαθήκαν χορηγός*

¹⁰Str. 2.147.2 (GCS 15:193): *οὐ δὴ μάχεται εὐαγγελίῳ ὁ νόμος, συνάδει δὲ αὐτῷ. πῶς γὰρ οὐχί, ἐνὸς ὄντος ἀμφοῦ χορηγοῦ τοῦ κυρίου;*

readers. We will examine this point in more detail below, when we look at the reading strategies Clement uses here in book five. We may point to one further instance of *χορηγός* in Clement's corpus that will reveal the second way he characteristically speaks of God's authorship. In the *Paedagogus*, Clement describes Scripture's divine arrangement in terms that recall his arguments in book five:

Many are the treasures furnished by the one God (*θησαυροὶ δὲ ὑφ' ἐνὸς πολλοὶ χορηγούμενοι θεοῦ*), some revealed in the Law, others through the Prophets, and others directly from the mouth of God, and still another in tune with the sevenfold spirit. But the Lord is one, and through all these things, he is the same Educator.¹¹

As in the *Stromateis*, Clement here describes the content of Scripture as the treasures that God himself offers. Perhaps the reference to the Law and the Prophets as scriptural categories are clear enough, but what does Clement mean by his suggestion that some of these treasures are received "by the divine mouth" (*τῷ θείῳ στόματι*)? Is he still speaking of Scripture here? To answer this question, we must turn to the second image that Clement employs to speak of divine authorship.

The second image by which Clement emphasizes the divine source of the Scriptures is his repeated claim that Christians are taught by the "voice of the Lord." In the seventh book of the *Stromateis*, we find Clement stating this point explicitly, when he says, "we are instructed into the knowledge of truth by the voice of the Lord."¹² It is not obvious, however, that such a passage must refer to the Scriptures, but there are good reasons to believe this is the case. In his *Protrepticus*, Clement provides us with a short summary of his understanding of the relation of the Word to the people of God as revealed throughout the Old Testament. He recounts how the Word was present, exhorting his people in the past.

Let us run to the Savior, the Lord, who even now, as ever, exhorts (*προύτρεπεν*) men to salvation, as he did by wonders and signs in Egypt, and in the wilderness by the burning bush and the cloud that, through his loving grace, followed the Hebrews like a

¹¹Paed. 3.87.4 (GCS 12:284): *Θησαυροὶ δὲ ὑφ' ἐνὸς πολλοὶ χορηγούμενοι θεοῦ, οἱ μὲν διὰ τοῦ νόμου, οἱ δὲ διὰ προφητῶν ἀποκαλύπτονται, οἱ δὲ τῷ θείῳ στόματι, ἄλλοι δὲ τοῦ πνεύματος τῇ ἐπτάδι ἐπάδων· εἷς δὲ ὁν ὁ κύριος διὰ πάντων τούτων ὁ αὐτός ἐστιν παιδαγωγός*

¹²Str. 7.95.6 (GCS 17:67)

handmaid. By the fear that these signs inspired he exhorts (*προύτρεπεν*) the hardhearted; but then, through all-wise Moses and truth-loving Isaiah and the whole prophetic choir, he converts to the Word by more rational means those who have ears.¹³

Clement describes the ministry of the Word as one of exhortation, progressively leading God's people through each stage. Yet, Clement adds a further detail to the picture. Comparing the Word's action to that of the doctor, who employs various remedies for different ailments,¹⁴ Clement uses Hebrews 1 to describe the Word's exhortation. As the doctor uses many remedies,

So also the Savior employs many voices and many ways (*πολύφωνος καὶ πολύτροπος*) to lead men to salvation. By threatening, he warns; by rebuking, he converts; by offering a lament, he shows pity; and by singing, he encourages.¹⁵

Clement's use of Hebrews is subtle, but his point is that the Word has been leading men to salvation (*εἰς ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίαν*) through "many voices" (*πολύφωνος*).¹⁶ That is, in the history of Israel, the Word has used various events, figures, and outcomes to direct his people to salvation. Nevertheless, since his people did not believe in the voice mediated through the prophets, Clement concludes starkly: "the Word Himself now speaks to you in clear view (*ἐναργῶς*), putting to shame your unbelief (*ἀπιστίαν*)."¹⁷ Earlier, Clement had described this

¹³Prot. 1.8.1–2 (GCS 12:8)

¹⁴Clement will return to this medicinal analogy in *Paed.* 1.3.1–3 (GCS 12:91).

¹⁵Prot. 1.8.2–3 (GCS 12:8–9)

¹⁶Clement's subtle change to the phrase from Heb. 1:1 has hidden the allusion from many, but it seems that his alteration of *πολυμερῶς* to *πολύφωνος* is a means to draw attention to the voice of the Word that has led men throughout the divine pedagogy. Walther Völker, *Der wahre Gnostiker nach Clemens Alexandrinus*, (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1952), 100–02, notes the allusion, though he makes no attempt to discern the reason for Clement's alteration: "Wie im Leben des einzelnen, so ist der Logos auch im Verlauf der Heilsgeschichte als der große Erzieher wirksam. Er steht als leitende Kraft hinter allem historischen Geschehen . . . Jedem gibt er das Passende zur rechten Zeit, daher wendet Clemens in diesem Zusammenhang gern das Wort Hebr. 1,1 an: *πολυτρόπως καὶ πολυμερῶς*. In Ägypten bedurfte es der Zeichen und Wunder, die Verkündigung des Moses und der Propheten bewegte sich bereits auf einer höheren Ebene" (101).

¹⁷Prot. 1.8.4 (GCS 12:9). My translation of *ἐναργῶς* as "in clear view" is indebted to the insightful essay on Epicurean epistemology by A. A. Long, "Aisthesis, Prolepsis and Linguistic Theory in Epicurus," *BICS* 18 (1971): 114–33. For a more detailed look at the role of *ἐνάργεια* in Clement's understanding of the Incarnation and Scripture, see H. Clifton Ward, "We Hold These *ἀρχαί* to be Self-Evident: Clement of Alexandria, *ἐναργεία*, and the Search for Truth," *SP* (forthcoming). Both the ancient philosophical and ancient rhetorical traditions were concerned to emphasize the sense of sight—that which appears "clear" and "evident." Thus, they each adapted discussions of *ἐνάργεια* towards their own ends. For an argument that the Hellenistic literary critics borrowed *ἐνάργεια* from contemporary philosophy, see G. Zanker, "Enargeia in the Ancient Criticism of Poetry," *RhM* 124 (1981), 308–10. For the use of *ἐνάργεια* in ancient rhetoric, see Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 29–53;

contrast more explicitly: "Our ally and helper is one, the Lord himself, who from the beginning spoke through prophecy, but now exhorts to salvation in clear view."¹⁸ For Clement, the mediated voice of the Logos had earlier spoken through the Old Testament and only recently had the Word appeared, whose immediate voice now speaks open and in clear view as the Lord, our Teacher (*διδάσκαλος*).¹⁹

This discussion in the *Protrepticus*, then, clarifies Clement's intention in book seven of the *Stromateis*. There, to clarify his point that "we have the Lord as a first principle of teaching, guiding us, from the first to the last, to knowledge 'in many and various ways' (*πολυτρόπως καὶ πολυμερῶς*) through the Prophets and the Gospel and the blessed Apostles," Clement says, "we are instructed into the knowledge of truth by the voice of the Lord (*φωνῇ κυρίου παιδευόμεθα*)."²⁰ The recollection once again of Hebrews 1:1 calls to mind Clement's argument from the *Protrepticus*, and it confirms the Scriptures—composed of Prophets, Gospel, and Apostles—as the medium through which the Word speaks *πολύφωνος*.²¹ It seems likely, then, that when Clement claims in the *Paedagogus* that God furnishes some of the treasures contained in Scripture *τῷ θείῳ στόματι*, his use of this obscure phrase is tantamount to a claim that Christians are likewise instructed "by the voice of the Lord."²² Both phrases become a metonymic reference to the teaching of the incarnate Lord in the New Testament.

By his use of these two images, then, Clement emphasizes the divine source of Scripture.²³ Yet, Clement's frequent return, often implicitly, to Scripture's divine origin, is only

Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 194–98; and Heinrich F. Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity and the Early Modern Age: The Aesthetics of Evidence*, (Leiden: Brill, 2012). Clement often correlates hearing clearly with exercising faith (*πίστις*). For a discussion of Clement's understanding of faith, see Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 118–42.

¹⁸Prot. 1.7.6 (GCS 12:8): *εἰς καὶ αὐτὸς <ό> ἐπίκουρος καὶ βοηθὸς ἡμῖν ὁ κύριος, προμηνύων ἀρχῆθεν προφητικῶς, νῦν δὲ ἥδη καὶ ἐναργῶς εἰς σωτηρίαν παρακαλῶν*

¹⁹Prot. 1.10.1 (GCS 12:10)

²⁰Str. 7.95.3–6 (GCS 17:67).

²¹Cf. Prot. 1.8.3 (GCS 12:8–9).

²²Cf. Str. 7.95.4 (GCS 17:67): "by the Lord's Scriptures and his actual voice" (*τῇ κυριακῇ γραφῇ τε καὶ φωνῇ*)

²³By focusing on these two images, I do not intend to minimize Clement's articulation that God speaks

the initial move required in his creative exegesis. As we saw in the first chapter, a number of other grammatical considerations depended on the identification of a text's author, and for Clement, this is no different. The identification of God as the primary author of Scripture provides Clement the opportunity to reflect on such issues as the narrative and the goal of the Scriptures.

The Narrative and Goal of Scripture

Indeed, in our reading of book five, we noticed that Clement's reflection on the authorship of Scripture prepares the way for a consideration of its plot and narrative. In its opening chapters, Clement identified two sets of opponents. The first opponent claimed that *πιστής* was concerned only with the Son, whereas *γνῶσης* dealt entirely with the Father. His Valentinian opponent, on the other hand, considers faith and the incarnation entirely superfluous, since salvation is gained by nature instead of faith. Against both of these understandings, however, Clement argues that Scripture actually correlates faith and knowledge as a progressive pedagogical ascent to the Father through the Son. Using Romans 1:17 as his basis, Clement claimed that Scripture actually teaches what only appears as a twofold faith but is in reality two sides to the same coin: "a single faith that admits of growth and perfection."²⁴ Of course, it is possible to read Clement's arguments at the outset of book five and miss the subtle link that he makes between theological inquiry and the reading of Scripture. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that Clement situates his own reading of Scripture alongside two opposing readings. In other words, Clement understands the creative exegesis he offers in book five to be an alternative narrative, a distinct way of viewing Scripture's teaching in contradistinction to these opponents. Notice what Clement says in the very first line of book five:

There are some who make the following distinction: whereas our faith concerns the

"through" Scripture's human authors. Indeed, I have already shown that Clement's use of this phrase in introducing the quotation from Isaiah 45:3 is a characteristic way for Clement to return to the issue of Scripture's divine origin.

²⁴Str. 5.2.4 (GCS 15:327)

Son, knowledge concerns the Father. But it has escaped their notice ($\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\nu\ \delta\epsilon\ a\acute{u}t\omega\nu\varsigma$) that while we must truly believe ($\pi\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\hat{\nu}\sigma\iota\ \acute{a}\lambda\eta\theta\hat{\omega}\varsigma$) the Son that he is the Son (and that he came and how and why and about his passion), it is also necessary to know ($\gamma\nu\hat{\omega}\nu\iota\iota\iota$) who the Son of God is.²⁵

Clement critiques anonymous opponents who have misinterpreted the scriptural terminology of $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\gamma\nu\hat{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$, which Clement intimately relates to the Father-Son language of the gospels. The identity of these opponents is not obvious, but their position is clear: Christian "faith" is related to the Son, while "knowledge" is related to the Father. Clement maintains, however, that the failure of his opponents here is indeed a failure to understand the intricacies of the Scriptures, which present faith and knowledge as inherently inseparable. Clement claims that this reading "has escaped their notice" ($\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\theta\epsilon\nu\ \delta\epsilon\ a\acute{u}t\omega\nu\varsigma$). This is a phrase found often in ancient literary scholarship, by which critics often took notice of details that happened inconspicuously in texts.²⁶ In the scholia on the *Iliad*, for instance, characters may be mentioned *en passant* at one place because they will become important later.²⁷ Elsewhere, speakers may indirectly address interlocutors or even the audience "between the lines."²⁸ For his purposes, Clement claims that these opposing readers have failed to notice the reciprocity of faith and knowledge in the Christian texts. To be sure, the indirect nature of the term $\lambda\alpha\nu\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega$ may suggest that this relationship between $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\gamma\nu\hat{\omega}\sigma\iota\varsigma$ is not straightforward. Nevertheless, Clement argues that it is, in fact, the common teaching of the Johannine gospel and Paul in Romans and the Corinthian correspondence. These opponents dissect the truth, misalign the roles of faith and knowledge, and completely misunderstand the relationship between the Son and the Father. But Clement is fully aware that there is more than one way to misunderstand the truth, and he immediately turns his attention to another opponent who

²⁵Str. 5.1.1–2 (GCS 15:326)

²⁶On the use of $\lambda\epsilon\lambda\eta\theta\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\varsigma$ in ancient scholarship, see Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 57 and 211.

²⁷Cf. schol. bT Il. 1.242 ex.

²⁸Cf. schol. bT Il. 11.766 ex., in which Nestor is said to instruct Patroclus "indirectly" ($\lambda\epsilon\lambda\eta\theta\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\varsigma$); or schol. bT Il. 11.116–7 ex., where the use of a simile "indirectly" expresses to the audience the dishonorable character of the Trojans.

constructs yet a different narrative.

The precepts both of the Old and of the New Testament are, then, superfluous (*παρέλκουσι*), if one is saved by nature (*φύσει σωζομένον*), as Valentinus would have it, or is a believer and elect man by nature (*φύσει ἐκλεκτοῦ ὄντος*), as Basilides thinks; and nature would have been able, one time or other, to have shone forth, apart from the Savior's appearance.²⁹

If his first opponents misunderstood the role of faith in Scripture's portrayal of the Christian pedagogy, then the Valentinians here completely disregard the role that faith plays at all. The pedagogical narrative that Clement constructs in book five is dependent on the major roles of faith and the Incarnation. Yet, in this alternative account of Scripture's narrative, there would no longer be the need for either faith or the Savior's appearance. If, however, one admits that the Savior's appearance was in fact necessary, since one may only know the Father through the Son, then the elect can no longer be said to be saved by nature. On the contrary, they are saved by instruction, purification, and the doing of good works, taught as it were by the voice of the Lord. Clement's argument against the Valentinians here turns to the Abraham narrative of Genesis 12, where Abraham exercised faith upon hearing the voice of the Lord say, "I will give this land to you and your seed." Clement points to the significance that Abraham's *πίστις* was counted to him as righteousness. If Abraham is therefore shown to be elect and saved by faith, then he is clearly not saved by nature. Thus, Clement claims that his opponents' narrative has failed (*λέλυται αὐτοῖς ἡ ὑπόθεσις*), while simultaneously believing that his own understanding of Scripture's portrayal of faith and knowledge has been confirmed.³⁰

Of course, the narrative of Scripture cannot be strictly divorced from the aim to which Scripture's narrative points.³¹ Thus, in a section concerned with these literary features, it is not surprising that Clement draws attention to the goal of Scripture. After outlining the progression

²⁹Str. 5.3.3 (GCS 15:327)

³⁰On *ὑπόθεσις* in ancient scholarship, see Kassel, "Hypothesis."; Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 105–33; and Nünlist, *Ancient Critic at Work*, 23–68.

³¹Cf. Meijering, *Literary and Rhetorical Theories*, 108, who notes, "the *ὑπόθεσις* of a text evidently is what the author aims at, his personal and freely chosen *τέλος*."

from faith to knowledge, Clement claims that the harmony (*συμφωνία*) of this process articulated in the Christian Scriptures moves toward one aim (*εἰς ἐν πέρας*): salvation.³²

Clement elsewhere develops this link between Scripture's aim and Paul's programmatic statement in Romans 1:17.

"And the righteous one shall live by faith," which is according to the testament and the commandments, since these testaments—two in name and time—are given economically for maturation and progress, are one in power, whether "Old" or "New," and are furnished (*χορηγοῦνται*) by the one God through his Son. About this testament also, the Apostle says in the letter to the Romans: "For the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith," teaching one salvation perfected (*τετελειωμένην*) from prophecy to gospel through one and the same Lord (*δι' ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κυρίου*).³³

For Clement, the unity of God's divine pedagogy and the unity of the Scriptures are grounded in the single God who has furnished the Scriptures and created the cosmos. A focus on the narrative and theme of Scripture was common in the second century C.E., especially in the heresiological disputes of Christians with Valentinians.³⁴ It is not my intention to claim that Clement elevates the concept of *ὑπόθεσις* in a way similar to Irenaeus, whose emphasis on this concept is well-known.³⁵ I do want to suggest, however, that Clement's detailed attention to the narratives constructed by his opponents in book five reveals the literary foundations to his own textual practices. Regardless of whether one considers Clement's reading to be as clearly superior as he believes it to be, it is important to note that his fundamental complaint against

³²Str. 5.2.2 (GCS 15:327)

³³Str. 2.29.2–3 (GCS 15:128). Clement's gloss of *ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστων* with *ἐκ προφητείας εἰς εὐαγγέλιον* seems perhaps to share features with Origen's reading of Romans from an economical standpoint.

³⁴See, especially, Le Boulluec, "Exégèse et polémique antignostique"; and Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians". On the intellectual culture in which these polemical strategies of exegesis develop, see Christoph Marksches, *Kaiserzeitliche christliche Theologie und ihre Institutionen: Prolegomena zu einer Geschichte der antiken christlichen Theologie*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007). Again, this broader narrative of the development of Christian exegesis that correlates the implementation of literary-critical tools with the polemics against Valentinians is compellingly argued by Ayres, *As It Is Written*.

³⁵For a summary of the literature and helpful argument on Irenaeus' intentions in employing rhetorical and literary concepts, see Briggman, "Literary and Rhetorical Theory in Irenaeus, Part 1"; and Anthony Briggman, "Literary and Rhetorical Theory in Irenaeus, Part 2," *VC* 70 (2016): 31-50.

these opponents emphasize that their fundamental failure, at least in his mind, was a misreading of Scripture's expressions. They did not read the letter of Scripture properly, and as a result, they falsely construed Scripture's teaching. But how is one to provide a more appropriate reading of Scripture's letter? What techniques or reading strategies does Clement apply to the text to understand its narrative in a way different from these opponents? This will be the concern of our next chapter.

6

Clement's Grammatical Archive, Part II: The Practices Applied to a Text

"And the righteous one shall live by faith," which is according to the testament and the commandments, since these testaments—two in name and time —are given economically for maturation and progress, are one in power, whether "Old" or "New," and are furnished by the one God through his Son. About this testament also, the Apostle says in the letter to the Romans: "For the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith," teaching one salvation perfected from prophecy to gospel through one and the same Lord.¹

In chapter five, I examined the textual practices that Clement culled from his grammatical archive, as they pertained to the properties of the text itself. In this chapter, then, I will analyze a few of the textual practices that Clement applies to the text for the purpose of reading it. Once again, it is important to note that this is not intended to be an exhaustive description of Clement's repertoire of reading practices. Instead, I want to emphasize those practices that we can observe in the creative exegesis of book five, as Clement is concerned with the textual obscurity presented by the Scriptures and how he might clarify its intentions.

In one sense, this exercise is dependent on the brilliant work of Robert Grant.² Though the book itself is relatively short, the publication of *The Letter and the Spirit* in 1957 was a significant step forward for English scholarship in the consideration of early Christian exegesis in its Greco-Roman context.³ To be sure, Grant's work maintains some positions that are today rightly considered untenable,⁴ but the sensibility he displays to situate Christian reading

¹Str. 2.29.2–3 (GCS 15:128)

²Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*.

³It is important to register the qualification that, although Grant's monograph represents a significant contribution to English scholarship on early Christian reading, these questions were not entirely omitted by the broader scholarly world. This can be seen in the work of Pépin, *Mythe et Allégorie*.

⁴For example, one need only revisit his claim that, although the "difference between Alexandria and

alongside the practice of interpretation in the broader ancient world is entirely correct. I am not convinced by Grant's suspicion that the literary-critical techniques used by early Christian readers on the Scriptures were a subsequent step intended to verify theological presuppositions. As we saw in chapter three, we have evidence of a number of ancient readers, Christian and pagan alike, who suggest that access to the theological truths within a given text is granted to those who have the ability to interpret in the right manner. Nevertheless, as verification of his decision to compare Christian and Greek readers, Grant outlined a number of technical terms both traditions shared in an appendix to *The Letter and the Spirit*. He registered the caution that the terms were exceedingly fluid, but substantiated the need to understand the role that each term played for early Christian exegetes.⁵

As a means of structuring this chapter, and in order to emphasize the consistency of Clement's textual practices, I will examine the strategies of Clement's grammatical archive according to our definition for creative exegesis. Thus, we may divide our definition into the following three phrases (given in a slightly different order for the sake of the current chapter):

Antioch can be exaggerated," Antiochene exegetes had "a closer relationship to Jewish exegesis," were influenced by "Aristotelian rather than Platonic philosophy," and developed "a theology concerned as much with the humanity as with the divinity of Christ." See Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*, 105.

⁵For this important appendix, see Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*, 120–42. Grant concludes this appendix with five general theses that, he claims, can be generated from investigation of these technical terms (141–42): (1) "The content is *theologia* or *physiologia*"; (2) "This content was delivered in hints, suggestions, and indications"; (3) "The resulting form is *ainigma, allegoria, parabolé*. The content, in so far as it can be differentiated from the form, is *mystérion, symbolon, typos* (in various senses)"; (4) To understand form and content, the exegete needs to use *exégésis* and *thèoria*, preferably 'spiritually' and with *anagōgē*, in order to "know", to have "understanding", and to reach a solution of these mysteries"; (5) "This true meaning, the same as the content mentioned above, can also be called *hypnoia*, or a recognition of the *oikonomia* underlying scripture." For his part, Grant's methodology is instructive, and he is entirely correct that these technical terms do have a broad semantic range. Thus, no argument concerning early Christian exegesis can be sustained that is dependent solely on one specific term or another. Nevertheless, I am not persuaded by Grant's theses for two reasons in particular. First, and most significant, Grant's concluding theses attempt to generalize definitions for these terms that are true for all Christian interpretation. In my view, the fluidity of the terms and the fact that individual exegetes employ the same term in different ways disallows such generalization. One must instead consider the interaction of individual interpreters with this exegetical terminology in detail before any broad characterizations about Christian exegesis in general could ever be drawn. Second, there are a number of significant technical terms given no discussion at all. For instance, there is no entry on any of the following terms: *πρέπον*, *σκοπός*, or *ὑπόθεσις*. Additionally, Grant's discussion of some terms is much too brief to be helpful. Three sentences devoted to *ἀμφιβολία* is a pertinent example of this unfortunate brevity, considering the significance of this term in the heresiological polemics of the second century. Conversely, his loquacious entry of three pages on *ἀλληγορία* renders undue significance to a term that was not of primary importance to early Christian readers.

- (1) Creative exegesis is the discovery of the textimmanent intention of an author . . .
- (2) . . . by clarifying textual obscurity . . .
- (3) . . . through the literary-critical tools of the grammarians.

These three phrases will serve as the framework for our discussion in the rest of the chapter.

The Textimmanent Intention

In chapter one, I argued that that goal of employing the tools from one's grammatical archive was to be found in discerning the intention of a given text.

In Clement's discussion of symbolism and scriptural interpretation, this priority is no different. Just prior to his discussion of Scripture's mysteries, Clement draws his reader into the reasons for his labored discussions on symbolic texts. The key point that he wants to put across is that symbolic texts

must be understood figuratively, not absolutely in all their expressions (*πάντα τὰ ὄνόματα*), but in those expressions which signify (*σημαντικά*) the general sense (*τῆς διανοίας τῆς καθόλου*). And we shall find (*ἐξεύροιμεν*) these expressions indicated by symbols (*διὰ συμβόλων*) under the veil of allegory (*ὑπὸ παρακαλύμματι τῇ ἀλληγορίᾳ*).⁶

In keeping with our definition, it is clear from this passage that Clement's conception of creative exegesis mandates the search for the intention (*τῆς διανοίας*) of the passage under consideration. Moreover, Clement confirms the literary nature of Christian inquiry (*ζήτησις*) that has been his focus since the first chapter of book five. His use of the verb *ἐξευρίσκω*, applied here for the first time explicitly to textual research and discovery, provides a clear link to his earlier use of the imagery drawn from Matthew 7.⁷ Yet, Clement adds an additional layer to the expression-intention dichotomy. For Clement, one may not read every expression

⁶Str. 5.58.6 (GCS 15:365)

⁷Cf. Str. 5.11.1 (GCS 15:332–33)

figuratively, but only those that must be given a figurative reading to maintain the general intention of the text.⁸ Clement maintains, then, an understanding that certain texts are clear as they are presented, and therefore, they are not in need of exegetical clarification.⁹ We will examine this process of exegetical clarification in more detail in the following section.

This distinction between words and intention, however, becomes a means for Clement to attend to the polemical battle for scriptural interpretation. He is often quite happy to contrast those who look to Scripture's expressions (*τὰς λέξεις*) with those who seek its intentions (*τὰς διανοίας*).¹⁰ We see once again, under the language of semiotics, the grammatical distinction between word and thought, *λέξις* and *διάνοια*. In book seven of the *Stromateis*, Clement parallels an understanding of Scripture's expressions (*τὰς λέξεις*) with the ability to show its meanings (*τὰ σημανόμενα ἐνδειξώμεθα*).¹¹ For Clement, then, the purpose of literary investigation is the discovery of *τὰ σημανόμενα*; that is, the things signified by the text of Scripture. One must attend to both the textual phrases and the meaning intended by them. Castigating his opponents, Clement claims that their failure resides in attending to words alone (*τοῖς ὀνόμασι μόνοις*) rather than seeking their meaning (*τὰ σημανόμενα*).¹² For Clement, the verb *σημαίνειν*—perhaps more clearly than *διάνοια*—subtly links the discovery of the intention with the necessity to attend to the words and expressions of the text themselves. The terminology of "signification" does not presuppose a figurative meaning,¹³ but rather it presupposes attention to the sign prior to discovery of the meaning. The exegete must apply

⁸Le Boulluec, SC 279:216, rightly claims that "il énonce un principe d'exégèse qui modère le recours à l'allégorie en le soumettant à la cohérence propre du texte commenté."

⁹Indeed, this is conspicuously reminiscent of the first division of the Egyptian hieroglyphics that Clement mentions earlier in book five. There, he speaks of a mode of symbolism that "expresses the 'proper' meaning by the very appearance of the sign" (*κυριολογεῖται κατὰ μίμησιν*). See Str. 5.20.3 (GCS 15:339).

¹⁰For this contrast, see Str. 6.132.3 (GCS 15:498).

¹¹Str. 7.1.3 (GCS 17:3)

¹²Str. 7.96.3 (GCS 17:68)

¹³Contra Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*, 135, who argues that this term points to "the underlying allegorical content of a work being interpreted; it is practically equivalent to *ainissthai* or *ménuein*, but suggests that the allegory is fairly evident to the reader."

certain grammatical tools, which we will survey below, and thereby he will uncover the meaning (*τὸ σημανόμενον*) of Scripture's words. Clement argues that the purpose of his exegesis is to express Scripture's thought alone (*τὸν νοῦν μόνον*), and not merely its expressions (*οὐ τὴν λέξιν*).¹⁴

We must be careful, however, of reading too much into the distinction between expression and intention. Some scholars have argued, for instance, that *διάνοια* is nearly synonymous with *ὑπόνοια* in early Christian exegesis, and therefore, a search for the intention of Scripture is necessarily a move toward figural reading. Robert Grant, for example, points to Philo's claim that the text serves as a "symbol of a hidden intention" (*σύμβολον διανοίας ἀφανοῦς*), such that texts have a literal script (*ταῖς ρηταῖς γραφαῖς*) and an underlying allegorical intention (*ταῖς καθ' ὑπόνοιαν ἀλληγορίαις*).¹⁵ But we should be cautious of linking *διάνοια* with an underlying or hidden meaning generally.¹⁶ Clement, contrary to Philo, rarely uses *ὑπόνοια*, and though at times his use of *διάνοια* may follow Grant's understanding, this is not evident in every case. We must be aware that, for Clement, there are certain expressions which may not be rendered figuratively. These texts express their intention upon a straightforward reading; there is no obscurity to be resolved. But not all texts are categorized in this way, and therefore, creative exegesis must focus on the task of clarification.

Clarifying Textual Obscurity

If my argument in chapter one is compelling, and the grammatical tradition may best be viewed as an attempt at expressing clarity from the obscurity presented by a text, then Clement's adaptation of this principle in his own creative exegesis is hardly difficult to imagine. As Francesca Schironi has argued, the fundamental assumption of the *Homerum ex homero* reading strategy—which I argued earlier was itself intended to provide clarification of textual

¹⁴Str. 7.1.4 (GCS 17:3)

¹⁵Grant, *Letter and the Spirit*, 125–26. Cf. Philo, *Præm.* 61; 65 (LCL 341:348–49; 352–53).

¹⁶Cf. Isocrates' silence (fourth century B.C.E.) as to whether his interpreter had, at the end of the day, understood the *ὑπόνοιας* of his *διανοίας*; see *Panath.* 265 (LCL 229:536–37)

obscurity—for Aristarchus and the Alexandrian grammarians was that there are "internal and rational rules" to Homeric poetry. From this perspective, "since Homer is internally consistent, then any questionable word, phrase, or episode can be explained or rejected using Homeric poetry itself as evidence."¹⁷ Of course, for Clement and other early Christian readers, concerned not with the Homeric corpus but with a text furnished by God himself, the outright rejection of scriptural passages was not a valid option.¹⁸ Indeed, as Clement argues, God did not speak obscurely because of jealousy, but specifically to engage the readers of Scriptures in this hunt for its internal consistency, where truth is to be found.¹⁹ Rather than athetizing the text of Christian Scripture, the explanations of the supposed obscurities of the Bible would turn for Clement on the creative exegesis of the words, phrases, and episodes in the text.

Clement often glosses the act of exegesis explicitly as clarification (*σαφηνίζω*). We have already seen how this terminology can be traced back to the Homeric scholarship in Ptolemaic Alexandria, and it remained a valuable term in the second and third centuries C.E. Jaap Mansfeld has shown the importance of the concept of clarity (*σαφήνεια*) to Neoplatonic philosophers, which he also compellingly observes in Galen's medical exegesis. For these readers, the process of discovering clarity might only be found by adducing it from other passages in Plato or Hippocrates, respectively.²⁰ In Clement of Alexandria, we find a similar perspective. This process of clarification may operate in two ways.

First, Clement emphasizes the possibility of a horizontal clarification—the use of one passage to clarify another more ambiguous text. This horizontal clarification accounts for an author's ability to portray his own intentions more clearly through the course of his writing, as

¹⁷Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 436.

¹⁸Philo likewise refused to athetize any passages of the Pentateuch. See Niehoff, *Jewish Exegesis and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria*, 134–39. Niehoff concludes with apt words about Philo's methodology: "In first-century Alexandria, [Philo] was the first scholar to anchor a consistently allegorical approach in serious literal scholarship, thus offering a new theory of allegory, which is rooted in Aristotelian notions of authorial intention" (139). It is my contention in this study that Clement's use of Philo is not predicated on agreement in readings but rather in appreciation for Philo's ability to ground his figural readings in the literal sense. In other words, for Clement, it was Philo's methodology, not its results, that was worthy of imitation.

¹⁹Cf. Str. 5.24.2 (GCS 15:341)

²⁰See Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 155–61.

details are added to earlier obscure statements or phrases. In *Paed.* 2.103, Clement offers an explanation of the exhortation in Luke 12:29: "Do not seek for what you will eat or drink." Clement argues that this should not be read as a general prohibition of all food or drink, but rather against ostentatiousness and overindulgence. To justify this reading, Clement notes that "the phrase which follows clarifies (*σαφηνίζει*) the meaning." The addition of "do not be presumptuous" in the latter half of the verse illuminates the proper meaning of the former.²¹ This is obviously also Clement's logic in *Str.* 5.61.3–4, when he argues that *πάντα ἄνθρωπον* could not mean every man, since then no one would lack faith. Rather, he continues "because 'all do not possess knowledge,' he explicitly adds (*διαρρήδην ἐπιφέρει*): 'Being knit together in love' . . ."²² For Clement, *πάντα ἄνθρωπον* means "the whole man," since Paul continues by suggesting in the following verses that God himself must do this work of maturation. The later verses clarify the earlier verses in this immediate context.

But this passage from book five highlights another aspect of horizontal clarification: the ability of clear texts from elsewhere in Scripture to clarify obscure ones. Clement imports 1 Corinthians 8:7 ("knowledge is not for all") as a means of clarifying Paul's logic in *Colossians*. Elsewhere, this same horizontal clarification allows texts from each testament to clarify one another. For instance, in *Prot.* 1.9.4, Clement claims that the text of *Isaiah* 54:1 offers clarification (*σαφηνίζει*) to the message of salvation and eternal life that is only hinted at (*αινισσονται*) by the two "voices" (*φωναι*) of the gospels—the angel Gabriel (cf. *Lk.* 1:13–17) and John the Baptist (cf. *Jn.* 1:20–23). Inasmuch as the Isaianic passage represents the "Lord himself speaking in *Isaiah*" (*αὐτὸς ἐν Ἡσαΐᾳ ὁ κύριος λαλῶν*)—that is, the Word who has guided humanity to salvation in "many voices and many ways" (*πολύφωνός καὶ πολύτροπος*; cf. *Heb.* 1:1)—, then this text may therefore clarify the message of the two "voices" who prefigure the incarnate Word who will exhort men to salvation, no longer obscurely, but clearly (*ἐναργῶς*) in the flesh. The message of *Isaiah* and that of the Gospels is one and the same, a point which Clement bases on his understanding of the authorship of Scripture, which we

²¹*Paed.* 2.103.1–3 (GCS 12:218–19)

²²*Str.* 5.61.3–4 (GCS 15:367)

discussed earlier.

Clement also uses the language of clarity to describe a reader's progression into the understanding of Scripture's deeper meaning—a vertical clarification. The initiation of this vertical process belongs to the Lord himself, who has taught the apostles the mystery contained in the Old Testament: "For the prophecy (*ἡ προφητεία*) is full of knowledge, since it was given by the Lord (*παρὰ κυρίου δοθεῖσα*) and once more it was clarified by the Lord (*διὰ κυρίου πάλιν σαφηνισθεῖσα*) to the apostles."²³ Clement argues that Scripture is clarified when its mysteries are revealed, and this process of creative exegesis was initiated by the Word who had himself first given the Scriptures.²⁴ Clement describes the overarching goal of this exegesis as a penetration to the "exact clarity" (*τὴν ἀκριβῆ σαφήνειαν*) of the Scriptures, the discovery of truth by means of the connection between the two testaments.²⁵ Indeed, in Q.D.S. 26.1, Clement equates the clear meaning (*σαφηνισμόν*) of Scripture with the mystery contained under the words (*κατὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν*). The process of clarification then operates at both the surface level of the text, but it also penetrates to the deeper, inner meaning of Scripture. But does this process of clarification operate similarly beyond the confines of book five of the Stromateis? To answer this question, we must first look at some of the technical terms from Clement's grammatical archive before noting how they powered his reading practices.

Clarity (*σαφής*, *ἀναφανδόν*, *φανερός*)

Outside of the confines of the creative exegesis found in Str. 5, Clement's most prominent use of the language of clarity comes in his appellation of terms related to the adjective *σαφής*. Clement's preferred means for describing the clear statements of Scripture is the use of the adverb *σαφῶς*. For Clement, Deuteronomy 32:10–12 (LXX) describes the

²³Str. 6.68.3 (GCS 15:466): *γνώσεως γὰρ πλήρης ἡ προφητεία, ὡς ἀν παρὰ κυρίου δοθεῖσα καὶ διὰ κυρίου πάλιν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις σαφηνισθεῖσα*

²⁴For other examples of this broad sense of clarification, see *Paed.* 1.51.3 (GCS 12:120–21); Str. 7.100.6 (GCS 17:70–71). Once again, this clarification is dependent upon an understanding of textual authorship.

²⁵For these two concepts, see Str. 7.100.6; 7.109.6 (GCS 17:70–71; 78). One could compare these claims with Str. 6.68.3 (GCS 15:466), where Clement argues that the Old Testament is "full of knowledge" (*γνώσεως πλήρης*), which is initially clarified (*σαφηνισθεῖσα*) by the same Lord who gave it (*δοθεῖσα*).

Educator and his guidance, identifying him clearly (*σαφῶς*) as "the Word who guides all humanity" (οἱ πάσης τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος καθηγεμῶν λόγος).²⁶ Further, to justify his reading of ἀρχή from John 1:1 in a Christological sense,²⁷ Clement claims that Hosea teaches clearly (*σαφῶς*) that the "beginning" is indeed the Son: "And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered into one, and they will appoint themselves one head (ἀρχὴν μίαν), and they will rise from the earth, for great will be the day of Israel" (cf. Hos. 2:2).²⁸ It is perhaps surprising that the claim of the Old Testament here serves to ground the New Testament ambiguity. Hosea's statement that the people of God will be gathered into one ἀρχή is the baseline for Clement's reading of John in the *Eclogae Prophetae*. Of course, it is not merely a characteristic of Scripture to speak clearly, since other texts may be understood to speak in a straightforward manner about their subject matter. Clement says that Cleanthes, for instance, speaks *σαφῶς* about the nature of God as the ultimate good.²⁹

Additionally, Clement argues that one can deduct truths from these clear statements of Scripture. In Str. 1.25.4–5, for example, Clement claims that it is clear (*σαφὲς*) from a straightforward reading of Exodus 31:1–5 that all wisdom and technical expertise comes from God.³⁰ Similarly, Clement argues that 1 Peter 2:9 makes clear (*clarum*) that "we are a chosen race by the election of God."³¹ Thus, the noun *σαφήνεια* expresses the intent of scriptural interpretation for Clement. In Str. 7.109.6, Clement claims that his opponents are incapable of drawing out the precise clarity (*τὴν ἀκριβῆ σαφήνειαν*) of the Scriptures. Elsewhere, Clement's own exegesis of the decalogue serves as the model of the clarity which comes with knowledge

²⁶Paed. 1.55.2–56.1 (GCS 12:122–23)

²⁷Ed. 3.1 (GCS 17:137)

²⁸Ed. 4.1–2 (GCS 17:138)

²⁹Prot. 6.72.3 (GCS 12:55)

³⁰Str. 1.25.4–5 (GCS 15:16)

³¹Adumbr. 1 Pet. 2:9 (GCS 17:204): Quoniam vero »electum genus« sumus dei electione, abunde clarum est.

(ὑπόδειγμα εἰς σαφήνειαν γνωστικήν).³² In fact, Clement claims that the Scriptures are intentionally spoken obscurely, so that readers who possess the requisite skills can perceive the clear meaning of the teaching (*σαφήνειαν διδασκαλίας*) in the Scriptures.³³

Moreover, though it is a rare term in Clement, the adjective *ἀναφανδόν* is employed synonymously to differentiate between clear texts and those with figurative potential.³⁴ Thus, Clement contrasts Moses' prohibition against eating the hare or the hyena, which is given through enigmas (*δι’ αἰνιγμάτων*), with the direct command (*ἀναφανδόν*) in Exodus 20:14 not to commit adultery.³⁵ The command forbidding adultery and the figurative prohibition have the same meaning, though the former needs no interpretation as it is spoken clearly.

Less frequent in Clement's work are statements that use the language of "manifest" (*φανερός*) to describe Scripture's claims, and Clement employs this language in a slightly different manner than the clarity denoted by *σαφής* and *ἀναφανδόν*. Clement uses *φανερός* to denote items that were formerly ambiguous or obscure, but are now open and evident before the reader. As opposed to his use of *σαφῶς* for the individual texts of Scripture that speak clearly, Clement applies the "manifest" language to the figures or events described in the texts of Scripture, rather than the texts themselves. For instance, the timeline for the construction of the temple is *φανερόν*, since Ezra gives the date of its completion (cf. Ezra 6:15).³⁶ The incarnation of the Word was "hidden in the enigmas of prophecy" and becomes manifest when the

³²Str. 6.133.1 (GCS 15:499)

³³Str. 1.45.1 (GCS 15:30). It is at this point that Clement introduces the necessity of dialectic for scriptural interpretation. We will discuss this phenomenon below, in the chapter on the Christian reader and *gnostikōs*.

³⁴For other uses of *ἀναφανδόν*, which are not restricted to the Scriptures, see Prot. 4.62.2; 7.76.2; Str. 5.80.4; 5.88.3 (GCS 12:47; 12:58; 15:379; 15:384).

³⁵Paed. 2.89.1 (GCS 12:211). Clement suggests that Moses' prohibition against eating the hare (cf. Deut. 14:7) has the same meaning as his clear statement (*ἀναφανδόν*) with the prohibition against adultery in Exod. 20:14. Of course, we must note also that Clement here is reading Moses through the Epistle of Barnabas. In Ep. Barn. 10:6–7, we find the prohibition against eating the hare (*τὸν δασύποδα*) and hyena (*τὴν ὕαιναν*), and Clement in general retains the figurative reading first given in Barnabas. The key point for my argument on terminology here is not the source of Clement's reading, but rather the characteristics that differentiate the prohibition against hare and hyena from the statement to refrain from committing adultery.

³⁶Str. 1.126.1 (GCS 15:78)

meaning of the prophetic symbols are revealed in the actions of the Gospels.³⁷ In each of these examples, *φανερός* (or its cognates) is used to describe the reality to which the text points and not the text *qua* clear text per se.

We may therefore summarize these terms of "clarity" in two general points. First, Clement suggests that, contrary to statements that operate through enigmas and obscure speech, there are scriptural texts that are inherently clear, whose meaning is obvious in a straightforward reading of the text. Second, this clarity can function both horizontally, as the clear statements serve to regulate more ambiguous ones, and also vertically, such that the clarity one seeks is a deeper understanding of the text itself.

Explicitness (*διαρρήδην*, *ἄντικρυς*)³⁸

Clement's two preferred terms to express the explicitness of scriptural claims retain a similar reciprocity to that seen the terms of clarity above. That is, *σαφής* spoke to the clarity of texts, whereas *φανερός* concerned the manifest realities revealed by clarity. Similarly, Clement uses *διαρρήδην* to refer to texts or writers that speak "explicitly," and *ἄντικρυς* is the characteristic of openness that results from explicit texts. When a passage is spoken "explicitly," the meaning is understood to be obvious on the surface of the text. Certain texts require an explanation to discern its proper intention, but a statement spoken *διαρρήδην* reveals its intention in the very appearance of its words. For example, in Str. 2.131–36, Clement claims that Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 11:1 ("Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ") is an explicit charge to seek the likeness of God. For Clement, Paul more directly states this aim than Genesis 1:26, since one achieves it by imitating the one who is from God.³⁹ In a discourse about God's nature as a just Father (cf. Jn. 17:24–26), Clement identifies two statements that speak

³⁷Str. 5.55.3 (GCS 15:363)

³⁸See Str. 2.136.5–6 (GCS 15:188), where the "open" understanding of the meaning is derived from the "explicit" statement: "Imitate me as I imitate Christ."

³⁹Cf. Plato, Tht. 176b (LCL 123:128–29). In Exc. 19.4 (GCS 17:113), Clement suggests that Paul's explicit (*διαρρήδην*) statement in Col. 1:15–16 states "more clearly" (*σαφέστερον*) about the generation of the Son as the image of the Father.

explicitly concerning the subject matter, one from the Old Testament and one from the New.⁴⁰

First, Wisdom claims *διαρρήδην* about God that "mercy and wrath are with him" (Wisd. 16:12). For Clement, the coherence of mercy and wrath in God's justice is seen in their shared goal of the salvation of mankind. According to Clement, "the Word himself" (ο *αὐτὸς λόγος*) also speaks "explicitly" on this subject, when he avers that "there is none good except my Father in heaven" (Matt. 19:17) and that the "Father makes the sun shine upon all" (Matt. 5:45). Clement particularly emphasizes that such explicit statements are derived from various points in the Christian Scriptures, confirming the unity of the whole. Moreover, these explicit statements lead Clement to the "most clear" (*σαφέστατα*) conclusion that the Creator and the ultimate good is "one and the same God" who is also the Just Father.⁴¹ Thus, in his appeal to the scriptural statements offered *διαρρήδην*, Clement suggests, first, that the Scriptures speak coherently across the testaments, and second, that at the very least their consistent subject matter is the "one and the same God," who is both merciful and just.

The term *ἄντικρυς*⁴² is used by Clement to denote the open nature of the details to which the Scriptures speak. In Str. 4.35.1, the clear statement of Matthew 6:32–33 to "seek first the kingdom of heaven" exhorts believers plainly (*ἄντικρυς*) to pursue the life of the *gnostikōs* and search for truth. In book three of the Stromateis, Clement argues that 1 Timothy 4:1–5 is spoken *άντικρυς* about his opponents who are either too stringent or too casual in their views on marriage. Instead, Clement argues that the Scriptures teach moderation and self-control.⁴³ As can be seen in these examples, when Clement employs *άντικρυς* in reference to the Scriptures, it concerns the teaching of the Scriptures rather than the text itself. But it is important to note

⁴⁰The argument regarding God as Just Father is found in *Paed.* 1.71–74 (GCS 12:131–33). For the use of *διαρρήδην* within his logic here, see *Paed.* 1.72.

⁴¹*Paed.* 1.73.1 (GCS 12:132)

⁴²Cf. Str. 7.6.2 (Son of God) with 7.84.5 shows that *άντικρυς* can be applied narrowly and broadly. Significantly, the open statement suggests the coherence (*ἀκολούθια*) between texts. Contrast Str. 3.8.4–5 where Clement says that Basilides' words plainly detract from the unity of the scriptural witness

⁴³Str. 3.85–86 (GCS 15:235–36). On Clement's "discourse of desire," see David G. Hunter, "The Language of Desire: Clement of Alexandria's Transformation of Ascetic Discourse," *Semeia* 57 (1992): 95–111. See also the helpful discussion of Clement's anthropology by John Behr, *Asceticism and Anthropology in Irenaeus and Clement*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 135–51.

that *ἀντικρυ*σ operates on a broad and narrow level for Clement.

On a broad level, multiple passages of Scripture can speak *ἀντικρυ*σ about a specific teaching. In this way, one can identify themes that are significant in Clement's thought. For instance, Clement says, "that there is a Son of God, and that this Son is the Savior and Lord that we assert him to be, the divine prophecies express openly (*ἀντικρυ*σ *ai θεῖαι παριστάσι προφητεῖαι*)."⁴⁴ We will see later in the current chapter that this claim is indeed, in Clement's view, one of the main teachings of Scripture. On a narrow level, however, a statement that teaches a subject *ἀντικρυ*σ can be used as a baseline to discover the teaching of another passage. Thus, in Str. 7.84, Clement provides an interpretation of 1 Corinthians 6:1: "Do any of you who have an issue with another dare to go to law before the unrighteous rather than the saints?" Clement says that this verse must be read in light of the open (*ἀντικρυ*σ) teaching of Jesus to pray for one's enemies (cf. Matt. 5:44), and the resulting interpretation stresses the contrast between those who would take the unrighteous to court in retaliation and those "who ask in prayer that their persecutors would experience similar retribution in return."⁴⁵ The teaching of the Lord grounds Clement's reading of the Pauline claim; the clear matter serves as a baseline for the more ambiguous.

From the foregoing evaluation, it is evident that Clement—like all ancient readers—believed that certain texts were clear (*σαφῆς*), and, from such texts, the facts, events, and details of the subject matter were openly proclaimed (*ἀντικρυ*σ) and manifest (*φανερός*) to its reader. These passages are clear upon a straightforward reading, and they can serve to regulate the interpretation of passages that are more obscure. Such a practice to creative exegesis should be expected, when one considers that the process is entirely from beginning to end a process of clarification and explanation, of discerning the intent inherent in the text. This process of textual discovery, however, can be achieved by employing any number of reading practices.

⁴⁴Str. 7.6.2 (GCS 17:6)

⁴⁵Str. 7.84.3–7 (GCS 17:60)

Further Literary Tools of the Grammarians

There are two further textual practices that Clement employs in book five of the *Stromateis*. Both of these practices flow from Clement's convictions on the authorship of Scripture that we examined in the previous chapter. On the one hand, Clement presumes that Scripture speaks coherently from beginning to end. On the other hand, because Scripture is furnished by one and the same God, terms should be carefully defined, in order to render proper judgment on the ability of individual words to convey distinct concepts.

Textual Coherence

Clement's claims about the divine origin of the Scriptures had repercussions for the reading practices he used on the Bible. In this regard, there was no more significant procedure for Clement's exegesis than his attempt to understand Scripture as a coherent whole. At the outset of book five, in his defense of the inseparability of faith and knowledge in the Christian economy, Clement appeals to the Pauline claim in Romans 1:17 that "the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith" (*ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν*). Clement interprets this as a progression that appears twofold, but in reality is a single process of growth towards perfection. In other instances, Clement appeals to Romans 1:17 to make a similar argument about the Scriptures. Though there are two testaments, they are only "two" with regard to time, but should be understood more specifically as a single progression.

"And the righteous one shall live by faith," which is according to the testament and the commandments, since these testaments—two in name and time—are given economically for maturation and progress, are one in power, whether "Old" or "New," and are furnished (*χορηγοῦνται*) by the one God through his Son. About this testament also, the Apostle says in the letter to the Romans: "For the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith," teaching one salvation perfected (*τετελειωμένην*) from prophecy to gospel through one and the same Lord (*δι' ἑνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κυρίου*).⁴⁶

⁴⁶Str. 2.29.2–3 (GCS 15:128)

Once again using the verb *χορηγέω* to draw attention to the fact that the Scriptures have been furnished by "the one God through his Son" (*διὰ νιόν παρ' ἐνὸς θεοῦ*), Clement claims that one must have a reciprocal comprehension of Scripture's unity. Since they come from one God, the Scriptures teach of one salvation accomplished from the Old Testament to the New Testament through the one Lord. Moreover, one must understand exactly how these testaments should be related in the interpretation of any given passage to comprehend the truth of God's teaching. We have already seen Clement's claim that the Law never "fights" (*μάχεται*) with the Gospel, but rather harmonizes (*συνάδει*) with it.⁴⁷ And it is this harmony that must be discovered by the interpreter.

Clement models just such a process of seeking the unified teaching of the Old and New Testaments in the creative exegesis of book five. Clement reads Isaiah 45:3 through the lens of the Wisdom of Solomon to identify the treasures promised in the former with the wisdom described in the latter. Isaiah and Wisdom can rightly be read together, inasmuch as they proclaim the same truth progressing from prophecy to gospel. Similarly, Clement argues that the alongside these texts from Isaiah and Wisdom, the Psalms and Paul speak "similar things" (*τὰ ὁμοια*). Though the exegetical link begins with an understanding of the divine origin of all these texts, Clement's argument maintains that it is the treasure hidden by God within Scripture that they all equally share and illuminate. Thus, Paul's claim that the Spirit reveals the "depths of God" can be read as tantamount to Isaiah's promise that God will reveal the "dark and hidden truths." These become synonymous statements of Scripture's subject matter.

Although Clement does not employ the term in book five, these exegetical moves surely reflect his commitment to the textual *ἀκολούθια* of Scripture.⁴⁸ In Str. 1.179.4, Clement

⁴⁷Str. 2.147.2 (GCS 15:193)

⁴⁸On the concept of *ἀκολούθια* in Clement's corpus, see the lucid discussions of Laura Rizzerio, "La nozione di *ἀκολούθια* come 'logica della verità' in Clemente di Alessandria," *RFNS* 79 (1987): 175–95; and Raoul Mortley, *Connaissance Religieuse et Herméneutique chez Clément d'Alexandrie*, (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 102–08. Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 125–26, suggests wrongly, I think, that the use of *ἀκολούθια* in heresiological disputes does not properly relate to Clement's understanding of the interpretation of Scripture. On the importance of such grammatical practices as a direct development of these disputes, see Ayres, *As It Is Written*. Cf. Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 39–41, who applies *ἀκολούθια* to the literary sequence of Clement's own "trilogy"; and Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 83–84, who emphasizes the term in ethical discourse. A commitment to Scripture's *ἀκολούθια* will continue to be a grammatical interpretive technique in the Christian tradition at least until the fourth century C.E. See Jean Daniélou, "Akolouthia chez Grégoire de Nysse," *RevSR* 27 (1953): 219–49; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*,

summarizes this unifying sensibility: "As much as we are able, we must approach Scripture in a more dialectical manner to hunt down the sequence of the divine teaching ($\tauὴν ἀκολουθίαν τῆς θείας διδασκαλίας$)."⁴⁹ In an article on the concept of *ἀκολουθία* in Gregory of Nyssa, Jean Daniélou briefly recognized Clement's use of its textual implications. Daniélou claimed, "The interesting point about Clement's remark (in Str. 1.179.4) is that it shows that the investigation of scriptural *ἀκολουθία* consists in applying to Scripture the methods utilized by grammarians for the explanation of literary texts."⁵⁰ Indeed, Clement's concatenation of texts in Str. 5, ranging from Isaiah and Wisdom to the Psalms and Paul, presupposes an inherent coherence to the subject matter treated in the Scriptures.⁵¹ This concept of a coherent sequence within the teaching of Scripture will drive Clement's exegesis on two levels: his narrow understanding of individual texts and his broad correlation of texts from both testaments.

On a narrow level, the concept of *ἀκολουθία* may be used in the reading of specific individual passages. For example, in a reading of Psalm 18:5–6 (LXX), Clement suggests that, although the Psalmist says in verse five that "in the sun he has set his tabernacle," the interpreter who understands this rightly as a reference to the second coming ($περὶ τῆς παρουσίας τῆς δευτέρας$) recognizes the presence of hyperbaton in the Psalm. This phrase from verse five must be arranged *κατὰ ἀκολουθίαν* to make sense of the passage.⁵² More broadly, though, Clement speaks of this coherence, this textual *ἀκολουθία*, as a safeguard to the unity of the divine teaching that comes through both the Old and the New Testaments. He claims that all the Pauline letters "preserve the sequence from the Law to the Gospel ($\tauὴν ἀκολουθίαν σώζουσαι τοῦ νόμου πρὸς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον$)."⁵³ Applied directly to his understanding

242–46.

⁴⁹Str. 1.179.4 (GCS 15:110)

⁵⁰Daniélou, "Akolouthia chez Grégoire de Nysse," 238.

⁵¹This is evidence of the presumption among early Christian readers, to which Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading*, 216, points, that "the Christian Bible is read Christianly when it is seen to depict the ongoing historical outworking of a divine intention."

⁵²Ed. 56.1–2 (GCS 17:152–53)

⁵³Str. 3.86.1 (GCS 15:235)

of Christian exegesis, Clement avers that those who rightly interpret the Scriptures are the ones who "clarify the truth by means of the coherence of the testaments" (*τὴν ἀλήθειαν διὰ τῆς ἀκολουθίας τῶν διαθηκῶν σαφηνίζοντες*).⁵⁴ When the consistency between the two testaments is preserved, then one may discover the consequent (*ἀκόλουθον*) reality: "For it follows that there is one unchangeable gift of salvation given by one God, through one Lord, which benefits 'in many ways' (cf. Heb. 1:1)."⁵⁵ Because the Scriptures are furnished to the Church by the one God, then there is a consistency—a textual *ἀκολουθία*—to its message. As one of the most significant means by which Clement clarifies the obscurities of Scripture, the concept of *ἀκολουθία*, as Daniélou reminds us, has a veritable pedigree in the grammatical and rhetorical traditions.⁵⁶

Definition of Terms

There are at least two instances in his argument from book five of the *Stromateis* where Clement builds his exegesis upon a distinct definition of terms. In the first chapter, Clement argues against his opponents who want to draw a sharp distinction between faith and knowledge by articulating the viewpoint that the scriptural terms "Father" and "Son" cannot be disjoined. "Now, knowledge is not without faith, nor is faith without knowledge, as indeed

⁵⁴Str. 7.100.5 (GCS 17:70)

⁵⁵Str. 6.106.4 (GCS 15:485)

⁵⁶Clement also calls attention to an ontological function for *ἀκολουθία*. Under this heading, we may place the numerous instances where Clement argues that the moral purpose of the Christian is an assimilation to the divine. For Clement, this is a direct reading of Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image (*κατ' εἰκόνα*) and in our likeness (*καθ' ὁμοίωσιν*)."⁵⁷ Clement discusses this assimilation at length in Str. 2.131–36, drawing upon the Platonic injunction to attain the greatest possible likeness to God (cf. Plato, *Thet.* 176B). On the Platonic formula *ὁμοίωσις θεῶ* in Clement, see Völker, *Der wahre Gnostiker*, 579–97; Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 57–59, 106–17; Dietmar Wyrwa, *Die christliche Platonaneignung in den Stromateis des Clemens von Alexandria*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983), 173–89. Surely Plato has influenced Clement's thought on this score, but in the course of Clement's exegesis in Str. 2.131–36, it becomes evident that he finds the clearest exposition of Genesis 1 in the Pauline injunction to imitate Christ (1 Cor. 1:11). Clement argues that this process is an act of conforming oneself to the image of the Word (Str. 2.132.4; cf. *Paed.* 1.102.4; Str. 2.4.1: *ἀκόλουθα τῷ λόγῳ*). Indeed, Clement will often read Christ's command from the gospels to "Follow me!" (*ἀκολούθει μοι*) according to this sense (see *Paed.* 2.36.2; cf. Matt. 19:21). Thus, it is not surprising to find a similar reading of this imperative in Clement's speech *Quis dives salvetur*, constructed as it is upon a reading of Mark 10:17–31 where this command once again appears (cf. Q.D.S. 4.6; 16.1; 23.1–3). On the theme of imitation in Clement's moral thought, see Olivier Prunet, *La Morale de Clément d'Alexandrie et le Nouveau Testament*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), 231–34; Havrda, "Grace and Free Will".

neither is the Father without the Son. For insofar as he is 'Father,' he is 'Father of the Son,' and the Son is the true teacher about the Father. Moreover, in order to believe in the Son, we must know the Father, with respect to whom is the Son."⁵⁷ Certainly this argument is employed to combat his opponents by linking the progression between faith and knowledge. But this exegesis is dependent upon the claim that one can only be called a father if he has a son or daughter. The logic is dependent on defining these terms.

Later in book five, Clement subtly identifies the terms *παραβολή*, *αἴνιγμα*, and *πρόβλημα* in a reading of Psalm 77 (LXX). And though he does not explicitly articulate that he is making a grammatical point at this juncture, his argument only works if one understands *πρόβλημα* as a "riddle," which is ostensibly not its primary sense.⁵⁸ But this identification allows him to draw one further parallel in the Pauline teaching of the New Testament. If *παραβολή*, *αἴνιγμα*, and *πρόβλημα* are synonymous terms for a riddle in need of a solution, then Paul "speaks similarly" (*τὰ ὅμοια ὁδέ πως λέγει*) when he argues that the wisdom of God, though hidden in a mystery, is the solution to the prophetic enigma.⁵⁹ Not only is this connection dependent upon his presupposition of a textual *ἀκολούθια*, but it is built upon his definition of these scriptural terms.

Conclusion: Reading Creatively

In this chapter, I have outlined a few of the reading practices that Clement employs to make sense of the text of Scripture. Of course, not all of these strategies can be seen in other Christian readers, nor would one expect them to be. Every Christian reader, including Clement, chooses to use reading strategies that he or she finds appropriate at a given time. Others may find these reading practices helpful, or they may see them as detrimental to a good reading of the text. But we must account for the types of practices—the how of reading—in order to understand the process of exegesis in early Christianity. In fact, this is the advantage of

⁵⁷Str. 5.1.3–4 (GCS 15:326)

⁵⁸Cf. Cook, *Enigmas and Riddles in Literature*, 263–65.

⁵⁹Str. 5.25.2 (GCS 15:341)

understanding such differences as the creative aspect in the term "creative exegesis." This coincides with the first sense of "creative" that I described in chapter one. Clement chooses the grammatical skills and reading practices he deems necessary to give a good reading of the biblical text, and in this sense, it is a proper reading. But, just as ingenuity varies among individuals, so the choice of exegetical technique varies in the reading of Christian Scripture. It is necessary to see this to understand fully how Christians read the text.

At the same time, as I argued in chapter one, the concept of creativity inherent in this conception of creative exegesis has a second important sense. Though it is a rarer meaning in the modern use of "creative," the word may also signify the process of construction or production itself—the ability "to create." In the next chapter, this sense of creativity takes center stage.

Reading as "Creative Exegesis," Part I: Scripture and Memory

I fell in with the final one—supreme in mastery. I tracked him down to his hiding place in Egypt and stayed with him. He was the true Sicilian bee, plucking flowers from the meadow of the prophets and apostles and producing a pure substance of knowledge in the souls of his hearers.¹

The whole responsibility of *inventio*, of discovery, is transferred to the reader, and the function of *inventio* is to make, not *res*, but *signa* meaningful.²

As I suggested in the introduction to this project, one could look at this study as a tale of two halves, with each half contributing to the whole picture of how "creative exegesis" is a helpful term to describe the scriptural exegesis of Clement of Alexandria. In the first half of this study, I argued that the grammatical and rhetorical traditions served as the foundation to Clement's exegetical practice. In particular, the repertoire of tools and techniques of literary analysis learned at the hands of the *γραμματικός*—which I have termed the "grammatical archive"—provided the textual practices that Clement employed to interpret the Scriptures. When I speak of "creative exegesis," I mean to emphasize the foundations that the grammatical archive played for early Christian readings of the sacred text. But what is intended by the adjective "creative"? This will be the subject of the last half of this study.

Let us recall the definition of creative exegesis as I have developed it in this study:

Creative exegesis is the task of clarifying textual obscurity by employing the literary-

¹Str. 1.11.2 (GCS 15:8–9): *ὑστάτῳ δὲ περιτυχῶν* (δυνάμει δὲ οὖτος πρῶτος ἦν) ἀνεπανσάμην, ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ θηράσας λεληθότα. Σικελικὴ τῷ ὄντι ἦν μέλιττα προφητικοῦ τε καὶ ἀποστολικοῦ λειμῶνος τὰ ἄνθη δρεπόμενος ἀκήρατόν τι γνώσεως χρῆμα ταῖς τῶν ἀκροωμένων ἐνεγέννησε ψυχαῖς

²Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 158.

critical tools of the grammarians to discover the textimmanent intention of an author.

It will be clear to the attentive reader that the one aspect of this definition that we have yet to discuss is the complementary verb: "to discover." As with all the other facets of this definition, I do not use this term unintentionally. As I will argue in the next two chapters, this verb describes the "creative" aspect to early Christian exegesis.

Exegesis as Invention

In the opening chapter to the *Stromateis*, Clement reflects on the process and necessity of writing. Should one's writings be open to all, or might there be a legitimate reason to withhold information from some?³ Throughout the first chapter Clement offers reasons for putting pen to paper in an apology for writing the *Stromateis*, suggesting that his work will preserve the tradition of those who had transmitted the true knowledge of the Scriptures prior to him.⁴ Indeed, though the *Stromateis* may conceal truth, it is expressly so that those who can track it down might discover the seeds of knowledge hidden within.⁵ This first chapter has been the subject of a number of scholarly investigations. Dietmar Wyrwa has helpfully shown the links between Clement's arguments and Plato's *Phaedrus*.⁶ Alain Le Boulluec has supplemented Wyrwa's work by showing in particular how Clement "modifies the problematic imported from the Greek tradition" with specific references to the Scriptures.⁷ Le Boulluec's essay in particular shows clearly how Clement's appeal to the Scriptures adapts the Platonic background to his claims about writing. Yet, it is only at the end of his essay, however, that Le Boulluec mentions the striking illustration that I quoted at the outset of this chapter from *Stromateis* 1.11, wherein

³Cf. Str. 1.1.1 (GCS 15:3)

⁴Str. 1.11–14 (GCS 15:8–11)

⁵Cf. Str. 1.20.4 (GCS 15:14). Clement employs the analogy of a "hunt" in Str. 1.21, with truth as the object to be discovered.

⁶Wyrwa, *Die christliche Platonaneignung*, 30–46.

⁷Alain Le Boulluec, "Pour qui, pourquoi, comment? Les *Stromates* de Clément d'Alexandrie," in *Alexandrie antique et chrétienne: Clément et Origène*, (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2012), 111–23.

Clement describes the actions of his teacher Pantaenus culling the "pure substance of knowledge" from the Scriptures just as a bee extracts honey from a flower.⁸ What purpose does this imagery serve for Clement's understanding of scriptural exegesis? A good case can be made, I think, that Clement is thinking about exegesis as a process of rhetorical invention.⁹ This is especially the case when one considers that, for ancient readers, the exegetical task was often considered a search, a hunt to "discover" the ideas inherent within a text. In Greek, the term used was *εὑρίσκω*—a term that we will find peppered throughout Clement's discussions of scriptural exegesis—but the Latin equivalent *inventio* (also operational within literary discussions in the second century C.E.) may better key us in to some of the nuances of this "discovery."

Inventio received its most detailed treatment in antiquity within the domain of rhetoric, but the classicist Rita Copeland has examined the concepts of rhetorical invention and its surprising links with the methodologies of grammatical exegesis in her brilliant book *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*. Copeland suggests that the translation of written works into the vernacular in the late Middle Ages offers a particularly acute paradigm for the ways in which grammatical exegesis and the language of the commentary supplant and displace ancient rhetoric as the preeminent academic discourse. In the operations of translation, the work of grammarians, which had historically been attuned to the descriptive function of explaining a text, encroaches upon the rhetorical realm of productivity. As Copeland argues about rhetorical *inventio*, "as the orator fitted a speech to the particular circumstances of persuasion, so in a certain sense the medieval exegete remodels a text for the particular circumstances of interpretation."¹⁰ In this way, Copeland emphasizes the rhetorical character of academic commentary in the Middle Ages and suggests that "the rules by which orators compose have here become the rules by which grammarian-exegetes read."¹¹ In other words, the nexus of

⁸See Str. 1.11.2 (GCS 15:8–9)

⁹It seems that Le Boulluec, "Pour qui, pourquoi, comment?", 120, is approaching this insight, when he calls recollection (la remémoration) a noble and principal act (un acte noble et capital) as it is reminded of the thought of one's master who holds the truth.

¹⁰Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 63–64.

¹¹Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 64.

grammar and rhetoric is found in the realm of hermeneutics, the interpretation of a literary text that is simultaneously offered as a descriptive and productive invention.¹² Grammatical exegesis unites with the heuristic motives of hermeneutics to make a text both intelligible and interpretable.

Copeland, however, focuses her scholarly energies entirely on the tradition of rhetorical and grammatical handbooks as they plow the ground for medieval translation. In fact, she deliberately sets the Christian tradition to the side in her examination of commentaries from the arts curriculum.¹³ But Copeland's study is a beneficial lens from which to view our current interests, given that she is entirely interested, not in the "actual scope of *grammatica*" but rather in the "interpretive methods derived from the grammarians."¹⁴ In other words, Copeland's interests run parallel to my own in looking at the methods and techniques of grammatical interpretation for what it may explain of the reading practices more broadly. Consider her summary of Augustine's own *ars grammatica*, the *De doctrina christiana*:

Classical rhetoric deals with the ambiguities of meaning from the perspective of the orator, of the producer of the utterance. The facts of the case, the *res*, are ambiguous, and meaning is contingent upon the orator's effective use of language, of *signa*. It is up to the orator to argue the case from the most persuasive angle. Augustine's sacred rhetoric takes up ambiguities of meaning from the perspective of the reader. The "facts" of the "case," that is, the *res* or doctrine, are determinate and unitary, and what is ambiguous are the words, the *signa*. It is the responsibility of the reader to interpret these signs and to produce an account of their meaning. The whole responsibility of *inventio*, of discovery, is transferred to the reader, and the function of *inventio* is to make, not *res*, but *signa* meaningful.¹⁵

To be sure, Copeland's analysis of Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* is among the best English analyses of the broad intentions of this text that I have come across, showing how Augustine treats that task of scriptural interpretation as essentially a task of invention, grounded

¹²Cf. Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 2: "the two disciplines overlapped in the character of their most fundamental procedures, rhetorical *inventio* and grammatical or hermeneutical *enarratio*."

¹³Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 6.

¹⁴Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 5–6.

¹⁵Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 158.

in the techniques of the grammarian.¹⁶ Thus, *De doctrina christiana* can rightly be classified as an *ars grammatica*, but only if one gives credence to the rhetorical character of its paradigm for textual interpretation. As Copeland suggests, for Augustine "it is in Scripture that one discovers— invents or comes upon—the doctrine or *res* that one will expound."¹⁷ Indeed, Copeland contrasts Augustine's interpretive scheme with the processes of classical rhetoric to emphasize the implications of his "sacred rhetoric as hermeneutical performance" for the medieval arts tradition. But what of Christian exegetes that have preceded Augustine? Should these be deliberately set aside, or might they too offer a "hermeneutical performance"—an *inventio*—in the mold of Augustine's? I suggest that Copeland, in the omission of this Christian exegetical tradition, overlooks a series of readers who were already concerned with the nexus of rhetoric and grammar in the interpretation of the text of Scripture.

Over the course of the next three chapters, then, I will show that Clement provides us with one of these examples of such hermeneutical invention in early Christian exegesis. In this chapter, I will argue that Clement's description of Pantaenus' exegesis as a "bee that culls honey" does not reveal a preference for oral teaching to writing, as is often argued, but rather, this imagery is a powerful metaphor for the process of memory and composition. Seen in this way, Clement's defense of writing in the first chapter of the *Stromateis* becomes itself an argument for the type of scriptural exegesis that Clement will display in his work. In the next chapter, I will show how memory is paralleled in Clement's writing by some common tropes of recollection. In the last chapter, I will argue that this process of exegetical invention is seen most clearly in Clement's collection of thematic constellations, which provide the context for his scriptural reading. If my argument is correct, then the creative aspect to Clement's "creative

¹⁶On the rhetorical character of Augustine's hermeneutics in the *De doctrina christiana*, I would also point readers to Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition*, 53–63. Eden, however, throughout her book wants to emphasize the role of *interpretatio scripti* in ancient hermeneutics. I would rather point to the role of *inventio* for textual interpretation, as the nexus of grammar and rhetoric, of which *interpretatio scripti* is one part of many.

¹⁷Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 156. Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 10–12 refers to this act of literary invention as "creative thinking." It is Carruthers' gloss that serves as inspiration for my use of the adjective in the term "creative exegesis," by which I intend to elicit the invention, or "hermeneutical performance," at the heart of all early Christian scriptural exegesis.

exegesis" is rightly characterized by Copeland's description of a "hermeneutical performance," an imaginative collection Scripture's texts and themes that, to use Clement's analogy, provide a fresh reading of both the letters and syllables of Scripture.

Metaphors for Memory in Antiquity

Before we turn to the metaphors for memory that Clement employs, let us first look at a series of larger metaphors for memory in antiquity to which Clement's choice imagery can be paralleled. In her work *The Book of Memory*, Mary Carruthers analyzes a number of metaphors that the ancients employed to discuss the work of memory and recollection. The most common metaphor for memory in antiquity was the wax tablet or wax-in-seal upon which images are imprinted. Since it has clear implications for the link between memory and recollection, I will consider the wax tablet metaphor in more detail in the following chapter. For now, let us give attention to the other metaphors Carruthers investigates, beginning with what is the second most common image: the treasury or storehouse.¹⁸

The Imagery of a Treasury

As Carruthers argues, the metaphor of the wax tablet was intimately related to the concept of a "treasury." Whereas the wax tablet emphasized the process of creating a memorial image and storing the image in one's memory, the figure of a treasury referred to the contents and organization of one's memory.¹⁹ This can be seen clearly in the two English words derived from the original Latin. One stocks an "inventory" of materials, from which he composes an "invention." Indeed, there is a significant relationship between the two senses of the term. Yet, as Carruthers notes in a subsequent book on the process of "thinking" (*cogitatio* in medieval terminology), both senses of *inventio* lead to the perspective from which we may talk of

¹⁸For her most detailed discussion of metaphors for memory and recollection, see Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 18–55.

¹⁹Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 37.

someone having an "inventive mind."²⁰

Unlike the modern conception of a filing cabinet, this ancient metaphor was intended to emphasize the usefulness of the contents rather than their accuracy. Treasuries "contain 'riches,' not documents."²¹ Once one had collected these riches within the treasury of their memory, there exists a collection, an "inventory," from which one could bring images together in a single act of understanding or thought.²² The treasury therefore provided a number of various commonplaces—or to use Aristotle's term, *τόποι*—from which to draw one's knowledge. As Carruthers concludes, "every topic is in this sense a mnemonic, a structure of memory for recollection."²³

The most significant instance of this metaphor in antiquity for our purposes here may be found in Plato's *Phaedrus*. In a well-known passage towards the end of the dialogue, Socrates speaks to Phaedrus concerning the propriety and impropriety of writing.²⁴ As Socrates suggests, written words serve merely as a reminder (*ὑπομνήσαι*) for those readers who understand what the writing is about.²⁵ This is the context in which one must interpret the myth of Theuth and Thammuz in the *Phaedrus*.²⁶ Theuth was the Egyptian god who invented (*εὑρεῖν*) *inter alia* geometry, astronomy, and above all, script.²⁷ Theuth proclaims to the king, Thammuz, that

²⁰Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images*, 400-1200, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 12. She also refers synonymously to this activity of memorizing and composing anew as "creative thinking." This process of "creative thinking" (or *cogitatio*) will form the foundation to my arguments on "constellations" in chapter nine.

²¹Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 38.

²²Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 39–40.

²³Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 40.

²⁴Plato, *Phdr.* 275B–276D (LCL 36:562–569). Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 35–36, treats this passage under her consideration of the metaphor of wax tablets, but given Plato's use of "treasure" terminology directly, it seems to me relevant as it concerns the metaphor of the treasury.

²⁵Plato, *Phdr.* 275D (LCL 36:564–65)

²⁶Plato, *Phdr.* 274C–275B (LCL 36:560–65)

²⁷The use of *καὶ δὴ* clearly places the emphasis on Theuth's invention of writing in *Phdr.* 274D (LCL 36:562–63): *τοῦτον δὲ πρῶτον ἀριθμόν τε καὶ λογισμὸν εύρειν καὶ γεωμετρίαν καὶ ἀστρονομίαν, ἔτι δὲ πεττείας τε καὶ κυβείας, καὶ δὴ καὶ γράμματα*

writing is indeed a "drug for memory and wisdom" (*μνήμης τε γὰρ καὶ σοφίας φάρμακον*).²⁸

In reply, however, Thammuz argues that writing has nothing to do with memory, only reminding. For Thammuz, one should never depend upon writing instead of learning first by imprinting images upon the memory.²⁹ Writing, it appears, only produces negligence with respect to memory.

Yet, throughout the dialogue, Plato's concern is not with writing *per se*, but rather with the writing of manuals intended to serve as a substitute for live teaching.³⁰ Though Socrates prefers living discourse (*λόγον ζῶντα*),³¹ as is evident from the myth of Theuth and Thammuz, he does not condemn writing wholesale.³² And the value he does assign to writing may be seen in the following passage:

The gardens of letters he will, it seems, plant for amusement, and when he writes, he will write to treasure up reminders for himself (*έαντῷ τε ὑπομνήματα θησαυριζόμενος*), when he comes to the forgetfulness of old age, and for all who follow his tracks. He will take pleasure when he sees them putting forth tender leaves.³³

²⁸Plato, Phdr. 274E (LCL 36:562–63). I have translated *φάρμακον* as "drug" to retain the positive and negative potential of the term, either as "remedy" or as "poison." For a similar decision, see Jacques Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," in *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 70, who prefers to transliterate the term throughout his essay (*pharmokon*), though occasionally he employs the term "drug." R. Hackforth, *Plato's Phaedrus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 157, translates *φάρμακον* as "recipe," which is followed by Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 35. In the Loeb edition, Fowler chooses the term "elixir" (LCL 36:563).

²⁹Plato, Phdr. 275A (LCL 36:562–63)

³⁰Loveday Alexander, "The Living Voice: Scepticism towards the Written Word in Early Christian and in Graeco-Roman Texts," in *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, eds. David J. A. Cline, Stephen E. Fowl, and Stanley E. Porter (Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), 237–38, clearly summarizes this point. Cf. Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 35–36.

³¹Plato, Phdr. 276A (LCL 36:566–67)

³²Cf. G. R. F. Ferrari, *Listening to the Cicadas: A Study of Plato's Phaedrus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 204–22, who views Socrates' condemnation as an epilogue to the treatise, rather than a theme of the work as a whole. On the plot of the *Phaedrus*, see also Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 4–6.

³³Plato, Phdr. 276D (LCL 36:568–69): ἀλλὰ τοὺς μὲν ἐν γράμμασι κήπους, ὡς ἔουκε, παιδιᾶς χάριν σπερεῖ τε καὶ γράψει, ὅταν γράφῃ, ἔαντῷ τε ὑπομνήματα θησαυριζόμενος, εἰς τὸ λίθης γῆρας ἐὰν ἵκηται, καὶ παντὶ τῷ ταῦτὸν ἵχνος μετιόντι, ἡσθήσεται τε αὐτὸς θεωρῶν φυομένους ἀπαλούς. Here, we might also compare the definition of memory (*μνήμη*) that Sextus Empiricus attributes to Zeno the Stoic: "memory is the

In using the verb *θησαυρίζω*, I suggest that Plato is claiming that, although it should not replace live teaching, writing is useful as a storehouse—a treasury—for one's memories. Writing never usurps teaching, but it does supplement teaching. Moreover, Plato's botanical imagery alludes to further related metaphors for memory and composition, one of which is the apian imagery that Clement uses in the first chapter of the *Stromateis*.³⁴

The Imagery of Bees

Mary Carruthers shows how the imagery of bees and honey used in antiquity is directly related to the metaphor of the treasury.³⁵ As bees collect honey in their hives, so individuals collect images within the "inventory" of memory. Quintilian, in praising the skills of the most eloquent orator to cull from various disciplines, compares him to the bees who "turn various kinds of flowers and juices into that flavor of honey which no human skill can imitate."³⁶ For our purposes, the clearest illustration of this metaphor in relation to the memorial work of composition is found in Seneca's Epistle 84.

We should follow, men say, the example of the bees, who flit about and cull the flowers that are suitable for producing honey, and then arrange and assort in their cells all that they have brought in.³⁷

Much like the metaphor's use by Quintilian, Seneca maintains that we should imitate the gathering process of the bees, who cull from flowers the substances suitable for honey and

"treasury of images" (*μνήμη θησαυρισμὸς οὖσα φαντασιῶν*); see S. E., M 7.373 (SVF 1.19, fr. 64).

³⁴Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 35, suggests that Plato's terminology in this passage implies something along the lines of a florilegium already.

³⁵See Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 42–45. It is possible that Plato's metaphor for knowledge in *Theaetetus*, the aviary (*περιστερέων*) in which one possesses a multitude of birds as one maintains a multitude of images in his memory, is making a similar point to the bee metaphor in other writers. See Th. 197C–D (LCL 123:206–07). Cf. Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 42–43.

³⁶Quintilian, Inst. 1.10.7 (LCL 124:216–17). To be sure, Quintilian attributes this activity to "mute creatures" (*muta animalia*), but his references to flowers and honey show that he clearly has bees in mind.

³⁷Seneca, Ep. 84.3 (LCL 76:276–77): *Apes, ut aiunt, debemus imitari, quae vagantur et flores ad mel faciendum idoneos carpunt, deinde quicquid attulere, disponunt ac per favos digerunt et*

store them in cells for subsequent use. But Seneca moves beyond Quintilian to apply this process of memory to the invention and composition that comes with reading and writing.

And reading, I think, is necessary, in the first place, to keep me from being satisfied with myself alone, and then, after I have learned what others have sought (*quaesita*) by their studies, to enable me to examine their discoveries (*de inventis iudicem*) and to meditate upon discoveries still to be made (*cogitem de inveniendis*).³⁸

For Seneca, it is the process of creative exegesis that forms the context in which one ought to imitate the bees. He continues,

We also ought to copy these bees, and sift whatever we have gathered from a varied course of reading (*ex diversa lectione*), for such things are better preserved if they are kept separate; then, using our innate care and skill, we blend these various tastes into one savor (*in unum saporem*) that, even if it is apparent from whence it was taken, will yet be something different.³⁹

Seneca proposes that the images, the memories, one retains from his diverse reading should be blended into one distinct and savory mixture. For Seneca, then, the imagery of bees and honey clearly illustrates the process of creative exegesis for which I have been arguing. The presence of a text provides opportunity for discoveries to be stored in the inventory of memory. Then, one may recollect and gather these images into a new composition, which supplements the source text, but nevertheless, as an exegesis and commentary on the source, is itself a new creation. In Ep. 84, Seneca adds one additional image for this process of memory and recollection—the figure of digestion.

The Imagery of Digestion

For Seneca, reading is not merely a process of consumption, but it is entirely a process of digestion. We have already seen Seneca's description of the bee, who collects a variety of

³⁸Seneca, Ep. 84.1 (LCL 76:276–77): *Sunt autem, ut existimo, necessariae, primum ne sim me uno contentus; deinde ut, cum ab aliis quaesita cognovero, tum et de inventis iudicem et cogitem de inveniendis.*

³⁹Seneca, Ep. 84.5 (LCL 76:278–79): *nos quoque has apes debemus imitari et quaecumque ex diversa lectione congesimus, separare, melius enim distincta servantur, deinde adhibita ingenii nostri cura et facultate in unum saporem varia illa libamenta confundere, ut etiam si apparuerit, unde sumptum sit, aliud tamen esse quam unde sumptum est, appareat.*

materials from the flowers to blend into honey, and this image recalls a second motif by which Seneca illustrates the process of reading and composition.

This [process of blending disparate materials into one substance] is what we see nature doing in our own bodies without any labor on our part . . . we should see to it that whatever we have absorbed should not be allowed to remain unchanged, or it will be no part of us. We must digest it (*concoquamus illa*); otherwise it will only enter our memory and not pass on to become a part of our abilities (*alioqui in memoriam ibunt, non in ingenium*). . . . This is what our mind (*animus noster*) should do: it should hide away (*abscondat*) all the materials by which it has been aided, and bring to light (*ostendat*) only what it has made of them.⁴⁰

Though the metaphor has changed, the point clearly remains the same. As images enter the memory, one must digest these materials—or "hide them away," presumably in an inventory—in order to recollect them for the process of composition, commentary, and as I would label this entire process, creative exegesis. As Carruthers concludes, "Merely to store memory by reading is an incomplete process without composition, for composing is the ruminative, digesting process, the means by which reading is domesticated to ourselves."⁴¹ The metaphor of digestion for meditation, memory, and even invention or creative exegesis, has a long history in Jewish and Christian tradition. We may simply note a few examples, each of which reflect on the Levitical law concerning animals that "chew the cud" (Lev. 11:3).⁴²

The Letter of Aristeas proposes that the description of the animals in Leviticus 11:3 as those

⁴⁰Seneca, *Ep. 84.6–8* (LCL 76:278–81): *Quod in corpore nostro videmus sine ulla opera nostra facere naturam: alimenta, quae accepimus, quamdiu in sua qualitate perdurant et solida innatant stomacho, onera sunt; at cum ex eo, quod erant, mutata sunt, tum demum in vires et in sanguinem transeunt. Idem in his, quibus aluntur ingenia, praestemus, ut quaecumque hausimus, non patiamur integra esse, ne aliena sint. Concoquamus illa; alioqui in memoriam ibunt, non in ingenium. Adsentiamur illis fideliter et nostra faciamus, ut unum quiddam fiat ex multis, sicut unus numerus fit ex singulis, cum minores summas et dissidentes computatio una comprehendit. Hoc faciat animus noster: omnia, quibus est adiutus, abscondat, ipsum tantum ostendat, quod efficit*

This translation is my own, though in my translation of *non in ingenium*, I have followed Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 238.

⁴¹Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 238.

⁴²On the shared exegetical traditions between Jews and Christians on the food laws, see Gregory E. Sterling, "'The School of Sacred Laws': The Social Setting of Philo's Treatises," *Vigilae Christianae* 53 (1999), 152–54.

"which part the hoof and chew the cud" is a clear expression for memory (*τὸ τῆς μνήμης*).⁴³

The Levitical description calls to mind the Torah's instruction to remember the deeds the Lord had accomplished for his people (cf. Deut. 7:18). Significantly, the *Letter of Aristeas* calls attention to the fact that God had ordered the people to "put the divine oracles (*τιθέναι τὰ λόγια*) upon our gates and doors as a remembrance of God (*πρὸς τὸ μνεῖαν εἶναι θεοῦ*)."⁴⁴ The oracles form the foundation upon which one should meditate upon (*μελετᾶν*) the works of God.⁴⁵ The metaphor of "chewing the cud" is thus an "excellent analogy" (*τὸ περισσὸν τῆς εὐλογίας*) to describe the process of memory.⁴⁶

Philo of Alexandria continues this exegetical tradition of understanding the Levitical description of animals which "chew the cud" as a description of memory and meditation. Philo, even more clearly than the *Letter of Aristeas*, places this act of meditation in a scholarly context, focusing on the process of teaching and learning. In book four of *On the Special Laws*, Philo offers the following description of "chewing the cud":

For just as a cud-chewing animal (*τὸ μηρυκώμενον ζῷον*) after biting through the food keeps it at rest in the gullet, again after a bit draws it up and masticates it and then passes it on to the belly, so the pupil (*ὁ παιδευόμενος*), after receiving through his ears the principles and theories of wisdom from his teacher (*παρὰ τοῦ διδάσκοντος*), prolongs the process of learning, as he cannot at once apprehend and grasp them securely, until he calls up each thing that he has heard by memory in constant meditations (*ἔκαστον ὅν ἡκουσεν ἀναπολῶν μνήμῃ συνεχέσι μελέταις*)—which are the cement of conceptions—he stamps a firm impression of them on his soul.⁴⁷

For Philo, "chewing the cud" recalled the process of memory, meditation, and recollection, as he employs the language that we will find in the Christian tradition of the second century C.E. Moreover, the link of the metaphor with the process of reading and

⁴³Ep. Arist. 153–54 (SC 89:176–77)

⁴⁴Ep. Arist. 158 (SC 89:176–79)

⁴⁵Ep. Arist. 160 (SC 89:178–79)

⁴⁶Ep. Arist. 161 (SC 89:178–79)

⁴⁷Philo, *Spec.* 4.107 (LCL 341:72–73)

commentary is further clarified in Philo's treatise *On Husbandry*.

For as the animal that chews the cud (*τὸ μηρυκάμενον*) renders digestible the food taken in before as it rises again to the surface, so the soul of the keen learner (*φιλομαθοῦς*), when it has by listening taken in this and that proposition, does not hand them over to forgetfulness (*λήθη μὲν αὐτὰ οὐ παραδῖδωσιν*), but in stillness all alone, he turns (*ἀναπολεῖ*) them one by one quite quietly, and so comes to the recollection of them all (*εἰς ἀνάμνησιν τῶν πάντων ἔρχεται*).⁴⁸

Notice how Philo has here employed the language that we noticed earlier from the *Phaedrus*. The keen learner does not hand the materials he has heard to forgetfulness (*λήθη*), but instead he meditates upon them—he "turns them"—and is successful in the recollection of all of them as needed. We will deal with the process of recollection in the next chapter, but it is significant to note here that Philo's use of *ἀνάμνησιν* in this instance has no trace of Platonic epistemology built upon the preexistence of the soul. It is possible that Philo here has some consideration of a process of dialectic in mind, which would certainly accord with Plato's and Aristotle's conception of recollection.⁴⁹ But the key point from these texts is that Philo's arguments, built on the Levitical description of "chewing the cud," are centered on memory, meditation, and recollection, a perspective that will continue in the Christian tradition. We may point quickly to the *Epistle of Barnabas* as one who draws upon this Jewish exegetical tradition. In *Ep. Barn. 10:11*, the author clearly describes "chewing the cud" in the language of meditation and memory.

What then does he mean? Cleave to those who fear the Lord, with those who meditate in their heart on the distinction of the word which they have received (*μετὰ τῶν μελετώντων δὲ ἔλαβον διάσταλμα ρήματος ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ*), with those who tell of the ordinances of the Lord and keep them, with those who know that meditation is a work of gladness and who chew the cud of the word of the Lord (*μετὰ τῶν εἰδότων ὅτι ἡ μελέτη ἐστὶν ἔργον εὐφροσύνης καὶ ἀναμαρυκωμένων τὸν λόγον κυρίου*).⁵⁰

⁴⁸Philo, *Agr.* 132 (LCL 247:174–75)

⁴⁹On this possibility, cf. Philo, *Agr.* 145 (LCL 247:180–81)

⁵⁰*Ep. Barn.* 10:11

Clement's Metaphors for Memory

Thus, we have seen that, in addition to the metaphor of the wax tablet, three other powerful analogies were offered in antiquity for memory and composition. We saw from Plato's *Phaedrus* that memory, especially in the context of written notes (*ὑπομνήματα*), can serve as a treasury for recollection in the future. The imagery of bees was for Seneca an especially fruitful metaphor for the process of culling material from various places to arrange into another productive composition. Seneca also provided a third metaphor that taught the same lesson as the bees. Just as an individual absorbs various foods into the body and the process of digestion mixes these foods into a single substance, so we should gather material from things that we have read and "digest it," to create a new work in the process of composition. Moreover, the striking fact of each of these metaphors is their application to the process of reading and writing. Thus, it should come as no surprise to see Clement revive such metaphors in the context of scriptural exegesis.

Treasury

We have already seen Clement's use of the treasury metaphor in his apology for Christian figural reading in Str. 5. From Isaiah 45:3, Clement emphasizes the Spirit's promise to provide hidden treasures (*θησαυρὸς ἀποκρύφους*) in the Scriptures. For Clement, Scripture is a storehouse that contains the "treasures of God" (*θησαυρὸὶ τοῦ θεοῦ*). But, in a manner that hearkens back to the Aristotelian description of recollection, these treasures are not easy to discover. In fact, although Clement identifies the treasure as wisdom, he does not leave this unqualified. It is a "wisdom that is hard to catch" (*ἡ δυσθήρατός ἐστι σοφία*).⁵¹ Clement employs the hunting imagery that Aristotle was fond of using to describe the process of memorial recollection.⁵² It is also the imagery of the treasury that permits Clement's association

⁵¹Str. 5.23.2 (GCS 15:340)

⁵²I will discuss the hunting imagery further in the next chapter on the process of recollecting one's memories.

of Isaiah 45:3 with Colossians 1:2 later in book five of the Stromateis.

Clement also employs the imagery of the treasury at the end of his *Paedagogus*.⁵³ Clement is speaking about the transfer of the Christian from an education at the hands of the divine Pedagogue to the education given by the Teacher. Clement claims that, although the pedagogical process of both instructors was centered on the interpretation of Scripture, the Teacher is explicitly concerned with revealing the treasures collected in the storehouse of Scripture. Clement gives voice to the Teacher, who calls to his children with the following exhortation:

Follow, then, the good way that I will expound (*ἐξηγήσωμαι*) for you, O little one! Lend an attentive ear to me and hear: "And I will give you hidden treasures, concealed, invisible" to the Gentiles, but visible to you (cf. Isa. 45:3). I will give you "never-failing treasures" (cf. Wisd. 7:14) which the Apostle marveled at when he said, "O the depth of the riches and of the wisdom!" (Rom. 11:33) Many are the treasures furnished by the one God, some revealed in the Law, others through the Prophets, and others directly from the mouth of God.⁵⁴

Given Clement's focus on the scriptural exegesis at the center of this divine pedagogy in *Paed.* 3.87, it seems likely that the Teacher's vow—*ἐξηγήσωμαι*—should be read as a promise to open the Scriptures to his student.⁵⁵ Scripture is for Clement a storehouse, which holds its treasures, not only in the Law and the Prophets, but also in the words given directly from the divine mouth of the incarnate Christ. The scriptural texts—both Old and New Testaments—were not only words to be read. They were also treasures to be stored in one's memory, which could be recollected through a myriad of associations in one's creative exegesis.⁵⁶

⁵³*Paed.* 3.87 (GCS 12:283–84)

⁵⁴*Paed.* 3.87.3–4 (GCS 12:284)

⁵⁵See LSJ, s.v., "*ἐξηγέομαι*," II.3

⁵⁶It seems likely, in my view, that this is the reason for Clement's claim in Str. 1.179.4 (GCS 15:110), that Scripture is *οὐ «μία Μύκονος»*. This will be the subject of the next two chapters.

Bees

Clement appropriates the imagery of bees in the first chapter of the *Stromateis*, as he describes the exegetical ability of Pantaenus, the final teacher that Clement had heard after tracking him down. The description is vivid and resembles the words of Seneca's Ep. 84:

I fell in with the final one—supreme in mastery. I tracked him down to his hiding place in Egypt and stayed with him. He was the true Sicilian bee, plucking flowers from the meadow of the prophets and apostles and producing a pure substance of true knowledge in the souls of his hearers.⁵⁷

As in Seneca's epistle, Clement highlights the process of Pantaenus's creative exegesis, drawing materials from his reading and generating a new substance—true knowledge—for his audience. But Clement has added a new feature to the metaphor. For the first time in the tradition, he identifies the object text of the bee's culling action. The flowers are plucked specifically "from the meadow of the prophets and apostles" (*προφητικοῦ τε καὶ ἀποστολικοῦ λειμῶνος*). Clement is perhaps also giving the first example of an Old Testament and New Testament distinction in the *Stromateis*, which he will expand in later books. The significance of Clement's employment of the bee imagery, a stock metaphor for memory and composition in antiquity, is to be found in the application he gives it to Christian creative exegesis. Moreover, Clement links his own exegesis with the trade of his masters. After suggesting that Pantaenus and his other unnamed teachers were faithful in preserving the teaching of the apostles, Clement claims with respect to his teachers, "I think that they will be pleased—I do not mean that they will be pleased with my particular exposition, but simply in my preservation of the tradition with respect to my interpretation."⁵⁸ Clement situates his own exegetical strategies

⁵⁷Str. 1.11.2 (GCS 15:8–9): *ὑστάτῳ δὲ περιτυχῶν* (*δυνάμει δὲ οὖτος πρῶτος ἦν*) *ἀνεπαυσάμην, ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ θηράσας λεληθότα. Σικελικὴ τῷ ὅντι ἦν μέλιττα προφητικοῦ τε καὶ ἀποστολικοῦ λειμῶνος τὰ ἄνθη δρεπόμενος ἀκήρατόν τι γνώσεως χρῆμα ταῖς τῶν ἀκροωμένων ἐνεγένησε ψυχαῖς*

⁵⁸Str. 1.12.1 (GCS 15:9): *καὶ εὖ οὖδ' ὅτι ἀγαλλιάσονται, οὐχὶ τῇ ἐκφράσει ἡσθέντες λέγω τῇδε, μόνη δὲ τῇ κατὰ τὴν ὑποσημείωσιν τηρήσει.* I have translated the noun *ὑποσημείωσις* as "interpretation" (cf. Str. 2.1.2). For this reading, see PGL, s.v. *ὑποσημείωσις*, II. Cf. PGL, s.v. *ὑποσημείωσις*, I, which argues for the meaning "summary," but which uses this passage from Str. 1.12.1 as its only instance in patristic literature prior to Cyril of Alexandria's use of the term in his *Commentary on John* in the fifth century C.E. I am not convinced, however, by this

within that tradition that he learned from his teachers, centered upon the work of memory and recollection pictured by the metaphor of the bee.

"Chewing the Cud"

In his Ep. 84, Seneca compared the metaphor of the bee culling from flowers to the more natural, bodily metaphor of digestion. And while Clement does not employ the digestion metaphor in this way, he does have two substantial passages where he interacts with the biblical image of "chewing the cud," which we saw earlier as a common trope in discussion of memory and recollection in the Jewish and Christian tradition.⁵⁹

In the *Paedagogus*, we find the following explanation:

Everything "that divides the hoof and chews the cud" is clean, because the divided hoof indicates an evenly balanced justice, which chews the cud of its own food of justice; namely, the word that enters from the outside through instruction, in a similar way to food, and, once inside, it is regurgitated as if from the stomach of the mind (*ἀναπεμπόμενον ὥσπερ ἐκ κοιλίας τῆς διανοίας*) as a logical recollection (*εἰς ἀνάμνησιν λογικήν*). The just man ruminates (*μηρυκάζει*) on the spiritual nourishment, since he has the word upon his mouth; and justice undoubtedly divides the hoof, in that it both sanctifies in this life and prepares us as well for the life to come.⁶⁰

Andrew Itter has argued that this passage reveals Clement's desire to "develop a theory of 'rational anamnesis' (*ἀνάμνησιν λογικήν*) that synthesized Platonic thought and New Testament revelation."⁶¹ Itter notes that Clement's use of *ἀνάμνησις* does not develop in any

arrangement and believe that Clement intends "interpretation" in both cases. Cf. Irvine, *Making of Textual Culture*, 250.

⁵⁹In Str. 5.51.2–6 (GCS 15:361), Clement interacts with the reading of Ep. Barn. 10:11, which we noted earlier. Because he essentially copies the reading from Barnabas, I will not consider it here, beyond simply noting that Clement had direct familiarity with the correlation of memory, meditation, and chewing the cud, at least through Barnabas and perhaps through Philo as well.

⁶⁰Paed. 3.76.1–2 (GCS 12:278): ἀλλα δὲ ὅμοιας ἀλληγορεῖται. Τίσω οὖν οἰκεωτέον; τοῖς δικαίοις, πάλιν ἀλληγορῶν φησιν. Πᾶν γάρ «διχηλοῦν καὶ μαρυκάμενον» καθαρόν ἔστιν, ὅτι τὸ διχηλοῦν δικαιοσύνην ἐμφαίνει τὴν ἴσοστάσιον μηρυκάζουσαν τὴν οἰκείαν δικαιοσύνης τροφήν, τὸν λόγον ἔκτοσθεν μὲν εἰσιόντα κατὰ ταῦτα τῇ τροφῇ διὰ κατηχήσεως, ἐνδοθεν δὲ ἀναπεμπόμενον ὥσπερ ἐκ κοιλίας τῆς διανοίας εἰς ἀνάμνησιν λογικήν. Μηρυκάζει δὲ ὁ δίκαιος τὴν πνευματικήν τροφὴν ἀνὰ στόμα ἔχων τὸν λόγον, καὶ διχηλεῖ ἡ δικαιοσύνη εἰκότως, κανταῦθα ἀγιάζουσα καὶ εἰς τὸν μέλλοντα παραπέμπουσα αἰώνα.

way directly from the New Testament texts upon which later doctrines of recollection will center.⁶² Itter suggests that Clement wants his readers to intentionally connect his work to a Platonic epistemology, which can be seen in his use of *ὑπομνήματα* in the lengthy title of the Stromateis.⁶³ Nevertheless, Itter does confess that the "synthesis" he sees in Clement's work with Platonic thought "relies on the mediation of the reader's intellectual capacity to harmonize seemingly incongruous material as it is set out in the Stromateis."⁶⁴ Itter may well be correct that Clement deliberately intends his readers to relate his work to Platonic thought; this has long been established in scholarship on Clement.⁶⁵ What is less apparent, however, is that Clement deliberately makes this connection with his understanding of *ἀνάμνησις*, a claim that Itter explicitly promotes, appealing to the passage from *Paed.* 3.76 that I quoted above.⁶⁶ It seems more likely, though, given the digestion metaphor inherent to the passage from the *Paedagogus*, that Clement employs recollection here and elsewhere in the ways that recall the art of memory with its foundations in Aristotelian thought; that is, a process of recollection with deliberate rhetorical and exegetical ends in mind. For Clement, this recollective memory is a fundamental activity of creative exegesis.

This position is bolstered when we consider a similar passage from the seventh book of the Stromateis. Clement once again identifies "chewing the cud" with the process of scriptural

⁶¹ Andrew C. Itter, *Esoteric Teaching in the Stromateis of Clement of Alexandria*, (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 113–39; this quote is found on p.113.

⁶² On the development of a doctrine of anamnesis with respect to the liturgy, see Odo Casel, "Das Mysteriengedächtnis der Meßliturgie im Lichte der Tradition," *JLW* 6 (1926): 113–204; Nils A. Dahl, "Anamnesis. Mémoire et commémoration dans le Christianisme primitive," *ST* 1 (1948): 69–95; and B. Botte, "Problèmes de l'Anamnèse," *JEH* 5 (1954): 16–24.

⁶³ Itter, *Esoteric Teaching*, 113–15.

⁶⁴ Itter, *Esoteric Teaching*, 113–14.

⁶⁵ Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, remains the standard here. See also Charles Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913); Osborn, *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria*; J. Wytzes, "The Twofold Way (I): Platonic Influences in the Work of Clement of Alexandria," *VC* 11 (1957): 226–45; J. Wytzes, "The Twofold Way (II): Platonic Influences in the Work of Clement of Alexandria," *VC* 14 (1960): 129–53; and Wyrwa, *Die christliche Platonaneignung*.

⁶⁶ Itter, *Esoteric Teaching*, 113: "Clement, however, develops a theory of "rational anamnesis (*ἀνάμνησιν λογικήν*)" that synthesized Platonic thought and New Testament revelation."

meditation.

Scripture teaches that the animals lifted for sacrifice which divide the hoof and chew the cud are clean and acceptable to God, since the righteous make their approach to the Father and the Son through their faith (for this is meant by the stability of those that divide the hoof) and they meditate and ponder over the oracles of God by night and day (*τῶν «τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ» «νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν μελετώντων» καὶ ἀναπεμπαζομένων*) in the mental receptacle of knowledge (which is an exercise of knowledge that the law describes figurally as chewing the cud by a clean animal).⁶⁷

Clement's verb of choice here is *μελετάω*, which was a distinct technical term in the Hellenistic school tradition and was already used in a similar fashion by Irenaeus.⁶⁸ As in the passage from the *Paedagogus*, Clement specifically links the scriptural figure of chewing the cud with the memorization and meditation of the scriptural text. Indeed, we see a natural association of Leviticus 11 with Psalm 1, since both texts speak—in Clement's mind—of textual memorization and study. Thus, in the midst of an implicit argument for recollection as a process of literary invention, Clement models just how one association might take place. Two similar items are associated such that the passages may be read together for mutual benefit.

Mary Carruthers rightly identified such digestive activities as "powerful and tenacious" metaphors for the "complementary activities of reading and composition, collection and

⁶⁷Str. 7.109.2 (GCS 17:77): *τὰ μὲν γὰρ διχηλοῦντα καὶ μηρυκισμὸν ἀνάγοντα τῶν ἱερείων καθαρὰ καὶ δεκτὰ τῷ θεῷ παραδίδωσιν ἡ γραφή, ὡς ἀν εἰς πατέρα καὶ εἰς νιὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῶν δικαίων τὴν πορείαν ποιουμένων (αὕτη γάρ ἡ τῶν διχηλούντων ἐδραιότης) τῶν «τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ» «νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν μελετώντων» καὶ ἀναπεμπαζομένων ἐν τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς τῶν μαθημάτων δοχείῳ, ἥν * καὶ συνάσκησιν γνωστικὴν ὑπάρχουσαν καθαροῦ ζώου μηρυκισμὸν ὁ νόμος ἀλληγορεῖ.*

⁶⁸On the exercises of the Hellenistic schools, see Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Michael Chase (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1995), esp. 81–125; and Loveday Alexander, "Memory and Tradition in the Hellenistic Schools," in *Jesus in Memory: Traditions in Oral and Scribal Perspectives*, eds. Werner H. Kelber and Samuel Byrskog (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 113–54. Hadot rightly sees the correlation between the Christian use of *μελετάν* and the earlier philosophical exercises: "Like philosophical meditation, Christian meditation flourished by using all available means of rhetoric and oratorical amplification, and by mobilizing all possible resources of the imagination" (133). For Irenaeus' use of *μελετάν* as a recollection and rehearsal of texts, see *haer.* 1.9.4 (SC 263:146–47). Jane M. F. Heath, "Nomina Sacra and Sacra Memoria Before the Monastic Age," *JTS* 61 (2010), 534–35, has noted rightly that *μελετάν* has proved a "stumbling block" for English translations of Irenaeus' argument on the Homeric cento, due precisely to a misunderstanding of its role in literary analysis and reading.

recollection."⁶⁹ When taken together, these metaphors reveal the role of memorization in the process of reading and study in the ancient world. Each of the metaphors that we have considered here—the treasury, the industrious bee, and digestion or rumination—suggest not only the importance of memory to the process of reading, but they equally imply that the process of recollection, of invention and creative exegesis, is intimately related to reading. I agree, then, with Carruthers who suggests that these two activities are so related that, in fact, "the 'art of memory' is actually the 'art of recollection'."⁷⁰ How then should we understand this process of recollection?

⁶⁹Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 207.

⁷⁰Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 23–37.

Reading as "Creative Exegesis", Part II: Scripture and Recollection

When they are examined with respect to other spaces, the Scriptures I have already discussed will yield other mysteries.¹

In the previous chapter, I examined the various metaphors in Clement's work that showed his emphasis on the work of memorization and composition in the process of interpreting the Scriptures. In this chapter, I will consider the significance of this process of memory, inasmuch as it is also—and perhaps more fundamentally—an "art of recollection."² Clement employs the common trope of recollection as an investigation or a search. Taken together, Clement presents the entire process of memory and recollection as an art of literary invention, a hermeneutical performance that displays the creativity of scriptural exegesis.³ This chapter will proceed in two phases. First, I will examine ancient reflections on recollection, in order to situate Clement and early Christian readers in a proper context. Second, I will analyze Clement's use of these ancient perspectives in promoting this "art of recollection" in the practice of biblical exegesis.

¹Str. 1.32.3 (GCS 15:21): *κατ' ἄλλους μέντοι γε τόπους ἐξεταζόμεναι αἱ προειρημέναι γραφαὶ ἄλλα μνηστήρια μημνύονται παρίστανται*

²This is the argument that we saw at the end of the previous chapter from Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 23–37.

³For the language of rhetorical invention as a "hermeneutical performance," see Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 151–78. On the ways that *inventio* reflect creativity and imagination, see Carruthers, *Book of Memory*, 10–12.

Recollection as Investigation and Invention

"Recollecting Is a Sort of Reasoning"

The earliest extant treatise exclusively on the subject of memory and recollection is Aristotle's *De memoria et reminiscentia*. In the *De memoria*, Aristotle defines memory as a mental image (*φάντασμα*) that is inscribed on the part of the body that constitutes memory.⁴ Not only, however, does Aristotle describe memory more vividly as an "imprint or drawing in us," like a picture,⁵ but he also describes how this memory comes about. "The change that occurs marks in a sort of imprint, as it were, of the sense-image, as people who seal things with signet rings."⁶ Here, Aristotle employs the metaphor for memory of the wax seal, derived most likely from Plato, who had already used the term *δακτυλίοις* ("signet ring") in his version of the metaphor.⁷ It is the second chapter of the *De memoria* that will concern us here, as Aristotle devotes the entirety of the second part of the treatise to the process of recollection (*τὸ ἀναμνήσκεσθαι*). Aristotle offers the following definition of recollection: "recollecting is, as it were, a sort of reasoning (*συλλογισμός*). For in recollecting, a man reasons that he formerly

⁴Aristotle, Mem. 451a14–16 (LCL 288:296–97). Richard Sorabji, Aristotle on Memory, (London: Duckworth, 2004), 14, notes that Aristotle is not always consistent in his discussion of "what" memory is. At Mem. 450a30, Aristotle seems to suggest that memory is the imprint of a sense image (*οἶν τύπον τινὰ τοῦ αἰσθήματος*), but, as Sorabji rightly claims, in Mem. 451a14–16, it is clear that "it is the *phantasma*, the having of which is said to be memory." Thus, it seems likely that the "picture-like effect," to use Sorabji's term for the imprint in 450a30, is simply a more vivid description of the *φάντασμα* that is memory. For a broader discussion of *φάντασμα* as mental images, see Aristotle, DA 431a16; 431b2; 432a3–14. See also Malcolm Schofield, "Aristotle on the Imagination," in Essays on Aristotle's *De anima*, eds. Martha C. Nussbaum and Amélie Rorty (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 249–77.

⁵Aristotle, Mem. 450b18–32 (LCL 288:294–97).

⁶Aristotle, Mem. 450a30–32 (LCL 288:294–95): *ἡ γὰρ γνομένη κίνησις ἐνσημαίνεται οἶν τύπον τινὰ τοῦ αἰσθήματος, καθάπερ οἱ σφραγίζομενοι τοῖς δακτυλίοις.*

⁷Cf. Plato, Thet. 191D; 193B–C (LCL 123:184–85; 190–93). Sorabji, Aristotle on Memory, 5n.1, also notes that, beyond the lexical similarities between Plato and Aristotle in this metaphor for memory, both philosophers share the idea "that memory and imagination involve the seeing of internal pictures." On this shared idea, see the passages from Aristotle in the previous note and compare with Plato, Phlb. 38E–39D (LCL 164:298–303); Phd. 73D (LCL 36:254–55); Ti. 26D (LCL 234:44–47).

saw, or heard, or had some such experience, and recollecting is, as it were, a sort of search (*ζήτησίς*)."⁸

It is significant that Aristotle describes recollection as a search. It is an investigation for material that has been placed in the memory but which now must be recalled after the passage of time.⁹ But for what is the object of this search? The answer is provided in Mem. 451b3–5.

"When he recovers previously held scientific knowledge (*ἐπιστήμην*), or perception (*αἴσθησιν*), or that of which we were earlier saying that the state connected with it is memory, this is, and is the time of, recollecting (*τὸ ἀναμνήσκεσθαι*) one of the things mentioned."¹⁰ Here, Aristotle distinguishes recollection from re-learning. In his view, recollection occurs when one, of his own accord, remembers something he had previously encountered. Re-learning, on the other hand, depends on another individual. Whether this is an accurate distinction between recollection and re-learning need not detain us here.¹¹ The significant point is that Aristotle locates this process of recollection as an investigation by one's own agency into previously encountered material, housed as images in the memory.

How then does the process of recollection occur? Aristotle continues with a specific description of the activity.

But one must get a starting-point (*ἀρχής*). And this is why people are thought sometimes to recollect starting from "places" (*ἀπὸ τόπων*). The reason is that people go quickly from one thing to another—from milk to white, from white to air, and from this to fluid, from which one remembers (*ἐμνήσθη*) autumn, the season one is seeking (*ἐπιζητῶν*). In general in every case the middle also looks like a starting-point. For if no sooner, a person will remember when he comes to this, or else he will no

⁸Aristotle, Mem. 453a10–13 (LCL 288:310–11): *τὸ ἀναμνήσκεσθαι ἐστιν οἶν συλλογισμός τις· ὅτι γὰρ πρότερον εἶδεν ἢ ἤκουσεν ἢ τι τοιοῦτον ἔπαθε, συλλογίζεται ὁ ἀναμνησκόμενος, καὶ ἐστιν οἶν ζήτησίς τις.*

⁹We may note Aristotle's insistence on the elapse of time to the process of recollection in Mem. 451a31–b6 (LCL 288:298–301).

¹⁰Aristotle, Mem. 451b2–5 (LCL 288:300–01): *ἀλλ’ ὅταν ἀναλαμβάνῃ ἢν πρότερον εἶχεν ἐπιστήμην ἢ αἰσθησιν ἢ οὖ ποτὲ τὴν ἔξιν ἐλέγομεν μνήμην, τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ καὶ τότε τὸ 5ἀναμνήσκεσθαι τῶν εἰρημένων τι.*

¹¹Sorabji, Aristotle on Memory, 37–40, has a helpful discussion on this point, concluding that Aristotle was wrong on this point. In his view, Plato's allowance for re-learning to occur on one's own accord (as in the dialogue of the *Meno*) is more accurate.

longer remember from any position, as for example if someone were to think of the things denoted by A B Γ Δ E Z H Θ. For if he has not remembered at A, he will remember at E for from here he can move in either direction to Δ or to Z. But if he was not seeking one of these, after going to Z he will remember, if he is searching for H or Θ, or if he is not, he will remember after going to Δ. And so in all cases.¹²

I want to note two points from this detailed description of recollection. First, notice that Aristotle once again describes the process as a search. From a starting-point, one seeks (*ἐπιζητῶν*) for the memory through a sequence of nodes. In fact, Aristotle elsewhere describes this progression through the sequence as a hunting excursion:

We hunt (*θηρεύομεν*) for the successor, starting in our thoughts from the present or from something else, and from something similar, or opposite, or neighboring. By this means recollection occurs (*ἡ ἀνάμνησις*). For the changes connected with these things in some cases are the same, in others are together, and in others include a part, so that the remainder which one underwent after that part is small. Sometimes, then, people search (*ζητοῦσι*) in this way.¹³

Indeed, throughout the *De memoria*, Aristotle's preferred terms for recollection (*ἡ ἀνάμνησις*) invoke an investigation or a hunt, as one progresses from one point to another along the series.

Second, Aristotle offers in Mem. 452a12 an example of the association of ideas that ground his process of recollection. In the example he offers, it seems most likely that Aristotle proceeds from milk to white to air and so on because of a similarity that he sees in the images. In Mem. 451b18–22, however, he notes that, although one could recollect images from similarity (*ἀφ' ὁμοίου*), one could just as easily associate nodes by the fact that they are

¹²Aristotle, Mem. 452a12–24 (LCL 288:304–05): δεῖ δὲ λαβέσθαι ἀρχῆς. διὸ ἀπὸ τόπων δοκοῦσιν ἀναμνήσκεσθαι ἐνίστε. τὸ δ' αἴτιον ὅτι ταχὺ ἀπ' ἄλλου ἐπ' ἄλλο ἔρχονται, οἷον ἀπὸ γάλακτος ἐπὶ λευκόν, ἀπὸ λευκοῦ δ' ἐπ' ἀέρα, καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου ἐφ' ὑγρόν, ἀφ' οὐδὲ ἐμνήσθη μετοπώρου, ταύτην ἐπιζητῶν τὴν ὥραν. οὐκεὶ δὴ καθόλου ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ μέσον πάντων· εἰ γάρ μὴ πρότερον, ὅταν ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἔλθῃ, μνησθήσεται, ἡ οὐκέτ' οὐδὲ ἄλλοθεν, οἷον εἴ τις νοήσειν ἐφ' ὧν ΑΒΓΔΕΖΗΘ· εἰ γάρ μὴ ἐπὶ τοῦ Α μέμνηται, ἐπὶ τοῦ Ε ἐμνήσθη· ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ ἐπ' ἄμφω κινηθῆναι ἐνδέχεται, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ Δ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ Ζ. εἰ δὲ μὴ τούτων τι ἐπιζητεῖ, ἐπὶ τὸ Ζ ἔλθων μνησθήσεται, εἰ τὸ Η ἡ τὸ Θ ἐπιζητεῖ. εἰ δὲ μή, ἐπὶ τὸ Δ· καὶ οὕτως ἀεί.

¹³Aristotle, Mem. 451b18–23 (LCL 288:300–03):

διὸ καὶ τὸ ἐφεξῆς θηρεύομεν νοήσαντες ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ἡ ἄλλου 20τινός, καὶ ἀφ' ὁμοίου ἡ ἐναντίου ἡ τοῦ σύνεγγυς. διὰ τοῦτο γίνεται ἡ ἀνάμνησις· αἱ γὰρ κινήσεις τούτων τῶν μὲν αἱ αὐταί, τῶν δ' ἄμα, τῶν δὲ μέρος ἔχουσιν, ὥστε τὸ λοιπὸν μικρὸν ὁ ἐκινήθη μετ' ἐκεῖνο. ζητοῦσι μὲν οὖν οὕτω

opposite (*ἐναντίον*) or even simply neighboring (*σύνεγγυς*) within the series.¹⁴

To be sure, Aristotle confesses that these nodes can appear as "places" (*τόπων*), but Aristotle's arguments in the *De memoria* should be distinguished from the "place-system" as a strictly mnemonic device, especially as later described by the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and thus transmitted to the Middle Ages.¹⁵ As can be seen from his example, although milk serves as the starting-point, from which Aristotle investigates until he discovers autumn, any of these nodes could serve as a starting-point, a location from which to search for any one of the others. And though it is different from the architectural mnemonic developed in the later Roman tradition, Aristotle's treatise does provide a philosophical explanation for the recollective activity of using associations to proceed between a variety of spaces in one's memory.¹⁶ It was this explanation that was to serve as the foundation for later conceptions of memory and, especially, recollection.

"The Arrangement of Spaces Will Preserve the Arrangement of Things"

For instance, after providing the well-known story of Simonides' recollection of banquet guests based on the seats around the table, Cicero continues in the *De oratore* with the following description of recollection:

For those who would train this faculty must select spaces (*locos*) and form mental images of the things they wish to remember and store those images in these spaces (*in eis locis collocanda*). The result will be that the arrangement of the spaces (*locorum ordo*) will preserve the arrangement of the things (*ordinem rerum*), and the images of the things (*rerum effigies*) will designate the things themselves (*res ipsas*). Thus, we shall employ the

¹⁴Cf. Sorabji, Aristotle on Memory, 42–46. These three possibilities are similar to at least two of Plato's laws of association in Phd. 73D–74A. That is, one can be reminded of Cebes by seeing Simmias who is often nearby (neighboring); or, one can be reminded of Simmias when he sees a picture of him (similar).

¹⁵Cf. David Bloch, Aristotle on Memory and Recollection: Text, Translation, Interpretation, and Reception in Western Scholasticism, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 43n.29, who registers his surprise at Aristotle's claim: "the passage does not accord well with the usual conception of loci."

¹⁶Cf. Carruthers, Book of Memory, 155; Jocelyn Penny Small, Wax Tablets of the Mind: Cognitive Studies of Memory and Literacy in Classical Antiquity, (London: Routledge, 1997), 89–94; Bloch, Aristotle on Memory and Recollection: Text, Translation, Interpretation, and Reception in Western Scholasticism, 137–228, provides a lengthy essay on the reception of Aristotle's theory of memory in the West, though he is concerned primarily with memory in the philosophy of mind.

spaces as a wax tablet (*locis pro cera*) and images as letters written on it (*simulacris pro litteris*).¹⁷

In *De oratore*, Cicero moves beyond Aristotle's philosophy of the mind to describe a formal architectural mnemonic, just as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* would do. Nevertheless, he employs the same spatial technique that we saw in Aristotle's *De memoria*. Much like Aristotle's "starting-points," the spaces are arranged to provide a vital link to an arrangement of the things that are in one's memory. Moreover, Cicero, unlike Aristotle, describes this process of recollection as a process of reading letters. Indeed, it is this connotation of recollection that reveals the creativity of memory in the process of exegesis and literary invention, transposing it from a general philosophy of the mind to the realm of commentary. This distinction is important to note, since two distinct traditions of memory and recollection are transmitted through late antiquity and the Middle Ages. On the one hand, Aristotle's *De memoria* serves to ground reflection on the temporal work of memory. In other words, the emphasis is on memory as a *past* moment, to be recollected in order to remember the past *per se*.¹⁸ On the other

¹⁷Cicero, *de Orat.* 2.354 (LCL 348:466–67). Cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.2.30 (LCL 494:72–73). I have translated locus in the passage as "space" to draw out the general locational strategy of both Cicero's and Aristotle's process of recollection. Small, *Wax Tablets of the Mind*, 88–89, uses the term "bins" to make a similar point.

¹⁸See Janet Coleman, *Ancient and Medieval Memories: Studies in the Reconstruction of the Past*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). This aspect of "memory" and "the past" has been explored in biblical scholarship on "social," "cultural," or "collective" memories, most frequently to consider the movement from oral tradition to written text in the composition of the gospels. See the helpful summaries of the past decade in Chris Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part One)," *Early Christianity* 6 (2015): 354–76; and Chris Keith, "Social Memory Theory and Gospels Research: The First Decade (Part Two)," *Early Christianity* 6 (2015): 517–42. From the growing scholarly literature on this topic, see such works as Samuel. Byrskog, *Story as History – History as Story: The Gospel Tradition in the Context of Ancient Oral History*, WUNT 123 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003); Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, Stephen C. Barton, and Benjamin G. Wold, *Memory in the Bible and Antiquity*, WUNT 212 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); Anthony Le Donne, *The Historiographical Jesus: Memory, Typology, and the Son of David*, (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009); and, most recently in Pauline studies, Benjamin L. White, *Remembering Paul: Ancient and Modern Contests over the Image of the Apostle*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). To be sure, one should not make "collective memory" (or these other categories) to be synonymous with "historical accuracy"; according to Keith, "Social Memory Theory (Part One)," 362, this is not the focus: "Collective memory refers to the representation of the past in light of the needs of the present with no automatic assumption at the outset concerning the degree to which that representation may reflect past reality." Nevertheless, as Keith also admits, "social memory theory is not so much a historiographical method as it is a theory of the social construction of the past that enables responsible historiography" (376, emphasis mine). Thus, even the scholarly focus on memory in biblical scholarship is focused on the past *per se*. However, the second aspect of "memory" that I have mentioned, which touches on creative composition, has been the focus of much less study,

hand, the spatial aspect of memory and recollection grounded another distinct tradition: the art of recollection in service of literary invention. It is this function of memory and recollection that concerns us here, a focus on the task of recollection rather than the content of the past images. Thus, while all memorial images are temporally past, their significance for Christian exegesis is found in the process of recollection and association that creatively invents new relationships between texts in the hunt for meaning.

In her book *The Craft of Thought*, Mary Carruthers began with the point that the crucial task performed by memorial recollection is one of investigation, clearly seen in the language of hunting and searching employed by Aristotle. Carruthers noted, as I have suggested, that beyond the use of Aristotle in philosophical discussions of psychology, the use of this recollective process has a particularly creative application in the realm of ancient rhetorical *inventio*, the discovery or "finding" of things to say. In ancient rhetoric, the chief task of memory was to provide the orator with the material necessary to invent his speech *ex tempore*.¹⁹ This was the mark of the expert orator. But this was not the most influential aspect of the art of memory for the Christian tradition. Rather, Carruthers provides the ingenious observation that,

These structures [the "spaces" of memory and recollection] need not bear a direct relationship to the "art of memory" described in the Republican Roman *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. To limit the study of "locational memory" to this one variety has obscured both the generic concept and the medieval and even Renaissance developments of *memoria*. More important than (at least through the mid-thirteenth century), and in addition to, the precepts of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, there developed very early on in Christianity a *disciplina* or *via* of inventive meditation based on memorized locational inventory-structures, which was called by the monks "memoria spiritalis" or "sancta memoria." This traditional practice of meditation also was deeply implicated in the pedagogy of ancient rhetoric as well as the textual pedagogy of Judaism, making many of the same assumptions about "invention" and how it is to be done that we find more generally in non-Christian sources. As a consequence, it did not develop in total isolation from the ancient rhetorical practices of invention and composition.²⁰

and it is my concern in this project.

¹⁹Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 8–10. Cf. Heath, "Nomina Sacra and Sacra Memoria," 527–28.

²⁰Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 12.

As Carruthers argues, the "spaces" constructed in medieval monastic exegesis were drawn particularly from the Scriptures. In ways recalling Aristotle's associations of ideas in the *De memoria*, monastic exegetes, as Carruthers shows, drew together disparate scriptural texts into a "memorative web" of creative invention. For these monastic interpreters, every scriptural verse "became a gathering place for other texts, into which even the most remote (in our judgments) and unlikely matters were collected, as the associational memory of a particular author drew them in."²¹ And, as Aristotle had noted, these associations can be made not only by principles of consonance and similarity, but just as easily and profitably by divergences and opposition. Thus, the process of creative exegesis was simultaneously an art of recollection and an art of literary invention.

"Constellations" as Inventory

In this respect, Carruthers provides a helpful illustration.²² She points in particular to the practice of astronomers who divide up stars into "constellations," each of which are named for a variety of things, from animals to mythic beings. But one would be mistaken to think that these stellar groupings were intended to recall groups of stars that "looked like" certain creatures. Indeed, the intention of constellations was never to provide etiological fables to explain how the stars got there, and Carruthers shows how the explanations about the constellations in ancient textbooks like Isidore of Seville's *De natura rerum* never "counsel a student 'now look up in the sky and find the dog'"²³ The ancients assumed as we do that the pattern of the stars were the significant pieces of information to be understood from the constellations, and not the figures of a "dog" or "bull" themselves.

What people needed from star charts was a way of quickly and unerringly picking out certain stars, for their position was essential in the conduct of daily life—to calculate the calendar, to navigate, to plant, to know when to do a host of things. And a great

²¹Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 19.

²²For this illustration, see Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 24–27.

²³Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 25; for an image of the relevant manuscript from Isidore, see Plate 6 between p.142 and 143.

many random items, such as the individual stars, are not retrievable, and so cannot be learned, unless they are organized into patterns that allow people readily to find them. The constellations form a stellar inventory, one that is easily reconstructable, both in part and as a whole, and also one whose plan is completely distinctive. . . . The purpose of organizing stars into constellation patterns is not "representation," but to aid human beings, needing to find various stars, to locate them by means of a recognizable pattern retrieved immediately and securely from their own memories. Constellations are mnemotechnical tools.²⁴

Constellations were devices that could be used by individuals to locate particular stars, for whatever purpose one needs. One could imagine the need even today. As a young boy in East Tennessee, I was taught how to discern a northern orientation without a compass via these same constellations. On a clear night, one need only find the "Big Dipper" (I learned that it was called Ursa Major later), locate the edge of the ladle, and imagine a line directly through the two stars that form the outermost edges of Ursa Major. This line will then connect to the star at the tip of the handle of the "Little Dipper" (or, Ursa Minor), which is Polaris, or the "North Star." Like the ancients, my knowledge of the "Big Dipper" and "Little Dipper" constellations were expressly designed to be useful should I need to find the north-south line, even if one can image strange drawings or fables that could develop around these patterns.²⁵

It is the strangeness, the beauty, or even the obscurity of these fables that make them memorable, and as Carruthers shows, this is the very thing that makes constellations valuable to a culture dependent upon memory. It was not only cultural fables that provided fodder for the

²⁴Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 26.

²⁵In fact, I still read a story to my daughters frequently about a young girl who lived in a land that had experienced a drought for a very long time. When her mother was ill, she went to look for water, equipped with only a small tin ladle from their home. She finally came across a tiny spring on a mountainside, and although this spring was almost dry, she nevertheless patiently filled the ladle with drip after drip. On her way home, she encountered a parched dog, had mercy on it, and gave it the water. Her tin ladle then magically transformed into a silver ladle, full of water again. When she arrived home, her mother insisted that the girl first give their old maid servant a drink of water. The girl's ladle then transformed into a gold ladle, as full of water as it had been. Finally, before she could give her mother a drink, there was a knock at the door. A stranger, pale and dusty from travel, entered their home, and he asked for some water. The girl gave him a drink from the ladle without a fuss. The stranger smiled, and he turned the dipper into a diamond ladle. When he tipped it over, the water poured out, soaked into the ground, and bubbled up into a fountain for all to drink. The stranger disappeared into the sky, and to this day, there in the sky shines the diamond dipper. See J. Berg Esenwein and Marietta Stockard, "The Legend of the Dipper," in *The Children's Book of Virtues*, ed. William J. Bennett (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 77-82.

memory and recollection of Christian readers. The Scriptures themselves provided key examples that urged them to inventive exegesis.

A Pauline Trope for Invention (1 Cor. 3:10–17)

We may see one such scriptural motif in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 3:10–17, Paul claims that he has laid a foundation—Christ—on which others will build. Although the building metaphor is introduced by Paul in this passage, it remains a significant motif throughout 1 Corinthians.²⁶ From the first century C.E. onwards, this building trope would be an image to represent the church as the building of God, and Paul was probably employing standard educational terms to describe the function of the members, and especially teachers, within God's building.²⁷ At the same time, however, Mary Carruthers has shown how the Corinthian passage itself contains a figure for literary and rhetorical invention.

Paul uses his architectural metaphor as a trope for invention, not for storage. Likening himself to a builder, he says he has laid a foundation—a foundation which can only be Christ—upon which others are invited to build in their own way. From the beginning of Christianity, the architecture trope is associated with invention in the sense of "discovery," as well as in the sense of "inventory." The foundation which Paul has laid acts as a device that enables the inventions of others. This may seem a minor point in this text, but it acquired major significance later on as exegetical scholars elaborated this "foundation" for meditational compositions of their own, invited to do so by St. Paul himself.²⁸

Carruthers points to Gregory the Great's articulation of the four senses and Hugh of St. Victor's mnemonic in the *Didascalicon* as two instances where medieval "exegetical scholars"

²⁶For a helpful discussion on the building metaphor, see Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians*, (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991), 99–111, who connects it with the political *topos* of concord amidst factionalism, as seen, for example, in one of Aristides' speeches on concord (cf. Or. 23.31). She notes the recurrence of the imagery in 1:6–8; 6:19; 8:1, 10; 10:23; 14:3–5, 12, 17, 26; 15:58; and 16:13.

²⁷Note the recent study of educational metaphors in Paul's Corinthian correspondence by Devin L. White, "Teacher of the Nations: Ancient Educational Traditions and Paul's Argument in 1 Corinthians 1–4," (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2016).

²⁸Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 17–18.

develop Paul's figure towards literary invention.²⁹ And this Pauline passage, read as "a trope for invention," provided even the earliest Christian exegetes with a model for culling disparate texts from the meadows of the Scriptures to employ to new, creative ends. Carruthers has shown convincingly that this Pauline text initiated inventive thought in medieval monastic rhetoric and scholastic exegesis. In the quote above, she claims that this trope was associated with invention and discovery "from the beginning of Christianity," but she never examines any Christian exegete prior to the fifth century C.E. This certainly begs the question. Did this process of creative exegesis exist "from the beginning of Christianity," or did it originate with the monastic rhetoric she analyzes? Were these medieval exegetes the first to think of meditation and scriptural interpretation in these ways? The evidence would seem to suggest otherwise.

We already saw above that the *Letter of Aristeas*, Philo, and the *Epistle of Barnabas* all viewed the metaphor of "chewing the cud" as a directive toward meditation, memorization, and study in this way. Birger Gerhardsson has shown the mnemonic processes at work in Jewish exegesis and composition.³⁰ Moreover, Jane Heath has suggested that the *nomina sacra* could have served likewise as an inventive tool in the reading culture of antiquity that prioritized memory and visuality.³¹ But we can bring the evidence closer to home, by looking at the Pauline trope from 1 Corinthians 3:10–17 in earlier scriptural interpreters.

In her book *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, Margaret Mitchell has argued compellingly for the significance of the Corinthian correspondence in early Christian exegesis, not because it argued for a particular interpretive method, but rather because it "amounted to a set of carefully crafted and strategically delivered arguments by which they

²⁹See Gregory the Great, *Mor. ad Leandrum* 3 (CCSL 143:4.110–14); Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon* 6.4 (Buttmer, 118.10–13; 119.27–120.1). As Carruthers notes, Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale, les quatre sens de l'écriture.* (Paris: Aubier, 1964), 4:44, claims that this Pauline metaphor occupied a privileged place in medieval religious literature. He also adds: "Ce sont là, d'ailleurs, déjà des images bibliques, évangéliques et pauliniennes, dont les Pères avaient fait grand usage."

³⁰Birger Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, trans. Eric J. Sharpe (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells, 1961), 122–70, esp. 148–56

³¹Heath, "Nomina Sacra and Sacra Memoria".

volleyed back and forth the meaning of words, episodes, and relationships.³² Gregory of Nyssa serves as Mitchell's exegete *par excellence*, who models the agonistic paradigm of interpretation modeled in the Corinthian correspondence. This is why it is all the more surprising to me that Mitchell never treats this building metaphor. Indeed, the quote from Gregory's prologue to the *Homilies on the Song of Songs* that Mitchell gives on the last pages of her book provide clear evidence of the passage read as a "trope of invention." I will not quote the entire passage, but simply the section that is relevant for our purposes here.

If we desire, even after Origen exerted himself diligently in the study of this book, to hand on our own work in written form, let no one make that a reason for accusation, in view of the divine utterance of the Apostle who said, "Each will receive his own reward according to his own labor" (1 Cor. 3:14–15). Now my work has not been composed for show, but, when some of our companions, out of a love for learning, had taken down notes in writing of many things we said in church, I took from their hand the things their note-taking had recorded in proper order, and added for my own part things that were necessary as a supplement. I have fashioned this composition in the form of homilies, bring forward verbatim in a continuous fashion the *theoria* of the words.³³

For Gregory, it is the Pauline architectural trope of 1 Corinthians 3:10–17 that provides his justification for writing these homilies. Moreover, the appeal to the architectural imagery in Paul's letter situates Gregory's homilies as an exercise of invention, of "discovering" what may be said about the canticles, even if others like Origen had already offered comment upon them. Indeed, Gregory postures his creative exegesis as a means of discovering the *theoria* hidden in the words (*τὴν τῶν ῥήτων θεωρίαν*).

In light of this evidence, we may suggest that the workings of memory and recollection were important to the creative exegesis of texts not only, or even primarily, for medieval readers (though the study of Carruthers suggests it may have indeed been expanded in this period).³⁴

³² Mitchell, *Paul, the Corinthians, and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, 10.

³³ Greg. Nyss., *Cant. prol.* (GNO 6.12–13). In something of a chiasmus, Gregory describes this task in the first paragraph of the prologue as a clarification—or, revelation (*φανερωθῆναι*)—of the "philosophy hidden in the words" (*τὴν ἐγκεκρυμμένην τοῖς ῥήτοῖς φιλοσοφίαν*).

³⁴ Cf. Alexander, "Memory and Tradition," 141–42.

Rather, the workings of memory and recollection may be seen as a framework through which to view all early Christian exegesis. In what follows, then, we may confirm that this conjecture holds true for Clement of Alexandria. We have already verified the existence of multiple metaphors for memory throughout Clement's work. What about his familiarity with the operations of recollection as we have seen them analyzed in this chapter? As we will see, Clement maintains the investigative connotation to the process of recollection seen in Aristotle's *De memoria*, characterized primarily by the motifs of hunting and searching through the texts housed in one's memory. Moreover, Clement likewise employs the Pauline building metaphor as a trope for invention, seen as the discovery of what may be said about the Scriptures.

Clement's Use of Recollection

Having seen the understanding of memory and recollection in antiquity, we may now turn to observe the roles that these play in Clement's understanding of scriptural exegesis. I will first argue that each of the metaphors for memory that were outlined above find a place in Clement's discussions of the Scriptures. Then, we may turn to see how Clement returns to the language of investigation that was prominent in the Aristotelian discussion of recollection. Not only does Clement describe exegesis as a search, but he places it in the context of memorial recollection and the creative exegesis that employs recollection to discover meaning in the scriptural text.

"Hunting for the Sequence of Divine Teaching"

For Aristotle, as we have seen, the process of recollecting items from one's memory can best be described as hunting for materials (*θηρεύω*) or, likewise, as a process of investigation (*ζήτησις*). One must progress through the sequences of his memory to track down, "to recollect," the items that have been stored away in one's inventory. As I noted above, Aristotle does not employ recollection to the ends of literary invention, as it would be used subsequently. Clement, however, returns to Aristotle's imagery to describe the effective means of reading the Scriptures.

In Str. 1.179.4, Clement takes up the language of the hunt (*θηράω*), and he

appropriates it distinctively for the reading of Scripture and the search for its meaning. He claims, "those who hunt for the sequence of divine teaching ($\tauὴν ἀκολουθίαν τῆς θείας διδασκαλίας θηρωμένοις$) must approach Scripture more dialectically."³⁵ The connections with Aristotle's arguments are striking. Not only had Aristotle described the process of recollection as a hunt, which Clement here assumes, but he had also described the path of the investigation as a movement through the sequence of the series within one's memory. In this passage, Clement retains the same idea, arguing that one must search through the sequence ($\tauὴν ἀκολουθίαν$) of divine teaching in various scriptural texts. Subsequent Christian appropriations of $\acute{a}κολουθία$ will emphasize such textual features as the chronological sequence of the narrative, but this is a concern that rarely bothers Clement. So, in what way then does Clement suggest to track down the scriptural $\acute{a}κολουθία$? If we approach Clement from the perspective of memory and the process of recollection, already entrenched in the culture of the second century C.E., then we may understand this exhortation more clearly.

We have already seen from the fifth book of the *Stromateis* that Clement's scriptural correlations of two texts (or more) are often predicated on a shared or contrasting idea or word. For instance, Clement quickly links Isaiah 45:3 with Wisd. 7:14 and 8:18 on the basis of shared terminology. In Isaiah 45, Clement notes that God has promised hidden treasures ($\thetaησαυρὸὺς ἀποκρύφους$). It is not a difficult move, then, for Clement to recall that the text of Wisdom presents wisdom as an unfailing treasure ($\acute{a}νεκλιπὴς θησαυρός$), offering an answer for the question raised by Isaiah 45:3—"What are the treasures God has promised?" I will argue in a subsequent chapter that "wisdom" ($\sigmaοφία$) is one of the inventive topics around which Clement builds a constellation of texts, but the point here is that Clement's display of one of the metaphors of memory—the treasury—combines with one of his "spaces" of memory—"wisdom"—to make the recollection of Wisdom 7:14 a natural exegetical association. Clement has thus followed the sequence both of his memory but also, more fundamentally, of the divine teaching in the Scriptures. Recollection, seen as a hunt for the sequence of scriptural teaching, is a crucial facet of Clement's creative exegesis.

³⁵Str. 1.179.4 (GCS 15:110). For other uses of this hunting motif, see Str. 1.35.4; 2.3.5 (GCS 15:23; 114).

Clement also presents this hunt as a pursuit of the things taught by the divine Spirit.

Once again, it seems quite significant that Clement employs the hunting imagery in the context of scriptural investigation and creative exegesis.

It is necessary then, since everyone agrees that the Scriptures are spoken in parables, that those who would interpret (*διερευνωμένους*) the Scriptures accurately (*ἀκριβῶς*) hunt (*θηρᾶσθαι*) from the words the notions about things, which the Holy Spirit, who possesses them, teaches by expressing, as it were, his mind in the words. The result is that when the words spoken with numerous meanings are examined stringently (*ἀκριβῶς ἔξεταζόμενα*), they are disclosed to us, and when that which was hidden by many coverings is examined and considered closely, it would be revealed and enlighten us.³⁶

The links with the aims of literary investigation are clear, as Clement presents the hermeneutics of Scripture as an investigation of *signa* and *res*, or *ὄνομα* and *πρᾶγμα*, to use Clement's Greek terms. And a close examination of the words, spoken with the potential for numerous meanings, will uncover the things, the meaning hidden in obscurity. This argument grounds the associations we may see in Clement, like the previous example, where material may be culled from a variety of scriptural texts when these texts may only share a single feature. This is the case as well when we consider Clement's employment of the language of searching.

In addition to the language of hunting, then, Clement recalls Aristotle's presentation of the process of recollection itself as an investigation (*ζήτησις*), a deliberate act of "recollective cogitation."³⁷ We saw in an earlier chapter how Clement frequently described the task of scriptural exegesis in the fifth book of the *Stromateis* as an investigation. Clement reveals the vital link he holds between investigation and the understanding of Scripture in an interpretation of Psalm 22:26:

Therefore, inquiry with respect to God (*τὸ ζητεῦν περὶ θεοῦ*) is saving, provided it does

³⁶Ed. 32.2 (GCS 17:116–17): *δεῖ τοίνυν τὰς γραφὰς ἀκριβῶς διερευνωμένους, ἐπειδὴ ἐν παραβολαῖς εὑρῆσθαι ἀνωμολόγηνται, ἀπὸ τῶν ὀνομάτων θηρᾶσθαι τὰς δόξας, ἃς τὸ ἄγιον πνεῦμα περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἔχον, εἰς τὰς λέξεις ὡς εἰπεῖν τὴν αὐτοῦ διάνοιαν ἐκτυπωσάμενον, διδάσκει, ἵνα ἡμῖν ἀκριβῶς ἔξεταζόμενα διαπτύσσονται μὲν τὰ ὄνόματα πολυσήμως εἰρημένα, τὸ δ' ἐγκεκρυμμένον ἐν πολλοῖς τοῖς σκέπουσι ψηλαφώμενον καὶ καταμανθανόμενον ἐκφαίνηται καὶ ἀναλάμψῃ.*

³⁷The term "recollective cogitation" is from Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 117.

not tend to strife, but instead to discovery (*εἰς εὑρεσιν*). For it is written in David, "The poor eat, and shall be filled; and those who seek him (*ἐκζητοῦντες*) shall praise the Lord. Their heart shall live for ever." For those who investigate (*οἵ γὰρ ζητοῦντες*) in accordance with the true search (*κατὰ τὴν ζήτησιν τὴν ἀληθῆ*), praising the Lord, shall be filled with the gift that comes from God, which is knowledge (*τῆς γνώσεως*)."³⁸

Matthew 7:7 provides Clement with the promise of discovery for the search, "Seek, and you will find." And, for Clement, it is a textual investigation of the Scriptures by which one comes to understand the knowledge that God has placed in them. As he confirms elsewhere, "we must search and apprehend the hidden sense in the Scriptures with a worthy investigation and understanding."³⁹ And, much the same as the hunting metaphor in Str. 1.179.4, this search is performed by collating material throughout the Scriptures. This much is clear in Clement's arguments from Str. 7.96.1: "Therefore, we also demonstrate perfectly matters about the Scriptures from the Scriptures themselves."⁴⁰ This is much more than a Christian rendition of the common philological principle *Homerum ex Homero*, though I think it is that. Clement is here suggesting that the Scriptures are an entirely fertile ground for literary invention, a meadow of texts from which material can be drawn and used in Christian exegesis.

"When the Scriptures Are Examined From Other Spaces..."

The use of the hunting metaphor along with the language of investigation suggests the process of literary invention by which Clement will understand the Scriptures. And in the opening chapters of the *Stromateis*, Clement confirms this for us in explicit terms. "When they are examined (*ἐξεταζόμεναι*) with respect to other spaces (*κατ' ἄλλους τόπους*), the Scriptures I have already discussed will yield other mysteries."⁴¹ Here, Clement, as a good grammarian,

³⁸Str. 5.12.2 (GCS 15:334): Τὸ δὲ ἄρα ζητεῖν περὶ θεοῦ, ἀν μὴ εἰς ἔρω, ἀλλὰ εἰς εὑρεσιν τείνη, σωτήριόν ἔστι. γέγραπται γὰρ ἐν τῷ Δαβὶδ «φάγονται πένητες καὶ ἐμπλησθήσονται καὶ αἰνέσουσι κύριον οἱ ἐκζητοῦντες αὐτόν. ζήσεται ἡ καρδία αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος.» οἱ γὰρ ζητοῦντες κατὰ τὴν ζήτησιν τὴν ἀληθῆ αἰνοῦντες κύριον ἐμπλησθήσονται τῆς δόσεως τῆς παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, τουτέστι τῆς γνώσεως

³⁹Q.D.S. 5.2 (GCS 17:163): ἀλλὰ τὸν ἐν αὐτοῖς κεκρυμμένον νοῦν μετὰ τῆς ἀξίας ζητήσεως καὶ συνέσεως ἐρευνᾶν καὶ καταμανθάνειν Cf. Lilla, Clement of Alexandria, 137.

⁴⁰Str. 7.96.1 (GCS 17:68): οὖν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀπ' αὐτῶν περὶ αὐτῶν τῶν γραφῶν τελείως ἀποδεικνύντες

⁴¹Str. 1.32.3 (GCS 15:21): κατ' ἄλλους μέντοι γε τόπους ἐξεταζόμεναι αἱ προειρημέναι γραφαὶ ἀλλα

refers to the concept we saw earlier in Aristotle's *De memoria* of the association of ideas.

Significantly, however, Clement gives it a textual application, suggesting that a single scriptural word or passage may be approached in different ways to yield further meaning. He is reflecting on recollection as a tool of literary invention, and in what follows, we may see an example of how this worked, using a text from the *Paedagogus* we encountered earlier.

We have already seen the keen observation by Mary Carruthers that, if we disconnect the structures of memory from the architectural mnemonics of the Roman rhetorical tradition, then we can see how Scripture itself served as tools for ancient exegetical invention. She argues that it is best to conceive of memory within this tradition not merely as "rote," which seeks to replicate verbatim, but also as a "matrix of a reminiscing cogitation, shifting and collating 'things' stored in a random-access memory scheme, or set of schemes."⁴² Thus, we can extend Plato's and Aristotle's imagery, such that memory is not only a wax tablet or even a book, but it becomes a library, stocked with manifold "books" expressly to be recalled for the inventive purposes of creative exegesis. From this perspective, then, the tools of ancient Christian memory work are the lexemes, tropes, figures, and events of the Scriptures. The very words of Scripture become "the devices and machines" of reading and composition, the craft of thinking.⁴³ And, as we have already seen, the Pauline building metaphor from 1 Corinthians 3:10–17 was a significant trope for this process of literary invention.

Clement indeed proves an early witness in the Christian exegetical tradition to this trope. In chapter two, I argued that Clement's creative exegesis in the fifth book of the *Stromateis* was intended to characterize the teaching of Scripture as a "structure of knowledge," the building of wisdom and knowledge upon the ground of faith. What was beyond our purview in that chapter—the source of his phrase "structure of knowledge"—is directly applicable here. It is worth including the relevant passage in full, before offering a few comments.

For he knows the spiritual man and the *gnostikôs* to be the disciple of the Holy Spirit

μνοτήρια μηνύονται παρίστανται.

⁴²Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 4.

⁴³Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, 3–4

furnished by God, which is the mind of Christ. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness to him." Now the apostle, in contradistinction to the perfection of knowledge, sometimes calls common faith the "foundation," and sometimes "milk," writing in this way: "Brothers, I could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to carnal, to babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, not with meat, for you were not able. Neither are you now able, for you are still carnal. For whereas there is among you envy and strife, are you not carnal, and walk as men?"

These things are the choice of those men who are sinners. But those who abstain from these things give their thoughts to divine things, and partake of gnostic food.

"According to the grace," it is said, "given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation. And another buildeth on it gold and silver, precious stones"—such is the superstructure of knowledge on the foundation of faith in Christ Jesus. But "the stubble, and the wood, and the hay," are the additions of heresies. "But the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is" (1 Cor. 3:10–13). In allusion to this structure of knowledge also in the Letter to the Romans, he says, "For I desire to see you, that I may impart unto you a spiritual gift, that ye may be established" (Rom. 1:11). It was impossible that gifts of this sort could be written without disguise.⁴⁴

Notice that Clement's use of the Pauline building metaphor is entirely hermeneutical. It is found in an argument on the levels of textual understanding between believers and Christian *gnostikoi*. Not only does the Pauline educational metaphor of milk and meat reflect the levels of the pupils, but Clement understands the architectural metaphor also to be a reflection of scriptural interpretation. The foundation is "faith in Christ Jesus," and the superstructure (*ἐποικοδομήματα*) is completed when others build upon this foundation. Significantly, poor construction is seen in the poor interpretations of the sects (*τῶν αἱρέσεων*). And, for Clement, Paul himself confirms that the "spiritual gift" in Romans 1:11 is identical to the "structure of

⁴⁴Str. 5.25.5–26.5 (GCS 15:341–42): *πνευματικὸν γὰρ καὶ γνωστικὸν οἶδεν τὸν τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος μαθητὴν τοῦ ἐκ θεοῦ χορηγούμενον, ὃ ἐστι νοῦς Χριστοῦ. «ψυχικὸς δὲ ἀνθρωπος οὐδέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐστιν.» αὐτίκα ὁ ἀπόστολος πρὸς ἀντιδιαστολὴν γνωστικῆς τελειότητος τὴν κοινὴν πίστιν πῇ μὲν θεμέλιον λέγει, πῃ δὲ γάλα, γράφων τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον: «ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἡδυνήθην λαλῆσαι ὑμῖν ὡς πνευματικοῖς, ἀλλ’ ὡς σαρκικοῖς, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ. γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὐ βρῶμα: οὕπω γὰρ ἐδύνασθε. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἔτι νῦν δύνασθε, ἔτι γὰρ σαρκικοί ἐστε. ὅπου γὰρ ἐν ὑμῶν ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις, οὐχὶ σαρκικοί ἐστε καὶ κατὰ ἀνθρωπον περιπατεῖτε;» τὰ αἱρετὰ τοῖς ἀμαρτωλοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, οἱ δὲ τούτων ἀπεσχημένοι τὰ θεῖα φρονοῦσι καὶ βρώματος γνωστικοῦ μεταλαμβάνουσιν. «κατὰ τὴν χάρω», φησί, «τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ὡς σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων θεμέλιον τέθεικα, ἀλλος δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ χρυσίον καὶ ἀργύριον, λίθους τιμίους.» ταῦτα γνωστικὰ ἐποικοδομήματα τῇ κρηπidi τῆς πίστεως τῆς εἰς Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, «καλάμη» δὲ τὰ τῶν αἱρέσεων ἐπαναθήματα καὶ «ξύλα» καὶ «χόρτος». «όποιον δὲ ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον, τὸ πῦρ δοκιμάσει.» τὴν γνωστικὴν οἰκοδομὴν καν τῇ πρὸς Ρωμαίους ἐπιστολῇ αἰνιστόμενός φησιν: «ἐπιποθῶ γὰρ ἵδεν ὑμᾶς, ἵνα τι μεταδῶ χάρισμα ὑμῖν πνευματικὸν εἰς τὸ στηριχθῆναι ὑμᾶς.» ἀποκεκαλυμμένως δὲ οὐχ οἰόν τε ἦν τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν χαρισμάτων ἐπιστέλλειν.*

knowledge" (*τὴν γνωστικὴν οἰκοδομὴν*), which is figured in 1 Corinthians 3:10–17 and is the goal of Christian creative exegesis.

But it is not merely Clement's use of the Pauline metaphor that recalls the inventive process of recollection in this passage. Notice how he describes Paul's teaching on faith. At times, Clement says, Paul will describe faith as the "foundation," and at other times, he speaks about faith by calling it "milk." In subtle fashion, Clement reflects here the ability to discern "faith" in multiple passages of Scripture by treating it, to use Carruthers' analogy, as a "constellation." That is, an examine of the Pauline corpus under the heading of "faith" might legitimately recollect the passage on "milk," but it could at other times recollect the Pauline language of "foundation." In its implications for literary invention, this imaginative recollection is quite fruitful for early Christian exegesis.

When we see that Clement, centuries before Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory the Great, had already employed this Pauline metaphor as a trope for literary invention, it provides us with a means for understanding some of Clement's exegetical creativity. As an example of this ingenuity, we may take a second look at two passages we examined earlier. I have already called attention to the significance of Clement's use of the metaphor of digestion in the scriptural figure of the animal that chews the cud. If the argument advanced in this chapter is right, and Clement's use of metaphor and recollection is turned to inventive ends, then it is striking to note the distinctions in the association that Clement draws between Leviticus 11 and Psalm 1 in both *Str. 7.109* and *Paed. 3.76*.

Scripture teaches that the animals lifted for sacrifice which divide the hoof and chew the cud are clean and acceptable to God, since the righteous make their approach to the Father and the Son through their faith (for this is meant by the stability of those that divide the hoof) and they meditate and ponder over the oracles of God by night and day (*τῶν «τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ» «νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν μελετώντων» καὶ ἀναπεμπαζομένων*) in the mental receptacle of knowledge (which is an exercise of knowledge that the law describes figurally as chewing the cud by a clean animal).⁴⁵

⁴⁵Str. 7.109.2 (GCS 17:77): *τὰ μὲν γάρ διχηλοῦντα καὶ μηρυκισμὸν ἀνάγοντα τῶν ιερείων καθαρὰ καὶ δεκτὰ τῷ θεῷ παραδίδωσιν ἡ γραφή, ὡς ἂν εἰς πατέρα καὶ εἰς νίὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῶν δικαίων τὴν πορείαν ποιουμένων (αὕτη γάρ ἡ τῶν διχηλούντων ἐδραιότης) τῶν «τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ» «νύκτωρ καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν μελετώντων» καὶ ἀναπεμπαζομένων ἐν τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς τῶν μαθημάτων δοχείῳ, ἥν * καὶ συνάσκησιν γνωστικὴν*

In this passage from the *Stromateis*, I suggested that the creative association Clement makes between "chewing the cud" in Leviticus 11 and "meditating on the oracles of God" in Psalm 1 was due to the similarity that each text had in promoting textual memorization and study. But the association in the *Paedagogus* is entirely different. Clement writes,

Everything "that divides the hoof and chews the cud" is clean, because the divided hoof indicates an evenly balanced justice, which chews the cud of its own food of justice; namely, the word that enters from the outside through instruction, in a similar way to food, and, once inside, it is regurgitated as if from the stomach of the mind (*ἀναπεμπόμενον ὥσπερ ἐκ κοιλίας τῆς διανοίας*) as a logical recollection (*εἰς ἀνάμνησιν λογικήν*). The just man ruminates (*μηρυκάζει*) on the spiritual nourishment, since he has the word upon his mouth; and justice undoubtedly divides the hoof, in that it both sanctifies in this life and prepares us as well for the life to come.⁴⁶

Clement's application of the biblical figure of chewing the cud to the process of recollection is, in some sense, expected, and it is identical to the reading that he offered in Str. 7.109 above. It is what follows, however, that is striking. After his reading of Leviticus 11 as a standard metaphor for memory, Clement returns to his broader arguments in the *Paedagogus*:

As for the theater, the Educator certainly does not lead us there. One could—not unreasonably—call the stadium and the theater "seats of pestilence" (*καθέδραν λοιμῶν*). The "gathering" (*βουλὴ*) in such a place is indeed wicked, and, as it were, set up against the just; therefore, attendance at it is cursed.⁴⁷

Here, Clement offers us another example of the recollective process at work in his creative exegesis. Clement's imaginative association of Leviticus 11 with Psalm 1 is expected, since the figure of chewing the cud recalls for him the psalmist's encouragement to meditate

ὑπάρχουσαν καθαροῦ ζώου μηρυκισμὸν ὁ νόμος ἀλληγορεῖ.

⁴⁶Paed. 3.76.1–2 (GCS 12:278): ἀλλα δὲ ὄμοιῶς ἀλληγορεῖται. Τίσιν οὖν οἰκειωτέον; τοῖς δικαίοις, πάλιν ἀλληγορῶν φησιν. Πᾶν γάρ «διχηλοῦν καὶ μαρυκάζουσιν» καθαρόν ἔστω, ὅτι τὸ διχηλοῦν δικαιοσύνην ἐμφαίνει τὴν ἰσοστάσιον μηρυκάζουσαν τὴν οἰκείαν δικαιοσύνης τροφήν, τὸν λόγον ἔκτοσθεν μὲν εἰσιόντα κατὰ ταύτα τῇ τροφῇ διὰ κατηχήσεως, ἔνδοθεν δὲ ἀναπεμπόμενον ὥσπερ ἐκ κοιλίας τῆς διανοίας εἰς ἀνάμνησιν λογικήν. Μηρυκάζει δὲ ὁ δίκαιος τὴν πνευματικὴν τροφὴν ἀνὰ στόμα ἔχων τὸν λόγον, καὶ διχηλεῖ ἡ δικαιοσύνη εἰκότως, κανταῦθα ἀγιάζουσα καὶ εἰς τὸν μέλλοντα παραπέμποντα αἰώνα.

⁴⁷Paed. 3.76.3 (GCS 12:278); Cf. Ps. 1:1

upon the oracles of God. This is evident from the passage in the *Stromateis*. In that case, the association is made, to use Aristotle's terminology, between two similar points. In this instance, however, Clement's recollection of Psalm 1 permits him to proceed further in the series and associate the psalmist's "seats of pestilence" (*καθέδραν λοιμῶν*) with the seats that his audience occupy, when they attend the theater. Moreover, the theater is an establishment where only the wicked gather as a quasi-*"council"* (*βουλὴ*).⁴⁸ In this instance, then, the recollection of Psalm 1 is clear, but given the subject matter of the *Paedagogus* and its moral exhortation, Clement recalls the text not to recover something similar, but to recollect something neighboring it in his memory.

Creative Exegesis is "Inventive" Exegesis

The purpose of the last two chapters has been to provide a justification for my decision to use the adjective "creative" as a proper description of Clement's exegesis. We have seen Clement's employment of standard metaphors for memory within the process of reading and commentary, and I have suggested that these metaphors, when combined with Clement's use of hunting language and his reading of the Pauline building metaphor from 1 Corinthians 3:10–17, situate Clement in the early stages of a tradition of creative exegesis that would continue into the medieval monastic practices of *memoria sacra*. Thus, Clement is rightly seen as an exegete whose enterprise of literary analysis is not only grounded in the grammatical tradition, but is also an activity of invention—the imaginative act of discovering what may be said about a text in any given instance.

In the next chapter, we must turn to consider the result of this creativity within Clement's reading practices. If Clement's creative exegesis is at its core an activity of literary invention, then how might we describe the "inventive" associations of scriptural texts and images that he collects? To use Carruthers' terms, what are the structures of Clement's "locational memory"?

⁴⁸Clement is here playing on the homonymy of the term, which may mean either "counsel" (TLG, s.v. *βουλή*, I.2) or "council" (TLG, s.v. *βουλή*, II).

"Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom": Constellations for Reading Scripture

"The Mosaic philosophy is accordingly divided into four parts: first, the historic part; second, that which is strictly called the legislative part (both of which properly belong to ethics); a third part, which relates to liturgy (a part of physical science); and fourth, above all, the theological part, the vision, which Plato says belongs to the truly great mysteries, while Aristotle calls it metaphysics" . . . There are four ways in which we can receive the meaning of the Law: it may present a type; it may show a sign; it may lay down a command for right conduct; and it may pronounce a prophecy. I am well aware that to make these distinctions and expound them is the work of fully mature men. The whole of Scripture is not, in the proverbial saying, "a single Myconos."¹

In chapter seven, I argued that Clement's reflection on writing in the first book of the *Stromateis* does not, as is often assumed, understand writing predominantly in negative terms. Especially as it comes to the action of commenting upon and understanding the Scriptures, Clement employs common metaphors from the traditions of memory and composition to suggest the significance of such an activity. As he claims there, his teacher Pantaenus would gather material from the meadow of the Scriptures, and, like the quintessential bee, create a composition of exposition as pure as honey. In chapter eight, I argued that Clement is not interested in memory *per se*. Rather, he employs these metaphors alongside standard imagery for the art of recollection to suggest that the act of exegesis is itself a process of literary invention. Thus, creative exegesis is not simply an act of grammatical interpretation. It is also always an act of the imagination, of the recollection of scriptural texts and themes that may be considered "constellations"—the textual gathering places to and from which one might draw a myriad of associations or contrasts.² Indeed, Clement suggests that his own exegetical activity in the

¹Str. 1.176.1–2; 179.3–4 (GCS 15:108; 110)

²On this concept, I am following the insightful work on monastic reading by Carruthers, *Craft of Thought*, esp. 19, who gives a similar definition. Note also how she describes the function of astral constellations: "a great

Stromateis should be viewed in this light. That is, his own deep interpretation (*ὑποσημείωσις*), like his teacher's exposition, should be seen as the continued practice of memory and composition, drawing pure exegetical honey from the flowers of the Scriptures.³

These "creative" associations form the framework by which early Christian readers work with the text of Christian Scripture to understand the dramatic narrative of God's activity in the world and in their own time. To be sure, as with all instances of one's memorial archive, the potential for constellations is limitless. Nevertheless, it is true that certain constellations become priorities in one's logic, continually finding a place in a recitation of Scripture's teachings. Thus, as I suggested earlier, a focus on the textual constellations drawn from the scriptural memory of various exegetes provides a fruitful way forward in our attempts to understand the reading practices of early Christianity.

In this chapter, then, we will consider Clement's own "memorial archive"—the themes, texts, or figures of Scripture from which he develops his constellations for scriptural interpretation. By using the term "memorial archive," I do not intend to suggest that we may develop a systematic catalog of Clement's imagination, since we surely have no way of accessing the totality of Clement's memorial archive. On the contrary, I use the term "memorial archive" as a way of connecting Clement's art of recollection with the grammatical archive that we examined in the earlier chapters of this study. By analyzing Clement's textual "constellations"—the gathering places to and from which he draws a myriad of other texts and figures—we might understand those topics that become a priority in his unique rendition of the scriptural narrative.⁴

many random items, such as the individual stars, are not retrievable, and so cannot be learned unless they are organized into patterns that allow people readily to find them" (26). Similarly, I would suggest that the individual creativity of early Christian readers produce equally unique "patterns" and "constellations" through which we may understand their reading practices.

³Cf. Ed. 28 (GCS 17:145)

⁴Though it goes beyond the scope of this chapter, my use of the term "rendition" is motivated by a desire to emphasize that the term "creative" presupposes a dramatic or performative way of reading Christian Scripture. This analogy for scriptural reading has been explored, with varying degrees of fruitfulness, in such works as Nicholas Lash, "Performing the Scriptures," in *Theology on the Way to Emmaus*, (London: SCM Press, 1986), 37-46; Rowan Williams, "The Discipline of Scripture," in *On Christian Theology*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 44-59; Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology*, (Louisville: Westminster

In particular, I will argue that an attention to the scriptural constellations that Clement develops will enable us to reconsider a perennial difficulty in understanding his corpus. The question of whether Clement's interpretation of Scripture "fits" within the pedagogical paradigm he seems to describe has loomed over scholarship for decades. Does Clement interpret Scripture according to a definitive plan of Christian growth and maturity? Or is his interpretation as random and variable as the title of his *Miscellanies* suggests, a veritable loose association of unrelated texts?⁵ The rest of this chapter, then, will consist of two stages. First, I will examine two substantive "constellations" by which Clement organizes his scriptural texts. Then, I will show how these two constellations can help us to reconsider the supposed "literary problem" within Clement's work, if this is even a helpful terminology by which to describe it.⁶

In fact, I think that Clement points us toward these two significant and overarching constellations in the very first extended discussion of Scripture we find within his corpus. In the first seven chapters of his *Protrepticus*, Clement rarely appeals to Scripture to make his point. The outset of the eighth chapter, however, marks a distinct turning point, and the Christian Scriptures are from here on out placed front and center in Clement's theological reasoning. Clement begins *Prot.* 8 in this way:

It is now time, as we have despatched in order the other points, to go to the prophetic Scriptures; for the oracles present us most clearly the resources necessary for the attainment of piety, and in this way, they establish the truth. The divine Scriptures and practices of wisdom form the short road to salvation. Devoid of embellishment, of

John Knox Press, 2005); Matthew Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008); and Hans Boersma, *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011). In a broader account of the performative aspect to Christian "creative exegesis," I would want to emphasize that the persuasiveness of readings more likely hinges not on the specific reading itself but in its role within the exegetical performance taken as a whole.

⁵The best description of the state of affairs comes from Matyáš Havrda, who says, "Apart from those approaching Clement of Alexandria merely as a doxographic source, the readers of his *Stromata* are inevitably confronted with the question of whether the sequence of topics discussed in that work follows any plan, or whether it is merely a chance association of more or less elaborated texts, accruing in the manner of a Wittgensteinian city. It seems that both answers are correct, to some extent." See Matyáš Havrda, review of *Esoteric Teaching in the Stromateis* of Clement of Alexandria, by Andrew Itter, *Adamantius* 18 (2012): 573.

⁶Due to its clear and concise nature, I borrow the term "literary problem" from Walter Wagner, "Another Look at the Literary Problem in Clement of Alexandria's Major Writings," CH 37 (1968): 251-60. Cf. also Marco Rizzi, "The Literary Problem in Clement of Alexandria: A Reconsideration," *Adamantius* 17 (2011): 154-63.

outward beauty of diction, of wordiness and seductiveness, they raise up humanity strangled by wickedness, teaching men to despise the casualties of life; and with one and the same voice remedying many evils, they at once dissuade us from pernicious deceit, and clearly exhort us to the attainment of the salvation set before us.⁷

In what follows, Clement argues that the Scriptures are used by God both to exhort men to conversion and, subsequently, to progress to the maturity that comes with divine knowledge. In this chapter, then, I simply want to suggest that Clement derives this narrative from the Scriptures by creating two constellations of texts centered on distinct themes: fear and wisdom. It is perhaps surprising to hear that these two constellations are repeatedly emphasized in the course of Clement's writings. After all, these terms are not frequently mentioned when discussing Clement's theology. I will argue that a close reading of some significant passages from the *Paedagogus* and the *Stromateis* allows us to understand the importance of fear and wisdom to Clement's rendition of the scriptural narratives.

Before proceeding, however, it is important to note that I am not making the claim that these constellations form the definitive way to understand Clement's use of Scripture. Rather, I am suggesting that these form two distinct ways of analyzing Clement's approach to Scripture.⁸ In making this claim, I am implicitly drawing a contrast between my approach and all others that might suggest there is a conclusive description of an individual's scriptural exegesis. If the constellations are innumerable, then the means by which we may describe a reader's exegesis is also innumerable. I do believe, however, that these particular constellations not only form the foundation of Clement's chronological connection between Old and New Testaments, but they also correspond to two distinct ways of reading the Old Testament in particular. I will argue that for Clement the concept of fear suggests the initial workings of faith, and it comes as the result of reading the Old Testament text as either a series of commandments or examples. At the same time, wisdom stands as the key constellation for Clement's understanding of New Testament realities, what he calls in the *Protrepticus* the "mysteries of wisdom." In other words, the key

⁷Prot. 8.77.1 (GCS 12:59)

⁸Indeed, reflections on each of these constellations could fill an entire chapter, in addition to a number of other Clementine scriptural topologies, such as "little ones," gnosis, and above all, unity.

pedagogical process that Clement emphasizes throughout his corpus is the progression from fear to wisdom, two terms which correspond to distinct readings of Christian Scripture. One begins the life of faith in obedience to God's commands through fear, but if one is to become a Christian *gnostikôs*, then he must move to obedience through love via the life of wisdom, prophesied in the Old Testament and seen explicitly in the life of the incarnate Christ.

"I Will Teach You the Fear of the Lord": Fear and Its Textual Constellations in the *Protrepticus*

But how does Clement understand the Scriptures to function in this way? How do they guide us to salvation? Here, Clement introduces us to the two constellations that form the foundation of this chapter. We will note what he says about wisdom later in this chapter, but notice how he introduces his reader to the function of fear as it is seen in the Scriptures. Clement begins chapter nine in this way:

I could bring before you ten thousand passages of Scripture, of which not "one tittle shall pass away," without being fulfilled (Matt. 5:18); for the mouth of the Lord, the Holy Spirit, has spoken these things. He says, "Do not any longer, my son, despise the chastening (*παιδείας*) of the Lord, nor faint when reproved by Him" (Prov. 3:11). O surpassing love for man! Not as a teacher speaking to his students, not as a master to his servants, nor as God to men, but as a gentle father⁹ the Lord admonishes his children. Thus Moses confesses that "he was afraid and trembling" (*εὐφοβός εἶναι καὶ ἔντρομος*; cf. Heb. 12:21; Deut. 9:19) when he heard about the Word, but do you not fear when you also hear the voice of the Divine Word? Are you not anxious? Are you not cautious and eager to learn—that is, eager for salvation, — fearing wrath, loving grace, striving after hope, so that you may avoid the judgment?¹⁰

Clement claims that innumerable texts from Scripture—indeed, his use of *μυρίας γραφὰς* with Matthew 5 here seems to suggest a hyperbolic reference to all of the Scriptures—when understood to be spoken by the Lord's own voice, should provoke its readers to anxiety, as it did, Clement argues, for Moses. Indeed, it is the fear that results from one's reading of the

⁹On this phrase (*πατὴρ ὡς ἥπιος*), cf. Homer, Od. 2.47.

¹⁰Prot. 9.82.1–3 (GCS 12:62)

Scriptures that marks the first step towards salvation, as it causes one to hasten to learn more from the Logos.¹¹ Such a position is not surprising at this juncture in the *Protrepticus*, as Clement has already alluded to such fear twice earlier in the treatise. First, as we saw in chapter five, Clement outlines the pedagogical work of the Logos in the Scriptures, from his voice speaking to the Hebrews in Egypt and the wilderness to the clear voice of the incarnate Lord. And Clement describes the Word's pedagogy in those early scriptural events with the same terminology of fear: "By this fear which these inspired, [the Logos] addressed the hard-hearted."¹² Even in this first instance of this concept in the *Protrepticus*, we see that it is fear that the Word uses to initiate the process of salvation.

Then, in Prot. 4.59.3, Clement draws upon both Petrine and Johannine language to distinguish the life of believers from the lives of the multitude of pagans. "We are a chosen race and royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9), he says, "who are not from beneath but understand the dispensation of God" (cf. Jn. 3:31; 8:23). But the same cannot be said of the pagans, whom Clement calls "the many." They have neglected the fear that Scripture instills, and instead, wed themselves to impurity.¹³ It is the proper response of fear that characterizes the Christian response to the divine voice of the Scriptures.

Yet, for Clement, it is a text from the Psalms that provides the clearest expression of the role that fear plays in the divine process of salvation. Having introduced the Scriptures as the "letters that sanctify and deify," he queries with a bit of brashness:

Are ye so devoid of fear, or rather of faith, as not to believe the Lord Himself, or Paul, who in Christ's stead thus entreats: "Taste and see that God is good" (Ps. 33:8)? Faith will lead you in; experience will teach you; and Scripture will train you, for it says, "Come here, children; listen to me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord (*φόβον*

¹¹For a helpful scholarly discussion on the role of fear in Clement's thought, mostly concentrated on the *Stromateis*, see Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 312–26, who was rightly convinced that "cet aspect de la pensée et de l'œuvre de Clément ayant été assez négligé par les auteurs qui en ont traité, il convient de s'y arrêter" (313). Méhat emphasizes the role of divine punishment in Clement's pedagogy (*l'éducation de l'homme par les châtiments divins*), but it seems to me that he leaves room to consider the role of Scripture, and its "examples" or "commands," in the advancement of the pedagogical progression from fear to wisdom.

¹²Prot. 1.8.2 (GCS 12:8): Τούτω μὲν δὴ τῷ φόβῳ τοὺς σκληροκαρδίους προῦτρεπεν.

¹³Prot. 4.60.1 (GCS 12:46)

κυρίου διδάξω)" (Ps. 33:11).¹⁴

Though the attribution of the psalmist's language to the Apostle may strike one as odd, the use of Psalm 33 to describe the initial stages of salvation is less strange when one notes the presence of fear in Psalm 33:11. For Clement, the fear that the Word instills through the Scriptures is the first stage of the process of salvation. The argument of the *Paedagogus* continues this trajectory, as it is an exhortation to move from fear to wisdom and love. And it is in the *Paedagogus* where we see that Clement's logic of fear is for him a Pauline theme. Clement employs texts from 1 Corinthians and Galatians to express once again this chronology of fear, perhaps moving towards some explanation for his strange attribution of the psalmist's language to Paul in Prot. 9.87.4.

"He Weaves the Thread of Fear Into Everything": Fear and Its Textual Constellations in the *Paedagogus*

Whereas Clement addressed pagans in the *Protrepticus*, in the *Paedagogus* he turns to exhort young Christians to follow the commands of the Scriptures and grow from those Scripture calls "little ones" to the Christian *gnostikôs* who serves the Lord out of love. Nevertheless, Clement's main point in the first book of the *Paedagogus* is further developed around the constellation of fear, even though his text of choice is altered. In order to draw out his point that Christians must turn from fear to wisdom, Clement suggests that the Apostle Paul himself made this very claim. He points to 1 Corinthians 13:11: "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways." What better way to picture the movement from fear than a clear analogy in growth from childhood to maturity? To emphasize the chronology of fear that he had set out initially in the *Protrepticus*, Clement links 1 Corinthians 13 with Galatians 3:23–25:

But before faith came, we were kept imprisoned under the Law, shut up for the faith that was to be revealed. Therefore, the Law has been our educator in Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under an

¹⁴Prot. 9.87.4–88.1 (GCS 12:65)

educator.

Clement emphasizes that the Law was "accompanied by fear" (Paed. 1.31.1), and this passage from Galatians becomes key to understanding Clement's metaphor of childhood. Just like a child is afraid of ghosts, those who are subject to the fear that accompanies the Law reveal themselves to be children. Thus, Clement claims that Paul's phrase "when I was a child, I spoke as a child" is, in fact, a description of life under the Old Testament Law. To move beyond childish things, then, is to no longer think the things of the Law but rather the things that accord with Christ—to be subject to faith and not to fear.¹⁵

This leads him to the most explicit description of the chronology of fear in Paed. 1.59.1:

In former times, our ancestors had an Old Testament. As law, it guided them through fear (*νόμος ἐπαιδαγώγει τὸν λαὸν μετὰ φόβον*); as word, it was a messenger (*λόγος ἀγγελος ἦν*). But to the new and young people a new and young testament has been given. The Word has become flesh; fear has been turned into love. Jesus, that mystical messenger, has been born. Formerly, this same Pedagogue proclaimed, "You will fear the Lord your God" (Deut. 6:2). But to us He exhorts, "You shall love the Lord your God" (Matt. 22:37). For this reason then, he commands us, "Cease from your deeds"—your old sins—"and learn to do good; turn away from evil and do good. You have loved justice and hated lawlessness" (cf. Isa. 1:16–17). This is my new testament, already engraved in the letters of the old.¹⁶

When viewed as "law" the Old Testament guides the people of God through fear, and this becomes the basis for Clement's understanding of God's corrective hand as seen in the Old Testament. In the midst of identifying a number of corrective measures that one may see the Educator using on his "children" throughout the Old Testament—reproof, rebuke, admonition, censure, and so on¹⁷—Clement suggests that the importance of fear may be seen in the fact that it is the divine device intended to save his people. It is the initial step of the Scripture's

¹⁵Paed. 1.34 (GCS 12:110)

¹⁶Paed. 1.59.1 (GCS 12:124–25). As this passage continues, Clement offers a striking claim that the teaching of the New Testament can be seen "already engraved in the letters of the Old" (*παλαιῷ κεχαραγμένη γράμματι*). I will suggest below that this points to Clement's understanding of distinct ways to approach the Christian Old Testament.

¹⁷See Paed. 1.62–88 (GCS 12:126–42)

presentation of salvation. Indeed, Clement's claim is grand: "[The Educator] weaves the thread of fear into everything because 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding.'"¹⁸ But this passage from *Paed.* 1.59 goes further than suggesting "fear" as a theme of Scripture. Clement claims that the Old Testament itself may be read in multiple ways, both as "law" and as "word." As a constellation for his exegesis, fear does not simply allow Clement to gather multiple texts from Scripture—Psalm 33; Galatians 3; 1 Corinthians 13—to make a specific point. It also provides him with an avenue to make the claim that the Old Testament may be read in distinct ways. As "law," the Old Testament gives commands and examples that one must obey through fear. In fact, we can see this logic in a passage from the first chapter.

Christian Scripture in Pedagogical Mode

After an introduction at the outset of the *Paedagogus* to the role of the Logos as the pedagogue for mankind, Clement turns to describe the mode of discourse one will find in his treatise. His description is significant:

I believe it is already evident ($\delta\eta\lambda\sigma$) what the Educator ($\sigma\pi\alpha\iota\delta\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\sigma$) desires and what He professes to accomplish, what he has in mind in his words and in his deeds when he commands what to do and what we are to avoid. It is also clear ($\sigma\alpha\phi\epsilon\sigma$) that the other kind of discourse, the didactic ($\tau\sigma\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\iota\kappa\sigma$)—holding the deepest mysteries ($\tau\sigma\epsilon\pi\sigma\pi\kappa\sigma$)—is at the same time direct and spiritual, in unmistakable language. But, for the present, let that be. As for him who lovingly guides ($\tau\sigma\nu\kappa\alpha\theta\gamma\gamma\sigma\mu\epsilon\nu\sigma$) us along the way to a better life, we ought to return him love and live according to the dictate of his principles. This we should do not only by fulfilling his commandments and obeying his prohibitions, but also by turning away from the evil examples we just mentioned and imitating the good.¹⁹

Presently, I'm not concerned about Scripture's didactic mode ($\tau\sigma\delta\iota\delta\alpha\sigma\kappa\alpha\lambda\iota\kappa\sigma$), as we will discuss that in the following section. Notice, though, the language that Clement uses to describe the pedagogical discourse of the Logos. Clement claims that both the words and deeds of the Logos are seen as "commands" to which those who follow him ought to return love and

¹⁸*Paed.* 1.77.1 (GCS 12:135), citing Prov. 9:10.

¹⁹*Paed.* 1.8.3–9.1 (GCS 12:95)

obedience. The pedagogical mode that Clement describes here views Scripture as an extended series of commands and examples. As the passage continues, Clement confirms that this is a posture before Christian Scripture, a pedagogic manner of reading the text: "considering the Word as law (*νόμον*), let us see his commandments and counsels (*τὰς ἐντολὰς καὶ τὰς ὑποθημοσύνας αὐτοῦ*) as direct and sure paths to eternity."²⁰

It is common knowledge that Clement's interpretation of Scripture in the *Paedagogus* is bent towards moral exhortation. What is less emphasized, but more significant, in my view, is that this moral exhortation is entirely derived from reading the Scriptures as a book of commands and examples. This is what Clement means by suggesting that one receive the words of the Old Testament as "law." In the *Protrepticus*, as we saw, Clement suggested that the Old Testament stories were examples that produced fear leading to conversion. In the *Paedagogus*, the stories are once again held up as examples: "Let us little ones, then, attending to the story of the sins of others, refrain from like offenses, from fear of the threat of suffering like punishment."²¹

From these accounts, Clement argues, one can see the "rod" (*ῥάβδος*) with which the Lord educates his people. But Clement chastises those who believe that this makes the Lord unloving, and unsurprisingly, he describes the Lord's action in terms of "fear."

Thereupon certain persons have arisen denying that the Lord is good, because of the rod and threats and fear that he uses. First of all, these persons misunderstand the Scriptures, which say somewhere, "And the one who fears God will turn to his own heart."²²

The failure of those who mistakenly claim that the Lord is not good is a poor reading of the Scriptures. Thus, at this point, Clement turns to consider the various types of discourse

²⁰Paed. 1.9.4 (GCS 12:95). Although it goes beyond the scope of the present work, Clement's insistence on both the practical and theoretical, the deeds and the words of the Logos, may suggest a Stoic influence on his perspectives. Here, I anticipate the forthcoming work of Gretchen Reydams-Schild, who will be analyzing the Stoic influence on Clement's thought.

²¹Paed. 1.58.3 (GCS 12:124)

²²Paed. 1.62.1 (GCS 12:126)

found in the Scriptures. But, as we saw, regardless of their generic identification, all of these distinct kinds of discourse share a common thread within the Lord's own pedagogical mode of speaking: "He weaves the thread of fear into everything because 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding."²³ For Clement, far from showing the Lord to be uncharitable, the fear that he uses is, in fact, a measurement of his love for his people: "Fear, indeed, is beneficial for men, and leads men towards good. For 'the spirit who fears the Lord will live, because his hope is upon the one who saves them' (Wisd. 34:14)."²⁴ And unsurprisingly, when considering the texts that we have already seen him use in his constellation of fear, Clement returns to both 1 Corinthians, where he had seen the chronology of Christian maturity in the movement from fear to wisdom, and the Psalms, wherein he had discovered that the Word instructs his people in the fear of the Lord. It is an ingenious—a "creative"—correlation of these texts that allows Clement to discover the overarching purpose of the Lord's rod that brings fear.

And through the lips of David, he says, "The Lord chastising has chastised me, but he has not delivered me over to death" (Ps. 117:18) Indeed, the very act of being chastised, and being educated by the Lord as a child (1 Cor. 13:11), means deliverance from death. Again, he says through the same psalmist, "You shall rule them with a rod of iron" (Ps. 2:9). Similarly, the Apostle exclaimed when aroused by the Corinthians: "What is your wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?" (1 Cor. 4:21) By another psalmist, the Lord says again, "The Lord will send forth the rod of power out of Zion" (Ps. 109:2 LXX). And "your rod and staff"—this pedagogical mode of discourse (*ἡ παιδαγωγικὴ αὐτη*)—"have comforted me," another says (Ps. 22:4).²⁵

Scripture's pedagogical mode—composed of commands, counsels, and examples—is a comforting discourse, not because it avoids fear, but because the fear that it instills is the first stage of the Word's saving activity. That this is the ultimate goal that the Word seeks to accomplish is clear to Clement (Paed. 1.8.3), and it becomes the framework for his interpretation of the Scriptures throughout the *Paedagogus*. Having outlined this perspective at the

²³Paed. 1.77.1 (GCS 12:135)

²⁴Paed. 1.67.2 (GCS 12:129)

²⁵Paed. 1.61.2–3 (GCS 12:126), emphasis mine.

outset of the treatise, and having attended to Scripture's commands and examples in the course of his argument, Clement summarizes the same perspective in his closing chapter:

The things we should be on our guard against at home, and how we are to preserve our lives upright, the Pedagogue has shown us in abundant detail. The things that are dear to him to discourse about along the way until he lead us to the Teacher, these he has suggested and proposed by way of a general summary right in the Scriptures. He gives his commands plainly (*γυμνὰς παρατιθέμενος τὰς παραγγελίας*), adapting them to the time of guidance, but he turns them over to the Teacher for their interpretation (*τὰς ἔξηγήσεις*). The purpose of his rule is to weaken fear and free the will for its act of faith.²⁶

Notice the change in subject at the end of this passage. The Pedagogue had given commands plainly for the education of his little ones. Then, Clement describes the passage from the Pedagogue to the Teacher. If my arguments are correct about Clement's constellation of fear, with his simultaneous emphasis on the chronological movement from fear to wisdom, then the stress of the pronoun in the final sentence is surely a reference to the Teacher. In other words, the one whose activity is meant to move beyond fear is the Teacher and not the Pedagogue. The discourse of the Teacher moves beyond the pedagogical by stressing wisdom and not fear.

"When a Man Loves Wisdom, His Father Will Be Pleased": Wisdom and Its Textual Constellation in the Stromateis

As we saw earlier, the passage from *Stromata* 1.11 in which Clement discusses writing, the tradition of his teachers, and his own exegetical practice is best construed as an argument for the importance of the memorial archive in Christian biblical interpretation. Clement suggests that his teacher Pantaenus was the eminent exegetical bee, who could produce a pure honey from the meadows and flowers of the Scriptures. Here, however, I want to note a feature of this passage that is often overlooked. Clement actually identifies the content of the pure

²⁶Paed. 3.87.1 (GCS 12:283–84): “Οσα μὲν οὖν οἴκοι παραφυλακτέον καὶ ὡς τὸν βίον ἐπανορθωτέον, ὁ παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῖν ἄδην διεῖλεκται· ἀ δ’ οὖν καὶ κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς ὄμιλεν αὐτῷ φίλον τοῖς παιδίοις ἄχρις ἀν ἀγάγῃ αὐτὰ πρὸς τὸν διδάσκαλον, ταῦτα δὲ ἡμῖν ἐν κεφαλαίον μέρει δι’ αὐτῶν ὑποτίθεται καὶ παρατίθεται τῶν γραφῶν, γυμνὰς παρατιθέμενος τὰς παραγγελίας, ἀρμοζόμενος μὲν τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς καθοδηγήσεως, τὰς δὲ ἔξηγήσεις αὐτῶν ἐπιτρέπων τῷ διδασκάλῳ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ νόμος αὐτοῦ τὸν φόβον ὑπεκλύειν βούλεται τὸ ἔκούσιον ἐλευθερώσας εἰς πίστιν

substance that the exegetical bee derives from the scriptural field.

Immediately after recounting that his own exegesis in the *Stromateis* should be viewed in relation to that of his teachers, Clement makes the following statement. "In my view, the one whose soul desires to keep the blessed tradition securely has an outline (*ἡ ὑποτύπωσις*) along the lines of this: 'When a man loves wisdom, his father will be pleased' (Prov. 29:3)." ²⁷ It is the preservation of scriptural wisdom that Clement presumes will please those from whom he initially learned it. Indeed, appealing to the story of the light under a bushel in Matthew 5:15, Clement argues that wisdom is the pure substance of the Scriptures that must be cultivated in teacher and pupil alike: "What is the profit of wisdom which does not also bring wisdom to anyone capable of understanding?" ²⁸

Indeed, this reflection leads Clement to consider a scriptural phrase to which he will return multiple times in his contemplations on wisdom throughout the *Stromateis*. "Speak to a wise man, and he will be wiser" (cf. Prov. 1:5; 9:9). ²⁹ For Clement, this phrase applies in particular to scriptural interpretation, and the recollection of Scripture's teachings of wisdom, presumably first taught by his teachers, when he cannot remember. ³⁰ Clement goes so far as to claim that "wisdom" is indeed the primary truth to be garnered from the Scriptures, though its scope is all-encompassing.

The Apostle reasonably called God's wisdom "manifold," "working in many forms and many ways" (*πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως*) through technical skill, scientific knowledge, faith, prophecy; it shows us its power for our benefit because, as the Wisdom of Jesus says, "all wisdom comes from the Lord and is with him to all eternity" (Sir. 1:1). "For if you call for wisdom and perception at the top of your voice, if you

²⁷Str. 1.12.1 (GCS 15:9)

²⁸Str. 1.12.3 (GCS 15:9). For the most recent discussion on the function of wisdom in the first two books of the *Stromateis*, see Schneider, *Theologie als christliche Philosophie*, 232–45. Schneider rightly notices Clement's description of the pedagogy of wisdom, drawn predominantly from sapiential texts, and then subsequently used for interpreting other scriptural passages. However, as I hope will be clear in this chapter, I am less inclined than Schneider to see this as an instance of *willkürlicher Eisegese* (245), with the negative connotations that such a description could bring. Rather, I suggest that this is an example of the creativity of Clement's exegesis, regardless of whether Schneider or I would find Clement's reading compelling.

²⁹Str. 1.14.1 (GCS 15:10)

³⁰Str. 1.14.2 (GCS 15:10)

seek it (*ζητήσῃς*) as you would a treasure of silver (*ἀργυρίου θησαυρὸν*), and if you track it down (*ἐξιχνιάσῃς*) ardently, then you will realize the meaning of reverence for God and you will grasp the perception of God" (Prov. 2:3–5). The prophet spoke to distinguish this from the philosophic approach to perception. He is teaching us with great dignity and solemnity to search it out (*ἐξερευνᾶν*), in order to progress towards reverence for God. So he opposed to it perception made in reverence for God, hinting at knowledge in these words: "For God grants wisdom (*σοφίαν*) from his mouth together with perception and practical wisdom (*αἴσθησίν καὶ φρόνησιν*), and stores up help for the righteous" (Prov. 2:6–7).³¹

In this passage, Clement makes two claims that, in my view, will be sustained throughout the rest of the *Stromateis*. First, Clement distinguishes the wisdom of God in the Scriptures from that of Greek philosophy. In fact, Clement appeals to the characteristic imagery of the "search" (*ζητήσῃς*), which we considered in the previous chapter, to charge his audience to seek for divine wisdom in the Scriptures.³² The distinction Clement makes here is surely seen in his desire to articulate the theft of the Greeks from the Christian Scriptures. He does not engage in such polemics merely to justify the Christian way of philosophy. He is even more concerned to raise the term "wisdom" to the heights of Christian interpretation.³³

Second, from this passage it becomes clear that Clement will understand wisdom as the overarching category of Scripture's deepest mysteries. This accords nicely with his suggestion earlier in *Stromata* 1.11–12 that wisdom is indeed the pure substance of scriptural interpretation, passed from teacher to pupil. But it also provides Clement with a broad term, grounded in the Scriptures themselves, by which to refer to the deepest mysteries of the

³¹Str. 1.27.1–3 (GCS 15:17)

³²It is significant, in my view, that Clement also employs the metaphor of the treasure (*θησαυρὸν*) here. See my discussion of the treasury metaphor above in chapter seven.

³³Cf. the description of Clement's lengthy exposition on the anteriority of the Jews in Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 316: "Qu'est-ce à dire, sinon que cette chronologie n'a pas seulement pour but d'établir l'antériorité des Juifs sur les Grecs, mais aussi de présenter un résumé d' 'histoire sainte', bref qu'elle recouvre une catéchèse élémentaire, où la pédagogie de la crainte, comme le voit, tient une large place." I agree with Méhat's analysis that this "pedagogy" is an underlying motive for Clement in this defense, though I am suggesting here that fear plays a smaller role than wisdom. It is significant, I think, that in a later section of his book, entitled "De la sagesse et de la philosophie" (354–56), Méhat does in fact note that Clement's extended defense of the "larceny of the Greeks" comes immediately after his reflections on true and false wisdom. Indeed, the immediate context of the discussion on Greek theft is wisdom and not the fear that precedes it in the divine pedagogy. Thus, the pedagogy of fear has become the pedagogy of wisdom in the *Stromateis*.

Christian faith. This is a point we don't want to bypass too quickly. It has been a common theme of Clementine scholarship to seek an overarching theme or doctrine to Clement's theology: from *γνῶσις* or unity to his Logos-theology or apophatic theology.³⁴ The concept of *γνῶσις* in Clement's thought has perhaps the strongest arguments for occupying a central role, and yet, every discussion of this concept in the first book of the *Stromateis* is subsumed under a broader dialogue concerning wisdom. In fact, Clement himself seems to think that the term wisdom is large enough to encompass the entirety of Scripture's mysteries, including divine knowledge (*γνῶσις*).³⁵

In *Stromata* 2.7, Clement once again appeals to the phrase from Proverbs that "the wise man will be wiser." At the outset of the second book, however, Clement provides an exposition of the entire passage from Proverbs 1:2–6. In this extended exposition, we see how Clement not only how Clement relates wisdom and knowledge, but we also see quite clearly that wisdom pays distinct dividends in the interpretation of Scripture's mysteries.

"On hearing this, the wise man"—the person who has been persuaded to obey the commandments—"will be wiser" with respect to knowledge. "The person of understanding will acquire the power of government and will understand parables, dark language, the sayings of the wise, and enigmas." For neither those inspired by God nor those equipped by them express sentiments that lead into error, still less into the traps in which the majority of sophists entangle the young without directing their studies to the truth at all. But those who possess the Holy Spirit search out "the depths of God" (*τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ*; cf. 1 Cor. 2:10)—in other words, they attain the hidden secrets that surround prophecy.³⁶

³⁴To these, one could easily add other examples. Cf. Arkadi Choufrine, *Gnosis, Theophany, Theosis: Studies in Clement of Alexandria's Appropriation of his Background*, (New York: Peter Lang, 2002), on the role of deification in Clement's thought.

³⁵Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 85, rightly notes that, for Clement, one must take a word like "wisdom" (sagesse) in its strongest sense, pointing as an example to Clement's discussion of wisdom in *Prot. 11.113.1*.

³⁶Str. 2.7.2–3 (GCS 15:116): *τῶνδε γὰρ ἀκούσας σοφός*, ὁ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς πεπεισμένος, «*σοφώτερος ἔσται*» κατὰ τὴν γνῶσιν, «*ό δὲ νοήμων κιβέρνησιν κτήσεται νοήσει τε παραβολὴν καὶ σκοτεινὸν λόγον ρήσεις τε σοφῶν καὶ αἰνίγματα.*» οὐ γὰρ κιβδήλους οἱ ἐπιπνοι ἐκ θεοῦ λόγους προφέρουσιν οὐδέ οἱ παρὰ τούτων ἐμπορευόμενοι οὐδὲ μὴν πάγας, αἰς οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν σοφιστῶν τοὺς νέους ἐμπλέκουσι πρὸς οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς σχολάζοντες, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν τὸ ἄγιον πνεῦμα κεκτημένοι ἐρευνῶσι «*τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ*,» τουτέστι τῆς περὶ τὰς προφητείας ἐπικρύψεως ἐπήβολοι γίνονται.

In this exposition of Proverbs, Clement affirms the chronology of fear and wisdom to which I have been calling attention in this chapter. He identifies the "wise man" of Prov. 1:5 with the one who has turned to obey the commandments. It seems likely that this man represents the audience Clement addressed in the *Protrepticus* and *Paedagogus*, whom he hoped to see turn in fear to obey the commands of Scripture. But this isn't the end of the process in Clement's mind. The one who by fear obeys the commandments, will grow in wisdom "with respect to knowledge" (*κατὰ τὴν γνῶστν*). How is this accomplished? According to Clement's exposition here, this growth in wisdom occurs in large part through the interpretation of Scripture, in the acquisition of the ability to understand parables and the enigmas found in the Scriptures.³⁷ Clement develops this constellation of wisdom by linking the text from Proverbs with 1 Corinthians 2:10, suggesting that the result of Christian interpretation is a growth in wisdom tantamount to seeking the "depths of God."³⁸ And much like his constellation of fear turned on the view that Scripture, and especially the Old Testament, was composed of examples and commandments (which is unsurprisingly confirmed in the present passage), Clement suggests that the wisdom contained in Scripture can be seen most explicitly when one views the text in its didactic mode as "prophecy" (*προφητεία*).

Christian Scripture in Didactic Mode

Let us take a minute to remember the text from the early chapters of the *Paedagogus*. I argued above that Clement understood Scripture's pedagogical mode to be seen clearly in the commands and examples that populate the text. Clement differentiates this mode of discourse from a second scriptural mode.

It is also clear (*σαφὲς*) that the other kind of discourse, the didactic (*τὸ διδασκαλικόν*)—holding the deepest mysteries (*τὸ ἐποπτικόν*)—is at the same time direct and spiritual (*ἰσχνόν καὶ πνευματικόν*), in unmistakeable language

³⁷See Clement's claim in *Prot.* 1.10.1 (GCS 12:10), that the presence of the incarnate Word has ushered in a period of understanding Scripture's mysteries and breaking the silence of the "prophetic enigmas" (*τῶν προφητικῶν αἰνιγμάτων*). Cf. *Str.* 5.10.3 (GCS 15:332).

³⁸We encountered a similar logic in chapter two, when we examined Clement's interpretation in *Str.* 5.

(ἀκριβολογίας). But, for the present, let that be.³⁹

As I argued above, Clement does not concern himself with this didactic mode in the body of the *Paedagogus*. He does, however, explicitly turn to give way to this didactic mode at the end of the treatise. He once again summarizes his understanding of the pedagogical discourse of the Educator that has been his concern until this point, and now, he foreshadows the didactic discourse that will occupy the *Stromateis*.⁴⁰

[The Pedagogue] gives his commands plainly, adapting them to the time of guidance, but entrusting the interpretation of them to the Teacher (*πρὸς τὸν διδάσκαλον*). The purpose of his rule is to weaken fear and free the will for its act of faith. . . . [The Teacher says,] Lend an attentive ear to me and hear: "And I will give you hidden treasures, concealed, unseen" (Isa. 45:3 LXX) by the Gentiles, but visible to you, "unfailing treasures of wisdom" (cf. *Wisd.* 7:14; *Lk.* 12:33), which the Apostle marveled at when he said, "O the depths of the riches and the wisdom!" (Rom. 11:33)⁴¹

As Clement describes the discourse of the teacher, he turns to distinct scriptural texts that will arise time and again in the *Stromateis*—especially in his articulation of figurative reading in book five. Appealing to Isaiah 45:3, Clement claims that the discourse of the teacher can be pictured as the discovery of "hidden treasure."⁴² But, as Clement will do again in book five of

³⁹Paed. 1.8.3 (GCS 12:95): Σαφὲς δὲ ὡς ἄρα θάτερον εἶδος τῶν λόγων, τὸ διδασκαλικόν, ἵσχνόν τέ ἔστι καὶ πνευματικόν, ἀκριβολογίας ἔχόμενον, τὸ ἐποπτικόν, ὃ δὴ ὑπερκείσθω τὰ νῦν.

⁴⁰For a similar reflection on the "didactic mode" of Scripture, see Robert G. T. Edwards, "Clement of Alexandria's Gnostic Exposition of the Decalogue," *JECS* 23 (2015), 520–26. Note especially Edwards' claim that "because Clement's interpretation is gnostic in character, in many cases he does not read the commandments as commands at all" (520, emphasis original). I am sympathetic to much of Edwards' article, especially as it concerns the various ways of reading dependent upon the implied audience. There are, however, items with which to disagree, like Edwards' claim that the commands of the *Protrepticus* and *Paedagogus* are given "completely without allegory" (521). This is a similar claim to Rizzi, "Literary Problem," 159; see my interaction with Rizzi's points below, n.57.

⁴¹Paed. 3.87.1–3 (GCS 12:283–84): "Οσα μὲν οὖν οἴκοι παραφυλακτέον καὶ ὡς τὸν βίον ἐπανορθωτέον, ὃ παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν ἀδην διελεκταν· ἀ δ' οὖν καὶ κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς ὄμιλειν αὐτῷ φίλον τοῖς παιδίοις ἄχρις ἀν ἀγάγῃ αὐτὰ πρὸς τὸν διδάσκαλον, ταῦτα δὲ ἡμῶν ἐν κεφαλαίον μέρει δι' αὐτῶν ὑποτίθεται καὶ παρατίθεται τῶν γραφῶν, γυμνὰς παρατιθέμενος τὰς παραγγελίας, ἀρμοζόμενος μὲν τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς καθοδηγήσεως, τὰς δὲ ἔξηγήσεις αὐτῶν ἐπιτρέπων τῷ διδασκάλῳ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ νόμος αὐτοῦ τὸν φόβον ὑπεκλύειν βούλεται τὸ ἔκονσιον ἐλευθερώσας εἰς πίστιν

⁴²The parallels between the treasury motif in the previous chapter are clear.

the Stromateis, he specifically identifies the treasure in a reading of the Wisdom of Solomon. The didactic discourse of Scripture contains the "unfailing treasures of wisdom" (*σοφίας δὲ θησαυροὶ ἀνέκλειπτοι*). Moreover, Clement further describes this treasure as the "depth of wisdom" (*βάθος σοφίας*), which may in fact provide him with the foundation to connect 1 Corinthians 2:10 with Proverbs 1:5 in the passage from the Stromateis above. In any case, Clement understands this second mode of scriptural discourse as the movement beyond fear and into the revelation of wisdom. It is important, though, to remember that Clement does not necessarily differentiate between distinct genres of Christian Scripture. On the contrary, the same text—indeed, the Old Testament as a whole—can be seen in both modes. Here, the passage from Paed. 1.59 is once again instructive:

In former times, our ancestors had an Old Testament. As law, it guided them through fear (*νόμος ἐπαιδαγάγει τὸν λαὸν μετὰ φόβου*); as word, it was a messenger (*λόγος ἄγγελος ἦν*). But to the new and young people a new and young testament has been given. The Word has become flesh; fear has been turned into love. Jesus, that mystical messenger, has been born. . . . This is my new testament, already engraved in the letters of the old.⁴³

For Clement, the key exegetical factor is not to identify whether a text belongs to one discourse or the other. Rather, every text may belong to both discourses. At one time it may speak pedagogically through fear, and at another time, it will point to the "unfailing treasures of wisdom" of the didactic discourse.⁴⁴ This seems to be the most likely reason for Clement's

⁴³Paed. 1.59.1 (GCS 12:124–25): Τὸ μὲν οὖν πρότερον τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ λαῷ πρεσβυτέρα διαθήκη ἦν καὶ νόμος ἐπαιδαγάγει τὸν λαὸν μετὰ φόβου καὶ λόγος ἄγγελος ἦν, καινῷ δὲ καὶ νέῳ λαῷ καινὴ καὶ νέα διαθήκη δεδώρηται καὶ ὁ λόγος γεγένεται νηται καὶ ὁ φόβος εἰς ἀγάπην μετατέτραπται καὶ ὁ μυστικὸς ἐκεῖνος ἄγγελος Ἰησοῦς τίκτεται. Ο γάρ αὐτὸς οὗτος παιδαγωγὸς τότε μὲν «φοβηθήσῃ κύριον τὸν θεόν» ἔλεγεν, ήμῦν δὲ «ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου» παρήνεσεν. Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐντέλλεται ήμῦν «παύσασθε ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων ὑμῶν», τῶν παλαιῶν ἀμαρτιῶν, «μάθετε καλὸν ποιεῦν· ἔκκλινον ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποίησον ἀγαθόν· ἡγάπησας δικαιοσύνην, ἐμίσησας ἀνομίαν». Αὕτη μου ἡ νέα διαθήκη παλαιῷ κεχαραγμένη γράμματι. As this passage continues, Clement offers a striking claim that the perspective and teaching of the New Testament can be seen "already engraved in the letters of the Old" (*παλαιῷ κεχαραγμένη γράμματι*). I will suggest that this points to Clement's understanding of distinct ways to approach the Christian Old Testament, a concept to which we will return below.

⁴⁴Schneider, *Theologie als christliche Philosophie*, 166, comes close to this perspective, when he says that Clement approaches scriptural texts with the question, "Bei welchen Dingen, in welchen Fragen kann uns dieses Gleichnis unsere Erkenntnis erweitern?"

frequent return to the *Kerygma of Peter*. At times, Clement provides an extended quote from this text. But most frequently, Clement simply returns to the characteristic phrase drawn from the *Preaching of Peter*: the Lord is called both "Law and Word."⁴⁵ In fact, standing at the end of the first book of the *Stromateis*, just after his description of the four ways that the Old Testament may be understood, and just prior to the exposition of Proverbs 1 that opens book two, Clement appeals to the Lord's identity as both Law and Word as a succinct summary of the single power and trajectory of the Old Testament. To be sure, Clement's use of the *Preaching of Peter* could have other applications beyond his conception of the Old Testament, but after his exposition of Proverbs, Clement reiterates this position in Str. 2.29.1–4. Here, he provides a trenchant expression of the relationship between Old and New Testaments: they form "a single process of salvation proceeding from prophecy to fulfillment in the gospel, through one and the same Lord."⁴⁶ As the one who furnished the Old Testament, the Lord is both "Law and Word," guiding his people through fear and into wisdom, respectively.

Fear, Wisdom, and Clement's "Literary Problem"

As we have seen in this chapter, Clement divides scriptural discourse into two distinct modes, a pedagogical mode and a didactic mode. Moreover, these two modes are identified through Clement's construction of two distinct textual constellations: the constellation of fear and the constellation of wisdom. When viewed as "law," the Old Testament presents commands and examples for the education of God's people. In following the Word's pedagogical discourse, Clement encourages believers to obey the commands or heed the examples out of fear that what has happened to earlier generations will indeed happen to them. Yet, when viewed as "word," the same texts of the Old Testament present a prophecy that finds its fulfillment in the New Testament and especially in the incarnation of the Lord. Indeed, the "mysteries of

⁴⁵The significance of the *Preaching of Peter* to Clement's understanding of scriptural interpretation is tangible. In Str. 6.127–28 (GCS 15:496–97), Clement confirms his view that Scripture's prophetic nature is intended to reveal "holy mysteries" that accompanied the Incarnation of the Word.

⁴⁶Str. 2.29.1–4 (GCS 15:128–29). Clement incorporates the Pauline statement of Rom. 1:17 in this second passage, a text that will prove vital to his logic on figural reading in the fifth book of the *Stromateis*. See H. Clifton Ward, "'The Symbolic Mode is Most Useful': Clement of Alexandria's Scriptural Imagination," JECS (forthcoming).

wisdom" are seen clearly in the life of Christ which has broken the silence of the prophetic enigmas.⁴⁷

In what follows, I will suggest that this attention to Clement's textual constellations can contribute an answer to the question of Clement's literary output that has " vexed" Clementine scholarship for years.⁴⁸ Does Clement interpret Scripture according to a definitive plan of Christian growth and maturity? Or is his interpretation as random and variable as the title of his *Miscellanies* suggests, a veritable loose association of unrelated texts? Most answers to these questions have been dependent on a passage that concludes the first chapter of Clement's *Paedagogus*. In this passage, Clement outlines the pedagogical process employed by God to lead his people to salvation:

The entirely benevolent Logos, being eager to perfect us by the progressive stages of salvation, uses a beautiful plan (*τὴ καλὴ οἰκονομία*), appropriate for effective education (*εἰς παιδευσιν ἐνεργῆ*): first he exhorts us (*προτρέπων*), then he trains us (*παιδαγωγῶν*), and, finally, he teaches (*ἐκδιδάσκων*).⁴⁹

This short text has led to a tremendous amount of discussion pertaining to Clement's own literary activity, and one can easily understand the temptation for this dialogue. After all, the activity which Clement ascribes to the Logos aligns closely with the titles of his own works, though Clement has no work paralleled to the "teaching" activity of the Logos, which would ostensibly be titled the *Didaskalos*. Of course, this has led to much ink on whether Clement's *Stromateis* might correspond to the teaching activity of the Logos.⁵⁰ I do not claim to have a clear

⁴⁷Cf. Prot. 1.10.1 (GCS 12:10)

⁴⁸This is the way that the situation is described by Wagner, "Another Look," 251.

⁴⁹Paed. 1.3.3 (GCS 12:91)

⁵⁰The ease with which scholars move from the verbs in this passage to the titles of Clement's works is clearly seen in the words of Bogdan G. Bucur, *Angelomorphic Pneumatology: Clement of Alexandria and Other Early Christian Witnesses*, (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 13: "The work of the Logos as *προτρέπων* and *παιδαγωγῶν* finds its counterpart in Clement's *Logos Protreptikos* and *Logos Paidagogos*. The question is to determine what corresponds to the divine Logos as *ἐκδιδάσκων*." Others have warned against reading too much into them; cf. Völker, *Der wahre Gnostiker*, 29–30. For the clearest exposition of the debate concerning whether the *Stromateis* should be identified with the *Didaskalos*, see Wagner, "Another Look". The traditional position was to identify the two; see Carl Heussi, "Die *Stromateis* des Clemens Alexandrinus und ihr Verhältnis zum *Protreptikos* und *Pädagogus*," *ZWT* 45 (1902): 465–512. Indeed, in recent years, some scholars have returned to traditional arguments (and offered occasional new theses) in order to identify the *Stromateis* with the expected *Didaskalos*. See Eric Osborn, "Teaching and Writing in the First Chapter of

solution to the question of whether the *Stromateis* should be identified as the anticipated *Didaskolos*. However, I do think that the arguments I have provided in this chapter suggest that this anticipation for a threefold pedagogical paradigm, based on such passages as this one from the *Paedagogus*, and into which we must fit Clement's own literary plan is misguided. On the contrary, Clement more clearly identifies a twofold discourse within the Scriptures—which he calls the voice of the Lord—and this twofold discourse generally aligns with a division of his works that focus on moral exhortation to the faith and the teaching of Scripture's deeper mysteries. If Clement models his own literary corpus on the work of the Logos, then I would argue that such treatises as the *Protrepticus*, the *Paedagogus*, and *Who is the Rich Man Who Will Be Saved?*, composed as they are with obvious paraenetic goals, are modeled on the pedagogical discourse of the Logos in the Scriptures. Likewise, the *Stromateis* and the *Hypotyposes* (including what remains extant in the *Eclogae propheticae*, the *Adumbrationes*, and the *Excerpta Theodotus*) are modeled on the didactic discourse, composed of subtle hints and figurative readings to instill an understanding of the deepest "mysteries of wisdom" contained in the Scriptures.⁵¹

In a recent essay on Clement's "literary problem," Marco Rizzi has offered an argument

the *Stromateis* of Clement of Alexandria," *JTS* 10 (1959): 335–43; and, most recently, Itter, *Esoteric Teaching*, who concludes matter-of-factly, "The *Stromateis* is the *Didaskalos*" (221). Nevertheless, compelling arguments can be made that the *Stromateis* is not the intended *Didaskalos*. See Eugène de Faye, *Clément d'Alexandrie: Étude sur les rapports du Christianisme et de la philosophie grecque au IIe siècle*, (Frankfurt/Main: Minerva, 1967); Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria*, 189n.4; and, above all, Pierre Nautin, "La fin des *Stromates* et les *Hypotyposes* de Clément d'Alexandrie," *VC* 30 (1976): 268–302, whose manuscript analysis of the 11th century *Codex Laurentianus*—the only manuscript to include the *Stromateis*, *Excerpta*, and *Eclogae*—suggested that the *Stromateis* were in fact a preparatory text for the intended *Didaskalos*.

⁵¹On the setting and purposes of *Quis dives salvetur*, see L. Michael White, "Moral Pathology: Passions, Progress, and *Protreptic* in Clement of Alexandria," in *Passions and Moral Progress in Greco-Roman Thought*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald (London: Routledge, 2008), 284–321. Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 42–54, suggested that Q.D.S. was written after Clement left Alexandria, sometime around 203 C.E. David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 144–45, argued in support of Méhat's chronology, suggesting that the lack of Philonic material in both Q.D.S. and the works that postdate the *Stromateis* would appear to confirm this view. White, "Moral Pathology," 310n.24, contests this view by noting that there are, in fact, some common notions between Clement and Philo on the passions, though there are no direct quotations or clear allusions (291–96). Moreover, if one considers the possibility that Clement's reference to his work *ἐν τῇ περὶ ἀρχῶν καὶ θεολογίας ἐξηγήσει* (Q.D.S. 26.8) is a referral to the *Stromateis* rather than a separate work (cf. Str. 4.2.1–2), it remains entirely possible that the "differential use of Philonic material" is related more to audience and purpose than to geographical provenance. White thus argues that Q.D.S. is addressed "to the cultured elite" as an exhortation "to pursue his Christian educational program." I agree with White on this score, but I want to stress the fact not that this audience is composed of the "cultural elite," but rather of novices on the educational program—that is, those in need of the "pedagogical discourse" I discuss here.

that supports my thesis of a twofold discourse in Clement's work.⁵² In his essay, Rizzi seeks to refute the "very idea of a threefold project in [Clement's] work,"⁵³ and he develops his notion that Clement operates in two distinct styles: a "proptreptic and pedagogic style" and a "didactic style."⁵⁴ Rizzi points to a passage within the *Paedagogus* that confirms this general schema: *Paed.* 2.76.1. In this text, Clement says, "I have departed from the pedagogical mode (*παιδαγωγικὸς τύπος*) and encroached upon the didactic mode (*διδασκαλικὸν εἶδος*). Let me thus return to my subject."⁵⁵ Here, Clement employs two terms that are, as Rizzi rightly notes, "taken from the specific rhetorical vocabulary and refer to problems of style and literary genres."⁵⁶ Once again, like in the preface to the *Paedagogus*, Clement distinguishes in his own scriptural interpretation between a pedagogical and didactic mode, reminiscent of the twofold discourse of the Word.

Rizzi wants to distinguish the style of interpretation for each of these modes, arguing that the "pedagogic style" is characterized by literal exegesis and the "didactic style" by allegorical exegesis.⁵⁷ I think this distinction is difficult to maintain, given the fact that Clement's works do not so easily divide according to this strict dichotomy. Figural reading can be seen from the outset of the *Protrepticus*, and the *Stromateis* contains multiple passages that provide literal readings of scriptural texts. Moreover, Rizzi's use of the term "style" to differentiate between the "pedagogic" and "didactic" is unfortunate because the primary differences between the two are not primarily stylistic—understood as a grammatical and

⁵²Rizzi, "Literary Problem"

⁵³Rizzi, "Literary Problem," 155. I only encountered Rizzi's essay after coming to similar conclusions independently, and I judge our similar descriptions of Clement's activity to be mutually confirming. This reading of a twofold pattern to Clement's work was earlier supposed by Giuseppe Lazzati, *Introduzione allo studio di Clemente Alessandrino*, (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1939), 1–36.

⁵⁴Rizzi, "Literary Problem," 159. The similarity of the terms by which we both describe Clement's "style" or "mode"—which we construed independently—can be adequately explained by our individual attempts to pay deference to the Greek terminology that underlie them.

⁵⁵*Paed.* 2.76.1 (GCS 12:203)

⁵⁶Rizzi, "Literary Problem," 159.

⁵⁷Rizzi, "Literary Problem," 159.

literary-critical distinction. Thus, I think we can better describe the differences in Clement's readings by distinguishing between two modes of interpretation that parallel the "pedagogical" and "didactic" modes of discourse used by the Logos: namely, "exemplary interpretation" and "prophetic interpretation." In Clement's exemplary interpretation, the reader approaches the Scriptures seeking to discover its commands, precepts, and examples, which through fear exhorts the reader to faith. On the other hand, Clement's prophetic interpretation reads the same scriptural texts in search of Scripture's deepest mysteries, seen most clearly, but not simply, in Old Testament promises fulfilled in the incarnation of Jesus.⁵⁸

I am less concerned with advancing the effect of these arguments on solving Clement's "literary problem" than Rizzi appears to be. Indeed, I remain open to the possibility that Clement's literary works are perhaps aligned with the threefold philosophical subdivision prevalent in the second century C.E., and yet, I think the conclusions of Nautin—that the *Stromateis* appear to be preparatory to the extant fragments of *Hypotyposeis*—are entirely right. Nevertheless, it seems true that the implications of the arguments advanced in my last two chapters on the scriptural constellations in Clement's creative exegesis do suggest that a twofold pattern—a pedagogical and didactic mode of reading—is highlighted, and thus, if the *Stromateis* appear as a preparatory text to the *Hypotyposeis*, it seems entirely possible that Clement himself did not intend for these to be two distinct documents.⁵⁹

⁵⁸A related question, but which goes beyond the scope of the current project, is how the didactic discourse—nearly always described as mystical, mysterious, or enigmatic—can be explained as having an "exactness" or "preciseness" (*ἀκριβολογίας*) in *Paed.* 1.8.3–9.1. Clement never answers this question explicitly. Is he simply inconsistent on this point? I think it more likely that the view of a twofold paradigm—a pedagogical and didactic discourse—turns the emphasis from the speech itself to the speaker's understanding of his audience. That is, the didactic mode can be described as "exact" or "clear," but only to an audience who is prepared to understand it as such. This implied audience has moved from fear to wisdom and is capable of understanding the "mysteries of wisdom" contained in Scripture, which Clement calls elsewhere the "depths of God" (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10).

⁵⁹Cf. Marco Rizzi, "The End of *Stromateis* VII and Clement's Literary Project," in *The Seventh Book of the Stromateis: Proceedings of the Colloquium on Clement of Alexandria (Olomouc, October 21-23, 2010)*, eds. Matyáš Havrda, Vít Hušek, and Jana Plátová (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 299–311.

The Complexity of Textual Constellations

The benefit to approaching Clement's biblical exegesis from the perspective of the textual constellations that he organizes goes far beyond any potential solution to the literary problem. I want to emphasize in conclusion to this chapter, then, the profit that this perspective brings to evaluate whether Clement's exegetical praxis aligns with his theory. Does his actual execution of scriptural interpretation fit with his description of exegesis? Permit me to remind us of Clement's most explicit description of exegesis in the two passages from Str. 1.176 and 1.179, with which I began this chapter:

"The Mosaic philosophy is accordingly divided into four parts: first, the historic part; second, that which is strictly called the legislative part (both of which properly belong to ethics); a third part, which relates to liturgy (a part of physical science); and fourth, above all, the theological part, the vision, which Plato says belongs to the truly great mysteries, while Aristotle calls it metaphysics." . . . There are four ways in which we can receive the meaning of the Law: it may present a type; it may show a sign; it may lay down a precept (*ώς ἐντολὴν*) for right conduct; and it may pronounce a prophecy (*ώς προφητείαν*). I am well aware that to make these distinctions and expound them is the work of fully mature men. The whole of Scripture is not, in the proverbial saying, "a single Myconos."⁶⁰

This theoretical explanation from Clement has been considered frequently in attempts to systematize Clement's exegesis, especially in its relation to his list in Str. 1.176 that is clearly Philonic.⁶¹ For example, André Méhat, in his astute work on the *Stromateis*, refers to this passage

⁶⁰Str. 1.176.1–2; 179.3–4 (GCS 15:108; 110): *τετραχῶς δὲ ἡμῖν ἐκληπτέον καὶ τοῦ νόμου τὴν βούλησω, ** ἡ ὡς σημεῖον ἐμφαίνουσαν ἡ ὡς ἐντολὴν κυροῦσαν εἰς πολιτείαν ὄρθην ἡ θεσπίζουσαν ὡς προφητείαν. ἀνδρῶν δὲ εὐ οἰδ' ὅτι τὰ τοιαῦτα διακρίνειν τε καὶ λέγειν· οὐ γὰρ δὴ «μία Μύκονος» ἡ πᾶσα πρὸς νόησω γραφή, ἡ φασιν οἱ παροιμιαζόμενοι*

⁶¹Str. 1.176.1 (GCS 15:108). This passage reads: "The Mosaic philosophy is accordingly divided into four parts: first, the historic part; second, that which is strictly called the legislative part (both of which properly belong to ethics); a third part, which relates to liturgy (a part of physical science); and fourth, above all, the theological part, the vision, which Plato says belongs to the truly great mysteries, while Aristotle calls it metaphysics." Cf. Philo, *Mos.* 2.46 (LCL 289:470–71). For a discussion of the relevant passages, see Boer, *De allegorese*, 47–64; Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), 56; André Méhat, "Clément d'Alexandrie et les sens de l'Écriture," in *Épektasis; mélanges patristiques offerts au cardinal Jean Daniélou*, eds. Jacques Fontaine and Charles Kannengiesser (Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 358–62; and Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo*, 60–62.

as either a "fourfold list of the meanings of Scripture" or a "formula on biblical exegesis."⁶² Méhat followed these statements with an essay devoted to the "deux listes quadripartites des sens de l'Écriture" (i.e., Str. 1.176.1 and 1.179.3), in which he argues that, although the two lists do not align directly to one another, they both concern the hermeneutical discernment of Scripture's different senses. Moreover, Méhat claims that the formula of Str. 1.179.3 aligns with a catechetical progression that Clement has placed not merely within the problem of his literary trilogy but indeed in the advancement presupposed by the Stromateis themselves.⁶³

I want to emphasize, however, that passages like this one should not be used to formulate a description of the hermeneutical "senses" that Clement might discern in Scripture.⁶⁴ After all, Clement rarely shows the drive to differentiate a "type" from a "sign," much less use this terminology.⁶⁵ On the other hand, we have confirmed that he quite often emphasizes that the Law is received as either a "command" or as a "prophecy." But I want to suggest that these are not primarily a difference in genre for the hermeneutical enterprise. Instead, they represent differences in approaches to the Law, and they turn the tables on the important questions to ask before the exegetical enterprise can even begin. That is, the identity of the audience is of far more importance than the identification of textual genre or style.⁶⁶ Is

⁶²See Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 435n.76 and 316n.104, respectively.

⁶³Méhat, "Sens de l'Écriture," 365. This is the conclusion of his earlier study in Méhat, *Étude sur les 'Stromates'*, 507–22, where Méhat argues that even the Stromateis begin with a "deuxième Protreptique" and should be expected to have concluded with the now lost *Hypotyposes* in their internal movement from ethics to physics to epoptics. This second claim was forcefully argued in the magisterial article by Nautin, "La fin des Stromates". And though he does not appeal to either of these texts for his classification, Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, 153–62, also seeks to classify Clement's exegesis by hermeneutical vocabulary.

⁶⁴For a similar claim, see Boer, *De allegorese*, 59: "Een hermeneutische indeeling, die als basis kan worden gebruikt bij een onderzoek van Clemens' interpretaties van bijbelsche en profane schrijvers, kunnen wij bij hem niet vinden." Oddly, Boer's earlier statement concerning Str. 1.179.3 does label it a hermeneutical distinction: "In 179,3 is echter van het begin af aan niet sprake van een uiterlijke indeeling, maar van een hermeneutisch onderscheid" (56).

⁶⁵Méhat, "Sens de l'Écriture," 362–64, comes closest in my view to understanding how Clement might use the terms *τύπος* and *σημεῖον* in Str. 1.179.3. He argues from *Paed.* 2.89.2–3 that *τύπος* is used by Clement to mean "example," situating the term within Clement's moral discourse. Moreover, Méhat argues—though I would disagree here—that *σημεῖον* is used in *Prot.* 8.1.3 and *Str.* 6.28.3 in the sense of "miracles," which are also used by God for "la conversion des pécheurs endurcis." According to Méhat, then, "examples" and "miracles" (along with "commands") are part of the moral exhortation of the Law.

⁶⁶I hope to investigate this claim more fully in a future work, as it seems to me a fundamental question

the audience in need of moral exhortation to live Christianly (and perhaps read Christianly?), and thus in need of seeing the examples or commands of Scripture that teach the fear of the Lord? Or is the implied audience composed of mature Christians who seek the "mysteries of wisdom" in the figurative and enigmatic language of Scripture as a prophetic text?

Of course, these questions are not always answered in our sources; Clement himself rarely provides an explicit answer. However, by looking to the textual constellations that Clement forms from his experience with the Scriptures, one can move towards understanding how Clement would articulate his posture before Christian Scripture. For Clement, the same text may speak as a command or example for right conduct in one instance and as a prophetic pronouncement in another. And, to be sure, to leave our investigation without satisfactorily discerning the actual settings in which a text is read for either an exemplary or prophetic interpretation (outside of my suggestion that, for Clement, the audience who participates in the investigation is the deciding factor) is certainly not without its difficulties. But difficulties is merely another word for complexities. And this is an instance where systematization would simplify and distort a complex issue. Thus, I maintain what I said at the outset; namely, it is this very complexity—the potential to notice the constellations that motivate the thoughts of our early Christian exegetes while simultaneously (and happily) confessing our inability to systematize this thought—that provides the most fruitful and accurate description of ancient reading practices for our understanding of early Christian exegesis today.

Epilogue: Clement as Commentarial Theologian

Far from being writers—founders of their own place, heirs of the peasants of earlier ages now working on the soil of language, diggers of wells and builders of houses—readers are travellers; they move across lands belonging to someone else, like nomads poaching their way across fields they did not write, despoiling the wealth of Egypt to enjoy it themselves.¹

I began this study by situating it as a contribution to the reappraisal of early Christian exegesis initiated in the late twentieth century. The best book to have emerged from this reassessment is, in my opinion, Elizabeth Clark's *Reading Renunciation*. I come to this judgment for two reasons. First, Clark's monograph heeded the clarion call of Frances Young's earlier *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* to be dissatisfied with investigations into the idea of early Christian exegesis and, instead, to give attention to the detailed practices of biblical exegesis. Thus, Clark limited her study to an investigation of ascetic exegesis in early Christianity, specifically as it concerned sexual renunciation, and she situated these ascetic concerns within the context of Jewish and Greco-Roman exegetical culture. Yet, Clark went a step further, providing the second reason for my earlier judgment of her book. Clark developed ways of discussing how these exegetes employed the Scriptures in creative and (at times) surprising ways. The fifth chapter of *Reading Renunciation*, for example, focused on "exegetical and rhetorical strategies" that Clark observed in early Christian ascetic interpretation, and she provided her audience with the opportunity to consider what these exegetes did with the scriptural texts: from placing texts in different contexts to "imploding" texts into unrelated core ascetic issues, from "talking back" with a textual interlocutor to changing the implied audience of a biblical

¹Michel de Certeau, "Reading as Poaching," in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 174. This quote was originally cited by Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 371.

text. As Clark compelling argued, early Christian interpreters were both readers and writers, who engaged the Scriptures creatively to form an "asceticized version of Christianity."² Reading *Renunciation* rightly moved the focus of the discussion further away from the idea of exegesis and much closer to exegetical practice.³

Nevertheless, the scope of Clark's book does not allow much room for conclusions about individual readers. Since she limits her investigation to sexual renunciation, she could never consider the immense amounts of material from certain early Christian figures. Indeed, this fact might require the contemplation that, although Chrysostom, Jerome, and Origen might provide three helpful "models of reading renunciation," these models might not hold up to the scrutiny of examining the reading practices of any of these figures individually across their own works.⁴ Thus, although Origen might offer a "transhistorical reading of Scripture" and jettison a "chronological trajectory between Hebrew past and Christian present" for the purposes of discussing sexual renunciation, in order to transpose such a discussion from focusing on physical bodies to the inner composition of one's soul, is it the case that his reading practices holistically represent such a strategy? I would imagine this is not the case, and David Dawson has offered an argumentation along these lines.⁵ Therefore, one way of filling this lacuna is an examination that takes as its delimiting factor the work of an individual reader. This study has been an attempt to accomplish this very task as it relates to the scriptural exegesis of Clement of Alexandria.

In order to accomplish this task, I have sought to develop a concept of "creative

²Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 371.

³Of course, this does not mean that Clark's work is above criticism. For instance, I am not compelled by her attempt at separating "close reading" from "intertextual exegesis" (see Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 118–28). Indeed, I would argue that these categories are inherently too broad to provide meaningful discussion of the techniques employed in such readings. That is, prosopological exegesis, the definition of terms, identifying a textual genre, and scanning for thematic resonances across a given corpus are all techniques of "close reading," and they all also prove fruitful in much intertextual exegesis. Thus, while Clark's monograph moved the focus toward the practice of exegesis, I suggest that there remains further travel to be made in this direction.

⁴For these three "models of reading renunciation," see Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 153–74.

⁵See Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading*, and particularly such comments as, "Origen is explicitly and intensely concerned with history precisely as event. Indeed, it is only as event—especially as ongoing or renewable event—that Origen thinks history is important" (125, emphasis original).

exegesis" that is consciously mindful of two foundations to exegetical practices in antiquity. First, the literary analysis of antiquity was consistently developed on the foundations of the tools and techniques of reading learned at the hands of the ancient *γραμματικός*. One can view the various techniques and strategies of the grammarian as a repository—a grammatical archive—from which a reader draws the necessary textual practices for working with a text as a carpenter draws the necessary tools from his toolbox to work with the lumber in front of him. Second, I have argued that Clement's scriptural exegesis displays the existence of a second archive, one less concrete than the grammatical archive and nevertheless just as significant. By examining Clement's use of standard metaphors of memory and recollection from antiquity, I suggested that we may catch a glimpse of his memorial archive, seen most clearly in the constellations around which he interprets a variety of scriptural texts and to which he collects others. This activity displays the creativity of Clement's exegesis. Exegesis becomes an act of discovery, a rhetorical invention, wherein Clement (and, I would argue, any ancient interpreter engaged in creative exegesis) "dwells among the texts," especially the Christian Scriptures, and "is always discovering in them more things to say."⁶

Even if I have been persuasive in developing this concept of creative exegesis as a means by which to examine early Christian exegesis, there are a few areas of further study that can be identified to extend our understanding of creative exegesis in antiquity. In the course of my argument, I have seen fit to examine Clement's reading practices primarily from the lens of grammatical interpretation and the art of recollection as these activities are expressed in the Greco-Roman tradition. There remains work to be done on the parallels between creative exegesis as I have outlined it here and the practices inherent to Jewish exegesis. In fact, the term "creative exegesis" has been used to describe midrashic interpretation, especially in its aggadic form. Joseph Heinemann described the phenomenon as follows:

The Jewish people sought, successfully, to continue living according to the dictates of the Torah. To achieve this, it was necessary that the Torah remain dynamic and open to varying interpretation in order to meet the challenges of drastically varying

⁶This quote is drawn from the definition of a "grammarian embellisher" given by Bruns, *Inventions*, 56, and cited approvingly by Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, 84, who likewise sees this exegesis as a rhetorical invention, an exploration of the "indeterminate areas of the text."

circumstances. By developing a method of "creative exegesis" the aggadists were able to find in Scripture—which might otherwise have come to seem irrelevant to contemporary needs—the new answers and values which made it possible to grapple with the shifts and changes of reality.⁷

Perhaps the characteristics of "creative exegesis" as I have developed it in this study will align in a number of fruitful ways with Jewish exegetical practices. Some scholars have already suggested that there are some parallels to be drawn.⁸ Others, however, insist that we must be careful to suggest such connections too hastily.⁹ Regardless of the conclusions, there could be, in my view, much benefit to extending the concept of creative exegesis in accordance with a study of Jewish interpretation in late antiquity.¹⁰

⁷Joseph Heinemann, "The Nature of the Aggadah," in *Midrash and Literature*, eds. Geoffrey H. Hartman and Sanford Budick (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), 43. Heinemann draws attention to the first use of the term "creative exegesis" to describe such midrashic interpretation by Isaak Heinemann, *Darkhei ha-Aggadah*, (Givatayim: Magnes and Massada, 1970).

⁸On the exegetical practices of midrash, see Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990); and David Halivni, *Peshat and Derash: Plain and Applied Meaning in Rabbinic Exegesis*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). The standard article on the parallels between Jewish and Greco-Roman techniques is David Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric," *HUCA* 22 (1949): 239-64. See also David Daube, "Alexandrian Methods of Interpretation and the Rabbis," in *Festschrift Hans Lewald: Bei Vollendung des vierzigsten Amtsjahres als ordentlicher Professor im Oktober 1953*, (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1953), 27-43. On the role of memory and recollection in Jewish readings of Scripture, see Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript*; and William W. Hallo, "Midrash as Mnemonic: A New Approach to Rabbinic Exegesis," *HUCA* 74 (2003): 157-73.

⁹Michael A. Fishbane, "Inner-Biblical Exegesis: Types and Strategies of Interpretation in Ancient Israel," in *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989), 3-18, has sought to temper the arguments of Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric". For Fishbane, Daube has mistaken "the occurrence of similar exegetical terms for the inner-Jewish cultivation of preexistent native traditions of interpretation" (4). A similar argument on shared exegetical terminology is made by Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), 56-68. Beyond the discussions of influence, it is possible that Fishbane's work could provide interesting extensions of our understanding of the imaginative—or "creative"—aspects to early Christian exegesis. Note how he describes the role of imagination in exegetical practice: "One of the great and most characteristic features of the history of religions is the ongoing reinterpretation of sacred utterances which are believed to be foundational for each culture. So deeply has this phenomenon become part of our modern literary inheritance that we may overlook the peculiar type of imagination which it has sponsored and continues to nurture: an imagination which responds to and is deeply dependent upon received traditions; an imagination whose creativity is never entirely a new creation, but one founded upon older and authoritative words and images" (3). This comment touches on the nature of commentary itself, a question whose answer is crucial, but the investigation of which must be postponed for another study.

¹⁰Though he does not employ the term "creative exegesis," Gerald L. Bruns, "Midrash and Allegory: The Beginnings of Scriptural Interpretation," in *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, eds. Robert Alter and Frank Kermode

Additionally, another potential area for beneficial study is the creative exegesis of other early Christian readers. I have suggested that the reassessment of early Christian exegesis in the last few decades is a helpful corrective, but while my study suggests that this model of creative exegesis, complete with explorations of its grammatical and memorial foundations, is a helpful lens through which to exegete the exegetes, so to speak, I have nonetheless only explored the practices of one reader—Clement of Alexandria. Before any possible conjectures about the fittingness of "creative exegesis" as a wholesale label for early Christian scriptural interpretation can be made, there must be further explorations of individual exegetes from various geographical and chronological locations. Let me simply suggest two possibilities.

Gregory of Nyssa was the most productive author among the Cappadocians, and yet, to date there exists no good book on Gregory's biblical exegesis in English.¹¹ In the existing scholarship on Gregory's exegesis, most contributions either consider exegetical techniques as they are seen in one particular treatise, or they prioritize the theological development of Gregory's claims with less concern on the practices of exegesis that lead to his theological positions.¹² A broader reflection on the reading practices to be seen in Gregory's creative exegesis is surely needed. Cyril of Alexandria provides another author whose creative exegesis leaves room for further study. Cyril was a prodigious exegete, and there remains more extant exegetical literature from Cyril's hand than any other patristic figure of the East.¹³ Matthew

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 625-46, does see numerous parallels between midrash and early Christian figural reading. Cf. Gerald L. Bruns, "The Problem of Figuration in Antiquity," in *Hermeneutics: Questions and Prospects*, eds. Gary Shapiro and Alan Sica (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 147-64; and the chapter on "The Hermeneutics of Midrash" in Gerald L. Bruns, *Hermeneutics Ancient and Modern*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 104-23.

¹¹For the French contribution to this question, see Mariette Canévet, *Grégoire de Nysse et l'herméneutique biblique: Étude des rapports entre le langage et la connaissance de Dieu*, (Paris: Études augustinianes, 1983); and Matthieu Cassin, *L'écriture de la controverse chez Grégoire de Nysse: polémique littéraire et exégèse dans le Contre Eunome*, (Paris: Institut d'études augustinianes, 2012).

¹²For the former claim, see Cassin, *L'écriture de la controverse chez Grégoire de Nysse*, whose valuable study is circumscribed to the *Contra Eunomius*. For the latter claim, one may consult the various essays in Matthieu Cassin and Hélène Grelier, eds. *Grégoire de Nysse: la Bible dans la construction de son discours. Actes du colloque de Paris, 9-10 février 2007* (Paris: Institut d'études augustinianes, 2008). These essays vary in their actual contribution to Gregory's exegetical practice rather than the idea of his exegesis.

¹³The best work on Cyril's exegesis in recent years is Matthew R. Crawford, *Cyril of Alexandria's Trinitarian*

Crawford has argued that "Cyril's numerous and lengthy exegetical works illustrate his remarkable commitment to the elucidation of the biblical text within a theological tradition, and this devotion makes him a prime candidate for furthering our understanding of pro-Nicene exegesis."¹⁴ Crawford takes up this mantle to consider Cyril's contribution to the development of pro-Nicene Trinitarian theology and, more specifically, the importance of this theological context for his exegetical approach. Thus, Crawford confesses that "without doubt further investigation is needed to elucidate the manner in which Cyril appropriates those techniques that were common to late antique *paideia*."¹⁵ These are simply two potential fruitful lines of investigation in early Christian creative exegesis, to which one could add numerous other possibilities.

Elizabeth Clark was surely right in her estimation that early Christian exegetes were both readers and writers who, to use Certeau's imagery (which, as Clark notes, itself is a traditional Christian trope), both "despoil the wealth of the Egyptians" by enjoying other texts for themselves and "found their own place" in writing about these texts. For Clark, this is seen in the "asceticized Christianity" that the earliest Christian readers created in their commentary on Scripture. But Clark neglects to add the very next sentence of Certeau's analysis, which runs as follows: "Writing accumulates, stocks up, resists time by the establishment of a place and multiplies its production through the expansionism of reproduction."¹⁶

Perhaps Certeau's point is less that a place is created—like the asceticism in Clark's analysis—than it is a call to the awareness of writing itself.¹⁷ If so, then Clark's book is still a

Theology of Scripture, O ECS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

¹⁴Crawford, *Trinitarian Theology of Scripture*, 5.

¹⁵See Crawford, *Trinitarian Theology of Scripture*, 183. Crawford points to the studies of J. David Cassel, "Cyril of Alexandria and the Science of the Grammarians: A Study in the Setting, Purpose, and Emphasis of Cyril's 'Commentary on Isaiah,'" (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 1992); and Lois M. Farag, *St. Cyril of Alexandria, a New Testament Exegete: His Commentary on the Gospel of John*, (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007). These studies, however, could be situated in the same category as Cassin's work on Gregory of Nyssa above, as they focus on one of Cyril's texts, to the exclusion of his other works. With the immense corpus of Cyril's exegetical literature still extant, there remains the need for a more comprehensive investigation of his reading practices.

¹⁶Certeau, "Reading as Poaching," 174.

¹⁷Certeau's citation of Barthes' third type of reading, which "cultivates the desire to write," would seem to support this conjecture. See Certeau, "Reading as Poaching," 176, citing Roland Barthes, "Sur la Lecture," *Le*

resolute success, for it calls us to give more attention to the "mechanics of textual construction and to the productive role of readers" in early Christian commentary.¹⁸ Indeed, this is what I have sought to do in giving attention to the product of Clement's creative exegesis, and we can see this, I think, in the definition of creative exegesis we developed throughout this study:

Creative exegesis is the task of employing the grammatical archive to clarify textual obscurity and discovering the textimmanent intention of an author.

Clement's creative exegesis was simultaneously an attempt at respecting the authority of his source text, the Christian Scriptures, and yet an articulation of his own understanding of the proper way to read this text. It is, as Certeau suggests, a "production through the expansionism of reproduction."¹⁹ Yet, Clement's production is much more than the stringent asceticized Christianity that Clark sees (though, at times, it is that).²⁰ As we have seen, Clement shows deep concerns with the narrative of God's pedagogy in the world as it expands from Old Testament to New Testament. He reflects on the love of God displayed in the fear by which he brings humanity to faith (chapter nine). He contemplates the wisdom of God as the ultimate progression of this pedagogy, and the *sine qua non* for the figural reading of Scripture (chapter nine). And speaking of the figural exegesis of Scripture, Clement takes pains to identify the content of Scripture's two mysteries—the incarnation of Christ as the fulfillment of history and the wisdom and knowledge of God's essence, the very "depths of God" to which Scripture alludes in 1 Corinthians.

In all these ways, regardless of our estimation of his reading practices, Clement still shows himself to be a theologian. For Clement, the exegesis of Scripture is the foundational

Français aujourd'hui 32 (1976), 15–16.

¹⁸Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 371, citing Valentine Cunningham, "Renoving that Bible: The Absolute Text of (Post) Modernism," in *The Theory of Reading*, ed. Frank Groversmith (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1984), 1–51, and Boyarin, *Intertextuality*.

¹⁹For thoughts on this as an inherent dialectic of commentary, see Sluiter, "Dialectics of Genre."

²⁰Clement appears only a few times in *Reading Renunciation*; see the index entry for Clement at Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 412. The most dense occurrence of Clement's thoughts occur in Clark's evaluation of interpretations of marriage (316–28), which is unsurprising given the topic(s) of book three of the *Stromateis*.

practice of Christian theology. Indeed, the case can be made that scriptural exegesis is at the heart of the development of all early Christian theology.²¹ Thus, in order to better understand the nature of theological practice in early Christianity, we must better understand the practices of scriptural exegesis at its core. This latter point has been the goal of this study. In stepping back from explicit theological questions to focus on Clement's textual practices, I hope to have shown more clearly that sustained reflection on how Clement "did things with the text" is a necessary prolegomena to understanding his theological practice as a whole.²² I agree with Elizabeth Clark's thesis that much in modern literary theory can be incredibly useful for the study of patristic commentary, including the perspective she rightly promotes that this exegetical endeavor is itself the construction of a "new text" out of the old.²³ However, I am not convinced that this must necessarily bring "issues of power" or "the creation of 'difference'" to the fore.²⁴ On the contrary, it is my contention that, while he was certainly engaged in polemical dispute that resulted in the creation of "difference,"²⁵ Clement nevertheless saw his project of creative exegesis as the foundation of his theological practice. Indeed, the *Stromateis* can itself be read as a reflection on the nature of theological inquiry. Thus, Clement may rightly be considered "above all an exegete," as we saw at the outset of this study.²⁶ But Clement's status as a biblical exegete cannot exclude the philosophical and theological concerns that motivated and shaded his creative exegesis. Indeed, these concerns are the items that set distinct early Christian theologians apart. Clement's creative exegesis was an exercise in practicing theology on the basis of Christian Scripture, using it as the fundamental resource for his

²¹On this, above all, see Ayres, *Nicaea and its Legacy*.

²²On this phrase as a moniker for the textual practices of reading in antiquity, see Anthony Grafton and Glenn W. Most, "How To Do Things With Texts: An Introduction," in *Canonical Texts and Scholarly Practices: A Global Comparative Approach*, eds. Anthony Grafton and Glenn W. Most (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 1-13.

²³See Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 371–73. This has many affinities with the quote on creativity and imagination that I provided earlier from Fishbane, "Inner-Biblical Exegesis," 3.

²⁴Clark, *Reading Renunciation*, 373.

²⁵On this cultural revision, see Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 183–234.

²⁶Campenhausen, *Fathers of the Greek Church*, 30.

theological imagination. What I hope to have shown, then, can be summarized simply: Clement is above all a *commentarial theologian*.²⁷

²⁷Here, I borrow the term from John Webster, “Rowan Williams on Scripture,” in *Scripture’s Doctrine and Theology’s Bible: How the New Testament Shapes Christian Dogmatics*, eds. Markus N. A. Bockmuehl and Alan J. Torrance (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 106. Cf. Paget, “Christian Exegesis,” 498, who says that “For Clement the Bible is the central focus of his theological meditation.” As far as I can tell, Webster does not develop this concept in any fashion elsewhere. In my view, however, the notion of *commentarial theologian* both prioritizes the role of scriptural exegesis in theological practice—granting the sophisticated cultural interactions in which the process of reading and writing inevitably participates—and retains a traditional emphasis on the aims that early Christian readers had for their interpretation of Scripture. Questions on the nature of commentary, its relationship to philosophy/theology, and whether the understanding of “commentary” changed for Christians over time must, for now, await a future investigation.

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