

## Revisiting Christian Oeyen: “The Other Clement” on Father, Son, and the Angelomorphic Spirit\*

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### Abstract

This article contributes to research on Clement of Alexandria’s pneumatology by revisiting and expanding upon Christian Oeyen’s oft-neglected study *Eine frühchristliche Engelpneumatologie bei Klemens von Alexandrien*, published in 1966. It argues, first, that a study of Clement’s Pneumatology cannot ignore the surviving portions of Clement’s *Hypotyposes* (especially the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, *Eclogae Propheticae*, and *Adumbrationes*), because these appear to have included treatises “On Prophecy” and “On the Soul.” Secondly, it reaffirms Oeyen’s thesis that Clement of Alexandria’s Pneumatology is best understood within the framework of early Jewish and Christian speculation on the “first created” angelic spirits (πρωτόκτιστοι). The article advances the discussion by providing a context for Clement’s “angelomorphic Pneumatology”: this phenomenon is part of a larger theological articulation, occurring in tandem with Spirit Christology and a marked binitarian orientation.

### Keywords

angelomorphic pneumatology, logos-theology, Valentinianism, Jewish Christianity, Middle Platonism, hierarchy, binitarian, Ps-Dionysius, Spirit Christology

Clement of Alexandria’s pneumatology is a relatively under-researched area in Patristic studies.<sup>1</sup> Many scholars insist that Clement himself had precious

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<sup>1</sup>) The author of the first study on Clement’s Pneumatology made this remark in 1936: Johannes Frangoulis, *Der Begriff des Geistes Πνεῦμα bei Clemens Alexandrinus* (Leipzig 1936) 1. The situation warranted a similar verdict in 1972: Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, *Gottes*

little to contribute to the subject. It is quite telling, for instance, that Jules Lebreton's fundamental study on Clement's "theology of the Trinity" discusses the Father and the Son, but has absolutely nothing to say about the Spirit. According to Theodor Zahn and Georg Kretschmar, Clement's all-encompassing Logos-theology completely overshadowed his notion of the Holy Spirit. In W. H. C. Frend's terms, "there would appear to be little real place for Him in his [Clement's] system."<sup>2</sup> More recently, Henning Ziebritzki passed the following verdict:

Klemens hat explizit den Heiligen Geist weder in seiner individuellen Substanz begriffen, noch seinen metaphysischen Status auch nur ansatzweise bestimmt. Damit fehlen aber auch die entscheidenden Voraussetzungen, die es erlauben würden, im klementinischen Verständnis des Heiligen Geistes den Ansatz zum Begriff einer dritten göttlichen Hypostase zu sehen.<sup>3</sup>

It appears that some important elements are being overlooked in research about Clement's Pneumatology. According to his own statements, Clement set out to explain "what the Holy Spirit is" in his treatises "On Prophecy" and "On the Soul."<sup>4</sup> Since these works were most likely part of the *Hypotyposes*,<sup>5</sup> it makes good sense to approach Clement's understanding of the Holy

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*Geist und der Mensch: Studien zur frühchristlichen Pneumatologie* (München 1972) 13, n. 10. Aside from Frangoulis' pioneering, but very limited study, I know of a single work dedicated entirely to Clement's Pneumatology: Luis Ladaria, *El Espíritu en Clemente Alejandro: estudio teológico antropológico* (Madrid 1980). Other books contain chapters of relevance for this topic: Hauschild, *Gottes Geist*, 11-85; Henning Ziebritzki, *Heiliger Geist und Weltseele: das Problem der dritten Hypostase bei Origenes, Plotin und ihren Vorläufern* (Tübingen 1994) 93-129; Eric Osborn, *Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge 2005) 149-153. For the anthropological relevance of πνεῦμα, see Gérard Verbeke, *L'évolution de la doctrine du pneuma, du stoïcisme à s. Augustin: étude philosophique* (Paris-Louvain 1945) 429-440.

<sup>2</sup> Lebreton, "La théologie de la Trinité chez Clément d'Alexandrie," *RSR* 34 (1946) 55-76, 142-179; Theodor Zahn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur III: Supplementum Clementinum* (Erlangen 1884) 98: [der Geist] "den er wie die Alten so oft in seinen Speculationen über das Verhältnis des Logos zu Gott und zur Welt regelmässig übergeht"; Georg Kretschmar, *Studien zur frühchristlichen Trinitätstheologie* (Tübingen 1956) 63: "im allgemeinen denkt er [Klemens] logozentrisch, der Geist tritt zurück"; Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus* (Garden City, N.Y. 1967) 264.

<sup>3</sup> Ziebritzki, *Heiliger Geist und Weltseele*, 123.

<sup>4</sup> *Strom.* 5:13:88; cf. *Strom.* 1:24:158, 4:13:93.

<sup>5</sup> André Méhat, *Etude sur les "Stromates" de Clément d'Alexandrie* (Paris 1966) 521; A. Le Boulluec, "Commentaire", in *Clément d'Alexandrie: Stromate V, tome 2*. SC 279 (Paris 1981) 286-288.

Spirit by focusing mainly on the surviving parts of the *Hypotyposes*—the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, the *Eclogae Propheticae*, and the *Adumbrationes*. It is in these works more than anywhere else that one is likely to learn about Clement's Pneumatology.

Another reason for considering these works as a privileged entry-point into Clement's theology becomes apparent when one considers the place held by the *Hypotyposes* in the overall architecture of the Alexandrian master's works. It is generally admitted that Clement understood his teaching and writing to proceed according to principles of intellectual and spiritual formation.<sup>6</sup> Pierre Nautin has demonstrated that within the program of Clementine works the *Hypotyposes* represented Clement's *physics* and *epoptics*.<sup>7</sup> We are dealing, therefore, with the highest exposition of Christian doctrine, offered only after the student had gone through preliminary matters. To quote Méhat, “[b]ref, si la gnose est essentiellement du domaine de la « physique », les *Hypotyposes* devaient en regorger . . .”.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, searching for Clement's doctrine of the Spirit through the lens of late fourth century Pneumatology limits our ability to capture important elements. Given the fluidity of second-century views on the Spirit, one must adopt a wider perspective, taking into consideration the frequent intersection and overlap between Pneumatology, Christology and angelology, labeled in scholarship as “Spirit Christology,” “angelomorphic Christology,” or “angelomorphic Pneumatology.” I will discuss this point in some detail further down.

I am indebted here to one of the most thorough and creative studies in the field, Christian Oeyen's *Eine frühchristliche Engelpneumatologie bei Klemens von Alexandrien*. This small but extremely dense work is a slightly revised reprint of a two-part article published in 1965, which is in turn a revision of an excerpt from Oeyen's 1961 dissertation under Antonio Orbe.<sup>9</sup> *Habent sua fata libelli*: Oeyen's study, which was based largely on

<sup>6</sup> See in this respect the excellent presentation and abundant references to secondary literature in Judith Kovacs, “Divine Pedagogy and the Gnostic Teacher According to Clement of Alexandria,” *J ECS* 9 (2001) 3-25.

<sup>7</sup> Nautin, “La fin des *Stromates* et les *Hypotyposes* de Clément d'Alexandrie,” *VigChr* 30 (1976) 268-302. See esp. 297-298. Although Nautin does not treat the *Adumbrationes*, it is easy to see how these passages also belong to the *epoptics*. See Méhat, *Etude*, 517-522; 530-533. The phrase “program of his works” is Osborn's (*Clement*, 98). For a brief survey of proposals see *Clement*, 5-15.

<sup>8</sup> Méhat, *Etude*, 521.

<sup>9</sup> Christian Oeyen, *Eine frühchristliche Engelpneumatologie bei Klemens von Alexandrien*. Erweiterter Separatdruck aus der Internationalen Kirchlichen Zeitschrift (Bern 1966). The

the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, *Eclogae Propheticae*, and *Adumbrationes*, found only marginal appeal, thus confirming the fate of “the other Clement,” who remains sorely neglected in scholarship. It is necessary at this point to clarify the expression “the other Clement,” which I have used in both this and an earlier study.<sup>10</sup> This is simply a rhetorical term, by which I designate what is usually left out in most scholarly treatments of Clement: the *Adumbrationes*, the *Eclogae Propheticae*, and, to a lesser degree, the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*. Serious consideration of these oft-neglected remnants of the *Hypotyposes*, in which the echo of doctrines and practices of an earlier generation of Jewish Christian teachers is especially clear,<sup>11</sup> is an absolute requirement for a proper understanding of Clement and (perhaps especially) his views on the Holy Spirit.

In the following pages, I shall reaffirm Oeyen’s thesis that Clement’s Pneumatology is best understood within the framework of Jewish Christian speculation on the “first created” angelic spirits (πρωτόκτιστοι). On the other hand, I shall advance the discussion by attempting to provide a context for Clement’s *Engelpneumatologie*. This phenomenon (which, I argue, would be better termed “angelomorphic Pneumatology”) is adequately understood only in conjunction with Clement’s Spirit Christology and overall binitarian orientation.<sup>12</sup>

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article had appeared in *IKZ* 55 (1965) 102-120; 56 (1966) 27-47, as a revision of Oeyen’s *Las potencias de Dios en los dos primeros siglos cristianos, I: Acerca de la Pneumatología de Clemente Alejandrino* (Buenos Aires 1963).

<sup>10</sup> Bogdan G. Bucur, “The Other Clement of Alexandria: Cosmic Hierarchy and Interiorized Apocalypticism,” *VigChr* 60 (2006) 251-268.

<sup>11</sup> On the presence of Jewish and “Jewish Christian” traditions in these works by Clement, see Jean Daniélou, “Les traditions secrètes des Apôtres,” *ErJb* 31 (1962) 199-215. Throughout this essay, the term “Jewish Christian” will be taken in the sense described by Daniélou in his classic *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London 1964). As long as the narrative of an early and radical parting of the ways between “Christianity” and “Judaism” remains normative, despite its documented inability to explain a great deal of evidence from the first four centuries, the term “Jewish Christianity” remains useful as a description of “Christianity” itself. For more recent treatments of this problem, see the essays collected in *The Ways that Never Parted* (ed. A. H. Becker, A. Y. Reed; TSAJ 95; Tübingen 2003); Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia, Pa. 2004).

<sup>12</sup> The Greek text is that of the GCS critical edition (O. Stählin, L. Früchtel, U. Treu, *Clemens Alexandrinus* [3 vols; 4th ed.; Berlin 1985—]). For the *Stromata*, I use the translation available in the ANF collection, with slight modifications (indicated as such); references to the *Stromata* indicate book, chapter, and section, not book, section and line. Passages from the *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, *Eclogae Propheticae*, and *Adumbrationes* are my own translation.

## 1. Binitarian Monotheism in Clement of Alexandria

“Clement’s theology was really binitarian”; although “he mentions the Spirit as the agent of Faith in the believer, there would appear to be little real place for Him in his system.”<sup>13</sup> This blunt statement by W. H. C. Frend calls for some refinement. According to Osborn, even though “the centre of Clement’s understanding of God is the reciprocity of father and son,” which is similar “to the Platonic simple and complex unity,” Clement “sees the reciprocity of father and son proliferated in spirit.”<sup>14</sup> In other words, Clement’s starting-point is a “binitarian” structure, or, in Osborn’s language, the “reciprocity of Father and Son.”<sup>15</sup> This divine reciprocity is made to “overflow” or “proliferate,” so as to account for divine economy, and especially God’s spiritual presence in the believers.<sup>16</sup> Osborn highlights the second element, and states, on its basis, that Clement has a “worthy theology of the Holy Spirit” (I will return to this topic in a later section of this paper). Yet, if due consideration is given to the first element, the divine reciprocity of Father and Spirit, which Osborn himself regards as the “center” of Clementine theology, the conclusion can also be different. Clement’s theological intention is certainly Trinitarian, and can be documented by his use of Trinitarian formulae. The corresponding theological account, however, has not reached the concept of a triadic Father—Son—Spirit “reciprocity.” Clement’s thought remains determined in large measure by a binitarian framework.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church: A Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus* (Garden City, N.Y. 1967) 264.

<sup>14</sup> Osborn, *Clement*, 107; 117; 128; 150.

<sup>15</sup> The term “binitarian” points to a bifurcation of the divinity (as opposed to “unitarian”), while preserving a monotheistic worldview (“binitarian monotheism,” as opposed to “dualism”). The Jewish traditions investigated by Alan Segal (*Two Powers In Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports About Christianity and Gnosticism* [Leiden 1977]) are examples of binitarianism; one may find such “binitarian” elements echoed in the religious philosophies of Philo and Numenius. Binitarianism is not dualism: “neither the apocalyptic, mystical, nor Christianized Judaism affirmed two separate deities. They understood themselves to be monotheistic . . . Only radical gnosticism posited two different and opposing deities” (Segal, “Dualism in Judaism, Christianity and Gnosticism: A Definitive Issue,” in his *The Other Judaisms of Late Antiquity* [Atlanta, Ga 1987] 13).

<sup>16</sup> Osborn, *Clement*, 150. The Father-Son reciprocity “overflows to the salvation of the world”; this proliferation is “from father and son to spirit and then to the ultimate union of believers in God” (Osborn, *Clement*, 141; 152).

<sup>17</sup> According to Osborn (*Clement*, 150), Clement’s Trinitarian theology is “well-grounded in the Johannine account of the reciprocity of father with spirit and son with spirit

How do we recognize whether a monotheistic text is unitarian, binitarian, or trinitarian? I find it helpful to apply a principle developed by Larry Hurtado, which can be reduced to the following formula: that which is considered “God” is necessarily the object of worship; and that which is the object of worship is considered “God.”<sup>18</sup> It is noteworthy, in this light, that Clement seems reluctant to include the Spirit as a recipient of worship. In the closing chapter of the *Instructor* (*Paed.* 3:12:101) invokes God as *υἱὲ καὶ πατὴρ, ἐν ἄμφω, κύριε*; praise, glory, and worship are given “to the only Father and Son, the Son and Father, the Son—Instructor and Teacher—, together with the Holy Spirit.”<sup>19</sup> It may be true that in Clement’s thought the Father-Son reciprocity “proliferates from father and son to spirit and then to the ultimate union of believers in God.”<sup>20</sup> The reference to the Holy Spirit in this text seems nevertheless like a pious afterthought.<sup>21</sup>

Clement sometimes presents the Father alone receiving praise *through* the Son and the Holy Spirit.<sup>22</sup> More significant are the instances in which Clement suggests a subordination of the Holy Spirit to both the Father and the Son. For instance, in the following passage he quite significantly calls only the Father and the Son “God”: “they know not what a ‘treasure

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(John 14:15-20; 16:7-15),” and uses whatever it finds helpful in Middle Platonism (e.g., Ep. 2, 312E). These “building blocks,” however, are quite problematic. Ziebritzki (*Heiliger Geist und Weltseele*) has demonstrated that the Platonic tradition could not contribute in the articulation of the pneumatology of Clement and Origen. With respect to Clement’s use of Ep 2 in *Strom.* 5:14:89, as a proof text for the Trinity, Ziebritzki (*Heiliger Geist und Weltseele*, 126) observes that Clement “dem Heiligen Geist... keine besondere Rolle zuweist,” even while to the Son he ascribes John 1:3 (“by whom all things are made”), and the Father he implies to be the one who made all things through the Logos. As for the Johannine sayings about the “other Paraclete,” scholars widely agree, despite the variety of interpretations being proposed, that the blurred relation verging on identity between the exalted Christ and the Holy Spirit as the two paracletes, poses major exegetical and theological problems. I will discuss Clement’s views in a separate section of this study.

<sup>18</sup> Hurtado, *At the Origins of Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids, Mich. 1999), and *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, Mich. 2003) esp. 11-53.

<sup>19</sup> τῷ μόνῳ πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ, υἱῷ καὶ πατρὶ, παιδαγωγῷ καὶ διδασκάλῳ υἱῷ, σὺν καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι (*Paed.* 3:12:101).

<sup>20</sup> Osborn, *Clement*, 152.

<sup>21</sup> As noted by Ziebritzki, *Geist und Weltseele*, 124.

<sup>22</sup> “To whom [to the Father], by (διὰ) His Son Jesus Christ, the Lord of the living and dead, and by (διὰ) the Holy Spirit, be glory, honor, power, eternal majesty, both now etc” (*Quis Dives* 42:20).

in an earthen vessel' we bear, protected as it is by the power of God the Father, and the blood of God the Son, and the dew of the Holy Spirit."<sup>23</sup>

Clement is not an exception among early Christian writers. On the way to a mature Trinitarian theology, a certain binitarian orientation, coexisting with Trinitarian formulae, is often noticeable among Christian authors.<sup>24</sup> But Clement also illustrates another phenomenon characteristic of early Christian thought, namely the combination of a binitarianism with "Spirit Christology."<sup>25</sup>

## 2. Spirit Christology in Clement of Alexandria<sup>26</sup>

Clement illustrates a widespread phenomenon in early Christian thought, namely the lack of distinction between "Logos" and "Spirit."<sup>27</sup> Whenever he

<sup>23</sup> *Quis Dives* 34:1. The observation has already been made by Hauschild (*Gottes Geist*, 84) and Ziebritzki (*Heiliger Geist und Weltseele*, 124).

<sup>24</sup> See, in this respect, Manlio Simonetti, "Note di cristologia pneumatica," *Augustinianum* 12 (1972) 201–232, esp. 230–231; Raniero Cantalamessa, *L'omelia in S. Pascha dello Pseudo-Ippolito di Roma. Ricerche sulla teologia dell'Asia Minore nella seconda metà del II secolo* (Milano 1967) 171–185; Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers* (Cambridge 1964<sup>2</sup>) 177–256; Christopher Stead, *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity* (Cambridge 1994) 155–156; Lilla, *Clement*, 26, 53; Friedrich Loofs, *Theophilus von Antiochien Adversus Marcionem und die anderen theologischen Quellen bei Irenaeus*. TU 46 (Leipzig 1930) 114–205.

<sup>25</sup> Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie*, 115–116; Waldemar Macholz, *Spuren binitarischer Denkweise im Abendlande seit Tertullian* (Jena 1902); Loofs, *Theophilus von Antiochien*, 114–205; Joseph Barbel (*Christos Angelos: Die Anschauung von Christus als Bote und Engel in der gelehrten und volkstümlichen Literatur des christlichen Altertums: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ursprungs des Arianismus*. Fotomechanischer Nachdruck mit einem Anhang (Bonn 1964) 188–192; Basil Studer, "La Soteriologie de Lactance," in *Lactance et son temps: Recherches Actuelles*. Actes du IV<sup>e</sup> Colloque d'Etudes Historiques et Patristiques, Chantilly 21–23 septembre 1976 (ed. J. Fontaine, M. Perrin; Paris 1978) 252–271, here 259–260, 270–271.

<sup>26</sup> For the purpose of this essay, the term "Spirit Christology" refers to the use of "pneuma" language to designate Christ—whether in reference to his divinity as opposed to his humanity, as a characteristic of his divine identity, or as a personal title. These distinctions are made by Ladaria (*El Espíritu*, 47) and Manlio Simonetti ("Note," 202–203). I find them unnecessary for the present investigation, especially since the problems involved in the procedure are quite evident to Simonetti himself ("Note," 209): these distinctions did not present themselves as such to patristic authors, so that *even in cases that appear certain to the modern scholar*, there remains a doubt with respect to the precise meaning that patristic authors ascribe to the term πνεῦμα.

<sup>27</sup> See Stead, *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity*, ch. 13: "Logos and Spirit" (148–159).

offers his own theological reflection (as opposed to simply passing on traditional formulae of faith), Clement feels free to use “Logos” and “Pneuma” as synonyms, by shifting between them repeatedly and without much explanation.<sup>28</sup>

In *Strom.* 5:6, Clement ascribes the divine acts of creation, preservation, and revelation to the “Name,” “Son,” “Savior,” or “Logos.” Nevertheless, the latter’s role in organizing the cosmos and in prophetic revelation is documented with a quote from 1 Cor 12:11 (“the self-same Holy Spirit works in all”). Moreover, this verse is soon afterwards reworked in a Christological key: “God the Savior works . . . it is the same Logos which prophesies, and judges, and discriminates all things.” There seems to be a perfect parallel between the reference to the Spirit and the reference to the Logos: both are introduced as inspired, prophetic ideas (“the apostles were at once prophets and righteous”; “the oracle exhibits the prophecy which by the Word cries and preaches . . . since it is the same Word which prophesies.”); both use ἐνεργέω; both designate “what is one,” and at the same time becomes “what is many.” It seems that Clement operates a translation *sui generis* of Cor 12:11 into his own theological idiom: the “Spirit” mentioned by the Apostle is identified as the Logos.

In *Excerpta* 24:2, a text directed against the dualist views of the Valentinians, Clement affirms the perfect identity (i.e., an identity of οὐσία and δύναμις) between the Paraclete who is at work (ἐνεργῶν) in the Church, and the Paraclete who was active (ἐνεργήσαντι) in the prophets. Implicit here is the identification of this Paraclete with the Logos, because (a) Clement had previously affirmed that it was the Logos who worked in the prophets (ἐνεργήσας, *Excerpta* 19:2); (b) the adverb “proximately” (προσεχῶς),

<sup>28</sup> *Paed.* 1:6:43: “the Lord Jesus, the Word of God, that is, the Spirit made flesh.” Commenting on the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, Clement explains: “The seventh day, therefore, is proclaimed a rest . . . preparing for the Primal Day, our true rest; which, in truth, is the first creation of light, in which all things are viewed and possessed. . . . For the light of truth, a light true, casting no shadow, is the Spirit of God indivisibly divided to all. . . . By following Him, therefore, through our whole life, we become impassible; and this is to rest” (*Strom.* 6:16:138). “Day” and “true Light” are quite transparently referring to Christ (cf. John 1:4-8; 8:56), as becomes clear immediately afterwards, when the text speaks about following Christ. However, the latter’s identity is, in this passage, “Spirit of God.” Clement is obviously drawing on an archaic Christology designating the preexistent Christ as πνεῦμα interchangeably with λόγος. See the article by Simonetti, quoted above; Wolfson, *Philosophy*, 177-256; Cantalamessa, *Lomelia in S. Pascha*, 181-183. This seems to be a widespread phenomenon, present in Syria-Palestine, Asia Minor, Alexandria, Carthage, and Rome, in authors speaking Latin, Greek and Syriac.



qualifying the action of the Paraclete, functions as a technical term in Clement's description of how the Logos transforms the perfect souls towards godlikeness.<sup>29</sup>

The same exegetical procedure occurs in *Excerpta* 17, where Clement discusses the work of the δύναμις in the world. Here and elsewhere in Clement, δύναμις is a Christological term.<sup>30</sup> The Biblical proof texts, however, are, once again, references to πνεῦμα: John 4:24 (“God is Spirit”) and John 3:8 (“He blows wherever He wills”).

Clement ends *Strom.* 4:26:172 with the following words: “I shall pray the Spirit of Christ to wing me (εὐξάιμην τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ περῶσαί με) to my Jerusalem.” A very similar invocation occurs in the hymn to Christ (*Paed.* 3:12:101): Christ is called upon as the “wing (πετρόν) of unwandering birds” and “heavenly wing (πετρόν οὐράνιον) of the all-holy flock.” The evident parallelism between the invocations in *Strom.* 4:26:172 and *Paed.* 3:12:101 suggests that “Spirit of Christ” is simply Christ in his function of heavenly guide.

At least three determining factors can be pointed out. First, similarly to earlier writers, Clement deploys an all-encompassing theory of the Logos, and thereby inevitably claims for the Logos certain areas of activity traditionally associated with the Holy Spirit, namely the inspiration of Scripture and the charismatic empowerment of the believer.<sup>31</sup> Second, Clement follows the Philonic model of “translating” Scriptural terms and images into philosophical concepts, and “explains” the Biblical πνεῦμα in light of the philosophical “Logos.” Finally, the term δύναμις seems to facilitate this tendency, insofar as Clement uses it alternatively for the Logos and the Spirit.<sup>32</sup>

To sum up: Clement refers often to the “Holy Spirit,” but he also uses πνεῦμα to designate the second hypostasis. Similarly to what one finds in

<sup>29</sup> *Excerpta* 27:3; 27:6. I will discuss the use of προσεχῶς in the section dedicated to Clement's cosmology.

<sup>30</sup> *Strom.* 7:2:7, 9; *Excerpta* 4:2; 12:3. See also Sagnard, *Excerpta*, 79, n. 2. Δύναμις is a Christological term in *Strom.* 7:2:7; 7:2:9.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Zahn, *Forschungen*, 98; Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie*, 63. Ladaria (*El Espíritu*, 25) notes that the Spirit's “efficient causality” in the phenomenon of inspiration is equally applied to the Logos or Kyrios, especially in the *Instructor*, but he does not believe that these coincidences amount to an identification of the Word with the Spirit.

<sup>32</sup> Frangoulis (*Der Begriff*, 16) also makes a brief note to this effect: “[es] findet sich bei Clemens auch eine enge Verbindung von Pneuma und Sohn in dem übergeordneten Begriff des δύναμις.”

other early Christian writers, the distinction between the Logos and the Holy Spirit is blurred.<sup>33</sup> But how does Clement himself relate Logos and Spirit? He is clearly not advocating an ontological identification. In a text from the *Instructor* he states that “the Spirit is the power of the Word.”

And the blood of the Lord is twofold. For there is the blood of His flesh, by which we are redeemed from corruption; and the spiritual, that by which we are anointed. And to drink the blood of Jesus is to become partaker of the Lord’s immortality; for the Spirit is the power of the Word (ισχύς δὲ τοῦ λόγου τὸ πνεῦμα), as blood is of flesh.<sup>34</sup>

As Ladaria has rightly observed, the Spirit here is “the power, the dynamic character of the Logos.”<sup>35</sup> To better understand the relation between λόγος and πνεῦμα, it will be useful to resort to Clement’s own remarkably clear and detailed explanations: the dynamic aspect of the Logos manifests itself in the work of angelic spirits.

### 3. Angelomorphic Pneumatology in Clement of Alexandria

Before moving on to the crucial texts in the *Excerpta*, *Eclogae* and *Adumbrationes*,<sup>36</sup> two additional elements must complete our understanding of Clement’s theological framework: a hierarchical cosmology, and a complex articulation between divine unity and the multiplicity of the cosmos. I will show that these two elements provide the basis for a specific theory of prophetic inspiration, which is best accounted for by Oeyen’s thesis of “Engelpneumatologie” in Clement of Alexandria.

<sup>33</sup> E.g., Justin, *Apol.* 1:33:6: “It is wrong, therefore, to understand ‘the Spirit and the power of God’ [in Luke 1:35] as anything else than the Word, who is also the first-born of God, as the foresaid prophet Moses declared; and it was this which, when it came upon the virgin and overshadowed her, caused her to conceive.” The same view is repeated in *Apol.* 1:46:5 and 1:66:2.

<sup>34</sup> *Paed* 2:2:19-20 (ANF, modified).

<sup>35</sup> Ladaria, *El Espíritu*, 50, 266.

<sup>36</sup> Oeyen drew most of his textual evidence from the *Excerpta*, the *Adumbrationes* and the *Eclogae Propheticae*. Ladaria (*El Espíritu*, 256) concedes that certain passages in which the Spirit is “personified” as angelic “powers” can be taken as examples (*muestras*) of “angel Pneumatology,” but argues that these are only “a brief appendix” to the vast pool of other passages relevant for Clement’s Pneumatology. In other words, the passages from the *Excerpta*, *Adumbrationes* and *Eclogae Propheticae* should be treated as a secondary witness. I have already explained in my introduction why Oeyen’s approach is absolutely justified.

### 3.1. *Clement on Divine Unity and the Cosmic Multiplicity*

#### *Unity and Multiplicity in the Logos*

*Strom.* 4:25:156, “the decisive passage for the doctrine of the trinity in Clement,”<sup>37</sup> speaks of the utterly transcendent God and the Logos as his agent. The difference between Father and Son is very similar to Numenius’ distinction between the first and the second god: God cannot be the object of any epistemology (ἀναπόδεικτος; οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιστημονικός), while the exact opposite is true of the Son (σοφία τέ ἐστι καὶ ἐπιστήμη; ἀπόδειξιν ἔχει). This difference on the epistemological level corresponds to a different relation to the cosmos, where it is the Son who founds multiplicity:

The Son is neither simply one thing as one thing (ἓν ὡς ἓν), nor many things as parts (πολλὰ ὡς μέρη), but one thing as all things (ὡς πάντα ἓν).<sup>38</sup>

In this statement, Clement surveys the following theoretical possibilities: (a.) absolute unity, in no way connected to multiplicity (ἓν ὡς ἓν); (b.) absolute multiplicity, in no way connected to unity (πολλὰ ὡς μέρη); (c.) unity *qua* multiplicity (ὡς πάντα ἓν). Clement embraces the third option as the most appropriate account of the Son’s activity: the Son founds the multiplicity of creation, but this multiplicity, being founded by the same one principle can be eventually reduced to Logos. It is in this sense that “the Word is called the Alpha and the Omega, of whom alone the end becomes beginning, and ends again at the original beginning.”<sup>39</sup>

All of this seems fairly clear in light of the philosophical tradition,<sup>40</sup> which Clement received both directly and indirectly, via Philo.<sup>41</sup> But what are we to make of the following affirmation:

<sup>37</sup>) Osborn, *Clement*, 151.

<sup>38</sup>) *Strom.* 4:25:156.

<sup>39</sup>) *Strom.* 4:25:157.

<sup>40</sup>) “According to Posidonius and Philo, the cosmos was governed by a system of powers, which took the place of the forms of Plato and the immanent logos of the earlier Stoics” (Osborn, *Clement*, 152); cf. Osborn, *The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria* (Cambridge 1957) 41: Clement “explained the existence and nature of things by ‘powers’ just as Plato had done by ‘forms’ and the earlier Stoics had done by immanent reason or divine fire.” Salvatore R. C. Lilla (*Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism* [London 1971] 205) thinks that Clement may have come across speculations about unity and diversity in Neopythagorean interpretations of the *Parmenides*.

<sup>41</sup>) Lilla (*Clement*, 204) notes that “Clement found already formed in Philo the doctrine of the *Logos as the totality of powers* which are identical with the ideas.” For relevant passages in Philo, see Lilla, *Clement*, 205.

all the powers of the spirit, taken together as one thing, find their perfection in the same, that is, in the Son... He [the Son] is the circle of all powers rolled and united into one.<sup>42</sup>

The simple equation of the “powers” with the Platonic ideas does not account for the complexity of this text. Both Lilla and Osborn suggest in passing that the Biblical doctrine of angelic powers may also have influenced Clement.<sup>43</sup> Following Oeyen, one can say confidently that Clement is fusing the Logos-speculation with an established teaching on the “powers of the spirit” that originated in Jewish or Jewish Christian speculation about angelic “powers.”<sup>44</sup> It is significant in this respect that Clement immediately quotes the Book of Revelation: “the Word is called the Alpha and the Omega...” (Rev 1:8; also 21:6; 22:13). What he has in mind is surely the throne-visions of Revelation, depicting the seven spirits or angels in attendance before the throne (Rev 1:4; 8:2).<sup>45</sup>

Following Oeyen, I submit that “powers of the Spirit” alludes here to the seven spirits in Revelation, and that Clement subjects traditional Jewish-Christian material to the spiritualizing interpretation and the Logos-theology inherited from Philo. It seems clear, in light of this overlapping of

<sup>42</sup> πᾶσαι δὲ αἱ δυνάμεις τοῦ πνεύματος συλλήβδην μὲν ἔν τι πρῶγμα γενόμεναι συντελοῦσιν εἰς τὸ αὐτό, τὸν υἱόν... κύκλος γὰρ ὁ αὐτὸς πασῶν τῶν δυνάμεων εἰς ἓν εἰλουμένων καὶ ἐνουμένων (*Strom.* 4:25:156).

<sup>43</sup> Lilla, *Clement*, 204, n. 3: “Clement may have believed in the identity between angels, the ideas, and the powers of God”; Osborn, *Clement*, 152: “A still stronger influence on Clement was the concept of the manifold powers of the spirit in the Old Testament and especially in Paul (1 Cor 12).”

<sup>44</sup> It is noteworthy that this time Clement moves from λόγος to πνεῦμα, that is, he introduces πνεῦμα into the philosophical speculation on the Logos.

<sup>45</sup> The majority position in patristic and scholarly interpretation of these passages is to connect the seven spirits/ eyes/ lamps of the Lord in Revelation with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:2 LXX, Prov 8:12-16). A second opinion argues that the seven spirits are the seven angels of the presence (Tob 12:15; 1 En 90:20-21). This position is defended by Joseph Michl (*Die Engilverstellungen in der Apokalypse des hl. Johannes* [Munich 1937]), and David E. Aune (*Revelation* [Dallas, Tx. 1997] 33-35) with an impressive arsenal of primary and secondary literature. Among the patristic voices, it is quite significant that Cassiodorus’ commentary on Revelation echoes the theology of the *Adumbrationes*: the blessing “from the seven spirits” (Rev 1:4) is said to come from the seven archangels mentioned in Tob 12:15, and the seven spirits before the divine throne in Rev 4:1 are equated with the same seven angels of God (*Complexiones* 2). This is hardly surprising, since it was the same Cassiodorus who commissioned the Latin translation from Clement’s *Hypotyposes*, the *Adumbrationes* (see Cassiodorus’ report in his *Institutions* 1:8:4).

doctrinal frameworks, that “powers” *do* hold an important place in Clement’s account of reality.<sup>46</sup> In the following section I propose additional evidence for this assertion.

### *Unity and Multiplicity in the Spirit*

In *Strom.* 5:6, Clement provides an allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament Temple and its furnishings, an enterprise in which he is by no means unique, since Barnabas before him, and Origen and Cyril of Alexandria afterwards, are engaged in the very same project. In the following I confine myself to the menorah, the cherubim, and the twelve stones.

Clement’s exegesis follows a recognizable pattern. He introduces the object of interpretation, offers a first level of explanation, then a second one. The first level of explanation is astrological: the lamp signifies “the motions of the seven planets that perform their revolutions towards the south,” the cherubim signify the two bears, or the two hemispheres, and the twelve wings and twelve stones describe for us the circle of the zodiac.<sup>47</sup>

Clement then offers a second level of interpretation, directly related to Christ: the lamp conveys a “symbol of Christ,” the twelve stones are discussed in reference to the Lord, the Word, the Holy Spirit, etc. The “eighth region” mentioned in the interpretation of the cherubim refers to the place above the seven heavens, and we can assume that this is where he would picture the enthroned Christ. The interpretations of the lamp, the cherubim, and the stones are very similar, in that they all deal with the relation between unity and multiplicity. In the symbolic description of the lamp, Christ represents “what is one,” while “the seven eyes of the Lord” and “the seven spirits” stand for “what is many.” In the description of the cherubim, “the eighth region,” “the world of thought,” and “God,” represent “what is

<sup>46</sup> David T. Runia (“Clement of Alexandria and the Philonic Doctrine of the Divine Power[s],” *VigChr* 58 [2004] 256-276) holds that “Clement transfers the full weight of the cosmic powers onto Christ the Logos,” so that “the role of these powers in Clement’s thought is very limited” (268-269).

<sup>47</sup> This interpretation is not Clement’s own creation, and his allusion to “some” others who interpret the cherubim as images of the zodiac may be extrapolated to the other two elements. Philo has a very similar interpretation of the cherubim (*Cherubim* VII:21-24). For a comprehensive survey of Clement’s debt to Philo in his exegesis of the Temple, the vestments and the high priest, see Annewies van den Hoek, *Clement of Alexandria and His Use of Philo in the Stromateis: an Early Christian Reshaping of a Jewish Model* (Leiden–New York 1988) 116-147.

one,” while the zodiac, the time, and the world of sense represent “what is many.”<sup>48</sup> Finally, in the interpretation of the stones, “the one and the self-same Holy Spirit,” “the Lord,” “the Savior,” “the Word” stand for “what is one,” while “the whole world,” and “all things” represent “what is many.”

The cosmological scheme at work here seems to consist of “the invisible God” (who is only alluded to, because he is beyond the dialectic of one/many), the Son/Word/Savior as principle of all things, and the multiplicity of things. One may wonder what place this account leaves for the Holy Spirit.

As has become clear from the discussion of *Strom.* 5:6 in the section on Spirit Christology, Clement does *not* neglect or avoid speaking about the Holy Spirit in this fragment. On the contrary, he even chooses to introduce a πνεῦμα reference (1 Cor 12:11: “the self-same Holy Spirit works in all”) as proof text for his otherwise purely Christological discussion. As I have shown, in the interpretation of the twelve stones, πνεῦμα designates the Word.

On the other hand, in the interpretation of the lamp, “spirits” refers to the seven spirits, the eyes of the Lord. These are presumably the seven “first-born princes of the angels (οἱ πρωτόγονοι ἀγγέλων ἄρχοντες) who have the greatest power.”<sup>49</sup> What is the relation between the πνεῦμα as Logos, and the first created angelic πνεύματα? The following passage may offer an answer:

The golden lamp conveys another enigma as a symbol of Christ... in his casting light, “at sundry times and diverse manners,” on those who believe in Him and hope and see by means of the ministry of the *protocists* (διὰ τῆς τῶν πρωτοκτίστων διακονίας). And they say that the seven eyes of the Lord are the seven spirits resting on the rod that springs from the root of Jesse.<sup>50</sup>

Clement draws here on a series of Biblical passages (Isa 11:1-2; Zech 4:2, 10; Rev 1:4; Rev 5:6; Rev 8:2) that might have already been combined by earlier tradition.<sup>51</sup> Isaiah’s seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are Zechariah’s

<sup>48</sup>) To indicate “what is many” in the case of the cherubim, I had to introduce elements from the first level of interpretation, because the interpretation switches from the cherubim to the ark, and the idea of multiplicity remains to be conveyed by the twelve wings.

<sup>49</sup>) *Strom.* 6:16:142-143.

<sup>50</sup>) *Strom.* 5:6:35. I will have more to say about the *protocists* in the next section.

<sup>51</sup>) Karl Schlütz, *Isaias 11:2 (Die sieben Gaben des Heiligen Geistes) in den ersten vier christlichen Jahrhunderten* (Münster 1932).

seven spirits (eyes of the Lord), understood as the seven “first born” angels, the *protocists*. Consistent with the Christological framework in which he places the Old Testament prophecies and theophanies throughout his writings, Clement sees the seven angelic spirits as exercising a certain *διακονία* by which the Logos is imparted to the world, and in this sense being subordinated to the Logos.<sup>52</sup>

The cosmological aspect of this activity consists in the move from unity to multiplicity, by which the Logos establishes “what is many” in creation: the one “Spirit” (the Logos) relates to “seven spirits” in the same way that Logos relates to the “powers” in *Strom.* 4:25:156. Equally important is the theologoseological aspect of the discussion. The Logos, who intrinsically possesses the perfect vision of God, passes this vision on to creation by the ministry of the *protocists* (*Strom.* 5:6:35).

Clement seems to suppose the sequence Father—Son—*protocists*. Confirmation of this idea, and a fairly detailed description of the multi-layered cosmos, is provided by the *Excerpta*.

### 3.2. Clement’s “Celestial Hierarchy”

The title of this section is deliberately anachronistic, borrowing from the vocabulary of the much later Ps-Dionysius Areopagites. Even if the term “hierarchy” was coined by this anonymous late fifth century author, whose writings mark the confluence of Christian theology and late Neoplatonism, it is perfectly legitimate to use it in a discussion of a second-century Christian author who makes heavy use of Middle Platonism. Obviously, I do not use “hierarchy” for the relation between Father and Son. As Osborn has noted, Clement’s view of the Father-Son relation, derived from the Fourth Gospel, and expressed with the help of Middle Platonic duality between God and Intellect, is different from the later Plotinian “hierarchy” in which the One utterly transcends Mind.<sup>53</sup> “Hierarchy” and “hierarchical” are instead appropriate designations for the multi-storied cosmos characteristic of apocalyptic writings such as the *Ascension of Isaiah*, *2 Enoch* or the *Epistula Apostolorum*. In the case of Ps.-Dionysius, the

<sup>52</sup> It is noteworthy that the brief quotation from Heb 1:1 (“at sundry times and diverse manners”) is also subtly molded into an explicitly Christological affirmation: the one speaking “at sundry times and diverse manners” to the fathers is, originally, “God”; Clement, however, speaks about *Christ* casting his light “at sundry times and diverse manners.”

<sup>53</sup> Osborn, *Clement*, 107, 115, 117, 118, 122, 131.

hierarchy is not one among other features of his worldview: the hierarchy *is* the world.<sup>54</sup> For Clement,

Christ has turned the world into an ocean of blessings. . . . The whole of the new creation is a saving *activity*. Every part does something to carry the world forward and to lift it higher. It is saving and being saved. Its *hierarchy* expands the Platonic world of forms. It is powerful as the *energeia* of God. The world culminates in the ever-present word whose light penetrates everywhere and casts no shadow.<sup>55</sup>

Aside from the use of “hierarchy,” Osborn’s beautiful description is unmistakably “Dionysian.” It was, after all, the Ps-Areopagite that defined the hierarchy as “a sacred order, and knowledge, and activity (ἐνέργεια)” (*Celestial Hierarchy* 3:1, 164 D)! Generally speaking, however, the similarity between the Clementine and Dionysian “hierarchies” is only seldom discussed in modern scholarship.<sup>56</sup> This is quite different from what one finds in the sixth-century scholiast of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, John of Scythopolis, who tries to bring into harmony the Dionysian and the Clementine angelic hierarchies.<sup>57</sup> It should be noted, finally, that the centrality of the hierarchically ordered universe and its denizens was an important “archaizing” feature of the Ps.-Dionysian work, subordinated to one of the likely goals of this “New Testament pseudepigraphon”—namely the subversion

<sup>54</sup> Cf. René Rocques, *L'univers dionysien: structure hiérarchique du monde selon le Pseudo-Denys* (Paris 1983) 131.

<sup>55</sup> Osborn, *Clement*, 158 (italics mine).

<sup>56</sup> See the brief note by Alexander Golitzin, in his *Et Introibo Ad Altare Dei: The Mystagogy of Dionysius Areopagita, with Special Reference to its Predecessors in the Eastern Christian Tradition* (Analekta Vlatadon 59; Thessalonica 1994) 265: the angelic hierarchies of the *Excerpta* are “remarkably reminiscent” of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.

<sup>57</sup> In his scholion on the *Divine Names* 2:9, where the text had mentioned “the premier among the oldest angels” (τῷ πρωτίστῳ τῶν πρεσβυτάτων ἀγγέλων), John of Scythopolis writes: “Note how he says that certain angels are oldest (πρεσβυτάτους ἀγγέλους εἶναι τινας) and that one of them is premier (πρωτον αὐτῶν). The divine John speaks of elder angels in the Apocalypse, and we read in Tobit as well as in the fifth book of Clement’s *Hypotyposes* that the premier angels are seven (ἐπτὰ εἶναι τοὺς πρώτους). He [Dionysius] was wont to call the three highest orders ‘the oldest angels’ (πρεσβυτάτους ἀγγέλους)—Thrones, Seraphim, and Cherubim—as he often signifies in his treatise *The Celestial Hierarchy*.” The Greek text is taken from PG 4, col. 225, 228; the English translation is, with slight modifications, that of Paul Rorem, John. C. Lamoreaux, *John of Scythopolis and the Dionysian Corpus: Annotating the Areopagite* (Oxford 1998) 198.



of similar apocalyptic imagery (and associated doctrines) among competing groups in Christianity.<sup>58</sup>

I now return to Clement of Alexandria's "celestial hierarchy." In *Excerpta* 10, 11, and 27 and *Eclogae* 56–57, Clement presents it as a theological tradition inherited from the "elders."<sup>59</sup> Having at its pinnacle the Logos, the spiritual universe features, in descending order, the seven *protocists*, the archangels, and the angels.<sup>60</sup>

The orienting principle (ἀρχή) of the hierarchy is the "Face of God"—a theme whose prominence in the apocalyptic literature of Second Temple Judaism was only amplified with the emergence of Christianity.<sup>61</sup> For

<sup>58</sup> The argument is made by Golitzin, "Dionysius Areopagita: A Christian Mysticism?," *ProEcclesia* 12 (2003) 161–212, esp. 178.

<sup>59</sup> The fact that Clement's strictly hierarchical universe goes back to earlier tradition has been demonstrated by older research: Paul Collomp, "Une source de Clément d'Alexandrie et des Homélie Pseudo-Clémentines," *RPh* 37 (1913) 19–46; Wilhelm Bousset, *Jüdisch-christlicher Schulbetrieb in Alexandria und Rom: Literarische Untersuchungen zu Philo und Clemens von Alexandria, Justin und Irenäus* (Göttingen 1915). Despite the pertinent critique of some of Bousset's conclusions (Johannes Munck, *Untersuchungen über Klemens von Alexandria* [Stuttgart 1933] 127–204), the thesis of a Jewish and Jewish-Christian literary source behind Clement remains solidly established: Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie*, 68, n. 3; Daniélou, "Les traditions secrètes des Apôtres," 214; Roncaglia, "Pantène et le Didascalée d'Alexandrie: du judéo-christianisme au christianisme hellénistique," in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature and its Environment, Primarily in the Syrian East* (ed. R. H. Fischer; Chicago 1977) 211–233; Osborn, *Clement*, 102.

<sup>60</sup> Since God is neither an accident (συμβεβηκός), nor described by anything accidental (*Strom.* 5:12:81), he is beyond the hierarchy, and should not be counted as the first of five hierarchical levels (*pace* Collomp, "Une source," 24; Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 20; Ziebritzki, *Heiliger Geist und Weltseele*, 121). To designate the Father, Clement repeatedly alludes to the famous Platonic "beyond ousia" (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας, *Rep* 509B), which had been already appropriated by Justin (ἐπέκεινα πάσης οὐσίας, *Dial* 4:1). God is one and *beyond* the one and the monad (*Paed.* 1:8:71), and *beyond* cause (τὸ ἐπέκεινα αἵτιον, *Strom.* 7:2:2).

<sup>61</sup> C. L. Seow, "Face," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (ed. K. van der Toorn, B. Becking, P. W. van der Horst; Leiden–Boston 1999) 322–325. According to Andrei Orlov (*The Enoch-Metatron Tradition* [TSAJ 107; Tübingen 2005] 153, 279), early Enochic texts, such as 1 Enoch, Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon, or the Book of Giants, make little use of "face" imagery; however, in the context of an ongoing polemic against other Jewish traditions of divine mediatorship, later Enochic booklets—2 Enoch, 3 Enoch—produce extensive reflections on the Face. For a theological evaluation of the theme of the Face in the Pseudepigrapha, see Orlov, *The Enoch-Metatron Tradition*, and his articles "Exodus 33 on God's Face: A Lesson From the Enochic Tradition" and "The Face as the Heavenly Counterpart of the Visionary in the Slavonic *Ladder of Jacob*," republished in his *From Apocalypticism to Merkabah Mysticism: Studies in the Slavonic Pseudepigrapha* (JSJ 114; Leiden 2006) 311–325, 399–419. See also April DeConick, "Heavenly Temple

Clement, “the Face of God is the Son.”<sup>62</sup> To describe the continual propagation of light from the Face down to the lowest level of existence (the divine οἰκονομία), Clement uses the adverb “proximately” (προσεχῶς), to suggest the lack of any interval between the levels: each rank of spiritual entities is “moved” by the one above it, and will, in turn, “move” the immediately lower level.<sup>63</sup> The advancement on the cosmic ladder leads to the progressive transformation of one level into the next, an idea for which Clement offers a highly complex account.<sup>64</sup>

The first level of celestial entities contemplating the Face are the angels “first created” (πρωτόκτιστοι). These *protoctists* are seven (identified with the “seven eyes of the Lord” in Zech 4:10, Rev 5:6), but they are simultaneously characterized by unity and multiplicity:

... even while they are distinct in number, and individually defined and circumscribed, the similarity of [their] state nevertheless points to [their] unity, equality and being alike. Among the seven, there has not been given more to the one and less to the other; nor is any of them lacking in advancement (προκοπή); [they] have received perfection from the beginning, at the first [moment of their] coming into being, from God through the Son.<sup>65</sup>

Clement’s *protoctists* echo Jewish and Christian traditions about the highest angelic company.<sup>66</sup> On the other hand, the *protoctists* also represent the

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Traditions and Valentinian Worship: A Case for First-Century Christology in the Second Century,” in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism* (ed. C. C. Newman, J. R. Davila, G.S. Lewis; JSJ 63; Leiden 1999) 308-341, esp. 327-329.

<sup>62</sup> *Excerpta* 10:6; *Excerpta* 12:1. April DeConick (“Heavenly Temple Traditions,” 325) states that “the image of the Son as the Father’s Face may have played a significant role in Valentinian theologies.” However, the repeated occurrence of the same designation in Clement of Alexandria (*Paed.* 1:57 and 1:124:4, *Strom.* 7:58, as well as in Tertullian (*Adv. Prax.* 14), suggests that “Face” as a Christological title was at least as popular in mainstream Christianity as it was in Valentinian tradition.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. the veiled description in *Strom.* 6:16:148: “the operative power (ἡ δραστηκὴ ἐνέργεια) is imparted by descent through those that are moved successively (διὰ τῶν προσεχέστερον κινουμένων).”

<sup>64</sup> See Collomp, “Une source,” 23-24; Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 8-9, 12; Bucur, “The Other Clement: Cosmic Hierarchy.”

<sup>65</sup> *Excerpta* 10:3-4. I use two different words for ὁμοιότης (“similarity” and “being alike”), because our post-Nicene theological bias would automatically weaken the bearing of this word in Clement. The second time he uses ὁμοιότης, Clement has in mind “being like” as opposed to “being unlike,” not to “being the same as.”

<sup>66</sup> The group of seven is found in Ezekiel 9:2-3 (seven angelic beings, of which the seventh is more important than the other six), Tob 12:15 (seven “holy angels” who have access

point where divine unity passes into multiplicity, and, conversely, the point in which the multiplicity of the world of being is reassembled into the unity of the Logos/ Power/ Son.

I noted earlier that the cosmological scheme described in *Strom.* 5:6 or in the *Excerpta* seems to reserve no place to the Holy Spirit: in descending order, one reads about the Father, the Son, and the *protocists*. Le Boulluec synthesizes what we know about this group of seven superior angelic beings.<sup>67</sup> He does not, however, discuss the relation between the seven *protocists* and the Holy Spirit. This problem constitutes, instead, the heart of Oeyen's contribution, which I will present and discuss in the following pages.

It has now become possible to approach the fundamental question, namely the thesis of an "angelic" Pneumatology in Clement of Alexandria.

### 3.3. *Clement's Theory of Prophetic Inspiration*

Clement is aware of the two major functions traditionally ascribed to the Holy Spirit, namely the inspiration of Old Testament prophets and the

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before the Glory, where they present the prayers of "the saints"), and 1 Enoch (ch. 20: seven archangels; ch. 90:21, "the seven first snow-white ones"). The notion of "first created" is important to the author of *Jubilees*: the angels of the presence are said to be circumcised from their creation on the second day, thus possessing a certain perfection and functioning as heavenly models and final destination of the people of Israel (*Jub* 2:2; 15:27). The *Prayer of Joseph* seems to imply that Israel ranks higher than the seven archangels, as chief captain and first minister before the face of God. Among Christian texts, Revelation mentions seven spirits / angels before the divine throne (1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 8:2), and the *Shepherd of Hermas* knows of a group of seven consisting of the six "first created ones" (πρῶτοι κτισθέντες) who accompany the Son of God as their seventh (*Vis* 3:4:1; *Sim* 5:5:3). The sermon *De centesima, sexagesima, tricesima* (dates for this text are ranging from late second to the fourth century) states that God first created seven angelic princes out of fire (cf. 2 En 29:3), and later made one of the seven into his Son. For the text, see Richard Reitzenstein, "Eine frühchristliche Schrift von den dreierlei Früchten des christlichen Lebens," *ZNW* 15 (1914) 60-90, here 82. Among later Jewish writings, 3 En 10:2-6 mentions that Metatron is exalted above the "eight great princes" who bear the divine Name. *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer* (iv:23), a work composed around 750 CE, but incorporating material going back to the Pseudepigrapha, combines the number seven and the idea of "first created."

<sup>67</sup> Derived from Jewish speculation on the various angelic ranks in Second Temple Judaism (e.g., *Tob* 12:15; 1 En 90:20), identified with Paul's "thrones" (*Col* 1:16) in *Eclogae* 57:1), Clement's *protocists* are the highest angelic rank, comparable to the πρῶτοι κτισθέντες of the *Shepherd of Hermas* (*Vis* 3:4:1; *Sim* 5:5:3). See Le Boulluec, "Commentaire," 143. Oeyen identifies the *protocists* with the particular angelic rank called "powers," in Justin Martyr, Clement, and Origen (Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 28-30, and "Die Lehre von den göttlichen Kräften bei Justin," *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972) 214-221.

indwelling of Christian believers.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, he often ascribes the same functions to the Logos, even while maintaining some role for the Holy Spirit. He affirms, for instance, that the Logos “tunes” the world—the great cosmos, as well as the human microcosm—by the Holy Spirit, ἁγίῳ πνεύματι (*Protr* 1:5:3). Osborn finds, nevertheless, that inasmuch as Clement (and Origen) articulate a robust doctrine of divine presence in the world, they possess a “worthy theology of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>69</sup> There is nothing I disagree with in this statement. However, what exactly Clement understood by “the Logos through the Spirit” becomes clear only in his account of prophecy in the *Eclogae* and *Adumbrationes*—that is, precisely in those texts that Osborn (and Clementine scholarship, generally) tends to ignore.

*The heavens proclaim the glory of God* (Ps. 18:2). By “heavens” are designated in manifold ways both “the heavens” pertaining to distance and cycle [= the sky; my note], and the proximate operation (ἐνέργεια προσεχής) of the first-created angels, which pertains to covenant. For the covenants were wrought (ἐνηργήθησαν) by the visitation of angels, namely those upon Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. For, moved by the Lord, the first-created angels worked in (ἐνήργουν εἰς) the angels that are close to the prophets, as they are telling the “glory of God,” [namely] the covenants. But the works accomplished by the angels on earth also came about for “the glory of God,” through the first-created angels. So, [the following] are called “heavens”: in a primary sense, the Lord; but then also the first-created [angels]; and with them also the holy persons [that lived] before the Law, as well as the patriarchs, and Moses and the prophets, and finally the apostles.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> “The Holy Spirit, by Isaiah, denounces . . .” (*Paed.* 2:1:8); “the Holy Spirit, uttering His voice by Amos” (*Paed.* 2:2:30); “the Spirit prophesies by Zephaniah” (*Paed.* 2:12:126); “the Spirit [says] by Solomon” (*Paed.* 2:12:129). In *Excerpta* 24:2, Clement affirms the perfect identity (i.e., an identity of οὐσία and δύναμις) between the Paraclete that is working (ἐνεργῶν) in the Church, and the Paraclete who was active (ἐνεργήσαντι) in the prophets. See my analysis above.

<sup>69</sup> Osborn, *Clement*, 152-153: “The activity of the spirit in the created world, as it has been renewed by Christ’s recapitulation, is more direct than in other accounts”; [Clement and Origen] “had . . . a real doctrine of the continuity and energy of God’s working in the world—that is a worthy theology of the Holy Spirit. Clement may have assigned to the Logos the functions of the Spirit; Origen may have failed to discriminate between the functions of the second and third Persons of the Trinity; but both of them had the root of the matter in their lives and in their thought. For them the constant vitalizing activity of God at work in his world was the essential element of their teaching.”

<sup>70</sup> *Eclogae* 51-52.

It is clear that the explanations above presuppose the hierarchical worldview presented in *Excerpta* 10, 11, and 27. Prophecy occurs when the Logos moves the first rank of the *protocists*, and this movement is transmitted from one level of the angelic hierarchy down to the next. The lowest angelic rank, which is the one closest to the human world, transmits the “movement” to the prophet.<sup>71</sup> Through a sort of telescoping effect, the first mover—the Logos—is simultaneously far removed from the effect of prophecy and immediately present. This principle of “mediated immediacy” becomes evident when Clement says that Jude refers the action of a lower angel (“an angel near us”) to a superior angelic entity, the archangel Michael;<sup>72</sup> or when “Moses calls on the power of the angel Michael through an angel near to himself and of the lowest degree (*vicinum sibi et infimum*).”<sup>73</sup> Ultimately, the action of inspiration must be referred to the original mover, the Logos, since Clement also applies the outlined theory of angelic mediation to the prophetic call of Samuel (1 Sam 3), where the text repeatedly mentions the Lord or the voice of the Lord.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Following the logic of the text, one could say that the prophet represents the highest level in the human hierarchy. A few centuries later, the Ps.-Areopagite will assign this position to the bishop. Clement, instead, seems much closer on this issue to the *Shepherd of Hermas* (Mand 11:9), for whom the point of contact between the inspiring angel and the community of believers is the prophet, or to the *Book of Revelation*. In the latter, the statement about the angel being “a fellow servant” with the prophet (repeated in Rev 19:10 and 22:8-9) may serve, on the one hand, to correct any angelolatric tendencies; but, on the other hand, “John’s purpose was . . . perhaps, to claim for his brothers a certain primacy in the affairs of churches” (Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John* [London 1963] 449); see also Hanna Roose, *Das Zeugnis Jesu: seine Bedeutung für die Christologie, Eschatologie und Prophetie in der Offenbarung des Johannes* (Tübingen 2000) 202–208; Pierre Prigent, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John* (Tübingen 2001) 529–533.

<sup>72</sup> “When the archangel Michael, disputing with the devil, was arguing over the body of Moses.’ This confirms the *Assumption of Moses*. ‘Michael’ here designates the one who argued with the devil through an angel close to us” (*Adumbrationes* in Jude 9).

<sup>73</sup> *Adumbrationes* in 1 John 2:1. This principle of “mediated immediacy,” by which Clement explains away Biblical passages in which a higher angelic being (e.g., the archangel Michael) is said to interact with humans, instead of an angel of “lower” degree, is strikingly similar to how Ps.-Dionysius explains why Isa 6:1 affirms that Isaiah was “initiated” by a Seraph (*Celestial Hierarchy* 13:1, 300B).

<sup>74</sup> *Adumbrationes* in 1 John 2:1. It is significant that the same idea is alluded to in the *Stromateis*, yet in a much more veiled manner. Speaking about the theophany on Mount Sinai, Clement says the following: “But there being a cloud and a lofty mountain, how is it not possible to hear a different sound, *the πνεῦμα being moved by the active cause* (πνεύματος κινουμένου διὰ τῆς ἐνεργούσης αἰτίας)? . . . You see how the Lord’s voice, the Word,

In this light, it becomes clear how Clement understands the traditional statements about the Logos speaking in the prophets ἀγίῳ πνεύματι, as in *Protr* 1:5:3, quoted above: the prophet experienced the presence and message of the Logos by receiving the “energy” by the proximate angel.<sup>75</sup> It appears, overall, that “the constant vitalizing activity of God at work in his world” was, indeed, as Osborn noted, an essential element of Clement’s thought. What must be added, however, is that when it came to such deeply traditional elements as prophecy, Clement also had recourse to the traditional angelic imagery inherited from the “elders.”

### 3.4. Clement’s Understanding of “Spirit of Christ” and “Paraclete”

Clement’s *Adumbrationes, Excerpta* and *Eclogae* provide an interesting interpretation of the fundamental concepts of Christian Pneumatology: “Spirit of Christ” and “Paraclete.”

#### “Spirit of Christ”

It is thereby made clear that the prophets conversed with Wisdom, and that there was in them the “Spirit of Christ,” in the sense of “possession by Christ,” and “subjection to Christ” (*secundum possessionem et subiectionem Christi*). For the Lord works through archangels and through angels that are close (*per... propinquos angelos*), who are called “the Spirit of Christ” (*qui Christi vocantur spiritus*).<sup>76</sup> . . . He says, “Blessed are you, because there rests upon you that which is of his glory, and of God’s honor and power, and who is His Spirit. This “his” is pos-

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without shape, the power of the Word, the luminous word of the Lord, the truth from heaven, from above, coming to the assembly of the Church, *worked* by the luminous *immediate ministry* (διὰ φωτεινῆς τῆς προσεχοῦς διακονίας ἐνήργει) (*Strom.* 6:3:34, ANF slightly revised). To anyone not previously familiar with the doctrine of inspiration presented above, several important elements can easily go unnoticed: Christ (“the luminous Word” cf. SC 446: 130, n. 3) is the active cause of the theophany; he *works* through the immediate ministry; conversely, the “wind” is “moved” by him. Since he is using “ministry” and “immediate,” Clement probably interprets what he calls “the descent of God,” and “manifestation of the divine Power” (*Strom.* 6:3:32) in light of Acts 7:35, 38 and 53, as an *angelic* manifestation, and an *angelic* giving of the law. Thus, πνεῦμα here is signaling the presence of the *angelic* spirit.

<sup>75</sup> The same phenomenon applies to the gift of philosophy to the pagans: the Logos “gave philosophy to the Greeks by means of the inferior angels,” διὰ τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων ἀγγέλων (*Strom.* 7:2:6).

<sup>76</sup> *Spiritus Christi* could, in theory, be translated as a plural (“spirits of Christ”); but Clement is here expanding on 1 Pet 4:14, ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ πνεῦμα ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς ἀναπάνεται.

sessive, and designates the angelic spirit (*Hic possessivum est eius et angelicum spiritum significat*).<sup>77</sup>

Once again, the “telescopic” view of the hierarchy is presupposed, so as to convey the presence of Christ through (“per,” presumably rendering *διὰ*) the work of the lowest angelic level.<sup>78</sup> *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 4:14 presents three entities: first, God; second, God’s Glory/ Honor/ Power (= “He”); third, the Spirit of God’s Glory/ Honor/ Power (= “His Spirit”).<sup>79</sup> Yet, the Spirit of Christ is treated, in a way that could hardly be more explicit, as a designation for angelic beings. For a comparison with the way in which Clement approached this problem in the *Stromata*, it is instructive to look at the exegesis of Gen 15:5-6 (Abraham meeting the three heavenly visitors) in the following text:

... on looking up to heaven, whether it was that he saw the Son in the spirit, as some explain, or a glorious angel, or in any other way recognized God to be superior to the creation... he receives in addition the Alpha, the knowledge of the one and only God, and is called Abraam, having, instead of a natural philosopher, become wise, and a lover of God.<sup>80</sup>

Clearly, Clement eludes any detailed explanation of what happened. He suggests a certain disagreement with other exegetes, who posit a direct manifestation of the Logos. In light of the theory of prophecy discussed above, the choice between Abraham seeing the Logos, and Abraham conversing with an angel represents, indeed, a false alternative: what Abraham saw was neither the Logos, nor a glorious angel, but rather the Logos in the *angelic spirit*.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>77</sup> *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 2:3; *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 4:14.

<sup>78</sup> Oeyen (*Engelpneumatologie*, 27-28) and Hauschild (*Gottes Geist*, 79) identify the “angeli propinqui” with the *protocists*. This interpretation appears to miss half of Clement’s intention: the prophetic inspiration is, indeed, worked out through the *protocists*, who are “close” to the Son; yet the movement is further transmitted in the same way to the archangels, who are “close” to the *protocists*, and the angels, who are “close” to the archangels. Finally, the lowest angelic rank is the last element in the chain of prophetic inspiration: this is, for Clement, the “spirit” that rests upon the prophets.

<sup>79</sup> For a discussion of the variant reading of 1 Pet 4:14, see Zahn, *Forschungen III*: 95, n. 11; Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 28, n. 24; Michael Mees, *Die Zitate aus dem Neuen Testament bei Clemens von Alexandrien* (Quaderni di “Vetera Christianorum” 2; Bari 1970) I:179-180, II:242.

<sup>80</sup> *Strom.* 5:1:8.

<sup>81</sup> Oeyen discusses this passage in *Engelpneumatologie*, 18-19.

“Paraclete”

I have already shown that the “Paraclete” was implicitly identified with the Logos in *Excerpta* 24:2, where Clement affirms the perfect identity between the Paraclete that is working (ἐνεργῶν) in the Church, and the Paraclete who was active (ἐνεργήσαντι) in the prophets. The *Adumbrationes* provide further details about the Paraclete:

The things of old (*vetera*) that were wrought through the prophets, and are concealed from most, are now revealed to you through the evangelists. “For to you,” it says, “have these things been revealed (*manifestata sunt*) through the Holy Spirit who was sent,” that is, the Paraclete, of whom the Lord said, “Unless I depart, He will not come”; “unto whom,” it is said, “the angels desire to look”—not the fallen angels, as most suspect; rather, as is true and godly, the angels who desire to attain to the contemplation of His perfection (*prospectum perfectionis illius*).<sup>82</sup>

This passage reinforces Clement’s identification of the Church’s Paraclete Spirit with the Spirit already manifested in Old Testament prophetic inspiration. The Paraclete sent to the Church is at the same time an object of contemplation for the angels. This evokes the hierarchical universe described in the *Excerpta*. There, however, the angels are contemplating the *protocists*, who are mediating to them the light of the divine Face. To make things even more ambiguous, the passage above follows immediately after Clement’s affirmation that Christ’s spirit in the prophets must be understood in the sense of “possession by Christ,” which later on is explained as “Christ working through archangels and angels who are close to us.” The exact relation between Christ, the Paraclete, and the *protocists* becomes clearer in light of the discussion of the Paraclete references in the *Adumbrationes* in 1 John 2:1 (“But if anyone does sin, we have a *paraclete* with the Father, namely Jesus Christ”):

Just as the Lord is a *Paraclete* for us with the Father, so also is He a *Paraclete* whom He [scil. the Lord] has deigned to send after His Ascension. For these primitive and first-created powers, unchangeable according to substance, effect divine operations together with the subordinate angels and archangels whose names they share (*hae namque primitivae virtutes ac primo creatae, immobiles existentes secundum substantiam, cum subiectis angelis et archangelis, cum quibus vocantur equivoce, diversas operationes efficiunt*).<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 1:10-12.

<sup>83</sup> *Adumbrationes* in 1 John 2:1. Stählin introduces a comma between “immobiles” and “existentes.” I prefer to revert to Zahn’s text, which has no comma. Thus, I take “immobiles



The reference to the “primitive and first-created powers” (rendering *πρωτόγονοι καὶ πρωτόκτιστοι δυνάμεις*) in the first passage is a subject of marked disagreement among scholars. The first interpretation, going back at least as far as Zahn’s annotated edition of the text, sees the “primitive powers” as none other than the two paracletes, the Son and the Spirit.<sup>84</sup> A second position, argued by Brooke F. Westcott (prior to Zahn), and by Lueken (in direct polemic with Zahn), was adopted by Sagnard, and, more recently, by Ziebritzki. Its most extensive exposition, however, was furnished by Oeyen.<sup>85</sup> According to this reading, the “powers” under discussion are the seven *protocists*, situated below the Son/ Logos, and either identified with the sevenfold Spirit (Oeyen), or juxtaposed to the Spirit (Ziebritzki).<sup>86</sup>

At first sight, the two-Paraclete scheme, discussed by Kretschmar with reference to early Christian exegesis of Isa 6:1-3 and the developing reflection on the Trinity, is perfectly applicable to the passage. Christ is the Church’s *Paraclete* before the Father, the Spirit is the *Paraclete* sent to the Church: hence, two Paracletes, Christ and the Holy Spirit. According to Zahn and Kretschmar, here as well as in other passages (*Strom.* 6:16:143; *Excerpta* 10:4, 20; *Eclogae* 56-57), Clement applies the designation and characteristics of angels or *protocists* to Christ and the Spirit, without thereby numbering the latter two among the angels. Yet, unlike “real” angelic beings, Christ and the Spirit would be “immobiles existentes secundum substantiam,” that is, according to Zahn, characterized by “an

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existentes secundum substantiam” to mean that their substance is immovable according to substance, i.e., it does not undergo change.

<sup>84</sup> Zahn, *Forschungen* III: 79-103, esp. 98-99. Zahn’s opinions carry on to this day: Frangoulis (*Der Begriff*, 16-17); Barbel (*Christos Angelos*, 202-203); Kretschmar (*Trinitätstheologie*, 71,

n. 2); Ladaria (*El Espíritu*, 255), and Hauschild (*Gottes Geist*, 79).

<sup>85</sup> B. F. Westcott, “Clement of Alexandria,” in *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects, and Doctrines* (ed. W. Smith, H. Ware; London 1877) 1:559-566, here 564; Wilhelm Lueken, *Michael; Eine Darstellung und Vergleich der jüdischen und morgenländisch-christlichen Tradition vom Erzengel Michael* (Göttingen 1898) 113, n. 1; Sagnard, *Excerpta* 77, n. 2; Ziebritzki, *Geist und Weltseele*, 122, n. 148; Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 31-33.

<sup>86</sup> Ziebritzki’s contention that the identification between the Spirit and the *protocists* is “unlikely” because Christian tradition originally conceived of the Holy Spirit as of a singular entity (*Geist und Weltseele*, 122) is unfounded. The combination of the seven gifts of the Spirit (Isa 11:1-2), and the seven angelic spirits of the Lord (Zech 4:2, 10; Rev 1:4; Rev 5:6; Rev 8:2), which we have seen in Clement’s exegesis of the sevenfold candlestick, is a well established tradition in early Christianity. See Schlütz, *Die sieben Gaben*.

ethical immutability rooted in their essence.” As for the equation between the Holy Spirit and the angelic spirits in *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 4:14, such language is not to be taken literally.<sup>87</sup>

Westcott and Lueken have pointed to a textual problem in the *Adumbrationes*. The entire passage beginning with “hae namque virtutes” and continuing with a discussion of the now familiar principle of mediated immediacy, illustrated by the cases of the archangel Michael, Samuel, and Elisha, seems oddly out of place as an exegesis of 1 John 2:1. This material might have been displaced from the *Adumbrationes* in Jude 9, where Clement discusses precisely the alleged presence of the archangel Michael at the scene of Moses’ death; the digression on Moses, Samuel, and Elisha, and Michael working through subordinate angels, would be perfectly justified.<sup>88</sup> Unfortunately, Westcott’s displacement hypothesis finds no support in the meager text tradition of the *Adumbrationes*, and must therefore remain a mere conjecture.

For some, accepting the preeminence of the text tradition implies accepting the Zahn–Kretschmar exegesis.<sup>89</sup> Yet, the equation of the *virtutes* with the seven *protocists* is not dependent on the displacement hypothesis. For Oeyen (who is, of course, sympathetic to this theory), making sense of the reference to “the primitive powers” requires the larger theological context provided by the *Adumbrationes*, *Excerpta*, and *Eclogae*. In this perspective, for instance, the “Paraclete” working in the Church is by no means an unambiguous referent: a few passages earlier in the *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet, Clement discloses to his readers that the “Spirit of Christ” resting upon the faithful is, in fact, Christ working through the “angelic spirit,” through archangels and inferior angels. Secondly, the description of the “powers” matches other Clementine references to the *protocists*. Their being “first-created” (πρωτόκτιστοι), “primitive” (πρωτόγονοι), and “immutable,” perfectly matches the description in *Excerpta* 10; “aequivoce” (ὁμονύμως) can be better explained as referring to the personal name (e.g., “Michael”),

<sup>87</sup> Zahn, *Forschungen* III:98; Frangoulis, *Der Begriff*, 17; Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie*, 71, n. 2. Barbel, *Christos Angelos*, 203, n. 106: “Man kann sich fragen, ob der Ausdruck [the Logos as *protocist*, “first born”] in seinem wörtlichen Sinn zu nehmen ist.”

<sup>88</sup> Westcott, “Clement,” 564; Lueken, *Michael*, 113, n. 8. Lueken rejected Zahn’s statement about “ethical immutability,” and proposed “local immutability.” However, as Barbel (*Christos Angelos*, 203) notes, substantial immutability implies both.

<sup>89</sup> Barbel (*Christos Angelos*, 202) notes: “Doch wird man dem Zeugnis des Überlieferung das Vorrecht lassen müssen”; he then embraces the identification of the *primitivae virtutes* with Christ and the Spirit.

which is ascribed, as a condescension to human weakness, to an angel of the lowest rank; and the “diverse operations” effected by these powers fit well Clement’s detailed account of prophetic inspiration.

The divergence in the interpretation of the *Adumbrationes* in 1 John 2:1 is not as radical as it may seem. I submit that it is possible to move beyond the divergence by considering the *primitivae virtutes* in light of a new descriptive category: “angelomorphic Pneumatology.”

### 3.5. *Angelic or Angelomorphic Pneumatology?*

Oeyen contends that the *proctocists* simply *are* the Spirit, a plural designation of the sevenfold Holy Spirit.<sup>90</sup> Ladaria refuses this identification on the grounds that the indwelling work of the Spirit finds no counterpart in the action of the *proctocists*, and that there is a clear distinction between the paradigmatic status of the *proctocists* with respect to the vision of God, and work of Holy Spirit who enables one to see God.<sup>91</sup> These objections are easily overcome as soon as it is understood that the *proctocists* serve as “high priests” of the deifying and theophanic action ultimately performed by the Logos, and therefore mediators of the *visio dei*. Ziebritzki agrees with Oeyen that the Spirit is, indeed, subordinated to the Logos and abides in unchanging contemplation of the latter. He asserts, however, without offering any proof, that the Spirit is assigned to the same hierarchical rank as the *proctocists*, although he remains a distinct entity.<sup>92</sup> Hauschild’s cautious observations seem extremely apt at this point: interpreting Clement’s Pneumatology depends to a great extent on determining the extent to which Clement is in agreement with the traditions that he is reworking. Given that Clement nowhere identifies them explicitly, he *could* be equating the *proctocists* with the Spirit; but he could also be resorting to a traditional view which simply does not speak of a “Holy Spirit,” and *not* have the capacity to bend the inherited framework so as to accommodate the hypostasis of the Spirit.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 20, 25, 31, 33, 40. For a presentation of the functional identity between the Holy Spirit and the *proctocists*, see Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 22-23.

<sup>91</sup> “Mientras que El Espíritu Santo es comunicado al hombre y en él habita, es decir, se convierte en un principio interno de actuación del creyente, nada de esto se dice en relación con los ‘proctocistos’” (Ladaria, *El Espíritu*, 252); “hay diferencia entre ‘ser ejemplo’ y ‘hacer capaz de’” (Ladaria, *El Espíritu*, 252, note 17).

<sup>92</sup> *Geist und Weltseele*, 122-123.

<sup>93</sup> Hauschild, *Gottes Geist*, 79, n. 10. The close association between “possessing the Spirit” and the process of angelification might originally have been part of a tradition featuring an angelic “Holy Spirit” (cf. Hauschild, *Gottes Geist*, 78-79).

The following text may lead to more clarity.

And by one God are many treasures dispensed; some are disclosed through the Law, others through the prophets; some by the divine mouth, another by the heptad of the spirit (τοῦ πνεύματος τῆ ἑπτάδι) singing in accompaniment. And the Lord being one, is the same Instructor in all of these.<sup>94</sup>

According to Schlütz this text describes the revelation of the Instructor Logos as both unitary and progressive: the Logos works in the law, later in the prophets, then in the Incarnation (“the divine mouth”), and, finally, the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost. Oeyen prefers a direct equation of “the divine mouth” with the Spirit, on the basis of *Protr.* 9:82 (where the Spirit is precisely the mouth of the Lord).<sup>95</sup> On either view (and I would argue that Clement’s Spirit Christology annuls their distinction), the expression “heptad of the spirit” refers to the Holy Spirit. The question is to decide whether “holy spirit” is a designation for the seven “angels of the Face,” or “seven protoctists” a designation for the Holy Spirit. Briefly put: “angel” Pneumatology or “pneuma” angelology?<sup>96</sup>

Ladaria prefers to interpret “angels” as references to the Holy Spirit.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Oeyen notes, commenting on the passage discussing the *spiritus angelicus* (*Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 4:14): “nicht nur werden Engel Geist genannt; auch der Geist wird als *engelhaft* bezeichnet,” and concludes “dass es sich ohne Zweifel um den Heiligen Geist handelt, und nicht um einen niedrigeren Engel, der *Geist* im abgeschwachten Sinne genannt würde.”<sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *Paed.* 3:12:87 (ANF, modified).

<sup>95</sup> Schlütz, *Die sieben Gaben*, 77; Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 27, n. 22.

<sup>96</sup> Far from being a Christian invention, much less a peculiarity of Clement’s, the use of πνεῦμα to designate an angelic being is widespread in pre- and post-exilic Judaism, witnessed by the LXX and authors of the diaspora, and also prominent at Qumran. In the Old Testament, the *locus classicus* is Isa 63:9-10, where the Angel of the Lord is referred to as “holy spirit”; in the New Testament, aside from the designation of *evil* angels as (impure) “spirits,” the equivalence of “spirit” and “angel” is implicit in Heb 12:9 (“Father of spirits”), and Acts 8:26.29.39, where Philip’s guide is successively described as “angel of the Lord,” “spirit,” and, “spirit of the Lord.” See John Levison, “The Angelic Spirit in Early Judaism,” *SBLSP* 34 [1995] 464-493; *The Spirit in First Century Judaism* (AGJU 29; Leiden–New York–Cologne 1997); Arthur E. Sekki, *The Meaning of Ruach at Qumran* (SBLDS 110; Atlanta, Ga. 1989) 145-171; Bucur, “The Son of God and the Angelomorphic Holy Spirit: A Rereading of the *Shepherd’s* Christology,” *ZNW* 98 (2007) 121-143.

<sup>97</sup> Ladaria, *El Espíritu*, 254.

<sup>98</sup> Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*, 28 (Oeyen’s italics).

These observations amount to a distinction between “angelic” and “angelomorphic” Pneumatology. It would, indeed, be preferable to use the newer descriptive category of “angelomorphic Pneumatology,” as proposed by Crispin Fletcher-Louis, namely “wherever there are signs that an individual or community possesses specifically angelic characteristics or status, though for whom identity cannot be reduced to that of an angel.”<sup>99</sup> The virtue of this definition is that it signals the use of angelic *characteristics* in descriptions of God or humans, while not necessarily implying that the latter are angels *stricto sensu*.<sup>100</sup>

I submit that this new reading lens can help us overcome the two divergent readings of the passage about the “*primitivae virtutes*” in the *Adumbrationes* in 1 John 2:1. Granted the basic divergence between the number of the powers involved (two, for Zahn and Kretschmar; seven, for Lueken and Oeyen), there is much in the two exegeses that is only apparently in conflict. Zahn and his followers affirm that Clement is speaking about Christ and the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, Oeyen does not deny the Pneumatological content of passage: the seven first-created angels *are* the sevenfold Holy Spirit in archaic angelomorphic “disguise.”

The case for Clement’s Spirit Christology has direct bearing on the interpretation of the passage. This becomes clear if one reexamines Clement’s speculations on unity and diversity in light of the conclusions arrived at so far.

### 3.6. *A Final Look at Clement’s Speculations on Unity and Diversity*

How is the equation of the Paraclete with the *protocists* coherent with the identification between the Paraclete and the Logos, noted earlier? Briefly put, the solution resides in Clement’s view on the relation between unity and multiplicity: the one “Spirit,” the Logos, becomes multiform in the angelic “seven spirits.” Clement’s speculation on the interplay between the “Spirit” (the Logos) and the first created “spirits” has been discussed above. I find it necessary, however, to reintroduce the quotation from *Strom.* 5:6:35, together with a complementary fragment from *Adumbrationes*:

<sup>99</sup>) Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (WUNT 94; Tübingen 1997) 14–15.

<sup>100</sup>) It is important to caution against an anachronistic understanding of the terms “angel” or “spirit.” According to Daniélou (*Jewish Christianity*, 118), “the use of such terms in no way implies that Christ was by nature an angel. . . . The nature of this supernatural being is

The golden lamp conveys another enigma as a symbol of Christ... in his casting light, “at sundry times and diverse manners,” on those who believe in Him and hope and see by means of the ministry of the *protocists* (διὰ τῆς τῶν πρωτοκτίστων διακονίας). And they say that the seven eyes of the Lord are the seven spirits resting on the rod that springs from the root of Jesse;

*For the eyes of the Lord, he says, are upon the righteous, and His ears on their prayers: he means the manifold inspection (multiformem speculationem) of the Holy Spirit.*<sup>101</sup>

At first sight, it would seem that the passage turns an anthropomorphism of the Psalms (Ps. 33:16 [LXX], quoted in 1 Pet 3:12) into a reference to the Holy Spirit. Yet, the “inspection” of the Spirit is described as “manifold,” suggesting that Clement understands “the eyes of the Lord” to be not the two eyes of an anthropomorphic God, but rather the same seven “eyes of the Lord” discussed in *Strom.* 5:6:35, the *protocists*. On this reading, the use of Heb 1:1 (“God—more specifically, Christ, according to *Strom.* 5:6—spoke to the prophets and patriarchs *at sundry times and diverse manners*”) in both texts, and further down in the *Adumbrationes*, makes excellent sense: the inspiring Spirit of Old Testament revelation is identified with the Logos working through the *protocists* and the entire angelic hierarchy. Clement’s texts allow us to restate this idea using πνεῦμα as the reference point. Given that the theory of the one Logos *as* multiplicity perfectly parallels the relation between one Spirit and seven powers of the Spirit, and the repeated identification between Logos and Spirit, discussed earlier, it is legitimate to conclude that πνεῦμα is simultaneously one (*qua* Logos), and many (*qua* *protocists*).

On the one hand, there are in Clement’s writings numerous references to the “Holy Spirit.” On the other hand, a sophisticated and technical exegesis explains πνεῦμα in such traditional expressions as “Spirit of Christ” as designations for the angelic spirits. The question is whether we can still speak about Pneumatology at all. Does all of the above not confirm Ziebritzki’s conclusion that Clement did not have a concept of the Spirit as an individual substance, a distinct third hypostasis?<sup>102</sup>

Such a conclusion would be unfair to Clement. Aside from the fact that the seven *protocists* are described as “immutable” and as “heptad of the

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not determined by the expression but by the context. ‘Angel’ is the old-fashioned equivalent of ‘person.’”

<sup>101)</sup> *Strom.* 5:6:35; *Adumbrationes* in 1 Pet 2:3.

<sup>102)</sup> Ziebritzki *Heiliger Geist und Weltseele*, 123 (quoted above, in the introduction).

Spirit,” it is important to consider the following elements. First, many passages in Clement that contain angelomorphic Pneumatology center around the phenomenon of prophecy. The starting-point is, therefore, the claimed religious experience, and the *functional identity* of Christ, the Holy Spirit and the angel as grasped by this experience. Clement instantiates a larger phenomenon in early Christianity, namely a certain incongruence between the creedal level of theology and the theological account of the creed. Obviously, articulating a Trinitarian doctrine, in order to reflect a Trinitarian experience of God, took longer than the introduction of Trinitarian formulae. Second, Clement is ambiguous in his use of angelomorphic language. As has been pointed out with reference to his use of the *Excerpta, Eclogae, and Adumbrationes*, despite his abundant use of apocalyptic imagery inherited from older tradition (the Face of God, the seven highest angels performing their liturgy before the Face, the various levels of the angelic hierarchy, etc.), Clement’s project in fact “sabotages” these very elements, by a constant process of internalization and spiritualization.<sup>103</sup> A literal reading of the passages illustrating Clement’s *Engelpneumatologie* would be profoundly unfair to the Alexandrian master.

## Conclusions

It is possible at this point to conjugate the results of all previous sections. I begin by positing what seems to be the fundamental aspect of Clement’s cosmological and theological view: the hierarchically ordered cosmos, featuring several angelic ranks, a worldview inherited from older tradition (e.g., *Mart. Ascen. Isa.*, *2En.*, *EpApos*), and strikingly anticipating the *Corpus Dionysiacum*.

Clement refers to the utterly transcendent God whose “Face” is the Logos, and who manifests himself, in descending order, to the seven *proctists*, the archangels, the angels, finally the prophets, as highest representatives of the Church. There is little or no explicit mention of the Holy Spirit in this hierarchy. Moreover, when there is, the term “spirit” describes either the Son, or the angelic spirits. The interplay between the Logos as πνεῦμα and the angelic πνεύματα (or, for that matter, Logos as δύναμις and the angelic δυνάμεις) reflects Clement’s understanding of the interplay

<sup>103</sup> See in this respect Bucur, “The Other Clement: Cosmic Hierarchy,” 14–18.

between unity and multiplicity, more precisely his understanding unity *as* multiplicity (ὡς πάντα ἓν, *Strom.* 4:25:156).

A generation later, Origen was clearly aware of this theological tradition. In the seventh book of his *Commentary on Romans*, for instance, while discussing at length the possible meanings of πνεῦμα, Origen argued that the Holy Spirit was termed ἡγεμονικόν, *principalis* in Ps. 50:14 because “He holds dominion and sovereignty among the many holy spirits” (7.1). Indeed, the Holy Spirit is “the firstfruits of many spirits” by analogy with Christ, who is “the first born of all creation” (7.5).<sup>104</sup> Origen’s understanding of the Holy Spirit in relation to the angelic spirits is perhaps the following: “All spirits . . . are a part of the School of God’s Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the head Teacher, who oversees the spiritual growth and education of every human being. However, like schools in Origen’s day, the teachers are different from and inferior to the divine Spirit, but they assist in aspects of the Spirit’s work.”<sup>105</sup> Certainly, the *Shepherd of Hermas* and the *Testament of Reuben* are part of the background to Origen’s statements here.<sup>106</sup> The more important element, however, is to be located in the surviving fragments from Clement’s *Hypotyposes*, where an elaborated angelomorphic Pneumatology is embedded in the tradition of Bible exegesis to which Origen is the direct heir.<sup>107</sup>

Whether one chooses to say that for Clement the Holy Spirit is a plural entity consisting of the seven highest angels, or that the hypostasis of the Spirit is functionally absorbed and replaced by the *protoctists*, or, as I incline

<sup>104</sup> “quemque principalem spiritum propterea arbitror nominatum ut ostenderetur esse quidem multos spiritus sed in his principatum et dominationem hunc Spiritum Sanctum qui et principalis appellatur tenere” (7.1 [554]); “ut ille primogenitus dicitur omnis creaturae tali quadam ratione etiam multorum spirituum primitiae dicatur Spiritus Sanctus” (7.5 [574]). Numbers in square brackets indicate the pages in the critical edition: C. P. Hammond Bammel, *Der Römerbriefkommentar des Origenes: Kritische Ausgabe der Übersetzung Rufins* (Vetus Latina 34; Freiburg 1998). For a detailed analysis of Origen’s Pneumatology in the Romans commentary, see Maureen Beyer Moser, *Teacher of Holiness: The Holy Spirit in Origen’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Piscataway, N.J. 2005). For a discussion of the same passages, see Philip L. Tite, “The Holy Spirit’s Role in Origen’s Trinitarian System: A Comparison with Valentinian Pneumatology,” *Theoforum* 32 (2001) 149-151.

<sup>105</sup> Moser, *Teacher of Holiness*, 51.

<sup>106</sup> This is argued by Moser, *Teacher of Holiness*, 37-41; Bucur, “Rereading the *Shepherd’s* Christology.”

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Méhat, *Étude*, 521, n. 159: “les commentaires d’Origène, qui ont sans doutes utilisé les *Hypotyposes*, ont dû contribuer à les eclipser.”



to think, that it is represented in an angelomorphic manner, there is abundant proof to confirm the thesis proposed by Christian Oeyen in 1966. I have argued that the theological phenomenon under discussion would be more accurately described as “angelomorphic Pneumatology,” and that it occurs in a larger theological articulation, namely in tandem with binitarianism and Spirit Christology. Far from being an isolated oddity of Clement’s, this phenomenon occurs in other early Christian texts as well.<sup>108</sup>

In historical perspective, angelomorphic Pneumatology constitutes a significant phase in Christian reflection on the Holy Spirit. The use of Second Temple themes, such as the “angelic spirit” and the apocalyptic “angels of the Face,” as building blocks in the articulation of early Christian Pneumatology, illustrates the indebtedness of pre-Nicene theology to the categories inherited from Second Temple Judaism. This way of thinking and speaking about the Holy Spirit was still an option in the fourth century.<sup>109</sup> However, with the advent of the new theological paradigm in the wake of the Arian and Pneumatomachian controversies, angelomorphic Holy Spirit became highly problematic, and ultimately a theological liability.

Christian Oeyen’s *Engelpneumatologie bei Klemens von Alexandrien* must be credited not only for an important contribution to the study of early Christian Pneumatology, but also for insisting on the relevance of the often-neglected *Eclogae*, *Adumbrationes* and *Excerpta* for a more complete understanding of Clement’s theology. I can only hope that the pages above will follow suit in spurring scholarly interest in “the other Clement.”

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<sup>108)</sup> See, in this respect, Oeyen, “Die Lehre von den göttlichen Kräften bei Justin”; Bucur, “Rereading the *Shepherd’s* Christology.”

<sup>109)</sup> See the brief summary in Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford 2000) 122–123 (discussion) and n. 270 (patristic references).