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THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE IN CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

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Many attempts have been made to present a biography of Clement of Alexandria from the point of view of his life and works. Suffice it to refer to some of such studies and to highlight some fundamental aspects that pertain to the interest of the scope of our study. Although Clement of Alexandria has been called the father of speculative theology, later to be greatly developed by St Augustine and St. Thomas, the aim of our research work has been to elaborate the theory of knowledge that lies behind Clement's speculative thought. In a way, it could be said that we have aimed at grasping Clement's conception of knowledge, the asystematic or multisystematic nature of his writings notwithstanding.

From Clement's own account, there is no doubt that Platonism was his main philosophical formation and that he went in great quest for knowledge and studied under several Christian thinkers. The most esteemed of these, by Clement, is Pantaenus the founder of the Alexandrian school whom Clement later succeeded as the head of the school. About him Clement says: «When I came upon the last (he was the first in power), having traced him out concealed in Egypt, I found rest. He, the true, the Sicilian bee, gathering the spoil of the flowers, of the prophetic and apostolic meadow, engendered in the soul of his hearers a deathless element of knowledge».

In this regard, W. Wilson rightly affirms in his introductory note to the English translation that: «Titus Flavius Clemens, the illustrious head of the Catechetical School at Alexandria at the close of the second century, was originally a pagan philosopher. On embracing Christianity, he eagerly sought the instructions of its most eminent teachers; for this purpose traveling extensively over Greece, Italy, Egypt, Palestine and other regions of the East».

Among Clement's extant writings, the three major ones are the Protrepticus or The Exhortation to the Heathens, Paedagogus or The Instructor and Stromata or The Miscellanies. Of these three, the
Stromata is the most philosophical in content. Other works include Excerpt ex Theodoto, the Prophetic Eclogues, and Quis Dives Salvetur as well as fragments from the Hypotyposeis. Many of his others works have been lost. The issue of the relationship between his three major works, often referred to as a trilogy, has attracted a lot of attention and commentaries. Osborn has highlighted some aspects of Clement's style and thought with particular reference to the Stromata. He rightly observes that to get into Clement's thought is to get into a labyrinth of thought. His works show an asystematic presentation of ideas expressed in symbolic and enigmatic language.

Clement's thought is generally accepted as asystematic in view of the fact that he is not restricted to one previous philosophical system nor school. His eclectic approach to knowledge leads him to accept whatever has been well said by any philosophical school. As a consequence of this approach to knowledge, Jewish, Greek and Alexandrian speculative heritage are united and employed by Clement for the exposition of the Christian wisdom. Hence Clement's unpreparedness to limit himself to only one system of thought, reflects his recognition of the universal nature of truth. It also shows his eclectic approach to knowledge, his appreciation for the truth in each philosophical school and his conviction that no single system could exclusively explain all he had to say. Furthermore his use of symbolism, a persistent characteristic of Clement's thought, is an attempt to reflect the hidden complexity of the relationships between things and therefore between the ideas of our knowledge of them.

Although some studies have been carried out on Clement's thought from philosophical, theological, and patristic points of view, little has been done on the theory of knowledge behind Clement's whole thought: his concept of Knowledge and the approach to knowledge. Our research work is therefore a contribution in this direction. Taking into account the eclectic nature of Clement's thought, we have a special effort to marshal and systematize the relevant textual evidence for what would constitute Clement's gnoseological view and his theory of knowledge. Hence as much as possible our author has been allowed to speak for himself. Although Clement of Alexandria never produced a systematic work on gnoseology, one can grasp what would con-
stitute his theory of knowledge from the apparently unconnected parts and ideas of his works. To this end we have tried to give abundant references in connection with the topics discussed. This is clearly an advantage of this study.

In considering Clement’s approach to the problem of knowledge it would be a wrong impression to think that Clement was actually concerned with the elaboration of a theory of knowledge for its own sake or as a philosophical method. Clement never sat down to develop systematically a theory of knowledge as many of the modern and contemporary philosophers have tended to do thus giving rise to the different epistemology-centered philosophical systems. In these philosophical systems the theory of knowledge is the foundation for further development as is manifested by the different critiques of the human understanding as the starting point of any philosophical speculation.

The core of Clement’s originality and merit is intimately connected with his use of the Hellenic philosophical ideas to convey a harmonious synthesis of a true philosophy. This has been rightly expressed by E.F. Osborn when he affirms that, «to be introduced to Clement of Alexandria is to be asked a riddle. Here is a man whose thought is scattered and eclectic but whose answers to philosophical questions are illuminating and to the point. The answer to the riddle is that Clement is at once breaking up old systems and creating a new synthesis». Consequently in whatever may constitute Clement’s theory of knowledge it is no surprise that he employs notions and terminologies belonging to the philosophical schools before him. Hence many ideas taken from Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics and neo-Platonists are frequently to be found in Clement’s notion of knowledge as we are to see from the many references that Clement makes to these different philosophical systems.

At the core of Clement’s thought as a philosopher, as a Christian or as a gnostic, lies an authentic and original view of knowledge which is reflected in the expression of his ideas. As would be expected, references to his works would reflect both philosophical and theological aspects as well as aspects deriving from the cultural milieu in which Clement developed his thought. This fact is nothing rather than a consequence of the nature of
Clement’s thought. Hence the Christian truth is an essential element in his conception of knowledge, as expressed by his works.

In view of the aspects that we have highlighted so far in this prologue, our research work has involved the search for related ideas in reference to the theory of knowledge behind our author’s thought. This is better appreciated when it is borne in mind that Clement puts down in writing the ideas that come to his mind when they do and consequently related ideas are to be found scattered in different parts of his writings.

From the vast range of topics dealt with by Clement, we have focused on the most fundamental themes of his thought which most readily reflect his theory of knowledge and his approach to knowledge. These themes include: 1) Clement’s theory of the *Logos* as a metaphysical and a gnoseological principle. 2) The acts of the intellect in the process of knowledge. 3) The role of belief in the act of knowledge. 4) Contemplation. 5) Clement’s conception of wisdom.

Through the discussion of these topics we tried to present the constitutive ideas of Clement’s gnoseology with the aim of providing a better understanding of his theory of knowledge. We have also strived to see to what extent the fundamental aspects of the theory of knowledge of the main Greek thinkers later to be found in such great Christian thinkers as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas are already present in Clement of Alexandria.

The first chapter of our study deals with Clement’s idea of the Logos. According to Clement the *Logos* is a metaphysical and a gnoseological principle. The divine *Logos* is considered as the model of the human spiritual intellect possessed by all men as the ordinary faculty of knowledge. Clement also maintains that man counts with an additional principle of knowledge - the divine inspiration through the *Logos*. Thus natural intellectual apprehension as well as supernatural inspiration and revelation are indispensable elements in Clement’s theory of knowledge.

Furthermore chapter II will also deal with some essential aspects of Clement’s logic and his evaluation of the language-concepts-reality relationship. In this context Clement emphasizes the need for rigorous definition and distinguishes between demonstration, syllogism, analysis and rhetoric. He criticizes suspension of judgement and philosophical scepticism while he
upholds the utility of true dialectics. *Clement's theory of symbolism* will also be considered in this chapter. This would enable us to appreciate why he is of the view that reality is complex and so is our knowledge of it. Consequently the most sublime truths are not immediately apprehended by the intellect but being hidden they are grasped through symbols.

Clement attributes very important roles to the will and intellect in his conception of knowledge. Clement's conception of the voluntary nature of knowledge is seen in his theory of *pístis* in which he intends to develop a doctrine of belief. The general thesis is that (from the point of view of its cause) knowledge is a voluntary act and consequently one would not know if one does not will to know or if one is sceptical about all truth.

Chapter III, titled *Belief*, deals with Clement's theory of *pístis*. The aim is to see what role Clement attributes to the will in human knowledge and the corresponding priorities of the intellect and the will in this regard. Clement's theory of belief which is of Stoic origin has many incorporated Aristotelican and Christian elements of knowledge and truth. He considers knowledge as a voluntary act and the question has been put forward as to whether Clement could be accused of intellectual voluntarism.

In chapter IV Clement's notion of contemplation as intellectual vision and the object of contemplation are dealt with. He stresses the fact that intellectual and moral separation from matter are necessary for perfect contemplation. The idea of perfect knowledge as contemplation is treated by Clement in knowledge of God. The imperfect knowledge of God through the contemplation of the universe when perfected culminates in the direct contemplation of God, the most sublime object of knowledge.

One of the fundamental ideas that runs through Clement's conception of knowledge is that of analogy. This is very much linked with his notion of contemplation. Mirror imagery and the idea of reflection in contemplation form part of Clement's paradigm of knowledge.

Clement's notion of wisdom transcends mere natural human wisdom or practical knowledge. His concept of wisdom comprises philosophical, theological and the Christian *gnosis*. Wisdom ought
to lead to the possession of the eternal and unchangeable habit of contemplation which is at the same time operative on to complete perfection.

The last chapter deals with Clement’s conception of *wisdom* which comprises the knowledge of things both human and divine. Philosophical and Christian truths, *gnosis* and the ultimate direct contemplation of God are considered by Clement as a continuous and related gradation of wisdom. Among other topics, the discussion in this chapter will center on Clement’s notion of philosophy as a gnoseological instrument of divine Providence in history. As regards philosophical wisdom, Clement conception of philosophy as a divine gnoseological instrument in history is quite original. Clement’s concept of the true philosophy is unquestionably eclectic. At the core of Clement’s eclecticism is his view that truth is one and universal.

*Style of Quotations*

J.J. Sanguineti has already presented some aspects on the manuscripts, editions and translations of Clement’s works. We therefore only wish to give some additional information on the translations and editions of Clement’s works from the books consulted. (See the Appendix of the present study).

For quotations from the writings of Clement the texts used include:


The numbering in the Stählin-Früchtel text has been used to correlate the numbering in the quotations. The quotations from *Stromata* Bk. VIII are mainly from the English translation mentioned above owing to the impossibility of obtaining other editions.
Before going further to consider the topics that we have outlined above, we should mention the way in which the references to Clement’s works have been made.

*Prot.* VI, 67: refers to the *Protrepticus*, Chapter VI, paragraph 67 (Edizione Paoline).

References to the *Paedagogus* and to the *Stromata* comprise of four numbers. The first two roman numerals refer to the book and the corresponding chapter respectively.

*Paed.* I.VI, 36.6: refers to the *Paedagogus*, Book I, Chapter VI, paragraph 36.6 (Stählin-Früchtel divisions as presented in the Italian Translations mentioned above by Edizione Paoline)

*Str.* VII.XII, 71.3: refers to the *Stromata*, Book VII, Chapter XII, paragraph 71.3 (*Cfr.* the reference to the *Paedagogus*)

In the present excerptum we have limited ourselves to highlighting the main constitutive aspects of Clement’s theory of knowledge to be found especially in chapters II and III of the thesis, viz. the roles of the intellect and the will in our author’s theory of knowledge. Because of the limited scope of the present work we have therefore left out some parts of the above two chapters as well as prescinded completely of the contents of chapters I, IV and V of the main study. The aspects that have been left out are nevertheless necessary for a complete understanding of the theory of knowledge in Clement’s thought.

I wish to use this opportunity to thank all those who in one way or another have contributed to the accomplishment of this work. My special thanks to D. Juan José Sanguineti for his timely suggestions and advice during the elaboration of the thesis, as well as for his taking pains to read and correct the typescripts.

My gratitude to D. José Angel García Cuadrado, Josemaría Pastor and José María Valero for their technical assistance without which it would have been more arduous to complete this work.
NOTES


2. Clement’s thought represents an effort to give a philosophical vision of Christianity using the philosophical systems of his time.


4. Str. I.I, 11.2-3. The above passage hints at Pantaenus’ eclectic approach to knowledge which no doubt must have influenced Clement.


7. It is important to point out here that this good eclectic attitude found in Clement, is also characteristic of the great Christian thinkers as exemplified by St. Thomas Aquinas’ synthesis. Hence one of the motives for studying Clement’s gnoseological aspects.


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PLATO, *Episteme*. VII.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Paed.  Paedagogus.
Prot.  Proprepticus.
Str.   Stromata.
PCA.   Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria.
CQ.    Classical Quartrely.
CSCG.  Clement of Alexandria; A Study in Christian Platonism and
       Gnosticism.
Clem.  Clement.
Com.   Commentaries.
S.C.   Sources Chrétienes.
An approach to understanding the theory of knowledge embedded in Clement’s thought is a general consideration of his approach to the problem of human knowledge. To this end a search in Clement’s thought for his ideas on man’s capacity to acquire true knowledge of the reality, the roles of a sense perception, the intellect and the will in the act of knowledge would no doubt throw much light on his theory of knowledge. This would also show Clement as a realist philosopher, his platonic philosophical inclination notwithstanding.

I. THE ACTS OF THE INTELLECT AND ITS OBJECTS

In this section we wish to deal with some general considerations connected with Clement’s theory of knowledge. What is really Clement’s approach to the problem of knowledge? According to Clement can man acquire true knowledge of reality and how is this possible? What are the roles of sense perception, the intellect and the will in the act of knowledge? Answers to the above and other related questions will no doubt throw light on Clement’s theory of knowledge as well as show Clement as a realist philosopher, his platonic philosophical inclination notwithstanding. There are many Aristotelian elements of knowledge in our author’s gnoseological theory although Stoic influence is not lacking. In fact, it has been said that «Clement’s approach to the problem of knowledge is rather Aristotelian than Stoic»1. This is quite understandable when it is taken into account that Clement considers sensation as one of the pillars of truth2, and regards sense perception as prior to intellectual apprehension.
As we let Clement speak for himself, his theory of knowledge would gradually unfold, in answering the questions put forth above. It would be convenient first of all, to examine what notion of man Clement has and to see what roles he gives to the human cognitive faculties.

A. Cognitive Powers

1. Anthropological Aspects

According to Clement the study of gnosis is to be preceded by the study of nature. This idea is evidently expressed by Clement when he affirms in the opening chapter of *Stromata* Bk. IV that «The science of nature, then, or rather observation, as contained in the gnostic tradition according to the rule of the truth, depends on the discussion concerning cosmogony, ascending thence to the department of theology».

Similarly Clement says that in accordance with the deepest contemplation of the knowledge which proceeds from the creation of the world, to the renowned and venerable canon of tradition, the study of nature has to come first. Thus by «setting before us what according to natural contemplation necessarily has to be treated beforehand clearing off what stands in the way of this arrangements», we are better prepared for the reception of the tradition of perfect knowledge.

This way of proceeding as expressed in the above paragraph is transposed by Clement to his consideration of the nature of man and his rational faculties considering that the expression *know thyself*, for instance, «may be an injunction to the pursuit of knowledge», and affirming that «it is not possible to know the parts without the essence of the whole»; he explains that «one must study the genesis of the universe, that thereby we may be able to learn the nature of man».

Consequently Clement’s view of man is very much inspired in the Christian notion of man. «Is not man, then rightly said «to have been made in the image of God?» —not in form of his [corporeal] structure; (but inasmuch as God creates all things by the Word, ...) and the Gnostic performs good actions by the in-
tellect» 10. Clement sees this likeness to God in man's spiritual faculty. «For conformity with the image and likeness is not meant of the body (for it were wrong for what is mortal to be made like what is immortal), but in mind and reason on which fittingly the Lord impressed the seal of likeness, both in respect of doing good and of exercising rules» 11. However a strong Platonic influence that hints at a certain dualism in Clement's view of man, is not lacking. The effect of the latter is nevertheless mitigated by Clement's fidelity to the contents of Scripture, to which he always has recourse when in doubt.

Hence in Clement's view the possessor of perfect knowledge is «compelled to become like his Teacher, the divine Logos... For the Word of God is intellectual, according as the image of mind is seen in man alone» 12. Clement sees a certain similitude between divine nature and human nature.

In Clement's view of man what has he to say about the soul? It is true that Clement, speaking about the soul, considers it as a more precious thing than the body 13. On this subject Clement has recourse to Platonic psychology as well as to Scripture. Hence his affirmations that «souls, themselves are equal. Souls are neither male nor female, when they no longer marry nor are given in marriage» 14. This same idea leads Clement to affirm that the essence of the soul, being colourless, formless, and intangible, is visible only to God 15. Clement considers God the soul's guide. That man has a resemblance to God is an idea that is at the core of Clement's confidence in man's capability to know the created reality and the supernatural truths. With references to revelation and other Greek philosophers Clement clearly maintains this idea. «Far from destitute of a divine idea is man, who, it is written in Genesis, partook of inspiration, being endowed with a purer essence than the other animate creatures. Hence the Pythagoreans say that intellect comes to man by divine providence, as Plato and Aristotle avows» 16. J. Daniéelou has also pointed out this view among some of the Greek philosophers who considered that the soul was constituted by the ether of God 17.

Clement seems to commend the Platonic doctrine of the soul in saying that «the Platonists hold that intellect is an effluence of divine dispensation in the soul, and they place the soul in the body» 18.
As can be inferred from what has been said so far, Clement's anthropological view is very much inspired in the Christian doctrine of the divine element in man, the spiritual soul. Hence the sense of the supernatural is a recurrent aspect of Clement's theory of knowledge. From Platonism he is influenced by the doctrine of the world of immaterial forms and from Christianity by the indispensable role of the divine Logos in human knowledge.

There are however passages in Clement's reference to man which are not very clear. In Chapter sixteen of *Stromata* Bk. VI Clement presents a «Gnostic Exposition of the Decalogue» 19. In this allegoric exposition, Clement makes a symbolic interpretation of numbers, relating the number ten to man's faculties. «And there is a ten in man himself: the five senses, and the power of speech, and that of reproduction; and the eighth is the spiritual principle communicated at his creation, and the ninth the ruling faculty of the soul; and the tenth, there is the distinctive characteristic of the Holy Spirit, which comes to him through faith» 20. Similarly Clement considers that in addition to these ten human parts, «the law appears to give its injunctions to sight, and hearing, and smell, and touch, and taste, and to the organs subservient to these, which are double — the hands and the feet. For such is the formation of man» 21. However, ambiguity is not lacking in this view of man's faculties and this is seen specifically when Clement goes on to add, «And the soul is introduced, and previous to it the ruling faculty, by which we reason, not produced in procreation, so that without it there is made up the number ten, of the faculties by which all the activity of man is carried out» 22.

A similar ambiguity is seen in Clement's dichotomy or trichotomy of the soul and its functions. Among the distinctions made by Clement are to be found carnal or corporeal spirit, the ruling faculty and the faculty of reason.

Clement is of the opinion that the rational and ruling power is the cause of the constitution of the living creature and the irrational part is also part of it. Hence, «the vital force, in which is comprehended the power of nutrition and growth, and generally of motion, is assigned to the carnal spirit, which has great susceptibility of motion, and passes in all directions through the senses and the rest of the body, and through the body is the
primary subject of sensation» 23. This Platonic-Stoic anthropological doctrine of the trichotomy of the soul and its functions has also been pointed out by M. Spanneut 24.

It is not clear if Clement’s ruling faculty is the will or the intellect because he goes on to add: «But the power of choice, in which investigation, and study, and knowledge, reside, belongs to the ruling faculty: it is through it that man lives, and lives in a certain way» 25. There are good reasons to say that by ruling faculty Clement means the will. Nevertheless be it as it may, the important thing is that in Clement’s view the will and the intellect play an indispensable and mutual role in the act of knowledge.

In pointing out that man’s resemblance to God corresponds to the spiritual aspect of man and not to the material part, Clement distinguishes between man’s corporeal structure and the intellectual structure. For some, not so clear, reason in his gnostic Exposition of the Decalogue, he relates symbolically these two aspects of man to the two tablets of the Decalogue. «Properly therefore the two tablets are also said to mean the commandments that were given to the twofold spirits — those communicated before the law to that which was created, and to the ruling faculty; and the movements of the senses are both copied in the mind, and manifested in the activity which proceeds from the body» 26.

In conclusion it can be that Clement’s anthropological stand, in view of his theory of knowledge, takes into account all the essential elements in human nature: the soul and its rational faculties as well as the senses. According to Clement, therefore knowledge is possible thanks to man’s possession of the spirit infused at creation, the soul, the ruling faculty and the senses. «For apprehension results from both combined. Again, as sensation is related to the world of sense, so is thought to that of intellect» 27.

2. The Intellect

Clement attaches a special role to the intellect in his theory of knowledge. We would be considering this point in the present section and later the role of the will in the act of knowledge. At
the same time it would be interesting to know to which of the
two faculties Clement attributes priority in the act of
knowledge.

Clement is quite clear on the point that among the living
corporeal creatures only man possesses a spiritual soul with ra-
tional faculties and an intrinsic self-determination towards their
objects. As regards the movement of beings towards their objects,
he also affirms that some are moved by impulse and appearance,
as animals; and some by transposition, as inanimate objects.«But
the intellectual faculty being peculiar to the human soul
ought not to be impelled similarly with the irrational animals, but
ought to discriminate appearances, and not to be carried away by
them».

The intellect or spiritual faculty is thus a guiding faculty of
the soul thanks to its power of judging the truth of the apprehen-
sion acquired by the other faculties. This idea is evidently implied
by Clement, as for instance when he says: «Reason the governing
principle, remaining unmoved and guiding the soul, is called its
pilot».

However knowledge belongs properly speaking to the ruling
faculty and not to the senses although they both play an impor-
tant role. In this regard, «through the corporeal spirit, then, man
perceives, desires, rejoices, is angry, is nourished, grows. It is by
it, too, that thoughts and conceptions advance to actions. And
when it masters the desires, the ruling faculty reigns».

Although Clement attributes a certain kind of knowledge to
sense perception, he nevertheless is of the view that knowledge
properly speaking belongs to the spiritual faculties of man. Not
all reality is the direct object of the senses and consequently the
human intellectual faculty can apprehend realities which are
beyond the reach of the senses. This last aspect is clearer when
Clement speaks of knowledge of revealed truth and the knowledge
of God. Knowledge understood as the contemplation of reality
and of truth is a recurrent idea in Clement’s treatment of the
 gnosis. The fundamental role of the intellect is therefore the
contemplation of reality.

Admitting that the senses contribute to the acquisition of
knowledge, «...since also sight, and hearing, and the voice con-
tribute to truth», Clement firmly agrees with the Platonic doc-
trine that real knowledge is of the immutable and intelligible reality. Consequently, as regards truth, «it is the intellect which is the appropriate faculty for knowing it».

In keeping with the Platonic doctrine it is impossible that the immutable should assume firmness and consistency in the mutable. In view of this Clement considers that he who is perpetually changed by external occurrences and accidents, can never possess habit and disposition, and consequently cannot possess the grasp of scientific knowledge. Similarly if the ruling faculty were to be perpetually changing, and therefore mutable, the force of habit would not be maintained and consequently it would not possess true and unchanging knowledge.

By identifying the intellect as the proper faculty of knowledge, Clement makes quite an interesting and firm criticism of Empiricism. «For bound in this earthly body, we apprehend the objects of sense by means of the body; but we grasp intellectual objects by means of the logical faculty itself. But if one expects to apprehend all things by the senses, he has fallen far from the truth». Here we have another crucial point of Clement’s theory of knowledge: the senses contribute to the apprehension of the truth but not all truth is subject to sense perception. This idea is frequently applied by Clement when speaking about the knowledge of supernatural truth and the knowledge of God. «Spiritually, therefore, the apostle writes respecting the knowledge of God, «for now we see as through a glass, but then face to face».

According to Clement and in agreement with Plato, the objects of sense are not the only things that exist. «For great is the crowd that keep to the things of sense as if they were the only things in existence. «Cast your eyes round and see,» says Plato, «that none of the uninitiated listen.» Such are they who think that nothing else exists but what they can hold tight with their hands; but do not admit as in the department of existence, actions and processes of generation, and the whole of the unseen. For such are those who keep by the five senses. But the knowledge of God is a thing inaccessible to the ears and like organs of this kind of people».

As can be inferred from the above passage, Clement’s approach to knowledge is neither empiricist nor materialistic. It is quite likely that Clement is under the influence of the Platonic
doctrine of the world of ideas. On one hand, he uses it to justify why all principles of knowledge are not subject to the senses and on the other hand, to reaffirm the immaterial nature of the act of knowledge. This is certainly the case with his idea of belief as a principle of knowledge.

Accordingly Clement affirms: «But those who believe not as is to be expected, drag all down from heaven, and the region of the invisible, to earth, «absolutely grasping with their hands rocks and oaks,» according to Plato. For, clinging to all such things, they asseverate that, that alone exist which can be touched and handled, defining body and essence to be identical» 41.

Clement is evidently opposed to Stoic materialism as can be inferred from many passages 42. This criticism by Clement has also been pointed out by Casey 43. However the gift of understanding leads us from things of sense to intellectual objects and in fact to holy things 44.

As we can see so far, Clement maintains the classical scheme of knowledge whereby from sense perception, followed by abstraction, we attain intellectual apprehension. This idea is closely linked to Clement’s view of knowledge as contemplation and particularly so when he speaks of the knowledge of immaterial beings and of God 45.

Hence Clement’s affirmation that «Through reasoning, it is possible to attain an intuition of God, if one attempts without any of the senses, by reason, to reach that which each being is in itself; and does not quit the sphere of being», till, rising up to the things which transcend it, «he apprehends by the intellect itself that which is the good in itself, moving in the very confines of the world of thought, according to Plato» 46. Thus according to Clement the proper object of the intellect is not material.

Consequently Clement proposes that we ought to direct the visual faculty of the soul aright to discover, and to clear away obstacles to knowledge and gnostic perfection 47. Now this direction of the cognitive faculty implies intellectual abstraction, logical processes such as demonstration, dialectics and other related speculative operations. Before discussing these, attention should first of all be given to the aspect of sense experience in Clement’s theory of knowledge.
3. The Role of Sense Perception

What is really Clement’s evaluation of sense perception in his notion of knowledge? Can Clement be regarded as an idealist owing to his strong Platonic inclination or is he an empiricist? The present study calls for a determination of our author’s position as regards one of the central ideas of a realist gnoseology, viz. that intellectual knowledge proceeds from sense experience.

Clement no doubt attributes quite an important role to sense perception in his notion of knowledge in view of his confidence in the human capacity to know the truth about reality. That the first data of knowledge is sense perception is pointed out by Clement in several passages. The following passage from Clement may serve as an orientation to enable us to hear it from Clement himself. «For in order, straightaway on man's entering existence his life begins with sensations» ⁴⁸, and furthermore, «as sensation is related to the world of sense, so is thought to that of intellect» ⁴⁹. However Clement explains that «apprehension results from both combined» ⁵⁰.

The indispensable nature of sense data in human knowledge is clearly expressed by our author when he says, for instance: «Now, inasmuch as there are four things in which truth resides — sensation, understanding, knowledge, opinion — intellectual apprehension is first in the order of nature; but in our case, and in relation to ourselves, sensation is first, and from sensation and understanding the essence of knowledge is constituted; and evidence is common to understanding and sensation.» In Clement’s view evidence, this is a clear although not the only criterion of truth ⁵¹.

Hence the character of trustworthiness that Clement attributes to the truth of sense knowledge despite his agreement with Platonism in that true knowledge can only be of the immutable reality. In fact Clement does affirm that «...sensation is the ladder to knowledge» ⁵², since sense perception is of evident sensible reality. Consequently, Clement’s realistic approach to knowledge leads him to shun sensism and empiricism as well as any materialist approach to knowledge. He does not consider the truth of sense perception as absolute.
However Clement explains that the primary data of revealed truth is not attained through sense perception but through faith. Hence, «faith, advancing over the pathway of the objects of sense, leaves opinion behind, and speeds to things free of deception, and reposes in the truth» 53.

He is quite aware of the unstable and deceptive possibilities of sense knowledge. Thus Clement goes on to say that «knowledge is otherwise spoken of in a twofold sense: that, commonly so called, which appears in all men (similarly also comprehension and apprehension) universally, in the act of knowledge of individual objects; in which not only the rational powers, but equally the irrational, share, which I would never term knowledge, inasmuch as the apprehension of things through the senses comes naturally» 54.

The definition of knowledge in the above passage is among the three general definitions of knowledge given by Clement in the first chapter of Stromata Bk.VI. As it has rightly been observed, this particular definition is rejected by Clement on the basis that it is not completely an intellectual act 55. According to Osborn, Clement rejects it because it deals with sense-perceived objects and not solely with intellectual objects 56.

The other two definitions are Platonic 57 and peculiarly Christian 58 respectively. According to the first of the two definitions, «that which per excellence is termed knowledge is characterized by the intellect and reason, in the exercise of which we become real rational beings, applying purely to objects of thought, and resulting from the pure activity of the soul» 59.

The question remains as to whether Clement has only a negative view of sense perception or not. This does not seem to be the case for he does admit that «some questions demand the evidence of the senses, as if one were to ask whether fire be warm or snow white and some admonition and rebuke, as Aristotle says: as the question if you ought to honour your parents» 60. This idea is similarly expressed by Aristotle 61, Xenon 62 and is also to be found in Scripture (Cfr. Ex.20,12) in which Clement constantly seeks justification of the highest authority for his ideas. As if seeking more support Clement goes on to point out that «Theophrastus says that sensation is the root of faith for from
it the rudimentary principles tend to the reason that is in us, and the understanding».

Thus for Clement «sensation for objects of sense, reason for speech... and the mind for intellectual objects», constitute three fundamental elements of truth and therefore criteria for the judgement of knowledge.

According to Clement, therefore, the senses are to be developed by exercising them in order to aid the act of knowledge just as those who are occupied in instruction train the sensibility. Practice consequently will increase the sense appreciation which has knowledge for its end.

Nevertheless since knowledge is properly said of the immutable reality, «access to the immutable is obtained by a truly immutable means». Hence Clement’s affirmation that we receive «a firm persuasion of true perception, through the knowledge of things comprehended by the intellect». Similarly in reference to the human faculties and intellectual knowledge, Clement affirms that «there are body and soul, the five senses, speech, the power of reproduction, the intellect or the spiritual faculty or whatever you choose to call it. And we must in a word, ascending above all the others, stop at the intellect».

In conclusion it must be said Clement attaches an indispensable role to sense perception in human knowledge. It provides the first data of knowledge for the intellect thus serving as the ladder to intellectual apprehension. All human knowledge starts from some sense perception and advances by progressive abstraction from matter but always refers to reality.

4. Abstraction and Object of the Intellect

One of the central ideas that runs through Clement’s gnoseology, is that of the need for abstraction from matter and from the passions in order to acquire perfect knowledge. In his notion of abstraction there are mainly aspects of Stoic, Platonic, and Aristotelian doctrines, synthesized under the guidance of his Christian doctrine.

Moreover Clement’s concept of knowledge implies practical consequences in reference to the acquisition of a perfect moral life. «For he who neither employs his eyes in the exercise of
thought, nor draws from his other senses, but with pure intellect itself applies to the objects, practices the true philosophy. This is, then, the import of the silence of five years prescribed by Pythagoras, which he enjoined on his disciples; that abstracting themselves from the objects of sense, they may with the mind alone contemplate the Deity».

Hence Clement’s notion of abstraction extends not only to the intellectual faculty but to the knowing subject (man). His idea of abstraction therefore implies a general separation from matter in order to facilitate intellectual knowledge. Just as in the great mysteries, in which learning is abandoned for the contemplation and the immediate apprehension of reality, so also is purification and instruction necessary for perfect knowledge.

The most outstanding text, worth quoting in full, where Clement speaks about abstraction appears in Str. V.XI. «We shall understand the mode of purification by confession, and that of contemplation by analysis, advancing by analysis to the first notion, beginning with the properties that are underlying it; abstracting from the body its physical properties, taking away the dimension of depth, then that of breadth, and then that of length. For the point which remains is a unit, so to speak, having a position; from which if we abstract position, there is the conception of unity. If then, abstracting all that belongs to bodies and things called incorporeal...».

From this notion of abstraction it is evident that according to Clement just as for Aristotle the intellect through abstraction apprehends the intelligible aspects of particular things. Clement’s reference to the point in the above text corresponds to the Aristotelian definition of a point, and the description of abstraction can be found in the Platonic tradition.

Clement’s analysis begins with the unit of the sensible phenomenon abstracting from it all the physical attributes peculiar to its nature, including the dimensions. When position, the only attribute of the resulting geometric point, is abstracted, the last vestige of material content disappears. The result is an absolute simple unity.

In this regard R. P. Casey has rightly observed that for Clement, «Such a unity is achieved by the gnostic when in contemplation he has stripped his soul of all its material interests, abandoning sensation and acquiring that impassibility...».
Thus in Clement’s notion of abstraction, both the intellectual and moral aspects of knowledge are intimately linked. The category of ethics and knowledge come together, with the inclusion of the Stoic ideal of impassivity in Clement’s theory of knowledge. Accordingly, to the extent that one is free from the passions, to that extent is one apt to apprehend the higher forms of reality and consequently a more perfect knowledge.

Reference has been made to the fact that Clement’s notion of abstraction is a manifestation of the general tendency of the Alexandrian school to see the passions in a gnoseological context. This tendency implies that “indulging the flesh is a crime against one’s ability to know rather against some moral code.” Hence Clement affirms that as regards the knowledge of the divine, “many are the ditches of lust which impede us, and the pits of wrath and anger which must be over-leaped, and all the machinations we must avoid of those who plot against us, who would no longer see the knowledge of God through a glass.”

It can be said that, unlike in Aristotle, Clement’s notion of abstraction has a greater extension and places greater emphasis on separation from matter and from the passions in general. In Aristotle’s view, abstraction refers particularly to the intellectual separation and possession of the forms from sensible reality. Consequently in Clement’s view, separation from the sensible things, particularly from the body, is the only way to achieve the contemplation of the intelligible world which is the object of the intellect.

Hence the passage quoted by Clement in the opening paragraph of Str. IV.XXV, “Happy he who possesses the culture of knowledge... but contemplates the undecaying order of immortal nature, how and in what way and manner it subsists. To such the practice of base deeds attaches not.” The reason being that “the gnostic soul must be consecrated to the light, stripped of the integuments of matter, devoid of the frivolousness of the body and of all the passions, which are acquired through vain and lying opinions ...”. In this regard the divine Logos has a role to play. According to Clement, this role is “to lead man, the foster-child of this world, up to the objects of the intellect, and to the most essential truths by knowledge, from one world to another.”
Furthermore, quoting from Plato, Clement reaffirms the moral and gnoseological implications of his concept of abstraction. «Rightly then Plato says that the man who devotes himself to the contemplation of ideas will live as a god among men; now the intellect is the place of ideas, and God is intellect».

In view of the infinity of the individual, particular things, Clement like Aristotle maintains that the objects of the intellect may be classed under the Aristotelian Categories. «For these are capable of being contemplated by the intellect. (...) immaterial things are capable of being apprehended by the intellect alone, by primary application. And of those things that are classed under the ten Categories, some are predicated by themselves (as the nine categories), and others in relation to somethings.

Primarily speaking, therefore, the object of the intellect, —the thing apprehended by the intellect — is not matter, «for through the knowledge of things comprehended by the intellect» we receive a firm persuasion of true perception.

The objects of the intellect are therefore the intelligible realities of the things abstracted from the sensible reality to which they are related as the concepts. The intellect therefore possesses the forms of things and through these, it possesses the things immaterially. Similarly this idea of abstraction from sensible things is also implied in what Clement has to say about perception. Accordingly Clement says that perception is the knowledge of intellectual objects which are what the mind deals with. To this end, by the gift of understanding, one is led from the things of sense to intellectual objects and from these to holy things.

Consequently the most perfect object of the intellect is therefore the knowledge of God. According to Clement, therefore, all knowledge and true philosophy have as their ultimate goal the contemplation of God by the sole pure and incorporeal application of the intellect.

It is interesting to note the Platonic influence in Clement's notion of abstraction. There are numerous texts in which Clement speaks about the objects of the intellect using such terminology as: objects of thought, ideas, intellectual objects and world of thought. Thus it is to be concluded that Clement's notion of abstraction, although not very sophisticatedly developed, expresses the essential idea that the objects of the intellect are the im-
material forms of the sensible realities. These forms are obtained from the sensible things through intellectual abstraction and through them the intellect knows the infinity of particular things. Clement's operative notion of knowledge leads him to extend this idea to the abstraction from the passions in order to acquire perfect knowledge.

II. CLEMENT'S NOTION OF LOGIC

Clement's positive attitude to and appreciation for logic is evidenced by many passages of the *Stromata*. It must be pointed out that Clement attributes to the notion of Platonic dialectic the importance Aristotle attaches to logic. This would become clearer through the course of the discussion in this section. Thus Clement does not make drastic distinctions between logic and dialectic. He considers logic as necessary for the sake of rejecting the deceitful opinions of the Sophists. But, above all, it is necessary because knowledge is directed towards intellectual objects and results from the exercise of the rational powers.

Admitted Clement's appreciation of the importance of logical inquiry in the approach to knowledge, the question arises as to what is Clement's concept of logic. What essentially is logic according to our author?

Clement's discussion of logical concepts is to be found mainly in the *Stromata Bk. VIII*. These ideas are used by Clement in the rest of his works. He affirms that scientific knowledge is based on general and defined principles and not on particulars which are infinite. Hence like philosophical research which is occupied with conceptions and real things, logic also brings every subject being investigated under some universal principles of knowledge. In this way it determines or proves the truth of the point in question. Such is the classification of names according to the Categories which may apply to them in themselves or to their relationship with one another.

Accordingly, logic is the art of reasoning being necessary for the acquisition of both logical or speculative knowledge as well as spiritual knowledge. This positive attitude towards logic is closely
linked with Clement's conviction that human knowledge is necessary for the understanding of supernatural knowledge.

Before going on to discuss the logical terms expounded by Clement, it is important to underline the fact that according to Clement, for comprehensive scientific knowledge there must exist the right relationship between language, concept and the reality expressed by the language. Logic thus helps to identify what type of relationship there is in a proposition and consequently to what extent it is true.

A. Language-Concepts-Reality

It is generally agreed that the contents of Str. BK.VIII, belong to the field of logic, notwithstanding the controversies as to whether this book properly belongs to the Stromata or not. The contents however are noted down by Clement. Osborn has rightly pointed out that: "These extracts show that Clement was interested in logic as an independent discipline. They also show the problems which he considered important." The contents of this book are used by Clement in different parts throughout the other books of the Stromata. Consequently the contents of Stromata. BK. VIII "provide evidence of the kind of logic which Clement practised".

Through highlighting the main points of Str. VIII, we intend to shed some light on Clement's concept of logic. The main ideas discussed are the following: the object of philosophical and theological inquiry, the necessity of perspicuous definition, the notions of demonstration and definition, suspense of judgement, as well as the causes of doubt or assent, and language.

In the eighth chapter of the eighth book of the Stromata, Clement deals with the distinction between names, concepts and things. The use of Aristotelian terminology, the realist distinction between the three elements of knowledge mentioned above (names, concepts and things) and the discussion on the ten categories shows the Aristotelian inclination of Clement's logic. This will become even more evident in the following discussion.

The opening paragraphs of Str.VIII.VIII are very indicative of Clement's notion of knowledge and truth, and of language as
an expression of knowledge and truth. For instance according to Clement: «In language there are three things: Names which are primarily the symbols of concepts and by consequence also of subject. Second, concepts, which are the likeness and impressions of the subjects. Hence in all the concepts are the same; in consequence of the same impression being produced by the subjects in all. But the names are not so, on account of the difference of languages. And thirdly the subject-matters by which the concepts are impressed in us».

It is interesting to note the different classification of names and things given by Clement in the second half of this chapter. He considers for instance univocal terms, as for example animal, applied to both man and ox, because of their possession of an animate essence. Different names applied to the same thing are termed heteronyms whereas applied to different things they are different. Whereas heteronyms relate to the same subject under several names, as for example ascent and descent, names that are considered different do not possess the same subject.

Some things have the same definition but different names and such names are termed polynyms. Such is the case of the names of the same object in different languages. Other things have different definitions but the same name and such names are termed paronyms. To these Clement also adds the equivocal term, which is the name applied to things of differing definitions. Mention is also made of analogical terms.

From the above consideration of Clement’s analysis of the possible classification of names and things an aspect of his logic can be glimpsed at. It can be inferred that Clement strongly holds the view that for there to be logical truth, the terms employed must really express the reality they signify (Cfr. section below on definition). Furthermore, since the names have their ultimate foundation in the reality they are meant to refer to, Clement points out that a logical truth is scientific in the measure in which it corresponds to the reality signified by it.

As has been seen above, according to Clement, knowledge is, properly speaking, proper of the rational powers and therefore characterised by judgement and reason. These rational powers are therefore directed to mental objects or concepts which have their foundation in reality. The adequate relationship between reality,
concept and language is thus necessary for them to be true knowledge. Hence Clement’s affirmation of the importance of the logical inquiry in which the rational faculties act in a reasoning process. In this way knowledge attains truth by logical procedure, classifying things and concepts by reference to a system of thought and its conformity to external reality.

Thus the truth of an expression or proposition depends on the meaning of the concept and in the ultimate analysis on the object it signifies. Normally the same reality produces the same impression in all. But, as he rightly points out, the names to express the same concept are not the same on account of the diversity of languages.

B. Demonstration

This aspect of logic is one of the most important terms discussed by Clement in Str. BK.VIII and, in fact, it appears at the beginning of the book. For Clement the idea of demonstration is at the core of his account of gnoseology. The similarity between Clement’s and Aristotle’s accounts of demonstration as discourse has also been pointed out by Osborn. According to him, Clement’s account, «is derived mainly from Aristotelian sources».

What, is demonstration according to Clement? «Demonstration is discourse, agreeable to reason, producing belief in points disputed, from points admitted» (Str.VIII.III p.559a). It is interesting to note that according to Clement there must be some points of agreement for a demonstrative discourse to be possible. «In strict propriety, then, that is called demonstration which produces in the souls of learners scientific (knowledge) belief». Such scientific belief is in actual fact not mere opinion but certain, scientific, knowledge.

Clement’s notion of demonstration has all the essential elements of classical scientific demonstration. It is maintained that for any scientific demonstration, the premises or initial assumptions must be true in order for there to be a conclusion and not just a mere opinion. Hence, «in every trend of reasoning, the point sought to be determined is the end, which is called the conclusion».
demonstration, syllogism and analysis. The distinguishing characteristic being that true demonstration is only possible if the premises correspond to, and truly express, the reality of the matter in question. Otherwise, one is dealing with mere syllogism.

«So that there is a compound advantage of demonstration: from its assuming, for the proof of points in question, true premises, and from its drawing the conclusion that follows from them. If the first have no existence, but the second follow from the first, one has not demonstrated, but syllogised. For, to draw the proper conclusion from the premises, is merely to syllogise. But to have also each of the premises true, is not merely to have syllogised but also to have demonstrated» 104. Thus demonstration implies syllogism but not vice versa since to draw the right inference from the what is admitted is to syllogise, whereas to draw the right conclusion from what is true is to demonstrate.

Clement distinguishes between primary and secondary demonstrations. The first has to do with drawing conclusions from what is evident. He therefore maintains that «in the case of all conclusions alleged to be found out, demonstration is applied in common, which is discourse, establishing one thing from another» 105, the starting point been known and admitted. «And the foundation of all these is what is evident to sense and to the intellect. Accordingly the primary demonstration is composed of all these» 106.

Secondary demonstration refers to conclusions from truths not immediately evident. In comparison to the first, Clement says: «But the demonstration which, from the points already demonstrated thereby, concludes some other point, is no less reliable than the former. It cannot be termed primary, because the conclusion is not drawn from primary principles as premises» 107.

Clement rejects successive acts of demonstration ad infinitum. He rightly admits that not all things require demonstration. Certain things are evident and require no demonstration in order to prove the knowledge of them. On the other hand if all things required demonstration, then by demanding the demonstration of each demonstration, the process would go on ad infinitum — leading to the subversion of scientific knowledge 108.

Clement has recourse to the philosophers in whom he finds a reaffirmation of this view. This is clearly seen in the following
passage: «In point of fact, the philosophers admit that the first principles of all things are indemonstrable. So that if there is demonstration at all, there is an absolute necessity that there be something that is self-evident, which is called primary and indemonstrable». Three things are considered by Clement as fundamental grounds of demonstration. These are: things that are evident to the senses, those evident to the intellect, and Scripture. These three are therefore primary, indemonstrable and are the starting points of demonstration.

According to Clement, «the phenomena of sensation are simple and incapable of being decompounded; but those of understanding are simple, rational and primary. But those produced from them are compound but no less clear and reliable and having more to do with the reasoning faculty than the first». Hence the phenomena produced from understanding have to do with the reasoning faculty which deals with agreement or disagreement between the points understood and the reality of the points in question. The logical process therefore belongs, properly speaking, to the reasoning faculty.

As a consequence of his view of the mutual relationship between natural speculative knowledge and the supernatural revealed knowledge, Clement also maintains that «all demonstration is traced up to indemonstrable faith». Thus since demonstration starts with axioms, Clement, with a certain ingenuity, equates faith to axiomatic truth. In this way the content of Scripture is regarded as one of the first indemonstrable principles of perfect knowledge or gnosis. To this end, perfect knowledge also counts with the help of the data of divine revelation.

Furthermore, it is of the very essence of questions subject to demonstration that there must be a previously known truth, «which being self-evident is believed without demonstration». This serves as the starting point in their investigation. Accordingly, Clement points out that if one starts from things that are evident to the senses or to the understanding and draws the proper conclusion, one truly demonstrates. But starting with premises which are only probable and are neither primary nor evident to the senses and the understanding, one cannot demonstrate. Drawing the proper inference in such cases would only mean to syllogise.
Now, as regards Analysis, Clement says it is the reverse of demonstration. Starting from the conclusion, it follows a trend of reasoning that goes back to the points that are self-evident. But demonstration is when the point in question reaches us through all the intermediate steps 114.

Clement's realist view of the essence of knowledge can further be inferred from his idea of the steps that should be taken into account in a logical process. In the first place, there must be a universally admitted definition of the question. Secondly, the premises must be true, different, relevant and related to the question proposed. Thirdly, the right conclusion must be drawn from the available data. Consequently, «the man, then who practices demonstration, ought to give great attention to the truth, while he regards the terms of the premises, whether you call them axioms, or premises, or assumptions» 115 VIII.III (p.560a). From the foregoing, it is obvious that Clement's notion of demonstration contains the essential elements of the Aristotelian concept of demonstration. For instance, Clement affirms the necessity of first indemonstrable principles, the presence of at least two true and different premises, logical syllogism and the right conclusion. In expounding how Clement articulates these essential elements, it has been possible to have another glimpse at our author's positive and realist approach to knowledge.

Thus in Clement's gnoseological theory, the extramental reality is always the touchstone of man's knowledge. This fact, together with his positive attitude to knowledge, also shows that his logic is not founded on pure mental constructions. This becomes even more evident after discussing his concepts of definition and scepticism.

C. Rigorous Definition

In chapter II of Str.VIII, Clement outlines the need for a perspicious definition in logical knowledge. «Every term therefore, advanced for discussion, is to be converted to an expression that is admitted by those that are parties in the discussion to form the starting point for instruction, to lead the way to the discovery of the points under investigation» 116. According to Clement, therefo-
re, a rigorous definition prevents ambiguity and consolidates pre-existing knowledge which serves as the starting point of scientific knowledge. In solving a problem by demonstration, a clear definition of the terms must be understood.

Clement points out that in order not to go on ad infinitum in a demonstrative process or proof it is necessary for the parties concerned to understand the same thing by the same concept. «One, therefore, will give the definition of whatever he possesses the knowledge of; as one can by no means be acquainted with that which he cannot embrace and define in speech. And in consequence of the ignorance of the definitions, the result is that many disputes and deceptions arise» 117. To this end, the discourse would have to be carried back to a more generally admitted fundamental principle or concept in case of dispute. This is the case, for instance, of reducing the term in question to a concept that is universally understood by all of the same nation and language.

Hence Clement’s affirmation that «if the belief of a point that is not admitted be carried back to one admitted by all, that is to be made the commencement of instruction» 118. Such universal admission is based on the fact that the same concept is possessed from the apprehension of the same reality.

Clement admits that man’s expression of his knowledge depends on the way he knows. His imperfect knowledge is also reflected in the imperfect expression of such knowledge. Man’s knowledge of a thing does not exhaust the reality of the thing in question. Definitions therefore serve to express the precise extension of the knowledge possessed about the object known.

Accordingly, Clement maintains that our «pre-existing knowledge of each object of investigation is sometimes merely of the essence, while its functions are unknown... or of the properties or powers, in other words of the qualities inherent in the objects. And some times we may know one or more of those powers or properties—as for example the desires and affections of the soul— and be ignorant of the essence» 119. Similarly even when we know the essence and the operations we may be ignorant of the modifications 120. Hence the more reason for a rigorous definition in the expression of scientific knowledge.
Clement points out that, in view of all these, it is necessary to specify to which of the aspects of an object our propositions refer, «for it is after forming conceptions of both —that is, both of essence and operations— in our intellect, that we proceed to the question» 121. It is our author’s view that the form of expression of a certain concept may deceive, confuse and disturb the mind, making it difficult to discover to what category the thing belongs; «as for example whether the foetus is an animal» 122. A clear definition precisely prevents ambiguity. «For, having the concept of an animal and a foetus, we inquire if it be the case that a foetus be an animal» 123.

In view of all this Clement presents some practical aspects. Therefore, a question must be stated in a clear and precise manner; equivocal and synonymous terms being accurately defined according to their significations. It is then to be determined if the proposition belongs to those points, considered in themselves or in relation to others, in view of what and why a thing is. A rigorous definition no doubt serves to solve these questions. «And to the consideration of these points, the knowledge of Particulars and Universals, and the Antecedents and the Differences and their divisions contribute» 124.

With references to Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics in Str. VIII.IV, Clement goes on to illustrate the importance of perspicuous definition using their definition of animal. «For Plato calls plants animals, as partaking of the third species of life alone, that of appetency. But Aristotle, while he thinks that plants are possessed of a life of vegetation and nutrition, does not consider it proper to call them animals; for that alone which possesses the other life —that of sensation— he considers warrantable to be called an animal. The Stoics do not call the power of vegetation, life» 125.

The right definition of an animal must therefore include the fact that it is a being that is nourished and grows as well as possesses sensation or movement by impulse. Consequently, he who admits the Aristotelian definition of an animal as an animate sentient being must also affirm that a foetus is an animal.

As regards the three elements of knowledge viz. the thing, its concept, and the words that express it, although related, Clement does point out their difference in nature. This is quite evi-
dent from this rather humorous passage: «Now if you are shuffling about names, it is plain to everybody that the name, foetus is neither an animal nor a plant, but a name, and a sound, and a body, and a being and anything and every thing rather than an animal. And if it is this that you have propounded, you are answered» 126. The foetus is a material being in itself whereas the concept and the word foetus, in themselves are incorporeal. But as Clement rightfully points out, the real foundation of all these is what is evident to the senses and to the intellect 127, which are likewise the foundation of scientific demonstration.

The importance of definition is further inferred from the sixth chapter of Str. BK. VIII. With reference to induction, division and definition, Clement maintains that induction aims at generalization and definition, whereas division aims at species, particular differences and demonstration. The result of the whole leads to scientific knowledge and the truth. Hence, «induction, accordingly shows not what a thing is but that it is, or is not. Division shows what it is; and, like Division, definition expresses the essence and what a thing is, but not if it is. Demonstration explains the three points, if it is, what it is and why it is» 128. Understood in this way demonstration is equivalent to complete knowledge. It is pertinent to point out that all these points are clearly Aristotelian.

Clement's account of definition and series of successive divisions involved is impregnated with Aristotelian terminology and influence. For instance, Clement explains that the definition of man is reached by the successive division of the genus animal into its component or compound species until the simple species which consists of man is reached. This process of analysis is then followed by synthesis. Thus, «selecting from the species, apprehended by division, those next to man, and combining them into one formula, we state the definition of man, who is a an animal, mortal, terrestrial, walking, rational» 129.

In view of this concept of definition as expounded by Clement, only division of the genus into species is approved. Other forms of divisions such as division into parts, magnitudes, accidents are rejected. Similarly, it is maintained that in the large definitions of things the number of the species that are discovered are the ten categories. Hence Clement's view that by taking the
principal points of the simplest species, the essence and the nature of the thing is defined. For each of the species is either an essence (corporeal or incorporeal) or one of the other nine categories\(^{130}\) VIII.VI (p.563b), where Clement says, «For each of the species is either an essence; as when we say some substances are corporeal and some incorporeal; or how much or what relation, or where, or when, or doing, or suffering». This is, no doubt, very similar to the Aristotelian doctrine.

Futhermore Clement affirms that «in definition, difference is assumed, which in the definition, occupies the place of sign. The faculty of laughing, accordingly, being added to the definition of man, makes the whole — a rational, mortal terrestrial walking, laughing animal»\(^{131}\). The genus is thus in the species and whatever is predicated of the genus will be all predicated of the species but not vice versa. In all definition therefore, the first genus of the simplest species must assume the specific difference as principal and fundamental\(^{132}\) Str.VIII.VI (p.563b).

From Clement’s account of definition it must be concluded that his account reflects a profound influence from Aristotelian doctrine and terminology — directly derived or otherwise. A definition therefore expounds the essence of a thing, for instance man as: a rational, laughing animal. It is however incapable of accurately comprehending the complete nature of the thing. For a scientific definition it is necessary to divide the genus into at least two essentially necessary species for the sake of brevity. By means of uniting the principal species a definition exposes the essence of a thing in the qualities expressed.

D. Judgement and Philosophical Scepticism

Clement’s criticism of philosophical scepticism in the fifth and seventh chapters of Stromata Bk.VIII is basically an application of his notion of definition. The sceptical suspense refuted by Clement is not the mere habit of unbelief that may arise from the lack of knowledge or complete understanding. Clement’s target is the \textit{a priori} methodical philosophical scepticism in which the first principle assumed is that of the inknowability of truth. This is evidently a critique of the Cartesian posture of knowledge which
proposes methodical doubt as a principle of knowledge. The refutation affirmed and presented by Clement is from the Stoic tradition in which the main thesis is that, if nothing is certain, then it cannot be certain *that nothing is certain*.

In particular the scepticism in question is Pyrrhonian scepticism. Accordingly, «Suppose the Pyrrhonian suspense of judgment, as they say, [the idea] that nothing is certain: it is plain that beginning with itself, it first invalidates itself».

As Clement points out, three things can be inferred from the affirmation of such a thesis. In the first place, it is granted that something is true. Secondly, such an affirmation already means that judgement cannot be suspended on all things. Finally, it is persistently affirmed that there is nothing true. There is evidently a contradiction because it either affirms the truth or it does not.

Now if the sceptical proposition that nothing is certain affirms the truth, then it must admit that something is true — at least its thesis. If, on the other hand, it is false, then it leaves true what it intended to demolish. «For, in so far as the scepticism which demolishes is proved false,... the positions which are being demolished are proved true; like the dream which says that all dreams are false. For in confuting itself, it is confirmatory of the others».

To this end it must be said that the philosophical sceptical proposition is a self-defeating affirmation and can neither be a philosophical principle nor a logical principle.

At the core of Clement’s refutation of philosophical scepticism is his defense of the knowability of truth and of extrametal reality. Such truth is discovered by the rational faculties when man applies himself to the loving search of truth in itself through scientific investigation. In this regard, Clement points out that all that is true in Greek philosophy and in true philosophy is a clear manifestation of the fact that truth is knowable. It may be God given or obtained through the efforts of human investigation. Hence the mutual relationship that Clement maintains as existing between the best Greek philosophy and Scripture as sources of knowledge.

One clear point that can be inferred from the foregoing is Clement’s rejection of philosophical scepticism, his affirmation of the knowability of truth and his proposition of philosophy and
Scripture as complementary sources of knowledge. This is quite evident from the opening passage of the eighth book of the *Stromata* where he points out that the object of philosophical and theological inquiry is the discovery of truth.\(^{136}\)

According to Clement, the most ancient philosophers were not carried away to disputing and doubting, much less are the Christians, who are attached to the really true philosophy, and on whom Scripture enjoins to seek and to investigate in order to find. «Accordingly, by investigation, the point proposed for inquiry and the answer knocks at the door of truth according to what appears. And, on an opening being made through the obstacle in the process of investigation, there results scientific contemplation. To those who thus knock, according to my view, the subject under investigation is opened» \(^{137}\).

On the other hand, it is the most recent of Hellenic philosophers who, Clement says, quibble incessantly and argue to no purpose except for self glorification. The barbarian philosophy, on the contrary, rejects all useless babbling in refuting and wrangling; expelling all contention. It affirms that if one seeks one would find, it shall be opened and it shall be given to the one who asks. Consequently, «when one knocks at the door of truth by logical inquiry, the barrier to knowledge is removed» \(^{138}\). This indispensible role of intellectual effort in order to acquire knowledge is very indicative of Clement’s own practical experience and objectivity in the acquisition of knowledge.

Thus, in the same way as by searching, examining, analysing, unfolding, questioning and clarifying we find what was hidden, so also do we, conscious of our ignorance, attain knowledge when we inquire fully in a similar way.

Clement’s approach to the problem of knowledge is a completely positive one and a far cry from philosophical scepticism. It very much conforms to the normal human knowing experience. In his optimistic view he maintains that it is impossible to have gone through the whole investigation without receiving as a prize the knowledge of the point in question.

Such is the irreconcilable position of philosophical scepticism that Clement rightly maintains that, drawn by the desire to discover the truth, we have to seek thoughtfully all the sources of knowledge, be they human or divine: «for it is incumbent, in ap-
plying ourselves not only to the divine Scriptures, but also to com-
mon notions, to institute investigations, the discovery ceasing at
some useful end» 139.

Admitted the inacceptability of philosophical skepticism,
Clement's criticism does not intend to maintain the knowability
of all truth by the human intellect. Granted that the truth is
knowable, it is also granted that the human rational faculty is
limited, and consequently doubts, errors and corrections can and
do arise. Now by the very act of trying to correct erroneous
knowledge or to establish the doubt respecting it, it is granted
that the truth is knowable.

Hence according to Clement, in leaning towards logical con-
ceptions which have consistency with one another and with
phenomena, there may be a certain suspension of judgement. Con-
ception is here understood as a state of and an assent of the mind
to the apprehended truth 140 VIII.V (p.562b).

Such a suspension of judgement, more than a principle of
knowledge, is actually a doubt on the adequacy of the coherence
between the elements of knowledge. These elements include the
phenomena, the concepts thus obtained and the assent of the
mind to the coherence between them.

In this regard, «not merely sceptics, but everyone who
dogmatizes is accustomed in certain things to suspend his judge-
ment, either through want of strength of mind or want of
clearness in the things, or equal force in the reasons» 141. Clement
therefore identifies two causes of scepticism: the nature of the
human mind and the nature of the external world that confronts
it. The former refers to the instability of the human mind and
the latter refers to the mutability, the discrepancy and the com-
plexity of sensible reality.

He finds justification in the fact of the existence of the
many tribunals and councils as well as the libraries full of books
and compilations of treaties of differing dogmas, each claiming to
know the truth. All these he sees as signs of a mind in doubt and
not the evidence of philosophical scepticism.

Such a mind halts its judgement through feebleness, on ac-
count of conflicting matters, and not out of essence because the
mind is naturally open to all truth. «For being unable either to
believe in all views, on account of their conflicting nature; or to
disbelieve all, because that which says that all are untrustworthy is included in the number of those that are so; or to believe some and to disbelieve others on account of the equipoise, we are led to scepticism* VIII.VII (p.564a).

Thus Clement rejects philosophical scepticism and the suspension of judgement as principles of knowledge. He admits the possibility of doubt on the basis of the incoherence between propositions and the reality apprehended by the intellect. In Clement we can already find the idea that the truth is the coherence between the human intellect and reality; an idea later to be developed by St. Thomas Aquinas. Nevertheless it is the limitation of the human mind the Clement considers the cause of logical scepticism, and not the nature of things.

E. Dialectic

It has been rightly pointed out that Clement’s account of dialectic shows how in his view logical procedure is not merely a technique for the protection of truth but an important part of knowledge. In fact it is speculative gymnastics as it is to be found in the different philosophical schools. Now what is really dialectics according to Clement and what is its role in the cognitive act? Does Clement consider dialectics of any gnoseological value?

Among the definitions of dialectics given by Clement the following can be regarded as summarizing the essential aspects of his notion of dialectic. As in many other parts of his works where references are made to Plato, the same occurs here in Clement’s discussion of dialectics. This is the case when Clement says for instance that «according to Plato in The Statesman, dialectics is a science devoted to the discovery and explanation of real things».

As has been pointed by G. Pini, for Clement dialectic is something much more than what is expressed by the Platonic notion. «He abandons the term logoi« with the human reason» and thus Christianizes the resulting Platonic dialectic, from a method of intellectual ascent towards the first reality, into the way leading to God by gradation (physical world, celestial powers, etc.)».
According to Clement, therefore: «The true dialectic, being philosophy mixed with truth, by examining things, and testing forces and powers, gradually ascends in relation to the most excellent essence of all and essays to go beyond to the God of the universe, professing not the knowledge of mortal affairs, but the science of things divine and heavenly; in accordance with which follows a suitable course of practice with respect to words and deeds, even in human affairs. Rightly, therefore, Scripture, in its desire to make us such dialecticians, exhorts us: «Be ye skillful money changers», «rejecting some things, but returning what is good».

Clement's dialectics is an act of the intellectual faculty that by discerning the true and the false ascends to the most excellent essence of all reality in accordance with the science of things human and divine which is the true gnosis. Consequently true dialectic is considered to be the science which analyses the objects of thought, and shows abstractly and by itself the individual substratum of beings, or the power of dividing things into genera, which descends to their most special properties, and presents each individual object to be contemplated simply such as it is. Similarly dialectics, which Clement considers as a function of the intellect, is regarded as the logical discussion of intellectual subjects, with selection and assent. This intellectual act establishes by demonstration, allegations respecting truth, and demolishes the doubts brought forward.

Clement as well as Plato upholds the immutable nature of the object of truth and consequently considers the inconsistency and inability of a definition to stand up to the objections brought forward, sufficient to disqualify it. Hence the «examining» and «testing» mentioned in the above definition are among the most important elements of dialectics from a practical point of view. Osborn has rightly pointed out that «this testing has sometimes been regarded as the whole of dialectic. It is displayed elaborately in the Parmenides and became very popular with middle and neo-Platonists. It is linked with analysis in the Republic».

Nevertheless Clement's originality in this regard is that in reference to the true dialectic and the true philosophy, consistency is not enough. The truth with which Clement is concerned is ultimate, essential, Christian truth. He was certainly aware of the
many systems of dialectics of his day leading to different first principles. In his view, to determine a system, its first principle must be fixed. This unshakeable first principle he found in the Christian truth.

Furthermore, Clement’s realist notion of dialectics is clearly manifested in another definition he gives: «For this true dialectic is the science which analyses the objects of thought, and shows abstractly and by itself the individual substratum of existences, or the power of dividing things into genera, which descends to their most special properties, and presents each individual object to be contemplated simply such as it is. Wherefore, the true dialectic, «conducts to the true wisdom, which is the divine power which deals with the knowledge of entities as entities, which grasps what is perfect, and is freed from all passions; not without the Saviour, who withdraws by the divine word, the gloom of ignorance arising from evil training, which has overspread the eye of the soul and has given us the best faculty of all «that we may know well whether we are dealing with man or God» 151. True dialectics is therefore intimately linked to true wisdom 152.

Just as in Plato 153, dialectics is conceived by Clement as a rational process that has nothing to do with sense perception or experience. Rather, it concentrates on the hierarchical essences of things. Thus for Clement, the «powers» play the role that forms play for Plato. Through such dialectics the soul ascends to the forms as well as discerns the right relationship of one form with the others thus defining the essence of each particular thing. In this way dialectics shows clearly the substance of each real thing 154.

Clement’s notion of dialectics is far removed from sophistry which he strongly criticizes in many passages of the Stromata. To this end, and in agreement with Plato in The Statesman he affirms that dialectics is to be acquired by the wise man, not for the sake of saying or doing what the dialecticians who occupy themselves in sophistry do, but to be able to say and do, as far as possible, what is pleasing to God 155. Once more we can appreciate the very close relationship between knowledge and moral perfection in Clement’s theory of knowledge.

As has already been hinted above, Clement shows appreciation for dialectic. Of what use then is dialectics in Clement’s
view? According to Clement dialectic develops argumentative skill which prevents one from succumbing to falsehood and to heresies as well as guard against sophism. Hence Clement maintains that «The dialectic in vogue in the schools on the other hand, is the exercise of a philosophy in matters of opinion, for the sake of the faculty of disputation. But truth is not in these at all» 156.

Although Clement engages in polemics against the Sophists (Cfr. Str. I.III, 22-24), his condemnation of their dialectic is not total. The true dialectic is useful to the philosopher, to the Christian as well as to the gnostic. Hence Clement points out that it serves to distinguish sophistry from philosophy, mere rhetoric from dialectics, the other sects from the true philosophy, to distinguish ambiguous expressions from synonymous ones and above all to treat of intellectual objects by philosophising. To this end, «Logical disscusion, then, of intellectual subjects, with selection and assent, is called Dialectic; which establishes by demonstration allegations respecting the truth, and demolishes the doubts brought forward» 157.

In the field of the Christian truth Clement affirms that true dialectic helps in the correct explanation of the Scriptures. This is quite evident from this passage: «For the whole Scripture is not in its meaning a single Myconos, (...) but those who hunt after the connection of the divine teaching, must approach it with the utmost perfection of dialectics» 158.

Thus Clement's conception of dialectic is entirely Platonic and not Aristotelican although Clement's syncretism leads him to use Aristotelican philosophical method (logic) and Platonic dialectic. Although he does not really separate logic and dialectic, he nevertheless highlights dialectic to a greater extent.

III. SYMBOLIC KNOWLEDGE

Clement's account of symbolism to be considered in this section is based on his view that the most profound realities and the truth about them, are not immediately apprehended by the intellect. Being hidden, they are expressed through symbols. Symbolism and the veiling of truth are thus justified by Clement on
the basis of the complex nature of reality, the esoteric nature of truth and the limitations of the human intellect. This is most evident in his treatment of supernatural and divine truths.

Here we wish to examine Clement’s theory of symbolism with particular reference to its characteristic aspects and foundation, Clement’s justification of symbolism and the role of the mysteries and allegorism with the view of evaluating the role of symbolism in his theory of knowledge.

A. The Theory of Symbolism

The bulk of Clement’s account of Symbolism appears in Bk. V of the Str. although his use of symbolism is manifested in several parts of his writings. The foundation of Clement’s account of symbolism is his view of the esoteric nature of reality, and knowledge of the truth, be it speculative or revealed. The foundation of Clement’s theory, therefore, has ontological, linguistic, cultural and moral aspects. At the core of Clement’s theory of symbolism is his idea of the hidden things of truth and reality. Symbolism is thus the way of expressing and transmitting knowledge about these hidden aspects to others.

Clement’s notion of symbolism is intimately linked to that of mysterion. Mystery is associated to the symbolic and allegoric methods of expression. Hence for instance in Str. I.I, 13.4 and in Str. VI.XV, 124.5 mystery and symbolism are used synonymously. Similarly in Str. V.IX, 58.6ff where Clement speaks about the Pythagorian symbolism, veiling, allegorism and symbolism are all put in relation with each other. The fundamental aspect of symbolism, according to Clement, is that of the dissimulation of the truth (Cfr. Str. V.IV, 21.4), where he considers this point as a principle in the knowledge of the most sublime truths. Thus knowledge expressed in a symbolic form always veils some aspect of the whole truth.

According to Clement, the most important parts of truth are hidden. Some are unwritten but reserved for the oral instruction of a few while others are written in an obscure and enigmatic way and need interpretation. Clement sees this most clearly manifested in the different philosophical schools and in
Scripture. The Lord revealed things to the few by word of mouth and not in writing and what has been written about ultimate things is expressed in a mysterious form in riddles and parables and are veiled\textsuperscript{162}. He therefore points out that in Scripture, for example, use is made of enigma, allegory and symbol.

However Clement affirms that nature itself bears a natural symbolism, a kind of complicity between beings which links them all together. Despite their diversity they are all comparable because of a certain similarity between them. There is therefore analogy between things and some symbolise others. Hence the use of symbolism in the domain of sensation, objects, events, myths, language, and philosophy to express the most sublime truths\textsuperscript{163}.

R. Mortley has rightly explained that this view of Clement is due to the fact that, for Clement, «the answer is in the divine economy: all that exists is invested with meaning. Man and his world are signs because of their origin. God who is transcendent, has left traces of his nature in his disposition of the universe. One of these traces is the principle of analogy»\textsuperscript{164}. Hence the justification for expressing the notion of an object in reality through a symbol, or a spiritual truth through earthly symbolic elements.

Things are proportional and in some way resemble each other. There is therefore a kind of parallellism between the celestial plan and the terrestrial plan as well as a parallellism between the diverse elements of the terrestrial plan — a kind of horizontal parallellism whereby the inferior symbolises the superior\textsuperscript{165}. All these relationships permit the human spiritual soul to make a sort of synthesis embracing all the elements of sensible experience. In this way the \textit{gnostic} is «capable of perceiving the true and detecting the false, of discovering correspondences and proportions, so as to hunt out for similarity in things dissimilar...»\textsuperscript{166}.

In fact Osborn has pointed out that symbolic expression and interpretation is perhaps the part of Clement’s thought which is most foreign to modern minds\textsuperscript{167}. He has adduced two fundamental reasons for Clement’s theory of symbolism. According to him, one minor point was that, particularly in Alexandria, Christian converts came from a background of which it was a normal feature. But, «the main point which underlines all the ex-
amples is that there are connections in the world other than those normally seen. These connections take the form of likenesses, proportions, harmonies. They all point out unities in apparent diversity. They show that the world is a unity of far greater complexity than is normally seen. They give point to studies as astronomy." 168.

B. Universal Domain of Symbolism

For Clement, the domain of symbolism is universal. He regards the sensible realities accessible to our sense apprehension as a sign of a deeper reality of which these are multiple reflections. Thus Clement considers words, objects and rites as all subject to interpretation in order to obtain the deeper truth underlying them. His view of the sensible world as a reflection of truth is clearly Platonic 169.

The fundamental basis of the universality of symbolism, according to Clement, is the fact that the whole of creation is filled with indications of the existence of a divine being who is the object of a variable avalanche of names. But according to Clement, "... the God of the universe, who is above all speech, all conception, all thought, can never be committed to writing, being inexpressible even by his own power" 170.

It must be pointed out, however, that the extension of Clement's theory of symbolism, includes words, names and objects, because they all have a revealing function. They are signs of the reality to which they refer and which they represent as well as reflect. In this sense everything in nature is meaningful, so that even the simplest hide an immense richness of meaning, which requires many symbols for its expression. Mortley has pointed out that, in this regard, the study of etymology, presented by Clement, indicates that the reflections of reality are discovered through all the languages 171. Similarly in the domain of myths, philosophy, language, poetry, culture, theatre and theology Clement finds elements of symbolism. This is most evident in the attempts to express the divine reality which the intellect cannot fully apprehend.
The universality of symbolism, according to Clement, also extends to all forms of expression in which there is a gradation of relationship between the symbol and the reality symbolized. Hence not all symbols of a particular reality have the same importance. In this regard speaking about the Egyptian hieroglyphic, (Str.V.IV) Clement distinguishes two kinds: one literal and the other symbolic. «Of the symbolic, one kind speaks literally by imitation, and the other writes, as it were, figuratively, and another is quite allegorical, using certain enigmas».

Consequently, the domain of symbols and allegory extends to all forms of expressions: these include imitation as in the case of the circle to symbolize the sun, in which case the relationship between the figure and what is symbolized is natural and evident. In the case of a metaphor which represents an abstract idea by a word, for instance, the relationship between the symbol and the reality is less natural and evident. Finally, in the allegoric — enigmatic form of expression, the connection between the sign and what is signified is neither natural nor evident but arbitrary and conventional. The truth expressed in this form will remain obscure and incomprehensible to him who does not know the key to the conventions.

C. Origin of Clement’s Symbolism

The origin of Clement’s symbolism comes from the oriental influences in Greek thought, especially in Platonism and from the mystery religions. To these must be added the influence of the allegoric method of interpretation of Scripture developed and employed in the Alexandrian school. Clement’s symbolism is therefore part of the tradition that goes back to the ancient Greek mythical culture. Having destroyed the primacy of religious myths, the poets and their disciples, the philosophers were left with an abundance of mythical material that needed interpretation and explanation.

Furthermore the origin of Clement’s theory of symbolism must be sort of in connection with the great emphasis he lays on the esoteric nature of gnosis. To this end Clement quotes Pla-
to\textsuperscript{174} in order to reaffirm his view. Hence the presence of the Platonic influence in Clement’s symbolism.

Similarly S. Lilla has rightly pointed out that «Clement glances at the most important Greek philosophical schools in order to prove that what he has been saying so far is right: if the Pythagoreans, the Platonists, the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Aristotelians agreed in keeping the most important of their doctrines hidden... is there not more reason to keep the true philosophy out of the reach of common people?»\textsuperscript{175}. All these philosophical doctrines in addition to Scripture play an important role in the development of Clement’s theory of Symbolism\textsuperscript{176}. He has sufficiently shown that the origin of Clement’s symbolism is to be found in the practice of the above mentioned philosophical schools, Scripture\textsuperscript{177} and the philosophical systems of Clement’s time\textsuperscript{178}.

The use of Symbolism already existed in the Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy, Middle Platonism, Neoplatonism and even in the heretical Christian Gnosticism. Clement knew all these and in some sense tended to imitate them. Above all it is in Philo that the use of symbolism is particularly clear\textsuperscript{179}. In this sense apart from Philo, the middle Platonic Plutarch and Albinus in whom there is the same tendency to stress the hidden nature of the highest doctrines must have influenced Clement’s symbolism\textsuperscript{180}.

The theory of symbolism had its greatest success in the Christian Platonism of which Clement is one of the greatest figures. In Clement symbolism could not stay at the margin of his gnoseology. The Christian Platonists were faced with the enormous problem of Christian truth: the transcendental being has manifested himself in a sensible form. Mortley thinks that this problem, proper to Christianity, had stimulated Clement to develop a theory of symbolism, «a theory of the relation between the divine reality and the concepts which are presented to understand this reality»\textsuperscript{181}.

This idea is in fact extended by Clement to the knowledge of reality in general. Hence Clement’s gnoseology is also symbolic. Consequently syncretism and Clement’s Platonic formation are some of the sources of Clement’s theory of symbolism. Among the causes of Clement’s theory of symbolism Osborn has
identified two possible causes. First, the Christian converts, particularly in Alexandria, came from «a background of which symbolism was an inevitable part of their mental machinery» 182. However the main point is that according to Clement, there are complex relationships which are not immediately evident in reality.

The multiple relationships in reality, as the basis of Clement’s foundation of the theory of symbolism has also been pointed out by Mondésert. In view of this he observes that: «At the basis of symbolism, as Clement understands it, there is a profound idea which the very excesses of the method of interpretation emphasize... This idea is the relatedness of all things among themselves, the intelligible bond which sets them in order, and brings them together again, which makes them one beneath their multiplicity, one by their cohesion and their unity» 183.

From the possibility of finding the same ideas implanted in different gnoseological systems and situations, but expressed in different forms, Clement is led to compare and to equate as well as to assimilate the mythical traditions in a theory of symbolism. The truth is thus considered as residing in the community of human thought which has several symbolic manifestations 184. Consequently, an affirmation of a symbolic nature may not be submitted to the criterion of logical truth because its truth is of a different genus — the symbolic.

Thus it can be concluded that the origin of Clement’s symbolism derives from the influence of the mystery religions and that of the esoteric philosophical systems. These include especially Pythagorism, Platonism and Stoicism. However, the immediate origin of Clement’s symbolism can be attributed to his literary dependence on Christian Platonism, in particular Philo, on Scripture and the gnostic literature. Together with all these Clement’s syncretic method must be taken into account.

D. Examples and Justification of Symbolism

Clement gives numerous examples of symbolism throughout his writings and tries to justify the important role of symbolism in knowledge. In fact the symbolic style is employed by Clement
especially in the *Stromata* as he is the first to admit. «Some things I purposely omit, in the exercise of a wise selection ... Some things my treaties will hint; on some it will linger; some it will merely mention. It will try to speak imperceptibly, to exhibit secretly, and to demonstrate silently.» 185.

According to Clement, he does not wish to artfully conceal the truth by the body of varied erudition as contained by the *Stromata*. On the contrary he intends to avoid divulging the secrets of the true philosophy to those who discredit the truth 186. Hence his affirmation that «The *Stromata* will contain the truth mixed up in the dogmas of philosophy, or rather covered over and hidden, as the edible part of the nut in the shell. For, in my opinion, it is fitting that the seeds of truth be kept for the husbandmen of faith, and no others» 187.

In *Str. BK.V*, Clement gives and explains many examples of symbolism using them to justify his theory of symbolism. The main types of symbolism include:

a.) *Verbal symbolism* as for instance the Greek maxims referred to by Clement. «Also the maxims of those among the Greeks called the wise men, in a few sayings indicate the unfolding of matter of great importance» 188. Examples include the maxims, «Know thyself» 189, the symbols attributed to Pythagoras such as, «the Samian counsel *not to have a swallow in the house*» 190, and *Don't sail on land* 191.

b.) *Pictoral symbolism*, such as the example of the exposition in *Str. V.VI*, of the symbolic objects in the construction of the Tabernacle. (*Cfr. Str.V.VI, 32.1ff*)

c.) *Symbolism of numbers*, as for instance, the symbolism of *The number Ten*, in Clement’s Gnostic exposition of the Decalogue. (*Cfr. Str.VI.XVI, 133.1ff*) Similarly another Chapter is given to Symbolism of numbers, geometrical ratios as well as music. *Cfr. Str. VI.XI, 84.1ff*, where Clement illustrating geometrical symbolism says, «For the expression *wooden squares* indicates that the square form, producing right angles, pervades all, and points out security» 192.

d.) Clement also hints at other forms of symbolism as can be inferred from the following passage: «All then, in a word, who have spoken of divine things, both Barbarians and Greeks, have veiled the first principles of things, and delivered the truth in
enigmas, and symbols, and allegories, and metaphors, and such like tropes»

Clement goes to a great extent in justifying the important role of symbolism in knowledge. The abundant reasons of justification can be found in many parts of his works, especially in the Stromata and in particular in Str. Bk.V., starting from chapter nine.

The main reasons put forward can be summarized under the following points:

i.) Symbolism dissimulates the truth rendering it more valuable and noble. Thus it stimulates and motivates the search for truth as well as encourages vigilance (Cfr.Str.I.II, 21.2; VI.XV, 126.1.) In this sense Clement considers Greek philosophy as dissimulating the truth. (Cfr.Str.I.II, 3.5 ). In Str.V.IV, Clement actually gives a long explanation of this concept of the dissimulation of truth.

ii.) Symbolism, by veiling the truth, possesses a greater suggestive power and consequently makes a more vivid impression on the mind. «Besides all things that shine through a veil show the truth grander and more imposing... in addition things unconcealed are perceived in one way»

iii.) Clement also points out that symbolism serves for brevity of expression. «Very useful, then, is the mode of symbolic interpretation for many purposes; and it is helpful to the right theology, and to piety, and to the display of intelligence, and the practice of brevity, and exhibition of wisdom»

iv.) Apart from the fact that symbols are more impressive than ordinary forms of expression of the truth, they also make possible for a variety of interpretations. «Since, then, we may draw several meanings, as we do from what is expressed in veiled form, such being the case, the ignorant and unlearned man falls into error. But the gnostic apprehends»

v.) Symbolism also responds to the esoteric nature of knowledge. Consequently Clement affirms that all forms of philosophy have veiled certain knowledge in symbols and allegory. «And the disciples of Aristotle say that some of their treaties are esoteric and others common and exoteric»

The use of sym-
bolism therefore responds to the reservation and prudence that must be practiced in the transmission of the most sublime truths.

vi.) The existence of tradition is another justification for symbolism. Since mere verbal expressions veil a certain aspect of the reality signified, Clement maintains that interpreters will be needed. These will transmit the whole truth to others thus constituting a tradition. «They also wish us to require an interpreter and a guide. For so they consider that receiving truth from the hands of those who knew it well, we would be more earnest and less liable to deception, and those worthy of them would profit» 198.

vii.) Clement considers truth to possess a certain sacredness and because of its preciousness it must not be profaned by the morally impure. This idea is symbolically expressed by Clement in the following passage: «Wherefore, the method of concealment is truly divine and most necessary for us, because of the truly sacred teaching deposited in the shrine of truth» 199.

In conclusion, Clement’s theory of knowledge is to be considered in view of his Christian notion of man understood as endowed with sense perception and intellectual apprehension. The latter proceeds from the former by abstraction. Although the two are indispensable for knowledge, only to the intellect is knowledge attributed properly speaking. In Clement’s notion of knowledge the ethical and the speculative aspects are intimately linked. Hence his notion of abstraction from matter extends not only to the intellect but to the separation of the knowing subject from the passions in order to acquire perfect knowledge.

Apart from abstraction, such logical acts as demonstration, definition, and dialectic proceedings are all attributed by Clement to the intellect because in them there can be pure application of the intellect. To this end Clement regards them as acts of the intellect that result in the acquisition of truth.

At the core of Clement’s theory of knowledge is his emphasis on the esoteric nature of the most sublime realities and consequently of the knowledge about them, since the intellect is not perfect. This for Clement is the foundation of symbolic knowledge and he firmly justifies the theory of symbolism. The origin of his theory of symbolism can be traced back to the in-
fluence of the Greek mysteries, Scripture and Clement’s dependence on the philosophical tradition of his time.

It is worthwhile mentioning at this point that these elements present in Clement’s thought already contain substantially complete the gnoseological doctrine later to be received by the mediaeval Christian culture. These include Aristotelian epistemological elements, aspects of the Platonic doctrine of ontological knowledge and the importance of symbolism that later exercises a great influence in speculative theology. In a word it could be said that in Clement the Agustinian and Thomistic programme is already marked out. Clement is truly the first in Christian philosophical thought.

IV. THE WILL AND THE VOLUNTARY DIMENSION OF KNOWLEDGE

At the core of many theories of knowledge, one can find the doctrine of a voluntary rejection of aspects of spontaneous knowledge or a peculiar view of the will in knowledge.

Having seen some fundamental aspects of the role of the intellect in Clement’s conception of knowledge, in the previous section, our study now calls for a treatment of an aspect which in Clement’s theory of knowledge is fundamental. This is the voluntary factor in the act of knowledge which is treated by Clement in his theory of πνευμα. He very much appreciates the important role of the will in knowledge in view of its positive role in inclining the rational faculties towards knowledge. How voluntary is the act of knowledge according Clement? Does our author attribute priority to the intellect or to the will in the act of knowledge or does he rather see a simultaneous and mutual influence? As we strive to marshal out answers to these questions from Clement’s thought, the role of the will in his theory of knowledge will become clearer.

Clement is quite outspoken as regards the voluntary operation of the soul. This is most evidently manifested when Clement speaks about the authority of the will in moral actions and in assent to the truth. In fact some passages give the impression that he overvalues the will’s capacity to selfdetermination.
A. The Doctrine of Assent

The importance of belief in the act of knowledge had been pointed out by some philosophical schools before and during Clement's time, as for instance the Stoics. In general assent can be considered as the act of interior adhesion to what the mind apprehends as true or the personal participation in an idea or action. The Stoics consider assent as the intrinsic moment of knowledge and recognize in it a certain role of the will, considering error as the consequence of a precipitated assent. Thus assent is simply seen as the act by which that which is presented as evident, is recognized as such by the influence of the will. It can therefore be said that the constitutive act of assent is presented as a theoretical and a practical moment of knowledge. Later St. Thomas among others has however pointed out the complexity of the act of assent.

Clement affirms the Stoic teaching on the important role of belief in knowledge and that assent is an act of voluntary choice. In view of Stoic philosophy, he affirms: «And not only the Platonists, but also the Stoics, say that assent is in our own power. All opinion then, and judgment, and supposition, and knowledge, by which we live and have perpetual intercourse with the human race, is assent; which is nothing else than faith.» Such is the context and extension of Clement's notion of belief.

The importance of belief in Clement's theory of knowledge may be better appreciated if it is borne in mind that according to ideas in Aristotle and the Stoics, pòstis pertains to the judgement of a syllogism or of a reasoning process — the faculty which accepts the result of reasoning. Thus Aristotle maintains a similar idea Top. I.1.100b. 18. It is in this context of pòstis, as certain knowledge, a truth evident in itself, that Clement's notion of assent has to be placed.

Similarly Epicurus already employed the notion of pòstis, understood as a voluntary preconception in his theory of knowledge. Clement presents a long treatment of Epicurus' conception in Str. II.IV, 16.3. He points out that it is a clear grasping of the concept of a thing, which constitutes the precondition for any argument, opinion or intellectual activity. In this sense belief...
becomes the initial understanding which permits further understanding of a truth. Through this preconception one establishes general notions, as the basis, in anticipation of the conclusion of an intellectual discovery. *Pístitis* can therefore be regarded as a point of departure that helps to guide the progress of intellectual knowledge.

As R. Mortley observes, Clement’s treatment of the notion of belief in knowledge shows a great originality. «He is the first, known to us, to adapt the scriptural term to the notion of *pístis* that is found in Aristotelian and stoic logic» 206.

According to Plato, belief, that is conjecture, comes under the category of opinion 207. In this sense *pístis* is considered as part of inferior knowledge whose object is the changeable reality and therefore is not to be considered as real truth. However Clement attaches to belief the importance Aristotle attaches to the knowledge of the first principles. It is this tradition of the notion of belief which permits Clement to show the philosophical acceptability of faith as a fundamental aspect of knowledge 208. Thus for Clement *pístis* is not just a mere acceptance of a vague and irrational opinion but the foundation and part of knowledge 209. Lilla has really observed that Clement obtains this doctrine from Plato but that Clement uses it in addition some Aristotelician ideas 210.

According to Clement this assent of the will is of double importance. On the one hand it is the foundation of knowledge (*epistemological pístis*) and on the other hand it is necessary for salvation (*religious pístis*). However there is a mutual and complementary connection between the two as far as knowledge is concerned.

B. Clement’s Theory of Pístis

The idea of perfect knowledge represents one of the most important aspects of Clement’s philosophy and some of his most instructive writing concerns the nature of *pístis* and *gnosis*. Although the ideas on these topics can be found throughout his works, the theory of *pístis* is discussed mainly in *Stromata* II and *Stromata* V. The issue of gnoseological perfection is, in Clement’s thought, closely related to that of *pístis* 211.
Clement's doctrine of *pistis* can rightly be said to represent a serious attempt to give a scientific explanation of the words *pistis* (faith) and *πιστεύω* (to believe) which occur so frequently in the Scriptures. Clement's theory of *pistis* concerns the nature of belief and may be described as the first Christian essay in aid of a grammar of assent. He also seeks to relate the act of faith to the epistemological debates of the philosophical schools about the nature of proof and the ground of assent. In order to achieve his goal, Clement resorted to the school-philosophy of his time as well as to some ideas characteristic of Philo.

Clement attaches several meanings to his conception of *pistis*. Among other meanings it pertains to the intellectual acceptance of evident truth. In the following section we intend to discuss some of the meanings of Clement's conception of *pistis* with the view obtaining a more global understanding of Clement's concept.

Clement's definitions of *pistis* are closely related to one another and the study of each of them and their mutual relationships would provide a better understanding of what Clement really means by *pistis* and the role it plays in his gnoseological doctrine.

The most characteristic aspect of Clement's notion of the *pistis* is the stress on the idea of «a firm conviction» that reflects the truth. Presently the first meaning which refers to the epistemological aspect of *pistis* will be examined followed by the discussion of the religious *pistis*.

1. *Pistis* as assent to evident knowledge and to first principles

The indispensable role of *pistis* in the acquisition of knowledge is expressed by Clement in some of his definitions of demonstration. *Pistis* is presented as the intellectual act of assenting to immediate, evident knowledge or to the first undemonstrable principles of demonstration. This first meaning of *pistis* occurs in such passages as: «What is subjected to criticism is not believed till it is so subjected; so that what needs criticism cannot be a first principle. Therefore, as is reasonable, grasping by faith the undemonstrable first principle and receiving in abundance, from the first principle itself, demonstrations in reference
The idea on which the above passage is based is expounded by Clement in *Str. VIII*, which contains some material dealing mainly with logic and epistemology (*Cfr. chap. II. sect. 2*). This idea which is worth emphasizing expresses the metaphysical foundation of Clement’s theory of belief: «either everything needs a demonstration, or something is itself trustworthy. In the first case we, by requiring the demonstration of each demonstration, shall be involved in an infinite regress, and in this way the demonstration itself will be overthrown. In the second case the things which are themselves trustworthy will become the principles of demonstrations. The philosophers then admit that the principles of all things are undemonstrated. Consequently, if there is a demonstration, there must necessarily be something prior to it, which is trustworthy and which is called «primary» and undemonstrated. Therefore every demonstration is traced back to an undemonstrated *belief*».

According to Clement, therefore, some demonstrations must be based on undemonstrated principles, which are themselves trustworthy or evident. This explains why at the end of the passage, he calls the first principle *pistis*, and maintains that by means of *pistis* it is possible to assent to the existence of some undemonstrable principles. Similary Clement points out that knowledge is not founded on demonstration by a process of reasoning because the first principles are incapable of demonstration; for they are known neither by art nor by theory. For the latter is conversant about objects that are susceptible to change, while the former is only practical and not theoretical.

«Hence it is thought that the first cause of the universe can be apprehended by faith alone. Since all science is capable of being taught; what is capable of being taught is founded on what is known before. But the first cause of the universe was not previously known to the Greeks». As regards the need for, and the existence of an absolute and unconditioned principle in the dialectic process, attention had been drawn by Plato and Aristotle. The former in the *Republic*, VI, 511 b 6-7. Aristotle maintains that it is impossible to require a demonstration for every demonstration, and that some demonstrations must start
from some absolute, undemonstrated, *truths*, and consequently also *trustworthy principles*²²¹. This Aristotelian doctrine is similar to Clement’s conception of assent. Clement’s originality lies in attributing to belief the quality of an undemonstrable principle of knowledge.

Thus like many other Stoic and Aristotelian doctrines, the Aristotelian doctrine of the absolute undemonstrable and trustworthy principle of demonstration had become a constitutive element of the syncretism characteristic of some Middle-Platonic Schools as well as in Clement’s conception of *pistis*.

Furthermore, Clement is inclined to consider as principles of demonstration, not only the *universal and trustworthy* Aristotelian principles, but also *what appears evident both to sensation and to the mind*²²². This idea is evidenced by Clement’s affirmation *Str.* Bk. II that: «Theophrastus says that sensation is the root of *pistis*. For from it the rudimentary principles extend to the mind that is in us, and the understanding».²²³. Hence Clement’s conception of gnoseological belief is not a mere blind faith but has its foundation in reality.

This consideration of what appears evident both to sensation and to the mind as principles of demonstration, (i.e., of scientific knowledge) is closely connected with the view according to which scientific knowledge is based on both sensations and perception and on the mind. This is clearly expressed in the following words: «Now, inasmuch as there are four things in which the truth resides —sensation, understanding, knowledge, opinion— intellectual apprehension is first in the order of nature; but in our case, and in relation to ourselves, sensation is first, and of sensation and understanding the essence of knowledge is formed; and evidence is common to understanding and sensation»²²⁴. These ideas are very similar to and indicative of Clement’s dependence on the epistemology of the Peripatetic School tradition²²⁵.

It must be said that Clement surpasses the doctrine of *pistis* in his predecessors. According to him, «sensation is the ladder to knowledge; while Faith, advancing over the pathway of the objects of sense, leaves opinion behind, and speeds to things free of deception, and reposes in the truth»²²⁶.

Nevertheless what Clement says in *Str.* II.II, 9.5; II.IV, 13.2; VIII.III, 7.3-4 and 14.3 can be said to form a coherent
epistemological system and in agreement with the idea that the self-evidence of sense-perceptions represents the first fundamental stage for the growth of knowledge and has a direct influence on intellectual apprehension.

From what we have seen so far about Clement’s doctrine of pístis, it is worthwhile mentioning that despite Philo’s great influence on Clement in general, he does not possess such a complicated doctrine of pístis as is to be found in Clement. However his epistemological views have been shown to be the similar to those of Antiochus. For instance, Philo maintains that knowledge is the product of the activity of sense-perceptions or sensations and the mind. Nevertheless Clement received not from the Peripatetic school, but from the school-teaching going back to Antiochus, the doctrine of assent to what appears evident to sense-perception as origin of immediate knowledge.

Now in the next section we will examine another meaning of pístis as it is to be found in Clement’s gnoseological views.

2. Preconception or Intellectual Anticipation

The idea of pístis as belief in those principles which appear evident both to sensa­tion and to mind is closely related to the definition of pístis as assent, approval of, or consent to (συζκατάθεσις) which appears in such passages as: «But the faith which some Greeks disparage, deeming it futile and barbarous, is a voluntary preconception or anticipation (πρόληψις); the assent of piety».

This same idea is expressed thus: «...and a hope which is the future apprehension of a future event. And not only the Platonist, but the Stoics, say that assent is in our own power. All opinion then, and judgment, and supposition, and knowledge, by which we live and have perpetual intercourse with the human race, is an assent, which is nothing else than faith».

Clement employs the Stoic terminology συζκατάθεσις (to approve of) used in the middle-platonic philosophy of his time as is shown by the allusion made in Str. II.XII, 54.5. The other terminology, πρόληψις (anticipation) and «preconception» is of Epicurean origin and middle-platonic origins The Stoic term,
especially as used by the Stoics, indicated the positive reaction or assent of the mind to sense-perceptions. In this sense, assent and faith are practically the same. However it is the mind that must ultimately decide whether to believe or not the sense perceptions and this decision is expressed by an intellectual assent.

By using the Stoic and Epicurean terminologies, Clement approves of Epicurus’ statement according to which pístis is a preconception of the mind: «Epicurus, too, who very greatly preferred pleasure to truth, supposes faith to be a preconception of the mind; and defines preconception to be a grasping at something evident, and as the clear understanding of the things; and asserts that without preconception, no one can either inquire, or doubt, or judge, or even argue». Thus the «preconception of the mind» in this sense actually refers to the first principles of knowledge without which it is not possible to inquire, know or judge.

In fact Clement himself later goes on to define belief as a preconception: «Faith is the voluntary supposition and anticipation of pre-comprehension». Thus it could be said that this meaning of pístis really expresses the notion of a concept although using Stoic and Epicurean terminology. The Stoics also considered sense-perceptions as the basis of all knowledge and as the first cause of what they too called πρόληψις. Similarly the Epicurean doctrine of πρόληψις accepted by Clement, is in agreement with it. Clement certainly found this doctrine in conformity with his own epistemological view of sense perception as the starting point of human knowledge.

However Clement’s originality is seen in the fact that after mentioning Epicurus’ doctrine, he maintains, contrary to Epicurus, for whom πρόληψις is itself knowledge; that a preconception is prior to knowledge, but not knowledge; as already indicated in Str. II.VI, 28.1 above, and is transformed into knowledge by instruction. This can be inferred from the following passage: «How can one, without a preconception of what he is aiming after, learn about that which is the subject of his investigation? He, again who has learned has already turned his preconception into comprehension». In this regard belief is understood as a fundamental aspect of knowledge which serves and enhances the development of further knowledge.
In conclusion, therefore, *pistis* in Clement, employed in a gnoseological sense, refers to the *assent to* or the acceptance of the *first, undemonstrable principles* of demonstration. It thus pertains to whatever appears as evident to the rational faculties. Any kind of immediate knowledge based on spontaneous apprehension can therefore be said to fall within the scope of Clement’s *pistis*, sometimes expressed as *preconception*.

3. *Pistis* as the firm conviction of the human mind

In the previous section we examined Clement’s use of the term *pistis* to signify the attitude peculiar to the human mind when it assents to the first principles of demonstration. These are conceived as undemonstrable and trustworthy or evident. They therefore merit an unshakable conviction from the knowing faculty.

In the present section we wish to consider the notion of *pistis* in Clement understood as the intellectual assent to a conclusion. *Pistis* in this sense is considered as the firm conviction which the human mind possesses after reaching the knowledge of something by means of a scientific demonstration. Clement understood quite well that a characteristic aspect of scientific demonstration is the attainment of the truth. Consequently he also uses *pistis* to designate the firm belief of the mind in the truth of the conclusion of demonstration.

One of the most outstanding passages in this regard is the following: «Knowledge, accordingly, is characterized by faith; and faith by a kind of divine mutual and reciprocal correspondence, becomes characterized by knowledge».

The essential characteristic feature of *pistis*, which is the firm conviction in the reality being considered, is evident in Clement’s definition of scientific knowledge. Thus he says, «But that knowledge, which is the scientific demonstration of what is delivered according to the true philosophy, is founded on faith. Now, we may say that it is that process of reason which, from what is admitted, procures faith in what is disputed».

Clement considers the end of demonstration as the causing of assent to what is not yet convincing. Hence Clement says,
"The knowledge of the truth among us from what is already believed, produces faith in what is not yet believed; which is, so to speak, the essence of demonstration".

Such passages as we have seen above explain why Clement referring to Aristotle agrees with him in that the intellect naturally assents to the truth. To this end he affirms that «Now Aristotle says that the judgement which follows knowledge is in truth faith. Accordingly, therefore, faith is something superior to knowledge, and it is its criterion». Faith is thus considered a criterion of knowledge.

For Clement this faith-knowledge becomes gnosis as can be seen in Str. II.II, 49.3; V.III, 18.3 and in Str. VII.X, 57.3. Clement therefore maintains the Aristotelian ideas that the peculiar character of scientific knowledge — knowledge attained through demonstration — is represented by the firm assent by the mind to the truth attained. Clement also refers to this as pistis. Pistis can therefore refer to the product of demonstration or it may also refer to immediate knowledge, as when Clement says: «Pistis is the voluntary supposition and anticipation of pre-comprehension».

As regards the acceptance of or the assent to the premises of demonstration, there is no doubt that according to Clement if these premises are true, the conclusion thus attained will be scientific knowledge; if they are only probable and based on opinion the inference will be knowledge subject to opinion.

There is a similarity between the distinctions which Clement makes between pistis and the Aristotelian distinction between scientific demonstration, dialectical syllogism and rhetorical syllogism. According to Aristotle scientific demonstration has as its point of departure premises which are first and true principles, whereas for the latter two types of syllogisms are based on premises which belong to the sphere of opinion.

For Clement, therefore, just as for Aristotle, dialectical and rhetorical syllogisms are based on merely probable premises; and Clement's pistis strictly speaking does not refer to this type of premises of demonstration. In fact, according to Clement, pistis is identified with scientific knowledge since it is its direct product as is expressed in some of the above passages. Since such scientific knowledge or gnosis is only possible if the mind has a firm conviction of the truth in question, Clement considers such pistis as
superior to spontaneous knowledge, ἐπιστημή. He therefore maintains a very close relationship between pίστις, demonstration and scientific knowledge, clearly distinguishing them from the sphere of opinion.

C. The Will and the Act of Knowledge

According to Clement, «to will is the act of the soul, but to do so is not without the body. Nor are actions estimated by their issue alone; but they are judged also according to the element of free choice in each». Hence he would say that what we do not, we do not either from, not being able, or not being willing or both. Consequently in Clement’s view, «what is voluntary is either what is by desire, or what is by choice, or what is of intention».

Clement includes knowledge among those acts he considers as voluntary acts. This is in view of the fact that the desire to know aids in the acquisition of knowledge. This is the point to be examined in the next few pages.

1. Knowledge as a Voluntary Act: a Rational Choice

Now since knowledge is subject to the voluntary operation of the soul, Clement is also of the view that knowledge is a voluntary act. Accordingly it is either of desire, choice or intention. The role of the will is so essential in the act of knowledge, according to Clement, that it could be said that to know one has to will it. «Therefore volition takes the precedence of all; for the intellectual powers are ministers of the will. Will, it is said, and thou shalt be able.»

In view of such attributes by Clement to the will, there seems to be some justification to think that in his approach to knowledge there is a certain tendency to intellectual voluntarism in Clement. However that this is not really the case would become clearer in the course of our discussion.

In one of the opening paragraphs of Stromata BK. I, Clement says: «It is by one’s own fault that he does not choose what
is best; God is free of blame". This principle of freedom of choice and human freedom is firmly maintained by the Christian view of truth which no doubt greatly influenced Clement's conception of knowledge. Clement affirms this fact as against the implicit fatalism of certain gnostics. Clement, who holds in very high esteem man's free, will cannot but find the celebrated saying in Plato's Republic very appealing. «The blame is his who chooses; Heaven is blameless».

Clement's view of the independence of the will and its great autonomy leads him to attribute to the human will an extensive power of determining its actions. This is most clearly seen when he is dealing with moral acts which in Clement are intimately linked to cognitive acts because his notion of knowledge is operative and leads to virtuous perfection. According to Clement, therefore, it would seem that our voluntary acts depend almost exclusively on us. Hence «to free ourselves from ignorance, and from evil and voluptuous choice, and above all, to withhold our assent from those delusive phantasies, depends on ourselves».

Application to the training of ourselves and consequently the acquisition of knowledge as well as subjection to the Commandments, are among the acts Clement considers under our power. Others include distraction and disobedience as well as obedience.

With this notion of the will, virtue is said to depend on us, and the requisition of gnosis or perfect knowledge is by a free choice. Knowledge is therefore considered to be a voluntary act and the love for the contemplation of the truth is the beginning of wisdom. Closely connected with this question of knowledge as a rational choice is the question of the priority of the will and the intellect.

2. Priority of the Will and of the Intellect

From what we have seen above, there is no doubt that for Clement the role of the will in assenting to truth is really essential in the act of knowledge. A docile disposition and great desire that leads to a practical application of the other faculties and necessary means facilitate the acquisition of the truth. In view of
this Clement explains that «the preference and choice of truth is voluntary»\(^{257}\). To this end, he repeatedly maintains that belief aids understanding. This is most clearly seen when Clement is dealing with knowledge of the Christian truth as for instance when he says that «intellectual apprehension depends on faith»\(^{258}\). Hence the conclusion: «For he who hopes, as he who believes sees intellectual objects and future things with the mind»\(^{259}\).

On the other hand some passages of Clement tend to point to the fact that according to him the intellect has priority over the will. Knowledge would therefore precede desire. This is precisely the case with the knowledge of revealed truth as for instance when Clement speaking about knowledge of the Christian truth declares: «He, then, who imitates opinion shows also preconception. When then one, having got an inkling of the subject, kindles it within his soul by desire and study, he sets everything in motion afterwards in order to know it. For that which one does not apprehend, neither does he desire it, nor does he embrace the advantage flowing from it»\(^{260}\).

It is an expressed view of Clement that the intellect and the will being rational faculties are principles of knowledge, desire and action. «For both are powers of the soul, both knowledge and impulse. And impulse is found to be a movement after an assent. For he who has an impulse towards an action, first receives the knowledge of the action, and secondly the impulse»\(^{261}\).

The intellect therefore seems to have priority over the will. In fact Clement goes on to add that «since learning is older than action (for naturally, he who does what he wishes to do learns it first: and knowledge comes from learning, and impulse follows knowledge; after which comes action) knowledge turns out to be the beginning and author of all rational action»\(^{262}\).

Consequently gnoseological faith is thus to be regarded as an intellectual desire, since it is the assent of the mind to unseen objects. These ideas are clearly used by Clement to express the relationship between belief and knowledge; will and intellect. Accordingly «If then faith be choice, being desirous of something, the desire is in this instance intellectual. And since choice is the beginning of action, faith is discovered to be the beginning of action, being the foundation of rational choice in the case of anyone who exhibits to himself the previous demonstration through
faith» 263. This syllogism employed by Clement in the above passage is Aristotelican as so also is the definition of choice 264. Hence Clement’s affirmation that «voluntarily to follow what is useful is the first principle of understanding» 265. First comes the knowledge of the object through intellectual apprehension; then the desire of the object thus apprehended.

In Clement’s view, therefore, first comes knowledge, then volition and finally action. «So that rightly the peculiar nature of the rational soul is characterized by this alone; for in reality impulse, like knowledge, is excited by existing objects» 266, since knowledge is the contemplation of beings that are.

D. Belief and Understanding

Despite such extensive attributes to the will as we have just seen, Clement nevertheless is quite aware of the limitations of the human rational capacity. According to Clement, therefore, the human intellect alone cannot arrive to perfect knowledge and truth, nor apprehend all the knowledge it could. Consequently God in his divine providence has revealed some deeper truths by the divine Logos. Hence Clement’s insistence on faith in the divine Logos and in His teaching, the Christian truth, in order to acquire a more perfect knowledge. «For there is nothing like hearing the Word Himself, who by means of Scripture inspires fuller intelligence» 267. For him faith and trust in the divine authority as the ultimate measure of truth is unquestionable. This is clearly manifested by his theory of assent.

Clement saw a harmonious relationship between faith and reason, between divine revelation and the effort of the human intellect to reach the most profound truths. In fact this is one of Clement’s main tasks. «Animated by the attitude which was later summed up in the formula, Credo, ut intelligam, he sought to develop the systematic presentation of the Christian wisdom in a true, as opposed to a false gnosis» 268.

Accordingly, in our author’s view to dispense of or disbelieve Scriptures and Christian revelation inevitably implies the impossibility of attaining the whole and real truth. «But whoever chooses to banquet on faith, is steadfast for the reception
of the divine words, having acquired already faith as a power of judging, according to reason*. Hence ensues to him persuasion in abundance. And this was the meaning of that saying of prophecy, «If ye believe not, neither shall ye understand» 269. Faith is therefore indispensible for knowledge.

So much is faith an essential aspect in Clement’s gnoseology that he regards it as a way of attaining knowledge of the ultimate cause, righteousness and wisdom. Clement therefore affirms that «also Xenocrates, in his book on «Intelligence», says «that wisdom is the knowledge of first causes and of intellectual essences» 270. To this end Clement does not fail to point out that «it has been shown that the knowledge of the first cause of the universe is of faith, but it is not demonstration» 271.

Just as the voluntary acts of the will which are necessary for human perfection do not depend exclusively on the faculties, so also is knowledge not dependent exclusively on the human intellect. «For neither is it possible to attain it (the perfect good) without the exercise of the free choice; nor does the whole depend on our own purpose; as for example, what is destined to happen» 272.

In this respect Clement attributes an indispensible role to the help of the divine Logos in human knowledge. «For since the soul became too enfeebled for the apprehension of realities, we need a divine teacher. The Saviour is sent down—a teacher and leader in the acquisition of the good—the secret and sacred token of the great providence» 273.

Now the act of faith is an act of the will, according to Clement, and firm and true faith augments the momentum in the direction of knowledge. Consequently, «the exercise of faith directly becomes knowledge, reposing on a sure foundation» 274, which is the divine authority itself. Such then is the natural prerogative of him who has received faith or assented to the first indemonstrable principles of knowledge to apprehend knowledge, if he desires. Thus developing a perfect knowledge on «the foundation» of faith 275.

In conclusion therefore Clement’s theory of assent manifests the importance he attributes to voluntary aspect of knowledge in general. The intellectual assent to the first indemonstrable principles of knowledge is considered as the foundation of knowledge.
From the discussion so far it can be seen that Clement attributes a mutual relationship to the roles of the intellect and will in the act of knowledge. He can therefore not be really accused of intellectual voluntarism.

As can be inferred from Clement’s theory of belief, he considers knowledge and in particular wisdom as a whole. In this sense, he emphasizes the voluntary psychological presupposition whereby wisdom also includes possession of the virtues. He does not assume an analytic or scholastic perspective in which the first principles are objects of the will (Ockham, Descartes). Clement’s notion of belief, as that of the ancient Greek philosophers, is not to be identified with the modern belief (of Hume for instance).

Clement, as a good Greek, is very intellectualistic. He is not a voluntarist nor a fideist in the modern sense. He does not use belief in order to solve critical problems nor to refute scepticism. For Clement, belief means simply conviction, personal commitment. It corresponds to the very common principle that one will not know if one does not want to know.

In the case of the Christian truth, an essential part of Clement’s notion of truth, he attributes the character of first principles to the contents of revelation. Hence the need to assent to them as the foundation for further knowledge. Clement’s theory of belief also reflects his view of the limitation of the speculative faculty.

CONCLUSIONS

As can be inferred from the foregoing study, Clement’s conception of knowledge comprises the apprehension of all truth be it natural or supernatural, speculative or practical, human or divine, demonstrable or based on faith. He no doubt possesses and proposes a comprehensive approach to knowledge.

Clement’s theory of the Logos, his Christian conception of human psychology as well as his theory of symbolism and his theory of pístis constitute essential aspects of his theory of knowledge. To these must be added Clement’s conception of contemplation and wisdom which reflect the intimate connection bet-
ween intellectual and moral perfection in his concept of knowledge. Their fundamental role in Clement’s gnoseological doctrine is evidenced by his exposition of the Christian gnosis. The latter is considered to be the knowledge of things human and divine. According to Clement perfect knowledge must therefore lead to the perfect contemplation of God, the most perfect object of knowledge and the ultimate goal of real wisdom.

1. Clement’s anthropological view is very much inspired in the Christian doctrine of the divine element in man, the spiritual soul. Hence the sense of the supernatural is a recurrent aspect of Clement’s theory of knowledge. From Platonism he is influenced by the doctrine of the world of immaterial forms and from Christianity by the indispensable role of the divine Logos in human knowledge.

A fact that stands out in Clement’s theory of knowledge is his optimistic conception about the human capacity to attain true knowledge of reality. Hence his criticism of philosophical scepticism. In the human acquisition of knowledge, Clement counts with the following sources: a common natural apprehension of reality, involving sense perception and intellectual abstraction; a natural revelation as in the case of the philosophers, and a supernatural revelation. All these are conceived as harmonious and complementary towards the acquisition of the perfect knowledge of things human and divine. As a consequence of Clement’s realistic and comprehensive conception of knowledge, the Logos is considered as a metaphysical and a gnoseological principle. Clement envisages a close affinity between the human intellect and the Logos, considering them as ontological principles of human knowledge.

Clement’s theory of knowledge is to be considered in view of his Christian notion of man understood as endowed with sense perception and intellectual apprehension. In his view the latter proceeds from the former by abstraction. Although the two are indispensable for knowledge, only to the intellect is knowledge attributed properly speaking. Clement’s anthropological stand, in view of his theory of knowledge, takes into account all the essential elements in human nature: the spiritual soul infused at creation and its rational faculties as well as the senses. The acquisition of knowledge is considered to result as combined roles of these faculties.
Although Clement does not expound a highly developed psychology as is later to be found in St. Thomas’ works, he nevertheless takes the first steps in the right direction among the Christian thinkers. He possesses a substantially Christian anthropology, the Platonic influences notwithstanding. He affirms that the intellect is the proper faculty of knowledge and that although knowledge is immaterial, it nevertheless starts with sense perception. Hence Clement considers sense experience as one of the pillars of truth and the ladder to knowledge.

It can be said that Clement’s anthropological stand, in view of his theory of knowledge, takes into account all the essential elements in human nature: the soul and its rational faculties as well as the senses. According to Clement, therefore, knowledge is possible thanks to man’s possession of the spirit infused at creation, the soul, the ruling faculty and the senses. Thus Clement rejects philosophical scepticism and the suspension of judgement as principles of knowledge. He admits the possibility of doubt on the basis of the incoherence between propositions and the reality apprehended by the intellect. In Clement we can already find the idea that the truth is the coherence between the human intellect and reality; an idea later to be developed by St. Thomas Aquinas. Nevertheless it is the limitation of the human mind that Clement considers to be the cause of logical sceptism, and not the nature of things.

Clement attaches an indispensable role to sense perception in human knowledge. It provides the first data of knowledge for the intellect thus serving as the ladder to intellectual apprehension. All human knowledge starts from some sense perception and advances by progressive abstraction from matter but always refers to reality. Clement’s realistic approach to knowledge leads him to shun sensism and empiricism as well as any materialist approach to knowledge. He does not consider the truth of sense perception as being absolute.

2. Apart from abstraction, such logical acts as demonstration, definition, and dialectic proceedings are all attributed by Clement to the intellect because only with them is there real application of the intellect. To this end Clement regards them as acts of the intellect that result in the acquisition of truth. Clement firmly agrees with the Platonic doctrine that real knowledge is of the im-
mutable and intelligible reality. Consequently the intellect is the appropriate faculty for knowledge. In this regard he makes quite an interesting and firm criticism of Empiricism. He maintains that bound in this earthly body, man apprehends the sensible objects by means of the senses; but that he grasps intellectual objects by means of the logical faculty itself. Accordingly he points out that the object of knowledge is not only that which is subject to sense experience.

In his conception of knowledge, the ethical and the speculative aspects are intimately linked. Hence his notion of abstraction from matter extends not only to the intellect but to the separation of the knowing subject from the passions in order to acquire perfect knowledge. In this regard Clement emphasizes the need for separation from matter and from the passions in order to possess perfect contemplation. It seems that Clement’s notion of abstraction is a manifestation of the general tendency of the Alexandrian school to see the passions in a gnoseological context. However he points out that the most profound contemplation starts with knowledge of created reality. He affirms that if one expects to apprehend all things by the senses alone, one has fallen far from the truth. According to him, although the senses contribute to the apprehension of the truth, not all truth is subject to sense perception. Consequently the human intellectual faculty can apprehend realities which are above the reach of the senses.

As we can see so far, Clement maintains the classical scheme of knowledge whereby from sense perception, followed by abstraction, we attain intellectual apprehension. This idea is closely linked to Clement’s view of knowledge as contemplation and particularly so when he speaks of the knowledge of immaterial beings and of God. As has been seen above, according to Clement, knowledge is, properly speaking, proper of the rational powers and therefore characterised by judgement and reason. These rational powers are therefore directed to mental objects or concepts which have their foundation in reality. The adequate relationship between reality, concept and language is thus necessary for them to be true knowledge. Hence Clement’s affirmation of the importance of the logical inquiry in which the rational faculties act in a reasoning process.
Consequently, in Clement's view, separation from the sensible things, particularly from the body, is the only way to achieve the contemplation of the intelligible world which is the object of the intellect. Thus it is to be concluded that Clement's notion of abstraction, although not very sophisticatedly developed, expresses the essential idea that the objects of the intellect are the immaterial forms of sensible realities. These forms are obtained from sensible things through intellectual abstraction and through them the intellect knows the infinity of particular things. Clement's operative notion of knowledge leads him to extend this idea to the abstraction from the passions in order to acquire perfect knowledge.

3. In the gnoseological theory behind Clement's thought, the extramental reality is always the touchstone of man's knowledge. This fact, together with his positive attitude to knowledge, also shows that his logic is not founded on pure mental constructions. This becomes even more evident after discussing his concepts of definition and scepticism. The fact that reality is the touchstone of knowledge is reflected in Clement's view on the intellectual processes in the acquisition of knowledge. This is reflected in his ideas on logic in which he is strongly influenced by the Aristotelian doctrine of scientific demonstration and by Platonic dialectics.

Clement's notion of demonstration contains the essential elements of the Aristotelian theory. For instance, Clement affirms the necessity of first undemonstrable principles, the presence of at least two true and different premises, logical syllogism and the right conclusion. In expounding how Clement articulates these essential elements, it has been possible to have another glimpse at our author's positive and realistic approach to knowledge.

The use of Aristotelian terminology, the realistic distinction between the three elements of knowledge mentioned above (names, concepts and things) and the discussion on the ten categories, shows the Aristotelian inclination of Clement's logic. However Clement does not make a strict distinction between Aristotelian logic and Platonic dialectics. Rather, he attributes to the latter the importance Aristotle attributes to the former. It can be inferred that Clement strongly holds the view that for there to be logical truth, the terms employed must really express the
reality they signify (Cfr. section above on definition). Furthermore, since names have their ultimate foundation in the reality they are meant to refer to, Clement points out that a logical truth is scientific in the measure in which it corresponds to the reality signified by it.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Clement’s notion of demonstration contains the essential elements of the Aristotelian concept of demonstration. For instance, Clement affirms the necessity of first indemonstrable principles, the presence of at least two true and different premises, logical syllogism and the right conclusion. In expounding how Clement articulates these essential elements, it has been possible to have another glimpse at our author’s positive and realistic approach to knowledge. Clement affirms that there is a distinction between demonstration, syllogism and analysis. The distinguishing characteristic being that true demonstration is only possible if the premises correspond to, and truly express, the reality of the matter in question. Otherwise, one is dealing with mere syllogism. Thus in Clement’s gnoseological theory, extramental reality is always the touchstone of man’s knowledge. This fact, together with his positive attitude towards knowledge, also shows that his logic is not founded on pure mental constructions. This becomes even more evident after discussing his concepts of definition and scepticism.

From Clement’s account of definition it must be concluded that his account reflects a profound influence from Aristotelian doctrine and terminology — directly derived or otherwise. According to him, a definition therefore expounds the essence of a thing, for instance man as a rational, laughing animal. It is however incapable of accurately comprehending the complete nature of the thing. For a scientific definition it is necessary to divide the genus into at least two essentially necessary species for the sake of brevity. By means of uniting the principal species, a definition exposes the essence of a thing in the qualities expressed.

Clement’s dialectics is an act of the intellectual faculty that by discerning the true and the false ascends to the most excellent essence of all reality in accordance with the science of things human and divine which is the true gnosis. Similarly, dialectics, which Clement considers as a function of the intellect, is regarded as the logical discussion of intellectual subjects, with selection and
assent. This intellectual act establishes by demonstration, allegations respecting truth, and demolishes the doubts brought forward. Thus Clement’s conception of dialectic is entirely Platonic and not Aristotelican although Clement’s syncretism leads him to use Aristotelican philosophical method (logic) and Platonic dialectic. Although he does not really separate logic and dialectic, he nevertheless highlights dialectic to a greater extent.

4. Nevertheless, Clement is of the view that not all knowledge responds to logical analysis owing to the complexity of reality and our knowledge of it. According to him, the most sublime truths are not immediately apprehended by the intellect but through symbols. Clement sees an appropriate need for some use of symbolism in the understanding of revealed truth which he considers to contain deeper meanings. The origin of Clement’s symbolism, derives from the influence of the mystery religions and that of the esoteric philosophical systems. These include especially Pythagorism, Platonism and Stoicism. However, the immediate origin of Clement’s symbolism can be attributed to his literary dependence on Christian Platonism, in particular Philo, on Scripture and the gnostic literature. Together with all these, Clement’s syncretic method must also be taken into account.

Clement emphasizes the esoteric nature of the most sublime realities and consequently of the knowledge about them, since the intellect is not perfect. This for Clement is the foundation of symbolic knowledge. The origin of his theory of symbolism can be traced back to the influence of the oriental mystery religions, the Greek mysteries, Scripture and Clement’s dependence on the philosophical tradition of his time.

5. For Clement, knowledge is a voluntary act, in its cause, compatible with being formally an intellectual act. Hence the very important roles he attributes to the intellect and to the will in his conception of knowledge. This also reflects another aspect of Clement’s notion of knowledge. According to Clement, knowledge is operative and leads to human perfection, contributing to man’s attainment of his ultimate goal. Hence the intellectual, spiritual, logical and moral elements of knowledge are all brought into intimate connection in Clement’s gnoseology.

Clement’s conception of the voluntary nature of knowledge is seen in his theory of pistis, in which he intends to develop a
doctrine of belief or assent to the truth. The general thesis is that (from the point of view of its cause) knowledge is a voluntary act and consequently one would not know if one does not will to know. Clement finds a parallelism between the nature of the Aristotelian notion of the undemonstrable first principles of demonstration and the objects of belief. To this end the first principles of demonstration are to speculative knowledge what the data of revelation are to religious knowledge. In this regard the revealed truths are the first undemonstrable principles of religious knowledge.

The basis of Clement’s theory of belief is that the demonstration of scientific knowledge cannot go on ad infinitum. There must therefore be some starting principle which being an evident truth or a conclusion is the object of belief. Thus Clement applies the Aristotelian idea of the intellectual apprehension of the first principles of demonstration to his doctrine of belief. To this end he points out that the knowledge of the first cause of the universe, the Creator, is not the subject of demonstration.

6. Clement’s notion of knowledge as wisdom transcends mere natural human wisdom or practical knowledge. His concept of wisdom comprises philosophical, theological and the Christian gnosis. Wisdom ought to lead to the possession of the eternal and unchangeable habit of contemplation which is at the same time operative on to complete perfection. The idea of contemplation in Clement reflects unmistakable Platonic and Christian influences as can be inferred from his conception of the objects of contemplation. For him contemplation is undoubtedly something spiritual; a purely intellectual act. It is an intellectual vision and speculation.

As regards philosophical wisdom, Clement’s conception of philosophy as a divine gnoseological instrument in history is quite original. His thesis is that philosophy is of divine origin and had been given to the Greeks as the Old Testament was given to the Jews to prepare them for the reception of Christian wisdom. Thus philosophy as well as revelation have a common origin and are directed to the same end.

Clement’s concept of true philosophy is unquestionably eclectic. In his evaluation of Greek philosophy, he holds Plato and Pythagorism in high regard and condemns Stoic materialism and determinism. The Peripatetic doctrine which limits divine providence is also criticized by Clement. His strongest criticisms are
reserved for the philosophy of Epicurus and the Sophists. Nevertheless, Clement admits that the best Greek philosophers who had truly philosophized, had attained some aspects of the truth.

7. At the core of Clement's eclecticism is his view that truth is truth and universal wherever it may be found. Hence there is a harmonious relationship between true speculative knowledge and Christian truth. All true knowledge is a participation in the Logos who is Wisdom. The relationship between reason and faith is a crucial problem in Clement's whole thought. There is no doubt that the solution he provides sheds a lot of light on the theory of knowledge behind his thought. For Clement, there is a harmonious relationship between reason and faith. The mutual relationship between Philosophy and Revelation is based on their common divine origin and goal. The relationship between them is therefore considered as harmonious and complementary.

Clement's merit lies in his establishment of the fundamental balanced principle in the reason-faith relationship. A more profound and systematic theory of the relationship between faith and reason will later be developed by St. Thomas. Clement is the first to lay down in a firm way the principle that God, being the same author of the natural and the supernatural, does not permit any contradiction nor the devaluation of the truth attained by the intellect. Nevertheless, the revealed truth is superior. In Clement we can already find the germ of an essential aspect of Christian philosophy. Hence he has been considered the precursor of Christian philosophy, later to be developed by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Finally it is worthwhile mentioning at this point that all these elements present in Clement's thought already contain substantially complete the gnoseological doctrine later to be received by the mediaeval Christian culture. These include Aristotelian epistemological elements, aspects of the Platonic doctrine of ontological knowledge and the importance of symbolism that later exercises a great influence in speculative theology. In a word it could be said that in Clement the Agustinian and Thomistic programme is already marked out. Clement is truly the first in Christian philosophical thought.
NOTES

1. Dr. H.B. Timothy, *The Early Christian Apologists and Greek Philosophy*, Assen, 1973, p. 73, footnote n. 6 (from the editor Prof. Dr. C. J. De Voget, et al.)
2. *Cfr. Str.* II.IV, 13.2
3. *Str.* IV.I, 3.2. The rule of the truth referred to by Clement in this passage is the scriptures and the Christian tradition which he considers the touchstone of truth. The same idea is referred to by canon of tradition (*Str.* I.I, 11.3) or canon of faith (*Str.* V.XIV, 131.1; VII.XVI, 94.5) or rule of the gnostic (*Str.* I.I, 1.4) as well as ecclesiastic tradition (*Str.* VI.XV, 125.2)
4. *Cfr.* Str. II, 15.2
6. *Cfr.* A. Cleveland Coxe, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* by The Rev. Alexander Roberts, D.D., and James Donaldson, Vol. II, Eerdmans, Michigan, 1983 p. 344; See *Elucidation* V. Conformity with the Christian notion of truth and therefore with reality and revelation is the essential criterion for Clement’s judgement of the truth of any knowledge. A. Cleveland Coxe, referring to the passage above, has rightly affirmed that «This is a valuable passage for the illustration of our author’s view of the nature of tradition, as a canon «from the creation of the world; a tradition preluding the tradition of true knowledge».
7. *Str.* I.XIV, 60.3
8. *Str.* I.XIV, 60.4
10. *Str.* VI.XVI, 136 etc. *Cfr.* John I, 26 and also *Str.* VI.XIV, 114.4 and *Str.* II.XVI, 72.2 for man’s likeness to God in a spiritual sense.
12. *Str.* VI.IX, 72.1 and 72.2
13. *Cfr.* *Str.* I.XXVII, 171.1
18. *Str.* V.XIII, 88.2. *Cfr.* Plat. *Tim.* 30b; 69c and 89e. The idea of effluence is quite recurrent in the book of wisdom, for instance Wisd. 7, 25 and in
Middle-Platonism as has been rightly pointed out by R. Witt, The Hellenism of Clem., «Class. Quart». 25, 1931, pp. 195-204. Also to be seen in cfr. Protr. VI, 68.2. Although Clement relates this idea of effluence of divine dispensation to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Cfr. Str. VI.XVI, 134.2), he nevertheless makes it clear that «it is not as a portion of God that the Spirit is in each of us». (Str. V.XIII, 88.3. cfr. Gal. 2, 28)

19. Str. VI.XVI, 133.1
20. Str. VI.XVI, 134.2
21. Str. VI.XVI, 134.3
22. Str. VI.XVI, 135.1
23. Str. VI.XVI, 135.3
25. Str. VI.XVI, 135.4
26. Ibid., 136.4
27. Ibid., 136.5-137.1 This realist line of thought is later developed to a higher level by such Christian philosophers as St. Thomas Aquinas.
28. Cfr. Str. II.XX, 110.4.
29. Str. II.XX, 111.1-3.
30. Str. II.XI, 51.6
31. Str. VI.XVI, 136.1
32. According to Clement «...gnosis, is essentially a contemplation of existences on the part of the soul, either of a certain thing or of certain things, and when perfected, of all together» (Str. VI.VIII, 69.3)
33. A more extensive treatment of contemplation is dealt with in Chapter IV of this work.
34. Str. I.XX, 99.3
35. Ibid.
36. Cfr. VI.IX, 78.3
37. Cfr.Ibid. 78.2
38. Str. V.I, 7.4 cfr. Plato, Fedon 79 cd; 81e etc.
39. Ibid. 7.5 cfr. I Cor. 13,12. Also cfr. R. Mortley, The Mirror and I Cor. 13,12 in the Epistemology of Clement of Alexandria, «Vigilae Christianae», 30, 1976, pp. 109-120. He has rightly observed that Clement mitigates the idea of the obscurity of the vision in a mirror. The idea of mirroring is «considered as a legitimate and valid way of obtaining knowledge». (Ibid. p.120)
40. Str. V.VI, 33.4-6. cfr. Plato, Theaet, 155e
41. Str. II.IV, 15.1
42. Cfr. V.XIV, 89.2-5; VII.V, 29.2; VII, 37.1-2; Prot. V, 66-3. Other criticisms of Stoic materialism also occur in Str. II.XXII, 135.3; VI.XIV, 114.5; VII.XIV, 88.5.
44. Cfr. Str. VI.IX, 86.1 In many occasions Clement doesn’t fail to use expressions from Scripture if he thinks they express his idea better. «Thus Scripture says, that «the spirit of perception» was given to the artificers from God. And this is nothing else than understanding, a faculty of the soul,
capable of studying existences, of distinguishing and comparing what succeeds as like and unlike..." (Str. VI.XVII, 154.4)

45. To this end he finds St. Paul’s and Plato’s words very convenient. «Thence says the apostle: «now we see as through a glass, but then face to face» by those sole pure and incorporeal applications of the intellect» (Str. V.XI, 74.1; I Cor. 13, 12.). Also cfr. Méhat, Étude sur des Stromates de Clément, Paris 1966, p.203.

47. Cfr. Str. V.I, 11.4
48. Str. VI.XVI, 135.1
49. Str. VI.XVI, 137.1
50. Str. VI.XVI, 136.5
51. Cfr. Str. II.IV, 13.2
52. Str. II.IV, 13.3
53. Ibid.
54. Str. VII.I, 3.1 cfr. Str. II.XI, 48.2
56. Cfr. Osborn, op. cit. p.147. It does not seem that Osborn is justified in maintaining that «Clément did not regard sense-perception as a means of discovering truth». (Ibid.)
57. Cfr. Str. VII.I, 3.2
58. Cfr. Str. VII.I, 2.4ff
59. Str. VII.I, 3.2 In this definition there is a mixture of Stoic and Platonic doctrines.
60. Str. V.I, 6.1
61. Cfr. Aristotle, Topics, I 11 105a 3-9
63. Str. II.II, 9.5
64. Str. II.XI, 50.1
65. Cfr. Ibid., 50.2
67. Str. II.XI, 57.6
68. Str. II.II, 20.3
69. Str. II.XI, 51.1
70. Str. V.XI, 67.2-3. Also see Str. V.XIV, 106.1 and VII.XII, 71.3 as well as Plato, Phaedo, 65e — 66a; 67d; and 80c — 81a for the notion of the true philosophy which is discussed in chapter V of the present study.
71. Str. V.XI, 71.2-3 Cfr.Str. VI.XI, 90.4
73. Cfr. Albinus, Did. 5, 4-5 p.157 H
74. Cfr. Robert P. Casey, Clem. of Alex. and the Beginnings of Christian Platonism, «Harv. Theo. Rev.», 18, 1925, p.76. This hints at Clément’s intellectual mysticism in which comprehension is so perfect that the distinction between subject and object becomes unreal.
75. Cfr. Str. IV.VI, 40.1 for reference to the intimate connection between the ethical and the theoretical aspects of perfect knowledge.
76. R. Mortley, 1 Cor. 13, 12. p.112
77. Str. IV.III, 12.2
78. Cfr. Str. IV.XX, 139.5 - 140.1; V.XI, 67.3; VI.XI, 86.1 and VII.VII, 40.1-2
79. Str. IV.XXV, 155.1 Speaking negatively about the passions Clement points out that, «those who abstain from these things give their thoughts to the divine things, and partake of the gnostic food» (Str. V.IV, 26.2)
80. Str. V.XI, 67.4
81. Str. VI.XV, 126.3
82. Str. IV.XXV, 155.2 Cfr. Aristotle, De Anima, III 429a 27, for this Platonic view; Str. V.XI, 73.3. The identification of the intellect with God also appears in Str. II.XI, 51.1 and IV.XXV, 162.5. Cfr. E. Osborn, The Philosophy of Clem., Cambridge 1957, pp. 38-44.
83. Str. VIII.VIII (P.564b)
84. Str. I.II, 20.3
85. Cfr. I.XXX, 99.3
86. Cfr. Str. II.XVII,
87. Cfr. Str. VI.XI, (p.500a)
89. Str. IV.XXV, 155.1-2; V.IV, 26.6; V.XI, 73.3 and VI.XV, 126.3
90. Cfr. Str. I.I, 18.2; I.VI, 35.2 and I.IX, 43.1ff
91. Cfr. Str. I.VI, 35
93. Ibid. Osborn has pointed out that these Categories refer to Aristotle’s ten categories. Cfr. Osborn, op. cit. p. 151. See note n. 5
94. Some authors are of the view that the Eighth Book of the Stromata, is not properly speaking part of the Stromata, but a note-book of extracts which Clement had made, probably from different lectures or from written treaties on logic. Cfr. Witt, Albinus and the history of Middle Platonism, Cambridge 1937, pp. 31-39; Lilla, op. cit. p.120ff., note n. 3. Pohlenz, Klemens von Alexandria und sein hellenisches Christentum, Göttingen Nachrichten, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 1943 p.111. The same idea also appears in J. von Arnim, De Octavo Clementis Stromateorum libro, Rostock, 1894, p.12.
95. Osborn, op. cit. p.148
96. Ibid.
97. In the following sections we will discuss these points, except the first and the last. The former will be discussed in the chapter on philosophy, chapter V. The spirit of Clement's approach to the problem of knowledge can be deduced from his following words: «But it is suitable for him, who is at once a lover and disciple of the truth, to be pacific even in investigations, advancing by scientific demonstrations, without love of self, but with love of truth, to comprehensive knowledge» (Str. VIII.III, 1ff.)
98. Str. VIII.VIII, (p.564 of the English translation used)
99. Cfr. Str. VIII.VIII,
100. Cfr. Str. VIII.VIII, 23 ( p.564a )
101. Osborn, op. cit. p.150
102. Ibid.
103. Str. VIII.III.5 (p.559b)
104. Str. VIII.III (p.559b)
105. Str. VIII.IV, (P.562a)
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Cfr. Str. VIII.III, 6
109. Str. VIII.III.6 (p.559b)
110. Ibid.
111. Str. VIII.III, 6 (p.559b)
112. Str. VIII.III (p.560a)
113. Cfr. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
115. Str.
116. Str. VIII.II (p.559a)
117. Str. VIII.VI, (p.563b)
118. Str. VIII.II, (p.559a)
119. Cfr. Str. VIII.IV (p.560b)
120. Ibid.
121. Str. VIII.IV (p.560b)
122. Ibid.
123. Ibid.
124. Str. VIII.IV
125. Ibid. Plato, Timaeus
126. Ibid.
127. Cfr. Str. VIII.IV
128. Str. VIII.VI (p.563a)
129. Ibid.
130. Cfr. Str.
131. Ibid.
132. Cfr. Ibid.
133. Str. VIII. V (p.562a)
134. Cfr.Str. VIII. V (Ibid.)
135. Str. VIII.V (Ibid.)
136. Cfr. VIII.I, (p.558a)
137. Str. VIII.I (p.558a)
138. Str. (p.558a)
139. Ibid.
140. Cfr. Str.
141. Ibid.
142. Str.
143. F. Osborn, op. cit. pp. 148-153
metodo di ascesa intellettuale verso le realtà prime, la via conducente a Dio per gradi (mondo fisico, potenza celesti, etc.).

146. Str. I.XXVIII, 177.1-2

148. Cfr. Str. I.XXVIII, 177.3
149. Cfr. Str. VI.XVII, 156.2; Str. II, 18.3-4 etc. This positive view of dialectics in Clement is a far cry from sophism and from the dialectics in modern and contemporary philosophy where the aim is not the attainment of truth based on the reality of things.

151. Str. I.XXVIII, 178.1 As in other places, the expression «eye of the soul» is of Platonic origin. Cfr. Resp. VII 533d; Str. I.XXIV, 164.4; Protr. VI, 68.4 and XI, 114.1

152. Cfr. Str. VI.VII, 54; and also cfr. Osborn _op. cit._ pp. 153-157
153. Cfr. Plato, _Republic_, 532
154. Cfr. Plato, _Sophist_, 253

156. Str. I.VIII, 39.5
157. Str. VI.XVII, 156.2 Cfr. Str. I.X, 44.2-45.3; I.I, 18.2-4; 43.1
158. Str. I.XXVIII, 179.4 Also Cfr. I.VIII, 39.4; IX, 44.3; and VI.X, 80.4-82.3
159. Cfr. Str. VIII.I, 4.2
160. Cfr. Str. V.VIII, 45.1
161. Cfr. _Paed._ III,97
163. Cfr. _Paed._ II.2, 20.4; Str. VI.XI, 88.3 and Prot. XI.111.1; I.10.1. The most fundamental of such complicity is no doubt the fact that all beings participate in being to varying degrees.


165. Cfr. R. Mortley _op. cit._ p.199
166. Str. VI.XI, 90.4
168. _Ibid._ About astronomy Clement has this to say: «For treating of the descriptions of the celestial objects, about the form of the universe, and the revolution of the heavens, and the motion of the stars, leading the soul nearer to the creative Power... This science makes the soul quick to understand... It enables the soul to find agreements and relations so as to hunt out likenesses in unlike things». Cfr. Str. VI.XI, 90.3.

169. Cfr. Str. V.V, 29.4; LXXII, 150.1-3; where Clement speaks about reflection of truth in reference to Plato and Pythagoras. Also Cfr. Str. I.I, 10.2 and
Plato, *Theaetetus* 206d; *Timaeus* 46.a ff. as well as *The Republic*, 514.a ff. and *Laws* VII 792d. The idea of the reflection will be treated in chapter IV of the present study.

170. *Str. V.X*, 65.2 Cfr. *Str. XI*, 71.5; XII, 78.3 and 81.4-82.4; as well as E. Marsh, The use of mysterion in the writings of Clem. etc., «Journ. of Theol. Study»*, 37, 1936, p. 64

171. Cfr. R. Mortley *op. cit.* p.196, «La pratique de l’étymologie, présente chez Clement, indique que les reflets de la réalité se retrouvent à travers tous les langages».

172. *Str. V.X*, 65.2.

173. Cfr. *Str. V.IX*, 56.3

174. Cfr. *Rep.VI* 494a; *Theaet.* 155e; *Epinom.* 973e. Also see *Str. V.III*, 17.4; VI, 33.5; I, 7.6 respectively.


176. Cfr. *Str. V.III*, 17.4-5 and *Str. I.XIX*, 92.3

177. Cfr. *Str. VI.XV*, 126.1-127.4 Also see Clement’s interpretations of Matt. 10,26 (Str.I.I, 13.3).


180. See for instance how Albinus, *Did.* 179. 33-4, in reference to Plato’s *Timaeus* 28c approves of the use of esoterism and symbolism. This famous passage of Plato is also quoted by Clement (Cfr. *Prot.* 68.1).


184. Cfr. *Str. V.XIII*, 87.3ff, LXIV, 133 and *Prot. VI*. 68.2ff

185. *Str. II*, 14.3 and 15.1

186. Cfr. *Str. I.II*, 20.4ff

187. *Str. II*, 18.1. This is also Clement’s aim as can be inferred from *Str. I.XII*, 56.3, VII, 2.1 and VII.XVIII, 110.4

188. *Str. V.IV*, 22

189. *Str. V.IV*, 23.1

190. *Str. V.V*, 27.1


192. *Str. V.VI*, 86.2

193. *Str. V.IV*, 21.4

194. *Str. V.IX*, 56.5. Also Cfr. *Str. V.IV*, 25.5; V.IX, 57.2 and V.VI, 32.1

195. *Str. V.VIII*, 46.1

196. *Str. V.IX*, 57.1 Cfr. *Str. I.I*, I.2; 13.1ff. as well as *Str. VI.VII*, 57.1 and VII.XVI, 94.5ff. for references to such philosophical and heretical errors.

197. *Str. V.IX*, 58.3. Cfr. *Str. VI.XV*, 127.3ff and V.IX, 58.5

198. *Str. V.IX*, 56.4
199. Str. V.IV, 19.3. Cfr. Str. I.II, 20.4
201. Cfr. Ibid.
202. Cfr. Summa Theologica, I-II, q. 15, a. 1, ad 3
203. Cfr. Str. V.XIII, 86.1; II.II, 8.4 and V.I, 3.2 Also Cfr. Plato, Laws 630 b, c; Aristotle, Eth. Nic. VI. 2. 4 for references to voluntary choice as the basis of all intellectual enterprise.
204. Str. II.XII, 55
206. R. Mortley, Connaissance... p.108
208. Cfr. R. Mortley. op. cit. p. 110
210. Cfr. S. Lilla op. cit., p. 131,
213. Cfr., for instance, Salvatore R.C. Lilla., Clement of Alexandria, A Study in Christian Platonism and Gnosticism, Oxford University Press 1971, p. 118. According to Henry Chadwick, Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition, Oxford, Claredon Press, 1987, pp. 51ff, the following questions, among others, have been adduced as those to which Clement sought to respond with his doctrine of pístis: (i) the attack of some Greek philosophers, who strongly criticized the faith as an unreasoning opinion formed without proper consideration nor demonstration. (Cfr Str. II.II, 8.4.) (ii) On the other hand, Clement had also to face the dangerous attitude of those simple believers who insisted on the all-sufficiency of faith; rejecting any attempt to give a scientific content to their Christian beliefs and to develop their pístis into a higher form of knowledge. (Cfr. Str. I.IX, 43.1). These are obviously the same Christians who are opposed to the study of Greek philosophy.
214. Cfr. Str. VIII.III, 7.6 and 8.1
215. Str. VII.XVI, 95.5-6
216. Str. VIII.III, 6.7-7.2
217. Cfr. Str. VII.XVI, 95.6
219. Str. II.IV, 14.1-2. Thus for Clement the authority of the Logos surpasses the rational demonstration (cfr. Str. V.I, 5.4; and Str. VII.XVI, 93.2 ff.) and this
is the unity between the faith and human knowledge of things natural and supernatural. The idea of what is known before is an Aristotelican concept that appears in Post. an. I.2.71b21; Metaphysics. I.9. 992b 30; Ethic. Nic. VI.3.1139b25-27.

220. It must be mentioned that Lilla has given some attention to the sources of Clement's doctrine of Pístis. According to him and in agreement with I. von Armin, De Octavo Clementis Stromateorum libro (Rostock Progr., 1894) p. 12 and with Ernst, W. De Clementis Alexandrini Stromatum libro octavo qui fertur (Diss. Gröttingen, 1910), the underlying ideas of Clement's doctrine of the Pístis and the material on logic in Str. BK. VIII are mainly based on notes taken by Clement himself during his reading of some handbooks of logic.

221. Cfr. Prior an. 64b32-6, Post. an. 71b20-3, 72a7-8, 84a30-3 as well as in Eth. Nic. 1140b31-3.


223. Str. II.II, 9.5. Cfr. Str. II.IV, 13.4-14.1; VII.XVI, 95.6 and in VIII.III, 6.7-7.2; Also cfr. Rep. VI.511b for similar ideas.

224. Str. II.IV, 13.2

225. Attention has been drawn by Lilla to Clement's possible dependence on a work by Theophrastus or a Peripatetic school-handbook and on Antiochus of Ascalon through the Adversus Mathematicos, VII.226 and 218. Cfr. Str. II.II, 9.5; and Str. II.IV, 13.2; and VIII.III, 14.3, respectively.

226. Str. II.IV, 13.3

227. On the dependence of the passages of Str. II.IV, 13.2 and VIII.III, 7.3-4 on Antiochus, also cfr. R.E. Witt, Albinus and the History of Middle Platonism, Cambridge, 1937, p. 34.

228. Cfr. Lilla, op. cit. p.131-2 where attention has been drawn to these close correspondences between Antiochus, Philo and Clement (ibid. footnote n. 2)

229. Str. II.II, 8.4. For the definition of faith as assent Cfr. Str. II.II, 4.1; 9.1; III, 11; VI, 27-28; V.I, 3.2; V.XIII, 86.1 and VII.II, 8.1.

230. Str. II.XII, 54.5-55.1. Clement is very much of the idea that the freedom of assent is in man's power. Cfr. Str. I.I, 4.1 where he speaks of the voluntariness of faith. Also see Str. V.I, 3.2 and III, 11.1-2.

231. Cfr. Lilla, op. cit. 127-9


233. Str. II.II, 16.3. This is one of Clement's few positive references to the atheistic Epicurus, whom he nevertheless does not miss the opportunity to criticize in this passage (Cfr. Str. I.I, 1.2; I.XI, 50.6). On more about preconception see Str. II.II, 8.4 and Str. I.IV, 28.1.


235. Str. II.IV, 17.1

236. Str. II.IV, 16.2

237. Str. II.XI, 48.1. Cfr. Str. VIII.III, 5.1-3 and 7.6. There is a Stoic influence in this definition of demonstration as has been rightly noted by Witt, op. cit. p. 33. See footnotes 5 and 7.
NOTES

238. Str. VII.XVI, 98.3.
240. Str. II.VI, 28.1.
242. CfR. Str. II.IV, 15.5.
243. Str. II.VI, 26.4-5
244. CfR. Str. II.XVII, 77.2
245. Str. II.XV, 62.1
246. Str. II.XVII, 77.4. CfR. Str. I.I, 1.1; V.XI, 71.5 and VII.X, 55.3.
247. Str. I.I, 4.1
248. CfR. Str. LXVII, 83.5-84.2; Str. II.XIV where Clement speaks about involuntary acts and Str. II.XV, where he deals with voluntary acts.
249. CfR. Str. II.III, XX,115-116.
250. Plato, *Republic* X 617 e. CfR. II 379b, c. *Tim.* 42d; *Laws* X 904c. cfr. Str. II.XVI,75.2-3; IV.XXIII,150.4; V.XIV,136.4; VII.II,12.1. This idea is similiary to be found in *Paed.* I.8, 69.1
251. CfR. Str. III.VII, 58.1; IX,65.1 for allusions to the independence of the will.
252. Str. I.XVII, 84.5
253. cfr. Str. II.XV,62.4, cfrStr. II.VI,26.3
254. cfr. Str. II.XIII,59.6
255. CfR. Str. IV.XIX,124.1-2, VI.XI,95.5
256. cfr. Str. VI.IX,78.4; VII.XVI,101.6
257. Str. LXVIII, 89.1
258. Str. VI.XVIII, 151.5
259. Str. V.III, 16.1
260. Str. VI.XVIII, 150.1-2
261. Str. VI.VIII, 68.3-69.1 It is interesting to note Clement’s use of the Stoic definition of impulse in this passage. CfR. Chrysippus., *fr. moe* 462 Arn. Also cfr. Str. II.XIII, 59.6 and Str. I.I, 4.1 for references to interior free will.
262. *Ibid.*, 69.2
263. Str. II.II, 9.2
265. Str. II.II, 9.3
266. Str. VI.VIII, 69.3
267. Str. V.V, 40.1
269. Str. II.II, 8.2.
270. Str. II.V, 24.1
271. Str. II.V, 24.2. CfR. II.IV, 13.4-14.3 for Clement’s demonstration that the science of the first principle of the universe is reducible to faith and not to demonstration.
272. Str. V.I, 7.1. This same idea is applied to salvation since according to him our salvation depends on our free will but not without divine gift. To this
end Clement refers to Eph. 2.5: «For by grace we are saved», pointing out that, «not, indeed, without good works».

273. Str. V.I, 7.8
274. Str. II.II, 9.4
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