

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA: *EAC* 1.546–49; *ECE* 1.298–99; *ECL* 1.254–55; *EECh* p 180; *EEChr* pp 214–16; *NCE* pp 943–44; *NDT* 191–92; *OCD* pp 344–45; *ODCC* pp 364–65; *Pat.* 2.5–36.

Little is known with certainty about the life of Titus Flavius Clemens (c. 150–c. 215), called Clement of Alexandria after the city with which he is most identified. By the fourth century, as **EPIPHANIUS CYPRUS** (bishop of Constantia in Cyprus 367–403) notes, Church tradition placed Clement’s birthplace either as Alexandria or Athens (*Panarion* 32.6 [Holl 1915 p 434]), the latter theory being favored by modern historians. Born of pagan parents, upon conversion to Christianity Clement traveled widely through Italy, Syria, and Palestine, seeking instruction from prominent Christian teachers. At length, he came to Egypt, where he became the student of one whom the fourth-century **EUSEBIUS** and a number of modern scholars identify as Pantaenus (**HISTORIA ECCLESIASTICA** V.xi.2 [Schwartz and Mommsen 1903 p 452]), though Peter Karavites argues that “Nothing permits us to identify with a good chance of probability the teacher of Clement in Christianity” (1999 p 3; cf. *EEChr* pp 214–16 vs. Cosaert 2008 pp 6–7, *EAC* 1.547, *ECE* 1.298, *Pat.* 2.5, Ferguson 1974 p 15, and *EECh* pp 180). Pantaenus was the earliest known head of the School of Alexandria, then an unofficial association giving instruction to catechumens, and at Pantaenus’s death c. 190 Clement succeeded to his position. Eusebius suggests that one of Clement’s students was **ORIGEN** (c. 185–c. 254), the brilliant and controversial figure who followed Clement as head and became the foremost representative of the School of Alexandria. Some modern historians, however, object to this assertion, noting that Origen fails to cite Clement in his writings and speaks of Pantaenus, not Clement, as his teacher (Karavites 1999 p 5; cf. *ECA* 1.547 vs. *ECE* 1.298). In any event, somewhere between 200 and 203 Clement appears to have left Alexandria during a period of persecution under Septimius Severus (Roman emperor from 193 to 211). After spending some time at Caesarea in Cappadocia, he may have ended his days teaching in Antioch.

Like Origen, Clement’s status and orthodoxy have been the subject of some debate. Venerated as a saint through the sixteenth or seventeenth century, his name appeared in Roman martyrologies until it was excised by Clement VIII (Pope 1592–1605) on the advice of the ecclesiastical historian Cesare Baronius (1538–1607) due to the dubious nature of some of Clement’s doctrines, which had been condemned for example by Photius (see below). He has been taken by scholars variously as a Platonist, a Stoic, an Aristotelian, or a Gnostic seeking to reconcile Christianity with the best of Greek thought (see Lilla 1971 pp 1–8, Ashwin-Siejkowski 2008 pp 3–10, Itter 2009 p 3, Edwards 2015, and Castillo and Gonzaga 2017; see also the wide-ranging analysis of Osborn 2005). Clement himself praises the Christian “gnostic” who attains the deeper *gnosis* or knowledge of the Logos, in contrast to the follower of heretical Gnosticism; nevertheless, the theological distinction is not always clear in his works. Clement’s less-than-systematic approach poses in fact somewhat of a challenge to the modern reader: scholars have criticized him, for example, for his disconcerting “absence of method” (*NCE* p 943). Even so, his works offer a reward to the persistent, being “a virtual mine of philosophical, historical, archaeological, and poetic material” containing references to works which otherwise would be unknown (Karavites 1999 p 8).

Seven main works by Clement survive. There is evidence for the (mainly indirect) knowledge of two of these in early England: the **STROMATEIS** and **HYPOTYPOSEIS** (see the entries below).

Clement's five other surviving works are as follow.

The *Protrepticus* [*Προτρεπτικός πρὸς Ἕλληνας*] or “Exhortation to the Greeks,” composed around 190 or 195 (on the dates of composition, see *ODC* p 345 and Ferguson 1974 p 17, respectively). In the *Protrepticus*, the Logos (see Eveleth 2013) depicts the error and immorality of pagan belief and leads men through baptism to the true doctrines of Christianity; in the process, the text provides a wealth of information about Greek mystery religions. The *Protrepticus* together with the following work comprise the first two parts of an uncompleted trilogy.

The *Paedagogus* [*Παιδαγωγός*], or “Tutor,” composed around 190–02 or 197. Here the Logos provides the convert with introductory moral training in preparation for deeper teaching from the Scriptures to be expounded in a third volume, the *Didascalus* [*Διδάσκαλος*] or “Teacher.” While some have posited the *Stromateis* (see below) as this third volume, at least one prominent scholar dismisses the theory as “nonsense” (Ferguson 1991 pp 11–12; cf. *NCE* p 943, *EAC* p 547, and Oliver 2017 p 4).

The *Excerpta* consist of selections from the work of Theodotus, a Valentinian Gnostic of whom Clement appears to approve but of whom we otherwise know nothing.

The *Eclogae*, reflecting the prophetic trend in Scripture as a whole rather than the Old Testament prophets in particular (Ferguson 1991 p 15), contain sections on baptism, the Christian Gnostic, and miscellaneous Scriptural commentary. While some scholars have viewed the *Excerpta* and *Eclogae* as excerpts made by someone else of the lost, completed eighth book of the *Stromateis*, others see the works rather as raw material that ultimately was never woven into a larger collection (see *ODCC* p 364 and Havrda 2017 pp 1–9 vs. *Pat.* 2.15 and Ferguson 1991 p 12).

The homily *Quis diues saluetur?* [*Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος;*]—or “What Rich Man Will be Saved?”—was composed around 203. In this treatment of Christ's encounter with the rich man wishing to inherit eternal life (Mk 10:17–31), Clement urges detachment from if not necessarily the renunciation of worldly goods (*ODC* p 344).

Besides these seven works, there are writings attributed to Clement in passing by Eusebius (*Historia ecclesiastica* VI.xiii.3 [Schwartz and Mommsen 1908 p 547]), such as the *Canon ecclesiasticus* dedicated to Alexander of Jerusalem (bishop of Cappadocia, d. 250/51); these, however, survive only in fragments, if at all (*EAC* 1.548 and 76; vs. Oliver 2017 p 8 and Cosaert 2008 p 12).

The only works in early England with citations of Clement by name are the **CANTERBURY BIBLICAL COMMENTARIES** and works by **BEDE**. The Commentaries (ed. Bischoff and Lapidge 1994), to begin with, record the oral exegesis of students at the school of **THEODORE OF CANTERBURY** and **HADRIAN OF NISIDA** from 670 to 690 (*ASL* p 177). They reveal at least a passing knowledge of the *Hypotyposeis* and *Stromateis*, though it remains uncertain as to whether Canterbury's library contained copies of these texts (see Bischoff and Lapidge 1994 pp 208, 412, and 523; and below).

Bede drew indirectly on Clement on six occasions in as many works: **DE TEMPORUM RATIONE**, **COMMENTARIUS IN MARCUM**, **EXPOSITIO ACTUUM APOSTOLORUM**, **MARTYROLOGIUM**, **RETRACTATIO IN ACTUS APOSTOLORUM**, and **COMMENTARIUS IN APOCALYPSIM**. M. L. W. Laistner counts eight references to Clement in Bede (1933 pp 90–91 and 1936 pp 258–29), but two citations in *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* V.34 and *Retractatio in Actus Apostolorum* V.34 (CCSL 121.31, lines 70–73 and 121.129, lines 36–48) regarding Gamaliel’s address to the Sanhedrin and his covert faith (Acts 5:34) are actually to the **PSEUDO-CLEMENT RECOGNITIONS** I.65 (see **APOCRYPHA**).

Of Bede’s six references to Clement, the first, found in *De temporum ratione* 66 (the “biographical item” in Laistner’s terms [1933 p 90]), briefly casts an eye on Clement’s life, making note of his role in a philosophical debate. In the course of his *Chronica maiora* (chapters 66–71 of *De temporum ratione*), Bede notes that Clement, “Alexandrinae ecclesiae presbyter” (“a priest of the church of Alexandria”), debated the Stoic philosopher Panthenus in *Anno mundi* 4163 (CCSL 123B.502, lines 1188–90). As elsewhere in Bede, the reference derives ultimately from Eusebius; in this case, however, it comes not from Rufinus but from **JEROME**’s **CHRONICON** (Helm 1984 p 211), his Latin translation of Eusebius’s now-lost *Χρονικοί Κανόνες*. Later works probably known to the early English which recount this episode include **PROSPER OF AQUITAINE**’s **EPITOMA CHRONICORUM** and **HAYMO OF AUXERRE**’s **HISTORIAE SACRAE EPITOME** (see below).

Bede’s other quotations or citations from Clement derive from the Latin translation of Eusebius’s *Historia ecclesiastica* by **RUFINUS OF AQUILEIA** (c. 345–411), the assiduous translator and historian who was strongly influenced by Origen and who viewed Clement by association as “eminent, catholic in every respect and learned, and, despite his doctrine that the Son was created by God, [as] honoring the glory and eternity of the Trinity” (Ferguson 1974 p 17). Bede’s heavy reliance on Rufinus-Eusebius leads Laistner to suggest that Bede knew of Clement only through Rufinus or a combination of intermediate sources: Laistner includes no volumes by Clement in his reconstruction of authors and works in Bede’s library (1935 p 266; see also pp 258–59 and 1933 pp 90–91). For details, see the entries below on the *Stromateis* and *Hypotyposesis*.

Other authors known in early England who make mention of Clement include Prosper of Aquitaine, Haymo of Auxerre, **SMARAGDUS**, **HRABANUS MAURUS**, Jerome, and **CASSIODORUS**.

Prosper’s *Epitoma chronicorum*, a source for such works as Bede’s **HISTORIA ECCLESIASTICA GENTIS ANGLORUM** (Beckett 2002), reproduces the episode of Clement’s debate with Panthenus (Mommsen 1892 p 433, line 741), as does Haymo of Auxerre’s *Historiae sacrae epitome* V.8 (PL 118.846A), on which **ÆLFRIC** probably draws for his **CATHOLIC HOMILIES** (see Godden 2000 p 165; Godden 1996); Haymo notes that in this contest of spiritual erudition Clement “blossomed abundantly” (*maxime effloruit*). Prosper draws on Jerome’s *Chronicon* for the episode, while Haymo may take his material from Bede’s *De temporum ratione*.

Smaragdus’s **EXPOSITIO LIBRI COMITIS**, another source for Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies* (see Godden 1997), follows Bede’s *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* XII.2 in citing Clement for its discussion of James’s martyrdom (PL 102.389D), as does Hrabanus Maurus’s **HOMILIAE IN**

EVANGELIA ET EPISTOLAS 109 (PL 110.350A). Another text by Hrabanus Maurus, **DE UNIVERSO** V.1 (PL 111.88C), quotes from Bede’s *Retractatio in Actus Apostolorum* I.23 in reference to the two candidates chosen from among the Seventy for Judas’s position. At present perhaps the only early English work suspected of drawing on these texts by Hrabanus is the anonymous Old English version of **OROSIUS’S HISTORIAE ADVERSUS PAGANOS** (see Jayatilaka 2001).

Jerome, in addition to noting the debate with Panthenus in his *Chronicon*, makes mention of Clement in his **EPISTULAE**. In one of his letters, in a brief survey of numerous early Church writers, Jerome speaks of Clement as “uir meo eruditissimus” (“the most learned man [known] to me”), attributing to him the eight books of *Stromateis*, the eight books of *Hypotyposeis*, a work “against the Gentiles”—most likely the *Protrepticus*—and the three books of the *Paedagogus* (Epist. 70.4 [CSEL 54.705.15–19]). Jerome provides a more extensive list in his account of Clement in **DE VIRIBUS INLUSTRIBUS** 38, where he refers among other things to the homily *Quis diues saluetur?* Jerome notes that Clement succeeded Pantaenus as the head of the School of Alexandria, and follows Eusebius in asserting that Origen was Clement’s disciple (Richardson pp 26–27).

It is Cassiodorus, however, who provides us with one of the more perceptive assessments of Clement. In his *Institutiones*, having mentioned Clement positively in a list of Greek Fathers (I.praef.4 [Mynors 1937 p 5 lines 15–20]), Cassiodorus speaks about his translation of notes by Clement on 1 Peter, 1–2 John, and Jude—quite possibly extracts from the *Hypotyposeis*. Having explained that he did not reproduce Clement verbatim, but omitted certain “slightly offensive” passages, Cassiodorus offers this ambivalent appraisal: while affirming that on many subjects Clement showed “penetrating insight” (*subtilitas*), on occasion, Cassiodorus says, Clement expressed himself “less than prudently” (*incaute*) (*Institutiones* I.viii.4 [Mynors 1937 p 29 lines 16–22]).

Whether alluding to Clement’s forensic skills, citing the *Hypotyposeis* to discuss Mark’s Gospel, the martyrdom of James, or the election of Judas’s successor, or drawing on the *Stromateis* to consider the purity of Nicolaus, the degree to which the authors above rely on Clement is not extensive. Most, in fact, refer to the early Father only in passing. It is difficult to imagine, therefore, that any early English authors who encountered these references would gain detailed insight either into Clement’s life or his theology. Perhaps the most one might assert is that assiduous readers of Bede’s works may in the end have been familiar with Clement’s name.

Hypotyposeis [CLEM.ALEX.Hypo.]: *CPG* 1380.

ed.: Stählin, Früchtel, and Treu 1970 pp 194–215.

MSS – OE Vers
none.

Quots/Cits
see below.

Refs

none.

The *Hypotyposeis* [Ἰποτυπώσεις], the “Sketches” or “Outlines,” of which only fragments remain, appear to have been an eight-book exegetical work consisting of notes on Scriptural passages; these gave not an exposition of the entire text but an allegorical interpretation of selected verses (Karavites 1999 p 7 and *Pat.* 2.16–17). To the *Hypotyposeis*, for example, we owe the now-debated attribution of the book of Hebrews to Paul (Ferguson 1974 p 181). One medieval perspective on the work may be found in the writings of the Byzantine scholar Photius, patriarch of Constantinople in 858–67 and 878–86. Reviewing a copy of the complete text, Photius condemned the *Hypotyposeis* as heretical for asserting (among other things) that the Son was created by God and became human not in the flesh but in appearance alone (*Bibliotheca* 109 [PG 103.383A–83C]; see Ashwin-Siejkowski 2010 pp 75–93 and 57–74, and Hägg 2006 pp 180–206).

Quots/Cits

At one point, the Canterbury Biblical Commentaries say that “Clemens Stromatheus” (“Clement the Stromatist”) “in quinto codice suo” (“in his fifth book”) teaches that Jesus baptized Peter, who went on to baptize Andrew (THEODOR.Cant.bib.comm. EvII, 82, 1–2; ed. Bischoff and Lapidge 1994 p 412). The sentence is not actually from the *Stromateis*, however. John Moschus (a monk near Jerusalem, c. 550–634), who includes the quotation in his *Pratum spirituale* (176 [PG 78.3045]), identifies it as deriving from the *Hypotyposeis* (Bischoff and Lapidge 1994 pp 208, 412, and 523)—though whether the phrase “quinto codice” in the Commentaries refers to the *Hypotyposeis* itself or the lost fifth book thereof is ambiguous.

Bede’s quotes Clement’s *Hypotyposeis* second-hand by way of Rufinus-Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, to discuss the composition of Mark’s Gospel, the martyrdom of James, and the election of Judas’s successor.

In his Prefatory Epistle to his commentary on Mark (CCSL 120.431, lines 5–17), Bede quotes word-for-word from Rufinus’s translation of Eusebius’s *Historia ecclesiastica* II.xv.1E–2 (Schwartz and Mommsen 1903 p 141, 3–19) for an account of the composition of Mark’s Gospel. This account, Rufinus and Bede state, is to be found in the sixth book of Clement’s “Dispositiones”—that is, the *Hypotyposeis*. Eusebius recounts the story again when discussing the *Hypotyposeis* in his list of Clement’s works (*Historia ecclesiastica* VI.xiv.6–8 [Schwartz 1908 p 235, 18–28]; cf. *BKE* p 115).

In his exegesis of the book of Acts (12.2 [CCSL 121.58, lines 18–25]), Bede cites Clement when speaking of the apostle James’s martyrdom, as he does later in his *Martyrologium* (see below). Bede here draws directly on Rufinus’s translation of Eusebius (*Historia ecclesiastica* II.9 [Schwartz and Mommsen 1903 p 125, lines 14–24]), which names the seventh book of the *Hypotyposeis* as its source. Later works known to the early English that repeat this episode from Bede include Smaragdus’s *Expositio Libri comitis* and Hrabanus Maurus’s *Homiliae in Euangelia et Epistolas* (see above).

As in the commentary on Acts, for his discussion of James's death in the *Martyrologium* (PL 94.985B; cf. Dubois and Renaud 1976 p 136) Bede relies on Rufinus-Eusebius (*Historia ecclesiastica* 2.9 [Schwartz and Mommsen 1903 p 125, lines 19–21]), which cites the *Hypotyposeis* as its source.

In his supplemental comments on Acts (*Retractatio* I.23 [CCSL 121.108, lines 110–12]), speaking of Matthias's election to Judas's place as an apostle after Christ's ascension (Acts 1:15–26), Bede notes that Clement, “uir per omnia doctissimus” (“a man most learned in all matters”), states that the two candidates for Judas's position were chosen from the Seventy (see Lk 10:1). This information about the candidates is also found in Eusebius's *Historia ecclesiastica* I.xii and II.i (Schwartz and Mommsen 1903 p 81, line 15 – p 83, line 7 and p 105, lines 11–14); as Bede does not directly quote from Eusebius, however, and as Eusebius does not cite Clement as a source, Ogilvy (*BKE* p 116) tentatively suggests that Bede may have had access to a lost portion of the *Hypotyposeis*, possibly through an intermediate source.

Stromateis [CLEM.ALEX.Strom.]: *CPG* 1377.

ed.: Stählin, Früchtel, and Treu 1985 (Books I–VI) and 1970 pp 1–102 (Books VII–VIII).

MSS – OE Vers
none.

Quots/Cits
see below.

Refs
none.

Clement's eight books of *Stromateis* [Στρωματεῖς]—literally, “Tapestries,” a term meaning “Miscellanies” or loosely woven compositions—were composed around 200–02 or 199–204. Disparate, obscure, and perhaps the most important of Clement's writings, the *Stromateis* treat such subjects as the relationship between philosophy and Christian doctrine and the nature of the perfect Gnostic Christian. The eighth, incomplete book consists of various comments on logic, drawing primarily on Plato and Aristotle. The *Stromateis* survive in one primary manuscript, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 5.3 (s. xi) <<http://mss.bmlonline.it/catalogo.aspx?Shelfmark=Plut.5.3>>, in which also are found Clement's fourth and fifth extant works, the *Excerpta ex Theodoto* (“Extracts from Theodotus”) and the *Eclogae ex scripturis prophetis* (“Selections from the Prophets”).

Quots/Cits

The phrase “Clemens Stromatheus” is used as a sobriquet to identify Clement in the Canterbury Biblical Commentaries (THEODOR.Cant.bib.comm. EvII, 82, 1–2; ed. Bischoff and Lapidge 1994 p 412). See above on the *Hypotyposeis*. The Commentaries possibly draw on the *Stromateis* at another point, when they understand Abram's 318 servants (Gen 14:14) as a

type of the Cross; other writers to make the point, however, include Origen, **AMBROSE**, and **AUGUSTINE** (Bischoff and Lapidge 1994 pp 208, 322, and 452–53). A use of Clement’s work as a precise source is, therefore, difficult to discern.

Another indirect use of the *Stromateis* appears in Bede’s discussion in *Commentarius in Apocalypsim* II.15 (CCSL 121A.257) of the heretical Nicolaitans. Clement states that while the Nicolaitans understood Nicolaus’s action as an affirmation of sexual license, Nicolaus’s monogamy and his childrens’ chastity suggest that Nicolaus was in fact declaring his renunciation of fleshly passions. According to Laistner (1935 p 259 n 1), this derives from Rufinus-Eusebius (*Historia ecclesiastica* III.29 [Schwartz and Mommsen 1903 p 261, 6–22]). Eusebius’s account, drawn from Clement’s *Stromata* III.4.25–26 (Stälin, Früchtel, and Treu 1985, pp 207.6–208.9), relates an episode in which Nicolaus is said to have offered his beautiful wife to the apostles for any of them to marry. In contrast to Laistner, Ogilvy (*BKE* p 116) argues that Eusebius’s version is “not very close” to Bede’s; noting a parallel account in Augustine’s *De haeresibus* 5–6 (CCSL 46.291–93), he suggests that Bede’s citation “may rest either upon a gloss to Augustine, upon a combination of Augustine and Eusebius, or upon a passage in the lost *Hypotyposesis*.” Gryson (CCSL 121A.256) claims that this passage derives directly from Augustine. This is, therefore, a case of an indirect citation via an intermediary source, rather than evidence for Bede’s direct knowledge of the *Stromateis*.

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