

Clement of Alexandria and the Shaping of Christian Literary Practice

Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis* were celebrated in antiquity but modern readers have often skirted them as a messy jumble of notes. When scholarship on Greco-Roman miscellanies took off in the 1990s, Clement was left out as 'different' because he was Christian. This book interrogates the notion of Clement's 'Christian difference' by comparing his work with classic Roman miscellanies, especially those by Plutarch, Pliny, Gellius and Athenaeus. The comparison opens up fuller insight into the literary and theological character of Clement's own oeuvre. Clement's *Stromateis* are contextualised within his larger literary project in Christian formation, which began with the *Protrepticus* and the *Paedagogus* and was completed by the *Hypotyposesis*. Together, this stepped sequence of works structured readers' reorientation, purification and deepening prayerful 'converse' with God. Clement shaped his miscellanies as an instrument for encountering the hidden God in a hidden way, while marvelling at the variegated beauty of divine work refracted through the variegated beauty of his own textuality.

J. M. F. Heath is Associate Professor of Theology and Religion at Durham University. She is the author of *Paul's Visual Piety: The Metamorphosis of the Beholder*.

Clement of Alexandria and the Shaping of Christian Literary Practice

*Miscellany and the Transformation of
Greco-Roman Writing*

J. M. F. HEATH
University of Durham



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-84342-3 — Clement of Alexandria and the Shaping of Christian Literary Practice
J. M. F. Heath
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108843423

DOI: 10.1017/9781108918640

© Cambridge University Press 2020

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-84342-3 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page</i> vii
1 Introduction: A Christian among Roman Miscellanists	1
2 Clement's Miscellanism and the Scholarly Trope of Christian Difference	9
3 Studying Ancient Miscellanism: Defining Features, Scope and Method	23
4 Early Imperial Cultures of Miscellany-Making: Clement's Social and Institutional Contexts	56
5 Self-Introductions and Clement's Miscellanistic Vocation	81
6 Miscellany Titles and Clement's Divine Paratexts	120
7 The Miscellanist's Trope of Deselecting Titles and Clement's Conversion of Imagery	166
8 Muses in the Miscellanists' Frame	204
9 Clement's Theology of Hiddenness and the Logic of Christian Miscellanism	239
10 Mystery Initiation and Clement's Literary <i>Paideia</i> : The Making of a Christian Miscellanist	271

11	<i>Poikilia</i> : Theological Interpretation of a Miscellanistic Aesthetic	329
12	Conclusion	376
	<i>Appendix</i> The Literary Sequence of <i>Protrepticus</i> , <i>Paedagogus</i> , <i>Stromateis</i> (and <i>Hypotyposesis</i>)	382
	<i>Bibliography</i>	394
	<i>Index</i>	424

Acknowledgements

The initial time and space that were needed to get this project off the ground came in the form of an Alexander von Humboldt Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (2014–2016). For this, I am grateful to my academic hosts, Christoph Marksches and Markus Asper at the Humboldt University in Berlin, to the trustees of the Foundation for supporting my work and to my home institution, Durham University, for granting me leave to take up this post and still welcoming me back at the end of it. Thank you to Carol Harrison and Michael Squire for encouraging me to pursue this in the first place.

For critique of drafts, I am especially indebted to Lewis Ayres, who cheerfully offered to read the *whole thing* . . . a thankless task if ever there was one. Likewise, Teresa Morgan provided challenging and gracious criticism at key points. Others have read and responded helpfully to portions of the work in earlier versions: thank you especially to George Boys-Stones, Ruth Edwards, Dawn LaValle Norman and to those who gave feedback at research seminars and conferences in Berlin, Durham, Göttingen, Münster, Olomouč and Oxford. For generosity with their time and wisdom in conversation about all this, thank you especially to John Barclay, Jason König, Oswyn Murray, Ilaria Ramelli and Francis Watson. From 2016 onwards, the opportunity to work with the ACU-funded research project on ‘Modes of Knowing and Ordering Knowledge in Early Christianity’ was a particular gift, and I am grateful for discussion with ACU colleagues, especially Matthew Crawford, Michael Champion, Dawn LaValle Norman, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, David Runia, Jonathan Zecher and Lewis Ayres. To the anonymous readers for CUP, thank you for your constructive suggestions, which I have sought to take on board in