Hyperboreus 29: 1 (2023) 124–142
DOI: 10.25990/hyperboreus.j6h5-4016

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THE "JEWISH SIBYL" IN CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA'S *PROTREPTICUS*[1]

In chapters 6 and 7 of Clement of Alexandria's *Protrepticus*, devoted to the statements of Greek philosophers and poets about God the Creator, the biblical books, namely the Old Testament, are called the main source of true knowledge. In *Protr*. 69. 1–2, Clement hints that Plato's teaching may have a connection with the Old Testament law: citing the words of Moses about God being the criterion for truth, he compares them with the same thought in Plato's *Laws* (715 e 7 – 716 a 3). A bit further (70. 1–2), he says openly that Plato owes his "true laws and the view of God" to the Jews and cites the verses from the third book of the *Sibylline Oracles* (586–588; 590–594) on pious people, whom Clement identifies with the Jews. Then, in *Protr*. 71. 1, Clement stresses the same thought, giving it a more general form: Greek philosophers borrowed knowledge of God from the Jews. By showing that prominent representatives of Hellenic culture depended on the Scriptures, Clement develops an idea of plagiarism. According to this topos, Greek philosophers and poets who said something true about God the Creator are not independent in their maxims, as they borrowed them from the Jews. However, Clement mentions another source besides Moses from which the "son of Gryllus" (Xenophon) acquired true knowledge. He quotes a paraphrase of Socrates' monologue about the obviousness of God's power and the invisibility of his image[2] from *Memorabilia* (*Protr*. 71. 4):

[1] Clement's writings are quoted from the following editions: the *Protrepticus* and *Paedagogus*, ed. by M. Marcovich (1995; 2002) and the *Stromateis*, ed. by O. Stählin and L. Früchtel (1985; 1970). The text of the *Sibylline Oracles* is cited according to the edition by J. Geffcken (1902b).

[2] This passage is an extended paraphrase of Xen. *Mem.* 4. 3. 14, modified in a monotheistic spirit (Xenophon speaks not of God, but of the gods).

> Πόθεν ἄρα ὁ τοῦ Γρύλλου σοφίζεται ἢ δηλαδὴ παρὰ τῆς προφήτιδος τῆς Ἑβραίων θεσπιζούσης ὧδέ πως;
>
> Τίς γὰρ σὰρξ δύναται τὸν ἐπουράνιον καὶ ἀληθῆ
> ὀφθαλμοῖς ἰδεῖν θεὸν ἄμβροτον, ὃς πόλον οἰκεῖ;
> Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἀκτίνων κατεναντίον ἠελίοιο
> ἄνθρωποι στῆναι δυνατοί, θνητοὶ γεγαῶτες.
>
> Where does the wisdom of the Gryllus' son come from, if not from a Jewish prophetess foretelling: "What flesh can see with its eyes the true immortal God who dwells in the firmament? People – those who were born mortal – are not able to withstand even the rays of the sun".

The passage is quite unusual. Christian literature mostly considered the *Sibylline Oracles* to be pagan prophecies, although in reality the collection of oracles that has come down to us, which was used by Christian writers, consists of pseudepigrapha – works written by Jewish and Christian authors on behalf of pagan prophetesses. Such works preach monotheism and contain multiple elements of the Old and New Testament teachings and prophecies that have already "come true", combined with pagan motifs.[3] However, it seems that Clement presents a correct view on the origin of the *Sibylline Oracles*: Xenophon, unlike Plato, did not have access to the Scriptures, but he was familiar with the "Jewish" Sibyl, who speaks Greek.[4]

In academic literature, the question of Clement's "Jewish Sibyl", first noted in a study by Nicole Zeegers-Vander Vorst,[5] is still a matter of controversy. Zeegers-Vander Vorst had no doubt that Clement implied the Jewish origin of the Sibyl. She suggested that Clement was influenced by the third book of the *Sibylline Oracles*, in one of the passages of which the Sibyl speaks of herself as a relative of Noah, who migrated from Babylon to Greece and there became known as the Sibyl from Erythrae in Asia Minor (*Or. Sib*. 3. 809–829).[6] However, R. Buitenwerf believes

[3] For valuable surveys of the pagan, Jewish, and Christian traditions of the Sibyls, see Parke 1992; Schürer 1986, 618–654; Lightfoot 2007.

[4] The same combination of Xenophon's paraphrase and the passage from the Sibyl's prophecy also appears later in the selection of monotheistic quotes from pagan philosophers in the *Stromateis* (5. 108. 5). However, it is not mentioned that Xenophon borrowed his wisdom from the Sibyl, although Clement may have implied the same thing.

[5] Zeegers-Vander Vorst 1972, 203–205.

[6] Zeegers-Vander Vorst 1972, 204.

that one piece of evidence (*Protr.* 71. 4) is insufficient to suggest that Clement considered the Sibyl to be a prophetess of Jewish origin, for in other cases Clement identifies the Sibyl as Greek.[7] Buitenwerf supposes that, in *Protr*. 71. 4, he calls her a Jewish prophetess, not because she belongs to the Jews by birth, but because she gives oracles concerning that nation.[8] Such a solution seems unfortunate from the linguistic point of view[9] and is not quite convincing in the context. It was hardly important to Clement to mention the Sibyl making prophecies *about* the Jews while telling that Xenophon learned from her the doctrine of divine incomprehensibility, which has universal significance. On the contrary, mentioning the Jewish origin of the Sibyl was appropriate to the context in order to emphasize the divinely revealed nature of her teaching. In addition, in other passages, Clement's judgements about the Sibyl are not so straightforwardly in favour of her gentile origin as Buitenwerf assumes (more on this later).

J. L. Lightfoot is thus quite right to regard Buitenwerf's interpretation as implausible . She claims that Clement sees the Sibyl in *Protr*. 71. 4 (and elsewhere in the *Protrepticus*) precisely as a Jewish prophetess, "who makes prophecies for the Jews and whose revelations are on the same level as the Holy Scripture". She believes that Clement's attitude towards the Sibyl changes from treatise to treatise: while in the *Paedagogus* the prophetess appears to be a part of Greek culture, in the *Stromateis* her figure is ambiguous. More often she appears there belonging to paganism, but in one passage her testimony is cited along with *Deuteronomy* against

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[7] Buitenwerf 2003, 77–78.

[8] Buitenwerf wants to confirm his interpretation by mentioning that, earlier in *Protr.* 70. 1, without naming his source, Clement quotes *Or. Sib*. 3. 586–588; 590–594 and relates a description of the pious life of some people to the Jews, although this does not directly follow from the text. Buitenwerf therefore thinks that it was precisely because of this quotation that further in the text Clement called the Sibyl (a pagan but) Jewish in the sense of "prophesying about the Jews". Zeegers-Vander Vorst, in contrast, believes this passage to be a confirmation that Clement perceives the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess. It seems that the passage cannot serve as an argument in favour of either point of view. The identification of the pious people with the Jews was more or less obvious for Clement from the description itself, but this identification does not shed light on the origin of the Sibyl: it was usual for Christian authors to ascribe the revealed truth to Sibyls, when referring to any people, including Jews; but Sibyls remained gentile prophetesses for the Jews.

[9] Words in the genitive that depend on προφήτης / προφῆτις may refer to the event about which the prophecy is given, but there are no known examples of the genitive that would denote the person to whom these events will occur.

the testimony of a pagan author.[10] Lightfoot cites Zeegers-Vander Vorst (in connection with the views of Pseudo-Justin) that Christian literature was influenced by dual perception of the Sibyl being of Jewish origin, but later becoming one of the pagan Sibyls (viz. in the view of the author of the third book of the *Sibylline Oracles*). Nevertheless, Lightfoot appears not to trace Clement's "Jewish Sibyl" to the third book of the *Oracles*, as Zeegers Vander-Vorst did. Moreover, she does not make any assumptions about the sources of this view at all. She limits herself to pointing out that, in his interpretation of the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess, Clement is alone among Christian authors both before and after him. For the most part, they considered Sibyl to be pagan, but believed that she did not borrow true knowledge from the Old Testament literature as other pagans did according to the "plagiarism theory". On the contrary, she had her own privileged access to the truth and thereby confirmed the truth of the divine revelation. Lightfoot explains the exceptional position of the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess by the fact that Clement keeps the characteristics he inherited from Jewish literature.[11]

Lightfoot's interpretation of Clement's concept of the Jewish Sibyl seems generally correct, yet it still needs some clarifications. They relate to (1) interpretation of the Sibyl in various writings by Clement; (2) the origins of the Jewish Sibyl's image; (3) the attitude towards the Sibyl in the Christian tradition – Clement's view of Sibyl as Jewish is not as unique in the tradition as Lightfoot believes.

There is little evidence on the Sibyl's origin in the gentile authors. Until the Hellenistic period, only a few references to her name can be found: in the famous fragment of Heraclitus (fr. 75 Wehrli) and in the comedies of Aristophanes (*Pax* 1095); the Sibyl and the "others who have prophetic inspiration" (μαντικῇ χρώμενοι ἐνθέῳ) were also mentioned once in Plato's *Phaedrus* (244 b).[12] Initially, there probably was only one Sibyl. Heraclides Ponticus, however, already knows two Sibyls: the Erythraean (Herophile) and the Marmessian from the Troad, whose name is not mentioned (fr. 130–131 Wehrli). Apparently, this is the time when cities began claiming to be the birthplace of the prophetess one

[10] Lightfoot 2007, 82–84.

[11] Lightfoot 2007, 84–85.

[12] Lightfoot 2007, 4. The Platonic motif of divine ecstasy or madness was taken up by Jewish writers, including Philo of Alexandria, who presents the prophet's behaviour as ecstatic, incompatible with the ordinary state of mind (Philo, *Quis Here*. 249; 258–266).

after another. Thus, the name "Sibyl" gradually began to move into the category of a generalized designation of an inspired prophetess.[13] Lists of the Sibyls start to arise afterwards. The most significant of them was compiled by Varro: he mentions ten prophetesses in *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* named in accordance with the geographic principle (Lact. *Div. Inst*. 1. 6. 8–12 = Varro, *Ant. Rer. Div*. fr. 56 a Cardauns). The earliest mention of the Jewish Sibyl in pagan literature can be found in Pausanias. It is a part of a story about the connection of individual Sibyls with various cities. Pausanias (10. 12) was familiar with four Sibyls. He notes that the fourth Sibyl – Sabba – was born in Judea and was the daughter of Berossus and Erimantha. He also adds that others call her the Babylonian and Egyptian Sibyl.[14] There is no doubt that in this case Pausanias follows the Jewish tradition directly or through some intermediary. However, before considering Clement's attitude towards the version of Pausanias, we should first elaborate on the image of the "Jewish Sibyl" in the Hellenistic Jewish literature itself. The mention of the Jewish Sibyl appears at about the same time in Aelianus (*Var. Hist*. 12. 35), who mentions two alternative lists of the Sibyls. The first one consists of four names but does not include the Jewish Sibyl. The second one consists of ten names and does include her. Sure enough, Pausanias and Aelianus rely on different sources (their lists of Sibyls have considerable discrepancies), but there can hardly be any doubt that, in the end, the idea of the Jewish Sibyl goes back to the Hellenized Jewish tradition. Repercussions of Pausanias' version were found in other pagan and Christian authors: the closest is the judgement about the Sibyl made by the unknown author of the *Exhortation to the Greeks*, which was erroneously attributed to Justin Martyr (see below).

Addressing the Sibyl's image for exhortation purposes was a common technique in Jewish literature, especially during the Hellenistic period. The Jews, who, just like the Greeks, gave much importance to prophecies as a method of foretelling the future, composed them by themselves,

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[13] Stanley–Potter 2012, 1360.

[14] Paus. 10. 12. 9: ἐπετράφη δὲ καὶ ὕστερον τῆς Δημοῦς παρ' Ἑβραίοις τοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς Παλαιστίνης γυνὴ χρησμολόγος, ὄνομα δὲ αὐτῇ Σάββη· Βηρόσου δὲ εἶναι πατρὸς καὶ Ἐρυμάνθης μητρός φασι Σάββην· οἱ δὲ αὐτὴν Βαβυλωνίαν, ἕτεροι δὲ Σίβυλλαν καλοῦσιν Αἰγυπτίαν. With "Palestine", Pausanias means Syria, that is, the coastal strip of the Mediterranean Sea, as far as to Egypt; ὑπὲρ τῆς Παλαιστίνης is commonly thought to mean Judea, either as it is on a plateau *above* the coastal strip (see Hitzig–Bluemner 1910, 704) or as being "*outside* of Palestine" (see Bultrighini–Torelli 2017, 71; 322).

putting maxims about God the Creator into the mouth of the pagan Sibyl. Pseudo-epigraphs and prophecies written in Greek became their favourite tool for proselytising or converting pagans to Judaism, as later to Christianity. One of the most striking works of this kind are the *Sibylline Oracles*. A part of the collection that stands apart is Book 3 of the *Oracles*, in which the Sibyl clearly speaks of herself as a Jewish prophetess. This book is undoubtedly of Jewish origin,[15] as well as being the oldest book in the collection. Researchers agree that it was written in Egypt in the 1st–2nd century BC.[16] At the end of the book, the Sibyl (the prophecies are given on her behalf) speaks of herself as a relative[17] of Noah, who was sent to the Greeks from Babylon by the gods, it seems, in association with the destruction of the Tower of Babel and the separation

[15] The Jewish origin of Book 3 is generally recognized among scholars, starting from the first decades of the 19th century. However, some Christian additions were allowed, which cannot be called indisputable. The surviving quotations from this book belong to Christian authors only; the earliest of them is Theophilus of Antioch (Buitenwerf 2003, 124–126). The 829 verses that make up Book 3 can be called one of the most extensive works of Hellenistic Judaism after the writings of Philo of Alexandria (Collins 2005, 82).

[16] Book 3 has been attracting the attention of researchers more than any other book of the collection. By the beginning of the 20th century, there was a prevailing opinion about the dating of its main part: it was agreed on the middle of the 2nd century BC. The reason for this was primarily the mention of the "young" seventh king of Egypt, that is, Ptolemy VI or Ptolemy VIII; some parts of the book may belong to the 1st century BC, see primarily the work of J. Geffcken: Geffcken 1902a, 5–7; Collins 1974, 30–33. However, there are a number of scholars who argue that the expression "the seventh king" was used in its literal meaning. They date the whole book to the 1st century BC (see Buitenwerf 2003, 126–130: between 80–40 BC). The Egyptian origin of the book was never put under dispute, due to the significant role it assigns to Egypt and its rulers.

[17] *Or. Sib.* 3. 827 f.: τοῦ μὲν ἐγὼ νύμφη καὶ ἀφ' αἵματος αὐτοῦ ἐτύχθην, τῷ τὰ πρῶτ' ἐγένοντο· τὰ δ' ἔσχατα πάντ' ἀπεδείχθη. We find a similar self-identification of the Sibyl in *Or. Sib.* 1. 283–306, where the prophetess speaks of herself as the wife of one of Noah's sons who escaped on the ark and became a witness to the life of the sixth, happy generation after the flood. It is probable, but not certain, that νύμφη has the same "daughter-in-law" meaning in 3. 827 f. (cf. LSJ s.v. 3), see Lightfoot 2007, 412. This version of Book 3 is generally considered older than one of the Books 1 and 2 (Buitenwerf 2003, 300), cf., however, Waßmuth 2011, 178 f. (The Sibyl as Noah's daughter-in-law is an innovation of the author of Books 1 and 2; 3. 823–829 is a later addition, made under the influence of Books 1 and 2). The idea that Sibyl was the daughter-in-law or relative of Noah appears repeatedly in subsequent literature: *Schol. Plat. Phaedr*. 244 b; Suda s.v. Σιβύλλα Χαλδαία, etc.

of languages. Living among the Greeks, she was given the name Sibyl from Erythrae in Asia Minor, that is, the most famous of the pagan Sibyls (3. 809–829).[18]

Jewish authors, putting statements about God into the mouth of the famous pagan prophetess, have probably striven to show the Greeks that their own prophetic authority has been calling to preserve monotheism since ancient times. The Sibyl from Book 3 predicts that only the Jews will remain faithful to the true religion, thereby asserting their religious authority over other nations.[19] Buitenwerf, following I. Vossius, thinks that later some of the Jews themselves began to believe in the authenticity of the Sibylline predictions compiled by the Jews. For example, there was a prophecy popular among Egyptian Jews during the period when Romans seized and took control of Egyptian land. It was told in the prophecy that the Messiah would come when three men would reign in Rome and the Empire would seize the land of Egypt. Taking the capture of Egypt as a fulfilment of the prophecy, the Egyptian Jews expected the speedy arrival of the Messiah.[20]

Information about how later Jewish authors used and perceived the *Sibylline Oracles* is scarce. According to excerpts from the writings of Eusebius, Aristobulus does not quote the prophetess at all; Josephus Flavius refers to her once (*AJ* 1. 118). Lightfoot believes that the Jews of the Hellenistic era no longer perceived the Sibyl as a pagan figure and in their view she had a deeper connection with Enoch than Pseudo-Sophocles. In contrast, in Christian literature the Sibyls were understood mainly as pagan prophetesses.[21] This judgement, however, seems a bit exaggerated: we are only aware of two direct references to the Jewish origin of the Sibyls in the Jewish literature itself, that is, the Sibyl's self-identification as a relative of Noah (*Or. Sib*. 3. 809–829) and the Sibyl's own characterization of herself, which depends on the forementioned text, as Noah's daughter-in-law, who escaped with him and his family on the ark during the flood (1. 283–306). In the first case, the Sibyl identifies herself with the pagan Sibyl from Erythrae, that is, she does not act as a *Jewish* prophetess, but only as a pagan of Jewish origin. That is exactly why in later Christian literature she is determined dually – either as Jewish, or as Babylonian, then as Erythrean.

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[18] Buitenwerf 2003, 371–372; Lightfoot 2007, 5.
[19] Buitenwerf 2003, 33.
[20] Buitenwerf 2003, 20.
[21] Lightfoot 2007, 79–80.

Subsequently, Christian authors began to adopt texts of the Jewish oracles as well as a tendency to refer to the Sibyl as a pagan authority. The earliest mention of the Sibyl in Christian literature can be found in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, a treatise from the first half of the 2nd century AD.[22] In one of the visions (that make up the whole work) the hero crosses paths with an old woman in luminous clothes holding a book. Hermas receives long prophecies and instructions (*Herm*. 1. 2–3; 6–7) from her. Then a beautiful young man appears to the hero to interpret what has been said: at first, he asks Hermas if he knows who the elderly lady was. Hermas replies that this woman is the Sibyl, and the young man refutes him, arguing that in reality this is the Church of God.[23] Thus, the authority of the Sibyl in the *Shepherd* is somewhat diminished – as the very first creation of God and the highest source of revelation, the Church is opposed to her.[24] At the same time, the Sibyl was the first to be associated with the highest wisdom by Hermas, so it cannot be excluded that the author of the *Shepherd* thus indicates the high authority of the Sibyl in Christian circles.

Afterwards, the image of the Sibyl became widespread among Christian apologists as well. The first to repeatedly quote the *Sibylline Oracles* was Theophilus of Antioch in the work *To Autolycus*, which is usually dated shortly after 180 AD.[25] He mentions only one Sibyl and quotes *Or. Sib*. 3. 97–103; 105 and 8. 5 (*Ad Autolyc*. 2. 31), as well as three passages from the *Oracles* that have no correspondence in the surviving collection (fr. 1 and 3 Geffcken = *Ad Autolyc*. 2. 36; fr. 2 Geffcken = *Ad Autolyc*. 2. 3). In all these cases, Theophilus cites the Sibyl as an indisputable authority, separating her from pagan authors who stole the truth from the Scriptures (2. 37) or who sometimes express true judgements about the gods, because they are released (apparently, due to their own efforts) from the influence of demons, who had earlier mastered them. Most pagan authors, however, still speak what is dictated by the demons (2. 8).[26] Theophilus contrasts these contradictory statements of pagan poets with the inspiration of the Jewish prophets and puts them on a par with the Sibyl who prophesied among the Hellenes (*Ad Autolyc*. 2. 9):

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[22] Parke 1992, 152–173.

[23] The Sibyl mentioned in the *Shepherd* is often identified with the Cumaean Sibyl, as the action takes place not far from the Cumae (Parke 1992, 154).

[24] Parke 1992, 156.

[25] On the dating of the work, see Engberg 2014, 106.

[26] Lightfoot 2007, 82.

> καὶ οὐχ εἷς ἢ δύο ἀλλὰ πλείονες κατὰ χρόνους καὶ καιροὺς ἐγενήθησαν παρὰ Ἑβραίοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ Ἕλλησιν Σίβυλλα καὶ πάντες φίλα ἀλλήλοις καὶ σύμφωνα εἰρήκασιν, τά τε πρὸ αὐτῶν γεγενημένα καὶ τὰ κατ' αὐτοὺς γεγονότα καὶ τὰ καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς νυνὶ τελειούμενα·
>
> And not one or two, but many (prophets) appeared at different times among the Jews, like the Sibyl among the Hellenes, and they all expressed agreement with each other about what happened before them, what will happen after, and what is happening in our time right now.

In 2. 36 he speaks of her as a prophetess "among the Hellenes and other pagans". These statements are usually understood in such a way that Theophilus, considering the Sibyl divinely inspired, locates her entirely within Greek culture.[27] Nevertheless, it cannot be categorically excluded that Theophilus had in mind the Sibyl from the third book of the *Sibylline Oracles*, who acted in the Greek world as the Erythrean Sibyl, but was originally from the family of Noah and came to the gentiles from Babylon.

As for other representatives of apologetics, they rarely turned to the image of the Sibyl, referring to her antiquity for argumentative purposes. Thus, Tatian, one of Clement's predecessors, mentioned the Sibyl in order to prove the chronological antiquity of Moses in relation to Homer. Claiming that before Homer there existed not only Moses, but also other poets, he cites Orpheus and the Sibyl as examples (*Or*. 41), just as Clement does in the *Stromateis* (1. 2. 108).

Thus, in the early Christian tradition before Clement, the attitude towards the Sibyl and her prophecies differed. Some authors did not give her much interest and rarely referred to her as an authoritative figure; others, in contrast, emphasized the divine inspiration of the Sibyl and put her on the same level as the Jewish prophets. The source of her inspiration is nowhere named clearly, but it is undoubtedly a direct divine inspiration, which Theophilus distinguishes both from plagiarism from the Holy Scriptures and from the contradictory attempts to approach the truth on their own by pagan poets. We have not encountered direct statements about the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess, but there is nothing that would exclude her Jewish origin.

As we do not know of any statements made by Christian authors before Clement about the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess, a question arises whether Clement came to this idea under the influence of Hellenized

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[27] Lightfoot 2007, 82: "for Theophilus Sibylla is Greek".

Jewish literature (where, as in *Or. Sib*. 3 and 1, it was said that the prophecies belonged to the Jewish Sibyl) or indirectly, through the works of pagan authors that (most likely under the influence of the same Jewish literature) contained references to the Jewish Sibyl just like the writings of Pausanias and Aelian (see above).[28] The choice between these possibilities is not easy, but we will try to show that a solution is possible.

Let us dwell on Clement's own attitude towards the Sibyl in more detail. Lightfoot notes that Clement interprets this figure in different ways. In the *Protrepticus*, Clement speaks of the Sibyl only in the singular and also refers to her as an absolute authority: having a poetic and prophetic gift, she acts as a mentor, contrasting her prophecies with the prophecies emanating from Apollo; she proclaims herself a prophetess of the true God and heralds the death of pagan sanctuaries (*Protr*. 50. 1–3); she refutes polytheism and calls for enlightenment (27. 4–5); she is also quoted next to the books of *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy* in the denunciation of the deity's images (62. 1–2). Moreover, she expresses true maxims about God, sings a "song of salvation" (74), and by inspiration (ἐνθέως) likens deceit to darkness and knowledge to the sun and light (77). In 70. 2, the *Sibylline Oracles* (3. 586–588, 590–594) are quoted anonymously: these lines depict just and pious people (Jews, from whom Plato borrowed his ideal laws, according to Clement, see above). As already mentioned, the Sibyl is called the "Jewish prophetess" in only one case (71. 4 – the monotheistic teaching that Xenophon borrowed from her), but it is likely that this name applies to her in other references, since Clement means only one Sibyl everywhere in the *Protrepticus*. In *Protr*. 50. 4 Clement

[28] The dependence of the pagan authors who tell us about the Jewish Sibyl on the Jewish *Sibylline Oracles* is strongly rejected by Buitenwerf (Buitenwerf 2003, 122) on the grounds that (1) this evidence only appears in the 2nd century AD, much later than *Or. Sib.* 3 (dated not later than the 1st century BC); (2) that the author of *Or. Sib.* 3 presents his work not as Jewish, but as belonging to the Erythrean Sibyl; and (3) forgeries of the pagan oracles were fabricated starting from the 2nd century BC, but before Pausanias and Aelian no one mentions the Sibylline books written by the Jews. These arguments are not convincing: (1) Pausanias and Aelian are independent of each other and each go back to different sources, so that the very version of the existence of the Jewish Sibyl could have arisen long before their lifetimes; (2) the Jewish origin of the Erythrean Sibyl who claims to be the author of *Or. Sib*. 3 is obvious from this book; (3) the sources of Pausanias and Aelian (they themselves do not mention the *Oracles of the Sibyls*), which have not come down to us, were, for one reason or another, inclined to accept the existence and, probably, the authority of the "Jewish Sibyl"; therefore, they had no reason to doubt the indication in the *Or. Sib*. 3 that the author of this work is a Jewish prophetess.

invites a pagan not willing to listen to the Sibyl to hear the words of "his philosopher, Heraclitus of Ephesus". That is, Clement makes it clear that the Sibyl does not belong to the pagan world. In chapter 77, Clement moves from the grains of truth that are available to pagan poets to the writings of the prophets, showing a clear path to the truth and denouncing all misbeliefs. The "prophetess" Sibyl opens a series of quotations from the Old Testament prophets (*Or. Sib*. fr. 1. 28–35) with her song. "Much divinely inspired", comparing misbelief with darkness and knowledge with the sun and divine light, she guides to the right choice. As we can see, in the *Protrepticus* there is nothing that would contradict the understanding of the Sibyl as a one-of-a-kind prophetess, originally belonging not to Greek, but to Jewish culture, although she prophesied to the gentiles. For Clement the source of the truth contained in the prophecies of the Sibyl undoubtedly springs from her divine inspiration.[29]

In Clement's *Paedagogus*, the Sibyl is quoted only twice. In the passage 2. 10. 99. 3, her condemnation of vices (*Orac. Sib*. 5. 166–168; 4. 33–34) is quoted after the quotation from *Sir* 26:22, and she herself is contrasted with the text of the Holy Scripture as ἡ παρ' ὑμῖν ποιητική, "our poetess".[30] At first glance, Clement has the pagan Sibyl in mind here,[31] but if we assume that the Jewish Sibyl of Clement is the Sibyl of the third book of the *Oracles*, then she could well be called "our poetess" not because of her origin, but because of the place she acts in (Clement also repeatedly makes it clear that the Sibyl makes prophecies *for* the pagans in the *Protrepticus*).[32] The second mention, the quotation from

[29] Lightfoot also notes that, in four out of five citations from the *Oracles* in the *Protrepticus*, Clement calls the Sibyl προφῆτις, a word that he does not use for her elsewhere (Lightfoot 2007, 83 n. 130). It is not easy to interpret this fact: on the one hand, this word is definitely associated with the Old Testament prophets and the prophecy of Christ in the New Testament; on the other hand, Theophilus already uses it in relation to the Sibyl. Apparently, this word implies the inspiration and authority of the Sibyl herself, rather than speaking directly about her Jewish origin.

[30] The substantiated οἱ ποιητικοί in the rare meaning of "poets" (not mentioned in the LSJ and Lampe) occurs in Clement (*Protr.* 26. 4).

[31] Lightfoot 2007, 83.

[32] It might be assumed that ποιητική here means poetry in the collective sense, as Clement often uses this word, especially in cases where the source of the passage he quoted was unknown to him (see *Protr*. 73. 1; *Paed*. 2. 2. 28. 2; 6. 50. 4; *Strom*. 5. 5. 27. 6). In such a case, Clement may have borrowed the quotation from the *Oracles* from the florilegium, in which the words of the Sibyl were quoted among the pagan poets. However, this understanding is refuted by *Protr*. 24. 5, where the Sibyl is called ἡ προφητικὴ καὶ ποιητικὴ Σίβυλλα.

Or. Sib. 4. 154–155 (*Paed*. 3. 3. 15. 2–3) where the Sibyl is mentioned directly, testifies to her unconditional authority for Clement, but does not give any hint at her identification.

As Lightfoot correctly points out, in the *Stromateis* the Sibyl appears in a double light. She is repeatedly mentioned in the context of pagan beliefs: Clement willingly gives various versions of the Sibyl's origin, as well as reports that there were several of them (1. 15. 70. 3–4; 21. 108. 1–4). He also provides a list of nine Sibyls, in connection with the story of the Hellenic soothsayers (1. 21. 132. 3). The "Jewish" Sibyl is absent here. She could be hiding behind the Erythrean Sibyl, the one that the Sibyl from the third book of the *Oracles* identifies herself with. However, the source used here by Clement is definitely not familiar with such an identification. Probably none of these passages are connected with quoting the fragments of the *Oracles*.

At the same time, there is also an idea of the sole Sibyl present in the *Stromateis* – a prophetess proclaiming the doctrine of the true God, reminiscent of the *Protrepticus*. In one case, Clement cites evidence from a certain pseudo-epigraph containing the words of St. Paul the Apostle.[33] Clement argues that God singled out prophets not only from the Jews, but also from the Greeks. Therefore, according to Clement, St. Paul advises the pagan audience to familiarize themselves with the books of the Sibyl (*Strom.* 6. 5. 43. 1):

> ἐπεί, ὅτι καθάπερ Ἰουδαίους σῴζεσθαι ἠβούλετο ὁ θεὸς τοὺς προφήτας διδούς, οὕτως καὶ Ἑλλήνων τοὺς δοκιμωτάτους οἰκείους αὐτῶν τῇ διαλέκτῳ προφήτας ἀναστήσας, ὡς οἷοί τε ἦσαν δέχεσθαι τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ εὐεργεσίαν, τῶν χυδαίων ἀνθρώπων διέκρινεν, δηλώσει πρὸς τῷ Πέτρου Κηρύγματι ὁ ἀπόστολος λέγων Παῦλος· "λάβετε καὶ τὰς Ἑλληνικὰς βίβλους. ἐπίγνωτε Σίβυλλαν, ὡς δηλοῖ ἕνα θεὸν καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα ἔσεσθαι..."
>
> For, in addition to *Peter's Sermon*, Paul the Apostle will also make it clear that just as God wanted to save the Jews by giving them prophets, so did he among the Greeks, having raised the most glorious prophets (who spoke) in their own language, so that they could

[33] O. Stählin, the editor of the *Stromateis*, suggests that the quotation is borrowed from the apocryphal *Acts of Paul*. Parke erroneously refers the quotation from Paul to *Peter's Sermon* (Parke 1992, 156). In fact, Clement says that *in addition* to Peter in the *Sermon* (see 6. 5. 39. 1), Paul also speaks about the availability of the truth to the Gentiles.

> receive God's beneficence, and separated them from ordinary people. Paul says, "Take the Greek books as well. Find out how Sibyl points to the One God and to what is to come…".

It is worth noting that Clement did not call the prophets acting in Greece Greeks, but οἰκεῖοι αὐτῶν τῇ διαλέκτῳ, that is, those who are involved in the language of Greeks. This may imply not belonging to the Greek language and culture by origin, but familiarizing oneself with it consciously. Therefore, it is possible that Clement is referring to the Erythrean Sibyl, who, according to the third book of the *Oracles*, came from the family of Noah but prophesied in Greek.

Only on five occasions does Clement quote passages from the collection of the *Sibylline Oracles* in the *Stromateis*. Leaving aside the cases in which quotations are given without reference to the Sibyl or are reminiscences of the *Oracles*,[34] there are only three passages in which Clement quotes the *Oracles*, naming the Sibyl in the singular and finding the true teaching in her words:

> *Strom*. 3. 3. 14. 3: *Or. Sib*. fr. 1. 1 (pessimistic statements about the life of pagan poets and philosophers);
>
> *Strom*. 5. 14. 108. 6: *Or. Sib*. fr. 1. 10–13 (cf. *Protr.* 71. 2);
>
> *Strom*. 5. 14. 115. 6: *Or. Sib*. fr. 1. 28 (cf. *Protr*. 77. 2).

It is noteworthy that all three quotations go back to fr. 1 of the *Oracles*, which is quoted in full by Theophilus (*Ad Autol*. 2. 36 = *Or. Sib.* fr. 1 Geffcken). On two occasions, Clement himself had already used the quotations earlier in the *Protrepticus* (see above). There is no doubt that in this case, just as in the *Protrepticus*, what he has in mind is the Sibyl, the prophetess of the true God. It is very probable that in all three cases she represents for Clement the Jewish Sibyl, as in *Protr*. 71. 4.[35]

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[34] *Strom*. 3. 5. 45. 3 (a paraphrase of *Or. Sib*. 2. 163–164); 5. 14. 125. 2 (from Orpheus, close to *Or. Sib*. 8. 430–436).

[35] *Strom*. 3. 3. 14. 3 present a more complicated case: a line from the *Oracles* (*Or. Sib.* fr. 1. 1) is quoted here among the pessimistic sayings about the life of pagan poets and philosophers. Yet this does not necessarily mean that Clement traces the Sibyl to a pagan tradition, since the origin of the saying does not play any role here.

The origin of *Or. Sib*. fr. 1 is an old and intricate problem that continues to be the subject of controversy. Some scholars believe that this fragment, like fr. 2 and 3 quoted in their fullest form by Theophilus, originally belonged to the third book of the *Oracles* and were in the place of the present verses 1–96 of this book. Geffcken challenged this assumption, arguing that verses 1–45 of Book 3 are authentic and that the passages quoted by Theophilus are, in fact, a Christian forgery.[36] Despite his objections, the majority of scholars still think of the surviving introduction as interpolation.[37] The fragments of Theophilus are also, albeit cautiously, recognized as the original version of the introduction to the third book (contrary to Geffcken, their Jewish origin is not in doubt).[38] In any case, there are good reasons to believe that at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, fragments of Theophilus belonged to the third book of the *Oracles*. In his *Divinae institutiones* (written after AD 303), Lactantius cites Varro's list of ten Sibyls (1. 6. 7–12). He further mentions, no longer following Varro, that there are books of various Sibyls, which (since each is attributed to a Sibyl) are considered to be the prophecies of only one Sibyl, but can be attributed to any of them. The exception is the Erythrean Sibyl, who inserted her real name into the text of her song and said that she would be called Erythrean, although she comes from Babylon (1. 6. 13):

> et sunt singularum singuli libri; quos, quia Sibyllae nomine inscribuntur, unius esse credunt[ur], suntque confusi nec discerni ac suum cuique adsignari potest nisi Erythraeae, quae et nomen suum uerum carmini inseruit et Erythraeam se nominatuiri praelocuta est, cum esset orta Babylone.

This unmistakably points to *Or. Sib*. 3. 809–829, where the Sibyl characterizes herself in this particular way. After that, Lactantius quotes fr. 1. 7; 3. 3–5; 1. 15–16 as belonging to the Erythrean Sibyl (1. 6. 15–16). In addition, in *Inst*. 4. 6. 5 Lactantius quotes fr. 1. 5–6 Geffcken and refers to these lines as the beginning of the song of the

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[36] Geffcken 1902a, 15–16, 69–75.

[37] See Collins 1974, 24–25; Buitenwerf 2003, 72 (3. 1–92 is the ending of the original Book 2 of the *Oracles*, which is not preserved).

[38] Grant 1979, 89 n. 1; Schürer 1986, 638: both extensive fragments (eighty-four verses in all) given by Theophilus, *Ad Autol.* 2. 36 (ed. Grant, pp. 86–89, 90–93), also belong either to the original Book 3 or to the lost original Book 1; Merkel 1998, 1068–1069; Buitenwerf 2003, 73–75.

Erythrean Sibyl (he cites immediately after that *Or. Sib*. 3. 775 as the end of the same song).

There is no doubt that in his attribution of fragments 1 and 3 to the third book of the *Oracles* (and probably in quoting the verses themselves), Lactantius is independent of Theophilus, who does not mention that the parts of the quoted *Oracles* belong to the third book. Nor does he provide the name of the Sibyl. Lactantius obviously relies on his own knowledge of the third book of the *Oracles*, from which he borrowed this information.[39] In addition, Lactantius testifies that in the edition of the third book that he used, fr. 1 and 3 belonged to this particular book.[40]

If fr. 1 belonged to the third book in the time of Clement (which seems quite probable), then it is safe to say that the designation of the Sibyl as a "Jewish prophetess" in *Protr*. 71. 4, where Clement quotes vv. 10–13 of this fragment, goes back to the Sibyl's characterization of herself as a relative of Noah, who came from Babylon from the same book. It is difficult to tell whether Clement was influenced by Theophilus' use of fr. 1–3 of the *Oracles*.[41] But there can be no doubt that naming the Sibyl the "Jewish prophetess" is in no way connected with Theophilus and, most likely, goes back to a direct acquaintance with the third book of the *Oracles*.[42]

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[39] See Buitenwerf 2003, 81–82.

[40] Buitenwerf 2003, 83–84.

[41] *To Autolycus* (shortly after 180 AD) was probably written earlier than the *Protrepticus*, which is dated to approximately AD 195–197; the *Stromateis* date back to AD 194–202 (Hyldahl 2014, 140). Supposed quotations from Theophilus are found in the *Protrepticus* (see the index of quotations in Marcovich 1995), but we cannot tell for certain if Clement knew his writings.

[42] Clement's acquaintance with this book is evidenced by quotations in the *Protrepticus* (70. 1): *Syb. Or*. 3. 586–588, 590–594. He also repeatedly quotes passages from fr. 1 and 3 Geffcken: in addition to *Protr*. 71. 1, see *Protr*. 27. 4–5 (fr. 1. 23–25, 27); 62. 1–2 (fr. 3. 29); 77. 2 (fr. 1. 28–35); see also the already mentioned quotations in *Stromateis*: 3. 3. 14. 3: (fr. 1. 1); 5. 14. 108. 6 (fr. 1. 10–13, cf. *Protr.* 71. 2); and 5. 14. 115. 6 (fr. 1. 28, cf. *Protr.* 77. 2). It is usually assumed that Clement was not directly familiar with the *Sibylline Oracles*, but used this collection through some kind of florilegium, in the first place, since he (unlike Lactantius) does not indicate the book numbers of the *Oracles* and since in *Protr*. 74. 6 he erroneously attributes to Orpheus a quote from the *Oracles* (Buitenwerf 2003, 76–77). But neither case excludes the possibility that Clement could use the *Oracles* in some cases directly and in other cases through intermediate sources. His reference to the "Jewish Sibyl" when quoting fr. 1 of the *Oracles* speaks in favour of the fact that he, like Lactantius, knew the entire third book of the *Oracles*.

The Babylonian Sibyl, who speaks from divine inspiration, is also mentioned in the *Exhortation to the Greeks*, which was erroneously attributed to Justin ([Iust.] *Cohort*. 37. 1). This work was written between AD 221 (or 217) and 311–312.[43] According to Pseudo-Justin, the Sibyl came from Babylon: she is the daughter of Berossus, who arrived in Campania by unknown means and proclaimed prophecies there, in the city of Cumae. This version is the closest to that reported by Pausanias (see above). Most likely, it penetrated into Christian literature from the pagan tradition and has nothing to do directly with the Jewish Sibyl of Book 3 of the *Oracles*, except for the Babylonian origin of the Sibyl, her resettlement in a pagan environment and identification with the pagan Sibyl. Although Pseudo-Justin knows the verses from fr. 1 and 3 as well as from the third book of the *Oracles*, he either does not know or ignores the version of the Jewish origin of the Sibyl.

Let us summarize. Based on the statements of Lactantius about the Sibyl from Babylon, related to the fragments of the *Oracles* that he traces back to the third book of the collection, we can state with a high degree of certainty that the "Jewish Sibyl" of Clement goes back to the same source. This Sibyl is a prophetess of Jewish origin, a relative of Noah, who settled in Babylon after the flood and then, having moved to Asia Minor, proclaimed prophecies as the Sibyl from Erythrae. The divinely inspired nature of her prophecies is associated with her direct connection with the Jewish people. Other references to the Sibyl in the *Protrepticus* do not contain direct indications of her Jewish origin, but do not contradict it either, since they imply the authority and inspiration of the Sibyl. The same applies to the *Paedagogus*. There is, however, some ambiguity here as to whether the Sibyl belongs to the Jewish or pagan tradition; this is connected, perhaps, with her original duality: for the third book of the *Oracles* she is a Jewish Sibyl by origin, but prophesizing among the gentiles. In the *Stromateis*, Clement often draws on pagan Sibyl information that is not characteristic of earlier writings, but still recognizes the sole authoritative Sibyl that is mentioned in connection with the citation of fr. 1 of the *Oracles* and may therefore refer to the Jewish Sibyl of the third book of this collection.

The ambivalent attitude of Clement towards the Sibyl is associated with his characteristic dependence on sources. Probably, the idea of the Sibyl from the Jewish environment (which is contrary to the prevailing

[43] Marcovich 1990, 3–4 (dating between 260 and 302 is probable, but disputable).

views of her as pagan) arose in the third book of the *Oracles of the Sibyls*, in order to elevate the authority of this book over other works of this kind. This came into conflict with the original and prevailing tendency to preach monotheism on behalf of pagan soothsayers: in most such writings, the Sibyl is a pagan prophetess endowed with divine inspiration, whose authority confirms the truth of the Scriptures from afar, as it were, from an autonomous source; the author of Book 3, in contrast, directly connects the Sibyl with biblical tradition. Perhaps Clement was guided by similar considerations, drawing on the image of the "Jewish Sibyl" from Book 3 of the *Oracles*: referring to her, he made it clear that the truth about God was inaccessible to the Greeks. In other cases, speaking of anticipation of the truth by the pagans, he is inclined to prove that it was revealed to them to some extent.

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The article examines passage 71. 4 of the *Protrepticus* by Clement of Alexandria, in which the pagan Sibyl is called a "Jewish prophetess". The passage appears unique, because no other known Christian text before Clement addresses the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess. Moreover, the "Jewish Sibyl" of the *Protrepticus* contradicts the opinion prevailing among Christian apologists that the Sibyl was a divinely inspired, but still pagan prophetess, the view Clement himself shares in some passages of the *Stromateis*. There was an attempt to explain away this extraordinary idea by supposing that Clement has in view the pagan Sibyl who makes prophecies about Jews (R. Buitenwerf). Other scholars rightly rejected this attempt. It was also proposed, albeit without detailed argumentation, that Clement was influenced by Book 3 of the *Sibylline Oracles*, where the Sibyl speaks of herself as a relative of Noah who settled in Babylon after the flood, but later migrated from Babylon to Greece and became known there as the Sibyl from Erythrae in Asia Minor (N. Zeegers-Vander Vorst). By examining various works by Clement as well as texts by ancient and Christian authors, the author of the present paper attempts to endorse this latter proposal. Relying on the statements of Lactantius about the Sibyl from Babylon, which are connected with his quotations of fragments from the *Sibylline Oracles*, attributed by him to the third book, one can infer that fragment 1 of the *Oracles* belonged to the third book in the time of Clement. Therefore, it can be stated with sufficient certainty that Clement's designation of the Sibyl as a Jewish prophetess in *Protr*. 71. 4, where he quotes just vv. 10–13 of this fragment, goes back to the Sibyl's characterization of herself as a relative of Noah in Book 3 of the *Oracles*. This also makes it probable that Clement was familiar with this book of the *Oracles* directly, without any mediators.

В статье рассматривается пассаж 71, 4 из *Протрептика* Климента Александрийского, в котором языческая Сивилла названа “еврейской пророчицей”. Уникальность этого фрагмента состоит в том, что прямых высказываний христианских авторов о Сивилле как о еврейской пророчице до Климента нам не известно. Более того, еврейская Сивилла *Протрептика* противоречит господствующему среди апологетов представлению о Сивилле как боговдохновенной, но все же языческой пророчице. Высказывалось предположение, что Климент имеет в виду не еврейское происхождение Сивиллы, но то, что она пророчествует о евреях, однако оно было справедливо отвергнуто. Предполагалось также, хотя и без развернутой аргументации, что на Климента оказала влияние III книга собрания *Оракулов Сивилл*, в которой Сивилла говорит о себе как о родственнице Ноя, поселившейся после потопа в Вавилоне, но затем переселившейся в Грецию, где она пророчествовала как Сивилла из Эритр в Малой Азии (Н. Зегерс-Фандер Форст). Автор статьи стремится обосновать это второе предположение, исследуя различные произведения Климента, а также тексты античных и христианских авторов. Опираясь на высказывания Лактанция о Сивилле из Вавилона, связанные с цитируемыми им фрагментами *Оракулов*, которые он относит к 3-й книге, можно полагать, что фрагмент 1 принадлежал 3-й книге во времена Климента. Это позволяет с достаточной уверенностью утверждать, что именование Сивиллы “еврейской пророчицей” в *Protr.* 71, 4, где Климент цитирует как раз ст. 10–13 этого фрагмента, восходит к характеристике Сивиллой себя в 3-й книге *Оракулов* как родственницы Ноя, пришедшей из Вавилона. Это позволяет в свою очередь считать, что Климент был прямо знаком с 3-й книгой, а не пользовался ею через посредников.

CONSPECTUS

Статьи сопровождаются резюме на русском и английском языке
Summary in Russian and English