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Heresiology and Florilegia: The Reception of Epiphanius of Salamis' *Panarion* and Ephrem the Syrian's *Prose Refutations* and *Hymns against Heresies*

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Introduction: Heresiology and Florilegia

The field of ancient Christian heresiology has been flourishing in the past two decades, especially with regard to the Greek tradition.¹ In the framework of this renewed interest, the study of the Syriac heresiological tradition has also recently received scholarly attention.² From its first attestations in the second century to its later expressions in the thirteenth century, Syriac heresiology has been explored in two main directions: the study of writings that refute “erroneous” doctrines in their philological, historical, and ideological dimensions, and the reception of these

* I wish to express my deep gratitude to Matthieu Cassin (IRHT, CNRS, Paris-Aubervilliers) for his help on the oral version of this chapter, and to Marianna Mazzola (Ghent University) and Yonatan Moss (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) for their invaluable remarks and suggestions on a previous draft. They prevented me from making many mistakes, yet errors and points of imprecision which may remain are my own.

¹ After the pioneering essay of Alain Le Boulluec's two volumes *La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grecque II^e-III^e siècles* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1985), the field has been enriched not only by the publication of new editions and translations of ancient heresiological sources (in particular Epiphanius' *Panarion* and Pseudo-Hippolytus' *Refutation of all heresies*), but also of monographs and articles that explore various facets of the heresiological discourse. Let us mention some important titles: Aline Pourkier, *L'hérésiologie d'Épiphanie de Salamine* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1992); Benoît Jeanjean, *Saint-Jérôme et l'hérésie* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1999); Alain Le Boulluec, “Orthodoxie et hérésie aux premiers siècles dans l'historiographie récente,” in *Orthodoxie, christianisme, histoire* (ed. S. Elm, É. Rebillard, A. Romano; Rome: École française de Rome, 2000), 303-319; Hervé Inglebert, *Interpretatio Christiana: Les mutations des savoirs (cosmographie, géographie, ethnographie, histoire) dans l'Antiquité chrétienne* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2001); Averil Cameron, “How to Read Heresiology,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33/3 (2003): 471-492; Judith M. Lieu, *Marcion and the Making of a Heretic. God and Scripture in the Second Century* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Geoffrey S. Smith, *Guilt by Association: Heresy Catalogues in Early Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Todd S. Berzon, *Classifying Christians: Ethnography, Heresiology, and the Limits of Knowledge in Late Antiquity* (Oakland, Ca.: University of California Press, 2016). For an excellent presentation of the study of ancient heresiology, see Eduard Iricinschi and Holger M. Zellentin, “Making Selves and Making Others: Identity and Late Antique Heresiologies,” in *Heresy and Identity in Late Antiquity* (ed. E. Iricinschi and H. M. Zellentin; Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 119; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 1-27.

² See Alberto Camplani, “Traces de controverse religieuse dans la littérature syriaque des origines: peut-on parler d'une hérésiologie des ‘hérétiques’?” in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque* (ed. F. Ruani; Études syriaques 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 9-66, and Flavia Ruani, “Les controverses avec les manichéens et le développement de l'hérésiologie syriaque,” in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque* (ed. F. Ruani; Études syriaques 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 67-103.

writings in later texts.³ For the history of Syriac heresiology, the corpus of West Syrian dogmatic florilegia, spanning from the seventh to the ninth century, is interesting in more than one respect.⁴ First, florilegia chronologically sit at a symbolic juncture in the production of polemical literature in Syriac. Indeed, they follow the peak of the Christological controversy of the fifth and sixth centuries, and are contemporary with the first reactions to Islam. Second, from the literary point of view, florilegia have their own characteristics, but can also be seen as inheritors of the traditional heresiological style. For example, contrary to polemical texts, they lack an explicit authorial voice that would glue together the quoted extracts in a coherent discourse. However, dogmatic florilegia bear some significant similarities to the conventional way of writing heresiology both in content and form.

For example, the florilegia's major aim is to affirm the Syrian Orthodox faith by refuting the opinions of a diverse array of opponents: Dyophysite adversaries, such as the Chalcedonians and the "Nestorians", but also other forms of Miaphysitism, such as the ones proposed by the "Julianists", the "Agnoetians", and the "Tritheists", among several others.⁵ Not only florilegia tend to associate all these doctrinal opponents, both external and internal, with ancient heresies, but also, despite their variety, to group them in a unifying polemical category, that of "heresy". This calls to mind the traditional heresiological practice of amalgamation, namely the perception, and portrayal, of distinct theological doctrines as different manifestations of one single error.⁶ This

³ See the example of Titus of Bostra, *Against the Manichaeans*, originally written in Greek but entirely transmitted only in Syriac, which has been recently edited and translated, as well as studied: Agathe Roman et al., eds., *Titi Bostrensis Contra Manichaeos libri IV* (Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca 82; Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); Agathe Roman et al., eds., *Titus de Bostra, Contre les manichéens*, introduction, traduction, notes et index (Corpus Christianorum in translation 21; Turnhout: Brepols, 2015); Nils Arne Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proofs in Defense of God. A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichaeos: The Work's Sources, Aims and Relation to its Contemporary Theology* (NHMS 56; Leiden: Brill, 2004); Paul-Hubert Poirier and Timothy Pettipiece, *Biblical and Manichaean Citations in Titus of Bostra's Against the Manichaeans: An Annotated Inventory* (Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia 78; Turnhout: Brepols 2017).

⁴ In this article, by "florilegia" I mean compilations of textual excerpts arranged in thematic sections articulated in an organic way. By "dogmatic florilegia", I mean the florilegia that have doctrinal content aimed at the refutation of religious teachings perceived as erroneous and at the joint promotion of one specific confession, perceived as orthodoxy. Therefore, according to this definition, dogmatic florilegia differ from simple collections of doctrinal extracts lacking an internal logic, such as the late-antique anti-Jewish *testimonia*, on one side, and from miscellaneous manuscripts, which may contain more than one florilegium, on the other side.

⁵ For a presentation of the controversies internal to Miaphysitism represented in the dogmatic florilegia transmitted in the manuscripts BL Add. 12155, 14532, 14533 and 14538, see Yonatan Moss, "Les controverses christologiques au sein de la tradition miaphysite: sur l'incorruptibilité du corps du Christ et autres questions," in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque* (ed. F. Ruani; Études syriaques 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 119-136.

⁶ On "amalgamation" as an ancient heresiological practice, see Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie*, 2:643 (index entry "Amalgame").

themselves, for the sake of refutation, and from previous Church authorities, in support of specific arguments. One example is offered by a florilegium preserved in the eighth-century manuscript BL Add. 12155, which includes several passages from Nestorius' writings.¹⁰ These passages are signaled in the margin with specific signs (*obeli* ÷) to indicate their different status from the preceding and following citations, namely, in the West Syrian viewpoint, a heterodox status. One of these passages is introduced as follows: "From Nestorius, from his *Letter to Thedoretus*, in which he blames the statements written by Cyril *contra Orientales*..." (f. 37r).¹¹ The refutation of Nestorius' claims is done implicitly, through the juxtaposition of quotes from Scriptures and orthodox Church writers in the remaining parts of the florilegium.¹²

As a contribution to the history of Syriac heresiology, in this paper I would like to explore the reception and accommodation of material from heresiological works in medieval florilegia (seventh to ninth century). This research rests on the premise that the act of quoting from previous heresiological writings, among other polemical sources, contributes to define dogmatic florilegia as constructed texts with their own polemical intentions. I will therefore probe the way in which the florilegia's authors lend this status to their compositions: how they built their interpretations by choosing what to include and what to exclude from these sources, as well as by presenting the selected material in a different light, by detaching it from the original context, putting it into a new one and editing it to fit this new polemical destination.

¹⁰ For its content and date, see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:921-955.

¹¹ The same excerpt, accompanied with marginal *obeli*, is also quoted in BL Add. 14532, f. 18r. To be sure, Nestorius is not the only adversary to be cited: extracts from the canons of the Synod of Chalcedon and from Julian of Halicarnassus' writings are further examples. The latter (taken from Add. 14532, but also Add. 12155, 14533 and 14538) have been edited by René Draguet, *Julien d'Halicarnasse et sa controverse avec Sévère d'Antioche sur l'incorruptibilité du corps du Christ. Étude historique, littéraire et doctrinale, suivie des fragments dogmatiques de Julien (texte syriaque et traduction grecque)* (Louvain: Smeesters, 1924).

¹² On the use of such marginal marks that allow to distinguish the adversaries' positions from the parts of the text considered orthodox, see Michael Philip Penn, "Know Thy Enemy: The Materialization of Orthodoxy in Syriac Manuscripts," in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology* (ed. L. I. Lied and H. Lundhaug; Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der althristlichen Literatur 175; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 221-241. Michael Penn examines in detail the marks featuring in the manuscripts that contain West Syrian florilegia, the same under discussion in the present article: BL Add. 12155, 14532, 14533, 14538. The enemies marked with these marginal signs include Nestorius, the Council of Chalcedon, Julian of Halicarnassus, Leo of Rome and Theodoret (see esp. 225 and 228-229). Moreover, Penn points out that in some instances, the citation of the position to be denounced occurs within the quote of an authoritative source: in this case as well, the heterodox passages are signaled with *obeli* or similar symbols in the margins (angle brackets, lines); this is the case of Eunomius quoted by Basil of Caesarea and Damien of Alexandria cited by Peter of Antioch. Along with these reading marks, Penn highlights other strategies that Syriac copyists employed to present and at the same time condemn the adversaries' claims, such as narrative framing and marginalia, also used in our manuscripts. I thank Yonatan Moss for pointing this article to me.

Towards this end, I will first offer an overview of the heresiological sources that are quoted in the florilegia. Such a survey allows us to understand which texts were in circulation and available to the authors of West Syrian florilegia, in seventh- to ninth-century Upper Mesopotamia, and which ones were deemed relevant for their purposes. Two of them, both belonging to the fourth-century, will be the focus of the next part of the paper: Epiphanius of Salamis' catalogue of heresies, the *Panarion*, and Ephrem the Syrian's heresiological works, namely the *Prose Refutations against Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan* and the *Hymns against Heresies*. Second, I will probe the selection, organization and content of these excerpts, including the textual modifications that they undergo to be accommodated in the new contexts in which they are received. Finally, in order to show that florilegia were polemical works in their own right, rather than mere collections of quotes, the paper will broaden its scope to previous, contemporary and later authors and texts that quote the same heresiological sources, namely Epiphanius' and Ephrem's above-mentioned writings. More specifically, I will assess if florilegia borrowed the fourth-century heresiological quotations from previous authors, on one side, and if contemporary and later authors took them in turn from the florilegia, on the other. Elements of comparison will be offered by the writings of three authors who are well-known for their extensive use of patristic texts: for the former aim, I will refer to Philoxenus of Mabboug (d. 523) and Severus of Antioch (d. 538); for the latter, to Moses bar Kepha (d. 903).

1. Heresiological Texts in Seventh- to Ninth-Century Florilegia: A Survey

Since dogmatic florilegia are written by and for Miaphysite communities, one could expect that they display only excerpts from earlier Church writers dealing with theological contents addressing major topics of the Christological debate, namely the nature of Christ (his divine and human nature, his body, his knowledge and will), the Trinity as well as the resurrection of the body. A glimpse to the part devoted to florilegia in William Wright's catalogue of the Syriac manuscripts kept at the British Library,¹³ allows one to immediately correct this assumption. Wright's very detailed descriptions show that florilegia quote a great variety of titles of diversified

¹³ Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:904-1015.

polemical nature, including writings dealing with heresies that do not concern the Christological controversy.¹⁴

Here are some recurring ones among them, in chronological order: Irenaeus of Lyon's *Against Heresies*, Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata*, Athanasius of Alexandria's *Against Arius* and *Against Apollinarius*, Ephrem the Syrian's *Hymns against Doctrines (Heresies)* and *Mimre against Doctrines (= Prose Refutations)*, Titus of Bostra's *Against the Manichaeans*, Gregory of Nyssa's *Against Eunomius*, Epiphanius of Salamis' *Panarion (Against Heresies)*, Severianus of Gabala's *Sermon against Kentorye, Manichaeans and Apollinarists*, Cyril of Alexandria's *Against Julian the Apostate* and *Against Nestorius*, Isaac of Antioch's *Mimro against the Chaldeans*, Severus of Antioch's *Against Julian of Halicarnassus* and *Against John the Grammarian*.

The sources belong to both the Greek and Syriac traditions, and cover the entire patristic age, spanning from the second century (with Irenaeus of Lyon) to the sixth century (with Severus of Antioch), with a preference for post-Nicene writers of the fourth and early fifth centuries. They target a variety of adversaries, even if they are all quoted in florilegia that aim to affirm Syrian Orthodox identity by condemning especially "Julianists," "Nestorians" and Chalcedonians. Indeed, while Cyril of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch deal with the Christological controversy as the authors of florilegia do, other texts deal with the Trinitarian debate (aimed against Arius and Eunomius). Yet, since this debate addressed some Christological issues, the sources related to it can properly support the Miaphysite arguments developed in the anti-Julianist, anti-Nestorian and anti-Chalcedonian florilegia.¹⁵ Next to these sources directly dealing with Christological matters that would fit the florilegia's aims, there are others with an apparently unrelated content, directed towards more ancient heresies: Irenaeus and Clement against the Gnostics; Epiphanius against the Gnostics and several other early Christian heresies; Cyril against Julian the Apostate; Ephrem, Titus and Severianus against the Manichaeans; Isaac of Antioch against the Chaldeans. Surprising as the presence of these texts may seem, it should be remembered that the practice of quoting ancient authors independently from the adversaries they target, is attested since the first patristic expressions of gathering proofs for demonstrative purposes. What mattered were not the opponents, but the status of the writer. In the history of the concept of "auctoritas partum" and use

¹⁴ To be sure, these texts are, by far, not the majority of texts quoted in dogmatic florilegia: there are many other texts of theological content, but which are not polemical.

¹⁵ There are also anti-Arian sections: see BL Add. 12155, chapter 389, f. 106v (see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:936).

of patristic sources, the appeal to Nicene fathers as well as authors defending the Nicene orthodoxy vastly increased by the fifth century for dogmatic purposes. This explains the citation, in our medieval compilations, from fourth-century writers, such as Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, but also Ephrem and Epiphanius, who, by promoting the Nicene creed against its contestants, were considered champions of the faith and paragons of orthodoxy. On the other hand, the appeal to anti-Nicene authors, while decreasing in favor of the defenders of Nicaea, never ceased, since they were recognized as universal authorities, namely as sources whose authoritative status was accepted by all parties involved. Relying on them would have prevented the opponent to contest their validity and consequently the validity of the claims in support of which they were invoked. Irenaeus figures among the pre-Nicene fathers who continued to be quoted the most.¹⁶

Yet, the presence of these texts, whose content seems at first sight incongruent with the controversies developed in the florilegia, arouses curiosity: for which goals and in which ways are their content considered relevant with regard to the context of their reception? In other words, how did florilegia use ancient heresiology? Which parts of these sources have been selected and appropriated by the medieval compilers?

In this regard, we may notice, at the outset, the absence of famous late antique heresiological works: if we have the *Panarion* by Epiphanius, we do not encounter Ps.-Hippolytus' *Refutations of All Heresies (Elenchos)* (first half of the third century) nor Theodoret of Cyrrhus' *Haereticarum Fabularum Compendium* (fifth century), to mention other well-known catalogues of heresies. The latter in particular was very widespread in Greek and excerpts from other works of Theodoret are cited in West Syrian florilegia, such as his *Ecclesiastical History*, despite the fact that the author belongs to the other side of the Christological divide.¹⁷ It is possible that these writings had not reached the Syriac world, or were not considered relevant for medieval doctrinal debates, or again were not found to be doctrinally sound enough for inclusion in what may be called the "identity cards" of Syrian Orthodox faith.¹⁸

¹⁶ See Robert M. Grant, "The Appeal to the Early Fathers," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 11/1 (1960): 13-24, and Patrick T.R. Gray, "'The Select Fathers': Canonizing the Patristic Past," *Studia Patristica* 23 (1989): 21-36. I thank Yonatan Moss for these references.

¹⁷ See André de Halleux, "L'Histoire ecclésiastique de Théodoret dans les florilèges grégoriens syriaques," in *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont: contributions à l'étude des christianismes orientaux*, avec une bibliographie du dédicataire (ed. R.-G. Coquin; Cahiers d'orientalisme 20; Geneva: P. Cramer, 1988), 221-232. CPG 6223 does not mention any translation of the *Compendium* in any Eastern Christian language.

¹⁸ I borrow this term from Moss, "Les controverses christologiques", 120-121: "Ces quatre recueils [BL Add. 12155, 14532, 14533, 14538] ... peuvent être considérés comme des 'cartes d'identité théologiques' de l'Église miaphysite syriaque." Perhaps the excerpts from Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical history* were more neutral from a theological point of

In the past, scholars have exploited the quotes of the heresiological texts contained in the florilegia for philological purposes. This is the case of Irenaeus,¹⁹ Titus of Bostra,²⁰ and Ephrem's *Prose Refutations*.²¹ The prominent tendency was to take these excerpts from the point of view of the "received text" (thus, by using them for stemmatic purposes and critical editions), without paying attention to the "receiving context". We have now the opportunity to do a methodological shift and analyze the content and function of each quote in these dogmatic collections, in the perspective of studying the heresiological tradition in Syriac.

2. Ancient Heresies, New Heresies

The first element of reception worth mentioning is that the citations coming from heresiological texts are not grouped together;²² rather, they appear next to other polemical texts, as well as writings of exegetical, homiletical and liturgical nature. This is different, for example, from the reception of other types of sources: excerpts from historiographical texts, for example, tend to be transmitted one after the other in West Syrian florilegia, to the point that they can form extensive sections solely of historiographical content.²³ Moreover, as a general rule, quotes from the same heresiological text in one florilegium do not follow each other, but are rather dispersed all throughout the text. This means that they are integrated in the framework of different polemics

view, and thus deemed acceptable for the West Syrian compilers of florilegia, or were purged of certain theological content when incorporated into the florilegia. Giorgia Nicosia is currently conducting a Ph.D. on this topic at Ghent University, and the results of her research will shed new light on this important question.

¹⁹ Adelin Rousseau and Louis Doutreleau, eds., *Irénée de Lyon, Contre les hérésies* (5 Books, 10 vols.; SC 100.1-100.2, 152-153, 210-211, 263-264, 293-294; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1965, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1982), 1:109-111, 2:113-155, 3:138-141, 4:102-104, 5:163-165.

²⁰ Roman et al., *Titi Bostrensis*, 359-360. See also Nils Arne Pedersen, "Titus of Bostra in Syriac Literature," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 62/2 (2006): 359-367.

²¹ See below. This is also the case of Gregory of Nyssa's works: see Martien F. G. Parmentier, "Syriac Translations of Gregory of Nyssa," *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 20 (1989): 143-193; and of Cyril of Alexandria's *Against Julian the Apostate*: see Hubert Kaufhold, "Die syrischen Fragmente," in *Kyrill von Alexandrien, Werke. Erster Band: "Gegen Julian", Teil 2: Buch 6–10 und Fragmente* (ed. W. Kinzig and Th. Brüggemann; Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte, Neue Folge 21; Berlin / Boston: de Gruyter, 2017), 821-895.

²² This does not exclude the possibility that they circulated together in collections of quotes then used by the florilegia.

²³ See for example the sections XVIII and XIX of MS Deir al-Surian 28, ff. 114r-127v, containing excerpts from Theodoret of Cyrrhus' *Ecclesiastical History* solely: Sebastian P. Brock and Lucas van Rompay, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts and Fragments in the Library of Deir Al-Surian, Wadi Al-Natrun (Egypt)* (OLA 227; Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 197-199. It is a tendency; to be sure, there are citations from historiographical sources in dogmatic florilegia too that are not grouped together, but appear amidst other kinds of texts: for example, MS London, BL Add. 14533, cites excerpts from Eusebius of Caesarea's and Theodoret's ecclesiastical histories (at f. 170r and 168r respectively) in the framework of the controversy against the followers of Paul of Bet-Ukkame (see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:973).

and in support of arguments against not one, but various opponents. In turn, their appearance in various contexts of debate multiplies the rhetorical effect produced by these quotations: by citing previous heresiological texts, the authors of florilegia invest their wide-ranging theological adversaries with the charge of heresy and implicitly equate them, “new heresies”, with old ones. We will see below concrete examples with the reception of Epiphanius’ and Ephrem’s works. Here, it is interesting to note that such a connection between ancient heresies and new heresies is done also at the conceptual level. In MS BL Add. 14533, f. 137r (n° 23), in the middle of various controversies, namely the debates against John Barbur (n° 16 at f. 106r and again n° 27 at f. 140r), Sergius the Armenian (n° 20 at f. 135v and again n° 28 at f. 140 r), and the “Pagans” (n° 25, f. 138r), we find a chapter on the definition of “heresy” which is exemplified by two quotations. The first one is taken from the *Stromata* by Clement of Alexandria (d. 215), one of the founding texts of ancient heresiology:

What a heresy (*heresis*) is. From Clement Stromateus, end of memra 8: Heresy is an inclination (*meşṭalyanuta*) towards teaching, or, according to some people, an inclination (*meşṭalyanuta*) towards multiple teachings which adhere to one another and comprehend visible things that tend to a good life. Teaching is a logical conception; conception is a state and assent of the mind: not only skeptics (*ephektikoi*), but also every teacher is accustomed to withhold (the judgment), either due to the weakness of the mind, or the unclarity of the things, or the equal force of the reasons.²⁴ (*Stromata* VIII, ch. 5, 16, 2)

[illegible]

The Syriac is a literal translation of the Greek original (*PG* 9:531):

Εἰ δὲ αἵρεσίς ἐστι πρόσκλισις δογμάτων, ἥ, ὥς τινες, πρόσκλισις δόγμασι πολλοῖς ἀκολουθίαν πρὸς ἄλληλα καὶ τὰ φαινόμενα περιέχουσα, πρὸς τὸ εὖ ζῆν συντείνουσα· καὶ τὸ μὲν δόγμα ἐστὶ καταληγνίς τις λογική· κατάληγνις δὲ ἕξις καὶ συγκατάθεσις τῆς διανοίας· οὐ μόνον οἱ ἐφεκτικοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶς δογματικὸς ἐν τισιν ἐπέχειν εἶωθεν, ἥτοι παρὰ γνώμης ἀσθενεῖαν, ἢ παρὰ πραγμάτων ἀσάφειαν, ἢ παρὰ τὴν τῶν λόγων ἰσοσθενεῖαν.

For an English translation of the Greek, see William Wilson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (vol. 2; ed. A. Roberts, J. Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe; Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885): “But if a philosophical sect is a leaning toward dogmas, or, according to some, a leaning to a number of dogmas which have consistency with one another and with phenomena, tending to a right life; and dogma is a logical conception, and conception is a state and assent of the mind: not merely sceptics, but every one who dogmatizes is accustomed in certain things to suspend his judgment, either through want of strength of mind, or want of clearness in the things, or equal force in the reasons.”

The second passage is an extract from Severus of Antioch against the necessity to re-impart baptism and chrismation to converted from Nestorianism:

In this homily, Severus' intent is to convince his fellow Miaphysites that Nestorians, despite being heretical on the doctrinal profile, are still Christians and therefore, upon conversion, do not require to be rebaptized or rechrismated.²⁷ To prove his point, he provides a definition of "heresy" which is deliberately general: like the word "illness" that embraces many various diseases in the realm of the body, the term "heresy" applies to a range of "diseases" of the faith, each one with its own characteristics. In this classification, according to Severus, the Nestorians belong to the heresies that do not need to receive the sacraments again. In other words, Severus' target are less the Nestorians than strict Miaphysites, and here Severus shows a mild attitude towards converted from Nestorianism.

[illegible]

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Despite the original intentions of these two texts, which are neutral if not irenic, the fact that the florilegist selected the paragraphs containing the definitions of “heresy” and nothing else, naturally detaches these definitions from their authentic contexts and contributes to distort their intended meaning. Indeed, thanks to their juxtaposition, the two passages illuminate each other’s sense. First, it is probable that the ancient meaning of *hairesis* as “academic school” rather than doctrinal error was completely lost at the time of the florilegist. Second, Severus’ definition of the term as something “away from the word of truth” leaves no doubt as to its negative connotations. Third, the link between the two citations is further assured by the word “inclination” (*meşṭalyanuta*) that they have in common. This common terminology (“heresy” and “inclination”) contributes to shed a negative coloring back on Clement’s, otherwise neutral, definition. In sum, thanks to the juxtaposition of the two passages that share the same vocabulary, regardless of their original contexts (one dealing with the philosophical school of the Skeptics, and the other with rebaptism and rechrismation of ex-Nestorians), and, above all, contrary to their primary meanings, it seems as if the florilegist wished to present Severus’ definition as the Syrian Orthodox prolongation of the ancient definition of heresy, the one provided by Clement, but in a pejorative sense. As a result, the Nestorians, who are the subject of Severus’ homily, are implicitly associated to the early Christian notion of “heresy”, and, by extension, are presented as a renewed version of the ancient error.

3. First Case of Reception: Epiphanius of Salamis’ *Panarion*

The *Panarion*, or “Medicine Chest”, penned by Epiphanius bishop of Salamis around 375 AD, is a grandiose and renowned catalogue of heresies, featuring an all-encompassing notion of heresy.²⁸ In three books, Epiphanius presents and refutes 80 heresies, both pre-Christian – including Pagan myths, philosophical schools, and Jewish groups – and post-Christian – including all the second- to fourth-century sects perceived as deviating from the teaching of the Great

²⁸ Edition: Karl Holl, *Epiphanius. Ancoratus und Panarion. Band 1: Ancoratus und Panarion, haer. 1–33, Band 2: Panarion haer. 34–64, Band 3: Panarion haer. 65–80. De fide* (3 vols.; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1915-1933). English translation: Frank Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis. Book I (Sects 1-46)* (NHMS 63; 2nd ed., revised and expanded; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009) and *Id., The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis. Books II and III. De Fide* (NHMS 79; 2nd and revised ed.; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2013).

Church, such as Gnostic and Trinitarian trends.²⁹ Apart from individual chapters, each one devoted to one heresy, the *Panarion* also features transitional parts that summarize the denounced heresies in short paragraphs; this epitomized version of the *Panarion* is called *Anakephalaiosis*. The latter is known in Syriac, where it circulates as a single work, detached from the *Panarion*.³⁰ On the contrary, there seems to be no attestation of a Syriac translation of the *Panarion* itself in a complete version.³¹ More importantly for our purpose here, the existence of excerpts from both texts in the indirect tradition has not been explored yet.³² The following table shows the passages that I could identify in the Syriac florilegia kept at the British Library and in the Mingana collection, according to their order in the source text:³³

Epiphanius <i>Panarion</i>	Mingana syr. 69 (ca 650 AD)	BL Add. 12155 (747 AD?)	BL Add. 14532 (8th c.)	BL Add. 17194 (886 AD)
<i>Anakephalaiosis</i> I, 3, 1-7 (against Hellenism)				f. 17v-18r
<i>Anakephalaiosis</i> II, 21, 1-3 (against the Simonians)			f. 217r	
<i>Anakephalaiosis</i> II, 27, 1 (against the Carpocratians)			f. 217r	
<i>Anakephalaiosis</i> II, 31, 1 (against the Valentinians)			f. 217r	
<i>Panarion</i> 21, 4, 4 (against the Simonians)			f. 217r	
<i>Cf. Panarion</i> 30, 29, 1-2 (against the Ebionites)				f. 52r
<i>Panarion</i> 31, 7, 6			f. 217v	

²⁹ For a thorough study of the *Panarion*, see Pourkier, *L'hérésiologie*. See also Young R. Kim, *Epiphanius of Cyprus: Imagining an Orthodox World* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2015) and Andrew S. Jacobs, *Epiphanius of Cyprus: A Cultural Biography of Late Antiquity* (CLA 2; Oakland: University of California Press, 2016).

³⁰ See Luise Abramowski, “Die Anakephalaiosis zum Panarion des Epiphanius in der Handschrift Brit. Mus. Add. 12156,” *Le Muséon* 96 (1983): 217-230. The Syriac *Anakephalaiosis* proved very popular in later Syriac literature: for the example of its material on Jewish sects used by Theodore bar Konai and Dionysius bar Salibi, see Sebastian P. Brock, “Some Syriac Accounts of the Jewish Sects,” in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature and Its Environment, Primarily in the Syrian East* (ed. R. H. Fischer; Chicago, Illinois: The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1977), 265-276.

³¹ *CPG* 3745 mentions an Arabic and a Georgian translation, but not a Syriac one.

³² Another dogmatic work of Epiphanius of Salamis, the *Ancoratus* (*CPG* 3744), composed a few years before the *Panarion* and centered on the theme of the Trinity, also contains polemical hints against Origen and others. Equally unknown in Syriac translation (no reference to such a tradition is made in *CPG*, which mentions Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic and Arabic versions), there are several excerpts from it quoted in the West Syrian theological florilegia. It would be worth in the future to collect and study all these quotations as well.

³³ To this table, one should add the manuscripts BL Add. 14533 (eighth-ninth century), and 14538 (tenth century), which share a nearly identical content with the Add. 14532 as far as the anti-Julian and anti-Tritheist florilegia are concerned. See Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:967-976, esp. 969, for the first, and 1003-1008, esp. 1007, for the second. See the Appendix for the exact folios where the quotes from Epiphanius appear. The passages cited in more than one manuscript transmit the same text.

(against the Valentinians)				
Anakephalaiosis III, 38, 1-2 (against the Cainites)			f. 217v	
Panarion 69, 24, 6 (against the Arians)	f. 23r	f. 66r	f. 43r	
Panarion 76, 6, 3-4 (against the Anomoeans)		f. 13v	f. 96v	
Panarion 76, 39, 6 (against the Anomoeans)	f. 23r	f. 66r	f. 43r	
Panarion 76, 50, 5-6 (against the Anomoeans)		f. 13v	f. 96v	
De Fide 17, 8-9		f. 21r	f. 126r	

We notice that the excerpts included in dogmatic florilegia (transmitted by MS Mingana syr. 69, BL Add. 12155 and 14532)³⁴ come from chapters that deal with issues related to the nature of Christ and the Trinity, as they are addressed against the heresies of the Arians and the Anomoeans³⁵ and provide a definition of the orthodox faith (which is found in the chapter entitled *De Fide* at the end of the *Panarion*). The fourth manuscript, BL Add. 17194, is a spiritual florilegium, which gathers patristic citations on various biblical and theological subjects.³⁶ We remark that it contains two passages from the *Panarion* which are not found in the dogmatic florilegia (as far as these British manuscripts are concerned). This variety in the excerpts' reception raises the following question: How are the excerpts treated in their various receiving contexts? With which specific topics and debates are they associated? Do they undergo any textual variation that would signal their integration into these new, Syrian Orthodox doctrinal settings?

To answer these questions, it is pertinent to distinguish between the reception in dogmatic and in spiritual florilegia. For the latter category, the aforementioned BL Add. 17194 cites an excerpt from the *Anakephalaiosis* (I, 3, 1-7) denouncing "Hellenism", namely Greek polytheism, and quotes it as the first witness of section 24 entitled "Which shows how and when idols entered the world" (f. 17v). Further below (f. 52r), the manuscript features what seems to be a shortened periphrasis of *Panarion* 30, 29, 1-2, which deals with the sect of the Ebionites. Yet, the quoted

³⁴ For a description of MS BL Add. 12155 and BL Add. 14532, see fn. 10 and fn. 7 above, respectively. For the Mingana manuscript, dated to around 650 AD, see Alphonse Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts. I, Syriac and Garshūni Manuscripts* (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1933), 173-178. I use the foliation of the manuscript, which differs by one from the foliation given by Alphonse Mingana in his catalogue (the folio given by Mingana for these quotations is 24r).

³⁵ Anomoeanism was a theological current founded by Aetius and Eunomius in the mid-fourth century, which promoted an extreme form of Arianism.

³⁶ See Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:1002-1003 for its description. For a definition of "spiritual florilegia" as collections of excerpts dealing with "the good practice of Christian life, asceticism and spiritual progress", see Marcel Richard, "Florilèges spirituels grecs," in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1962), 475-512.

passage contains a reference to the offering of gifts by the Magi to the newborn baby Jesus, as it fits the topic: “Indication of how old our Lord was when the Magi arrived” (f. 51v). We thus see how two passages coming from a polemical work end up in thematic sections of religious-historical interest.

The thematic contexts are naturally different when we look at the reception in dogmatic florilegia. Given that MS BL Add. 14532 contains all the passages quoted in the two other manuscripts, and has some more of its own, we will examine the organization and the text of the citations from the *Panarion* that appear in it. (The full text and translation of all the passages mentioned in the table are provided in the Appendix at the end of this contribution; in what follows, we will provide a discussion of their content relevant for our purpose.)

In the dogmatic florilegia contained in BL Add. 14532, the citations from the *Panarion* are quoted in support of two main controversies: one against the Julianists and their doctrine of the impassibility of the body of Christ; and the other against the Tritheists and their spiritual, rather than real, notion of the consubstantiality of the persons of the Trinity.

More specifically, in the anti-Julianist florilegium (ff. 36r-94v), two excerpts are quoted one after the other: *Panarion* 69, 24, 6, against the Arians, and *Panarion* 76, 39, 6, against the Anomoeans, and more specifically their leader Aetius. Despite being extracted from two different chapters, these two passages share the topic of the passibility of the incarnated Christ and the impassibility of God. Their selection reveals to be very relevant for supporting the denunciation of the Julianists’ doctrine on Christ’s incorruptibility. In this regard, the Syriac version of the second passage presents one significant variant compared to the original Greek text. Whereas the first passage and almost all of the second are literal translations of the Greek, the second passage contains a sentence that slightly differs from the original: it reads “those who are subject to the pain of the flesh (*besra*)”, instead of “those who are subject to the pain of death”.³⁷ The variant “flesh” in the place of “death” puts a further emphasis on the subject of passibility at the heart of the debate. This reading is not attested in Greek.³⁸ Significantly, it is not transmitted in another relevant indirect tradition either, namely in the treatises against Julian of Halicarnassus written by Severus of Antioch. There, Severus makes use, in two different occasions, of the quote from the

³⁷ There is also another variant in the second passage, which seems to be less relevant: “of old” in the place of “before him”.

³⁸ Holl, *Epiphanius*, 3:393 does not signal any such variant in Greek in this place.

Panarion corresponding to the second one in our florilegium. Yet, save very minor differences, in both places, the version preserved in the Syriac translation of Severus' texts does not contain the variant "flesh", but renders the original "death":

[illegible]

Therefore, since he was wisdom and impassible God, and knew that by suffering he would save the ones who are subject to the pain of death (*mawta*), he did not send “a messenger or an angel” (Is 63:9) or, again, prophets as the ones before him, but came himself as Lord, and while assuming possibility, in it he truly suffered, though his divine nature remained impassible.³⁹

How to account for this difference? It is possible that the compiler of the florilegium used an already existing Syriac translation of the *Panarion*, containing the word “flesh”, of which we have no evidence, or that he intentionally changed the word to fit his debate. Both these answers in fact converge in offering a picture where the florilegist acts according to precise goals. This is due to the extensive knowledge he has of Severus’ anti-Julianist writings, which he quotes on multiple occasions.⁴⁰ Indeed, while knowing in all likelihood the quotes in Severus’ works, he *selected* the version of the *Panarion* which was more convenient to him for his doctrinal controversy, or he *modified* the one he consulted, which can be Severus’ or a text bearing the same reading as the one kept by Severus, to fit the context to a greater degree. In both scenarios, it seems that the florilegium opposes Julianism even more than its historical champion detractor, Severus!

At any rate, by selecting these two quotes from the *Panarion* to address the polemics concerning Christ's suffering, the florilegium is indirectly equating the sixth-century Julianists to the fourth-century Arians and Anomoeans. Not only does the recourse to this heresiological source

³⁹ Severus of Antioch, *Critique of Julian's Tome*, 129 (text), 99 (trans.) and *Apology for the Philalethes*, 8 (text), 7 (trans.). I reproduce the text of the passage that appears in the first work. The text of the citation preserved in the second work presents very minor differences in terms of vocabulary and word order, none of which concerns the variant under discussion here. Both citations have indeed the reading "death".

⁴⁰ Severus is one of the most quoted fathers in MS BL Add. 14532: see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:957-958, 961, 964 for an overview of the extracts cited from his writings in this manuscript, including all his works against Julian of Halicarnassus.

allow the florilegium to implicitly present the former as an actualization of the latter's doctrines, but, obliquely, it also projects on the Julianists the historical condemnation of Arians and Anomoeans by official ecclesiastical authorities, namely the councils of Nicea (325) and Constantinople (381) respectively. As a result, the Julianists are portrayed as already defeated, as much as their earlier counterparts.

If we now consider the anti-Tritheist debate, which is the second main debate where MS BL Add. 14532 quotes excerpts from the *Panarion*, we should divide the discussion further, according to the two different settings in which the citations appear. Three excerpts are indeed mentioned in a section that seems to be compiled directly by the author of the florilegium (ff. 94v-133v), whereas a group of six quotations appears in the last section of the manuscript, which is said to be borrowed from a treatise written by the Tritheists against the philosopher John Philoponus (d. 570), also a defender of Tritheism (ff. 213v-221r). Thus, if the first section is the work of an anti-Tritheist author (the author of the florilegium), the latter section reproduces internal conflicts among divergent conceptions of Tritheism, which the florilegium leverages. This difference in the confessional origin of the quoting text is coupled by a difference in content, since the quoted extracts from the *Panarion* do no overlap in the two sections.

The first three excerpts are taken from the chapter against the Anomoeans and from the final profession of faith (*Panarion* 76, 6, 3-4; 76, 50, 5-6, and *De Fide* 17, 8-9).⁴¹ They all deal with the distinction of the persons of the Trinity and the concomitant unicity of God, a doctrine that at first glance seems to fit the polemic against the adversaries labeled as Tritheists. Nevertheless, a closer look at the original context of the citations allows to perceive that a conceptual transposition has occurred in the new setting of reception. In this regard, it is worth considering the second passage, *Panarion* 76, 50, 5-6. In Epiphanius' work, these lines are part of the refutation of a specific claim by Aetius, which is the following:

If the Ingenerate transcends all cause but there are many ingenerates, they will [all] be exactly alike in nature. For without being endowed with some quality common [to all] while yet having some quality of its own—[a condition not possible in ingenerate being]—one ingenerate nature would not make, while another was made.

⁴¹ Neither of them presents significant differences with the original Greek text.

We observe that the terms of the debate rely on the subordinationist conception of the second person of the Trinity. By extension, this conception denies the identity between the substances of the Trinity, since it argues for a difference between the creating substance of the Father and the created substance of the Son. In spite of this, the heart of the debate does not coincide with what the Tritheists claim, which is more philosophical. Tritheists try to understand the notion of the hypostatic union of the Trinity using Aristotelian ontological categories. More importantly, Tritheism, as a movement within the Miaphysite community, saw itself as upholding anti-Arianist, Nicene orthodoxy.⁴² Therefore, and once more, the florilegium contemporizes an ancient controversy and throws back against the sixth-century Tritheists arguments developed in the frame of the fourth-century Trinitarian controversy. As a result, it indirectly attributes to the former the claims of the latter, despite their divergent conceptual presuppositions and especially their opposing confessional stand-points, and polemically makes of the Tritheists new Arians.

Finally, Add. 14532, ff. 213v-221r contains a florilegium in support of the resurrection of the bodies. I quoted above its opening paragraph, which lists several ancient heretics. This florilegium cites a Tritheist writing that cites in turn many patristic texts, including six passages from the *Panarion* (at f. 217).⁴³ The writing in question has been identified by Albert Van Roey as a sixth-century Cononite florilegium composed against the doctrine on the resurrection defended by John Philoponus. The latter, a Miaphysite, was a fellow Tritheist but his view on the resurrected body as a new, incorruptible one was rejected by Conon, metropolitan bishop of Tarsus, and his followers, who believed that the mortal body would resurrect identical.⁴⁴ Among the quoted sources, including ante-Nicene and fourth- and fifth-century fathers, the six extracts from Epiphanius are all, with one exception, taken from the *Anakephalaiosis* and follow one after the other as one continuous citation.⁴⁵ They solely concern first- and second-century heresies

⁴² On Tritheism and the Tritheist controversy, see Alois Grillmeier, “The Tritheist Controversy in the Sixth Century and Its Importance in Syriac Christology,” in *Christ in Christian Tradition. Vol. 2/3 The Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch from 451 to 600* (ed. A. Grillmeier and T. Hainthaler, trans. M. Ehrhardt; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 268-280.

⁴³ This borrowing is shown in the manuscript with marks in the margins, next to each line of each passage. The same extracts are quoted in BL Add. 14538, f. 147v.

⁴⁴ On the Cononite florilegium and this intra-Tritheist controversy, see Van Roey, “Un traité cononite.” Van Roey identifies all the sources and edits and translates the passages that were still unpublished, in particular those extracted from John Philoponus’ writings themselves, to which the florilegium reacts (n° 25, 29-33). As he points out, the florilegium is also contained in MS London, BL Add. 14538, ff. 147r-148v, with some omissions (at 125-126).

⁴⁵ The six extracts are identified by Van Roey, “Un traité cononite,” 131, n° 17; he does not edit and translate them, since they are published in the original Greek in the *Patrologia Graeca* 41, to which he refers. We offer an edition and a translation in the Appendix, based on both manuscripts Add. 14532 and 14538.

labelled as Gnostic that have in common the denial of the bodily resurrection and the rejection of the Old Testament. These heresies are quoted in chronological order, the same adopted in the *Panarion*: they are the followers of Simon Magus, Carpocrates, Valentinus, and the Cainites. Differently from the previous passages by Epiphanius that we analyzed above, here the citations do not correspond literally to the Greek original, nor to the Syriac version of the *Anakephalaiosis* preserved entirely in MS BL Add. 12156.⁴⁶ Sometimes, they seem to be paraphrases rather than proper citations, given the discrepancies in content. For the parallel sentences, however, it is possible that the Syriac translator of the Tritheist work, probably originally composed in Greek, did not consult an already existing Syriac translation of the *Anakephalaiosis*, but rendered directly the Greek found in the text-source. This may account for the differences in vocabulary and syntax between these extracts and the *Anakephalaiosis* of MS BL Add. 12156. To take just one example, let us compare the first citation dealing with the followers of Simon Magus (*Anakephalaiosis* II, 21, 1-2) contained in our florilegium and the parallel passage of the Syriac version of the *Anakephalaiosis* preserved in BL Add. 12156:

<i>Florilegium</i> (BL Add. 14532, f. 217r)	<i>Anakephalaiosis</i> (BL Add. 12156, f. 132r)
<p> מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד עֲלֵיכֶם. </p>	<p> מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד מִיִּשְׁתַּבְּחִים מִלֵּב וְיָד </p>
<p> The Simonians are those who come from Simon the magician, who (stood) in front of/(lived) before the apostle Peter and (was) from the Samaritan village of Gitthon. He was Samaritan and assumed Christ's name only. (2) He taught the defilement of lasciviousness and the changing and impure intercourse with women. He rejected the resurrection of bodies. </p>	<p> The Simonians are those who come from Simon the magician, who (lived) in the days of the apostle Peter and was from the Samaritan village of Gitthon. He was Samaritan and adopted Christ's name only. (2) He taught obscene practices and sexual congresses. He rejected the resurrection of bodies, and claimed that the world is not God's. </p>

The relevance of these citations, all invoked for supporting the resurrection of the mortal body, is clear in the context of the intra-Tritheist debate, as a reaction to Philoponus' doctrine. In contrast,

⁴⁶ This seems to be the case of other citations as well: Van Roey, “Un traité cononite,” remarks that the quotes from Titus of Bostra (n° 16) and Severus of Antioch (n° 18 and 28) differ from the published Syriac translations of the works from which they are taken.

it is difficult to fully understand the values of their inclusion in manuscripts that, beside this subject, feature anti-Tritheist florilegia. In other words, if the authors of the West Syrian florilegia are anti-Tritheists, why would they rely on a Tritheist text as an authoritative source? It is possible that the answer lies on the topic under discussion. The Tritheists are condemned as far as their view on the relationship among the persons of the Trinity is concerned, but they (or one of their factions) can be deemed authoritative when other subjects are at stake, such as the resurrection of the bodies. On that topic, the florilegists would agree with them, against adversaries who would oppose that view, including some Tritheists like Philoponus. Another observation that we can make is that the *Panarion* by Epiphanius was a reference source for both anti-Tritheist authors (the florilegists) and (at least some) Tritheist thinkers: both found it useful for supporting their various claims, and drew on different parts of it. It may be possible, therefore, that one of the objectives of the florilegists first in attacking, then in using Tritheist theses, was to show to the Tritheists that one of their proof-texts, on which they rely to defend their doctrine on resurrection, may just as well contain arguments that would support a rejection of their doctrine on the persons of the Trinity.⁴⁷

The evidence for the employment of Epiphanius' heresiology in medieval polemical florilegia presented above points to a fairly circumscribed interest in this encyclopedia of ancient errors. Out of the 80 chapters of the *Panarion* aimed against pre-Christian and post-Christian heresies, the anti-Julianist and the anti-Tritheist florilegia selected the positions of the bishop of Salamis as anti-Arian theologian and a defender of the Nicene formulation of the *homoousios*. The reaction to the fourth-century Trinitarian controversy was perceived as particularly relevant and fruitful for sixth-century theological debates. Most significantly, perhaps, we observe that the quotations come from the chapters against Aetius and Eunomius, whose radical subordinationist teachings were particularly influential in Syria and the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire.⁴⁸ In addition to the thematic relevance of the excerpts taken from these chapters, it is possible that

⁴⁷ On arguments over the same patristic sources in fifth- and sixth-century dogmatic controversies, see Grant, "The Appeal to the Early Fathers."

⁴⁸ See Christine Shepardson, *Anti-Judaism and Christian Orthodoxy. Ephrem's Hymns in Fourth-Century Syria* (North American Patristics Society, Patristic Monograph Series 20; Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 111-116 for this regional influence at the time of Ephrem the Syrian.

this local dimension was also part of the motivations that laid at the backdrop of the florilegists' practice of selection.

4. Second Case of Reception: Ephrem the Syrian's *Prose Refutations* and *Hymns against Heresies*

If Epiphanius' *Panarion* is used for its Christological and Trinitarian content, Ephrem the Syrian's heresiological works offer a complementary case-study since they concern different adversaries and debates, and thus provide us with different polemical material.⁴⁹ Chronologically, Ephrem's heresiological works preceded the *Panarion* by several years.⁵⁰ One in prose, the so-called *Prose Refutations*, and the other in poetry, the *Hymns against the Erroneous Doctrines*, or *Heresies* (henceforth *HcH*), both writings were likely composed or completed during the Edessene period of the author's life, namely between 363 and 373.⁵¹ Even if the *Prose Refutations* are usually considered as a more mature and sophisticated work addressed to a well-educated readership, and the *Hymns* as a popular version meant for wider circulation,⁵² both writings display the same notion of heresy and target the same opponents. In this regard, compared to Epiphanius' *Panarion*, Ephrem's works have a double cultural advantage for the West Syrian polemical florilegia: they are penned by a Syriac author admired and vastly quoted by subsequent writers, including champions of Miaphysitism, such as Jacob of Serug and Philoxenus of Mabbug; and they mostly

⁴⁹ This is why we exclude from the examination Ephrem's *Hymns on Faith*, which are also a heresiological writing, as they represent a response to Arian positions, and we focus on the reception of "external" heresies – to use Ephrem's own terminology in *Hymns against Heresies* 3, 9 (Syr. *barraye*). These "external" adversaries, namely Marcion, Bardaisan and Mani, are, to be sure, also condemned in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, but they receive a full refutation in Ephrem's writings: it is to them that he devotes the 12 treatises of the *Prose Refutations* and the 56 hymns of his poetical heresiological collection. A study of the citations from Ephrem's *madrāse* surviving in dogmatic florilegia is a desideratum: see Sebastian P. Brock, "The Transmission of Ephrem's *madrāshe* in the Syriac liturgical tradition," *Studia Patristica* 33 (1997): 490-505, esp. 492, fn. 12.

⁵⁰ It is even possible that Epiphanius knew these works by Ephrem: in *HcH* 22-24, Ephrem lists many heretical groups that are all mentioned in the *Panarion* as well. These groups, belonging to Gnostic and Trinitarian confessions, may be included in the category of the "internal" heresies, following Ephrem's expression in *HcH* 3, 9 (Syr. *gawwaye*).

⁵¹ Edition and translation of the *Prose Refutations*: J. Joseph Overbeck, ed., *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae Episcopi Edesseni, Balaei aliorumque Opera Selecta* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1865), 21-58 edition of *Discourse 1 Ad Hypatius*; 59-73 edition of *Discourse 2*; Charles W. Mitchell, Anton A. Bevan, and Francis C. Burkitt, eds., *Saint Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan* (2 vols.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1912 and 1921), edition (except of *Discourse 1*) and English translation of the 12 treatises. Edition of the *Hymns against Heresies*: Edmund Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen contra Haereses* (2 vols.; CSCO 169-170 / Syr. 76-77; Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1957). French translations: Dominique Cerbelaud, *Éphrem de Nisibe. Hymnes contre les hérésies, Tome I: Hymnes contre les hérésies I-XXIX, Tome II: Hymnes contre les hérésies XXX-LVI et Hymnes contre Julien*, (SC 587 and 590; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2017); and Flavia Ruani, *Éphrem de Nisibe. Hymnes contre les hérésies*. Traduction du syriaque, introduction et notes (BOC 4; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2018).

⁵² André de Halleux, "Saint Éphrem le Syrien," *Revue théologique de Louvain* 14 (1983): 328-355, esp. 335.

combat three major “local” heresies that represent the past history of Syriac Christianity itself, namely Marcion (d. 160), Bardaisan (d. 222) and Mani (d. 277). Their content does not deal with Christological matters, but rather with broader theological questions, such as the conception of the divinity and the created world, the constitution of the human being, freewill, resurrection, as well as Scriptures and religious rituals. It is thus interesting to see how these polemics intervene in the Christological debates of the West Syrian sixth-century florilegia.⁵³

a. The Prose Refutations

As mentioned above, the extracts from the *Prose Refutations* quoted in medieval florilegia have already been identified by the editors of the text at the beginning of the twentieth century. The following table provides an overview of the passages in question and their place in the manuscript tradition:⁵⁴

⁵³ On the reception of Ephrem as anti-Manichaean polemicist, see my “Recherches sur la place d’Éphrem de Nisibe dans la littérature syriaque anti-manichéenne,” *Parole de l’Orient* 38 (2013): 83-108, and “Sur les traces syriaques des manichéens: les réfutations de Moïse bar Kepha (IX^e s.) et de Jacques bar Šakko (XIII^e s.),” in *Gnose et manichéisme. Entre les oasis d’Égypte et la route de la soie. Hommage à Jean-Daniel Dubois* (ed. A. Van den Kerchove and L. G. Soares Santoprete; BEHE Sciences religieuses 170; Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 299-332. The present contribution represents a further opportunity for me to extend the enquiry to a part of Syriac literature that I have not explored yet.

⁵⁴ Compared to the manuscripts known and used by the editors, I only add MS Mingana syr. 69 and BL Add. 14533, which escaped their notice, but which contain the same identical passage as Add. 12155 and Add. 14532, namely *Against Bardaisan* st. 88 (contrary to what the apparatus in Mitchell, Bevan and Burkitt, *Prose Refutations*, 2:166 and the notes to the translation at 2:lxviii suggest, all five manuscripts present the same variants compared to the edited text, including the omission of the *dalat* at l. 34). It should be noted that MS BL Add. 14538 contains the title of the same extract at f. 107v, but the passage itself is lost in the material lacuna that ensues. MS BL Add. 17194 was known to Joseph Overbeck, who published the quote it transmits in Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri*, 136. The quoted passage bears the title “From Ephrem, from the *Discourse against Bardaisan*” but remains unidentified to this day (it does not correspond to any of the extant stanzas of the *Against Bardaisan*, nor to any other part of the *Prose Refutations* reconstructed from the palimpsest). For this reason, I will reproduce the Syriac text and offer an English translation of this passage in the Appendix, in the hope that the excerpt will be identified. On the other hand, I will not provide the texts and translations of the other citations, since they can be reconstructed by consulting the critical edition. On a related note, it is interesting to remark that a passage circulating under the title of *Against Bardaisan* (ܐܢܬܝܟܐ ܕܒܪܕܝܝܫܐܢ) is quoted in an East-Syrian florilegium of monastic and ascetic content, transmitted by MS Cambridge, Or. 1319 (a nineteenth-century copy of a manuscript dated to 1233/4 or 1333/4 AD). The passage is edited and translated by Luise Abramowski and Alan E. Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection of Christological Texts. Cambridge University Library, MS. Oriental 1319* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 1:219-220 (text), 2:132-133 (trans.). It is also contained in an East-Syrian monastic collection, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz, syr. 27 (Sachau 302), ff. 21v-22r, dated to the seventh or eighth century: see Eduard Sachau, *Die Handschriftenverzeichnisse der königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (2 vols.; Berlin: Asher, 1899), 1:110-111, who reproduces the citation. The passage does not correspond to any citation quoted in the West Syrian florilegia and is not in fact taken from the *Prose Refutations*, but from a *memra* attributed to Ephrem which was published twice in 1904, by A. S. Duncan Jones and E. Rahmani (see Abramowski and Goodman, *A Nestorian Collection*, 2:l). For a recent analysis of this *memra*, see Izabela Jurasz, “Le Nom et le Lieu de Dieu. Étude d’un témoignage inconnu de la cosmologie bardesanite,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 2 (2108): 297-337.

Ephrem, Prose Refutations	Add. 14612 (6th/7th c.)	Add. 17214 (7th c.)	Ming. syr. 69 (c. 650 AD)	Add. 12155 (747 AD?)	Add. 14532 (8th c.)	Add. 14533 (8th/9th c.)	Add. 17193 (874 AD)	Add. 17194 (886 AD)
Fourth Discourse I, 118, 31 – 119, 31	f. 84r							
Fourth Discourse I, 119, 42 – 120, 15	f. 84rv							
Fourth Discourse I, 121, 17-35	f. 84v		f. 34r	f. 91v	f. 54r			
Fifth Discourse I, 127, 30-44		ff. 105v-106r						
Against Bardaisan St. 33-42 (except 40)							ff. 7v-8r	
Against Bardaisan St. 88				f. 71r		f. 62v		
“Against Bardaisan” = not identified								ff. 24v-25r

The editors C. W. Mitchell, A. A. Bevan and F. C. Burkitt used these excerpts in their critical edition of the famous palimpsest BL Add. 14623:⁵⁵ the passages are mentioned in the apparatus whenever they present a textual variant with regard to the edited text, and oftentimes they help reading the palimpsest when it is barely legible or fill in its lacunae. The variants of the passages in the medieval florilegia are quite scanty; the text they transmit is fundamentally stable.⁵⁶ This remark is quite important for the history of the *Prose Refutations*, which are otherwise attested,

⁵⁵ Description in Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:762-766.

⁵⁶ The variants of the manuscripts BL Add. 14612 and 17214 are given in Mitchell, Bevan, and Burkitt, *Prose Refutations*, 1:230-231 in a Corrigenda section. The manuscripts BL Add. 12155 and 17193 are mentioned at the beginning of *Against Bardaisan* in 2:143, but only the variants of the latter are presented at 151-154 in correspondence with the text of the st. 33-42 (and lxx for the translation). In this regard, it must be stated that the editors do not give all the textual differences of MS 17193, but only the most important ones. The preference of 17193 over 12155 is not entirely clear, since, in fact, MS 17193 presents a more corrupted text than 12155, with omissions and *sauts-du-même-au-même*. Finally, the variants of the BL Add. 12155 and 14532 for the st. 88 are given in 2:166-167 (text) and lxxviii (trans.).

for the most part, only in the undertext of the palimpsest manuscript.⁵⁷ By quoting passages from the *Prose Refutations*, and especially from *Discourses* 4 and 5 which were entirely erased at the beginning of the ninth century, when the manuscript was brought from Northern Mesopotamia to Egypt, to make room for writings of a more ascetical nature, medieval florilegia play a major role in further preserving this Ephremian text.

Having underlined the importance of the florilegia for the transmission of the received text, we now consider its selection and the contexts of its reception. First of all, the fact that passages from the *Prose Refutations* are quoted in sixth- to ninth-century manuscripts shows that they were still deemed relevant to the cultural interests of those epochs in Northern Mesopotamia.⁵⁸ This datum contrasts with the perceived irrelevance of Ephrem's polemical works in early-ninth-century Egypt, when they were erased. Nevertheless, we notice that only three texts out of the twelve originally composing the *Prose Refutations* were used by the florilegists.⁵⁹ Compared to other texts by Ephrem, as well as to other authors' polemical writings altogether, the *Prose Refutations* turn out to be not very popular. The content of the selected passages, as well as the receiving contexts in which they are embedded, confirm this by revealing that the reasons for their inclusion are not related to their initial polemical valence.

Of the eight manuscripts listed in the table above, four contain demonstrations from the Church fathers on various biblical and theological subjects. BL Add. 14612 is a compilation of patristic excerpts organized by author and not by theme, where Ephrem is quoted together with other Syriac and Greek ecclesiastical writers;⁶⁰ BL Add. 17214,⁶¹ 17193⁶² and 17194⁶³ deal with a great diversity of topics: thus, the *Prose Refutations* are quoted as proof-text for demonstrating

⁵⁷ Exceptions are *Discourse* 1 as well as some stanzas from the *Against Bardaisan* and the entire treatise *On Virginity*. The former is transmitted by two manuscripts, BL Add. 14570 and Add. 14574; Add. 14574 is composed of 19 folios that were detached from the manuscript BL Add. 14623 before it was transported to Egypt and erased (see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:406-407 and 407-408 respectively; Add. 14574 also contains part of *Discourse* 2; another manuscript, BL Add. 14581, contains two folios with parts of *Discourse* 1. See Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri*, vi-vii). The latter were copied by the monk Aaron from the very manuscript he erased: these texts thus appear in the inferior as well as in the superior script of the manuscript Add. 14623.

⁵⁸ This remark follows the methodological trajectory delineated by A. Butts that aims to analyze manuscripts "as evidence for the time and place in which they were written": see Aaron M. Butts, "Manuscript Transmission as Reception History: The Case of Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373)," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 25/2 (2017): 281-306, esp. 285-288 for the *Prose Refutations* (quote at 288).

⁵⁹ This is true as far as these manuscripts are concerned and since the last passage has not been identified yet.

⁶⁰ Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:696-701.

⁶¹ Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:915-917.

⁶² Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:989-1002.

⁶³ On this manuscript, see fn. 36 above.

“What Golgotha is, and concerning the Cross and that everyone dies at his appointed time” (*Against Bardaisan* st. 33-42, in 17193 and 12155), or that “Satan cannot enter man without God’s command” (the unidentified passage in 17194). Accordingly, the selected lines perfectly fit the thematic chapter-heading under which they feature. For example, stanzas 33-42 form a digression from the principal topic of the text, which is the refutation of Bardaisan’s doctrine of body and soul, and explicitly address the question of theodicy through the example of Adam’s and Abel’s deaths, which were determined by God. In particular, in Ephrem’s interpretation, Abel’s killing was perpetrated at the hand of a man, Cain, but in the moment sentenced by God, who is the master of time and has decreed a temporal limit for everyone. Therefore, we can imagine that the lack of polemical weight in their original context made these stanzas an “easy” pick for the authors of the florilegia, who could thus extract them and use them for demonstrations that have no polemical connotation either.⁶⁴

We are thus left with the four manuscripts of dogmatic content that feature polemical florilegia, namely Mingana syr. 69, BL Add. 12155, 14532 and 14533. As said above, they share in particular the anti-Julianist florilegium. It is in this same context of debate that we find the only citation from the *Prose Refutations* used in a polemical setting. The citation reproduces st. 88 of the *Discourse against Bardaisan* and reads as follows:

From the Blessed Ephrem, from the Discourse on Resurrection and Against Bardaisan: “An example He depicted--and a likeness He impressed--and a mirror He fixed by His Body,-- He was victorious and tasted suffering--and was raised and put on glory;--and He taught

⁶⁴ These stanzas, devoid of overt polemical hints, provide a biblical exegesis and promote a general notion of God’s omnipotence. Their digressive character is quite unique in the twelve treatises of the *Prose Refutations*. The digression is announced at st. 31: “Now let us turn for a little to a question...” (Mitchell, Bevan, and Burkitt, *Prose Refutations*, 2:lxix). This may be the reason why the monk Aaron would have copied them from the undertext of MS BL Add. 14623 that he erased, and saved them for his overttext. See the question asked by Butts, “Manuscript Transmission,” 287: “Monks such as Aaron were more interested in texts of an ascetical nature... This would account for the selection of authors that are found in the overttext as well as for why Aaron recopied Ephrem’s *Hymn on Virginity*. It would not, however, explain why he recopied part of Ephrem’s *Discourse against Bardaisan*.” The answer may thus lie in the content of the stanzas: they are not ascetical, but they are exegetical. Indeed, next to works of ascetical character, highlighted by Butts, the monk Aaron copied also texts dealing with biblical interpretation, such as John Chrysostom’s *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, Jacob of Serug’s *Mimro on the prophet Jonah*, as well as excerpts from the Apostolic Epistles. This may further explain the otherwise somewhat curious coincidence that one set of the stanzas kept by Aaron in 822 almost overlaps with the ones quoted in the florilegia: st. 31-42 for the former, st. 33-42 for the latter. This content-wise explanation may be applied to the other set of quotes by Aaron, namely st. 86-94, since they also contain an interpretation of Adam’s transgression.

drawn from the absence of the title and the misattribution is that, unless these anomalies are due to material reasons,⁶⁸ at a symbolic level, the florilegists would not consider as source of authority the work itself, but rather the author under whose name the work circulates, and that they systematically acknowledge. This would mean, in the perspective of Syriac heresiology, that Ephrem's heresiological writings do not count in themselves as much as their author, who, on the contrary, is evoked as a continued prestigious name.

Turning to the settings of reception, we immediately observe, as we did for the *Prose Refutations*, that the great majority of the poetic quotes too are not contained in polemical florilegia. They are rather transmitted by one manuscript (BL Add. 17194), which, as we have already seen, is a spiritual florilegium. The stanzas are extracted from the polemical hymns to serve a very diverse array of subjects: biblical subjects (such as “the interpretation of the fact that God repented”, ch. 22 of the florilegium, quoting *HcH* 30, 1, which deals with God's remorse), cultural topics (ch. 23 “Which demonstrates from where the Hebrews were called”, citing *HcH* 23, 5, which indeed offers the explanation that the word Hebrew comes from Heber), theodicy (ch. 34, “Which reveals...that evil does not exist by nature”, reproducing *HcH* 17, 1 and the end of 21, 7 which proclaim that evil is not a divine entity but derives from freewill), and themes related to human behaviors (ch. 39, on dreams, citing *HcH* 29, 23-24, entirely devoted to the oneiric experience; ch. 30, on nocturnal pollution, with several stanzas from the same hymn and addressing precisely this topic, *HcH* 29, 5-15). In their original conception, all these stanzas bear either explicit or implicit polemical contents. God's remorse in *HcH* 30, 1, for example, is used by Ephrem as an argument against Marcion's views on the evil Creator; *HcH* 17, 1 and 21, 7 clearly aim against Mani and his doctrine of the existence of a principle of Evil, coeternal with God; finally *HcH* 23, 5 wedges the etymology of Hebrews from Heber in a wider accusation against Bardaisan which is traditional in Christian heresiology, and which consists of accusing the heretics of calling the community of their disciples after their name, instead of the name of Christ as true Christians

Carmina Nisibena is given: “From the same, from the Volume about Nisibis, from the hymn whose beginning is: ‘The Sons of error will be persuaded’, according to the melody ‘Paradise’.” The identification has been made possible thanks to the excellent tool provided by Sebastian P. Brock, “In Search of St. Ephrem,” *Христианский Восток* NS 6 [12] (2013): 13-77, which offers an index of the first words of Ephrem's published *madraše* (at 66, ܡܕܪܫܐ ܕܥܦܪܝܡ, Nis 46).

⁶⁸ Namely, that the authors of the florilegia had access to untitled isolated stanzas and to an already wrong textual attribution. These two scenarios are not unlikely, since analogous textual phenomena are attested for the circulation of Ephrem's *madraše* in liturgical manuscripts, which, similarly to florilegia, are based on selection: see Brock, “The Transmission.”

do.⁶⁹ With their reception in this spiritual florilegium, the passages have lost their original polemical quality and gained a demonstrative significance for the topics of interest of the florilegium, which do not pertain to religious controversy. This is further proved by the fact that all these citations literally reproduce Ephrem's text and do not present any meaningful variant.⁷⁰

On the contrary, the only quotation that is preserved in the polemical context of the anti-Julianist florilegium (*HcH* 29, 37, in BL Add. 12155, 14532, 14533 and 14538) displays a divergent reading from the edited text and thus signals an adaptation to the new doctrinal framework. The immediate context of reception is a chapter demonstrating the immortality of the soul. Contrary to the reference edition of the first lines of *HcH* 29, 37, which reads "Since it is immortal, the soul does not sleep,"⁷¹ the text cited in the florilegium has "The soul is immortal because it does not sleep."⁷² By changing the place of the *dalat*, the florilegium has inverted the entire cause-effect logic of the passage and makes Ephrem claim something he did not claim. The emphasis is now on the immortality of the soul, as required by the thesis to support, rather than on the sleep and the condition of the soul during moments of suspension of consciousness, which is the subject of Ephrem's hymn 29. As we can see, we are not in the presence of a lexical variant which would indicate an adjustment of Ephrem's expressions to meet sixth-century West Syrian theology. Our variant is far from the well-known example of Ephrem's excerpts cited in Miaphysite liturgical manuscripts, where his Christological language was changed to fit the post-Chalcedonian context.⁷³ Yet, probably because the framework under examination here does not require a specific terminology, even a tiny inversion of syntax would suffice to mark the transformation of the original quote into a proof-text in support of a specific claim. This direct intervention on the source-text, however small, shows that florilegists operated on their textual witnesses in order to make them better adhere to their own argumentative goals.

⁶⁹ This heresiological strategy emerges with Justin Martyr and derives from the denominations of philosophical sects: see Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie*, 1:48-51, 79-80.

⁷⁰ They are usually orthographical variants. A comparison with the critical edition by E. Beck allows to remark that the text of the stanzas quoted by MS BL Add. 17194 tends to follow the variants of manuscript A (= BL Add. 12176, sixth century) given by Beck in the apparatus.

⁷¹ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܠܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ (Beck, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, 1:119).

⁷² ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܠܐ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܠܟܐ: BL Add. 14532, f. 78r and Add. 14538, f. 114v. The passage quoted in BL Add. 12155, f. 80r features a double *dalat*, one at the beginning, like the edition, and the other in the second half of the verse, like the previous manuscript: the first could indicate the beginning of the citation, rather than being already part of it, or it could further testify to the process of adaptation of the original text. Thus, Add. 12155 would have kept the original *dalat* while at the same time inserted the second one to fit the thematic context of reception. By contrast, the passage cited in BL Add. 14533, f. 72r is identical to the edited text.

⁷³ Butts, "Manuscript Transmission," 288-302.

In sum, neither the *Prose Refutations* nor the *Hymns against Heresies* were really exploited by West Syrian polemicists. The majority of the citations taken from these heresiological writings are included in spiritual or exegetical, non dogmatic, florilegia, to demonstrate a wide range of subjects, next to other patristic, non polemical sources. Only one quote from the treatises in prose and one from the poetical text appear in the anti-Julianist florilegium. There, contrary to what one would have expected, it is not the incomparable material on Manichaeism that they offer, for example, that attracted the attention of the opponents to Julian of Halicarnassus. This is surprising, given the frequency with which Julian is associated with Manichaeans for his “phantasiastic” doctrine, on the one side,⁷⁴ and the presence of citations from Julian’s works in which he rejects this association in the florilegium itself, on the other.⁷⁵ Rather than for Ephrem’s anti-Manichaean condemnation, then, it is for the topics of the resurrection and immortality that these works of Ephrem were used as proof-texts. This demonstrates that florilegists kept quoting the authorial figure of Ephrem, by referring to a palette of his literary output; however, it also points towards a decadence in relevance of traditional heresies such as those of Marcion, Bardaisan and Mani. For the medieval authors of the florilegia, Ephrem’s heresiology does not offer relevant arguments of refutation, nor even a suitable rhetoric of polemics, such as the easy association of a contemporary enemy with an opponent of the past. It is probably just regarded as not pertinent for the medieval controversies.

5. Before and After the Florilegia

The examination of the heresiological quotes has demonstrated that a certain degree of independence exists between the florilegia that share the same citations. The most telling example is offered by the anti-Julianist florilegium, in which both Epiphanius’ and Ephrem’s polemical texts are included. This florilegium is attested in several manuscripts (chiefly Mingana syr. 69, BL Add. 12155 and BL Add. 14532), which transmit the heresiological quotes that they have in

⁷⁴ See Moss, *Incorruptible Bodies*, 24, and Frédéric Alpi, “Les manichéens et le manichéisme dans les *Homélies cathedrales* de Sévère d’Antioche (512-518): observations sur l’HC 123 et sur quelques passages négligés,” *ARAM* 16 (2004): 233-243, esp. 234, and fn. 9 there.

⁷⁵ Citations from Julian’s *Treatise against the Manichaeans and the Eutychians* are contained in BL Add. 14532, ff. 39v, 40r, 41r, 57v.

common in an identical textual form and in the company of the same patristic texts. Nevertheless, we could notice that they do not always include the same number of quotes. As we have seen with Epiphanius, BL Add. 12155 and 14532 include an excerpt that is not attested in the Mingana manuscript, nor in any other.⁷⁶ The same observation can be made by enlarging the focus beyond the individual florilegia to embrace their organization within the single manuscripts. In this respect, we will not find one manuscript identical to another. Even when two manuscripts bear entire sections of identical content, they may differ as regards what precedes and what follows these common sections, thus ultimately providing different florilegia altogether. This is true of the three manuscripts containing the anti-Julianist florilegium, which is never preceded and followed by the same texts in the three of them. This is even more evident in the case of two manuscripts that can be qualified, at first blush, as transmitting a diverging content altogether. MS BL Add. 12155, of dogmatical nature, for example, shares one Ephremic quote with MS BL Add. 17193, of spiritual and exegetical character. Both manuscripts insert this quote in a section that runs parallel between them, but only up to a certain point, where they thematically part ways.

These dynamics of dependence and independence, of imitation and creation, that characterizes the florilegia shared by more than one manuscript, both in their internal structure and in their articulation with other florilegia, is further expounded by the comparison with selections of themes and patristic authorities that predate our medieval manuscripts. We are lucky that sometimes the compilers of the florilegia indicate their borrowing from an earlier collection of quotes and at the same time signal that they dissociate themselves from this previous model. A marginal note in MS BL Add. 12155, f. 87r, states that “up to this (point), these demonstrations were taken from the book of Mar Sergius of Huzary, the remaining fourteen being added by the compiler of the volume.”⁷⁷ Unfortunately, we do not know what this “book”, to which the note refers, is, nor who “Mar Sergius of Huzary” is, but we can deduct from this that to the fourteen further citations belongs the quote from Ephrem’s *Against Bardaisan* st. 33-42, at f. 91v. Ephrem’s quote thus stems from an independent choice of the author of the florilegium. The example of Ephrem’s *Hymns against Heresies* confirms the florilegists’ autonomy. There is one known

⁷⁶ For cases like this one, it would be a fascinating task to study the connections between them, and determine the dependence and filiation of one on the other. Another example is offered by the anti-Tritheist florilegium, where BL Add. 12155 and 14532 share many citations from Epiphanius, but, as we have seen, BL Add. 14532 includes also several quotes of its own.

⁷⁷ The note is reproduced and paraphrased as such in Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:933.

inclusion of excerpts from the *Hymns against Heresies* in a more ancient Miaphysite Syriac collection of patristic demonstrations, namely the so-called Florilegium of Philoxenus of Mabbug (dated to around 482).⁷⁸ This florilegium is appended to Philoxenus' polemical *Discourses against Ḥabib* and gathers 227 passages from the Church fathers in order to refute Dyophysitism. Remarkably, Ephrem is the only cited Syriac authority, the other being all Greek writers. Yet, he alone scores 105 quotes, thus surpassing any other authors in terms of representation.⁷⁹ Three of these quotes are taken from the *Hymns against Heresies*: HcH 21, 3; 35, 12 and 39, 11.⁸⁰ We observe that none of them is quoted in our medieval florilegia, despite the fact that they would share with Philoxenus the same adversaries. This means that, as far as I could see and as far as Ephrem is concerned, the compilers of the medieval florilegia made their own selection without resorting to already available ones, even if the latter would match their Miaphysite, doctrinal intentions.

The case of Epiphanius' *Panarion* sheds light on another aspect of this original approach. We have seen that one excerpt from the *Panarion* cited in the anti-Julianist florilegium is also quoted in the anti-Julianist works *Critique of Julian's Tome* and *Apology for the Philalethes* by Severus of Antioch. We have stressed above the textual difference between the two versions of this quote in the florilegium, on one side, and Severus' texts, on the other. Here, we would like to highlight that despite the fact that the same quote already exists in a selection of patristic authorities for similar intents (Severus), this quote is not inserted in the same cluster of citations in the florilegium. Indeed, although the florilegium cites the same *Panarion* quote as Severus, and although it is with the exact same textual extent, it transmits it together with differing citations than Severus. More specifically, it inserts it after another citation of the *Panarion* and before Amphilochius of Iconium's *Discourse on "My Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me"* (Lk 22:42) and Isaac of Antioch's *Mimro on Faith*. In Severus' writings, by contrast, Epiphanius' citation follows Cyril of Alexandria's *Discourse to the Emperor Theodosius* and *Scholia* as well as Gregory of Nazianzus's *Letter to Cledonius*, and is followed by Cyril's *Commentary on John*

⁷⁸ Edition and French translation in Maurice Brière and François Graffin, *Sancti Philoxeni episcopi Mabbugensis dissertationes decem de Uno e sancta Trinitate incorporato et passo (Mēnre contre Ḥabib)*, V. Appendices: I. *Tractatus*; II. *Refutatio*; III. *Epistula dogmatica*; IV. *Florilegium* (PO 41,1; Turnhout: Brepols, 1982), 58-123.

⁷⁹ See Brock, "The Transmission," 491-492. See also Lucas van Rompay, "Mallpânâ dilan suryâyâ. Ephrem in the Works of Philoxenus of Mabbog," *Hugoye* 7 (2007): 83-105.

⁸⁰ They correspond to quotes n° 188-190 (= § 229-231): Brière and Graffin, *Sancti Philoxeni*, 114-115.

(in the *Critique*), and appears between Athanasius' *On Trinity against the Arians* and Gregory of Nazianzus's *Letter to Cledonius* and *On Baptism* (in the *Apology*).⁸¹

If the cases that we discussed show that florilegia are not just simple recipients of previous doctrinal elaborations and selections, what can we say in turn about the usage that was made of them by contemporary and later Syriac authors? Did they use the selections made by the florilegia, as if the latter's purposes were simply to offer anthologies of excerpts arranged in thematical order without an inner logic of their own? To illustrate this point, we will consider the example of the *Prose Refutations*. It has been demonstrated by Mikael Oez that the *Treatise Against Bardaisan* st. 33-42 (with the omission of st. 40), which is quoted in BL Add. 12155, is also quoted in two ninth-century authors, namely Cyriacus of Tagrit, in his *De Providentia* 18.1 (the same extract), and Moses bar Kepha, in the *Treatise On Free Will*, Discourse 3, ch. 2 (st. 33-36, 38, 41-42, in a chapter against Bardaisan).⁸² By comparing the quote in these three sources, as well as with the edited text of the *Prose Refutations*, Oez concludes that both Cyriacus and Moses relied on a

⁸¹ Another example of the independence of the florilegia's selection is when florilegia feature the same topics as previous sources, but do not cite the same quotes in their support. MS BL Add. 17194 offers an interesting case-study. It contains a florilegium of numerous exegetical and spiritual subjects, for some of which the source may have been Jacob of Edessa. Indeed, we find similar topics in Jacob's *Letters XII and XIII to John of Litharb*, devoted to the explanation of some biblical themes, such as the absence of writing before Moses (ch. 2), which language is the first one and wherefrom are the Hebrews called (ch. 14) (see François Nau, "Traduction des lettres XII et XIII de Jacques d'Edesse," *Revue de l'Orient Chretien* 10 (1905): 197-208, 258-282, esp. 206 and 273-274). These themes correspond to ch. 23 of the florilegium ("which demonstrates which language is the first and from where the Hebrews were called and (why) there was no writing before Abraham," ff. 16r-17v). Both Jacob and the florilegium cite Clement of Rome as an authority, but this is the only patristic witness they have in common. The florilegium is original in the way it orders the themes and adds new testimonies (in this case, Ephrem, Severianus of Gabala and John Chrysostom, who do not appear in Jacob of Edessa's letter). The study of why certain topics are still deemed relevant in the ninth century is a desideratum that should take into account the broader religious context of the composition of the florilegia. For example, it would be fruitful to compare the subjects of florilegia with contemporary canon laws, monastic rules and exegetical writings, in order to understand if and for which reasons specific topics are in fashion in precise times and places.

⁸² Mikael Oez, *Cyriacus of Tagrit and his Book on Divine Providence* (Gorgias Eastern Christianity Studies 33; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012), 191-194. Moses bar Kepha's *On Free Will* is still unedited and is contained in one manuscript witness, BL Add. 14731 (see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:853-855, who dates it to the eleventh century on paleographical grounds). See Herman Teule, "Mushe bar Kepha," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History. 2 (900-1050)* (ed. D. Thomas and A. Mallet; History of Christian-Muslim Relations 4; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2010), 98-101, for a short presentation, as well as Sidney Griffith, "Disputes with Muslims in Syriac Christian Texts: From Patriarch John (d. 648) to Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286)," in *Religionsgespräche im Mittelalter* (ed. B. Lewis and F. Niewöhner; Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien 4; Wolfenbüttel: Harrassowitz, 1992), 251-273, esp. 267-268. It should be mentioned that Oez mistakenly states that *On Free Will* contains st. 33-36 and 41-42 (at 191, fn. 16), while in fact giving the text of st. 38 as well (in the table at 193), which is indeed quoted by Moses. This text is known and cited by the editors of the *Prose Refutations*: see Mitchell, Bevan, and Burkitt, *Prose Refutations*, 2:151-154, who use it in the apparatus, and lxx, for the translation. Also, Oez mentions another manuscript containing the same extract, namely BL Add. 17193, but wrongly says that it transmits st. 33-42: the manuscript is like BL Add. 12155 as well as Cyriacus' *De Providentia*, inasmuch as it omits st. 40 like them.

florilegium—Cyriacus used the one transmitted by BL Add. 12155, whereas Moses, given his different wording from both Cyriacus and BL Add. 12155, probably consulted another florilegium, not extant.⁸³ This would mean that, at least for this passage of the *Prose Refutations*, a florilegium, and not the original text, is the source of the heresiological discourse of Bar Kepha.

Now, if we look at an earlier chapter of the treatise *On Free Will*, Discourse 2, chapter 5, entitled “Against the followers of Mani and Marcion who destroy free will by saying that good and evil things are given by the mixture of entities” (BL Add. 14731, ff. 10r-11r), we observe that, despite the fact the Moses does not mention any source, the entire chapter is in fact composed by the juxtaposition of various quotes taken from the *First Discourse* of Ephrem’s *Prose Refutations*.⁸⁴ They are, in order of quotation in Moses’ text:⁸⁵ I, p. 37, ll. 5-12; p. 38, ll. 14-21; p. 40, ll. 11-15; p. 40, ll. 18-25; p. 40, ll. 3-9; p. 43, ll. 22-25; and p. 44, ll. 16-23. We remark that in general the progression of the borrowing is linear (from p. 37 to 44), and the text differs from the edited one sometimes only slightly, for minor lexical variants and syntactical rearrangements, and sometimes more greatly, as if Moses bar Kepha summarized or paraphrased his source-text. Where did Moses take these extracts from? Since he probably used a florilegium for his quotes of the *Against Bardaisan*, it is possible that he consulted a florilegium containing all these quotes from the *First Discourse* too. Yet, as far as we can tell, this florilegium would not be extant anymore. As highlighted above, the surviving parts of the *Prose Refutations* in medieval florilegia concern excerpts from *Discourses* 4 and 5, and the one *Against Bardaisan*, not of *Discourse* 1. Thus, it could also be possible that Moses consulted directly Ephrem’s text. This would fit with the size of the quotes, which are longer than the already extended citation of *Against Bardaisan* st. 33-36, 38, 41-42 taken from a florilegium; and would maybe explain the difference that exists with the introduction of the excerpts from *Against Bardaisan*. The latter are explicitly attributed to Ephrem: “From Mar Ephrem, in (the writing) towards Bardaisan” (ܡܪ ܝܫܝܝܐ ܒܪ ܝܫܝܐ ܒܪ ܝܫܝܐ ܒܪ ܝܫܝܐ), with a formula very close to the citational mode of the florilegia; whereas the quotes from the *First Discourse* are anonymous and not flagged in any way. This example may represent, with all due

⁸³ Oez, *Cyriacus*, 194. We compared Moses’ text to the excerpts contained in BL Add. 17193, and we conclude that it is not this florilegium the one from which Moses borrowed these stanzas.

⁸⁴ One paragraph does not correspond *verbatim* to any passages of Ephrem’s *Prose Refutations*, but it reflects the general content of Ephrem’s argument. See the Appendix for more.

⁸⁵ The following page and line numbers refer to the edition in Overbeck, *S. Ephraemi Syri*. We provide Moses’ and Ephrem’s texts in parallel in the Appendix to this article, accompanied by a translation.

caution, a proof of the fact that Moses, next to florilegia, directly consulted Ephrem's heresiological works as well.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have discussed the reception of early Christian heresiological writings in medieval dogmatic florilegia, which share some formal and content characteristics with them. I focused on two fourth-century case-studies, one emanating from the Greek tradition, the other from the Syriac one: Epiphanius' *Panarion* and Ephrem the Syrian's *Prose Refutations* and *Hymns against Heresies*. The analysis of contexts and modalities of reception, both in the florilegia and in comparison with previous and later texts, have produced two coherent sets of evidence, which ultimately demonstrate the status of these compilations as polemical works in their own right.

First, dogmatic florilegia, which carefully select their proof-texts, seem to give prominence to the heresiological passages which deal with Christian issues. This is not surprising, considering the anti-Julianist and anti-Tritheistic debates in which they are engaged. For this reason, thanks to its chapters against Trinitarian heretics such as Arians and Anomoeans, Epiphanius' work turns out to offer more useful material than Ephrem's texts, aimed against Marcion, Bardaisan and Mani. Therefore, on one side, florilegists leverage fourth-century arguments originally meant to refute anti-Nicene doctrines, to make sixth-century Christological opponents appear like recent manifestations of these ancient errors. On the other side, they do not quote Ephrem's works for their polemical content. The adversaries targeted in the past by the deacon of Nisibis are no longer a threat for the present time of the florilegia's compilers, but neither are they considered as meaningful polemical associations to exploit. Ephrem's texts are rather cited for other purposes. Thus, the reception of Ephrem's heresiological texts in a later and religiously different milieu disregards their original polemical aims (as demonstrated by the omission of the title and the case of misattribution for the *Hymns*) and even their polemical nature, as they are quoted in various thematic sections, the majority of which deal with spiritual contents rather than with controversial ones. This is further proven by the absence of any interpolation, addition, deletion or rewriting that would signal an appropriation of the quotes in line with the new doctrinal setting of reception. The analyzed quotes show that they are at best syntactically reconfigured to better adhere to specific doctrinal points.

Second, the florilegia's selection of heresiological excerpts is not shared by previous or later texts. Moreover, when they quote extracts already existing in a previous selection, they do not insert them in the same cluster of citations, but rather create their own. This suggests that the florilegia's compilers had a certain editorial independence and that they were animated by precise argumentative goals as much as any other polemical authors. Finally, the fact that later authors seem to use direct sources next to florilegia further says something on how the latter were perceived by Syriac authors: not just as mere reservoirs of quotes to be exploited, such as sterile lists of *testimonia*, but as any other source at their disposal with its own authorial status.

For the way in which they handle previous heresiological works and create their own, medieval dogmatic florilegia are undoubtedly a part of the history of Syriac heresiology.

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Epiphanius of Salamis, *Panarion*

- [illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

⁹² Translation based on Williams, *The Panarion. Book II and III*, 559, slightly modified to adhere to the Syriac.

From Saint Epiphanius, from the first tome of the third book against the heresies: “But we must know that one is God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom is also the Holy Spirit, who ‘proceeds from the Father and receives of the Son.’ (Jn 15:26, 16:14) And this is the one Godhead—one God, one Lord, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There is no confusion between the Son and the Father and neither the Holy Spirit, but the Father is a father, the Son, a son, and the Holy Spirit, a holy spirit. (They are) three Perfects, one Godhead, one God, one Lord, as we have ascribed this praise many times, for all heresies.”⁹⁴

(Add. 14532, f. 96v = Add. 12155, f. 13v = Add. 14533, f. 73v = Add. 14538, f. 120r, just after the previous one)

From the same, from the same tome with (objections) against Aetius the Anomoean:⁹⁷ “Therefore, the one Trinity is one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: unmade, uncreated, unbegotten, a Trinity which is not made but makes, which includes the name of no creature but creates, which is one and not many. And all things are from it.”⁹⁸

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104  Add. 14533.

From Saint Epiphanius, from the profession of faith which is at the end of the tome 7 of Book 3 against the heresies, whose beginning is “Those various, multiform and much divided perverted ideas”: “What had been passible (becomes) impassible and remains forever impassible, the divine (nature) with body, soul, and all the human nature. He is God, when has ascended into the heavens and took his seat at the Father’s right hand in glory, not by discarding his saint corporeal nature but by uniting (it) to spirit in the perfection of one Godhead.”¹⁰⁵

6. Six extracts (BL Add. 14532, f. 217rv = Add. 14538, f. 147v)

a. Anakephalaiosis II, 21, 1-2 – Against the Simonians = cf. Holl 1:234, ll. 1-4 and BL Add. 12156, f. 132

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From Epiphanius bishop of Cyprus, from the first Book on heresies which is called *Panario* [sic]: “The Simonians are those who come from Simon the magician, who (stood) in front of/(lived) before the apostle Peter and (was) from the Samaritan village of Gitthon. He was Samaritan and assumed Christ’s name only. (2) He taught the defilement of lasciviousness and the changing and impure intercourse with women.”¹⁰⁷

b. Panarion 21, 4, 4 – Against the Simonians = Holl 1:243, ll. 12-14

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And in the second (Book?), on Simon: “(He teaches that) there is a decay and destruction of flesh, and a purification only of souls—and of these (only) if they are established in the mystery through his erroneous ‘knowledge’.”¹¹⁰

c. Anakephalaiosis II, 27, 1 – Against the Carpocratians = Holl 1:235, ll. 23-25 and BL Add. 12156, f. 132v

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¹⁰⁵ Williams, *The Panarion. Book II and III*, 675.

¹⁰⁶ Add. 14538.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Williams, *The Panarion. Book I*, 59.

¹⁰⁸ Add. 14538.

¹⁰⁹ Add. 14538.

¹¹⁰ Williams, *The Panarion. Book I*, 65.

<p>victorious by his nature and cannot fail? Or whom will the Avenger blame—that nature which fails and cannot conquer? These are great absurdities.</p> <p>But they ask, “What is this will?” we say it is freewill endowed with independence. And if they say, “Why part of it is evil and part of it is good?” we should tell them that because it is a thing endowed with independence and freedom. And if they are not convinced, this unteachableness of theirs teaches that because they have freewill, they did not wish to be taught.</p> <p>For he who says that there is no freewill hastens to ascribe his folly to God, is found without folly and his Maker is accused. But he commits three evil things: one, that his folly is ascribed to God, two, that he frees Satan from rebuke, and saves himself from blame so that all the blame may rest with God.</p> <p>And if they say that they do not know what will is, they should know that, since they knew what a ‘bound nature’ is, they can know what an unconstrained nature is, but that which is unconstrained cannot be constrained. But in what is it unconstrained except in that it has (the power) to will and not to will?</p> <p>There is no man who goes down to the struggle and receives a crown with great joy who says: “I have no freewill”, lest he lose his glory and his crown. But he is someone who has not conducted himself aright through his freewill, the one who says “I have no freewill.”</p>	<p>fail? Or whom, again, will the Avenger blame—that nature which fails and is not able to conquer?</p> <p>If, therefore, anyone asks, “What is this will, for though it is one thing, part of it is good, and part of it evil?” we should tell him that because it is a will. And if he asks again, we shall tell him that it is a thing endowed with independence. And if he still continues to indulge in folly, we should tell him that it is freewill. And if he is not convinced, this unteachableness of his teaches that because there is freewill he did not wish to be taught.</p> <p>But whoever denies that there is freewill utters a great blasphemy in that he hastens to ascribe his vices to God; and seeks to free himself from blame and Satan from reproach in order that all the blame may rest with God.</p> <p>It would not be right for any one, after he heard about the will, to ask “But what, again, is the will?” Does he know everything and has this (alone) escaped his knowledge, or does he know nothing at all since he cannot know even this? But if he knows what a ‘bound nature’ is, he can know what an unconstrained will is, but that which is unconstrained cannot be constrained, because it is not subject to constraint. But in what is it unconstrained except in that it has (the power) to will and not to will?</p> <p>But there is no man who has gone down and brought up a crown with great toil from the hard struggle, and (then) says that there is no freewill, lest the reward of his toil and the glory of his crown should be lost. The man who has failed says there is no freewill that he may hide the grievous failure of his feeble will. If thou seest a man who</p>
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<p>And if they say that if freewill comes from God, then the good and evil impulses which belong to it are from God, they should thus know that if the impulses that are stirred in freewill belong to God and not to it [freewill], they get wrong since they called freewill a bound nature. For he who says that God moves our freewill stands against his own word, since he said freewill but added that God moves it; and he destroys his word which said that there is freewill. For God did not give freewill and went on to move impulses in it; he did not give it so that it does whatever it wants; and he brought it forth for this, so that it become freewill, do not serve the impulses that are stirred in it, but he who moved the impulses in it, which is not proper to the one who gave freewill. For how does one call that freewill and goes on to bind it so that it is not freewill? For it is not possible to enslave something free; it is independent and not a nature, it is loose, not bound. And just as when any one speaks of fire, its strength is declared by the word, and by the word 'snow,' its coolness, so by the word 'freewill' its independence is revealed.</p>	<p>says there is not freewill, know that his freewill has not conducted itself aright.</p> <p>And if they say that if freewill comes from God, then the good and evil impulses which belong to it are from God...</p> <p>For how does he call that freewill when he goes on to bind it so that it is not freewill? For the name of Freewill stands for itself; for it is free and not a slave, being independent and not enslaved, loose, not bound, a will, not a nature. And just as when any one speaks of fire, its heat is declared by the word, and by the word 'snow,' its coolness is called to mind, so by the word 'Freewill' its independence is perceived.</p>	
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