

Florilegia Syriaca

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TEXTS AND STUDIES OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LIFE AND LANGUAGE

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Florilegia Syriaca

*Mapping a Knowledge-Organizing Practice in the
Syriac World*

Edited by

Emiliano Fiori
Bishara Ebeid



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Abbreviations

CPG	<i>Clavis Patrum Graecorum</i>
CSCO	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
ES	<i>Études syriaques</i>
GCS	<i>Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte</i>
GCS.NF	<i>Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte, Neue Folge</i>
HCMR	<i>History of Christian-Muslim Relations</i>
JEastCS	<i>Journal of Eastern Christian Studies</i>
LM	<i>Le Muséon</i>
NPNF	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers</i>
OCA	<i>Orientalia Christiana Analecta</i>
OCP	<i>Orientalia Christiana Periodica</i>
OLA	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i>
OLP	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica</i>
PG	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i>
PdO	<i>Parole de l'Orient</i>
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
SC	<i>Sources Chrétiennes</i>
SP	<i>Studia Patristica</i>
VChr	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>

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Syriac Florilegia and Patristic Christianity beyond East and West

Emiliano Fiori

Scholarship has recently come to see Late Antiquity as a Eurasian “Denkraum”,¹ an epistemic space stretching over Syria, Mesopotamia, Iran, and the Caucasus as well as Palestine and the Arabian Peninsula; recent hypotheses expand it chronologically until 1000 CE.² This periodization, together with this broad Eurasian scope, suitably account for a range of religious, cultural, and intellectual phenomena that cross-fertilized the area.³ Within this broader space, people, ideas, and religious identities were entangled in intellectual continuums and religious divides. Patristic Christianity was one of the major enduring cultural patterns of this long Late Antiquity;⁴ the canonization of textual authorities is one of the common cultural forms shared by the Abrahamic religion in the area, and “Patristic Christianity”, a process of “canonization of the Church Fathers”,⁵ is one of its manifestations.

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- 1 Nora K. Schmid, Nora Schmidt, and Angelika Neuwirth, “Spätantike. Von einer Epoche zu einem Denkraum,” in *Denkraum Spätantike. Reflexionen von Antiken im Umfeld des Koran* (ed. N. Schmid, N.K. Schmid, and A. Neuwirth; Episteme in Bewegung 5; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2016), 1–35.
 - 2 Garth Fowden, *Before and after Muhammad. The First Millennium Refocused* (Princeton-Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014).
 - 3 See Garth Fowden et al., “The First Millennium Refocused: Eine Debatte,” *Millennium* 13 (2016), 3–64.
 - 4 As persuasively suggested by Fowden, *Before and after Muhammad*, 181–188.
 - 5 This phenomenon has been the focus of increasing scholarly attention in the last decades. See Patrick Gray, “The Select Fathers’: Canonizing the Patristic Past,” *SP* 23 (1989): 21–36; Thomas Graumann, *Die Kirche der Väter. Vätertheologie und Väterbeweis in den Kirchen des Ostens bis zum Konzil von Ephesus (431)* (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 118; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002); Yonatan Moss, “‘Packed with Patristic Testimonies’: Severus of Antioch and the Reinvention of the Church Fathers,” in *Between Personal and Institutional Religion: Self, Doctrine, and Practice in Late Antique Eastern Christianity* (ed. B. Bitton-Ashkelony and L. Perrone; Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 15; Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 227–250; Yonatan Moss, “The Rise and Function of the Holy Text in Late Antiquity: Severus of Antioch, the Babylonian Talmud, and Beyond,” in *Patristic Studies in the Twenty-First Century: Proceedings of an International Conference to Mark the 50th Anniversary of the*

Patristic Christianity, when seen in this broader perspective, was the object of intensive transfer and renegotiation processes between different Christian cultures within the epistemic space of Late Antiquity. The passage of patristic knowledge from Greek to Syriac and Arabic was the most relevant episode of patristic transfer in the Late Antique world, albeit not the only one. Indeed, two crucial knowledge transfer pathways in the area were the interaction between Greek and Syriac Christian cultures (fourth–seventh century), and the later contacts between Syriac Christianity and Islam (seventh–tenth century). The latter phase saw the formation of an Arabic-speaking Syriac Christian culture as part of the multicultural environment known as “the Islamicate world”.⁶ Indeed, around the end of the first millennium, both East Syrian and West Syrian intellectuals were integrated members of early Abbasid society, sometimes belonging to its highest elite, and their intellectual confrontation with Muslim scholars and rulers was intense.

The approach of the present volume to Syriac patristic Christianity does presuppose a first-millennium focus, 1) because the Syriac evolution and transformation of the Greek “fathers” as a corpus of authoritative thinkers is comprised fairly precisely within that time period; 2) although other Eastern Christian cultures (Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Slavonic, Ethiopic, Arabic Melkite) experienced analogous developments of patristic canonization, the Syro-Arabic line is particularly relevant, for it builds the most exemplary bridge between the two poles of a first-millennium perspective on Late Antiquity, that is, from Greek patristic literature up until the year 600 to the Syro-Arabic writers of the ripe Abbasid era (ninth–tenth century), while hinging substantially on the central role of the Syriac rearrangement of Greek patristic literature.

1 The ‘Allelopoietic’ Approach to Patristic Christianity in Syriac

The idea of this volume originates from the perception of two complementary lacunae in contemporary approaches to the study of Eastern patristic Christianity. On the one hand, the attitude of Syriac and Arabic Christian cultures towards Greek Christian thought has been too often treated with a “Greco-centric” approach, as if they had been only or mostly mere “recipients” of Greek patristic literature; the specific creative contribution of the Eastern cultures

International Association of Patristic Studies (ed. C. Harrison, B. Bitton-Ashkelony, and T. de Bruyn. Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 521–546.

6 For a definition, see Camilla Adang, Meira Polliack, and Sabine Schmidtke, “Introduction,” *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 1 (2013): 1–5.

in this field has been mostly overlooked (with the exception, e.g., of Sebastian Brock,⁷ although in a recent work he focuses again on the “Hellenization” of these cultures).⁸ On the other hand, scholarship has tended to disregard a pervasive literary form of Syriac literature, the patristic florilegia and miscellanies. Although artifacts of this kind represent, e.g., 40% of the Syriac manuscripts of the British Library,⁹ they have been almost completely overlooked in the last 150 years, apart from an important recent study¹⁰ and a few older works.¹¹

As far as the first lacuna is concerned, it is well known that integral translations of Greek patristic writings were particularly lively between the fourth and seventh century, with a blooming in the sixth and seventh century. However, this phenomenon was relatively short-lived, as also attested by the relative paucity of extant manuscripts containing integral patristic translations, and by the early date of many among them.¹² This translation literature is far from understudied,¹³ as the penetration of Late Antique Greek Christian thought into Syriac culture enjoyed scholarly interest throughout the twentieth century. Scholars mainly and comprehensibly focused their attention on capital

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- 7 Sebastian P. Brock, “From Antagonism to Assimilation: Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning,” in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period. Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, 1980* (ed. N. Garsoïan, T.F. Mathews, and R.W. Thomson; Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1982), 17–34.
 - 8 Sebastian P. Brock, “Charting the Hellenization of a Literary Culture: The Case of Syriac,” *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 3 (2015): 98–124.
 - 9 David Michelson, “Mixed Up by Time and Chance? Using Digital Media to ‘Re-Orient’ the Syriac Religious Literature of Late Antiquity,” *Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture* 5 (2016): 136–182, here 154–155.
 - 10 Grigory Kessel, “Syriac Monastic Miscellanies,” in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. An Introduction* (ed. A. Bausi et al. Hamburg: COMSt, 2015), 411–414.
 - 11 E.g. Herman G.B. Teule, “Les compilations monastiques syriaques,” in *Symposium Syriacum VII: Uppsala University, Department of Asian and African Languages, 11–14 August 1996* (ed. R. Lavenant; OCA 256; Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1998), 249–264, and numerous articles by Albert Van Roey (see bibliography).
 - 12 Sebastian P. Brock, “L’apport des Pères grecs à la littérature syriaque,” in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet; ES 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 9–26.
 - 13 From Sebastian P. Brock, “Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 20 (1979): 69–87, and Sebastian P. Brock, “Towards a History of Syriac Translation Technique,” in *III Symposium Syriacum, 1980: Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures (Goslar 7–11 Septembre 1980)* (ed. R. Lavenant; OCA 221; Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1983), 1–14 to Adam C. McCollum, “Greek Literature in the Christian East: Translations into Syriac, Georgian, and Armenian,” *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 3 (2015): 15–65. See also Daniel King, *The Syriac Versions of the Writings of Cyril of Alexandria: A Study in Translation Technique* (CSCO 626, Subsidia 123; Leuven: Peeters, 2008).

texts whose Greek original is lost, e.g., the *Chapters on Knowledge* of Evagrius of Pontus.¹⁴ Other Syriac translations of Greek works were studied, among other reasons, because of their value for the establishment of the Greek critical text, since manuscripts that transmit the Syriac versions are often more ancient than the whole Greek manuscript tradition. This is the case for the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite (sixth century): the first witness of these writings is not in Greek, but in Syriac.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the study of these patristic versions has been completely unilateral so far, for it has exclusively hinged on what the Syriac translations tell us about the ancient form of the Greek texts, as Joseph-Marie Sauget did in 1978.¹⁶ There has been no dramatic change in this one-sided approach for the last forty years. As a result, the specificity of the Syriac “patristic attitude”, which is a seminal feature of all Late Antique Christian cultures on a first-millennium scale, has only rarely been given any attention. Hints have recently emerged, however, at the perceived necessity of a broader approach to the study of Patristic Christianity “beyond East and West”,¹⁷ and thus from an entangled intercultural perspective within a first millennium periodization.

Syriac Christianity was transformed by its assimilation of Greek patristic literature, but the latter became something else in its Syriac form. What took place was not only a “Hellenization” of Syriac and Arabic Christian cultures, but also a “Syriacization” and “Arabization” of Greek patristic culture. Recent studies on knowledge transfer between different cultures term this kind of exchange *allelopoiesis*, i.e., a reciprocal creative transformation between cultures.¹⁸ The allelopoietic approach is particularly suited to the intercultural study of patristics, since it aims at understanding *how and why* an original contribution is concretely manifested. In our case, we look at how Syriac and Arabic Christianity contributed to the recreation of Greek patristic literature. Based on such an approach, we ask the following questions: how did Syriac

14 A survey in Muriel Debié and Dominique Gonnet, “Les Pères disparus en grec,” in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet; ES 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 127–148.

15 See Emiliano Fiori, ed., *Dionigi Areopagita. Nomi divini, teologia mistica, epistole. La versione siriana di Sergio di Rešʿaynā (VI secolo)* (2 vols.; CSCO 656–657, *Scriptores Syri* 252–253; Louvain: Peeters, 2014).

16 Joseph-Marie Sauget, “L’apport des traductions syriaques pour la patristique grecque,” *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* 110 (1978): 139–148.

17 Columba Stewart, “Patristics beyond East and West,” in *Patristic Studies in the Twenty-First Century* (ed. C. Harrison, B. Bitton-Ashkelony, and T. de Bruyn; Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 317–341.

18 The term allelopoiesis was proposed by Lutz Bergemann, Hartmut Böhme, Martin Dönike et al., eds., *Transformation. Ein Konzept zur Erforschung kulturellen Wandels* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2011).

Christians give shape to the patristic patrimony they received? Why and in what forms did they, and later the Christian Arabic writers, select, transform, and make the Greek “fathers” *their own* fathers? What are the themes and the patterns around which they organized their reading of the fathers? How did their reorganization contribute to the production of new knowledge?

2 Syriac Patristic Florilegia as Creative Laboratories of Knowledge

Since not much attention has been paid to the originality of the Syriac reading of the “fathers”, patristic florilegia—one of the places where this originality most eminently manifests—have also been understudied. This brings us to the second lacuna mentioned above. From the sixth century onwards, florilegia progressively became a prominent (though certainly not the exclusive)¹⁹ and, in some cases, the predominant form used by Syriac and Christian Arabic intellectuals to reshape Greek Christian thought, and thus produce new knowledge by selecting and rearranging patristic literature in new collections. Although they did not stop reading integral patristic texts, they largely privileged the florilegium and other types of collections.

Important progress has been made in recent years in the study of manuscripts containing a plurality of texts, and a broad phenomenology has recently been proposed of “reading in excerpts” as a knowledge-organizing practice, which extends across many cultures and covers fields ranging from Egyptology to Late Western Medieval philosophy.²⁰ Greek Byzantine,²¹ Coptic,²²

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- 19 Integral translations of major works, like Gregory of Nazianzus' Homilies or Dionysius the Areopagite's Corpus, continued to be read as a whole. As far as collections are concerned, also homiliaries had great importance (see the reference work by Albert Ehrhard, *Überlieferung und Bestand der hagiographischen und homiletischen Literatur der griechischen Kirche* [3 vols., Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1937–1952]). On Syriac homiliaries see especially the studies collected in Joseph-Marie Sauget, *Littératures et manuscrits des chrétientés syriaques et arabes* (Studi e Testi 389; Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1998): homiliaries, however, did not collect excerpts as florilegia did, but rather integral homiletic texts.
- 20 Sébastien Morlet, ed., *Lire en extraits. Lecture et production des textes de l'Antiquité à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Cultures et civilisations médiévales 63; Paris: PUPS, 2015); Jacqueline Hamesse, “Florilège’ et ‘autorité’: deux concepts en évolution depuis l'Antiquité jusqu'à la Renaissance,” in *On Good Authority. Tradition, Compilation, and the Construction of Authority in Literature from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (ed. R. Ceulemans and P. De Leemans; Lectio 3; Turnhout: Brepols, 2015, 199–225; the whole volume edited by Ceulemans and De Leemans is interesting and relevant in this regard).
- 21 E.g. Alexandros Alexakis, *Codex Parisinus Graecus 115 and its Archetype* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 34; Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996).
- 22 Paola Buzi, “Miscellanea e florilegi. Osservazioni preliminari per uno studio dei codici

Ethiopic,²³ and Slavic²⁴ studies have especially enjoyed this scholarly rush. Terminological definitions and cataloguing methods have been established, while codicological issues have been investigated.²⁵ Manuscripts containing a plurality of texts have been defined as “multiple-text manuscripts”, the study of which is a field in rapid and constant expansion.²⁶ Alessandro Bausi²⁷ introduced the concept of “corpus”, i.e. the totality of the texts and excerpts of texts available to a written culture that are rearranged and crystallized in ever-new multiple-text combinations. Every time discrete excerpts or source blocks are extracted from the textual corpus of a culture, they undergo ever different assemblages

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- copti pluritestiuali: il caso delle raccolte di excerpta,” in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends. Studies in Honor of Tito Orlandi* (ed. P. Buzi and A. Camplani; Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 125; Roma: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2011), 177–203; Paola Buzi, “From Single Text to Multiple Text Manuscripts: Transmission Changes in Coptic Literary Tradition. Some Case-Studies from the White Monastery Library,” in *One-Volume Libraries—Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts* (ed. M. Friedrich and C. Schwarke; Studies in Manuscript Cultures 9; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 93–109.
- 23 Alessandro Bausi, “A Case for Multiple Text Manuscripts Being Corpus Organizers,” *Manuscript Cultures Newsletter* 3 (2010): 34–36; Alessandro Bausi, “Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts: The Ethiopian Evidence,” in *One-Volume Libraries—Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts* (ed. M. Friedrich and C. Schwarke; Studies in Manuscript Cultures 9; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 111–153.
- 24 David J. Birnbaum, “Computer-Assisted Analysis and Study of the Structure of Mixed-Content Miscellanies,” *Scripta & e-Scripta* 1 (2003): 15–54; Anisava Miltenova, “Intertextuality in the Orthodox Slavic Tradition. The Case of Mixed-Content Miscellanies,” in *Between Text and Text: International Symposium on Intertextuality in Ancient Near Eastern, Ancient Mediterranean, and Early Medieval Literatures* (ed. M. Bauks, W. Horowitz, and A. Lange; Journal of Ancient Judaism. Supplements 6; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2013), 314–327.
- 25 See e.g. Marilena Maniacci, “Il codice greco ‘non unitario’. Tipologie e terminologia,” in *Il codice miscellaneo, tipologia e funzioni. Atti del convegno internazionale (Cassino, 14–17 maggio 2003)* (ed. E. Crisci and O. Pecere; Segno e testo 2; Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 75–107; Patrick Andrist, “La descrizione scientifica dei manoscritti complessi: fra teoria e pratica,” *Segno e testo* 4 (2006): 299–356.
- 26 As attested by, among others, Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke, eds., *One-Volume Libraries—Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts* (Studies in Manuscript Cultures 9; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016). See also Stephan Dusil, Gerald Schwedler, and Raphael Schwitler, eds., *Exzerpieren—Kompilieren—Tradieren: Transformationen des Wissens zwischen Spätantike und Frühmittelalter* (Millennium-Studien 64; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017); Marrietta Horster and Christiane Reitz, eds., *Condensing Texts—Condensed Texts* (Palingenesia 98; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2010). Multiple-text manuscripts can be either composite, i.e. consisting of codicological units of different provenance, or unitary, i.e. consisting of a single codicological unit.
- 27 Bausi, “A Case.”

within each new collection. From the point of view of its contents, a multiple-text manuscript contains diverse writings that are not by the same author and do not belong to the same work. This textual plurality can take up the form of a florilegium, which can be defined as a collection of *excerpts* from writings by different authors. These excerpts are often mistakenly called “fragments”, but such a denomination tends to obliterate the creative act of selection (the excerption) that lies at the ground of these anthologies.

Although they are among the most ancient extant Christian florilegia, and abundant in number, Syriac patristic florilegia have remained largely untapped and untouched by this methodological renewal. A serious philological and hermeneutical approach to these texts has so far remained a desideratum in the field of Syriac studies. Such an approach is all the more desirable since, as Marilena Maniaci has rightly pointed out, in florilegia the “juxtapositions of textual units” are “bound together by a more or less tenuous line”.²⁸ Even if this line is admittedly difficult to find in some of the extant Syriac florilegia, many of them do bear witness to a high degree of organization of the sources. The excerpts in the latter type of florilegia are not merely juxtaposed but organized around specific topics in “patchwork-treatises” with clear overall aims; as such, they vividly reflect a coherent editorial project on the part of the compiler. Thus, it is particularly regrettable that so far Syriac florilegia have mostly been treated as mere juxtapositions of texts by scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, who pillaged them by picking and publishing some interesting passages of works whose Greek original is lost.²⁹

Therefore, the main objective of the present volume is to outline a phenomenology of Syriac patristic florilegia and map their diffusion and relevance in time and space, from the sixth to the eleventh century and from the Roman Empire to China. In order to do this, it has been indispensable to study them in their own right, i.e., as specific cultural products with their own textual-

28 Maniaci, “Il codice greco,” 84.

29 A representative, though certainly not exhaustive list can include the following: Ernest W. Brooks, ed., *A Collection of Letters of Severus of Antioch from Numerous Syriac Manuscripts* (PO 12.2, 14.1; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1915, 1920); Paul A. De Lagarde, ed., *Analecta syriaca* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1858); Friedrich Loofs, *Nestoriana: Die Fragmente des Nestorius gesammelt, untersucht und herausgegeben* (Halle an der Saale: Max Niemeyer, 1905); Jean-Pierre P. Martin, *Analecta sacra Patrum Antenicænorum ex codicibus orientalibus*. *Analecta sacra spicilegio Solesmensi parata*. Tomus 4: *Patres Antenicæni*. (Paris: Ex publico Galliarum typographeo, 1883); Eduard Sachau, ed., *Theodori Mopsuesteni fragmenta syriaca e codicibus Musei Britannici Nitriacis* (Leipzig: W. Engelmann, 1869); Eduard Sachau, ed., *Inedita Syriaca: Eine Sammlung syrischer Übersetzungen von Schriften griechischer Profanliteratur, mit einem Anhang, aus den Handschriften des Britischen Museums herausgegeben* (Wien: K.K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1870).

ity. This approach has enabled us to appreciate what florilegia were for Syriac culture: laboratories of knowledge, where the selection, rearrangement, codification and transformation of old patristic sources—and in some cases their canonization—were prompted by new religious and intellectual needs, most often within the entangled cultural world of the Islamic Middle East.

3 Typological and Phenomenological Outlines

From a diachronic point of view, Syriac patristic florilegia mostly stem from the two pivotal periods of Syriac Christianity. One is the Byzantine phase (sixth–seventh centuries), in which florilegia were produced by Syriac Christians in a context of Greco-Syriac bilingualism within the borders of the Roman Empire, and the other is the Abbasid phase (eighth–tenth centuries), in which the Islamic environment and the confrontation between different Syriac Churches were among the main factors determining the production of florilegia.

From a typological standpoint, patristic florilegia (not only Syriac but Christian florilegia at large) can be divided into three major categories:

- the exegetical florilegium, a rather rare type of patristic anthology in Syriac, an example of which is illustrated by Marion Pragt in the present volume;³⁰
- the ascetical florilegium,³¹ certainly the most frequent type, which mostly contains works on ascetic topics and is investigated here by Grigory Kessel and Vittorio Berti, who both further expand their research beyond the genre of the florilegium;
- the speculative florilegium (defined as “dogmatic florilegium” by Marcel Richard),³² usually aimed at the refutation of heresies, and sometimes accompanied by excerpts from translated Greek philosophical works, which is the focus of the chapters written by Flavia Ruani, Emiliano Fiori, Bishara Ebeid, and Herman G.B. Teule.

We should also mention the collections of biblical testimonia explored in Sergey Minov’s chapter. This literary genre can be regarded as a precursor of florilegia and, arguably, an immediate model for them. Testimonia were collected

30 See Bas ter Haar Romeny, “The Identity Formation of Syrian Orthodox Christians as Reflected in Two Exegetical Collections: First Soundings,” *PdO* 29 (2004): 103–121; Bas ter Haar Romeny, “Les florilèges exégétiques syriaques,” in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet; ES 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 63–76.

31 Teule, “Les compilations;” Kessel, “Syriac Monastic Miscellanies.”

32 Marcel Richard, “Notes sur les florilèges dogmatiques du v^e et du vi^e siècle,” in *Actes du vi^e Congrès international d’Études byzantines (Paris, 27 juillet–2 août 1948)*, 1 (Paris: École des Hautes Études, 1950), 307–318. Repr. as n. 2 in id., *Opera minora* 1 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1976).

scriptural quotations which Christians gathered and organized thematically for apologetic and polemic purposes against Jews and (to a lesser extent) pagans. They emerged as early as the second century and enjoyed considerable popularity during Late Antiquity. However, despite the existence of these exclusively biblical collections, the Bible and the Fathers do not seem to be theoretically distinguished within florilegia, where it often happens that the biblical text is quoted along with a stream of patristic citations; indeed, the same terminology is used for both, “testimonia” or “demonstrations” (ܛܘܡܘܢܝܘܬܐ or ܛܘܡܘܢܝܘܬܐ). The underlying idea is that a transhistorical truth cannot but remain stable from the Bible to whatever age in the history of theology.

Syriac florilegia raise a number of questions that are only partially specific to them.³³ In some cases, such as the monastic miscellanies, a florilegium overlaps with a single manuscript (Kessel’s chapter in this volume illustrates this point well).³⁴ Contrariwise, we can observe that many florilegia—especially dogmatic and, more rarely, exegetical ones (the Collection of Simeon, marginally touched upon in Pragt’s chapter)—have their own manuscript tradition preserved in more than one multiple-text manuscript. At any rate, florilegia are rather unstable artifacts, subject to both expansion, by the addition of texts, and/or contraction, by means of abridgment. What, then, is the degree of textuality of florilegia? How strong is it? Can they always be defined as texts in their own right? How should they be approached in terms of a critical edition? This most general question can only be answered by tackling other broad questions, shown below.

- a. What appears to be most difficult is determining how the sources from the original works made their way to the florilegia. Some chapters in this volume (especially Fiori’s and Ruani’s) show that we might get a clue from blocks of excerpts that travel from one text to another rather than from single excerpts; however, single excerpts may be useful when

33 The following part of the paragraph repeats, develops, and rearranges remarks that had already appeared in Emiliano Fiori, “Conference report: *Florilegia Syriaca. Mapping a Knowledge-Organizing Practice in the Syriac World, Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, 30 January–1 February 2020*,” *COMSt Bulletin* 6:1 (2020): 93–110.

34 Indeed, in the definition quoted above (see note 28), Maniaci maintains that florilegia are “bound together by a more or less tenuous line that is not sufficient to cause a new stable tradition to take place” (Maniaci, “Il codice greco,” 84). She assumes that even if the same texts or blocks of texts do recur, their arrangement in each collection is a unicum transmitted by a single manuscript, which never reappears in an identical way. Thus, florilegia would seem to defy traditional philology, since they cannot always be investigated with the traditional stemmatic method that locates every manuscript along well-defined lines of derivation. They have no identical models, nor are they the origin of faithful copies. This uniqueness of florilegia, however, is not an absolute rule, as we will immediately see.

they feature typical but decisive characteristics such as interruptions with ܘܥܕܘܐ (“and again”), ܘܥܕܘܐ ܕܥܘܠܘܐ (“after a while”), and others. In one case, as pointed out by Moss in his chapter, we are so fortunate as to observe the process of excerpt selection in the making; marginal signs and glosses to a continuous, integral text sometimes clearly indicate the intention of the Syriac reader to isolate some passages which indeed are later found as excerpts in florilegia. Since glosses are often present in many Syriac manuscripts, and they are rather uncharted territory as well, we should consider mapping them more carefully when studying florilegia. However, we can also observe some florilegia that have other florilegia as their source, not the original texts from which excerpts are drawn. Such florilegia thus appear to be of a second (or even third) degree. In fact, glosses also appear in florilegia manuscripts themselves, which thus also bear witness to an ongoing activity of reading and elaboration even once the florilegia had reached a relatively stable form.

- b. In order to assess the internal coherence and agenda of a florilegium, it is also crucial to determine its historical context, wherever possible, especially through the reading of all possible sources touching upon the themes of the florilegium at hand and belonging to its presumable age. Therefore, determining compilation practices requires working on the fine details (see next point) as well as the big picture.
- c. Many manuscripts containing florilegia include more than one, and some contain florilegia exclusively. One can even think of the term “metaflorilegium” to define such manuscripts, but this prospective category will require further elaboration. If we apply it to any manuscript containing a plurality of florilegia, it risks being an empty category; it may rather be useful to apply it to manuscripts in which the florilegia are bound together by a recognizable agenda or thematic thread.

These general remarks highlight how Syriac florilegia pose problems common to all other compilation traditions in the Late Antique and Medieval Mediterranean and beyond. That being the case, one cannot pursue the study of Syriac florilegia without considering the developments of more advanced fields, such as the most recent scholarship on Greek Byzantine and Latin Medieval studies on multiple-text manuscripts.

Let us now turn to an overview of the individual contributions of this volume.³⁵

35 This paragraph is an abridged and reworked version of the COMST Bulletin report (see note 33), and partially relies on the abstracts of the papers given at the first FLOS workshop (see below).

4 The Present Volume: An Overview

Sergey Minov's paper deals with a collection of biblical *testimonia*, and therefore opens the volume with good reason. Minov discusses how this genre was still operative during the early Islamic period among Syriac-speaking Christians. The primary focus of his investigation is an unpublished Syriac work, entitled *Collection of Demonstrations from the Old Testament against the Jews and Other Unbelievers*, which is attested in a single West Syriac manuscript (London, British Library Add. 12154) dated to sometime between the eighth and ninth century. He addresses the question of whether this composition stands in a direct genetic relation with the early specimen of the Greek *testimonia* literature, or whether it should be regarded as an original compilation, produced in a Syriac-speaking milieu. The chapter also discusses the question of a possible social and religious function of this text during the early Abbasid period, as well as its relation to the rich tradition of Syriac florilegia of this period.

In his chapter, Yonatan Moss tackles some core methodological questions of the volume. Why did the florilegium become a predominant mode of organizing, transmitting, and creating knowledge in the Syriac world? How did the process of selection from larger texts, and compilation in florilegia, work in practice? Moss' proposal to explore these overarching questions is highly concrete. He asks whether there are any material traces of the selection and extraction processes of individual passages from the continuous texts and their incorporation into the florilegia. Moss precisely finds such traces in at least one continuous sixth-century manuscript—London, British Library Add. 14567—which contains “minor” works by John Chrysostom, in conjunction with several of the later theological florilegia. BL Add. 14567 comes with dozens of scribal notes appearing in the margins and serving a variety of functions. Structurally, the link between the marginal notations and the main body of the text in this manuscript has the same function as that between headings to excerpts and the excerpts themselves in the florilegia. But there is more. Moss tracks down several cases of word-for-word identity between notations found in BL Add. 14567 and headings found in subsequent florilegia, both referring to the same texts. This would seem to open a window unto one of the concrete processes through which the late ancient and early medieval Syriac florilegia were formed.

Marion Pragt's chapter explores the organization of exegetical knowledge in two West Syriac collections. These are the so-called London Collection (seventh century, extant in one single manuscript of the eighth–ninth century, London, British Library Add. 12168), and the Collection of Simeon (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Syr. 103 and London, British Library Add. 12144). Her focus is on the reception of Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of*

Songs in both collections. Gregory's *Homilies* circulated in Syriac in both full and abbreviated versions, which have not yet been edited or fully studied, and became one of the main sources for Syriac interpretations of the Song. In the London Collection and the Collection of Simeon, the compilers operated in two ways; they abridged texts from individual authors (Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs*) while they also added extracts selected from various works. Pragt examines how the *Homilies* were abbreviated and organized, in what different ways Gregory and other authors were used and what this may reveal about the compilers' aims and interests.

In her chapter, Flavia Ruani studies the content and form of florilegia as part of the Syriac heresiological tradition. These often bear the title of *Demonstrations from the Fathers against Heresies*, and their main goal is to refute the opinions of a variety of adversaries (Julianists, Nestorians, etc.). Furthermore, they both adopt and adapt a structural way of refutation going back to classical heresiology (starting in the second century in Greek), which consists of quoting excerpts either from the adversaries themselves, for the sake of refutation, or from previous Church authorities, in support of specific arguments. As one way to understand the polemical nature of the florilegia as constructed texts with their own editorial intention, Ruani suggests that we study the use they make of previous heresiological works. Firstly, the chapter offers an overview of the heresiological sources quoted in the florilegia, which come from the Syriac and Greek traditions. Such a survey allows us to understand which texts were in circulation and available to the authors of the florilegia in Upper Mesopotamia in the seventh–tenth century, and which were deemed relevant. The main part of the chapter focuses on two of them. These are the *Panarion* by Epiphanius of Salamis, and Ephrem of Nisibis' heresiological works, namely, the *Prose Refutations against Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan* and the *Hymns against Heresies*. After offering a survey of the quotations from these sources, she concentrates on a close reading of the selection, organization, and content of these excerpts, including the textual modifications they may have undergone and the contexts in which they were received. Finally, the chapter broadens its scope to previous, contemporary, and later authors and texts that quote the same sources. Comparisons are drawn, for example, with Philoxenus of Mabbug, Severus of Antioch, and Moses bar Kepha.

Emiliano Fiori's chapter presents a large Christological florilegium preserved in different manuscripts of the British Library and the Mingana collection. The florilegium, which expounds a Miaphysite Christology in 110 chapters and is mainly made up of quotations from Cyril of Alexandria and Severus of Antioch, discusses highly technical topics. An initial exploration of the patristic materials of this florilegium and of their itineraries through the centuries leads

Fiori to some provisional results concerning the context in which they were originally collected and the circumstances that may have prompted the production of the florilegium as we have it now. Much of what is discussed in the Christological florilegium in its current form was already present in some late sixth-century controversies between Miaphysites and Chalcedonians. These very topics emerged again in an age of renewed polemics that opposed Miaphysites to Chalcedonians, between the end of the Umayyad caliphate and the first decades of the 'Abbasid rule. By investigating the reiterated emergence of these topics in Syriac Miaphysitism between the sixth and ninth century, Fiori illustrates the nature of the florilegium as an 'emergency kit' for Miaphysite apology against Chalcedonian adversaries, who were in the heyday of their power and influence, with the support of both the Roman Empire and the first Caliphs.

Bishara Ebeid concentrates on the apologetic writings on the Trinity and Christology of Abū Rā'īṭah al-Takrītī, a Miaphysite theologian of the eighth–ninth centuries, who used Greek patristic authorities to answer the accusations of non-Miaphysite Christians as well as Muslims (with the latter group, of course, the references made to the Fathers are indirect). In the Christological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries, Miaphysite authors like Severus of Antioch and Peter of Callinicum relied on the patristic heritage to prove that their doctrine was orthodox and in agreement with the Church Fathers. Two centuries later, the patristic quotations used by Severus, Peter, and other authors were further selected and reorganized in Christological and Trinitarian patristic florilegia. In his paper, Ebeid analyzes the use of the patristic tradition in some of Abū Rā'īṭah's writings (*The first letter on the Holy Trinity*, *The letter against Melkites*, and *The apology on the Trisagion*) and demonstrates that the latter's knowledge of the Fathers' doctrine and the quotations and references he makes from their works, both directly and indirectly, are based on these Syriac dogmatic florilegia. Ebeid points to the highly relevant fact that Syriac florilegia had a multilingual life, whose impact extended beyond the Syriac language, as his chapter clearly shows, and influenced the arguments and thought of a seminal Christian Arabic author like Abū Rā'īṭah.

Herman Teule's chapter takes us as far as the second half of the second millennium and allows us to explore the persistence of ancient compilation practices in a little explored age of Syro-Arabic literature. While he was still the Metropolitan of Amid, the later Chaldean Patriarch Joseph II (1667–1713) published in Syriac a selection of conciliar decrees. The oldest extant manuscript is probably an autograph by Joseph himself. As stated by Joseph in one of the introductions to this work (there are at least three), his Syriac text goes back to an Arabic original, authored by a Carmelite. Teule discusses the *Sitz im*

Leben of the Arabic original, focusing on the rationale behind the selection of these conciliar documents.

Grigory Kessel's paper moves from the assumption that, just as in other Christian traditions, reading played an important role in Syriac Christianity, but that the development of reading practices within the Syriac Christian tradition has not yet received the attention it deserves. Scholars of Syriac Christianity are in a very fortunate position, as we have in our possession the actual products that reflect the changes and developments that took place within the Syriac monastic tradition from the sixth century onwards, namely, the miscellanies (not only florilegia). Miscellanies were the main vehicle for the transmission of monastic literature and were deemed essential for a monk's spiritual formation. In the earliest extant examples (dating to the sixth century) we can already detect a feature that remains constant through time: each miscellany has a unique combination of texts. Such collections of texts thus offer us a unique glimpse into the Syriac monastic milieu of their day. They show us, for example, which texts were given preference in copying and which texts fell out of use after a period of circulation. Thanks to miscellanies, we can observe clearly how Syriac monasticism was shifting from its admiration for the Byzantine monastic tradition to the establishment of its own extensive corpus; most of Syriac monastic literature, including translations of Greek patristic writings, is preserved solely in monastic miscellanies. Kessel considers Syriac miscellanies containing ascetic texts as a source for the study of intellectual activity in Syriac monasteries. He demonstrates some aspects of the significance of the miscellanies for the study of Syriac literature by presenting as a case study the works of Ephrem of Nisibis that can be found in the miscellanies. Traditionally, Ephrem was known in both Byzantine and Syriac milieus not as the historical Ephrem, the fourth-century author of cycles of *madrashé*, but as a solitary who left the world and concentrated on permanent contrition for his sins. Indeed, a close look at monastic miscellanies produced in different periods reveals that the works transmitted by such miscellanies as Ephremian are in fact not by Ephrem himself; they are rather pseudo-Ephremian. Ephrem's authentic works probably did not exercise any attraction for an audience that was entirely concentrated on ascetical questions.

Vittorio Berti's paper vastly broadens the geographic scope of our investigation and shows how far in space the Syriac practices of collection and compilation reached. The Sogdian Christian manuscript E28 is a set of scattered sheets and fragments discovered in Turfan which were reordered by scholars through codicological and philological analysis. It can be defined as an East Syriac monastic miscellany, although not a florilegium in the proper sense; it collects entire works, which include lives of ancient solitaries, counsels for

novices, and ascetical homilies. A Syriac manuscript containing precisely the same texts is not extant; it is most likely that the Sogdian miscellany is an original product of the Turfan Christian monastic community. The latter possibility suggests that we pursue a comparative work on the most pertinent Syriac manuscript tradition for each text collected in the Sogdian miscellany in order to sketch the hypothetical Syriac library as it may have been known by these Sogdian monks, the imagined audience, and the plausible context of use of the book.

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An Unpublished Syriac Collection of the Old Testament *Testimonia* against the Jews from the Early Islamic Period

Sergey Minov

Introduction

Resorting to the Old Testament for apologetic and/or polemic engagement with Jews and Judaism constituted an integral and, arguably, one of the most important elements in the Christian repertoire of identity maintenance from the very beginnings of the new religion. Among the earliest literary forms to be deployed for such purposes were collections of scriptural *testimonia*, that is, loosely organised and often thematically arranged lists of biblical quotations that were meant to demonstrate the truth of Christianity vis-à-vis Judaism.¹ Although the earliest specimens of this genre did not survive, there are still several Greek collections of anti-Jewish testimonies, preserved from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.²

While the roots of this literary form lay in Greek-speaking milieux, the genre of *testimonia* collections gained popularity among other Christian cultures as well. When it comes to Syriac-speaking Christians, some scholars argued that such collections were in use among them as early as the fourth or fifth century.³

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- 1 One of the earliest systematic treatments of this genre was carried out by James Rendel Harris, in his seminal monograph *Testimonies* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916–1920). For a more recent and balanced discussion, see Martin C. Albl, *“And Scripture Cannot Be Broken”: The Form and Function of the Early Christian Testimonia Collections* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum 96; Leiden: Brill, 1999).
 - 2 See texts published in: Robert V. Hotchkiss, *A Pseudo-Epiphanius Testimony Book* (SBL Texts and Translations, Early Christian Literature Series 1; Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1974); Martin C. Albl, *Pseudo-Gregory of Nyssa. Testimonies against the Jews* (SBL Writings from the Greco-Roman World 8; Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004); Marc de Groote, “*Anonyma Testimonia Adversus Iudaeos*: Critical Edition of an Antijudaic Treatise,” *VChr* 59 (2005): 315–336.
 - 3 Cf. the suggestion regarding the author of the *Teaching of Addai* in Harris, *Testimonies*, 1:59; and a more nuanced discussion of Aphrahat’s possible indebtedness to “a wider NT and early Christian *testimonia* tradition” in Albl, *And Scripture*, 146–148. Cf. also hypothesis of Allison

Even though such a possibility does not seem unlikely, no conclusive evidence in that regard has been provided so far.

In this article, I am going to present and discuss a hitherto unpublished and unstudied specimen of the *testimonia* literature in Syriac, which constitutes the earliest preserved representative of the genre in this language. Entitled *Collection of demonstrations from the holy scriptures of the Old (Testament) against the Jews and the rest of unbelievers*, this work is attested in a single textual witness, manuscript London, British Library Add. 12154.⁴ Dated by William Wright approximately to the late eighth or early ninth century on the basis of its handwriting, this manuscript was produced within a West Syrian milieu. It contains an extended anthology of various texts, which include theological works in defence of Miaphysite Christology and many extracts from works of patristic authors, in Syriac or translated from Greek. The *Collection* appears on fols. 201^v–222^r, preceded by an excerpt from the *Ecclesiastical History* by John of Ephesus and followed by a collection of the letters of George, Bishop of the Arabs.

Below, I shall provide a summary of the *Collection*, followed by discussions on its biblical profile and the work's context and message, as well as its possible relationship to the *Disputation* of Sergius the Stylite, an important anti-Jewish composition from approximately the same period.⁵ The complete Syriac text of the *Collection* is presented in Appendix 1, followed by an index of scriptural passages in Appendix 2.

1 Summary of the *Collection*

In this section, I shall offer a detailed summary of the *Collection*, based on the complete Syriac text of the work. I present the composition's general layout, with all structurally relevant para- and intra-textual material translated into English (in italics), and all quoted (or mentioned) scriptural passages, listed in accordance with their sequence.

Peter Hayman regarding sources of the *Disputation* of Sergius the Stylite, mentioned below, pp. 41–42.

4 For a detailed description, see William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, Acquired since the Year 1838* (3 vols.; London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870–1872), 2:976–989.

5 Published by Allison P. Hayman, *The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite against a Jew* (2 vols.; CSCO 338–339, *Scriptores Syri* 152–153; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1973).

Title: *Collection of demonstrations from the holy scriptures of the Old (Testament) against the Jews and the rest of unbelievers.*

1.1 *The first chapter: About (the fact) that the God of everything and Lord is indeed declared and announced in the holy prophets in the Trinity of persons, that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as also we, Christians, believe and praise.*

1.2 *First, about the three holy persons together:*

Gen 1:26, 3:22, 11:7, 18:1–23, 18:26, 18:32–19:3,⁶ 19:12–13, 19:19–25; Exod 3:1–7,⁷ 3:11–15, 31:1–3,⁸ 33:18–23,⁹ 34:5–6, 34:8–9; Num 6:22–27;¹⁰ Deut 6:4; Ps 33:6, 67:7–8; Wis 8:3; Ezek 37:1; Isa 6:1–3.

1.24 *In all these (testimonies), the three persons of the Holy Trinity are declared.*

1.25 *Again, about two persons:*

Gen 1:27, 5:1, 6:3,¹¹ 19:24, 22:10–12,¹² 22:15–18, 31:11–13; 1 Sam 12:3–5;¹³ Ps 56:11, 119:89, 130:5, 51:12–14,¹⁴ 143:10; Prov 30:4,¹⁵ 8:11–31;¹⁶ Joel 3:1;¹⁷ Mic 3:8; Isa 61:1, 63:14.

1.45 *And it is on account of the Holy Trinity, indeed, that we have brought forward these (testimonies) now; we may still find many like them, also among those that are arranged below.*

2.1 *Chapter two: Allusive, i.e., more concealed prophecy about the coming of our great Saviour, the one who is announced in the holy prophets.*

6 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About two persons.*

7 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the person of the Son, who is called God and angel.*

8 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the Holy Spirit.*

9 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the Father and the Son.*

10 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About three persons.*

11 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About two (persons).*

12 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the Son, who is called God and angel.*

13 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the Son.*

14 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the Spirit.*

15 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About Son.*

16 A gloss by the same hand on the right margin: *One that, in my thought, (is) about his exalted incarnation.*

17 A gloss by the same hand on the right margin: *About the Spirit.*

Gen 49:8–12; Exod 4:13; Deut 18:15; Ps 8:5–7; Mic 5:1; Zech 6:12–13, 9:9–11; Jer 23:5–6, 30:8–9, 33:20–21; Ezek 34:25, 37:23–24, 37:25, 21:32; Dan 2:34–35; Isa 10:33–11:10, 28:16–17, 55:3–5, 61:1–3; Num 24:17.

2.22 *Completed are also the (testimonies) of this chapter. However, these below are the same and have the same meaning, and all of them together are, indeed, bound and fastened one with another in the likeness of cords.*

3.1 *Chapter three: That that king and saviour, whose kingdom and salvation the prophets have been announcing, is not only for the Jews but, indeed, generally and equally for all people who accept him.*

Gen 18:17–18, 22:18; Ps 2:8,¹⁸ 72:6–19; Isa 42:6–9, 45:22–25, 49:5–6, 49:8–9, 55:4–5, 62:10–12; Zech 9:10.

3.13 *Completed is also this chapter.*

4.1 *Chapter four: That the one, whom the prophets announced that he would come for salvation, is God, as also we, Christians, indeed, announce and believe.*

Job 19:25; Ps 12:6, 80:2–4, 84:8, 94:1, 144:5, 118:25–27; 2 Chr 6:17–18; 1 Kgs 8:27; Hos 10:12; Mic 1:2–3; Zeph 3:14–18; Bar 3:36–38; Ezek 44:1–3; Isa 7:10–14, 35:2–10, 40:3–5, 40:9–11, 46:12–13, 63:9.

4.22 *Completed.*

5.1 *Chapter five: That this God the Saviour, who was prophesised by the prophets, is the Son and Word of the Father, as also, indeed, say and confess we, Christians.*

Ps 2:6–8, 43:3, 45:7–8, 57:4, 72:1, 110:1–4; Zech 2:14–17; Isa 9:5–6, 48:12–16; Sir 24:1–12, 24:19–29.

5.13 *Completed.*

6.1 *Chapter six: That the one who was born from the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judaea, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah and Isaiah, that is to say, during the time of the kingship of Augustus, Caesar of the Romans, is the Lord and Saviour mentioned above, as also we, Christians, confess and hold.*

18 A gloss by the same hand on the left margin: *About the calling of the nations.*

Dan 9:24–26; Gen 49:10;¹⁹ Ps 89:4–5, 89:21, 89:29–38; Jer 33:17.

6.8 *Completed are also the (testimonies) of this chapter, likewise in brief.*

7.1 *Chapter seven: Prophecy (that) concerns distinctly, that is. specifically, the (actions) of the salvific dispensation of Christ, Our Saviour.*

7.2 *About his flight, that is to say, entrance to Egypt:*

Isa 19:1;

7.4 *About his gentleness, and humility, and good deeds:*

Isa 42:1–4, 52:13–53:7;

7.7. *About that glorious entrance of his:²⁰*

Gen 49:10–11; Zech 9:9; Ps 8:3;

7.11 *About his handing over, that is arrest:*

Ps 2:1–3; Wis 2:12–22; Isa 3:9–10; Ps 41:10, 109:1–9, 27:12; Zech 11:12–13, 13:7;

7.20 *About what happened in the law court:*

Mic 4:14; Isa 50:5–8; Jeremiah agraphon; Isa 53:7–12;

7.25 *About his crucifixion:*

Ezra agraphon; Ps 22:17–19, 69:22, 22:8–9; Amos 8:9–10; Zech 14:6–7, 12:9–10, 11:7–9;

7.34 *About his burial:*

Lam 4:20; Ps 41:8–9, 88:6; Gen 49:8–9;

19 The biblical verse is accompanied by the following explanation: *As he, indeed, calls kingship sceptre, while prophecy—lawgiver. And the Jews do not have these from the very time of the coming of the eternal righteousness, Our Saviour Christ. The one, whose manifestation both seals, that is cancels, the appearance of prophecy, and removed their governorship, as, indeed, Angel Gabriel and the righteous Jacob said before.*

20 A gloss by a different hand on the left margin: *to Jerusalem.*

7.39 *About his rising from the grave:*

Ps 16:8–10, 68:2–4, 78:65–66, 118:21–24; Zech 9:11; Isa 25:8–9, 26:1–4, 49:9, 42:7; Hos 6:1–2; Ps 12:6;

7.51 *About his ascension to heaven:*

Ps 24:7–10, 68:19, 47:6–10; Zech 13:6; Isa 63:1–6.

8.1 *Chapter eight: About the rejection and repudiation of the nation that did not accept Christ, and the election and calling of the nations that accepted him and believed in him.*

Ps 69:22–23;

8.3 *Again, then, this is also demonstrated in that Psalm “O God of my praise, do not be silent” (Ps 109:1), from its beginning until its end.*

Hos 7:13–16, 9:7–17; Amos 5:21–27, 6:8, 9:1–5; Jer 14:11–12, 15:1–4, 18:11–13; Isa 11:0–16, 30:8–14, 65:2–7; Ezek 7:1–9, 15:1–16:3, 16:44–52, 22:17–18;

8.19 *One can bring forward from the prophets all these and many other (testimonies), and they demonstrate the rejection of the nation by God. Again, the great prophet Moses also writes (things) that are similar to these in “Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak” (Deut 32:1), the second ode of his.²¹ These demonstrate, then, the election and calling of the nations:*

Gen 17:5–7, 12:3, 26:4, 49:10; Ps 2:7–8, 72:8–11, 72:17, 22:31–32, 117:1–2, 98:2; Zech 9:9–10; Isa 43:6–9, 8:16–18, 25:6, 26:1–4, 54:1, 11:9–10, 42:1–4, 40:3–5, 45:21–24, 49:8–9, 51:4–5, 52:10, 55:4–5, 65:1, 65:8–16, 65:22–24; Joel 3:1–5.

21 The reference is to Deut 32:1–43, which circulated as a separate unit included into the so-called “Book of Odes”, often appended to the liturgical Psalters in Syriac (and some other) traditions. For the text and discussion, see Heinrich Schneider, Willem Baars and Jürgen Ch.H. Lebram, *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version. Part IV, fasc. 6: Canticles or Odes; Prayer of Manasseh; Apocryphal Psalms; Psalms of Solomon; Tobit; 1 (3) Esdras. General Preface* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972).

Conclusion: *These demonstrations have been gathered and laid out here from the books of the holy prophets for the admonition of Jews and pagans. Although there were many others that are suitable to be brought forward against them, yet these that have been laid out will suffice. Completed are the testimonies.*

2 Structure of the *Collection*

Before proceeding further, a caveat is in order regarding the use of the term “author” and comparable terms in connection with our work. Establishing the authorship of the *Collection* is made difficult, if nearly impossible, by the anonymous and atomistic, and thus easily changeable nature of the work itself. The situation is made even more complicated by the fact that we do not know whether its text in BL Add. 12154 is an autograph, so that the manuscript’s scribe could be considered as the work’s author, or it was copied from an earlier textual witness. If the latter scenario is the case, we have no means to assess the extent of the scribe’s agency in shaping both the form and the content of the *Collection* as it appears in this manuscript. In light of all these considerations, I employ the terms “author” and “compiler” in relation to our work only conditionally, using them interchangeably in order to refer to the person responsible for the form in which it appears in BL Add. 12154.

The text of the *Collection* encompasses 200 units with scriptural passages. The compiler used a wide range of para- and intra-textual means to organise this diverse material and thus make it accessible to readers.

First of all, he divided the whole work into eight thematic chapters dealing with different major areas of anti-Jewish apologetics and polemics, which are numbered (both in the text and on the margins) and introduced by rubricated titles. In addition to that, in some chapters, such as 1 and 7, the compiler adds short subtitles (some of them rubricated) to help the reader navigate them. Furthermore, in some cases, he uses marginal notes to indicate the relevance of a given passage with greater precision. Such notes abound especially in chapter 1, where different biblical passages are marked as referring to different persons of the Trinity.

In rare instances, a biblical passage is accompanied by an elaborate explanation of its relevance. For example, in the case of Gen 49:10 (6.3), the compiler supplies this verse with an extended explication of its supersessionist meaning.

Most of the scriptural passages quoted in the *Collection* are introduced by the name of the supposed author of the biblical book from which they come or, if they follow a passage from the same book, by such phrases as *again* (1.20 *et passim*), *after a while* (1.4 *et passim*), *after many things* (1.13, 1.30) and *after some*

things (1.27–1.29).²² Sometimes, a passage is introduced only by the name of the book, as in Gen 17:5–7 (8.20): *From the Creation*. Most of these introductory names and phrases are rubricated.

On some occasions, when a given biblical author was thought to produce several compositions, the introductory phrase mentions his name together with that of the specific book:

- Gen 49:8 (2.2) *Moses in the first book; from the blessing of Jacob the elder; the two following passages, i.e., Exod 4:13 (2.3) and Deut 18:15 (2.4), are introduced as In book two and In book five, respectively;*
- Num 6:22–27 (1.17) *Moses in book four; the following passage, i.e., Deut 6:4 (1.18), is introduced as Again, in the Deuteronomy;*
- 2 Chr 6:17 (4.9) *Solomon in the Book of Kings;*
- Prov 30:4 (1.39) *Solomon in the Book of Proverbs;*
- Wis 2:12–22 (7.13) *Solomon in the Great Wisdom;*
- Wis 8:3 (1.21) *Solomon in the Proverbs;*
- Bar 3:36–38 (4.14) *Jeremiah in the Epistle of Baruch.*

On some occasions, the compiler introduces biblical passages using somewhat more elaborate descriptions, as in the following cases:

- Ps 89:4–5 (6.4) *Again, then, David sings thus;*
- Jer 33:17 (6.7) *Jeremiah, then, says.*

Sometimes, the introductory phrase ascribes a given passage not to the author of the biblical book, but to the biblical protagonist who pronounced it:

- Gen 49:8–7 (7.38) *Jacob the patriarch;*
- Gen 49:10 (6.3) *And these, again, the righteous Jacob confirms when he was blessing Judah;*
- Gen 49:10–11 (7.8) *The righteous Jacob;*
- Num 24:17 (2.21) *Balaam the soothsayer in book four of the Torah;*
- Dan 9:24–26 (6.2) *Angel Gabriel thus said to Daniel the prophet.*

22 In most cases, attributions of the quoted passages to respective biblical books are correct. The only exception is the case of Wis 8:3 (1.21), wrongly introduced as *Solomon in the Proverbs*.

Most of the biblical passages quoted in the *Collection* are given in full. There are, however, several instances when only the beginning of a relevant passage is quoted, with a concluding comment added, as in the following cases: Gen 49:10 (8.23): *and the rest*; Ps 72:1 (5.6): *the whole Psalm*; Ezek 15:1–16:3 (8.16): *and the rest of the whole story that follows*. The relevance of the whole Ps 109 is explained in a separate sentence in 8.3, where only its first line is quoted.

On rare occasions, as in the case of Dan 9:24–26 (6.2), the scribe of the manuscript marks a scriptural passage with the help of quotation marks, placed in the right margin.

3 Scriptural Profile of the *Collection*

As mentioned above, the text of the *Collection* comprises 200 units with scriptural passages.²³ Some of these proof-texts, however, occur more than once: Gen 49:10 (6.3, 8.23); Ps 12:6 (4.3, 7.50); Isa 26:1–4 (7.46, 8.34), 40:3–5 (4.18, 8.38), 42:1–4 (7.5, 8.37), 49:8–9 (3.9, 8.40), 55:4–5 (3.10, 8.43). Accordingly, the number of unique passages can be reduced to 193. It should be pointed out that there are quite a few units whose biblical passages overlap to a greater or lesser degree,²⁴ but for the sake of convenience, I count such cases as separate.

The primary biblical text that underlies the *Collection* as a whole is that of the Peshitta version.²⁵ As one reads through the work, however, one comes across numerous departures from the Peshitta text. After discarding cases of obvious scribal mistakes,²⁶ one can distinguish four main types of non-Peshitta material in the *Collection*: (a) independent reworkings of the Peshitta text (3.1), (b) revisions based on the Syro-Hexapla (3.2), (c) influence of other textual traditions (3.3), and (d) extracanonical material (3.4). Here below, I provide examples from all these groups. Except for the last one, they are by no means exhaustive but serve to illustrate a broad range of textual choices made by the compiler of the *Collection*.

23 For a complete list, see Index in Appendix 2.

24 Cf. cases like Gen 49:8–9 (7.38) and Gen 49:8–12 (2.2), Ps 69:22 (7.28) and Ps 69:22–23 (8.2), Isa 45:21–24 (8.39) and Isa 45:22–25 (3.7), etc.

25 For the text of the Peshitta, I rely upon the Leiden edition: *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version* (18 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1966–2019).

26 Cf. Isa 62:10 (3.11):  for .

3.2.4 Ps 69:22
 Coll. 8.2 ... **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Pesh. ... **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Syro-Hex. ... **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ

3.2.5 Isa 65:8
 Coll. 8.45 ... **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Pesh. ... **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Syro-Hex. ... **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ

3.2.6 Isa 65:22
 Coll. 8.46 **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Pesh. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Syro-Hex. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ³⁰

3.2.7 Ps 69:22
 Coll. 7.28 **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Pesh. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Syro-Hex. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ

3.2.8 Ezek 34:25a
 Coll. 2.12 **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Pesh. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Syro-Hex. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ

3.2.9 Jer 23:5-6
 Coll. 2.9 **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ
 Pesh. **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ** ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ

30 In the scribal apparatus on the margins of Codex Ambrosianus, an explanatory gloss is added: **ܘܥܡܘܢܘܢ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܗ**.

Genesis.³⁴ It should be added that this reading and the addition of the noun ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ after the phrase ܡܢ ܡܠܝܚܐ set this quotation of Gen 49:10 apart from units 6.3 and 7.8, where it appears in its standard Peshitta form.

3.3.2 Ps 69:27

Coll. 8.2

Pesh.

Syro-Hex.

³⁵ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ
ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ
ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ

The readings ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ, “my bruises/wounds” and ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ, “my sores” of the *Collection* reflect ultimately the Greek variant τραυματων μου, which appears in place of τραυματιων σου in some textual witnesses of the Septuagint version of Psalms.³⁶ Moreover, this biblical verse is quoted in this form in works of some Greek exegetes from Late Antiquity, as, for example, in the corresponding section of the *Commentary on Psalms* by Theodore of Mopsuestia: και ἐπι τὸ ἄλλο τῶν τραυματων μου προσέθηκαν.³⁷ What is noteworthy about the appearance of these readings in the *Collection* is the fact that its compiler for some reason decided not to use the semantically close rendering ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ, “my wounds” of the Syro-Hexapla, but chose instead to integrate the Septuagint material by resorting to some other source. At this point, it is difficult to say whether he did that by relying directly on some Greek work, such as Theodore’s *Commentary*, or based on some Syriac intermediary.³⁸

3.3.3 Isa 42:4

Coll. 8.37

Pesh.

Syro-Hex.

ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ
ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ
ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ
ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ

34 See Baars, *New Syro-Hexaplaric Texts*, 67.
35 The form is glossed on the margin with: ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ.
36 See Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta Societatis Scientiarum Gottingensis, x: Psalmi cum Odis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1931), 194. David Taylor has suggested, in a private correspondence, that the gloss ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ was added in order to warn the reader not to confuse the form ܠܫܘܠܗܘܬܐ with its homograph meaning “my (female) companions”.
37 Ed. Robert Devreesse, *Le commentaire de Théodore de Mopsueste sur les Psaumes. I-LXXX* (Studi e Testi 93; Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1939), 457. Cf. also Athanasius of Alexandria, *Expos. in Ps.* (PG 27, col. 312), and Theodoret of Cyrus, *Comm. in Ps.* (PG 80, col. 1409).
38 Unfortunately, the relevant section of the Syriac version of Theodore’s *Commentary* has not survived.

and the extended quote from the Wisdom of Solomon, i.e., 2:12–22 (7.13).⁴³ The latter passage seems to be better understood as a result of the reworking of the Peshitta text based on the Syro-Hexaplaric version.

3.4 *Extracanonial Material*

Finally, I should mention two cases of scriptural proof-texts in the *Collection*, which fall outside the canon of the Old Testament in Syriac tradition, even understood broadly in its most extended version, as in some manuscripts of the Peshitta,⁴⁴ namely the agrapha transmitted under the names of Jeremiah (7.23) and Ezra (7.26). Besides the *Collection*, both these passages appear in several other Syriac works: the Syriac version of the *Acts of Sylvester*, dated to the sixth century,⁴⁵ the already mentioned *Disputation* of Sergius the Stylite, and the anti-Jewish treatise by the West Syrian polemicist Dionysius bar Šalībī (12th c.).⁴⁶ In order to make easier a comparison between them, I provide below the Syriac text and the translation of three out of four versions for each of the agrapha in a synoptic form and discuss their origin and mutual relationship briefly.⁴⁷

The Books of Samuel in the Syriac Version of Jacob of Edessa (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 10; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 34.

- 43 A Syriac fragment containing Jacob's version of Wis 2:12–24 was published by Willem Baars, "Ein neugefundenes Bruchstück aus der syrischen Bibelrevision des Jakob von Edessa," *Vetus Testamentum* 18:4 (1968): 548–554.
- 44 On the Old Testament canon in the Syriac tradition, see Jean-Claude Haelewyck, "Le canon de l'Ancien Testament dans la tradition syriaque (manuscripts bibliques, listes canoniques, auteurs)," in *L'Ancien Testament en syriaque* (ed. F. Briquel-Chatonnet and P. Le Moigne; ES 5; Paris: Geuthner, 2008), 141–172; Edmon L. Gallagher and John D. Meade, *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity: Texts and Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- 45 Translated into Syriac from Greek, it is preserved embedded in Pseudo-Zachariah's *Ecclesiastical History*, composed after 569 CE. On the Syriac version of the *Acts*, see Victor Rysel, "Syrische Quellen abendländischer Erzählungsstoffe: IV. Die Silvesterlegende," *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen* 95 (1895): 1–54; Annunziata Di Rienzo, "Gli *Actus Silvestri* nella tradizione in lingua siriana: il testimone contenuto nel manoscritto BL Add 12 174," *Adamantius* 22 (2016): 328–348; Annunziata Di Rienzo, "Pope Sylvester: How to Create a Saint. The Syriac Contribution to the Sylvestrian Hagiography," in *Syriac Hagiography: Texts and Beyond* (ed. S. Minov and F. Ruani; Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 20; Leiden: Brill, 2021), 113–134.
- 46 See paragraph 6.2; ed. Rifaat Y. Ebied, Malki Malki and Lionel R. Wickham, *Dionysius Bar Šalībī's Treatise Against the Jews: Edited and Translated with Notes and Commentary* (Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 15; Leiden: Brill, 2020), 94–97.
- 47 I do not include the version of Dionysius bar Šalībī because it comes considerably later than the *Collection* and, thus, has less relevance for the current discussion. It should be pointed out, however, that these two passages in Dionysius' treatise exhibit much greater

3.4.1 Jeremiah Agraphon

Coll. 7.23 **אִירְיָה**. חַסְרָא כְּרַחֲמֵי דְסַלְמָתָא אִירְיָה. אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא

Acts of Sylv.⁴⁸ רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא כְּרַחֲמֵי דְסַלְמָתָא אִירְיָה. אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא <...> אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא

Disp. I.16, 18⁴⁹ .רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא <...> אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא

Coll. 7.23 “Jeremiah: *This people surrounded me (with) the thorns of their sins, and I have become a laughing-stock to this people.*”

Acts of Sylv. “And (prophesying) that the crown of thorns would be put on him, Jeremiah says: *This people put upon me the thorns of their sins.* <...> And that they mocked him, Jeremiah says: *I have become a derision and laughing-stock to this people.*”

Disp. I.16, 18:⁵⁰ “And (prophesying) that he would be crowned with thorns, Jeremiah said: *(With) the thorns of its transgressions this people surrounded me.* <...> And (prophesying) that he would be mocked, Jeremiah said: *I have become a laughing-stock to this people.*”

3.4.2 Ezra Agraphon⁵¹

Coll. 7.26 **חִירְיָה**. אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא

Acts of Sylv.⁵² אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה אִירְיָה
.רַחֲמֵי חַסְרָא

textual affinity with those of the *Collection* than with their counterparts in the *Acts of Sylvester* and *Sergius' Disputation*, which makes one consider seriously the possibility that Dionysius made use of the *Collection* while compiling his anti-Jewish work.

48 Ed. Ernest W. Brooks, *Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta* (4 vols.; CSCO Syr. III.5–6; Louvain: Typographeo Reipublicae, 1919–1924), 1:75.

49 Ed. Hayman, *Disputation of Sergius*, 1:3–4.

50 Trans. Hayman, *Disputation of Sergius*, 2:4–5.

51 I highlighted in blue readings that distinguish the version of the *Collection* from both the *Acts* and the *Disputation*.

52 Ed. Brooks, *Historia ecclesiastica*, 1:75.

namely the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* (10.24, 27),⁵⁹ and in some apocryphal compositions, such as some versions of 5 Ezra (1:32a–c).⁶⁰

The textual differences between the three versions of both agrapha are significant enough to make it difficult to claim a direct dependence of the *Collection* upon the two other works. This is especially manifest in the case of the Ezra agraphon, the text of which features several readings that set it apart from its counterpart in the *Acts* as well as in the *Disputation*. One can think of several explanations for this discrepancy. One solution would be to pose a hypothetical intermediary source, upon which the compiler of the *Collection* and Sergius depended. For example, in his analysis of the relationship between the *Disputation* of Sergius and the *Acts of Sylvester*, Allison Peter Hayman comes to the conclusion that the former did not depend directly upon the Syriac version of the *Acts*, but used the Syriac translation of a collection of scriptural *testimonia* instead, upon whose Greek version the compiler of the *Acts* depended in his turn.⁶¹ Another way to account for the particular form of the two agrapha in the *Collection*, which does not necessarily exclude Hayman's approach, would be to put greater emphasis on the editorial agency of its compiler, which we have already seen at work in the free-hand manner of his handling the Peshitta and Syro-Hexaplaric material.

4 The *Collection* and the *Disputation* of Sergius the Stylite

One more issue to be discussed in connection with the selection of scriptural proof-texts found in the *Collection* is that of its possible relationship to the *Disputation against a Jew* ascribed to Sergius the Stylite, which represents, arguably, the most important Syriac anti-Jewish composition from the early Islamic period. Composed approximately during the same period as our work,⁶² this extended anti-Jewish treatise likewise encompasses a considerable amount of scriptural material.⁶³ As mentioned above, in his analysis of bibli-

59 Ed. William Varner, *Ancient Jewish-Christian Dialogues: Athanasius and Zacchaeus, Simon and Theophilus, Timothy and Aquila* (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 58; Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2004), 162–163.

60 For a discussion, see Theodore A. Bergren, *Fifth Ezra: The Text, Origin and Early History* (SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies 25; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1990), 62–64, 131–133.

61 For a discussion, see Hayman, *Disputation of Sergius*, 2:21*–22*.

62 According to its editor, the work was composed during the eighth century; see Hayman, *Disputation of Sergius*, 1:3*.

63 About 300 passages according to Hayman, *Disputation of Sergius*, 1:6*. For a discussion of

cal and extracanonical passages in the *Disputation*, Allison Hayman concludes that, besides the Bible, its author relied upon a supposedly existing Syriac version of a collection of biblical anti-Jewish *testimonia* that was originally composed in Greek.⁶⁴

Given the large amount of scriptural material used by the authors of both the *Collection* and the *Disputation*, one might expect a certain overlap between the two sets of biblical proof-texts. However, a closer analysis of this material reveals significant discrepancies between the two compositions.

To begin with, there is a considerable difference in the range of biblical passages quoted by the two authors. Thus, out of 193 scriptural proof-texts incorporated in the *Collection*, only 16 appear in the *Disputation*,⁶⁵ 51 appear in a partial form,⁶⁶ and 126 are completely absent.⁶⁷

When it comes to the range of biblical sources used in the two works, the *Collection* includes passages from the following books that are not represented in the *Disputation*: Proverbs, Joel, Micah and Zephaniah. On the opposite side, the *Disputation* quotes from or alludes to the following books, not found in the *Collection*: Leviticus, Joshua, Judges, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 1 Chronicles, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, Habbakuk, Haggai, 4 Ezra, 2 and 4 Maccabees.

biblical material in the *Disputation*, see also Allison P. Hayman, "The Biblical Text in the *Disputation* of Sergius the Stylite against a Jew," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium* (ed. R.B. ter Haar Romeny; Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden 15; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 77–86.

- 64 Hayman, *Disputation of Sergius*, 1:21*–22*. On p. 25* she suggests that this collection existed in Syria as early as the fifth century. Cf. also the discussion on pp. 30*–32*.
- 65 Gen 1:26, 6:3, 19:24, 22:18; Deut 6:4; Job 19:25; Ps 33:6, 72:17, 88:6, 119:89; Isa 19:1, 62:10–12, 65:2–7; Zech 9:9; Jer agraph.; Ezra agraph.
- 66 Gen 18:1–23, 18:26, 18:32–19:3, 19:19–25, 22:10–12, 22:15–18, 49:8–9, 49:8–12, 49:10–11; Exod 3:1–7, 3:11–15, 34:5–6, 34:8–9; Ps 2:1–3, 2:6–8, 2:7–8, 16:8–10, 22:17–19, 24:7–10, 41:8–9, 47:6–10, 72:6–19, 72:8–11, 78:65–66, 109:1–9, 110:1–4, 118:25–27; Isa 1:10–16, 7:10–14, 8:16–18, 10:33–11:10, 11:9–10, 28:16–17, 35:2–10, 40:3–5, 48:12–16, 49:5–6, 52:13–53:7, 53:7–12, 55:3–5, 61:1, 61:1–3, 65:8–16; Ezek 15:1–16:3; Dan 2:34–35, 9:24–26; Amos 8:9–10, Zech 9:9–10, 9:9–11, 12:9–10; Bar 3:36–38.
- 67 Gen 1:27, 3:22, 5:1, 11:7, 12:3, 17:5–7, 18:17–18, 19:12–13, 26:4, 31:11–13, 49:10; Exod 4:13, 31:1–3, 33:18–23; Num 6:22–27, 24:17; Deut 18:15; 1 Sam 12:3–5; 1 Kgs 8:27; 2 Chr 6:17; Ps 2:8, 8:3, 8:5–7, 12:6, 22:8–9, 22:31–32, 27:12, 41:10, 43:3, 45:7–8, 51:12–14, 56:11, 57:4, 67:7–8, 68:2–4, 68:19, 69:22, 72:1, 80:2–4, 84:8, 89:4–5, 89:21, 89:29–38, 94:1, 98:2, 117:1–2, 118:21–24, 130:5, 143:10, 144:5; Prov 8:11–31, 30:4; Isa 3:9–10, 6:1–3, 9:5–6, 25:6, 25:8–9, 26:1–4, 30:8–14, 40:9–11, 42:1–4, 42:6–9, 42:7, 43:6–9, 45:21–24, 45:22–25, 46:12–13, 49:8–9, 49:9, 50:5–8, 51:4–5, 52:10, 54:1, 55:4–5, 63:1–6, 63:9, 63:14, 65:1, 65:22–24, 69:22–23; Jer 14:11–12, 15:1–4, 18:11–13, 23:5–6, 30:8–9, 33:17, 33:20–21; Lam 4:20; Ezek 7:1–9, 16:44–52, 21:32, 22:17–18, 34:25, 37:1, 37:23–24, 37:25, 44:1–3; Hos 6:1–2, 7:13–16, 9:7–17, 10:12; Joel 3:1, 3:1–5; Amos 5:21–27, 6:8, 9:1–5; Mic 1:2–3, 3:8, 4:14, 5:1; Zeph 3:14–18; Zech 2:14–17, 6:12–13, 9:10, 9:11, 11:7–9, 11:12–13, 13:6, 13:7, 14:6–7; Sir 24:1–12, 24:19–29; Wis 2:12–22, 8:3.

Furthermore, even in cases of several biblical passages that are shared by both works, one can observe a certain degree of textual dissimilarity. In most of such cases the version of the *Disputation* stays closer to the Peshitta text, whereas the *Collection* diverges from it to a greater degree:

4.1 *Deut 6:4*

Coll. 1.18

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

Disp. 1.2

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

4.2 *Job 19:25*

Coll. 4.2

ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

Disp. 1.4

ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

4.3 *Ps 33:6*

Coll. 1.19

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ
ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

Disp. 11.5

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ
ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

4.4 *Isa 19:1*

Coll. 7.3

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

Disp. 1.7

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

4.5 *Isa 65:5*

Coll. 8.14

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

Disp. XX.5

ܘܥܒܕ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ ܕܥܡܘܟܐ

In addition to these examples, it should be recalled that the two extracanonical passages, i.e., the agrapha of Jeremiah (7.23) and Ezra (7.26) discussed above, likewise appear in somewhat different textual forms in the *Collection* and the *Disputation*.

All these dissimilarities between the scriptural material incorporated into the two compositions lead us to the conclusion that their authors worked independently of each other. Their use of such relatively rare extracanonical material as the agrapha of Jeremiah and Ezra still leaves a possibility that they had recourse to a common source, as suggested by Hayman. However, establishing the exact nature of such a source is difficult at the moment.

5 Context and Message of the *Collection*

Regardless of whether its compiler may have relied on an earlier collection of biblical anti-Jewish *testimonia*, which cannot be securely confirmed or disproved at this point, there can be little doubt that in its present form the *Collection* stems from the early Islamic period. The *terminus post quem* of the first half of the seventh century for the composition is provided by the use by its author of Syro-Hexaplaric material, derived from the Syriac translation of the Greek text of the Septuagint made by the West Syrian scholar Paul of Tella during the years 614–616. Its *terminus ante quem* is more approximate, as it depends on the dating of the scribal hand of the manuscript, in which the *Collection* appears, to the eighth or ninth century.

In the title, the author of our work presents it as a *kunnāšā*, “collection”. In the Syriac literary tradition, this general description could refer to different, both in size and content, collections and compendia based on earlier sources, such as ascetical,⁶⁸ polemical,⁶⁹ canonical,⁷⁰ medical,⁷¹ and other works. As for the exact nature of what is being “collected” in the *Collection*, the author indicates it by using two terms. One of them is *taḥwyātā*, “demonstrations,” used in the title and conclusion. Derived from the verb *ḥawī*, “to show, to demonstrate,” this label could be applied to works of different genres in the Syriac literary tradition. For example, we find it used by Aphrahat (fourth c.) in his famous *Demonstrations*, exhortatory and apologetic treatises packed with biblical proof-texts, as well as in the titles of some of the collections of prophecies about Christ by pagan philosophers,⁷² and some of the patristic florilegia.⁷³ In addition to that, in the concluding paragraph, the author uses another term to

68 Cf. ms. *Saint Catherine, Sinai* Syr. 14; Agnes S. Lewis, *Catalogue of the Syriac Mss. in the Convent of S. Catharine on Mount Sinai* (Studia Sinaitica 1; London: C.J. Clay and Sons, 1894), 17.

69 Cf. ms. *London, British Library* Add. 14533, fol. 167^r; Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, 2:973.

70 Cf. ms. *Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France* Syr. 323; Jean Baptiste Chabot, “Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques de la Bibliothèque Nationale acquis depuis 1874,” *Journal asiatique* IX, 8 (1896): 234–290 (270).

71 Cf. Grigory Kessel, “A Syriac Medical *Kunnāšā* of ʾĪšōʿ bar ʾAlī (9th c.): First Soundings,” *Intellectual History of the Islamic World* 5:3 (2017): 228–251.

72 See Yury N. Arzhanov, *Syriac Sayings of Greek Philosophers: A Study in Syriac Gnomologia with Edition and Translation* (CSCO 669, Subsidia 138; Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 50.

73 Cf. the earliest preserved Syriac florilegium, composed in Edessa during the sixth century: see Ignaz Rucker, *Florilegium Edessenum anonymum (syriace ante 562)* (Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Abteilung 1933, 5; München: C.H. Beck, 1933), 1.

refer to the content of his work, and that is *sāhedwātā*, “testimonies,” derived from the verb *shed*, “to witness, to testify”. As in the case of *taḥwyātā*, one finds this label applied to different kinds of collections of excerpts.⁷⁴

The primary purpose of our work is indicated in the title, which relates that this collection of scriptural testimonies is aimed “against the Jews and the rest of unbelievers”. The compiler implements this polemical program by dividing his material into eight chapters that deal with the following topics: demonstration of the persons of the Trinity (1), the coming of Christ (2), the universal scope of Christ’s mission (3), the divine nature of Christ (4), Christ as God’s Son and Word (5), Jesus born from Mary in Bethlehem is Christ (6), events of Jesus’ life being foretold by the prophets (7), rejection of the Jews and the election of the nations by God (8).

The anti-Jewish message conveyed in the *Collection* is rather typical for the Christian tradition of *adversus Judaeos* literature, as it is based on three main polemical strategies: (a) demonstration that the Christian understanding of God, i.e., the notions of Trinity and divine nature of the Messiah, is firmly rooted in the Old Testament, (b) identification of Jesus of the New Testament with the Messiah promised by God to the Jewish people in the Bible, and (c) supersessionist theology. The latter is made explicit in the title of chapter 8, in which a cluster of scriptural passages about the rejection of the Jewish people is followed by proof-texts about the election of the nations, and in the long explication of Gen 49:10 (6.3).⁷⁵

At this point, it should be noted that although all anti-Jewish arguments brought forward by the compiler of the *Collection* can be found in earlier anti-Jewish works written in Greek, there is no recognisable evidence that he relied consistently on any among these compositions, either on the formal level of dividing scriptural material into distinctive groups or in the selection of particular biblical proof-texts and their allocation to specific arguments.⁷⁶ Our work, thus, is better to be considered as an original Syriac composition.

74 Cf. the title of the collection of patristic testimonies in ms. BL Add. 12164, fol. 130^r; Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, 2:528; or the title of John Rufus’ *Plerophoriae*, ed. François Nau, *Jean Rufus, évêque de Maïouma. Plérophories, c’est-à-dire: témoignages et révélations contre le concile de Chalcédoine* (PO 8.1 [36]; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1911), 11.

75 For a discussion of supersessionism in Syriac anti-Jewish works from Late Antiquity, see Sergey Minov, *Memory and Identity in the Syriac Cave of Treasures: Rewriting the Bible in Sasanian Iran* (Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 26; Leiden: Brill, 2021), 87–130.

76 This does not mean that individual scriptural passages from the *Collection* cannot be found in connection with the same anti-Jewish argument in earlier Greek (and Syriac) compositions, but that the clusters of biblical proof-texts and their sequence are unique to our work.

As with many other works of *adversus Judaeos* tradition, a question could be raised regarding who were the primary intended audience of the *Collection*, Jews or Christians. Given the use by the work's compiler of deuterocanonical (Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach) and extracanonical material (the agrapha of Jeremiah and Ezra), which would be hardly authoritative in the eyes of his possible Jewish opponents, it seems more probable that our work was intended for exclusive use by Christians. Our work, then, should be best regarded as one of the instruments in the repertoire of internal discursive tools that were meant to serve the needs of identity maintenance for the compiler's West Syrian community.

While the primary target of the *Collection* is Jews, it should be taken into account that they are mentioned as representatives of a bigger unspecified group, called "unbelievers" (*lā mhaymnē*) in the title, and paired with "pagans" (*ḥanpē*) in the concluding paragraph. The mention of the latter group makes us consider seriously a possibility that the *Collection* was intended to be used for purposes of anti-Muslim apologetics and/or polemics as well. In favour of that speaks the fact that it is not rare to find Muslims referred to as "pagans" across Syriac sources. Thus, Michael the Syrian (12th c.) describes Theodore Abū Qurrah as "a sophist experienced in debates against the pagans (*ḥanpē*) and knowledgeable in the Saracen language", clearly pointing to his anti-Muslim polemical efforts.⁷⁷ Muslims are paired with Jews under the name "pagans" (*ḥanpē*) in the apologetical anti-Muslim treatise by Dionysius bar Ṣalībī (12th c.): "We also venerate the cross because it is our *qiblah* by which we are distinguished from Jews and pagans who do not venerate it."⁷⁸

Moreover, scholars have already pointed out the important role played by the genre of scriptural *testimonia* in the early stages of the development of polemic against Islam among Syriac and Arab Christians.⁷⁹ It is not surprising, then, that even a perfunctory examination reveals some of the scriptural passages included into the *Collection* to be used by later Syriac polemicists

77 *Hist.* 12.8; ed. Jean Baptiste Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166–1199)* (4 vols; Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1899–1910), 4:495–496; trans. apud Alexander Treiger, "New Works by Theodore Abū Qurrah Preserved under the Name of Thaddeus of Edessa," *JEastCS* 68:1–2 (2016): 1–51 (17).

78 Ed. Joseph Phillip Amar, *Dionysius bar Ṣalībī. A Response to the Arabs* (2 vols.; CSCO 614–615, *Scriptores Syri* 238–239; Louvain: Peeters, 2005), 1:93 [Syr.], 2:86 [trans.].

79 See David Bertaina, "The Development of Testimony Collections in Early Christian Apologetics with Islam," in *The Bible in Arab Christianity* (ed. D.R. Thomas; HCMR 6; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 151–173; Mark N. Swanson, "Beyond Proof-texting (2): The Use of the Bible in Some Early Arabic Christian Apologies," in *The Bible in Arab Christianity* (ed. D.R. Thomas; HCMR 6; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 91–112 (98–105).

- Isa 43:6-9 8.31

חַם כְּעָרָא. חַלְלָה לִּי כְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וְכֵן יִשְׁמַע לִּי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה וְלֹא יֵשׁוּב עָלַי שׂוֹנֵא. וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע לִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲחֵרִים. וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע לִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲחֵרִים. וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע לִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲחֵרִים. וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע לִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲחֵרִים.
- Isa 8:16-18 8.32

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 25:6 8.33

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 26:1-4 8.34

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 54:1 8.35

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 11:9-10 8.36

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 42:1-4 8.37

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 40:3-5 8.38

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 45:21-24 8.39

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 49:8-9 8.40

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 51:4-5 8.41

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 52:10 8.42

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 55:4-5 8.43

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.
- Isa 65:1 8.44

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה. וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִהְיֶה לָנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה.

Genesis (cont.)		16:8–10	7.40
49:8–12	2.2	22:8–9	7.29
49:10	6.3, 8.23	22:17–19	7.27
49:10–11	7.8	22:31–32	8.27
		24:7–10	7.52
Exodus		27:12	7.17
3:1–7	1.11	33:6	1.19
3:11–15	1.12	41:8–9	7.36
4:13	2.3	41:10	7.15
31:1–3	1.13	43:3	5.3
33:18–23	1.14	45:7–8	5.4
34:5–6	1.15	47:6–10	7.54
34:8–9	1.16	51:12–14	1.37
		56:11	1.34
Numbers		57:4	5.5
6:22–27	1.17	67:7–8	1.20
24:17	2.21	68:2–4	7.41
		68:19	7.53
Deuteronomy		69:22	7.28
6:4	1.18	69:22–29	8.2
18:15	2.4	72:1	5.6
32:1	8.19	72:6–19	3.5
		72:8–11	8.25
1 Samuel		72:17	8.26
12:3–5	1.33	78:65–66	7.42
		80:2–4	4.4
1 Kings		84:8	4.5
8:27	4.10	88:6	7.37
		89:4–5	6.4
2 Chronicles		89:21	6.5
6:17–18	4.9	89:29–38	6.6
		94:1	4.6
Psalms		98:2	8.29
2:1–3	7.12	109:1	8.3
2:6–8	5.2	109:1–9	7.16
2:7–8	8.24	110:1–4	5.7
2:8	3.4	117:1–2	8.28
8:3	7.10	118:21–24	7.43
8:5–7	2.5	118:25–27	4.8
12:6	4.3, 7.50	119:89	1.35

130:5	1.36	9:9-10	8.30
143:10	1.38	9:9-11	2.8
144:5	4.7	9:10	3.12
		9:11	7.44
Proverbs		11:7-9	7.33
8:11-31	1.40	11:12-13	7.18
30:4	1.39	12:9-10	7.32
		13:6	7.55
Job		13:7	7.19
19:25	4.2	14:6-7	7.31
Hosea		Isaiah	
6:1-2	7.49	1:10-16	8.12
7:13-16	8.4	3:9-10	7.14
9:7-17	8.5	6:1-3	1.23
10:12	4.11	7:10-14	4.16
		8:16-18	8.32
Joel		9:5-6	5.9
3:1	1.41	10:33-11:10	2.17
3:1-5	8.47	11:9-10	8.36
		19:1	7.3
Amos		25:6	8.33
5:21-27	8.6	25:8-9	7.45
6:8	8.7	26:1-4	7.46, 8.34
8:9-10	7.30	28:16-17	2.18
9:1-5	8.8	30:8-14	8.13
		35:2-10	4.17
Micah		40:3-5	4.18, 8.38
1:2-3	4.12	40:9-11	4.19
3:8	1.42	42:1-4	7.5, 8.37
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		43:6-9	8.31
Zephaniah		45:21-24	8.39
3:14-18	4.13	45:22-25	3.7
		46:12-13	4.20
Zechariah		48:12-16	5.10
2:14-17	5.8	49:5-6	3.8
6:12-13	2.7	49:8-9	3.9, 8.40
9:9	7.9	49:9	7.47

Isaiah (cont.)

50:5-8	7.22
51:4-5	8.41
52:10	8.42
52:13-53:7	7.6
53:7-12	7.24
54:1	8.35
55:3-5	2.19
55:4-5	3.10, 8.43
61:1	1.43
61:1-3	2.20
62:10-12	3.11
63:1-6	7.56
63:9	4.21
63:14	1.44
65:1	8.44
65:2-7	8.14
65:8-16	8.45
65:22-24	8.46

Jeremiah

14:11-12	8.9
15:1-4	8.10
18:11-13	8.11
23:5-6	2.9
30:8-9	2.10
33:17	6.7
33:20-21	2.11

Lamentations

4:20	7.35
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Ezekiel

7:1-9	8.15
15:1-16:3	8.16
16:44-52	8.17
21:32	2.15
22:17-18	8.18
34:25	2.12
37:1	1.22
37:23-24	2.13
37:25	2.14
44:1-3	4.15

Daniel

2:34-35	2.16
9:24-26	6.2

Baruch

3:36-38	4.14
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Wisdom of Solomon

2:12-22	7.13
8:3	1.21

Sirach

24:1-12	5.11
24:19-29	5.12

Jeremiah Agraphon 7.23**Ezra Agraphon** 7.26**Bibliography**

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Tongues on a Golden Mouth: The Transition from Scholia to Florilegia as Evidenced in a Sixth-Century Syriac Chrysostom Manuscript

Yonatan Moss

Why did the florilegium become a predominant mode of organizing, transmitting, and creating knowledge in the Syriac world, beginning in the sixth century, and with ever-increasing energy and complexity in the Abbasid period? How did the process of selection of smaller excerpts from larger texts, and their compilation in florilegia, work in practice?

I propose one modest, and quite specific, point of entry into these big questions. The logic of my procedure is as follows: The patristic extracts comprising the theological florilegia (to limit the discussion to just that one type of florilegium) would ultimately need to have been excavated from earlier manuscripts of continuous patristic texts. Given that quite a few Syriac manuscripts containing such continuous texts survive from the period before the heyday of the Syriac florilegium,¹ we may ask whether any traces are to be found in

1 I know of no study that offers an organized presentation of all the early—let us say, fifth and sixth century—continuous manuscripts of patristic texts in Syriac. The list of dated Syriac manuscripts provided by Sebastian Brock, “A Tentative Checklist of Dated Syriac Manuscripts up to 1300,” *Hugoye* 15 (2012): 21–48 records 30 patristic manuscripts from the fifth and sixth centuries. There are, of course, also dozens more undated patristic manuscripts from this period, such as *London, British Library* Add. 14567, the focus of this article. For a general overview of Greek patristic authors in Syriac translation, see Dominique Gonnet, “Liste des oeuvres patristiques traduites du grec en syriaque,” in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriacque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet; ES 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 202–221. There are several excellent specialized studies on the transmission history of the specific works of individual patristic authors, such as Athanasius, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Alexandria, and Severus of Antioch. This is not the place to review that literature. For the purposes of this article, I limit references to some of the work on the Syriac versions of John Chrysostom. See Jeff W. Childers, “Chrysostom’s Exegetical Homilies on the New Testament in Syriac Translation,” *SP* 33 (1997): 509–516; idem, “Chrysostom in Syriac Dress,” *SP* 67 (2013): 323–332; idem, “Constructing the Syriac Chrysostom: The Transformation of a Greek Orator into a Native Syriac Speaker,” in *Syriac in its Multi-Cultural Context* (ed. H.G.B. Teule, et al.; Eastern Christian Studies 23; Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 47–57. This note was limited to Greek authors in Syriac translation because Chrysostom is the focus of the present article. Needless to say, the same processes of selection from continuous manuscripts and

those earlier manuscripts of the transferral of material from continuous texts into florilegia. Specifically, we may ask the following questions: As they mined these earlier manuscripts for material, did the later readers, the compilers of the florilegia, leave behind any telltale marks of their excavations? Or, since the practice of creating florilegia stretches back to the sixth century and earlier,² perhaps already such telltale marks can be found also in the work of the scribes who wrote out these continuous manuscripts? Can it be demonstrated that certain manuscripts were created with an eye to their usage as a source for future florilegia? Finally, if such traces exist, what can they teach us not only about how florilegia were created, but also, perhaps, about why they were created?

It is obvious that the manuscript evidence for both continuous texts and florilegia that happens to survive today tells only part of the story.³ Yet, even within those manuscripts that the hands of history have placed at our disposal, we may search for concrete traces of the processes of selection and extraction of individual passages from continuous texts and may thereby try to answer the above-mentioned questions about the creation of the florilegia.

This article lays out the evidence for precisely such traces in one sixth-century Syriac Chrysostom manuscript: *London, British Library Add. 14567*. William Wright dates the manuscript on paleographical grounds to the sixth century.⁴ A note appended to the end of the manuscript, in a different scribal hand, indicates that the book was purchased in 929 AG, that is 618 CE, thus providing a *terminus ante quem* for the writing of the book, and an actual date for the writing of that note.⁵ The Estrangela writing of the main hand is unmistakable, and is accordingly noted as such by Wright.⁶ Wright also mentions that

incorporation into florilegia would presumably have worked the same way with the Syriac material.

- 2 Christological florilegia are attested for as early as the fifth century. For the general contours of the phenomenon in the Greek milieu, see Basil Studer, "Florilegia," in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* (ed. A. Di Berardino; trans. J.T. Papa, et al.; 3 vols.; Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2014), 2:47–49. For a more detailed survey of late ancient Christological florilegia in a range of languages, see Alois Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition: Volume 11: From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604): Part I: Reception and Contradiction: The Development of the Discussion about Chalcedon from 451 to the Beginning of the Reign of Justinian* (trans. P. Allen and J. Cawte; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987), 51–78.
- 3 See Sebastian P. Brock, "Without Mushê of Nisibis, Where Would We Be? Some Reflections on the Transmission of Syriac Literature," *JEastCS* 56 (2004), 15–24.
- 4 William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1838* (3 vols.; London: British Museum, 1870–1872), 2:478–479.
- 5 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:479. See BL Add. 14567, fol. 200^v, for the note.
- 6 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:478: "Fine, regular Estrangela of the sixth century."

the endnote is in “a different hand.” More recent paleographical studies allow us to identify that endnote hand as an Estrangela-Serto hybrid,⁷ of the kind that begins to be attested in such scribal notations around the mid-sixth century.⁸ These two hands—the sixth-century Estrangela and the early seventh-century Estrangela-Serto hybrid—will play an important role in our discussion, but first we must describe the contents of the manuscript.

The bulk of the manuscript contains several of John Chrysostom’s non-exegetical works. These are: the first four of the five homilies *On the Incomprehensibility of God*, and about half of the fifth homily;⁹ the three treatises to Stagirus the monk tormented by a demon;¹⁰ and the homily entitled “On that Demons Do not Govern the World,” known in other contexts also as the first of Chrysostom’s three homilies *On the Devil*.¹¹ These works occupy the first 177 folios.

The final 23 folios provide the following other four Chrysostom texts: the first is a long extract from the beginning of Homily 20 *To the People of Antioch* (also

7 See Appendix 2 below (reproduced separately due to the images contained therein).

The forms in the hybrid hand for beth, gomal, koph, and pe are Estrangela. The forms in the hybrid hand for dolath, he, waw, semkat and rish are Serto. The hybrid hand forms for olaph, mim, shin and taw are neither Estrangela nor Serto, but can be described as forms that are midway between them.

8 See Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet, “Writing Syriac: Manuscripts and Inscriptions,” in *The Syriac World* (ed. D. King; Routledge Worlds; London and New York, 2019), 243–265, at 254; Michael Penn, R. Jordan Crouser, and Philip Abbott, “Serto before Serto: Reexamining the Earliest Development of Syriac Script,” *Aramaic Studies* 18 (2020): 46–63, at 55–56. See further Kristina Bush et al., “Challenging the Estrangela/Serto Divide,” *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 21 (2018): 43–80.

9 First Homily: BL Add. 14567, fol. 2^v–12^v; Second Homily: fol. 12^v–25^v; Third Homily: fol. 25^v–37^r; Fourth Homily: fol. 37^r–49^r; Fifth Homily: fol. 49^v–57^r. For a study of this manuscript’s Syriac version of these homilies, see François Graffin and Anne-Marie Malingrey, “La tradition syriaque des homélies de Jean Chrysostome sur l’incompréhensibilité de Dieu,” in *Epektasis. Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou* (ed. J. Fontaine and C. Kannengiesser; Paris: Beauchesne, 1972), 603–609. For an edition of the Greek text, see *Chrysostome, Incompréhensibilité*. See also *ibid.*, 65; 76–79 for a presentation of the relevance of the Syriac version in arriving at a critical edition of the Greek text. See further below for evidence of other Syriac versions of this text.

10 First Treatise: BL Add. 14567, fol. 57^r–92^r; Second Treatise: fol. 92^r–126^r; Third Treatise: fol. 126^r–159^v. For an edition of the Greek text, see *PG* 47, 423–494. For two recent studies focusing on this text, see Jessica Wright, “Between Despondency and the Demon: Diagnosing and Treating Spiritual Disorders in John Chrysostom’s Letter to Stageiros,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 7 (2015): 352–367; Blake Leyerle, “The Etiology of Sorrow and its Therapeutic Benefits in the Preaching of John Chrysostom,” *Journal of Late Antiquity* 7 (2015): 368–385, at 377–381; 383–384.

11 BL Add. 14567, fol. 160^r–178^r. Greek text: *PG* 49.241–258.

known as *On the Statues*). It is cited—we are informed by a “caption,” a heading preceding the text—to prove that the Lenten fast alone is not sufficient to make one able to receive the Easter communion, but that repentance of the soul is also required.¹² The second text is a long extract from Chrysostom’s ninth Homily on Matthew, concerning Herod’s massacre of the innocents.¹³ The third text is the entirety of Chrysostom’s Eighth Homily on 1 Thessalonians.¹⁴ The fourth, and final text of the volume, is a short excerpt from the Fifth Homily on Matthew, the heading caption of which indicates that it is “an admonition not to rely on others to redeem us on the great day of resurrection.”¹⁵

These final four texts seem to have a common denominator: they all focus on sincere, personal responsibility in religious behavior, and on the question of theodicy when such behavior does not seem to lead to rewards in this world. Three of the four passages are provided with heading captions indicating the main point they are meant to demonstrate. The Homily on 1 Thessalonians has no such caption, perhaps because it is cited in its entirety. In two of the other three cases, the “captions” given here are not found in the Greek tradition. The exception is the first citation, from the *Homilies to the People of Antioch*, which cites the “argument” that prefaces the homily also in the Greek tradition.

Although, as far as I can tell, the fact has gone unmentioned in earlier scholarship, this manuscript is furnished with forty scribal glosses, or scholia,¹⁶ written in its margins.¹⁷ There are, in addition, five notes that are one-word correc-

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- 12 BL Add. 14567, fol. 178^r–182^f. The Greek text: *PG* 49.197–200. The heading, or “caption,” of the Syriac version here, referred to above (necessity of spiritual repentance for Easter communion) is also found in the Greek tradition. See *PG* 49.197.
- 13 BL Add. 14567, fol. 182^v–186^v. The Greek text: *PG* 57.89/175–179.
- 14 BL Add. 14567, fol. 187^r–198^v. The Greek text: *PG* 62.439–446.
- 15 BL Add. 14567, fol. 199^r–200^v. The Greek text: *PG* 57.59–60.
- 16 The precise difference between the terms “gloss” and “scholium,” which is subject to debate, does not concern me here. For one, provisional, definition, see Michael D. Reeve, “Scholia,” in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth; 3rd rev. ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1368. I will usually refer to these marginalia as “scholia” when referring to the gloss taken together with its lemma. When focusing just on the note itself, I will call them glosses.
- 17 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:479 takes note of drawings of birds and deer, but makes no mention of the scholia. Graffin and Malingrey, “La tradition syriaque,” in an article dedicated to this manuscript and Penn et al., “Serto,” who analyze the manuscript’s handwritings, also say nothing about the scholia. The neglect of these scholia may be compared to a similar situation with regard to the marginalia on Syriac manuscripts of Gregory of Nazianzus. See André de Halleux, “Les commentaires syriaques des Discours de Grégoire de Nazianze: Un premier sondage,” *LM* 98 (1985), 103–147, at 141–142. My preliminary work on those Gregory marginalia reveals connections between them and the florilegia, similar to the connections documented in this article.

tions or glosses on individual words, written in a hasty, cursive hand with no particular attention drawn to them.¹⁸ Those notes need not concern us here. What will concern us are the forty scholia spread throughout the first 177 folios of the manuscript (in other words, on the continuous texts: *On the Incomprehensibility of God; To Stagirus; and On that Demons Do not Govern*).¹⁹ These scholia, which are transcribed and translated together with their lemmata in an appendix to this article, are all at least one sentence long; sometimes a bit longer. They are all written in a careful, intentional manner; they are all highlighted by an outline that is either a simple line around the words,²⁰ or a *tabula ansata*.²¹ These outlines are, as a rule, in a color different from the color of the text of the scholium. The scholia are usually provided with a graphic sign (to be discussed more below) indicating which part of the continuous text they refer to.

Having presented the contents of the manuscript, including its scholia, we may now return to the issue of the two scribal hands described above. Of the forty scholia, nine are written in the Estrangela hand of the body of the manuscript, while the remaining 31 scholia are written in the hybrid Estrangela-Serto hand documented in the manuscript's endnote.²² The nine Estrangela scholia are distributed among the first 18 scholia of the manuscript, stretching from fol. 9^v to fol. 56^v. Dispersed among those leaves are nine scholia written in the hybrid hand. The remaining 22 scholia, stretching from 61^v to 173^v, are all written in the hybrid hand.

Two conclusions arise from this data. First, the scribe of the main text, or someone working close to him in time and place (due to the identical appearing handwriting), also provided his own nine scholia to his text. Whether he copied these scholia from his archetype or came up with them himself, we cannot say. Second, the scribe of the endnote (or someone working close to him in time and place ...), who was a different, later person than the scribe of the body

18 These short notes can be found on the following folios of BL Add. 14567: 17^v; 20^r; 26^r; 151^v; 175^r.

19 The forty scholia can be found on the following folios of BL Add. 14567: 1) 9^v; 2) 11^r; 3) 19^r; 4) 19^r bis; 5) 19^v; 6) 22^r; 7) 29^r; 8) 31^v; 9) 33^v; 10) 34^v; 11) 35^v; 12) 36^r; 13) 36^v; 14) 36^v bis; 15) 45^v; 16) 49^r; 17) 55^r; 18) 56^v; 19) 61^v; 20) 62^r; 21) 63^v; 22) 63^v bis; 23) 64^v; 24) 67^r; 25) 67^r; 26) 72^r; 27) 73^r; 28) 88^r; 29) 91^v; 30) 93^r; 31) 100^v; 32) 151^r; 33) 152^v; 34) 155^r; 35) 156^r; 36) 156^v; 37) 157^r; 38) 157^v; 39) 167^v; 40) 173^v. This enumeration will be followed throughout the article. See the appendix below for a full transcription of the scholia and their respective lemmata. The question may be raised why scholia appear only on the first 177 folios, on the continuous texts, but not on the manuscript's final 23 folios. See on this n. 75 below.

20 See Appendix 2 below.

21 See Appendix 2 below.

22 See Appendix 2 below.

of the text,²³ added 31 more scholia of his own, some interspersed within the first scribe's scholia, and most after them.

These two conclusions demonstrate that the "scholiastic" treatment of such continuous patristic texts was an ongoing activity. In the case of this manuscript, the scholiastic activity appears to have begun as early as the time of the manuscript's production,²⁴ and it continued once the manuscript had changed hands at a relatively early stage. Yet, while palaeography helps us date the scholiastic activities surrounding our manuscript, it does not in itself bring us any closer to understanding the connection between scholia and florilegia. For this we must focus on the specific strategies by which the scholia are connected to the texts upon which they comment. Then we must compare these strategies to the ways in which florilegia select and introduce their excerpts. For, structurally speaking, the link in a continuous manuscript between the marginal notation (the "gloss") and the segment of the main body of the text to which it refers (the "lemma") functions like the link between the headings to excerpts and the excerpts themselves in the florilegia.²⁵ I propose that this structural connection embodied a historical-practical reality. I think the scholia on the continuous patristic texts can provide concrete evidence for how, and possibly even why, the florilegia were made.

Scholia in continuous manuscripts may be divided into two broad categories, according to the strategies by which the gloss is connected to its lemma. I call these categories "introvertive" and "extrovertive."²⁶ The introvertive scholia

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- 23 Although in some manuscripts the scribe of the colophon and endnotes can be shown to be the main scribe, who has changed his hand for the less formal colophon (see Briquel-Chatonnet, "Writing Syriac," 256; Penn et al., "Serto," 53–54), in this manuscript that is not the case. This is because, if it were indeed the same scribe, we would not be able to explain why he chose to write the scholia in two different hands (which, as the analysis below demonstrates, do not have any other observable substantive or stylistic differences).
- 24 This phenomenon of the scribe providing glosses to his own manuscript is amply attested (if we follow Wright's paleographical judgments). See, e.g., *London, British Library Add. 17146* (Gregory of Nazianzus' homilies), with Wright, *Catalogue* 2:437; *London, British Library Add. 12153* (also Gregory's homilies, but according to a revised version), with Wright, *Catalogue* 2:426; *London, British Library Add. 14633* (Isaac of Nineveh), with Wright, *Catalogue* 2:576.
- 25 This double terminological distinction—gloss-lemma=heading-excerpt—works well for the theological material. This is not the case with exegetical material, where the "headings" in florilegia are often called "lemmata", and the excerpts can be called "glosses."
- 26 These are my terms. I do not know of typological equivalents either in the ancient material or in modern scholarship. Nevertheless, the array of sigla used by late ancient glossators of Latin manuscripts betrays a typology that overlaps with the one I am proposing. Sigla are distinguished according to the following six functions: quotation, correction, omission, text structuring, attention, and excerption. The first four functions may be classified as

point the reader to the text itself; they provide signposts to the text and explain it. As a result, they only make full sense within the context of the text itself. The extrovertive scholia, by contrast, point outwards to a broader context, often more connected to the world of the scholiast and his imagined reader than to the world of the author upon whose work the scholia were written. Extrovertive scholia shed some of the specifics of the text they interpret. They avoid anonymous, distant pronouns, speaking of “you” and “us” rather than of “he” and “him.” In cases where their lemmata, in the course of the discussion, have left out the subject, they fill it in. They make a point of changing the wording of the lemma to make clear what is being discussed. And, perhaps most importantly, they concern themselves with lessons applicable outside the world of the specific text to which they are linked. In short, introvertive scholia are centripetal; extrovertive centrifugal.

These differences may be illustrated with a few examples of each type, taken from our manuscript. Our first two examples of introvertive scholia come from the second treatise to Stagirus. In the lemmata, Chrysostom encourages Stagirus in his tribulations, by pointing out that suffering brings one closer to God. He appeals to the precedence of two types of people: the saints of old, and contemporary suffering individuals. In both cases, the glosses simply spell out that this is what the author is doing. In the first case, the gloss reads: “Here he begins to talk about the tribulations of the saints.” In the second case, the gloss reads: “From here he begins <to talk> about the tribulations of individuals in that time.” In both cases the beginning of the lemma is marked by a slight backslash in the margin of the text.²⁷ I have inserted thick arrows in the images below to signal the backslashes.²⁸

“introvertive,” while the final two may be classified as “extrovertive.” Interestingly, the final function, “excerption,” is the latest and the rarest. See Eva (Evina) Steinová, “Notam Superponere Studui: The Use of Technical Signs in the Early Middle Ages” (Ph.D. diss., Utrecht University, 2016), 197–216. Information about the rarity and belatedness of the excerption signs can be found there at 215–216. I thank Marion Pragt for bringing this excellent dissertation to my attention. See also a near equivalent to my typology in Francesco Trisoglio, “Mentalità ed atteggiamenti degli scolasti di fronte agli scritti di S. Gregorio di Nazianzo,” in *II. Symposium Nazianzenum, Actes du colloque international, Louvain-la-Neuve, 25–28 août 1981* (ed. J. Mossay; Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums 2; Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1983), 187–251, esp. at 214–219.

27 Such backslashes appear throughout the manuscript, often marking lemmata (in some cases the beginning of the lemma, in others the end, and in yet others, both), but often they appear without connection to any glosses. I have not been able to understand the full range of their functions in the manuscript. We will soon see that alongside the backslashes this manuscript also uses another siglum, the trigon, to indicate the scholia's lemmata.

28 The second lemma, in Scholium 33, strangely precedes its attendant gloss, appearing on fol. 152^r, when the gloss is on fol. 152^v. I cannot explain this anomaly.

Lemma:³¹

... רהובי לעזר סה וסטר. להארהפלסו רהובי רר ...

Recall that beloved old man, namely Demophilus ...

Gloss:

חרר חרר חל רלרר דסס דסס ורר

From here he begins <to talk> about the tribulations of individuals in that time.

FIGURE 3.2 Scholium 33, BL Add. 14567, fol. 152^r (lemma); fol. 152^v (gloss)

that it is *here*, or *from here*, that something begins if we see what came before that “here”. In their current form, these scholia cannot be extracted from the manuscript without somehow repackaging them.

Scholium 33, the second example of introvertive scholia, is also interesting because it betrays its author’s distance from Chrysostom. It speaks of tribulations of individuals “in that time,” namely in the time of Chrysostom, thus creating a distance between the author’s time and the scholiast’s time, and thus it also drives a wedge in the potential applicability of the author’s message to the world of the scholiast.

lemma and wider text, but, in this case, it seems also to be tied to the earlier scholium on the same topic (31). For, Scholium 31 had a verb *ܕܒܘܠܗ*, “to recount,” to go with the “beginning” verb. Scholium 33, with its elision of that complementary verb, would seem to be relying on its connection to the earlier gloss.

31 The text: *Ad Stagirium* 3.12; PG 47.489; Coco, *A Stagirio*, 160.

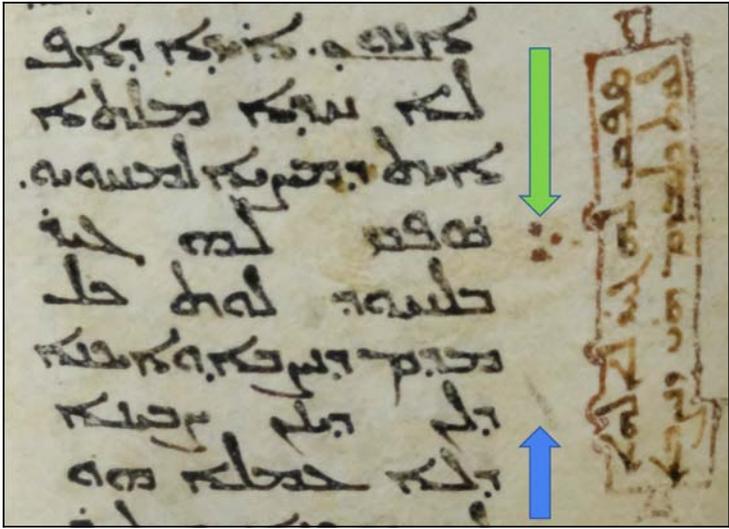
In sum, introvertive scholia may be compared to the stage directions appended to the script of a play. They are signposts for the readers as they navigate their way through the text, and they make little to no sense outside of the world of the text itself. It is for this reason that introvertive scholia have often been more interesting in the eyes of modern scholarship, for they provide keys to the interpretation of historical texts within the contexts of their times.³²

The extrovertive scholia do precisely the reverse. Because they turn outwards, to the world beyond the text, as time between the author of the text and the situation of the scholiast elapses, they run the risk of anachronism. Furthermore, unlike the introvertive scholia, which use anonymous, distant pronouns, extrovertive scholia clarify the identity of the subject at hand.

Two scholia will serve as illustrations of the extrovertive type. The first is taken from the *Second Homily on the Incomprehensibility of God*. Unlike the two introvertive scholia we saw, here the beginning point of the lemma is indicated by a *trigon* (also known as a “therefore sign,” signaled below by my downwards-pointing arrow), rather than a backslash. A backslash in what appears to be close to a logical ending point for the lemma (signaled by my upwards-pointing arrow) may have been inserted to indicate the end of the lemma, but it is hard to determine what its function is with certainty. The *trigon* is not especially characteristic of extrovertive rather than introvertive scholia, although it is consistently used only for the first eighteen scholia of the manuscript, after which it does not reappear.³³ There does not seem to be a discernible pattern as

32 The stated purpose of so-called “material philology” or “New Philology” approaches is precisely to offer an alternative to this traditional modern historiographical preference. For a now-classic statement, see Stephen G. Nichols, “Why Material Philology? Some Thoughts,” *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 116 (1997): 10–30. For a more recent representative, including studies on Syriac material, see Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, eds., *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 175; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017). For an interesting proposal to recategorize the differences between “old” and “new” philology, see further Maja Bäckvall, “Description and Reconstruction: An Alternative Categorization of Philological Approaches,” in *Philology Matters! Essays on the Art of Reading Slowly* (ed. H. Lönnroth; Medieval and Renaissance Authors and Texts 19; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017), 21–34.

33 It will be recalled that the manuscript’s sole nine scholia written in Estrangela are distributed among the manuscript’s first eighteen scholia. See n. 22 above. *Tabulae ansatae* are consistently used for the first nineteen scholia of the manuscript, after which they do not reappear. I cannot figure out what the connection between these three, apparently related, observations might be.



Lemma:³⁴

מעמ למ ליה כלשהו להו כל מהו והיכא.

For it is enough for him with regard to everything, just to will it.

Gloss:

מעמ למ ליה ללמה להו כלמהו הו והיכא.

For it is enough for God with regard to everything, the fact that he wills [it].

FIGURE 3.3 Scholium 5, BL Add. 14567, fol. 19^v (lemma and scholium)

to when the *trigon* is used to indicate lemmata, when the backslash, and when neither.³⁵

The context of the lemma is Chrysostom’s discussion about the sheer distance between God and man. Unlike human creativity, which is accomplished by action, God’s creative powers operate through will alone. “For it is enough for him with regard to everything, just to will it.” This important theological notion, conveniently encapsulated in one pithy sentence, was deemed worthy of a gloss. But rather than merely draw the reader’s attention to it, the scholiast

34 The text: *De Incomprehensibili natura Dei* 2.30; *Chrysostome, Incomprehensibilité*, 164; *Chrysostom, Incomprehensible Nature*, 83.

35 But see Steinová, “Notam Superponere,” 216; 219; 238, who identifies the functions of the *trigon* in Latin manuscripts as either “attention” or “excerpt” signs, both functions which we have associated with extrovertive scholia. See n. 26 above.

Second, certain elements of Chrysostom's text actually contradict, rather than support, the lesson the scholium extracts from it. For, alongside presenting the creation of man as occurring after the creation of the angels, Chrysostom also mentions the creation of the world *after* the creation of man ("he made man ... and all of this world"). Our scholium accordingly adjusts the lemma on precisely this point, by placing the creation of "this world" *before* the creation of man ("the creation of the angels preceded both this world and man").

Third, thanks to external sources we know that the question here addressed was one of some interest, and indeed controversy, in the Syriac milieu that produced this form of the text and its scholia. Opinions varied: in one place, Ephrem wrote that the angels were fashioned on the second day of creation; in another he leaves open the question of which day it was that their creation took place.⁴⁰ Theodore of Mopsuestia, echoed in certain East Syrian sources, thought the angels were created on the first day, right as the creation of the world began.⁴¹ Other East Syrian sources stress, in sharp contrast to the position espoused in our scholium, that the angels had to have been created only *after* heaven and earth were already in existence.⁴² On the other hand, there are yet other sources, both East and West Syrian, as well as several Greek patristic sources, that agree with our scholiast in clearly stating that the angels preceded the creation of this world.⁴³ Given just how controversial this question was, it would have been essential to distill a succinct, communicable statement about it from the sprawling prose of Chrysostom's lemma.

40 Second day: Ephrem, *Hymns on the Nativity* 26.5; Open question: Ephrem, *Commentary on Genesis* 1.3. See the discussion in Ephrem, *Selected Prose*, 76, n. 29. The latter position is also expressed by Jacob of Edessa, towards the end of the first book of his *Hexaemeron*; *Iacobi Edesseni Hexaemeron*, 44. See also Theodoret of Cyr, *Questions on the Octateuch*, Genesis, Questions 3; 4.

41 *Theodori Mopsuesteni fragmenta*, 6–7 (Syr.); 5–6 (trans.). For later echoes of this opinion in the East Syrian tradition, see Van Rompay, *Commentaire sur Genèse-Exode*, 2 (Syr.); 2–3 (trans.); 7 (Syr.); 9–10 (trans.). The latter passage is closer to Theodore. The former passage actually stresses that the "invisible beings" had to have been created *after* the visible world. *Isho bar Nun, Selected Questions*, 21 and *Išo'dad de Merv, Commentaire sur la Genèse*, 13 (Syr.); 15 (trans.). Both Isho' bar Nun and Isho'dad stress the simultaneity of the creation of the angels with the creation of the heavens and the earth, as well as of fire, air, water and darkness. See also the Theodore fragment on this question cited by John Philoponus, and discussed by Richard A. Layton, "The Making of a Classic: Moses as Author," in *The Christian Moses: From Philo to the Qur'an* (ed. P. Rousseau and J.A. Timbie; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 80–99, at 93–94.

42 *Théodore bar Koni*, 17 (Syr.); 64 (trans.), at 1.38. Theodore quotes the concatenation of world, angels and men in 1 Cor 4:9 to prove that they must have been created in that order.

43 See the discussion in Paul M. Blowers, *Drama of the Divine Economy: Creator and Creation in Early Christian Theology and Piety* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 123. Blowers cites Narsai (*Hom. on Creation 2*) and Jacob of Sarug (*Hom.*

In this sense, Scholium 19 is paradigmatic of the extrovertive type of scholia. The scholiast is interested in the ways in which he can find answers to contemporary questions in the classic text. Rather than assist the reader to step into the world of the text, as the introvertive scholia do, these extrovertive scholia assist the text, as it were, to step into the world of the reader. The urge to cull lessons from individual passages of the fathers, to highlight them, to collect them, and to catalogue them, is at basis the same urge that underlies the creation of the florilegia. Given this shared purpose, it stands to reason that the extrovertive glosses were either made with the conscious aim of creating florilegia, or, if they were not designed as such to begin with, they would have been, at the very least, an invaluable resource for the creation of the florilegia.

Beyond the basic logic of this claim, there is also concrete evidence to support it. Considering the haphazard survival rates of our evidence, we cannot expect to find documentation in the florilegia for every extrovertive scholium of the Chrysostom manuscript. Nevertheless, I have found three such cases: two on the same leaf (fol. 263^v) of the famous British Library florilegium, *London, British Library Add. 12155*,⁴⁴ and one in the florilegium-like compilatory works *On Paradise* by Moses bar Kepha and *On Heretics* attributed to the ninth-century author John of Dara.⁴⁵

in Hex. 1), and *The Cause of the Foundation of the Schools* § 348. For a Greek representative, see Basil of Caesarea, *Hexaem.* 1.5. John of Damascus, *Expos. Fidei* 17 (2.3) associated this notion with Gregory of Nazianzus, but the citation he gives (*Or.* 38.9; 45.5) does not, upon inspection, support it. See Andrew Louth, *St. John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 119–120. Interestingly, although John of Damascus, and other Greek authors before him, describe this as just one position within the Greek tradition, later authors outside the Greek tradition, both Syriac and Latin, associated the notion of the angels' preexistence with the "Greek teachers". See Moses bar Kepha, *On Paradise* 2.7; *Yale*, Syriac 10, fol. 111^v. Bar Kepha associates the opposite view with the "Syriac teachers." See more on this work by Bar Kepha, further below. For a famous articulation of this idea in the Latin tradition, see Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theol.* 1.61.3 ("sententiam doctorum graecorum, qui omnes hoc concorditer sentiunt, quod angeli sunt ante mundum corporeum creati").

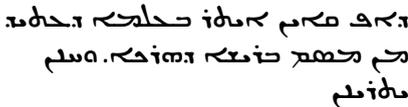
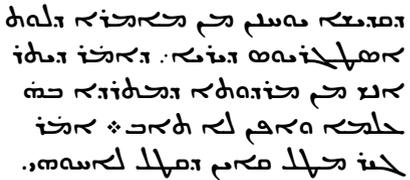
44 This famous florilegium, tentatively dated by Wright to 747 (see Wright, *Catalogue* 2:921; 2:955; 2:967), is discussed in several different chapters of this book. See the contributions by Bishara Ebeid, Emiliano Fiori and Flavia Ruani.

45 On Moses bar Kepha's florilegium-like reliance on patristic sources in *On Paradise* and in general, see Andreas Juckel, "La réception des pères grecs pendant la 'renaissance' syriacque: Renaissance; inculturation; identité," in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriacque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet; ES 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 89–125, at 104–107; 114–117; Yonatan Moss, "Scholasticism, Exegesis and the Historicization of Mosaic Authorship in Moses bar Kepha's *On Paradise*," *Harvard Theological Review* 104 (2011): 325–348, at 334–336. For more on *On Paradise* and *On Heretics*, and on the questionable attribution of the latter, see below.

experiences in this world will be counted for him to reduce any suffering he might experience in the next world. Chrysostom proves this from various biblical precedents, the first being Cain, who suffered for many years after killing his brother.⁴⁸ It is not clear whether the scholiast thought the lemma had clear beginning and end points. A backslash is provided in the intercolumnar margin (signalled by my arrow) at a place that would seem like an appropriate summary of the claim:

Note the “extrovertive” nature of this scholium. The main lesson, expressed in a long, drawn-out text, focussing mostly on Cain, is summarized in a brief, communicable sentence, which also stresses its general application to others. Cain’s name was last mentioned only on the previous folio. For the duration of the present folio Cain is referred to only by personal pronouns, but the scholiast reintroduces his name to clarify the reference. As with the example of Scholium 5 discussed above, here too the scholiast appears to have “repackaged” the words of the lemma so as to prepare them for “export.”

This is indeed what we find on fol. 263^v of BL Add. 12155. The following table presents that florilegium’s heading to the Chrysostom extract alongside BL Add. 14567’s Scholium 24:

BL Add. 14567, fol. 67 ^r Scholium 24, on <i>Ad Stagirium</i> 1.3	BL Add. 12155, fol. 263 ^v ; Heading to extract from <i>Ad Stagirium</i> 1.3
	
<p>That also Cain benefits in the world to come from his punishment here [in this world]. And we <also> benefit <in the next world from our sufferings in this world>.</p>	<p>From St. John from the treatise to Stagirus the monk, who says that one benefits from the chastisement the world suffers and even if one does not repent; for he says concerning Cain who killed his brother.</p>

48 *Ad Stagirium* 1.3; PG 47.431; Coco, *A Stagirio*, 55.

Although some of the vocabulary is different, e.g., the scholium uses “punishment” (ܠܥܝܒܐܢܐ), while the florilegium heading uses “chastisement” (ܠܫܘܒܐܢܐ; a word that is used in the lemma), the wordings of the scholium and the heading are quite similar. Both point to the same basic notion that sufferings that befall one in this world are for one’s benefit, and that this lesson is learned from Cain. The similarity in contents combined with the differences in formulation indicate that the author of the florilegium was likely not borrowing directly from our Chrysostom manuscript. There was presumably an intermediary link unknown to us.

This conclusion is supported by a comparison between the texts of the florilegium’s extract and the lemma of our Chrysostom manuscript. On the one hand, the two texts are clearly using the same Syriac version of Chrysostom’s treatises to Stagirus. This situation is different from what we find for the homilies *On the Incomprehensibility of God*, the other main textual corpus in our continuous Chrysostom manuscript. The latter homilies are cited in subsequent florilegia according to a version that is different from the one found in our continuous manuscript.⁴⁹ In the case of the treatises to Stagirus, by contrast, the florilegium follows the Syriac version that is found in our continuous manuscript.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, a close comparison of the two texts shows that although they are clearly using the same version, the florilegium is not directly borrowing from the Chrysostom manuscript. For, at one point in the text the florilegium retains a phrase, found in the Greek text, which is absent from our continuous Syriac Chrysostom manuscript. The resulting text of the latter manuscript makes little sense here. It was presumably an erroneous transcription that arose from a *saut du même au même* (ܝܗܘ ... ܫܘܒܐܢܐ):

49 John of the Sedre, in his *Plerophories against the Julianists*, a florilegium compiled toward the middle of the seventh century, cites from *De incomprehensibili natura Dei* 2.45–46; Chrysostome, *Incompréhensibilité*, 178, according to a completely different version from what we find at BL Add. 14567, fol. 23^r. *John Sedra, Plerophory*, 98 [= London, British Library Add. 14629, fol. 14^v]. John of the Sedre’s version of the text is supported by another florilegium, *London, British Library Add. 14532*, which Wright dates to the eighth century (Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:955). See BL Add. 14532, fol. 46^r for the extract from *De incomprehensibili natura Dei* 2.45–46 cited by John of the Sedre, plus a few more lines. These pieces of evidence for an alternate version of Chrysostom’s *Incomprehensibility* homilies have been ignored in earlier scholarship. See Graffin and Malingrey, “La tradition syriaque;” *Chrysostome, Incompréhensibilité*.

50 Our manuscript’s version of *Ad Stagirium* is also the one cited in another florilegium, *London, British Library Add. 14538*, dated by Wright to the tenth century (Wright, *Catalogue*, 2.1004). See *ibid.*, fol. 55^r–55^v, which provides three long extracts, equivalent to BL Add. 14567, fol. 72^v–74^r; 79^r; 79^v–81^r (segments ranging from *Ad Stagirium* 1.5–7; PG 47.435–442).

PG 47.431

BL Add. 14567, fol. 67^r

BL Add. 12155, fol. 263^v

εἰ μὴ λίαν
ἀναίσθητος ἦν,
καὶ θηρίον μᾶλλον
ἢ ἄνθρωπος,
πολλὰ ἂν
ἀπὸ ταύτης ἐκέρδανε τῆς ζωῆς.

ⲛⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ

ⲛⲓ ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲙⲁⲣⲁⲩⲁⲛ ⲛⲓ

Had he not been too numb,
a beast rather than a man,
he could have gained much
from this life.

Had he not been too numb,
rather a beast,
he would not
have been from this life.

Had he not been too numb,
a beast rather than a man, he
could have gained much from
this life.

Due to the later florilegium’s correct text here, as opposed to the earlier, continuous text, we must postulate that its author (or the latter’s source) had access to a different Chrysostom manuscript than ours. Thus, there must have been other links in the chain. Nevertheless, the striking similarity between the extrovertive scholium on our continuous text and the heading in the florilegium still offers us a window into the general processes by which passages were extracted from continuous texts and inserted into florilegia.

A similar process is evidenced on the same folio of our BL Add. 12155 florilegium. As in the previous case, we will begin with the continuous manuscript and its scholium, and then proceed from there to the florilegium. The lemma appears in the third treatise to Stagirus. As part of his attempt to encourage Stagirus, Chrysostom reminds him of the tribulations suffered by various exemplary figures from the past. One such figure is the apostle Paul. Chrysostom cites various verses from the Pauline corpus indicating Paul’s sufferings. He caps off the discussion with an interpretation of Rom 9:3–4a: “For I could pray that I may be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh, they who are Israelites.” Chrysostom explains that Paul’s point is to emphasize his grief at not winning over all the Jews. He would be willing to accept condemnation to Hell if it could make the Jews believe in Christ. But since they do not believe his pain is worse than Hell.⁵¹ The lemma is

51 *Ad Stag.* 3.11; *PG* 47.488; BL Add. 14567, fol. 151^r: “What in fact does he say? ‘For I could pray

not signaled in the manuscript, but its beginning and end points are clear from the context, since it is a self-contained exegesis of a single verse.

The gloss on this lemma, Scholium 32, is accordingly brief and to the point: "An interpretation of the verse 'that I may be accursed.'"⁵² The purpose of this scholium seems to be none other than the extrovertive function of signaling the lemma for "export." The scholium's extrovertive nature may be highlighted by comparing it to another exegetical scholium in our manuscript. That scholium, Scholium 39, the manuscript's penultimate gloss, is the first of two on the homily "On that Demons Do not Govern the World." The discussion there concerns the purpose of divine chastisement. Chrysostom claims that it is meant not as retribution for the past but as a lesson for the future. This is how he explains God's statement in Gen 11:6b, in the context of the Tower of Babel: "Nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them." Chrysostom explains God's declaration about the destruction of the Tower and the dispersal of its builders not as a punishment, but as a means of preventing them from committing further wickedness.⁵³ The Syriac scholium on Chrysostom's lemma there offers the briefest of comments: "A necessary interpretation."⁵⁴ Unlike the exegetical scholium on Rom 9:3, which flags the lemma for usage in other contexts by tagging the verse that is involved, this scholium points inwards, evaluating the interpretation without indicating which verse is being interpreted.

The extrovertive nature of Scholium 32, on Rom 9:3, enables its lemma to be extricated from its original context and to be re-embedded in a new context, such as in a florilegium. This is exactly what happens in BL Add. 12155, on the same folio as our previous example. As before, the florilegium's extract follows the version found in the continuous Chrysostom manuscript. The gloss and the lemma are nearly identical for the simple reason that they are both exceedingly short, merely noting the fact that Chrysostom offers an interpretation of Rom. 9:3:

that I may be accursed from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh, they who are Israelites' (Rom 9:3–4a). This indicates as follows: 'It would be better for me to fall into Hell than to see that the Israelites do not believe.' For this is the meaning of 'I could pray that I may be accursed.' He who accepted the torment of Hell in exchange for attaining all the Jews (that which he did not succeed at), it is clear that not succeeding at this meant more torment for him than the torment experienced by all the people in Hell. This is because this (having the Jews believe in Christ) was a stronger desire for him than that (avoiding the torments of Hell)."

52 BL Add. 14567, fol. 151^r, Scholium 32: ܠܥܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܥܝܫܘܬܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܥܝܫܘܬܐ

53 *On that Demons Do not Govern* 4 (PG 49.250; NPNF I, 9.181); BL Add. 14567, fol. 167^v.

54 BL Add. 14567, fol. 167^v: ܠܥܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܢ ܕܥܝܫܘܬܐ.

resurrection, and of the bodies of Adam and Eve before the fall.⁵⁶ The scholiast on the Chrysostom manuscript, whether he operated in the sixth century or the early seventh, would have known that Julian flourished decades *after* the Council of Chalcedon and that Chrysostom had died several decades *before* the council. Thus, the scholiast's signalling of Chrysostom's words as being "against" Julian and his followers clearly embodies his understanding of the long-term relevance of Chrysostom's words in historical and theological contexts different from Chrysostom's own context.⁵⁷

The fact that of all subsequent theological controversies, it was precisely the Julianist one that was of concern to the scholiast, further strengthens the connection between the scholia and the florilegia. For, the Julianist controversy is one of the most, if not the very most, popular topics in the West Syrian theological florilegia.⁵⁸ It stands to reason that we would find traces in our sixth-century manuscript of the attempts to excavate nuggets relevant to this important question from such an influential figure within the West Syrian milieu as John Chrysostom.⁵⁹

Scholium 20 is connected to a lemma in the first treatise to Stagirus which mentions in passing that prior to Adam's fall God had promised him immor-

56 On this controversy, see Yonatan Moss, *Incorruptible Bodies: Christology, Society and Authority in Late Antiquity* (Christianity in Late Antiquity 1; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2016).

57 For a study of the transhistorical understanding of patristic authority as demonstrated by late ancient theological texts, see Yonatan Moss, "'I Trapped you with Guile': Rationalizing Theology in Late Antiquity," in *Rationalization in Religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (ed. Y. Friedmann and C. Marksches; Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften / Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2019), 103–126, at 114–122.

58 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; ES 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 119–136, at 121–128. See also Flavia Ruani's contribution to the present volume.

59 Chrysostom had an immense impact on Severus of Antioch, who was himself immensely influential in the West Syrian tradition. See Pauline Allen, "Severus of Antioch: Heir of Saint John Chrysostom?" in *Severus of Antioch: His Life and Times* (ed. J. D'Alton and Y. Youssef; Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 7; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 1–13. For further discussion and references to other literature, see Yonatan Moss, "Severus of Antioch: A 'Feminist' Patriarch?" in *Severus of Antioch and his Search for the Unity of the Church* (ed. A. Shemunkasho; Bibliotheca Nisibinensis; Berlin and Piscataway, New Jersey: De Gruyter and Gorgias Press, forthcoming), n. 13. It is worth noting that Severus himself does not quote from *Ad Stagirium* in his writings against Julian, or anywhere else. For a convenient list of Severus' citations from Chrysostom, see Sever Voicu, "Quoting John Chrysostom in the Sixth Century: Severus of Antioch," in *La teologia dal v all'vii secolo fra sviluppo e crisi: XLI Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 140; Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 2014), 633–643, at 642.

lia, the presence of the scholia is often not indicated in the catalogues or in scholarship on the manuscripts (in cases where such scholarship exists).⁷² Similarly, the specific sources of the patristic passages that are cited in the florilegia are also not always indicated in the catalogues. Thus, further study of possible connections between scholia on continuous patristic manuscripts and patristic florilegia requires painstaking research.

I began this article by posing two overarching questions about how and why the Syriac florilegia came to be made. The bulk of this article has proposed a direction towards answering the “how” question. Thinking about the florilegia through their debt to the scholia can also offer a direction towards answering the “why” question. I wish to conclude the article with some reflections along those lines, culled from the comparative evidence of contemporary textual production in the Latin milieu.

Mariken Teeuwen speaks of two distinct, but overlapping, ways of understanding the cultural function of glosses in Anglo-Saxon and Carolingian manuscripts dating from the same time as many of our Syriac florilegia. She writes the following (with my own emphases):⁷³

Too often, I would argue, has the presence of glosses in a manuscript led scholars to mark them as schoolbooks, in which the glosses were either written by the master (who used them for his teaching) or by his students (who noted down the words of the master). The model of a master teaching his students, however, does not always fit the characteristics of glossed manuscripts. In fact ... their first goal is not to educate but to collect: *they generated new learning based on the ancient building blocks found in the main text ...* The marginal and interlinear glosses thus show us ... what their methods were *to make the ancient cultural heritage their own,*

century manuscript of Chrysostom's homilies, in a layout that is similar to our Chrysostom manuscript. See also *London, British Library Add. 14550*, a sixth-century continuous manuscript of homilies by Gregory of Nyssa and theological letters by Gregory of Nazianzus, that also has no scholia.

72 See n. 17 above. For reflections on the role and degree of attention to “paratextual” elements in manuscript catalogues [with particular attention to 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)], see Kristian S. Heal, “Catalogues and the Poetics of Syriac Manuscript Cultures,” *Hugoye* 20 (2017): 375–417.

73 Mariken Teeuwen, “Marginal Scholarship: Rethinking the Function of Latin Glosses in Early Medieval Manuscripts,” in *Rethinking and Recontextualizing Glosses: New Perspectives in the Study of Late Anglo-Saxon Glossography* (ed. P. Lendinara, et al.; *Textes et Etudes du Moyen Âge* 54; Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 19–37, at 23–24.

and how ancient texts and contemporary issues were linked in intellectual discussions. Thus, they are not educational texts, but rather scholarly collections, containing the seeds of new, medieval learning. I am aware of the fact that the two genres, educational and scholarly, are perfectly able to overlap, and that it is often difficult to pry them apart, but still the emphasis should be on their goal to generate new learning rather than to teach old learning.

Teeuwen's distinction between the "educational" and "scholarly" genres of glossed manuscripts can, to a large degree, be mapped on to our distinction between "introvertive" and "extrovertive" scholia. Just as the Latin medieval manuscript tradition also contains, alongside the "scholarly" type Teeuwen rightly highlights, multiple examples of more "educational" types of glosses,⁷⁴ so in the Syriac tradition the scholia on continuous patristic manuscripts can easily be shown to have fulfilled both functions. It was, however, specifically the extrovertive scholia that served in the Syriac context the exact purpose that Teeuwen identifies for her Latin materials: generating "new learning based on the ancient building blocks found in the main text." It is precisely such new learning that the Syriac florilegia embody, linking "ancient texts and contemporary issues ... in intellectual discussions."⁷⁵

74 See, e.g., Ann Collins, "Eleventh-Century Commentary on the Epistles of Saint Paul: The Role of Glosses in Pauline Exegesis," in *A Companion to St. Paul in the Middle Ages* (ed. S.R. Cartwright; Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 39; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 175–204, at 191: "Glosses could contain much more sophisticated theological statements, but assisting basic understanding was at the heart of all the glossed commentaries. Every reader of the epistles has been confused by Paul's digressions, and every serious student of Paul has wished for a guide to his complex arguments. Brief notes written alongside the text were ideally designed for the clarification of such points."

75 As crucial as the scholia were in the transition from continuous manuscripts to florilegia, we must not forget that even without the scholia the continuous manuscripts can already be shown to be participating in this process. I am referring to the florilegia-type collections we often find towards the end of continuous manuscripts, including our BL Add. 14567. As noted at nn. 12–15 above, following the full, continuous texts of different units of Chrysostom's homilies, the manuscript offers four extracts from various other homilies (one of the four cases is, to be precise, a complete homily). As in the florilegia, these excerpts are introduced by "captions" indicating their sources and the points they are meant to demonstrate. This is itself an act of generating new learning. But perhaps it too derived from scholia on the continuous manuscripts from which these excerpts, in their turn, were culled. In any case, it is worth noting that these final 23 folios are not furnished with any scholia in their margins. This may be due to their being perceived as a comprising their own florilegium of sorts. I owe this idea to Flavia Ruani.

Lemma, 11^{ra}:

ⲕⲉⲓⲣⲓⲛ ⲕⲃⲁⲃⲃⲁⲛ ⲃⲁⲗⲁ : ⲁⲛⲓⲃⲁⲛⲓ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕ
.ⲃⲁⲓⲛ ⲁⲃⲁⲛⲓ ⲕⲉⲛⲁⲗⲓ ⲕⲉⲛⲁⲗⲓ

Ἄν μὲν οὖν βλάβπτωσιν αὐτῶν αἱ φιλῖαι καὶ πρὸς κοινωνίαν τῆς ἀσεβείας ἔλκωσι, καὶ οἱ γεγεννηκότες ὦσιν, ἀποπήδησον·

But if their love injures you and drags you down to share their godlessness, even if they are your parents, you must run away from them.

Hom. Inc. 1.41; Malingrey 132; Harkins, 68

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslash.

Scholium 3, 19^{rb}

Gloss (red in red tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ

One angel is more powerful than all of creation.

Note hand.

Lemma, 19^{rb}:

ⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ
.ⲁⲛⲟ

τῆς κτίσεως τῆς ὀρωμένης ταύτης εἰς ἄγγελος μόνος ἀντίρροπός ἐστι

One angel alone is more powerful than all this visible creation.

Hom. Inc. 2.29; Malingrey 164; Harkins, 82

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslash.

Scholium 4, 19^{rb}

Gloss (red in red tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ ⲕⲉⲕⲟⲛⲓ ⲗⲉⲛⲟ ⲁⲛⲟ

For angels are far greater than the righteous.

Note hand.

Lemma, 19^{rb}:

ⲙⲉⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ

πολλῶ γὰρ τῶν δικαίων ἄγγελοι μείζους.

For angels are far greater than the righteous.

Hom. Inc. 2.29; Harkins, 82

Note: Lemma indicated by trigon.

Scholium 5, 19^{va}

Gloss (red in red tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲙⲉⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ

For it is enough for God with regard to everything, just willing [it].

Note hand.

Lemma, 19^{va}:

ⲙⲉⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ

ἤρκεσε γὰρ αὐτῷ τὸ θελήσαι πρὸς ἅπαντα

It is enough for him with regard to [making] everything, just to will it.

Hom. Inc. 2.30; Malingrey 164; Harkins, 83

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslash.

Scholium 6, 22^{va}

Gloss (red in black tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲁⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ

All those who rose then died again.

Main Hand.

Lemma, 22^{vb}:

Καὶ τοῖς ἄνω δυνάμεσιν ἀθέατός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός.

[We will show that] God is invisible to the powers above.

Hom. Inc. 3.24; Malingrey, 208; Harkins, 106

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslash.

Scholium 9, 33^{va}

Gloss (red in red/black tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲕⲁⲧⲓ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲁⲛⲱ ⲧⲩⲛⲁⲙⲉⲥⲓⲛ ⲁⲑⲉⲁⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲧⲓⲛ ⲟⲩ ⲑⲉⲟⲥ.

God is incomprehensible to the cherubs and seraphs

Note hand.

Lemma, 33^{vab}:

ⲟⲩ ⲧⲓ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲭⲉⲣⲟⲩⲃⲓⲙ ⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲥⲉⲣⲁⲫⲓⲙ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ... ⲕⲁⲧⲁⲗⲏⲭⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲧⲓⲛ ⲟⲩ ⲑⲉⲟⲥ.

ὅτι δὲ οὐ τοῖς Χερουβὶμ οὐδὲ τοῖς Σεραφὶμ μόνον ... κατάληπτός ἐστιν ὁ Θεός.

God is incomprehensible not only to the Cherubim and Seraphim [but also to the Principalities and the Powers and to any other created power.]

Hom. Inc. 3.30; Malingrey, 214; Harkins, 108

Scholium 10, 34^{va}

Gloss (red in black tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲟⲩ ⲧⲓ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲭⲉⲣⲟⲩⲃⲓⲙ ⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲥⲉⲣⲁⲫⲓⲙ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ... ⲕⲁⲧⲁⲗⲏⲭⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲧⲓⲛ ⲟⲩ ⲑⲉⲟⲥ.

That it is more beneficial for one to pray in public than to pray on one's own.

Main hand.

Lemma, 34^{vb}:

ⲟⲩ ⲧⲓ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲭⲉⲣⲟⲩⲃⲓⲙ ⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲓⲥ ⲥⲉⲣⲁⲫⲓⲙ ⲙⲟⲛⲟⲛ ... ⲕⲁⲧⲁⲗⲏⲭⲧⲟⲥ ⲉⲥⲧⲓⲛ ⲟⲩ ⲑⲉⲟⲥ.

ⲁⲕⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ

Τότε δὴ πᾶσα ἡ πόλις ἐπὶ τὸν ἵππόδρομον ἔτρεχε καὶ τοὺς ἐκ τῶν ἐργαστηρίων ἐξήγον καὶ κοινῇ πᾶς ὁ δῆμος ἀνελθὼν ἐξήρπασε τῆς βασιλικῆς ὀργῆς τὸν καταδικασθέντα ...

Then the whole city ran to the hippodrome, even bringing workmen from their shops. All the people came together from every side and rescued the condemned man from the imperial wrath, even though he deserved no pardon.

Hom. Inc. 3.38; Malingrey, 222; Harkins, 112

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslash.

Scholium 13, 36^{va}

Gloss (red in black tabula ansata in outer margin):

ⲕⲁⲓⲁⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ

When the holy mysteries are administered, only humans offer supplication, but also the angels supplicate on our behalf.

Note hand.

Lemma, 36^{rb-va}:

ⲕⲁⲓⲁⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ
ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲟⲩⲛⲁ

Οὐκ ἄνθρωποι μόνοι βοῶσι τὴν φρικωδεστάτην ἐκείνην βοήν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄγγελοι προσπίπτουσι τῷ Δεσπότη, καὶ ἀρχάγγελοι δέονται. Ἐχουσι καὶ τὸν καιρὸν αὐτοῖς συμμαχοῦντα, τὴν προσφορὰν βοηθοῦσαν.

It is not only men who are making their voices heard in that prayer, a prayer which is filled with the holiest fear and dread. Angels, too, fall down in adoration before their Lord. Archangels beg his favour. They have that sacred moment to fight for them as their ally; they have the sacrifice to lend them aid.

Hom. Inc. 3.40; Malingrey, 224; Harkins, 113

כֹּחַ הַיָּד הַיְמָנִית הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה

The influence of the demons is a bitter and hard shackle.

Main hand.

Lemma, 45^{va}:

כֹּחַ הַיָּד הַיְמָנִית הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה

Ἄλυσις πονηρὰ καὶ χαλεπὴ τῶν δαιμόνων ἐστὶν ἢ ἐνέργεια.

The influence of the demons is a dreadful and hard shackle.

Hom. Inc. 4.33; Malingrey, 254; Harkins, 128

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslash.

Scholium 16, 49^{rb}

Gloss (black in red tabula ansata in outer margin):

כֹּחַ הַיָּד הַיְמָנִית הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה

That we should give thanks whenever troubles befall us.

Main hand.

Lemma, 49^{rb}:

כֹּחַ הַיָּד הַיְמָנִית הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה

Εὐχαριστίας σοι ὑπόθεσις γίνεται τῶν δεινῶν ἢ πείρα

The trial of troubles is an occasion for you to give thanks.

Hom. Inc. 4.48; Malingrey, 266; Harkins, 135

Scholium 17, 55^{rb}

Gloss (black in red tabula ansata in outer margin):

כֹּחַ הַיָּד הַיְמָנִית הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה

On why he calls the father God and the son Lord.

Note: Lemma apparently indicated by both trigon and backslashes.

Scholium 19, 61^{va}

Gloss (black in red tabula ansata):

ⲕⲉⲓⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲙ ⲕⲉⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲁⲗⲁⲧⲓ ⲕⲉⲑⲓⲥ ⲕⲉⲙⲓⲟⲧ

That the creation of the angels predated the creation of this world and of man.

Note hand.

Lemma, 61^{va}:

... ⲕⲉⲓⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲙ ⲕⲉⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲁⲗⲁⲧⲓ ⲕⲉⲑⲓⲥ ⲕⲉⲙⲓⲟⲧ
... ⲕⲉⲓⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲙ ⲕⲉⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲁⲗⲁⲧⲓ ⲕⲉⲑⲓⲥ ⲕⲉⲙⲓⲟⲧ

ἐποίησεν ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, καὶ τὰς ἄλλας τῶν ἀσωμάτων οὐσίας ... Μετὰ δὲ τὴν τούτων δημιουργίαν ποιεῖ καὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον διὰ τὴν αὐτὴν αὐτὴν ...

He made the angels, and he made the other incorporeal beings ... after their creation, he made man, as well ...

Stag. 1.2; PG 47.427; Coco, 46

Scholium 20, 62^{rb}

Gloss (black in red outline):

ⲕⲉⲓⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲙ ⲕⲉⲃⲁⲗⲁ

Against the Julianists

Note hand.

Lemma, 62^{rb}:

ⲕⲉⲓⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲙ ⲕⲉⲃⲁⲗⲁ ⲕⲉⲁⲗⲁⲧⲓ ⲕⲉⲑⲓⲥ ⲕⲉⲙⲓⲟⲧ

καὶ ἀθανασίαν παρέξειν ὑπέσχετο.

And he [God] promised him [Adam] immortality.

Stag. 1.2; PG 47.428; Coco, 47

Further note: This exact text is cited (within a much longer extract) in BL Add 14538, 55^r. The lemma, in what seems to be a paraphrase, is also cited by (Ps.)-John of Dara, *On Heretics*, chap. 3, and Moses bar Kepha, *On Paradise*, 3.3. See the discussion above.

Scholium 28, 88^{ra-b}

Gloss (black in red outline):

ܘܝܫܘܬܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ

Refutation of <the notion that> when one behaves well, he is exalted.

Note hand.

Lemma, 88^{ra}:

ܘܝܫܘܬܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ

Ei δὲ λέγοι τις βέλτιον εἶναι κατορθοῦντας ἐπαίρεσθαι ...

Yet if one were to say that it is advantageous for us to be exalted when we behave well ...

Stag. 1.9; PG 47.446; Coco, 80

Note: The beginning of the lemma is marked with a backslash.

Scholium 29, 91^{va-b}

Gloss (black in red outline):

ܘܝܫܘܬܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ

Why the great men and saints he went to did not cure him.

Note hand.

Lemma, 91^{va}:

ܘܝܫܘܬܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ ܘܥܠܘܗܘܢ

is the meaning of 'I could pray that I may be accursed.' He who accepted the torment of Hell in exchange for attaining all the Jews (that which he did not succeed at), it is clear that not succeeding at this meant more torment for him than the torment experienced by all the people in Hell. This is because this (having the Jews believe in Christ) was a stronger desire for him than that (avoiding the torments of Hell).

Stag. 3.11; *PG* 47.488; *Coco*, 160

Note: The beginning of the lemma is indicated by a backslash.

Further note: See BL Add. 12155, 263^{va}, and discussion above.

Scholium 33, 152^{va}

Gloss (black in red outline):

כאן מתחיל לדבר על צרות האדם

From here he begins <to talk> about the tribulations of individuals in that time.

Note hand.

Lemma, 152^{rb}:

... וְאֵיךְ הָיָה לְדַמּוֹפִילוֹס לְדַבֵּר עִלְמוֹתָיו

Ἀναμνήσθητι γὰρ τὸν φίλτατον γέροντα ἐκεῖνον, Δημόφιλον λέγω ...

Recall that beloved old man, namely Demophilus ...

Stag. 3.12; *PG* 47.489; *Coco*, 160

Note: Lemma appears to be indicated by backslashes (the beginning on the previous leaf).

Scholium 34, 155^{rb}

Gloss (black in red outline):

הדבר הזה הוא יותר מן המד, והוא שהיה לנו

That depression is worse than the demon, and why it is that it has been placed in our nature.

Note hand.

Lemma, 155^{rb}:

Καταλαβόντες ἑαυτοὺς ἡ δαιμονικὰ καὶ ἀκαταλαβόντες ἑαυτοὺς
ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς

Πάσης γὰρ δαιμονικῆς ἐνεργείας βλαβερώτερον ἢ τῆς ἀθυμίας ὑπερβολή.

Excessive depression is far more harmful than all demoniacal influences.

And Lemma, 155^{va}:

ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς ... ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς

Τὴν γὰρ ἀθυμίαν ἐνέθηκεν ἡμῶν ὁ Θεὸς τῇ φύσει ... ἵνα τὰ μέγιστα κερδάνωμεν ἐξ αὐτῆς.

For, God placed depression in our nature ... so that we may earn great things from it.

Stag. 3.13; 14; PG 47.491; Coco, 164–165

Note: The gloss atypically refers to two lemmata; the beginnings of which are indicated by backslashes, on two different leaves.

Scholium 35, 156^{ra-b}

Gloss (black in red outline):

ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς ἡ δαιμονικὰ

An example relating to depression

Note hand.

Lemma, 156^{ra}:

... ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς ἡ δαιμονικὰ ἑαυτοὺς

καὶ συμβαίνει ταυτὸ, οἷον ἐπὶ τῶν φαρμάκων τῶν παρὰ τῶν ἱατρῶν διδομένων ...

And the same thing happens with remedies given by physicians ...

Stag. 3.14; PG 47.491; Coco, 165

ρῆθι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς
 ρῆθι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς
 ρῆθι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς
 ρῆθι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς
 ρῆθι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς
 ρῆθι οὐκ ἔστιν ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς

"Οτι αὐτὸ τοῦτό ἐστὶ τὸ σκανδαλίζον με πλέον. Διὰ τί γὰρ δύο ὄντων τῶν πονη-
 ρῶν, ὁ μὲν κολάζεται, ὁ δὲ διαφυγῶν ἀπέρχεται, καὶ δύο ὄντων ἀγαθῶν, ὁ μὲν
 τιμάται, ὁ δὲ τιμωρούμενος διατελεῖ; Καὶ τοῦτο αὐτὸ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ προνοίας
 μέγιστον ἔργον ἐστίν. Εἰ γὰρ πάντας ἐνταῦθα ἐκόλαζε τοὺς πονηροὺς, καὶ πάν-
 τας ἐνταῦθα ἐτίμα τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς, περιττὴ ἢ τῆς κρίσεως ἦν ἡμέρα ...

Because it is this very thing which offends me more. For why when there
 are two evil men, is one chastened, and another gets off, and escapes; and
 when there are two good men, one is honored, and the other continues
 under punishment? And this very thing is a very great work of God's provid-
 ence. For if he were to chasten all the evil men, here; and were to honor
 here all the good men, a day of judgment were superfluous ...

Daem. 7; PG 49.254; *NPNFI*, 9.184

Note: The beginning (and possibly also the end) of the lemma is indicated by a backslash.

Appendix 2: Footnotes with Images from British Library Add. 14567

Footnote 7

The following specimens from our manuscript may be compared:

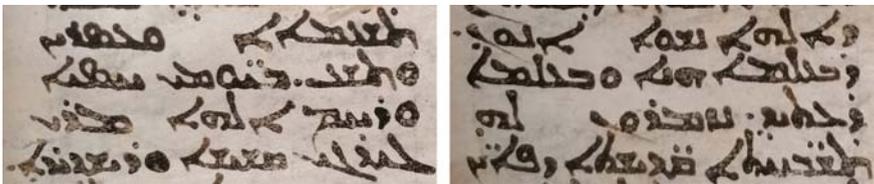


FIGURE 3.6 Fol. 200^v (hybrid hand)

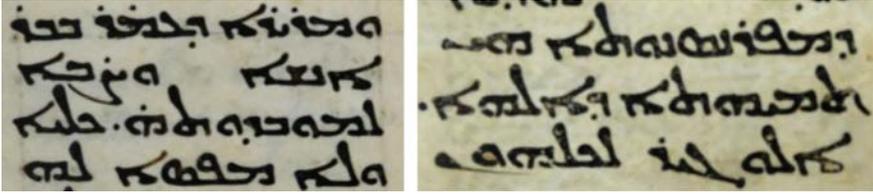


FIGURE 3.7 Fol. 172^v; 173^v (Estrangela)

The forms in the hybrid hand for beth, gomal, koph, and pe are Estrangela. The forms in the hybrid hand for dolath, he, waw, semkat and rish are Serto. The hybrid hand forms for olaph, mim, shin and taw are neither Estrangela nor Serto, but can be described as forms that are midway between them.

Footnote 20

E.g. Scholium 33:

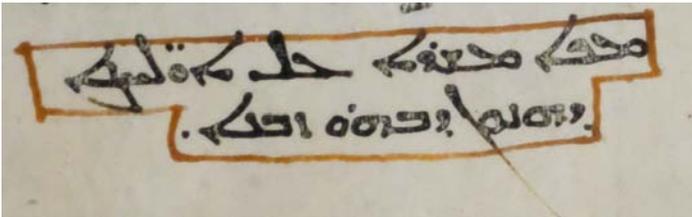


FIGURE 3.8 Scholium 33

Footnote 21

E.g. Scholium 19:

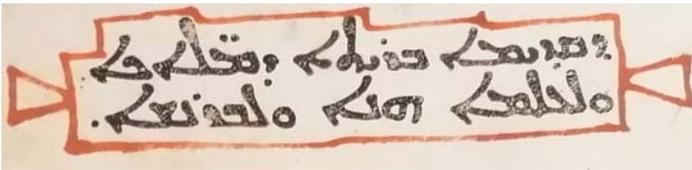


FIGURE 3.9 Scholium 19

There are also two scholia, 35 and 36, that follow a different pattern (rectangle outline with droplets in its four corners).

Footnote 22

The Estrangela scholia are: 1; 2; 6; 8; 10; 15; 16; 17; 18. All the rest are hybrid. The hands of the scholia (“main hand” and “note hand”) are indicated in Appendix 1. For examples, see:

Scholium 6:

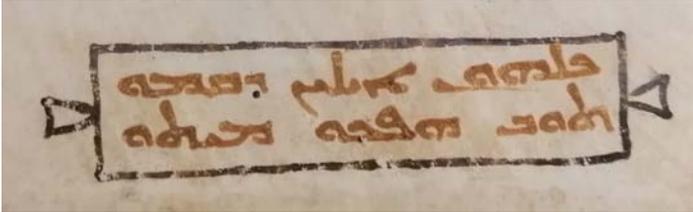


FIGURE 3.10 Scholium 6 (Estrangela)

And Scholium 7:

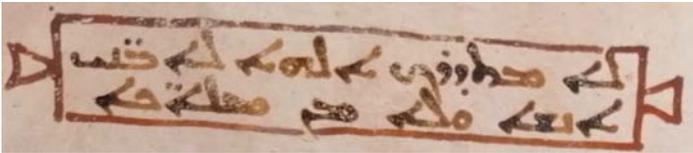


FIGURE 3.11 Scholium 7 (hybrid)

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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*

Flavia Ruani

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 As part 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

- 1 After Alain Le Boulluec's pioneering essay in two volumes *La notion d'hérésie dans la littérature grecque I^{re}–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 (e.g. Epiphanius' *Panarion* and Pseudo-Hippolytus' *Refutation of all heresies*), but also monographs and articles that explore various facets of the heresiological discourse. Let us mention some important titles: Aline Pourkier, *L'hérésologie 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; ES 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 9–66, and Flavia Ruani, "Les controver-

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 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 several ways.⁴ Firstly, florilegia sit at a chronologically 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. Secondly, 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 to achieve a coherent discourse. However, dogmatic florilegia bear some significant similarities to the conventional way of writing heresiology, both in content and form.

The florilegia’s major aim is to affirm the Syrian Orthodox faith by refuting the opinions of a diverse array of opponents, which include Dyophysite adversaries, such as the Chalcedonians and the “Nestorians”, as well as other forms of Miaphysitism, such as the ones proposed by the “Julianists”, the “Agnoetians”, and the “Tritheists”, among several others.⁵ Even though florilegia tend to as-

ses avec les manichéens et le développement de l’hérésologie syriaque,” in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque* (ed. F. Ruani; ES 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 67–103.

- 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: *Titi Bostrensis Contra Manichaeos* (see the bibliography, under “primary sources”); *Titus de Bostra, Contre les manichéens* (see *ibid.*); 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* (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 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, “florilegia” refer to compilations of textual excerpts arranged in thematic sections articulated in an organic way. On the other hand, “dogmatic florilegia” refer to florilegia that have doctrinal content aimed at the refutation of religious teachings that are 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* (however, see Minov’s chapter in this volume), and from miscellaneous manuscripts, which may contain more than one florilegium.
- 5 For a presentation of the controversies internal to Miaphysitism found in the dogmatic florilegia transmitted in the manuscripts *London, British Library Add. 12155, 14532, 14533 and 14538*, see Yonatan Moss, “Les controverses christologiques au sein de la tradition miaphysite:

sociate all these doctrinal opponents, both external and internal, with ancient heresies, they often also group them in a unifying polemical category, that of “heresy”, despite their variety. 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 labelling is most perceivable in titles: the polemical florilegia contained in the eighth-century manuscript *London, British Library Add. 14532* include, among others, anti-Dyophysite, anti-Julianist, anti-Tritheist and anti-Agnoetian florilegia which bear the overarching title of *Volume of Demonstrations from the Holy Fathers against Various Heresies* (ܠܘܩܘܣܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ ܕܗܘܪܘܘܬܐ, fol. 1^v).⁷

Moreover, some florilegia explicitly mention lists of traditional groups charged with heresy and integrate them in their argumentations. Listing heresies is yet another expression of the amalgamation technique, very widespread in the ancient Christian heresiological discourse, which developed it through the motif of “succession”, or *diadochè*, of erroneous doctrines.⁸ For example, we find such a blacklist of heresies in the narrative introducing the florilegium devoted to the question of the afterlife in MS BL Add. 14532, fol. 213^v–217^v, such as those (pre-Christian and Christian, up to the third century) gathered under the theme of the rejection of bodily resurrection, as shown below:

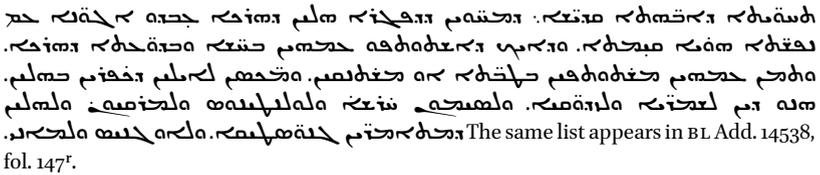
Testimonies from the holy Fathers that show that there will be resurrection for those bodies which wrestled with souls here below, and as they partook with them in the suffering of this world, they will partake with

sur l’incorruptibilité du corps du Christ et autres questions,” in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque* (ed. F. Ruani; ES 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”).
- 7 The first part of this title (“Demonstrations from the Holy Fathers”) is also written in red ink on the top margin of the verso of the last folio in each quire (last occurrence at fol. 122^v, in a total of 221 folios). For a description of this manuscript and the four florilegia, see William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838* (3 vols.; London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870–1872), 2:955–967. See also Albert Van Roey, “Un traité cononite contre la doctrine de Jean Philopon sur la resurrection,” in *Antidoron. Hulde aan Dr. Maurits Geerard bij de voltooiing van de Clavis Patrum Graecorum 1* (ed. J. Noret; Wetteren: Cultura, 1984), 123–139, esp. 125–126.
- 8 On the notion of heretical *diadochè*, see Le Boulluec, *La notion d’hérésie*, 2:639 (index entry *διαδοχή*) and Id., “Discours hérésiologique et dénominations des ‘sectes’,” in *Les communautés religieuses dans le monde gréco-romain. Essais de définition* (ed. N. Belayche and S.C. Mimouni; Bibliothèque de l’école pratique des hautes études, Sciences religieuses 117; Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 107–122.

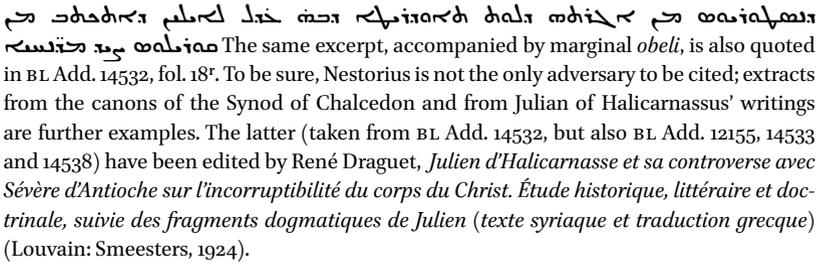
them in the blessings or they will be punished. And refuted are those who deny this, namely the Samaritans, the Sadducees, Simon Magus, Valentinus, Marcion, those who are called Gnostics, Origen and Mani.⁹

Furthermore, in terms of form, florilegia adopt and adapt a structural mode of refutation that is traditional in heresiology. This mode consists in quoting excerpts both from the adversaries 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 *London, British Library Add. 12155*, which includes several passages from Nestorius' writings.¹⁰ These passages are marked in the margins with specific signs (known as *obeli*,—or ÷) to indicate their different status from the preceding and following citations, as they have a heterodox status from the West Syrian viewpoint. One of these passages is introduced as follows: "From Nestorius, from his *Letter to Theodoretus*, in which he blames the statements written by Cyril *contra Orientales ...*" (fol. 37^r).¹¹ The refutation of Nestorius' claims is obtained implicitly by juxtaposing quotes from Scriptures and orthodox Church writers in the remaining parts of the florilegium.¹²

9  The same list appears in BL Add. 14538, fol. 147^r.

Doxographies of heretics are common in ancient heresiology, and the enumeration of heresies is the very *ratio* that forms catalogues of heresies, a very popular heresiological genre; see Smith, *Guilt by Association*.

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

11  The same excerpt, accompanied by marginal *obeli*, is also quoted in BL Add. 14532, fol. 18^r. 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 BL Add. 14532, but also BL 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 used to distinguish the adversaries' positions from the parts of the text which are 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 altchristlichen Literatur 175; Berlin: De Gryuter, 2017), 221–241. Michael Penn examines in

As a contribution to the history of Syriac heresiology, in this chapter 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.

I shall begin with an overview of the heresiological sources quoted in the florilegia. Such a survey will allow 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 chapter. These are Epiphanius of Salamis' catalogue of heresies, the *Panarion*, and Ephrem the Syrian's heresiological works, the *Prose Refutations against Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan* and the *Hymns against Heresies*. Next, I will probe the selection, organization and content of these excerpts, including the textual modifications carried out to accommodate them into their new contexts. Finally, in order to show that florilegia were polemical works in their own right, rather than mere collections of quotes, the chapter will broaden its scope to previous, contemporary and later authors and texts that quote the same heresiological sources, namely, the writings by Epiphanius and Ephrem mentioned above. 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

detail the marks found 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 especially 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 signalled with *obeli* or similar symbols in the margins (angle brackets, lines); this is also the case of Eunomius, quoted by Basil of Caesarea, and Damian of Alexandria, cited by Peter of Antioch. Along with these reading marks, Penn highlights other strategies employed by Syriac copyists 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 out this article to me.

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 Mabbug (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 them to display only excerpts from earlier Church writers dealing with theological contents on major topics of the Christological debate, such as the nature of Christ (his divine and human nature, as well as his body, knowledge and will), the Trinity, and the resurrection of the body. However, this assumption can immediately be corrected by taking a glimpse at William Wright's catalogue of the Syriac manuscripts kept at the British Library, and to the section devoted to florilegia specifically.¹³ Wright's very detailed descriptions show that florilegia quote a great diversity of polemical titles, including writings dealing with heresies that do not concern the Christological controversy.¹⁴

Below, I provide a chronological list of some recurring ones. 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 they cover the entire patristic age, spanning from the second century (with Irenaeus of Lyon) to the sixth (with Severus of Antioch), with a preference for post-Nicene writers of the fourth and early fifth centuries. They target a variety of adversaries, although they are all quoted in florilegia that aim to affirm Syr-

13 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:904–1015.

14 To be sure, these texts are, by far, not the majority out of those quoted in dogmatic florilegia; there are many other texts whose content is theological but not polemical.

ian 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 dealing directly with Christological matters that would fit the aims of the florilegia, 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 noted that the practice of quoting ancient authors independently from the adversaries they target is attested since the first patristic expressions of gathering proof for demonstrative purposes. What mattered were not the opponents but the status of the writer. In the history of the concept of “auctoritas patrum” and the use 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 citations, in our medieval compilations, from fourth-century writers such as Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa, as well as Ephrem and Epiphanius, who were considered champions of the faith and paragons of orthodoxy for promoting the Nicene creed against its contestants. On the other hand, the appeal to ante-Nicene authors, while decreasing in favour of the defenders of Nicaea, never ceased, since they were recognized as universal authorities, that is, sources whose authoritative status was accepted by all parties involved. Relying on them would have prevented the opponent to contest their validity and, therefore, the validity of the claims they were invoked to support. Irenaeus figures among the pre-Nicene fathers who continued to be quoted the most.¹⁶

Yet, the presence of these texts, whose content at first sight seems incongruent with the controversies developed in the florilegia, arouses curiosity: for which goals and in which ways are their contents considered relevant with regard to the context of their reception? In other words, how did florilegia use

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

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,” *SP* 23 (1989): 21–36. I thank Yonatan Moss for these references.

ancient heresiology? Which parts of these sources were selected and appropriated by the medieval compilers?

At the outset, we may notice the absence of famous late antique heresiological works. While we do 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), just to mention other well-known texts of this genre. The latter, in particular, was very widespread in Greek, and excerpts from other works by Theodoret are cited in West Syrian florilegia, such as his *Ecclesiastical History*, despite the fact that the author belonged on the other side of the Christological divide.¹⁷ Possibly, these writings had not reached the Syriac world, or they were not considered relevant for medieval doctrinal debates, or again, they were not found to be doctrinally sound enough for inclusion in what may be called the "identity cards" of Syriac Orthodox faith.¹⁸

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 now have the opportunity to

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 view, which made them acceptable for the West Syrian compilers of florilegia, or perhaps some theological content was taken out before incorporating them into the florilegia. Giorgia Nicosia is currently conducting a Ph.D. research on this topic at Ghent University, which will shed new light on this important question.

19 Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies*, 1:109–111, 2:113–155, 3:138–141, 4:102–104, 5:163–165.

20 Roman et al., *Titi Bostrensis Contra Manichaeos*, 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," *OLP* 20 (1989): 143–193; and of Cyril of Alexandria's *Against Julian the Apostate*: see Hubert Kaufhold, "Die syrischen Fragmente," in *Kyrrill von Alexandrien, Werke. Erster Band: "Gegen Julian", Teil 2: Buch 6–10 und Fragmente* (ed. W. Kinzig and Th. Brüggemann; GCS.NF 21; Berlin-Boston: de Gruyter, 2017), 821–895.

do a methodological shift and analyse the content and function of each quote in these dogmatic collections from 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 from the reception of other types of sources; for example, excerpts from historiographical texts 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; rather, they are dispersed all throughout the text. This means that they are integrated in the framework of different polemics to support 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 charge a wide range of theological adversaries with heresy and implicitly equate their “new heresies” with old ones. Below, we will see concrete examples in the reception of Epiphanius’ and Ephrem’s works. Interestingly, such a connection between ancient and new heresies is carried out also at the conceptual level. In MS *London, British Library Add. 14533*, fol. 137^r (n^o 23), amidst various controversies, namely the debates against John Barbur (no. 16 at fol. 106^r and again no. 27 at fol. 140^r), Sergius the Armenian (no. 20 at fol. 135^v and again no. 28 at fol. 140 r), and the “Pagans” (no. 25, fol. 138^r), we find a chapter on the definition of “heresy” which is exemplified by two quotations. The first of these quotations, taken from the

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

23 See for example the sections XVIII and XIX of MS *Deir al-Surian 28*, fol. 114^r–127^v, 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. This is a tendency; however, there are also citations from historiographical sources in dogmatic florilegia that are not grouped together and appear amidst other kinds of texts. For example, MS *BL Add. 14533*, cites excerpts from Eusebius of Caesarea’s and Theodoret’s ecclesiastical histories (at fol. 170^r and 168^r respectively) as part of the controversy against the followers of Paul of Bet-Ukkame (see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:973).

ing. Indeed, thanks to their juxtaposition, the two passages illuminate each other's meaning. Firstly, it is probable that the ancient meaning of *hairesis* as "academic school" was completely lost at the time of the compiler, rather than it being a doctrinal error. Secondly, Severus' definition of the term as something "away from the word of truth" leaves no doubt as to its negative connotations. Thirdly, the link between the two citations is further assured by the word "inclination" (*meṣṭalyanuta*), which they have in common. This common terminology ("heresy" and "inclination") contributes to shedding a negative light back on Clement's definition, which would otherwise be neutral. In sum, it seems as if the compiler 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. He did so by juxtaposing the two passages sharing the same vocabulary regardless of their original contexts (one dealing with the philosophical school of the Sceptics, and the other with the rebaptism and rechrismation of ex-Nestorians), and their primary meanings. As a result, the Nestorians, whom Severus addresses in his homily, are implicitly associated to the early Christian notion of "heresy", and, by extension, they 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 to deviate from the teaching of the Great Church, such as Gnostic and Trinitarian trends.²⁹ Apart from its individual chapters, each devoted to one heresy, the *Panarion* also features transitional parts that summarise the denounced heresies in short paragraphs; this epitomised version of the *Panarion* is called *Anakephalaiosis*. The latter is known

28 Edition: Epiphanius, *Panarion* (see bibliography under "primary sources"); English translation: *The Panarion of Epiphanius* (see *ibid.*).

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

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 complete version of the *Panarion*.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

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 regarding 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, gathers

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- 30 See Luise Abramowski, "Die Anakephalaiosis zum Panarion des Epiphanius in der Handschrift Brit. Mus. Add. 12156," *LM* 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 Koni and Dionysius bar Šalibi, 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. In the future, it would be worth collecting and studying 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 BL 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.
- 34 For a description of MS BL Add. 12155 and BL Add. 14532, see n. 10 and n. 7 above, respectively. For the Mingana manuscript, dated to around 650 AD, see Alphonse Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts. 1, 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 24^r).
- 35 Anomoeanism was a theological current which promoted an extreme form of Arianism, founded by Aetius and Eunomius in the mid-fourth century.

TABLE 4.1 Passages from Epiphanius of Salamis' *Panarion* quoted in florilegia manuscripts

Epiphanius <i>Panarion</i>	<i>Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library Min- gana syr. 69 (ca. 650AD)</i>	<i>London, British Library Add. 12155 (747AD?)</i>	<i>London, British Library Add. 14532 (8th c.)</i>	<i>London, British Library Add. 17194 (886AD)</i>
<i>Anakephalaios</i> I, 3, 1–7 (against Hellenism)				fol. 17 ^v –18 ^r
<i>Anakephalaios</i> II, 21, 1–3 (against the Simonians)			fol. 217 ^r	
<i>Anakephalaios</i> II, 27, 1 (against the Carpocratians)			fol. 217 ^r	
<i>Anakephalaios</i> II, 31, 1 (against the Valentinians)			fol. 217 ^r	
<i>Panarion</i> 21, 4, 4 (against the Simonians)			fol. 217 ^r	
<i>Cf. Panarion</i> 30, 29, 1–2 (against the Ebionites)				fol. 52 ^r
<i>Panarion</i> 31, 7, 6 (against the Valentinians)			fol. 217 ^v	
<i>Anakephalaios</i> III, 38, 1–2 (against the Cainites)			fol. 217 ^v	
<i>Panarion</i> 69, 24, 6 (against the Arians)	fol. 23 ^r	fol. 66 ^r	fol. 43 ^r	
<i>Panarion</i> 76, 6, 3–4 (against the Anomoeans)		fol. 13 ^v	fol. 96 ^v	
<i>Panarion</i> 76, 39, 6 (against the Anomoeans)	fol. 23 ^r	fol. 66 ^r	fol. 43 ^r	
<i>Panarion</i> 76, 50, 5–6 (against the Anomoeans)		fol. 13 ^v	fol. 96 ^v	
<i>De Fide</i> 17, 8–9		fol. 21 ^r	fol. 126 ^r	

patristic citations on various biblical and theological subjects.³⁶ We observe 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 reception of the excerpts raises a few questions. 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?

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 M. Richard, “Florilèges spirituels grecs,” in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, 5:475–512.

To answer these questions, we need to distinguish between the reception in dogmatic and spiritual florilegia. For the latter category, the aforementioned BL Add. 17194 cites an excerpt from the *Anakephalaiosis* (1, 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” (fol. 17^v). Further below (fol. 52^r), 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 passage contains a reference to the Magi offering gifts to the newborn baby Jesus, as it fits the topic: “Indication of how old our Lord was when the Magi arrived” (fol. 51^v). 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 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 notion of the consubstantiality of the persons of the Trinity.

More specifically, in the anti-Julianist florilegium (fol. 36^r–94^v), two excerpts are quoted one right 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 from the Greek, the second passage contains a sentence that differs slightly from the original. This sentence 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

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

convenient to him for his doctrinal controversy, or he may have *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 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, in the same way as their earlier counterparts.

If we now consider the anti-Tritheist debate, which is the second main point of discussion where MS BL Add. 14532 quotes excerpts from the *Panarion*, we should divide the matter 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 (fol. 94^v–133^v), 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 (fol. 213^v–221^r). Thus, if the former section is the work of an anti-Tritheist author (the author of the florilegium), the latter reproduces internal conflicts between 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 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 labelled as Tritheists. Nevertheless, a closer look at the original context of the citations allows us to perceive that a conceptual transposition has occurred in the new reception setting. In this regard, it is worth considering the second passage, *Panarion* 76, 50, 5–6. In Epiphanius'

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

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.

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. 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 updates 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 standpoints, and polemically makes new Arians of the Tritheists.

Finally, BL Add. 14532, fol. 213^v–221^r contains a florilegium in support of the resurrection of the bodies. I quoted its opening paragraph above, 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 fol. 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 new and incorruptible was

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. by 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, fol. 147^v.

rejected by Conon, the metropolitan bishop of Tarsus, and his followers, who believed that the mortal body would be resurrected 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 another as one continuous citation.⁴⁵ They solely concern first- and second-century heresies, 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 from the followers of Simon Magus, Carpocrates, Valentinus, and the Cainites. Differently from the previous passages by Epiphanius that we analysed above, here the citations do not correspond literally to the Greek original, nor to the Syriac version of the *Anakephalaiosis* preserved entirely in MS London, British Library BL Add. 12156.⁴⁶ In some instances, they seem to be paraphrases rather than proper citations, given the discrepancies found in the 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 a pre-existing Syriac translation of the *Anakephalaiosis*, but rather, they 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 make 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:

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, including 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, fol. 147^r–148^v, 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 BL Add. 14532 and 14538.

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.

Florilegium (BL Add. 14532, fol. 217^r)

Anakephalaiosisis (BL Add. 12156, fol. 132^r)

ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ

ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ
 ܘܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ ܕܡܫܚܘܬܗ

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.

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 disorderly forms of sexual intercourse. He rejected the resurrection of bodies and claimed that the world is not God's.

In the context of the intra-Tritheist debate, the relevance of these citations, all of them invoked to support the resurrection of the mortal body, is clearly a reaction to Philoponus' doctrine. In contrast, it is difficult to fully understand the value 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? The answer may lie in the topic under discussion. The Tritheists are condemned when it comes to their view on the relationship among the persons of the Trinity, 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 compilers would agree with them against adversaries who would oppose that view, including some Tritheists like Philoponus. Another observation we can make is that the *Panarion* by Epiphanius was a reference source

for both anti-Tritheist authors (the compilers) and (at least some) Tritheist thinkers; both found it useful in supporting their various claims and drew on different parts of it. Therefore, by first attacking and then using Tritheist theses, the compilers may have had as one of their objectives to show the Tritheists that one of their proof texts, on which they relied 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 presented above for the employment of Epiphanius' heresiology in medieval polemical florilegia 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, this local dimension may also have been part of the motivations underlying the compilers' practice of selection.

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

Given that Epiphanius' *Panarion* is used for its Christological and Trinitarian content, Ephrem the Syrian's heresiological works offer a complementary case study, as they concern different adversaries and debates, thus providing us with different polemical material.⁴⁹ Chronologically, Ephrem's heresiological works

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), 11–16, for this regional influence at the time of Ephrem the Syrian.

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 instead on the reception of "external" heresies—to use Ephrem's own terminology in

preceded the *Panarion* by several years.⁵⁰ One of them is in prose, known as *Prose Refutations*, and the other in verses, 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, as 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 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, free will, resurrection, in addition to 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

Hymns against Heresies 3, 9 (Syr. *barraye*). While these "external" adversaries, namely Marcion, Bardaisan and Mani, are also condemned in Epiphanius' *Panarion*, they do receive a full refutation in Ephrem's writings, which devote to them the 12 treatises of the *Prose Refutations* and the 56 hymns of his poetical heresiological collection. A study of the citations from Ephrem's *madrashe* surviving in dogmatic florilegia is a desideratum: see Sebastian P. Brock, "The Transmission of Ephrem's *madrashe* in the Syriac liturgical tradition," *SP* 33 (1997): 490–505, esp. 492, n. 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 "internal" heresies, following Ephrem's expression in *HcH* 3, 9 (Syr. *gawwaye*).

51 Edition and translation of the *Prose Refutations*: S. *Ephraemi Syri Opera Selecta*, 21–58 edition of *Discourse 1 Ad Hypatius*; 59–73 edition of *Discourse 2*; Ephrem, *Prose Refutations*, edition (except of *Discourse 1*) and English translation of the 12 treatises. Edition of the *Hymns against Heresies*: Ephrem, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, and *Éphrem de Nisibe. Hymnes contre les hérésies* (Cerbelaud and Ruani; see the bibliography, under "primary sources").

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

53 On the reception of Ephrem as anti-Manichaean polemicist, see Flavia Ruani, "Recherches sur la place d'Éphrem de Nisibe dans la littérature syriaque anti-manichéenne," *PdO* 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*

4.1 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

-
- d'Égypte et la route de la soie. Hommage à Jean-Daniel Dubois* (ed. A. Van den Kerchove and L.G. Soares Santoprete; Bibliothèque de l'école pratique des hautes études, Sciences religieuses 170; Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 299–332. The present contribution represents a further opportunity for me to extend my 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 BL Add. 12155 and Add. 14532, namely, *Against Bardaisan* st. 88 (contrary to what suggested by the apparatus in Mitchell, Bevan and Burkitt, *Prose Refutations*, 2:166 and the notes to the translation at 2:1xxviii, 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. 107^v, 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 *S. Ephraemi Syri Opera Selecta*, 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, which 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* (ܡܡܪܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ) is quoted in an East-Syrian florilegium of monastic and ascetic content, transmitted by MS Cambridge, University Library Or. 1319 (a nineteenth-century copy of a manuscript dated to 1233/4 or 1333/4AD). The passage is edited and translated by Luise Abramowski and Alan E. Goodman in *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), fol. 21^v–22^r, 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, nor is it 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*, 2:1). 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 bardesane,” *OSP* 2 (2108): 297–337.

TABLE 4.2 Passages from Ephrem the Syrian's *Prose Refutations* quoted in florilegia manuscripts

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

The editors C.W. Mitchell, A.A. Bevan and F.C. Burkitt used these excerpts in their critical edition of the famous palimpsest *London, British Library 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 with the reading of 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

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

56 The variants of the manuscripts BL Add. 14612 and 17214 are given in Ephrem, *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 stanzas 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 BL Add. 17193, but only the most important ones. The preference of 17193 over 12155 is not entirely clear, since, in fact, MS BL Add. 17193 presents a more corrupted text than BL Add. 12155, with omissions and *sauts-du-même-au-même*. Finally, the variants of the BL Add. 12155 and 14532 for st. 88 are given in Ephrem, *Prose Refutations*, 2:166–167 (text) and lxxviii (trans.).

for the history of the *Prose Refutations*, which, for the most part, are otherwise attested only in the undertext of the palimpsest manuscript.⁵⁷ Medieval florilegia play a major role in further preserving this Ephremian text by quoting passages from it; 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.

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 compilers.⁵⁹ Compared to other texts by Ephrem, as well as polemical writings by other authors, the *Prose Refutations* turn out not to be 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 ecclesi-

57 Exceptions are *Discourse* 1 as well as some stanzas from *Against Bardaisan* and the entire treatise *On Virginity*. The former is transmitted by two manuscripts, *London, British Library* Add. 14570 and Add. 14574; BL 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). BL Add. 14574 also contains part of *Discourse* 2; another manuscript, *London, British Library* Add. 14581, contains two folios with parts of *Discourse* 1. See S. *Ephraemi Syri Opera Selecta*, vi–vii). The latter were copied by the monk Aaron from the very manuscript he erased; these texts thus appear in both the inferior and superior script of the manuscript BL Add. 14623.

58 This remark follows the methodology delineated by A. Butts to analyse 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.

astical 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 “What Golgotha is, and concerning the Cross and that everyone dies at his appointed time” (*Against Bardaisan* st. 33–42, in BL Add. 17193 and 12155), or that “Satan cannot enter man without God’s command” (the unidentified passage in BL Add. 17194). Accordingly, the selected lines fit perfectly 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 they 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

60 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:696–701.

61 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:915–917.

62 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:989–1002.

63 On this manuscript, see n. 36 above.

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 ...” (Ephrem, *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 overtext. 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 overtext 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 also copied 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*, and 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.

already seen. We are referring to the compilers intervening in the text to adapt to the receiving context a quotation of a passage from Epiphanius' *Panarion*.

4.2 The *Hymns against Heresies*

The *Hymns against Heresies* present us with a situation similar to the *Prose Refutations* as far as the reception in a polemical context. Only one citation taken from them is indeed used in such a polemical setting, namely, once more, in the anti-Julianist florilegium. The following table lists the passages that appear in the medieval florilegia, neither of which, to the best of my knowledge, had been spotted yet.

Before analysing the reception context and the textual variants linked to it, let us first consider the manner in which the *Hymns* are introduced. The most common way mentions the author and the title, "From Mar Ephrem, from the Volume against the Doctrines" (ܡܪ ܘܨܦܪܝܡ ܡܢ ܩܘܠܘܡܢ ܕܗܘܠܘܡܢܐ), or "From Mar Ephrem, from the Hymns against the Doctrines" (ܡܪ ܘܨܦܪܝܡ ܡܢ ܩܘܠܘܡܢ ܕܗܘܠܘܡܢܐ), sometimes with the addition of the specific melody attached to the hymn in question. While the name of the author is always present, there are two major anomalies concerning the rest of the introductory formula. The first one relates to *HcH* 12, 3 (in BL Add. 17214) and *HcH* 29, 37 (in BL Add. 12155, 14532, and 14533), in which the work is not specified. In both occurrences, the florilegia instead give the indication of the melody according to which the hymn should be sung: "From Mar Ephrem, according to the melody 'Oh my disciple'" (for *HcH* 12, 3) and "From the Blessed Mar Ephrem, from the hymn according to the melody 'Your flock, sadly'" (for *HcH* 29, 37). The second anomaly is in fact a case of misattribution; in the passage quoted in MS BL Add. 14532, fol. 68^v (= BL Add. 14538, fol. 111^r), this time the title is given according to the usual formula ("From the Volume against the Doctrines", ܡܢ ܩܘܠܘܡܢ ܕܗܘܠܘܡܢܐ), but the quoted stanza corresponds to that of a hymn belonging to another collection, *Carmina Nisibena* 46, 11.⁶⁶ The conclusion that can

66 The same stanza is quoted in BL Add. 12155, fol. 76^v, but it is introduced without reference to the title of the hymn collection ("From the same, from the Volume whose beginning is: 'The Sons of error will be persuaded', according to the melody 'Paradise'"); and in BL Add. 14533, fol. 68^v, but here the quoted stanza is correctly attributed to the *Carmina Nisibena*: "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 was achieved 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, ܡܢ ܩܘܠܘܡܢ ܕܗܘܠܘܡܢܐ, Nis 46).

TABLE 4.3 Passages from Ephrem the Syrian's *Hymns against Heresies* quoted in florilegia manuscripts

Ephrem the Syrian, <i>Hymns against Heresies</i>	BL Add. 17214 (7th c.)	BL Add. 12155 (747 AD?)	BL Add. 14532 (8th c.)	BL Add. 14533 (8th/9th c.)	BL Add. 17194 (886 AD)	BL Add. 14538 (10th c.)
12, 3	fol. 34 ^v					
17, 1					fol. 27 ^{rv}	
21, 7					fol. 27 ^v	
23, 5					fol. 16 ^v	
29, 5–15 ^a					fol. 32 ^v –33 ^r	
29, 23–24					fol. 31 ^{rv}	
29, 37		fol. 80 ^r	fol. 78 ^r	fol. 72 ^r		fol. 114 ^v
30, 1					f. 15 ^{rv}	
“Hymns Against Doctrines”		[fol. 76 ^v]	fol. 68 ^{rv}	[fol. 68 ^v]		fol. 111 ^r

a Except st. 7.

be drawn from the absence of the title and the misattribution is that, unless these anomalies are due to material reasons,⁶⁷ at a symbolic level, the florilegists would not consider as a source of authority the work itself, but rather the author under whose name the work circulates, and whom they systematically acknowledge. This would mean, in the perspective of Syriac heresiology, that Ephrem's heresiological writings do not matter by themselves as much as their author does, who, on the contrary, is evoked as a continued prestigious name.

Turning to the reception settings, we immediately observe, as we did for the *Prose Refutations*, that the great majority of the poetic quotes are not contained in polemical florilegia. Rather, they are transmitted by one manuscript (BL Add. 17194), which, as we have already seen, is a highly miscellaneous florilegium. The stanzas are extracted from the polemical hymns to serve a very diverse array of subjects, such as biblical subjects (such as “the interpretation of the fact that God repented”, ch. 22 of the florilegium, quoting *HcH* 30, 1, which deals

67 Namely, that the authors of the florilegia had access to untitled isolated stanzas and a textual attribution that was already wrong. 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.”

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 free will), and themes related to human behaviours (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 do.⁶⁸ 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.⁶⁹

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,"⁷⁰ the text cited in the florilegium has "The soul is immortal because it does not sleep."⁷¹ By changing the place of the *dalat*,

68 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.

69 They are usually orthographical variants. By making a comparison with the critical edition by E. Beck, we can observe that the text of the stanzas quoted by MS BL Add. 17194 tends to follow the variants of manuscript A (= *London, British Library* Add. 12176, sixth century) given by Beck in the apparatus.

70 ܕܠܐ ܢܝܕܡ ܠܐܝܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܝܕܡ (Ephrem, *Hymnen contra Haereses*, 1:119).

71 ܕܠܐ ܢܝܕܡ ܠܐܝܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܝܕܡ: BL Add. 14532, fol. 78^r and Add. 14538, fol. 114^v. The passage quoted in BL Add. 12155, f. 80^r 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 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 condition of the soul while consciousness is suspended, 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.⁷² Yet, probably because the framework under examination here does not require 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.

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,⁷³ and the presence of citations from Julian's works in which he rejects this association in the florilegium itself, on the other.⁷⁴ Rather than for Ephrem's anti-Manichaean condemnation, then, it is for the topics

The first *dalat* could indicate the beginning of the citation, rather than being part of it, or it could further testify to the process of adaptation of the original text. Thus, BL Add. 12155 would have kept the original *dalat* while at the same time inserting the second one to fit the thematic context of the reception. By contrast, the passage cited in BL Add. 14533, fol. 72^r is identical to the edited text.

72 Butts, "Manuscript Transmission," 288–302.

73 See Moss, *Incorruptible Bodies*, 24, and Frédéric Alpi, "Les manichéens et le manichéisme dans les *Homélie cathédrales* de Sévère d'Antioche (512–518): observations sur *IHC* 123 et sur quelques passages négligés," *ARAM* 16 (2004): 233–243, esp. 234, and n. 9 there.

74 Citations from Julian's *Treatise against the Manichaeans and the Eutychians* are contained in BL Add. 14532, fol. 39^v, 40^r, 41^r, 57^v.

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 decline in the 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 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 medieval controversies.

5 Before and after the Florilegia

The examination of the heresiological quotes has demonstrated that a certain degree of independence exists between 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 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.⁷⁵ 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 nor followed by the same texts in any 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. For example, MS BL Add. 12155, which is of a dogmatical nature, shares one Ephremic quote with MS BL Add. 17193, whose

75 For the affinity between Mingana Syr. 69 and the BL manuscripts, see Fiori's chapter in the present volume. Since the manuscript Mingana Syr. 69 is heavily mutilated, it may have contained Epiphanius' passage. Another example is offered by the anti-Tritheist florilegium, where BL Add. 12155 and 14532 share many citations from Epiphanius; however, as we have seen, BL Add. 14532 also includes several quotes of its own.

character is spiritual and exegetical. 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 characterize the florilegia shared by more than one manuscript, both in their internal structure and in their articulation with other florilegia, are further expounded by the comparison with selections of themes and patristic authorities that predate our medieval manuscripts. We are lucky that, at times, the compilers of the florilegia indicate their borrowing from an earlier collection of quotes while signalling their dissociation from this previous model. A marginal note in MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 87^r states that “up to this (point), these demonstrations were taken from the book of Mar Sergius of Huzri, the remaining fourteen being added by the compiler of the volume.”⁷⁶ Unfortunately, we do not know this “book” to which the note refers (although the identity of this “Mar Sergius of Huzri” seems to have been discovered), but we can deduct from this that to the fourteen further citations belongs the quote from Ephrem’s *Against Bardaisan* st. 33–42, at fol. 91^v. 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 inclusion of excerpts from the *Hymns against Heresies* in a more ancient Miaphysite Syriac collection of patristic demonstrations, known as Florilegium of Philoxenus of Mabbug (dated to around 482).⁷⁷ This florilegium is appended to Philoxenus’ polemical *Discourses against Habib* and gathers 227 passages from the Church fathers in order to refute Dyophysitism. Remarkably, Ephrem is the only cited Syriac authority, the others being all Greek writers. Yet, he alone scores 105 quotes, thus surpassing any other author in terms of representation.⁷⁸ Three of these quotes are taken from the *Hymns against Heresies*: HcH 21, 3; 35, 12 and 39, 11.⁷⁹ We observe that none of them are quoted in our medieval florilegia, despite the fact that they would share the same adversaries with Philoxenus. 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.

76 The note is reproduced and paraphrased as such in Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:933. For the identity of Sergius of Huzri, see Fiori’s chapter in the present volume.

77 Edition and French translation in Philoxenus, *Mémre contre Habib*, 58–123.

78 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.

79 They correspond to quotes 188–190 (= § 229–231): Philoxenus, *Mémre contre Habib*, 114–115.

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, and Severus' texts. Presently, 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 said quote 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*; moreover, it is followed by Cyril's *Commentary on John* (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*).⁸⁰

If the cases we discussed show that florilegia are not just simple recipients of previous doctrinal elaborations and selections, what can we say in turn about

80 Another example of independent selection when it comes to florilegia is when they 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'Édesse," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 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", fol. 16^r–17^v). 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 its 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 in the composition of 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.

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).⁸¹ 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 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, which is not extant.⁸² This would mean that, at least for this passage of the *Prose Refutations*, the source of Bar Kepha's heresiological discourse is a florilegium, and not the original text.

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, fol. 10^r–11^r), we observe that, despite the fact the Moses does not mention any source, the entire chapter is in fact composed by the jux-

81 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, *London, British Library* Add. 14731 (see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:853–855, who dates it to the eleventh century on palaeographical grounds). See Herman Teule, "Mushe bar Kepha," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History. 2 (900–1050)* (ed. D. Thomas and A. Mallet; HCMR 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, n. 16), while, in fact, he gives 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 Ephrem, *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 he mistakenly states that it transmits st. 33–42; just as in BL Add. 12155 and Cyriacus' *De Providentia*, the manuscript omits st. 40.

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

taposition of various quotes taken from the *First Discourse* of Ephrem's *Prose Refutations*.⁸³ They are, in order of quotation in Moses' text, as follows:⁸⁴ 1, 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 see that the general progression of the borrowing is linear (from p. 37 to 44); however, while parts of the text differ only slightly from the edited one, as far as minor lexical variants and syntactical rearrangements are concerned, some other parts differ more greatly, as if Moses bar Kepha had summarised 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 from *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. Additionally, it 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 ܝܫܘܥ ܒܪ ܦܪܘܚܝܘܢ ܕܡܪ ܝܫܘܥ ܒܪ ܦܪܘܚܝܘܢ), 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 caution, a proof of the fact that Moses, together with florilegia, directly consulted Ephrem's heresiological works as well.

Conclusion

In this chapter, 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. These are

83 One paragraph does not correspond verbatim to any passages of Ephrem's *Prose Refutations*; however, it reflects the general content of Ephrem's argument. See the Appendix for more.

84 The following page and line numbers refer to the edition in S. *Ephraemi Syri Opera Selecta*. In the Appendix to this article, I provide Moses' and Ephrem's texts in parallel and with a translation.

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.

Firstly, 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 engage. 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 in order 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 compilers of the florilegia, 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 the reception. The quotes I analysed show that they are at best syntactically reconfigured to better adhere to specific doctrinal points.

Secondly, the selection of heresiological excerpts of the florilegia 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 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.

e. *Panarion* 31, 7, 6 = Against the Valentinians = Holl 1:396, l. 16–397, l. 2

והוא לנפש חיה חסר מן החיים והחיים הם חסר מן החיים.. והוא חסר מן החיים
והוא חסר מן החיים והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.
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And further he rejects indeed the Law with the resurrection of the dead. And in the second Discourse he says about them: “They deny the resurrection of the dead, by making some figurative, silly claim, that it is not this body which rises, but another which comes out of it, the one they call ‘spirit.’”¹¹²

f. *Anakephalaios* III, 38, 1–2—Against the Cainites = cf. Holl 2:2, ll. 3–7 and BL Add. 12156, f. 133^v

והוא חסר מן החיים והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.
והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.
והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.
והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.

And further, in the second Discourse he says: “The Cainites deny the resurrection of the flesh and slander the Law and the One who spoke in the Law, and they say that Cain comes from the mighty power. And they deify Judas and the followers of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and the Sodomites.”¹¹³

7. Add. 17194f. 17^v–18^r: cf. *Anakephalaios* I, 3, 1–7 (Holl 1:163, l. 1–164, l. 5; BL Add. 12156, f. 130^v)

והוא חסר מן החיים והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.
והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים. והוא חסר מן החיים.
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112 *The Panarion of Epiphanius. Book I*, 174.
113 Cf. *The Panarion of Epiphanius. Book I*, 227.

(cont.)

Moses bar Kepha
On Free Will 2.5
(BL Add. 14731, fol. 10^r-11^r)

Ephrem the Syrian
Prose Refutations
First Discourse

Over-
beck's
edition

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ܩܘܠܘܢܐ ܕܫܘܒܘܢ ܩܘܠܘܢܐ ܩܘܠܘܢܐ ܩܘܠܘܢܐ
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p. 44,
ll. 16-23

Chapter 5, 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.

If thus the good which is in us is good and cannot become evil, and if the evil in us is evil and can [not] become good, (then) these good and evil promises which the Law makes are superfluous. For who is he that the Rewarder will crown—the one who is victorious by his nature and cannot fail? Or whom will the Avenger blame—that nature which fails and cannot conquer? These are great absurdities.

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

But if the evil which is in us is evil, and cannot become good, and if also the good in us is good, and cannot become evil, (then) these good and evil promises which the Law makes are superfluous. For whom will the Rewarder crown—one who is victorious by his nature and cannot fail? Or whom, again, will the Avenger blame—that nature which fails and is not able to conquer?

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

123 This paragraph does not find any specific parallelism in Ephrem's text, but its content is similar to the development of the *First Discourse* at pp. 44-45.

(cont.)

Moses bar Kepha <i>On Free Will</i> 2.5 (BL Add. 14731, fol. 10 ^r –11 ^r)	Ephrem the Syrian <i>Prose Refutations</i> <i>First Discourse</i>	Overbeck's edition
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because they have freewill, they did not wish to be taught.

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, three, that he saves himself from blame so that all the blame may rest with God.

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?

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."

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

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.

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.

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?

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 says there is not freewill, know that his freewill has not conducted itself aright.

And if they say that if freewill comes from God, then the good and evil impulses which belong to it are from God ...

(cont.)

Moses bar Kepha <i>On Free Will</i> 2.5 (BL Add. 14731, fol. 10 ^r –11 ^r)	Ephrem the Syrian <i>Prose Refutations</i> <i>First Discourse</i>	Overbeck's edition
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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.

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.

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A Geological Approach to Syriac Miaphysite Christology (Sixth–Ninth Centuries): Detours of a Patristic Florilegium from Antioch to Tagrit

Emiliano Fiori

Patristic florilegia are paradoxical texts. On the one hand, they are very eloquent, as they often deal at length with clearly defined topics: on the other hand, however, they are obstinately mute, as they speak through the voices of others and seem to lack their own. Thus, although they do say much, and what they say is quite clear, what they intend to communicate through the voices of the ‘old masters’ tends to escape our investigation. Their intention is of course closely related to their historical context, which, however, is difficult to determine, since the purely theological content of these florilegia remains far from factual history. They are mosaics, but in a way, they are quite the opposite of proper mosaics, as we cannot enjoy their overall subject and intention with one comprehensive glance; in order to appreciate the sense and underlying strategy of their composition, we must rather auscultate the fine junctions between the individual tesserae. This is also true in the case of a large florilegium of Christological content that occupies a prominent position in six manuscripts of the eighth–tenth centuries preserved at the British Library and in the Mingana Collection. In this chapter, I shall present a few fieldnotes from an on-going exploration on this florilegium.

The florilegium discusses highly technical topics such as: 1) the persistence of a difference between the natures from which Christ derives; 2) the exclusion of any duality from Christ; 3) the apology of the alleged novelty of the Miaphysite doctrine through a collection of patristic authorities, from Dionysius the Areopagite to the Cappadocians; and 4) an overview of the definition and the debates held at Chalcedon. A first exploration of the patristic materials of this florilegium, their relationship with the above-mentioned topics, and their complex itineraries through the centuries has led to some provisional results concerning the context in which they were originally collected and the circumstances that may have prompted the production of the florilegium as we have it now. The topics discussed in our florilegium were the core of a rather obscure Christological debate of the end of the sixth century, which, however, was crucial for the theological self-consciousness of later Syriac Mia-

physitism, namely, the controversy around Probus, a Miaphysite theologian who converted to Chalcedonianism in the 580s. Much of what is discussed in our florilegium, especially the “natural characteristic” and the removal of the duality of Christ’s natures, is already present in this sixth-century controversy.

These very topics resurfaced in an age of renewed polemics between Miaphysites and Chalcedonians, between the end of the Umayyad caliphate and the first decades of the ‘Abbasid rule. A precious source from the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century is the letter of a man by the name of Elias, who converted from Chalcedonianism to the Miaphysite faith. This letter, addressed to the Chalcedonian syncellus Leo of Ḥarrān, shows us that the discussion still focused on the same points concerning the difference between the natures in Christ and the exclusion of any duality. The authorities quoted by Elias to defend his Miaphysite options are the same as in our florilegium and are organized in a similar way. At approximately the same time, we observe how Nonnus of Nisibis and his relative Abū Rā’iṭah used the same florilegium we now read for their polemic against the Melkites.

After a presentation of the contents, structure, and aims of the florilegium, the chapter will move on to a contextualization of its gradual appearance between the sixth and eighth century, touching upon the relevant steps, including the debates between Probus and the Miaphysites, Elias’ Letter, and Nonnus of Nisibis’ Christological writings. In the conclusions, I shall try and argue why, in that age, Miaphysite intellectuals felt the need to mobilise the resources of their metaphysical and theological tradition once again and to such an extent.

My exploration of this long story is necessarily partial and incomplete, for it is difficult to determine the exact production context of the florilegium, and it will perhaps remain impossible.

1 The Florilegium: Manuscripts, Content, Structure, and Aims

1.1 *Manuscript Tradition*

The Christological florilegium is preserved in six manuscripts.¹ Applying and expanding the sigla used by Albert van Roey and Pauline Allen,² the FLOS project is indicating them as follows:

1 This florilegium, as well as others preserved in the same manuscripts, will be published in a born-digital edition by the FLOS project.

2 Albert van Roey and Pauline Allen, *Monophysite Texts of the Sixth Century* (OLA 56; Leuven: Peeters, 1994).

- A *London, British Library* Add. 12154: a portion of the Christological florilegium at fol. 17^v–28^r;³
- B BL Add. 12155: Christological florilegium at fol. 32^v–53^v;⁴
- C BL Add. 14532: Christological florilegium at fol. 1^v–36^r;⁵
- D BL Add. 14533: Christological florilegium at fol. 19^v–37^v;⁶
- E BL Add. 14538: Christological florilegium at fol. 80^v–101^v;⁷
- M *Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library*, Mingana Syr. 69: parts of the Christological florilegium at fol. 1^r–17^v.⁸

All these manuscripts, and especially B, C, and D, are invaluable repositories of Miaphysite writings throughout the centuries, which include not only florilegia, but also authored writings from the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh centuries, of which we would have otherwise lost trace.⁹ Suffice it here to mention the *libelli* of the Miaphysite monks against Probus, and a correspondence between a Chalcedonian monks of Bêt Marûn and the Miaphysites, both of which will be treated or mentioned later in the present chapter.

The Christological florilegium opens the most fine-looking and probably most ancient of its witnesses, manuscript C (BL Add. 14532), which William Wright dated to the eighth century. This manuscript was conceived in a unitary way; it is called **ܩܘܡܘܣܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ** (“a volume of demonstrations of the holy Fathers against various heresies”). This title is repeated as a running title throughout the manuscript, which in its present form contains 221 leaves and originally must have included at least 24 quires. The unitary conception of the volume is further confirmed by the presence of an overall index in the last folios (fol. 218^r–221^v), which is unfor-

3 William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since the Year 1838* (3 vols.; London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870–1872), 2:978–979.

4 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:923–927. Here Wright did not notice the overlapping with the Christological florilegium with the same text in the other manuscripts, as he does in the case of C, D, and E. He even cuts the florilegium into two different sections (II and III), whereas they belong to the same florilegium.

5 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:955–958.

6 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:968.

7 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:1007.

8 Alphonse Mingana, *Catalogue of the Mingana Collection of Manuscripts* (3 vols; Woodbrooke Catalogues 1–3; Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1933–1939), 1:173–178.

9 For an overview of these manuscripts as markers of intellectual identity for the Syriac Miaphysite Church, 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; ES 13; Paris: Geuthner, 2016), 119–136.

tunately incomplete at the beginning and at the end. The entire manuscript is subdivided into relatively short chapters that are numbered throughout the volume. This numbering starts from 1 with the first chapter on the first page and goes on without interruption until the last one we have, number 334, as if the whole volume were occupied by a single text, which, however, is not the case. Manuscript C shares this characteristic with various manuscripts containing florilegia; the greatest part of D, for instance, is structured in the same way, as well as part of the huge MS B, BL Add. 12155, which bears the same general title as BL Add. 14532, **ܐܘܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܘܢܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܢܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܢܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܢܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܢܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܢܐܘܪܝܢܐ**. However, C, B and D do not contain a single running text; several discrete units, i.e., different florilegia, can be singled out, configuring these manuscripts as collections of florilegia (but also of other materials). Four florilegia recur more frequently in the manuscripts and are constantly grouped together, although in slightly different orders; these are our florilegium on Christology, a second one against the doctrines of Julian of Halicarnassus, a third one on Trinity (of which a longer form has been transmitted by B; see Bishara Ebeid's chapter in the present volume), and a fourth one against Origen.

William Wright had already noticed the recurrence of the Christological florilegium in C, D and E,¹⁰ whereas he had not noticed its presence in A (which contains only a small portion of it) and B, nor had Alphonse Mingana noticed that the first 17 folios of M contain a substantial part of it.

Except for A, the order in which the three florilegia are disposed is the following:

- B Trinitarian (in a longer form) – Christological – Anti-Origenist – Anti-Julianist
- C Christological (with lacunae) – Anti-Julianist – Trinitarian – Anti-Origenist (partial)
- D Christological – Anti-Origenist – Anti-Julianist – Trinitarian
- E Christological – Anti-Julianist – Trinitarian – Anti-Origenist (partial, same extension as in C)
- M Christological (with lacunae) – Anti-Julianist (with lacunae); the Trinitarian florilegium may well have featured in the manuscript, which, however, is heavily mutilated.

¹⁰ Wright, *Catalogue*, respectively 2:955, 2:968 and 2:1007.

is missing altogether. Two of these titles, then, explicitly refer to the Christological and, more precisely, anti-dyophysite nature of the florilegium. Thus, not only its content (Christology) would seem clear, but also its intention (a Miaphysite refutation of opposite views). At a closer inspection, however, things are less self-evident than they appear. While the florilegium certainly deals with Christology from a Miaphysite standpoint, we must ask a series of questions. At whom was this polemic aimed in the eighth and ninth centuries, to which most of these manuscripts must be dated? Why was it conducted through this specific selection of topics and authorities? When precisely was the florilegium composed? Who are these dyophysites? Were they East Syrians or Chalcedonians, even though both were doctrinally the same from a Miaphysite point of view? In other words, what was the context that prompted the compilation of this florilegium and how did the florilegium react to that context? Our answers can only come from a close reading of the florilegium, proceeding with small clues to illuminate the larger framework.

2 The Themes

Despite the different distribution of the chapters in the various witnesses, it is possible to enucleate five main thematic areas in the florilegium. This presentation of the contents will concentrate on the first four sections, and especially on the chapter titles, as they are the privileged place where the compiler reveals the implicit narrative and strategy of the selection.

2.1 *Difference as to the Natural Characteristic*

The compilation starts with a section (chapters 1–23) devoted to a crucial topic of Miaphysite Christology, the so-called “natural” or “essential characteristic (or quality, or predication),”¹¹ ܕܘܒܝܢܐ ܕܠܗܘܬܐ or ܕܘܒܝܢܐ in Syriac, which distinguishes a nature or essence from the others by marking its specific features. This section is mostly made up of excerpts extracted from works by Severus of Antioch, especially his treatise *Against the Grammarian* and his three Letters to Sergius the Grammarian, where the topic was discussed at length. The main argument is that the union of the divine and human natures in Christ rules out any real division (ܕܘܒܝܢܐ) between the two natures; however, a real difference (ܕܘܒܝܢܐ) between the two is preserved precisely because their respective nat-

¹¹ See the next footnote.

ural characteristics do not get lost in the union. On the one hand, the difference protects the union from confusion: this is made evident, for example, by the excerpt from *Against the Grammarian* 111.30, which makes up the entirety of chapter 16 of the florilegium (the title of the chapter, which is itself a quotation from Severus' excerpt, reads as follows: "The otherness as to the natural characteristic preserves the union unconfused and [at the same time] does not dissolve the formula 'one incarnate nature of the Word!"). On the other hand, difference does not imply division. This is an argument *par excellence* of Cyrillian and Severan Miaphysitism,¹² but what the florilegium especially intends to underline in its opening section is that precisely this "natural characteristic" is key to preserve a perceivable difference of the natures after the union. Some examples will serve to illustrate this point. The title of chapter 22 (entirely con-

12 It is the argument of property *ὡς ἐν ποιότητι φυσικῇ*, or of the *λόγος τοῦ πῶς εἶναι*. On this argument, which was "inlassablement développé" by the Miaphysites, see Joseph Lebon, "Le monophysisme sévérien," in *Das Konzil von Chalcedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart* (ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht; Vol. 1. Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1951), 424–580 at 534–552; Theresia Hainthaler, "A Christological Controversy among the Severans at the End of the Sixth Century—the Conversion of Probus and John Barbur to Chalcedonism," in *Christ in Christian Tradition Volume 11: From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604): Part 3. The Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch from 451 to 600* (ed. A. Grillmeier, T. Hainthaler, T. Bou Mansour, and L. Abramowski; trans. M. Ehrhardt; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 386–418, at 393–398. This argument was first put forward by Cyril in his *Second Tome against Nestorius* (11, 6) and in his first letter to Acacius of Melitene (Cyril's Letter 40), and further developed by Severus against the emerging neo-Chalcedonianism in letters to Count Oecumenius and Bishop Eleusinius, in his *Against the Grammarian*, and in his correspondence with Sergius the Grammarian, all of which texts are lavishly cited in the first section of our florilegium. The topic became crucial, as we shall shortly see, in the controversies around the Chalcedonian convert Probus in the late sixth century and remained central in the following centuries. See Albert Van Roey, "Het dossier van Proba en Juhannan Barboer," in *Scrinium Lovaniense. Mélanges historiques—Historische opstellen Étienne Van Cauwenberg* (Recueil de travaux d'histoire et de philologie 1v.24; Louvain: Bibliothèque de l'Université Bureau du Recueil, 1961), 181–190, especially 186, and Albert van Roey, "Une controverse christologique sous le patriarcat de Pierre de Callinique," in *Symposium Syriacum 1976: célébré du 13 au 17 septembre 1976 au Centre Culturel "Les Fontaines" de Chantilly (France)* (ed. F. Graffin and A. Guillaumont; OCA 205; Roma: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1978), 349–357, especially 350 and 354–357; Uwe P. Lang, *John Philoponus and the Controversies over Chalcedon in the Sixth Century: A Study and Translation of the Arbitrator* (Spicilegium sacrum Lovaniense: Études et documents 47; Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 33–40. In his translation of John Philoponus's Christological treatises, where the expression recurs, Augustin Sanda translated *ⲕⲁⲗⲟⲩⲁⲥ* as "praedicatio", thereby adhering to the etymological meaning of the Syriac term, which is based on the Shafel (causative) of *ⲁⲛⲁ*, "to know".

the way the Miaphysite arguments are presented tend to be apologetic and/or polemical, seeing how the compiler selects and rearranges passages that serve as a polemical justification of the Miaphysite position against critical remarks coming from the Chalcedonian side. Some chapter titles in the first section are particularly eloquent, as they are formulated in a negative form and thus sound like replies to objections. See e.g. chapter 10: “The union did not take away difference”; and reciprocally chapter 22: “Speaking of union does not neglect the difference”; chapter 13: “Essential difference does not bring in with itself a cutting into two after the union”; chapter 14: “Division does not follow a difference of essence in any regard”; and the previously quoted title of chapter 17: “We do not avoid confessing the property of the natures from which the Emmanuel derives, in order to preserve the union unconfused”. Thus, even though the title of the manuscripts B and C is “demonstrations of the Fathers against various heresies”, in this florilegium the demonstrations do not attack the alleged heresies but rather defend Miaphysitism from the attacks of the heretics. This hypothesis is further confirmed by the following sections of the Christological florilegium, where the compiler goes on to define the Miaphysite tenets in a defensive way. Indeed, at the end of chapter 46, a passage from Severus’ letter to his correspondent Eleusinius is quoted where Severus refers to Theodoret of Cyrus, who had written that the phrase “unity in hypostasis”, or “hypostatic union”, cannot be accepted insofar as it is stranger to the patristic tradition. Once again, an accusation coming from the Chalcedonian party.

2.3 *A Variety of Sources*

The next section of the florilegium (chapters 47 to 80, but especially 47–68) moves from the almost homogeneously Cyrillian and Severan selection of the previous sections to a wider variety of sources. The intention is to show that many Fathers, since the beginnings of Christianity, had known the Miaphysite union and all the related conceptual apparatus, including the concept of composition of the two natures in Christ and the theopaschite idea of God suffering and dying on the cross. In a way, this section is a patristic florilegium in the florilegium, where the universally accepted authority of the pre-Chalcedonian Fathers is evoked to support the Miaphysite tradition, which was mostly represented by Severus and Cyril in the previous 46 chapters. The title of chapter 49 is particularly telling: “The Fathers know that the union of the Word with His ensouled flesh was natural and hypostatic”. The same pattern can be identified in other titles where the term “Fathers” is present, for example in chapter 52: “Testimonia of the holy Fathers who confess that God the Word suffered and died for us in the flesh” or 53: “Although the Fathers separate two natures in theory, they see and say that the union occurred from those [two] and con-

fess one incarnate nature of the Word after the union, and do not divide in any way those which were united". These chapters do not proceed in chronological order but start from Dionysius the Areopagite, who is seen as a genuine disciple of the apostles. Peter of Alexandria, Athanasius, Basil, ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, the synod of Antioch that condemned Paul of Samosata, especially Malchion's letter against Paul, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom are then quoted in the following chapters. The compiler even adds a short selection of passages from the New Testament in chapter 50. Significantly enough, in B, where the structure is different, the block of chapters 47–68, which contains an apologetic selection of pre-Chalcedonian witnesses on the hypostatic union, opens the florilegium; the block containing chapters 1–47 immediately follows it. This cannot be the original order, because it is typical of florilegia to be appended to a piece of writing, not to precede it. Moreover, as stated above, at the end of chapter 46, a fragment from one of Severus' letters to Eleusinius mentions an objection to the Miaphysite Christology raised by Theodoret, to which the following block starting with chapter 47 indeed seems to reply. However, the rearrangement of B is understandable, since the pre-Chalcedonian Fathers antedate Cyril and Severus, and thus they should be put before the Miaphysite theologians, as if paving the way to them.

2.4 *The Council of Chalcedon*

The anti-Chalcedonian nature of this florilegium becomes obvious in the fourth section of the florilegium (chapters 81–105), which contains a large and most interesting selection of translated excerpts from the Council of Chalcedon itself. In most manuscripts, these excerpts are indicated through *obeloi* in the margin,²⁰ in order to warn the reader that they come from heretical writings. These excerpts seem to be extracted from a sort of commented epitome of the Council, since they are occasionally accompanied by critical and historical remarks, which, however, may have been written by the compiler of our florilegium. This finding is surprising, since, except for the canons published by Schulthess more than a century ago,²¹ we do not have Syriac translations of

20 The use of these marginal signs was studied by Michael P. 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 altchristlichen Literatur 175; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 221–241. See also Flavia Ruani's chapter in the present volume.

21 Friedrich Schulthess, *Die Syrischen Kanones der Synoden von Nicaea bis Chalcedon nebst einigen zugehörigen Dokumenten* (Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse, N.F. X.2; Berlin: Weidmann, 1908).

the proceedings of this Council. In our florilegium, citations from the council of Chalcedon alternate with excerpts from dyophysite writers such as Theodoret and Nestorius and, as a counterpoint, with passages from Cyril and Severus, always with an apologetic flavour. What is also surprising is that this section adds a sort of historical framework to the previous sections, providing the readers of the florilegium with a “dogmengeschichtliche” perspective and allowing them to understand the stakes of the Christological debate in historical perspective. Chapter 82, for instance, contains the whole Chalcedonian definition of faith, which is followed, in chapter 83, by Severus’ harsh criticism of it in a letter to an Isaac Scholasticus; in chapters 89 and 96, we find passages from Cyril’s letters where he complains that his writings have been falsified so as to seem in agreement with the dyophysite tenets. Indeed, in chapter 98, we can have a look at the other side of this affair, with a quotation from Theodoret’s letter to Nestorius, communicating that Cyril has accepted the view of the dyophysites. All the chapters in between, 90–95, contain quotations from Nestorius and Cyril, aiming to show that Cyril may seem close to the dyophysites because he uses the language of unity too, but that the dyophysites conceive of unity in a wrong way, since they undermine it with a wrong conception of duality.

3 A Remote Root: The Probus Affair

A crucial clue to the original context that prompted the production of the material collected in this florilegium is provided by the last quotations in chapter 68. They are extracted from three different writings of Probus, a little-known Miaphysite and later Chalcedonian theologian of the end of the sixth century. Probus’ thought and writings received some attention in the last century; Albert Van Roey,²² Paolo Bettiolo,²³ José Declerck,²⁴ Theresia Hainthaler,²⁵ and Karl-Heinz Uthemann²⁶ wrote on him and published some of his works. Sebas-

22 Albert Van Roey, “Het dossier,” Albert van Roey, “Une controverse.”

23 Paolo Bettiolo, ed. *Una raccolta di opuscoli Calcedonensi: Ms. Sinai Syr. 10* (CSCO 403–404, *Scriptores Syri* 177–178; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1979).

24 José H. Declerck, “Probus, l’ex-jacobite et ses epaporemata pros Iakobitas,” *Byzantion* 53 (1983): 213–232.

25 Hainthaler, “A Christological Controversy.”

26 Karl-Heinz Uthemann, “Syllogistik im Dienst der Orthodoxie. Zwei unedierte Texte byzantinischer Kontroverstheologie des 6. Jahrhunderts,” *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 30 (1981): 103–112, and Karl-Heinz Uthemann, “Stephanos von Alexandrien und die Konversion des Jakobiten Probos, des späteren Metropoliten von Chalkedon. Ein Beitrag zur Rolle der Philosophie in der Kontroverstheologie des 6. Jahrhunderts,” in *After Chal-*

tian Brock²⁷ has even suggested to identify him with the philosopher Probus, some of whose works are extant in Syriac.²⁸ Uwe Michael Lang touched upon Probus in his monograph on Philoponus' *Arbiter*.²⁹ According to the West Syriac patriarch Dionysius of Tell-Mahre³⁰ (ninth century; the pages on Probus are the only surviving ones from his chronicle) and to the twelfth-century historian Michael the Great, who elaborates on Dionysius' account, Probus was a Miaphysite theologian of the second half of the sixth century, an "erudite and intelligent" man,³¹ who had accompanied the Miaphysite patriarch of Antioch, Peter of Callinicum, during a visit to Alexandria in 581–582, together with the archimandrite John Barbur who, according to another hitherto unknown source, was his teacher.³² In Alexandria, the two men were seduced by the theories of an Alexandrian "philosopher" or "sophist", named Stephen (whose identity remains uncertain).³³ We know that, for a while, Probus had defended

cedon: Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor Albert Van Roey for His Seventieth Birthday (ed. C. Laga, J.A. Munitiz, and L. van Rompay; OLA 18; Leuven: Peeters, 1985), 381–399.

- 27 Sebastian P. Brock, "The Commentator Probus: Problems of Date and Identity," in *Interpreting the Bible and Aristotle in Late Antiquity: The Alexandrian Commentary Tradition between Rome and Baghdad* (ed. J. Lössl and J.W. Watt; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011), 195–206.
- 28 On Probus the philosopher, see Henri Hugonnard-Roche, "Le commentaire syriaque de Probus sur l'Isagoge de Porphyre. Une étude préliminaire," *Studia graeco-arabica* 2 (2012): 227–243; Henri Hugonnard-Roche, "Un cours sur la syllogistique d'Aristote à l'époque tardo-antique: le commentaire syriaque de Proba (VI^e siècle) sur les Premiers Analytiques. Édition et traduction du texte, avec introduction et commentaire," *Studia graeco-arabica* 7 (2017): 105–170; Henri Hugonnard-Roche, "Probus," in *Philosophie der Kaiserzeit und der Spätantike* (ed. C. Riedweg, C. Horn, and D. Wyrwa; Die Philosophie der Antike 5.1–3; Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2018), 2465–2469.
- 29 Lang, *Arbiter*, 38–40.
- 30 Fac-simile of the account (from *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Vat. Sir. 144, f. 89^{ra-vb}) and German translation in Rudolf Abramowski, *Dionysius von Tellmahre, jakobitischer Patriarch von 818–845. Zur Geschichte der Kirche unter dem Islam* (Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 25.2. Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1940), 138–144.
- 31 Abramowski, *Dionysius von Tellmahre*, 139.
- 32 He is called Probus' ܠܘܒܘܫ in the preface (preserved in the MS Vat. Sir. 144, fol. 90^r) of Elias of Harrān to the treatise *On Difference*, which will be mentioned shortly.
- 33 Much has been written on this Stephen, but any attempt at a precise identification has failed because of the presence of many Alexandrian "Stephens" in contemporary and later accounts; some of them may of course be one and the same person. See especially Declerck, "Probus;" Wanda Wolska-Conus, "Stéphanos d'Athènes et Stéphanos d'Alexandrie. Essai d'identification et de biographie," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 47 (1989): 5–89, Uthemann "Stephanos von Alexandrien;" Hainthaler, "A Christological Controversy," 413–417. According to Uthemann, "Stephanos von Alexandrien," 388–399, and Wolska-Conus, "Stéphanos," 82–89, this Stephen was the sixth-century Alexandrian commentator of Aristotle of the same name.

with two creeds addressed to Gregory and his successor Anastasius, respectively, which are both cited in chapter 68 of our Christological florilegium.³⁸ Peter of Callinicum's writing against Probus is unfortunately lost, but we know from Dionysius of Tell-Mahre that its main thesis was the following: "the difference of the natures from which Christ derives really exists and persists after the union, without implying number and division of the natures".³⁹ This is precisely what our florilegium tries to repeat throughout the first two sections; firstly, the persistence of difference and the cessation of division, and, secondly, the fact that the number two is not real in the incarnation, since only one is concretely subsistent. The problem seems to have raised many concerns and to have been strongly debated among Miaphysites at the end of the sixth century. Another treatise of those years, which has long been attributed to John Philoponus but was certainly not written by him, *On Difference, Number, and Division*,⁴⁰ tackles precisely the same topic, and seems indeed to be addressed against Stephen's tenets. In fact, I have recently discovered a preface to this treatise by an Elias of Harrân (see below) appended to the MS *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Vat. Sir. 144, one of the manuscripts preserving this treatise. According to this preface, *On Difference, Number, and Division* was composed by three Syrians, Sergius of Huzri, Thomas of the monastery of Mar Zakkai and Simeon of the monastery of Talil. These three men are also known to us as participants in

between the synod of Gubba Barraya and Anastasius' election in 593; see Van Roey, "Het dossier," 185 n. 1, and Van Roey, "Une controverse," 350.

38 See Appendix 1 for the titles of these texts.

39 Abramowski, *Dionysius von Tellmahre*, 140: "Und sogleich schrieb der Patriarch Mar Petrus einen Brief oder Traktat in Vollmacht der ganzen Synode, in dem er die Meinung des Sophisten und des Probus vernichtete und zerstörte und durch Zeugnisse der Lehrer aufrichtete und bewies, daß wahrhaftig und wirklich der Unterschied der Naturen, aus denen Christus besteht, auch nach der Feststellung der Einheit gewahrt wird ohne Zählung und Unterscheidung dieser Naturen".

40 On this treatise, preserved in the MSS Vat. Sir. 144, *London, British Library* Add. 12171, and partially in BL Add. 14670, and published and translated among John Philoponus' works in *Opuscula monophysitica Ioannis Philoponi*, 95–122 (text), 140–171 (trans.), see Lang, *Arbiter*, 33–40. Lang convincingly argues against the attribution to Philoponus and suggests that it must be considered a work produced in Philoponus' circle. Van Roey suggested (Van Roey, "Het dossier," 187), but later on retracted (Van Roey, "Une controverse," 352 n. 9), that Probus may have been the author of this treatise during his Miaphysite phase, and that the treatise may have coincided with his work against Stephen (see note 34 above). This cannot be the case, since the only fragment we have from the treatise "On difference" against Stephen (identical with Probus's preserved *Hypomnestikon*, see again note 34 above) that the Miaphysite monks attribute to Probus in their seventh and eighth *libelli* does not overlap with any passage in the anonymous treatise *On Difference, Number, and Division*.

legium, although they are quoted in a different order. The table in the appendix provides a partial idea of the correspondences; we can suppose that the quotations in these *libelli*, if summed to the quotations that certainly appeared in the six lost *libelli*, covered the greatest part of our florilegium.

Some of the excerpts quoted in the *libelli* are longer than the corresponding excerpts in our florilegium, whereas some others are much shorter. This means that the *libelli* are not, or not entirely, the direct source of the Christological florilegium. Therefore, it is tempting to venture a little speculation and turn to Peter of Callinicum as the initial source of this patristic material. We do not have his treatise against Probus of 585 but, judging by Peter's compilatory style in his massive extant work against the patriarch of Alexandria on tritheism, the *Contra Damianum*, which is largely based on patristic quotations, we can easily suppose that he made use of a large number of patristic sources in the lost treatise against Probus as well. Thus, one is easily led to suppose that Peter's lost treatise against Probus may be the source of the selections from Severus, Cyril, and the other Fathers that the monks also quoted in their *libelli* ten years later. More generally, one could say that our Christological florilegium selects, collects and rearranges patristic materials that were produced in the decade of 585–595, during the controversy between Probus and the Antiochene Miaphysites. The florilegium may have drawn at least a part of its patristic testimonia, which were also used in the *libelli* of the monks (and in the response of the Miaphysite monks to the monks of Bêt Marûn⁴⁴), from Peter of Callinicum's lost treatise, and it may have reassembled them into a new florilegium. Although speculative, the hypothesis that Peter of Callinicum's patristic materials were selected and rearranged in later Syriac florilegia is not unreasonable. As Bishara Ebeid has recently shown, the greatest part of the trinitarian florilegium that accompanies our Christological florilegium, in most of the manuscripts where it is preserved, consists precisely in a rearrangement of the patristic excerpts contained in Peter of Callinicum's *Contra Damianum*.⁴⁵ Thus,

44 Another Miaphysite source of the end of the sixth century that contains a great deal of excerpts also found in the Christological florilegium, exactly with the same form and length as in the florilegium, is the response of a group of Miaphysite monks, "partisans of Peter (of Callinicum), patriarch of Antioch", to five propositions of the Chalcedonian monks of Bêt Marûn (Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:945–946; partial translation in François Nau, "Les Maronites, inquisiteurs de la foi catholique du VI^e au VII^e siècle," *Bulletin de l'Association de Saint-Louis des Maronites* janvier [1903]: 343–350; avril [1903], 367–383. I am also currently preparing a critical edition and complete translation of this correspondence).

45 Bishara Ebeid, "Metaphysics of Trinity in Graeco-Syriac Miaphysitism: A Study and Analysis of the Trinitarian Florilegium in MS British Library Add. 14532," *Studia Graeco-Arabica* 11

the Christological florilegium may be at least partially the result of an analogous operation made on Peter's work against Probus. Therefore, with Probus and with the Miaphysite response to the monks of Bēt Marūn, we have brought to light the most ancient layer accessible to us of the geological stratification of our florilegium.

4 In Search of a Context: Why an Anti-Chalcedonian Florilegium?

Now that we have determined the likely context in which the materials of our florilegium originated, we must come back to the florilegium itself and necessarily ask two questions. What was the use of rearranging, in the late eighth century, the patristic archives that had informed an apparently remote and highly technical controversy of the sixth century? How important could the refutation of Chalcedonian Christology be in that age?

4.1 *Elias' Letter to the Chalcedonian Syncellus Leo of Ḥarrān*

In the last decades, the period between the end of the seventh and the beginning of the ninth century has been intensively studied by Syriac scholars as the age of the establishment of the Umayyad and then of the 'Abbasid rule in Syria and Mesopotamia, as well as the crucible of Christian Arabic literature and the heyday of anti-Islamic apology. Little attention, however, has been paid to Christological disputes of the same age involving the Syriac orthodox Church; as a matter of fact, only two articles by Ute Possekkel were devoted to the topic in the last thirty years. Our sources are admittedly scarce, especially as far as the eighth century is concerned. One of Possekkel's articles⁴⁶ sheds new light on a rather friendly dispute of the eighth (or possibly the beginning of the ninth) century that involved a Miaphysite convert from Chalcedonianism, a man named Elias, and his friend Leo, a syncellus of the Chalcedonian bishop of Ḥarrān. This Elias must not be confused with the Syriac orthodox patriarch Elias of Ḥarrān, who died in 723;⁴⁷ in fact, he must probably be identified with

(2021): 63–108; Albert Van Roey, "Un florilège trinitaire syriaque tiré du Contra Damianum de Pierre de Callinique," *OLP* 23 (1992): 189–203.

46 Ute Possekkel, "Christological Debates in Eighth-Century Harran: The Correspondence of Leo of Harran and Eliya," in *Syriac Encounters: Papers from the Sixth North American Syriac Symposium, Duke University, 26–29 June 2011* (ed. M.E. Doerfler, E. Fiano, and K.R. Smith; Eastern Christian Studies 20; Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 345–368.

47 Josephus Simonius Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana* (3 vols.; Romae: Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1719–1728) 1:467 was at the origin of this confusion as he suggested that Elias should be dated to ca. 640; the identification with the

an Elias of Ḥarrān, by whom we have a treatise on the Eucharist addressed to Dionysius of Tell-Mahre, arguably before the latter was elected patriarch (Dionysius is called “of Qennešre” in the dedication),⁴⁸ in addition to a short preface to the above-mentioned pseudo-Philoponian treatise *On Difference, Number, and Division*. Specifically, we have an incomplete letter in twelve chapters addressed by Elias to Leo, in which he explains to his friend the theological rationale of his conversion; in the letter, Elias also quotes extensive passages from other works of slightly earlier Syriac Chalcedonian theologians, George, bishop of Martyropolis-Maipherqat, and Constantine, bishop of Ḥarrān, who had written against the Miaphysites. The letter was edited and translated in 1985 by Albert van Roey,⁴⁹ who had also published an extensive study on its contents and theology more than forty years earlier.⁵⁰

The topics tackled by Elias, which were singled out by Van Roey in his study,⁵¹ partially but significantly overlap with those tackled by the monks in their *libelli* against Probus, in the above-mentioned treatise *On Difference*, and in the Christological florilegium. Even after Van Roey’s fine doctrinal overview, Elias’ letter would still deserve a detailed commentary. Here, I will just isolate some samples in order to highlight how the choice and treatment of two topics in the letter are particularly close to our florilegium. These are; 1) the distinction between “difference” and “division” of the natures in Christ, and 2) the rejection of the use of the expression “two natures” after the thought of the union. What is even more significant with regard to the Christological florilegium is that, as we shall see, the whole letter is interspersed with patristic quotations, and the last part of the letter is a discussion on Leo’s wrong understanding of the patristic quotations he had displayed when writing to Elias.⁵² In fact, most of these quotations once again overlap with those in the florilegium, as can be seen from the selection provided in Appendix 3.

As to the first topic (difference vs. division and the natural characteristic), the fifth chapter of the letter rejects the dyophysite tenets by stating that one can only say “two natures” in the sense that in the union there remains a difference in their natural characteristic; any other affirmation of two natures cuts

patriarch was made by Rubens Duval, *La littérature syriaque* (Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1907), 378. Albert Van Roey, “La lettre apologétique d’Élie à Léon, syncelle de l’évêque chalcédonien de Harran,” *LM* 57 (1944): 1–52, at 4–10, corrected the mistake.

48 This treatise is preserved in the MS *London, British Library* Add. 14726, fol. 59^v–71^v; see Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:830–831.

49 *Eliae epistula*.

50 Van Roey, “La lettre.”

51 Van Roey, “La lettre,” 21–51.

52 *Eliae epistula*, 89–106 (text), 64–76 (trans.).

the union. As Elias writes, “why do you make of the difference in the natural characteristic a cause for the separation of the natures?”⁵³ This question was still urgent in the eighth–ninth century as it implies a typical Chalcedonian argument, which by Elias’ time had already found full-fledged expression in John Damascene, and which requires a brief excursus on the opposed metaphysical presuppositions of Chalcedonians and Miaphysites.

In fact, both Chalcedonians and Miaphysites acknowledged the persistence of a “natural” or “essential” difference in the union, i.e., a difference on the level of nature between humanity and divinity in Christ. Since Cyril, the Miaphysites had called it, as we saw above, a difference as to the natural quality, ὡς ἐν ποιότητι φυσικῇ, concerning the *ratio* of the mode of being, λόγος τοῦ πῶς εἶναι. This level of difference is the level of the ἴδιον,⁵⁴ i.e., of the property that distinguishes the species, or specific universals, from one another. Neo-Chalcedonians, however, always distinguished the essence from the individual. They insisted on the fact that what distinguishes individuals, i.e. hypostases, from one another, and thus also makes it possible to count them, is a particular bundle of accidental properties (a terminology which can be traced back to Porphyry’s *Isagoge*).⁵⁵ According to John of Damascus, the individual, or hypostasis, is an essence with accidents, οὐσία τις μετὰ συμβεβηκότων.⁵⁶ This means, in turn, that every hypostasis is an instantiation of a specific universal essence through a peculiar bundle of accidental properties.⁵⁷ According to the Chalcedonians, any essence really exists only as instantiated in an individual hypostasis;⁵⁸ there are no uninstantiated universals, but,

53 *Eliae epistula*, 19 (text), 13 (trans.).

54 See e.g. Van Roey “La lettre,” 23.

55 Porphyry, *Isagoge*, 7, 19–27.

56 John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa* III.6, 120.11.

57 Christophe Erismann, “A World of Hypostases. John of Damascus’ Rethinking of Aristotle’s Categorical Ontology,” *SP* 50 (2011): 269–287, at 276–277. This is the grounds of the typically Chalcedonian concept of *enhypostatos*, or instantiation of an essence in a hypostasis, which Erismann discusses at length in the same article at 280–287, and has recently been the object of intensive enquiry; see Benjamin Gleede, *The Development of the Term ‘enhypostatos’ from Origen to John of Damascus* (VChr Supplements 113; Leiden—Boston: Brill, 2012); Johannes Zachhuber, *The Rise of Christian Theology and the End of Ancient Metaphysics. Patristic Philosophy from the Cappadocian Fathers to John of Damascus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), especially 196–197, 207–214, 219–237, 292–295; Dirk Krausmüller, “Enhypostaton: Being “in another” or “with another”: How Chalcedonian theologians of the sixth century defined the ontological status of Christ’s human nature,” *VChr* 71 (2017): 433–448.

58 “Universals subsist as *universals* in individuals” (Erismann, “A World of Hypostases,” 283). To indicate this principle, Zachhuber, *The Rise*, 193, created the siglum NNWH, “no nature without hypostasis”; Erismann devoted a whole article to it: Christophe Erismann, “Non

rilegium, “we do not consider the difference to be cause of division” and “Heretics try to introduce division through difference,” as well as the title of Elias’ fifth chapter, “the two natures that are posited by the dyophysites according to the essential difference viz. to the difference in the natural characteristic ... are not united, as they guiltily state, but separated”. Namely, the way the dyophysites conceive of the difference in the natural characteristic, i.e., as a reason to affirm a duality of nature, is illegitimate, because it reintroduces a separation—a duality—in Christ. Of course, although they maintained—opposite to the Chalcedonians—that the difference of properties is at the level of the individual nature/hypostasis, the Miaphysites did not draw from this the conclusion that there are two Christs, because their ontology was substantially different. While for the Chalcedonians two different sets of properties must be referred to two different, really existent essences (which in the case of Christ are instantiated within the same individual hypostasis), for the Miaphysites there are no such things as really existent essences to which properties must be referred, so that two different sets of properties can rest on the same individual without implying different essences in the background. An elegant illustration of this Miaphysite point of view is found in the above-mentioned sixth-century treatise *On Difference, Number, and Division*, where the authors explain that different sets of properties can exist within the same individual, without implying a multiplicity of individuals, since difference is not a matter of quantity but of quality—i.e., it falls under a different category. Division, on the contrary, belongs to the domain of quantity. Elias echoes this argument in the fifth chapter of the letter, where he responds to a Chalcedonian remark that “every difference, insofar as it is a difference, necessarily implies number”;⁶² against this, he affirms that “number is not connected to every difference ... that [type of] difference, to which number is not connected, does not produce a division”.⁶³

Since the natures are not separated, Elias writes in chapter 9, one can no longer use any expressions containing “two natures” (which is tantamount to *numbering* two natures) after thinking of the union that, as such, removes any “two”. Previously, in chapter 5, Elias had written that “those natures that you continue to count even after considering the union are separated, not united”,⁶⁴ because union must imply the disappearance of duality: “the force of a real union does

62 *Eliae epistula*, 16 (text), 11 (trans.).

63 *Eliae epistula*, 17 (text), 12 (trans.).

64 *Eliae epistula*, 21 (text), 15 (trans.). Here, once again, the misunderstanding between the two groups is based on contrasting ontologies (and not only on terminology); both agree that individuals are distinguished numerically, so that one cannot count more than one individual Christ. However, their differing conception of the universals, their concrete existence, and what an individual is, leads them to complete incomprehension. Chal-

not tolerate division and number, and makes them cease”⁶⁵ (compare the title of chapter 79 in the Christological florilegium: “The force of the union makes every duality cease”). In chapter 9, after quoting a passage from Cyril’s first letter to Succensus, he writes: “(Cyril) did say that he sees two natures when he considers the way of the incarnation of the Word with the eyes of the soul,⁶⁶ but when he considers their concourse to the *real* union, he confesses one incarnate nature of the Word”⁶⁷ (compare with the title of florilegium chapter 53, on which see also above under 2.3: “Although the Fathers separate two natures in theory, they see and say that the union occurred from those [two] and confess one incarnate nature of the Word after the union, and do not divide in any way those which were united”); “they no longer remain two after the thought of the union”⁶⁸ (compare with the florilegium, title of chapter 75: “After the thought of the union, the cutting into two [that is present] in the thought ceases and departs”). Also, in the seventh chapter of his letter, Elias discusses another important point of our florilegium, that is, since the two natures of the Chalcedonians are not really united, they must actually be defined as two independent hypostases (see the title of Elias’ chapter 7: “the Chalcedonians know that the two natures that they affirm in Christ are two hypostases and two sons”).⁶⁹ Our florilegium treats this point as well, especially in chapter 65: “The expressions “in two” or “in each one” are understood [as referring to] two hypostases that subsist in their proper subsistence”. These arguments correspond to the second section of the Christological florilegium. What is most relevant here is that the patristic quotations of chapter 9, as can be seen in the appendix, correspond with few exceptions to a compact block of quotations that are included in the third section of our florilegium, in chapters 52–54, and often appear in Elias in the same order as in the florilegium; note that the title of chapter 53 was mentioned here above as a parallel to Elias’ arguments. This is a clear indication that Elias was using a collection of excerpts, the organization of which was already similar to that of the florilegium.

To sum up, Elias tackles precisely the same questions as in the first three sections of our florilegium, with the same apologetic tone, and, in doing so, he also

cedonians count two natures but would never dare count two individuals; Miaphysites would never dare count two individuals either, but since nature is exclusively identical with the individual, they regard the Chalcedonians as counting two individuals.

65 *Eliae epistula*, 26 (text), 18 (trans.).

66 Elias also reveals here the fundamental Miaphysite “nominalism”.

67 *Eliae epistula*, 66 (text), 48 (trans.).

68 *Eliae epistula*, 71 (text), 51 (trans.).

69 *Eliae epistula*, 51 (text), 37 (trans.).

abundantly quotes patristic authorities largely overlapping with those quoted in the florilegium. It must be noted, however, that Severus, the main authority quoted in the florilegium, is almost nowhere to be found in Elias' letter. This must certainly be partially due to the fact that he intends to make use of authorities that also Chalcedonians could accept.⁷⁰ Thus, with Elias, we have reached a second geological stratum, which is much closer in time, and more similar, to what we see on the surface—the Christological florilegium.

4.2 *A Cumbersome Antagonist: Theodore Abū Qurrah*

Ḥarrān, the city of Elias' addressee Leo, and very likely of Elias himself, was, as Possekel has shown,⁷¹ a stronghold of Chalcedonian doctrine during the whole eighth century and beyond. Theodore Abū Qurrah was the city's bishop at the beginning of the ninth century (the exact dates are unknown), thus he must have been roughly contemporary to Elias,⁷² and he was at the centre of a renewed moment of controversy between Chalcedonians and Miaphysites. Indeed, not later than 812/3, Abū Qurrah went to Armenia with missionary purposes and sojourned at the court of prince Ašot Msaker. He tried to convert the prince's court to the Chalcedonian faith, but Ašot wanted him to debate with a Miaphysite theologian, and invited the Arabic-speaking scholar of Tagrit, Abū Rā'īṭah, who did not himself go, but sent, as is well known, his relative Nonnus of Nisibis (d. ca. 860),⁷³ even though he also wrote two letters to Ašot against Theodore Abū Qurrah (Abū Rā'īṭah's third letter, written before the debate, and fourth letter, written after it).⁷⁴ The debate took place between 813 and 817, and according to all sources except for a Georgian one, which understandably considers the winner to be the Chalcedonian Theodore,⁷⁵ Nonnus pre-

70 It must be considered, however, that the letter abruptly ends at the beginning of the twelfth chapter, which is indeed devoted to the discussion of quotations from Severus.

71 Possekel, "Christological Debates."

72 According to Possekel, "Christological Debates," 358, the fact that Elias does not mention Theodore would indicate that Elias' letter was written before Theodore's theological flourish. Apart from the fact that we do not have the entirety of the letter, Elias' silence on Theodore may also have a strategic reason. Being a Ḥarranite convert from Chalcedonianism, Elias quotes Chalcedonian authorities of the recent past, such as George of Maipherqat or John Damascene, but he may have found it prudent, or simply respectful (considering the friendly tone of his letter), to avoid mentioning, and start a polemic with, his own former bishop.

73 Albert Van Roey, *Nonnus de Nisibe. Trait  apologetique.  tude, texte et traduction* (Biblioth que du Mus on 21; Louvain: Bureaux du Mus on, 1948), 5.

74 See also Bishara Ebeid's chapter in the present volume, with secondary literature.

75 This information is drawn from Nikolaj J. Marr, "Аркауи, монгольское название христиан в связи с вопросом об армянах-халкедонитах," *Византийский временник* 12

vailed⁷⁶ and Theodore was expelled from Armenia. Unfortunately, no account of the debate is available to us but, in the preface to Nonnus' *Commentary on John*, the Armenian translator provides us with highly generic information on the topic of the confrontation. He writes that Theodore, whom he does not mention by name, "divided into two the inseparable unity of Christ after the indivisible and unconfused unity". Nonnus, however, reaffirmed the Miaphysite orthodoxy: "to confess one from two natures".⁷⁷ Nothing more can be gathered from this source, nor are we better informed by Michael the Great, who is our "only even moderately substantial source"⁷⁸ on Theodore's life; he mentioned these events, but mixed up Theodore Abū Qurrah with another figure, Theodoricus Pyglo or Puggolo, who is different from him in many respects.⁷⁹ We can only speculate whether Nonnus and Theodore debated on the same problems tackled by Probus, Peter of Callinicum and the Miaphysite monks more than two centuries earlier, and by Elias in his letter. The letters against the Melkites addressed to prince Ašot by Abū Rā'īṭah do not provide us with significant insight on the topics that were discussed in Armenia. Something more can be found on the other side of the controversy. Indeed, among the many

(1906): 1–68, at 9 and n. 2 ("na gruzinskom jazike sohranilos' prenije Abukury s armjaninom. v pamjatnike imeem tendencioznoe izobraženie, po-vidimomu, togo religioznogo prenija ... Sudja po etomu halkedonitskomu istočniku armjanin pobežden"). Marr does not give any indication as to his source, which he only defines as "Chalcedonian" (halkedonitskij istočnik); he merely states that he found the information in the Georgian MS 51 of the "Society for the Spreading of Literacy among Georgians", which would contain, on fol. 67^r–68^r, a debate between Theodore Abū Qurrah and an Armenian, whom Marr assumes to be Nonnus of Nisibis. As far as I can see, however, in the catalogue of the Society (Э.С. Такаишвили, *Описание рукописей Общества распространения грамотности среди грузинского населения* [2 vols.; Тифлис: Типография К.П. Козловскаго, 1904–1912], 1:372–378), MS 51 has a part of the epic of Rostam (Rostomiani) from the *Shah-Name* and does not seem to contain the debate of Abū Qurrah and Nonnus. Currently I am not able to locate the manuscript, which must be preserved at the Abuladze centre of Georgian Manuscripts in Tbilisi as part of the S-collection, just as all the manuscripts once owned by the Society.

- 76 For an overview of our sources of information concerning the debate, see Marr "Аркауи;" Van Roey, *Nonnus de Nisibe. Traité apologetique*, 3–15 and 18–21; Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et byzantins à l'époque de Photius: Deux débats théologiques après le triomphe de l'orthodoxie* (CSCO 609, Subsidia 117; Louvain: Peeters, 2004), 69–74; see also Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Works*, xi–xviii. According to Marr, the "Georgian source" (see previous note) reproduces the debate, but this information cannot yet be verified.
- 77 Nonnus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John*, 3. See also Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et byzantins*, 74.
- 78 See Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Works*, xiv.
- 79 Michael the Great, *Chronicle*, 4:495 (text), 3:32 (trans.); Dorfmann-Lazarev, *Arméniens et byzantins*, 69.

extant works of Abū Qurrah, we find two interesting writings in Greek and Arabic, respectively, a letter significantly addressed to the Armenians⁸⁰ and a short Confession of Faith,⁸¹ the occasion of which is unknown. In both texts, Abū Qurrah deals at length with the topic of “natural properties, natural energies, and natural wills”, in a polemic against Miaphysites and Monothelites. These three phrases remind us of the expression “natural characteristic” of the Miaphysites, which can indeed be regarded as a summary of the three. According to Abū Qurrah’s exposition of the Chalcedonian orthodoxy, the two natures must be present in the single hypostasis of the incarnate Logos also after the union, as substrata containing the potentiality of the properties, energies and wills that are actually present in the concretely existing single hypostasis of Christ. Here, I shall quote only an exemplary statement from the second writing: “in the same way [as the properties of the two natures in Christ], sight is said to belong to the eye and not to the ear, and hearing to the ear and not to the eye, while sight and hearing together belong to the single hypostasis that has the eye and the ear—for instance, St. Peter or St. Paul”.⁸² It is precisely against this kind of position that the Miaphysites recurrently argued over the centuries, i.e. in their opinion, even if different properties, belonging to different natures, rest on one single hypostasis, their difference cannot be explained through a duplicity of natures. Abū Qurrah, on the contrary, starkly states: “unlike Severus, the scholastic ass, I do not deny that he [*scil.* Christ] has two natural properties”, thereby meaning that the different properties point to the persisting existence of two natures in the incarnate Christ. For the Miaphysites, there is no admitting such a twofold substratum, for any duality whatsoever must be condemned. The Chalcedonians, on the contrary, do not see how a difference of properties may continue to subsist within a single individual, without the underlying persistence of such a duality, since it is clear that the unity of the hypostasis must be saved on the other side. Thus, although Abū Qurrah does not mention the concepts of “difference” and “division”, he shows that in his age the debate still focused on the correct comprehension of the natural properties and their relation to the natures and the one hypostasis. Furthermore, since Theodore also treated this point when writing to the Armenians,⁸³ we can legitimately suppose that the topic had some purport in the debate at the court of Ašot.

80 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Works*, 83–95.

81 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Works*, 151–154.

82 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Works*, 153–154.

83 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Works*, 89–90.

had already been gathered in the sixth century. Given Nonnus' and his relative Abū Rā'īṭah's knowledge of the florilegium, it would not be so risky to speculate that they were directly involved in its final redaction.⁸⁸ Although once again speculative, this conclusion is the closest we can get to historical facts on the basis of a sheer reconstruction of geological strata. As in geology, we try and reconstruct a whole (textual) scenario through traces, fossils, and the chemical composition of the ground. Our traces and fossils are the citations of, and allusions to (as in Nonnus), recurrent patristic excerpts from the sixth to ninth century; our chemical composition is the recurrence of Christological motifs, especially that of the preservation of a difference as to the natural quality in Christ.

By way of conclusion, let us then try to imagine a historical scenario.

Conclusion

What kind of historical picture can we sketch with the clues we have collected?

It is understandable that discussing these doctrinal issues, which had been harshly debated centuries earlier and had mostly disappeared in extant sources of the seventh and part of the eighth century,⁸⁹ must have again raised interest in Elias' times, as Ute Possekel has also recently shown.⁹⁰ By the middle of the

88 See also Bishara Ebeid's chapter in the present volume.

89 With some notable exceptions, like the Plerophories composed by John of the Sedre (d. 648) against the dyophysites and the Julianists preserved in MS London, *British Library* Add. 14629 and published by Jouko Martikainen, *Johannes I. Sedra* (Göttinger Orientalforschungen, 1. Reihe: Syriaca 34; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), and the monothelete florilegium of MS London, *British Library* Add. 14535 (on which see Sebastian P. Brock, "A Monothelete Florilegium in Syriac," in *After Chalcedon: Studies in Theology and Church History Offered to Professor Albert Van Roey for His Seventieth Birthday* [ed. C. Laga, J.A. Munitiz, and L. van Rompay; OLA 18; Leuven: Peeters, 1985], 35–45; Jack Tannous, "In Search of Monotheletism," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 68 [2014]: 29–67; Maria Conterno, "Three Unpublished Texts on Christ's Unique Will and Operation from the Syriac Florilegium in the ms. London, British Library, Add. 14535," *Millennium* 10 [2013]: 115–144 and Maria Conterno, "Byzance hors de Byzance: la controverse monothélite du côté syriaque," in *Les controverses religieuses en syriaque* [ed. F. Ruani; ES 13; Paris: Paul Geuthner, 2016], 157–180).

90 Elias certainly wrote his letter after 743 (Van Roey, "La lettre," 9). In 1944, Van Roey considered that the letter may even date to the beginning of the ninth century (Van Roey, "La lettre," 20–21). However, the lack of any reference to Theodore Abū Qurrah tends to keep the dating within the third quarter of the eighth century. Although this is a proof *e silentio*, it must be reminded that Elias is carefully up to date as to the Christological developments of his time, and these developments do not go beyond John of Damascus.

eighth century, Chalcedonian Christology was thriving in the Umayyad Empire, thanks to the prominent intellectual and political position of the Chalcedonian Church and his major representative, John of Damascus. Later on, between the end of the eighth and the beginning of the ninth century, the Chalcedonians were actively proselytising, especially among Miaphysites; Theodore Abū Qurrah, as we have seen, had attempted an unfortunate mission in Armenia, and among his writings we can also read a hortatory letter, in which Theodore tries to convince his Miaphysite addressee to convert to Chalcedonianism.⁹¹ As to the Damascene (together with other authors, such as George of Martyropolis and Constantine of Ḥarrān, of whom we know only through quotations in Elias's letter), he had raised once again the old polemical arguments against the Miaphysites, and this time within the framework of a majestic theoretical system, which surpassed the previous works of Leontius of Byzantium, Theodore of Raithou, or Anastasius of Sinai, all of them authors who, in any case, had lived within the borders of the Byzantine Empire. We can imagine that it was of no little concern for Miaphysite theologians to have such important adversaries as the Damascene and Abū Qurrah in the Chalcedonian party, which was also the most prominent of that day under the Umayyads. John's writing *Against the Jacobites*, as well as parts of his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, were particularly challenging for the Miaphysites. It is not by chance that both works are quoted by Elias in his letter.⁹² Michael the Great⁹³ informs us that Cyriacus of Tagrit, under whose patriarchate the debate in Armenia between Nonnus and Abū Qurrah took place, was particularly concerned with the challenges set by Chalcedonians (and Julianists), and that he actively engaged in negotiations and polemic issues with both parties, which, not surprisingly, are both represented as the polemical goal of two consecutive florilegia in our British Library and Mingana manuscripts. Considering the general lack of Miaphysite Christological sources between the death of George of the Arabs (708 CE) and the beginning of the ninth century, we are lucky to have at least Elias' and Nonnus' letters, since they add crucial elements to the picture of the Miaphysite position at the end of a long period of triumphant

91 Theodore Abū Qurrah, *Mayāmir*, 104–139.

92 *Eliae epistula*, 46 and 96 (text), 33 and 69 (trans.) (from John's *Against the Jacobites*); 33–34 and 42–45 (text), 24 and 29–32 (trans.) (from John's *De fide orthodoxa*).

93 Chalcedonians: Michael the Great, *Chronicle*, 4:495–497 (text), 3:32–34 (trans.); Julianists: Michael the Great, *Chronicle*, 4:483–486 (text), 3:10–15 (trans.). On Julianism under Cyriacus, see Ute Possek, "Julianism in Syriac Christianity," in *Orientalia Christiana: Festschrift für Hubert Kaufhold zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. P. Bruns and H.O. Luthé; Eichstätter Beiträge zum Christlichen Orient 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), 437–458, at 454–456.

Chalcedonianism. These sources reveal that the main questions at stake were the same as those tackled in our florilegium in the same years, and that, to address these questions, Elias and Nonnus used pretty much the same collection of patristic quotations and ideas as can also be found in the florilegium. Indeed, it is likely that the Christological florilegium started circulating in the form in which we now read it under Cyriacus, since all its manuscript witnesses can be dated no earlier than the end of the eighth century. Wright's eighth-century dating of BL Add. 14532, which seems to be the earliest witness to the florilegium, is telling in this regard.

Elias' and Nonnus' letters show that, in the last years of the eighth century and at the beginning of the ninth, the questions⁹⁴ debated at the end of the sixth century under the patriarchate of Peter of Callinicum regained high relevance among Miaphysite theologians, who then turned to sixth-century sources and patristic collections (and certainly added to them) to construct their arguments and texts. The controversial themes of the past were recurring once again, but the Chalcedonian metaphysics had significantly evolved. It is to this evolution of old topics in a new form that Miaphysite theologians intended to react. The new Chalcedonian view on the questions of nature, hypostasis, and properties imposed on the Miaphysites a work of re-conceptualization and re-organization of their tradition. The Christological florilegium, which tackles the same topics and uses the same sources in the same years, may thus be seen as a further actor in the debate between Chalcedonians and Miaphysites, based on the same arguments and materials. Through Elias' letter, we can even have a look at these anthological materials in the making, just as they were drawing close to their final form. We could even suppose that Elias, perhaps writing *after* the florilegium had reached its final form, used the Christological florilegium as we know it—if he did not himself contribute to its compilation. It is tempting to conclude that Cyriacus, who was a successor of Peter of Callinicum and probably could still have access to materials from previous controversies and especially from those involving Peter, may have ordered that those materials, which had already been organised in some way by the previous generations, be

94 Admittedly, the only chronological information provided by Elias' letter is that it was written after 743, to which the Damascene's *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, quoted in the letter, is dated. As I said, it is likely that the Elias of the letter is the Elias of Ḥarrān (the city of which Abū Qurrah was bishop at the beginning of the ninth century) who wrote the preface to the treatise *On Difference, Number, and Division* and dedicated his treatise on the Eucharist to the not-yet patriarch Dionysius of Tell-Mahre. Thus, we should assign Elias's *floruit* between the end patriarchate of Cyriacus of Tagrit (790–817) and the beginning of Dionysius', which was also Nonnus' main period of activity.

set up as structured handbooks to form his theologians for the urgent dogmatic controversies of his day against the predominant Church.

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Appendix 1. The Christological Florilegium: Chapter Titles 1–105

- 1 [The Fathers teach] what the difference is as to the natural characteristic of the [natures] from which Christ derives.
- 2 What does “as to the natural characteristic” mean?
- 3 We confess the difference, the property, and the otherness of the natures from which Christ derives.
- 4 Not confessing the otherness of *ousia* nor the difference [of *ousia*] does not fall outside of the iniquity of those who confuse the *ousiai*.
- 5 Sometimes a division is also conceived along with the difference.
- 6 Division ceases and difference is preserved.
- 7 We see that the difference as to the natural characteristic does not vanish, thanks to the unconfused character of the union, but division has been taken away.
- 8 Difference as to the *ousia* did not cease after the thought of the union.
- 9 Difference as to the *ousia* remained.
- 10 The union did not take away difference, nor did it make it vanish nor cease; but it took away division into two. One thing is division, another one is difference.
- 11 We do not make the difference a cause of division.
- 12 Heretics try to introduce division through difference as to the *ousia*.
- 13 Essential difference does not bring in with itself a cutting into two after the union.
- 14 Division does not follow a difference of essence in any regard.
- 15 Difference as to the *ousia* denies duality after the union.
- 16 Otherness as to the natural characteristic also preserves the union unconfused and does not dissolve the formula “one incarnate nature of the Word”.

- 17 We do not avoid confessing the property of the natures from which the Emmanuel derives, in order to preserve the union unconfused.
- 18 One [is] the incarnate nature of the Word and it is not divided into two after the union, and yet [this] does not suppress the essential difference.
- 19 Since the human being can be separated in theory, [Severus] shows the difference of the [components] of which he consists.
- 20 Taking difference away is tantamount to introducing confusion.
- 21 After the unutterable union, the hypostatic union does not mix up the difference as to the natural characteristic, nor does it leave [any] trace of a cutting.
- 22 Speaking of union does not neglect the difference but removes division.
- 23 Wherever we confess one incarnate nature of the Word, we also conceive of a difference as to the natural characteristic.
- 24 We do not maintain, nor confess, two natures before the union, in the union, or after the union.
- 25 The teacher [*scil.* Cyril] conceived of “after the union” and of “union” as [being] the same thing.
- 26 The Grammarian spoke of “two natures” in the union.
- 27 One is the nature and the hypostasis in the union and in the composition.
- 28 Two things or beings are one once they are gathered together.
- 29 Even though the two are one because of the gathering, they [are] such not [because they are] equal by nature or equal by *ousia*.
- 30 Saying “two” in whatever way is tantamount to cutting.
- 31 Separating [if only] in theory is tantamount to cutting.
- 32 Demonstration that “two” means cutting, and that not even conceptually does one say “two” without dividing in theory.
- 33 Not even in one’s mind can one say “two” without dividing Him who is from two.
- 34 Separation is a premise to duality.
- 35 The cutting and the duality which are in the thought cease.
- 36 ‘From two natures or hypostases’ is said [only] in theory.
- 37 Composed [things] are separated only in theory.
- 38 Composition is divided only in [one’s] mind.
- 39 The [natures] from which Christ derives appear two only in theory because of the difference as to the *ousia*, and because of inequality of species with regard to one another.
- 40 “Other and other” can be understood only as far as the essential characteristic is concerned, when what is composed is separated in theory.
- 41 Only in theory is one allowed to see the [natures] from which the union derives as “other and other”.

- 42 [Only] in theory do we know that two [entities that are] different as to
the *ousia* were gathered together.
- 43 When one separates in the thought, one finds otherness as to the species
and inequality of *ousia*.
- 44 Not because those [*scil.* the Chalcedonians] who are against the differ-
ence of the natures from which Christ derives say it is necessary that
we avoid to [mention difference], too.
- 45 Not the fact itself of mentioning two natures is bad, but the fact of speak-
ing of two natures after the union is contemptible.
- 46 No one before Cyril had spoken with the very words “hypostatic union”.
- 47 The union of the Word with the flesh is called composition.
- 48 On the fact that Christ is one composite person.
- 49 On the fact that the Fathers know that the union of the Word with His
ensouled flesh was natural and hypostatic, and they teach that He was
united with regard to the *ousia*.
- 50 What is composed in a natural union from entities different by [their]
nature is named after its parts, and the whole is called after each of them,
and each of them is named after the name of its whole.
- 51 God the Word became human and was begotten in the flesh.
- 52 Testimonia of the holy Fathers who confess that God the Word suffered
and died for us in the flesh.
- 53 Although the Fathers separate two natures in theory, they see and say that
the union occurred from those [two] and confess one incarnate nature of
the Word after the union, and do not divide in any way those which were
united.
- 54 Refusal of saying “two natures”.
- 55 Saying “two united [*scil.* natures]” is opposite to saying “one incarnate”.
- 56 “One” is said not only of simple things but also of composite ones, and
whoever says: “if one is the incarnate nature of the Word, then confusion
and mixture occur”, says oddities.
- 57 Let us refer all the words present in the Gospels to one person and
hypostasis; the teacher confesses one incarnate hypostasis of the Word.
- 58 On the words “with” and “together”.
- 59 It is not necessary that we avoid all the things that the heretics say, [but]
recognizing the difference is no cause for cutting the one Christ into two
natures.
- 60 Those who confess Christ [as] two natures add a [word that] leads astray
the simple: they define the [natures through] the word “undivided”.
- 61 As to the natures from which Christ derives, the holy Fathers know them
as hypostases.

- 62 Two persons are ascribed to hypostases that [have] their proper subsistence and subsist separately.
- 63 We do not say that Christ [derived] from two persons in the same way as we say that [he derives] from two natures or hypostases.
- 64 On the fact that it is abominable to say that the nature of God the Word changed into the flesh to the point that they were confused.
- 65 The expressions “in two” or “in each one” are understood [as referring to] two hypostases that subsist in their proper subsistence.
- 66 “From two” and “two” are not the same thing.
- 67 [Cyril] orders Nestorius, after he introduced the natures into the union, to avoid division.
- 68 For the adversaries it is the same thing to say “Christ in two natures” and “two natures in Christ”. [In this chapter we find three excerpts from Probus: “Of Probus, from the *chartis* he made as a confession of faith and gave to Anastasius, chief of the congregation in Antioch”; “Of the same from the *chartis* he produced at the synod held in Antioch under the direction of Gregory, who was patriarch, and of twelve bishops”; “Of the same from the sixth *chartis* against the monks”].
- 69 The Word is not known without the flesh after the union.
- 70 The natures or hypostases from which Christ [derives] are seen in one person and in one hypostasis and nature; they do not imply a division into two.
- 71 Only one Christ and Lord and Son is seen in one person and hypostasis and in his only nature, i.e. the incarnate [nature].
- 72 The natures or hypostases from which Christ [derives], by being in composition without diminution and without separation, make up one person.
- 73 When the natures from which Christ derives subsist in composition, the duality of hypostases and persons that [can be conceived of], as it were, in the phantasy of thoughts vanishes.
- 74 When the concept of the union is brought in, the presence of duality in the mind is removed.
- 75 After the thought of the union, the cutting into two [that is present] in the thought ceases and departs.
- 76 Seeing two [natures] is possible in theory alone, and the teacher [*scil.* Cyril] demonstrated that “after the union” is tantamount to “after the thought of the union”.
- 77 The [natures] that were united are not at all [any longer] two.
- 78 The expressions “the one Son is not two natures” and “duality dissolves the union” are asserted absolutely.

- 79 The force of the union makes every duality cease, and the one incarnate nature of the Word makes every confusion and division cease.
- 80 [Cyril] prohibits the cutting in every respect.
- 81 Those who were in Chalcedon were required by the [political] leaders to formulate a Creed.
- 82 The definition that was established by the Synod of Chalcedon.
- 83 Saying what is in agreement with the 318 Fathers is not prohibited.
- 84 The blasphemies of the Tome of Leo, which are exposed one by one with the other remaining ones that have the same meaning.
- 85 In his letter to the Emperor Marcian, Dorotheus attests that Leo in his Tome affirms two natures after the union.
- 86 On the acceptance of Eutyches.
- 87 On the fact that Eutyches was accepted by Leo of Rome.
- 88 The condemnation of Dioscorus did not occur on account of faith.
- 89 “Knowing the difference of the words is one thing, separating the natures is another thing”: regarding these unlearned words, saint Cyril says that they are not his own.
- 90 It is foolish to say that the union of the Emmanuel derives from two persons.
- 91 Hypostases or natures are the [entities] that were united.
- 92 Nestorius did not affirm—in words—neither two Christs or two Sons or one and another Son.
- 93 Nestorius confesses ‘united natures’.
- 94 Nestorius affirms one person from two.
- 95 One thing [resulted] from two.
- 96 What the Easterners wanted the holy Cyril to quit and reject, and again what he wanted them to reject.
- 97 [Christ] is both [things] together, or, he is and is known as [both] ‘this’ and ‘that’.
- 98 Of Theodoret, from the things he wrote to those who had his same opinion in Constantinople, after Cyril’s union with the Easterners.
- 99 From the letter of Hiba to Mari the Persian, which was read to the Synod of Chalcedon in the tenth [but: eleventh] session.
- 100 Of Nestorius from the letter to the Constantinopolitans.
- 101 From a *dialalà* [Actio XI] of the Council of Chalcedon.
- 102 From the eighth [but: ninth] session on Theodoret.
- 103 Theodoret confesses two hypostases viz. natures.
- 104 Leo says that every nature preserves its property.
- 105 The holy Fathers say that sometimes the Emmanuel left the flesh that it might suffer its own [passions].

Appendix 2

TABLE 5.1 A sample of the correspondences between the Christological Florilegium and the Miaphysite *Libelli* of 595 (MS D = BL Add. 14533)^a

Excerpt in the 7th <i>Libellus</i>	Position of the same excerpt in the florilegium
fol. 111 ^{ra} , from Cyril, 2nd Tome against Nestorius	chapter 1
fol. 111 ^{rb} , from Severus, Contra Grammaticum	chapter 3, same interruption with Ⲁⲟⲃⲁ .
fol. 111 ^{rb} , from Severus, Letter to Eleusinius	chapter 1
fol. 111 ^{rb} , from Severus, Philalethes	chapter 10
fol. 111 ^{va} , from Severus, Apology of the Philalethes	chapter 6
fol. 111 ^{va} , from Severus, Letter 1 to Sergius the Grammarian	chapter 7, same interruption with Ⲁⲟⲃⲁ .
fol. 112 ^{ra} , from Severus, Contra Grammaticum	chapter 29
fol. 112 ^{rb-va} , from Cyril, Letter 2 to Succensus	chapter 55
fol. 112 ^{vb} –113 ^{ra} , from Cyril, 2nd Tome against Nestorius	chapter 67
fol. 113 ^{ra} , from ps.-Athanasius, “De incorporatione divina Verbi Dei”	chapter 54
fol. 113 ^{ra} , from ps.-Julius of Rome, Discourse to those who fight against the divine incarnation of the Word	chapter 54
fol. 113 ^{ra} , from Cyril, Apology of the 8th anathematism, against Andrew	chapter 58
fol. 113 ^{rab} , from Cyril, Logos Prosphonetikos to Theodosius II	chapter 65
fol. 113 ^{rb} , from Proclus, Tome to the Armenians	chapter 27

a Extension of the Miaphysite *Libelli* against Probus in MS D: fol. 107^r–123^v.

Appendix 3

TABLE 5.2 A sample of the correspondences between Elias' Letter to Leo and the Christological Florilegium

Passage and position in florilegium	In Elias' Letter
From Cyril, 2nd Tome against Nestorius, chapt. 67	Chapter 5, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 25 text; 18 trans.
From Cyril, Letter to Eulogius, chapt. 53	Chapter 5, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 25 text; 18 trans.
From Cyril, Letter 1 to Succensus, chapt. 53	Chapter 9, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 65–66 text; 47 trans.
Immediately following in chapt. 53: From Cyril, Letter 2 to Succensus	Also immediately following in Chapter 9, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 68 text; 50 trans.
From Cyril, Letter to Eulogius, chapt. 59	Chapter 9, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 70 text; 51 trans.
From Cyril, Letter to Acacius of Melitene, chapt. 53	Chapter 9, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 70–71 text; 51 trans.
Following one in chapt. 53: From Cyril, Letter to Acacius of Melitene	Previous one in chapter 9: <i>Eliae epistula</i> 70 text; 51 trans.
From ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, <i>Fides secundum partes</i> , chapt. 54	Chapter 9, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 76 text; 55 trans.
Immediately following in chapt. 54 after a bridging formula: From ps.-Athanasius, "De incorporatione Verbi Dei"	Immediately following in Chapter 9, with the same bridging formula, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 76–77 text; 55 trans.
From Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 1 to Cleodnius, chapt. 52	Chapter 9, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 77 text; 56 trans.
From John Chrysostom, 38th Homily on 1 Cor, chapt. 52	Chapter 11, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 94 text; 67 trans.
From ps.-Athanasius, against Apollinaris, chapt. 49	Chapter 11, <i>Eliae epistula</i> 96 text; 69 trans. with the same interruption through ܘܐܘܪܘܫܝܡܐ

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Patristic Tradition, Trinitarian Doctrine, and Metaphysics in Abū Rā'īṭah al-Takrītī's Polemics against the Melkites

Bishara Ebeid

Introduction

The West Syrian theologian Ḥabīb ibn Ḥidmah Abū Rā'īṭah al-Takrītī¹ lived between the eighth and ninth centuries. Due to his relative adjective (*nisbah*) “al-Takrītī”, ancient authors and some modern scholars considered him bishop of Tagrit, a city situated in present-day Iraq between Baghdad and Mosul, whose Metropolitans represented the Miaphysite Syrian Patriarch in Mesopotamia from the sixth century on. However, since there is no evidence that he was a priest and/or bishop in the contemporary sources and documents, scholars today assert that he was a layman, probably, as S. Kh. Samir maintains,² a father of a daughter whose name was Rā'īṭah.

Some Armenian chronicles describe Abū Rā'īṭah as a great *vardapet*, a title usually given to apologists and teachers of theology. His being a teacher (in Syriac *mallpōnō*) in his Church, and precisely in the centre of Tagrit, might lead one to see behind his *nisbah* a form of connection with this city as an educational centre. Indeed, in the seventh century the Metropolitan see of Tagrit was

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- 1 The main detailed study on Abū Rā'īṭah's life and writings is Sandra T. Keating, *Defending the 'People of Truth' in the Early Islamic Period. The Christian Apologies of Abū Rā'īṭah* (HCMR 4; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 32–56. See also Sandra T. Keating, “Abū Rā'īṭa l-Takrītī,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History Volume 1 (600–900)* (ed. D. Thomas and B. Roggema; HCMR 11; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 567–581, here 567–571; Sandra T. Keating, “Ḥabīb ibn Khidma Abū Rā'īṭa al-Takrītī's ‘The Refutation of the Melkites concerning the Union [of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ]’ (III),” in *Christians at the Heart of Islamic Rule: Church Life and Scholarship in 'Abbasid Iraq* (ed. D. Thomas; History of Christian Muslim Relations 1; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 39–53, here 39–45 and Sidney H. Griffith, “Ḥabīb ibn Ḥidmah Abū Rā'īṭah, a Christian mutakallim of the first Abbasid century,” *Oriens Christianus* 64 (1980): 161–201, here 164–165.
 - 2 Cf. Samir Kh. Samir, “Création et incarnation chez Abū Rā'īṭa. Étude de vocabulaire,” in *Mélanges en hommage au professeur et au penseur libanais Farid Jabie* (Section des Études Philosophiques et Sociales 20; Beirut: Publications de l'Université libanaise, 1989), 187–236, here 191.

transformed into a Maphrianate,³ and from the ninth to the eleventh century, the golden age of the city, it became one of the most important educational and cultural centres for the West Syrians in Mesopotamia.⁴ Consequently, “al-Takrīṭī”, if it does not allude to Abū Rāʾīṭah’s birthplace, could mean the place where he lived and worked. In my opinion, our author was a collaborator in the educational project of the West Syrian Patriarch Cyriacus (d. 817),⁵ who, as it seems from the canons of the synods he summoned in Beth Bathin (794) and in Ḥarrān (812/3), aimed to improve the intellectual level of the priests and monks of his Church, so that they could polemicise with Chalcedonians (Melkites) and East Syrians.

Indeed, Abū Rāʾīṭah was one of the most prominent apologists and theologians of his time. He belonged to the generation of those Christian authors who felt the necessity to translate, express and even write theology in Arabic, the new *lingua franca*.⁶ As an apologist and a teacher, he was involved in discussions with non-Miaphysite Christians, defending Miaphysite theology, as well as with Muslim scholars, defending Christian doctrine against Islamic accusations, and at the same time encouraging Christians to remain faithful to their religion and not to convert to Islam.⁷

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- 3 On the meaning of Maphrian and Maphrianate, and on Tagrit as the see of the West Syrian Maphrianate in Mesopotamia, see George A. Kiraz, “Maphrian,” in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage* (ed. S.P. Brock, A.M. Butts, et al. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011), 264–265.
 - 4 For more details on Tagrit as a Christian center, among others, see: Philip Wood, *The Imam of the Christians. The World of Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, c. 750–850* (Princeton, NJ–Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2021), 121–135; Amir Harrak, “Tagrit,” *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage* (ed. S.P. Brock, A.M. Butts, et al. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011), 395–396; Jean-Maurice Fiey, “Tagrīt: Esquisse d’histoire chrétienne,” *L’Orient Syrien* 8 (1963): 289–342; Lucas Van Rompay and Andrea B. Schmidt, “Takritans in the Egyptian Desert: The Monastery of the Syrians in the Ninth Century,” *Journal of the Canadian Society of Syriac Studies* 1 (2001): 41–60; Harald Suermann, “Ḥabīb ibn Ḥidma Abū Rāʾīṭa: Portrait eines miaphysitischen Theologen,” *JEastCS* 58 (2006): 221–233, here 225–227; Samir, “Création,” 189–190.
 - 5 On this important figure, see Witold Witakowski, “Quryaqos,” *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage* (ed. S.P. Brock, A.M. Butts, et al. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011), 347–348.
 - 6 The fundamental work on Christian Arabic literature remains Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* (5 vols.; Studi e Testi 144–148; Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944–1953). On the encounter of Christian Arabs with Muslims and their production in the Arabic language, especially of the first generation, and its content, see Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008). See also the first chapter of Bishara Ebeid, *La Tunica di al-Masīḥ. La Cristologia delle grandi confessioni cristiane dell’Oriente nel X e XI secolo* (2nd ed.; Rome: Valore Italiano—Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, 2019).
 - 7 Cf. Keating, *Defending*, 12–19.

Abū Rā'īṭah wrote only in Arabic. His works have mostly an apologetic character and should be considered the starting point of the Miaphysite Christian theological production in the Arabic language.⁸ His writings can be categorised into two main groups: 1) polemics against non-Miaphysite Christians, mainly Chalcedonians, and 2) apologetic works in relation to Muslims.⁹

Scholars of Christian Arabic texts and theology usually tend to seek behind all works of Christian Arabic literature a direct or, in the best cases, indirect relationship with Islam. However, I believe that this approach and method is not always correct and sometimes leads to erroneous conclusions. In fact, many Christian Arabic theological works were written to defend what their authors deemed the proper doctrine against that of other Christians; intra-Christian polemics continued to exist even if Christians in the Middle East had to face the same “new opponent”, Islam. This does not mean that they ignored the “new religion” or that they did not take it into consideration, but, as far as intra-Christian polemics are concerned, one should carefully examine the originality of the theological thought of each author (especially those of the first generation), and at the same time, his dependence on his tradition, and the original theological development he produced. In other words, intra-Christian polemics written under Islam should be read and examined within their Christian tradition, while also taking into consideration, of course, their “new opponent”.¹⁰

Following this tendency, scholars who studied the writings and thought of Abū Rā'īṭah maintain that his main enemies were Muslims, and that, therefore, his writings should be read from this perspective.¹¹ An exception to this

8 For a description of his works and the topics discussed therein, see Keating, *Defending*, 56–65; Keating, “Abū Rā'īṭa”, 571–581. An edition of all his extant writings with German translation was made by Graf in Abū Rā'īṭa, *Writings*. An edition of his writings (supposedly) related to Islam with English translation was made by Keating, *Defending*, 73–357. It must be mentioned that there are partial editions of some of his writings made by Salim Daccache.

9 Cf. Keating, “Habīb”, 40.

10 See, for example, my suggestion in Ebeid, *Tunica*.

11 See, for example, the studies of Griffith, “Ḥabīb”; Harald Suermann, “Der Begriff Sīfah bei Abū Rā'īṭa”, in *Christian Arabic Apologetics during the Abbasid period (750–1258)* (ed. S.Kh. Samir and J.S. Nielsen; Studies in the History of Religion 63; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 157–171; Octavian Mihoc, “Hermeneutische und argumentative Modelle im Traktat über Christologie von Ḥabīb ibn Khidma Abū Rā'īṭah l-Takrīṭi,” in *Begegnungen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart: Beiträge dialogischer Existenz. Eine freundschaftliche Festgabe zum 60. Geburtstag von Martin Tamcke* (ed. C. Rammelt, C. Schlarb, and E. Schlarb; Theologie 112; Münster: Lit Verlag, 2015), 380–397; Sara L. Husseini, *Early Christian-Muslim Debate on the Unity of God: Three Christian Scholars and Their Engagement with Islamic Thought*

approach is the study by F. Benevich, who tried, more than others,¹² to read this author within his tradition, especially of the sixth and seventh centuries.¹³ Even if the problem of Islam was becoming very serious and the number of conversions was increasing,¹⁴ I am convinced that, at Abū Rā'īṭah's time, Miaphysites still considered the Chalcedonians to be their main opponents. This explains, in fact, why the majority of his writings were written against them. Therefore, when examining his works, one should read Abū Rā'īṭah within his own tradition and the controversial literature thereof.

The following is a list of his polemical writings against the Chalcedonians that have come down to us:¹⁵

- 1) "Introductory letter to Aṣot Smbāt Msaker: Refutation of the Melkites on the Union [of the Divinity and Humanity in Christ]".¹⁶
- 2) "Second letter to Aṣot Smbāt Msaker: Evidence for the Threefold Praise of the One Who was Crucified for Us".¹⁷
- 3) "Refutation of the Melkites".¹⁸

(9th Century C.E.) (HCMR 21; Leiden: Brill, 2014), 77–104, 193–198; Keating, "Habīb," Sandra T. Keating, "The Rationality of Christian Doctrine: Abū Rā'īṭa al-Takrītī's Philosophical Response to Islam," in *Heirs of the Apostles: Studies on Arabic Christianity in Honor of Sidney H. Griffith* (ed. D. Bertaina et al.; Arabic Christianity 1; Leiden: Brill, 2019), 157–178, and Sandra T. Keating, "An Early List of Šifāt Allāh in Abū Rā'īṭa al-Takrītī's 'First Risāla on the Holy Trinity,'" *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 36 (2009): 339–355. In another paper, I examine Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian apologetical doctrine and its relationship with the Islamic doctrine on the divine attributes, and how reading our author within the context of his tradition and taking into consideration all his writings in this regard leads to a more correct understanding of his view on the hypostases and the attributes, see Bishara Ebeid, "Abū Rā'īṭah al-Takrītī's Trinitarian Doctrine: Between Miaphysite Tradition and Islamic Challenge," *Adamantius* 27 (2021): 6–28.

- 12 One can find a similar approach in Keating, "Rationality." However, as I shall demonstrate in this chapter, her study and analysis of Abū Rā'īṭah within the context of his tradition was not deep, and therefore, in my opinion, she came to some incorrect conclusions.
- 13 One of those scholars that tried to read some of Abū Rā'īṭah's thought within the context of his Miaphysite tradition was Fedor Benevich, "Christliche Trinitätslehre vor dem Islam: Ein Beispiel von Abū Rā'īṭa al-Takrītī," *Oriens Christianus* 96 (2012): 149–164.
- 14 See, for example, Keating's opinion in "Habīb," 40.
- 15 The English titles given are based on Keating, *Defending*, 71–72, with some slight changes.
- 16 It is the letter that Abū Rā'īṭah gave to Nonnus of Nisibis to be read by Aṣot Smbāt Msaker before the disputation with Abū Qurrah, Text number III according to Graf's edition, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 65–72 (text).
- 17 It is the second letter that Abū Rā'īṭah wrote to Aṣot Smbāt Msaker after the disputation between Nonnus of Nisibis and Abū Qurrah, where he refutes in detail the argumentations of the Melkite Abū Qurrah. Text number IV according to Graf's edition, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 73–87 (text).
- 18 Probably, it is a treatise that Abū Rā'īṭah wrote after the first two, since in the manuscripts

- 4) "Evidence for the Threefold Praise for the One Crucified for Us".¹⁹
- 5) "From the 'Book of the Confession of the Fathers'".²⁰
- 6) "Christological Discussion".²¹

Abū Rā'īṭah's argumentation against the Chalcedonian doctrine is based on: 1) the Bible, by mentioning some biblical verses and giving them an exegesis that demonstrates the wrong doctrine of the Melkites and the Orthodoxy of the Miaphysites;²² 2) the faith of the three Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381) and Ephesus (431);²³ 3) a correct use of metaphysics, by explaining how the metaphysical terms used in the Christian doctrine should be understood; 4) rational argumentations, syllogisms and analogies based on the tradition of the Syriac Aristotelian culture,²⁴ in which Abū Rā'īṭah probably shared,²⁵ and on the way of making Kalām, mainly of the Mu'tazilites,²⁶ the most influential Islamic school at the time of the author;²⁷ 5) liturgical

it is considered as his fourth letter. Text number VII according to Graf's edition, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 105–130 (text).

- 19 This treatise was probably written after the first two, and I think it was written before the third work in our list here. Text number V according to Graf's edition, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 88–93 (text).
- 20 Some quotations found in an Arabo-Coptic Florilegium called *I'tirāf al-Ābā'* (the Confession of the Fathers, cf. Georg Graf, "Zwei dogmatische Florilegien der Kopten. B. Das Bekenntnis der Väter," *OCP* 3 (1937): 345–402, here 398–399). Text number IX according to Graf's edition, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 160–161 (text).
- 21 It is a Christological disputation that, according to one tradition, occurred between Abū Rā'īṭah, Abū Qurrah, and an East Syrian Metropolitan. Text number XI according to Graf's edition, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 163–165 (text).
- 22 See, for example, how he uses the Bible in his anti-Melkite writings, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 90–91, 124–125 (text). See also Sandra T. Keating, "The Use and Translation of Scripture in the Apologetic Writings of Abū Rā'īṭa al-Takrītī," in *The Bible in Arab Christianity*. (ed. D. Thomas; HSCMR 6; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 257–274; Mihoc, "Hermeneutische," 383–389; Suermann, "Ḥabīb," 230.
- 23 See, for example, Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 67–68, 75, 79 (text).
- 24 Cf. John W. Watt, "The Syriac Aristotelian Tradition and the Syro-Arabic Baghdad Philosophers," in *Ideas in Motion in Baghdad and Beyond. Philosophical and Theological Exchanges between Christians and Muslims in the Third/Ninth and Fourth/Tenth Centuries* (ed. D. Janos; Islamic History and Civilization 124; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 7–43.
- 25 See Keating, "Rationality," 158; Suermann, "Ḥabīb," 227–228, 230–231, 232; Mihoc, "Hermeneutische," 392–397.
- 26 Cf. Albert N. Nader, *Le système philosophique des Mu'tazila (Premiers penseurs de l'Islam)* (Recherches 3; Beyrouth: Les Lettres orientales, 1956). See also Montgomery W. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), 209–250; Montgomery W. Watt, *Islamic Philosophy and Theology. An Extended Survey* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985), 46–55.
- 27 Cf. Watt, *Formative*, 221. See also chapters 8 and 9 of Hugh Kennedy, *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World: The Rise and Fall of Islam's Greatest Dynasty* (London: Phoenix, 2005).

elements taken from the Melkite tradition to demonstrate that their liturgical texts contradict their own doctrine;²⁸ and 6) the patristic tradition, by quoting, directly and indirectly, passages by Church Fathers that confirm the Orthodoxy of the doctrine of his Church.

One of the aims of this chapter is to understand why Abū Rā'īṭah considers problematic the Trinitarian doctrine of the Melkites, and why discussing with the Melkites concerning the Trinitarian dogma does not necessarily mean that, in his mind, or among his audience, there were Muslims or Christians recently converted to Islam, as some scholars maintain.²⁹ To realise this goal I shall analyse and examine two of Abū Rā'īṭah's works: his *Refutation of the Melkites* and his *Introductory letter to Aṣot Smbāt Msaker*,³⁰ where he refutes the Melkite Trinitarian doctrine. My analysis will demonstrate that, for Abū Rā'īṭah, the error of the Melkites is to be identified in their metaphysical system, developed at and after the Council of Chalcedon (451), which, once applied to their Trinitarian doctrine, created risky consequences.

For those who study the development of the theological thought of the Miaphysites from the sixth to the eighth century, it is known that this polemical element is not an innovation by Abū Rā'īṭah.³¹ In their controversial writings against Chalcedonians and "Nestorians", the Miaphysites accused both of having an erroneous understanding and use of metaphysical concepts such as "substance", "hypostasis" and "person"; for this reason, they maintained, the Trinitarian doctrine of both was corrupted.³² The Miaphysites tried to

28 Such element was treated in his second letter to the Armenian ruler on the Trisagion; Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 80–83 (text). See also Suermann, "Ḥabīb," 232; Bishara Ebeid, "Miaphysite Syriac Patristic Florilegia and Theopaschism: Abū Rā'īṭah's Defence of the Christological Trisagion Hymn," *Annali di Scienze Religiose* 14 (2021): 231–269.

29 See the last section of this chapter where I enter in dialogue with S. Keating and her opinion in this regard.

30 For methodological reasons, I will follow Graf's edition.

31 Regarding this, see Bishara Ebeid, "Metaphysics of Trinity in Graeco-Syriac Miaphysitism: A Study and Analysis of the Trinitarian Florilegium in MS BL Add. 14532," *Studia graeco-arabica* 11 (2021): 83–128.

32 On this issue, among others, see Roberta C. Chesnut, *Three Monophysite Christologies. Severus of Antioch, Philoxenus of Mabbug and Jacob of Sarug* (Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); André de Halleux, *Philoxène de Mabbog. Sa vie, ses écrits, sa théologie* (Universitas Catholica Louvaniensis. Dissertationes ad gradum magistri in Facultate Theologica vel in Facultate Iuris Canonici consequendum conscriptae III.8. Louvain: Imprimerie orientaliste, 1963); David A. Michelson, *The Practical Christology of Philoxenos of Mabbug* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); David A. Michelson, "Philoxenos of Mabbug: A Cappadocian Theologian on the Banks of the Euphrates?" in *Motions of Late Antiquity: Essays on Religion, Politics, and Society in Honour of Peter Brown* (ed. J. Kreiner and H. Reimitz; Cultural Encounters in Late

find proofs for their doctrine in the patristic tradition—in fact, the *consensus patrum* was used by each Christian confession as a proof of proper Orthodoxy.³³ One of the consequences of this method was the compilation of patristic and dogmatic florilegia.³⁴

As we shall see, Abū Rāʾīṭah also considers the consensus with the Church Fathers as evidence for the correctness of his Trinitarian and Christological doctrine. Unfortunately, scholars who studied his writings did not show a real interest in his patristic background and how he used the Church Fathers and the patristic material; they only limited themselves to mentioning his use of some Fathers, their names and the reasons that led him to refer to them.³⁵ As already mentioned, the main aim of this chapter is to fill this gap in the scholarship on Abū Rāʾīṭah's thought and writings. The patristic tradition in his Christological polemical writings against the Melkites was studied and analysed in another study of mine;³⁶ in the present chapter, I will examine his direct and indirect use of the Church Fathers in his Trinitarian and metaphysical polemics against the Melkites. Furthermore, my analysis shall demonstrate his close relationship to the Miaphysite movement of compilation of patristic florilegia against various heresies. It is necessary, however, to start with a summary of Abū Rāʾīṭah's arguments against the Trinitarian doctrine of the Melkites and their metaphysical system after Chalcedon.

Antiquity and the Middle Ages 20; Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), 151–174 and Iain R. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon. Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1988).

- 33 Cf. Franz-Josef Niemann, “Consensus patrum,” *Religion Past and Present* (2011). Last retrieved 16/10/2020. Online http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1877-5888_rpp_SIM_03210. See also Patrick T.R. Gray, “The Select Fathers’: Canonizing the Patristic Past,” *SP* 23 (1989): 21–36.
- 34 On the Miaphysite florilegia, see John W. Watt, “Rhetorical Education and Florilegia in Syriac,” in *Les auteurs syriaques et leur langue* (ed. M. Farina; ES 15; Paris: Geuthner, 2018), 95–110. See also Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity,” 99–128. In addition, it must not be forgotten that patristic and dogmatic florilegia were also used by Chalcedonians in the same way and for the same aim, cf. Marcel Richard, “Les Florilèges diphysites du v^e et du vi^e siècle,” in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon: Geschichte und Gegenwart* (vol. 1; ed. A. Grillmeier and H. Bacht; Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1951), 721–748 and Marcel Richard, “Notes sur les florilèges dogmatiques du v^e et du vi^e siècle,” in *Actes du vi^e Congrès International d’Études Byzantines (Paris 27 Juillet–2 Août 1948)* (Vol. 1; Paris: Sorbonne, École des hautes études, 1950), 307–318.
- 35 See, for example, Keating, “Rationality,” 158, 167; Keating, “Habib,” 50–52 and Suermann, “Der Begriff,” 169.
- 36 See Ebeid, “Miaphysite,” 245–261.

1 Abū Rā'īṭah's Metaphysical System and His Trinitarian Doctrine

In the introduction to his *Refutation of the Melkites*, Abū Rā'īṭah presents the main metaphysical issues that one should take into consideration when discussing with Melkites:

What made Melkites describe that the nature of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is something different from them [i.e., the three hypostases], and that it exists in its perfection in each one of them without being [identified] with them, or they [identified] with it? Is it possible that the nature of God is not his hypostases and his hypostases are not his nature, as the Melkites described? What are the nature and the essence, what is the difference between them, and according to what definition should one use each of them? Is there [any] existent [entity] except the substance and the accident? What is a hypostasis, that is, a person? What is the relationship between the property and the thing to which it belongs: does it complete it or indicate it? How was it possible for them [the Melkites] to confirm that Christ (may he be praised!) is one hypostasis, after having affirmed that in him there are two natures, two wills and two actions? Why did they refuse to describe him one nature and one hypostasis from two natures, divinity and humanity, after they have been united and combined?³⁷

According to Abū Rā'īṭah, who follows his Miaphysite polemical tradition against Chalcedonians, the main problem for the Melkites is the doctrine of the Council of Chalcedon.³⁸ He specifies that their Christology obligated them

³⁷ "ما دعا الملكية ان تصف ان كان الاب والابن والروح القدس شيء غيرها موجود بكاله في كل واحد منها من غير ان يكون إياها ولا هي إياه. وهل يجوز ان يكون كان الله غير اقاتيه واقاتيه غير كانه كما وصفت الملكية. وما الان الأشياء الكيان والذات. وما الفرق بينهما وعلى كم نحو يقال كل واحد منهما. وهل من الموجود غير جوهر او عرض. وما القنوم أى الشخص. وما موقع الخاصة من الذى هي له خاصة مكلمة هي له ام دالة عليه. وكيف جاز عندهم ايجابهم المسيح سبحانه قنوماً واحداً من بعد ما الحقوا له وفيه كيانين ومشيتين وفعلين. وما علة امتناعهم (؟) من غير ان يصفوا كياناً واحداً وقنوماً واحداً من كيانين اللاهوت والناسوت من بعد اتحادهما واجتماعهما"

Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 105 (text). The English translation is mine.

³⁸ Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 78–79.

to modify their metaphysical system, and therefore, concepts like nature, substance, hypostasis, person, and property took on a new use and understanding, and the relationship between these metaphysical categories received a new definition. Following his Miaphysite tradition, Abū Rā'īṭah accuses his opponents of holding a dualistic Christology and considers them Nestorians,³⁹ since the content of their Christology is similar to that of Nestorius and his followers, but with a different use of terminology.⁴⁰ According to his point of view, the Melkites could not affirm that in Christ there are two natures/substances and at the same time that he is one hypostasis, without in fact distinguishing between nature/substance and hypostasis/person, and considering them as two different metaphysical categories.⁴¹ Such remark, once applied to the Trinitarian doctrine, leads one to maintain that the three divine hypostases, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are something different from the divine nature and substance that they share.⁴² As a consequence, such a doctrine makes the Trinity become a quaternity (i.e. three hypostases and one substance).⁴³ Abū Rā'īṭah probably had in mind some Chalcedonian authors, who, in their attempt to polemicise against Tritheism, proposed a 'Tetradite' solution like, as Dirk Krausmüller has demonstrated, the one of Anastasius of Sinai, who came to the point of considering the common substance as a quasi-hypostasis added as fourth to the three hypostases of the Trinity.⁴⁴

Abū Rā'īṭah is well aware that Melkites could easily apply his same rational demonstration to the Trinitarian doctrine of his own Church, maintaining that, for Miaphysites, the three divine hypostases are three gods because of the Miaphysite identification of nature/substance and hypostasis.⁴⁵ His solution is to confess and affirm that: 1) God is the three hypostases and the three hypostases are God; 2) the three hypostases share all the natural and substantial characteristics of the Godhead; 3) the three hypostases are distinguished, each through a property which cannot be shared neither with the other hypostases nor with the substance itself; and 4) the number three is not applied to the substance, which remains one, but to the hypostases and the properties.⁴⁶

39 For this accusation against Nestorians by Miaphysites, like Severus of Antioch and Philoxenus of Mabbug, see Ebeid, *Tunica*, 279.

40 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 106–108 (text).

41 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 108 (text).

42 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 108–111 (text).

43 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 111–113 (text).

44 See Dirk Krausmüller, "Under the Spell of John Philoponus: How Chalcedonian Theologians of the Late Patristic Period Attempted to Safeguard the Oneness of God," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 68 (2017): 625–649, here 641–643.

45 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 113 (text).

46 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 113–124 (text).

Indeed, the main problem among Miaphysites during the sixth and seventh centuries was the discrepancy between the metaphysical systems they used in their Trinitarian and Christological doctrines respectively. On the one hand, they had to hold to their Miaphysite Christology, which implied the coincidence of nature/substance and hypostasis;⁴⁷ on the other hand, however, they

47 The Miaphysite Christology, developed against the Chalcedonian and the 'Nestorian' Christologies, created some problems of metaphysical nature to the same Miaphysites. Affirming that Christ is one composite substance/nature of two substances/natures, and that he is one hypostasis/person led Miaphysites to identify in some way, and only in their Christology but not in their Trinitarian doctrine, two metaphysical categories: on the substance/nature coinciding with hypostasis/person. When, in the second half of the sixth century, this identification was applied to the Trinitarian doctrine by some Miaphysite intellectuals and theologians, such as John Philoponus (d. ca. 570), it caused the emergence of a Trinitarian doctrine where the three divine persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, were considered three single divine natures/substances. The followers of these doctrine were called Tritheites by their opponents, and their doctrine was called Tritheism. On Tritheism, among others, see Alois Grillmeier, "The Tritheist Controversy in the Sixth Century and its Importance in Syriac Christology," in *Christ in Christian Tradition. Vol. 2: From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604). Part 3: The Churches of Jerusalem and Antioch from 451 to 600* (ed. A. Grillmeier et al.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 268–280; Theresia Hainthaler, "John Philoponos, Philosopher and Theologian in Alexandria," in *Christ in Christian Tradition. Vol. 2: From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604). Part 4: The Churches of Alexandria with Nubia and Ethiopia after 451* (ed. A. Grillmeier and T. Hainthaler; London: A.R. Mowbray, 1996), 107–146; Johannes Zachhuber, "Personhood in Miaphysitism. Severus of Antioch and John Philoponus," in *Personhood in the Byzantine Christian Tradition: Early, Medieval, and Modern Perspectives* (ed. A. Torrance and S. Paschalides; New York: Routledge 2018), 29–43 and Johannes Zachhuber, *The Rise of Christian Theology and the End of Ancient Metaphysics: Patristic Philosophy from the Cappadocian Fathers to John of Damascus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 145–169. This tritheistic doctrine was rejected by most Miaphysites, and it was also anathematized through synods and by hierarchs. During this controversy over Tritheism, another Trinitarian controversy arose between two Miaphysite hierarchs: Damian of Alexandria (d. 605) and Peter of Callinicum, the patriarch of Antioch (d. 591). Without entering into much detail, both hierarchs, while combating Tritheism, tried to give alternative comprehensions of how the one God is also three hypostases: Damian distinguished in an extreme way the hypostasis from the substance, identifying the hypostasis with the property (idiom); whereas Peter considered each hypostasis, taken and seen individually, as a concrete and perfect substance. Consequently, the two hierarchs disagreed, and each considered the other's doctrine erroneous. For the controversy and the doctrines of Damian and Peter see, among others, Albert van Roey, "Le traité contre les Trithéites (CPG 7245) de Damien d'Alexandrie," in *Philohistôr: Miscellanea in Honorem Caroli Laga Septuagenarii* (ed. A. Schoors and P. van Deun; OLA 60; Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 229–250; Dirk Krausmüller, "Properties Participating in Substance: the Trinitarian Theology of Severus of Antioch and Damian of Alexandria," *Journal of Late Antique Religion and Culture* 12 (2018): 15–29; Rifaat Y. Ebied, "Peter of Anti-

felt the necessity to find the correct definition for the metaphysical terms they used, in order to ensure that: 1) Christ is the incarnate God; 2) He is a perfect God and perfect man, which means 3) that neither the three divine persons were all together incarnate, nor the humanity in Christ was the totality of the human hypostases; 4) He is one substance from two, and at the same time he is also one hypostasis; and finally 5) the Trinity is not a Tritheism, that is, the three divine hypostases are one Godhead and the one Godhead is the three divine hypostases. In fact, after having faced internal Trinitarian problems (the dispute on Tritheism) because of the peculiar metaphysics of their Christology, they needed to (re)formulate and produce a (new) and unified metaphysical system for both doctrinal levels, Trinitarian and Christological, and to use it against Chalcedonians and Nestorians. This metaphysical system, in addition, had to be based on Church Fathers whose authority was undiscussable. I am convinced that the Miaphysites realised this goal through the compilation of patristic dogmatic florilegia, especially those that deal with Trinitarian topics, where they had to (re)define the different metaphysical concepts and categories and the relationships between them. If their Christology was called Miaphysite, the (re)formulation of their Trinitarian doctrine through this new metaphysical system should be called “Miaphysite Trinitarian doctrine”.⁴⁸

In the collection of Syriac Miaphysite patristic florilegia of the British Library, four manuscripts preserve a Trinitarian florilegium with metaphysical content. This florilegium is preserved in two versions, shorter and longer. The shorter version, which I have already analysed according to one manuscript,⁴⁹ contains 65 chapters and is preserved in MSS BL Add. 14532, fol. 94^v–133^v; BL Add. 14533, fol. 73^r–89^r; and BL Add. 14538, fol. 119^v–133^v. The longer version contains 108 chapters and is preserved in MS *London, British Library* Add. 12155, fol. 2^v–32^v. In our ERC project “FLOS. Florilegia Syriaca”, we aim to provide a critical edition of both versions. In addition, I aim to examine the metaphysical and theological content of the longer version in a future study.⁵⁰

och and Damian of Alexandria: The End of a Friendship,” in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature and its Environment, Primarily in the Syrian East* (ed. R.H. Fischer; Chigaco: The Lutheran School of Theology, 1977), 277–282; Rifaat Y. Ebied, “Peter of Callinicus and Damian of Alexandria: The Tritheist Controversy of the Sixth Century,” *PdO* 35 (2010): 181–191 and Zachhuber, *The Rise*, 170–183. See also Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity”, 88–98.

48 See the analysis of one of these Trinitarian florilegia in Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity”, 99–128.

49 See Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity”, 99–119.

50 It must be mentioned that Albert van Roey has already examined the patristic quotation in the first part of this florilegium’s long version, that is, the first 29 chapters, see Albert van

The longer version, which, as I think, was compiled later, will be taken into consideration in this chapter. The whole manuscript bears the title *Volume of Demonstrations of the Holy Fathers against Various heresies* (ܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ),⁵¹ whereas the Trinitarian florilegium ends with the following expression: “The end of the chapters on the Divine Discourse, i.e. Divine Theology” (ܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ),⁵² while the last chapter has the title *On the doubt expressed by the Romans and the Easterners, the ones against the others, concerning the name “substance” and [the names] “hypostases” and “persons”* (ܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ ܕܩܘܿܒܘܿܠܘܿܬܘܿ).⁵³ Thus, it is evident that the polemical goal of this florilegium are the Chalcedonians, called “Romans”, and the “Nestorians”, called “Easterners”, because of their erroneous use and understanding of the metaphysical concepts of substance, hypostasis, and person, caused by their Christology and leading to a wrong theology, i.e. a wrong Trinitarian doctrine.⁵⁴

As already noted by F. Benevich,⁵⁵ Abū Rāʾīṭah’s thought must be read in relation to this theological and controversial context. In Abū Rāʾīṭah’s polemical writings against the Melkites and their metaphysical system, it is notable that the most important proof for the correctness of his arguments is the consensus with the Church Fathers. Therefore, in the rest of this chapter I aim to present and analyse his direct and indirect patristic references in the two selected writings and the possible relationship between his works and the aforementioned Trinitarian florilegium.

2 Abū Rāʾīṭah’s Patristic Quotations in His *Refutation of the Melkites*

At the end of his *Refutation of the Melkites*, to prove his position, Abū Rāʾīṭah refers to some biblical verses explaining them in such a way as to demonstrate that, in the Old and New Testament, God is one and the same, and that he *is*

Roey, “Un florilège trinitaire syriaque tiré du Contra Damianum de Pierre de Callinique,” *OLP* 23 (1992): 189–203.

51 MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 2^v.

52 MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 32^v.

53 MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 31^r.

54 In my study of the short version of the trinitarian florilegium, I showed that the main opponents against whom this florilegium is addressed are Chalcedonians and Nestorians, see Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity,” 125–128.

55 Benevich, “Christliche Trinitätslehre,” 159–164.

the three hypostases.⁵⁶ In addition, he provides the reader with a patristic florilegium, that is, patristic quotations that, according to him, demonstrate the Orthodoxy of the Miaphysite doctrine in question. Before passing to the florilegium, Abū Rā'īṭah introduces it and affirms:

after the testimonies of Moses, we must follow the sayings of the holy [and] pure Fathers who were columns and fortifications for the Church through the way they polemicised against the apostates from the religion of Christ ...⁵⁷

After this introduction, where our author declares the importance of the patristic tradition for the correctness of the faith, he starts quoting some Church Fathers as follows.⁵⁸

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium⁵⁹

1 قال ديوناسيوس الطاهر تلميذ بولس وحسبه ذلك من
الفضل والشرف في ميمر له يقال له نعت الاسماء الالهيات
رداً منه على الجحاد. قال

Dionysius the pure, the disciple of Paul—which gave him superiority and honour—, said, confuting the heretics, in a discourse called the *Description of the divine names*:

ليست رئاسة اللاهوت كلها حياة فكيف يحق الكلمة
الطاهرة اذ وصفت بانه كما ان الاب يقيم الموتى ويحييها
كذلك والابن يحيي من يشاء. وايضاً المحيي الروح.

Is not the whole of the most high Godhead life? How right, then, is the holy word when it claims: “Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, the Son also gives life to whom he wills”. And also: “who gives life is the Spirit”.

Καὶ εἰ μὴ ὄλην εἶναι φασὶ τὴν ζωαρχίαν, πῶς ἀληθῆς ὁ φήσας ἱερός λόγος: “Ὡσπερ ὁ πατήρ ἐγείρει τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ ζωοποιεῖ, οὕτως καὶ ὁ υἱός, οὗς θέλει, ζωοποιεῖ” καὶ ὅτι “τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ ζωοποιούν”;⁶⁰

56 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 124–125 (text).

57 “وقد ينبغي ان تتبع شهادات موسى قول الإباء القديسين الذين كانوا للبيعة أعمدة ودعائم بما جاهدوا الخائدين عن دين المسيح ...”

Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 125 (text). The English translation is mine.

58 However, note that Graf's German translation of Abū Rā'īṭah's writings had already identified some of these quotations; see Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 152–158.

59 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 125–130. The English translation is mine. Please note that I do not agree with some passages of Graf's reading and his German translation.

60 Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Divine Names*, II.1, 123, 6–8.

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium

2

ومن قوله And from his saying:

فانه وان كانت النوعت على كل موصوفة وحدانية وثلاثية فليست كالوحدانية ولا الثلاثية المذكورة منّا او من أحد من الموجودة وثلاثا نصف توحيدها المعتلى على كل نصدق ذلك وولود اللاهوت يصف المعتلى على الاسم والجوهر في نعت الالهى.

Although the descriptions 'uniqueness' and 'trinity' are said on everything about which such statement can be made, it is not like the 'uniqueness' and 'trinity' which are stated by us or by someone else among the existents. And even if we do not describe [the Trinity's] singleness, which is above all, we accept [all] this and [even] the generation of the Godhead to describe the divine, the above-name and the [above-]substance.

Διὸ καὶ μονὰς ὑμνουμένη καὶ τριάς ἢ ὑπὲρ πάντα θεότης οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲ μονάς, οὐδὲ τριάς ἢ πρὸς ἡμῶν ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν ὄντων διεγνωσμένη, ἀλλὰ ἵνα καὶ τὸ ὑπερνωμένον αὐτῆς καὶ τὸ θεογόνον ἀληθῶς ὑμνήσωμεν, τῇ τριαδικῇ καὶ ἐνιαίᾳ θεωνομίᾳ τῆν ὑπερώνησμον ὀνομάζομεν, τοῖς οὖσι τὴν ὑπερούσιον.⁶¹

Comment on the previous quotations:

أفلا تنظرون في قول هذا الاب الفاضل الواصف بأن رئاسة اللاهوت كلها حياة اى الاقانيم الثلاثة ويستشهد بها. فلولا ان الاقانيم هي اللاهوت كيف كان يستشهد بان رئاسة اللاهوت كلها حياة لان الاب والابن والروح القدس كلها حياة. وايضاً ان اللاهوت المعتلية على كل ثلاثة اذ هي لديهم شيء اخر غير الاقانيم.

Don't you see in the saying of this virtuous father that he describes the whole of the most high Godhead, that is, the three hypostases, as life and he affirms it? If the hypostases were not the Godhead, how could he affirm that the whole of the most high Godhead is life, since the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all life? And moreover, how the Godhead [who is] above all would be three if they [*scil.* the Melkites] affirm that it is something else than the hypostases?

3

ثم ان اغريغوريوس ذا العجائب يقول في ميمرله كتبه في الايمان ذات الاجزى قال:

And Gregory Thaumaturgus says in his discourse that he wrote on the *Faith according to parts*:

يا واصفي اللاهوتية الثلاثية لاهوتا واحدا وربوية واحدة لأن اب الرب علمة لم يزل مولودا منه ومثال الرب الروح كذلك والاب رب والابن اله. وقد قيل في الله انه روح.

O you who describe the divine Trinity one Godhead and one lordship, [it is so] because the Father of the Lord is cause; He [the Lord] is always generated from Him; and the image of the Lord is the Spirit as well. The Father, then, is Lord and the Son is God. It is also said on God that He is Spirit.

Λέγομεν δὲ καὶ μίαν θεότητα καὶ μίαν κυριότητα καὶ μίαν ἀγιότητα τὴν τριάδα· ὅτι τοῦ πνεύματος ὁ κύριος· οὕτως γὰρ καὶ ὁ πατήρ κύριος καὶ ὁ υἱός θεός καὶ περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ εἴρηται ὅτι "πνεῦμα ὁ θεός".⁶²

61 Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Divine Names*, XIII,3, 229, 6–10.

62 Ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, *On Faith in Parts*, 176, 13–18.

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium

Διαδραμῶν τὰ σύμπαντα, καὶ ὑπὲρ πάσαν τὴν κτίσιν
ἀνανεύσας τοῖς λογισμοῖς, καὶ ἐπέκεινα τούτων τὸν
νοῦν ἀनुψώσας, ἐνόησον τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν· ἐστῶσαν,
ἄτρεπτον, ἀναλλοίωτον, ἀπαθὴ, ἀπλήν, ἀσύνητον, ἀδι-
αίρετον, φῶς τον, ἀπαθὴ, ἀπλήν, ἀσύνητον, ἀδιαίρετον,
φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, δύναμιν ἄφατον, μέγεθος ἀπεριόρι-
στον.⁶⁷

Ἐκεῖ Πατὴρ καὶ Υἱὸς καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, ἡ ἄκτιστος
φύσις.⁶⁸

- 9 : *ومن قول في ميمرله ثاني ردأ على انوميوس الاراطيق. قال:* And from his saying in his second discourse
Against Eunomius the heretic, he said:

ان الابن موصوف مثالا للاب مولودا منه لانه شعاع مجد
الله وقوة وحكمة وير لا كالمكتسب ولا كالمملوك لا بل
جوهر حي فاعل.
The Son is described an image of the Father gen-
erated of Him, since He is the beam of God's
glory, [His] power, wisdom, and righteousness,
not like an acquired or possessed thing, but [as]
a living [and] active substance.

Εἰκῶν δὲ εἴρηται καὶ ἔστιν ὁ Υἱὸς γεννητὴ, καὶ ἀπαύγα-
σμὰ ἐστι τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ σοφία, καὶ δύναμις,
καὶ δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ, οὐχ ὡς ἕξις, οὐδὲ ὡς ἐπιτηδειό-
της, ἀλλ' οὐσία ζῶσα καὶ ἐνεργῆς.⁶⁹

Comment on the previous quotations

أفلا تعتبرون من قول هذا الحكيم الطاهر ان كان الله المتفاوت من الخلق ادراكه المعتلى على كل شيء هو الاب والابن
والروح القدس.

Don't you learn a lesson from the saying of this pure wise [father], [who says] that the nature of God,
which is inconsistent with the comprehension of the creatures and is over everything, is the Father, the
Son, and the Holy Spirit?

- 10 *ومن قول في رسالة كانت منه الى اغريغوريس اخيه في
فرق ما بين الجوهر والاقنوم قال:* And from a saying in a letter he [sent] to his
brother Gregory on the *Difference between sub-*
stance and hypostasis, he said:

لا يعجب من وصفنا الله بعينه متوحدا
Do not be surprised if we describe God Himself
united

67 Ps.-Basil of Caesarea, *Homily on Faith*, PG 31: 465, 28–33.

68 Ps.-Basil of Caesarea, *Homily on Faith*, PG 31: 465, 40–41.

69 Basil of Caesarea, *Against Eunomius*, Book II, Section 17, 5–9 (PG 29: 605, 21–25).

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium

والثامًا متفرقا. and separated conjunction.

Μὴ θαυμάσης δὲ εἰ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ συνημμένον καὶ διακεκριμένον εἶναι.⁷⁰

καὶ διακεκριμένην συνάφειαν.⁷¹

11 من قوله: From his saying:

من انه جهة مدروكة في الحواس جاز لنا ان نصف بتفهم
منا متفرقا متوحدا جميعا معا.

Because there is a side that can be comprehended with the senses, we are allowed to describe [Him], with awareness, to be, at the same time, both separated and united.

Πόθεν οὖν φαμεν τὸ διακεκριμένον ἅμα καὶ συμφυῆς ἐκ τῶν κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν ἡμῖν προφαινομένων ἀναλογίζεσθαι;⁷²

12 ثم ان اغريغوريس اسقف نيسيس الطاهر في ميمر كتبه
ردّ فيه على انوميس. قال:

And Gregory the bishop of Nyssa the pure, in a discourse he wrote to refute Eunomius, said:

واذا لله اسماء كثيرة مسمى بها في القصص والنبوات
والناموس وفض ربنا المسيح كلها اقتصارا منه على المعرفة
اكثر ذلك الايمان وامر ان يسمى باسم الاب والابن
والروح القدس المرفوع على فهم الذي هو بحق الذي هو
واحد وغير واحد اعني الواحد في الجوهر. وكذلك اقترض
علينا ان نصمد له باسم واحد. فاما الخواص الدالة على
الاقانيم فنقسم. وذلك الايمان باب وابن وروح قدس فهو
منقسم بلا تباين ومتوحد بلا اختلاط.

While God has many names with which he is named in the stories [i.e., historical books], in the prophecies, and in the law, our Lord Christ has dissolved them all limiting himself to making known the most important thing, namely faith. He commanded that He [God] should be named with the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which is enough to understand Him [God], i.e. who truly is, who is one and [at the same time] not one: I mean, one in substance (and therefore He ordered us to give Him one name); while for the properties that indicate the hypostases, He is divided, and therefore the faith is in a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is indeed divided without separation and united without mixture.

πολλῶν γὰρ ὄντων καὶ ἄλλων ὀνομάτων, οἷς τὸ θεῖον διασημαίνεται ἐν ἱστορίᾳ τε καὶ προφητείᾳ καὶ νόμῳ, πάντα καταλιπὼν ὁ δεσπότης Χριστὸς ὡς μᾶλλον ἡμᾶς προσάγεσθαι δυναμένης τῆ περὶ τοῦ ὄντος πίστει ταύτας τὰς φωνὰς παρατίθεται, ἀρκεῖν ἀποφηνάμενος παραμένειν ἡμᾶς τῆ τοῦ πατρὸς τε καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ

70 Basil of Caesarea, *Letter* 38, Section 4, 87–88.

71 Basil of Caesarea, *Letter* 38, Section 4, 90–91.

72 Basil of Caesarea, *Letter* 38, Section 5, 5–7.

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium

- ἀγίου πνεύματος κλήσει εἰς κατανόησιν τοῦ ὄντως ὄντος, ὅπερ καὶ ἔν ἐστι καὶ οὐχ ἔν. τῷ μὲν γὰρ λόγῳ τῆς οὐσίας ἔν ἐστι, διὸ καὶ εἰς ἔν ὄνομα βλέπειν ὁ δεσπότης ἐνομοθέτησε· τοῖς δὲ γνωριστικοῖς τῶν ὑποστάσεων ἰδιώμασιν εἰς πατρός τε καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ πνεύματος ἀγίου πίστιν διήρηται, ἀδιαστάτως τε μεριζόμενον καὶ ἀσυγχύτως ἐνούμενον.⁷³
- 13 ومن قوله في ميمرله موصوف بالمواظظ، قال: And from his saying in a discourse characterised as *Catechesis*, he said:
- ان يكون معدود مفرد عن العدد موجود منقسم مدرك بالوحدة مابين بالاشخاص غير منقسم في الطبيعة. [It is possible] that something can be counted and excluded from count, exist as divided [but] comprehend as unity, divided according to individuals, [but] undivided according to nature.
- Πῶς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ ἀριθμητὸν ἐστὶ καὶ διαφεύγει τὴν ἐξἀριθμησιν, καὶ διηρημένως ὁράται καὶ ἐν μονάδι καταλαμβάνεται, καὶ διακρίεται τῇ ὑποστάσει καὶ οὐ διώρισται τῷ ὑποκειμένῳ;⁷⁴
- 14 ومن قوله في ميمره الأول يرد فيه على انوميوس في وجود الثلاثة، قال: And from his saying in his first discourse *Against Eunomius* on the existence of the three [hypostases], he said:
- انا اوجبنا ان الكيان الغير مرئي والذي ليس بمركبي هو الثلاثة الطاهرة. We state that the invisible nature, which is not seen, is the Holy Trinity.
- καὶ τῆς μὲν ἀκτίστου φύσεως τὴν ἁγίαν τριάδα εἶναι διωρισάμεθα.⁷⁵
- 15 ومن قوله في رده على ما وضع اوناميس، قال: And from his saying in his *Refutation of what Eunomius exposed*, he said:
- في كيان الله اب وابن وروح قدس In the nature of God there is a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit.
- θεία δὲ φύσις ὁ πατήρ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.

73 Gregory of Nyssa, *Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius*, Sections 5, 8–6, 6.74 Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechetical Oration*, Chapter 3, 5–8.75 Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius*, Book I, chapter 1, section 295, 6–7.

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium

- 16 ثم ان اغريغوريوس الفاضل الذي استوجب ان يوصف
بناطق الالهيات بصدق منطقته على الله وشرفه في ميمرله
كتبه في نعت الفصح الطاهر دعوة منه لرعيته بعد قول كان
منهم اليه. قال:
من غير ان تجيبوا الدعوة الغريبة والمشورة بسرورها المفارقة
عن الحق،
المفضية عن الايمان الصحيح الثابت بالاب والابن والروح
القدس تلك اللاهوت الواحدة والقوة الواحدة.
μηδὲ ξένης φωνῆς ἀκούοντες, ὑποκλεπτούσης καὶ δια-
σπειρούσης ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας εἰς ὄρη.⁷⁶
καὶ ἀπὸ μὲν τῆς ὑγιούς πίστεως ἀπαγούσηςΚ, τῆς εἰς
Πατέρα, καὶ Υἱόν, καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, τὴν μίαν θεότητά
τε καὶ δύναμιν.⁷⁷
- 17 ومن قوله في ميمرله حيث وصف مصالحة الملائكة بعضهم
لبعض، قال:
فاما الباقون من هؤلاء فتأبون في كراماتهم التي انما عظم
خطرها لهدوءهم ومصالحتهم التي انما صاروا واحداً
بالثلاثية الممدوحة الطاهرة التي منها يستضون ويستنبرون
لانها الاله واحد غير مجحود لها ولا مدفوع.
οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ μένουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἀξίας, ἧς πρῶ-
τον τὸ εἰρηναῖον καὶ ἀστασίαστον, τὸ ἔν εἶναι λαβόντες
παρὰ τῆς ἐπαινετῆς καὶ ἀγίας Τριάδος, παρ' ἧς καὶ
τὴν ἔλλαμψιν. Ἐπεὶ ἀάκείνη εἷς Θεός ἐστὶ τε καὶ εἶναι
πιστεύεται.⁷⁸
- And Gregory the virtuous, who was correctly described the Theologian for his true doctrine on God and His honour, in his discourse that he wrote *On the Pure Easter*, replying to his church who had written to him, said:
Without accepting the foreign invitation, which is known that it hides the truth and separates from it,
and distracts from the right and firm faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the one God-head and one power.
And from his saying in his discourse where he described the reconciliation of the angels together, he said:
The rest of these [angels], however, remain in their dignity, the significance of which became very big because of their calm and peacefulness, in which they have become one through the praised Holy Trinity, from whom they received their light and are illuminated, because it [the Trinity] is one God, which can be neither denied nor rejected.

76 Gregory of Nazianzus, *First Oration on Easter (Or. 1)*, Section 7, 11–12 (PG 35: 401, 1–2).77 Gregory of Nazianzus, *First Oration on Easter (Or. 1)*, Section 7, 14–16 (PG 35: 401, 4–6).78 Gregory of Nazianzus, *First Oration on Peace (Or. 6)*, Section 13, 6–10 (PG 35: 740, 1–5).

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's Trinitarian Patristic Florilegium

18 ومن قوله في ميمرله على الميلاد الطاهر، قال: And from his saying in his discourse *On the Pure Nativity*, he said:

إذا ما انا وصفت الله فائما اعنى الاب والابن والروح القدس من غير ان تجوز اللاهوت هذه العدة. حذرا لان نصف جماعة الهة ولا تقتصر دونها فنصفها بمسكنة وضيق. When I describe God, I mean, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, without the Godhead exceeds this number [three]. We pay attention, [from one hand] to assert a multiplicity of gods, and [from the other] not to restrict ourselves to a smaller number, so we describe [the Godhead] with poverty and lack.

Θεοῦ δὲ ὅταν εἴπω, λέγω Πατρός, καὶ Υἱοῦ, καὶ ἁγίου Πνεύματος· οὔτε ὑπὲρ ταῦτα τῆς θεότητος χρομένης, ἵνα μὴ δῆμον θεῶν εἰσαγάγωμεν· οὔτε ἐντὸς τούτων ὀρίζομένης, ἵνα μὴ πενίαν θεότητος κατακρίθωμεν.⁷⁹

Comment on the previous quotations

فقد جاز ظني ان ادعوا الصم يسمعوا والعمى ليصروا فضلاً عن السمع والبصر فان كانت اللاهوت غير الاقانيم كرمكهم فكيف لا تصير الهة كثيرة بمجاز اللاهوت الى غير هذه العدة او صفة ان قصرت دونها كما شهد هذا الاب الطاهر. فتجاوزوا اللاهوت الى غير هذه العدة ان تصير الاقانيم الثلاثة اربعة او خمسة او اكثر من ذلك وصفا حرجاً ان يكون اقل من الثلاثة اى اثنين او واحد. فكيف يقبل اللاهوت زيادة او نقصاناً لمجاوزتها هذه العدة. والا فكيفنا دونها غير الاقانيم لديهم والاقانيم غيرها. وانما يوصف الشيء زائداً وناقصاً اذا ما قبل ذلك في عدد ذاته لا ذات غيره كما انه لا يزيد في عدد الملائكة ولا ينقصها ما يزيد في عدد البشر وينقص.

It is allowed for me, I think, to call the deaf to hear and the blind to see, let alone those hearing and seeing. Thus, if the Godhead was not the hypostases, as you pretend [i.e. Melkites], how, then, there is not a multitude of gods, that is, [how does] the Godhead not exceed towards a number other than this [i.e., three], or how does [the Godhead] not become inferior than this characteristic [of being Trinity], as this pure father witnessed? You, then, make the Godhead exceed towards a number other than this [i.e., three], so that the three hypostases become four or five or even more, [or exceed] towards an embarrassing characteristic, so that they become less than three, namely two or one. How then, does the Godhead receive increase or decrease by exceed towards a number other than this [i.e., three]? Otherwise, is its nature for them something else than its hypostases? Indeed, a thing is described to be increased or decreased [only] if it receives [increasing and decreasing] in the number of its own essence and not in the [number] of the essence of something else, just as when [we say that] the number of human beings increases and decreases: this does not mean that the number of the angels increases or decreases as well.

79 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration on the Nativity (Or. 38)*, Section 8, 14–17 (PG 36: 320, 21–25).

Abū Rā'īṭah presents his patristic quotations according to a chronological order, starting from the earliest Father to the most recent, after having selected them according to two criteria: 1) their content is on the subject he treats; 2) the selected Church Fathers are accepted by both Miaphysites and Melkites, as he declares in the introduction of another Christological florilegium he produced in another work.⁸³

A careful examination of the Arabic text provided by Abū Rā'īṭah and the Greek original reveals that he does not translate from the Greek, and even that he does not quote from the Fathers' works according to the complete version, as he relies on a previous Syriac translation of patristic quotations. In fact, the peculiar way Abū Rā'īṭah quotes the Fathers is similar to that of the florilegia and their sources, like Severus of Antioch's *Against the Grammarian* and Peter of Callinicum's *Against Damian*.⁸⁴ He starts by mentioning the name of the Father, sometimes with an appellation, then the title of the work; sometimes, although not consistently as in the florilegia and in their sources, he adds precise details regarding the quotation, i.e. from which book and/or chapter the relevant passage is quoted. In addition, as the florilegia and their sources do, when the next quotation is from the same Father, Abū Rā'īṭah simply writes "and from his saying" (ومن قوله), without repeating the Father's name.

Quotation number 7 is an important indication that Abū Rā'īṭah selected his patristic quotations from a pre-existing florilegium/source. After mentioning that the next quotation is from the same previous Father, i.e., Athanasius, and after having given the title of the quoted work, Abū Rā'īṭah says: "he [Athanasius] said after a while" (قال بعد قليل), which is probably how he translates in Arabic the Syriac "ܘܗܘ ܐܘܬܢܐ ܡܘܨܪܐܘܬܐ ܡܘܨܪܐܘܬܐ". In fact, usually when the compiler of a florilegium or an author like Severus or Peter of Callinicum quotes more than one passage from the same work, the second passage is usually indicated through expressions like the already mentioned "ܘܗܘ ܐܘܬܢܐ ܡܘܨܪܐܘܬܐ", "ܘܗܘ ܐܘܬܢܐ ܡܘܨܪܐܘܬܐ" (and

paper concerning his Trinitarian doctrine and its relation to the Muslim doctrine on the divine attributes, where I also refer to his metaphysical principle, that is, that the hypostases are the substance, and the substance is the hypostases, Ebeid, "Abū Rā'īṭah".

⁸³ "وقد ينبغي لنا ان نتبع هذا القول ببعض شهادات بعض الآباء الطاهرة المقبولة من المؤمنين عامة ومن ابى قرة واشياعه"

Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 83 (text). See also Ebeid, "Miaphysite," 246–247.

⁸⁴ Cf. Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*; Peter of Callinicum, *Against Damian*. See also van Roey, "Un florilège trinitaire," and Giuseppe Furlani, "Un florilegio antitrinitario in lingua siriana," *Atti del Regio Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* 1X, 8 [83] (1924): 661–677.

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's text (see previous table)	Florilegium's text
<p>ومن قوله ان الاب والابن والروح القدس الاله الاجناد هو الرب. فانما نسيح للاب والابن والروح القدس. وكذلك نعمد باسم الاب والابن والروح القدس هو الرب ذو الاجناد.</p>	<p>And when the cherubim praise God three times, saying 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaoth, they praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And that is why we are baptised [in the name of the Holy Ghost] just as we are in the name of the Father and of the Son; [and we become sons of God and not sons of Gods]. For the Lord Sabaoth is the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. For the Godhead is one and three is one God.⁹⁰</p>
<p>8 ثم ان باسيلوس [الطاهر الذي احاطت عنايته باقطار الارض حتى صارت باسرها ممتلئة بين عينيه] في ميمر كتبه في الايمان [وصف فيه تفاوت ادراك الله واعتلائه عن كل درك قال:]</p>	<p>And after a few things The Lord Sabaoth, therefore is the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.⁹²</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>...]</p>

90 Peter of Callinicum, *Against Damian*, 4: Chapter XLVII, 143–149.
91 MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 13^v.
92 Peter of Callinicum, *Against Damian*, 4: Chapter XLVII, 149–150.

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's text (see previous table)	Florilegium's text
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ان الابن موصوف مثالا للاب مولودا منه لانه
شعاع مجد الله وقوة وحكمة وبر لا كالمكتسب ولا
كالمملوك لا بل جوهر حي فاعل.

...
...
...
...
...
...⁹⁵

Of the same from the *Second [Discourse] against Eunomius*

The Son is said and he is begotten image, he is the replenishment of the glory of God, the Wisdom, Power and Justice of God, not by way of possession or of quality, but he is living and active substance [and the shining of the glory of God. This is why he shows in himself the whole Father, whose entire glory shines in him].⁹⁶

10 ومن قول في رسالة كانت منه الى اغريغوريس اخيه
في فرق ما بين الجوهر والاقنوم [قال:
لا يعجب من وصفنا الله بعينه متوحدا
والثاما متفرقا

...
...
...
...⁹⁷

Of Saint Basil from the *Letter to his brother on substance and hypostasis*

But do not be surprised if we say the same thing is both united [and divided, and if we discover some new and paradoxical, as it were enigmatical, united separation] and separated conjunction.⁹⁸

95 MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 16^r.

96 This passage could not be found in Peter of Callinicum's *Against Damian*; thus, the translation is mine.

97 MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 14^r.

98 Peter of Callinicum, *Against Damian*, 4: Chapter XLVIII, 154–157.

way by Abū Rāʾīṭah; f) only one part of the last quotation, i.e. no. 20, is found in the Syriac florilegium; and finally, g) both texts, the Arabic and the Syriac, are almost in total agreement as to the rubrics that introduce the quotations.

Some of these remarks (especially f), as well as the fact that some of Abū Rāʾīṭah's quotations are not found in the Syriac Trinitarian florilegium of MS BL Add. 12155, might lead one to affirm that our author did not use this specific florilegium as a source for his patristic quotations. Before coming to such conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the Syriac quotations of the previous table belong to three chapters in the aforementioned Trinitarian florilegium, namely chapters 30, 31, and 39, which deal with the main metaphysical question in Abū Rāʾīṭah's polemical writing, which affirms that 'God is the three hypostases and the three hypostases are God'. In the following three tables, I shall present each chapter's title and its patristic quotations. The quotations present in Abū Rāʾīṭah's *Refutation of the Melkites* are colored:

1) Chapter 30 (ܐܘܪܘܚܐ ܕܘܚܪܐ), BL Add. 12155, 13^r-14^r

Title	Patristic quotations
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Ps.-Basil of Caesarea, <i>Homily on Faith</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>First Oration on Easter (Or. 1)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>First Oration on Easter (Or. 1)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>First Oration on Peace (Or. 6)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Nativity (Or. 38)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Spirit (Or. 31)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on Himself (Or. 26)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Lights (Or. 39)</i>
ܕܥܘܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Lights (Or. 39)</i>
Demonstrations of the holy Fathers who teach that the substance and the nature of the Holy Trinity, which is the Godhead, is the three hypostases of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that the substance is not one thing, i.e. the Godhead, and the hypostases are another thing. ¹¹⁴	Ps.-Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>On Incarnation and against the Arians</i>
	Ps.-Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>On Incarnation and against the Arians</i>
	Ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, <i>On Faith in Parts</i>
	Ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, <i>On Faith in Parts</i>
	Ps.-John Chrysostom, <i>On the Holy Trinity</i>
	Epiphanius of Salamis, <i>Panarion</i>
	Epiphanius of Salamis, <i>Panarion</i>
	Cyril of Alexandria, <i>On Worship in Spirit and Truth</i>
Severus of Antioch, <i>Cathedral Homily 42</i>	
Severus of Antioch, <i>Letter to Eupraxius Cubicularius</i>	
Severus of Antioch, <i>Letter to Eupraxius Cubicularius</i>	
Severus of Antioch, <i>Letter to Isidore the Count</i>	
Theodosius of Alexandria, <i>On the Holy Trinity</i>	

114 The English translation is mine.

(cont.)

Title	Patristic quotations
Father, Son and Holy Ghost as names or characteristic properties of hypostases. And the examination of patristic statements which lay it down is that the same divine mystery is at once united and divided, both one and not one. ¹⁶²	<p>Theodosius of Alexandria, <i>On the Holy Trinity</i> Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 52</i> Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>First Oration against Julian</i> (Or. 4) Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Against Eunomius</i> Cyril of Alexandria, <i>Dialogues on the Holy Trinity</i> Cyril of Alexandria, <i>Dialogues on the Holy Trinity</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Critique of Julian's Tome</i> Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 38</i> Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Spirit</i> (Or. 31) Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Third Oration on Peace</i> (Or. 23) Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration to Hero the Philosopher</i> (Or. 25) Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i> Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Catechetical Oration</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Cathedral Homily 70</i></p>

This is not the place to discuss the relationship between the Trinitarian florilegium and *Against Damian*; it is evident, however, that there is a link between them and Abū Rāʾīṭah. To better understand the relationship between our author, the Trinitarian Syriac florilegia and their main sources, see in the following page Table 6.1 that summarises the results of the comparative analysis presented above.

A careful comparison between Abū Rāʾīṭah's text, Peter of Callinicum's work and the quotations in the Trinitarian florilegium leads to the following remarks: a) the length of the quotations in Abū Rāʾīṭah's text is almost the same as in the florilegium; b) quotations 1, 2, 6, 7, 15 and 17 are missing in the florilegium while present in *Against Damian*; c) quotations 14 and 19 are missing in both the florilegium and *Against Damian*; d) quotation 9 is present in the florilegium but missing from *Against Damian*; e) since the quotations found in Peter's work come from three chapters of his third book, the hypothesis that quotations 9, 14 and 19 could be found in the missing parts of *Against Damian* is not reasonable; f) quotation 20 is present completely in *Against Damian*, but partially in the florilegium; g) quotations 10 and 11 are two passages taken from letter

¹⁶² Peter of Callinicum, *Against Damian*, 4: Chapter XLVIII, 1–12.

TABLE 6.1 Trinitarian Florilegia and their main sources

	Abū Rā'īṭah's patristic quotations	Quotations in MS BL Add. 12155	Quotations in <i>Against Damian</i>
1	Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, <i>The Divine Names</i> , II.1	–	Book III, ch. 47
2	Ps.-Dionysius the Areopagite, <i>The Divine Names</i> , XIII.3	–	Book III, ch. 47
	Comment by Abū Rā'īṭah on the previous		
3	Ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, <i>On Faith in Parts</i>	Chapter n. 30	Book III, ch. 47
4	Ps.-Gregory Thaumaturgus, <i>On Faith in Parts</i>	Chapter n. 30	Book III, ch. 47
5	Ps.-Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>On the Incarnation and against the Arians</i>	Chapter n. 30	Book III, ch. 47
6	Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>First Letter to Serapion</i>	–	Book III, ch. 47
7	Ps.-Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Sermo Major on Faith</i>	–	Book III, ch. 47
8	Ps.-Basil of Caesarea, <i>Homily on Faith</i>	Chapter n. 30	Book III, ch. 44
9	Basil of Caesarea, <i>Against Eunomius</i>	Chapter n. 39	–
	Comment by Abū Rā'īṭah on the previous		
10	Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 38</i>	Chapter n. 31	Book III, ch. 48
11	Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 38</i>	Chapter n. 31	Book III, ch. 48
12	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i>	Chapter n. 31	Book III, ch. 48
13	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Catechetical Oration</i>	Chapter n. 31	Book III, ch. 48
14	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Against Eunomius</i>	–	–
15	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i>	–	Book III, ch. 47
16	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>First Oration on Easter (Or. 1)</i>	Chapter n. 30	Book III, ch. 47
17	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>First Oration on Peace (Or. 6)</i>	–	Book III, ch. 47
18	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Nativity (Or. 38)</i>	Chapter n. 30	Book III, ch. 47
	Comment by Abū Rā'īṭah on the previous		
19	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>On Pentecost (Or. 41)</i>	–	–
20	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Spirit (Or. 31)</i>	Chapter n. 30 (part.)	Book III, ch. 47

38 attributed to Basil of Caesarea, present as one unique passage in *Against Damian*, but separate in the Trinitarian florilegium as in Abū Rā'īṭah's text, as is evident in the following table:

Abū Rā'īṭah's text

Against Damian's text

Don't you see in the saying of this virtuous father that he describes the whole of the most high Godhead, that is, the three hypostases, as life and he affirms it? If the hypostases were not the Godhead, how could he affirm that the whole of the most high Godhead is life, since the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all life? And moreover, how the Godhead [who is] above all would be three if they [*scil.* the Melkites] affirm that it is something else than the hypostases?¹⁶³

For Dionysius, hearer of the apostolic voice and especially rich in the knowledge of divine and profound thoughts, who had felled with exact theology most of the absurd heresies before they appeared, clearly destroyed this one too, their queen (so to say), the oldest of them and even perhaps indeed the wickedest of them all, for could anyone discover a worse blasphemy against God? For saying: "The whole Godhead possesses lordship over all", and professing it Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is nothing but uprooting from the very foundations the new-fangled insanity which godlessly makes the Godhead in the full sense 'something other' than Father Son and Holy Ghost. Look, then at what he says: "But because the whole Godhead possesses lordship over all by virtue of Godhead, whether paternal or filial, it would, I think, be impossible to say how often in the theology the word 'Lord' is resoundingly proclaimed of the Father and of the Son: but the Lord too is the Spirit". And let us look at the other passage: "Therefore, he says, thought the all-transcending Godhead is glorified as unity and trinity". And in what way is the all-transcending Godhead a trinity when (according to the dangerous teaching of the wise in themselves) it is something other than the three hypostases, since they can nowhere show us any Trinity except Father, Son and Holy Ghost?¹⁶⁴

All these observations led us to the following hypotheses concerning the sources of Abū Rā'īṭah's patristic quotations in his *Refutation of the Melkites*: 1) Abū Rā'īṭah had more than one source; 2) it is plausible that he was in direct or at least in indirect relation with the copyist(s) of the Trinitarian florilegium attested in MS BL Add. 12155 and copied in other manuscripts in a shorter version;¹⁶⁵ and therefore, 3) he knew the text of *Against Damian*, which is one of the main sources of this florilegium, and he used it for the purposes of his

163 The English translation is mine.

164 Peter of Callinicum, *Against Damian*, 4: 340, 85–105.

165 It must be mentioned that during Abū Rā'īṭah's life, that is, during the patriarchate of Cyriacus, his city was a center where manuscripts of different theological, ascetical, liturgical, and other content were produced and copied; for more details, see Wood, *The Imam*, 125–126.

polemical work. This hypothesis can be supported by the fact that in his arguments, syllogisms, and analogies, Abū Rā'īṭah uses the content of the chapter titles of the florilegium, and indirectly refers to some patristic material contained in these chapters. The following table compares some of Abū Rā'īṭah's statements with the titles of some chapters of the florilegium¹⁶⁶ and the content of their patristic quotations:¹⁶⁷

Abū Rā'īṭah's statement	Chapter title in Florilegium	Quoted Fathers and works	Main topics of quotations
<p>لان الواحد الموصوف منا ثلاثة ليس بمعدود في وحدته. لان وحدانيته ماهية الاقائيم بعينها ووجودها التي يجري عليها العدد لقوام ذات خاصه كل واحد منها الذي به صار معدودا.¹⁶⁸</p>	<p>Chapter 31 (fol. 14^{rv})</p> <p>حل في وحدته ما هي الاقائيم التي يجري عليها العدد لقوام ذات خاصه كل واحد منها الذي به صار معدودا.</p>	<p>Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 38</i> Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 38</i> Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Spirit (Or. 31)</i> Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Third Oration on Peace (Or. 23)</i> Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration to Hero the philosopher (Or. 25)</i> Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i> Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i> Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Catechetical Oration</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Cathedral Homily 70</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Letter to John and John the Priests and Abbots</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Letter to John and John the Priests and Abbots</i></p>	<p>God has paradoxically union and division.</p> <p>For as to the concept of substance God is one but by virtue of the properties, which are indicative of hypostases, He is divided into Father, Son and Holy Spirit: inseparably divided and un-confusedly united.</p> <p>The same thing (God) is both numbered and yet avoids number.</p> <p>The Trinity is numerable as to the hypostases but outside number because it is one and the same substance.</p>
<p>Because the One, described by us as three, is not numbered as far as his unity is concerned, since his oneness is the constitutive substantial element (quiddity) of the hypostases themselves and of their existence. The number is applied to the hypostases because each has its own property through which it is subsistent and becomes numbered.</p>	<p>We say that what is united and what is separated are the same, and that the three are one according to Godhead and the one is three according to properties and that He is one and not one, and that the same is numbered and escapes from number.</p>		

166 The English translations are mine.

167 This table is based on Ebeid, "Metaphysics of Trinity," 100–109.

168 Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 113–114 (text).

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's statement	Chapter title in Florilegium	Quoted Fathers and works	Main topics of quotations
فلتنظر ما الصفات التي لا يجوز ان يوصف بها احد سوى الله تبارك اسمه على الوجه الربوي الحقيقي لا لحال مشاركة غيره ولا باستعارة من القول. فن صفة الله الحقيقية المتفق عليها انه جوهر بسيط حي لم يزل ولا يزال على كل غير محدود من شيء علم حكيم خالق باري نور خير فعال لما يريد مالك الكل. فما رأيكم اتصفحون عن ذنب من وصف الاقائيم بهذه الصفات على ما وصف الله بها على الوجه الربوي ... فان صفحتهم عن وصف الاقائيم بهذه الصفات فمختلفون انتم بذلك لصدق وصفه اياها بها. فاحذ الامر من اما ان تكون الاقائيم هي الجوهر نفسه والجوهر الاقائيم ليصير من ذلك بعينها واحد وثلاثة. واما ان يكون غير الجوهر فتصير بذلك الهة أربعة ¹⁶⁹ ... فالأقائيم موصوفة بكل صفات الله منوعة بها على النحو الذي يجوز وصفها به لوجوده فيها واشتراكها فيه. ¹⁷⁰	Chapter 77 (fol. 26 ^{rv}) جلس مع صدقة صحة صحة صحة صحة	Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i> Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter 214</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>	Each hypostasis participates in the concept of the substance, that is, manifests the common characteristics of the substance to which it belongs, and in addition manifests the particular properties. Hypostasis is not the substance, since the latter comprehends all hypostases belonging to it. The hypostases that participate in the same concept of substance have as common the same natural characteristics but differentiate through the particular properties. The participated concept of substance is seen in all its hypostases; therefore, they are equal. God is three according to the hypostases, but one according to the concept of substance.
Let us see the attributes with which nothing except God (his name be praised!) can be described according to [his] being truly Lord and	Chapter 78 (fol. 26 ^v) صحة صحة صحة	Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Against Eunomius</i> Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Lights (Or. 39)</i> Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i>	

¹⁶⁹ Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 116 (text).¹⁷⁰ Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 117 (text).

(cont.)

Abū Rā'īṭah's statement	Chapter title in Florilegium	Quoted Fathers and works	Main topics of quotations
<p>not according to [his] sharing [attributes] of the other [beings] nor according to allegory. Among the true and agreed-on attributes of God are the following: that he is simple substance, living, eternal, unlimited, knowing everything, wise, creator, light, good, acting as he wants, and omnipotent. What do you think, then, would you forgive the error of those who described the hypostases through these attributes by which God is described according to his being Lord? ... If you forgive the description of the hypostases through these attributes, you would be contradictory, for in this way you would have validated the description [of hypostases] through these [attributes]. Thus, [you have to choose] one of two things: that the hypostases are the substance itself, and the substance is the hypostases, and therefore he is one and three [at the same time], or that the substance is not the hypostases and there are four gods ...</p>	<p>Chapter 41 (fol. 17^r)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> ܠܗ ܕܘܢܝܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ </p>	<p>Basil of Caesarea, <i>Against Eunomius</i> Peter of Callinicum, <i>Against Damian</i></p>	<p>The characteristics and properties with which God is described, like light, goodness and so on, are understood outside of the substance, therefore God is simple and not composite or compounded.</p>
<p>The hypostases, then, are described with all the attributes of God according to the way God is described with them, since he exists in the [hypostases] and because the [hypostases] share in him.</p>	<p>On the fact that the indicative modes of the property do not damage [God's] condition of simplicity and that the characteristic properties are understood outside of the substance.</p> <p>Chapter 47 (ff. 18^v–19^r)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܘܬܐ </p> <p>How Basil conceives of the common of the substance (τὸ κοινὸν τῆς οὐσίας).</p>	<p>Basil of Caesarea, <i>Against Eunomius</i> Basil of Caesarea, <i>Against Eunomius</i></p>	<p>The same is applied to the properties of the hypostases, but not to the hypostases themselves.</p> <p>Therefore, those who acknowledge as hypostases the characteristic properties of the hypostases must say that the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit is not light, life or goodness at all, but accompanies the light, being understood outside the substance.</p> <p>The three divine hypostases share the same substance; therefore, the characteristics of the divine nature, like light, goodness and so on, may be said of all three.</p>

4 The Patristic Florilegia as the Main Source for Abū Rāʾīṭah's *Introductory Letter*

It is known that, between the years 815 and 817, the Melkite bishop of Ḥar-rān Abū Qurrah went to Armenia on a mission to convince the Armenians to abandon the Miaphysite teaching and accept the doctrine of Chalcedon.¹⁷¹ According to Michael the Syrian¹⁷² and some other Armenian sources as the *Chronicle of Vardan* (1271),¹⁷³ the Armenian prince Ašot Smbāt Msaker asked for an advice from the Syrian Orthodox patriarch Cyriacus, who chose a close relative of Abū Rāʾīṭah, the archdeacon Nonnus of Nisibis, to be sent to the Armenians. According to another version, however, the same Ašot asked Abū Rāʾīṭah to come and defend the Miaphysite teaching in the presence of Abū Qurrah, but Abū Rāʾīṭah, for some unclear reason, refused to go to Armenia¹⁷⁴ and sent Nonnus of Nisibis instead. In any case, since Nonnus was young and without great experience in disputing and confuting other Christians, he asked for aid from his relative and teacher Abū Rāʾīṭah, who wrote a letter of introduction for him to read before Ašot. In this letter, our author apologises for not coming in person and exposes his defence of the Miaphysite doctrine against the teaching of the Chalcedonians represented by Abū Qurrah. The meeting took place sometime between 813 and 817. After hearing Nonnus and the letter from Abū Rāʾīṭah, the prince, Ašot, who had initially accepted Abū Qurrah and his Chalcedonian doctrine, was won back to Miaphysitism and rejected Chalcedonianism. In addition, it is known that, after this event, Abū Rāʾīṭah wrote another work against the doctrine of the Melkites and, as he says, against the false claims made by Abū Qurrah.¹⁷⁵ A careful examination of the topics in both

171 We know that, in the year 812, the Patriarch of Jerusalem Thomas (d. 820) asked Abū Qurrah to write a letter to be sent to the king of the Armenians, which was also sent to the Byzantine emperor and translated into Greek. After this event, we know that the same Abū Qurrah started a mission among the Miaphysites in Egypt, Syria and then Armenia to convert them to Chalcedonianism. For more details, see John C. Lamoreaux, "Theodore Abū Qurrah," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History Volume 1 (600–900)* (ed. D. Thomas and B. Roggema; HCMRhips 11; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 439–491, here 439.

172 For details, see Keating, *Defending*, 38–40.

173 Cf. Keating, *Defending*, 36–38.

174 For possible reasons, see Keating's opinion in *Defending*, 36.

175 According to one tradition, Abū Rāʾīṭah met and discussed with Abū Qurrah and one Nestorian theologian, a Metropolitan from the Church of the East whose name was 'Abdīšū' (probably 'Abdīšū' ibn Bahrīz), at the court of an unnamed Muslim vizier. If such an event truly occurred, it should probably be dated to 820, cf. Keating, *Defending*, 348–351.

letters shows that, in the first letter, Abū Rā'īṭah deals with some of the topics on which Abū Qurrah had written in his *Epistle to the Armenians*¹⁷⁶ before his mission to Armenia, a fact that demonstrates that our author had some—probably indirect—knowledge of the content of Abū Qurrah's letter.¹⁷⁷ At the meeting before Aṣot, it seems that Abū Qurrah treated further doctrinal points, especially the addition Miaphysites made to the Trisagion hymn,¹⁷⁸ and therefore, once Abū Rā'īṭah knew about these topics from Nonnus, he wrote the second letter where he dealt with them.¹⁷⁹

As Sandra Keating notes, it might be true that Abū Qurrah's mission to Armenia had a political dimension. The Armenian prince Aṣot, who managed to obtain a level of autonomy for his country and thus controlled his lands between the years 804 and 826 by showing loyalty to the Abbasid Caliphate, had himself started to worry about the increasing number of conversions to Islam among the Armenians; therefore, he probably saw in Abū Qurrah's mission a good step to improve relations with Byzantium and ask the Byzantine emperor for help and assistance.¹⁸⁰ Such a fact, with the support of other elements,¹⁸¹ led Keating to suggest that Abū Rā'īṭah had expected that his *Introductory letter* “would be heard by Muslims as well as Christians, and perhaps even by those Christians who were being swayed by the message of Islam”.¹⁸² In conclusion, she leaves the reader with the idea that Abū Rā'īṭah's aim was not simply to refute the Chalcedonian doctrine but also to convince his readers that the “Cyrillian Christological formulation is less vulnerable to Islamic critique than that of Chalcedon”.¹⁸³

I do not entirely reject Keating's opinion on the *Introductory letter*;¹⁸⁴ however, my analysis highlights the importance of reading our author's intra-Chris-

176 For an English translation of this letter to the Armenians, see John C. Lamoreaux, *Theodore Abū Qurrah* (Eastern Christian Texts 1; Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 83–95.

177 Cf. Keating, *Defending*, 44.

178 See Abū Qurrah's polemics against the Theopsaschism of the Miaphysites, where he also refutes this addition, Lamoreaux, *Theodore*, 115–117.

179 Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 73–87. See also my analysis of this letter in Ebeid, “Miaphysite,” 237–269.

180 Cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 41.

181 Cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 45–47 and footnote 30 on p. 47.

182 Cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 47.

183 Cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 53.

184 In fact, her remark on the presence of some Islamic and Quranic terminology in the *Introductory letter* is a very important element, cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 47–49, which reveals, in my view, the reciprocal influence between Muslims and Christians and the attempt to create a common linguistic (and even philosophical) code.

tian polemics against the Melkites, and in this case, the *Introductory letter*, within the Miaphysite tradition of controversy against the Chalcedonians from the sixth to the eighth century, particularly in relation to the florilegia. In fact, this had already been partially noted by Keating and especially by Benevich,¹⁸⁵ when they affirmed that, in order to better understand some of Abū Rā'īṭah's doctrines, one should take into consideration Abū Qurrah's polemics against the Miaphysites. Only within this tradition is it possible to discover the theological, philosophical, and more generally intellectual purport of Abū Rā'īṭah's writings. In particular, I would like to show that some of the elements considered by Keating as "revealing keys" of the hidden anti-Islamic agenda of Abū Rā'īṭah's *Introductory letter*, as his attention for Trinitarian topics, are in fact traditional theological elements used by Miaphysites in their polemics against Chalcedonians, clearly connecting our author to his patristic sources, especially to the Trinitarian florilegium. Moreover, the fact that Abū Rā'īṭah wrote a second letter on the addition to the Trisagion hymn (considered by the Chalcedonians as a sign of Theopaschism) does not support Keating's hypothesis, since Abū Rā'īṭah provides liturgical and patristic material as a proof; this was of no interest at all to Muslims, and it deals with a doctrine which was unacceptable *a priori* for them,¹⁸⁶ that is, the death of God in the flesh.

The *Introductory letter* has two main polemical aims against the Melkites and their objections to the Miaphysites, also clearly found among the arguments of Abū Qurrah's *Epistle to the Armenians*:¹⁸⁷ 1) the substance is the hypostases, and the hypostases are the substance; 2) the divinity in Christ is perfect even if the incarnate was one hypostasis of the Trinity. It must be mentioned that, from a Miaphysite perspective, the second topic was the reason for developing the metaphysical ground of the first. As Krausmüller notes,¹⁸⁸ Severus of Antioch started reflecting on this topic in his *Against the Grammarian*, which led him to develop the concept of the substance as the sum total of its hypostases. However, he could not make a clear distinction between the intensional and extensional meanings of the substance, that is, between the substance as a "common concept" and the substance as the "sum total of all hypostases". The dilemma on the intensional and extensional understanding

185 Cf. Keating, "Habīb," 42–44; Benevich, "Christliche Trinitätslehre," 161–162.

186 On this topic, Abū Rā'īṭah wrote two works, see Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 73–87 and 88–93 (text). See also my analysis of their content in Ebeid, "Miaphysite," 237–245.

187 See Lamoreaux, *Theodore*, 84–89.

188 See Krausmüller, "Properties Participating."

of the substance was also a major topic in the controversy between Peter of Callinicum and Damian of Alexandria,¹⁸⁹ as shown in my analysis of the shorter version of the Trinitarian florilegium,¹⁹⁰ the dilemma was solved with the doctrine of the “Monarchy of the substance”, i.e., by developing a dialectical relationship between the extensional and intensional understanding of the substance.

Concerning the first point, Abū Rāʾīṭah writes as follows:

God is one substance, one glory, one power and one action and [one] in the rest of his substantial attributes. He is three hypostases, subsistent and established in their properties, the Father in his fatherhood, the Son in his sonship and the Spirit in his procession. Therefore, and without a doubt, the one is the three and the three are the one, which is a paradox, as the pure Gregory the Theologian and other Fathers have said, on which there is agreement and not disagreement.¹⁹¹

It is evident that Abū Rāʾīṭah's arguments here are similar to those presented in his *Refutation of the Melkites*. In addition, and as a proof of the correctness of his opinion, he mentions that his argument is based on the doctrine of Gregory the Theologian and other universally recognised Fathers.¹⁹² As previously seen, Abū Rāʾīṭah applied this criterion, that is referring to Fathers accepted by both Melkites and Miaphysites, to his selection of patristic quotations in the *Refutation of the Melkites*. Upon observing the relationship between our author and the Trinitarian florilegium, I examined the quotations from Gregory Nazianzen in the florilegium and came to the following conclusions.

189 Regarding this, see Zachhuber's analysis in *The Rise*, 170–183; see also my analysis in Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity,” 119–120.

190 See Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity,” 121–125.

191 “الاه واحد جوهر واحد ومجد واحد وقوة واحدة وفعل واحد وغير ذلك من الصفات الجوهريات اقانيم ثلاثة بخواصها ثابتة الاب بابوته والابن بابنيته والروح بانبثاقه. فالواحد هو الثلاثة لا امترئ والثلاثة هي الواحد بلا شك قولاً معجباً كما قال ذو النطق الإلهي اغريغوريوس الطاهر وغيره من الإباء المجتمع عليها ولا المختلف عليها”

Abū Rāʾīṭah, *The Writings*, 68–69 (text). The English translation is mine.

192 Even if Keating considered the presence of patristic references in Abū Rāʾīṭah's work and tried to identify some passages, she did not make an in-depth analysis in this regard; cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 50–51.

In chapter 31 of the florilegium, there are three quotations from Gregory that agree with the argument presented above by Abū Rā'īṭah. In addition, the quotation of Basil the Great in the same chapter, just to give one example, could be one of those quotations to which our author alludes referring to the Fathers accepted by both Melkites and Miaphysites:

Chapter 31 (ⲗⲉ ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓⲁ)

Title	Quoted Fathers, works and main topics
MS BL 12155, fol. 14 ^v	Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter</i> 38: ¹⁹⁴
<p>ⲉⲡ ⲛⲁ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲁⲓ</p>	<p>But do not be surprised if we say that the same thing is both united and divided. It is paradoxical to affirm a united separation and a separated conjunction. Basil of Caesarea, <i>Letter</i> 38 Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on the Holy Spirit (Or. 37)</i>:¹⁹⁵ Three are one as to the Godhead, and one is three as to the properties.</p>
<p>We say that what is united and what is separated are the same, and that the three are one according to the Godhead and the one is three according to properties and that He is one and not one, and that the same is numbered and escapes from number.¹⁹³</p>	<p>Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Third Oration on Peace (Or. 23)</i>:¹⁹⁶ The paradox in the Godhead is being one separately and separated unitedly. Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration to Hero the Philosopher (Or. 25)</i>:¹⁹⁷ There is one unity adored in a Trinity and a Trinity in a unity, having at the same time, paradoxically, division and union. Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Refutation of the Confession of Faith of Eunomius</i> Gregory of Nyssa, <i>Catechetical Oration</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Cathedral Homily 70</i> Severus of Antioch, <i>Letter to John and John the Priests and Abbots</i></p>

Abū Rā'īṭah did not cite these three passages by Gregory Nazianzen in his *Refutation of the Melkites*, but he did cite other passages from the same chapter 31

193 The English translation is mine.
 194 Section 4, 87–91.
 195 Section 9, 12–16.
 196 PG 35: 1160, 30–38.
 197 PG 35: 1221, 43–46.

(e.g., those from Basil and Gregory of Nyssa). The fact that he refers indirectly to the content of these passages of the Nazianzen in the *Introductory letter* proves again that his source was either chapter 31 of the florilegium or the sources from which the compilers of the florilegium had drawn their materials. In fact, here too as in the *Refutation of the Melkites*, Abū Rā'īṭah concludes that if the hypostases and the substance were not the same thing, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit should be three different things and the substance a fourth thing, which leads one to affirm four gods, i.e., a quaternity.¹⁹⁸

In addition, by affirming that the three hypostases are the same substance, that is, the extensional understanding of the substance, one might avoid any idea of division in God. According to Keating, this affirmation is an answer to the Islamic accusation of Tritheism against Christians. In her argumentation, she also affirms that Abū Rā'īṭah's aim is to confirm the oneness of the divine substance and that the hypostases are not to be regarded as individual gods, but as eternal properties.¹⁹⁹ However, if we read Abū Rā'īṭah within the context of his tradition, we will reach a different conclusion. Firstly, one should note that Abū Rā'īṭah bases his argumentation on the concept of “māhiyyat al-ḡawhar,”²⁰⁰ which literally means “the whatness of the substance.”²⁰¹ I think that, with this expression, he is referring to the “common of the substance”, in other words, the “constituent element of the substance/being”, that is, the intensional understanding of the substance. With this argument, our author adopts the dialectical relationship between the two ways of understanding the substance proposed by the Trinitarian florilegium for the (re-) formulation of the Miaphysite metaphysical system.²⁰²

Moreover, Abū Rā'īṭah refers to Basil the Great to better support his position and affirms that the three hypostases are one as to light but three as to the persons.²⁰³ Then, he goes on to say the following:

Light and light and light without division or separation in light, and the light itself is three persons. That each one of them is subsistent does not

198 Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 69 (text).

199 Cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 50–51.

200 Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 69–70 (text).

201 Note that Sidney Griffith, following Georg Graf, translated this technical term as “whatness” (cf. Griffith, “Habīb,” 180), whereas Keating translated it as “quiddity” (cf. Keating, “Rationality,” 165). See also Benevich's comment on this term, in Benevich, “Christliche Trinitätslehre,” 162–163, who considers it, correctly, as the abstract reality and translates it with “essence”.

202 See Ebeid, “Metaphysics of Trinity,” 121–125.

203 Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 70 (text).

mean that the unity of their light or their sameness is divided, as well as their sameness and their unity do not cancel that each one of the persons is subsistent.²⁰⁴

Once again, an examination of the Trinitarian florilegium reveals its direct relationship with our author. Indeed, in chapter 46 of the florilegium, we find two quotations, one from Theodosius of Alexandria's *On the Holy Trinity*, where he refers to Basil the Great, and the other from Basil's *Against Eunomius*. In both quotations, Basil uses the same arguments that Abū Rā'īṭah presents, shown above, and attributes to this Cappadocian Father:²⁰⁵

Chapter 46 (صحة معلوم)

Title	Quoted Fathers and works
MS BL 12155, fol. 18 ^{rv}	Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>On Theology</i> (Or. 20)
<p> ܐܘܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ ܕܥܢܘܡܝܘܣ </p> <p>How we pre-serve the con-fession of one God and of three hypostases.²⁰⁶</p>	<p>Theodosius of Alexandria, referring to Basil in his <i>On the Holy Trinity</i>, I, 157–161.²⁰⁷</p> <p>God is one substance and three hypostases.</p> <p>Each hypostasis is distinguished from the other hypostases through its own property.</p> <p>The confession of one substance and the properties of the persons.</p> <p>Basil of Caesarea, <i>Against Eunomius</i>:²⁰⁸</p> <p>The substance is common, the properties are characteristics and modes of existence for the hypostases.</p> <p>Light is the Father, light is the Son, unbegotten is the Father, begotten is the Son.</p> <p>Light is common, begottenness and unbegottenness are proper.</p> <p>The properties do not divide the unity of the substance.</p> <p>The properties do not indicate that each hypostasis is different, as to the substance, from the other hypostasis like bird, pedestrian animal, rational being and irrational being.²⁰⁹</p>

²⁰⁴ "فنور ونور ونور غير متجزئة في النور ولا متبضعة والنور بعينه اشخاص ثلاثة. وليس قوام كل واحد منها بالذي يجزى توحيد نورها واتفاقها ولا اتفاقها وتوحيدها بالذي يبطل قوام الأشخاص"

Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 68–69 (text). The English translation is mine.

²⁰⁵ Graf could not identify any passage similar to what Abū Rā'īṭah attributes to Basil, cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 88, n. 1 (text).

²⁰⁶ The English translation is mine.

²⁰⁷ 154, 163–170.

²⁰⁸ PG 29: 637, 21–44.

²⁰⁹ This last topic was also used in Abū Rā'īṭah's argumentation in *The Writings*, 69 (text).

Therefore, thanks to the double understanding of the concept of substance, Abū Rā'īṭah could answer the main Christological issue that Chalcedonians usually highlighted in their polemics against the Miaphysites, which, as I mentioned, had led Severus of Antioch to start reflecting on the meaning of the concept of substance. However, if one affirms that the substance is the three hypostases and professes that God became man and that Christ is perfect God and perfect man, he consequently affirms that either the three divine hypostases were incarnate, which is a blasphemy that contradicts the Holy Scriptures, or asserts that one third of the Trinity was incarnate, and therefore, the divinity in Christ was not perfect, which is one of the accusations made against the Miaphysites by Abū Qurrah.²¹⁰

According to Keating, Abū Rā'īṭah considered the Melkite dualistic Christology as risky, since it could confirm the Islamic view of Christ as a simple man and prophet.²¹¹ However, I think that it is impossible for a theologian like Abū Rā'īṭah, who knew very well the Chalcedonian doctrine, to see such implication in Melkite Christology. His *Introductory letter* rather focuses on answering the traditional Chalcedonian accusation just mentioned. To realise his goal, Abū Rā'īṭah first deemed it necessary to present Miaphysite Christology clearly and plainly: 1) One of the three hypostases, the Son, became incarnate; 2) He became man without change and remained one; 3) He is one composite substance from divinity and humanity, that is, the Logos and a rational body; 4) one person, one hypostasis, one Christ.²¹² Then, as a proof of the correctness of this type of union, which destroys every kind of duality in Christ, Abū Rā'īṭah refers to the analogy of the union between body and soul²¹³ and explicitly says that this analogy and this Christological doctrine are based on the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria,²¹⁴ whose authority was acknowledged by the Melkites and who was also quoted by Abū Qurrah in his *Epistle to the Armenians*.²¹⁵ Moreover, it must be noted that one of the most quoted Church Fathers in Syriac Christological florilegia is indeed Cyril of Alexandria. It is also worth mentioning that the analogy of the union of soul and body is present in Syriac Christological florilegia.²¹⁶ This may be another indication that Abū Rā'īṭah probably had a

210 See, for example, Lamoreaux, *Theodore*, 84–89.

211 Cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 44–45.

212 Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 70 (text).

213 On this analogy and its use, see, for example, Ebeid, *Tunica*, 367–370, 493–494, 621–623.

214 Cf. Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 70–71 (text).

215 Although Keating was aware of Abū Qurrah's use of Cyril of Alexandria, cf. Keating, “Habīb,” 44, she preferred to read Abū Rā'īṭah's thought in an anti-Islamic perspective.

216 See, for example, the quotation from Cyril's second letter to Succensus, in the patristic Christological group number 68 (ص ٦٨), cf. MS London, *British Library Add.* 15432, fol. 14^{ra}.

direct relationship with the compilation movement, or, to put it better, with the activity of copying patristic florilegia among the Syrian Miaphysites.²¹⁷

It is interesting to understand how Abū Rā'īṭah applied the double understanding of the concept of substance, as developed in the Trinitarian florilegium, to his Miaphysite Christology against the Melkites. In order to affirm that Christ is perfect God (and perfect man), and that perfection in this case does not necessary imply the extensional meaning of the substance (i.e. the sum total of its hypostases), Abū Rā'īṭah underlines that there are two kinds of perfection on metaphysical level: 1) the perfection of the *māhiyyah* (common of the substance) and the *wuḡūd* (existence), which is seen either in each one of the hypostases alone or in all the hypostases of the same substance together; 2) the perfection of *'iddah* (number), that is, the sum total of the hypostases together.²¹⁸ In Christ, the perfection of God (and man) indicates the perfection of the *māhiyyah* (common of the substance) and not that of

217 For the relationship of Abū Rā'īṭah and the Christological florilegia diffused among the Miaphysites, see Ebeid, "Miaphysite".

218 In other writings, Abū Rā'īṭah affirms that God is perfect according to his substance since nothing is like him, and that he is perfect according to his hypostases since the number three of the hypostases is the perfection of number, which includes both species of number, i.e., even and odd:

”يقال لكم قد نصفه واحد كاملاً في الجوهر لا في العدد لانه في العدد اى في الاقانيم ثلثة. فقد كملت صفته في الوجهين جميعا. اما وصفنا اياه واحداً في الجوهر فلاعتلائه عن جميع خلقه ... وفي العدد فلانه عام لجميع أنواع العدد. لان العدد لا يعدوا ان تكون انواعه نوعين زوجاً وفرداً فقد دخل هذان النوعان في هذه الاقانيم. فباى انحاء وصفناه لم يعدل بصفته الكمال شيئاً“

Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 7 (text). See also Abū Rā'īṭah, *The Writings*, 18–19 (text):

”فاما النصرارى نفتت عنه كل تشبيه ومثل لوصفهم اياه اقانيم ثلثة جوهر واحد. ولو ان جوهر الله سبحانه كان عدداً فرداً كان احط من جوهر الخلق الذى هو من اثنين الهوىلى اى الاله والنوع اى الصورة. ولو انه كان اثنين لكان به شبيه وله نظير. فاذا وجد انه ثلثة اقانيم جوهر واحد فقد اعتلت صفته عن كل تشبيه ومثل لانه لا سبيل الى ان يوجد في الخلق جوهر واحد اقانيم ثلثة هو بعينه في جميع ذواته. وهذه صفة الله الحقيقية بلا زيادة ولا نقصان فقد كملت صفته في كل الوجهين. اما في العدد فلاتفاقها في كل انحاء موصوفة به ذواتها واما في الثلثة فلانفراد قوام ذات كل واحد منها ولكمال أنواع العدد. لان أنواع العدد نوعان زوجاً واحداً وفرداً واحداً. وهما موجودان في هذه الثلاثة. فاكثر من الثلثة تكرار في العدد واقل منها نقصان منه ما لا يقبله ذو الرأى في صفة الله.“

number.²¹⁹ We found yet another instance of this argument in the Trinitarian florilegium, where the patristic quotations, although focusing on the Trinity, also contain a reference to the fact that the divinity in Christ, even if perfect, is not considered as the (sum total of the) three divine hypostases:

Chapter's title in Florilegium	Quoted Fathers and works	Main topics of the quotations
<p>Chapter 32 (ⲗⲁ ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓⲁ)</p> <p>MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 14^v</p> <p>ⲛⲓⲗⲁ ⲁⲗ .ⲕⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲛⲁⲓ ,ⲛⲟⲩ ⲗⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲑⲁⲕ ⲕⲉⲑⲁⲙⲓⲕⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲕⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ</p> <p>On the fact that one hypostasis is not the whole substance and Godhead.²²⁰</p>	<p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²¹</p> <p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²²</p> <p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²³</p>	<p>Each hypostasis participates perfectly in the common of the substance but it is not the whole substance.</p> <p>Christ is one of the three divine hypostases, comprehended in the substance of the Godhead. He is not the whole Godhead and substance which comprehends the three hypostases. He is perfect God and perfect man.</p>
<p>Chapter 33 (ⲗⲁ ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲓⲁ)</p> <p>MS BL Add. 12155, fol. 14^v</p> <p>ⲕⲉⲑⲁⲙⲓⲕⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲕⲉⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲗⲁ ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲑⲁⲕ ⲕⲉⲑⲁⲙⲓⲕⲁⲛⲟⲩ ⲕⲉⲑⲁⲙⲓⲕⲁⲛⲟⲩ</p> <p>The whole substance of the Godhead is the Holy Trinity.²²⁴</p>	<p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²⁵</p> <p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²⁶</p> <p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²⁷</p> <p>Severus of Antioch, <i>Against the Grammarian</i>²²⁸.</p> <p>Gregory of Nazianzus, <i>Oration on Baptism (Or. 40)</i>²²⁹</p>	<p>Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the one Godhead.</p> <p>The whole substance of the Godhead, which is the Holy Trinity, is not incarnate.</p>

219 Cf. Abū Rā'iṭah, *The Writings*, 71 (text).
 220 The English translation is mine.
 221 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 3:163 (text).
 222 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 3:162 (text).
 223 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 3:167 (text).
 224 The English translation is mine.
 225 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 3:172 (text).
 226 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 3:174 (text).
 227 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 3:212 (text).
 228 Severus of Antioch, *Against the Grammarian*, 1:8 (text).
 229 PG 36: 424, 3-7.

stance and hypostases/person, within the general context of the Miaphysite tradition of controversy from the sixth to the eighth century, when Miaphysite theologians progressively realised that making a wrong use of these concepts could entail risky consequences on the Trinitarian level. In this polemical literature, the reference to the Church Fathers as a proof of orthodoxy was an important controversial tool. This was one of the reasons why different Christian confessions created their own collections of patristic florilegia.

In fact, in two of his polemical writings against the Melkites, the *Refutation of the Melkites* and the *Introductory letter to Ašot*, Abū Rāʾiṭah deals with metaphysical topics and their impact on the Trinitarian doctrine. In both works, the patristic tradition is crucial to prove the correctness of the Miaphysite position. Next, I compared the direct patristic quotations brought forth by Abū Rāʾiṭah in his *Refutation of the Melkites* with the Trinitarian patristic florilegium produced by the West Syrian Church and copied in MS BL Add. 12155, which allowed me to outline a close relationship between Abū Rāʾiṭah, this florilegium, and the sources the compilers of the florilegium had in their hands. The analysis of Abū Rāʾiṭah's thought, the syllogisms he uses, and the content of his explanations, shows that he shares the doctrine of the Trinitarian florilegium and its patristic content.

Moreover, through another comparative analysis, I showed that this same patristic background was used by our author in his *Introductory letter*, where he dealt with the same metaphysical issues and their relationship to the Trinitarian doctrine in order to answer some Christological questions. In fact, the florilegium and Abū Rāʾiṭah had linked the same metaphysical problem, i.e., the relationship between the substance and its hypostases, with Christology, and more precisely, the question of how Christ is perfect God and perfect man, and how this does not mean that the whole Trinity was incarnate.

Consequently, since the main patristic material to which Abū Rāʾiṭah refers in these two writings, both directly and indirectly, basically comes from chapters 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 of the Trinitarian florilegium copied in MS BL Add. 12155, it is more than likely (considering that this as well as other florilegia were compiled in the seventh century and copied in the following centuries) that Abū Rāʾiṭah al-Takrītī was one of the copyists or, at least, had a direct relationship with them and their work.

Finally, this chapter highlighted the importance of the thought of Abū Rāʾiṭah and its close connection to his tradition, to which he remained faithful despite the new challenges set by Islam. Therefore, in order to better understand his teaching, one must read him within the context of his tradition and its sources, for him to take his adequate place among Miaphysite theologians and the development they offered to Christian theology and philosophy.

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Beyond Abbreviation: The Reception of Gregory of Nyssa, Severus of Antioch, and the Song of Songs in a Syriac Exegetical Collection (BL Add. 12168)

Marion Pragt

1 Introduction

Syriac exegetical collections present interpretations of scripture based on the works of Syriac and Greek Christian authors. This chapter focuses on the reception of Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs* in the London Collection, a West Syrian exegetical collection that has been dated to the seventh century. Gregory interprets the Song as recounting the ascent of the bride (the soul or church), who longs for spiritual union with her bridegroom (Christ or God). The present chapter concentrates on the interpretation of Song 5:2–4 in the London Collection, in which the bridegroom and bride enter into a nightly dialogue. After a brief overview of the structure and content of the London Collection, I will examine how Gregory's interpretation of the bridegroom's words in Song 5:2 was abbreviated. Next, I will argue that Gregory's explanation of the bride's response in Song 5:3–4 was replaced with that of Severus of Antioch for exegetical reasons.

Compilations are increasingly studied not only for the access they provide to earlier sources, but also as literary works in their own right. This development has so far been especially visible in the fields of western medieval studies¹ and classical and Byzantine literature.² By approaching the London Collection from

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- 1 See, for example, the 'Storehouses of Wholesome Learning' series, especially Rolf H. Bremmer and Kees Dekker, eds., *Foundations of Learning: The Transfer of Encyclopaedic Knowledge in the Early Middle Ages* (Mediaevalia Groningana New Series 9; Leuven: Peeters, 2007). See also, more recently, Sabrina Corbellini, Giovanna Murano, and Giacomo Signore, eds., *Collecting, Organizing, and Transmitting Knowledge. Miscellanies in Late Medieval Europe* (Bibliologia 49; Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).
 - 2 Several important contributions are: Marrietta Horster and Christiane Reitz, eds., *Condensing Texts—Condensed Texts* (Palingenesia 98; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2010); Peter Van Deun and Caroline Macé, eds., *Encyclopedic Trends in Byzantium? Proceedings of the International Conference Held in Leuven, 6–8 May 2009* (OLA 212; Leuven: Peeters, 2011); Jason König and Greg Woolf, *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

this perspective, the chapter aims to contribute to our knowledge of the role of compilations in shaping and transmitting interpretations of scripture among late ancient and early medieval Syriac Christians.

2 Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs* in the London Collection

The London Collection is a West Syrian exegetical collection that was most likely compiled in the seventh century and is extant in a single eighth- or ninth-century manuscript (*London, British Library Add. 12168*).³ As a 'multiple-text manuscript',⁴ it consists of biblical commentaries mainly based on the works of Greek Christian authors and contains occasional material of a historical and moral character.⁵ Its compiler operated in two ways. He included abridged versions of Cyril's *Glaphyra*, Athanasius' *Exposition of the Psalms*, and Gregory's

Press, 2013); Sébastien Morlet, ed., *Lire en extraits: Lecture et production des textes, de l'Antiquité à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: SUP, 2015); Reinhart Ceulemans and Pieter De Leemans, eds., *On Good Authority: Tradition, Compilation, and the Construction of Authority in Literature from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (LECTIO 3; Turnhout: Brepols, 2015); Stephan Dusil, Gerald Schwedler, and Raphael Schwitter, eds., *Exzerpieren—Kompilieren—Tradieren: Transformationen des Wissens zwischen Spätantike und Frühmittelalter* (Millennium-Studien 64; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017).

- 3 The manuscript is described in William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired Since the Year 1838* (3 vols.; London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870–1872), 2:904–908. As Wright and Bas ter Haar Romeny have noted, the Collection was compiled after the year 616/617 because it uses the Syro-Hexapla. Wright dates the work to the first half of the seventh century because of a note in which it is assumed that the last Sasanian king, Yazdgerd III, was still alive, Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:905–906. Romeny has noted that it is possible that the Collection was created slightly later: Bas ter Haar Romeny, "The Greek vs. the Peshitta in a West Syrian Exegetical Collection," in *The Peshitta: Its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers Read at the Third Peshitta Symposium* (ed. R.B. ter Haar Romeny; Monographs of the Peshitta Institute 15; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 298. Romeny discusses possible references to contemporary events in the London Collection, which speaks of war and upheaval. Bas ter Haar Romeny, "The Identity Formation of Syrian Orthodox Christians as Reflected in Two Exegetical Collections: First Soundings," *PdO* 29 (2004): 111–112.
- 4 The term 'multiple-text manuscript' was introduced by Michael Friedrich and Cosima Schwarke, "Introduction—Manuscripts as Evolving Entities," in *One-Volume Libraries: Composite and Multiple-Text Manuscripts* (ed. M. Friedrich and C. Schwarke; Studies in Manuscript Cultures 9; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 8–11, 15–16, and may be understood as a 'production unit' planned by the same persons as part of a single process to create a new work out of two or more independent texts.
- 5 For example, the London Collection recounts the story of the translation of the Septuagint and its revisions, contains a section from Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, and illustrates the importance of prayer: Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:904–907 and Bas ter Haar Romeny, "Les Pères grecs

Homilies on the Song.⁶ In other cases, the compiler created commentaries consisting of extracts from various authors alternated with summaries of the biblical books under consideration.⁷

The abbreviated version of Gregory's *Homilies on the Song of Songs* is the longest section devoted to the Song in the London Collection.⁸ It is introduced as a 'collection in short' (ܐܘܬܘܪܐ ܕܝܘܢܐ ܕܝܘܢܐ) and is based on the full Syriac translation of his work, which was done at the end of the fifth or in the sixth century.⁹ The London Collection presents abridged versions of each of the *Homilies*, in which the citations of the Song have been brought into accor-

dans les florilèges exégétiques syriaques," in *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriacque* (ed. A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet s.j.; ES 4; Paris: Geuthner, 2007), 70.

- 6 The abbreviated version of Athanasius was edited and translated by Robert W. Thomson, ed. and tr., *Athanasiana Syriaca IV: Expositio in Psalmos* (CSCO 386–387, Scriptores Syri 167–168; Leuven: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1977). On the use of Cyril's *Glaphyra* in the London Collection, see Romeny, "The Greek vs. the Peshitta," 303–305.
- 7 On the London Collection as building a West Syrian exegetical tradition mainly based on Greek Christian works of biblical interpretation, see Romeny, "The Identity Formation," 106; Romeny, "The Greek vs. the Peshitta," 297–298; Bas ter Haar Romeny, "Greek or Syriac? Chapters in the Establishment of a Syrian Orthodox Exegetical Tradition," *SP* 41 (2006): 89–96; Romeny, "Les Pères grecs dans les florilèges," 70–73; Bas ter Haar Romeny, "The Formation of a Communal Identity among West Syrian Christians: Results and Conclusions of the Leiden Project," *Church History and Religious Culture* 89 (2009): 1–52 (13–20).
- 8 Add. 12168 fol. 118^r–135^r, reaching up to Song 6:9. I am currently preparing a critical edition and English translation of the text.
- 9 As has been established by Ceslas Van den Eynde, *La version syriaque du Commentaire de Grégoire de Nysse sur le Cantique des Cantiques: Ses origines, ses témoins, son influence* (Louvain: Bureaux du Muséon, 1939), 50–56, Gregory's *Homilies* are extant in the manuscript *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Vat. Syr. 106 dated to the sixth century, *Sinai, Saint Catherine* Syr. 19 and its *membra disjecta* dated to the eighth century and (*olim*) *Diyarbakır, Chaldean Archbishopric* 20 dated to the twelfth century. Van den Eynde provides an overview of the manuscripts: Van den Eynde, *La version syriaque*, 9–15. On the Sinai manuscript, see also Sebastian Brock, "Mingana Syr. 628: A Folio from a Revision of the Peshitta Song of Songs," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 40 (1995): 39–56 and Paul Géhin, *Les manuscrits syriaques de parchemin du Sinai et leurs membra disjecta* (CSCO 665, Subsidia 136; Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 58–60. Van den Eynde was mainly interested in the materials that were transmitted together with Gregory's *Homilies* in Syriac but are not extant in Greek or have no Greek counterpart. He edited and translated the interpretation of Song 6:10–8:14 based on the work of a certain Symmachus, as well as two letters in which the Syriac translation of the *Homilies* was requested and the translator explained his rendering of Gregory's scriptural references: Van den Eynde, *La version syriaque*, 69–126. On the Syriac translation of Gregory's *Homilies* and its reception, see also Marion Pragt, "Sacred Spices. The Syriac Translation of Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs*," in *Caught in Translation: Versions of Late-Antique Christian Literature* (ed. D. Batovici and M. Toca; Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 17; Leiden: Brill, 2020), 104–121.

dance with the Syro-Hexapla. Gregory's interpretations are not presented in the form of separate extracts but as a running commentary. The narrative structure developed by Gregory in his *Homilies*, which describes the bride's ascent to the divine, is retained to some extent. In the abbreviated version of the *Homilies*, the transition between different interpretations is often marked with short summarising statements. For example, Song 3:6 ('Who is this coming up from the desert ...') is explained as containing praise of the bride's beauty by the bridegroom's friends. The interpretation is then followed by a short account in which these friends show the bride a beautifully adorned royal bed so that she would desire even more the 'divine participation with the king'.¹⁰ This section functions as an introduction to the next passage, where the bed of Solomon of Song 3:7 is interpreted ('See, the bed of Solomon ...'). Phrases such as 'Next, let us also see ...' and 'It is time that we also hear ...' smooth the transition from one interpretation to another.

The abbreviated *Homilies* also contain marginal notes, which indicate the homily numbers and the subjects they address. The notes which indicate subjects may be divided into two categories.¹¹ Some of them summarise the themes of Gregory's spiritual interpretation, reading, for example: 'Why God is incomprehensible in essence',¹² or: 'Concerning the angelic powers and (why) it is right to become like them'.¹³ In other cases, the words of the Song explained in a specific section are highlighted, as in Song 3:7: 'Concerning the bed of Solomon and the warriors that surround it'.¹⁴ In a similar vein, slightly longer notes identify, in staccato fashion, the spiritual significance of the Song's imagery. For example, Gregory's interpretation of Song 2:11–12 describes rain and winter as idolatry and temptation which have passed, after which the voice of John the Baptist points to the 'flowers' of virtue and announces the coming of Christ. The note in which this is summarised allows the reader to quickly capture the sense of Gregory's explanation: 'Winter: error. Rain: temptations. Flowers: the excellent life. The turtle dove: John the Baptist'.¹⁵

The practice of indicating themes in marginal notes is not a general feature of the London Collection. It seems likely that the notes were regarded as an especially useful addition to longer works referring to a single author, such

10 BL Add. 12168 fol. 126^r outer column l. 34–fol. 126^v outer column l. 6.

11 On different types of glosses and their importance for tracing the development of Syriac florilegia, see the contribution of Moss in this volume.

12 BL Add. 12168 fol. 121^r.

13 BL Add. 12168 fol. 131^r.

14 BL Add. 12168 fol. 126^r.

15 BL Add. 12168 fol. 124^r.

as the abbreviated *Homilies*, whereas the Collection's commentaries on other parts of scripture often consist of brief extracts from different authors which already have their own headings. The notes seem to have functioned as reading aids, guiding users through the abridged version of the *Homilies* and enabling them to navigate to sections of particular interest.¹⁶

To examine how Gregory was abbreviated in the London Collection, the following two sections concentrate on two contrasting examples. In the first, the London Collection follows Gregory relatively closely, whereas in the second it deviates from his views.

3 Gregory's Interpretation of Song 5:2 and Its Abbreviation in the London Collection

In his eleventh homily, Gregory takes his audience on a night-time journey as he interprets the bride's encounter with the bridegroom of Song 5:2–4.¹⁷ In the homily's opening section, Gregory focuses on the importance of keeping watch and being ready for the return of the bridegroom, like the angelic and heavenly powers.¹⁸ The Song's bride exemplifies these qualities. Gregory then emphasises that her ascent to God is without limit, as each further stage she reaches indicates a new beginning.¹⁹ Both parts are accurately and succinctly summarised in the London Collection. However, the compiler has chosen to leave out sections which repeat previous material or further illustrate Gregory's

16 The origin of the marginal notes is unknown, and it is unclear at present whether they were introduced by the compiler of the London Collection, or already part of his source material, or a later addition.

17 Overviews of Gregory's interpretation are given by Franz Dünzl, *Braut und Bräutigam: Die Auslegung des Canticum durch Gregor von Nyssa* (Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese 32; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 167–171 and, more briefly, Giulio Maspero, "The *In Canticum* in Gregory's Theology: Introduction and Gliederung," in *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Canticorum Analytical and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 13th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Rome, 17–20 September 2014)* (ed. G. Maspero, M. Brugarolas and I. Vigorelli; VChr Supplements 150; Leiden: Brill, 2018), 15. The interpretation of Song 5:2–4 is part of homily eleven (or *memra* twelve, according to the full Syriac translation and the London Collection, in which Gregory's preface is counted as the first homily). For reasons of clarity, I follow the numbering system of the Greek edition.

18 Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 315 l. 15–319 l. 5. All references to the Greek version of the *Homilies* are from Hermann Langerbeck (ed.), *In Canticum Canticorum* (Gregorii Nysseni Opera VI; Leiden: Brill, 1960). Gregory refers back to the final verse treated in homily ten: 'I am asleep but my heart is awake' (Song 5:2a).

19 Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 320 l. 8–321 l. 5.

views, such as an *excursus* on Moses' encounter with God in the darkness as an example for the bride's meeting with the bridegroom.²⁰

Next, the London Collection follows Gregory's interpretation of Song 5:2, in which the bride becomes aware of the bridegroom's voice and cites his words: "The voice of the son of my sister²¹ knocks at the door: "Open for me, my sister, my close one, my dove, perfect one. Because my head is covered in dew and my curls with the drops of the night."²² The following table includes Gregory's interpretation both according to the Syriac translation of the full *Homilies*, based on its oldest manuscript, *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Vat. Syr. 106, and in the abbreviated version of the London Collection:

Syriac translation of Gregory's *Homilies*²³

London collection²⁴

'For if you want *the door to be opened and the gates of your soul to raise their heads so that the king of glories will enter*,²⁵ it is right for you to become a sister to me, while you receive my will inside you,' just as he says in the gospel, that *everyone who does his will is his brother and sister*.²⁶ 'It is also right for you to come near to the truth to genuinely become close to it, while there will be nothing

'If you want *the door to be opened and the gates of your mind*²⁷ to raise their heads so that the king of glories will enter,²⁸ you ought to become for me a sister while you receive my will inside you,' just as it was said in the gospel that *everyone who does his will is his brother and sister*.²⁹ 'And you will also

20 Exod. 20:21.

21 Inspired by the Syro-Hexapla, the London Collection refers to the bride's beloved with the term 'son of my sister' (ܐܘܢ ܝܘܨܝܢ), which renders Greek ἀδελφιδός. On the use and reception of the term ἀδελφιδός, see Luc Brésard, Henri Crouzel and Marcel Borret, ed. and trans., *Origène: Commentaire sur le Cantique des Cantiques, Livres III–IV* (SC 376; Paris: Cerf, 1992), 774–776 and Jean-Marie Auwers, *L'interprétation du Cantique des cantiques à travers les chaînes exégétiques grecques* (Instrumenta Patristica et Medievalia 56; Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 44–47.

22 Verses from the Song of Songs are cited as they appear in the London Collection, which reads the Song according to the Syro-Hexapla. The full Syro-Hexaplaric version of the Song of Songs is preserved in Codex Ambrosianus C. 313 Inf. Antonio Maria Ceriani, ed., *Codex Syro-Hexaplaris Ambrosianus photolithographice editus* (Monumenta Sacra et Profana 7; Milan: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 1874), fol. 70^r–72^r.

23 Vat. Syr. 106 fol. 130^v inner column l. 50–fol. 131^r outer column l. 19. In the translations, quotation marks are used for direct speech, scriptural citations are indicated in italics, and brief additions to clarify the Syriac are placed between square brackets. Unless otherwise indicated, the translations are my own.

24 Add. 12168 fol. 131^r outer column l. 20–fol. 131^v outer column l. 16. Small differences in word choice in the London Collection when compared to the full Syriac translation are indicated in the footnotes.

25 LXX Ps 23:7, 9.

26 Mark 3:35.

27 The London Collection reads ܠܘܥܡ, whereas Vat. Syr. 106 has ܠܘܥܘܢ and Gregory ψυχῆ.

28 LXX Ps. 23:7, 9.

29 Mark 3:35.

(cont.)

Syriac translation of Gregory's *Homilies*

London collection

which divides you from it like an obstacle. And next, you will imitate the nature of the dove while you possess perfection, that is, you will not be lacking in anything, but will be filled with complete perfection and purity. When, therefore, you will accept these names like keys, O soul, open with them an entrance for the truth, because you have become sister and close one and dove and perfect one. Your profit from having received me and letting me dwell in your house will be this dew of which my head is full and the drops of the night which drop from my locks.' We plainly learn that dew like this is a medicine of the soul from the prophet who said to God: 'The dew which is from you is a medicine for them.'³⁰ The drops of the night possess the meaning shown to us before with these things which were said.³¹

For it is not possible for someone who enters the sanctuary, where the invisible things are, to be worthy of the rain or the desire of knowledge, but he is blessed if his intellect will be sprinkled with the gentle and subtle drops of the knowledge of the truth, which is accomplished by means of holy, inspired persons, who pour out spiritual drops. For the locks which are arranged and placed on the head of the All are called, as I believe, prophets, apostles, and evangelists. Each one of them draws and takes as much as he is able from the hidden, concealed, and invisible treasures. These ones are rivers full of water to us, yet in respect to the truth they really are drops of dew, even though they overflow with an abundance and multitude of teaching like a flood.

become to me a close one, when there is nothing which interferes and separates you from me. And next you are likened to a dove with perfection and purity from every evil.

The profit to you, from receiving me and letting me dwell in your house, will be the dew of my head' which, according to the expression of the prophet, *is a medicine*,³²

'and the drops of the night, [which are] the divine visions³³ which enlighten your intellect with true knowledge, these [with which] you were enlightened through the apostles and messengers of the gospel,³⁴ which are the adornment of my head.'³⁵ These [apostles and messengers] who, while to us they pour out the divine drink like rivers, are drops of dew as in respect to the source of truth.

30 Gregory bases his association of dew and healing on the appearance of dew as a sign of the divine in the Hebrew Bible, with specific reference to Isaiah 26:19 (ἡ γὰρ δρόσος ἡ παρὰ σοῦ ἴαμα ἀυτοῖς ἔσται). Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 325 l. 17–20.

31 Gregory refers to a previous section in which he described Moses as encountering God in the darkness. Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 323 l. 1–9.

32 Isa 26:19.

33 The 'divine visions' (ܪܘܘܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ) have no direct counterpart in Gregory.

34 Whereas Vat. Syr. 106 has ܪܘܘܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ for 'evangelists', the London Collection more explicitly reads ܪܘܘܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ, 'messengers of the gospel'.

35 The phrase 'adornment of my head' (ܕܘܠܐ ܕܪܘܘܢܐ) in the London Collection is not used by Gregory at this stage. However, it is similar to Gregory's interpretation of Song 5:1b ('his locks are fir trees, black like ravens') in homily thirteen, where he understands

(cont.)

Syriac translation of Gregory's *Homilies*

London collection

In like manner, the blessed Paul was a river, who *was lifted up and elevated above the heaven* on the waves of the mind, *until the third heaven, until paradise, until ineffable words* not subject to the voice.³⁶ And although he utters the riches of the message with all this greatness of speech³⁷ like a sea, he indicates again that this word is a drop of dew in comparison to the true word with these things which he says: *'We know a little of a part and we prophesy a little of a part.'*³⁸ And next: *'If someone thinks that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know.'*³⁹ And: *'I do not think about myself that I have understood.'*⁴⁰ If, therefore, a drop of dew and a sprinkling from the locks are found to be rivers, seas, and billows when they are compared to our capacity of understanding, what ought one to think about the wellspring which says: *'Let all who are thirsty come to me and drink?'*⁴¹ Let everyone of us who listens, then, consider the wonder when estimating these things which were spoken. For if a drop was enough to bring forth rivers, what should one think the river of God to be as from the comparison of this drop?

Just like even Paul, who *was elevated until the third heaven* and gained from there the greatness of expression of the divine message,⁴² says that he *sees as in a mirror and symbol.*⁴³

Gregory's interpretation consists of two elements. Firstly, he explains that the names of sister, close one, dove, and perfect one applied to the bride mean that she should carry out Christ's will, make sure nothing separates her from the truth, and become pure and perfect. In the London Collection, attachment to the truth is not mentioned; instead, the bride is urged by Christ to become close

the bridegroom's hair as the apostles. In the abbreviated version of homily thirteen, the London Collection describes them as 'the adornment of the church on the bridegroom's head'. Add. 12168 fol. 133^r inner column l. 23–24.

36 Cf. 2 Cor. 12:2–4.

37 Franz Dünzl takes Gregory's mention of *μεγαληγορία* as a reference to the boasting (*καυχᾶσθαι*) noted by Paul in the vision account of 2 Cor 12:1–5. Franz Dünzl, tr., *In Canticum canticorum homiliae/Homilien zum Hohelied* (3 vols.; Fontes Christiani 16; Freiburg: Herder, 1994), 3:590–591, n. 26.

38 1 Cor 13:9.

39 1 Cor 8:2.

40 Phil 3:13.

41 John 7:37.

42 Cf. 2 Cor 12:2–4.

43 Cf. 1 Cor 13:12. Gregory refers to the 'mirror' (*ἔσπετρον*) and 'riddle' (*αἶνιγμα*) in the preface to his *Homilies*. Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 6.

to him. Secondly, the bridegroom tries to persuade the bride to let him enter by noting that his moist head and hair will be profitable to her. According to Gregory, dew refers to healing, while the drops of the night indicate knowledge of the divine. He emphasises that although the promised knowledge may seem like a river from a human perspective, it amounts to mere drops in comparison to the true, divine wellspring, which is unimaginably greater and deeper. Here, the London Collection partly replaces Gregory's imagery of drops, rivers, floods, and springs with that of seeing and light, speaking of the 'divine visions' which will 'enlighten' the bride's mind. Finally, Gregory uses Paul as example *par excellence* to illustrate his point: even Paul, who was elevated to heaven, only gained partial knowledge. The London Collection again uses the imagery of seeing by introducing a new, different reference to Paul who sees indirectly and incompletely as in a mirror. In this way, the London Collection represents the main elements of Gregory's interpretation, while at the same time also expressing some of Gregory's ideas in its own words.

4 Song 5:3–4 according to Gregory and the London Collection

In the second half of homily eleven, Gregory focuses on the bride's response of Song 5:3, who says: 'I have taken off my tunic, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I soil them?' Gregory understands this somewhat mysterious answer as indicating the ways in which the bride opened the door for the bridegroom.⁴⁴ To him, the tunic indicates taking off the old human and putting on Christ as one's new garment.⁴⁵ Gregory also relates the new tunic to the bright and shining garment of Christ during his transfiguration on the mountain.⁴⁶ As to the bride's feet, these are now cleaned from all earthly defilement, which Gregory associates both with baptism and Moses taking off his sandals during his encounter with God.⁴⁷

44 Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 327 l. 18–19 (διὰ τούτων ἠνοιξεν ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τῷ λόγῳ τὴν εἴσοδον) and 332 l. 3–4 (ταῦτά ἐστι κατὰ γε τὸν ἑμὸν λόγον, δι' ὧν ἡ θύρα τῷ λόγῳ παρὰ τῆς νύμφης ἀνοίγεται).

45 Hans Boersema, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa: An Analogical Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 89–90.

46 Cf. Matt 17:1–2; Mark 9:2–3; Luke 9:28–29. Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 329 l. 10–12, where he speaks of putting on: τὸν ἡλιοειδῆ τοῦ κυρίου χιτῶνα τὸν διὰ καθαρότητος καὶ ἀφθαρσίας ἰστουργηθέντα, οἶον ἐπὶ τῆς <ἐπὶ> τοῦ ὄρους μεταμορφώσεως ἔδειξεν. According to this aspect of Gregory's interpretation, Christ's humanity may be seen as a 'tunic' with which he covered his divinity: Boersema, *Embodiment and Virtue*, 90–91.

47 Cf. Exod. 3:5.

one to the bridegroom through the pure marriage bed of baptism, and pure dove through the gift of the holy spirit—she receives and acknowledges the grace and proclaims the abundance of mercy towards her. But that she is perfect—the effect which is reached through good toils and with great toils and the exact observance of the commandments—she does not accept this now, because she is careful about herself. For she listened to Christ who said: *‘When you have done all the things which were commanded to you, say: “What we owe to do we have done.”’*⁵⁶ Next, she also knew the one who had fallen from heaven in pride and with it also deceived the first human and sent [him] out of paradise. And because of this, while she keeps watch vigilantly and guards her soul (saying: ‘I took off my tunic, the first evil, and I washed the uncleanness of sin from my feet’), how could she turn again to these things out of carelessness,⁵⁷ when she also teaches us with this that we should keep away from the harm of evil, which, while it is dark and hates light, assumes the likeness of light in order to deceive? And when because of these things she prudently receded to humility of mind and did what is pleasing to her bridegroom, she accepted his hand which he stretched out to her through the small opening,⁵⁸ [the hand] which is the knowledge of this creation which we now have in part, but which suffices to illuminate even the depth of our mind, so that by it we will also be elevated in an orderly way to the Craftsman and Maker.⁵⁹

This pericope contains several parallels with Severus of Antioch’s *Cathedral Homily* 108, suggesting that Gregory’s interpretation was replaced with that of Severus.

56 Luke 17:10.

57 By ‘these things’, the text refers to the tunic and the uncleaned feet of before, to which the bride would not carelessly return, as she is more advanced now.

58 Cf. Song 5:4.

59 BL Add. 12168 fol. 131^v outer column l. 22–inner column l. 37. In the manuscript, the beginning and end of our pericope are marked with series of alternated black and red dots. After the passage, the Collection cites Song 5:5 and Gregory’s interpretation of the verse as part of the abbreviated version of homily twelve.

ness itself.⁸¹ The idea of elevation to God ‘in order’ may reflect this hierarchical division of believers according to their spiritual state.⁸²

Severus concludes his interpretation of Song 5:3–4 with a lesson not included in the London Collection. Humans should not think too quickly that they are favoured with special revelations from God or saints.⁸³ Like the bride, they should remain prudent and not open the door too quickly to avoid letting in a foe in the form of a friend.⁸⁴

6 The Syriac Translations of Severus’ *Cathedral Homilies*

Severus’ *Cathedral homilies* were transmitted in Syriac in an initial translation from the sixth-century and in a revised version by Jacob of Edessa.⁸⁵ Some preliminary observations may be made on the version of *Homily* 108 used in the London Collection and the stage at which it may have been included in the abbreviated version of Gregory’s eleventh homily.

As the London Collection has used and rewritten Severus’ interpretations rather freely, some of the differences reflect the activity of the compiler rather than dependence on one particular Syriac translation. For example, when the bride fears that it is not Christ but the devil who is addressing her, the sixth-century translation reads Satan (ܫܬܢܐ),⁸⁶ whereas Jacob’s version refers to the Adversary (ܩܘܒܠܐ ܡܢ ܕܥܝܢܐ).⁸⁷ However, the London Collection avoids any direct mention and merely introduces the devil’s actions with ‘the one who’ (ܐܝܢܐ). In other cases, the two Syriac translations do not differ from each other. For instance, while the London Collection uses ܩܪܝܢܐ for the devil’s

81 Severus, *Cathedral homilies*, 108, 715 l. 3–10.

82 Severus does not refer to a particular verse of the Song here. Early Christian authors commonly divide believers into those who act out of fear of punishment, hope for reward, and love of goodness when interpreting the queens, concubines, and young women without number of Song 6:8. Such interpretations are for example given by Gregory of Nyssa, *Song of Songs*, 460–461 and Theodoret of Cyrus, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, PG 81: 172.

83 Severus, *Cathedral homilies*, 108, 713 l. 9–14.

84 Severus, *Cathedral homilies*, 108, 711 l. 13–14. Severus’ interpretation also has a polemical aspect. He directed himself against ‘the abominable Lampetius’ by emphasising that even if a person has been changed for the better, they may lapse into sin, so that caution and fear remain necessary. Severus, *Cathedral homilies*, 108, 716 l. 14–717 l. 9. This polemical aspect has not been included in the London Collection.

85 See note 60.

86 Vat. Syr. 143 fol. 38^r outer column l. 26. As Vat. Syr. 256 has several displaced folios; I mainly refer to Vat. Syr. 143.

87 See note 74.

7 An Exegetical Motivation for Replacing Gregory

This leaves us with the question why Gregory was replaced by Severus in the London Collection. It seems likely that the change was made for exegetical reasons. Severus offers a way of understanding the bride's surprising response in Song 5:3, in which she seems to hesitate. This is something Gregory did not recognise. In contrast, a key element of Severus' explanation is that the bride deliberately delayed her response, at first speaking to the bridegroom 'as to a stranger' (ῥιζαυ θάλι ῥικ).⁹⁵ What is more, Severus gave a positive explanation for her hesitation as indicating her caution and humility: 'The bride limped and therefore did not run at the voice, because she had learnt humility.'⁹⁶

Severus' elaborate discussion of the bride's caution thus offers a new perspective. According to Gregory, the bride accepted the names of sister, dove, close one, and perfect one as keys with which to open her door. He emphasises that God is not wholly perceivable and intelligible and that the bride, however eager she is to meet the bridegroom, only gains partial knowledge of him. To Severus, the central issue is rather that, because the bride always remains humble, she will remain close to God. By focusing on the bride's point of view, Severus departs from the interpretations of other Greek Christian authors, doing justice to the dialogical character of the Song, as René Roux has noted.⁹⁷

95 Severus, *Cathedral homilies*, 108, 709 l. 11.

96 Severus, *Cathedral homilies*, 108, 709 l. 2–3.

97 Roux, *L'Exégèse biblique*, 63; Roux, "Severus of Antioch at the Crossroad," 175. The possibility that the bride might let in opposing powers is acknowledged by Origen. However, to him, the bridegroom's explicit request to open the door 'for me' seems to have served as sufficient reassurance that the bride would only let in Christ: Origen, *Fragments on the Song of Songs*, fr. 47, 202 l. 9–10 (Ἀναγκαίως τὸ μοι προσετέθη τῷ Ἄνοιξον ἔστι γὰρ καὶ ἀντικειμέναις ἀνοιξάει δυνάμεσιν). As seen above, Gregory of Nyssa understood the bride's reaction not as reticence, but as indicating the ways in which she opened her door for the bridegroom. Like Severus, Theodoret of Cyrus comments on the bride's reluctance; however, in contrast to Severus, he interprets it as unwillingness. Theodoret concludes, according to Hill's translation: 'The lesson we learn from these verses, then, is to set aside all hesitancy and immediately open up to the bridegroom when he knocks, lest he go off and we are forced to roam everywhere and seek the one we desire.' Theodoret, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, PG 81: 153; Robert C. Hill, tr., *Theodoret of Cyrus. Commentary on the Song of Songs* (Early Christian Studies 2; Brisbane: Centre for Early Christian Studies, 2001), 89. Nilus of Ancyra also interprets the bride's hesitation negatively. Although she was willing to open, she hesitated because of the trouble she took to remove the tunic of worldly anxiety and to withdraw her feet from the earth. According to Nilus, the bridegroom's hand of Song 5:4 indicates punishment, as, despite her high ascent, the bride was blamed for

In this way, Severus' interpretation may also have served to remind the audience of the London Collection of the need of humility and prudence in spiritual matters.

Collecting interpretations from diverse authors in a compilation can lead one to a certain sense of polyphony. This is decidedly not what happened in the case of Song 5:3–4. Severus' interpretation, various parts of which are brought together in the London Collection, was perhaps deemed too long to enrich the abbreviated version of Gregory in the form of a marginal note or additional extract. Although the interpretation of Severus was favoured, it was transmitted under the name of Gregory, so that its origin may not always have been apparent to later audiences.

Finally, that Severus was preferred in the London Collection does not mean that Gregory's interpretation of Song 5:3–4 was generally rejected as wrong or unsuitable. Its inclusion in the Collection of Simeon, a West Syrian exegetical collection from the late ninth century, is testimony to its continued circulation in Syriac.⁹⁸

Conclusion

Studying exegetical collections can reveal surprises. This chapter examined part of Gregory of Nyssa's Syriac afterlife by focusing on his reception in the London Collection, in which his long *Homilies* are made available in a shorter, more easily accessible form.

As the case study of Song 5:2 showed, the compiler represented the main elements of Gregory's interpretation of the bridegroom's words, all the while excluding Gregory's illustrations, summarising statements and excursus. By introducing the imagery of light and adding a reference to Paul, the compiler also expressed some of Gregory's ideas in his own way. As I have attempted

this delay in opening the door. Procopius of Gaza, *Epitome on the Song of Songs*, 278–279, 282–283 (scholia 225 and 228); Auwers, *L'interprétation du Cantique*, 208–209, 231.

98 The Collection of Simeon, preserved in the manuscript *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Vat. Syr. 103, contains the Commentary of the Monk Severus together with additions in the main text, as well as marginal notes added by Simeon of Ḥisn Manṣūr. The title 'Collection of Simeon' was proposed by Romeny, "The Identity Formation," 107. For Gregory's interpretation, see Vat. Syr. 103, fol. 179^v l. 1–8. On the commentary on the Song in the Collection of Simeon, see Marion Pragt, "Love for Words in a Ninth-Century Syriac Commentary on the Song of Songs," in *The Song of Songs in its Context: Words for Love, Love for Words* (ed. P. Van Hecke; Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 310; Leuven: Peeters, 2020), 509–522.

to demonstrate, Gregory's interpretation of Song 5:3–4 was then replaced with that of Severus of Antioch. With this creative adaptation, the London Collection served new exegetical needs. On the basis of Severus' *Cathedral Homily* 108, the Collection provided an attractive explanation of the bride's hesitation in Song 5:3, a matter which Gregory left unaddressed.

In Gregory's case, the abbreviated version of the *Homilies* did not replace the transmission of his complete work in Syriac.⁹⁹ It seems both could exist side by side. Perhaps, it was even because Gregory's interpretation of the Song was available in a short and accessible form that his work remained known, which may in turn have positively influenced the continued transmission of the complete *Homilies*.¹⁰⁰

In conclusion, the short version of Gregory's *Homilies* in the London Collection shows that in the reception of their Greek Christian predecessors, Syriac authors and compilers could go beyond abbreviation.

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99 See note 9.

100 On this phenomenon in classical antiquity, including the creation of 'auto-epitomai' in which authors deliberately abridged their own works to guarantee the correct reception of their ideas, see Markus Mülke, "Die Epitome—Das Bessere Original?," in *Condensing Texts—Condensed Texts* (ed. M. Horster and C. Reitz; Palingenesia 98; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2010), 69–89.

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A Syriac Monk's Reading of Ephrem of Nisibis: A Perspective on Syriac Monastic Miscellanies

Grigory Kessel

Ephrem is mostly known today—at least in the academic world and scholarship—as an author of poetic compositions (*madrāšē*) who customarily employed such poetic tools as contrast, metaphor and many other types of imagery, including paradox—seemingly incongruous poles of that which assists in making possible the comprehension of divine truth.* Paradox did not bypass Ephrem himself, namely his biography and literary corpus.¹

As highlighted by scholars in the second half of the twentieth century, Ephrem's Life—known not only in Syriac but also in Greek—laid the foundations for the creation of the so-called “Ephrem Byzantinus”, in contrast with “Ephrem Syrus”, the real fourth-century author of *madrāšē*.² Traditionally, Ephrem was—and indeed still is—known, in both Byzantine and Syriac milieux, as being a solitary, even a recluse, who left the world to concentrate on performing permanent contrition for his sins. It is exactly this image that appears when one reads not only the corpus of *Ephraem graecus* but also many Syriac works attributed to Ephrem. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that

* This is a revised version of the article Grigory Kessel, “Св. Ефрем Нисибинский в круг чтения сирийского монаха: наблюдения о содержании сирийских аскетических сборников [St. Ephrem of Nisibis in the reading curriculum of a Syriac monk: some observations on the contents of the Syriac monastic miscellanies],” in *Преподобный Ефрем Сирин и его духовное наследие. Материалы конференции* [Saint Ephrem the Syrian and his Spiritual Heritage. Proceedings of the Conference] (ed. Metr. Hilarion of Volokolamsk; Moscow, 2019), 50–72 (in Russian).

- 1 Paradox in the writing of Ephrem has been explored by Phil J. Botha: e.g., Phil J. Botha, “Antithesis and Argument in the Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian,” *Hervormde Theologiese Studies* 44 (1988): 581–595; Phil J. Botha, “The Structure and Function of Paradox in the Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian,” *Ekklesiastikos Pharos* 68 (1990–1991): 50–62; Phil J. Botha, “Contrast and Contrivance in Ephrem the Syrian's Hymn *De virginitate* XLIV,” *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 12 (2001): 30–40.
- 2 Sidney H. Griffith, “Images of Ephrem: the Syrian Holy Man and his Church,” *Traditio* 45 (1989/90): 7–33; Sidney H. Griffith, “A Spiritual Father for the Whole Church: The Universal Appeal of St. Ephraem the Syrian,” *Hugoye* 1:2 (1998): 197–220; Joseph P. Amar, “Byzantine Ascetic Monachism and Greek Bias in the *Vita* Tradition of Ephrem the Syrian,” *ОСР* 58 (1992): 123–156; Sebastian P. Brock, “St. Ephrem in the Eyes of Later Syriac Liturgical Tradition,” *Hugoye* 2:1 (2010): 5–25.

the famous Russian theologian Filaret Gumilevsky (1805–1866) writes about Ephrem in the following manner: “What else could the soul seized by such deep contrition talk about if not the contrition of heart and tears, by means of which we should cleanse our sins? It is about humble contrition that Ephrem was most often talking. All his moral admonitions exhale the fragrance of humble contrition. On more than one occasion does Ephrem begin his composition thus: “Repent my soul [...]”. This contrition encompasses all the subjects of Ephrem’s works: repentance, recollection of death and judgement, the fear of God, attention to oneself, humility and others. In this contrition, Ephrem turns often to himself, reproaches his life and entreats others to pray on behalf of him”.³

It is this Ephrem that is known and venerated by the Christian ecumene, not the one who spent most of his life in Nisibis and in his last ten years was active in Edessa. Thanks to the study of ancient manuscripts containing Ephrem’s works, and also their critical editions by Dom Edmund Beck, we have discovered a completely different Ephrem, one who is open to the challenges of the world and the demands of his community, and is steady in fighting for Orthodoxy.

The starkest contrast consists in the fact that the historical Ephrem never moved away from the world and the church community. It is most likely that this ideal of monasticism, which had appeared in Egypt, began to spread throughout Syria during Ephrem’s lifetime; nonetheless, it had not yet replaced the specific forms of Mesopotamian consecrated lifestyle—now usually designated as “proto-monasticism”—that was practised by “the sons and daughters of the covenant”.⁴

The distortion of historical memory has affected not only Ephrem’s biography but, which is perhaps even more tragic, his literary heritage. As already

3 Archbishop Filaret Gumilevsky, *Историческое учение об Отцах Церкви* [The Historical Study of the Church Fathers] (3 vols; St. Petersburg, 1859), 2:84.

4 For Ephrem’s ascetic ideas, see Alison Salvesen, “Imitating the watchers: Restoring the angelic life of Adam in early Syriac thought,” *PdO* 46 (2020): 315–339. The development of asceticism as reflected in a cycle of hymns on Abraham of Qidun—some of which belong to Ephrem, while others were composed a little bit later—was traced in the recent monograph of Andrew Hayes, *Icons of the Heavenly Merchant: Ephrem and Pseudo-Ephrem in the Madrashe in Praise of Abraham of Qidun* (Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies 45; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2016). For Syriac proto-monasticism: Griffith, Sidney H. “Singles in God’s Service; Thoughts on the *Ihidaye* from the Works of Aphrahat and Ephraem the Syrian.” *The Harp* 4 (1991): 145–159 and Sidney H. Griffith, “Asceticism in the Church of Syria: The Hermeneutics of Early Syrian Monasticism,” in *Asceticism* (ed. V.L. Wimbush and R. Valantasis; New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 220–245.

mentioned, the image of the historical Ephrem is accessible to us thanks exclusively to the extant early Syriac manuscripts, which have preserved a fairly significant part of his authentic corpus. However, just as the historical Ephrem needed a certain amount of readjustment to conform with the new ideals of Christian monasticism, in the same way, his writings were ripe for the inevitable fate of re-thinking and re-editing.

One of the earliest indications of changing attitudes towards Ephrem's literary and theological heritage can be detected in the works of Philoxenos of Mabbug (d. 523), one of the most influential theologians of the Syriac Orthodox tradition. His extant writings testify to an ongoing process of dissociation from Ephrem's influence and authority.⁵

On the one hand, in an appendix to his theological treatise against Ḥabbib (written around 482–484), Philoxenos placed a florilegium to support his theological position.⁶ The fragments included were borrowed almost exclusively from works of Greek patristic authors, with only one exception, namely Ephrem.⁷ Indeed, the largest number of excerpts come from his works, 105 to be precise, almost half the total number. As a matter of fact, most of these can be identified as original works by Ephrem, which is an important testimony to the accessibility of manuscripts bearing Ephrem's original works in the first half of sixth century.

On the other hand, there is yet another florilegium in Philoxenos' letter to the monks of Senun, written near the end of his life in 521. This time, however, the florilegium features only a scattering of excerpts from Ephrem, and those are not prominent in the whole.⁸ Moreover, in the same letter, we find a characteristic attempt to interpret Ephrem's figurative language and imagery with the aim of making it appropriate to the requirements of post-Chalcedonian theology (in Philoxenos' case, of the miaphysite tradition).⁹

5 For a detailed study of Philoxenos' changing attitudes to the heritage of Ephrem, see Lucas Van Rompay, "*Mallpânâ dilan Suryâyâ*. Ephrem in the Works of Philoxenos of Mabbug: Respect and Distance," *Hugoye* 7:1 (2004): 83–105.

6 Edition: Maurice Brière and François Graffin, *Sancti Philoxeni episcopi Mabbugensis dissertationes decem de uno e sancta trinitate incorporato et passo (Mêmre contre Ḥabbib)* (PO 15.4, 38.3, 39.4, 40.2, 41.1; Paris: Firmin-Didot / Turnhout: Brepols, 1920–1982).

7 François Graffin, "Le florilège patristique de Philoxène de Mabbog," in *Symposium Syriacum 1972 célébré dans les jours 26–31 octobre 1972 à l'Institut Pontifical Oriental de Rome* (ed. I. Ortiz de Urbina; OCA 197; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1974), 267–290.

8 Edition: André de Halleux, *Philoxène de Mabbog. Lettre aux moines de Senoun* (CSCO 231, Scriptorum Syri 98; Louvain: Peeters, 1963).

9 Van Rompay, "*Mallpânâ dilan Suryâyâ*," 94–99.

However, changing attitudes towards Ephrem's literary heritage are even more eloquently testified by the manuscripts containing his works. These therefore provide us with the material evidence for the ongoing transformation.¹⁰

Ephrem's authentic works have come down to us in a particular type of manuscripts, which can be described as collections of works by a single author.¹¹ One of the characteristic features of these manuscripts is the fact that they contain solely works by Ephrem, and usually complete cycles of *madrāšē*. By way of example, one might mention the contents of a few manuscripts datable to the fifth–sixth centuries:

<i>London, British Library Add. 12176</i> (fifth–sixth c.)	Cycles of <i>madrāšē</i> on Faith, Against Heresies, Nisibene Hymns
<i>Dublin, Chester Beatty Library MS 209</i> (fifth–sixth c.)	Commentary on the Diatessaron
<i>Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana sir. 111</i> (522 CE)	Cycles of <i>madrāšē</i> on the Church, on Virginity, on Faith, on Heresies and on Paradise
<i>Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana sir. 112</i> (551 CE)	Cycles of <i>madrāšē</i> on Paradise and on the Nativity
<i>Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana sir. 113</i> (552 CE)	Cycle of <i>madrāšē</i> on Faith

This group of valuable manuscripts dates back to the fifth–sixth centuries, and their preservation is due to Mushe of Nisibis, abbot of the Dayr al-Suryān monastery in Egypt, who—on returning from Baghdad in 932 CE—brought with him some 250 Syriac manuscripts. Mushe went to Baghdad to obtain permission for the monks of Dayr al-Suryān to be exempted from the poll tax. He spent about five years in Mesopotamia and not only did he successfully deal with his mission, but he also assembled a large collection of manuscripts, some of which he acquired himself, whilst the others were donated to him as

10 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.

11 Sebastian P. Brock, “The Transmission of Ephrem's Madrashe in the Syriac Liturgical Tradition,” *SP* 33 (1997): 490–505, at 490–491; Sebastian P. Brock, “A brief guide to the main editions and translations of the works of St Ephrem,” in Sebastian P. Brock, *Singer of the Word of God: Ephrem the Syrian and his Significance in late Antiquity* (Sebastianyotho 1; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2020), 301–362, at 331–332; Butts, “Manuscript Transmission,” 288–292.

a gift to the monastery.¹² As highlighted by S. Brock on a number of occasions, without the efforts made by Mushe to gather these manuscripts, our present knowledge of early Syriac literature and Syriac Christianity in general would be completely different, since they often constitute unique copies of the works by authors from the so-called golden age of Syriac literature (i.e., fourth–seventh centuries). These include Ephrem, Aphrahat, Philoxenos of Mabbug and John of Ephesus, as well as numerous early translations from the Greek.¹³

Paraphrasing the title of Sebastian Brock's article dealing with the significance of Mushe's collection, one might ask the following question: "Which of Ephrem's works would we have without Mushe of Nisibis?". This question is far from rhetorical, as it is possible to reconstruct rather accurately Ephrem's corpus as it was known during the Medieval period.

On first acquaintance with the late manuscripts, the total absence of manuscript copies containing full cycles of hymns, and of those containing only works by Ephrem, is striking. S. Brock has shown that at the turn of the second millennium there occurs a shift in the transmission of Syriac literature, there is a gradually moving away from manuscripts containing the works of a single author towards various types of collections containing selections of texts extracted from the corpus of one or more authors.¹⁴

If single-volume collections of Ephrem's works were not created and copied during the second millennium, then in what kinds of manuscripts are his texts to be found? The re-use of his poetic works in liturgical texts is particularly relevant in this case.¹⁵ Among the large number of liturgical manuscripts that contain works attributed to Ephrem, one may distinguish two types. One of them includes collections of Ephrem's poetic texts selected for liturgical usage (along with works by other authors), whilst the other type includes manuscripts containing the services of the liturgical year (hymnaries) in which poetic works are embedded, again attributed not only to Ephrem but also other early Syriac authors.

12 Sebastian P. Brock, "Abbot Mushe of Nisibis, Collector of Syriac Manuscripts," in *Gli studi orientalistici in Ambrosiana nella cornice del IV centenario, 1609–2009: primo dies academicus, 8–10 novembre 2010* (ed. C. Baffioni et al.; Orientalia Ambrosiana 1; Roma: Bulzoni / Milano: Biblioteca Ambrosiana, 2012), 15–32.

13 Sebastian P. Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis, Where Would We be? Some Reflections on the Transmission of Syriac Literature," *JEastCS* 56 (2004): 15–24, at 23–24.

14 Brock, "Without Mushē of Nisibis," 18–21.

15 Brock, "The Transmission of Ephrem's Madrashe," 494–503; Jean Gribomont, "La tradition liturgique des hymnes pascales de S. Éphrem," *PdO* 4 (1973): 191–246; Butts, "Manuscript Transmission," 298–302.

The total number of such liturgical manuscripts is in the dozens; the earliest of them dates back to the eighth–ninth centuries. Despite their relative antiquity, research shows that, as a rule, they do not contain the full text of a particular *madrāšā* but only selected stanzas. Nevertheless, as S. Brock has shown, the value of these medieval liturgical manuscripts should not be underestimated, since they allow gaps to be filled in those texts that have not survived in their complete form.¹⁶ At the same time, to use liturgical manuscripts as witnesses for works by Ephrem unattested by ancient manuscripts is somewhat problematic, since the very attribution of liturgical texts requires a careful and critical examination, not to mention that any of these texts could easily have undergone some kind of modification or additional editing.¹⁷

To return to the main subject of this chapter, we may now add that, besides liturgical manuscripts, works attributed to Ephrem are also preserved in monastic miscellanies, or collections of ascetic or mystical works; these types of manuscripts also exist in other Oriental Christian traditions. Before turning to a consideration of Ephrem's works that can be found in monastic miscellanies, I will briefly present the miscellanies themselves.¹⁸

More than a hundred manuscripts that can be classified as monastic miscellanies are known today. Dating from the sixth to the twentieth centuries, they are direct witnesses to the development of Syriac monasticism from the early period into modern times. Although most of these manuscripts represent the Syriac Orthodox tradition, there is no doubt that monastic miscellanies were no less popular in the East Syriac and Melkite traditions. The quantitative difference in this case is rather a reflection of the deplorable fact that the East Syriac and Melkite traditions lost far more manuscripts during the Medieval period.

16 Brock, "The Transmission of Ephrem's Madrashe," 501–502.

17 Brock, "The Transmission of Ephrem's Madrashe," 495; Butts, "Manuscript Transmission," 298–302.

18 For some preliminary observations about Syriac monastic miscellanies, see Herman G.B. Teule, "Les compilations monastiques syriaques," in *Symposium Syriacum VII: Uppsala University, Department of Asian and African Languages, 11–14 August 1996* (ed. R. Lavenant; OCA 256; Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1998), 249–262; Grigory Kessel, "Syriac Monastic Miscellanies," in *Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies. An Introduction* (ed. A. Bausi et al.; Hamburg: Tredition, 2015), 411–414. For a broader context of monastic book culture and reading, see Joel Th. Walker, "Ascetic Literacy: Books and Readers in East-Syrian Monastic Tradition," in *Commutatio et Contentio: Studies in the Late Roman, Sasanian, and Early Islamic Near East in Memory of Zeev Rubin* (ed. H. Börm and J. Wiesehöfer; Düsseldorf: Wewel Verlag, 2010), 307–345.

Monastic miscellanies are important documents for the study of the history of Syriac monasticism, since they provide a snapshot of the state of Syriac monasticism at a certain moment and in a certain place. Through them, one can observe how monastic works translated from the Greek were gradually replaced by native Syriac literary compositions. One can likewise observe which authors, so to speak, set the tone and formed the mainstream in the intellectual tradition of Syriac monasticism, and which authors remained little-known and rarely read.

An important feature of the Syrian monastic miscellanies—which is relevant to the present study—is the phenomenon of re-attribution. In studying the content of miscellanies, it is often observable that the same text is attributed to different authors. This feature presents considerable difficulty for researchers who are trying to form a judgment about the authenticity of a text unattested elsewhere.¹⁹

Monastic miscellanies include works of the majority of Greek and Syriac monastic authors and it would be difficult to list them all. It is worth mentioning only some of the most popular, at least on the basis of the number of manuscripts that contain their works: Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Abba Isaiah, Mark the Monk, Macarius of Egypt, Evagrius, John Climacus, John the Solitary, Jacob of Serugh, Philoxenos of Mabbug, Gregory of Cyprus, Isaac of Nineveh, Joseph Ḥazzāyā and John of Dalyāthā.²⁰

Looking through the contents of the miscellanies, it is immediately clear that most of them are ascetic and mystical treatises in the strict sense of the word. This already raises a question: what kind of authentic works by Ephrem could have interested Syriac monks who had Evagrius and Abba Isaiah as their handbooks? Indeed, as mentioned earlier, in Ephrem's time, the anachoretic monasticism of the Egyptian type had not yet been adopted in the regions of the Syriac Church, whereas the Gospel ideals were realised there only in forms of proto-monasticism, which emphasised such ascetic practices

19 This applies, for example, to the brief compositions attributed to a certain John Nāqar (Herman G.B. Teule, "Jean Nāqar, auteur ascétique Syro-occidental," *PdO* 23 (1998): 61–78).

20 For detailed description of two miscellanies see Herman G.B. Teule, "A Fifteenth-Century Spiritual Anthology from the Monastery of Mar Ḥannanyā," *Het Christelijk Oosten* 49:1–2 (1997): 79–102, Sebastian P. Brock, "A Monastic Anthology from Twelfth-Century Edessa," in *Symposium Syriacum VII: Uppsala University, Department of Asian and African Languages, 11–14 August 1996* (ed. R. Lavenant; OCA 256; Roma: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1998), 221–231. A mutilated fragment of one monastic miscellany has been recently studied in Forness, Philip M. "Reading Early Christian Authors in Medieval Monastic Communities: A Syriac Monastic Miscellany from Ṭur 'Abdin (Harvard University, Syr. 108/18)." *Le Muséon* 134 (2021): 79–102.

as celibacy, fasting and vigil. Thus, it is easy to imagine that Ephrem's authentic works would not have been regarded as relevant or useful, if not in terms of monastic reading in general, then at least with respect to their inclusion in special monastic miscellanies. However, it would be rash to jump to any firm conclusions, since monastic miscellanies, in addition to traditional monastic writings, frequently contain writings by authors such as Jacob of Serugh and John Chrysostom. Although the selected texts of these two authors can be best described as admonitory, homiletic or moralising, it seems that it was not at all problematic for the compilers to include such works among ascetic treatises *in sensu stricto*. Furthermore, there are also featured texts of other genres— theological, dogmatic, and hagiographic. Therefore, taking into account the general veneration of Ephrem in the Syriac tradition, one would rather expect the presence of his texts in the miscellanies, even though they are not strictly monastic and ascetic in their content.

Indeed, the study of miscellanies shows that nearly half of the total number contains works attributed to Ephrem; that is to say, every second manuscript. Recalling the previously mentioned motif of paradox, one cannot but be surprised by the fact that the works of Ephrem, who lived and wrote outside of the context of classic monasticism, were so popular among the later generations of Syriac monks. However, the situation is less straightforward than it may seem. By way of example, I would like to offer a brief overview of the kinds of texts attributed to Ephrem which are present in several miscellanies from different periods.

Let us then begin with one of the earliest miscellanies, *London, British Library Add. 14605*, which can be dated to the first half of the sixth century.²¹ One of the notes found in the manuscript informs us that in the year 653CE the manuscript was purchased by the monastery of Psilta (located between Edessa and Nisibis, near modern Viranşehir). At a later date, the manuscript came to belong to another monastery (the name is erased), as well as to a certain stylite, whose name and location are also erased. Thus, we can easily see that the manuscript circulated in a monastic milieu.

Regarding its contents, the miscellany is defective, and today it contains works attributed to John Chrysostom and Jacob of Serugh, and also a number of monastic apophthegms. There is only one text ascribed to Ephrem in this miscellany, which, as it turns out, is not authentic.²²

21 William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, acquired since the year 1838* (3 vols; London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1871), 2:715–717.

22 Here and henceforth, I provide—if available—the standard title of the works under consideration. The actual wording present in a manuscript may vary.

fol. 41^r–49^v: *On the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "All flesh is like grass"* (Is. 40:6) [no. 1 in the appendix]

Title: כְּכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל וְכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל

Incipit: ... כְּכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל וְכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל

This text is known in ten manuscripts but it is attributed to Ephrem only in one of them, namely the miscellany under consideration, whereas in all other manuscript copies we find the attribution to another early Syriac author, Isaac 'of Antioch',²³ whose identity is still a matter of scholarly debate.²⁴ The corpus of texts attributed to Isaac most probably includes works written by different authors of the same name. The text was edited by P. Bedjan as part of the corpus of Isaac's works; the same text was also edited by Th.J. Lamy among the works by Ephrem. The oldest manuscript containing the text with attribution to Isaac, likewise, goes back to the 6th century. Due to the considerable differences in content and style in comparison with genuine works by Ephrem, the text has been tacitly treated as non-authentic.

The next manuscript, *London, British Library Add. 18817*, is not dated; but it was assigned to the ninth century on palaeographic grounds by W. Wright.²⁵ The miscellany consists mainly of works by John the Solitary; but it also includes fragments from Basil of Caesarea, Philoxenos, Abba Isaiah and others. The manuscript contains three texts attributed to Ephrem, as follows:

1. fol. 122^v–128^r: *On solitaries, mourners and hermits* [no. 2 in the appendix].

Title: כְּכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל וְכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל

Incipit: ... כְּכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל וְכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל

2. fol. 128^r–130^v: *On the perfection of the brethren* [no. 3 in the appendix].

Title: כְּכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל וְכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל

Incipit: ... כְּכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל וְכֹלֵּי־הָאָרֶץ כְּעֵשְׂבָאֵל

23 Edward Mathews kindly shared with me his unpublished census of Syriac manuscripts containing the works attributed to Isaac of Antioch (Edward G. Mathews Jr., *The Manuscript Works of Isaac* [draft]); for the earlier version, see Edward G. Mathews Jr., "The Works attributed to Isaac of Antioch: A[nother] Preliminary Checklist," *Hugoye* 6:1 (2003): 51–76.

24 For the problem of differentiation between different Isaacs, see the studies of Tanios Bou Mansour: Tanios Bou Mansour, "Une clé pour la distinction des écrits des Isaac d'Antioche," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 79:4 (2003): 365–402; Tanios Bou Mansour, "La distinction des écrits d'Isaac d'Antioche: les œuvres inédites," *JEastCS* 57:1–2 (2005): 1–46; Tanios Bou Mansour, "Les discours à caractère christologique et leur appartenance aux Isaac (d'Antioche)," *Oriens Christianus* 89 (2005): 8–42; Tanios Bou Mansour, "Les écrits ascétiques ou "monastiques" d'Isaac dit d'Antioche," *JEastCS* 57:1–2 (2007): 49–84.

25 Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, 2:803–806.

3. fol. 130^v–133^v: *On the vigil which makes the soul shine* [no. 4 in the appendix].

Title: ܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ

Incipit: ... ܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ ܕܩܝܡܝܬܐ

W. Wright, who catalogued the manuscript, had already recognised two of the texts (no. 1 and 2) as attributed elsewhere to Isaac of Antioch.²⁶ However, whereas the third text—attested exclusively by the monastic miscellanies—has not attracted scholarly attention, and the attribution of the second one to Ephrem appears not to have been discussed (apparently due to the more probable authorship by Isaac),²⁷ the authorship of the first one has been disputed. A. Vööbus argued in favour of Ephrem's authorship, whilst embedding the content of the text within his peculiar—and no longer accepted—interpretation of the early history of Syriac monasticism.²⁸ His position was challenged by E. Beck, who showed that the forms of monasticism depicted in this text belong rather to a later period, and therefore he considered the text to be non-authentic.²⁹ Modern scholarship treats the text in the same vein.³⁰

The manuscript *London, British Library Add. 14615* (tenth–eleventh c.) consists of 89 folios in its present form, but initially it was larger.³¹ The title of this miscellany has been preserved: “Admonitions from the holy books of the teachers” (*martyānūtā d-men ktābē qaddišē d-mallpānē*). It opens with five texts by Ephrem, which are followed by Evagrius' *Gnostic Chapters* and *Letter to Melania*, and works by Basil the Great, Ammonius and Abba Isaiah.

26 Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, 2:805.

27 For this text see Bou Mansour, “Les écrits ascétiques,” 58–67.

28 Arthur Vööbus, “Beiträge zur kritischen Sichtung der asketischen Schriften, die unter dem Namen Ephraem des Syrers überliefert sind,” *Oriens Christianus* 39 (1955): 48–55, at 51–54; Arthur Vööbus, *Literary, Critical and Historical Studies in Ephrem the Syrian* (Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile 10; Stockholm: Estonian Theological Society in Exile, 1958), 75–79; Arthur Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient: A Contribution to the History of Culture in the Near East*, vol. 3 (CSCO 500, Subsidia 181; Lovanii: Peeters, 1988), 43–44.

29 Edmund Beck, “Ascétisme et monachisme chez saint Ephrem,” *L'Orient Syrien* 3:3 (1958): 273–298, at 291–292.

30 Joseph Melki, “Saint Éphrem le Syrien, un bilan de l'édition critique,” *PdO* 11 (1983): 3–88, at 80. For a detailed study of a group of texts to which it belongs, see Edward G. Mathews Jr., “On Solitaries: Ephrem or Isaac?” *LM* 103 (1990): 91–110; Bou Mansour, “Les écrits ascétiques,” 58–67. For the criteria of authenticity of Ephrem's works, see Blake Hartung, “The Authorship and Dating of the Syriac Corpus attributed to Ephrem of Nisibis: A Reassessment,” *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 22:2 (2018): 296–321.

31 Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, 2:840–842.

1. fol. 2^v–4^v: *On silence* [no. 5 in the appendix].

Title: ܡܢ ܩܘܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

Incipit: ... ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

2. fol. 4^v–8^r: *On the perfection of the brethren* [no. 3 in the appendix].

Title: ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܘܨܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

Incipit: ... ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

3. fol. 8^r–10^r: *On the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "The sinner shall be taken lest he see the Glory of the Lord"* (Is. 26:10) [no. 6 in the appendix].

Title: ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܘܨܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

Incipit: ... ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

4. fol. 10^r–12^v: *On martyrs* [continuation of preceding text].

Title: ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܘܨܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

Incipit: ܡܢ ܩܘܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

... ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

5. fol. 12^v–19^v: *On magicians, charmers, diviners, and on the end and consumption* [no. 7 in the appendix].

Title: ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܡܘܨܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

Incipit: ܡܢ ܩܘܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

... ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܡܐ

The first text, entitled *On silence*, is known from a large number of manuscripts, many of which are monastic miscellanies. Most copies attribute it to Ephrem but none of them are particularly old. The given miscellany is the oldest known copy bearing the attribution to Ephrem; however, the same text also occurs with another attribution, to Isaac, for example, in *London, British Library Add. 14582*, dated to 816 CE. The text is considered non-authentic and probably for that reason remains unedited.

The second text, *On the perfection of the brethren*, was treated earlier.

The third and fourth texts are nothing other than two parts of one *mēmārā*, *On the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "The sinner shall be taken lest he see the Glory of the Lord* (Is. 26:10)". The manuscript tradition of the text goes back to the tenth century, and the manuscript under consideration constitutes its oldest manuscript witness. Despite the fact that the text is known only with attribution to Ephrem, it is unlikely that it is genuine. The text was edited by Beck,

teenth century. For Vööbus, this text could not have been composed by Ephrem due to its moderate ascetic ideas, which are at odds with Ephrem's genuine works (as reconstructed by Vööbus).⁴⁰ According to Matthews, the text belongs to the corpus of Isaac.

The last text—present here in two parts—possesses a very special title that deserves to be reproduced in full: “*Mēmṛā* about the solitariness of the solitaries and the destitute life of the mourners, of the dwellers in the caves, on the mountains, in hollows, in the rocks and the clefts of the ground, and of the roaming ones”. The very title of this composition does not allow it to be associated with the genuine works of Ephrem. This text presents a slightly different case because it occurs with attribution, this time, not to two authors, but three: Ephrem, Isaac of Antioch and Isaac of Nineveh. Ephrem's authorship was defended by Vööbus,⁴¹ but Beck's counter view has been upheld in scholarship.⁴² At present, the text is assigned to the corpus of Isaac, although there is only one witness that attests to such attribution. Equally, the attribution to Isaac of Nineveh occurs in only one manuscript. Furthermore, it should be noted that the earliest known manuscript witnesses of this text were produced during the second half of the fifteenth century in Ṭur ‘Abdin, where there was substantial interest in the works of Isaac of Nineveh. It was also pointed out above that the reattribution of texts was a common feature of monastic miscellanies, and it therefore comes as no surprise that the text was re-attributed to Isaac of Nineveh.

Conclusions

The manuscripts presented in this study constitute only a small part of the total number of monastic miscellanies containing works attributed to Ephrem; nevertheless, they represent well enough the character of works that can be found in manuscripts of this genre. Thus, beginning with the earliest monastic miscellanies dating back to the sixth century, in general, we do not come across unambiguously authentic works by Ephrem; that is, those that would have belonged to one of the known cycles and thereby would be attested by at least one ancient manuscript. As this survey of texts has shown, most are also known with attribution to another Syriac author, Isaac ‘of Antioch’, the ques-

40 Vööbus, *Literary, Critical and Historical Studies*, 86–88.

41 Vööbus, *Literary, Critical and Historical Studies*, 69–72; Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, 42–43.

42 Melki, “Saint Éphrem le Syrien,” 70–71; Bou Mansour, “Les écrits ascétiques,” 67–79.

tion of whose identity/-ies has not so far been settled. In the case of such works as those known with a double attribution to Ephrem and Isaac (nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, 10), there are no sufficient grounds for considering even one of these as securely belonging to Ephrem. The main distinguishing criteria are the characteristics of ascetic teaching (namely, emphasis on repentance, contrition, mortification and spiritual introspection), as well as a certain literary form (a preference for mechanical repetitions and a lack of imagery characteristic of genuine works by Ephrem), and finally, particular traits pertaining to the linguistic development of the Syriac language. Besides this group of texts, for which affiliation to Isaac's corpus is supported by the corresponding attestations by ancient manuscript witnesses, there are others of less clear origin (nos. 6, 7, 8, 9, 11). Given their spurious character and the fact that the manuscript tradition of some of them goes back to the fifteenth century, they have been excluded from the corpus of authentic works of Ephrem, in most cases without proper examination.

This survey of selected miscellanies calls for two more observations. Firstly, one cannot help but notice the gradual augmentation of this pseudo-Ephremian material over the course of time. Whereas the sixth-century miscellany provides only one work attributed to Ephrem, by the fifteenth century we find six. In addition, if the sixth-century miscellany contains a text that is confidently attributable to the corpus of Isaac, in the fifteenth-century miscellany we come across not only texts belonging to Isaac's corpus but also texts of obscure origin. Secondly, the two miscellanies—BL Add. 14615 (tenth–eleventh c.) and *Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs* MS 417 (1474 CE)—contain a text that is provided not in full but divided into two parts. This fragmentation phenomenon is one of the characteristic traits of monastic miscellanies; as a matter of fact, it is often possible to trace how the original text was initially copied in full and divided later (as well as supplied with a new title); moreover, if the divided parts had first been copied in the right order, they might have been placed in different parts of a manuscript or copied separately at a later time.

Finally, it would be an exaggeration to say that Ephrem's authentic works were completely inaccessible to Syriac monks, not least because many of them, though selectively, were integrated into liturgical manuscripts; besides, one should not forget that the ancient manuscripts containing genuine works were still available in monastic libraries. However, the study of monastic miscellanies clearly demonstrates that the original corpus of Ephrem did not match the intellectual taste of Syriac monks, whose reading curriculum was mainly focused on the perusal of ascetic and mystical works. In trying to comprehend the causes that led to the oblivion of Ephrem's corpus, one should bear in mind the branches of Syriac Christianity, whose theological and dogmatic sensibility

eventually replaced Ephrem's authority—which had undoubtedly dominated during the early period—with that of the Greek fathers, such as Cyril of Alexandria in the Syrian Orthodox tradition and Theodore of Mopsuestia in the East Syriac tradition.

Viewed against this background, it is not surprising that, in the texts of the monastic authors of the seventh–eighth centuries, one cannot find any significant signs of familiarity with the Ephrem's authentic works. Thus, according to Sabino Chialà's observations, there is not a single quotation from Ephrem in the works of Šubḥālmāran, Symeon d-Ṭaibūthēh, or John of Dalyāthā, and there is only one citation in the works of Sahdōnā and Joseph Ḥazzāyā, and two quotations in the *First Part* of Isaac of Nineveh.⁴³

To sum up, we may conclude that, paradoxically, and despite the universal estimation and veneration of Ephrem as a saint, his literary corpus was unable to pass through the spiritual lenses of Syriac monasticism.⁴⁴ This aligns with the statement of Andrew Palmer: “each culture constructs a picture of Ephraim according to its own lights”.⁴⁵ Hence, the Syriac monastic tradition construed its own figure of Ephrem; that of the ideal monk, extolling seclusion, mortification, self-condemnation and repentance, which are all anachronistic topics for the historical Ephrem. As a result, generations of Syriac monks over the centuries did not read, along with texts by Evagrius, Abba Isaiah, Isaac of Nineveh and other monastic fathers, the genuine works by the “harp of the Holy Spirit” but rather, they favoured the admonitions of the “teacher of repentance”.⁴⁶

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- 43 Sabino Chialà, “Efreem nei mistici siro-orientali e in particolare in Isacco di Ninive,” in *Saint Éphrem, un poète pour notre temps* (Patrimoine Syriaque, Actes du Colloque XI; Antélias, Liban: Centre d'Études et de Recherches Orientales, 2007), 241–253.
- 44 For the Syrian Orthodox tradition, see Van Rompay, “*Mallpānā dilan Suryāyā*,” Butts, “Manuscript Transmission,” 292–298; for the East Syriac context see Sabino Chialà, “La figura e l'opera di Efreem nella tradizione siro-orientale,” *PdO* 46 (2020): 341–367.
- 45 Andrew Palmer, “The Influence of Ephraim the Syrian,” *Hugoye* 21 (1999): 83–109, at 89.
- 46 This a common designation of Ephrem in the Orthodox tradition.

Appendix

TABLE 8.1 Texts attributed to Ephrem mentioned in the article.⁴⁷

	Text	Incipit	Attribution	Earliest manuscript witness	Authorship	Edition	References
1	<i>On the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "All flesh is like grass" (Is. 40:6)</i>	ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ	Ephrem	BL Add. 14605 (sixth c.)—a single known witness	Isaac 'of Antioch'	Ephrem's corpus: Lamy II, 313–334	Den Biesen 60 (50)
			Isaac of Antioch (majority of manuscripts)	BL Add. 12166 (sixth c.)		Isaac's corpus: Bedjan 408–420	Mathews 56 (55)
2	<i>On solitaries, mourners and hermits</i>	ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ ܩܘܡܐ	Ephrem	BL Add. 18817 (ninth c.)	Isaac 'of Antioch'	Ephrem's corpus: Lamy IV, 147–186	Den Biesen 124 (106)
			Isaac of Antioch (majority of manuscripts)	BL Add. 12166; Dayr al-Suryān Syr. 27A (both sixth c.)		Isaac's corpus: Bedjan 49–70	Mathews 26 (25)

47 The titles may vary in manuscript copies. Abbreviations used: Beck I—Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers Sermones I* (CSCO 305, Scriptorum Syri 130; Louvain: Peeters, 1970), Beck III—Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers Sermones III* (CSCO 320, Scriptorum Syri 138; Louvain: Peeters, 1972), Beck IV—Edmund Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrsers Sermones IV* (CSCO 334, Scriptorum Syri 148; Louvain: Peeters, 1973), Bedjan—Paul Bedjan, *Homiliae S. Isaaci Syri Antiocheni*, vol. I (Paris–Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1903), Den Biesen—Kees den Biesen, *Annotated Bibliography of Ephrem the Syrian* (s.l., 2011) (number in parentheses refers to the first edition, Giove in Umbria, 2002), Lamy II—vol. 2 (1890) of Thomas J. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri hymni et sermones* (4 vols.; Mechliniæ: H. Dessain, 1882–1902), Lamy IV—vol. 4 (1902) of Thomas J. Lamy, *Sancti Ephraem Syri hymni et sermones* (4 vols.; Mechliniæ: H. Dessain, 1882–1902), Mathews—Edward G. Mathews Jr., *The Manuscript Works of Isaac* (draft), Raḥmani—Ignatius E. Raḥmani, *Lūqāṭē da-mkannšīn men sāyōmē 'attiqē*, vol. II ([Sharfeh], n.d.), Roman Edition Syr. III—Petrus Benedictus and Stephanus E. Assemanus, *Sancti Patris nostri Ephraem Syri opera omnia*, ser. 2, vol. III (Romae, 1743), Zingerle—Pius Zingerle, *Sancti Patris Ephraemi Sermones Duo* (Brixen: Weger, 1869).

TABLE 8.1 Texts attributed to Ephrem mentioned in the article. (cont.)

Text	Incipit	Attribution	Earliest manuscript witness	Authorship	Edition	References
3 <i>On the perfection of the brethren</i>	ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ	Ephrem	BL Add. 18817 (ninth c.)	Isaac 'of Antioch'	Ephrem's corpus: –	Den Biesen –
		Isaac of Antioch (majority of manuscripts)	BL Add. 17164 (sixth–seventh c.)		Isaac's corpus: Bedjan 296–305	Mathews 58
4 <i>On the vigil which makes the soul shine</i>	ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ	Ephrem (attested only in monastic miscellanies)	BL Add. 18817 (ninth c.)	?	Rahmani, pp. 38–47	Den Biesen 129 (114)
5 <i>On silence</i>	ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ	Ephrem (majority of manuscripts)	BL Add. 14615 (tenth–eleventh c.)	Isaac 'of Antioch'	–	Den Biesen –
		Isaac of Antioch	BL Add. 14582 (816 CE)		–	Mathews 11
6 <i>On the saying of the prophet Isaiah, "The sinner shall be taken lest he see the Glory of the Lord" (Is. 26:10)</i>	ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ	Ephrem (exclusively)	BL Add. 14615 (tenth–eleventh c.)	Isaac 'of Antioch'?	Ephrem's corpus: Beck I/VI, 80–95	Den Biesen 85 (72)
		–	–		–	Mathews 18 (–)
7 <i>On magicians, conjures, diviners, and on the end and consumption</i>	ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܘܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ ܩܪܝܢ	Ephrem (exclusively)	BL Add. 14650 (875 CE)	Isaac 'of Antioch'?	Ephrem's corpus: Lamy II, 393–426 Beck III/II, 12–27	Den Biesen 90 (77)
		–	–		–	Mathews 138 (–)

TABLE 8.1 Texts attributed to Ephrem mentioned in the article. (*cont.*)

	Text	Incipit	Attribution	Earliest manuscript witness	Authorship	Edition	References
8	<i>On God's care for us and on the solicitude that is in him</i>	ܐܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ	Ephrem	? Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs MS 417 (1474 CE)	?	Rahmani 36–37	Den Biesen 81 (67)
9	<i>On a person living in stillness and self-emptying</i>	ܐܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ	Ephrem (majority of manuscripts)	? Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs MS 417 (1474 CE)	Isaac 'of Antioch'?	Ephrem's corpus: Zingerle 29–36, Rahmani 48–52	Den Biesen 82 (69)
			Isaac of Antioch	BnF syr. 197 (sixteenth c.)			Mathews 34 (33)
10	<i>On the solitariness of the solitaries</i>	ܐܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ	Ephrem (majority of manuscripts)	Vat. sir. 566 (1472/3 CE)	Isaac 'of Antioch'	Ephrem's corpus: Beck IV/1, 1–16	Den Biesen 125 (107)
			Isaac of Antioch	BnF syr. 215 (seventeenth c.)—a single known witness			Mathews 167 (–)
			Isaac of Nineveh	Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs MS 56 (1481/2 CE)—a single known witness			
11	<i>Paraenetica lviii</i>	ܐܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ ܕܢܝܢ	Ephrem	? Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs MS 417 (1474 CE)	?	Roman Edition Syr. III. P. 525	Den Biesen 36 (–)

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Meandering through Monastic Miscellanies from Turfan to Iraq: First Remarks on the Comparison of Sogdian Manuscript E28 with Syriac Ascetic Collections Referable to It

Vittorio Berti

1 Structure of the Collection

Through some focused insights, I hope to make a small contribution to the contextual background of the Sogdian ascetic miscellany E28 of the Turfan Collection, a set of paper sheets and fragments recovered from the Bulayīq monastery during the second and third German expedition to Turfan led by Von Le Coq in 1904–1905 and 1905–1907. The text was recently published by Nicolas Sims-Williams with an English translation.¹ Here, I shall offer a tentative analysis of its composition criteria and what we can infer from the Syriac tradition of each text included in the collection.

First, we must take as a starting point the philological and codicological reconstruction provided by Sims-Williams. He states that the entire E28 might be ascribed to the hand of one single copyist, but that, at the same time, this material should possibly be subdivided into three separate groups belonging to three different manuscripts originating from the same scriptorium. I shall assume this to be so. The group of texts already identified belongs to a single manuscript whose folio measures are “28–29.5 × 19–21 cm, with a written area of 24.5–26.5 × 16–18 cm”.² We should ascribe folios 1 to 10 of E28 to this manuscript, with the possible addition of folios 11–13.

This manuscript certainly included the following texts:

- a) An excerpt from the logos XXVI, 10 of the *Asceticon* of Abba Isaiah
- b) *Selected sayings* of Simon of Taibuteh
- c) Excerpts from the first and second part of the *Homilies* of Isaac of Nineveh

1 Nicholas Sims-Williams, *An Ascetic Miscellany: The Christian Sogdian Manuscript E28* (Berliner Turfantexte 42; Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).

2 Nicholas Sims-Williams, *Iranian Manuscripts in Syriac Script in the Berliner Turfan Collection* (Mitteliranische Handschriften 4; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2013), 128.

- d) Excerpts from Dadisho' Qatraya's Commentaries on the *Asceticon* of Abba Isaiah and on the *Paradise of the Fathers*.
 e) The *History of Mar Awgin*.

Let us start by saying that, with our current knowledge, a single Syriac manuscript containing all these texts does not exist. This entails two alternatives: either a hypothetical Syriac model has been lost, or, most likely, such a composition is an original product of the Turfan Christian monastic community. This option—which will certainly remain little more than a suggestion—must not dissuade us from making a comparative analysis with similar Syriac miscellanies. In fact, only a close dialogue between Syriac and Sogdian can help us outline the communal context and the institutional recipients of Turfan textual repositories more precisely.

2 Adapting Simon of Taibuteh

The above-mentioned *Selected sayings* of Simon of Taibuteh are a translation of Simon's so-called *Profitable counsels*. On this text, we must refer to the results achieved by Grigory Kessel and Nicholas Sims-Williams³ and try to gather from them some additional remarks. The Syriac text of the *Profitable Counsels* came to us through two Syriac manuscripts. The first, Seert 109 (AD1609), was lost during the First World War, and only a description of it, provided by Addai Scher, has come down to us,⁴ whilst the other, Šarfeh Rahmani 80, is possibly a copy of the first, and, according to Kessel, it might date back to the early twentieth century.⁵ In both cases, the volumes preserving Simon's text are defined ܩܘܒܬܐ ܕܩܠܘܠܐ “book of gleanings” = “anthology”, “florilegium”. An earlier example of this formula is found in the Syriac title of the *Book of the Bee* by Salomon of Bosra,⁶ ܩܘܒܬܐ ܕܩܠܘܠܐ ܕܩܘܒܬܐ ܕܩܠܘܠܐ. It does not seem to describe a particular type of manuscript, but a general collection of various texts that may not coincide with the entirety of a codex, thereby indicating a veritable miscellany.

From a linguistic point of view, according to the analysis by Kessel and Sims-Williams, Simon's Sogdian witness is particularly valuable as it is much older

3 Grigory Kessel and Nicholas Sims-Williams, “The Profitable Counsels of Šem'ōn of Taibūtēh. The Syriac Original and its Sogdian Version,” *LM* 123 (2011): 279–302.

4 Addai Scher, *Catalogue des manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés dans la bibliothèque épiscopale de Séert (Kurdistan) avec notes bibliographiques* (Mosul: Imprimerie des Pères Dominicains, 1905), 77–79.

5 Kessel and Sims-Williams, *The Profitable Counsels*, 283.

6 Salomon of Bosra, *The Book of the Bee*, ܩܘܒܬܐ ܕܩܠܘܠܐ.

than the oldest surviving Syriac manuscript. This led Kessel and Sims-Williams to regard the Sogdian variants as possible bearers of an older stage of the writing.⁷ However, I should like to note that some elements emerging in the comparison between Syriac and Sogdian are more conveniently understandable in the opposite direction, coherently with the process of translation from the first language to the second. First, three Syriac terms—ܩܢܐܘܢ “man”, ܩܢܐܘܢܐ “solitary” and ܩܢܐܘܢܐ “ascetic”—which indicate the specific addressees of three different counsels, are translated by the single Sogdian word *swgbr* 𐰽𐰺𐰍𐰏𐰚 (once *swqbr* 𐰽𐰺𐰍𐰏𐰚), meaning “monk”. Again, the difference between the Syriac ܩܢܐܘܢܐ “his neighbour” and Sogdian *br't* “brother” concurs to emphasise that, for the Turfan translator, the context in which such counsels were put into practice had to be strictly confined to a monastic microcosm. Thus, it is easier to think that, passing from Syriac to Sogdian, the text was simplified. Lastly, it is worth noting the presence of an expression repeated twice in Sogdian, “makes himself without desire”, which suggests some kind of conceptual shift when we compare it to the corresponding Syriac verb ܩܢܐܘܢܐ “to resist”. The Sogdian formula (r3–4: *wyspw swgbr qy xwty ɣryw r'mnty nwryžy wny*, r15: *wyspw qy r'mnty nwryžy wny xypθ ɣryw*)⁸ should be understood as a rewording of the same commonplace phrase (“to make himself without desire”) belonging to Sogdian monastic jargon. Similar solutions to express analogous concepts appear to be indeed used elsewhere in manuscript E28, that is, in the translations of Dadisho' Qatraya's works.⁹ We must further add that the characteristic term *nwryžy* (“without desire”) which recurs here and there in the fragmentary section of the codex¹⁰ can also be found in other Christian monastic texts in Sogdian translation,¹¹ as well as in a Sogdian Buddhist text from the library of the Mogao Caves near Dunhuang.¹²

7 Kessel and Sims-Williams, *The Profitable Counsels*, 289.

8 Simon of Taibuteh, *The Profitable Counsels (Sogdian version)*, 294; text and transl. in Sims-Williams, *An Ascetic Miscellany*, 10–11: “r3–4: Every monk who always makes himself without desire; r15: Everyone who always makes himself without desire”.

9 r25: *c'nw nwryž wnty 'dy xypθ*; v23: *qt (nwry:ž) w(n)'t mrt(x)ny xypθ* (Dadisho' Qatraya, *Commentary on the Second Homily of Abbā Isaiah [Sogdian version]*, 62–63).

10 Sims-Williams, *An Ascetic Miscellany*, 279.

11 Émile Benveniste, “Études sur quelques textes sogdiens chrétiens 1,” *Journal Asiatique* 243 (1955): 319. Olaf Hansen, *Berliner Sogdische Texte II* (Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse 15; Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1954), 910. Nicholas Sims-Williams, *The Christian Sogdian Manuscript C2* (Berliner Turfantexte 12; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1985), 130.

12 Émile Benveniste, *Textes Sogdiens* (Mission Pelliot en Asie Centrale 3; Paris: Geuthner, 1940), 124, line 122.

All these examples help us figure out the translator's way of understanding, reading and adapting Syriac ascetic mentality by means of shared cultural categories of the broader Sogdian area. They provide vivid clues for imagining the social and cultural dynamics involved in the translation and the work attitudes of the scriptorium.

3 A Clue from Isaac of Nineveh

Moving on to the presence of extracts of both the first and second part of Isaac's writings, one can observe a characteristic element related to what I noted above, which is the question of the audience to whom the content of these extracts was addressed. The first part of Isaac's writing focuses on ascetic life, whilst the second addresses monks who live between the first and the second step of the ascetic path; the latter are monks who have partially conformed to the daily work of asceticism and prayer, but still need instruction and discernment on the ultimate results of the solitary life. This appears particularly true when reading the text identified by Adrian Pirtea in E28 / 14, which derives from chapter 1 of the second part of Isaac's writings.¹³ The text depicts the possibility of a vision of God that can happen to a more experienced monk, filling his eyes with tears and enrapturing him in a spiritual union. At the same time, the text advises brothers who have not been long on their ascetic path against reading profane books unrelated to the monastic tradition, a cautionary warning that might be germane to issues typical of the so-called psychical step. This is coherent with the renowned three-step partition of monastic life according to the teaching of John the Solitary,¹⁴ which was certainly known by the monks of Bulayīq, as shown by an anonymous homily from the same Turfan collection published by Sims-Williams.¹⁵

13 The second Part, still unedited, is "preserved in the Oxford Ms Bodl. Syr. e.7, fol. 10^r-12^r" (Sims-Williams, *An Ascetic Miscellany*, 19, quoting Adrian Pirtea). There is an English translation by Sebastian Brock, "St. Isaac the Syrian: Two Unpublished Texts," *Sobornost* 19, no. 1 (1997): 7-33. See also Adrian Pirtea, "Isaac of Nineveh, *Gnostic Chapters*," in *From Liturgy to Pharmacology: Christian Sogdian texts from the Turfan Collection* (ed. Nicholas Sims-Williams; Berliner Turfantexte 45; Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), 118; idem, "St. Isaac of Nineveh's *Gnostic Chapters* in Sogdian: The Identification of an Anonymous Text," in *Caught in Translation: Studies on Version in Late Antique Christian Literature* (ed. Madalina Toca and Dan Batovici; Leiden: Brill, 2020), 89, n. 4.

14 On the teaching about the three steps of the Monastic Life in John the Solitary see: Paul Harb, "Doctrine spirituelle de Jean le Solitaire (Jean d'Apamée)," *PdO* 2 (1971): 225-260.

15 Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Syro-Sogdica 1: An Anonymous Homily on the Three Periods of the Solitary Life," *OCP* 47 (1981): 441-446.

4 Translating the Monastic Interpreter of a Monastic Authority: Dadisho' and Abba Isaiah

Setting aside the reference to Dadisho's commentary to the *Paradise of the Fathers*,¹⁶ additional suggestions for describing the monastic concerns of the E28 scriptorium might be inferred from the presence of extracts of Dadisho' Qatraya's *Commentary on the Asceticon of Abba Isaiah*.¹⁷ This seventh-century East Syrian monastic exegesis of the Syriac translation of a fifth-century Greek monastic work has reached us through five modern manuscripts, all of them depending from a lost thirteenth-century manuscript once preserved in the archiepiscopal library of Seert. The lost manuscript of Seert disappeared during the First World War. According to the description given by Addai Scher, it was a small volume of 17 × 12 cm, with 19 lines per page. The edition by Draguet is based on the ms *Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Sémences* 239, which is a nineteenth-century copy. To my knowledge, there are no Syriac extracts from this commentary in Syriac manuscripts bearing anthological collections. Although we know for sure that other writings by Dadisho' were anthologized—for example, in the famous ms *Alqosh, Notre-Dame des Sémences* 237, some passages from Dadisho' can be read alongside writings by other East Syrian spiritual authors—nevertheless, this does not happen for the *Commentary on the Asceticon of Abba Isaiah*.

As regards the relation between the Syriac original and the Sogdian version of Dadisho's commentary, I will not deduce all the contextual suggestions that can be gained from the linguistic apparatus provided by Nicholas Sims-Williams, except for one point, which in my opinion is one of the most intriguing clues emerging from his analysis. By considering the fact that the Sogdian version of Dadisho's commentary quotes logos 14 of Abba Isaiah's *Asceticon*, we can observe two things. On the one hand, some readings in the Sogdian version are closer to the autonomous Syriac version of Isaiah than the corresponding texts inserted into the Syriac commentary of Dadisho',¹⁸ on the other hand, the wording of Isaiah's text in the Syriac commentary of Dadisho' is sometimes closer to the Syriac autonomous version than the Sogdian translation of the commentary. Unless one postulates an unknown branch

16 We can read the Syriac text of the quotation in Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Dādišo' Qatrāyā's Commentary on the 'Paradise of Fathers,'" *Analecta Bollandiana* 112 (1994): 33–64.

17 The related Syriac texts are in Dadisho' Qatraya, *Commentary on the Asceticon of Abba Isaiah*, 54–56, 60–63, 214–215, 228–230 (t.); 41–43, 46–48, 165–166, 175–177 (v.).

18 See, for example, the references in Sims-Williams, *An Ascetic Miscellany*, 47, n. 7, 49, nn. 15, 17, 19.

of Syriac tradition of the Commentary of Dadisho⁶, this event could become immediately comprehensible and telling when considering that the Sogdian manuscript also contains an isolated quotation from Abba Isaiah's *Asceticon*,¹⁹ which can either belong to the lost second part of Dadisho's commentary or an independent anthologised section of Abba Isaiah's writings.²⁰ Therefore, we can hypothetically infer from all these elements that the Sogdian compiler, in this case, was not a mere copyist but someone working with multiple texts and possibly in a comparative way, selecting and improving them authoritatively.

5 Suggestions from the Syriac Manuscript Tradition of the Life of Mar Awgin

In searching for parallels of E28 in Syriac, I became convinced that the manuscript *London, British Library Add. 14653* could be profitably related to our topic.²¹ First, it is the oldest witness containing the *History of Mar Awgin*, not used by Bedjan in his edition of the text.²² Furthermore, as Erica Hunter has shown in a recent contribution,²³ it is one of the two oldest witnesses preserving the prayer to Thomasius, known to us also by way of an exemplar from the Syriac Turfan collection. Two Turfan texts in a Syriac miscellany suggest that we should consider it a good candidate for our inquiry.

BL Add. 14.653, whose beginning is lacking, is a codex written in Estrangelo script dating to the ninth-tenth century which displays a heterogeneous compilation of texts. In the final colophon, one can read a note by the compiler/copy-

19 Syriac text in Abba Isaiah, *Asceticon*, 410 (t.); 455 (v.).

20 Abba Isaiah, *Asceticon (Sogdian version)*, 10 (t.); 11 (v.). See Sims-Williams, *An Ascetic Miscellany*, 15.

21 Description in William Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, Acquired since the Year 1838* (3 vols.; London: British Museum, 1870–1872), 2:807–809.

22 The related passage in Syriac is in *History of Mar Awgin*, 431–433. Sergey Minov is now being dedicated to a new, more complete edition of this text. A previous and relevant study and edition of the text preserved in add. 14653 is found in Александр П. Дьяконов, “К истории сирийского сказания о св. Мар-Евгене,” *Христианский Восток* 6, no. 2 (1918): 107–174, republished in Александр П. Дьяконов, *Иоанн Ефесский и его церковно-исторические труды. Библиотека христианской мысли. Исследования*, Издательство Олега Абышко: С.-Петербург, 2006, 581–654.

23 Erica Hunter, “Traversing Time and Location: A Prayer-Amulet to Mar Tamsis from Turfan,” in *From the Oxus River to the Chinese Shores: Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia* (ed. Dietmar W. Winkler and Li Tang; *Orientalia Patristica Oecumenica* 5; Salzburg: Lit. Verlag, 2013), 23–41.

ist, named Saliba, who at the end of the transcription work says the following: “this book of the *History of the holy Mar Awgin* is completed, together with the other extracts (ܩܫܘܬܐ ܠܩܕܝܫܐ) (which are) in it”. According to his perspective, the pivot of the collection was the *History of Mar Awgin*; thus, investigating what other kinds of writings the manuscript contains may provide a deeper insight on the ecclesiastic context of use of this hagiographic text. In addition to the

1. *History of Mar Awgin*,

the Syriac miscellany contains the following texts:

2. the discourse on Mar Awgin by Jacob Malphana alias Jacob of Serug;
3. a discourse on the parable of the prodigal son according to the meter of the above-mentioned Jacob Malphana;
4. a prayer for the consecration of a bishop;
5. the history of Paul of Thebes, the one who first lived in solitude in the desert;
6. a brief excerpt from pseudo-Evagrius from the treatise on masters and disciples;
7. samples of letter formats to be used with various recipients:
 - 7.1 to a man of rank;
 - 7.2 to a wise and honoured men;
 - 7.3 to a bishop and doctor;
 - 7.4 to an honoured person of the same congregation;
 - 7.5 a letter of thanks to one for whom peace has been re-established;
 - 7.6 another letter to thank those who give alms to the needy;
8. discourse on the resurrection by Malphana Barsauma Huzaya;
9. consolatory discourse for the dead;
10. the prayer to Mar Tamsis.

Michael Philip Penn, who studied and published the aforementioned sample letter “to the rulers of the world” from this manuscript, in contextualising this short text into the diplomatic confrontation between the Christian clergy and Muslim rulers, attributed the manuscript BL Add. 14653 to a Syrian Orthodox Church scriptorium,²⁴ as Baumstark had already suggested before him.²⁵ This opinion disagrees both with the first description provided by Wright, and, as an example, with Paul Peeters’ feeling that the manuscript was “franche-

24 Michael Penn, “Addressing Muslim Rulers and Muslim Rule,” *Oriens Christianus* 93 (2009): 71–84.

25 Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der Syrischen Literatur* (Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Webers Verlag, 1922), 196.

ment nestorien".²⁶ It would appear that both Baumstark and Penn, who do not provide palaeographic evidence in support of their statements, base their conclusions ultimately on the mere fact that references to Jacob of Serugh are found in the manuscript. This argument, however, is not convincing. It is well known that Jacob's writings also circulated in dyophysite centres.²⁷ Yet, on closer inspection, and as already noticed by Wright,²⁸ neither of the two references to the name of Jacob can be ascribed to the compiler or the scribe (who are probably one and the same person). One of them was in fact a later correction of a previous attribution and the other a forcible addition of the name in the margin of an anonymous text. From the colophon, we learn that at some point the manuscript reached the Egyptian monastery of Deyr al-Suryan. Therefore, we can easily derive that some syro-orthodox monk intervened here and there with corrections and adjustments.

The presence of a treatise on the resurrection by Barsauma Huzaya would also suggest at first glance an East Syrian milieu.²⁹ Baumstark was at first inclined to identify this author as Barsauma of Karkha d-Ledan, a personality of the Church of the East who lived in the seventh century, but, on the basis of his incorrect understanding about the West Syrian origin of the manuscript, he eventually refused this identification, thus supposing that two different authors named Barsauma had to be distinguished. Contrary to this, the identification of Barsauma Huzaya with Barsauma of Karka d-Ledan is in fact a very plausible option. The *Catalogue* of 'Abdisho'³⁰ remembers Barsauma d-Karka d-Ledan, in particular, as the author of a "book named 'of the anger'", "several thanksgivings" (ܟܬܒܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ) —which put him virtually in continuity with Elisha the interpreter³¹ (possibly the Nisibene teacher Elisha Bar Quzbaye)³² —together with some consolatory discourses (ܟܬܒܐ) and interpretations.

What seems particularly important is to portray the possible manuscript readers. In his edition of the sample letter to "the rulers of the world", Penn

26 Paul Peeters—"J. Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l'Empire Perse sous la dinastie sassanide*," *Analecta Bollandiana* 24 (1905), 130.

27 For example, to quote a study by Sebastian Brock, a strategic text such as the East Syrian Hudra displays a segment of a Jacob of Serugh turgama, generically quoting it as a "malphonuta", a "doctrine" (Sebastian Brock, "An Extract from Jacob of Serugh in the East Syrian Hudra," *OCP* 55 (1989), 342).

28 Wright, *Catalogue*, 2:808.

29 Add. 14653, fol. 82^a–90^a.

30 Josephus Simonius Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino Vaticana* (3 vols.; Rome: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1719–1728), 3:1173.

31 Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 3:1166–167.

32 Arthur Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis* (CSCO 266, Subsidia 26; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1965), 128, and n. 38. See also L. Van Rompay, "Elisha' bar Quzbaye," in *Gor-*

affirmed that, albeit it might be originally destined to an actual Muslim governor, when it came into the hands of the copyist Saliba the real chance of a confrontation with a Muslim ruler became increasingly remote. Consequently, the presence of the text in the manuscript might have had a rather limited function internal to the Christian community, apt at most to suggest the approach to take towards the rulers.

Penn's viewpoint seems a little misleading, since, before focusing on the secular and independent nature of this short text, and thus on its allegedly "original" function, we should ask why it reached us through such a collection. The text, in fact, is the second of six template letters adapted in form and attitude to their potential recipients. Patently, the compiler must have considered it useful as a rhetorical chancery tool, to handle confrontations and relationships with institutions and personalities inside and outside the church. Furthermore, a deeper examination of the texts can bring up other significant clues. The six sample letters that in the manuscript precede the short treatise by Barsauma Huzaya are presented as belonging to three different categories. The first two letters are samples specifically addressed to someone (ܫܠܝܢܐ), the second two are "answers" (ܟܬܒܬܐ ܕܥܘܢܐ), and the last two are "thanksgivings" (ܟܬܒܬܐ ܕܫܘܚܪܐ). On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, the text immediately following Barsauma's treatise is an anonymous consolatory speech for a dead person (ܟܬܒܬܐ ܕܫܘܚܪܐ). This group of texts seems to coincide with the information on Barsauma's writings provided in the bibliographical notice of 'Abdisho'. Thus, it will not seem too risky to formulate the hypothesis that some of these pages could be related to Barsauma himself. If this were the case, they would testify to a literary rhetoric performance of a hitherto unknown Huzite theologian during the last days of the Sassanian empire.

Overall, these data suggest that we look beyond the Tigris, in the East Syrian milieu, to imagine a scriptorium matching such a manuscript.

Summing up the remarks I have gathered, the lives of two monastic founders (Awgin and Paul of Thebes) and the discourse on the prodigal son seem to address the need to train young people on the constitutive reasons of monastic life. The presence of the Syriac translation of a (pseudo) Evagrius text on masters and disciples—which Muyltermans described in the following terms: "une courte instruction de caractère gnomique à l'usage du maître de novices et des novices"—³³ may be understood in the same way. Again, the presence of

gias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage (ed. S.P. Brock, A.M. Butts, G.A. Kiraz, and L. Van Rompay; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 201), 141.

33 Joseph Muyltermans, *Evagriana Syriaca: Textes inédits du British Museum et de la Vaticane*

texts like number 8 and 9 might clearly be in response to the need of managing mournful events in an enclosed community.

6 First Impressions

If we compare the results of the analysis of BL Add. 14653 and the questions raised about E28, we can speculate that these manuscripts were addressed to two types of audiences that were only partially different. The Syriac manuscript was probably an educational and administrative device for a schoolmaster of novices living in a coenobium, whereas the Sogdian miscellany was an anthology of good readings for young monks with some experience. The Syriac collection was compiled in a coenobium, but probably in order to open a new settlement, so it was an “institutional” book, designed to be moved from a monastery to another. The second text was the final outcome of the translating and anthologising done by some local Sogdian monk to offer instructions and teachings to his own community. It goes without saying that this hypothesis needs much more investigating and confirming evidence.

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The Shining Lamp: An Arabic Florilegium of Conciliar Texts

Herman G.B. Teule

In the year 1888, the well-known Lazarist Father and missionary Paul Bedjan published a work entitled *Sunhādū tebilyātā ḥda'srē b-pasiqātā*, to which he gave the Latin subtitle *Compendium conciliorum oecumenicorum undecim*. In the French language introduction, he mentions that Mar Joseph (II) from Amid or Diyarbakir translated this work from Arabic into Syriac and that the Arabic text would have been based on a Latin original. As a matter of fact, Bedjan's *Compendium* is an edition (based on one manuscript, with some emendations and comments by the editor) of the *Lampādā nuhrānā* (also *Lampīd Nuhrā*, *The Shining Lamp* or *Lamp of Light*) by the Chaldean Patriarch Joseph II, known for having introduced all kinds of Latinising reforms in the fields of liturgy, theology and spirituality among the Chaldean Christians under his authority.¹ Joseph did not indicate his exact source, but it could be identified as the *Misbāḥ al-lāmi' fi tarjamat al-majāmi'* (The Shining Lamp concerning the Translation of the Councils), composed by the French Discalced Carmelite Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei. This work, a florilegium of conciliar texts, is the subject of the present study.²

1 The Editor of the *Shining Lamp*

To better understand the background of the *Shining Lamp*, I will provide some information about the author or compiler and the milieu in which he lived. Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei or Jean Pierre de la Mère de Dieu, born in 1620 in

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- 1 On Joseph's Latinising tendencies, see Herman Teule, "Middle Eastern Christianity in the Ottoman Empire and its relationship with the West. The case of the East-Syrians in the Diyarbakir region between the 16th and the early 18th century," in *Towards a culture of co-existence in pluralistic societies. The Middle East and India* (ed. D. Winkler; Pro Oriente Studies in the Syriac Tradition 4; Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2020), 43–57.
 - 2 For an analysis of Joseph's Syriac translation and Bedjan's dealing with Joseph's text, see Herman Teule, "From Aleppo to Khosrova. Paul Bedjan and his *Compendium Conciliorum*

Villefranche in the diocese of Lyon, is the monastic name adopted by Jean Chasagne, when, at twenty-one, he entered the order of the Discalced Carmelite Fathers. At the instigation of Pope Clement VIII (d. 1605), the Carmelite Order had established missions in the Arab Middle East and Persia, and, as was the case of many other orders and congregations, Aleppo became for them an important centre, both for developing local activities (the conversion of Christians bringing them into union with Rome) and serving as a sort of hub for initiatives further eastwards.³ Being sent to Aleppo was one of the logical consequences of becoming a Carmelite missionary. Unfortunately, we have no information on how Johannes Petrus was trained for this task. Most probably, he will have studied *De procuranda salute omnium gentium* (Antwerp, 1613), which was something like a handbook for future missionaries written by another Discalced Carmelite, Thomas a Jesu. Both Eusebius Renaudot and Josephus Simeon Assemani strongly criticised this work, but it must have been relatively popular since it also circulated in an Arabic translation published by the Coptic convert and later Oxford and Louvain professor Yūsuf Abū Ḍaḡn (Josephus Barbatus) around the year 1620.⁴ Renaudot's and Assemani's main point of criticism revolves around the author's unfamiliarity with the writings of eastern theologians, due to his lack of knowledge of oriental languages.⁵ The first Carmelite missionaries, however, were themselves aware of the importance of learning the local languages. For example, after his arrival in Aleppo in 1644, Bruno de Saint-Yves immediately started to study Arabic.⁶ In 1659, he

Oecumenicorum Undecim," in *Pulchritudo tam antiqua et tam nova. Studies in History of Christianity in Honour of Mathijs Lambergts* (ed. J.-M. Auwers and D. Vansacker; Bibliothèque de la Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique 107; Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 179–191.

- 3 Cf. Hidemi Takahashi, "Aleppo," in *Gorgias Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Syriac Heritage* (ed. S. Brock, A.M. Butts, G.A. Kiraz, and L. Van Rompay. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2011), 14–16 and especially Bernard Heyberger, *Les chrétiens du Proche-Orient au temps de la réforme catholique* (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 284; Rome: École Française de Rome, 1994).
- 4 See Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* (5 vols.; Studi e Testi 118, 133, 146, 147, 172; Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944–1953), 4:131–133.
- 5 See Joseph Simonius Assemani, *Bibliotheca orientalis Clementino-Vaticana* (3 vols.; Romae: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1719–1728), 2: sectio V (no pagination). Assemani also refers here to Renaudot. For the latter's judgment on Thomas à Jesu, see also Heyberger, *Les chrétiens*, 305.
- 6 Cf. Guy Alexis Lobineau and François-Marie Tresvaux du Fraval, *Les vies des saints de Bretagne* (4 vols.; Paris: Méquignon, 1836–1837), 4:332–334. Bruno de Saint Yves was from Brittany. In a letter to one of his superiors, he writes that his knowledge of the Breton language had helped him greatly in studying Arabic, especially the pronunciation!

wrote that he had composed an Arabic *Compendium of oriental heresies*.⁷ He also wrote an Arabic catechism and a work of disputations seemingly different from the *Compendium*, in addition to some liturgical compositions.⁸ Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei followed the example of the man who was the superior of the Carmelite community in Aleppo, which he joined in 1655, and whom he would succeed as Provincial of the Mission in Syria. The works he wrote, partly in Arabic, provide some insight into his theological orientations. He must have been a close observer of the troubles surrounding the election of Andreas Akhijan as first patriarch of the Syrian Catholic Church, which he describes in a report (in Italian) sent to the *Propaganda Fide*.⁹ Conversion to the *Catholica Romana* was close to his heart, as appears from his description of conversions operated by the Carmelites between 1657–1664 (*Breve relatione delle morti gloriose et attioni generose*). In his eyes, recognising the primacy of the Pope was an important element of the trajectory of the new convert.¹⁰ His missionary zeal is also evidenced by other writings of his, including an Arabic grammar for new missionaries, a work in Arabic *on religious controversies*¹¹ and guidelines (*exercitia*) to be observed by Syrian Christians wishing to receive the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. According to Cosme Villiers de St Etienne, author of the *Bibliotheca carmelitana*, Jean de la Mère de Dieu would also have known other oriental languages besides Arabic.¹² He probably means Armenian and Syriac, the languages of important communities in Aleppo, and possibly also Turkish. Johannes Petrus died a victim of the plague in 1669.

7 As a matter of fact, this seems no original work, but an edition or reworking of *De fide orthodoxa* by John of Damascus which he could read in an extant Arabic translation; see Graf, *Geschichte*, 4:245.

8 Ambrosius a Sancta Theresia, *Nomenclator missionariorum Ordinis Carmelitarum Discalceatorum* (Romae: Apud Curiam Generalitiam, 1944), 81–82.

9 For a list of works written by Johannes Petrus à Matre Dei, see Ambrosius a Sancta Theresia, *Nomenclator*, 217–218.

10 Bernard Heyberger, “Les chrétiens d’Alep à travers les récits de conversion des missionnaires carmes déchaux (1657–1681),” *Mélanges de l’Ecole Française de Rome* 100 (1988): 461–499, esp. 466.

11 Possibly identical with the *kitāb al-najāḥ wa-miṣbāḥ al-falāḥ*, preserved in several manuscripts; see Graf, *Geschichte*, 247. The *miṣbāḥ al-falāḥ* was published before the *Shining Lamp*, since the author refers to it in one of the introductions to this work.

12 Cosme Villier de St Etienne, *Bibliotheca carmelitana notis criticis et dissertationibus illustrata* (2 vols.; Aurelianis: Excudebant M. Couret de Villeneuve et Johannes Rouzeau-Montaut, 1752), 2:75.

2 The *Shining Lamp*

The *Shining Lamp* does not figure among Johannes Petrus' works listed in the *Bibliotheca Carmelitana* or the *Nomenclator*. However, judging from the number of extant manuscripts, several of which were copied in the 17th century,¹³ and the fact that it was translated into Syriac, this particular work must have been one of his more popular writings. Before trying to understand the rationale behind his selection of the proceedings of eleven Ecumenical Councils, i.e. the classical seven Ecumenical Councils and, in addition, Constantinople IV according to the Latin tradition (869), Lateran IV (1215), Lyons II (1274) and Ferrara-Florence (1438), I shall give a description of the content and a translation of some characteristic passages. The focus here is on the presentation by the translator or editor of the Councils, leaving aside the issue of the correctness of his translation or which redaction of the Acts of the Councils he used.¹⁴ This study is based on manuscript Beirut, *Université St Joseph, Bibliothèque orientale* 521, written in the year 1997 of the Seleucid era (fol. 109^r), corresponding to 1685/6 CE, sixteen years after the death of the author. The manuscript consists of 110 numbered folios.¹⁵

2.1 Presentation of the Text

Fol. 2^v–3^{r16}: Dedication to Mary, written by Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei in a not very elegant Arabic.¹⁷ Here, he indicates the aim of this work: in order to

13 Graf knows of at least seventeen manuscripts, the oldest one of which, *Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Vat. Syr. 131 (in Karshuni), was written in 1676. Joseph Nasrallah, *Catalogue des manuscrits du Liban* (4 vols.; Harissa: Imprimerie Saint-Paul, 1958–1970), 2:58 and 2:204–206, mentions three additional ones, Dayr al-Kreim 75 and Dayr al-Banāt 68 and 70.

14 For the original Greek and Latin texts of these Councils, see Giuseppe Alberigo, ed., *Les conciles œcuméniques. 2. Les décrets. De Nicée à Latran V* (Paris: Cerf, 1994), 27–407 (the first eight Ecumenical Councils), 489–577 (Lateran IV), 637–689 (Lyon II) and 933–934, 1053–1192 (Ferrara-Florence).

15 Accessed through Hill Museum and Manuscript Library. Cf. Louis Cheikho, “Catalogue raisonné des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque orientale. V. Patristique, Conciles, Écrivains ecclésiastiques anciens, Hagiologie,” *Mélanges de l'Université St Joseph* 11 (1926): 191–306, here 223–224. The manuscript has some marginal notes added by a later hand and ignored here.

16 We follow the recent foliation in Latin script rather than the original Arabic one.

17 The style is somewhat repetitive, with many standardised sentences: “know, o reader, that this Council was not convened unless to combat ...”

defend, as a member of the Carmelite Order (ṭarīqah), the honour of Mary, he feels it is his duty to refute the Nestorians, who state that “you (Mary) are not the Mother of God and who divide your Son by confessing two persons (uqnūmayn)”, as well as the Jacobites, who say that “your Son is disembodied (ḥayāl) because of their narrow-minded imagination that in Christ out of (His) divine nature and his human nature there was only one nature”. To remedy their ignorance, he feels it is his duty to translate the texts of the Councils.

Fol. 3^v–7^v: In a second introduction, he addresses the reader explaining the necessity of his translation: superficial knowledge of the Councils or the refusal to accept all of them. In the same way as the orders issued by a secular king and his council of ministers cannot be ignored, the orders issued by the Pope, “the king of the Church, appointed by God”, the patriarchs (of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem), archbishops and bishops should be obeyed. Not following the Councils brings about spiritual death. He then makes clear that a particular Council cannot undo the decisions of a general or Ecumenical Council convened by the Pope together with the Patriarchs, such as in the case of the Synod of Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, against Chalcedon, attended by delegates of Pope Leo. The approval of the Pope and the presence of three patriarchs out of four and the great number of attending metropolitans and bishops also testifies to the validity of the Council of Ephesus. At the end of this section, he gives his name: Ḥanna, of the Carmelite order and a Frenchman by birth.

Fol. 8^{rv}: List of the eleven selected Councils, with a brief characteristic of each of them, for example Constantinople IV “against the castrate Photius”, Lyon II, “on the union between the Roman and the Greek Churches”.

Fol. 8^v–11^r: he text continues with a third introduction, emphasising again the central role of the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, when convoking a council, and ending with a description of the four Councils of Jerusalem described in the Book of Acts, with the text of the twelve articles of faith formulated by the apostles at the fourth meeting. The apostolic Creed is for him the basis of all later creeds. Subsequent additions were made when, for reasons of heresy, a new council had to be convoked.

Fol. 11^r–16^r: The Council of Nicaea (325), indicating the reason why it had to be convened (the heresy of Arius), the course of the council and especially the arrangement of the sitting places. It is important that Hosius of Cordoba, who represented Pope Sylvester, occupied the first place and rank, followed by the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch (with an explanation that in this period there were not yet Patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem), archbishops and bishops, and the Emperor Constantine accepting the authority of the bishops in spiritual matters. This is followed by brief descriptions of

the various sessions and by the text of the Creed of Nicaea; this in its turn is followed by a relatively faithful translation of the Nicæan Canons, with an emphasis on the fact that the first to sign the canons was the representative of the Pope.

Fol. 17^r–20^r: The Council of Constantinople I. After discussing the reason for this council (the condemnation of the pneumatomachian heresy of Macedonios), the translator emphasises that the Emperor Theodosius convoked this council after seeking the permission of Pope Damasus. He then gives the rank and seniority of the participants, in the first place the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. Next are the text of the Creed and a translation of the seven canons. He then raises the issue that no Roman delegate nor any western personality attended the Council, but the fact that its decisions were later approved by Pope Damasus makes it a valid Ecumenical Council.

Fol. 20^r–23^r: The Council of Ephesus. The description begins with a presentation of the personality, life and heresy of Nestorius. This is followed again by the indication of the seniority of the participants, in the first place Patriarch Cyril of Alexandria in his capacity as representative of Pope Celestinus. After a brief and, as he acknowledges, incomplete description of four sessions, the Carmelite monk gives a literal translation of the twelve *anathematismoi* by Cyril.

Fol. 23^v–31^r: The presentation of the Council of Chalcedon follows a similar pattern, with a short biography of the Alexandrian Patriarch Dioscorus, disciple of Eutyches, and a long description of the preparations of the Council, the *latrocinium* of Ephesus and the Council in Chalcedon itself. The emphasis is entirely on the role of Pope Leo I and his *Tomus*, and on the involvement of his three envoys to Ephesus, the “cardinals” Julius, Renatus and Hilarius. With regard to Chalcedon, it is emphasised that the legates of Pope Leo, Paschanius, Lucentius and Bonifacius, were the first in rank during the deliberations, which are only briefly described. This is followed by a translation of the so-called disciplinary canons according to the Latin tradition. The list given by Johannes Petrus consists of 26 canons, omitting for some unknown reason the eleventh canon of the ordinary numbering.¹⁸ It is a matter of fact that he does not include the 28th Canon, on the honour due to the Patriarch of Constantinople, not recognised in the Latin tradition. This passage ends with extracts from the letters sent by the Synod to Dioscorus and the people of Alexandria.¹⁹

18 Cf. Alberigo, *Décrets*, 200–227, esp. 210–211.

19 Fol. 26^r: the section on the order of preeminence; the first lines are in a different hand.

Fol. 31^r–36^r: The presentation of the Second Council of Constantinople begins with an introduction describing the events in Alexandria and Antioch leading to the convocation of this Council. The Council itself, presided by the Patriarch of Constantinople with no papal delegates attending, is still to be considered as valid, since, as the translator emphasises, it was convened by the Emperor with the explicit permission of the Pope. Moreover, since the Pope (Vigilius) stayed in Byzantium, it was possible to interact directly with him, when needed. A brief description of the sessions is followed by the fourteen anathemas of the Three Chapters.

Fol. 36^v–49^v: The third Council of Constantinople was convened to combat the heresy of monotheletism and monoenergism, endorsed by five patriarchs of Constantinople, whose theological positions and political intrigues in the run-up to the Synod Johannes Petrus describes at some length, trying to save the honour of Pope Honorius, falsely accused of monotheletism. Before discussing the various sessions of this council, he provides once again the order of preeminence of the attending bishops, where the three Cardinals-delegates of Pope Agathon occupy the first place. Concerning the issue of monotheletism, much emphasis is placed on several papal documents (such as the *Tomus Leonis* during the seventeenth session) and, for the tenth session, on the letter by Ambrosius to Gratianus, interpreted wrongly by Makarios, Patriarch of Antioch, as supporting the monothelete heresy. As for the end of the Council, Johannes Petrus mentions the recognition of this council by the newly installed Pope Leo II, but he denies the validity of the 102 Canons, issued only ten years after the closure of the Council, when several Popes, mentioned by their names, had already been in office. At the end, the translator comes back to the delicate issue of the presumed monotheletism of Pope Honorius, attributing it to a shameless falsification by the patriarch of Constantinople and emphasising that the Council had never anathematised Honorius, but had rather accepted the “true testimony” in the letter of Pope Agathon that the Roman Church had never erred in matters of faith.

Fol. 49^v–58^v: Second Council of Nicaea. The description begins with the iconoclastic edict issued by the Umayyad Caliph Yazid II in 723 at the instigation of the Jew Sartafqīs (sic), followed by a long and most detailed narration of the reign and iconoclastic policy of Emperor Leo III, the answer of the Pope to letters by the Patriarch of Constantinople Germanos, the Pope’s excommunication of Leo, the iconoclastic policy of Leo’s successor, the Emperor Constantine V, the latter’s Bulgarian campaigns, the reigns of Leo IV and Constantine VI, and the icon-friendly policy of the latter’s mother Irene. This description serves as an introduction to the Council itself, which was presided by the delegates of Pope Hadrian I, the archbishop Peter, and the abbot Peter. Next is a brief sketch

of the seven sessions. For the second session, Johannes Petrus mentions the letter by Pope Hadrian to the Patriarch of Constantinople Tarsisius, reminding him that the Church of Rome is the head of all Churches, which was acclaimed by the whole assembly. This section ends with a list of twelve anathemas different from the anathemas (called *canons*) found in the Acts of the Council.²⁰

Fol. 58^v–68^r: Constantinople IV. As mentioned above, this is the fourth Council of Constantinople according to the Latin tradition, convened in 869 in order to give support to Patriarch Ignatius of Constantinople, who had been dismissed by the Emperor Michael III and replaced by Photius. The text describes how Photius, with the help of the Emperor, wrote a letter trying to obtain the support of Pope Nikolaos I, the negative answer of the Pope transmitted by two legates who were imprisoned upon their arrival in Constantinople, the organisation of a Council by Photius without the consent of the Pope, and the forced abdication of Ignatius, prompting the Pope to excommunicate Photius. The story ends with the murder of Photius' protector (the Caesar) Bardas and of the Emperor, and the reinstatement of Ignatius by Basil (the Macedonian), Michael's successor. When notified of this situation and receiving letters from the Emperor, Ignatius, and Photius, the successor of Nikolaos I, Pope Hadrian II, decided to hold a council, which was convened by the Emperor in Constantinople. The papal legates were the first in rank during the ten sessions, which are briefly described. During the first session, Pope Nikolaos' letter, in which he had excommunicated Photius, was read aloud, emphasising that the Roman Church had never erred in matters of faith. Other papal letters were read and discussed in the subsequent sessions. The description of this council ends with the abbreviated text of the twenty-seven disciplinary canons as received in the Latin tradition, emphasising the honour due to the See of Peter (canon 21).²¹

Fol. 68^r–87^r: The great Rome (Lateran) IV. Combating heresy (the doctrines of Joachim of Fiore) and the capture of Jerusalem by the Arabs were the reasons for convoking this Council in Rome, "the Mother of all cities". The Council was presided by Pope Innocent III himself. As for the previous Councils, Johannes Petrus also mentions the presence of the eastern Patriarchs, in this case the Patriarchs of Constantinople and of Jerusalem and representatives of

20 Alberigo, *Décrets*, 308–329.

21 For this Council, our manuscript is defective: three folios are lacking (but with continuous Latin foliation), fol. 60 is blank; fol. 61 is in a different hand; the next unnumbered folio is in this same hand. The original manuscript resumes at fol. 62^r. For the missing folios, I used the Syriac text of Joseph II, as edited by Paul Bedjan, *Compendium conciliorum oecumenicorum undecim* (Paris: Maisonneuve et C. Leclerc, 1888), 137–146, which, in general, gives a faithful rendering of the Arabic original, see Teule, "From Aleppo," 189.

the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, without mentioning that he had the Latin incumbents of these sees in mind. The Emperor of Constantinople was represented by a delegate, but again, he means the Latin Emperor (Henri of Flanders). The Carmelite monk then describes the Acts of the Council, firstly with a literal translation of the Catholic Confession of faith read out during the first session (including the term *transsubstantiatius*, rendered as *mustahīlah*),²² the issue of Joachim of Fiore (section 2), the insolence of the Greeks (section 4), the preeminence of the patriarchal See of Rome (section 5), and the plurality of rites (*madhab, milla*, section 9). He gives abbreviated or paraphrased translations of the complete list of the 71 so-called constitutions or decisions of the Council, omitting only the last one, the decision to liberate the Holy Land, a prelude to the fifth Crusade. This issue is however lengthily discussed in a following paragraph that partly paraphrases the 71st constitution but is also based on other material. In a marginal note, readers interested in knowing more about the Crusades are referred to “writings of the Franks”, since the focus of this work is on the Councils.²³

Fol. 87^v–96^v: Lyon II. The description begins with the election of the archdeacon Theobaldus as Pope with the name of Gregory X. As reasons for convoking the Council, the Carmelite monk mentions the necessity of bringing peace to the lands of Syria and arranging the issue of Jerusalem, as well as the unification of the Greek and Roman Churches. He then gives the order of preeminence during the sessions: the Pope himself and in the second place the Patriarch of Constantinople (whose name is given as Nitalah). This is followed by a sketch of each of the five sessions. For the first one, Johannes Petrus repeats the reasons for this council, mentioned above, while adding the reform of the Church. For the fourth session,²⁴ he gives the text of the Creed submitted by the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII, including the *filioque*, followed by his acceptance of the Catholic doctrine of purgatory, the sacrament of the Eucharist performed with unleavened bread and the recognition of the authority of the Pope and the Roman Church over all Churches. The description ends with the well-known story of the threefold singing of the *filioque* by the Greek delegation. The fifth session deals with the arrival of the Mongol delegation and their baptism and public conversion to the Catholic faith. This is followed by a selection of the constitutions or canons, where the translator limits himself to those dealing

22 Alberigo, *Décrets*, 494–497.

23 The Arabic text as found in our manuscript is abbreviated at the end, compared to the more elaborate Syriac text of Joseph II, see Bedjan, *Compendium*, 203.

24 The manuscript erroneously inserts the heading “the fifth session” before the letter of submission by Michael VIII.

with the regulations concerning the election of a new Pope (conclave) and other high ecclesiastical dignitaries.

Fol. 96^v–108^v: Ferrara–Florence. After indicating the reason for this council—the unification of the Greek and Roman Churches which had split from each other about fourteen times resulting each time into territorial losses for the Byzantines—Johannes Petrus describes the preparations of the Council, the Byzantine Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople accepting the Pope's invitation to attend a Council on this issue, their arrival in Ferrara and the cordial reception by Pope Eugenius IV. He then gives a summary of the discussions on the purgatory and, after the transfer to Florence, of the *filioque* and the *azyma*, the intercession for the souls in purgatory and the primacy of the Pope, concluding with the full agreement between the Greeks and the Latins. Next is the Athanasian creed. The last part of the text briefly evokes the agreement with the Armenians.

Fol. 108^v–109^r: *exordium* by Johannes Petrus à Matre Dei, indicating the reason for the composition of this book: local priests of the various *ṭā'ifāh*-s needed information on the Councils, because the text was not available to them in their own language.

2.2 Commentary

For the Latin missionaries working in the Middle East on the conversion of “heretical” Christians in the 17th century, a sound knowledge of the Councils was of prime importance. In 1669, the Capuchin missionary Justinien de Neuvy—active in Aleppo between 1664 and 1687 and involved, like Johannes Petrus à Matre Dei, in the nomination of Andreas Akhijan as head of the Syrian-Catholic community—is the author (under the name of Michel Febvre) of an important work of controversy, *Praecipuae obiectiones quae vulgo solent fieri per modum interrogationis a mahumeticae legis sectatoribus, iudaeis et haereticis orientalibus adversus catholicos earumque solutiones*, published by the Propaganda Fide (Rome) in 1679. The Christians of Aleppo could read it in Arabic and Armenian translations, also published by the Propaganda.²⁵ In *obiectio* XXXIII, Justinien reacts to the opinion of certain eastern Christians having a relativist view of the ecclesiastical divisions, arguing that believing in Jesus Christ and doing good works is sufficient in order to be saved. The answer

25 On the author, see Bernard Heyberger, “Justinien de Neuvy, dit Michel Febvre,” in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History* vol. 9 (ed. D. Thomas and J. Chesworth; History of Christian Muslim Relations 43; Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2017), 579–588.

is that this would imply that the Councils and their concomitant condemnations of heresies would not have been necessary. Salvation is only to be found in the Roman Church.²⁶ It is from this perspective, the condemnation of heresies and the establishment of the Catholic truth as formulated by the Councils, that we must understand the work written by Johannes Petrus. This is already made clear in the first introduction, which mentions the Nestorians and the Jacobites. The emphasis on the Jacobite heresy is understandable in the context of Aleppo, where, as seen above, the Carmelite monk had witnessed the beginning of the Syriac Catholic Church. The refutation of the Nestorians is to be seen against the background of a Carmelite and general Catholic missionary presence in Eastern Anatolia, Mesopotamia and Persia, the heartlands of the “Nestorians”, where the missionaries had founded several monasteries and occupied important ecclesiastical functions.²⁷

In the third introduction and in the *exordium*, Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei presents himself as a translator. This is however only partly true. Though large parts are indeed literal translations of conciliar texts, in other instances he rather abbreviates the texts at his disposal. It does not seem that he just translated an original work in Latin on the eleven Ecumenical Councils, a suggestion given by Paul Bedjan in the French introduction to the *Compendium*. To my knowledge, no such work exists. Indeed, he makes a selection, which raises the question of the criteria he used.

If Johannes Petrus had the local priests of the Christian communities of Aleppo in mind, it is obvious that he only had to provide them with the text of councils relevant for them. This is clear for the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, condemning the Jacobite and Nestorian heresies. But in order to win the hearts of the Christians in favour of the nascent Greek-Catholic community, a presentation of all Seven Ecumenical Councils, authoritative in the Orthodox tradition, was of prime importance. At the same time, the involvement of the Church of Rome in these Councils taking place in eastern lands

26 Cf. Cesare Santus, *Trasgressioni Necessarie: Communicatio in Sacris, Coesistenza e conflitti tra le comunità cristiane orientali (Levante e Impero Ottomano, XVII–XVIII Secolo)* (Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 383; Rome: École Française de Rome, 2019), 1.

27 See, for example, Fernando Filoni, *L'Église dans la terre d'Abraham. Du diocèse de Babylone des Latins à la nonciature en Iraq* (Paris: Cerf, 2009), 26–30 (Carmelites as Latin bishops of Baghdad and Ispahan in the period of Jean-Pierre de la Mère de Dieu). For a missionary presence among the Nestorians in Diyarbakir (Amid), see Albert Lampart, *Ein Märtyrer der Union mit Rom. Joseph I 1681–1696, Patriarch der Chaldäer* (Einsiedeln: Benziger Verlag, 1966), 31–38. For their presence in Persia and their efforts to study the local language, see F. Richard, “Carmelites in Persia,” *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 14/7: 832–834.

had to be emphasised, as well as the preeminence of papal authority above the other patriarchs. This explains the translator's attention for the seating arrangements of the attendants where the Pope or his delegates should always occupy the first place, the approval of the conciliar acts by the various popes and the reading aloud of papal documents or letters. The affirmation of the legitimacy of the fourth Council of Constantinople of 869 and its deposition of Photius is to be understood against the background of conversion to the Catholic Faith, which was the purpose of Johannes Petrus' mission of. Knowledge of this council was one of the preconditions for conversion, at least for members of the Greek-Orthodox community of the Antiochian Patriarchate. For example, a profession of faith submitted by the Greek-Orthodox metropolitan of Tripoli to the Roman authorities in 1698–1699 was not accepted. One of the reasons was exactly that he was unaware of this eighth Ecumenical Council which had condemned Photius.²⁸ The memory of Photius as originator of the first schism between the Greek and Roman Churches was still very vivid in post-Trent Rome,²⁹ which explains why this council was part of the Carmelite florilegium.

After Constantinople IV, the chronological line is interrupted and Johannes Petrus moves directly to Lateran IV (1215), ignoring three previous Councils (Latran I of 1123, II of 1139 and III of 1179) recognised as Ecumenical by the Catholic Church. The reason for this seems to be that these Councils discussed subjects not directly relevant for the Christians of Aleppo in the 17th century. Latran IV (1215), however, was selected as it dealt directly with issues related to the eastern churches, such as the stubbornness and arrogance of the Greeks and the possibility of a plurality of rites in the same place. The same holds true for Lyon II and Ferrara-Florence, which discussed the doctrinal divergences between Greeks and Latins and their unification and, for Florence, the agreement reached with the Armenians, an important community in Aleppo. These two Councils also make strong statements about the exclusive truth of the Roman Church.

28 Cf. Aurélien Girard, "Comment reconnaître un chrétien oriental vraiment catholique? Elaboration et usages de la profession de foi pour les orientaux à Rome (xvi^e–xviii^e siècle)," *L'union à l'épreuve du formulaire. Professions de foi entre Églises d'Orient et d'Occident (xiii^e–xviii^e siècle)* (ed. M.-H. Blanchet and F. Gabriel; Collège de France—CNRS Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, Monographies 51; Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 235–257, esp. 253.

29 Claudine Delacroix-Besnier, "Lectures de Photios du concile de Trente à Vatican II," *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome—Italie et Méditerranée modernes et contemporaines* 123 (2011): 253–283, esp. 12–18.

Once the selection of the Councils was made, Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei thought it necessary to give the complete text of the Acts of a particular Council, or at least a complete description of the proceedings, sometimes abbreviating or paraphrasing the original documents. This explains why, in several instances, we find passages which had no relevance for the Aleppine community where he worked. An example among many is the heresy of Joachim of Fiore and the conflict with Petrus Lombardus discussed in Lateran IV. It is difficult, however, to understand why—even though he wrote in the 17th century, worked in Aleppo under close supervision of the Propaganda Fide, and had been trained with works like *De procuranda salute omnium gentium* by Thomas a Jesu—Johannes Petrus did not include the Council of Trent. The logical explanation seems to be that the Acts of this Council were already (partially) available in an Arabic translation. We know how the Council of Trent and post-Tridentine theology played a role in the liturgical and ecclesiastical reforms of the Maronite Church in the late 16th and 17th century.³⁰ When, in 1578, the Jesuits Giovanni Battista Eliano and Tommaso Raggio were sent as papal delegates to Lebanon to investigate the situation of the Maronite Church, the later Prefect of the *Congregatio Interpretum Concilii Tridentini*, Cardinal Antonio Carafa, enjoined them to bring with them the text of the Council of Trent as well as a *summa* of the (other) Councils and also to translate Trent (into Arabic).³¹ Apparently, Trent is set apart from the other Councils, and, in Carafa's eyes, it was necessary to translate the Council of Trent in the first place. However, we have no information as to when this first translation was made and how it made its way to Aleppo. Johannes Petrus took up the challenge to translate the other Councils.

Conclusion

The conciliar florilegium of Johannes Petrus a Matre Dei is interesting for various reasons. The relative popularity of the Arabic text shows that his work was

30 See, for example, Pierre Jabbour, *La réforme liturgique maronite sous le patriarche Istifân Al-Douaihi (1670–1704): allégeance à Rome et fidélité à la tradition syro-antiochienne. Une étude menée sur les manuscrits Vat. Syr. 310 et 311* (Ph.D. Dissertation; Paris: ICP / Louvain: KUL, 2019), 11–17, 294–344.

31 For the Italian text of the Letter of Carafa, see Antoine Rabbath, *Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire du christianisme en Orient* (Paris: A. Picard / Leipzig: Harrassowitz / London: Luzac & Co., 1906–1910), 1140–144 and Jabbour, *La réforme*, 237.

well received in the Eastern Catholic circles of Syria and Lebanon, who apparently were impressed by this Catholic presentation of the Councils. It confirms the Latinising orientations of the missionaries in ecclesiological matters, already known from other theological and spiritual works. The Syriac translation made by Joseph II is another proof of the close connections between Aleppo and the more eastern territories, especially Amid-Diyarbakır. This was one of his earlier works, composed in 1693 when he was still metropolitan of Amid, which forced him to coin new Syriac terms for the Latin theological concepts expressed in the Arabic text. In this way, the *Shining Lamp* is a contribution to the development of a new Syriac theological language and further Latinisation of the Chaldean Church.

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