

Hairesis and Heresy: The Case of the haireseis iatrikai

HEINRICH VON STADEN

It is the fate of new truths to begin as heresies and
to end as superstitions. T. H. Huxley

The use of 'heresy' to refer to an opinion or a doctrine at variance with orthodox beliefs seems to have its proximate roots in early Christian uses of the Greek word *hairesis* (plural, *haireseis*). In most phases of post-classical antiquity, however, *hairesis* had a considerably broader semantic spectrum than 'heresy' might suggest. Its classical meanings – 'taking', 'choice', 'course of action', 'election', 'decision' – all continued to survive throughout the Hellenistic and later ancient periods of Greek culture. But *hairesis* also served to refer – positively, negatively, or neutrally – to any group of people perceived to have a clear doctrinal identity.

The primary purpose of the present contribution is to trace the development of this use of *hairesis* as a group referent in Greek medical literature, and to explore what 'group definition' or 'group self-definition' might mean when the definiendum is thought of as a *hairesis*. The fact that this analysis takes *hairesis* as its starting point does not mean that other generic Greek terms for 'school' or 'sect' are irrelevant to the question of definition and self-definition in the ancient world. Much could be learned from a careful scrutiny of *scholē*, *didaskaleion*, *agōgē*, *hoi ap' oikias tinos*, *hoi peri*, *hoi amphī*, *mathētēs*, and similar expressions. But in view of its prominence and its range, *hairesis* provides a useful starting point.

From the late second century CE to at least the eighth century CE the first book read in the medical curriculum of Alexandria – at that time probably the most significant centre of medical learning in the Mediterranean – was Galen's *On Haireseis for Beginners* (*De*

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sectis). Galen himself had recommended *De sectis* as a suitable introduction to his works,¹ and hence, of course, to all of medicine, and his medieval Arabic translator, Hunain ibn Ishāq, confirms that *De sectis* continued to be the first of four Galenic works used to instruct novices.²

In *De sectis*, as in several late Alexandrian commentaries on this treatise,³ three major *haireseis* or *sectae* are identified: the Empiricist (*empeirikē*) *hairesis*, Methodist (*methodikē*), and Rationalist (*logikē*) or Dogmatic (*dogmatikē*).⁴ Several other Galenic treatises, notably *De optima secta*, and two pseudo-Galenic treatises which might predate Galen contributed to the popularization of this division of physicians into three major *haireseis*.⁵ By the time Galen wrote his *De libris propriis* he could observe with both confidence and accuracy: 'Almost everybody already knows the names of the three *haireseis*.'⁶ This ternary division became virtually canonical for centuries, and it has influenced medical historiography up to our own age.⁷

The firmness, apparent clarity, and longevity of this influential *hairesis* tradition has tended to obscure problems that are pertinent to the subject of this volume, e.g., (1) what does *hairesis* or, more specifically, *hairesis iatrikē* mean, and does it always refer to the same kind of group? (2) are there significant discrepancies between external perceptions and internal definition of these *haireseis*? (3) how stable or dynamic is a *hairesis* doctrinally and institutionally? (4) when and how does *hairesis* acquire the meaning 'heresy' or 'heretical faction'?

This paper attempts a fleeting, preliminary exploration of these and related questions under the following rubrics: I. '*hairesis* literature' in pre-Galenic medicine; II. three brief examples of the application of the *hairesis* label to a group: (a) 'Rationalists' vs. Empiricists, (b) Methodists, and (c) Herophileans; III. a few remarks on *hairesis* and institutionalization, with particular reference to the Herophileans; IV. a brief epilogue on the use of *hairesis* in early Christian literature, with specific reference to the question of *hairesis* as 'heresy'.

I Pre-Galenic '*hairesis* literature'

While medical doxography owes much of its initial impetus to the Peripatos,⁸ as has long been recognized, Alexandrian medicine of the pre-Christian era seems to offer the first examples of the systematic application of *hairesis* both to an opposing school of

thought and to one's own. In doxographic treatises of polemical as well as apologetic character, early Alexandrian medical authors frequently employ *hairesis* for the purpose of partisan group characterizations.

The historical development of what I shall call – awkwardly, and for lack of inspiration – ‘Alexandrian *hairesis* literature’, might have derived, however obliquely, from the apostasy of Herophilus's famous pupil, Philinus of Cos, in the third century BCE. Herophilus, a revolutionary and highly scientific Alexandrian physician who is renowned especially for his anatomical discoveries and for his pioneering use of human dissection (but equally notorious for his use of human vivisection), attracted a circle of gifted followers to Alexandria, among them Philinus.⁹ But Philinus turned renegade and founded a rival Alexandrian school with a radically different methodological and epistemological orientation: the Empiricist *hairesis*.¹⁰ Philinus not only rejected several theoretical cornerstones of Herophilus's system; he also set an example for generations of Empiricists by devoting a treatise in six books to an attack on one of Herophilus's more substantial followers, Bacchius of Tanagra.¹¹ In the late third century BCE Philinus was succeeded as leader of the Empiricist ‘School’ by Serapion of Alexandria,¹² who wrote a treatise in two books *Against the haireseis* (*Ad sectas*).¹³

Little is known about the content of Serapion's *Ad sectas*, but it seems likely that it offered not only criticism of rival – i.e., non-Empiricist – views but also his own therapeutic prescriptions.¹⁴ More significantly, at least for present purposes, the plural, *haireseis*, probably refers to what later was lumped together as the ‘rationalist’ or ‘dogmatic *hairesis*’ (see II.1 below). Later Empiricists, perhaps taking their cue from the philosophical Sceptics, labelled all non-Empiricists ‘Rationalists’ or ‘Dogmatists’; but here the plural perhaps still concedes considerable diversity within ‘non-Empiricism’ – a diversity which later becomes at least partially obscured by the popular but distorting and misleading notion of a single ‘Rationalist’ *hairesis*. While one cannot exclude the possibility that Serapion used *hairesis* to refer to something other than the distinctive collections of beliefs that characterize certain groups, subsequent uses of the term within the Empiricist ‘school’ – and, for that matter, in other medical *haireseis* – render this unlikely. There were enough such groups to provide Serapion with a plural target: Herophileans, Erasistrateans, Praxagoras and his pupils, and so on.

In subsequent generations both the Empiricists and the Herophileans contributed a number of doxographic works that made central use of the concept *hairesis*. A few examples might suffice: in the first century BCE the Empiricist Heraclides of Tarentum wrote an entire treatise *On the Empiricist hairesis*,¹⁵ and the Herophileans Heraclides of Erythrae, Apollonius Mys, and Aristoxenus each followed with a treatise entitled *On the hairesis of Herophilus*.¹⁶ These treatises were substantial: that of Apollonius consisted of at least twenty-nine books, that of Aristoxenus of at least thirteen, and that of the Herophilean Heraclides of at least seven books; Galen's synopsis of the Empiricist's treatise consisted of eight books.¹⁷ And these treatises seem to have contained not only polemical but also apologetic material, as suggested by the fact that all three Herophileans' treatises dealt with their own ‘school’: *On the hairesis of Herophilus*.

By the end of the pre-Christian era the Alexandrian Empiricists and Herophileans therefore had identified themselves or their beliefs – and each other – as distinct *haireseis* and had produced a sizeable corpus of ‘*hairesis* literature’, the main impetus for which continued to be derived from the sharp conflict between the two schools.

The dialectic of scientific growth often is marked by scientists' attempts to emancipate themselves from the theories of their precursors and contemporaries; scientific patricide and fratricide are part of the story of the development of science, and ancient medicine is no exception. But it is striking that the polemics of the Alexandrian *hairesis* treatises are no longer directed primarily at individuals, in contrast, for example, to early Peripatetic doxography (cf. e.g. Anonymus Londinensis or the famous passage in Aristotle's *Historia animalium* 3.2–3, 511B11–513A15: Syennesis, Diogenes, and Polybius – not their ‘followers’ or ‘schools’ – are taken to task for their erroneous views of the human vascular system). Rather, the *agôn* with outsiders now is often, though by no means always, depersonalized at least superficially to the extent that polemics are *ad sectam*, not *ad hominem*, and the apologetics likewise *pro secta sua*. Certain individuals, to be sure, remain villains or heroes, but they now are presented – or present themselves – as members of a larger group.

The paucity of testimonia concerning the content of the Alexandrian *hairesis* literature unfortunately leaves us only vaguely informed about what qualifies a group for the label *hairesis* or what qualifies an individual for membership in a *hairesis*. But the

evidence suggests that a group with fairly coherent and distinctive theories, with an acknowledged founder (*haireti-archēs*), and with publicly identifiable leaders who articulate (a) their rejection of rival theories through theoretically founded polemics, as well as (b) their own systematic alternatives, would qualify as a *hairesis*. Unanimity on all doctrinal questions is not a requirement (more on this below), and neither a single geographical centre nor any institutional organization is necessarily implied by this use of *hairetis*, although both the Herophileans and the Empiricists originally made Alexandria their only centre, and the members of each *hairetis* presumably had close and frequent association.

It might be noted in passing that the distinctiveness implied by *hairetis* does not seem to be compromised by the fact that several rival *haireseis* claim the sanction of the same patriarch. Almost every ancient medical *hairetis* claims Hippocrates as its *haireti-archēs* (much as the various 'Socratics' claimed Socrates), some making him the founding father of medical 'rationalism', others of empiricism, still others of scepticism, etc.

A further complication arises from the expansion and redefinition of the *agōn* between Empiricists and Herophileans as a battle between Empiricists and 'Rationalists' or 'Dogmatists'. By the reign of Tiberius this putatively comprehensive, bipartite division of all physicians had become firmly established, possibly under Empiricist pressure, and it is reflected in Celsus's *De medicina*.¹⁸

This development represents a serious complication of the relatively straightforward though never satisfactorily explicated use of *hairetis* to refer to the Empiricist and Herophilean groups in Alexandria (who, along with the Erasistrateans, dominated Greek scientific medicine until the first century BCE). Despite all the internal debates, disagreements, and acts of revisionism within the great Alexandrian schools (see II.3 below), each school or *hairetis* constituted a relatively cohesive group with only one or two geographical centres. Not so the 'rationalist' or 'dogmatic' *hairetis*, as shown below in II.1.

It is worth noting that, no later than the second century BCE,¹⁹ *hairetis* begins to occur in non-medical literature, too, as a designation for a group that is thought to be doctrinally distinctive, especially for a philosophical school.²⁰ The historian Polybius, for example, refers to Prytanis as a member of the Peripatetic *hairetis*.²¹ Authors of the first century BCE who seem to have used *hairetis* in this sense include Diodorus of Sicily, Cicero, and Dionysius of

Halicarnassus. The latter refers to 'the leaders of the Stoic *hairetis*' and reports that Aristotle spent his time with Plato until he was thirty-seven years old, 'neither becoming the leader of [Plato's] school (*scholē*) nor having established his own *hairetis*'.²² Diodorus complains that the Greeks, unlike the Orientals, try to make a profit from higher studies by always introducing doctrinal innovations in important matters and by 'founding new *haireseis*'.²³ In a letter of January 45 BCE, Cicero twits Cassius for having switched allegiance from one *hairetis* (Stoic? Platonic?) to another, viz. the Epicurean.²⁴

In some of these non-medical texts 'doctrine', 'school', and 'sect' all might be defensible translations of *hairetis*, but in each case it refers to a group phenomenon, not to individual choice. Furthermore, here too, as in the Alexandrian medical *hairetis* literature, *hairetis* does not have any intrinsically pejorative overtones.

Unlike the medical *hairetis* tradition, however, the early philosophical usage is not associated with a substantial body of treatises called 'On *hairetis* x' or 'Against *hairetis* y.' This reinforces the impression that Greek medicine is the more significant early nurturing ground for *hairetis* as a doctrinal group designation. No later than the second century CE, however, *hairetis* also had become a standard term for philosophical 'school'²⁵ – and for religious 'sect',²⁶ as will be shown in IV below.

II Examples of medical 'haireseis'

1. 'Rationalists' vs Empiricists

From Celsus to Galen a fundamental use of *hairetis* is to contrast the 'Rationalist' or 'Dogmatic' *hairetis* with the Empiricist. The Empiricists, as was suggested above, remained a relatively small, cohesive Alexandrian group with a clear, reasonably consistent core doctrine; even the Ptolemaic court seems to have recognized them as a significant, distinctive school.²⁷ Under the label 'rationalist', by contrast, one finds assembled a motley group of individuals and of fiercely independent *haireseis*, some of whom held sharply conflicting views on key issues: 'Hippocrates', Diocles of Carystus, Praxagoras, Herophilus and his *hairetis*, Erasistrateus and his *hairetis*, Asclepiades of Bithynia, the *hairetis* of the Pneumatists, etc.

It seems clear that *hairetis*, as applied to 'Rationalists' or 'Dog-

matists', cannot be used in the same sense as it had earlier been used of Herophileans and Empiricists. There never was a single 'rationalist' school which wrote treatises *pro secta sua*, which enrolled apprentices, and which attacked rival schools in the name of the 'rationalist' *hairesis* – let alone a cohesive group which called itself 'the rationalist (*logikē*) *hairesis*'. Herophileans, to be sure, did battle with Empiricists – but also with 'Hippocrates', with Praxagoras, with Erasistratus, and so on. The diverse group of so-called 'rationalists' admittedly are set apart from the Empiricists by their commitment to various forms of more speculative and theoretical medicine and, in particular, by their interest in aetiology and speculative systematization. But these interests were given such radically divergent, mutually incompatible expression by various 'Rationalists' and 'Rationalist' *haireseis*, that it is seriously misleading to imply that they represented a *hairesis* in the same sense as the Empiricists.

The Empiricists, by contrast, are united on central issues.²⁸ Thus they all believed that the search for hidden causes (as opposed to 'evident causes', such as heat, cold, and hunger) is useless, and hence that anatomy and physiology, along with dissection, should be banished from *ars medica*. Furthermore, they claimed that experience (*peira*) alone could form the foundation of the art of medicine, and that experience is assimilated in three basic forms: (a) transmitted experience (*historia*, understood as a passive reception of experiential traditions, of evident data seen and confirmed by previous observers); (b) 'transition by way of the similar', a relatively simple mental operation by analogy from one drug or disease or bodily part to another on the basis of as many observed similarities as possible; (c) *empeiria*, which in turn has three species: (i) involuntary, (ii) voluntary or improvising, and (iii) imitative or repetitive *peira*.²⁹ Hypothesis formation and verification by experimentation – of which Erasistratus and Herophilus made use – are ruled out firmly. Finally, the Empiricists chose their own label: *empeirikoi* or *empeirikē hairesis*.³⁰

Among the so-called Rationalists there is no such agreement on either principle or detail. Divergent, even contradictory views prevail on the nature and knowability of causes, on the value and permissibility of dissection, on the place of experience in medical knowledge, on the value of experimentation, etc. – not to mention the irreconcilably divergent physiological and pathological theories (humoral, anti-humoral, atomistic, etc.) advocated by various 'Rationalists'.

For purposes of Empiricist propaganda it might have been useful to set up Empiricism as one of only two alternatives between which every physician had to choose, and for some doxographers it might have provided a welcome schematic simplification of complex traditions. But, by swallowing the Empiricist bait, some medical historians – ancient and modern – have helped to animate a doxographic fiction of convenience, viz. that there was a 'Rationalist' or 'Dogmatic' *hairesis* of medicine that was somehow comparable to the Empiricist *hairesis* in Alexandria.

This fiction does, however, establish an important point: while *hairesis* could be used of a socially cohesive, geographically centralized, and doctrinally relatively united group with its own, distinctive, publicly articulated system (e.g., Empiricist), it could also be given more expansive and even licentious application (e.g., the 'rationalist' or 'dogmatic' *hairesis*).

At the outset I suggested that Galen's ternary division of *hairesis* into Empiricists, 'Rationalists', and Methodists – rather than the bipartite division with which we have been dealing – became canonical. I turn now to the entry of the Methodists (who, *pace* John Wesley, displayed little individual responsibility) into the *hairesis* doxography.

2. Methodists

By the beginning of the first century CE, the duel between the Empiricist *hairesis* and its collective 'rationalist' opponents had become bogged down in what Galen later aptly described as 'an undecided disagreement'.³¹ Some educated members of Roman society nevertheless became fascinated with this struggle, perhaps not least because of the growing number of medical laymen (*philiatroi*) in Rome.³² When a self-proclaimed 'new (*nea*) *hairesis*' with a promising name, 'Method-ists' (*methodikoi*), stepped onto the stage,³³ professionals and dilettantes alike applauded.

The 'new *hairesis*' proclaimed its independence from both Empiricists (*quod parum artis esse in observatione experienterum credunt* [sc. *Methodici*])³⁴ and 'Rationalists' (*quod in coniectura rerum latentium nolunt* [sc. *Methodici*] *esse medicinam*).³⁵ Particularly welcome to laymen and, one might assume, to aspiring young physicians, was the Methodists' claim that medical science is simpler and more accessible than had commonly been assumed,³⁶ and that anatomy and physiology might – or rather, must – be dispensed with. The Methodist Thessalus, a contemporary of

Nero, is, for example, said to have claimed that anyone can master the art of medicine within six months.³⁷

Although Celsus, probably writing toward the end of Tiberius's reign, still starts his *De medicina* with the comprehensive Empiricist-'Rationalist' dichotomy,³⁸ he subsequently sensed the need to add the Methodists as a third, distinct group (whom he does not show much respect),³⁹ and by the time of Galen the ternary division of *haireseis* was quite firmly in place.

It is perhaps not surprising that Thessalus and other Methodists became the most popular physicians of the first and early second centuries in Rome,⁴⁰ eclipsing Empiricists, Herophileans, Erasistrateans, and other *haireseis*. Thessalus unabashedly 'crowned himself victor on the world-stage',⁴¹ and he attracted numerous apprentices who were as eager as they were unqualified. About Thessalus's pupils Galen caustically remarks: 'Cobblers and carpenters and dyers and smiths now are rushing to the tasks of the art of medicine, having abandoned their own ancient crafts.'⁴²

The partisan flamboyance of some Methodists and their appeal to a broad lay audience seem to have stimulated further interest in accessible doxographic works that focus on the three major *haireseis*, and Galen's *De sectis* is one of many attempts to satisfy the needs of this general audience. (I hasten to emphasize that while Thessalus's theatricality might have gone over well in the Heronian period, Galen, as a good, archaizing representative of the Antonine period, had nothing but contempt for Thessalus.⁴³)

To return to some of the questions posed at the outset: despite their more popular appeal, the Methodists constitute a *hairesis* in roughly the same sense as the Empiricists and the Herophileans, rather than in the sense of the 'Rationalists'. In their epistemological statements the Methodists seem to show consistency: they are perhaps more sceptical than any other medical *hairesis*. Sextus Empiricus interprets the basic Methodist principle, 'indication (*indexis*) derived from affections (*pathē*) which are apparent (*phainomena*)', as fully consistent with scepticism, and he remarks that a physician-sceptic could belong only to the Methodist school.⁴⁴ Yet all Methodists also seem to share the belief that medical practice must be based on the observation of three universal *communia* or *koinotētes*: costiveness, fluidity, and the mixture of these two.⁴⁵ Furthermore, like the Empiricists and the Herophileans, the Methodists chose their own *hairesis* label⁴⁶ and confidently proclaimed themselves as the only *hairesis* with access to the truth.⁴⁷ In these respects, then, the Methodists satisfy the

criteria that emerged above for a narrower use of *hairesis*: a self-labelling, geographically centralized, doctrinally cohesive group, about whose core doctrine there seems to be general agreement.

Yet closer scrutiny raises serious doubts about the extent of a normative doctrinal consensus among the Methodists. Galen reports, for example, that the Methodists in fact agreed only on the names of the three *communia*, not on their referents: some Methodists determine 'costive', 'fluid', and 'mixed' according to natural secretions from the body, whereas others – 'not a small chorus' – look upon 'costive' and 'fluid' as pathogenic conditions that are found in the very dispositions (*diatheseis*) of the body.⁴⁸

Furthermore, while the anti-Methodist polemics of other *haireseis* and of some non-aligned authors often are based on an assumption of dogmatic consensus and uniformity within the Methodist *hairesis*, Galen reports that the Methodists in fact all disagreed among themselves on almost all important doctrinal questions.⁴⁹ That Galen's references to Methodist discord or *diaphōnia* cannot be dismissed as a *topos* derived from sceptical polemics, is clear from the few instances of internal Methodist disagreement that are documented.

Precise details concerning internal dissension often are lacking in our extant sources, but external unity and internal disunity often co-exist in the Greek medical *haireseis*. A brief examination of dissent and revisionism within the Herophilean *hairesis* might shed further light on this aspect of the medical *haireseis* and on some of the other complex forces that militated against normative self-definition within ancient medical *haireseis*.

3. The *hairesis* of Herophilus⁵⁰

The relation of Herophilus's followers to the founding father of their *hairesis* is complicated, first, by the dynamic nature of the Herophilean school – which, unlike Galenism and perhaps Epicureanism, always remained open to changes in emphasis and to doctrinal shifts – and, secondly, by the long history of the Herophilean *hairesis*, roughly from 300 BCE to 50 CE through periods in which varying demands and needs exercised frequently changing pressures upon scientists and physicians. Throughout these three and a half centuries the sanction provided by the common label 'follower of Herophilus' was sought and proudly shared by numerous distinguished physicians, but this nominal

uniformity cannot conceal the diversity and the fierce, often contentious individualism accommodated within the *hairesis*.

Perhaps the single most striking development in this context is the general retreat from anatomy and from dissection, which had constituted Herophilus's most significant contribution to scientific medicine.⁵¹ Few, if any, activities played a more powerful role in the rise of scientific medicine in Alexandria than the dissection – and possibly vivisection – of humans by Herophilus, and few were apparently as widely abandoned by Herophilus's successors. About the reasons for this surrender of a major tool of scientific medicine, one can only speculate. Among the possible causes are the reassertion of Greek and native Egyptian taboos, the fundamental insecurity of science within the social order under almost all but the first two Ptolemies, and the rising popularity of the Alexandrian Empiricists' theory of scientific method (which denied the scientific value and clinical relevance of dissection).⁵² But whatever the reasons might be, with one or two notable exceptions (e.g. Hegetor), the followers of Herophilus, from the third century BCE to the first century CE, seem to have turned their backs on anatomy – at least if one may generalize on the basis of the roughly three hundred extant testimonia and fragments.

All was, however, not retreat, rebellion, and revision with the Herophilean *hairesis*. There are some clear strands of continuity between the founding master and his followers. Perhaps the most striking of these is the sustained interest Herophilus's followers showed in pulse theory, a branch of pathophysiology which assumed immense diagnostic significance in antiquity (and which owes its first thorough investigation to Herophilus).⁵³ From Bacchius (c. 275–200 BCE) to Demosthenes Philalethes (first century CE), the followers of Herophilus kept alive the sphygmological tradition initiated by the founding master of their school. Yet, even within this broad continuity, one is confronted with the independence and innovative ambitions of individual members of the *hairesis*.

Herophilus's analysis of the pulse was not simply transmitted with piety and reverence from one generation to the next, like an orthodoxy that had become obligatory. Instead, almost every Herophilean tried to improve not only on Herophilus's definition but also on those of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries within the school. The result is a striking example of the incessant shuffling and dissent that lurk not too far beneath the

homogenous surface suggested *prima facie* by the label 'Herophileans' or 'Herophilus's *hairesis*'.

Herophilus: the pulse is a perceptible motion of the arteries received from the heart; it is born and dies with a living being; it exists naturally and attends us involuntarily at all times, occurring both when the arteries are filled and when they are emptied, i.e., when they dilate and contract.⁵⁴

Bacchius: (a) The pulse is a dilation (*diastolē*) and contraction (*systolē*) occurring simultaneously in all the arteries;⁵⁵ or (b) the pulse is a distention (*diastasis*) of the artery or of the arterial part of the heart.⁵⁶

Zeno (c. 200–150 BCE): The pulse is an activity of the arterial parts – an activity which is a mixture of contraction and distention.⁵⁷

Chrysermus (mid-first century BCE): The pulse is a distention and contraction of arteries, when the arterial coat, through the agency of a psychic and vital faculty, rises on all sides and then again shrinks together; it is a constant concomitant in both healthy and diseased conditions, and it can be apprehended by sense-perception.⁵⁸

Alexander Philalethes (c. 50 BCE–25 CE): Objectively, the pulse is an involuntary contraction of the heart and the arteries, such as can become apparent; subjectively, it is the beat of the continuous, involuntary motion of the arteries against one's touch, and the interval occurring after the beat.⁵⁹

Heraclides of Erythrae (last half of the first century BCE): The pulse is a contraction and dilation of the arteries and the heart, accomplished through the agency of a vital and psychic faculty which is dominant.⁶⁰

Aristoxenus (first half of the first century CE): The pulse is an activity of the heart and the arteries – an activity peculiar to them.⁶¹

Demosthenes Philalethes (c. 20 BCE – 50 CE): Objectively, the pulse is a dilation of the heart and the arteries, or their natural contraction, capable of becoming apparent; subjectively, it is a natural beat of the heart or of the arteries against one's touch and the interval which occurs after the beat.⁶²

This selective enumeration of Herophilean pulse definitions provides only one example of that diversity – within a common thematic concern – which became characteristic of the Herophilean *hairesis*. Acutely aware of one another's views, in part through doxographic treatises concerning their own school, each Herophilean strove for a fresh and more viable definition of the essential nature of the pulse, attempting at the same time to meet objections raised to his precursors' formulations. What might, from a modern perspective, look like sophistic quibbling over minor differences concerning a definition, to most of the participants in this revisionary process was anything but a mere exercise in patricidal and fratricidal eristic. Rather, it was a search for a

correct understanding of the essential nature of a major diagnostic tool and, simultaneously, a reaffirmation of the value and relevance of theoretical investigations for the clinician.

What unites almost all followers of Herophilus is in fact precisely their interest not only in clinical but also in scientific or 'theoretical' medicine, and this is, of course, also what distinguishes them most sharply from their chief rivals in the early period, the Alexandrian Empiricists, who radically rejected anatomy and physiology as irrelevant for clinical purposes.⁶³ Even those Herophileans for whom no pulse-lore is attested (for example, Andreas) dealt with physiological questions that were taboo to the Empiricists – taboo, exactly because these questions required forming hypotheses concerning what nature has concealed.

With the exception of pulse-lore, the physiological questions which interested Herophilus do not, however, seem to have preoccupied subsequent members of his *hairesis* more than sporadically. The four faculties or humours,⁶⁴ the nervous system,⁶⁵ the problem of respiration,⁶⁶ dream theory⁶⁷ – none of these is tackled by any of his followers. Here and there we do get glimpses of continuity: Herophilus made a major contribution to the anatomy and physiology of the male and female reproductive organs;⁶⁸ Alexander Philalethes speculates on the origin and nature of sperm (and Andreas on conditions conducive to procreation);⁶⁹ Herophilus developed a theory of digestion and absorption; Alexander Philalethes returns to the same question.⁷⁰ But these strands of continuity tend to be the exception and they are relatively fragile. A similar pattern of spasmodically emerging affinities between the founding father of the *hairesis* and his followers is found in pathology.⁷¹

To find a part of medicine – other than sphygmology – both cherished by Herophilus and actively pursued by a majority of his followers, one has to turn to pharmacology. Herophilus had called drugs 'the hands of the gods'⁷² and had made active therapeutic use of them. Not only is his expertise in simple drugs attested, but some of his compound drug prescriptions also are extant. From the earliest generation of Herophileans to the last, this pharmacological part of Herophilus's legacy was honoured and cultivated. Andreas, the court physician who probably was a direct pupil of Herophilus, made a monumental contribution especially to the study of simple drugs, compound drugs, and the toxic effects of certain plants and animals.⁷³

Similarly, in the first generation of Herophileans, Callimachus

and Bacchius displayed an active interest in pharmacology,⁷⁴ and in the second century BCE the Herophilean physicians Zeno, Demetrius, and Mantias again kept this tradition alive.⁷⁵ Mantias, in particular, more than once is recognized by Galen as the true father of the compound drug tradition.⁷⁶ Mantias apparently was the first to arrange his comprehensive compilations of drug prescriptions not only by kind or *per genera* (e.g., purgatives, clysters, emollients, etc.) but also by place or *secundum locos* (e.g., prescriptions for headaches, ear-aches, skin conditions, eye ailments, upset stomach, etc.) – a useful taxonomic principle which was also adopted by Galen in his massive and influential pharmacological treatises, and which hence became entrenched for centuries.⁷⁷

In the first century BCE, too, Herophileans did not abandon their pharmacological legacy. Chrysermus, for example, became known both for his views on simple drugs, such as asphodel, and for his compound drug prescriptions,⁷⁸ and Chrysermus's pupil Apollonius Mys composed one of the more famous pharmacological treatises of antiquity, *Euporista* or *Readily Accessible Drugs* (also known as *On Common Drugs*), from which Galen quotes liberally, especially in his treatise *On the Composition of Drugs according to Place*.⁷⁹ Judging by Galen's accounts, Apollonius adopted one of Mantias's taxonomic principles, namely arranging his common remedies topically (i.e., by place of application), and the practicality of this arrangement, along with the fact that all the ingredients used by Apollonius were readily accessible, may account for its popularity in the first two centuries CE. About the state of pharmacology in the last visible generation of the Herophilean school we are less well informed, but it is possible that the drug prescriptions attributed to a 'Demosthenes' were authored by the great Herophilean ophthalmologist, Demosthenes Philalethes.⁸⁰

This rapid survey of the pharmacological tradition within the Herophilean *hairesis* suggests, then, that pharmacology, like pulse-lore, represents a strong strand of continuity in the history of the 'school'. But whereas no spectacular advances over Herophilus's theory of the pulse were made by his successors, pharmacology is an area to which the Herophileans seem to have become more committed after Herophilus's death.

There is a further significant difference between these two instances of continuity. Whereas Herophilus's pulse theory was firmly rejected by the Herophileans' chief rivals – the Alexandrian

Empiricists – as a part of theoretical or speculative medicine and hence irrelevant to medical practice, the Empiricists warmly embraced pharmacology as an empirical discipline of unquestionable clinical import. From the time of Herophilus's 'heretical' pupil, the Empiricist Philinus of Cos (third century BCE), until the first century CE, the Empiricist *hairesis* repeatedly engaged in pharmacological activity: Philinus, Glaucias, Mantias's renegade pupil Heraclides of Tarentum, Diodorus, Lycus, and Zopyrus of Alexandria are examples of Empiricists who actively affirmed the significance of pharmacology.⁸¹

Having abandoned research in the area which brought Herophilus his greatest fame, i.e., anatomy, the Herophileans now therefore seem to have stressed a branch of learning found unobjectionable by their rivals. The same is true of two further areas in which Herophileans took a more active interest after Herophilus's death: surgery and Hippocratic exegesis.⁸² This particular constellation – pharmacology, surgery, and Hippocratic exegesis – renders them virtually indistinguishable from their Empiricist rivals, and it is conceivable that the Empiricists' sustained polemics against theoretical medicine in general, and against the Herophilean school in particular, exercised pressure upon the Herophileans to concentrate on clinical medicine and the Hippocratic Corpus at the expense of anatomical exploration and physiological speculation.

The growing interest among Herophileans in Hippocratic philology is worth a brief comment. Whereas Herophilus's relation to 'Hippocrates' had been marked by ambivalence, polemics, and the need to establish himself as the emancipated founder of a new tradition, the later Herophileans, perhaps less burdened by the need to emancipate themselves from the Hippocratic shadow and to establish themselves as the vanguard of the new, scientific medicine, could approach Hippocratic texts in a relatively dispassionate, critical manner. Neither polemic nor an effort to legitimate their own views through an appeal to the sanction of the father of medicine marks their treatment of the Hippocratic texts.

Already in the first generation of Herophileans the new philological approach to Hippocratic texts becomes clear. The Herophilean physician Callimachus provided glosses on Hippocratic words,⁸³ and the *Lexeis* of his contemporary Bacchius became the most influential Hippocratic lexicon of the Hellenistic period. More than sixty testimonia and fragments from Bacchius's lexicon are still extant,⁸⁴ and the range of Hippocratic works it covered –

at least eighteen⁸⁵ – was unprecedented in the history of Alexandrian philology. But Bacchius was not only a lexicographer; he also edited the Hippocratic treatise *Epidemics* 3 (and possibly other Hippocratic works), and wrote commentaries on the Hippocratic *Aphorisms*, on *Epidemics* 6, and on *In the Surgery*.⁸⁶ Not much later the Herophilean Zeno provided further glosses on Hippocratic words⁸⁷ and apparently triggered the protracted Alexandrian debate about the authenticity and meaning of obscure letter-symbols found in an Alexandrian copy of *Epidemics* 3.⁸⁸ In the first century BCE two Herophileans continued this tradition: Dioscurides Phacas – apparently a prominent counsellor and ambassador of Cleopatra, of her father, and of her brother – composed a Hippocratic lexicon in seven books,⁸⁹ and Heraclides of Erythrae not only wrote a commentary on *Epidemics* 2, 3, and 6 but also resumed, and perhaps terminated, the controversy concerning the provenance and significance of the letter-symbols in *Epidemics* 3.⁹⁰ Cydias, too, seems to have engaged in Hippocratic exegesis.⁹¹

This Herophilean trend can, therefore, be documented richly. Also significant is the fact that Hippocratic philology gained a prominent position in the school of the Alexandrian Empiricists, too. From the founder of the school, Philinus of Cos, who wrote a polemical work against Bacchius's Hippocratic lexicon, to Apollonius of Citium and Heraclides of Tarentum in the first century BCE, Empiricists engaged as actively as Herophileans in exegesis and lexicography.⁹² This similar but not identical movement of two arch-rivals, Empiricists and Herophileans, from scientific research into philology, cannot be attributed to a diminution of royal patronage. On the contrary, there are indications that this development was encouraged, directly or indirectly, by at least some of the Ptolemies. Thus Apollonius of Citium, author of the only work of Hellenistic medicine to have survived intact, states in the introduction of his commentary on the Hippocratic work *On Joints* that he undertook the exegetical task on the king's orders and now offers the finished product to him for approval.⁹³ The Ptolemy in question is probably Cleopatra's father Auletes (c. 112–51 BCE),⁹⁴ and hence this is relatively late evidence, but it does reveal, as P. M. Fraser has argued, 'the direct' – but, I would add, not always scientifically fruitful – 'stimulus that writers received from a royal patron'.⁹⁵ It also vividly suggests the power of the patron to coax a physician into exegetical tasks.

Perhaps closely related to the burgeoning critical interest in

precursor texts is another movement away from anatomical and physiological research, namely the growing importance of doxography within the Herophilean school, which brings us back full circle to explicit uses of the *hairesis* concept. As in the case of Hippocratic exegesis, the Herophileans could appeal to the example of Herophilus – who had also written a treatise with a doxographic thrust – to legitimate their own doxographic efforts. But here, too, there is a significant difference, namely the increasingly self-centred nature of Herophilean doxography. While Herophilus and Andreas were still primarily concerned with going on the offensive in their doxographic efforts – Herophilus wrote *Against Common Opinions*,⁹⁶ Andreas *On False Beliefs* and *On the Genealogy of Physicians*⁹⁷ – Bacchius set in motion a long Herophilean tradition of writing about, or in defence of, the opinions or *doxai* held by various members of one's own school. This trend reaches its culmination in the last years of the school's visible existence with treatises entitled *On the hairesis of Herophilus* authored by no less than three different Herophileans, as pointed out above: Apollonius Mys, Heraclides of Erythrae, and Aristoxenus.⁹⁸ This burst of works with an apologetic and protreptic purpose in the final stages of the history of the school might well reflect the growing insecurity of the followers of Herophilus in the midst of new challenges. Whereas they were reasonably successful in surviving the Empiricist challenge, in part, as suggested above, by distinguishing themselves in branches of medicine highly valued by the Empiricists themselves (pharmacology, surgery, semiotics or symptomatology,⁹⁹ Hippocratic philology), the last generations of Herophileans faced the challenge not only of the Empiricists but also of new, eclectic 'Dogmatists' or 'Rationalists' and Sceptics who were rapidly gaining in popularity: the 'Pneumatic' and 'Methodist' schools of medicine. Herophileans no longer had the appeal of novelty or the strength of anatomical and physiological excellence; with the exception of their sphygmological and gynecological persistence, the concerns of most Herophileans had become virtually indistinguishable from those of their Empiricist rivals. Furthermore, the rebellious and individualistic strain that marked the long, rich history of the Herophilean *hairesis*, from the time when Herophilus was abandoned by one pupil and ridiculed by another¹⁰⁰ down to Aristoxenus's sharp censure of almost all his Herophilean predecessors and contemporaries in the first century CE,¹⁰¹ did not enhance its chances of surviving the fresh challenges. Herophilean polemics became

increasingly fratricidal in nature – Herophilean pitted against Herophilean – and the self-centred doxography referred to earlier became its vehicle.

Yet even at the moment of its last visible gasps the *hairesis* of Herophilus displayed some of the ambiguity and tenacity that had characterized much of its history: while one of the last representatives of the school, Aristoxenus, was engaging in internecine, sophistic censure of his fellow-Herophileans, another, Demosthenes Philaethes, made enduring, if not always original, contributions to the pathology and therapy of eye ailments, contributions whose general impact upon ancient and medieval medicine was matched by those of no other Herophilean except Herophilus himself.¹⁰²

Internal dogmatic scrutiny and heuristic triumph, looking over one's shoulder and looking ahead, preoccupation with the words of predecessors and aggressive discovery – these are some of the ambivalent dimensions of the history of Herophilus's *hairesis*, and they persist from its inception to its apparent death in the first century CE.

III Institutionalization and hairesis

The institutional history of the school of Herophilus will serve as a single but fairly representative example of what *hairesis* does and does not imply about institutionalization, at least in the medical tradition. There is no clear evidence that Herophilus or his followers were organized institutionally in the first two hundred or two hundred and fifty years of the existence of this group of physicians. There is not even firm evidence that Herophilus, or any representative of scientific medicine, ever was associated with the Alexandrian Museum. Rather, the general Greek system of medical apprenticeship probably also prevailed in Alexandria, and Bacchius's use of the phrase 'those from the house (*oikia*) of Herophilus' to refer to early Herophileans¹⁰³ might well be an indication of the informal and non-institutional – but not necessarily unrigorous – nature of medical apprenticeships in Alexandria.

Despite this apparent absence of formalization and institutionalization of the *hairesis*, despite the individualism and dissent that marked relations between 'members' of the school, and despite the political and social vicissitudes which buffeted science and scholarship in Ptolemaic Alexandria (such as the expulsion of a

large number of intellectuals, including physicians, from Alexandria in 145 BCE),¹⁰⁴ Herophilean medicine survived without noticeable interruption as a prominent force in Alexandrian life at least until the late first century BCE; there is no century in the history of Ptolemaic Alexandria in which Herophileans failed to assert their presence in the royal capital. Thus we find the Herophilean physicians Andreas, Callimachus, and Bacchius in Alexandria in the third century BCE; Zeno, Demetrius, Hegetor, and Mantias in the second century BCE; Dioscurides Phacas, Chrysermus, Apollonius Mys, and Heraclides of Erythrae in the first century BCE.

A novel phase in the institutional development of the school seems to have been reached, however, with the expansion of the school into Asia Minor in the mid- or late first-century BCE, after it had been associated exclusively with Alexandria for at least two hundred years. Founded by Zeuxis 'Philaethes' or 'Truth-Lover' (a reverential title traditionally reserved for Hippocrates) at the famous temple of the moon god Men Karou, in the vicinity of the Phrygian city of Laodicea on the great Eastern trade route, this branch of the school apparently had a more institutional character than the 'school' in Alexandria. Several factors seem to support this conclusion.

First, Strabo calls it a 'large place of instruction' or 'great school' (*didaskaleion mega*).¹⁰⁵ *Didaskaleion* is an expression rarely used of the Alexandrian 'school' of Herophileans – or, for that matter, of any other medical 'school'. The word usually is reserved for the kind of formal institution attended by school children and run by rhetoricians and grammarians; it is almost never applied to the apprenticeship arrangements that were characteristic of medical education in classical and Hellenistic Greece.¹⁰⁶

Secondly, the association of the school with a cult centre also suggests an institutionalization of the kind well known from the Alexandrian Museum (but nowhere attested for the Herophilean *hairesis* in Alexandria): in the Museum a group of scientists and scholars were joined together not only as researchers sharing patronage and meals, but also as members of a cult association presided over by a priest.¹⁰⁷ A similar arrangement probably prevailed at the Museion in Ephesus, which was famous for its *synedrion* of physicians and its annual 'medical Olympics'.¹⁰⁸ While the Herophilean school at the temple of Men Karou might not have shared all these characteristics with the Alexandrian

Museum and similar institutions, its association with a cult is suggestive.

Furthermore, by the Imperial period the *Lex Julia de collegiis* seems to have stipulated, as the first of several conditions for establishing medical schools or formal medical associations, that cult worship must be fostered by such an association or institution.¹⁰⁹ It is conceivable that the Herophilean school at Men Karou was constituted as just such a *collegium*.

The history of the Herophilean school in Asia Minor extends roughly one century or three generations, from about 40 BCE to 50 CE. The successive leaders of the school were Zeuxis Philaethes, Alexander Philaethes, and Demosthenes Philaethes. Another influential member of the school was a student of Alexander Philaethes, Aristoxenus, whose sharp criticism of a number of Alexandrian Herophileans might be indicative of rivalry, or at any rate of disharmonious relations, between the Alexandrian mother school and her Asian offspring. But among the Asian Herophileans, too, disagreements soon arose; institutionalization was no guarantee of unity or doctrinal homogeneity.

It has been suggested that a notorious earthquake which struck the area around Laodicea during the reign of Nero, in 60 CE, coincided with the end of the Herophilean school.¹¹⁰ Other factors mentioned above should, however, not be ignored in favour of a cataclysmic hypothesis. The Herophileans' disputes with the Empiricists and with each other became internecine; the partial usurpation of Herophilus's emphasis on anatomy and physiology by Hippocratic philology and doxography left many Herophileans vulnerable at a theoretical level (as did the restriction of physiology to pulse-lore, at least by a majority of Herophileans); and the rising popularity and influence of new schools of medicine with vociferous claims to sweeping theoretical innovation exercised strong pressures upon Herophileans.

This brief survey of doctrinal (II.3) and institutional (III) change and continuity in the Herophilean *hairesis* has yielded results which are fairly representative of the medical *haireseis*. The sectarian cohesion suggested by the common label 'Herophilus's *hairesis*' masks complex forces that generated constant internal debate, doctrinal disagreements, and shifts in emphasis. These shifts and disagreements often render even the minimal 'distinctive' core doctrine of the *hairesis* no more than a shell. The proclamation of *haireseis*, and the extensive *hairesis* literature, do

not seem to have advanced the cause of normative self-definition significantly.

IV *Hairesis and Heresy*

In the Acts of the Apostles the orator Tertullus charges Paul with being a ringleader of the *hairesis* of the Nazarenes.¹¹¹ Paul's reply to his accusers acknowledges that 'I serve the God of my fathers according to the way which *they* [sc. my accusers] call *hairesis* . . .'.¹¹² These two passages belong to the earliest text in which *hairesis* seems consistently used to designate a 'sect', 'faith' or 'school' that opposes one's own. Its author also refers to the Sadducees and Pharisees as *haireseis*, and he reports that the leading Roman Jews remarked to Paul, 'We consider it worthwhile hearing from you what you think; you see, as far as this *hairesis* [sc. of the Christians] is concerned, it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere.'¹¹³ In each of these cases an opponent is identified by a Christian or a Jew as belonging to a group called a *hairesis*. In and of itself such a reference to a doctrinally adversary group as a *hairesis* is not novel; as shown above, it represents one – but only one – strand in standard Hellenistic usage.

Hairesis, however, not only refers to an opposing sect or school of thought in early Christian and Jewish contexts. The neutral and positive Hellenistic uses of *hairesis* as a group referent also occur both in Christian and Jewish texts. In his *Life* Josephus, for example, reports:

When I became about sixteen, I wished to get experience of the *haireseis* among us. There are three of these; first, the *hairesis* of the Pharisees, second that of the Sadducees, and third [the *hairesis*] of the Essenes . . . In my nineteenth year I began to follow the *hairesis* of the Pharisees, which resembles the *hairesis* called 'Stoic' among the Greeks.¹¹⁴

In his *Jewish Wars*, Josephus reaffirms this as the standard division of Jewish 'schools of thought', this time using a derivative of *hairesis* to refer to the members of each 'school':

There are three forms of practising philosophy among the Jews: the *hairetistai* of one of these are the Pharisees, of another the Sadducees, and the third is called the Essenes.¹¹⁵

In none of these uses are *hairesis* and its derivatives defined by reference to orthodoxy. As in the Hellenistic texts discussed above in I and II, *hairesis* here does not necessarily imply heresy, sectarian defection, heterodoxy, or apostasy; rather, it refers

without pejorative overtones to 'sects' or 'schools of thought', including one's own. This usage survives into later antiquity, i.e., even after *hairesis* also has come to mean 'heresy' or 'heretical faction'. Thus Eusebius quotes Constantine as saying, ' . . . some people wickedly and perversely began to separate themselves from the universal [*katholikē*, i.e., orthodox and true Christian] *hairesis* . . .'.¹¹⁶

The authoritative claim that 'within Christianity *hairesis* always denotes hostile societies . . .' and that when *hairesis* is used in the early church, 'what the church usually has in view is Gnosticism'¹¹⁷ therefore does not hold, at least not without serious modification.

Clement of Alexandria provides a representative illustration of the wide range of uses to which patristic authors tend to put *hairesis*:

One must investigate and learn conclusively how some *haireseis* have become fallible, while the most accurate *gnosis* and the truly best *hairesis* is in the only true, ancient church.¹¹⁸

. . . Both among the Jews and among those philosophers most esteemed by the Greeks there have been very many *haireseis*; I presume you're not saying that one should hesitate to practise philosophy or Judaism just because of the disagreements that these *haireseis* have with one another?¹¹⁹

Like most patristic authors Clement, however, does not restrict *hairesis* to the Christian church, to Jewish 'sects', and to Greek philosophical 'schools'; he also gives it a meaning not characteristic of the texts and contexts discussed in I–III above, viz. 'heresy' or 'false, apostate doctrine':

A person who has fallen away into *hairesis* goes through a waterless desert, having left behind the truly real God; deserted by God, he seeks waterless water, traversing uninhabitable, parched land, collecting unfruitfulness with his hands.¹²⁰

Falling away, breaking away, separation, estrangement, alienation – these are new elements in the definition of *hairesis*: it now becomes defined primarily by reference to that from which it is separated or different.¹²¹ Thus Ignatius tells his readers that 'the love of Jesus Christ enjoins you to use only Christian nutriment, and to abstain from alien [*allotria*] plants, which are *hairesis*'.¹²² Origen, Justin Martyr, Hegesippus, Irenaeus, and Basil are among the numerous other patristic authors who use *hairesis* to refer to 'heresy' or to 'heretical faction'.¹²³

It is important to recognize that there is a significant difference

between (a) the use of *haireisis* by Jews and Christians in the Acts of the Apostles to refer to an adversary 'school' and (b) this patristic use of *haireisis* to refer to 'heresy'. It lies in the fact that the Pharisaic and Sadducean or 'Nazarene' *haireseis* did not stand accused by their Christian and Jewish opponents, respectively, of breaking away from the true doctrine they once had possessed – as little as did the Herophilean *haireisis*¹²⁴ – whereas the *haireseis* in the new patristic sense – 'heretical factions' – are accused precisely of separating themselves from the true church, and hence are defined by reference to Christian orthodoxy.¹²⁵ A Hellenistic medical or religious or philosophical *haireisis* could exist alone and without necessarily being regarded as errant, whereas a Christian *haireisis* now becomes a *haireisis* (qua 'heresy', 'heretical sect') only when condemned as such by the authors or bearers of ecclesiastic orthodoxy.

This new, early Christian use of *haireisis* to refer to a body of false beliefs or believers did not entirely usurp the standard Hellenistic uses, as the passages from Clement quoted above confirm. But it soon gave rise to elaborate new taxonomies of doctrinal and institutional error (in which *haireisis* played a central role), and to a substantial body of canon law. An examination of *haireisis* in these new contexts, and of its relation to *heterodoxia* and *schisma*, lies beyond the scope of this contribution, but a brief allusion to two texts that signal the increasingly technical uses of the word might be of use.

First, in a discussion of Montanist baptismal practices, Basil remarks:

... To some, they [sc. the ancients] gave the name *haireseis*, to others *schismata*, and to others again *para-synagōgai*: *haireseis* [they call] the ones who have completely broken away and who have become estranged with regard to their faith itself; *schismata* those who are in disagreement with each other for reasons having to do with the church and with remediable issues; and *para-synagōgai* [they call] those assemblies which arise through the agency of insubordinate elders or bishops or lay people. . . . *Haireseis* are, for example, the *haireisis* of the Manichaeans, of the Valentinians, of the followers of Marcion, and of these very Epuzans. . . .¹²⁶

Somewhat different, but again a harbinger of technicalities to come, is an earlier effort by Clement of Alexandria to classify *haireseis* according to the derivation of their names from personal names (Valentinians, Marcionists), from places (the Gnostic 'Peratikoi'), from ethnic origin (the 'Phrygian *haireisis*', a name for the

Montanists), from their practices (the Encratites or 'continent ones', a sect that abstained from marriage, meat and wine), from distinctive doctrines (the Docetists, who maintained the illusory character of the incarnation), from their hypotheses and from whom they honoured (the Gnostic 'Kainistai', who honoured Cain, and the 'Ophianoi' or serpent-worshippers), and from their acts of nefarious audacity (the 'Entychitai', an offshoot of the Simonian sect, probably so-called because of the belief that they practised promiscuous sexual intercourse at their meetings).¹²⁷

I have traced various aspects of the development of *haireisis* from 'taking' and 'individual moral or intellectual choice' to 'doctrinal group choice' and 'school', and finally to the Christian sense of 'heretical sect' or 'heresy'. It has become clear that some of the pre-Christian uses of *haireisis* continue to survive in Christian literature, alongside 'heretical sect', and that patristic authors even use *haireisis* to refer to their own orthodoxy. What remains unresolved, however, is how the use of *haireisis* to refer to one's own 'school' or to an external 'school', whether adversary or not, gave rise to the use of *haireisis* to refer to internal breaking away, to doctrinal dissent or deviation *within* Christianity.

A key text in this murky transition seems to be the New Testament. The consistent application of *haireisis* to a doctrinally adversary group in Acts was pointed out above. More explicitly *in malam partem* are statements by other New Testament authors deploring the existence of *haireseis*, 'factions' or 'factious beliefs', among the Christians themselves. Thus Paul expresses his disapproval of contentiousness and divisions (*schismata*) among the Corinthian Christians, while conceding that 'there must be *haireseis* among you in order that the approved persons may become clearly distinct among you'.¹²⁸ Similarly, he warns the Galatians against 'factious intrigues, seditious dissensions, and *haireseis*', all of which are among 'the works of the flesh', not 'the fruit of the spirit'.¹²⁹ In the letter to Titus, 'Paul' says: 'After a first and second warning, reject the person who is *hairetikos*, knowing that such a person has turned astray and sins, being self-condemned'.¹³⁰ In Peter's second letter, too, a warning is sounded against false teachers, *pseudo-didaskaloi*, 'who will surreptitiously introduce *haireseis* that cause destruction'.¹³¹ The church could not accept any schools or new societies within or alongside itself, since the *ekklesia* is the assembly of the whole people of God and accommodates this people both exclusively and comprehensively; 'the concept of party necessarily excludes that of the people or state'.¹³²

Jewish and Christian Self-Definition

From the 'factiousness' and 'factions' deplored in the New Testament it is neither an impossibly long nor a very tortuous road to the 'heretical sects' and 'heresies' so elaborately defined, classified, and condemned in Christian orthodoxy. But old habits die hard, and for several centuries the tenacity of the secular Hellenistic uses traced in I and II above continued to muddy the semantic waters in which *hairesis* drifted. As Cicero wrote to Cassius, 'in ista ipsa *hairesei* metuo, ne plus nervorum sit, quam ego putarim . . .'.¹³³

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