

SERGIUS OF RESHAINA, *INTRODUCTION TO ARISTOTLE AND HIS CATEGORIES, ADDRESSED TO PHILOTHEOS*, SYRIAC TEXT, INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY BY SAMI AYDIN, (ARISTOTELES SEMITICO–LATINUS, 24), LEIDEN –BOSTON: BRILL, 2016, XI + 328 PP., 9789004324954 (HBK), 9789004325142 (E-BOOK)

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In this engaging volume, Sami Aydin has provided carefully edited documents detailing the life and works of the famous *Sergius of Reshaina* (d. 536). Two related texts *Categories* and *Physics* extant in Syriac were written by this physician and commentator about the philosophy of Aristotle. Aydin revisits the previous translation of Sergius' shorter treatise preserved in Berlin- Manuscript Petermann I 9 (Sachau no 88) published by Robert R. Phenix and Cornelia B. Horn in Geoffrey Greatrex (ed.), 2011 and provides a thorough commentary. The publication of this text and the revised English translation, renamed *Introduction to Aristotle and his Categories*, is much to be welcomed. The contents of the volume are a window into Aristotelian philosophy in Syriac. They highlight the traditions and concepts taught at the Neoplatonist school of Ammonius Hermeiou (d. 517-526) in Alexandria. Sami Aydin has divided his treatment of the treatise into four sections: (i) an introduction; (ii) four chapters on Sergius writing, background, comments of Aristotle, linguistic observations on Aristotle's *Categories*; (iii) the text of the Syriac original with an English translation of each version immediately following on the same page; and (iv) a commentary. While section two with its four chapters does not harmoniously fit the breakdown structure of the contents, the overall presentation has the benefit of encouraging the readers to adopt a comparative approach and to better understanding fundamental similarities and differences.

Within a relatively brief introduction (pp. 1-9), Aydin sets the stage by providing readers with a comprehensive review of the genesis, contents, and reception of the text. He contextualizes Sergius' life and works from a multiplicity of perspectives and illustrates how Sergius' philosophical and medical education in Alexandria was decisive in his translation. This historical overview provides a good insight into philosophy and education in Late Antique Alexandria. In the second lengthy section of the book (pp. 10-88), which consists of four chapters, Aydin turns to discuss the original works of *Sergius of Reshaina*.

Subsequently, he situates Sergius' Alexandrian curricula, his sources, his school, and how he viewed and read *Aristotle's Categories* in relatively abundant detail and an attempt is made to identify the original settings of Sergius' two texts. There follows an equally scrupulous review of some linguistic features, and in particular the particles. The third section of the book consists of a critical edition of the Syriac text and English translation. Aydin places the edited text in easy-to-read column. Together with the accompanying translation and textual notes (pp. 94 - 175), the text is accessible to both general reading public and scholars. When necessary, Aydin makes emendations, changes and additions to his reading of the Berlin manuscript from the literal corresponding passages of Sergius' longer commentary available in British Library Additional 14658 (L=London) and Bibliothèque Nationale de France Syr. 354 (P =Paris). This appears in the critical apparatus. The commentary (pp. 176- 260) deploys range of literary evidence in order to illustrate the form and content of this important document and displays Syriac/ Greek/ English *lemmata*. This makes the book a highly attractive choice for any course dedicated to theology, Alexandrian philosophy and medical treatise alongside Syriac studies.

There follows a Syriac-Greek Glossary, a Greek- Syriac Glossary and Greek names in Sergius' introduction listing differences in reading. Both glossaries will prove useful to anyone doing comparative studies. The book concludes with indices that readers will find particularly reliable and useful.

The volume is easy to read and easy to follow. Scholars will find it a great resource for doing comparative studies on Aristotelian Philosophy. Students too, will derive benefit from consultation of this work.

It is evident that, for both author and translator, this project represented a labour of love, and that is a thing that *Sergius of Reshaina* himself would have had certainly recognised and doubtless approved!