

2 The Syriac Text of the *Commentary*

2.1 Manuscripts Containing the Full Version of the *Commentary*

2.1.1 London, British Library, Add. 14658 (L)

The London codex BL⁹⁶ Add. 14658 is the oldest witness to the text of Sergius' *Commentary*⁹⁷. This parchment manuscript came to London in 1843 as a result of the purchase of a large collection of codices from the Coptic monastery Dayr al-Suryan, located in the Nitrian desert in Egypt⁹⁸. It has been preserved without the first and the last folios. Thus its colophon, if there ever was one, is lost. However, based on a paleographical analysis of its writing, William Wright dated it to the 7th century, and this dating, which brings this codex quite close to Sergius' lifetime, has been generally accepted by later scholars.

The codex is written in two columns, containing 36 to 40 lines. In its present condition, it includes 188 folios, and apart from the large portions at the beginning and at the end, a considerable number of folios is missing from it, while some of the folios are bound in an incorrect order, a state of affairs mostly affecting the first quires of the codex, which contain Sergius' *Commentary*. The manuscript was copied by an unknown scribe in the regular *Estrangela* script. Parts of the text (see, e.g., fol. 42r) which were either damaged or unreadable have first been erased and later written anew in somewhat smaller letters but in the same *Estrangela* script as the main text.

The text also contains interlinear or marginal corrections written in the same or very similar *Estrangela* script and probably dating from the time of the manuscript production. Apart from these, a number of paratextual marks have been added to the text at a probably much later date. They have, first, the form of a square bracket (<)⁹⁹ or of ligatures combining either Syriac or Arabic letters, and they appear in all parts of ms. L, indicating how the codex was likely used at various periods of time¹⁰⁰. The West Syriac vowels (which reflect Greek vowel signs) attached to some proper names and Greek loanwords in the text seem also to belong to the later period than the original text.

⁹⁶ It was originally housed in the British Museum (hence it is referred to as "BM"), but is now part of the manuscript collection of the British Library.

⁹⁷ See the description of the codex in Wright 1872: 1154–1160.

⁹⁸ For the history of the collection of the monastery Dayr al-Suryan and its migration to several European libraries, see Wright 1872: i–xvii; Brock & Van Rompay 2014: xv–xviii.

⁹⁹ This sign usually served in Syriac manuscripts as a marker of a quotation that appears in the text, cf. Wright 1872: xxviii.

¹⁰⁰ The marginal notes that are found in other parts of the codex include the imperative "write" (☞), which gives reason to assume that this manuscript was used as a *Vorlage* for further copies (see fol. 99v, 124v, 129v, etc.). This is quite apparent in the case of the Syriac sentences of Menander (on fol. 163v), as the corrections found in ms. L were included in the later copy of this text on the fly-leaves of another codex; cf. Arzhanov 2017.

The contents of this codex have been described multiple times¹⁰¹. Scholars have stressed the importance of not only concrete works included in it (for many of which the codex remains the only witness) but also of the structure of this remarkable collection as a whole¹⁰². In its present state, the codex opens with Sergius' *Commentary*, which is followed by a number of further texts on logic¹⁰³, as well as treatises on grammar¹⁰⁴, natural philosophy¹⁰⁵, and psychology¹⁰⁶, but also some pseudopigraphic works attributed to Plato¹⁰⁷. Thus, this collection reflects the full cursus of late ancient higher education, which began with introductory texts and concluded with the study of Platonic works¹⁰⁸. Sergius' *Commentary*, with its extensive *prolegomena* part, thus plays the role here of an introductory work with which the course of philosophical study commences, a role apparently in line with Sergius' intention.

Due to the loss of a number of folios both at the beginning and in various other parts of the codex, Sergius' *Commentary* has been preserved in ms. L only partially, so that about a quarter of the text has been lost. Fortunately, one of the missing pages from this codex has been identified among the individual folios preserved in the collection of the University of Leipzig (this folio now bears the shelf-mark "Or. 1078/I")¹⁰⁹. However, ms. L is still characterized by a number of large lacunae and by an incorrect order of the folios¹¹⁰. We may describe the state of the text of Sergius' *Commentary* in this manuscript (supplied now with the Leipzig folio) as follows:

(lacuna at the beginning comprising ca. 8 folios)
 fol. 1
 (lacuna comprising ca. 2 folios)
 fol. 2–7
 (lacuna comprising ca. 2 folios)
 fol. 8–16 + fol. 30–39

¹⁰¹ See the earliest descriptions in Renan 1852b: 294–310, Sachau 1852: 71, Wright 1872: 1154–1160. Many original attributions have been corrected by later scholars, cf. Hugonnard-Roche 2007: 279–281.

¹⁰² See Hugonnard-Roche 2007, King 2010b, and Arzhanov 2019: 190–193.

¹⁰³ The anonymous Syriac translations of Porphyry's *Isagoge* and of Aristotle's *Categories*, as well as some short texts on logic, on which see section 1, above.

¹⁰⁴ The Syriac version of Dionysius Thrax' *Techne grammatische*.

¹⁰⁵ Ps.-Aristotle's *De mundo*, Alexander of Aphrodisias' *On the Universe*, and Paul of Alexandria's *On the Motion of the Sun*.

¹⁰⁶ Ps.-Aristotle's *On the Soul*.

¹⁰⁷ The dialogue "Sokrates", Ps.-Platonic *Definitions*, and Plato's *Advice to his Disciple*.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Arzhanov 2019: 190–193.

¹⁰⁹ See Kessel 2019: 398. This folio belonged to the collection of Constantin Tischendorf, with the shelf-number "XV.b.3" (according to the note that is visible on the photo of this codex); cf. Tischendorf 1855: 67–68, where the folio has the number XVI.D. See also the description in the catalogue of Vollers 1906: 381, who refers to it as part of the "Codex Tischendorf XVI" and describes it as the first fragment bound together in this manuscript.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Wright 1872: 1154 and Furlani 1922: 137.

(lacuna comprising ca. 1 folio)
 fol. 29 + fol. 17
 (lacuna comprising ca. 4 folios)
 fol. 20–25 + fol. 19 + fol. 18 + fol. 26–28 + fol. 40–42
 (lacuna comprising ca. 1 folio)
 fol. 43–46
 (lacuna comprising ca. 1 folio)
 fol. 47–52 + Leipzig folio
 (lacuna comprising ca. 1 folio)
 fol. 53–61r

Besides the highly lacunose character of the manuscript, the text preserved in it turns out to contain multiple errors which distinguish it from the other textual witnesses (cf. the stemma in 2.4, below) and make it, in most cases of textual variety, a rather unreliable source. The following cases demonstrate the most obvious errors in L:

100.13 **אָמַר** BCDP: **אָמַר** L
 118.19 **אָמַר** BCDP: **אָמַר** L
 196.5 **אָמַר** BCD, Epit.: **אָמַר** L
 198.3 **אָמַר** BCDP: **אָמַר** L
 202.15 **אָמַר** BCDP: **אָמַר** L
 204.20 **אָמַר** BCDP: **אָמַר** L
 216.20 **אָמַר** BCDP: **אָמַר** L
 224.3 **אָמַר** BDP, Epit.: **אָמַר** L
 232.23 **אָמַר** BDP, Epit.: **אָמַר** L
 244.18 **אָמַר** BDP, Epit.: **אָמַר** L
 384.12 **אָמַר** BDP: **אָמַר** L

One might provide a much longer list of errors in L which distinguish it as an isolated line of the transmission of the text. As it will be shown below (see 2.2), this line probably includes ms. E, which contains a selection from the *Commentary*, but does not comprise further witnesses known to us to date.

The *Commentary* in ms. L contains schematic divisions (Syr. **אָמַר**) of the subject matter at the end of Books II, IV, V, and VI, which are also found in other manuscripts. The loss of such divisions at the end of Books I and III may be explained by the loss of the corresponding folios of ms. L, which originally might have contained them. However, no divisions are found in the extant fol. 61r, which contains the final part of the *Commentary*. In L, the seventh and final book ends with a short remark¹¹¹ followed by a small ornament separating the *Commentary* from the next treatise in the codex. Apart from ms. L, the only mss. we have that contain the final portion of the *Commentary* are mss. B and D. Both of these are rather late (19th century) copies of the same prototype (cf. 2.1.3, below), which thus serves as our only witness to the presence of

111 Fol. 61r: **אָמַר** **אָמַר** **אָמַר**, “Book VII came to end”.

the divisions at the end of Book VII. It remains unclear whether the original text of the *Commentary* contained divisions at the end of the *Commentary* or not, but their absence in the oldest copy of the work, ms. L, makes it possible that the divisions were not originally appended to all the books, but with some of the divisions perhaps being added at a later stage of transmission.

Ms. L contains nearly no rubrics or subtitles. The titles of each book of the *Commentary* are clearly marked in the codex by means of red ink, which is also used in the extant divisions that appear (as noted just above) at the end of some books. But no other subtitles are found in this codex save for one occasion: on fol. 33r we encounter the rubric  **وَسَوْطَةٌ**  “On substance”, which is marked by red asterisks and thus clearly has the role of a subtitle for the corresponding part of Book III that indeed discusses this category¹¹². No other examples of this kind are found in L, thus suggesting that the rubrics found nearly exclusively in the Erbil group of mss. were attached to the text not by Sergius, but by later scribes.

2.1.2 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Syr. 354, Part I (P)

Ms. Paris Syr. 354 (which formerly belonged to the collection of the monastery of Seert, where it bore the number 91¹¹³) is a paper manuscript, which consists of two parts originating from two different codices¹¹⁴. Presently, it contains 147 folios. The second, shorter part includes folios 138–147; it is written in the East Syriac script and, according to a note on fol. 145r, was copied in the year 1224¹¹⁵. The first part, in which Sergius' *Commentary* is found and which comprises folios 1–137, was written by multiple hands in various forms of the East Syriac script. According to a note attached to the title of Book II of the *Commentary*, this codex was copied in the year 1187¹¹⁶.

The text of the manuscript (i.e., of the first part of the ms., hereafter simply “manuscript/codex”) is written in a single column with a widely differing number of lines depending on the folio. Indeed, the type of writing varies considerably throughout the manuscript; we may thus presume that not a few different scribes contributed to its production. The writing style sometimes changes only after several folios; thus, we see a change in hand in the middle of fol. 5v, in the middle of fol. 46v, at the beginning of fol. 52r, at the beginning of fol. 59v, and at the end of fol. 62v. In other places, however,

¹¹² It is interesting to note that Ammonius mentions two subtitles which he found in the text of Aristotle's *Categories* that he made use of during his lectures, "On substance" and "On relatives" (*In Cat.* 66.14–19). It is thus possible that at least this rubric found both in L and in the Erbil mss. derives from Sergius himself.

113 Cf. Desreumaux 1991: 231. Cf. the description of the Seert ms. in Scher 1905: 67–68.

¹¹⁴ See the description of the codex in Nau 1911: 306–310.

¹ 115 See Nau 1911: 309.

116 Fol. 13v: ማ. ዘመኑ ሲጠ, “the year 1498 of the Greeks”, i.e., 1187 AD.

such change occurs within the same page, which one may observe on fol. 73r: there, the first seven lines of the text are written in one hand, but in the middle of line 7 the hand changes, and then in line 11 it changes once again. A similar situation is found on fol. 74r: the first alteration of the hand is apparent in line 5, but the new hand goes only as far as line 12, when still a new hand may be seen, which in turn is replaced by another one in line 15. This final change in hands resulted in the repetition of the last words written by the previous scribe¹¹⁷.

This frequent change of hands in the ms. yields not only cases of dittography, like the one just mentioned, but also a large number of errors. In general, the codex is characterized by a rather negligent way of writing. Some portions of the text are in the wrong place, with the correct text simply added below¹¹⁸. On fol. 27r, half of the page is crossed out; a marginal note at the first line of the passage states that “corrupted text begins” here¹¹⁹. It seems likely, moreover, that ms. P was copied from a manuscript that was either destroyed or corrupted in some parts, as we find unexplained omissions of text on fol. 18r. The scribe(s) have in turn left parts of several lines unfilled, suggesting they were aware that words were missing, probably with the hope that these gaps could be filled in if a better copy became available.

At the end of the first part of the Paris codex, one finds a note that a certain Zeno (whose full name is recorded) “polluted and corrupted these pages”¹²⁰. However, it may hardly be taken as reporting the name of one of the scribes (or *the scribe*) who produced this codex. Rather it refers either to the author of multiple marginal notes found throughout the codex, written rather carelessly and usually not directly connected with the main text¹²¹; or whomever drew a number of marginal pictures depicting both human figures and animals¹²². However, apart from these additions, ms. P contains quite a few marginalia which may be understood as scholia to the Syriac text, containing either short explanations for difficult terms or different readings, some of which are transmitted by other textual witnesses. All such variants that are significant for the history of the Syriac text are documented in the critical apparatus of the edition.

Sergius' *Commentary* occupies the main part of the codex. It starts on fol. 1v and breaks on fol. 109v, after which several pages are added that derive from another commentary on the *Categories*¹²³. In its present state, P lacks only a small portion of

¹¹⁷ The words **କହିଲା** **କାହି** **କିବା** appear twice in lines 14 and 15.

118 See the cases of the transposition of the text abbreviated as “transp.” in the critical apparatus of the edition.

119 Fol. 27r, note in the right margin: መስኔር ገዢያ ያደረገ የጊዜ

120 Fol. 117v: **لِهِ مَسْلِيْلُ مَلْقَهِ كُلِّ الْيَمِّ** حَسْنَهُ وَتَعَظِّيْمُهُ كُلِّ الْيَمِّ وَقَدْ كَوَّهَ مَلْكُهُ

121 See, e.g., fol. 13v, 14r, 29v (all three notes are crossed out), 39r, 96r, 85v, 94v, and 99v.

122 See fol. 1r, 65v, 99v, and 117v.

123 Cf. the end of the text on fol. 117v: **መልቲዕምና የሚረዳውን የአዲስ አበባ ስነዎች ማረጋገጫ**, “finished is the writing of the *Categories* of Aristotle, (son of) Nicomachus”. The text deals

Sergius' treatise, namely §§448–450, which contained the epilogue of the work and which probably occupied no more than one or one-and-a-half folios (if the divisions were included). However, the compiler of the codex, which has been transmitted to us (i.e. with the missing last folios of the *Commentary*), found it necessary to add the final part of another work that deals with the *postpraedicamenta* (i.e. the categories of opposition, priority, simultaneity, and some other topics) covered by §§405–447 of Sergius' work that were and still are extant in P.

The attached text turns out to be very close to the commentary on the *Categories* by Dionysius Bar Ṣalibi (d. 1171). The text preserved in P contains many parallels to Dionysius' work but is not identical to the version that has come down to us only in the ms. Cambridge, University Library, Gg 2. 14¹²⁴. Dionysius himself admitted that he integrated a large number of earlier texts in his compendium. It is thus possible that P has preserved for us one of those sources which Bar Ṣalibi utilized for his compendium at approximately the same time when ms. P was put together in its final form.

The folios of ms. P have been bound in the wrong order. Modern pagination was introduced on the recto side of every page, but presently it does not correspond to the actual order of the folios. Additionally, one page, which appears between fols. 49 and 50 and whose text has been destroyed nearly completely so that only the margins have survived, was excluded from the pagination. Moreover, the pages that follow this unnumbered folio have not been bound properly. This reordering of the pages must have taken place rather early, since at the bottom of fol. 55v we find a note written in Syriac by a careful reader who indicated that the rest of the text is missing¹²⁵ (when in reality the text continues on fol. 51r).

The correct order is the following:

fol. 1–49
 folio without number
 fol. 57
 fol. 56
 folos. 52–55
 fol. 51
 fol. 50
 folos. 58–109

with the categories of opposition, priority, and simultaneity, and thus elaborates the last part of Aristotle's treatise, the *postpraedicamenta*.

¹²⁴ This codex is dated to the 16th/17th century, cf. the description in Wright 1901: 2.1008–1023. The fragment preserved in ms. P is very similar to the text on fols. 137v–151v of the Cambridge ms. but not identical to it.

¹²⁵ Fol. 55v, a marginal note at the bottom: *ܩܾܾܾ ܾܲ ܾܾܲ ܾܾܲ*, “the rest is wanting or erroneous”.

As noted, ms. P, written by multiple hands in a rather negligent manner, also contains a large number of errors that distinguish it from all other textual witnesses. The most obvious examples (from which only a small selection is given below) are the following:

136.5 **ΔΙΚ** BCDL, Epit.: **ΔΙΚ** P
 172.3 **ΔΙΚ** BCDL: **ΔΙΚ** P
 182.23 **ΔΙΚ** BCDL, Epit.: **ΔΙΚ** P
 192.21 **ΔΙΚ** BCDL, Epit.: **ΔΙΚ** P
 210.21 **ΔΙΚ** BCDEL: **ΔΙΚ** αλα P
 216.13 **ΔΙΚ** BCDL: **ΔΙΚ** P
 222.2 **ΔΙΚ** BCDL, Epit.: **ΔΙΚ** P
 240.22 **ΔΙΚ** BDL: **ΔΙΚ** P
 244.6 **ΔΙΚ** BDL: **ΔΙΚ** P
 244.7 **ΔΙΚ** BDL: **ΔΙΚ** P

As it becomes clear from these examples (and one might make this list much longer), most of the errors can be explained by the carelessness of the scribes, who appear to have had little experience in copying texts and easily misinterpreted the readings of the original. While the *Vorlage* of P was deficient in some parts (see above), it is apparent that the scribes further contributed to this deficiency. It is also worthy of note that it is only in ms. P that we find the words **ΔΙΚ** and **ΔΙΚ** with two *lamads*; these appear in this form throughout the whole manuscript and are not found in any other textual witness of the *Commentary*.

Ms. P shares no defective readings with ms. L¹²⁶, but has a large number of errors in common with the Erbil mss. and with the epitome (see the concrete examples in 2.1.3 and 2.3, below). Thus P, BCD, and Epit. belong to the same line of transmission, distinct from that of ms. L and including several extant textual witnesses.

Ms. P contains graphic divisions after each one of Books I–VI. Since the final portion of the *Commentary* (§§448–450) is no longer extant in P, we do not know whether the divisions were also attached to Book VII (as in case of mss. BCD, see below) or not (as in case of ms. L, see 2.1.1, above). Similar to ms. L, ms. P does not contain any rubrics in the text of Sergius' *Commentary*, although there are some rubrics written in red ink in the fragment of the above-mentioned exegetical work which pertains to the commentary of Bar Salibi and which was included in the codex after fol. 107, thus replacing the missing end of Sergius' work.

¹²⁶ In one case, both P and L turn out to contain similar errors, which, however, do not fully match; see 334.23: **ΔΙΚ** P: **ΔΙΚ** L: **ΔΙΚ** BD.

2.1.3 The Erbil Group (Mss. BCD)

The three codices, which derive from the same old copy of Sergius' text, are now situated in Erbil in Northern Iraq. Before this, their location changed several times due to the social and political upheaval in the region¹²⁷. The production of these manuscripts was connected with the activity of Gabriel Danbo, who in 1808 initiated a reopening of the monastery of Rabban Hormizd situated in the mountain region near the village of Alqosh for his newly founded Chaldean Antonian Order of St. Hormizd¹²⁸. For the sake of security, the manuscripts were later transferred to the nearby convent of Our Lady of the Seeds (Notre Dame des Semences)¹²⁹. In the second half of the 20th century, the manuscripts were brought first to the monastery of St. George near Mosul and later on to the convent of St. Antony in Baghdad. At the beginning of the 21st century, due to the new period of instability in Northern Iraq, the collection was transported again first to the monastery Notre Dame des Semences and then to Erbil, where it remains preserved in the new cultural center of the Chaldean Antonian Order of St. Hormizd, the "Scriptorium Syriacum". Thus, at different periods of time, the three manuscripts described below were referred to as either the Alqosh or the Baghdad codices, while in the two modern descriptions of them they are designated as mss. of Erbil-Ankawa, O.A.O.C. ("Antonian Order of St. Ormizda of the Chaldeans")¹³⁰.

Ms. Erbil-Ankawa, O.A.O.C., Syr. 169 (B)¹³¹, previously bore the shelf-marks Alqosh, Notre Dame des Semences, ms. 51¹³², and Baghdad, Chaldean Monastery, ms. 169¹³³. This paper manuscript contains 260 folios¹³⁴ and was written in a single column (with 25–27 lines per page) in regular East Syriac script. The copyist, deacon Šem'on¹³⁵, indicates his name several times in this codex, first in the decoration on fol. 1v and second at the end of Sergius' *Commentary* on fol. 158r. On fol. 1v, Šem'on also notes the year "2133 of the Greeks", which points to 1821/1822 as the date of the production of the codex. This is the period of time that followed the restoration of the monastery of St. Hormizd, with the manuscript most likely produced for its library and for use in the education

¹²⁷ For an overview of the history of this collection and its various locations, see Kessel 2023: 151–152.

¹²⁸ For the history of the monastery of Rabban Hormizd the Persian, see Wilmhurst 2000: 258–270.

¹²⁹ Cf. Wilmhurst 2000: 270–274.

¹³⁰ The description of these mss. by Manhal Makhoul was published online on the platform *e-Ktobe*; see <http://syriac.msscatalog.org/> (accessed on 17.07.2023). An alternative description of six philosophical manuscripts (Syr. 169–174) of this collection was provided in Kessel 2023.

¹³¹ See: <http://syriac.msscatalog.org/71255> (accessed on 17.07.2023) and Kessel 2023: 152–160.

¹³² Vosté 1929: 22 (codex LI).

¹³³ Ḥaddad & Isḥaq 1988: 82.

¹³⁴ A foliation was made in 2022, but it is not present on the photos which I had at my disposal for my edition. The folios of the codex contain earlier numbers written by means of Syriac letters on both recto and verso side of the folios. The first no. (Syr. *Alaf*) appears on fol. 1v.

¹³⁵ He belonged to the Asmar scribal family from Telkepe. See Wilmhurst 2000: 226–227 and Kessel 2023: 153–154.

of the monks¹³⁶. More than a hundred years later, ms. B was used as a *Vorlage* for the production of another copy, i.e. ms. Birmingham, Mingana, Syriac 606, dated to 1933¹³⁷.

Ms. Syr. 170 of the same collection (C)¹³⁸, *olim* Alqosh, Notre Dame des Semences 49 (as noted on the current fol. 1r)¹³⁹ or 52¹⁴⁰, *olim* Baghdad, Chaldean Monastery 170¹⁴¹, has been preserved until now only in the fragmentary form. This paper codex is written in the East Syriac script in one column, with 20 lines per page, and presently contains 149 folios. Neither the name of the scribe nor the exact date of its production is known. It is possible that both were indicated in the colophon, which is now lost. However, since we have good reasons to state (see 2.1.3.2, below) that the scribe of C knew and during his work made use of ms. D, which is dated to 1840, we may assume that ms. C was copied either in the middle or in the second half of the 19th century¹⁴². Moreover, one folio which derives from another manuscript is included just before the text of Sergius' *Commentary*, which is here preserved in an incomplete form due to the loss of the final folios.

The third codex, Syr. 171, from the same collection (D)¹⁴³, *olim* Alqosh, Notre Dame des Semences 50 (as indicated on fol. 1r)¹⁴⁴ or 53¹⁴⁵, *olim* Baghdad, Chaldean Monastery 171¹⁴⁶, is a paper manuscript written in one column, with 28–29 lines per page. Presently, it contains 233 folios. Neither the name of the scribe nor the date of production of the manuscript are indicated. However, at the last folio, one finds a note that the volume came into the possession of the monastery of St. Hormizd in the year ፲፻፲, i.e., 1840. Provided that this codex was commissioned for the library of this convent, it is likely that this year should also be taken for its actual dating.

The three afore-mentioned codices are collections of philosophical works that to a large extent have the same contents, although each one of them also contains works that are not found in other ones. The treatises included in mss. BCD may be outlined as follows:

¹³⁶ For Gabriel Danbo's interest in education in general and in philosophy in particular, see Kessel 2023: 144–147.

¹³⁷ See below, 2.1.3.2.

¹³⁸ Cf. <http://syriac.msscatalog.org/71256> (accessed on 17.07.2023) and Kessel 2023: 160–165.

¹³⁹ Cf. Scher 1906: 498.

¹⁴⁰ Vosté 1929: 22 (codex LII).

¹⁴¹ Haddad & Ishaq 1988: 82–83.

¹⁴² Wilmhurst 2000: 268 mentions that in 1850 the monastery of Rabban Hormizd was raided by the Kurds, followed by a flood which destroyed a large number of mss. (ca. 1000). It is possible that the production of ms. C resulted from the restoration process of the lost part of the collection.

¹⁴³ Cf. <http://syriac.msscatalog.org/71257> (accessed on 17.07.2023) and Kessel 2023: 165–173.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Scher 1906: 498.

¹⁴⁵ Vosté 1929: 22–23 (codex LIII).

¹⁴⁶ Haddad & Ishaq 1988: 83.

		B	C	D
(1)	John bar Zo'bī, <i>Divisions of philosophy</i>			×
(2)	Proba, <i>Commentary on Porphyry's Isagoge</i>	×	×	×
(3)	Ps.-Ammonius, <i>Two Lives of Aristotle</i>			×
(4)	Aristotle, <i>Categories</i> (transl. by Jacob of Edessa)	×	×	×
(5)	Sergius of Reshaina, <i>Commentary on Aristotle's Categories</i>	×	×	×
(6)	Aristotle, <i>On Interpretation</i> (transl. by Proba)	×		×
(7)	Proba, <i>Commentary on Aristotle's On Interpretation</i>	×		×
(8)	Paul the Persian, <i>Commentary on Aristotle's On Interpretation</i>			×
(9)	Severus Sebokht, Letter to Yonan on difficult questions connected with Aristotle's <i>On Interpretation</i> and <i>Prior Analytics</i>			×

Since ms. C is presently incomplete both at the beginning and at the end, it is now impossible to reconstruct the original extent of its contents. However, it becomes apparent from the comparison above that all three manuscripts share the same core of texts that were used for the study of Aristotle's logic in Syriac schools:

- 1) Items (1)–(3) are treatises which may be classified as introductions to logic and Aristotle's philosophy. John bar Zo'bī's *Divisions* included in ms. D suggest in summary fashion the main philosophical terms and their definitions, together with the divisions, found in graphic form after each book of Sergius' *Introduction*, which might also be included in the list of introductory treatises.
- 2) Besides introductory materials, the texts are based on Porphyry's *Introduction* and Aristotle's treatises *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, and *Prior Analytics* (I.1–7), thus representing the core of the logical curriculum¹⁴⁷.
- 3) Apart from the text of the *Categories* in the version of Jacob of Edessa, we find no separate works of Porphyry and Aristotle but only commentaries on them, which were probably considered substitutes for the texts which they commented on.

The compiler of C added the two pseudepigraphical *Vitae* of Aristotle¹⁴⁸ before the text of the *Categories*, a practice with parallels in other philosophical compilations, e.g., in ms. Vat. Sir. 158, dated to the 9th/10th centuries¹⁴⁹, and in ms. Berlin, Petermann I. 9, which contains the epitome of the *Commentary*¹⁵⁰. It is also found in one of the manuscripts now preserved in the Chaldean Patriarchate of Baghdad (CPB 223, *olim* Mosul

¹⁴⁷ On the scope of the logical curriculum in Syriac schools, cf. Watt 2017.

¹⁴⁸ Published in Sachau 1899: 1.335–336 and Baumstark 1900: 2–3.

¹⁴⁹ See the description in Assemani 1759: 304–307. On ms. Vat. Sir. 158 as reflecting the philosophical curriculum of the Qenneshre monastery, see Tannous 2010.

¹⁵⁰ See 2.3, below.

35)¹⁵¹, and it is possible that the latter codex served as the source for the *Vitae* in ms. C. The compiler of ms. D, on the other hand, included at the beginning of the collection the treatise on the division of philosophy attributed to John bar Zo'bi¹⁵². It provides a short general introduction to philosophy, which the compiler of D found necessary to put in front of Proba's commentary on the *Isagoge*, even though this commentary also contains an introductory part dealing with the *prolegomena*.

All three manuscripts preserved now in Erbil-Ankawa exhibit a pedagogical background similar to that of ms. L described above. It is thus likely that they were produced to be used for introductory classes in logic and philosophy (since logic was considered a general introduction to philosophical studies). However, in their composition and concept, the three mss. differ slightly from one another. Their compilers apparently had the same pedagogical aim in mind but decided to include some treatises that we do not find in other witnesses. These differences make it clear that we cannot consider either of these codices as mechanical copies of another representative of the Erbil group in spite of the similarities between them.

All three Erbil mss. include graphic divisions after each book of Sergius' *Commentary*, including Book VII (after which no divisions appear in ms. L, cf. 2.1.1, above). Apart from the latter case, these divisions match those found in the earlier witnesses and thus probably reflect an old tradition. However, it remains unclear whether this tradition goes back to Sergius himself or to the later stage of the transmission of his work. It is remarkable that Sergius never refers to them in the text of his *Commentary*, but this may not serve as a decisive argument against his authorship of them. Both the older (L and P) and the younger (BCD) witnesses turn out to be quite consistent in their transmission, which makes it possible that they derive from Sergius himself.

The same, however, does not hold for the subtitles, which are found either in the text or in the margins of the Erbil codices and which apparently go back to a common source (see the next section). Apart from the Erbil group, we do not find these rubrics in any other witness (for the only case in ms. L, see 2.1.1, above), and it is likely that they were introduced into Sergius' text at a late stage of its transmission.

2.1.3.1 The Common Source

The differences in contents among the three mss. make it possible that their scribes made use of various sources, while compiling them. However, a comparison of the texts of Sergius' *Commentary* as found respectively in mss. B, C and D allows us to assume that the text of Sergius' work in all three of them was copied from one and the same prototype independently from one another. Their common source:

¹⁵¹ Cf. Kessel & Bamballi 2018.

¹⁵² Cf. Daiber 1985. For further mss. containing it, see Kessel 2023: 167 n. 22.

- (1) contained several extensive lacunae in Book VII that the scribes of mss. B and D (C is not extant in this part) were unable to fill in from other mss.;
- (2) included a number of subtitles which subdivided the seven books of Sergius' *Commentary* into smaller units;
- (3) included scholia and corrections to the main text;
- (4) was characterized by a number of specific errors that migrated into its later copies.

All three Erbil mss. share the above-listed characteristics of the common prototype:

(1) B and D contain several lacunae in Book VII of Sergius' *Commentary* (the text in ms. C breaks earlier), which coincide completely in both mss. The first lacuna appears in B on fol. 154r and in D on fol. 125v. In both mss., the extant text breaks with the same word and begins the new passage with the same word as well. While the scribe of B has left about two-thirds of the page blank, the scribe of D has left only half of the page blank (i.e. the remaining room on it). Neither space, however, corresponds to the actual size of the missing text, which might have occupied no less than two full folios in B and about a folio and a half in D. It is thus likely that the space left in both mss. was not intended to be filled in on the basis of a better copy of the text, but rather to indicate that a large portion of the text was missing in the original.

The next lacuna appears in B on the immediately following fol. 154v, occupying several lines of this page and about two-thirds of the following fol. 155r. In D, it starts at the end of fol. 126r and occupies more than a half of the following fol. 126v. As in the previous case, the extant text breaks and then starts again with the same words in both codices. This time, the size of the lacuna corresponds more or less to the actual size of the text which was damaged or missing in the common source of B and D. It is more likely that part of the page was completely missing in the *Vorlage* of B and D — as the next extant portion of the text has approximately the same size as the previous one — and that it was contained on the verso side of the damaged folio of the original. After it, a third lacuna appears in B on fol. 155r and goes as far as the first half of the following fol. 155v. In D, the lacuna occupies the second half of fol. 127r. The lacunae in both mss. again correspond approximately to the size of the actual gap in the text.

The next blank space is present in ms. B in the last part of fol. 155v and in the first half of fol. 156r. In D, it occupies the second half of fol. 127r. The last lacuna in the text of Sergius' *Commentary* is found in ms. B on fol. 156v and in the first lines of fol. 157r. In D, it extends from the last lines of fol. 127v until the middle of fol. 128r. In both cases, the space that was left blank in mss. B and D corresponds more or less to the actual extent of the missing text. More lacunae are found in the other parts of the Erbil mss. and they make apparent that they were produced on the basis of the same copy which was damaged in some of its parts. The scribes who produced later copies of this codex evidently had no other exemplar of Sergius' text at their disposal that would have

allowed them to fill the gaps present in their source. It is worth keeping this conclusion in mind when we come to point (3) below.

(2) Although in one case we find one subtitle in L (see above), neither L nor P contain any further titles save for the headings of each of the seven books and the divisions attached to them. All three Erbil codices, on the contrary, include a large number of additional rubrics, which are very similar to what we find in various Syriac mss. containing works on Aristotle's logic, i.e., either translations of the *Organon* and Porphyry's *Isagoge* or commentaries and scholia on both works. It seems that this tradition originally goes back to the rubrics included in Porphyry's *Isagoge* at a very early period and found in nearly all Syriac works pertaining to it¹⁵³. The Erbil mss., which have Proba's commentary on the *Isagoge* in common as their first component text, also mark each section of Proba's work with a rubric written in red ink, i.e., "On genus"¹⁵⁴, "On species", "On differentia", etc., all of which either stand as first words in the line (as in ms. C) or as separate titles between the lines (as in mss. B and D). The same or similar rubrics appear further in those parts of the codices that contain the text of the *Categories*. Thus, at the beginning of chapter 5, the codices indicate the subject under discussion, "On substance", at the beginning of chapter 6 we find the title "On quantity", and so on through the rest of the categories¹⁵⁵. It was thus logical for the compilers of the Erbil mss. to put the same rubrics in the text of Sergius' *Commentary* that allow the reader, first, to navigate it, and, second, to understand the correspondence between passages in the *Commentary* and those in Aristotle's and Porphyry's treatises.

The rubrics in the text of Sergius' *Commentary* are identical in all three mss., which makes it probable that they derive from the common *Vorlage*. This assumption is corroborated by the fact that one of the subtitles is misplaced in all three codices. The rubric, "On the goal of the treatise *Categories*", is found at the beginning of §66, when it would make more sense to put it in front of §65, i.e. just before the words, "Concerning the goal of this treatise..." It is thus probable that this rubric was introduced in the wrong place already in the *Vorlage* of the Erbil mss. and that the mistake was carried over into its later copies.

(3) The three Erbil codices contain a number of corrections to the text of Sergius' *Commentary* that, while taking somewhat different forms in each of these manuscripts, are clearly related to one another. It is possible that the individual scribes of

¹⁵³ On Greek mss. of Porphyry's *Isagoge* containing rubrics, cf. Barnes 2003: xvii–xviii.

¹⁵⁴ Ms. C lacks it due to the loss of the first folios of the codex.

¹⁵⁵ These subtitles are found already in the early anonymous Syriac translation of the *Categories*, in all extant witnesses to Jacob of Edessa's version (which is included in the Erbil mss.), and in the only ms. containing the translation of it by George of the Arabs.

mss. B, C, or D were responsible for some of these corrections in particular, but the main bulk of them most likely goes back to the common *Vorlage* of the three codices:

66.6 **መ>መ>መ>** CDP: **መ>መ>መ>** B, add. D in marg. — The variant is added by the scribe of D in the margin (thus probably reflecting the correction in its source) and introduced into the main text of B (ms. C does not contain it).

68.9 **አ>አ>አ>** CDP: **አ>አ>አ>** B, add. D in marg. — Similar to the previous example, D indicated the alternative reading which was most likely suggested in the *Vorlage* in the margin, while the copyist of B took it for the correct reading of the text (again, C does not contain it).

128.17 **አ> ደ>አ>** LP: **አ> ደ>አ>** BCD — The additional letters *nun* and *dalat* are clearly marked as such in mss. BCD by means of red ink (in B only *dalat* is written in red, in C the letter *nun* stands above the line).

130.8 **የ>የ>የ>** BCDL: **የ>የ>የ>** P: **የ>የ>** add. BD in marg. — The variant of P and the additional variant of B and D both look like glosses which aimed to elucidate the difficult passage in Sergius' text.

134.18 **የ>የ>የ>** LP: **የ>የ>የ>** BCD — The possessive suffix (the latter *he*) is written in red ink *supra lineam* in mss. CD which have the same main text as LP, while ms. B contains the variant with the suffix in the main text. It is thus probable that the correction was present in the common *Vorlage*, and while the scribe of B introduced it into the main text, the scribes of C and D preferred to copy the original variant together with the correction proposed in their *Vorlage*.

136.12 **የ>የ>** BCDL: **የ>የ>** P — As the reading in P indicates, this word has changed during the transmission; this fact is corroborated by BCD. In all three latter mss., the two letters of the word (*yud* and *taw*) are marked with red ink, thus indicating that this word originally had the form **የ>የ>** but was corrected to **የ>የ>**. Additionally, one letter (*waw*) of the next word, **የ>የ>**, is also written in red in all three mss., thus making apparent that it was transmitted as **የ>የ>** but later corrected. All these corrections were most likely made *supra lineam* in the *Vorlage* of BCD and introduced into the main text by the copyists of the latter.

144.10 **አ>** BEP: **አ>** CD — Mss. C and D add the letter *dalat* to the particle **አ>**, probably indicating that it should be changed into **አ>**. The additional letter is written in red in both codices and was most likely copied from the interlinear correction in the common prototype.

166.12 **የ>የ>** CLP: **የ>የ>** BD — The variant of BD is written in such a way that the additional *yud* is marked with red ink and remains unattached to the following letter, thus making it probable that this was a correction written above the line in the scribes' source, which they then introduced into the main text. This correction, however, is not present in ms. C. Similar corrections of the same word (**የ>የ>** vs. **የ>የ>**) are found two more times in the following lines.

190.12 **የ>የ>የ>** BCDLP: **የ>የ>የ>** corr. BC — The correction (the letter *he*) is written above the line in C and just after the letter in the line in B (it is not present in D). In both cases it is marked red.

A limited number of corrections in BCD, which stand in contrast to the previous cases in being written not between the lines or in the main text but mostly in the margins, contain variants found in other textual witnesses. Thus, they reflect the work of a scholiast or a commentator on Sergius' text who had access to a number of textual witnesses and noted alternative readings in the form of scholia to the text.

64.11 **የ>የ>** P, D in marg.: **የ>የ>የ>** BCD — It is likely that mss. BCD transmit an erroneous form that appeared as a corruption of the variant preserved in P. Only ms. D indicates the correct reading in the margin, one that most likely derives from a gloss in the common *Vorlage* of BCD.

70.13 **ܒ** P, D in marg.: **ܒ** BCD — While all three codices contain a clearly erroneous variant, ms. D adds the correct reading (found in P) in the margins. Given that this reading is absent from B and C, it is possible that this was a correction made by the scribe of D only, but it is likely that it goes back to a scholion in the common *Vorlage* of BCD.

168.6 **ܗ** LP, D in marg.: **ܗ** BCD — All three Erbil mss. contain a variant that differs from what we find in L and P. Both variants seem possible at this place in the text, but it is a characteristic of D only that it suggests the variant of LP in the form of a marginal gloss.

172.5 **ܗ** LP, D in marg.: **ܗ** BCD — Ms. D contains the correct reading found in LP and indicated in the margin of D.

262.19 **ܗ** BDP: **ܗ** Epit., add. BDP in marg. — In this case, we find the variant of Epit. in the form of a gloss both in BD and in P. This makes it probable that some of the glosses found in mss. BCD derive from an even older copy than their common prototype.

358.14 **ܗ** LP, add. D in marg.: **ܗ** BD, add. P in marg. — The correction or the alternative reading found in the margins of P appears as the main reading in mss. BD, while D indicates the main reading of LP in the margin.

360.2 **ܗ** LP, add. D in marg.: **ܗ** BD: **ܗ** add. DP in marg. — As in the previous case, both P and D contain same glosses in the margins, while D additionally suggests the variant found in the main text of L and P.

378.18 **ܗ** LP, Epit., BD in marg.: **ܗ** BD — Both B and D suggest in the margins the correct reading that we find in all other witnesses.

Point (1) above makes apparent that the scribes of mss. B and D (and probably that of C) did not have access to any other copy of Sergius' *Commentary* save for the old and lacunose codex that served as their common source. Given that some of the corrections in their text are based on other manuscripts containing Sergius' work, these corrections were most probably present in their common source and copied together with the main text. It is noteworthy that the scribes of each codex (B, C, and D) worked independently from each other in this respect, so that the alternative readings found in the *Vorlage* are sometimes noted in one ms. only, and other times appear in multiple mss. However, these scholia in all probability go back to the glosses in the common prototype, which, in turn, carried them over from an even older copy (cf. the case of 262.19 above). As will be shown below, some of these scholia found their way not only into BCD but also into P. Hence, they most likely derive from a codex that predates these witnesses (see the examples in 2.1.3.3, below).

(4) Finally, the three Erbil mss. share the following errors that reflect their common *Vorlage*:

70.8 **ܗ** P: **ܗ** BCD

172.15 **ܗ** LP: **ܗ** BCD

174.20 **ܗ** L: **ܗ** BCD

180.9 **ܗ** LP, Epit.: **ܗ** BCD

194.5 **ܗ** LP, Epit.: **ܗ** CD: **ܗ** B

228.23 **ܗ** LP: **ܗ** BD

232.6 **ܗ** LP, Epit.: **ܗ** BD

246.13 **ܗ** LP: **ܗ** BD

250.14 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** LP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** BD
 322.17 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** LP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** BD
 328.16 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** LP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** BD
 346.15 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** L: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ**, P: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ**, BD
 372.4 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** LP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** BD, Epit.
 382.10 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** LP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** BD
 384.4 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** LP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** BD

These examples are the most evident cases of textual corruption. As the critical apparatus of the edition makes clear, the three Erbil codices also share a large number of textual variants that cannot be classified as clear errors but that still demonstrate the interrelation between them. All told, the four points outlined above give good reasons to conclude that each of the copies of Sergius' *Commentary* contained in the three Erbil mss. were copied from the same prototype. Apart from the *Commentary*, as the manuscripts differ from one another in terms of the precise extent of their component works, it is possible that additional exemplars were used for other parts of them.

2.1.3.2 Mss. B, C, and D as Independent Copies

In addition to the common errors listed in (4) above, all of which derive from the common *Vorlage*, each of the Erbil codices contains its own errors that show them to be separate copies of the old prototype which were made independently from one another. Ms. B, which is chronologically the earliest copy in the group, contains multiple unique errors not found in two other codices:

72.10 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 176.10 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDLP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 178.5 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDLP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 178.13 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDLP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 182.4 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDLP, Epit.: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 188.23 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDLP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ**, Epit.: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 202.21 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** CDLP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 262.19 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** DP, Epit.: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 262.20 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** DP, Epit.: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 270.18 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** DP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ**, **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 272.17 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** DP, Epit.: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 272.18 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** DP, Epit.: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B
 280.10 **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** DLP: **سِرْجِيُّوسْ** B

All unique errors of B, of which only a small sample has been given above, are present in the copy that was produced on the basis of B nearly one hundred years later than the B¹⁵⁶. Manuscript Mingana Syr. 606 (M), which is now preserved in the Cadbury

156 Cf. Kessel 2023: 154.

Research Library in Birmingham¹⁵⁷, was commissioned by Alfonse Mingana and produced in Alqosh in 1933 by Mattai bar Pawlos¹⁵⁸. Mattai copied the original manuscript with much diligence, reproducing in his copy all the characteristics of the original, including all errors found in B. Thus, we find in B some additions to the main text written *supra lineam* that are found within the text of M (cf. the inclusion of the word **ܣܹܹ** in 112.10); the marginal glosses of B are faithfully copied in the margins of M (cf. the addition of two words in 84.8 in both codices); and even the words written twice in B (cf. the case of dittography in 204.16) are mechanically copied in M. Additionally, ms. M contains errors not found either in B or in any other ms. from the Erbil group, making it apparent that the scribe had no other copy in front of him except B. Here are two examples of errors unique to M (neither of which are indicated in the critical apparatus of the present edition):

64.9 **ܩܹܹ** BCDP: **ܩܹܹ** M
106.3 **ܹܹ** BCDP: **ܹܹ** M

The next codex from the Erbil group, ms. D, that was produced chronologically after B, contains the following unique errors:

100.20 **ܹܹ** BP: **ܹܹ** D
120.4 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
122.13 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
122.22 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
124.15 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
148.21 **ܹܹ** BCELP: **ܹܹ** D
176.7 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
186.17 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
188.5 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
192.1 ,**ܹܹ** BCL: **ܹܹ** D
192.13 **ܹܹ** BCLP: **ܹܹ** D
196.6 **ܹܹ** BCL, Epit.: **ܹܹ** D
250.12 **ܹܹ** B: **ܹܹ** P: **ܹܹ** D
264.6 **ܹܹ** BP, Epit.: **ܹܹ** D

The errors found in D in those parts of the *Commentary* that have not been preserved in C do not allow us to confirm whether these errors are characteristic of D only or were also shared by C. However, the variants listed above give good reasons to conclude that D was copied from the common *Vorlage* of the Erbil group independently and was not based on B.

There are few erroneous variants that D shares with B only and not with C. The number of such cases, found in the part of the *Commentary* represented in all three

¹⁵⁷ For the description of this codex, see Mingana 1939: 1.1163–1166.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. the extensive colophon on fol. 232v of the codex, quoted in Mingana 1939: 1.1165–1166.

Erbil mss., is rather limited. However, they allow us to assume that the copyist of D (the codex produced at a later date than B), in addition to the old *Vorlage*, also had B at his disposal. The following errors are shared by B and D:

68.14 **መ** CP: **መ** BD
 70.14 **መ** CP: **መ** BD
 74.7 **ና** CP: **ና** BD
 78.9 **ና** C: **ና** BD: **ና** P
 82.7 **ና** CP: **ና** BD
 206.2 **መ** CLP: **መ** BD
 208.15 **ና** CLP: **ና** BD

Ms. C, which was in all likelihood produced as the latest copy of the same old prototype, contains the following unique errors:

88.3 **ና** BDP: **ና** C
 90.2 **ና** BDP: **ና** C
 98.15 **ና** BDP: **ና** C
 116.4 **መ** LP: **መ** BD: **መ** C
 126.7 **ና** BDLP: **ና** C
 154.20 **ና** BDLP: **ና** C
 168.19 **ና** BDLP: **ና** C
 188.11 **ና** BDLP: **ና** C
 188.13 **ና** BDLP: **ና** C
 206.5 **ና** BDLP: **ና** C

C shares some errors with B and/or with D. Thus, similar to the case of D and B (see above), it is likely that the copyist of C not only had the old copy in front of him, but also consulted with those copies that had been produced previously whenever he was uncertain how to understand the text of the old *Vorlage*.

128.2 **ና** BLP, Epit.: **ና** C: **ና** D — C shares the error of D, although the two variants differ slightly from one another.
 144.10 **ና** BEP: **ና** CD — Both mss. C and D make the addition of *dalat* to the particle **ና** (cf. point (3), above).
 154.13 **ና** BLP: **ና** C, D in marg.: **ና** D — B has the correct reading, while the reading of D is a clear corruption that, however, is corrected in the margin. The variant of ms. C has the correct form **ና**, but adds the negative particle to it, possibly on the basis of D.
 154.19 **ና** + **ና** CD — The addition of this particle is characteristic of the mss. C and D only, not of B or any other witness.
 158.7 **መ** DP: **መ** BCL — Among the Erbil mss., only D has the correct reading, whereas both B and C share the error of L. See also the divisions of Book II on 164.8, where we find DL vs. BCP.
 180.16 **ና** BLP, Epit.: **ና** CD — The erroneous variant is found in C and D only.

There are, however, many more examples where C does not contain the erroneous readings of D and/or B and serves as an independent witness to the common *Vorlage*:

68.14 **መ** CP: **መ** BD — Both B and D contain an error, not present in C, which has the correct reading also preserved in P.

92.3 **የ** BCP: **የ** D — C, like B, does not contain the error of D.

116.6 **በ** CLP: **በ** BD — The error of B and D is not present in C, which shares the correct readings with older witnesses.

120.4 **በ** BCLP: **በ** D — The error is found only in D, but not in B and C.

122.22 **በ** BCLP: **በ** D — Again, neither B nor C share the error of D.

142.22 **መ** BCP, D in marg.: **መ** D: **መ** add. BD in marg. — While B and C maintain the correct reading, D suggests here the erroneous variant in the main text that is corrected in the margin by means of two other variants, one of which is erroneous too.

186.17 **በ** BCLP: **በ** D — The error is found in D only, while C together with B contains the correct variant.

190.12 **የ** BCDLP: **የ** corr. BC — This “correction” (which in reality is a *Verschlimmbesserung*) is not present in D and thus could derive only from the common prototype directly.

190.19 **መ**] om. BD — One word is omitted by both B and D but is present in C.

206.18 **የ** CLP: **የ** D: **የ** B — Here, all three Erbil MSS. differ from one another, and C turns out to be the only witness among them containing the correct variant.

210.16 **በ** + **በ** D — D's addition is not found in C.

Such cases are much more numerous than presented here. On the basis of those presented, though, we can already discount the possibility that D or B was the only source of C, as the latter in a number of cases suggests correct readings where B and D contain errors. It is apparent that the scribe of C had access to the same copy of Sergius' *Commentary* as the scribes of B and D did, but it is possible that on some occasions he consulted other copies. It is also worthy of mention that in C we do not find any of the marginal glosses present in B and/or D that derive from a copy older than their common prototype.

Summing up the data presented in sections 2.1.3.1 and 2.1.3.2, one might draw the following conclusions that contribute to establishing the *stemma codicum*:

- 1) The three Erbil mss. are copies of the same *Vorlage*. The lacunae in BD, the scholia with variant readings, and a number of errors found in BCD derive from the common source.
- 2) The common prototype contained some variant readings deriving from other witnesses. No other sources save for the old *Vorlage* were accessible to the scribes of BCD for the section containing Sergius' *Commentary*. However, since the number of works included in the three mss. is not identical, it is possible that the scribes of B, C, and D made use of further codices while copying the other component texts.
- 3) The three copies were produced independently from one another on the basis of the same source. However, the scribes of later copies made use of the earlier ones (i.e. D of B, and C of B and/or D).
- 4) Ms. M is a direct copy of B and may thus be excluded from the *stemma*.

The question of the relation of the common source of BCD to other textual witnesses of Sergius' *Commentary* will be discussed in the next section.

2.1.3.3 Relation of the Prototype of BCD to Other Witnesses

Mss. BCD and L share nearly no variant readings that might be considered clear errors. In some cases, we find in mss. BCD variants transmitted by L, but these cases may be explained by the assumption (based on the arguments presented in 2.1.3.1, above) that the common prototype of BCD contained a number of marginal glosses. These glosses, which remained as additional elements also in B and D (the scribe of C decided not to copy them), probably derived from some learned commentator who had access to other witnesses of Sergius' *Commentary*. Overall, it can be concluded that BCD on the one hand and L on the other belong to two different lines of transmission of the text of Sergius' *Commentary*, which remained separate in spite of some cases of cross-contamination.

Such cases are mainly found in B, whose scribe, Šem'on, preferred the readings of L (i.e. of some witness pertaining to the line of L). However, the interlinear corrections in D suggest that at least some cases where B and L share a common variant may be explained by variant readings present in the margins of the prototype of BCD.

172.21 **ܒ** BCDP: **ܒ** L, add. D supra lin.

192.17 **ܒ** CDP: **ܒ** BL

202.23 **ܒ** BL, add. D supra lin.: **ܒ** C: **ܒ** P

206.14 **ܒ** CDP: **ܒ** BL

226.9 **ܒ** BL: **ܒ** DP — D shares the error of P that was probably characteristic of the common prototype of BCD, which in turn most likely contained the reading of L in the form of a gloss, it being the latter that was carried over into B.

228.5 **ܒ** BL, D in marg.: om. P — It is probable that not only P but also the *Vorlage* of BCD omitted this word, which, however, was restored in the margin in the form of a gloss, that was in turn copied as a gloss in D and included in the main text of B.

308.1 **ܒ** BL: **ܒ** DP

378.22 **ܒ** DP, Epit.: **ܒ** BL

The last case is the only example of a common error shared by one of the Erbil mss. and L. However, it is possible that this error entered the text of B in the same way as the rest of common variants between L and BCD, i.e., by introducing into B one of the glosses that were present in the common prototype of BCD. Based on this evidence, we may assume that L and BCD belong to two separate lines of transmission of Sergius' text.

There is much greater affinity between the Erbil mss. and ms. P. They share a great number of errors that bring them close in the scheme of transmission of the Syriac text of Sergius' *Commentary*. The following cases are examples of the errors shared by BCD and P:

100.15 **ܒ** L: **ܒ** BCDP

130.3 الـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ بـCـD~P

132.15 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ بـCـD~P

152.16 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ بـCـD~P

166.6 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ بـCـD~P

182.15 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ مـلـكـهـاتـ L, Epit.: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ مـلـكـهـاتـ BCDP

230.15 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ مـلـكـهـاتـ L, Epit.: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ مـلـكـهـاتـ BDP

280.8 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ مـلـكـهـاتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ BDP

298.11 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ BDP

304.14 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ BDP

330.9 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ مـلـ BDP

344.6 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ BDP

362.7 رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ L: رـوـمـاـنـاـتـ BDP

Besides these common errors, the prototype of BCD is connected to P through a number of marginal glosses found in the Erbil mss. One of these glosses contains an alternative textual variant that turns out to be the same as the readings of P:

148.2 *meas* BCDL: *meas* P, add. B supra lin., add. D in marg. — The reading of P is a clear corruption of the correct variant found in all other witnesses. It was most likely noted in the form of a gloss in the *Vorlage* of B and D.

In some cases, we find either the readings of BCD or marginal glosses preserved in the Erbil mss. also in the margins of P:

272.13 **بَدْرٌ** + **بَدْرٌ** BDP in marg. — All three mss. contain the same gloss, which suggests either an alternative reading (no other witness supports it) or a correction to the text.

328.16 ~~1902~~ LP: ~~1902~~ BD, add. P in marg.

372.6 ദുരന്തം] + ദുരന്തം BDP in marg.

378.18 **רְבָעָתָה** LP, Epit., add. BD in marg.: **רְבָעָתָה** BD, add. P in marg. — Apparently, both P and the common prototype of BCD contained in their margins alternative readings found in the main text of P or BD.

All such cases corroborate the conclusion that the source for alternative readings used by both P and the prototype of BCD were not the corresponding mss. (i.e. the *Vorlage* of BCD was not contaminated by P), but the scholia in their common prototype.

Two cases are of particular interest in this regard. In 390.6, we find in ms. D a marginal gloss that is also included into the main text of P and that clearly represents a commentary on Sergius' text. The gloss is attached to Sergius' remark that "contraries belong to the same genus" and contains a quotation from the *Cat.* 14a19–20, where Aristotle states that contraries must "either be in the same genus or in contrary genera or be genera themselves". The quotation derives from the 7th century Syriac version of the *Categories* made by the famous West Syriac scholar Jacob of Edessa (d. in 708)¹⁵⁹

159 Ed. in Georr 1948. Cf. the online edition in <https://hunaynnet.oeaw.ac.at/categoriae.html> (accessed on 11.10.23).

Hence, this scholion most likely belonged to a West Syriac commentator on Sergius' treatise and was preserved in the margins of the manuscript that served as a source for both the prototype of BCD and for P. While the former upheld the paratextual character of this scholion, the scribe of P included it in the main text.

Another example of this kind is found in 400.19, where mss. B and D contain marginal glosses. The glosses paraphrase the last part of the paragraph, which refers to the change in the vision that results from what is visible. Similar to the previous case, the variant is found in the main text in P but put in the margins in mss. B and D. Hence, it is likely that it entered the prototype of BCD from another copy of Sergius' work related to P and containing a marginal note.

All these examples make apparent that the similarities between the source of BCD and P are twofold. On the one hand, they share a number of common errors that make them part of the same line of transmission of the text of Sergius' *Commentary*. On the other hand, they contain a number of additional elements that most likely go back to a common prototype.

Summing up the observations above, one may state the following:

- 1) The prototype of BCD forms a separate line of transmission in comparison to L.
- 2) Cases of similar readings between L and BCD may be explained by scholia introduced into the prototype of BCD (or even earlier; see point 4).
- 3) The *Vorlage* of BCD belongs to the same line of transmission as P, with which it shares a large number of errors.
- 4) The common prototype of BCD and P contained multiple glosses and scholia, including short commentaries on Sergius' text, corrections, and alternative readings. These elements were partly introduced into the main text of later copies, but mostly maintained their paratextual character.

2.2 Collection of Excerpts in Ms. London, British Library, Add. 12155 (E)

The codex now preserved in the British Library of London as Additional 12155¹⁶⁰ is dated to the 8th century and thus appears to be the second oldest witness after ms. L, which is now located in the same collection. However, in contrast to the latter, ms. E does not contain the full text of Sergius' *Commentary*, but only a number of excerpts, which are reproduced mostly in abridged and revised form.

This manner in which the text of the *Commentary* has been reproduced fits with the overall state of the materials included in this large collection of heterogeneous writings. The codex bears the title, "A volume of testimonies from the holy fathers

¹⁶⁰ Cf. the description in Wright 1871: 921–955.

against various heresies”¹⁶¹, which discloses the polemical and probably pedagogical purpose of its composition. The BL ms. contains a large number of fragments taken from the works of the Church authorities (among whom Cyril and Gregory of Nazianzus have the most prominent position). Several non-Christian authors (e.g., Alexander of Aphrodisias) appear in this codex too, probably serving as additional and exotic materials which could also be used for polemic¹⁶². On fols. 178v–180v, we find a large collection of fragments divided into two parts. The first part is ascribed to “the archi-*atros Sergius*” (i.e. to Sergius of Reshaina); the second part contains the name of Aristotle in the title.

This collection of fragments, the greater part of which derives from Sergius' *Commentary*, also includes materials from other logical texts and works of *prolegomena*-literature. The two sub-titles of the collection mentioned above both appear on f. 178v, the first one in the right column, the second one in the left column. In what follows, I will briefly describe each fragment included in the compendium, indicating the number of the folio, recto or verso (r/v), the column (a/b), and the lines containing the text:

I. The first part has the sub-title (178va.6–8), “And further, from Sergius, the chief physician, from Book Six”¹⁶³. The first fragment included in it indeed derives from Book VI of Sergius’ *Commentary*.

I.1 (178va.8–35) Fragment of Book VI, §§374–375. The quoted text is close to the version which we find in other witnesses, although ms. E has some specific readings with no parallels in other mss. Some of the variants found in E bring it close to ms. L, e.g., the transliteration of the Greek κύκνος as **كَعْنَوْسٌ** and not as **كَعْنَوْنٌ** which we find in all other witnesses. In addition, both mss. L and E contain a similar (although slightly different) error in transliterating the Greek Ιλλυριοί, the Illyrians, as **كَلْيَرِكَ** and **كَلْيَرِكَ** respectively.

I.3 (178va.40–b32) The list of six introductory questions (Syr. مقدمة = Gr. τὰ κεφάλαια) which should be discussed before the study of every book. Although it is stated twice at the beginning of this fragment that these questions are seven in number, only six are further discussed: (i) the goal of particular book, (ii) its usefulness, (iii) its exact order (Syr. ترتیل = Gr. τάξις), (iv) the reason for the title, (v) the division

¹⁶² On the non-Christian materials in the codex, see Arzhanov 2019: 187–188.

into chapters, (vi) from whom it derives¹⁶⁴. These points are further explained in the rest of this fragment. Point (vi), which inquires whether the text was really written by the author to whom it is attributed is elucidated by the fact that there are many unscrupulous people who lead the simple persons astray by invoking the authority of great names. The need for point (iii) is explained with reference to a saying of Plato, namely that one should not extend the step of his foot farther than necessary¹⁶⁵. A further argument is that one should investigate these questions so as not to be led astray by false teachings. These remarks point to theological debates as the context for the interest in Aristotle's logic displayed by the compilers of the codex.

II. The second part of this collection has the sub-title (178vb.32–34), “Further selected fragments from Aristotle's *Categories*”¹⁶⁶. It contains a number of excerpts from Sergius' *Commentary*, most of which appear in periphrastic form.

- II.1 (178vb.34–39) A short quotation from §10 on two powers of the soul.
- II.2 (178vb.39–41) One sentence from §9 on God's possessing two principle powers.
- II.3 (178vb.42–50) A summary of the argument that logic is not a part of philosophy but rather its instrument, combined with a quotation from §44 to the effect that parts together make up the whole, whereas this is not the case with instruments.
- II.4 (178vb.50–54) Periphrastic quotation from §45 to the effect that a hand is both a part (of the body) and an instrument (of the soul).
- II.5 (178vb.54–179ra.2) Periphrastic quotation of one sentence from §51 on the completion of theory and practice.
- II.6 (179ra.2–6) Adapted quotation of the opening sentence of §56, stating that the end of theory is the beginning of practice and vice-versa.
- II.7 (179ra.6–13) Adapted quotation of §67, to the effect that the same things are called differently by different nations.
- II.8 (179ra.13–17) A summary of the argument in §§72–78 (without mentioning its Platonic source) that things exist in three ways: naturally, with the Creator, and in the memory of those who know them.
- II.9 (179ra.17–23) Adapted quotation of the last part of §125, listing the four combinations resulting from the fourfold division in *Cat.* 2.
- II.10 (179ra.23–25) Definition of accident based on §137.

164 Cf. the list of six κεφάλαια which one shall investigate with regard to every Aristotelian treatise in Ammonius, *In Cat.* 7.15–8.10, Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 1.10–13, and Elias, *In Cat.* 127.3–129.3 (cf. also Philoponus, *In Cat.* 7–13 and Olympiodorus, *In Cat.* 9–20). All these authors list six points which differ somewhat in order, but in general maintain the same scheme. Some of these points are discussed by Sergius in the introductory part (Prologue and Books I–II) of the *Commentary*.

165 Syr. ﻦـ ﻪـ ﻢـ ﻢـ ﻢـ ﻢـ ﻢـ Cf. a similar reference to Plato' *Phaedrus* 237b in Elias, *In Cat.* 127.7–9.

166 Syr. ﻦـ ﻪـ ﻢـ ﻢـ ﻢـ ﻢـ

II.11 (179ra.25–179rb.10) A periphrastic quotation of selected passages taken from §§138–149, which first lists eleven modes of saying that something is in something else and then further explains these modes.

II.12 (179rb.10–27) Periphrastic and selective quotation of §154 characterizing the correct way of making a definition.

II.13 (179rb.27–36) This fragment does not match with the transmitted text of Sergius' *Commentary* but appears as a summary of or rather as a scholion on §§157–163, dealing with various kinds of accidents.

II.14 (179rb.36–43) Periphrastic quotation of §164.

II.15 (179rb.43–54) Adapted quotation of several sentences selected from §§173–174 dealing with a division of substances into the simple and the composite.

II.16 (179rb.54–179va.6) A periphrastic account of §177, to the effect that substance is prior to the other nine categories which require it in order to subsist.

II.17 (179va.6–21) Adapted quotation of selected sentences from §§178–179 concerning the division of substance into primary and secondary.

II.18 (179va.21–47) Adapted quotation of §§180–181 and the first sentence of §182, describing the three kinds of division (the rest of §182 is quoted later, see II.24).

II.19 (179va.48–179vb.20) A short summary of §204–207, with an exposition of the types of property.

II.20 (179vb.20–28) A short summary of §96 on the difference between substance and accident.

II.21 (179vb.28–49) A summary (with extensive quotations) of §§84–86, describing the four kinds of speech.

II.22 (179vb.49–180rb.22) Adapted quotation of §§97–108, with an overview of the ten categories.

II.23 (180rb.23–52) Adapted quotation of §114–115 on various types of definition.

II.24 (180rb.52–180va.9) Fragment addressing the precise nature of substance' division into primary and secondary. It starts with an adapted quotation from the second half of §182 (starting shortly after the quotation in II.18), proceeds with a summary of §183 and a slightly modified quotation from §184, and concludes with the last sentence of §185.

As becomes clear from this overview, most of the excerpts appear not as faithful quotations of Sergius' *Commentary* but rather as free periphrases or even as short summaries of the contents. This form probably owes to the purpose of the florilegium as a whole, which was prepared as an aid in polemic (cf. the title of the whole codex).

Thus, it seems unnecessary in most cases to indicate all the variants of ms. E in the critical apparatus of the edition, as these variants turn out to be the result of the work of the compilers of ms. E rather than actual variants in the transmission of Sergius' text. Only in few cases are the variants of E indicated in the critical apparatus, the first of which is the case of I.1, which appears as an actual quotation rather than periphrasis. It is in this case only that some conclusions may be drawn as to the place of the ms.

E in the stemma. Additionally, in the cases of II.11, II.18, II.22, II.23, and II.24, which contain at least in some parts faithful quotations from the transmitted text of the *Commentary*, some variants have been included in the critical apparatus.

2.3 Epitome in Ms. Berlin, Petermann I. 9 (Epit.)

The collection of excerpts from Sergius' *Commentary* in ms. E discussed in the previous section gives an example of an adaptation of this work that combines direct quotations with periphrastic summaries and supplies them with additional materials deriving from other sources. Ms. E is dated to the 8th century and testifies to the popularity of Sergius' treatise in Syriac schools in the centuries following his death. A very similar kind of adaptation of Sergius' *Commentary* has been preserved in a later codex¹⁶⁷. Though much larger than the collection of excerpts in E, it shares most of the characteristics of the latter, for here too we find direct quotations from the *Commentary* together with passages that appear as adaptations of the original text supplied by a number of additional materials, which, just as in ms. E, mostly appear in the opening part of the text.

In contrast to ms. E, this version of the *Commentary* may be called an epitome, since it was clearly composed not as a collection of fragments but as a separate treatise. It has been preserved in the only manuscript, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Petermann I. 9 (Sachau 88)¹⁶⁸. This paper codex written in the East Syriac script is dated to 1260 AD¹⁶⁹ and constitutes a large collection of various philosophical texts. Neither the name of its scribe nor the location of its production are known to us. On fol. 83v–104r, it contains a treatise (Syr. *memra*) on Aristotle's *Categories* attributed to Sergius and addressed to a certain Philotheos¹⁷⁰.

The epitome in the Berlin codex contains a few passages which are not found in the *Commentary*. Their inclusion may be explained by the fact that the compiler of the epitome did not mechanically put together short and long excerpts from the *Commentary*, but also made use of additional elements for a more coherent final product. Thus, we find a longer introduction at the beginning and a short conclusion at the end that do not derive from the *Commentary*. A number of sentences were intended to serve as bridges between the excerpts taken from the *Commentary*, although in some

¹⁶⁷ Edited with an English translation in Aydin 2016. See also Hugonnard-Roche 1997.

¹⁶⁸ For a description of this codex, see Sachau 1899: 321–335. In the catalogue of Sachau, it appears under no. 88 (hence the no. in the brackets). Sachau noted that the ms. belonged to the collection of Petermann of the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin under no. 9.

¹⁶⁹ According to the note on fol. 36r and 112r, it was written down in the year 1571 of the Greeks, i.e. in 1260 AD.

¹⁷⁰ Syr.: *مَلَكُوتِيَّةِ مَلَكُوتِيَّةِ لِكُوئِيْتِيَّةِ مَلَكُوتِيَّةِ مَلَكُوتِيَّةِ*

This work has sometimes been considered an independent treatise composed by Sergius himself¹⁷², although already G. Furlani noted in his overview of the *Commentary*, that the treatise preserved in the Berlin codex is nothing else than an abridged version of the latter¹⁷³. The epitome lacks the rhetorical elegance of the *Commentary* and its clear logical form. It is not merely these stylistic deficiencies, moreover, that speak against its attribution to Sergius:

171 Cf. Aydin 2016: 158.22.

172 Cf. Hugonnard-Roche 1997: 346–349; Aydin 2016: 67–70.

173 Furlani 1922: 135.

¹⁷⁴ See Aydin 2016: 98–101.

175 See Aydin 2016: 116.22.

176 See the edition in Phillips 1869. Cf. Arzhanov 2021: 28–29.

177 Aydin 2016: 102.24.

cob, entered the Syriac philosophical lexicon nearly two centuries after Sergius' time.

- 4) In the epitome, we find a number of exegetical additions which may be explained by the work of a later commentator of Sergius' treatise rather than by the editorial attempts of Sergius himself. For instance, in the passage corresponding to 148.4, the epitome contains an addition that suggests a comment on the original text. While explaining the category of "where", Sergius speaks of words signifying **ܒନୀଧିର**, "places". The epitome here¹⁷⁸ has **ܒନୀଧିର ବୁନାର ବନୀଧିର**, "places or spaces", thus providing an alternative to the same word introduced by the particle **ବୁନାର**, which usually marks a gloss.
- 5) As noted, the epitome has a rather chaotic structure that is not characteristic of the *Commentary*. Sergius himself writes in the latter (see §§29, 138, 239, etc.) that he took great pains to make his work easy to read and understand. Also, the witness of Ps.-Zacharias of Mytilene, which is generally critical towards Sergius, stresses his rhetorical skills (see 1.1, above). One, however, is unable to see a skillful editorial hand in the epitome.

The last point is of particular value. The compiler of Epit. has freely moved around passages of the *Commentary*. For instance, the excursus on prime matter appears in §§236–238 of the *Commentary* as the first topic which Sergius discusses in Book IV focused on quantity in context of the question of the sequence of the categories and why the category of quantity appears just after substance by Aristotle. It is worthy of note that in ms. P, whose folios were bound in an incorrect order, this passage appears before Book IV. The same sequence is characteristic of the epitome, which includes the excursus on prime matter in the concluding part of the section on substance. While this may be a coincidence, this feature of the epitome may well indicate a relation to P.

As noted above, the text of the epitome has come down to us in a single, rather late copy. Thus, we may assume that some of the errors in the latter derive from the scribes who copied the epitome. However, there are a considerable number of errors which connect the text of the epitome to the line of transmission of Sergius' text represented by mss. BCD and P. Epit. shares with P the following errors that in some cases are also found in BCD:

288.9 **ବୁନାର** BDL: **ବୁନାର** P, Epit.

336.16 **ବୁନାର** L: **ବୁନାର** BDP, Epit.

418.1 **ବୁନାରରେ** BDL: **ବୁନାର** P: **ବୁନାରରେ** **ବୁନାର** Epit.

Thus, there is only one error which Epit. shares exclusively with P, while in two other cases it turns out to be related to BCD. Often Epit. shares errors with BCD only:

178.12 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BCD, Epit.
 190.8 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BCD, Epit.
 220.21 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BCD, Epit.
 284.23 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BD, Epit.
 334.16 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BD, Epit.
 348.9 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BD, Epit.
 372.4 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BD, Epit.
 434.7 **אָל** LP: **אָל** BD, Epit.

Additionally, in mss. BCD and P, we find two marginal glosses that represent the readings of Epit.:

262.19 **אָל** BDP: **אָל** Epit., add. BDP in marg.
 292.6 **אָל** DLP, corr. B in marg.: **אָל** B, Epit. — Only B shares the same error with Epit., indicating the correct variant in the margin.

These glosses most likely derive from the same common prototype of BCD and P, which contained a number of alternative readings (see above). Among these scholia, the variants of Epit. are also found, and they most likely derive from a codex related to the copy from which the epitome was compiled.

Summing up the data above, one may assume that Epit. was produced by an unknown compiler at the time after the 7th century (cf. the witness of Jacob of Edessa) on the basis of a codex that belongs to the same line of textual transmission of the *Commentary* as BCD and P. The address to a certain “Philotheos” (which might have been a general reference to any “God-loving” reader) seems to be a fictional substitute for the addressee Theodore found in the *Commentary*. Hence, the epitome serves for us as an additional witness to the text of the *Commentary*. One should bear in mind, of course, that the person who compiled this epitome has deliberately changed certain terms and otherwise added to it. Still, in many cases of textual divergence between the various witnesses to Sergius’ work, the text of the epitome may serve as an additional witness supporting one of the variants.

2.4 Relation Between Textual Witnesses and Principles of Edition

The characteristics of various textual witnesses to Sergius’ *Commentary* outlined above may be summarized as follows:

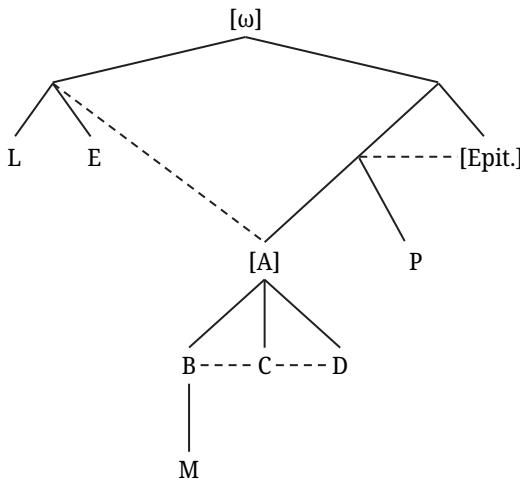
- 1) Ms. L is characterized by a number of specific errors that distinguish it from all other witnesses save for E (see 2.1.1).
- 2) The collection of excerpts preserved in ms. E consists largely of adapted and paraphrased quotations from the *Commentary*, which make it in most cases irrelevant for textual criticism (see 2.2). However, even in their altered state, several excerpts have remained close to the transmitted text of the *Commentary* (see partic-

ularly excerpts I.1, II.11, and II.18), on the basis of which one can conclude that ms. E belongs to the same line of transmission as L.

- 3) Some representative of the EL-line became available to the common source of mss. BCD, variants of which were noted as glosses in the margins (see 2.1.3.3).
- 4) Another line of transmission embraces all other textual witnesses, including the codex that served as the source for the epitome of the *Commentary* (i.e. [Epit.]), since the epitome has no errors in common with EL, but a number in common with BCD and P (see 2.3).
- 5) Ms. P shares a large number of errors with BCD and belongs to the same line of transmission as both their common source ([A]) and the epitome's ([Epit.]). Since both P and [A] contain several variant readings deriving from [Epit.] in the form of glosses (see 2.3), it is likely that their common source included these variant readings in the margins and that they migrated into the later representatives of this group.
- 6) Mss. BCD go back to the same common source ([A]), which contained several lacunae, multiple subtitles, and a number of marginal scholia and corrections to the main text of Sergius' *Commentary* (see 2.1.3.1). It was also characterized by a large number of specific errors which we find in all three later copies of it.
- 7) Scholia and corrections found in [A] go back to the common source of [A] and P, which included a number of marginalia based on the variant readings from other witnesses (see 2.1.3.1(3) and 2.1.3.3).
- 8) Mss. B, C, and D were produced independently from one another on the basis of the same copy, [A]. The scribe of D knew B and probably made use of it as an additional witness to [A], while the scribe of C in some cases made use of B and D, when copying the text of [A] (see 2.1.3.2).
- 9) Ms. M is a direct copy of B and thus may be excluded from the edition.
- 10) While the graphical divisions attached to each book of Sergius' *Commentary* are present in all textual witnesses and probably go back to the original version of this treatise, the subtitles found only in the late codices BCD turn out to be later additions to it (and are therefore indicated in the critical apparatus and not in the main text).

These observations, which reflect the process of *recensio*¹⁷⁹, yield the following *stemma codicum* of textual witnesses to Sergius' *Commentary*, which has served as the basis for the critical edition:

¹⁷⁹ On the process of evaluation of the extant textual witnesses known as *recensio*, see Maas 1960: 5–9, West 1973: 29–47, Chiesa 2002: 57–83, Tarrant 2016: 49–64. Cf. Timpanaro 2005: 58–74.



As noted above, the following edition is a critical one; that is, the result of an attempt to come as close as possible (the process of *emendatio*) to the original form of what may be called the final version of the text written by Sergius at the beginning of the 6th century¹⁸⁰. The dotted lines in the stemma represent cases of contact between different lines of transmission that nonetheless falls short of full-scale contamination between the sources, since most of the alternative readings deriving from other textual witnesses were introduced in the form of scholia and glosses into some of the representatives of the [Epit.]–[A]–P line. To a large extent, these variant readings maintained their paratextual character in the later copies, so that we still find them in the form of interlinear corrections and marginal notes in mss. BCD, which form the latest stages of textual transmission. Thus, we are still able to deal with Sergius' text as a closed textual tradition and to evaluate the variants of various textual witnesses based on the stemma above, notwithstanding possible contamination between them.

In order to make the process of establishing the text in the critical edition (the *examinatio* together with the *constitutio textus*)¹⁸¹ as transparent as possible, I have supplied the edition with a positive critical apparatus, thus making explicit which textual witnesses contain which individual variants. The edition includes no *apparatus fontium*, as all textual witnesses are indicated in the outer margins of the Syriac text. The only exceptions to this rule are two witnesses that contain excerpts from the *Commentary* and revisions of it, namely ms. E and the epitome, which do not appear in the margins and which appear in the critical apparatus only in those cases when variants contained in it support readings of other witnesses (for the limitations on their use in the critical edition, see 2.2 and 2.3, above).

¹⁸⁰ Cf. West 1973: 33.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Maas 1960: 9–13, West 1973: 47–59, Chiesa 2002: 83–99.

The critical apparatus claims to be exhaustive. It contains both meaningful words and different variants of the same words that appear in different witnesses and that in some cases allow the reader to see the relations between them. The only forms that do not appear in the critical apparatus are such variants of Syriac words as reflect individual habits of scribes of the manuscripts (e.g., such variants as **تَدْ بَرْ بَرْ / سَتْتَنْ** and **لَلْمَوْ / لَلْمَوْ** are not indicated). However, I have included in the apparatus various spellings of personal names (of Aristotle, Porphyry, Plato, and other Greek authors) and of Greek words¹⁸², which might be relevant not only for the textual history of Sergius' treatise, but also for the history of the Syriac language. The variety in transliteration of these names might contribute to our knowledge of the spread of Greek language among Syriac scholars in different periods of history¹⁸³.

The use of punctuation marks (dots)¹⁸⁴ in the Syriac text is rather limited and does not reflect any particular manuscript. The use of *Seyame* is restricted to nouns in plural and plural feminine participles¹⁸⁵. Although in some mss. *Seyame* is attached to numbers, it is not applied with this function in the edition. The sign of *Pasoqa* marks the end of a clause, but in those cases where the sentences were too long, they have been further sub-divided by means of *Šwayya* and *Tahtaya*¹⁸⁶. When applying these punctuation marks, I was eager to follow the extant manuscripts as far as possible. The latest codices that are now preserved in Erbil-Ankawa turned out to be particularly helpful in understanding the structure of the Syriac text and its division into smaller units. However, it did not always prove possible to adhere to the extant witnesses; thus, in some cases, the division of sentences and the use of punctuation dots reflect editorial choices rather than extant codices.

The tables with divisions that appear after each book of Sergius' treatise presented specific technical problems. Since there are certain divergences between mss. in the details of these tables, it seemed best to give the divisions in the form of plain text, since variant readings, which are bound to the line numbers, could thus be denoted in the critical apparatus. All divisions are presented in the form of diagrams in the Appendix to the edition.

The content of the footnotes to the English translation of Sergius' treatise is limited to (1) such differences in the transmission of Syriac text as are relevant for the translation, and (2) Greek parallels to the *Commentary* which allow for a better under-

¹⁸² E.g., the systematic use of the forms **نَوَالِلَهْ** and **نَوَالِلَهْ** with two *Lamads* in ms. P; see 2.1.2.

¹⁸³ For the influence of the Greek language on Syriac in various historical periods, see Butts 2016.

¹⁸⁴ On the use of dots in Syriac manuscripts at different periods of Syriac history, see Segal 1953. Cf. also a general introduction in Kiraz 2015.

¹⁸⁵ Since the application of *Seyame* in Syriac manuscripts is often random, those cases where it is absent from plural nouns and present for singular nouns are not indicated in the apparatus.

¹⁸⁶ On the use of these three punctuation marks in the period when Sergius was composing his treatise, see Segal 1953: 58–77, particularly 73–75.

standing of the Syriac terminology used by Sergius in his work. Although we cannot say that the *Commentary* is wholly derivative of any particular Greek source, it evidently goes back to written notes of the oral lectures of Ammonius Hermeiou (see 1.2, above). Given that extant commentaries deriving from the school of Ammonius (which are attributed either to the latter or to his disciples) provide us with the same or very similar materials as those Sergius utilized for his work, these texts are either referred to or quoted *in exenso* in the footnotes.

The footnotes also include some observations on the philosophical terminology used by Sergius and the relation of this terminology to both contemporary and later Syriac philosophical treatises. However, due to the limitations of such kind of annotations, these observations represent only the first soundings of the study of Sergius' philosophical vocabulary. A full-scale commentary on the Syriac text of the treatise as well as an extensive glossary of its terminology with corresponding Greek terms could not, for obvious reasons, be part of the present volume (which has already grown too voluminous) and must be postponed to a later date.

Since Sergius most likely made use of some sort of Greek text while working on his *Commentary*, it is unsurprising that the latter contains a large number of Greek loanwords, which are indicated in brackets in the English translation. A list of these Greek words appears as a separate index at the end of the book, together with a general index, which includes both subjects and proper names, together with a list of references to parallels with Sergius' text.

Finally, a short note on transliteration: Following the practice in my two previous books, the transliteration of Syriac terms in the present edition reflects East Syriac vocalization, whereby long and short vowels in both Syriac and Arabic words remain undifferentiated.

