

The Influence of Ephraim the Syrian on The Greeks?!

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Abstract

The influence of Ephraim the Syrian on the Greeks is not visible neither in the Greek *Life* nor in the Greek texts which were known under his name. However, the respect and interest in St. Ephraim, shown by them, supports the viewpoint that the theology and symbolism of his original works may have influenced the Greek writers exactly as his Syriac-speaking successors. As a result of thorough study of the text and terminology related to the Messalian controversy, the Syriac roots of the vocabulary and imagery of the Syrians, more exactly, those of Pseudo-Macarius have become clear. However, as was expected, there are many parallels with the text of *Liber Gradum*. Also, especially many parallels are found in the writings of Ephraim. Apparently, despite the impressions gained from theological works, not only Ephraim was the 4th-century theologian, at the same time, he had not exclusive rights on these ideas and images, but the issue whether there was more significant influence on Pseudo-Macarius than on the entire literary heritage requires further research. Such research is quite realistic and not just hypothetical, which is confirmed by excellent studies of West European researchers related to Romanos Melodos, the greatest hymnographer of the sixth century, who was also a bilingual writer of the Syrian origin. They proved that Ephraim had great influence not only on the development of kontakion, but also revealed an example of direct dependence of Melodos on the works of Ephraim. This presents grounds for thorough research of writings of such well-known authors as the Cappadocians, Pseudo-Dionysus and Pseudo-Macarius. Along with this, it should be explored whether there is a layer under Greek rhetoric, which depends on Ephraim and is not only a product of common culture.

Keywords: Pseudo-Macarius, Liber Gradum, Romanos Melodos, Cappadocians, Pseudo-Dionysus