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1. Isaac, évêque de Ninive, 7e s — Critique et interprétation.

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SOME USES OF THE TERM *THEORIA* IN THE WRITINGS OF ISAAC OF NINEVEH

BY
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A. INTRODUCTORY

The Greek loan word *theoria* (in Syriac *te'orya*) is absent, not only from the writings of the great fourth-century authors Aphrahat and Ephrem, but also from Narsai, Jacob of Serugh, and most other fifth-century writers. Two occurrences, however, can be found in one of the works under the name of John the Solitary¹, who is probably to be dated to the first half of the fifth century (though both his date and identity/identities are uncertain)²; otherwise, the first native Syriac writer to use the term seems to be Philoxenus. Without any doubt it became widely used in Syriac thanks to the Syriac translations of Evagrius' works³, where it features frequently. Its later popularity with Syriac monastic (and other) writers was further encouraged by subsequent translations of other Greek writers, prominent among whom was the unknown author of the Dionysian Corpus, whose work was translated into Syriac by Sergius of Resh'aina.

East Syriac writers of the sixth and seventh centuries seem to react very differently to the term: thus Cyrus of Edessa⁴ and Shubḥalmaran⁵ never use it, and Sahdona only employs it on a single occasion in his extensive Book

1) L.G. RIGNELL, *Drei Traktate von Johannes dem Einsiedler* (Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, NF Avd. 1., Bd.54,4, 1960) 22, line 4: *te'orya da-ḥata d-ʿIma da-šrara*, 'theoria of the vision of the world of truth/reality'; and S. DEDERING, *Johannes von Lycopolis, Ein Dialog über die Seele und die Affekte des Menschen* (Uppsala, 1936) 32, line 10, *b-te'orya*.

2) See the discussion in R. LAVENANT, 'Le problème de Jean d'Apamée', *OCP* 46 (1980) 367-90, and A. DE HALLEUX, 'Le milieu historique de Jean le Solitaire', in R. LAVENANT (ed.), *III SympSyr* (OCA 221, 1983) 299-305.

3) Most of these were probably made in the course of the fifth century.

4) Ed. W. MACOMBER in *CSCO* 355-6, *Scr.Syri* 155-6 (1974).

5) I have used British Library Or.6714. On Shubḥalmaran see D.J. LANE, 'Mar Shubḥalmaran's Book of Gifts, an example of a Syriac literary genre', in H.J.W. DRIJVERS, R. LAVENANT, C. MOLENBERG and G.J. REININK (eds.), *IV SympSyr* (OCA 229; 1987) 411-17.

of Perfection⁶; on the other hand Babai (d.628), Gregory of Cyprus (mid seventh-century), and Isaac (late seventh century), along with his contemporaries Dadisho^c and Shem'on d-Taybuteh (Simeon the Graceful), all make considerable use of it (Dadisho^c the least so). Babai, of course, could hardly have avoided adopting it, seeing that he was writing a commentary on Evagrius' *Kephalaia Gnostica*. As we shall see, Evagrius' influence accounts for much, but by no means all, of Isaac's use of the term. Before turning to Isaac, however, it is worth noting in passing some definitions that Gregory of Cyprus gives to *theoria*:

(a) 'when someone in his mind (*b-mad'eh*) looks at one of the things in creation that God has created, and wonders at it in his intellect (*b-hawneh*), judging it in his mind (*b-re'yaneh*), and understands what, and how, it is' (ed. HAUSHERR, p.50).

(b) 'the term *theoria* is Greek; in Syriac it is interpreted divine vision that discovers and defines intelligible natures, separating out the good from the bad, and the false from the true' (ed. HAUSHERR, p.52).

(c) '*theoria* is defined by those wise in spirit as the vision of intelligible natures; *theoria* is the (very) nature of that which is; *theoria* is the purity of intellect by which it examines noetically the natures of all things that have come into being' (ed. HAUSHERR, p.118).

Isaac's contemporary Dadisho⁷ also provides a short definition in his Commentary (XIV.12) on the Asceticon of Abba Isaiah, where he says that 'he (sc. Isaiah) calls spiritual discernment *theoria*'.

B. THEORIA IN ISAAC

In the vast majority of the hundred and thirty five or so occurrences of the word in Parts I⁸ and II⁹ of Isaac's writings it appears in the form *t'wry*'

6) Ed. A. DE HALLEUX in CSCO 214, Scr.Syri 90 (1961) II, p.20 (= II.ii.34).

7) Ed. P. BEDJAN, *Mar Isaacus Ninivita De Perfectione Religiosa* (Paris/Leipzig, 1909), cited by page number.

8) Preserved complete in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, ms syr.e.7, of which an edition is forthcoming in CSCO. The edition of the four series of Chapters (*Kephalaia*) on Knowledge, together with the two opening sections of the work, are being edited by P. BETTILOLO, while the remaining chapters (IV-XLI) are edited by me. The Chapters on Knowledge are cited as 'Keph.', followed by series (I-IV) and serial number within the series; the remainder of Part II is cited by chapter and section of my forthcoming edition. An Italian translation of the *Kephalaia* (and some other sections of Part II) is given by P. BETTILOLO in his *Isacco di Ninive. Discorsi Spirituali* (Magnano, 1985, 2nd edn. 1991).

(*te'orya*). On a few occasions, however, we encounter the plural form *t'wryš* (*te'oryas*), based on the Greek accusative plural: thus Part I, pp.31, 45, 134, 198-9, 303, 514, 522; Part II, Keph.IV.48; XXIX.1, 9; XXXIV.5. Much rarer is the appearance of suffixed forms (3rd. sing), as Part I, pp.255 (*t'wryh*, masc.), 474 (*t'wryh*, fem.).

Isaac offers a few short definitions of *theoria*, notably Part I, p.128 'profoundness of the soul's vision' (*'miqut ḥzata napšanita*); p.168 'spiritual prayer'; p.260 'spiritual vision'; p.544 'vision of the soul'. On p.17 he calls *theoria* 'a second soul'.

Our main concern in this article is not so much to study the semantic range of Isaac's use of the term¹⁰, but rather to try to pinpoint the various sources upon which he draws. In order to provide some manageable parameters within which a reasonably systematic enquiry can be made, two limitations have been made: in the first place, the number of earlier Syriac texts consulted has been for the most part restricted to monastic writings, whether translations from Greek¹¹ or native Syriac authors (for the latter, some of the main published texts by writers later than Isaac have been included, by way of comparison). In the second place, attention has been focused on three syntactical constructions, *theoria* followed by an adjective; *theoria* followed by a dependent genitive (i.e. Syriac *t'wry' d-N*, 'the *theoria* of N'); and *theoria* standing in genitival relationship to a preceding noun (i.e. Syriac *N d-t'wry'*, 'N of the *theoria*'). Although this procedure has the disadvantage of being rather mechanical and wooden, it does serve a useful purpose for an initial study of the term in Isaac since it isolates fairly clearly those elements of his usage that are specifically of Evagrian origin, and at the same time it indicates which ones had gained currency in other Syriac monastic writers of

The witness of the Book of Grace has not been included in the present study since Isaac's authorship is disputed: on this question see G. BUNGE, 'Mar Isaak von Nineve und sein "Buch der Gnade"' *Ostkirchliche Studien* 34 (1985) 3-22, and D. MILLER's introduction to *The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian translated by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery* (Boston, 1984), pp. LXXXI-LXXXV. An edition by É. KHALIFÉ-HACHEM is in preparation.

9) The range of meanings is wide, and 'contemplation' is not usually very adequate; usually it has the sense either of noetic or spiritual vision, or of the spiritual meaning or significance of something, or the understanding of this spiritual meaning. It is often associated with *ḥzata*, 'vision, perception' (see also note 11).

10) The term is absent from the Syriac translations of the Macarian Homilies (ed. W. STROTHMANN) and the Apophthegmata (ed. P. BEDJAN, AMS VII).

11) At III.6 and IV.30, where S2 has *te'orya*, S1 has *ḥzata* and *ida'ra* respectively; curiously, at IV.42 it is S1 that has *te'orya* and S2 *ida'ra* ('knowledge').

the time.

The most important texts that have been consulted for this purpose are the following (in approximate chronological order):

(a) *Translations from Greek*

1- **Evagrius**. The following texts have been used:

Evagrius *Cap.Cog.* = J. MUYLDERMANS, 'Evagre le Pontique: les Capita Cognoscitiva dans les versions syriaque et arménienne', *Le Muséon* 47 (1934) 73-106.

Evagrius *Epp.* = Epistles, ed. W. FRANKENBERG, *Evagrius Ponticus* (Abh. KGWGött. nF 13,2; 1912) 554-634, cited by the folio numbers given in the margin of the edition.

Evagrius *Keph.* = A. GUILLAUMONT, *Les six centuries des "Kephalaia Gnostica"* d'Evagre le Pontique (PO 28, 1; 1958), cited by Century and number (notice is given if the two Syriac versions, S1 and S2, differ)¹².

Evagrius *Keph.Supp.* = Supplement to *Kephalaia Gnostika*, ed. FRANKENBERG, *Evagrius Ponticus*, pp.422-70, cited by number in the series.

Evagrius M = J. MUYLDERMANS, *Evagriana Syriaca* (Bibliothèque du Muséon 31; 1952), cited by page.

2- **Nilus** = P. BETTILOLO, *Gli scritti siriaci di Nilo il Solitario* (Louvain, 1983), cited by page.

3- **Abba Isaiah** = R. DRAGUET, *Les cinq recensions de l'Asceticon syriaque d'Abba Isaïe* (CSCO 289-90, 293-4; Scr. Syri 120-123; 1968), cited by Discourse and section number.

4- **(Ps.)-Dionysius the Areopagite** (tr. Sergius of Resh'aina), cited from Sinai Syr.52, with folio number.

(b) *Syriac authors*

1- **Philoxenus**. The following two works have been used: *Disc.* = E.A.W. BUDGE, *The Discourses of Philoxenus* (London, 1894), cited by page of vol.I (text); and *Ep.Patr.* = R. LAVENANT, *La lettre à Patricius de Philoxène de Mabboug* (PO 30,5; 1963), cited by paragraph number.

¹²) For the date (c.684/6) see *Oriens Christianus* 63 (1979) 21.

2- **Sergius** = P. SHERWOOD, 'Mimro de Serge de Reshayna sur la vie spirituelle', *L'Orient Syrien* 5 (1960) 433-59; 6 (1961) 95-115, 121-156; cited by section number.

3- **Hierotheos** = F.S. MARSH, *The Book of the Holy Hierotheos* (London/Oxford, 1927), cited by page.

4- **Babai**, *Commentary* = Commentary on Evagrius' Centuries, ed. FRANKENBERG, *Evagrius Ponticus*, pp. 8-471; cited by folio number given in margin of edition.

5- **Gregory of Cyprus** = I. HAUSHERR, *Gregorii Monachi Cyprii De Theoria Sancta* (OCA 110, 1937), cited by page number.

6- **Isho'yahb Epp.** = R. DUVAL, *Iso'yahb Patriarchae III, Liber Epistularum* (CSCO 11-12, Scr.Syri 11-12; 1904-5, repr.1962), cited by page of text volume.

7- **Dadisho^c C. Abba Isaiah** = R. DRAGUET, *Commentaire du livre d'Abba Isaïe (logoi I-XV) par Dadišo^c Qatraya* (VII^e s.) (CSCO 326-7, Scr.Syri 144-5; 1972), cited by Discourse and section number.

8- **Shem^con d-Taybuteh** = A. MINGANA, *Early Christian Mystics* (Woodbrooke Studies VII, 1934) 281-320; cited by page and column.

9- **Abdisho^c** = A. MINGANA, op.cit., pp.262-81, cited by page and column. (Abdisho^c is the same person as Joseph Hazzaya).

10- **Joseph Hazzaya Ep.** = P. HARB and F. GRAFFIN, *Joseph Hazzaya, Lettre sur les trois étapes de la vie monastique* (PO 45,2; 1992); cited by section number.

11- **John of Dalyata Epp.** = R. BEULAY, *La collection des lettres de Jean de Dalyatha* (PO 39,3; 1978), cited by letter number and section.

Our procedure will be to consider the three different syntactical combinations separately and, within each of the three, to examine Isaac's usage in alphabetical order (by root).

(1) *Theoria* + adjective

- ܐܝܬܝܢܐ 'ityayta, 'essential': Part I, pp.187, 198. The phrase is found both in Evagrius, M 139 and *Keph.* V.61 (S), and (once only) in Dionysius, f.61a.

- ܐܠܗܝܬܐ *'alahayta*, 'divine': Part I, pp.23, 31, 161, 198, 571; Part II, *Keph.IV.48*, XIX.5. The phrase seems to be not of Evagrian, but of Dionysian origin (f.70a, 82a), though it also occurs in the Syriac translation of the Lausiak History (ed. DRAGUET, *Scr.Syri* 173, p.330 [recension 4]). In earlier Syriac writers it occurs in Philoxenus (*Ep.Patr.* 110, plur.); Sergius 27, 76, 78, 81, 88-9, 99, 119; Babai (*Commentary Evag.* 130b), and (especially) Gregory of Cyprus (pp.46, 68, 72, 98, 102). Among Isaac's contemporaries it features in Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 283b.

- ܓܢܝܘܬܐ *gnizata*, 'hidden': Part II, XXXVI.1. Also of Dionysian origin, where, however, only the singular occurs (f.96b, 103b); the plural is found in Hierotheos p.21.

- ܚܬܝܬܐ *hattitta*, 'exact, precise': Part I, p.194; Part II, *Keph.IV.82*. This appears to be an innovation on Isaac's part, suggested no doubt by the use of this adjective with *idaʿta*, 'knowledge', in Part I, p.60; Part II, XI.22, XVIII.6.

- ܡܝܬܝܕܐܢܝܬܐ *metyadd'anita*, 'noetic': Part I, p.521 with *ramta*. This adjective, based on Greek *noetos*, is found both in Evagrius (*Keph.VI.2* [S2], *Keph.Supp.44*) and Dionysius (f.104a, plur.). In earlier Syriac writers it is used by Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.*74.

- ܝܚܝܕܝܬܐ *ihidayta*, 'single, singular' etc.: Part II, *Keph.II.8,10*. This appears to be an innovation by Isaac, though it also occurs in Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 284a.

- ܟܝܢܝܬܐ *kyanayta*, 'natural': Part I, p.31; Part II, *Keph.II.105*, III.9, 57 (in Part II all + *d-tarten*, 'second'). This characteristically Evagrian phrase occurs above all in his *Kephalaia Gnostica*, II.2-4; III. 61, 67, 84; V.88 etc; cp also Abba Isaiah XIII.27[S2]. In earlier Syriac writers it naturally occurs frequently in Babai's *Commentary on Evagrius' Centuries* (60a, 61a, 82b, 93a etc.).

- ܡܠܐܚܝܬܐ *mal'akayta*, 'angelic': Part II, *Keph.III.90*. This appears to be an innovation by Isaac; compare *th. d-mal'ake* in (2) below.

- ܡܪܕܬܐ ܠܐ-ܒܫܬܐ *mardat la-bšata*, 'that defies investigation': Part II, XXXIX.1. This again appears to be new.

- ܡܥܠܝܬܐ *m'allayta*, 'exalted': Part I, p.571 (with *alahayta*). Dionysius f.54a (plur.); Sergius 63, 117; Babai *Commentary* 125a, 227a.

- ܡܚܘܒܐ *ḥipta*, 'double': Part II, *Keph.I.68*. This occurs in Evagrius

Keph.VI.2.

- **ܩܕܡܝܬܐ** *qadmayta*, 'first': Part I, pp.31, 303; Part II, *Keph.II.7,10*. For this characteristically Evagrian phrase see Evagrius *Keph.II.13*, 61[S1], III.10[S1], 17[S1], 19, 27, 33 etc. It likewise occurs frequently in Babai's *Commentary* (82b, 86a, 93b, 94a etc.); also Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.82*; Sergius 91 (+ *d-'ituta*); Gregory of Cyprus, p.110; Joseph Ḥazzaya *Ep.137*.

- **ܪܘܗܢܝܬܐ**; *ruhanayta*, 'spiritual': Part I, p.528; Part II, VII.1. Again a common Evagrian phrase, e.g. *Keph.I.34*, III.24[S2], 26, etc., which Babai also frequently uses (12a, 124a, 164b, 176a etc. It also occurs in Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.29*, 60, 65, 74, 77, 121-2; Sergius 44; Dadisho^c, *C. Abba Isaiah XI.17*, XIII.2; Shem^con d-Ṭaybuteh 285a, 307a, 320b; 'Abdisho^c 263a, 264a.

- **ܪܘܗܢܝܬܐ**; *ruhanyata*, 'spiritual' (plur.): Part I, p.522 (*t'wrys*). The plural does not seem to occur in Evagrius, but it is found in Dionysius (also with *t'wrys*), f.52b. Philoxenus uses the plural a number of times (*Disc.625*; *Ep.Patr.* 81, 95, 104-5, 107, 120), and it also features in Shem^con d-Ṭaybuteh 283b.

- **ܪܡܝܬܐ**; *ramta*, 'lofty': Part I, p.521; Part II, *Keph.I* title (plur.). The adjective occurs in Evagrius *Keph.Supp.* 44, and is also found in Sergius 99 and Shem^con d-Ṭaybuteh 284a, 309ab. Babai uses the related *mrayyamta*, 'exalted', in his *Commentary*, 91b, 101b, 103a; and *mramramta* occurs in Dionysius f.61b.

- **ܫܪܪܝܬܐ** *šarrirta*, 'true': Part I, p.162; Part II, *Keph.IV.85*. The adjective occurs both in Dionysius (f.108b) and in Abba Isaiah (XI.109-112); it also features in Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.90*, 95, and Sergius 61, 78.

- **ܫܡܝܝܢܝܬܐ** *šmayyanyata*, 'heavenly' (plur.): Part I, pp.134, 307. Apparently an innovation.

(2) *Theoria* + *d-* + noun

- **ܪܙܐ** (')*raze*, 'mysteries': Part II, XXXIX.1, XL title (both + '*alahaye*, 'divine'); XLI.2 [(')*razaw(hy) d-paroqan*]. *te'orya d-(')raze* is Dionysian (f.90b, 96b, 98b); also Hierotheos p.37.

- **ܪܙܐܐܪܝܬܐ** (')*razeh da-šliba*: Part II, XI title.

- **ܐܠܗܘܬܐ** *'itut 'alahuta*, 'of the Being of the Divinity': Part II, *Keph.II.4*. Compare *d-'ituta*, 'of the (divine) Being' in Sergius (91, 117,

119), and Babai's *Commentary* (20b, 217b). Compare Isaac *Keph.III.77* where he has *th. d-ʿal 'ituta*.

- ܒܝܠܘܬܐ *bīluta*, 'divine care': Part II, *Keph.II.73*. Based on Evagrius M 140; also Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.95*.

- ܒܪܘܬܐ *baroyuta*, 'the creative activity (of God)': Part II, *Keph.II.73*. Likewise based on Evagrius M 140.

- ܒܪܝܬܐ *beryata*, 'created things, creatures': Part I, p.172. Found in Babai's *Commentary* [29a, 103a (*t'wrys*), 168b], but not in any of the published texts of Evagrius.

- ܡܬܒܪܢܫܢܘܬܐ *metbarnšanuta*, 'the inhomination': Part I, p.161. This appears to be an innovation.

- ܓܘܫܡܐ *gušme*, 'corporeal bodies': Part II, *Keph.III.49*, IV.11. A characteristically Evagrian phrase, *Keph.II.71*[S1], IV.62[S1], VI.49, 72[S1]; *Keph.Supp.21*; likewise in Babai's *Commentary* 11a, 20b, 27b etc; ʿAbdisho^c 264b, 269a; Joseph Ḥazzaya *Ep.* 105, 137, 142, 147; John of Dalyatha *Epp.48:13*.

- ܕܝܠܝܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܗܐ *dilayateh da-mšiḥa*, 'the properties of Christ': Part II, *Keph.I.44*. Apparently an innovation.

- ܕܝܢܐ *dina*, 'judgement': Part I, p.192 (plur.); Part II, *Keph.I.51*, II.102 (both + *wda-bīluta*, 'and of (divine) care'), XXXIX.23 ('of the great judgement'). The phrase 'theoria of judgement and (divine) care' occurs in Evagrius M 139 and *Keph.I.27*; in Syriac writers, Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.95*; Babai *Commentary* 33b; ʿAbdisho^c 273a, 278a; Joseph Ḥazzaya *Ep.* 137, 144. Compare *th. d-dineh d-alaha*, 'theoria of God's judgement', Evagrius *Keph.V.23*[S1]. See also below, under *šuhlapa d-dine*.

- ܕܗܒܐ *dahba*, 'gold': Part II, *Keph.III.90*, where it is cited as from Evagrius; the phrase does not, however, occur in any of the published texts.

- ܗܘܝܐ *hwaye*, 'things that have come into being': Part II, *Keph.III.49*, 57. The phrase is characteristically Evagrian, e.g. *Keph.I.73*, 74 and often, *Epp.184a*, but also occurs in Ps.Aristotle, *Peri Kosmou* (title of the Syriac translation). In Syriac writers it features frequently in Babai's *Commentary* (26a, 31b, 34b, 65b, 67b etc.), and once in Dadisho^c *C. Abba Isaiah IX.2*.

- ܕܠܐ (ܕܠܐ) *(dla) hule*, 'immaterial object(s)': Part I, p.303. The phrase is Evagrian, *Keph.III.17*[S2], *Epp.100a*, and also occurs in Babai's *Commentary* 153a, 197b.

- زڨڨا, *zaddiqe*, ‘the just’: Part I, p.193.
- زوڨا ڨوڨا, *zaw^e tūbtane*, ‘blessed stirrings’: Part I, p.521.
- ڨزا, *h̄zata*, ‘vision’: Part II, X.17. Found in Philoxenus *Disc.* 508, *Ep.Patr.* 71, 87, 99, 110; *Babai Commentary* 94a, 169b; Gregory of Cyprus pp.72, 78, 116. See also John the Solitary, quoted in note 1.
- ڨزا, *h̄attaye*, ‘sinners’: Part I, p.193.
- ڨصا, *hekmta*, ‘wisdom’: Part II, *Keph.*II.73.
- ڨوڨا ڨوڨا, *šuhlapa d-dine*, ‘variation of judgements’: Part I, p.193. See also above, under *dine*.
- ڨوڨا, *haššeh*, ‘the Passion (of Christ)’: Part II, *Keph.*IV.82.
- ڨوڨا ڨوڨا ڨوڨا, *huššabeh mtomaya*, ‘his (sc.God’s) eternal thought’: Part II, *Keph.*II.8.
- ڨوڨا ڨوڨا, *metyadd^eanyata*, ‘noetic/intelligible things’: Part I, p.50. Evagrius combines this with *metraggšanyata* in *Keph.*II.47 and *Cap. Cogn.*p.90 (II.2). Contrast *th. d-methazyanyata*, ‘of visible things’, in Nilus p.295, and *Babai Commentary* 203a.
- ڨوڨا, *ktabe*, ‘the Scriptures’: Part I, pp.127, 164; Part II, *Keph.*I.41, XV.8. The phrase is frequently found in *Babai’s Commentary* (31b, 34b, 46b, 48a, 52b etc.); it also occurs in Shem^{on} d-Ṭaybuteh 290b, 310b. Compare *th. d-men ktabe* in Isaac Part I, p.53, and *Babai Commentary* 32a.
- ڨوڨا, *mal’ake*, ‘the angels’: Part I, pp.31, 197; Part II, *Keph.*III.47. Occurs in Evagrius *Keph.*V.6, and (especially) *Babai’s Commentary* (4a, 93b, 96b, 123a, 127b, 158a, 192a).
- ڨوڨا, *meddem*, ‘something’: Part I, p.492; Part II, *Keph.*III.92 (*meddem meddem*).
- ڨوڨا, *melle*, ‘words’: Part II, XXXVI.1. Also in *Babai Commentary*, 216a, 235b (sing.).
- ڨوڨا ڨوڨا, *‘alma da-‘tid*, ‘world to come’: Part I, p.433; Part II, *Keph.* III.56. For a closely related phrase in John the Solitary, see note 1. Compare Evagrius’s *th. d-‘alma hana*, ‘*th.* of this world’ (*Keph.*II.88, VI.2), and *d-‘alme*, ‘of the ages/(both) worlds’ (*Keph.*I.70[S2], IV.30[S2], *Keph.Supp.* 24), both of which also occur in *Babai’s Commentary* (227b; 164b, 218a, 222b, 223a, respectively).

- حقد فحلنه *amlay pulḥaneh*, 'the labours of his service': Part II, *Keph.IV.44*. See the next item.

- فحلنا *pulḥana*, 'service, ministration': Part I, p.337. Occurs in Evagrius *Keph.IV.40*[S1], and Babai's *Commentary* 204a.

- افصنا *tapnika*, 'the exemplar': Part II, *Keph.II.72*.

- فوهنا *puršane*, 'discernments': Part II, *Keph.II.5*.

- زحقلا *šebwatha*, 'things, objects': Part I, pp.50, 154 (sing.). Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 43; Babai *Commentary* 153a, 159b, 169a, 170b, 220a. Compare *th.dab-šebwata*, Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.30*.

- زحلا *šlota*, 'prayer': Part I, p.326 (compare *dba-šlota*, p.164).

- (وه) *qnomeh, qnomhon*, 'himself, themselves': Part I, 304. Similarly Babai *Commentary* 83a. Compare *th.d-napšeh*, Evagrius *Keph. II.15*[S1], V.41[S1]; Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.* 74; Babai *Commentary* 165b; Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 281a; John of Dalyatha *Epp.49:26* (*d-napšak*).

- فوهنا *qušta*, 'truth': Part I, pp.195, 197, 222. See also under *šrara*.

- رازا *raze* (see under (')*raze*, above).

- وهس *ruh*, 'the spirit' (cp *th. ruḥanayta*): Part I, pp.217, 303; Part II, *Keph.II.10*, XXXV.4. Evagrius, *Keph.II.13*, 61[S1], III.24[S1], IV.47, V.16 [S1], 74[S1], VI.63, 65[S1], and often in Babai's *Commentary* (14b, 26b, 30b, 38a, 67a etc.); also Dionysius f.98b; Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.* 82, 84; Sergius 78, 81, 95, 98-9, 102, 112, 117, 119; Hierotheos pp.34, 73, 75; Isho'yahb III *Epp.* pp.107, 141; Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 283b, 284a, 285ab, 292b, 301a.

- رحنا *re ṣyana*, 'the mind': Part I, p.126; Part II, XI.32. Compare *th.d-mad'a* in Nilus p.86; Babai *Commentary* 153a; Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 285b, 309b.

- رحنا (وه) *(kulleh) riša*, 'the entire principle': Part II, *Keph.I.7*.

- رازا *šrara*, 'truth': Part I, p.194, 444. Evagrius *Keph.II.9*[S1]; Babai *Commentary* 63a.

- رحنا رحنا رحنا *tlitayuta*, 'the Trinity': Part II, *Keph.III.57*, quoting Evagrius, in whose writings the phrase occurs frequently, e.g. *Keph.I.27*, 65[S1], III.6, IV.42[S1] etc., *Keph.Supp.49*, *Epp.* 184b, M 133, 140. Also, Nilus p.282; Sergius 88, 99; often in Babai's *Commentary* (43b, 48a, 86a, 94b, 142b etc.); Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 284a, 311a; 'Abdisho' 268b, 274a.

- ܬܪܬܢ *tarten*, 'second': Part II, *Keph.III.57*, quoting Evagrius. Evagrius *Keph.II.2*, 4, III.17[S1], 19[S1], 21; Babai *Commentary* 65a, 96a, 97b; John of Dalyatha *Epp.*48:8.

(c) noun + *d-theoria*

- ܬܪܬܢܐ *b'ata*, 'seeking': Part II.XXIX.1.
- ܒܐܪܬܩܠܐ *ba(r)t qala*, 'utterance': Part II, *Keph.II.4*.
- ܕܗܝܠܐ *gelyane*, 'revelations (of)': Part I, p.87.
- ܕܘܒܒܪܐ *dubbara*, 'mode of life': Part II, XII title.
- ܕܘܪܪܐܫܐ *durraša*, 'exercise, training': Part I, p.307.
- ܕܗܪܓܐ *herga*, 'meditation': Part II, XXXVI.1.
- ܗܘܘܪܐ *hzata*, 'vision': Part II, f.IIb. Also in Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.*71, 87, 99, 110; Babai *Commentary* 94a; Gregory of Cyprus pp.72, 78, 116; Shem'on d-Ṭaybuteh 308b; 'Abdisho' 274a, 278b; Joseph Ḥazzaya *Ep.* 63, 137, 144-5; John of Dalyatha *Epp.* 48:13, 49:12.
- ܗܘܘܪܐ *halyuta*, 'sweetness': Part I, p.328.
- ܡܠܘܐ *mlo'a*, 'fulness': Part I, p.135; Part II, *Keph.I.41*(plur.).
- ܡܠܠܐ *mallale*, 'eloquent in': Part II, *Keph.II.8*.
- ܡܢܐܬ *mnat*, 'portion, part': Part II, XIX.6
- ܢܘܗܪܐ *nuhra*, 'light': Part I, pp.200, 550; Part II, *Keph.I.29*. Also in Babai *Commentary* 130b, 226b.
- ܢܝܫܐ *niša*, 'aim': Part II, *Keph.I.62*, III.9. Evagrius *Keph.IV.21*[S1], 23[S1]; also Babai *Commentary* 137a.
- ܫܒܝܫܘܬܐ *sbisut*, 'multitude, density': Part II, *Keph.I.32*.
- ܫܐܩܐ *saka*, 'sum, limit': Part II, XX.23.
- ܡܫܩܩܬܐ *massaqta*, 'ascent': Part I, pp.16, 223(+ 'to the Trinity'). The plural occurs in Philoxenus *Ep.Patr.*82, 87.
- ܥܢܝܐ *anyay*, 'conversant with': Part II, XXXIX.1.
- ܥܢܝܢܐ *enyana*, 'converse': Part II, XII.1.
- ܡܥܩܒܢܐ *m'aqbana*, 'investigator': Part II, XXIX.9. Compare *mbahh-*

nana in Shem^con d-Ṭaybuteh 308b.

- *ܩܘܪܫܢܐ* *puršane*, ‘discernments’: Part II, *Keph.*II.10. Evagrius, *Keph.* II.83[S1], *Cap.Cog.* p.90 (II.2). Also Babai *Commentary* 88a.

- *ܩܘܪܫܢܐ* (*ܩܘܪܫܢܐ*) (*gelyane*) *ramay*, ‘(revelations) exalted in’: Part II, X.24.

- *ܩܘܪܫܢܐ* *tešbohta*, ‘glory’: Part II, *Keph.*II.7. Compare *šubha* in Abba Isaia XI.111; ^cAbdisho^c 268b.

- *ܩܘܪܫܢܐ* (*la*) *šawyuta*, ‘disparity, imbalance’: Part I, pp.192-3.

- *ܩܘܪܫܢܐ* *šullama*, ‘fulfilment’: Part II, *Keph.*I.72. Compare *šumlaya* in Evagrius *Epp.*185a.

- *ܩܘܪܫܢܐ* *šarbe* (‘)hrine, ‘other matters’: Part II, XXXVIII title.

C. SOME PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

The extent of Isaac’s debt to Evagrian language stands out very clearly from the above listings: under (a) we have *ityayta*, *metyadd’anita*, *kyanayta*, *pipta*, *qadmayta*, *ruḥanayta* and *ramta*; and under (b) *bīluta*, *baroyuta*, *gušme*, *dina*, *hwaye*, (*dla*) *hule*, *mal’ake*, *pulḥana*, *šebwata*, *ruḥ*, *šrara*, *tlitayuta*, and *tarten*. The harvest under (c), by contrast is much more modest, being restricted (it seems) to *niša d-* and *puršane d-*.

It is also interesting to note some of the common Evagrian phrases involving *theoria* that Isaac does not use; among these one might note the following: (a) *qaddišta* and *šhimta*; (b) *la gšime*, *ḥayla alahaya*, *ida’ta*, *iḥidayuta*, *kawkbe*, *kyana*, *‘alme*, *ruḥane*; (c) *la ta’yuta*, *ida’ta*, *‘uhdana*, *‘alma*, *šumlaya*, *šapyuta*, *taqnuta*.

The Dionysian Corpus did not exert any very strong influence on Isaac, and this is reflected in the rather small number of phrases with *theoria* that he has in common with Sergius’ translation of the work (though Phokas’ revision was made in Isaac’s lifetime, it is most unlikely that he knew of it): (a) *alahayta*, *gnizata*, *ruḥanyata*, *šarrirta*; (b) (‘)raze.

There are many Dionysian phrases with *theoria* which Isaac does not take up.

As for earlier Syriac writers, it is very likely, on other grounds, that Isaac knew Babai’s *Commentary* on Evagrius; the agreements with usage in Philoxenus and Sergius, on the other hand, are probably coincidental.

Similar studies of other key terms in Isaac’s writings will provide a

wider perspective, and some relevant materials are provided in the annotation to my forthcoming edition of Part II, chapters IV-XLI. Only in the light of a variety of such detailed studies will it eventually become possible to sort out and identify the various strands that go to make the web of Isaac's monastic vocabulary. Such studies should also help to throw light on the question of Isaac's possible authorship of the Book of Grace, on the interrelationship between Isaac and his contemporaries Dadisho^c and Shem^con d-Ṭaybuteh, and on the extent of his influence on subsequent East Syriac (and other) monastic writers.