

An acrostic soghitha by Isaac 'the Teacher' in Sinai Syr. 10

[Una soghitha acróstica por Isaac 'el Maestro' en Sinaí sir. 10]

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For Shafiq Abouzayd Founder and Director of *Aram*

Resumen: El artículo ofrece una edición y traducción de una soghitha atribuida a 'Isaac el Maestro, que se encuentran en el Sinaí siriaco 10. A la vista de la gran cantidad de *memre* inéditos atribuidos a uno u otro de los tres poetas siriacos de los siglos V y VI de nombre Isaac, un apéndice proporciona una lista alfabética de los *incipits* de todos los *memre* atribuidos a un Isaac que se encuentran en manuscritos tempranos datables en los siglos VI y VII.

Abstract: The article provides an edition and translation of a *soghitha* attributed to 'Isaac the Teacher', to be found in Sinai Syriacus 10. In view of the large number of unpublished *memre* attributed to one or other of the three fifth- and sixth-century Syriac poets name Isaac, an Appendix provides an alphabetical list of the *incipits* of all *memre* attributed to an Isaac which are to be found in early manuscripts datable to the sixth and seventh centuries.

Palabras clave: Isaac el Maestro. Manuscrito sinaítico. Siriaco.

Key words: Isaac the Teacher. Sinai manuscript. Syriac.



Sinai Syriac 10, written in an estrangelo hand of the eighth or ninth century, contains a very miscellaneous collection of texts, as can be seen from the recent inventory of them provided by Paul Géhin. Among the verse texts, beside various works by Ephrem and Jacob of Serugh, there is a single *soghitha* attributed to 'Isaac the Teacher'. This *soghitha*, with an alphabetic acrostic, is of particular interest in that is rare case of a *soghitha* attributed to 'Isaac the Teacher', almost all his other works being *memre* or *madrashe*.

As is well known, the attribution of texts attributed to 'Isaac' remains extremely problematic; already in the seventh century it was recognized by Jacob of Edessa that there were at least three different poets working in the fifth and sixth centuries with this name, whom he distinguishes as Isaac of Amid, Isaac of Antioch (but from Edessa), and Isaac of Edessa. Jacob, in

P. GÉHIN, "Restitution et datation d'un recueil syriaque melkite, Ambr. A.296 inf., ff.222-224, et Sinaï syr. 10", Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici 42 (2005), pp. 51-68. Géhin shows that the date given by W.H.P. HATCH, An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts (Boston, 1946), Plate XL, is wrong.

Especially important is the list of *qale* for Ephrem's *madrashe* (ff.165v-178r), published by A. DE HALLEUX, "Un clé pour les Hymnes d'Éphrem dans le ms. Sinaï syr. 10", *Le Muséon* 85 (1972), pp. 171-199. For the other texts under Ephrem's name, see my "Ephremiana in Sinai Syr. 10" (forthcoming).

³ Of these, the *memra* on Priesthood (ff.54r-59r) has been published by M. ALBERT, "Mimro inédit de Jacques de Saroug sur le sacerdoce et l'autel", *Parole de l'Orient* 10 (1981/1982), pp. 51-77. The various *madrashe* attributed to Jacob (ff.75v-80r, 189r-190v) will be included in an edition of Jacob's *madrashe* which is in the course of preparation.

It does not feature in the useful inventory of Isaac's works provided by E.G. MATHEWS, "The works attributed to Isaac of Antioch: a preliminary checklist", *Hugoye* 6:1 (2003), pp. 51-76. BICKELL, no. 7 is a *soghitha* (taken from Add. 17141, which contains five further *soghyatha* attributed to Isaac (see Bou Mansour, "La distinction" [see note 6], pp. 35-38); one of these is edited in my "A *soghitha* on the Daughter of Jephtha, by Isaac", *Hugoye* 14:1 (2011), pp. 3-25. For a further *soghitha*, attributed to 'the blessed Isaac', see Add. 14,591, f.59r (attached to a *memra* on the Crucifixion); this manuscript also contains *teshbḥatha* by Isaac, as well as *madrashe* (all be three of these were edited by BICKELL, nos. 16-31). Fragments of *madrashe* on the Nativity by an 'Ishaq *iḥidaya*' are to be found in Sinai Syr. New Finds, *Sparagma* 34.

common with the earliest manuscripts of Isaac's poems, describes introduces Isaac as 'the Teacher', or 'Doctor' (*malpana*). The problem of trying to sort out these different Isaacs is further complicated by the fact that the two editions of works attributed to Isaac, by Bickell and Bedjan, combine materials from mostly later sources, and make very little use of the earliest surviving manuscripts; it is true that Bickell drew on the sixth-century manuscript British Library, Add. 14,591, for his edition of the *madrashe* (his nos. 16-31), and, in a few cases, for that of his *memre* (his nos 15 (= Bedjan, no. 65), and nos. 35-36 (= Bedjan, nos. 66-67). What is needed is an edition of those homilies to be found in manuscripts prior to the eleventh-century collection which Yuḥanon bar Shushan started to put together; especially important for this purpose would be the sixth- and seventh-century manuscripts, British Library, Add. 12,166 (with 4

Thus Add. 14,529, 14,592, 14,612; likewise Zacharias Rhetor, *Hist. Eccl.*, I,9. In Add. 14,591 he is 'the blessed', and in Vat. Syr. 120 'the Syrian'; WRIGHT'S Catalogue does not give the epithet for Add. 12,166, 14,607, 17,158 and 17,164. Gennadius, in his *de viris illustribus* 66, describes the dyophysite Isaac as *presbyter Antiochenae ecclesiae*, living in the mid fifth century and author of a poem on the ruin of Antioch (evidently the earthquake of 458); according to J.A. ASSEMANI, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*. I (Rome, 1719), pp. 211, 230t, this poem will be Vat. Syr. 120, no. 5 (...,), though this might instead refer to another serious earthquake in 526.

G. BICKELL, S.Isaaci Antiocheni Doctoris Syrorum Opera Omnia, I-II (Giessen, 1873, 1877); P. BEDJAN, Homiliae S. Isaaci Antiocheni (Paris, 1903). For the problem, see especially T. BOU MANSOUR, "Une clé pur la distinction des écrits des Isaac d'Antioche", Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 79 (2003), pp. 365-402, "La distinction des écrits des Isaac d'Antioche: les oeuvres inédites", Journal of Eastern Christian Studies 57 (2005), pp. 1-46. "Les discours à caractère christologique et leur appartenance aux Isaac d'Antioche", Oriens Christianus 89 (2005), pp. 8-42, and "Les écrits ascétiques ou 'monastiques' d'Isaac, dit d'Antioche", Journal of Eastern Christian Studies 59 (2007), pp. 49-84.

⁷ Bedjan based his text for these *memre* on other manuscripts, but gave a collation with Bickell's edition on pp. 838-42. Bickell used another sixth-century manuscript (among three others) for his no. 37.

See Vatican Syr. 119, with 60 *memre*.

memre), ⁹ 14,591 (with 12 memre), ¹⁰ 14,592 (with 8 memre), ¹¹ 14,607 (with 5 memre), 14,612 (with 2 memre), 17,158 (with 2 memre), ¹² 17,164 (with 9 memre), ¹³ and Vatican Syr. 120 (with 27 memre); ¹⁴ to these there should now be added Deir al-Surian Syr. 21B (6th/7th cent.; with 4 memre) ¹⁵ and 27A (6th cent.; with 9 memre), ¹⁶ and Sinai New Finds Syr. M9N (with one memra). ¹⁷

Text¹⁸

Sinai Syr. 10, f.187v-189r

לסב שם בילא וכין, אישעם כלפיא []א נול[ב]סולא

א. אלמא עם עליטולי בא ווא אות בויקא ע סבא נסוית ך רבוץ נידא אסיבר בל יבידאי

Three of these have been published, but from other manuscripts: BEDJAN, nos. 2, 6, and 34

Besides the three mentioned above, one further one has been published by C. Moss, "Isaac of Antioch, on the Royal City", *Zeitschrift für Semitistik* 7 (1929), pp. 295-306, and 8 (1932), pp. 61-73.

Two of which have been published, one by BICKELL (no. 8; = BEDJAN, no. 61) from this manuscript, the other by Bedjan (no. 9), but from a different manuscript.

One of these has been published by BEDJAN, (his no. 6), but from a different manuscript.

Eight of these have been published by BEDJAN, (his nos. 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 25, and 51 [=BICKELL, no. 37]), but from other manuscripts.

Eight of these have been published by BEDJAN (his nos. 2, 9, 11, 25, 26, 35, 51, and 58), but from different manuscripts. Editions of some of the unpublished ones are in preparation by E.G. Mathews and one by myself (on Abel and Cain).

Three of these have been published by BEDJAN from other manuscripts (his 2, 4, and 17)

Three of these have by published by BEDJAN from other manuscripts (his nos. 6, 9, and 35).

On Antichrist. Although the catalogue inadvertently attributes the *memra* to Jacob, the photograph indicates clearly that the author is *Ishaq malpana*.

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ב. בשלבה אמנו לשמא וא ופרטון בי להבטוף אית השלבה בי בילה באוא אמנון אית להשלא המאא מטור מה להביל האים היא ואיי

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r. roth exiv rocholom r rocholom r rocholom r rocholom r rocholom rocholo

מ. מא (188r) ושמ ופליף עשא פאוע בבלמם מוגב, מנים אונים למוא שוא ביום בלמם מוגבים מוגב

ו. ומיא ומשרבין בחומלא מבושחלא מבושחלא מחושחלא אחבו:

مر الابناء المام المام

ل. الحجم مله الله المرد العرب مع المتم والله والمرد المرد ا

ر. مدیم ماله دولت الا مادند مدید دیم خطن دیم در مدید می دولت می دولت دیده می دولت در در مادند در مادن

م حلر محند معقد معادی معتده بر معاده بر معادد کر معادد کرد معادد

ל. לגן איא ל אפים גינו גיביא בלר סבוחאי אלא ליטביט גייא גיבוא בל בגיבי ביניאי

a. مريك المنام (1887) المريك المعالم المناعم المناعم

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- - שמ עדא ואבלהמי אוצא האלעשים בל מטבימם משל מוציל ויל ביד בבבבטור אי

 - ه. همه هدیم المحدول المحدول المحدود ا
- - ם. בהלו אלהא בועבא מא מנבין ל מהועה בבה מיץ אלהא בועבא מהנה לעליהאלי.
- ש. שלכא המכ מסא בביאל כאונעה הכיום להואף מס נפרות הבי, בעני אל הבביואא הביא היאי
 - الا الاسلام معنى مناع ما الاعتام و معالم الله ما الاعتام الاع

Translation

Next, a *soghitha* of Mar Ishaq the Teacher [] of Repe[nt]ance

Alaph O God, have pity on my sinful state
When You judge creation,
And when You summon me to the Law Court
Make me to stand at Your right hand.

- 3. *Gamal* The world enticed me and I relied On its possessions that are transient, But at my death, O Lord, I learnt that You alone remain for ever.
- 4. *Dalath* Judge me in Your compassion,
 And not in accordance with the multitude of my sins;
 And because You have allowed me to consume Your Body,
 Hold back the fire from my limbs.
- 5. *He* Look how the fragrance of Your living Body Wafts through all my limbs; Let Gehenna quake at it And let not its burning touch me.
- 6. Waw Let not Your image cry out 'Woe!' At the blows (inflicted by) Your Justice, But because of Your Grace Spare me, although I am unworthy.
- 7. Zayn May the resplendent who minister before You In purity and holiness
 Reconcile Your Majesty
 On behalf of my sinful self, so that it perish not.
- 8. *Ḥeth* You are merciful and full of compassion For You have pity on whosoever invokes You; Have pity, O Beneficent One, on my feeble state When You judge created beings.

- *Teth* You are good, for You do no hold back Your compassion From either the good or the bad;
 Do not avert Your pity from me,
 For in my limbs are Your Body and Blood.
- Yodh You are an Ocean full of merchandise, Whosoever travels on You becomes rich in You. As for me, who have sought refuge in Your Cross, May it become for me the Steersman.
- 11. *Kaph* Hold back, Lord, the (recording) books of Your Justice So that they do not read out the accusations against me, But let Your Grace stand up for me when Your Justice judges me.
- 12. Lamadh Whom do I have to ask, O my Judge,
 To supplicate concerning my wrongdoings
 apart from the Pledge of Life²⁰
 Which I have received from Your holy altar?
- 13. *Mim* O Fountain of Life from Mary Which has been granted to human beings, Which has lowered itself for my sake, Restore me to life for Your own sake.
- 14. *Nun* Let Your compassion come upon me, Lord, On the day of Your (Second) coming with the Watchers,

For *kubernētēs* in Isaac of Antioch, see ed. Bedjan, p.9.

²⁰ For *rahbona*, 'pledge', in a eucharistic context, cf. Isaac of Antioch, ed. Bedjan, p.184, 'See, he has given us as a wage his Body, and as a pledge, the Cup of his Blood', אם משטא מוסטים מוסטים מוסטים הואסטים. The term is commonly found later in this context.

And may Your salvation stand up²¹ for me When Your Justice is judging me.

- 15. Semkath O Medicine of Life which humans have consumed And their wrongdoings have been forgiven, Sprinkle Your pity on my limbs Which have been submerged in Your baptismal font.
- 16. 'e May the Watchers of fire and spirit
 Urge You in the case of my sinful self,
 And because of Your image which is with me,
 Mingle my spirit with their gatherings.
 Gen. 1:26
- 17. *Pe* This would be appropriate to Your Majestic Being Not to allow Your image to perish, For a painter is very much concerned That (his) image should not be destroyed.
- 18. *Ṣadhe* May Your Cross be a bridge²² for me And may I cross over that region of terror And be delivered from the torment That is reserved for those who are ungrateful to You.
- Qoph My thoughts are the accusations against me, Lord, Recalling to my mind my misdeeds; I beg of You, O God, Show pity, with compassion, on my sinful state.

The non-standard spelling n'qwm, with alaph, is evidently deliberate, in order to indicate that the shwa, normally treated as silent, is here, for metrical reasons, to be taken as representing a full vowel.

For the Cross as a 'bridge' in Isaac of Antioch, cf. ed. BEDJAN, pp. 740, 786.

20. Resh May the spit which You received on Your face For the salvation of Adam
 Provide moisture for me
 And let not the burning take hold on me.

Luke 1:28

21. Shin May the 'Peace' which Gabriel gave
To the ears of Mary who bore You
Receive me, O Lord, in Your mercy
At the crossing place of Judgement.

22. *Taw* May my soul live and praise You In that world that has no end,
And may I see Your mercy and acknowledge to You That You are the one who has pity on sinners.

Appendix

Memre by Isaac in sixth- and seventh-century manuscripts²³

In view of what was said earlier about the need for an edition making use of manuscripts earlier than the edition by Yuhanon bar Shushan, it may be helpful here to list, in alphabetical order of *incipits*, those to be found in the earliest manuscripts available, all dated to the sixth and seventh centuries.

²³ For some slightly later manuscripts, along with these, see Bou Mansour, "La distinction", pp.16-21.

Manuscripts

ed. Bedjan, number

Incipit

Vat. Syr. 120	Zingerle, <i>Chrestomathia syriaca</i> (Rome, 1871), pp. 395-405	אגע אענסמי, ^ב סנא
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		תלמבווא איז עזביו טע
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 17,164	11	لج <i>هج</i> ۱۳۵۰ مرنجه ۱۳۵
Add. 14,592	61 (= Bickell, no. 8)	אם לו: כי מן, כחוד
Vat. Syr. 120		זיאי ובכלות וב שאו
Vat. Syr. 120	excerpt in Zingerle, Chrestomathia, pp. 414- 416	מור אור ביו עלה
Vat. Syr. 120		שרעות זונחיז תדית
Add. 14,591	66 (= Bickell, no. 35)	שהעה עדינה עזיע
Add. 14,591 Deir al-Surian 27A	cf. 29 (p.366, line 9)	הלשוז שמשה המה
Deir al-Surian 21B	4	אלשמם היינו המלה
Add. 12,166; Add. 17,158; Deir al-Syrian Syr. 27A	6	הוטף דופחי השות
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 14,592; Add. 17,164	9	מונו משבם השאר

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Vat. Syr. 120; Add.	2	אי שט ניבייה גבהא
12,166; Add. 17,164;		,
Deir al-Surian Syr. 21B		
Vat. Syr. 120; Add.		مريع مسركس عدي
12,166		
,		
Add. 17,164	8	אשטתב , כל, ארעשא
Vat. Syr. 120		אשחר מינאי אנדא
Add. 17,158; Deir al-		האיניאה ערן איני עייניער
Surian Syr. 21B; Codex		
Syriacus Secundus ²⁴		
Add. 14,592		chaeth und at stig
		محال
Vat. Syr. 120		בביני מנאי איף
Vat. Syr. 120; Add.	excerpt in Zingerle,	ス/ ろぞり ステードリ
17,158	Chrestomathia, pp. 405-	ምባወ
	414	
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		てき てゅう てるり
Add. 14,591		מידי אדע לעציז עצדים
Add. 14,592		אסשיז איע איישיים
Add. 12,166; Codex	34	KLEK KUOji KLL
Syriacus Secundus ²⁵		
-		

See the facsimile in W. STROTHMANN, *Codex Syriacus Secundus* (GOFS 13; 1977), pp. 62-66.
 Facsimile in STROTHMANN, *Codex Syriacus Secundus*, pp. 66-72.

Vat. Syr. 120; Add.	25	בסו אולב אבוםם
17,164		_obur
17,104		
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		כו מלבא מכ ל, ועף
Den ar Sarian Syr. 2771		
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		4 - m. 1 am c i
Ben ar Sarian Syr. 2711		ر معالة م
		1,222,00
Add. 14,607		دعله عتب د: سح
1100111,007		ر مریم
		,
Add. 14,591	65 = Bickell, no. 15	كلاه وزحير يمعير
1100111,001	ge Brenen, nor re	
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		עיע לייפאש אאשע:
		· ·
Vat. Syr. 120	ed. S.Kazan, OC 45	אר א איע עדיי
	(1961), pp. 31-53	محمەت
	(1501), pp. 61 66	
Add. 14,591		אר אוצר ר האו
,		, גסיד
Vat. Syr. 120; Add.		מב ל, כו לבא
14,612		, and the second
11,012		
Add. 14,612		מב ל מסמי מליא
1100111,012		
Deir al-Surian Syr. 30C ²⁶		מב ל, כיי, אמנא
		√⊃i Ł
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		מב מ ו , מלא
		Riask
	•	

Although this ms. dates from 903/4, this *memra* on Sergius and Bacchus is included here, since the incipit in the only other witness, Vat. Syr. 117 (no.227), is lost., and so is absent from my "The published verse homilies of Isaac of Antioch, Jacob of Serugh and Narsai: Index of *incipits*", *Journal of Semitic Studies* 32 (1987), pp. 279-313, and MATHEW'S index in *Hugoye* 6:1 (2003), pp. 51-76. For Vat. Syr 117, see BOU MANSOUR, "La distinction", pp. 21-23.

Vat. Syr. 120		מיבחוץ דווף כי
Sinai NF Syr. M9N		ק דייטט עדיו עלש
Vat. Syr. 120	35	אב האבמה הביוה הלומב
Vat. Syr. 120		יאלז לזס ,ס ל <i>ילם</i> לול
Add. 14,591		אסאסט איייט אייט אייט רבאטטט
Vat. Syr. 120		سهتاكاه ما يدية بحليه
Add. 17,164	1	הצייו העוש הושלה
Vat. Syr. 120		הי ו לח לטוד עופן <i>טי</i>
Vat. Syr. 120		יטערט ומכט אומל
Add. 14,591		لازعه لا المامل
Add. 14,607		שטר אטפוא וברטוף
Add. 14,591		בו משאשה המששא
Vat. Syr. 120		حد عدمل هزه لمحمد عد
Vat. Syr. 120		שם גייו עייטיגריי קר
Add. 17,164		בל מומ כביול אומא
Add. 14,607		במי איז בלר שוא
Add. 17,164		הציין וכא נישל
Add. 14,607; Deir al- Surian 27A		לכנת מם שי אלמא

A J J 1 J 5 O 1		مرعله ۵۵ مسرح
Add. 14,591		32 10112 g(t) Antes
		<u> </u>
Y		
Vat. Syr. 120		ריבַפּט שוּבָאר: ערבַ
Add. 14,591		Kitzz Kisk Ils
1100.11,331		
Add. 14592		איזא ופך כי אואא עדיע לא
1166. 11892		
Add. 14,591	67 = Bickell 36	מן ומוכא לבו מלבא
7100. 14,371	07 = Bicken 30	
Add. 14,591		حميل له ملم دحن
Add. 14,391		
Add 14,592		ראים בנישא
Add 14,392		سع العال كالمام
A 11 14 501		പ്രതം പ്രത അ
Add. 14,591		מטא במטנא
Add. 14592		א שמי תאידישו עידר
Add. 14,607		א בייא ביי, ומטא ל
Vat. Syr. 120		भक्षा ८४४००
•		
Vat. Syr. 120	58	مندلام حنر حدد قلع
,		,
Deir al-Surian 21B	17	אסטא בים ביו האניביו
		~\i\~
		1
Vat. Syr. 120	cf. Zingerle,	عدجه حداله حدل قلع
, at. 5y1. 120	_	
	Chrestomathia, pp. 292-	
	301.	
Add. 14,591		スリス と スのか
		4 محبر
		, and the second
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 14,	51 (= Bickell, 37, lines 1-	حباته مد عامن مه
591; Add. 17,164	595, 1711-1924	ď
571, Aug. 17,104	373, 1711-1724	
Add. 14,591	ad Mass 755 am 7 (1020)	מסב אספה למ
Auu. 14,371	ed. Moss, ZfSem. 7 (1929),	القائد كالقبير كرا

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	pp. 298-306	אשבבא
Add. 14,592		איזה להשיטלישת ליוש

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