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 In view of the large number of unpublished *memre* attributed to one or other of the three fifth- and sixth-century Syriac poets name Isaac, an Appendix provides an alphabetical list of the *incipits*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.

طب

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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.¹ Among the verse texts, beside various works by Ephrem² and Jacob of Serugh,³ 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',⁴ 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

¹ 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.

² 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 *teshbhatha* 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 *ihidaya*' are to be found in Sinai Syr. New Finds, *Sparagma* 34.

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common with the earliest manuscripts of Isaac's poems, describes introduces Isaac as 'the Teacher', or 'Doctor' (*malpana*).⁵ 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,⁶ combine materials from mostly later sources, and make very little use of the earliest surviving manuscripts; it is true that Bickell drew on the sixthcentury 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).⁷ What is needed is an edition of those homilies to be found in manuscripts prior to the eleventh-century collection which Yuhanon bar Shushan started to put together;⁸ especially important for this purpose would be the sixth- and seventh-century manuscripts, British Library, Add. 12,166 (with 4

⁵ 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 (..., hough 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.

⁸ 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 $(6^{th}/7^{th} \text{ cent.}; \text{ with 4$ *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

אי אלמא ער עליטאי, בא גגאי אוע בועאא אי איז א בועא אי איז א איז מבא גמיטא ל, לבטא געא

⁹ Three of these have been published, but from other manuscripts: BEDJAN, nos. 2, 6, and 34.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

¹² One of these has been published by BEDJAN, (his no. 6), but from a different manuscript.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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).

¹⁵ Three of these have been published by BEDJAN from other manuscripts (his 2, 4, and 17),

¹⁶ Three of these have by published by BEDJAN from other manuscripts (his nos. 6, 9, and 35).

¹⁷ On Antichrist. Although the catalogue inadvertently attributes the *memra* to Jacob, the photograph indicates clearly that the author is *Ishaq malpana*.

¹⁸ Published by kind permission of Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, Egypt.

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ב בגלובת האינגול המשא הא אבבהו ב ליבהואי אונגול בי אינגול האינגול בי אינגול השיעא מהנות בא גאולא אולא

ד. דטע בדיעבטאמי מאמעשיאי איז איז איז איז איז איז איז די דעדיי, הבאר באר גיא גאים באלע אין איז גיא די אודיי

מ. מא (1881) העות ובגו אי עישא באחע בבלמה, מולב מי מא מיש אייני בבלמה אייני בעומי שאוני אייני א

אאמורביז האמשה דה הבים הל אהלה הים מ ארוה הלי הל אה מטעה בו לא הלא הלא

ו. והא השרשין בהדביתי בעובולה העישהולה הניה נובה לדבהולתי עלב עליהול, ולה ולהביל

ל. לד איש ל אישים היות הובאה בלר שבאהא, אלא להכבוא היינאה הכבוא בא בהבע בהגישאי

ת. בשיא ועיא (188V) וב ביית ואשאב לבוייא ואאמעא, באלא יעבי באלאי

ב. בידא גנהוא הגומשא ש ופישאי בל עליטאי, משאיטאי, איידי א

אר אואיא ג' אאיליא ג' אאיליא גביא אואיא גבעא אישאא גאולפישא די אישעאא געליי לבפי, בלעבטאאי:

> ם. מהלד אר ביו, נוחשבת מא ביובוא ל מהויעת בבה ביאה ארמא היונה לעליהאלי

i. ioan גמבאא בא אפאי (1891) האר בסומות גאגת מס נואב א מודה, סאא נמבחא בי מגואי

ש. שלהא המהב מהא גבויאיל באינעה והיות לגוא אי הם נעבלע ביו, בעונאי אב הביואאי וביא וינאי

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.

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2.	Beth In Your Cross I have taken refuge, Let not Your Grace deny me, And because I have confessed You like the Thief, Spare me when You come.Luke 23:42
3.	<i>Gamal</i> 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.	<i>Dalath</i> 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.	<i>He</i> 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.
б.	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.	<i>Heth</i> 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.

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- *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.¹⁹
- 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,

¹⁹ 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', המש המשה דוגבים הא במשה The term is commonly found later in this context.

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And may Your salvation stand up^{21} 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. <i>Pe</i> 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. Sadhe May Your Cross be a bridge ²² 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.
19. <i>Qoph</i> 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.

²¹ 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.
²² For the Cross as a 'bridge' in Isaac of Antioch, cf. ed. BEDJAN, pp. 740, 786.

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	20. <i>Resh</i> May the spit which You received on Your face For the salvation of Adam Provide moisture for me	Matt. 27:30
	And let not the burning take hold on me.	
	 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. 	Luke 1:28
	22. <i>Taw</i> May my soul live and praise You In that world that has no end, And may I see Your mercy and acknowledge to You	

Appendix

Memre by Isaac in sixth- and seventh-century manuscripts²³

That You are the one who has pity on sinners.

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</i> <i>syriaca</i> (Rome, 1871), pp. 395-405	אות איניטשי ^ג סגואי
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		<u>қағта</u> дт <u>қ</u> тғі оқ
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 17,164	11	אט גמודאי ט ^ק יידאי
Add. 14,592	61 (= Bickell, no. 8)	אוםלג בי די, בענה
Vat. Syr. 120		אראי גבובות וב עאו
Vat. Syr. 120	excerpt in Zingerle, Chrestomathia, pp. 414- 416	מוד אוד דש אוד
Vat. Syr. 120		אייעועד ועזיו עדיע
Add. 14,591	66 (= Bickell, no. 35)	നാന് സ്ഷാദ സ്ന്
Add. 14,591	cf. 29 (p.366, line 9)	אידא נישטו נוידרא
Deir al-Surian 27A		
Deir al-Surian 21B	4	אלשיש גועק שידיאא
Add. 12,166; Add. 17,158;	6	רגוטר די <i>ואיז</i> בטקב
Deir al-Syrian Syr. 27A		
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 14,592; Add. 17,164	9	אלמא סבא עוז א

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Vat. Syr. 120; Add.	2	א מס וכעבי דביא
12,166; Add. 17,164;		
Deir al-Surian Syr. 21B		
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 12,166		איז בישלישי דיויאיז
Add. 17,164	8	Kunaz, in , Kar
Vat. Syr. 120		אשטע נואנא שדענא
Add. 17,158; Deir al-		ארעישי אראיש
Surian Syr. 21B; Codex		
Syriacus Secundus ²⁴		
Add. 14,592		באמפידא עוטיא בו שויץ הנוך
Vat. Syr. 120		בבשה דינאי אילן
Vat. Syr. 120; Add.	excerpt in Zingerle,	רבישאי האניזש
17,158	<i>Chrestomathia</i> , pp. 405-414	പരന
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		איזאיזי איזיט אוחש
Add. 14,591		בבדא גדה איצא ביאי
Add. 14,592		הבולבא אייאי גבינבא
Add. 12,166; Codex Syriacus Secundus ²⁵	34	مسعد مريما، مسعد

 ²⁴ See the facsimile in W. STROTHMANN, *Codex Syriacus Secundus* (GOFS 13; 1977), pp. 62-66.
 ²⁵ Facsimile in STROTHMANN, *Codex Syriacus Secundus*, pp. 66-72.

Vat. Syr. 120; Add.	25	حماته حتمته أهم
17,164		Lagar
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		בי דברא חב לה ועי
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		ב ו הי מים וימב ל ק בהאביאי
Add. 14,607		בשא שביין בו עבד הסביא
Add. 14,591	65 = Bickell, no. 15	کللہ ii حسر نم ی نر
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		גאיבוך ביקידא אואי
Vat. Syr. 120	ed. S.Kazan, <i>OC</i> 45 (1961), pp. 31-53	גידא אייזיץ די שעל השטב
Add. 14,591		זיטז מאיר לוזצר אר רבשו
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 14,612		מב ל, כי לביא
Add. 14,612		חב ל, המיצה עלישה
Deir al-Surian Syr. 30C ²⁶		חב ל, דו אוליא שובמ
Deir al-Surian Syr. 27A		חב דו, דאאיז אידהיא

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²⁶ 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.

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Vat. Syr. 120		שיבחטקא דאוץ בי
Sinai NF Syr. M9N		קל גאי געויד א
Vat. Syr. 120	35	nim restrantion restored resto
Vat. Syr. 120		יאישא שי שיישי אושא
Add. 14,591		עסוא מעידא בבאבא
Vat. Syr. 120		مطيناكاسط نايميه مطيبه
Add. 17,164	1	הנושה הנושה
Vat. Syr. 120		האפוזה שווס, עין ו בזיז
Vat. Syr. 120		אובה אובע אובל
Add. 14,591		rine rill rial
Add. 14,607		אחשש אחשי אישמע אמצ
Add. 14,591		ע הגיטיאי טבוניסאי
Vat. Syr. 120		בו שובאל פוט ל-איבאי
Vat. Syr. 120		ר גידטטיא ועי בעו
Add. 17,164		ר בנות הביוא אומא
Add. 14,607		לחב אלש וארא ישבי
Add. 17,164		הייאריז נבא
Add. 14,607; Deir al- Surian 27A		לבנת חום סיך אלחא

Add. 14,591		דיצעיטי דיני שאדיאי בא
Vat. Syr. 120		באד ואיבועט טפביא
Add. 14,591		גווד אבוא נדווא
Add. 14592		רך אנצא על כי אנצא
Add. 14,591	67 = Bickell 36	די ובי אבי אבי אבאי איין איין איין איין איין
Add. 14,591		בחיר ל, סאח ובי
Add 14,592		سعه وونه وتعلمه
Add. 14,591		പ്രയം പ്രയ ഞ
Add. 14592		בעיא נמי <i>ו</i> וליא ישב ל
Add. 14,607		בייאי בי, נמסא ל
Vat. Syr. 120		יזשטו יגאדיטם
Vat. Syr. 120	58	منعم من المعند معند معند معند
Deir al-Surian 21B	17	i العلمة المحمد المصمة العلمة المحمد المصمة المحمد المحمد المحمد المحمد المحمد المحمد المحمد المحمد المحمد الم
Vat. Syr. 120	cf. Zingerle, <i>Chrestomathia</i> , pp. 292- 301.	عمیہ حدامہ حد قلع
Add. 14,591		רשות מא השא האמשיל
Vat. Syr. 120; Add. 14, 591; Add. 17,164	51 (= Bickell, 37, lines 1- 595, 1711-1924	רביריים סדר שלדבו סאו
Add. 14,591	ed. Moss, ZfSem. 7 (1929),	אמב המב, לה

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	pp. 298-306	K swazzs
Add. 14,592		אוזה אשרטיאשע אואא

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