

SCHEMA OF THE SYRIAC ŠĤIMO

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ABSTRACT

The current paper gives a schema of the liturgical book known as the Book of Šĥimo with some historical remarks. It will be shown that the received tradition goes back at least to the early modern period (ca. 1500s) and some elements are attested in the literature in the Syriac renaissance period. At least in one instance, it is argued that an element assigned to priests and bishops must have originally been assigned to the deacon. Snippets from an XML-TEI encoding demonstrate how digital humanities projects can encode liturgical texts.

The *Book of Šĥimo* [The Book of the Prayers of the Simple (or Ordinary) Week] contains the Liturgy of the Hours according to the West Syriac rite: the Syriac Orthodox Church in the Patriarchate of Antioch and the *Maphrianate* of the East (Mosul, Malankara), the Syriac Catholic Church in the Patriarchate of Antioch, and the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in India. It is closely related to the tradition of the Maronite Catholic Church in the Patriarchate of Antioch, and

perhaps they share a common origin.¹ This study aims at providing a schema of this text, based on the modern editions of the various rites, with remarks on modern practices from the Syriac Orthodox rite. By schema, I mean an outline of the elements that constitute the liturgical texts, how these elements are organized sequentially, and the attributes (e.g., who is the speaker, what is the melody of a hymn) assigned to these elements.

Our earliest manuscripts of the Šhimo belong to the Early Modern period, but scholars have found a few liturgical fragments from earlier periods. Barsoum notes fragments preserved in the Damascus Museum dating from around the 8th century.² He claims that their text is similar to the received tradition. Barsoum informs us that some manuscripts credit Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) as the initial compiler. He also tells us that he examined some manuscripts according to the traditions of Edessa. While the literary content varies among manuscripts, the schematic structure remains the same.

This study shows that all the main elements of the schema appear in various commentaries dating back to the early second millennium. We can be confident that the structure of the prayers found in the printed editions represents the schema of the text as it stood in the Early Modern period (ca. 15th or 16th century), if not earlier. Indeed, early fragments found in the Cairo Geniza contain texts that a young deacon today might select and chant, though they do not reveal much about structure.³

¹ I presented an earlier version of this paper at The Vth (North American) Syriac Symposium at the University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, June 25–27, 2007. Sebastian P. Brock and Mor Severus R. Akhrass kindly read the penultimate draft and gave valuable suggestions.

² Barsoum, *al-Lu'lu' al-Manthūr* p. 73-75.

³ G. Kiraz, "Learning Syriac and Garshuni in Early Modern Egypt: Evidence from the Cairo Genizah" in Geoffrey Khan, Sabine Schmitdke, and Sarah

Scholars have not analyzed the structure of the Ššimo in any detail. The late Robert Taft provides some brief observations on the present living tradition,⁴ and Christine Chaillot outlines the main daily offices prepared by Sebastian P. Brock.⁵ Eugene Aydin (aka Mor Poloycarpus) produced an essay in Syriac detailing the sources of the text with a discussion on the differences between the Orthodox, Catholic and Maronite printed editions,⁶ and I have relied upon his helpful lists of editions and translations.⁷

The text editors also provide us with further information. Barsoum, Konat, Griffith, and Mnayyer introduce the faithful to using the text, with Konat's introduction being the most extensive. However, they all assume familiarity with the tradition. Having said that, such instructional material is no more valuable than New Jersey's road signs which are helpful if you already know how to reach your destination. As such, only the trained clergy can perform the prayers. Numerous parts are

Stroumsa (eds.), *Studies in Literary Genizot* (= *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* 8 (2020): 1–26; G. Kiraz, "A Young Syriac Pupil in the Cairo Genizah: Or.1081 2.75.30." *Fragment of the Month: Newsletter of the Cambridge University Library Genizah Unit*. August 2018. <https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/departments/taylor-schechter-genizah-research-unit/fragment-month/fotm-2018/fragment-6>.

⁴ R. Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West* (1993) 239–247.

⁵ Christine Chaillot, *The Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East, a brief introduction to its life and spirituality* (Geneva: Inter-Orthodox Dialogue, 1998), pp. 99, 156–157.

⁶ Eugene Aydin, ܐܘܓܢܝܢ ܐܘܕܝܢ ܐܬܬܠܥܝܢ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ :ܡܪܝܢܐ in *Heto* 3 (2001), no. 5: 46–35.

⁷ See also A. Baumstark, "syr-Antioch" in *Der Katholik* 82 (401–427, 538–550) & 83 (43–54); A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* 47, n.4; where he lists mss); J. Tomajean, "La semaine liturgique dans le rite syrien" in *Parole de l'Orient* (1966) no. 1, 95–114. For the Maronite Lilyo and Šafro, see J. Tabet, *L'Office commun maronite* (Kaslik, 1972).

absent from the printed texts (see, for example, the *Sedro* schema below).

As far as I know, this article is the first attempt to describe the schema of a west Syriac liturgical rite. Such an analysis is helpful for digital humanities projects seeking to represent or encode the text. I will provide a conceptualization of the main structures and their elements. I will begin with a description of the printed editions upon which the study is based (I), an outline of the canonical hours (II), a schema of the text (III-VI), observations on the thematic structure (VII), and finally concluding remarks (VIII). An appendix gives snippets from an XML-TEI schema for consideration in digital humanities projects.

I. MODERN EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

The Syriac Orthodox editions bear the title ܣܕܪܐ ܕܝܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ “The Book of the Prayers of the Simple (*or* Ordinary) Week,” and the Syriac Catholic editions bear the title ܝܚܬܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ “The Prayers of the Simple Days of the Week.” One observes that the adjective ܡܫܝܚܐ “simple” is a modifier of ܡܫܝܚܐ “week” and ܝܚܬܐ “days,” not of the prayers themselves. In this terminology, a “simple” day is a non-feast day and excludes Sundays. (The Konat edition is the exception giving the title ܣܕܪܐ ܕܝܚܬܐ ܡܫܝܚܐ “The Book of the Simple Prayer.”) In his introduction to an Arabic translation of the Šhimo text, Yousef Mnayyer stresses this referential property of the title.⁸

The Syriac Orthodox church produced its first edition at the Deir al-Za‘faran press in 1890. A second edition by Barsoum was produced at the same press in 1913 based on nine MSS (seven according to his introduction!), one of which is by a certain monk named David (fl. 15th century).⁹ A third edition was

⁸ Mnayyer, *al-’Išhīm* (Damascus, 1994) p. 13.

⁹ Šhimo (Mardin, 1913) p. 6.

produced in Jerusalem in 1934 and became standard. It has been used in subsequent editions from Bar Hebraeus Verlag in Holland. The Barsoum text incorporates the western tradition of the Patriarchate of Antioch and the eastern tradition of the Maphrianate of Tikrit (now the Mosul and Nineveh Plains tradition).¹⁰ The Malankara tradition produced an edition by Matta Konat in 1915. While Konat's edition contains many differences in textual renderings, Konat's structure is identical to Barsoum's.

There are four Syriac Catholic editions: the 1696 edition produced by Athanasius Safar 'Aṭṭār of Mardin; the 1787 edition by Elias Amirkhan, itself based on the 1696 edition; the 1835 edition by Patriarch Peter Shabadin through the Propaganda Fide; the 1902 edition by Aphram Rahmani; and finally, the 1937 edition by Gabriel Tabbouni.¹¹

Although there are more Syriac Christians in the diaspora than in the homeland, hardly any churches have produced translations of the *Šhimo*. In parishes where the tradition is kept, mostly the Syriac Orthodox of Europe, the Syriac text is used. While prose prayers appear in translation here and there, poetry is far more difficult to translate for liturgical purposes, and the musical component is not easy to bridge across languages. However, a few translations exist. Mnayyer mentions an unpublished French translation by "brother Kristian who belongs to the young brothers of Jesus."¹² Bede Griffiths produced an English translation (n.d., reprinted by Gorgias Press in 2005), from which Madey produced a German translation in 1995.¹³ Acharya, produced another translation

¹⁰ Barsoum, *al-Lu'lu' al-Manthūr* p. 73-75.

¹¹ Aydin, p. 41-42.

¹² Mnayyer, p. 19.

¹³ Johannes Madey, *S'himo Oder Das Stundenlob der Syro-Antiochenischen Kirche an Wochentagen* (1995).

based in Griffith, but this version contains numerous adaptations.¹⁴ A few translations appeared in Malayalam, in part or in full, between 1910 and 1998. Mnayyer produced his Arabic translation in 1994. Finally, in 1969 Heinrich Husmann produced an edition of musical notations of the main hymns based on recordings by the late Qurillos Jacob Qas Girgis.¹⁵

II. THE CANONICAL HOURS

The west Syriac canonical hours follow Psalm 118 [MT 119]:164—**ܡܠܬ ܫܒܥܐ ܗܝܘܢ ܕܝܢܝܐ ܕܝܡܝܢ** “Seven (times) a day I praised you” and are hence seven. The ecclesiastical day begins at sunset, following the Jewish tradition. As such, (1) **ܥܫܐ**; (hereafter, Ramšo) “evening” is the first of the prayers; it corresponds to Latin vespers. Ramšo is usually indicated in liturgical texts with **ܕܥܫܐ** “dawn” followed by the day, e.g., **ܕܥܫܐ ܕܝܠܝܐ ܥܫܐ** “the dawn of Monday,” Monday being the day to come. One performs this prayer today on Sunday evening, i.e., the eve of Monday.

The same applies to the next hour, (2) **ܥܫܐ ܕܥܫܐ** (Sutoro) “covering, protection,” which corresponds to Latin Compline. Its name derives from Ps 91:1 (**ܫܝܬ ܥܫܐ ܕܥܫܐ ܕܥܫܐ**) “He who sits in the protection of the Most High”). This Psalm, recited during this hour, is what the faithful associate with this hour. Yet, its text does not appear in most of the editions considered here and in none of the manuscripts under consideration, demonstrating the interconnection between the written modality and orality.

The next hour is (3) **ܥܫܐ** (Lilyo) “night,” corresponding to Latin nocturnes. It consists of three **ܡܩܥܐ** (*qawme*) or “watches” (literally “standings”); some manuscripts (e.g., MS¹⁶²⁴) (should

¹⁴ F. Acharya, *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit. I, A Weekly Celebration of the Economy of Salvation* (Kurisumala Ashram, Vagamon, 1983).

¹⁵ Heinrich Husmann, *Die Melodien der Jakobitischen Kirche, Die Melodien des Wochenbreviers* (Wien: Hermann Böhlaus Nachf, 1969)

this be written MS 1624?) MS, for which see under III) use ܐܡܡܫܬܐ (Teshmeshto) “service” instead of Qawmo. Then comes (4) ܫܦܪܐ (Šaphro) “morning,” which is the apposition of Ramšo; it corresponds to Latin matins.

Then, we have (5) ܬܠܬܐ ܫܥܬܐ or the Third Hour, corresponding to Latin terce. The numbering of hours is offset by sunrise. Hence, the Third Hour—depending on the season—is approximately around 9:00 AM. Then, (6) ܫܦܬܐ ܫܥܬܐ or the Sixth Hour, corresponding to Latin sext, approximates our noontime. Finally, (7) ܬܬܝܬܐ ܫܥܬܐ or the Ninth Hour corresponds to Latin none, sometimes in the early afternoon.

A few Syriac writers cite these hours from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Jacob of Bartelleh (d. 1241) gives a list of them with additional commentary in his *Simotho*.¹⁶ Bar ʿEbroyo (d. 1287), in both his *Hudoye* (V, 5) and the *Ethicon* (I, 1, 8), states that the hours did not initially include Sutoro; it was later added in order to comply with ܡܫܬܬܐ “sevenness.” Ignatius bar Wahib (d. 1333), in a brief unpublished treatise on liturgical prayers,¹⁷ counts the three *qawme* of Lilyo as individual hours, giving a total of ten canonical hours. We can be confident that the canonical hours of the Šhimo go back to at least the early second millennium.

In earlier monastic settings, each hour was probably conducted independently at its own time. The received tradition, however, groups them into two synaxes (ܫܢܝܬܐ). The first is the evening synaxis, sometimes recited between 3:00

¹⁶ Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, *The Treasures*. Translated into Arabic by Behnam Daniel al-Bartali (Aleppo: Dar Mardin, 2007). The translation is based on three mss: the first is in the Syriac Orthodox Bishopric of Mosul dated 1718, the second belongs to bishop Saliba Shimoun of Mosul dated 1889, and the third belongs to the translator dated 1912.

¹⁷ Barsoum, *Al-lulu* 545, citing mss Homs (might be in Damascus now), Berlin Sachaw 151, Cambridge 2887, and Mosul.

PM and 6:00 PM—depending on local traditions—consists of the Ninth Hour (of the current day in modern reckoning), followed by Ramšo and Sutoro (of the following day). For instance, on a Sunday evening, one begins with the Sunday Ninth Hour (the last hour of Sunday), then moves to the Ramšo and Sutoro of Monday. The second is a morning synaxis that is sometimes recited between 5:00 AM and 7:00 AM, depending on local traditions. It consists of Lilyo, Şaphro, the Third Hour, and the Sixth Hour, all of the current day. The following diagram outlines the hours corresponding to modern times.

7	1	2	3	4	5	6
9 th Hr	Ramšo	Sutoro	Lilyo	Şaphro	3 rd Hr	6 th Hr
Evening Synaxis			Morning Synaxis			

Note that the break of a new ecclesiastical day occurs *during* the evening synaxis. After the completion of the 9th Hour, which follows the melody set of the current day, the melody will switch for Ramšo of the newly issued day. This cannot be more pronounced than on Palm Sunday, which is followed by Passion Week with its specific prayers and melodies. The faithful gather again on Sunday evening, after the completion of Palm Sunday festivities, for the service of Nahire that commemorates the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1–13). They begin with the 9th Hour with the festive melodies of Palm Sunday. Then, the entire atmosphere changes as Ramšo issues a new day, Monday, the beginning of Passion Week. The melodies become somber. The Trisagion is replaced by unique passion phraseology. The large Phenqitho volumes of the Lent season—used for the Liturgy of the Hours instead of the

Šhimo—are put away and replaced with the Passion Phenqitho.¹⁸

In some monastic settings, an additional noon synaxis is observed during which the 3rd, 6th, and 9th Hours are recited. In such cases, it would be a repetition of the same hours, albeit using a different text. The first edition of a noon synaxis was published by Abraham Konat¹⁹ (n.d.). Çiçek then produced a newer edition in 1989.²⁰

III. SCHEMA OF THE HOUR

The following discussion is based on the published texts of the following editions:

- C = Syriac Catholic ed.
- H = Husmann, *Die Melodien der Jakobitischen Kirche, Die Melodien des Wochenbreviers* (1969)
- O^H = Syriac Orthodox Holland ed. < O^J
- O^J = Syriac Orthodox Jerusalem ed. < O^Z
- O^K = Syriac Orthodox Konat ed.
- O^Z = Syriac Orthodox Za‘faran ed.

In addition, when discrepancies are found, the following MSS were consulted:²¹

¹⁸ Phenqithos have the text for the Lent cycle and for passion week in different volumes. Some modern editions, however, combine them in one volume.

¹⁹ ܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ (Mar Julius Press, Pampakuda, n.d.).

²⁰ ܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܠܚܝܬܐ (Holland, 1989). The same book was published at the same time in two trim sizes, large and medium.

²¹ I did not have access to an important early manuscript, Charfet 5/1. According to Armalet, it is a Beth Gazo from the 11th century. If true, this could be the oldest existing Beth Gazo which contains the prayers of

- MS^{Osaka}

A Beth Gazo from the Osaka collection, C942369413. Though undated, the first fragmentary portion of the MS, containing the Šhimo text, is probably one of the earliest surviving Beth Gazo manuscripts. The paleography is from the first half (if not the first quarter) of the second millennium, judging from the squarish ܐ, the ܕ, and a good number of Estrangela-like ܐ and ܝ. I am grateful to Hidemi Takahashi for sharing the images of this manuscript with me.
- MS¹⁶²⁴

A Beth Gazo in Library of the Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese of the Eastern United States, Paramus, NJ, originally from St. Mark's library, Jerusalem. The scribe began in 1624 and came back to complete the MS in 1651 (the Šhimo portion is at the beginning of the MS).
- MS^{Kiraz}

A Šhimo scribed by Giragos, son of Daoud (Kiraz), 1900, in the G. A. Kiraz private collection.

Two of the canonical hours, Ramšo and Şaphro, are set apart by their length, not only by the textual length of hymns but rather their inclusion of elements absent in the other hours. I dub Ramšo and Şaphro as Major Hours, while all the others as Minor Hours. The following table gives the elements found in each type.

I. Major Hours (Ramšo & Şaphro)		II. Minor Hours (Sutoro, Lilyo, 3 rd , 6 th , & 9 th Hrs)	
I.1	Opening Prayer	II.1	'Eqbo (Lilyo <i>qawme</i> only)
I.2	Psalms		
I.3 ܐ	Shubho in 'Eqbo		

Šhimo (item 9); see Issac Armalet, *Catalogue des Manuscrits de Charfet* (1937) 85 ff.

I.4	Ḥusoyo I		
I.5	Qolo of Incense (odd number of stanzas)		
I.6	Prayer of Incense		
I.7	Qolo after Incense (odd)		
I.8	Quqalion (even)		
I.9	Shubho in 'Eqbo		
I.9	Ḥusoyo II	II.2	Ḥusoyo
I.10	Qolo of Ramšo/Şaphro (even)	II.3	Qolo (even)
I.11	Bo'utho (even)	II.4	Bo'utho (even)

As can be seen above, the schema of the Minor Hours is basically the tail of the Major Hours. The relevance of odd/even stanzas and the sigla ʾ and ʿ are discussed in the appendix.

I.1 A Major Hour service, i.e., Ramšo or Şaphro, commences with ܬܡܝܠܐ ܕܥܡܝܢܐ or an opening prayer. The texts of this prayer—or even any indication of its existence—are absent in O^{ZH}. This is indeed one of the difficulties of determining the schemas of liturgical prayers without knowing the practice itself. Texts typically do not indicate fixed aspects of the liturgy. But we can be sure that the opening prayer is not a Malankara characteristic (O^K) or a Catholic addition (C). It is indeed mentioned by Jacob of Bartelleh (d. 1241) concerning the Ramšo, Lilyo, and Şaphro hours.²²

I.2 Then follows a recitation of a psalm. It should be stressed that “a Psalm” does not correspond to our modern Psalm divisions. An ecclesiastical Psalm usually corresponds to one or more Psalms of the modern divisions, and not always

²² Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, p. 108-110.

contiguously.²³ A psalm may be recited in two different manners: 1) *فَعْلًا* “simply” where the psalm is recited continuously by one or more deacons, one “verse” after the next (again, “verse” does not correspond to modern divisions), or 2) *حَسْبًا* “in response” where a response follows each “verse” of the psalm in the form of a hymn stanza. There is disagreement with regards to the Ramšo psalm: O^{ZH} prefixes the actual psalm text with *حَسْبًا*, but provides no hymn for the *حَسْبًا*, while C explicitly states that the psalm is recited *فَعْلًا* “simply,” and hence does not require a *حَسْبًا* hymn. MS¹⁶²⁴ and MS^{Kiraz} agree with O^{ZH}.

I.3 Then follows a *عَقْبُو* (‘Eqbo), literally “footstep, heel,” metaphorically meaning “to follow.” The ‘Eqbo is always prefixed with a Gloria, *عُذِّبْ لَأَلَا هَكَذَا هَذِهِ مَا قُبِعَا* “praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” recited by the most senior priest present. Elsewhere, the Mosul Phenqitho dubs this formula with *عُذِّبْ* “i.e. saying the *عُذِّبْ*.” The Šuboḥo is followed by *فَمِنْ حُكْمٍ وَدَبْرًا حَتَّى حَتَّى حَتَّى أَفْهَمَ* “from now and forever, and ever, Amen,” recited by the *gudo*. The rubric *عَمَدَ وَحَصَا* denotes this entire exchange in O^{ZH}, and the rubric *عَمَدَ وَحَصَا* in C. The three *qawme* of Lilyo also begin with a ‘Eqbo (II.1).

Parenthetically, we know of (a now humorous) squabble over the Šuboḥo. It took place in 1771 at the beginning of the Orthodox-Catholic split within the Syriac Orthodox Church. The Syriac Orthodox Patriarch George IV entered the church in Aleppo while a local priest, Joseph Hajjār, was already celebrating the liturgy. It seems that Joseph had just joined the Catholic party. At the time of the Šuboḥo, Joseph chanted the *عُذِّبْ لَأَلَا* phrase even though the Patriarch—the highest-ranking priest—was present. The Patriarch was quite annoyed and shouted at the priest in Arabic, *ورك انت تعطي شيخ وما تعرف من في واقف*

²³ Ramšo Ps. 140/141, 141/142, 118/119:105–112, 116/117 (simple); Šaphro Ps. 51 (simple), 63 (in ‘Enyoyo), and 113/158 (simple).

“Hey! You say the Šuboḥo? Don’t you know who is standing here?”²⁴

I.4 Then follows the first Sedro, whose schema is best described separately as this genre occurs in other liturgical texts.

I.5 The Sedro is followed by the First Qolo, or Qolo before Incense. In MS¹⁶²⁴ and MS^{Kiraz}, it is called the First Qawmo. The Qolo for the Ramšo of Monday in the modern editions begins with four introductory stanzas, followed by four stanzas for the Mother of God, another four for the saints, another four for repentance, and one (four in O^K) for the departed. Other days may have different themes (to be discussed below), but all begin, after the introductory stanzas, with the Mother of God and end with the departed. Some stanzas are prefixed with a ܦܬܝܓܗܘܡܐ (Phethghomo), a portion of a verse from the Psalms.

I.6 Then follows the Prayer of Incense. This prayer may go back to the seventh century or even earlier. Bar ‘Ebroyo quotes Jacob of Edessa (d. 708), saying, “even if the time of the morning or evening prayer comes and there is no incense, perform, O priest, the prayers without incense.” It is mentioned more explicitly by Jacob of Bartilleh.²⁵ Prior to this prayer, the deacon chants the phrase ܡܠܟܐ ܡܪܝܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܡܪܝܘܢ “Merciful Lord, have mercy upon and us and help us,” which is only preserved in the oral tradition.

As far as I can tell, the entire Prayer of Incense is omitted in all the received traditions. There is an implicit mention of it in O^K as the previous Qolo (I.5) is called the Qolo of Incense, and the following Qolo (I.7) is called the Qolo after Incense; additionally, the two Qole are separated by the word ܡܠܟܐ which starts the oral phrase mentioned above. There is no indication

²⁴ MS Sbath 131, f. 48r; I am grateful to Feraz Krimsti for pointing out this document.

²⁵ Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, p. 108.

of the Prayer of Incense in O^{ZH}; the preceding Qolo is simply called the First Qolo, and the following is the Second Qolo. MS^{Osaka} supports O^K; Both MS¹⁶²⁴ and MS^{Kiraz} are silent on the matter. This prayer is explicitly mentioned in C, giving the full text of the prayer.

I.7 Then comes the Second Qolo, or Qolo after Incense. It has a similar structure as I.5.

1.8 Then follows the Quqalion. It consists of short Psalm verses interspersed with Hallelujah.

1.9 Next comes a second ‘Eqbo.

1.10 A Second Sedro follows. But it is almost always omitted in the received tradition.

1.11 Then follows a third Qolo. Depending on the service, it is called the Qolo of Ramšo or Şaphro. It consists in the modern editions of four stanzas only.

1.12 The service ends with a Bo‘utho. It is always a *mimro* (metrical poem) composed either in the meter of St. Jacob of Sarug (12 syllables per strophe), St. Ephrem (7 syllables per strophe), or St. Balai (5-syllables per strophe). The Mimro begins with a ܡܝܡܪܐ consisting of two strophes, each sung by a *gudo*, and ends in a ܡܝܡܪܐ or ܡܝܡܪܐ, which, like the ܡܝܡܪܐ, are two strophes. The main body consists of an even number of stanzas. A multi-theme Bo‘utho is marked as ܡܝܡܪܐ “general” and covers four themes: Mary, the saints, repentance, and the departed; in such a case, it is chanted in its entirety (i.e., stanzas cannot be skipped in order not to skip a theme).



Akhrass²⁶ observed that the schema of the Major hours could be roughly divided into two *qawme*, duplicating an almost exact structure: the first qawmo consisting of I.2–I.7 and the second qawmo consisting of I.8–I.11. This point becomes apparent

²⁶ Personal communication, 5/19/2022.

when one considers that the Quqalion (I.8) consists of Psalm verses (cf. I.2). The ‘Eṭro (I.6) becomes the only element found in the first *qawmo*, but not in the second. Only the first *qawmo* has an Opening Prayer (I.1). This general schema of a service (Syriac ܩܘܩܠܝܢ) is prevalent in all church rites.

The Minor Hours simply consist of a Sedro, Qolo, and Bo‘utho. C begins the Sutoro with Ps 4, followed by a fixed ‘Eqbo. These are absent in O^{ZJH}, MS¹⁶²⁴, and MS^{Kiraz}.

Before leaving this section, one needs to mention the schema of the ܡܝܪܢܐ (M‘irono), which precedes the first Qawmo of Lilyo. It begins with the Prayer of M‘irono, sometimes called the Opening Prayer, followed by Ps. 133/134, 118/9:169-176, 116/7 recited in ‘Enyono. Then follows the Prayer after M‘irono, itself prefixed with Kyrie-eleison three times. Both prayers are attested in MS¹⁶²⁴.

IV. ܠܝܠܝܐ SCHEMA

I.4 The prayer of ܠܝܠܝܐ is mentioned by Jacob of Barelleh as one of the elements in the Liturgy of the Hours.²⁷ The ܠܝܠܝܐ is a prose text that consists of two main parts, a ܦܪܝܡܝܐ (Promion), a Greek loanword meaning “preface,” and a longer ܣܕܪܐ (Sedro) “list, array, items in a specific order.” While manuscripts—and printed texts—typically give just these two elements, the entire ܠܝܠܝܐ consists of more elements preserved only orally. These are outlined in the schema below.

	Part	Speaker	
ܠܝܠܝܐ	Proclamation		
ܠܝܠܝܐܐ		Deacon:	Stomen Kalos (Let us stand well)
ܠܝܠܝܐܐܐܐ		People:	Kyrie eleison

²⁷ Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, p. 108.

H ₂	Šuroyo:		
H _{2a}		Priest:	ܒܠܐ ܡܚܕ ...
H _{2b}		People:	ܡܚܕܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ...
H _{2c}		Priest:	ܐܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ...
H ₃	Promion	Priest:	<i>text</i>
H ₄	Mḥasyono		
H _{4a}		Bishop (if present):	ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ
H _{4b}		Priest	ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ...
H _{4c}		People:	ܐܡܨܥܝܐ
H ₅	Sedro	Deacon:	<i>text</i> (prefixed with ܡܚܨܥܝܐ)
H ₆	Qubolo	Priest:	ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ...
		People:	ܐܡܨܥܝܐ

H₁ The entire thing commences with the deacon proclaiming a Greek loan phrase, ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ (H_{1a}), which corresponds to the Syriac liturgical phrase “ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ” let us stand well.” The people are to respond with the Greek loan ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ (H_{1b}), which also corresponds to a Syriac liturgical phrase, ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ. These could have entered Syriac from Greek during the Byzantine reconquest of Asia Minor in the tenth century. Apart from the Malankara tradition, H_{1a} and H_{1b} are collapsed. A single deacon chants them as one unit. It is not clear when this occurred. M¹⁶²⁴ already gives the entire thing without space, ܡܚܨܥܝܐ ܡܚܨܥܝܐ.²⁸

H₂ The oral portions continue with the Šuroyo (I borrow the term from Mushe of Mardin, see below). The priest

²⁸ For further discussion on this phrase, see G. Kiraz, “A Proclamation Out of Place, ‘Stomen Kalos, Kyrie-Eleison’ and the Nicene Creed.” In *Ktheebboth hago: Festschrift in Honour of His Holiness Ignatius Zakka I Iwas*, ed. Roy Thomas, 417–31. Chicago: St. George Syrian Orthodox Church of Malankara, 2005.

proclaims *يَا أَيُّهَا فَكُّهُ وَتَسْعُهُ دَسْنُهُ هُيَ هُنَا تُحَدُّ* “let us all pray and beseech the Lord for mercy and compassion” (H2a) to which the faithful respond with *هُنَا هَدَسْنُهُ وَتَسْرُ حَكْمُهُ وَتَدَوُّهُ* “Merciful Lord, have mercy upon us and help us” (H2b). The priest then recites (H2c),

أَعْمَسُوا ذُرِّيَّائِي وَأَعْمَسُوا قُرْبَانِي وَعَمَسُوا عَيْنِي فَاقْضِ لِي إِلَهُي وَاقْضِ لِيَ إِلَى اللَّهِ إِكْرَامِي

May we be worthy to offer up continually, at all the time and in all seasons, praise, thanksgiving, glory, adoration, and never-ceasing exaltation.

In the received tradition, apart from Malankara, the entirety of H2 is collapsed into one element and is chanted by the priest alone. If a bishop is present, he recites the entire thing.

But one must pause here and question if the received tradition is a corruption of an earlier tradition. Is it possible that H₃ was initially assigned to the deacon? The use of the jussive, expressed in the prefixed (imperfect) form *يُؤَلِّ* is typical in proclamations made by the deacon. It is ubiquitous in the Qurobo, or Eucharistic, liturgy. Before the reading of the Gospel, the deacon proclaims, in the jussive, *يُؤَلِّ هُتَعَمِّدْ كَهَكْأُ*, *يُؤَلِّ هُتَعَمِّدْ كَهَكْأُ*, “let us give heed and listen to the Gospel full of life.” His subsequent proclamation in the pre-Anaphora is the exact words of H_{2a}, just after he declares to the faithful that the celebrating priest is placing incense “before the merciful Lord” (*مَبْرَمْ هُنْأُ هُنْأُ هُنْأُ*). Here too, the faithful respond with the exact words of H_{2b}. The deacon’s subsequent proclamation is just before the recitation of the creed, again with a jussive, *يُؤَلِّ هُتَعَمِّدْ كَهَكْأُ*, “let us all stand well in prayer.” At the beginning of the Anaphora proper, the deacon instructs the faithful, again in the jussive, *يُؤَلِّ هُتَعَمِّدْ كَهَكْأُ*, “let us give peace to one another” and right after the giving of the peace, *يُؤَلِّ هُتَعَمِّدْ كَهَكْأُ*, “let us bow down our head in front of the merciful Lord.” The thurifer also uses the jussive when calling upon the people, *يُؤَلِّ هُتَعَمِّدْ كَهَكْأُ*, “let

us stand well.” During the diptychs, deacons instruct the faithful, ܠܢ ܢܦܠܝܐ ܕܢܦܠܝܐ “let us pray and beseech” and later ܠܢ ܢܦܠܝܐ “let us beseech the Lord.” With almost every proclamation, there is a response by the people. H2a must have once belonged to the deacon rather than the priest, let alone the bishop.

While the Šuroyo never appears in manuscripts or printed editions, we know about it—and indeed its text—from Mushe of Mardin, the monk who traveled to Europe to print the New Testament in 1555. After collaborating with Johann Albrecht Widmanstad (1506–1557) to produce the *editio princeps* of the NT, the two men put together a primer for the Syriac language.²⁹ After introducing the alphabet with some exercises, they published a few prayers for which Mushe must have been the source. A Ḥusoyo is given with the full text of the Šuroyo. It is most likely that Mushe included the text of the Šuroyo explicitly, as Europeans would not be familiar with the oral elements of the liturgy.

Ḥ3,5 The Promion (Ḥ3) and the Sedro (Ḥ5) are the only elements known from the written text. The two elements form a set, the former recited by the priest and the latter by the deacon. In the case of the Šḥimo, an appendix contains all the Ḥusoyo texts in the form of Promion-Sedro pairs. One cannot read a Promion of one Ḥusoyo and follow it with the Sedro of another.

Ḥ4 The ܡܚܝܝܢܐ (Mḥasyono) is interspersed between the Promion and the Sedro only if the deacon offers incense and is usually omitted in the daily offices. This text is long and survives orally. Here too, Mushe of Mardin gives us a version of the text.

The Mḥasyono is prefixed with the phrase ܕܚܝܬܐ ܕܡܚܝܝܢܐ “by the fragrance of incense” (Ḥ4a), chanted by the bishop if present. It is more likely that this phrase is associated with the

²⁹ Widmanstad [and Mushe of Mardin], *Primo Elementa* (1555).

action of placing incense in the censor by the highest-ranking priest, which would explain why the bishop would say this phrase if present.

Ⲭ6 After the recitation of the Sedro, the highest-ranking priest recites the ⲙⲉⲃⲗⲁ (Qubolo), the formula being ⲙⲉ ⲁⲕⲗⲁ ⲙⲉⲃⲗⲁ “May we receive from God remission of debts and forgiveness of sins in both worlds, forever and ever.” Jacob of Bartilleh mentions the Qubolo when he refers to the Sedro of the Lilyo hour.³⁰

The entirety of the Ḥusoyo is delivered today in three different methods. At Mor Gabriel Monastery, southeast Turkey, the entire thing is recited *explicitly* in some hours, especially those of Lilyo. In many of the Tur Abdin parishes, and those in the Diaspora that originate from Tur Abdin, the Ḥusoyo (Šuroyo + Promion + Sedro) is recited in *silence* by a priest while the *gudo* goes on with what follows. In most parishes, the entire Sedro is *omitted*, but the proclamation Ḥ1 is retained as part of chanting the adjacent hymns.

V. QOLO SCHEMA

It is worth providing some comments on the structure of the Qolo. A Qolo is basically a stanzaic poem (kind of a Madrosho) with a specific metrical structure. The basic unit is the syllable or vowel count, called in Syriac ⲙⲉⲃⲗⲁ. Stress does not play any role in Syriac poetry because Syriac syllables are all of the same weight (bimoraic) as unstressed short vowels in open syllables (which would be monomoraic) are absent.

The next unit is the poetic phrase denoted by an unmarked caesura, a break or a pause in a line of verse. The poetic phrase is bound because it cannot stand alone in a line. Typically, long lines of seven or more syllables have such caesurae. Syriac does

³⁰ Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, p. 110.

not have a technical term for the poetic phrase, and some poets are unaware of it. For example, it is commonly known that the *qolo* **هَـؤُـلَا هَـؤُـلَا هَـؤُـلَا**—used often in dialog poems—consists of lines with seven syllables each. It is less known that each line consists of two poetic phrases, 4+3 syllables, for the melody to work smoothly. There is sometimes an intended discourse between the poetic phrases. The next unit after the line is the stanza itself. This point is illustrated with the *qolo* named **هَـؤُـلَا** whose meter, given from right to left, is:

5+4 5+7 5+7 5+4 5+4 5+7 4+7

Here is an actual stanza. I use the punctuation ‘:’ to denote a caesura break. A colon denotes a line break. A period denotes the end of a melodic section (to be discussed next).

4+7	هَـؤُـلَا:	فَلَا أَوْيَلَا وَأَفْصَه: لَيْلَا وَهَعْدَا:
5+7		صَبَّ أَلَا مُنَيَّ نَسَّ: حَلَّحَا وَحَلَّهَدَا.
5+4	فَرَحُكُنَا:	وَوَعَصِرَ يَدَا دَهْ: وَنَدَا وَهَجُنَا:
5+4		بَوَحَّجَدَا: لَحَلَّ رَقَبَ حَقِيدَا.
5+7	هَـؤُـلَا:	حَضَمَ نَدَا حَلَّ رَوَّحَا: هَدَا حَلَّ مَقَلَا:
5+7		هَدَا نَسَا فَلَكَ كَقَفَلَا: وَأَوَّ سَتَلَا نَمَ دَهْ:
5+4		وَكَلَّهَمَ: رَحَدَا لَحَبَّوِي حَ.

The musical layer adds another complication. Each stanza consists of a **هَـؤُـلَا** “beginning,” an optional **فَرَحُكُنَا** “middle,” and a **هَـؤُـلَا** “end.” Typically, the poetic (and melodic in the case of chanting) structure of the **هَـؤُـلَا** and **هَـؤُـلَا** is either exact or very similar. Notice that each poetic phrase corresponds to a grammatical phrase in terms of discourse. It is seldom that a grammatical phrase crosses over poetic phrases. A further melodic subdivision, not shown above, could split words. For instance, all 7-syllable caesurae are divided *melodically* into 2+5 syllables. The boundary in line 2 occurs in the middle of **صَبَّ أَلَا**:

5+(7 = 5 + 2) **صَبَّ أَلَا مُنَيَّ نَسَّ: حَلَّحَا وَحَلَّهَدَا.**

The same occurs with **نَسَا** in line 6:

Such subdivisions could vary across regional musical traditions, a topic that is beyond the scope of the current paper.

As a syntaxis consists of more than one hour, how does one determine where one hour ends and where the next begins?

But here, silence is associated with actions. In silence, the recitation of a Qawmo is associated with making the sign of the cross a few times. Until quite recently—around the end of the twentieth century—the silence was sometimes a form of incoherent mumbling. In the last decade or two, especially during events when many of the faithful are present, the mumbling turns into full-fledged oral action.

The *qawmo* consists of the Trisagion (...قَبْلَهُ اُحْدَهُ) followed by the Lord's prayer (...يَعْمَلُ). The Trisagion is audible with specific melodies in some hours, but the Lord's Prayer is silent. The only exception is the *qawme* of Lilyo where the entire thing is replaced with ... حَسْبُكَ يَا اَلِهِي which is mentioned by Jacob of Bartelleh.³¹ The full texts of these delimiter prayers are given in Barsoum's *al-Tuhfa al-Rūḥiyya*, a guide to the faithful in Arabic that has been translated into many languages.³²

³¹ Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, p. 110.

³² A. Barsoum, *al-Tuhfa al-Rūḥiyya* (Aleppo, 1956, 5th ed.), with many editions and translations.

VII. THEMES

Before closing, it is worth noting the thematic organization of the Šhimo. Each day/hour has a theme. These themes range from glorifying Mary (مُحَبِّا لَمَرْيَا), calling upon the apostles (مُعِشَا), and sometimes the evangelists (مُؤَلِّقَا), remembering the saints (مُحَبِّا)—or one particular saint (مُحَبِّا لَمَرْيَا), or remembering the martyrs (مُؤَلِّقَا) and the departed (مُؤَلِّقَا). Another theme is commemorating the cross (مُؤَلِّقَا) during the resurrection season. Repentance (مُؤَلِّقَا) is another central theme. A multi-theme hymn is called مَرْيَا "general, common." The table in Appendix 1 gives the days of the week, the hours, and the themes assigned to each hour.

In order to remember this complex arrangement, the Malphone came up with a poem, cited by Konat, that spells out the various themes,³³

مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا	مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا
مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا	مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا
مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا	مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا
مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا	مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا
مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا	مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا
مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا	مَرْيَا مَرْيَا مَرْيَا

Sunday is for the Resurrection; Monday is for repentance;
Likewise on Tuesday (i.e., repentance); Wednesday for the Virgin.
Thursday for the Apostles and the Doctors of the Holy Church;
Friday for the Living Cross and the chosen martyrs and the saints.
Saturday, during which the Lord rested from all the deeds that he
accomplished, is for the reverend priests and the saints; and all the
faithful departed.

³³ Konat ed., intro p. II.

This thematic structure also goes back to at least the beginning of the second millennium. Jacob of Bartelleh mentions that the Qolo of Sutoro is for repentance, agreeing with the above table.³⁴ The themes of the Ramšo *Quqalion* and *Bo'utho* seem to represent an earlier thematic arrangement known from Bar Salibi's treatise against the Melkites,³⁵

Sundays are consecrated to the festival of the Resurrection; Mondays and Tuesdays are devoted to prayers and repentance; Wednesdays are to the Mother of God, to the martyrs, and the dead; Thursdays to the Apostles and Doctors, to the Mother of God, to the martyrs, and to the dead; Fridays to the Cross; and Saturdays to the Mother of God, to the martyrs, and the dead.

VIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper argues that the schema of the Šḥimo goes back to at least the early modern period (ca. 15th century) if not to the first quarter of the 2nd millennium, as many of its elements are mentioned by writers of the Syriac renaissance period. It has also been shown that a complete understanding of the liturgical genre requires a close familiarity with the received tradition, where the written text engages quite intimately with orality, not to mention silence. Indeed, the written-oral-silence interface has not been addressed by scholarship to the best of my knowledge.

Another remark also argues that "corruption" is part of a living tradition. It has been proposed, for example, that the Šuroyo of the Ḥusoyo prayer (viz., ܥܠܐ ܡܥܝܢ) must have belonged

³⁴ Mar Severios Yacoub Albartali, p. 108

³⁵ A. Mingana, *Woodbrook I*, p. 33.

once to the deacon on the bases of philological analogy with the Qurobo liturgy.

Digital Humanities projects may find this study helpful in representing liturgical texts. Some snippets appear below.

APPENDIX: TEI-XML SCHEMA

The following are TEI-XML snippets for encoding the text of Šximo. The main `<TEI>` section includes one `<text>` element (lines 2–12) and another `<body>` element (lines 3–11). The main division element (`<div>`, line 4) under the body has two attributes. The first, `type`, states that the content is a book. The second, `subtype`, defines the genre as `šximo`. It is proposed that the rest of the schema is dependent on this value, `šximo`. It determines the schema of the rest of the XML. Other liturgical books would have other values for `subtype`; the rest of the XML will look differently.

```

1  <TEI>
2      <text xml:lang="syr">
3          <body>
4              <div type="book" subtype="šximo">
5                  <div type="day" n="xad bšabo">
6                      <div type="hour" n="7">
7                          <!-- Liturgical elements here -->
8                      </div>
9                  </div>
10             </div>
11         </body>
12     </text>
13 </TEI>
```

A Qolo, such as `ܩܠܐ` mentioned above, can be encoded with the following snippet. The entire thing is a division of `type qolo` (line 1 below). Again, this type determines the schema that follows. The `<sp>` element (line 2) designates the speaker,

The `<rubric>` element (lines 3–7) gives the qolo name with a link to a bethgazo encoding (line 4) and also designates the tune number (line 5).

[illegible]

One can, of course, choose to fine-tune this encoding further to encode the caesura breaks or even the melodic breaks within words that were mentioned above.

Texts that appear elsewhere, or the oral liturgical elements described above, can be encoded once and referred to with the `<ref>` element. Here is an example for linking to a *ḥusoyo* text.

```
1 <div type="ḥusoyo">
2   <p><ref type="ḥusoyo" target="...">ܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ</ref></p>
3 </div>
```

One can explicitly states all of the oral aspects of the liturgy in the XML encoding.

```
<colophon>
  <p>
    ܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ
  </p>
</colophon>
```

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Appendix 1: Table of Daily Prayers

	Su	Mo	Tu
Ramšo		جھسدا	
Quqalyon		احدال او زعما	احدال او زعما
Bo'utho		"	"
Sutoro	احدال	احدال	
Lilyo, Q I		محبلا گده	
Lilyo Q II		میتما	میتما
Lilyo Q III		احدال	احدال
Lilyo Q IV		جھسدا هج سب مهوما	
Bo'utho		احدال	احدال
Şaphro		جھسدا	
Quqalyon		احدال او فنا	احدال او فنا
Bo'utho		"	"
3 rd Hr		احدال	احدال
6 th Hr		جھسدا	
9 th Hr		ختبلا	

Appendix 1 : Table of Daily Prayers (cont.)

WE	TH	FR	SA
ܐܡܝܢܐ			
ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ	ܐܡܝܢܐ ܐܘ ܐܡܝܢܐ	ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ	ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ
ܐܡܝܢܐ	"	ܐܡܝܢܐ	"
ܐܡܝܢܐ			
ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ		ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ ܐܘ ܡܠܟܐ *	ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ
ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ
ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ / ܡܠܟܐ
ܐܡܝܢܐ ܐܘ ܡܠܟܐ			
ܐܡܝܢܐ	ܡܠܟܐ ܐܘ ܡܠܟܐ	ܐܡܝܢܐ	ܐܡܝܢܐ
ܐܡܝܢܐ			
ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ	ܐܡܝܢܐ ܐܘ ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ
ܐܡܝܢܐ	"	"	"
ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܠܐ	ܐܡܝܢܐ	ܡܠܟܐ	ܡܠܟܐ
ܐܡܝܢܐ			
ܡܠܟܐ			