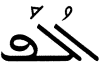
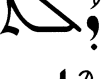


THE SYRIAC ALPHABET: SERṬO SCRIPT

Transcription	FINAL (no-join to L)	FINAL (joins to R)	MIDDLE (joins to L + R)	INITIAL (joins to L)	INITIAL (no-join to L)	Name	Hebrew	Arabic	Origins of Letter Names
ʿ	ܰ	ܰ			ܰ	 Ōlap ^h	א	ا	ʿalp = ox
b	ܠ	ܠ	ܠ	ܠ	ܠ	 Bēt ^h	ב	ب	beyt = house
g	ܡ	ܡ	ܡ	ܡ	ܡ	 Gōmal	ג	ج	gaml = throw-stick
d	ܢ	ܢ			ܢ	 Dōlat ^h	ד	د	daleth = door
h	ܥ	ܥ			ܥ	 Hē	ה	ه	hō = man calling?
w	ܦ	ܦ			ܦ	 Waw	ו	و	waw = peg
z	ܩ	ܩ			ܩ	 Zain	ז	ز	zên = weapon / olive tree
ḥ	ܫ	ܫ	ܫ	ܫ	ܫ	 Hēt ^h	ח	ح	ḥêt = fence
ṭ	ܥ	ܥ	ܥ	ܥ	ܥ	 Ṭēt ^h	ט	ط	ṭêt = spindle?
y	ܦ	ܦ	ܦ	ܦ	ܦ	 Yūd ^h	י	ي	yad = hand / arm
k	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Kōp ^h	כ	ك	kapp = palm of hand
l	ܡ	ܡ	ܡ	ܡ	ܡ	 Lōmad ^h	ל	ل	lamd = ox-goad
m	ܥ	ܥ	ܥ	ܥ	ܥ	 Mīm	מ	م	mêm = water
n	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Nūn	נ	ن	nun = fish
s	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Semkat ^h	ס	س	samk = prop?
ʿ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 ʿĒ	ע	ع	ʿên = eye
p / f	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Pē (Fē)	פ	ف	pê = corner
ṣ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Ṣōd ^{hē}	צ	ص	ṣad = plant
q	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Qūp ^h	ק	ق	qup = ?
r	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Rīš	ר	ر	raʿš = head
š	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	 Šīn	ש	ش	šann = bow [šin = tooth]
t	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	ܩ	Taw	ת	ت	taw = mark




Standard Ligatures




Lōmadh followed by Ōlaph:  ←  + 




In the Western Serṭo script: Ōlaph followed by Lōmadh:  ←  + 


In the Eastern script only: Taw followed by Ōlaph:  ←  + 

Scribal embellishments (added by some scribes for the fun of it!)


























Semkath followed by Ṭeth:  ←  + 

Ṭeth followed by Lōmadh:  ←  + 

Word ending in Lōmadh followed by new word beginning with Ōlaph: :  ←  + 

Final Semkath: 

Vowels


Vowel	Name	West Syriac	Greek	East Syriac	Examples
a	<i>ftōḥō</i>	 or 	A		 <i>ba</i>
ō (< ā)	<i>zqōḥō</i>	 or 	O		 <i>bā / bō</i>
e	<i>rvōṣō arrīkō</i>	 or 	E		 <i>be</i>
ē	<i>rvōṣō karyō</i>				 <i>bē</i>
i / ī	<i>ḥvōṣō</i>	 or 	I	 or 	 <i>bī</i>
o / ō	<i>ʿṣōṣō allīṣō</i>				 <i>bō</i>
u / ū	<i>ʿṣōṣō rwīṣō</i>	 or 	OY		 <i>bū</i>


The West Syriac vowel forms are miniature representations of the corresponding Greek vowel letters. They can be placed above or below letters, and this depends entirely upon the space available and the whim of the scribe!


The original Syriac pronunciation of *zqōḥō* is *ā*, as it still is among speakers of the East Syriac dialect, but this became *ō* in the West Syriac dialect. For pedagogic reasons it is this West Syriac pronunciation that is used by beginners in Oxford.

The names of the vowels differ both between and within the East and West Syriac grammatical traditions. Most notably, in the Eastern tradition the following variants are often found: *rvōṣō arrīkō* > *zlāmā pšīqā*; *rvōṣō karyō* > *zlāmā qaṣyā*; *ʿṣōṣō allīṣō* > *rvāḥā*; *ʿṣōṣō rwīḥō* > *rvāṣā*.

Other signs

1. A line under a letter indicates that it is not to be pronounced: e.g.  = *mdītō* (= city).

2. Two dots (syōmē) over a noun indicates it is a plural form: e.g.  = *ktōbē* (= books)

If there is a Rīš in the word, the double dots replace this letter's single dot: e.g.  = *zarē* (= seeds).

Handwriting practice lines with Arabic script at the top of the page.

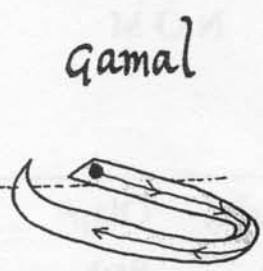
Angle of Paper
 $\approx 30^\circ$



Aleph



Beth



Gamal

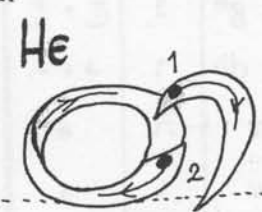
Dalat



Zain



Heth



He



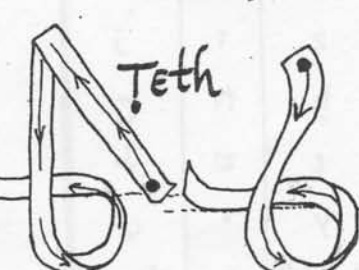
Waw



Kaph



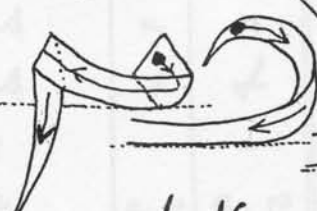
Lamad



Teth



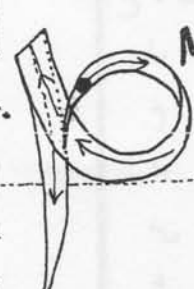
Yud



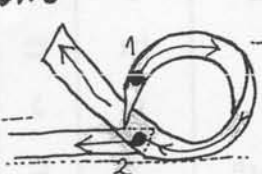
Semkath



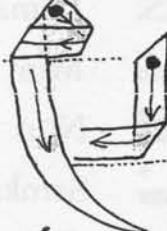
Ain



Mim



Nun



Qoph

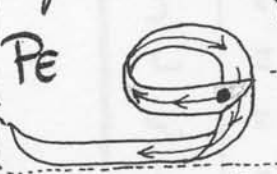
Resh



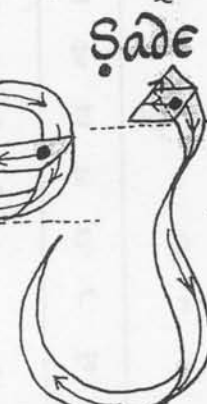
Shin



Tau



Pe



Sade



Handwriting practice lines with Arabic script on the left margin.

Handwriting practice lines with Arabic script on the right margin.