

# Poems on Mār Qūryāqōs by ‘Ab̄dišō’ of Gāzartā

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## Abstract

This article examines poems dedicated to the martyr Qūryāqōs by the eminent East Syriac poet and patriarch ‘Ab̄dišō’ of Gāzartā (d. 1570). For the first time the peculiarities of these works and their place in the development of Syriac poetry are examined. Additionally, a critical edition and translation of one of the poems, the *turgāmā*, is given, based on available manuscripts. A special place in the article is given to the correlation of the poetic texts under consideration with the prose versions of the hagiography of this martyr, which was used as a source by ‘Ab̄dišō’ of Gāzartā.

## Keywords

‘Ab̄dišō’ of Gāzartā – Mār Qūryāqōs – Church poetry – hagiography – poetic rendering – hymnological tradition – commemoration of saints

## 1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>

The growing role of poetry in late East Syriac literature is well-known. This development is clearly visible already in the Syriac Renaissance (11th–early 14th cent.) and continues in subsequent periods, including under Ottoman

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1 I would like to thank Dahlia Khay Azeez, Anna Moiseeva, and Aaron Butts, who helped with this study. Support from the Basic Research Program of the National Research University Higher School of Economics is gratefully acknowledged.

rule. One of the most productive poets of the Ottoman period, ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā, the second patriarch of the Chaldean Church and a prolific scribe, made a significant contribution to the development of ecclesiastical poetry. The list of themes in his works is extensive.

Like other examples of Syriac poetry, his works can be divided into those intended for liturgical use and those intended for personal reading. In general, there is a fairly high proportion of liturgical manuscripts in the corpus of his work, which correlates well with major trends in Syriac literature during this period, as noted by Helen Murre-van den Berg.<sup>2</sup>

Among the extant poems attributed to ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā, there are three hymns dedicated to Mār Qūryāqōs (the martyr Cyriacus): two of the *‘ōnītā* type, although significantly expanded, and one in the form of a *turgāmā*. These poems deal with the life of this early Christian martyr of the Roman period and contain descriptions of his torment, to varying degrees. Qūryāqōs was popular in Eastern Christian communities.<sup>3</sup> We know of no works by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā about any other saints. For this reason, the analysis of these works will undoubtedly be of interest to scholars of Syriac literature. It is also important to establish the influences behind these hymns.

## 2 Poems on Mār Qūryāqōs: General Overview

The poems in question have never been critically edited, nor have they been subject of special studies. All three are included in the checklist of texts by Heleen Murre-van den Berg, among those ascribed to ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā,<sup>4</sup>

2 See H.L. Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures. The Church of the East in the Eastern Ottoman Provinces (1500–1850)* (Eastern Christian Studies, 21, Leuven: Peeters, 2015) pp. 67, 98–202, and especially p. 145.

3 His rich dossier exists in various languages: A. Dillmann, ‘Über die apokryphen Märtyrergeschichten des Cyriacus mit Julitta und des Georgius’, *Sitzungsberichte der Königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* (1887), pp. 339–356; G. van Hoof, ‘Sanctorum Cyrici et Julittæ acta Græca sincera, nunc primum edita’, *Analecta Bollandiana* 1 (1882), pp. 192–207; E.M. Husselman, ‘The Martyrdom of Cyriacus and Julitta in Coptic’, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 4 (1965), pp. 79–86; N. Sims-Williams, ‘A Sogdian Fragment of the Martyrdom of Cyriacus and Julitta’, in P. Fodor, G. Mayer, M. Monostori, K. Szovák, and L. Takács (eds.), *More modoque: Die Wurzeln der europäischen Kultur und deren Rezeption im Orient und Okzident. Festschrift für Miklós Maróth zum siebenzigsten Geburtstag* (Budapest: Forschungszentrum für Humanwissenschaften der Ungarischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2013) pp. 235–239.

4 Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, pp. 323–324.

and the *turgāmā* is discussed in the corresponding section of her monograph.<sup>5</sup> These three poems are discussed in this article, along with an edition and translation of the *turgāmā*, based on the extant manuscripts (see Appendix 1).

As is typical of hymns for holy days, both *ōnyātā* in question were meant to be chanted at the ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܠܝܠܐ (night service), celebrated on the eve of a feast or commemoration, probably each at one of the two ܩܘܪܒܢܐ (sg. ܩܘܪܒܢܐ; *mawtbā*)<sup>6</sup> that make up an important hymnological part of the service.<sup>7</sup> The *turgāmā* is performed at the ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܘܚܪܝܫܬܐ (Eucharistic service), on the morning of the feast day itself. Thus, the poet has created a small hymnological corpus for all the services connected with the commemoration of Mār Qūryāqōs.

In addition to these three hymns by ‘Abdīšō’ dedicated to Qūryāqōs, others are known, which are not attributed to ‘Abdīšō’. In particular, MS Orient. Fol. 619 of the *Wardā* hymnological collection in the National Library, Berlin contains, in addition to the three by ‘Abdīšō’, two more anonymous *ōnyātā*, as indicated by their headings.<sup>8</sup> Altogether, they form a special block in the manuscript containing the *ōnyātā* appointed for the commemoration of Mār Qūryāqōs (MS Orient. Fol. 619, ff. 180<sup>r</sup>–196<sup>v</sup>), followed by the *turgāmā* in question.

Within this block, the anonymous *ōnyātā* precede the three poems attributed to ‘Abdīšō’, which begin with a heading mentioning the author’s name.

5 See Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, pp. 172–176.

6 The *mawtbā* is a part of the night service sung sitting, during which both Psalms and hymns are performed.

7 Some of the *ōnyātā* were composed for the Eucharistic service (*qurbānā*), but this is always indicated in the manuscripts of the *Wardā* collection. Such hymns explain the Gospel reading read at the service and are performed immediately thereafter. Thus, they are quite different in content from the hymns addressed in this article (see A. Pritula, *The Wardā: An East Syriac Hymnological Collection. Study and Critical Edition* [Göttinger Orientforschungen, 1. Reihe: Syriaca 47, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015] pp. 84–85, 87–88). The hymns performed at the *mawtbē* of the night service indicate when they should be chanted, namely after one of the priest’s three exclamations that are given at this service. These are designated before each hymn as ܩܘܪܒܢܐ, ܩܘܪܒܢܐ, or ܩܘܪܒܢܐ. These abridged designations are well-known to clerics of the East Syriac Church, with whom I have had the honor to communicate. Additionally, a very detailed study in the liturgical usage of the *ōnyātā* in the *Wardā* has been prepared by Dahlia Khay Azeez, a scholar with expertise in East Syriac church manuscripts and also a singer and reader in the Baghdad cathedral of the Ancient Church of the East (D. Khay Azeez, ‘The Connection between the Collection of *Wardā* and the Lectionary System’, *Biblia Arabica: Tests and Studies*, forthcoming).

8 See E. Sachau, *Verzeichnis der syrischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Asher & Co., 1899) pp. 244–250, no. 65. These hymns, whose titles do not identify the author, are immediately followed by hymns entitled “Hymns composed by ‘Abdīšō’ of Gāzartā.” This leads us to the conclusion that the preceding hymns are anonymous and not composed by ‘Abdīšō’.

The two anonymous hymns have the following features:

- 1) Incipit: ܡܠܚܡܐ ܡܢ ܡܠܚܡܐ (MS Orient. Fol. 619, ff. 180<sup>r</sup>–181<sup>r</sup>)
- 2) Incipit: ܡܠܚܡܐ ܡܢ ܡܠܚܡܐ (MS Orient. Fol. 619, ff. 181<sup>r</sup>–181<sup>v</sup>)

In terms of poetic features, the two anonymous hymns differ from the two hymns ascribed to ‘Abdīšō’. The former are much shorter and closer in size to the traditional *‘ōnyātā* found in hymnbooks. Therefore, we may assume that they were composed at an earlier period, or at least follow earlier models than ‘Abdīšō’s hymns. MS Orient. Fol. 619, representing a specific recension of the *Wardā*, witnesses serious discrepancies from the main version of the *Wardā*, both in the combination of the texts therein and in the absence of a supplement containing additional hymns. The *‘ōnyātā* that occur in the supplement in other manuscripts of the *Wardā* are placed in the main body in this recension.<sup>9</sup> However, the first of the two anonymous hymns occurs also in the manuscripts of the main redaction of the *Wardā*, for instance, in MS Vat. Syr. 567 (ff. 261<sup>v</sup>–263<sup>r</sup>), where it is placed in the aforementioned supplemental addition.<sup>10</sup> These facts indicate that this first anonymous hymn was written later than the main corpus and was included in the collection after the formation of the latter.

The two *‘ōnyātā* attributed to ‘Abdīšō’ of Gāzartā are primarily transmitted in poetry collections; apart from MS Orient. Fol. 619, they do not occur in the *Wardā* book. This may indicate that they were composed even later than the anonymous hymns on Qūryāqōs. Both hymns by ‘Abdīšō’ reflect a stage in the development of East Syriac literature when *‘ōnyātā* had evolved into more monumental works, often occupying both sides of ten or more folios.

Typically, poems by Syriac authors of the Ottoman period follow literary patterns from the Syriac Renaissance. In the case of *‘ōnyātā*, two extensive hymns can be mentioned: one attributed to Khāmīs bar Qardāḥē, on the martyr ʿĪšō’sabran,<sup>11</sup> and the other to Gaḅriēl of Mosul, nicknamed Qamšā (‘locust’), on the monastic life.<sup>12</sup> While the literary legacy of Khāmīs has been studied in detail by Alessandro Mengozzi,<sup>13</sup> the work of Gaḅriēl still needs further

9 I have discussed this recension of the hymnological collection elsewhere: Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 12–14.

10 See Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 81, 86.

11 See, for instance, MS CCM 00419 (1395), ff. 67<sup>v</sup>–73<sup>v</sup>. Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhml/readingRoom/view/132538>.

12 See, for instance, MS CCM 00419, ff. 34<sup>r</sup>–67<sup>v</sup>.

13 For instance, see A. Mengozzi, ‘The Book of Khāmīs bar Qardaḥē: History of the Text, Genres, and Research Perspectives’, in Maria Doerfler, Emanuel Fiano, and Kyle Smith (eds.), *Syriac Encounters: Papers of the Sixth North American Syriac Symposium (Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, June 26–29, 2011)* (Eastern Christian Studies, 20, Leuven–Paris–Bristol: Peeters, 2015) pp. 415–439; A. Mengozzi, ‘Persische Lyrik in syrischem

research. The aforementioned authors worked at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a period that was particularly productive in the formation of a new style of Syriac ecclesiastical poetry.

In terms of content, the hymns considered here reflect an important phenomenon in East Syriac hymnography and poetry in general, when (presumably in the fifteenth century) authors began to set forth in poetic form the lives and various other narratives of numerous saints. Eventually, introducing hymns on these saints into the liturgy resulted in the emergence of a large variety of such texts. This includes the *ʿōnītā* by Šliḇā Maṣṣūrī (early sixteenth century),<sup>14</sup> which gives a poetic account of the prose narrative about Nestorius<sup>15</sup> which often occurs in the *Wardā* collection in the section concerning the Commemoration of the Greek Doctors, as we have pointed out elsewhere.<sup>16</sup> A dozen such hymns form the aforementioned supplement to the *Wardā* collection.<sup>17</sup> Two of them, on the Persian martyrs Tahmazgard and Jacob, were published by Heinrich Hilgenfeld,<sup>18</sup> and later studied by Adam Carter-Bremmer McCollum, who came to the conclusion that both hymns were a poetic reformatting of already existing narratives.<sup>19</sup> One more *ʿōnītā* from the same supplement, on Mār Awgēn and his monastic community, was recently critically studied, edited, and translated by Andrew Palmer and me.<sup>20</sup>

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Gewand: Vierzeiler aus dem Buch des Khamis bar Qardaḥe (Ende 13. Jh.), in M. Tamcke and S. Grebenstein (eds.), *Geschichte, Theologie und Kultur des syrischen Christentums: Beiträge zum 7. Deutschen Syrologie-Symposium in Göttingen, Dezember 2011* (Göttinger Orientforschungen, Syriaca, 46, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014) pp. 155–176; A. Mengozzi, 'Quatrains on Love by Khamis bar Qardaḥe: Syriac Sufi Poetry', in S.H. Griffith and S. Grebenstein (eds.), *Christsein in der islamischen Welt: Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum 60. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015) pp. 331–344.

14 See F. Nau, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'Église nestorienne*, Part 3, *Histoire de Nestorius d'après la lettre à Cosme et l'hymne de Sliba de Mansourya sur les Docteurs Grecs* (PO, 13,1 [63], Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1917) pp. 287–316.

15 Nau, *Histoire de Nestorius*, p. 288.

16 See Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 72, 96.

17 See Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 77–81.

18 See H. Hilgenfeld, *Ausgewählte Gesänge des Giwargis Warda von Arbel. Herausgegeben mit Übersetzung, Einleitung und Erklärung* (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1904) pp. 74–86.

19 A. Bremer-McCollum, 'Prose, Poetry, and Hagiography: The Martyrdoms of Jacob the Persian and Tahmizgard in Syriac Story and Song', in S. Minov and F. Ruani (eds.), *Syriac Hagiography: Texts and Beyond* (TSEC, 20, Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2021) pp. 221–256 (231, 246). These two hymns were registered by me in the study on the *Wardā* collection as numbers 84 and 85, respectively.

20 See A. Palmer and A. Pritula, 'From the Nile Delta to Mount Izlā and the Tigris Gorge. A hymn by Giwargis Wardā on Mār Awgēn's family of monks', in E. Schlarb (ed.), *Den Orient erforschen, mit Orthodoxen leben. Festschrift für Martin Tamcke zum Ende seiner aktiven*

The most extensive poetic account of the life of Mār Hōrmīzd, the founder of an eponymous monastery in Alqosh, was undertaken by Sargīs bar Waḥlē, an author who lived in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries.<sup>21</sup> Sargīs, who was a monk in the monastery of Mār Hōrmīzd, is considered one of the founders of the Alqosh School of Poetry.<sup>22</sup> The poetic circle of this town, including later poetry in Neo-Aramaic, has been thoroughly studied by Alessandro Mengozzi, the leading expert in late Syriac poetry.<sup>23</sup> The extended poem by Sargīs bar Waḥlē is written in the form of a metrical homily and was apparently meant to be read, not sung, at the monastery service in commemoration of the saint, if it was used in the liturgy at all. The poem consists of 22 chapters called *tarē* (stanzas), each of which are monorhyme. As shown by Budge, Sargīs used a prose life of Hōrmīzd.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, by that time at least two shorter *‘ōnyātā* commemorating this saint might have existed. They are included in the standard supplement of the *Wardā* hymnological collection, as we have indicated elsewhere.<sup>25</sup> In a note written in ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā’s hand in his autograph MS SMMJ 116, the poet listed the books (i.e. manuscripts) he owned or acquired (see rear flyleaf ii<sup>v</sup>). One of the titles mentioned there is ܟܬܒܐ ܕܗܘܡܝܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܪܒܒܢ ܗܘܪܡܝܙܕ (“Book of homilies on Rabban Hōrmīzd”), which might be the aforementioned monumental poem by Sargīs bar Waḥlē.

Since it appears in the list as a separate book (no. 7 in the list), it is presumably not referring to the two shorter hymns about this saint from the *Wardā* collection. Its inclusion in the list is an indication that ‘Abdīšō‘ was familiar with this poet, who may have lived a few decades earlier; the work probably influenced his own poetry. This is also confirmed by the fact that the poem on Mār Hōrmīzd by Sargīs occurs in the anthology MS CCM 398 (ff. 78<sup>v</sup>–144<sup>v</sup>),<sup>26</sup> writ-

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*Dienstzeit* (Göttinger Orientforschungen, 1. Reihe: Syriaca, 61, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021) pp. 505–540.

21 W.E. Budge, *The Life of Rabban Hōrmīzd and the Foundation of his Monastery at Al-Kōsh: A Metrical Discourse by Waḥlē, Surnamed Sergius of Ādhōrbāyān* (Semitistische Studien, 2/3, Berlin: Emil Felber, 1894); W.E. Budge, *The Histories of Rabban Hōrmīzd the Persian and Rabban Bar-Idtā* (Luzac’s Semitic Text and Translation Series, 9–11, London: Luzac & Co., 1902).

22 R. Macuch, *Geschichte der spät- und neusyrischen Literatur* (Berlin–New York: De Gruyter, 1976) pp. 35–36.

23 For instance, see A. Mengozzi, *Israel of Alqosh and Joseph of Telkepe. A Story in a Truthful Language. Religious Poems in Vernacular Syriac (North Iraq, 17th century)* (CSCO, 589–590, Louvain: Peeters, 2002).

24 Budge, *The Life of Rabban Hōrmīzd*, pp. v–vi.

25 See Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 80. The numbers according to my checklist are *suppl. 9* and *suppl. 10*.

26 See A. Pritula, ‘East Syriac Literary Life in the Mid-16th Century: ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā and

ten in 1583 at the monastery of John the Baptist near Gāzartā, where ‘Abdīšō’ was a monk some time before. This manuscript is the most important source of ‘Abdīšō’s poetic legacy. Indeed, the poem by Sargīs bar Waḥlē was popular among the Gāzartā ecclesiastical elite during the period in question.

The hymns by ‘Abdīšō’ of Gāzartā under consideration belong to this later stage of the ‘*ḏnītā*’ poetic form development and, as noted above, are not included in the *Wardā* collection, with the exception of a few manuscripts.

Since the texts considered here were meant to be used in the liturgy, it seems logical to look at changes in liturgical practice for the reasons behind the popularity of such hymns about saints. The commemoration of the saints, for which such hymns are usually needed, occur either on a fixed calendar date or on Fridays, since that was the day of the week for the memory of martyrs and confessors in the East Syriac Church.

In general, the regular use of hagiographical texts in the liturgy is an influence of the West Syriac (Syriac Orthodox) Church, where such texts gained popularity much earlier, occurring in manuscripts already in the eleventh century, although not always in poetic form.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the further poetic development of such texts, for example, the introduction of stanzaic structure and choir singing, seems to be an East Syriac feature, since it is a general poetic tendency of that ecclesiastical tradition.

The history of the compilation of the services for the Friday saints’ commemorations is certainly beyond the scope of this article, but it would be correct to note that in the *Wardā* collection they were not intended as a regular weekly element. As Jean-Maurice Fiey argued in a special study, two groups of sources containing services to the saints can be distinguished: one from the eleventh–thirteenth centuries and the other from the sixteenth century. Many commemorations of saints, 57 in total, are of local character. Among them, the Friday commemorations count 51. After the liturgical reform conducted in Alqosh at the beginning of the sixteenth century, some of the commemoration services disappeared.<sup>28</sup> In all likelihood, the poems by ‘Abdīšō’ of Gāzartā in question represent this liturgical revision of the sixteenth century.

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Older Contemporary Poets’, *Вестник СПбГУ, Востоковедение и африканистика* 11.1 (2019), pp. 89–107 (90).

27 See B. Varghese, *The Early History of the Syriac Liturgy: Growth, Adaptation and Inculturation* (Göttinger Orientforschungen, 1. Reihe: Syriaca, 62, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2021) pp. 95–96.

28 See J.M. Fiey, ‘La Sanctoral Syrien Oriental d’après les évangéliaires bréviaires du XI au XIII siècles’, *OS* 8 (1963), pp. 21–54 (26).

Thus, for instance, the two *‘ōnyātā* on the martyrs Jacob and Tahmazgard in the *Wardā* book were meant for the Friday commemorations,<sup>29</sup> whereas the aforementioned anonymous hymn on Qūryāqōs was used for the saint’s commemoration days on June 15 and November 25, as clearly indicated in the headings of all the hymns in the manuscripts of the *Wardā* collection.<sup>30</sup>

One question still remains: Why did ‘AḐdīšō‘ of Gāzartā compose several liturgical hymns specifically dedicated to Qūryāqōs? Apparently the poet decided to take an active part in the creation of the textual corpus for the commemoration of Qūryāqōs. According to extant manuscripts, this saint’s name must have been quite popular from the middle of the sixteenth century on, since many scribes had it. Nevertheless, one should remember that East Syriac manuscript production recovered from a long decline during this period; thus, it is difficult for us to judge how things may have been beforehand. One of those who bore the martyr’s name was the scribe who copied MS CCM 429 in 1571 in Amid, where the death of ‘AḐdīšō‘ of Gāzartā is mentioned in the colophon (ff. 107<sup>v</sup>–108<sup>r</sup>).<sup>31</sup> Additionally, Wilmshurst mentions 22 clerics named Qūryāqōs,<sup>32</sup> along with 27 churches and chapels with the name of this saint.<sup>33</sup>

As will be shown below, all the poems of ‘AḐdīšō‘ of Gāzartā analysed here, like the other poems on the lives of saints, are poetic reworkings of the corresponding prose narratives, in this case that concerning the martyrdom of Qūryāqōs and his mother Yōlīṭā. The story takes place in the Roman Empire before the time of Constantine. Fleeing from anti-Christian persecution, Yōlīṭā moved to Tarsus from Iconium with her little son, but the local hegemon, named Alexander, started persecuting her and her son there. The main feature of the saint’s biography is his young age, since he was martyred as a child. For that reason, there is very little information in the text on his life before his martyrdom. Therefore, the narrative is actually confined to the description of his tortures, along with the miracles manifested by the saint during the martyrdom.

In his multi-volume collection of the lives of saints published between 1890 and 1897, Paul Bedjan provided an edition of the text based on Berlin MS Sachau

29 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 48.

30 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 81.

31 See A. Scher, ‘Notice sur les manuscrits syriaques et arabes conservés à l’archevêché chaldéen de Diarbékir’, *JA* 10 (1907), pp. 331–362, 385–431 (pp. 359–360); available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/132548>.

32 D. Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organisation of the Church of the East, 1318–1913* (CSCO Subsidia, 104, Louvain: Peeters, 2000) p. 832.

33 Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organisation*, pp. 761–762.



222, dated 1881.<sup>34</sup> More recently, Alisa Terpeliuk, under the scientific editorship of Nikolai Seleznev (1971–2021), published an edition of a different recension of the text, as witnessed in MS Vat. Syr. 161, datable to the ninth–tenth centuries on paleographic grounds.<sup>35</sup> A number of other manuscript witnesses are, however, extant, and so a new critical edition remains a *desideratum*.<sup>36</sup>

### 3 *‘Ōnītā* without Refrain

#### 3.1 *Transmission of the Text*

The hymn under discussion has the incipit ܕܘܢܝܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܬܐ (Ray of the eternal Father) and occurs in the following manuscripts:

- CCM 398 (1583), ff. 173<sup>v</sup>–183<sup>v</sup>
- Orient. Fol. 619 (1715), ff. 186<sup>v</sup>–195<sup>v</sup>
- CPB 100 (1780), ff. 159<sup>v</sup>–178<sup>v</sup><sup>37</sup>

It is regularly ascribed to ‘Aḇdīšō‘ of Gāzartā, which leaves no doubts about the authorship. Its earliest transmission is represented in MS CCM 398, which includes the largest selection of ‘Aḇdīšō’s works, as mentioned above in section 2. All manuscripts indicate that it should be performed on the commemoration day of Mār Qūryāqōs. At the same time, in MS Orient. Fol. 619, the title of the entire block of hymns dedicated to this saint clearly indicates its date: Tammuz 15 (July 15).

#### 3.2 *Poetic Features*

The hymn has a very complex poetic structure, being sung to the tune ܕܘܢܝܬܐ ܕܘܢܝܬܐ (Armor of the Spirit ...), where each stanza consists of three lines following the scheme (4+7)–7–7. This is a rather unusual rhythmic pattern, with only three lines in each stanza, the first one longer than the next two. The melody, albeit not the most popular, is used in several of the hymns included in the

34 P. Bedjan, *Acta martyrum et sanctorum Syriace*, vol. 1–7 (Paris–Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1890–1897; repr.: Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1968) vol. 3, pp. 254–283. For the manuscript, see Sachau, *Verzeichnis der syrischen Handschriften*, p. 290.

35 A. Terpeliuk, *Istoriia muchenichestva Mar Quriaqusa i Iolity (Kirika I Iulitty), kriticheskie tekst, perevod, issledovanie* (Moscow: Assiriiskaia Tserkov Vostoka, 2009). For the manuscript, see N.V. Pigulevskaya, *Katalog sirijskikh rukopisey Leningrada [Kataloz cupuïckix rukopisey Leningrada]* (Leningrad, Izdatel’stvo AN SSSR, 1960) pp. 144–146.

36 See Aaron Butts, Karen Connor, and Daniel Schriever, “From Manuscripts to Edition: The Case of the Syriac *History of St. Cyriacus and his Mother Julitta*,” lecture at the Society of Biblical Literature (Chicago, IL, Nov. 17–20, 2012).

37 Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmm1/readingRoom/view/503081>.

*Wardā* collection; nevertheless, it is likely that these pieces were composed by authors other than Gīwargīs Wardā himself, who composed the bulk of the corpus. Within the hymnological collection, the hymns with this tune are either anonymous or ascribed to other authors.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, the tune was used by Khāmīs in his book of poetry, which includes a number of *‘ōnyātā*.<sup>39</sup>

Each stanza has its own common rhyme, which links all of the lines, as is the normal case for an *‘ōnītā*.

The poem has a complex succession of sequential and intertwining acrostics, probably dictated by the difficult task of structuring a very long poetic text that takes up ten folios, both recto and verso (see MS CCM 398, ff. 172<sup>v</sup>–182<sup>v</sup>). At some point, an additional complete alphabetic acrostic is incorporated into the more general acrostic (see MS CCM 398, ff. 178<sup>v</sup>–179<sup>v</sup>). It is obviously one of the structural means—together with the refrain ܩܠܘܠܘܢܐ (peace be with you ...) that starts each stanza in the last part of the hymn—to distinguish the praise to the martyr that is a part of the larger final doxology. Each initial letter of a word that follows the refrain is part of this additional alphabetic acrostic, while the beginning of each stanza throughout the doxology uses a constant letter, which is *šīn*.

Also woven into the fabric of the poem are elements of dialogue poems, which are achieved by introducing several dialogues, such as that between the martyr and the hegemon, with the names of the speakers inscribed in the margin (see MS CCM 398, ff. 174<sup>v</sup>–176<sup>r</sup>). Thus, on the one hand, it is a reflection of the original prose version of the saint’s life, which contains numerous disputes between these two characters, and, on the other hand, it is one of the features of some *‘ōnyātā* which marks a further evolution of the disputation *sōjūtā* form.

One may assume that the author has tried to use as many different poetic devices as possible to compensate for the bulkiness of the text and the “single-plane” nature of the narrative.

### 3.3 *The Contents of the Poem*

The hymn consists of three parts, with the main (and most lengthy) part being the account of the martyrdom of Qūryāqōs and his mother Yōliṭā. Here we list the three parts, following the poetic narrative in question.

- A. *A brief prologue*, in which the author asks the martyr to guide him in writing a poem about him (MS CCM 398, f. 172<sup>v</sup>).
- B. *Narration about Qūryāqōs’s martyrdom* (MS CCM 398, ff. 172<sup>v</sup>–178<sup>v</sup>).

38 See Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 97–99.

39 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 99.

The story commences with information about the martyr's childhood and his spiritual development in the true faith. His mother Yōliṭā is mentioned as well, first preaching to heathens and defeating them. The hegemon named Alexander, led by a demon, forces the faithful to worship statues. He tortures them cruelly and calls a smith. The martyr overcomes his sufferings and exposes the hegemon and the heathens. The martyr instructs the smith in detail as to what instruments of torture to make and how to use them. The smith produces them and sends them to the hegemon. The latter begins to torture Qūryāqōs and his mother, but God saves them and the instruments cause them no harm, with the metal nails becoming cold as snow. Satan turns into a hawk and flies to the martyr to deceive him, but he is exposed and dissolves like smoke.

The hegemon lets the martyrs out of prison and asks them to worship his god, but God sends an angel to destroy the heathen statues. The hegemon continues torturing the martyrs, when a voice sounds from above and consoles Yōliṭā, encouraging her to trust her son, who would become a great saint. The hegemon orders that their hair be torn out and their heads covered with coals, but these turn into golden crowns. The hegemon is even more outraged. He orders that a bench of copper and three spokes be made and nails the martyr with the spokes to the bench. Through the martyr's prayer, an angel takes the spokes out and beats them into the hegemon's neck. The hegemon addresses the martyr, pretending that he has believed in God. The martyr takes the spokes out of his neck. The hegemon continues torturing Qūryāqōs, having brought iron maces. His servant wants to hurt the martyr, but the mace collapses on his shoulder. The hegemon orders his servants to tie up the bodies of the martyrs, to bring saws, and to cut them into three pieces. By God's will, no harm comes to them. The martyr advises the hegemon to make a saw out of wood. In anger, the hegemon orders oil to be heated and poured on the martyrs. God resurrects their bodies and commands them to go and rebuke the judge. The martyrs go to the hegemon's house and appear to him, but he does not recognize them. The martyrs tell him who they are. The hegemon is willing to believe in the truth of their God only if they perform a sign for him, by creating two animals out of his leather sandal.

By his prayer, the martyr creates a goat and a bull. The hegemon orders them to be slaughtered and a feast to be held. The martyr prays and feeds eleven thousand people with these two animals. The furious hegemon, encouraged by the demon, calls a physician and orders him to cut out the martyr's tongue. He carries out the order, but the Lord gives Qūryāqōs a spiritual tongue. They call a pig to tear out his tongue, but it immediately dies.

The enraged hegemon orders a cauldron to be brought and filled with oil; underneath sulphur and firewood are set on fire. The flames rise to the heav-

ens and terrify the ten-thousand spectators gathered there by the hegemon. The martyr’s mother is afraid and is ready to deny her faith. Qūryāqōs encourages her and prays to the Lord. His prayer is heard, and the Lord strengthens Yōlitā’s heart.

The martyr is thrown into the cauldron, but by the grace of God the boiling oil becomes as cold as snow. The stricken hegemon declares that this is witchcraft and that he will believe if it is demonstrated to him. Qūryāqōs sprays oil from the cauldron onto the ruler’s hand, and it is scalded, the skin falling off. The martyr prays and the hand is healed. However, pride and stubbornness prevent the hegemon’s conversion.

The hegemon commands a narrow tunnel to be drilled in a huge rock and Qūryāqōs and Yōlitā to be walled up in it. An angel prevents this by splitting the rock, which falls and crushes the crowd of Gentiles.

C. *Epilogue* (MS CCM 398, ff. 178<sup>v</sup>–182<sup>v</sup>)

The final doxology consists of many stanzas and contains the following parts: 1. Praise to God and to the martyr Qūryāqōs (MS CCM 398, ff. 178<sup>v</sup>–179<sup>v</sup>); 2. Supplication to God, that he would protect and support the Church, the Patriarch, the Metropolitans and the author himself (MS CCM 398, ff. 179<sup>v</sup>–182<sup>v</sup>).

The end of the narrative is incorporated into the doxology, as part of the praise addressed to the martyr in the second person: Before having his head cut off with a sword, the martyr prays to God for help. The Lord accepts his prayer and answers that He will grant him all the gifts and graces of eternal life. This allows the poet to interrupt the rather monotonous lengthy narration of tortures and bring it to an end in the doxology.

In the study by Terpeliuk, the episodes in the narrative are compared according to the various versions of the narrative found in the manuscripts. For example, one of the indicators is the number of spokes hammered into the body of the martyr by the ruler’s order, nailing him to the bench.<sup>40</sup> The poetic text we are considering here refers to three spokes, which is consistent with the version of the hagiography found in the Bedjan edition, i.e. the Berlin manuscript, and the St. Petersburg manuscript, but differs from the Vatican manuscript, which only mentions two spokes (MS CCM 398, ff. 175<sup>v</sup>).

One more significant feature concerns the names of the gods shouted out by the ruler of the town after the martyr has healed him. The list of these deities differs in different versions of the prose text. In the *‘ōnītā*, the author omits this list altogether (MS CCM 398, ff. 175<sup>v</sup>), probably considering it inappropriate for a hymn to be sung in church. Nevertheless, two names from this chain

<sup>40</sup> Terpeliuk, *Istoriia muchenichestva*, pp. 23–24.

appear in the *turgāmā*, which we examine below, allowing us to conclude that the poet here too follows the version of the text used by Bedjan, MS Orient. f. 619 (see below 3.3.4). Undoubtedly, despite the fact that the poet ‘Abdīšō‘ clearly used this version of the hagiography, some discrepancies with the original are inevitable, due to the difference in genres. For example, the author omits certain details in the poem which he deems to be unsuitable for church poetry.

After the martyr’s miraculous feeding of eleven thousand people with the meat of animals created from the ruler’s sandal, the poem gives the number of leftovers from the meal: ten baskets from a goat and four from a bull (MS CCM 398, f. 177<sup>r</sup>). In this, ‘Abdīšō‘ follows the version of the Berlin and St. Petersburg manuscripts as well, as opposed to the Vatican manuscript, which indicates sixteen and four baskets, respectively.<sup>41</sup>

The most disputable episode in the prose hagiography prototype is the so-called prayer of Qūryāqōs, which is actually a description of apocalyptic visions revealed to the martyr. There are different hypotheses about the origin of this part of the text. Some scholars have assumed that the passage is a translation from Greek, as evidenced by the presence of distorted forms of Greek origin, unusual for Syriac.<sup>42</sup> The circumstances and dating of its appearance in the hagiography of the saint are a separate problem.

It is premature to draw definitive conclusions about the prose text. A scholarly publication and comparative analysis of all existing versions of the text is necessary. However, the *ʿōnītā* composed by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā also contains important information which may be useful for the textual history of the prose prototype. The text of the poem does not contain the whole episode of apocalyptic phenomena; it contains only a brief prayer addressed by the martyr to God, in other words, the prayer itself in the literal sense. Moreover, the scene of the apparition that usually precedes the apocalyptic visions to the martyr and his mother is also missing. All other episodes, especially major ones, are present in the hymn, although some minor details are missing. Thus, the poetic work mentions only one appearance of Satan to the martyr, at the very beginning of the narrative (MS CCM 398, ff. 274<sup>r</sup>–274<sup>v</sup>), when the martyr was in prison (see below), instead of the two appearances that usually occur in the prose versions. It seems strange for the poet to omit two important narrative episodes

41 See Terpeliuk, *Istoriia muchenichestva*, p. 26.

42 See, for instance, H. Greßmann, ‘Das Gebet des Kyriakos’, *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 20, (1921), pp. 23–35 (24). Close connections between this passage and the Apocalypse is nevertheless clear (see A. Mastrocinque, *From Jewish Magic to Gnosticism* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005]).

that follow in succession: the second apparition of Satan and the apocalyptic visions following that. Therefore, it would be logical to suggest that the poet used a prose version that did not have these episodes. One may assume that in the time of ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā a corresponding version of this narrative, which did not include these two elements, was in circulation. Or perhaps a version with these episodes and a version without them circulated in parallel at that time. It is possible, therefore, that these episodes are secondary in the martyr’s hagiography.

#### 4 ‘Ōnītā with Refrain

##### 4.1 *Transmission of the Text*

A second ‘ōnītā on Mār Qūryāqōs ascribed to ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā occurs in the following manuscripts:

- Orient. Fol. 619 (1715), ff. 182<sup>v</sup>–186<sup>v</sup>
- CPB 100 (1780), ff. 178<sup>v</sup>–187<sup>v</sup><sup>43</sup>

It is composed to the tune ܡܪܝܩܘܫܐ ܫܪܝܕܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ (Oh, He who is perfect in His substance!), and has the refrain ܡܠܟܐ ܩܘܪܝܩܘܫܐ ܕܡܪܝܩܘܫܐ ܕܡܪܝܩܘܫܐ (Blessed are you, martyr-saint, the glorious Mār Qūryāqōs!), which is also the incipit.

In the rubrics of these manuscripts, the hymn in question is clearly attributed to ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā, so there can be no doubt about his authorship.

##### 4.2 *Poetic Features*

The poem is composed in seven-syllable meter and has a strophic structure with an alphabetic acrostic, where the number of stanzas corresponds to the number of letters in the Syriac alphabet (22). Each stanza is preceded by the above refrain, and the number of lines per stanza differs from letter to letter, ranging from twelve to six, as in the stanza on the letter *lamedh*.

In contrast to the ‘ōnītā without a refrain discussed above, this ‘ōnītā is not a narrative but a hymn of praise. These two main varieties of ‘ōnītā in terms of content have been examined in detail in our study on the *Wardā* collection.<sup>44</sup> In many respects, the first (narrative) type is a continuation of the poetic homily known as a *mēm̄rā*, while the second type is a more direct continuation of the *madrāšā* form, that is, a festive hymn of praise.<sup>45</sup> In hymns of the second type,

43 Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmm1/readingRoom/view/503081>.

44 Pritula, *The Wardā*.

45 See Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 92, 108–109, 133–143.

such as the one under consideration here, there is necessarily an acrostic structure and often a refrain, apparently dictated by the nature of the text, which is characterized by sublimity and emotionality.

There are many *ōnyātā* with refrains that praise the saints. In particular, some of these are included in the *Wardā* collection: on the apostles Peter and Paul,<sup>46</sup> on the Evangelists,<sup>47</sup> on the martyr Stephen,<sup>48</sup> and on the Greek Doctors.<sup>49</sup>

A few *turgāmē* have the same poetic structure as the hymn in question, including one by Khāmīs bar Qardāhē on the martyr ʿIšōʿsaḅran,<sup>50</sup> an anonymous one on the martyr Stephan (Eṣṭapānōs),<sup>51</sup> and one by ʿIšōʿya(h)b bar Mqaddam on the martyr Gīwargīs.<sup>52</sup> Like the hymn discussed here, they are all composed to the tune  $\text{ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ}$  and have the refrain  $\text{ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ}$  ...  $\text{ⲛⲓⲛⲁ}$ . They are dedicated to various martyrs, showing that this pattern was specifically intended for the commemoration of this kind of saint; the name of the martyr is inserted in the refrain, while the rest of the hymn is constant for all hymns set to this tune.

Metrically, the refrain is a verse that consists of two seven-syllable lines. In cases where the martyr's name has four syllables, the word *Mār* is omitted in the refrain, as in the cases of ʿIšōʿsaḅran and Eṣṭapānōs. In two other hymns where the saint's name is one syllable shorter, namely that on Qūryāqōs discussed here, and that on Gīwargīs, *Mār* is added before the name, according to metrical requirements.

The earliest of the hymns of this type is apparently the one by Khāmīs mentioned above; the others seem to follow it. Again, we are witnessing how the works of the Syriac Renaissance, and in particular the Mongol period, were treated as models for later poets.

### 4.3 Contents

Details of the saint's biography are used in the text for the sake of praising him. However, they are referred to very selectively and mostly as allusions, as is common for such hymns. These allusions, of course, serve the main purpose of the

46 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 67; hymn-number 16 in our list.

47 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 68; hymn-numbers 17 and 18 in our list.

48 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 68; hymn-number 19 in our list.

49 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 68; hymn-number 20 in our list.

50 See, for instance, manuscript MS CCM 00419 (1395), ff. 67<sup>v</sup>–73<sup>v</sup>. Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/132538>.

51 See, for instance, MS CPB 00100, ff. 147<sup>v</sup>–153<sup>v</sup>.

52 See, for instance, MS CPB 00100, ff. 153<sup>v</sup>–159<sup>f</sup>.

hymn: to highlight the saint’s glorified exploits. The content of the hymn by stanza is as follows:

- Aleph*: Qūryāqōs’s childhood and his spiritual development;  
*Beth*: The beginning of his preaching to and defeat of the pagans;  
*Gamal*: Qūryāqōs’s spiritual perfection;  
*Dalath*: More on Qūryāqōs’s preaching to and defeat of the pagans;  
*He*: Qūryāqōs’s suffering, which he overcame with the help of the Holy Spirit;  
*Waw*: Heating up the iron spokes to hammer them into Qūryāqōs’s body; the martyr’s cooling of the heated spokes; his destruction of the heathen temples;  
*Zayn*: Praising Qūryāqōs’s preaching and God’s help of him;  
*Ḥeth*: Satan’s apparition to Qūryāqōs and the martyr’s victory over him;  
*Ṭeth*: Praising Qūryāqōs’s preaching and his denunciation of false doctrine;  
*Yodh*: Qūryāqōs’s comfort and encouragement towards his mother, citing the Scriptures;  
*Kaph*: Qūryāqōs tied down and sawn into parts, followed by Christ’s resurrection of him;  
*Lamedh*: Christ giving Qūryāqōs special capacities for preaching;  
*Mim*: The hegemon asking Qūryāqōs for a miracle; the martyr making food from the hegemon’s sandal and feeding more than ten thousand people;  
*Nun*: A prayer to Qūryāqōs by the author;  
*Semkath*: Continuation of the prayer with some references to Qūryāqōs’s biography;  
*E*: Praising Qūryāqōs and the help he found from God, as well as the supernatural resilience of his body during his torture;  
*Pe*: Qūryāqōs’s sufferings and God’s help, including being put in a stove;  
*Ṣadhe*: Further praise of Qūryāqōs, along with reference to his preaching  
*Qoph*: Further praise of Qūryāqōs;  
*Resh*: Further praise of Qūryāqōs, mostly his preaching;  
*Shin*: Further praise of Qūryāqōs, mostly his preaching;  
*Taw*: Further praise of Qūryāqōs;



5 *Turgāmā*5.1 *Transmission of the Text*

The *turgāmā* on Mār Qūryāqōs, with the incipit **ܐܘܘܫܘܢ ܕܢܘܨܝܢ ܕܢܘܨܝܢ ܕܢܘܨܝܢ ܕܢܘܨܝܢ** (Oh those who believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit), was in all likelihood the most popular of all the poems by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāz-artā, occurring in numerous manuscripts, twelve of which were accessed by the present author. These are (sigla are supplied for the edition given in the appendix below):

- A CCM 398, *Miscellanea*, Chaldean Cathedral of Mardin (1583), ff. 204<sup>r</sup>–204<sup>v53</sup>
- B DCA 49, *Book of Turgāmē*, Chaldean Diocese of Alqosh (1529), ff. 61<sup>r</sup>–61<sup>v</sup> (written on a separate leaf in a different hand from the rest of the manuscript)<sup>54</sup>
- C BnF Syr. 434, *Miscellanea*, the National Library of France, Paris (16th–17th cent.), ff. 203<sup>r</sup>–204<sup>r55</sup>
- D CCM 400, *Book of Turgāmē*, Chaldean Cathedral of Mardin (17th cent.), ff. 72<sup>v</sup>–74<sup>r56</sup>
- E Orient. Fol. 619, *The Wardā Hymnological Collection*, State Library, Berlin (1715), ff. 195<sup>r</sup>–196<sup>v57</sup>
- F 57, *Book of Turgāmē*, Church of the East, Baghdad (1733), ff. 31<sup>r</sup>–32<sup>r58</sup>
- G DCA 102, *Book of Turgāmē*, Chaldean Diocese of Alqosh (1761), ff. 44<sup>r</sup>–45<sup>r59</sup>
- H 136, *Book of Turgāmē*, Church of the East, Baghdad (1767), ff. 46<sup>r</sup>–47<sup>r60</sup>

53 Formerly Diyarbakir 95 in the Diyarbakir Chaldean collection. See Scher, ‘Notice sur les manuscrits ... de Diarbékir’, p. 395; available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/132517>.

54 See the description in H. Sana, ‘Manuscripts of Al-Qosh Church’, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in Iraq*, vol. 1 (Baghdad: Publications of the Iraqi Academy, Syriac Corporation, 1978) p. 241; available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/208288>.

55 F. Briquel-Chatonnet, *Manuscrits syriaques de la Bibliothèque nationale de France (n° 356–435, entrés depuis 1911), de la Bibliothèque Méjanes d’Aix-en-Provence, de la Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon et de la Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire de Strasbourg* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997) pp. 178–183; available online at <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b5310176r>.

56 A. Scher, ‘Notice des mss. syriaques et arabes conservés dans la bibliothèque de l’évêché chaldéen de Mardin’, *Revue des Bibliothèques* 18 (1908), pp. 64–95 (74); available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/132519>.

57 Sachau, *Verzeichnis der syrischen Handschriften*, pp. 244–250, no. 65.

58 Gewargis Saliwa, *Catalogue of Manuscripts of the Library of the Diocese of the Church of the East in Baghdad* (Baghdad, 2001) p. 57 [in Arabic].

59 Sana, ‘Manuscripts of Al-Qosh Church’, p. 267; available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/208327>.

60 Saliwa, *Catalogue*, p. 136.

- I ACE 58, *Hymnological Collection*, Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil (1770), ff. 139<sup>v</sup>–140<sup>v</sup><sup>61</sup>
- J ACE 59, *Hymnological Collection*, Chaldean Archdiocese of Erbil (1770), ff. 43<sup>v</sup>–44<sup>v</sup><sup>62</sup>
- K CCM 182, *Miscellanea*, Chaldean Cathedral of Mardin (18th cent.), ff. 115<sup>r</sup>–116<sup>r</sup><sup>63</sup>
- L QACCT 132, *Miscellanea*, Chaldean Church of Tell-Kaif (Qalb Al-Aqdas) (18th–19th cent.), ff. 42<sup>v</sup>–43<sup>r</sup><sup>64</sup>

Additionally, this *turgāmā* was published in printed versions of the *Book of Turgāmē*, edited by the Church of the East and obviously based on some of the extant manuscripts.<sup>65</sup> The critical edition of the text and translation below are based on the manuscript evidence and the printed edition.

The earliest extant manuscript where the text in question occurs is DCA 49, dated 1529 (ff. 61<sup>r</sup>–61<sup>v</sup>), but this is written on a loose leaf, attached at the end of the book and in a different hand than the rest of the manuscript; the manuscript could thus have been written earlier than this date.<sup>66</sup> For this reason, I have used CCM 398 as the base text for the edition below, since it is the second earliest manuscript containing this poem and comprises the largest collection of poetry by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā; it may well be close to the autographs.<sup>67</sup> In the critical edition below, I have retained the original vocalization of MS CCM 398. The readings of all other manuscripts and of the printed edition are placed in the apparatus, with their individual vocalizations.

As seen in the list above, the poem in question was transmitted in manuscripts of various types. However, in the *Book of Turgāmē*, the collection in which this text appears, the poem does not appear until the seventeenth century. Before that, it apparently existed only in various poetry selections and anthologies, such as the collection of poems by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā which is

61 Jacques Isaac, *Catalogue des manuscrits syro-chaldéens conservés dans la bibliothèque de l'Archevêché chaldéen d'Erbil à Ainkawa, Iraq* (Baghdad: Dār Najm al-Mashriq, 2005) p. 60; available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/134092>.

62 Isaac, *Catalogue*, p. 61; available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/134093>.

63 See the description in Scher, 'Notice sur les manuscrits ... de Diarbékir', pp. 70–71; available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/501939>.

64 Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmmml/readingRoom/view/136596>.

65 *Ktābā d-turgāmē la-m'allyūt ewangelīyōn d-ḥad-b-šabbē wa-d-‘ēdē w-dūkrānē da-‘bīdīm l-mār ‘Abdīšō* (Baghdad, 1983) pp. 65–67. Another edition of the same book was published in Chicago; it includes the hymn in question as well: *Ktābā d-turgāmē w-rušmā d-ṭeksā da-mšammšānē wa-d-bēmā am sōḡyātā* (Chicago, 1996) pp. 66–68.

66 See the description in Sana, 'Manuscripts of Al-Qosh Church', p. 241.

67 See Pritula, 'East Syriac Literary Life', p. 90.

found in manuscript MS CCM 83, dated to 1683. Among the digital collections on vHMML, there are about ten manuscripts of the *Book of Turgāmē*, but only five of them contain the *turgāmā* on Mār Qūryāqōs by ‘Aḅdīšō’ of Gāzartā. The poem is further attested in three manuscripts of various poetry collections (see the list above). In MS DCA 49, the title and the author of the text are crossed out by a later hand, apparently datable to the sixteenth–seventeenth centuries.

The collection of the *turgāmē* for the whole church year comprises works from the Mongol period; other texts, including the poem under consideration, were included in this corpus later on.<sup>68</sup> In particular, in the earlier manuscripts, the book’s core is formed by the *turgāmē* attributed to ‘Aḅdīšō’ bar Brīkā and Khāmīs bar Qardāḅē, outstanding authors of the Syriac Renaissance.<sup>69</sup> The role of Khāmīs in the formation of this poetic form has been studied by Alessandro Mengozzi,<sup>70</sup> who has also listed the two pieces that were later added to the standard version of the book, represented in the manuscripts and in the printed edition. These two are a *turgāmā* by Gabriēl of Alqosh (early seventeenth century) on the apostle Thomas and the *turgāmā* on the martyr Qūryāqōs by ‘Aḅdīšō’ of Gāzartā discussed in this article.<sup>71</sup>

The poem discussed here is absent even in the manuscript MS CCM 429 (formerly Diyarbakir 60) of the *Book of Turgāmē*, written in 1571 (shortly after the death of ‘Aḅdīšō’ of Gāzartā) by a scribe who mentions the death of this patriarch in the colophon, showing that he was one of ‘Aḅdīšō’s followers.<sup>72</sup> This confirms the assumption that this *turgāmā* became a part of the *Book of Turgāmē* only after the death of the author.

The textual discrepancies in this *turgāmā* mainly concern the rendering of Greek words, which obviously resulted in many scribal errors. Nevertheless, one such variation seems to be characteristic of the textual history of the piece in question, namely the reading ܐܘܨܘܪܐ / ܐܘܨܘܪܐ ‘essence’ (line 2). The word ܐܘܨܘܪܐ occurs in MS CCM 398, the earliest extant manuscript, and in two other manu-

68 See Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, pp. 173–174.

69 See, for instance, the manuscripts in the vHMML digital collection. In the printed edition of the corpus, the piece in question occurs, but the bulk of the book is still formed by the aforementioned authors from the Syriac Renaissance (see *Kṭābā d-turgāmē w-rušmā d-ṭeksā da-mšammšānē*). The most detailed information on this poetic form and its liturgical context can be found in Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, pp. 172–176.

70 See A. Mengozzi and D. Pastore, ‘The Late East-Syriac Genre of the Turgāmā: Forms, Function, Vitality in the Liturgy’, *Христианский Восток* 8 (XIV) (2017), pp. 171–186 (172–179).

71 See Mengozzi and Pastore, ‘Late East-Syriac Genre’, p. 173. See also Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, p. 175.

72 See Scher, ‘Notice sur les manuscrits ... de Diarbékir’, pp. 359–360. Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/132548>.

scripts: MS Orient. Fol. 619 (dated 1715)<sup>73</sup> and MS Baghdad, Church of the East 57 (dated 1733).<sup>74</sup> The first of the three was written in the monastery where ‘Abdīšō‘ was a monk for a long time; it possibly transmits his poems quite closely to the author’s original version. This might mean that the word was changed for another term at a later stage, possibly for theological reasons that can be explained by the transmission of the text in both East Syriac Church lines—both the Church of the East and the Chaldean Church—during the following centuries. The question of textual transmission between these two church traditions is undoubtedly a challenging scholarly task requiring further study.

### 5.2 *Poetic and Stylistic Features*

The poem has all the features characteristic of the classical *turgāmā* form, as was standardized during the Syriac Renaissance period: a short hymn performed by a deacon before the reading of the Gospel during the mass.<sup>75</sup> As Murre-van den Berg has shown, it is usually a non-strophic monorhyme poem with dodecasyllabic lines, commonly starting with the words ܘܗܘܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܘܗܘܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ ܘܗܘܘܢ ܕܥܘܠܡܝܢ “Oh those who believe ...”<sup>76</sup> It has an alphabetic acrostic, which is a necessary feature of this poetic form.

Murre-van den Berg has pointed out that the poem in question has numerous Greek words.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, the syllable on which this monorhyme is arranged is *-os*, which is certainly the easiest one to find rhymes among the Greek masculine nouns.<sup>78</sup> One of the manuscripts written by ‘Abdīšō‘, namely MS SMMJ 159 (1567), contains a glossary of Greek words with their Syriac translations, written in his hand (MS SMMJ 159, ff. 48<sup>v</sup>–55<sup>v</sup>).<sup>79</sup> It is very likely that he used it while composing this poem, since it contains rather uncommon words, some of which occur only very rarely in Syriac dictionaries.

73 Sachau, *Verzeichnis der syrischen Handschriften*, pp. 244–250, no. 65.

74 Saliwa, *Catalogue of Manuscripts of the Library of the Diocese of the Church of the East in Baghdad*, p. 57.

75 In the modern Church of the East, *turgāmē* are sung in various ways, including by the whole congregation, alternating choirs, or a deacon alternating with the congregation or a choir.

76 Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, pp. 173–174.

77 Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, p. 174.

78 For the incorporation of these Greek words in Syriac, see Aaron M. Butts, *Language Change in the Wake of Empire: Syriac in its Greco-Roman Context* (Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic, 11, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2016) p. 98.

79 Available online at <https://w3id.org/vhmm1/readingRoom/view/501291>.

This also explains why explanatory glosses are found in the margins of many manuscripts containing this *turgāmā*. For this reason, we have dedicated a special table to them below (see Appendix 2).

Syriac verbs with the vowel *o* in the imperative and imperfect are used to rhyme with Greek singular masculine nouns of the second declension: ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 11), ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 12), ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 32), ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 34), ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 38), ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 39), and ܐܘܪܘܢܐ (line 40); they are used here as another source of rhymes. These are the only two categories of words rhymed on in this *turgāmā*.

It is very likely that the choice of rhyming words is related to the content of the poem, dedicated as it is to a Greek martyr. Rhyming on Greek words in Syriac became a kind of poetic fashion in the thirteenth century, at the height of the Syriac Renaissance. It occurs in several poems by Bar ‘Ebrōyō (1226–1286).<sup>80</sup> In East Syriac hymnography, the metropolitan of Mosul Gabriēl Qamṣāyā is known for his intensive use of Greek loanwords.<sup>81</sup> Two hymns demonstrating this occur in the *Wardā* hymnological collection.<sup>82</sup> As we have suggested above, such hymns seem to be a later addition to the collection, as they contrast sharply with the main body of the collection, which is written in transparent and easy-to-read language.<sup>83</sup> The tendency towards such rhymes seems to date from the late thirteenth century, corresponding to the development of Syriac poetry, when more elitist works, characterized by the use of uncommon vocabulary and complex rhymes, were being created.

Thus, ‘Abdīšō’ of Gāzartā’s *turgāmā* is a development of this earlier poetic trend. More examples of this trend can be found in two *turgāmē* by Gabriēl of Alqosh (early seventeenth century) which exploit Greek loan-words, as documented by Murre-van den Berg.<sup>84</sup>

### 5.3 *The Contents of the Poem*

The poem consists of the following parts:

- I. Introduction: appeal to the audience to attend to the commemoration of the martyr Qūryāqōs (lines 1–4);
- II. Main part: praise of Qūryāqōs (lines 5–32);
- III. Conclusion: doxology and prayer to the Lord (lines 33–44).

80 For instance, see F.Y. Dolabani, *Mušhōtō d-Mōr Grīgōriyūs Yūhannōn Bar ‘Ebrōyō mafriy-ōnō qaddīšō d-Madnḥō* (Glane–Lossler: Bar Hebraeus Verlag, 1983) pp. 155–156.

81 Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur, mit Ausschluss der christlich-palästinensischen Texte* (Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Weber) pp. 285–286.

82 Pritula, *The Wardā*, pp. 115–116.

83 Pritula, *The Wardā*, p. 116.

84 Murre-van den Berg, *Scribes and Scriptures*, p. 174.

The main part of the poem includes the following references to the martyrdom of Qūryāqōs:

- The martyr defeats the ruler Alexander (line 5);
- The martyr defeats the servants of Zeus (line 10);
- The martyr preaches at Tarsus and defeats the mages (line 13–14);
- The martyr breaks idols and statues, exposing the deities Arpaq and Arius (line 24);
- The martyr creates a meal out of the heathen ruler’s sandal, feeding thousands of people (line 25);
- The martyr’s body is sawn into pieces and thrown into the crowd (lines 27–28);
- The martyr is resurrected by Christ, who shows him heaven and the cosmos (lines 29–30);
- The martyr prays before his death (line 32).

As mentioned in the book by Alisa Terpeliuk, in composing his *turgāmā*, ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā must have used the version of the prose *History of Qūryāqōs* that occurs in the St. Petersburg manuscript and in the manuscripts represented in the edition by Bedjan.<sup>85</sup> The two odd names that occur in the *turgāmā* (see Appendix 1, line 24)—**ܐܪܦܩܩ** (Arpaq) and **ܐܪܝܘܫ** (Arius)—are also attested in this prose version, where they are listed among the heathen deities. The first one seems to be a distortion of **ܐܪܦܘܫ** (Orpheus), a mythological Greek hero, and the second, according to Terpeliuk, could be the name of the famous heresiarch of the fourth century that was included in the list by mistake.<sup>86</sup> Alternatively, it may be Ares, the Greek god of war, since this spelling of his name occurs in the Syriac tradition.<sup>87</sup> One should note that these versions of the names occur in all the manuscripts of the poem that are available to us (again, see Appendix 1, line 24), as well as in the printed version.<sup>88</sup> This may confirm the idea that the poet’s archetype actually contained these names. At the same time, it is hard to say exactly when they entered the prose version used by the poet. Nevertheless, it must have been at a time when the knowledge of Greek mythology and Church history had declined somewhat, i.e., after the Arab conquest of the Middle East.

85 Terpeliuk, *Istoriia muchenichestva*, pp. 14, 24; Bedjan, *Acta martyrum*, p. 266.

86 Terpeliuk, *Istoriia muchenichestva*, p. 24; Bedjan, *Acta martyrum*, p. 266.

87 See R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879–1901) p. 381.

88 See *Kṭābā d-turgāmē w-rušmā d-ṭeksā da-mšammšānē*, p. 67.

#### 5.4 *Glosses in the Turgāmā*

Glosses occur in seven of the twelve manuscripts available to us. They are arranged in Appendix 2 in grey, with the words that are commented on rendered in black.<sup>89</sup>

As mentioned above, these glosses probably do not belong to the author's version of the text but were added later. This is evidenced by the fact that they are absent in the earliest list of the *turgāmā*, MS CCM 398, which was apparently produced by someone in 'Aḫdišō' of Gāzartā's circle or close to it.

Nevertheless, the presence of glosses in numerous copies indicates their widespread use, as well as the obscurity of the Greek words for readers.

Since glosses were often written in the margins, usually in red ink, some of them are damaged, as noted in the table. On the whole, however, they show a marked uniformity among the manuscripts where they are present. Curiously, in one of the printed editions of the *turgāmē* collection, the glosses have been retained and placed in the folds after the text.<sup>90</sup> In general, they follow the text of the manuscripts.

This suggests that the tradition of including glosses for this *turgāmā* goes back to a single manuscript. The original scribe was probably not guided by glossaries, but by a "contextual" understanding that seemed right to him. Most manuscripts explain all or nearly all rhyming words, that is, the final word of each line. Some Greek words have strange explanations. For example, ܐܘܨ (‘Zeus’) is glossed as ܐܘܨܐܘܨ (‘idle’), and ܐܘܨܐܘܨ (‘Arius’, or ‘Ares’) as ܐܘܨܐܘܨܐܘܨ (‘image’) (see Appendix 2, lines 10, 24). Curiously, the word ܐܘܨܐܘܨܐܘܨ (‘cosmos, universe’) is explained as ܐܘܨܐܘܨܐܘܨܐܘܨ (‘ornament, decoration’) (see Appendix 2, line 30). This was probably inspired by the way the scribe interpreted the content of the poetic line (see Appendices 1, 2, line 30).

In addition to Greek words, common Syriac verbs in this position are also often explained, sometimes even in Arabic (see Appendix 2, lines 11, 32, 40).

The glosses have been used as reference material for the translation of the text, at least as an example of how the corresponding words were perceived by Syriac clergy during Ottoman times. That nevertheless seems rather important.

89 We have not included the glosses in the apparatus for the main text of the poem, since it would have made the apparatus very complex and inconvenient for reading. Besides, as we argue here, it does not belong to the author's version.

90 See *Kṭābā d-turgāmē w-rušmā d-ṭeksā da-mšammšānē*, p. 68.

## 6 Conclusion

Two main factors influenced the development of East Syriac hymnography in the period after the thirteenth century: first, the evolution of liturgical practice, and second, the literary tastes of the age. If the first factor determined the themes and motifs of church poetry, the second influenced its form and poetic features. At the same time, the second factor usually continued in effect even when the impact of the first factor ended, when themes and motifs were already fixed. This may explain the appearance of a multitude of hymns through centuries on the same themes, meant for the same commemorations. Here a phenomenon common to medieval Middle Eastern literature comes into force: the poet's attempts to demonstrate his mastery in versifying given themes and plots.<sup>91</sup>

Regarding the use of ecclesiastical poetry, one can assume that the two *‘ōnyātā* by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā on the martyr Qūryāqōs discussed in this article were intended primarily for performance in monastic communities. This is supported by the fact that other aforementioned hymns of extensive length were well suited for liturgical recitation in a monastery at the night vigil on the eve of a feast. Furthermore, these hymns were not included in the manuscripts of the standard hymnological *Wardā* collection, which has had wide liturgical use. Nevertheless, this hypothesis needs further confirmation.

However, unlike the *‘ōnyātā*, the *turgāmā* discussed here has entered into the regular ecclesiastical collection known as the *Book of Turgāmē*, and therefore occurs in numerous manuscripts. This book is still in use, in its printed version, in all the congregations of the Church of the East. There are likely two reasons for this: the brevity of such hymns and the fact that the *turgāmē* were chanted at the Eucharist on the day of the feast itself (unlike the night vigils, which were omitted in parish churches).

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91 This phenomenon seems to be universal across different eras and traditions, but it is in the medieval Middle East that it becomes formative for literary life. A literary circle was formed at court, around a ruler, and success in poetic competitions was the key to the poets' advancement. This was expressed in a special poetic form of response to another poet, using and supplementing the lines of the latter, and thus aiming to surpass him; in the Persian tradition, this poetic form was called *nažīra*; for instance, see N. Chalisova, 'Ob intertextual'noi tehnikе Hafiza', *Vestnik RGGU* 20 (100), (2012), pp. 41–71 (43–44).



### Appendix 1 *Turgāmā* on the Martyr Qūryāqōs by ‘Abdīšō’ of Gāzartā: Text and Translation

The manuscripts used for the edition along with their sigla are listed above (section 5.1). As explained there, A is used as the base manuscript for the edition. The printed edition of the *turgāmā* (designated as Ed.) is also used as reference material in the apparatus.<sup>92</sup>

#### Text

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**93.** אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

**1** אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא <sup>94</sup> מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

**2** תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

**5** דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

**3** דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא <sup>95</sup> מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

**10** דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

92 See *Ktābā d-turgāmē w-rušmā d-ṭeksā da-mšammšānē*, pp. 66–68.

93 B: The heading has been crossed out, and is therefore illegible.

C: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

D: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

E: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

F: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

G, I, J: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

H: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

L: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

K: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

Ed.: אָהַב מִלְּפָנֵי תְּהֵוּמָא עַד חַיִּיבָא הַמִּתְּקַבְּלָא דְּמַלְּטָא מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

94 B, C, D, G, H, I, J, K, L: מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

95 H: מִדְּבַר מַלְּכָא

15      ٥ هكز لم كمت ذمتهم ينجس ينجس ينجس ينجس :  
 ٦ متت صحبتيه نيسد كهم ذك مت يلكهم \*  
 ٧ ذك ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٨ مخط يخذ ذؤك يخذ يخذ يخذ يخذ يخذ يخذ \*  
 ٩ س لك هدم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ١٠ هك ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ١١ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ١٢ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ١٣ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ١٤ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ١٥ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ١٦ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ١٧ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ١٨ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ١٩ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٢٠ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ٢١ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٢٢ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ٢٣ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٢٤ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ٢٥ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٢٦ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ٢٧ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٢٨ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*  
 ٢٩ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم :  
 ٣٠ ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم \*

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96 D: ذمتهم ذمتهم; L: ذمتهم ذمتهم E: om. line 16.  
 97 D: ذمتهم ذمتهم  
 98 L: ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم ذمتهم  
 99 D: om. ذمتهم ذمتهم; blank space left for these words.  
 100 I, L: ذمتهم  
 101 I: here the text cuts off, having been either lost from the manuscript or not digitized.  
 102 H: ذمتهم  
 103 E: ذمتهم  
 104 D, H, K: ذمتهم ذمتهم

א כתב תורה 105 בד סהו דיסתלהסהה זהתת קסססה 106 :  
 וזיל מייס דבלב תיל היל ליה יססה \*  
 א קדס חל חק דיסודס אעס סססה סססה :  
 תיעס דסל סתדס קססס חק ייחג מייס וסודסה \*  
 א ילכת סססה לכס סססס ססססה סססה : 35  
 סססה סססה ססססה ססססה סססה סססה סססה סססה \*  
 א סססה סססה ססססה ססססה סססה סססה סססה :  
 דססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה \*  
 ז דססה סססה 107 סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה 108 :  
 סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה \* 40  
 א סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה :  
 דססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה 109 \*  
 א סססה 110 סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה :  
 סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה סססה \*

Translation

fol. 204<sup>r</sup>

Again, an introduction,<sup>111</sup> which is a *turgāmā* on Mār Qūryāqōs by Mār ‘Aḇdišō‘

- 1 Aleph: Oh those who believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
 three persons, one essence, one God,  
 Beth: Come in fear and love, my beloved lovers of the Just One,

105 B: סססה  
 106 D, E, H, K, L: סססה  
 107 L: סססה  
 108 C: added in the margin.  
 109 D, K: סססה; E: סססה; J: סססה; L: סססה  
 110 H: סססה  
 111 I.e., an introduction to the Gospel reading read during the liturgy, which corresponds to the liturgical context and purpose of the *turgāmā* hymns.

- celebrate the commemoration of the martyr Qūryāqōs!
- 5 Gamal: He rose to the combat heroically, although he was a little boy, overcame and defeated the hegemon, king Alexander.<sup>112</sup>
- Dalath: He resembled Stephan, the first-born among the martyrs, in his suffering.
- And he became a member of Peter’s blessed company.
- He: The faith, and hope, and love, as Paul said,
- 10 became the arms of the martyr, with which he defeated the worshipers of Zeus.
- Waw: On the day of his feast, we should give heed to his history, and seek refuge in his rest-place, and find a haven in it.
- Zayn: He sowed the seed of truth and righteousness in Tarsus, and plucked the weed of the evil seed of Magianism.<sup>113</sup>
- 15 Ḥeth: For the confession of his Lord, he endured all kinds of hardships. He neither feared nor succumbed to the battle with his suffering, like a [real] healer.
- Ṭeth: He carried his cross, as his Lord Christ commanded him. And with gladness, he endured torments and all shouts.
- Yodh: This guileless one established the image of his Lord in his person
- 20 by what he painfully suffered from the persecutors.
- Kaf: His crown shines in the abode of light higher than the sphere [of planets] among the infants slaughtered by Herod in the city of Jebus.<sup>114</sup>
- Lamadh: He guided many Gentiles to the way of truth by the power of God the Father, and broke statues, and exposed Arpaq<sup>115</sup> and Arius.<sup>116</sup>
- 25 Mim: From the shoe of the lawless king, he made a meal<sup>117</sup> and fed thousands, as his Lord did in the desert.

fol. 204<sup>v</sup>

112 Although the word **ܘܫܘܒܘܩܐ** (‘hegemon’, ‘ruler’) seems to be in st. constr., it is in fact in st. absol. The literal translation would then be: ‘overcame and defeated a hegemon, the king Alexander’. Nevertheless, it is the same person, as follows from the other versions of the narrative (see sections 2 and 3 of the current article).

113 The word **ܡܗܘܢܐ** (*māḡōs*) is generally used as a term for ‘Magism’, i.e. ‘Magianism’, i.e. Zoroastrianism, but could be used in a wider sense, referring to any pagan ruler (see Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, p. 2003). Note that this is how it is explained in the glosses to this poem, where the term **ܡܗܘܢܐ** (‘Magianism’) occurs (see Appendix 2, line 14).

114 I.e. Jerusalem.

115 *Arpaq* must be a distortion of the name **ܘܪܦܘܩܐ** (Orpheus); on these names, see above, section 5 of the current article.

116 Or Ares (see section 5 of the current article).

117 The translation is based on the context given in other poems on this martyr (see above,

Nun: The devil's worshipers sawed apart his body after having beaten him.

Then he was broiled by the hegemon's order before the crowd.

Semkath: Our Lord Jesus, the hope of those who fear him, stepped down from the throne

30 and resurrected him, having shown him His excellency and His universe.

ʿE: He made a plea, when he saw that the murderer was going to kill him and asked him for some time to pray before he would be slaughtered.

Pe: You who save everyone that remembers Your name and who become his shelter,  
in the name of your servant, cast off any harm from him and throw it away!

35 Šadhe: May Your Cross protect the Holy universal Church, and destroy its haters completely, and raise the ranks of the clergy!

Qoph: May it cause wars to cease, heal the afflicted, and strengthen the people

of the Christians, and take away all chastisements from them.

Resh: May the Great Shepherd spread and send the light of his countenance

40 upon His flock and sprinkle its face with the dew of His grace!

Shin: Glorious are You, our Lord, and glorious is Your power, and worthy of faith, with which the martyr shone and defeated every peril!

Taw: And now, let us listen also to the word proclaimed by the apostle Matthew the tax collector, one of the twelve theologians.<sup>118</sup>

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section 3 of the current article), which is supported also in the glosses to this *turgāmā* (see Appendix 2, line 25).

118 Or: one of the twelve, a theologian. The word *theologian* is in the singular here, but the author did not know Greek grammar, having used the words in the forms given in a glossary. Moreover, he needed this form for the rhyme. For the use of singular forms of Greek loanwords for the plural, see Butts, *Language Change in the Wake of Empire*, p. 106.

Appendix 2: Glosses in the *turgāmā* by ‘Abdīšō‘ of Gāzartā on the Martyr Qūryāqōs

Line number	MS B	MS C	MS F	MS G	MS H	MS I	MS K	Ed.
1	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
2	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
3	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
5	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ			
10	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
11	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
14	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ			ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
15			ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
17	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
18	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ <i>corrupt</i>	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
19	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ <i>corrupt</i>		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
20	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ <i>corrupt</i>	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
21	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ <i>corrupt</i>	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
22	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ <i>corrupt</i>	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
23	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ
24	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ	ܐܘܕܝܘܢܐ ܘܕܝܘܢܐ		

(cont.)

Line number	MS B	MS C	MS F	MS G	MS H	MS I	MS K	Ed.
25	ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ	ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ	ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ	ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ	ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ	ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ		ܘܚܘܫܘܢ ܘܚܘܫܘܢ
26	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ		ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
27	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ <sup>a</sup> ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
28	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
30	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
31	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
32	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ <i>corrupt</i>	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
36	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ... <i>corrupt</i>	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ		ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
37	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ <i>corrupt</i>	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
40	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ		ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ					
41	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ		ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
42				ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ				ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
43	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ		ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ		ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ
44				ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ			ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ	ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ ܘܘܫܘܫܘܢ

a The text cuts off here.