

# A Proclamation Out of Place

## 'Stomen Kalos, Kyrie-Eleison' and the Nicene Creed

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### Abstract

This study investigates the usage of the Greek proclamation *stomen kalos* in the West Syriac tradition. We show that the term found its way into Syriac around the late 500s and early 600s, and was used as a prelude to the Prayer of Pardon, the *Husoyo*. After the 12<sup>th</sup> century, *stomen kalos* was introduced as a prelude to the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace at the beginning of the Anaphora. As this prayer follows directly the Nicene Creed, a corruption took place whereby *stomen kalos* was misconceived as a conclusion to the Creed, resulting in using it in such a context in all daily services. We argue that the usage of *stomen kalos* as a conclusion to the Nicene Creed is the result of a liturgical corruption.

One of the most common phrases that occur in the Syriac Orthodox liturgy is *stomen kalos*, always followed by the response *Kyrie-Eleison*. The phrase *stomen kalos* is chanted during all services: morning prayers, evening prayers, baptisms, funerals, etc. Its frequent occurrence is only second to the Trisagion, more commonly known by its beginning phrase *Qadishat Aloho* 'Holy art Thou O God'. In what follows, I shall explain the meaning of *stomen kalos* and describe the contexts in which it is recited.

What made me write this article is a realization, one that took more than twenty-three years of serving as a deacon. In services other than the Holy *Qurbono* (or the Eucharistic Liturgy) the usage of *stomen kalos* after reciting the Nicene Creed is actually a misuse and is due to liturgical corruption.

I shall proceed as follows: In section I, "Introduction", I shall explain the meaning of the phrase *stomen kalos*. In section II, "*Stomen kalos* after the Creed?", I shall question the validity of the usage of *stomen kalos* after the recitation of the Nicene Creed in all services – with the exception of the Holy *Qurbono*. In section III, "*Stomen kalos* before the Prayer of *Husoyo*" I shall demonstrate that the original and primary usage of *stomen kalos* is before the Prayer of *Husoyo*. Finally, I give a concluding discussion in section IV.

### I. Introduction

The phrase *stomen kalos* is a proclamation – or instruction or command – said by the deacon. Proclamations constitute most of what the deacon recites. Examples of proclamations from the *Qurbono* Liturgy include, "let us give heed and listen" (before the reading of the Gospels) and "let us give peace to one another" (after the Prayer of Peace).

The proclamation *stomen kalos* is set apart from all other proclamations in one particular characteristic: it is actually said in Greek, not Syriac. The literal meaning of *stomen kalos* (Greek *στωμεν καλωσ*) is 'stand well' or 'stand right'. The equivalent Syriac form is *نقوم شافير* (*nqum shaphir*). The response to *stomen kalos* is always the Greek phrase *Kyrie Eleison* (κύριε ἐλέησον) which

means 'Lord have mercy'. The Syriac equivalent of *Kyrie Eleison* is **ܡܘܢ ܝܗܘܐ ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪܝܡ** (*morān eth-rahām 'layn*). The 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries Syriac dictionaries of Bar Ali and Bar Bahlul explain *stomen kalos* with the Syriac **ܢܩܘܡ ܫܦܝܪ** (*nqum shaphir*).

The phrase *stomen kalos*, in its Greek form, is used by all the Churches of the West Syriac tradition: Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Maronite, Syriac Catholic, and the Malankara Church in India, both Orthodox and Catholic. The usage of the phrase in all these churches is an indication of its antiquity in the Syriac tradition.

The usage of Greek terminology in Syriac liturgical literature is not uncommon. Under Byzantium, where Christianity flourished, Greek was the official language of the land, while Aramaic, of which Syriac is a dialect, was the language of the inhabitants of Greater Syria and Mesopotamia. Greek terminology used by Christendom in its entirety includes terms for offices of the hierarchy (e.g., Patriarch, metropolitan, deacon), names of vestments (e.g., *huroro* 'stole' from *ὠράριον*), liturgical words (e.g., Amen, Halleluia), etc. This mixture of Greek and Syriac is also due to the bilingual culture that was present in Syria between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this period, one finds many Greek phrases in Syriac liturgical manuscripts, and Greek prayers written in the Syriac script. Many bilingual monasteries, such as the one in Saydnaya, flourished in Syria during this period of time.

The first printed Syriac text to contain the Greek *stomen kalos*, is the 16<sup>th</sup> century edition of the Syriac Orthodox baptismal rite of Severus of Antioch, published by G. F. Boderiano in 1572. The same text, based on an old manuscript of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchal library was published by the late Patriarch Afram Barsoum in 1950. Here, and elsewhere, the phrase *stomen kalos* is used before a special prayer called the Prayer of *Husoyo* ('Petition'). Shortly, we shall see that the primary usage of *stomen kalos* in all

services is indeed in this context.

There is one other usage of *stomen kalos*, however, that prompted the writing of this article. This usage is with relation to the Nicene Creed.

## II. *Stomen kalos* after the Creed?

It is customary in the Syriac Orthodox Church, as well as all the Churches of the West Syriac tradition with the exception of the Maronite Church, to conclude the recitation of the Nicene Creed with *stomen kalos* in all services. This is mostly an oral tradition, although it is found in writing in the printed liturgical books of the West Syriac churches in India, both Orthodox and Catholic.

This is rather intriguing. As *stomen kalos* is a proclamation to 'stand well', one would expect it to take place *before* an event, not after it. Why are the faithful asked to 'stand well' *after* the recitation of the Creed?

To answer the question, we shall first take a look at the usage of *stomen kalos* in the *Qurbono* Liturgy, during which the phrase is used twice. The structure of the Holy *Qurbono* is reproduced below. Entire sections that are of no relevance to the current discussion are omitted and replaced by '...'

### The Public Celebration

- Celebrant: **ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪܝܡ** ('Mary who brought Thee forth, etc.')

People: **ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪܝܡ ܡܪܝܡ** ('By the prayers of Thy Mother who brought Thee forth, etc.')
- The Petition Prayer:**

Deacon: *stomen kalos* ('Stand well')

People: *Kyrie Eleison* ('Lord have Mercy')

Celebrant: Prayer of *Husoyo*
- The Creed:**

Deacon: **ܢܩܘܡ ܫܦܝܪ ܢܩܘܡ ܫܦܝܪ** ('Let us all stand up well, and respond to the reverend priest,

etc.')

Celebrant: **ܡܕܝܡܢܝܢܝܢ ܨܝܒܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ** ('We believe in one God')

People: **ܐܘܠܐ ܐܘܨܝܒܝܢ ܩܘܠܐ** ('The Father Almighty, etc.')

Deacon: *stomen kalos* ('Stand Well')

People: *Kyrie-Eleison* ('Lord have mercy')

### Anaphora (Divine Liturgy)

#### 4. The Prayer of the Kiss of Peace:

Celebrant: **ܐܠܗܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ** ('O God of all and Lord, etc.')

People: Amen. *Barekhamor* ('bless my lord')

Celebrant: **ܡܫܠܡܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܗܘܝܬ** ('Peace be with you')

People: **ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ** ('And with your Spirit')

Deacon: **ܢܠܡܐ ܡܫܠܡܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܗܘܝܬ** ('Let us give peace to one another, etc.')

#### 5. The Prayer of Inclination:

Deacon: **ܡܝ ܗܘܝܬ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ** ('After the holy and divine peace has been given, let us bow down our heads before the merciful Lord')

People: **ܡܘܩܝܡܝܢ ܨܝܒܝܢ ܐܠܗܐ** ('Before Thee, O our Lord and our God')

Celebrant: **ܐܘܗܘ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ** ('O Thou Who art alone the merciful Lord, etc.')

People: Amen.

#### 6. The Prayer of the Veil:

Celebrant: **ܐܠܗܐ ܐܘܠܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ** ('O God the Father, who by Thy great and indescribable love, etc.')

People: Amen.

#### 7. The Anaphora Proper:

Deacon: **ܢܦܩܡ ܡܫܠܡܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܗܘܝܬ** ('Let us stand well, let us stand

with fear', etc.)

Celebrant: **ܢܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ ܘܗܘܐ** ('The Love of God the Father, etc.')

#### 8. Dismissal of the Faithful:

Celebrant: **ܗܘܝܬ ܗܘܝܬ ܗܘܝܬ** ('Go in peace, etc.')

The above extract shows that the *Qurbono* liturgy consists of two main parts: The Public Celebration (items 1-3 above) and the Anaphora (items 4-8). In former times, the Public Celebration was attended by all people, baptized and non-baptized. The Anaphora, which is the actual Divine Liturgy, was attended only by those who were baptized.

The first occurrence of *stomen kalos* in the Holy *Qurbono* is prior to the *Husoyo* Prayer (item 2). Here, the deacon commands the faithful to 'stand well' to listen to the *Husoyo*. We shall see in section III below that the usage of *stomen kalos* before the *Husoyo* is the original and primary usage of this phrase in the Syriac tradition.

The second usage of *stomen kalos* (at the end of item 3) occurs between the two main parts of the liturgy: The Public Celebration and the Anaphora. Is *stomen kalos* really said *after* the Creed as indicated in the above extract? Or is it said *before* the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace? These may seem extraneous questions. After all, the Creed and the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace follow each other. Does it matter if we consider *stomen kalos* as a conclusion to the Creed or a prelude to the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace? It turns out that it does indeed matter.

The answer may result in questioning the validity of using *stomen kalos* in other services. If *stomen kalos* is intended to be a conclusion to the Creed, then its usage after the Creed in all other services (morning, evening, baptisms, funerals, etc.) is probably valid. However, if *stomen kalos* is intended to be a prelude to the Anaphora, the validity of using it after the Creed in daily services



requires further investigation.

We resort to the writings of the Fathers to try to find some answers. In his *Commentary* on the Divine Liturgy, the Syriac Orthodox scholar and bishop Moshe Bar Kephō (ca. 813-903), explains:

Concerning the proclamation (Syriac ܩܘܪܘܒܘܬܐ *koruzutho*) upon the steps. – The deacon urges the people by this proclamation to *stand well* (Syriac ܩܘܪܘܒܘܬܐ *nqum shaphir*), and purge their minds again from distractions and worldly cares, and to listen to those things which are said by the priest, and to make supplication to God that they (themselves) may be accepted and answered, and to answer the words which they are commanded to answer.

The above quote occurs in Bar Kephō's *Commentary* after a section titled "Concerning 'We believe in one God,'" and before a section titled "Concerning the Prayer of Peace". The position of the above quote in the *Commentary* does not help us answer the question: Is *stomen kalos* said as a conclusion of the Creed, or as a prelude to the Prayer of Peace? We can infer, however, from the content of the above quote, that the deacon commands the faithful to 'stand well' to what is about to happen: "to listen to those things which are said by the priest", i.e., the prayers of the Anaphora, and "to answer the words which they are commanded to answer", i.e., to say the words that the deacon commands them to say during the Anaphora.

That *stomen kalos* is said as a prelude to the Anaphora, and not as a conclusion to the Creed, is reinforced by another commentary. Writing in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Bar Salibi gives a similar explanation in his *Exposition of the Liturgy*. The relevant part is quoted in full:

Chapter Eight

Concerning the *Qurobo* [Anaphora]. After the General Creed, the deacon proclaims on the steps, urging [the people] in this proclamation to stand well (Syriac ܩܘܪܘܒܘܬܐ *nqum shafir*), and purge their minds again from distractions and worldly cares, and to listen to those things which are said by the priest, and to make supplication to God that they (themselves) may

be accepted, and to answer the words which they are commanded to answer. We did not observe that the Westerners practice this proclamation. The Easterners, [however,] always use it.

Bar Salibi relies heavily on Bar Kephō; the underlined text is what Bar Salibi has copied, almost verbatim, from Bar Kephō. The title of the paragraph and the place in which the quote appears in Bar Salibi's text affirm our conclusion. The title "Concerning the *Qurobo*" makes it clear that the proclamation to 'stand well' is part of the Anaphora, and not part of the Public Celebration.

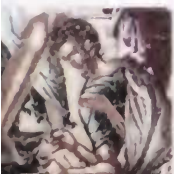
The chapter numbering in Bar Salibi's *Exposition* also supports our conclusion. In Chapter 7 of the *Exposition*, Bar Salibi explains various aspects of the liturgy, and ends the chapter with a detailed explanation of the Creed. Had the proclamation to 'stand well' been a response to the Creed, Bar Salibi would have placed the above paragraph at the end of Chapter 7. Instead, he started a new chapter, Chapter 8, where he began explaining the Anaphora. The first section of this Chapter 8 is the quote given above.

It is worth noting that both Bar Kephō and Bar Salibi do not use the Greek form *stomen kalos*; instead, they use the Syriac form *nqum shaphir*.

There is a third Syriac source that predates both Bar Kephō and Bar Salibi. Writing in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century, Jacob of Edessa also comments on the proclamation to 'stand well' in a letter he addressed to one priest named Thomas. Jacob's comment, however, is not with regards to *stomen kalos*, but to the deacon's proclamation of item 7 above: ܩܘܪܘܒܘܬܐ ܩܘܪܘܒܘܬܐ ܩܘܪܘܒܘܬܐ. However, it affirms our argument that such proclamations precede and do not conclude prayers.

The deacon gives directions admonishing to 'stand well' in becoming order, signifying thereby that the priest is just about to begin the mystic ministry.

It should be now clear that *stomen kalos*



marks the beginning of the Anaphora, and is not a closing response to the Creed: the deacon asks of the faithful to ‘stand well’ in preparation for the Anaphora. We shall present now two non-Syriac sources that support this conclusion.

The first source comes from a reconstruction, partly based on the Syriac, of the Greek version of the Liturgy of St. James by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cambridge scholar W. Trollope. We mentioned earlier that in former times, the Public Celebration was attended by all people, while the Anaphora was attended only by those who were baptized. Trollope gives the text said by the deacon at the end of the Public Celebration:

Let none of the Catechumens [‘hearers’, those who are receiving instructions in the faith with a view of being baptized], let none of the uninitiated, and let none of those who are not able to join with us in prayer, remain. Recognize one another. Close the doors. Let all stand upright. Let us pray to the Lord.

The second source is found in Mrs. Margoliouth’s *Supplement to her father’s Thesaurus Syriacus*, the largest Syriac dictionary ever written. Mrs. Margoliouth explains *stomen kalos* as follows: “stand we aright, the deacon’s invocation at the beginning of the Anaphora.”

Our question now is: Why is *stomen kalos* said after the Creed during services other than the Holy *Qurbono*? Is the proclamation to ‘stand well’ in such a context valid?

To determine this we need to understand and collate all the context(s) in which *stomen kalos* takes place in other services.

### III. *Stomen kalos* Before the Prayer of *Husoyo*

We mentioned at the beginning that the frequent usage of *stomen kalos* is only second to the Trisagion. So far we have only accounted for one usage: before the beginning of the Anaphora.

Looking at all liturgical texts – initially without further investigation – we find that

*stomen kalos* occurs in two contexts: (1) prior to the Prayer of *Husoyo*, as illustrated in the *Husoyo* of the *Qurbono* Liturgy above under item 2, and (2) during hymns of the daily prayers, known in Syriac by the name *ܫܫܝܡܘ* (*shhimo*) or ‘simple’.

On a regular ‘simple’ day (i.e., when there is no *Qurbono* Liturgy or a special feast), the phrase *stomen kalos* is chanted almost 20 times, always between hymns. An extract, familiar to many of the faithful, is given below from the Service of the Virgin as chanted by two choirs:

1. Choir 1: ܕܢܝܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘The King’s daughter stands forth in glory ...’)  
Choir 2: ܘܠܗܝܐ ܫܫܝܡܘ ܗܘܝܢܐ ܐܝܬܝܗ (‘Forget also Thine own people and Thy Father’s House ...’)
2. Choir 1: ܕܢܝܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘Bless my lord...’)  
Celebrant: ܩܘܠܘ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘Glory be to the Father ...’)  
Choir 1: ܡܫܝܝܡܘ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘As it was in the beginning ...’)
3. ܩܘܠܘ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘Offer supplication on our behalf ...’)
4. Choir 2: *stomen kalos* ‘stand well’  
*Kyrie Eleison* ‘Lord have mercy’
5. Choir 1: *Qolo* ‘Hymn’, first stanza  
Choir 2: ܕܢܝܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘Bless my lord...’)  
Celebrant: ܩܘܠܘ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ (‘Glory be to the Father ...’)  
Choir 2: *Qolo* ‘Hymn’, second stanza

The numbering into five sections above will become apparent soon. As we have established that *stomen kalos* precedes special events, one may wonder as to why the faithful are asked to ‘stand well’ in the middle of hymns (item 4 above)?

It turns out that there is an event, for which the faithful are commanded to ‘stand well’. This event is omitted in the above service. In the Syriac Orthodox printed editions of the *Shhimo*, we find that between the *stomen kalos* (item 4 above) and the *Qolo*

(item 5), there is always the word '*Sedro*'. Can this be a clue?

The *Sedro* is actually the second, longer part of the *Husoyo* prayer, the first part being a preface called the '*Promion*' (a Greek word). The word '*Sedro*' here indicates the existence of a *Husoyo* prayer between items 4 and 5 for which the faithful are asked to 'stand well'. The Syriac Catholic edition of the *Shhimo* is more emphatic: it gives the entire text of the *Husoyo* prayer in item 4.

The full version of the same service, divided into its various parts for clarity, is repeated below:

1. *Quqalion* (Psalm 45:10-11):  
Choir 1: ܕܰܝܰܐ ܰܡܰܟܰܬܰܐ ܰܒܰܗܰܘܰܘܰܐ ܰܡܰܘܰܠܰܐ ('The King's daughter stands forth in glory ...')  
Choir 2: ܰܗܰܘܰܐ ܰܚܰܘܰܒ ܰܚܰܘܰܒ ܰܗܰܘܰܐ ܰܐܰܒܰܘܰܐ ('Forget also Thine own people and Thy Father's House ...')
2. *Shubho* (Glory):  
Deacon: ܰܕܰܒܰܘܰܠܰܐܰܘܰܐ ('Bless my lord...')  
Celebrant: ܰܡܰܘܰܠܰܐ ܰܠܰܐܰܒܰܐ ('Glory be to the Father ...')  
Choir 1: ܰܡܰܥ ܰܚܰܕܰܡ ('As it was in the beginning ...')
3. *Eqbo* (Conclusion Prayer):  
Choir 1: ܰܡܰܘܰܠܰܐ ܰܚܰܘܰܒ ܰܠܰܐܰܒܰܐ ('Offer supplication on our behalf ...')
4. *Husoyo* (Petition Prayer):  
Deacon: *stomen kalos* ('stand well')  
People: *Kyrie Eleison* ('Lord have mercy')  
Celebrant: Prayer of *Husoyo*
5. *Qolo* (Hymn):  
Choir 1: *Qolo* 'Hymn', first stanza  
Deacon: ܰܕܰܒܰܘܰܠܰܐܰܘܰܐ ('Bless my lord...')  
Celebrant: ܰܡܰܘܰܠܰܐ ܰܠܰܐܰܒܰܐ ('Glory be to the Father ...')  
Choir 2: *Qolo* 'Hymn', second stanza

It turns out that for every *stomen kalos* in the *Shhimo* prayers there is a corresponding *Husoyo* that follows. In almost all cases, as in the above service, the *Husoyo* itself is omitted,

but the command to 'stand well' in preparation for it is still retained. In some Churches, especially monasteries, the prayers of *Husoyo* are said silently by a priest.

#### IV. Discussion

We have seen that the most frequent use of *stomen kalos* is before the prayer of *Husoyo*, even if such a prayer is skipped or said silently. The only other place in which *stomen kalos* is said is before the Anaphora.

As the Anaphora is preceded by the Nicene Creed in the *Qurbono* Liturgy, a common misconception among the clergy took place: that *stomen kalos* is a conclusion to the Creed. This false assumption is probably due to the fact that the phrase is said in Greek, and the Syriac common clergy did not understand it in later times when Greek ceased to be an influential language. Years later, deacons began chanting it after every recitation of the Creed in all other services till our modern time. The Syriac Orthodox and Syriac Catholic *Shhimo* editions of India explicitly have *stomen kalos* after the creed in daily prayers!

We may now revise our presentation of the liturgy from section II as follows, emphasizing that *stomen kalos* belongs to the Anaphora.

#### The Public Celebration

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#### 3. The Creed:

Deacon: ܰܒܰܘܰܠܰܐܰܘܰܐ ܰܚܰܘܰܒ ܰܠܰܐܰܒܰܐ ('Let us all stand up well, and respond to the reverend priest, etc.')

Celebrant: ܰܡܰܘܰܠܰܐ ܰܠܰܐܰܒܰܐ ('We believe in one God')

People: ܰܐܰܒܰܐ ܰܐܰܠܰܘܰܘܰܐ ('The Father Almighty, etc.')

#### Anaphora (Divine Liturgy)

4. Deacon: *stomen kalos* ('Stand Well')

People: *Kyrie-Eleison* ('Lord have mercy')



**The Prayer of the Kiss of Peace:**

Celebrant: ܕܘܫܘܝܘܢܝܢ ܕܘܫܘܝܘܢܝܢ (‘O God of all and Lord, etc.’)

Three questions remain to be answered: (1) When did the Greek *stomen kalos* enter the Syriac tradition and in what context? (2) When was *stomen kalos* introduced as a prelude to the Anaphora? (3) When did the liturgical corruption just mentioned (i.e., the recitation of *stomen kalos* as a conclusion to the Creed) take place? The rest of the section attempts to give answers to these questions.

**When did the Greek *stomen kalos* enter the Syriac tradition?**

There are two possible answers to this question. The first possibility is between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, a period of extreme Hellenistic influence. The second possibility is between the late 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries at the time of the Byzantine reconquest of Northwest Syria during which Greek canons were translated into Syriac, and the liturgical tradition of the Melkite Church (Rum Orthodox), originally Antiochean and bilingual (Greek and Syriac), was entirely Byzantinized.

The earlier date is more likely, as by the 10<sup>th</sup> century we have already an abundance of *Husoyo* prayers. In fact, this genre was either introduced or cultivated by Patriarch John III, known as John of the Sedros (remember that the *Sedro* is the second part of the *Husoyo*), who lived during the later parts of the 6<sup>th</sup> century and died in 648.

The earlier date is reinforced by the fact that the usage of *stomen kalos* prior to the *Husoyo* is used also by the Maronite Church, whose formation as a separate community goes back to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. Had *stomen kalos* entered the Syriac Orthodox Church in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century, it would hardly have entered the tradition of the Maronite Church as well.

The phrase *stomen kalos* then must have entered the Syriac tradition as a prelude to

the *Husoyo* prayer sometimes between the late 500s and early-mid 600s. It is worth noting that the ‘preface’ to the *Husoyo* is also given a Greek name, *Promion*, an indication of the Hellenistic influence of that time.

**When was *stomen kalos* introduced as a prelude to the Anaphora?**

Moshe Bar Kephō, writing in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, tells us that the proclamation to ‘stand well’ prior to the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace was already practiced during his time, although he quotes the Syriac form *nqum shaphir*. Bar Salibi, who wrote in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, also quoting the Syriac form, adds that this proclamation was practiced only in the East (Mesopotamia and Persia), and not in the West (Syria).

This indicates that the proclamation to ‘stand well’ before the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace was not practiced uniformly between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is possible that churches further West (around Antioch and Western Asia Minor) took over the Greek *stomen kalos* from the Greek version of St. James liturgy, where it is actually said *after* the Prayer of the Kiss of Peace, sometime around the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. If this was indeed practiced by a small number of Churches further west from Amida (Diyarbakir), of which Bar Salibi was the bishop, he may have not been aware of it.

Further east, the proclamation was already used in its Syriac form, probably a few centuries earlier. It is conceivable that both traditions met at some point after the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with the Greek *stomen kalos* dominating over the Syriac *nqum shaphir*. As the Greek *stomen kalos* prior to the Anaphora is practiced in the Syriac Catholic Church, this must have taken place before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**When did the liturgical corruption take place?**

The final question is when did the recitation of *stomen kalos* after the Nicene Creed in ser-



vices other than the Holy *Qurbano* take place? This could not have taken place prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> century for two reasons: Firstly, Bar Salibi tells us that even during his days, the churches in the West (Greater Syria and Asia Minor) did not say 'stand well' before the Anaphora. Secondly, if there was such a corruption in the days of Bar Salibi, he is likely to have instructed his readers to correct it.

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