

**As part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Institute of Liturgy of the Holy Spirit  
University of Kaslik (USEK) (1969-2019)**

**The Institute of Liturgy and the Department of Syriac and Antiochian Sciences of the  
Faculty of Religious and Oriental Sciences are organizing an international conference  
on**

**The Syriac poetic and musical heritage “Rîch Qolé رُحْ قَوْلَ – Beth-Gazo بَـثْ جَـزْوَ**

**2-4 May 2019**

### **Organizers of the conference**

The Institute of Liturgy and the Department of Syriac and Antiochian Sciences of the Faculty of Religious and Oriental Sciences – Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK)

### **Rationale**

Syriac churches across their branches and ramifications abound in treasures consisting of hymns and melodies transmitted orally from generation to generation by those taking part in liturgical prayers, rites and celebrations. Nevertheless, religious persecutions and the ensuing waves of displacement and emigration caused these churches to lose some of their intangible musical and poetic liturgical heritage.

These Syriac churches interacted with their surroundings due to their presence across several geographical, cultural and civilizational regions with which they had a relation of mutual influence. This led to the emergence of several melodies for the same Syriac hymn text and to multiple manners of performing the same melody.

Syriac churches take pride in the fact that their poetic and musical heritage bears the faith of their fathers and ancestors and encompasses the doctrines and spirituality of the Church. The major pioneers of this heritage include the likes of Saint Ephrem the Syrian, Saint Jacob of Sarug and Rabbula, and the majority of it is still prayed and sung in these churches to this day.

The compilation of all these hymns in one book, which was entitled in the old days “Rîch Qolé رُحْ قَوْلَ” and, later on in some churches, “Beth-Gazo بَـثْ جَـزْوَ”, is regarded as a developed, forward-looking educational and archiving endeavor, considering that this initiative sought to preserve these hymns and melodies by ensuring their literary, poetic, liturgical and musical classification. Some of these compilations and classifications of hymn texts were done according to their respective poetic divisions or liturgical uses. Others, still, undertook the Western-style music notation of these melodies towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, hence the publication of several books entitled “Rîch Qolé رُحْ قَوْلَ” or “Beth-Gazo بَـثْ جَـزْوَ”, each encompassing part of the heritage of a given Syriac church. This led to the emergence of two different types: the first includes all hymn texts or at least the first line after the beginning of which the hymn as such is named, whereas the second comprises the Western-style music notation of the Syriac melodies in use in any given Syriac church.

Most Syriac churches are in possession of the majority of these hymns, albeit with minor variations. However, the majority of melodies differ from one Syriac church to another, or even from one region to another, since each is based on a different tradition. The intangible oral heritage is as important as the countless manners of performing it; yet it remains subject to some modulations depending on the individual performers' mood and their vocal and artistic capacities.

The Institute of Liturgy and the Department of Syriac and Antiochian Sciences of the Faculty of Religious and Oriental Sciences at the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) take a keen interest in the Syriac liturgical heritage as evidenced in the various academic theological, liturgical, and historical studies and research papers. As such, they are pleased to issue this call for proposals for their international conference on the Syriac poetic and musical heritage, known as the “Rîch Qolé ܩܘܠܐ ܩܘܠܐ” or “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘܐ”.

The aim of this conference is to shed light on the Syriac heritage, illustrate its wealth and characteristics, and conduct research pertaining to the stages of its evolution.

### **Objectives of the conference**

In keeping with the objectives of the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK), the Faculty of Religious and Oriental Sciences is mindful of its educational, academic and research responsibilities and is keen to pursue its own objectives in terms of research, education, and heritage preservation and dissemination. Therefore, it intends to emphasize the relation between liturgy and the poetic and musical heritage of Syriac churches, including the importance of Syriac texts in the liturgy as well as their authors, their history and their evolution, the importance of Syriac melodies in liturgical celebrations and their various subdivisions and musical/liturgical characteristics, etc.

### **Conference themes**

- **First theme: “Rîch Qolé ܩܘܠܐ ܩܘܠܐ” or “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘܐ”**
  - Definition of these two denominations
  - History of these two denominations
  - Authenticity and importance of the Syriac poetic and musical heritage
- **Second theme: The Syriac poetic heritage**
  - Its genres
  - Its compiled manuscripts and printed heritage publications
  - Its translations
  - Its presence in current Syriac rites
- **Third theme: The Syriac musical heritage**

- History of music notations in Syriac churches
  - “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘ” of the Syriac Orthodox Church
  - “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘ” of the Syriac Catholic Church
  - “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘ” of the Syriac Malabar and Malankara Churches in India
  - “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘ” of the Assyrian Church
  - “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘ” of the Chaldean Church
  - “Rîch Qolé ܪܝܚ ܩܘܠܐ” of the Syriac Maronite Church
- **Fourth theme: The role of “Rîch Qolé ܪܝܚ ܩܘܠܐ” and “Beth-Gazo ܒܝܬ ܓܙܘ” in the renaissance of Syriac churches**
    - Studies on the Syriac poetic and musical heritage
    - The Syriacs between displacement, emigration and the preservation of their poetic and musical heritage
    - Young people and the Syriac heritage in the globalization era
    - Poetic translations of the Syriac heritage into foreign languages

### **Instructions for the paper proposal**

All participants wishing to take part in the conference should submit an abstract of their planned subject in keeping with the four themes of the conference, complete the attached application form, and send them, along with their ID and academic rank, to the Secretariat of the conference before March 15, 2019. The Secretariat of the conference will inform the authors whether or not the scientific committee has selected their papers by the end of March 2019. The authors of the papers selected will have to submit their complete texts before April 30, 2019.

The organizers of the conference will cover the travel costs of researchers whose papers are accepted, which includes airfare, accommodation and transportation for the duration of the conference.

Papers should abide by the following style guide:

- Papers are to be submitted in Arabic, French, or English, and the author will undertake, in writing, that the subject tackled has not been addressed before.
- Font: Simplified Arabic 14 for Arabic texts and Times New Roman 12 for Latin texts; Simplified Arabic 10 for Arabic footnotes and Times New Roman 10 for Latin footnotes;

Simplified Arabic 12 for Arabic bibliography and annexes and Times New Roman 12 for Latin bibliography and annexes.

- 20,000 to 25,000 characters (spaces, footnotes and bibliography included).
- The style guide used for the bibliography is as follows:
  - + **Books:** author's full name (surname, name), title (in italics), volume (if the book is composed of several volumes), publisher, location, edition, year, page;
  - + **Magazines and periodicals:** author's full name, title of the article or paper (between quotes), title of the magazine or periodical, date, volume, number, page;
  - + **Article published within a book** (e.g. conference proceedings): author's full name, title of the article (between quotes), title of the work (in italics), volume (if the book is composed of several volumes), publisher, location, print, year, page;
- Notes should be mentioned as footnotes.
- Foreign proper names: foreign proper names mentioned in Arabic papers should be written in Arabic followed by their transliteration in Latin characters.
- Justified text to the left and right and subtitles in bold.
- Quotes in italics.

Papers should be sent as Word or PDF documents to the Secretariat of the conference.

- Deadline for submitting papers is April 30, 2019.
- Time allotted for each presentation is 20 minutes.

### **Scientific committee**

Rev. Fr. Abbot Youhanna Tabet

Rev. Fr. Youssef Tannous

Rev. Fr. Abdo Badwi

Rev. Fr. Ziad Sacre

Rev. Fr. Joseph Obeid

### **Secretariat of the conference**

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