



[AP 229 - Bar Maryam at Dharmaram College.](#)

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Call Number	AP 229
Part Number	Part I – Syro Malabar Church
Title	Bar Maryam at Dharmaram College.
Duration	6:16
Place of Recording	Dharmaram College, Bengaluru
Date of Recording	18 July 2014
Youtube URL	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1liQ5T2Zik
Video Segment(s)	

Notes

Bar Maryam at Dharmaram College (2014)

On the uniqueness of the text and melody of [Bar Maryam](#) . From a lecture at [Dharmaram College, Bengaluru](#). 18 July 2014. This lecture took place much before the recent emotionally-laden discussions on social media regarding the origin and ownership of this chant. The song text, which may be of Middle-Eastern origin, is a common patrimony of the Chaldean Catholics as well as the Syriac Christians in India. The Chaldean Catholics continue to sing this song, albeit with a different melody and an Arabic vocal inflection (see Chaldean Catholic Bishop Singing Bar Maryam). Sadly, some of the Syro Malabar Catholics disowned this intangible cultural heritage even before the vernacularization of the Syriac liturgy (1962). Fortunately, the younger generation is currently warming up to the song enthusiastically to rediscover their identity. It is not clear if the melody is of Indian origin. We have one example of a Marian song in Tamil in the meter and melody of Bar Maryam (Aramaic Project-5A). Also, we have a recorded sample of the tune with different texts from the Syriac singers from St. John Nepomucene Church at Kadavanthara, Ernakulam (Aramaic Project-51M). This church belongs to the Archieparchy of Ernakulam-Angamaly. There is yet another sample of a popular devotional song in Malayalam that is sung to the melody of Bar Maryam (see Aramaic Project-53). Although the song was a common patrimony of all the Syriac Christians in Kerala, the Knanaya community among the St. Thomas Christians can be credited with preserving the tradition of singing this song at the conclusion of the wedding ceremonies in the church with a final blessing on the couple by the celebrant. The songtext, however, does not make reference to the wedding at Cana. The historical significance of the song is noteworthy. In retrospect, the Portuguese missionaries did not have to impose the burden of Nestorian heresy on the St. Thomas Christians. By singing Bar Maryam and Sagdīnan mār, the St. Thomas Christians had been reiterating in different words the correct Christology of the Ecumenical Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). By continuing the tradition, the present generation of Syro Malabar Catholics can reverse the course of history and redefine the future, and add India into the international imagination of Eastern Christianity. See more on the Encyclopedia of Syriac Chants <http://www.thecmsindia.org/bar-maryam...>

[Joseph J. Palackal, CMI](#)

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