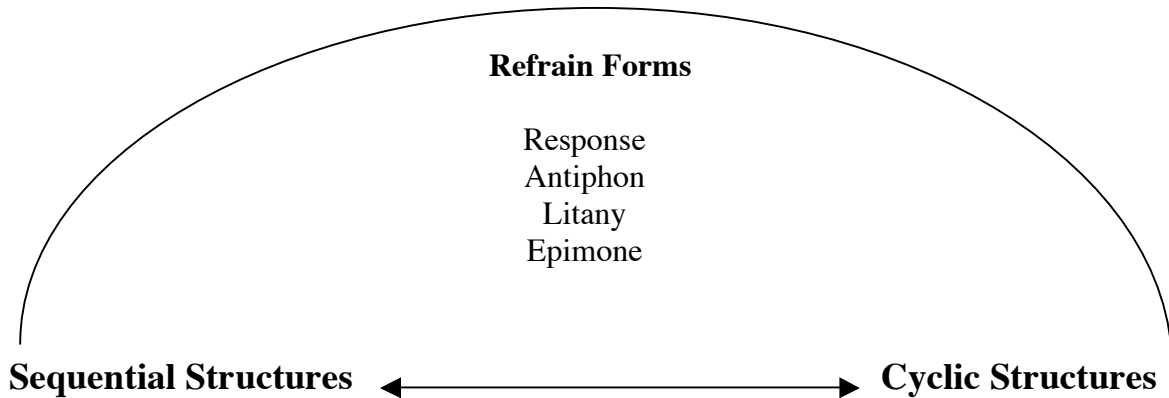


# Spectrum of Congregational Song Structures

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## Comparison between Sequential and Cyclic Musical Structures



Strophic  
Textual orientation  
Eye oriented  
Literate tradition  
Predictable performance time  
Linear in structure  
Verbose  
Comments on ritual activity  
Content oriented  
Moves toward climax in content

### Musical Considerations for Sequential Song

- Includes strophic hymns where the same music is repeated for successive stanzas
- Includes through-composed music and texts where there is no repetition of the music
- May include texts with brief textual repetition (usually on the last line) or epimone
- The essence of the text is essentially monochronic (teleological)
- Harmonic variations, varying instrumentations, and descants may provide musical variety from stanza to stanza

Theme and Variation  
Movement orientation  
Ear oriented  
Oral tradition  
Open-ended performance time  
Episodic in experience  
Concise  
Participates in ritual activity  
Community oriented  
Moves toward total participation and integration of participants

### Musical Considerations for Cyclic Song

- Maintains a steady beat once the song begins
- Each repetition of a cycle needs some small variation
- Often uses a soloist (cantor) to sing over the cycle
- Improvisations by soloist over ends of phrases
- Often accompanied by physical response
- Integration of choir and congregation as a unit
- Polychronic (vs. monochronic) sense of time
- Textual improvisations to fit ritual context