

Alfredo Delgado Gómez
CSU La Salle, Madrid



The Reception of the Codeswitchings of the Syriac Versions in the Gospel of Mark

Introduction

It is known that the Gospel of Mark contains several borrowed terms from Aramaic, Hebrew and Latin.¹ There are also codeswitchings from Greek to Aramaic (e.g. *καὶ ἔλεγεν αββα ὁ πατήρ*, Mark 14:36) and from Greek to Latin (e.g. *λεπτὰ δύο, ὃ ἔστιν κοδράντης*, 12:42).

The presence of these Aramaic loanwords and codeswitchings in Mark is high and odd. This oddness is confirmed by the fact that Matthew and Luke eliminated these cases of codeswitching when they adapted and expanded Mark's Gospel in their desire to improve Mark's style. In this regard Martin Hengel points out that there is no ancient document that has such a significant presence of Aramaic and Hebrew as the Gospel of Mark.² It is surprising that Paul, Flavius Josephus and Matthew, being multilingual, have few codeswitchings.³ Likewise there are very few Aramaic words in the LXX, which is "greatly surprising given that the mother tongue of the Jews of Egypt was Aramaic".⁴ In this sense

¹ From Aramaic *πάσχα* from *פסח*, *σάββατον* from *שבב* and from Latin *λεγιών* from *legio* and *δηνάριον* from *denarius*, etc.

² M. Hengel, "Probleme des Markusevangeliums", in P. Stuhlmacher (ed.) *Das Evangelium und die Evangelien: Vorträge vom Tübinger Symposium 1982*, col. «WUNT» 28 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), pp. 221-265, espec. 243.

³ Feldman underlines this absence. L. H. Feldman, *Josephus and modern scholarship, 1937-1980* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1984), p. 832.

⁴ J. Joosten, "The Aramaic background of the seventy: language, culture and history", *Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 43 (2010), pp. 7-53, espec. 9.

it is noteworthy that there are no Greek loanwords in the Qumran texts,⁵ nor any from Latin. Their absence responds to and reinforces an awareness of the identity of that community. It contrasts with the multitude of Greek loanwords in the Mishna and in the Targum. The presence of Latinisms in the Gospel is also unexpected because they tended to appear in Greek texts in a significant way in the III and IV centuries A. D.⁶

The loanwords and codeswitchings (below described) in the Gospel are conscious and deliberate.⁷ Actually, the author uses them with literary and rhetorical intention.⁸ They develop different social and literary functions in the Gospel. On the one hand, bilingualism is a powerful tool to express identity and solidarity. On the other hand, these borrowed terms play a significant role in several of the miracles and key passages of Jesus' life (*talitha kum, effatha, Eloi, Eloi lama sabaktani*),⁹ not to say in his sayings (e.g. *abba, amen*), while *rabbi* and *hosanna*, in the mouth of his disciples also appear in key passages of the Gospel.

Several interesting questions arise. Firstly, how have the Syriac versions received these Aramaic loanwords?¹⁰ This question is doubly interesting since the translators were native Aramaic speakers and their aim was to produce a faithful translation of the original Greek. Secondly, have these translations changed the rhetorical and literary functions developed by the Aramaic and Latin loanwords in the Greek text?

In this article, the reception of the loanwords and codeswitchings in the Gospel of Mark in the Syriac versions will be considered. The aim of this article is not the study of the

⁵ H. M. Cotton, "Greek", in L. H. Schiffman & J. C. Vanderkam (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea scrolls* (New York: OUP, 2000), pp. 324-326, espec. 325. With the exception of the Copper Scroll (3Q315) which has four Greek loanwords (*περιστύλον, στατήρ, στοά, εξέδρα*) and cases of script-switching (Greek letters in a Hebrew text).

⁶ E. Dickey, "Latin influence on the Greek of documentary papyri: An analysis of its chronological distribution", *ZPE* 15 (2003), pp. 249-257, espec. 250.

⁷ Loanwords and codeswitching serve as a literary device to convey powerful bilingual images, "not because of confusion or inability to separate the two languages, but a conscious desire to juxtapose the two codes to achieve some literary effect, an exercise of self-consciousness." J. M. Lipski, "Spanish-English language switching in speech and literature: theories and models", *Bilingual Review* 9:3 (1982), pp. 191-212, espec. 191.

⁸ A. Delgado Gómez, "Get up! Be opened! Codeswitching and Loanwords in the Gospel of Mark", *JSNT* 42:3 (2020), pp. 1-38.

⁹ If it had been written in Greek (my God, my God) the allusion to Elijah would have made no sense. Therefore, this case of codeswitching is clearly deliberate and plays a significant role in the gospel. According to Martin Ebner: "Jesus' Aramaic prayer (Eloi) is misinterpreted as a call for Elijah. This is intended by the narrator, as Jews would never misinterpret the prayer and Romans would never think of Elijah. The narrator rather writes a dramatic catechism for all who have still not internalised Jesus' way and who wait for God to step in for Jesus' salvation and for the punishment of non believers. But this is not how God's kingdom come". M. Ebner, *Das Markusevangelium* (Stuttgart: Bibelwerk, 4 edn, 2015), p. 164.

¹⁰ Childers has dealt with several of these cases in the Peshitta but not all of them have been discussed. He does not understand them as codeswitchings but as transliterations and glosses. J. W. Childers & G. A. Kiraz, *The Syriac Peshitta Bible with English translation. Mark* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2012), pp. XXXVI-XL.

Syriac versions in order to recreate the original Greek text that was behind them, but to study how these Syriac versions dealt with these loanwords and codeswitchings and how the rhetorical and literary functions of these sociolinguistic tools are changed in the Syriac versions due to the translation.

We shall only discuss the handling of these sociolinguistic strategies by the Old Syriac manuscript Sinaiticus¹¹ and the Peshitta. The text of the Harklean¹² version will not be discussed in this article, given that it is a more recent text and its character is of a “word for word” translation.

The Syriac Versions

It is known that there are two Syriac versions¹³ prior to the Peshitta:¹⁴ the Diatessaron and the Old Syriac. There are three manuscript witnesses of the Old Syriac version. The Gospel of Mark is mainly preserved in the Codex Sinaiticus¹⁵ (S), while in the Curatonian Codex (C) only a few verses survive (Mark 16:17b-20). The recently discovered manuscript, a witness of this version (Sinai NF 39),¹⁶ only contains Mark 1:44-2:14.

The text of Mark’s Gospel in the Old Syriac manuscripts and in the Peshitta¹⁷ (P) has its own peculiarities which have been discussed by other scholars, but it can be asserted that Mark’s Peshitta shares a number of distinctive readings with the Sinaitic Old Syriac manuscripts, revealing the Peshitta’s pedigree as a revised heir to the Old Syriac.

¹¹ The *Vetus Syra* version probably arose around the middle of the third century. Codex Sinaiticus is usually dated to the fourth century. W. L. Petersen, “Problems in the Syriac New Testament and How Syrian Exegetes Solved Them”, in R. B. T. Haar Romeny (ed.) *The Peshitta: its use in literature and liturgy* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 53-76, espec. 59.

¹² “A Greek text with a Syrian dress”. S. Soreshow Yohanna, *The Gospel of Mark in the Syriac Harklean version: an edition based upon the earliest witnesses*, col. «BO» 52 (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2015), p. 4.

¹³ “These two manuscripts [S and C] represent a version that is clearly earlier than the Peshitta and are related to the version from which the Peshitta was revised. This version arose after the Diatessaron”. P. J. Williams, “The Syriac Versions of the New Testament”, in B. D. Ehrman & M. W. Holmes (eds.), *The text of the New Testament in contemporary research* (Leiden: Brill, 2 edn, 2013), pp. 143-163, espec. 145.

¹⁴ “The Peshitta New Testament may be seen as standing at amid-point from the beginnings of Bible translation to the later refinements of literalism”. P. J. Williams, “The Syriac versions of the Bible”, in J. Carleton Paget & J. Schaper (eds.), *The New Cambridge History of the Bible: Volume 1: From the Beginnings to 600* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), pp. 527-535, espec. 533.

¹⁵ 1:12b – 44a; 2:21b – 4:17a; 4:41b – 5:26a; 6:5b – 16:8.

¹⁶ It is a palimpsest that will be published in a critical edition. S. P. Brock, “Two Hitherto Unattested Passages of the Old Syriac Gospels in Palimpsest from St Catherine’s Monastery, Sinai”, *Δελτίο Βιβλικῶν Μελετῶν* 31A (2016), pp. 7-18.

¹⁷ There is a certain uniformity among the manuscripts of the Peshitta. A description of these manuscripts can be found in D. M. Gurtner, “The Gospel of Mark in Syriac Christianity”, in B. Chilton & A. J. Avery-Peck (eds.), *Earliest Christianity within the boundaries of Judaism: essays in honor of Bruce Chilton* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 303-320, espec. 312.

In general, the Syriac tradition translates the Greek correctly, although each of the Gospels of the Old Syriac versions presents its peculiarities in translation and translation technique.¹⁸ Two observations can be made with regards to the Old Syriac version in S. Firstly, the language of S has an archaic character,¹⁹ as reflected by the use of the adverb ܠܐܠܐ. Secondly, as Haelewyck points out, the translator of Mark has made use of Matthew's translation.²⁰ Furthermore, S comes after the Syriac version of the Old Testament Peshitta (OTP) and most probably the translator of S knew of it and used it.

Codeswitchings

There are several sentences in Mark's Gospel where the author switches his discourse from Greek into Aramaic (e.g. λέγει αὐτῆ·ταλιθα κουμ Mark 5:41). The alternation between two languages in the same discourse, sometimes even within the same sentence, is called codeswitching.

Of the three different types of codeswitching,²¹ two of them appear in Mark's Gospel: the intra-sentential and "single word switches". First, in the intra-sentential codeswitching, the switch occurs within a sentence. A special case of this type is intra-clausal codeswitching (e.g. ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν). Another type of intra-sentential codeswitching is the "translation and repetition codeswitching"²² (e.g. εφφαθα, ὃ ἐστὶν διανοίχθητι). Mark's discourse is developed in Greek and suddenly there is a switch of code into Aramaic.²³ The Aramaic phrase or word (e.g. εφφαθα) is then followed by a translation into Greek (διανοίχθητι), this translation having been introduced by a formula (ὃ ἐστὶν) that allows both

¹⁸ Wilson presents the theological differences between S and C. Where there is a discrepancy between S and C in terms of grammar, C is usually correct. E. J. Wilson, *The Old Syriac Gospels: studies and comparative translations. Vol I. Matthew and Mark* (Piscataway, N.J.: Gorgias Press, 2 edn, 2003), pp. XXXV-XXXVIII, espec. XXXVII.

¹⁹ J. P. Lyon, *Syriac Gospel translations: a comparison of the language and translation method used in the Old Syriac, the Diatessaron, and the Peshitto*, col. «CSCO» 88 (Leuven: Peeters, 1994), pp. 197-200.

²⁰ "Le traducteur de Mc ait connu et utilisé la traduction de Mt. La liberté de traduction de Mt confirme son ancienneté." J.-C. Haelewyck, "Les Vieilles versions syriaques des Évangiles", in J.-C. Haelewyck (ed.) *Le Nouveau Testament en syriaque* (Paris: Geuthner, 2017), pp. 67-113, espec. 76.

²¹ According to Poplack there are three types: intersentential, intrasentential and tag-switching. F. H. Poplack, "Sometimes I'll Start in Spanish y termino en Español: Towards a Typology of Code-Switching", *Linguistics* 18 (1980), pp. 581-618, 589, espec. 615. Intersentential: the switch occurs after a sentence in the first language has been completed and the next sentence starts with a new language.

²² J. J. Gumperz, *Discourse strategies* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), p. 78, where he talks about reiteration. The important thing is the change, not the reference value of the word, since it does not change.

²³ The contrary situation in John 19:17: "the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha)."

phrases to be connected, and which makes the translation explicit.²⁴ This is the case which appears more times in the Gospel.

Second, in Mark's Gospel there are several cases of single word switches, also called "nonce borrowings", e.g., *ραββουι* (Mark 10:51) and *ὡσαννά* (11:9). Two considerations must be made. 1) There is no easy way of distinguishing between loanwords²⁵ and codeswitching. Loanwords appear as spontaneous codeswitchings and then some of these switches are extended. 2) It is possible that some loanwords are so integrated into the recipient language that they are no longer identified as loanwords by the speakers (e.g. *πάσχα*). Some clues to distinguish them could be the following. Firstly, loanwords are always words not lexical phrases, and they are unanalyzable units in the recipient language. Secondly, loanwords typically show various kinds of phonological and morphological adaptation, whereas codeswitching by definition does not show any kind of adaptation.²⁶ Thirdly, a loanword is a word that can conventionally be used as part of the language. In particular, it can be used in situations where no codeswitching occurs.²⁷ Fourthly, loanwords are more likely to be filling a "lexical gap" in the host language (e.g. *δηνάριον*), whereas codeswitchings tend simply to add themselves as a further option to the native equivalent. Finally, loanwords are usually predictable, while codeswitching is not.²⁸ Therefore *ραββουι*, *αββα*, *ὡσαννά*, *κορβάν*, *ἀμήν* are not loanwords because, first, they have not suffered neither morphological nor syntactical adaptation and second, they have not been accepted in the Greek language, so they are Aramaic words and instances of single word switches.²⁹

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²⁴ Repetition is done to align the meanings in the two different languages. These code-switched reiterations are oriented to the recipient's involvement in the interaction. K. Harjunpää & A. Mäkilähde, "Reiteration: at the intersection of code-switching and translation", *Multilingua* 35:2 (2016), pp. 163-201, espec. 193.

²⁵ A loanword is a word that at some point in the history of a language entered in its lexicon as a result of borrowing. M. Haspelmath, "Lexical borrowing: concepts and issues", in M. Haspelmath & U. Tadmor (eds.), *Loanwords in the world's languages: A comparative handbook*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), pp. 35-54, espec. 36.

²⁶ S. Poplack, *Borrowing: loanwords in the speech community and in the grammar*, (New York: OUP, 2018), p. 212.

²⁷ Haspelmath, "Lexical borrowing", pp. 40-41.

²⁸ P. Gardner-Chloros, "Contact and Code-Switching", in R. Hickey (ed.), *The Handbook of Language Contact* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2010), pp. 188-207, espec. 195-96.

²⁹ According to Haspelmath, loanwords are "established" by definition. Codeswitching, by contrast, is defined as the use of an element from another language in speech "for the nonce", so "nonce-borrowings" should be called codeswitchings. Haspelmath, "Lexical borrowing", p. 43.

In this section, we shall explain in detail the translations³⁰ into Syriac of the Aramaic codeswitchings in the Syriac versions of Mark's Gospel. After this presentation we will discuss how these translations have changed the literary functions that these codeswitchings have developed in the Greek Gospel.

Codeswitching is a sociolinguistic device, in fact a “contact-induced speech behavior”. The author uses this device to develop several functions. In fact, there is a great variety of psychological, social and conversational reasons to explain the use of codeswitching³¹: filling a linguistic gap, to express ethnic identity, to achieve a linguistic intention, to emphasize something, to affirm power, to declare solidarity, to maintain certain neutrality in spaces where two codes are used, etc. Codeswitching acts as a marker of belonging to a group and generates solidarity with it.³² It is not a random or meaningless change.³³

Several of these functions are common to most of these codeswitchings appearing in Mark's Gospel. They cause emphasis and surprise and make the narrative more vivid. Being unexpected they attract the attention of the reader. These Aramaic words give reliability³⁴ to the narrator and the historical intention of the Gospel is reinforced. The Greek explanation slows the narration, creating expectation. Several of these phrases characterise Jesus as a native Aramaic speaker. The translations reinforce the role of the author as an interpreter of the Jesus tradition. How these functions have been altered is the topic of this section.

Talitha kum *and* effatha

The Peshitta³⁵ in Mark 5:41 (S is lost) eliminates the translation *ταλιθα κουμ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον· τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε* and employs only *ܩܘܡ ܕܥܝܠܐ*. Although the

³⁰ The Syriac texts come from A. S. Lewis, *The old Syriac Gospels or Evangelion da-Mepharreshê, the text of the Sinai palimpsest with the variants of the Curetonian text*, ed. by A. S. Lewis (London, 1910). F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshê I: the Curetonian Version of the four gospels, with the readings of the Sinai palimpsest and the early Syriac patristic evidence* vol. I (Cambridge: CUP, 1904). P. E. Pusey & G. H. Gwilliam, *Tetraevangelium sanctum juxta simplicem Syrorum versionem* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1901). Also G. A. Kiraz, *Comparative edition of the Syriac Gospels: aligning the Sinaiticus, Curetonianus, Peshitta and Harklean versions. Volume Two. Mark*, (Leiden: Brill, 1996).

³¹ P. Gardner-Chloros, *Code-switching*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), pp. 42-43.

³² B. E. Bullock & A. J. Toribio, “Themes in the study of code switching”, in B. E. Bullock & A. J. Toribio (eds.), *Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Code-switching*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2009), pp. 1-17, espec. 4 and 10.

³³ A list of recurring functions of codeswitchings in writing in A. Mullen, “‘In both our languages’: Greek–Latin code-switching in Roman literature”, *Language and Literature* 24:3 (2015), pp. 213-232, espec. 221.

³⁴ Reliability is a matter of literal analysis, historical accuracy is the territory of the historian. R. A. Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: a study in literary design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 32.

³⁵ The same expression *ܩܘܡ ܕܥܝܠܐ* appears in Luke 8:54 in C, S and P.

variant *κουμι* appears in some Greek manuscripts the most accepted is *κουμ*.³⁶ However, in the Peshitta appears the reading *ܘܟܘܡ* reflecting a feminine imperative³⁷.

Mark 5:41 <i>ταλιθα κουμ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε</i>	Talitha cum, which means, little girl, I say to you, get up!
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S: text lost

ܘܟܘܡ ܩܘܡܝ ܩܘܡܝ

P: and said to her, Girl, get up

The codeswitching³⁸ in Mark 7:34 *εφφαθα, ὃ ἐστὶν διανοίχθητι* is eliminated both in the manuscript S and in the Peshitta and they employ only *ܘܦܗܘܬܐ*. The word *εφφαθα* could reflect the assimilation of reflexive passive t in colloquial Aramaic, but it has been properly translated into Syriac.³⁹

Mark 7:34 <i>εφφαθα, ὃ ἐστὶν διανοίχθητι</i>	Ephphatha, that is, Be opened!
<i>ܘܦܗܘܬܐ ܘܦܗܘܬܐ</i>	S: and said to him, Be opened!
<i>ܘܦܗܘܬܐ ܘܦܗܘܬܐ</i>	P: he said to him, Be opened!

The original function of these two codeswitchings was to enhance Jesus' words, through which he has healed two people with the authority of his word. The explanation slows the narration, creating an expectation gap between the order and the realization. They cause emphasis and surprise because they are unexpected.

On the one hand, the Syriac translators have simplified the readings using two understandable imperatives. The immediacy of Jesus' miracle is reinforced, since the realization of the healing is subsequently reported, actually the next word is *ܘܐܢܐ* ("immediately", translating *καὶ εὐθύς*). It is a correction similar to Matthew's style which simplifies the miracle stories. On the other hand, it can be noted that the element of surprise and the marked character of these words have been lost. In this regard there is no difference with Jesus' other miracles. In the case of *ταλιθα κουμ*, the expression "I tell you", which is not a literal translation is lost. This sentence reinforces the power of Jesus' word, his prominence, his authority, his commitment to healing, as well as his personal relationship with the child.

³⁶ *κουμ* in \aleph B C L M N Σ f¹ 33 892 while *κουμι* in A D Q P F f¹³ 22 28 124 543 and Vg.

³⁷ Pusey & Gwilliam, *Tetraevangelium*, p. 228.

³⁸ Lyon, *Syriac Gospel*, pp. 85-86. The Christian Palestinian Gospels renders the entire text. The Harklean retains it and the Arabic Diatessaron omits the explanatory phrase. B. M. Metzger, "The Syriac Versions", in B. M. Metzger (ed.) *The early versions of the New Testament: their origin, transmission, and limitations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 3-82, espec. 80.

³⁹ Imperative Ethpael 2ms *ܘܦܗܐ*. Cf. R. C. Steiner, "Papyrus Amherst 63: a new source for the language, literature, religion, and history of the Aramaeans", in M. J. Geller, J. C. Greenfield & M. Weitzman (eds.), *Studia aramaica: new sources and new approaches* (Oxford OUP, 1995), pp. 199-207, espec. 63.

Korban

The manuscript S in 7:11 eliminates the translation of *κορβᾶν, ὃ ἐστὶν δῶρον* and only appears as *ܩܪܒܢܐ*. The explanation also disappears in the Peshitta, but it renders *ܩܪܒܢܐ*.

Mark 7:11 <i>κορβᾶν, ὃ ἐστὶν δῶρον</i>	Corban (that is, a gift)
<i>ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ</i>	S: a sacrifice that you benefit from me
<i>ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ</i>	P: My offering is anything you would gain from me.

The Aramaic word *ܩܪܒܢܐ* gives emphasis and surprise to Jesus' words. It has a metaphorical use, due to its connection with Judaism. Its use characterises Jesus as a Jew, expert in the Law. The function of the explanation (*ὃ ἐστὶν δῶρον*) is to clarify this word. Its use intensifies the problem and eliminates ambiguity.

These functions have been lost in the Syriac translations. On one hand, the reading is easier and the reader does not need this information. On the other hand, with the simplification of the translation, the element of surprise and the marked character of these words have been lost.

Bartimaeus

The codeswitching *ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου Βαρτιμαῖος* (the son of Timaeus, Bartimaeus) is reproduced by both S and P as *ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ* (Timai son of Timai). The same expression appears in Ephrem.⁴⁰ H renders the expression as *ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ* (son of Timai, bar Timai).

Mark 10:46 <i>ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου Βαρτιμαῖος</i>	the son of Timaeus Bartimaeus
<i>ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ</i>	S: Timai son of Timai
<i>ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ</i>	P: Timai son of Timai

The Greek text suggests that the nickname of the beggar was *Βαρτιμαῖος*, whose personal name was replaced by his patronymic name.⁴¹ The expression *ὁ υἱὸς Τιμαίου* tries to explain this nickname formed by the Aramaic noun (ܩܪ) and a Greek personal name *Τιμαῖος*.⁴² Its

⁴⁰ It also appears in Ephr. *Comm. Diat.* XV.22: “Timaeus the son of Timaeus” *ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ*; XVII.13: “the son of Timaeus” *ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ*; XXII.5: “son of Timaeus” *ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ ܕܥܡܘܢܐ*

⁴¹ Several examples in ostraca in Masada. Other example could be *Βαρθολομαῖος* (Mark 3:18) from *ܩܪ ܕܩܪܐ ܕܩܪܐ* and *Πτολεμαῖος*. Cf. *Θολομαῖος* in Josephus, *Ant.* 14:8.

⁴² A unique phenomenon in NT transliteration refers to the Bar (Aramaic “son”) element at the beginning of a name. The NT often takes it as an integral part of the name. This indicates perhaps that the scribe

etymology could have other explanations and connotations (Τιμαίος from τιμή, honor or from נמט impurity, ܠܡܬ in Syriac).

The Peshitta, in agreement with the Sinaitic manuscript of the Old Syriac recognises the Aramaic component of the nickname and avoids the duplicate, but they create a confusing translation, as it can be seen in the variants in the Peshitta manuscripts.⁴³ The result of the Syriac translations implies that the personal name of the beggar was Timai and that he was son of another Timai. One of the possible explanations to this translation could be that the expression “Son of Timai” is the counterpart to the expression “Son of David” (10:47), which P and S render by ܡܝܢ ܒܢܝ ܕܕܘܘܕ as in the OTP 1 Sam 16:20.

The original function of this codeswitching was to fulfil an addressee specification, to explain this mixed nickname and to characterize Bartimeus as an Aramaic speaker. This nickname gives reliability to the story, because this name could have been known to the community.

By using ܠܡܬ, the Syriac translations could be developing a metaphorical use, but now the nuance is not clear. They tried to simplify the difficult expression. It is possible that they have developed a contrast between the expressions “son of Timai” and “son of David”, reinforcing this title. On the other hand, the Syriac versions have changed the name of the protagonist by giving a confusing translation. The reliability of the nickname is lost.

Boanerges

The manuscript S eliminates the explanation of the expression βoανηργές, ὃ ἐστὶν υἱοὶ βροντῆς (Mk. 3:17 BGT) (the sons of thunder) in Mark 3:17 and uses only ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ while the Peshitta adds the translation.⁴⁴

Mark 3:17 Βοανηργές, ὃ ἐστὶν υἱοὶ βροντῆς	Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder
ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ	S: he called them benairegshi.
ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ	P: he assigned the name, Sons of

viewed it as a nickname, or a family name. T. Ilan, T. Ziem & K. Hünefeld, *Lexicon of Jewish names in late antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), p. 18.

⁴³ M 36 ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ. M 2 ܡܝܢ ܒܢܝ ܕܕܘܘܕ ܕܢܘܨܐ. M 4 ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ. Pusey & Gwilliam, *Tetraeuangelium*, p. 266. List of manuscripts in pp. ix-xii.

⁴⁴ Six times the expression ὃ ἐστὶν appears in the Gospel of Mark, only in the intrasentential codeswitchings. It is rendered into Syriac by the expression ܡܢ ܕܢܘܨܐ (from ܢܘܨܐ) in S and P in 12:42 and 15:16; and only in Peshitta in 3:17 and 15:42. Three times ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον appears in Mark (5:41; 15:22, 34). The Peshitta translates it once as ܡܢ ܕܢܘܨܐ in 15:34 following the previous pattern, and in 15:22 using ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ from the verb ܠܡܬ (to interpret). These translations do not follow the possible previous rendering of S, C and P in Matt 1:23 that use ܠܡܬ ܕܢܘܨܐ from the verb ܠܡܬ to translate ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον. It also appears in OTP in 2 Macc 1:36.

ܪܝܫܝܢ ܕܥܡܝܢܝܢ

Regesh (that is, Sons of Thunder).

The name *βοανηγές* poses irresolvable problems of derivation and significance.⁴⁵ S only transliterates the expression as *ܒܘܢܝܢ* whose meaning is not clear.⁴⁶ A possible interpretation could be “sons of rage, of uproar.”⁴⁷ S did not need the duplicate, and creates a similar expression to the previous one⁴⁸ *ܠܥܘܪܝܢ ܕܥܡܝܢܝܢ*. It does not interrupt the list of names. It is possible that the author and the discursive community could have understood the expression, because on other occasions, when the word lost its meaning (e.g. Golgotha), the explanation was also added.

By the time that P corrected this translation, the Syriac translation was probably not understood, and the translator added the Syriac explanation of the nickname, by translating the Greek expression.

The functions developed by this nickname and its translation were several: they gave reliability to the narrator; the expression characterised John and Andrew as powerful disciples. The noun thunder evokes metaphorical nuances (THUNDER as strong).

S creates an easier reading of the list, creating a parallel with Simon, called Peter. On the other hand, he could have lost the reference to the metaphor thunder, in fact creating a misunderstanding. By translating the whole expression, P tries to maintain the reliability of the author and the reference to the metaphor which characterises John and Andrew. Doing this he also tries to follow the Greek text.

Eloi, Eloi

In Mark 15:34 there is a codeswitching, where the author in Jesus’ direct speech quotes an Aramaic translation of Ps 22:1, followed by an introductory formula prior to its translation into Greek.

Mark 15:34 *ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθανι; ε*

Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?

⁴⁵ A play on words with *βοάν*, scream. Its etymology is not clear. *βοανη* may represent *בני*, the Hebrew word for “sons of”, but the rest of Mark’s transliteration is puzzling. The suggestion of a positive meaning is slightly supported by the similar name of an ancient Jewish town, *בני ברק* “sons of lightning”, which like most town names probably has a positive nuance. J. Marcus, *Mark 1-8: a new translation with introduction and commentary*, col. «AB» 27 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), p. 264.

⁴⁶ At least four Hebrew/Aramaic words have been suggested: *רגש*, commotion; *רגז*, excitement or agitation; *שׂרע*, quaking, *עם*, thunder. A. Y. Collins, *Mark: A commentary*, col. «Hermeneia» 55 (Grand Rapids, MI: Fortress Press, 2007), pp. 295-96.

⁴⁷ The verb *ܐܘܪܝܢ* to rage, be in an uproar and *ܐܘܪܝܢ* uproar. J. Payne Smith, “A compendious Syriac dictionary”, = PS, p. 529. According to M. Sokoloff & C. Brockelmann, “A Syriac lexicon”, = SL, 1345 *ܐܘܪܝܢ* to be disturbed, rage, to be in an uproar.

⁴⁸ Peter, “rock” and “Sons of Thunder” are both hyperbolic epithets.

ἔστιν μεθερμηνευόμενον· ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με;

ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ

ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ

ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ

ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ

which means,
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

S: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

P: Eil, Eil, why have you forsaken me? which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me⁴⁹?”

Ps 22:1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Ps 22:19 But be not thou far from me, O Lord.

My God, my God, look upon me to help me.

The manuscript S eliminates this duplicate and agrees with OTP Ps 22:1. Contrary to S, the translator of the Peshitta tries to preserve the duplicate and maintains both phrases. The second sentence of the Peshitta translation is easier to analyse because it coincides with S and with the Psalm, using the vocatives ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ. To render ελωι ελωι in the first sentence, the translator uses the expression ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ, followed by the Syriac transcription and the adaptation of the Aramaic sentence from Mark. By using ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ the following wordplay with Elijah ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ is clearer (15:35-36). This first sentence agrees with the Peshitta in Matt 27:46. The expression ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ appears only in OTP Ps 22:20.⁵⁰

The Syriac text of the Ephrem’s *Commentary* in section XX is lost.⁵¹ Only the Armenian version has been preserved. In this paragraph the author quotes verse Matt 27:46 = Mark 15:34 twice in XX.30.19 and XX.30.26.⁵² The second quotation is followed by Mark 15:36.

In summary, S follows its pattern eliminating the duplicate and transcribing the sentence directly to Syriac which coincides with the Psalm. It kills two birds with one stone, both maintaining fidelity to Mark’s text and also quoting the Psalm, making the intertextual relationship clear. On the other hand, P maintains the duplicate and for this reason it uses two different words to designate God, which are also found in the OTP Ps 22. That change could also be influenced by P Matt 27:46 (a case of harmonization), where the Greek version had already changed the name from to ελωι to ηλι.

⁴⁹ Childers: ܘܫܘܥܘܟܘܢ in Syriac. *El, el*, from the Hebrew form of the general Semitic root for “god.” It is the only attestation of this word in the Syriac versions of the NT.

⁵⁰ Peshitta Institute, *The Old Testament in Syriac according to the Peshitta Version, Part II Fasc. 3. The Book of Psalms* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), p. 22.

⁵¹ L. Leloir, *Le témoignage d’Éphrem sur le Diatessaron*, col. «CSCO» 227.19 (Louvain: Peeters, 1962), p. 227.

⁵² XX.30.19: *Deus, Deus meus, quare dereliquisti me?*; XX.30.26: *Eli, Eli, quare dereliquisti me?* (B *El, El*). L. Leloir, *Commentaire de l’Évangile concordant: version arménienne* vol. 2, col. «CSCO» 145 (Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1954), p. 216. Cf. The patristic quotations of these verses in Leloir, *Le témoignage*, pp. 227 and 67.

Some of the functions of this codeswitching in Greek are the following: The author creates emphasis and surprise with this expression. Its appearance slows the discourse and generates an irony and a misunderstanding to the characters.⁵³ This use gives credibility and reliability to the narrator, reinforcing the author’s role as interpreter of the message of Jesus and guarantor of its transmission. Jesus prays quoting a Psalm not in Hebrew but in Aramaic. This action characterizes Jesus as a faithful Jew who does not pray in the official language, but in the language of the common people.⁵⁴

S makes the reference to the Psalm clear, retaining the misunderstanding and the irony. The emphasis and surprise are lost. P is faithful to the Greek text. Perhaps the reference to Elijah is clearer. By using the vocative ܐܒܐ ܐܒܐ, P has created another likely allusion to the Psalm in Syriac. P slows the discourse with this repetition, though on the other hand, it is an unnecessary duplicate.

Abba

When S translates the exclamation $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha \delta \text{πατήρ}$ in Mark 14:36, only the word ܐܒܐ appears, while the Peshitta employs ܐܒܐ ܐܒܐ, retaining the duplicate.⁵⁵

Mark 14:36 $\alpha\beta\beta\alpha \delta \text{πατήρ}$	Abba, Father
ܐܒܐ ܐܒܐ	S: And he said, My Father
ܐܒܐ ܐܒܐ	P: He said Abba, my Father

S’s use of ܐܒܐ reflects the usual OTP rendering⁵⁶ of the vocative ܐܒܐ with ܐܒܐ. The Peshitta maintains the duplicate by using the words ܐܒܐ ܐܒܐ. Both versions could have used the word ܐܒܐ as it appears in the Peshitta of Rom 8:15 and Gal 6:4 ܐܒܐ ܐܒܐ. As demonstrated in the examples below, there are two possibilities for rendering the vocative: it can be the first person in the plural⁵⁷ as it appears in several vocatives of the NT such as ܐܘܒܐ, ܐܘܒܐ, although in direct speech the first person is also used thereby reflecting a polite attitude. The OTP translates ܐܒܐ (vocative) “my father” by ܐܒܐ only in Gen 22:7 and Isa 8:4, while in the other instances ܐܒܐ is used (e.g. Gen 27:18).

⁵³ In the context of the story, Mark’s translation of the Aramaic expression allows only the reader to understand the death of Jesus correctly, because his cry was misinterpreted by the characters in the story: the cry to God is misunderstood as a cry to Elijah. “In a profound sense, the only genuine witness to the crucifixion in Mark is the reader”. R. M. Fowler, *Let the reader understand: reader-response criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), p. 109.

⁵⁴ In Qumran the Psalms and liturgical texts were prayed in Hebrew and not in Aramaic.

⁵⁵ For “my father” and the vocative “father”, Syriac usually uses ܐܒܐ. J. Joosten, “Materials for a Linguistic Approach to the Old Testament Peshitta”, *Journal for the Aramaic Bible* 1 (1999), pp. 203-218, espec. 216.

⁵⁶ ܐܒܐ only in S in Mark 14:36.

⁵⁷ In Syriac, especially in some specific genres it is used the plural form instead of the singular form for the vocative.

Verse	Original	S	P
Mark 14:36	αββα ὁ πατήρ		ܘܪ ܪܘܪ
Matt 26:39	πάτερ μου		ܘܪ
Luke 11:2	πάτερ		ܪܘܪ
Matt 6:9	πατήρ ἡμῶν		ܪܘܪ
Rom 8:15 and Gal 4:6	αββα ὁ πατήρ	ܪܘܪ ܪܘܪ	ܪܘܪ ܪܘܪ
Mark 7:28	κύριε		ܘܪܝܐ
Mark 10:35	διδάσκαλε		ܪܘܠܟܐ
Mark 12:37	κύριον		ܘܪܝܐ
Mark 13:1	διδάσκαλε		ܪܘܠܟܐ
Matt 7:22	κύριε κύριε	ܘܪܝܐ ܘܪܝܐ	ܘܪܝܐ ܘܪܝܐ
Mark 13:1	διδάσκαλε		ܪܘܠܟܐ
Mark 9:38	διδάσκαλε		ܘܪܝܐ
Gen 27:18	אָבִי		ܘܪ
Gen 22:7 and Isa 8:4	אָבִי		ܪܘܪ

The codeswitching *αββα ὁ πατήρ* gives emphasis, and solemnity to this important moment in Jesus' life. It functions as a vocative and an addressee specification and evokes a metaphorical use. Its use is also a reminder of Jesus (and therefore highlights the narrator's reliability) and recalls a possible liturgical practice (Gal. 4:6).

S simplifies the reading and intensifies the politeness of the expression, connecting it with the OTP. On the other hand, S loses the emphasis, and the marked character of the expression. P follows the Greek text giving a literal translation, creating more emphasis and solemnity, but also an unnecessary duplicate and an odd expression because the same vocative could be expected twice, but not two different ones.

Amen

The intra-clause codeswitching *ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν* appears 13x in Mark's Gospel. The Greek word *ἀμήν* in Jesus' direct speech is an adapted loanword from Hebrew into Aramaic⁵⁸ and then transliterated and adapted into Greek.⁵⁹ This codeswitching is rendered in S⁶⁰ as *ܘܪܝܐ*

⁵⁸ The Greek word *ἀμήν* in Jesus' direct speech is an adapted loanword from Hebrew into Aramaic (*ܘܪܝܐ* is a verb, passive participle) and then transliterated and adapted into Greek.

⁵⁹ In 12:43 in S it appears with a possible copy error, where *ܘܪܝܐ* (yes, verily) appears instead of *ܘܪܝܐ*. The word *ܘܪܝܐ* never translates the word *ἀμήν* in S in the entire NT. The word *ܘܪܝܐ* is always used to translate *ναί*.

ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ
ܩܘܠܘܬܐ

P: Golgutha, a place the name of which means the skull

In Mark 9:43 the manuscript S removes the word Γέεννα and maintains the explanation, while the Peshitta keeps the word ܩܘܠܘܬܐ and the explanation. In the other two cases (9:45-46) both manuscripts maintain the word Gehenna.⁶⁵

Mark 9:43 Γέεννα

Gehenna

ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ

S:⁴³ and go to the fire that is not extinguished.

omitted

⁴⁴ Omitted.

ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ
ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ ܩܘܠܘܬܐ

P: ⁴³ and go to hell, ⁴⁴ where their worm does not die and their fire does not go out.

The function of these codeswitchings in relation to place names is to specify and concretize a place possibly known to some members of the community. Indeed, they have a reference and descriptive value. On the other hand, they give credibility and reliability to the narrative. Both Gehenna and Golgotha, are used rhetorically and give emphasis to the story. The translation of Golgotha as the “place of the skull” is expressive of the drama that looms in the crucifixion. The words “into the unquenchable fire” associated with Gehenna reinforce Jesus’ warning. Both have a dramatic effect. In this case the Syriac versions maintain these functions.

Rabbi

The three times that the word *ῥαββί* appears in the Gospel (9:5; 11:21; 14:45) is translated, both in P and in S, with the word ܩܘܕܝܐ. The word ܩܘܕܝܐ is used to render the titles *διδάσκαλος* and *ῥαββί*,⁶⁶ however in several occasions (9:18 and 10:17, 20; 12:14, 19) S and P translate *διδάσκαλος*⁶⁷ with ܩܘܠܘܬܐ, a word that also appears in OTP 1 Chr 25:8. The word ܩܘܕܝܐ has a

⁶⁵ Sinaitic omits 9:44, 46 “where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched” in agreement with the Greek manuscripts 8 B C L W.

⁶⁶ An interesting case appears in 14:45, where the Peshitta reproduces the word reduplicated ܩܘܕܝܐ ܩܘܕܝܐ not so S. Also surprising is the rendering of *ῥαββουσι* in 10:51, where the manuscript S employs ܩܘܕܝܐ instead of an expected ܩܘܕܝܐ (which could be a normal case of nasal liquid change which in P appears as ܩܘܕܝܐ. E. Lipiński, *Semitic languages: outline of a comparative grammar* (Leuven: Peeters, 2 edn, 2001), p. 134.

⁶⁷ S does not follow a logical sequence in the translation of the word *διδάσκαλος*. Sometimes the vocatives are translated in S and P as ܩܘܕܝܐ (4:38), other by ܩܘܕܝܐ (9:17, 38; 10:35; 12:32) and others ܩܘܠܘܬܐ (10:17, 20; 12:14, 19). A very interesting presentation in G. Lenzi, “Note sul lessico della Vetus Syra”, *Annali dell’Università degli studi di Napoli “L’Orientale”* 65 (2005), pp. 51-73, espec. 59-70.

wide range of meanings in Syriac,⁶⁸ therefore it can make reference to the word “leader” (the leader of the synagogue in 5:22) and also to the high priests (ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ).

In the Greek text, ῥαββί (3x) and ῥαββουλί are not translated. These Aramaic nonce-borrowings are unexpected (in fact, Mark uses the word διδάσκαλος 12x) and they are integrated in direct speeches of several characters of the narrative. In three of the four instances Jesus is called ῥαββί or ῥαββουλί in response to a miraculous action on his part. The title ῥαββί conveys a sense of Jesus’ particular greatness. Mark is recalling a usage that goes back to the first disciples of Jesus. Its use functions as an addressee specification, as a title, as a vocative and it fulfills a metaphorical function.⁶⁹

In Syriac the word ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ has changed and added new meanings in comparison with those of רבני in Jesus’ times. Therefore, in the Syriac versions ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ fulfills other functions. With relation to Jesus it is a title and a polite vocative. On the other hand, the element of surprise, the marked character of these words, and their connection with the miracles has been lost. P has corrected the large number of uses by S, trying to be closer to the Greek text.

Hosanna

In Mark 11:9 ὡσαννά⁷⁰ is rendered in S and P as ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ, instead of following the OTP translation⁷¹ of Ps 118:25 ܘܘܨܝܢܐ from the verb ܘܘܨܝܢܐ. Mark 11:9 reflects Matt 21:9, 15 where C and P use ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ (S lost verse). In Mark 11:10 the word ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ is omitted in S but appears in P. The word ܐܘܘܠܝܘܬܝܐ appears twice in Ephr. *Comm. Diat* II.14 and XVIII.2.

The word ὡσαννά⁷² in 11:9 is a nonce-borrowing while in 11:10 it appears as a case of intra-clause codeswitching: ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις without translation. Mark uses the Aramaic⁷³ word ὡσαννά but does not translate it, since it is certain that in Jesus’ time, as well as in his community, it was a known expression of exclamation or praise, given its liturgical

⁶⁸ It appears in the OTP, not in the Pentateuch.

⁶⁹ The original literal meaning of the Aramaic word ῥαββί was “my great one.” In fact, it was a metaphor (BIG as important). In Jesus’ times it was an honorific form of address and not a usual designation for a teacher. It has lost in the Gospel its original metaphoric meaning and therefore it is in this context a nonce-borrowing.

⁷⁰ The Greek word ὡσαννά, transliterates the Aramaic word ܘܘܨܝܢܐ ܘܘܨܝܢܐ *hōšā‘nā* (an acclamation) which is an adaptation of the Hebrew expression ܘܘܨܝܢܐ ܘܘܨܝܢܐ *hōšā‘āb nā* (“deliver us”, an emphatic imperative) only appearing in Ps 118:25. Mark has conserved the expression ὡσαννά and not the Greek translation σῶσον δὴ of the LXX.

⁷¹ This verbal form ܘܘܨܝܢܐ (from the verb ܘܘܨܝܢܐ) is used in P Matt 14:30 to translate σῶσον με, while the prior translations S and C has translated this expression using ܘܘܨܝܢܐ from the verb ܘܘܨܝܢܐ.

⁷² The root ܘܘܨܝܢܐ is not attested in Aramaic, although the form ܘܘܨܝܢܐ appears in an Aramaic text from Qumran (4Q243 16:2) and the root ܘܘܨܝܢܐ appears in another Aramaic text, both associated with a cry of greeting or homage.

⁷³ This root does not appear in the Targum and is translated by the Aramaic root ܘܘܨܝܢܐ.

use. The word refers to Ps 118:25 and appears linked to the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem, where Jesus is praised as one who comes in the name of the Lord. Therefore, its use recalls a very significant scene in the life of Jesus and refers to the prayer of the Jewish people.

This word fulfills several functions. Firstly, it acts as a discourse marker and an interjection, giving solemnity to his followers' words. These two recurrences give cohesion and connection to this acclamation. Secondly, it refers the reader to a Psalm (quoting function). The entrance of Jesus is linked to the Psalm that praised the entrance of God into the Temple. Thirdly, this word recalls a significant historical moment in the life of Jesus. Fourthly, this exclamation surprises the readers and reminds them of its liturgical use in the community (John 12:13, Did 10:6).

S has not translated either of these two instances losing the cohesion of the acclamation. In 11:9 the Syriac versions retain these functions with their use of ܠܒܬܐܪܝܢ, especially the liturgical connotations. It is possible that the allusion to the Psalm has been lost.

Conclusions from a Sociolinguistic Perspective

The application of the sociolinguistic tools related with semantic borrowing, to the Gospel of Mark, both in Greek and Syriac, have allowed us to identify the literary and social functions developed by the codeswitchings and have allowed us to verify how these functions have inevitably changed in the translation process.

In general, S eliminates the cases of codeswitching of translation and reiteration, whereas the Peshitta maintains them and only eliminates them in three cases, showing that the Peshitta has a more conservative character than S.⁷⁴ The Harklean version (H) keeps them all.

The translator of the Sinaiticus manuscript has simply eliminated the duplicates,⁷⁵ aiming for a reader-oriented translation.⁷⁶ This proves similar to the strategy of the OTIP

⁷⁴ The Old Syriac Mark (S) favours the idioms and Hebrew words that will later be removed from the Peshitta in subsequent revisions Lyon, *Syriac Gospel*, pp. 76-77. Gurtner, "The Gospel of Mark in Syriac Christianity", pp. 311-13.

⁷⁵ Only the codeswitching relating to Golgota remains, surely because the word had no meaning in Syriac.

⁷⁶ "The earliest Syriac translations from Greek are free to a surprising degree. They are essentially reader-oriented and can all be classed as either expositional or tendential in character. The unit of translation can be as large as the paragraph, though in the case of biblical translation it is normally the sentence or phrase. Dynamic equivalence is the norm, with extensive use of modulation as well as of transposition". S. P. Brock, "Towards a History of Syriac Translation Technique", in R. Lavenant (ed.) *III Symposium Syriacum 1980. Les contacts du monde syriaque avec les autres cultures*, col. «OCA» 221 (Rome: Institut oriental, 1983), pp. 1-14, espec. 10.

translators: “Where the Hebrew seems redundant, the translators condense the text.”⁷⁷ This attitude makes the reading easier. However, this simplification eliminates most of the literary functions (emphasis and surprise, etc.) that these Aramaic words developed in the Greek Gospel.

The aim of the translator of the Peshitta was to correct the previous versions and to adhere the text more closely to the original Greek. Only the translations of the codeswitchings of *talitha kum*, *effatha* and *korban* are eliminated, which for the translator must have been clear cases of redundancy, while he preserves the others. The literary functions of the codeswitchings have changed, retaining the element of surprise but maintaining a sensation of redundancy (*abba, Eli, Eli, Bartimeus*).

The Syriac translations, Old Syriac and Peshitta, have been made in two clear linguistic contexts: firstly, in a “language contact” situation⁷⁸ and secondly, in a process of language evolution and semantic change (one of the reasons for the correction of the Old Syriac version by the Peshitta). This article has shown how both of these versions (S and P) try to render a reader-oriented translation on the one hand, whilst on the other hand, remain faithful to the original Greek text, by using different strategies.

Four influences have been decisive for the Syriac translation of Mark in S. Firstly, the earlier Syriac OTP gave a linguistic background for the translation of the Gospels.⁷⁹ Several of the Aramaic borrowings analysed follow the OTP rendering (e.g. the full quotation of Ps 22:1 and the word *abbi*), but others do not (e.g. *hosanna*). Secondly, the previous and probably earlier translations of the Diatessaron and the Old Syriac Gospel of Matthew may have influenced the Markan translation as shown in passages such as Mark 15:34 (P). Thirdly, there is the bilingual context in which the translation was developed.⁸⁰ Lastly, there is the translator’s aim of making a correct translation which is faithful to the original as well as intelligible to the receiving community.

This article has demonstrated that translation is always a compromise. The conscious and deliberate social functions developed by the loanwords and the codeswitchings both from Aramaic and Latin in the Greek Gospel have been inevitably affected and altered due to the translation process. The translator of S has chosen an easy reading and has

⁷⁷ M. Weitzman, “The Interpretative Character of the Syriac Old Testament”, in M. Sæbo (ed.) *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: the history of its interpretation* vol. I/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 587-611, espec. 592.

⁷⁸ “Despite its genuine Semitic character, Syriac literature was never isolated from the Graeco-Roman world”. L. Van Rompay, “The Christian Syriac Tradition of Interpretation”, in M. Sæbo (ed.) *Hebrew Bible, Old Testament: the history of its interpretation* vol. I/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 612-641, espec. 617.

⁷⁹ The OTP in the Pentateuch uses about 50 words of Greek or Latin provenance. J. Joosten, “Greek and Latin Words in the Peshitta Pentateuch. First Soundings”, in R. Lavenant (ed.) *Symposium Syriacum VII* (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1998), pp. 37-47, espec. 44.

⁸⁰ One example of this language contact situation are the twenty-four Greek loanwords accepted in S and P in the Gospel of Mark. S. P. Brock, “Greek Words in the Syriac Gospels (vet and Pe)”, *Le Muséon* 80 (1967), pp. 389-426.

eliminated the unnecessary glosses because his readers would have understood the Aramaic statements on their own. Doing this he has lost several of the functions that these loanwords developed. On the other hand, the Peshitta, clearly influenced by the previous translations has tried to conserve the repetitive codeswitchings which now seem redundant. Therefore, those literary functions have been altered.

Translating implies interpretation and the risk of accentuating some aspects while losing some nuances. In this case, the Italian saying “traduttore, traditore” meaning “translator, traitor” should be adapted to reflect the good work done by the Syriac translators as: “translator, brave witness of a living tradition.”

Abstract: The Gospel of Mark contains numerous loanwords and codeswitchings from Aramaic to Greek. These borrowed terms were not unconscious and developed important social, literary and narrative functions in key passages of the Gospel. This article considers how the Old Syriac versions and the Peshitta have treated these borrowed terms given that the translators were native Aramaic speakers and how the functions developed by these borrowed terms have been altered due to the translation process.

Keywords: Loanwords; Codeswitching; Old Syriac Gospels; Peshitta Gospels; Reception History; Gospel of Mark.

Resumen: El Evangelio de Marcos contiene numerosos préstamos lingüísticos y casos de alternancia de código del arameo al griego. Estos préstamos no fueron inconscientes, sino que desarrollan importantes funciones sociolingüísticas, literarias y narrativas en pasajes clave del evangelio. Este artículo desarrolla cómo las versiones de la Vetus Syra y la Peshitta han tratado estos préstamos dado que los traductores eran hablantes nativos del arameo y asimismo se estudia cómo las funciones desarrolladas por estos préstamos se han visto alteradas debido al proceso de traducción.

Palabras clave: Préstamos; Alternancia de código; Vetus Syra; Peshitta; Historia de la recepción; Evangelio de Marcos.