SECONDARY FORMATIONS FROM GREEK LOANWORDS IN SYRIAC

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1. INTRODUCTION

The influence of Greek on all the Late Aramaic dialects was strong, but in no case was this more so than in Syriac:[1] several Greek loanwords are already found in the Peshitta Pentateuch,[2] which in all likelihood goes back to the second century AD, while in the Old Syriac Gospels there are roughly eighty.[3]

The vast majority of direct borrows of Greek words in Syriac are nouns, and are derived from Greek nouns. Although there are also many Syriac verbs of Greek origin, these are almost all secondary formations based on earlier nominal forms (for these, see below, section 3); only in a small number of cases is a Syriac verbal form the primary form borrowed, though even this may derive from a Greek noun rather than a verb. This probably applies to *qaṭreg* 'accuse'[4] < G[reek] *katēgoros* (rather than *katēgorein*), and *zawweg* 'join', 'marry' < G *zeugos* (rather than *zeugein*), both of which are attested very early in Syriac.[5] Rare cases of

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[1] For Greek words in Syriac, see in general A. Schall, *Studien über griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen* (Darmstadt, 1960), for which an index is provided by R. Voigt in R. Lavenant (ed.), *Symposium Syriacum*, VII (Orientalia Christiana Analecta 256; 1998), pp. 539–543; also R. Voigt, "Griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen: Eine Bibliographie", *Graeco-Arabica* 7–8 (1999–2000), pp. 555–570 [non vidi], and my "Greek words in Syriac: some general features", *Scripta Classica Israelica* 15 (1996), pp. 251–262, repr. in my *From Ephrem to Romanos* (Aldershot, 1999), ch. XV.

[2] For these, see J. Joosten, "Greek and Latin words in the Peshitta Pentateuch: first soundings", in *Symposium Syriacum*, VII, pp. 37–47.

[3] These are listed in my "Greek words in the Syriac Gospels (vet. and pe.)", *Le Muséon* 80 (1967), pp. 389–426.

[4] In texts of the seventh century and later, also 'predicate'.

[5] Zawga already occurs in Genesis 45:22, and zawweg in the Old Syriac Gospels. I use a simplified transcription of the Syriac forms; it should be noted that the vocalization and orthography of many Greek loanwords is not fixed.

loanwords that are definitely taken directly from Greek verbs include the very common *appis* 'urge, request' (rather than 'persuade') < G *peisai* (aor. inf.), alongside such rarer verbs such as *pargel* 'bid, command' < G *paraggellein,* or *qasmes* < G *kosmein.* For a limited period, during the sixth and seventh centuries, and probably only within the Roman Empire, there was a fashion to construct Syriac verbal forms from Greek aorist infinitives, together with an auxiliary verb: either ʿ*bad* with active infinitives, or *hwa* with passive (for these, see Section 4).

For the most part, this contribution is concerned with various inner-Syriac developments concerning words taken over from Greek, with special attention paid to any diachronic patterns that can be discerned.[6] In passing it should be noted that Syriac is the only Late Aramaic dialect which develops this potential.

2. SECONDARY FORMATIONS FROM NOUNS

Syriac has three very productive affixes: in -*aya*, denoting adjectives; in -*uta*, denoting abstracts; and in -*a'it*, denoting adverbs. From an early date Greek loanwords begin to make good use of these formations. Occurrences from earlier than the fourth century are:

> *asoṭuta* < *asoṭa* < G *asōtos*; already in Peshitta Is. 28:7.
>
> *arkonuta* 'archonship' < *arkona* < G *archōn*; the only known occurrence is in P. Mesopotamia B.5, dated AD 242.
>
> *esṭraṭiguta* 'office of general' < *esṭraṭiga* < G *stratēgos*; P Dura 28 (dated AD 243).[7]
>
> *hegmonuta* 'governorship' < *hegmona* < G *hegēmōn*; Old Syriac Gospels.
>
> *ṭronuta* < *ṭrona* < G *turannos*; Wis. 16:4, III Macc.7:5.

While a number of further abstracts, along with some adverbs, based on Greek loanwords feature in fourth- and fifth-century texts,[8] adjectival formations hardly begin to appear before the sixth century, from which time they become increasingly common; the only exception to this is provided by terms used to denote professions (e.g. *bursaya* 'cobbler' < G *burseus*; *lisṭaya* 'robber' < G *lēistes*; *putqaya* 'inkeeper' < *putqa* < G *pandocheion*), and by *namosaya* < *namosa* < G

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6   For this aspect, see also my "Diachronic aspects of Syriac word formation", in R. Lavenant (ed.), *V Symposium Syriacum* (Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 236; 1988), pp. 321–330.

7   Also in Palmyrene inscriptions (ʾ*sṭrṭgw*, absolute form); cp my " Greek and Latin words in Palmyrene inscriptions: a comparison with Syriac", in E. Cussini (ed.), *Memorial volume for D. Hillers*. Unlike the case of *arkonuta*, *esṭraṭiguta* is often found in Syriac texts of the fifth and sixth centuries.

8   For Ephrem and Narsai, see my "Greek words in Ephrem and Narsai: A comparative sampling", *Aram* 11–12 (1999–2000), pp. 439–449.

nomos, which already occurs in the Syriac translations of Eusebius and Titus of Bostra, and is found is John the Solitary, Narsai and Jacob of Serugh in the fifth century. The following secondary formations in *-uta* and *-a'it* are found in texts of the fourth and fifth century:

> *agonisṭuta* '(ascetic) contest' < *agonisṭa* < G *agōnistēs*.
>
> *asoṭa'it* 'stupidly' < *asoṭa* < G *asōtos* (*Liber Graduum*; Narsai).
>
> *atliṭuta* 'athletic contest (figurative only)' < *atliṭa* < G *athlētēs* (Aphrahat, Narsai), and *atliṭa'it* (Narsai).
>
> *eparkuta* 'eparchy' < *eparka/heparka* < G *eparchos* (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*).
>
> *episqoputa* 'office' (Peshitta Acts); 'episcopacy' < *episqopa* < G *episkopos*.
>
> *ge'omeṭruta* 'geometry' < *ge'omeṭros* < G *geōmetros* (Ephrem, *Prose Refutations*).
>
> *gramatiquta* 'grammar' < *gramatiqa* < G *grammatikos* (Eusebius, *Theophania*; *Clementine Recognitions*).
>
> *ludaruta* < *ludara* < G *loudarios* < Latin *ludarius* (Eusebius, *Theophania*).
>
> *magistruta* < *magistra* < G *magistros* < Latin *magister* (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*).
>
> *musiqaruta* 'making music' < *musiqara* < G *mousikos* (Eusebius, *Theophania*).
>
> *namosa'it* 'according to the Law/law' < *namosa* < *nomos* (*Acts of Thomas*, Ephrem).
>
> *pilsaputa* 'philosophy' < *pilsapa* < G *philosophos* (Peshitta Col. 2:8).
>
> *rhiṭruta* 'rhetoric' < *rhiṭra* < G *rhētor* (Eusebius, *Theophania*).
>
> *ṭeṭrarkuta* 'tetrarchy' < *ṭeṭrarka* < G *tetrarchos* (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*).

Many further examples are first attested in sixth-century texts.

Early adjectival formations of the sixth century which quickly gain widespread use include:

> *adshaya* 'belonging to the species' < *adsha* < G *eidos*.
>
> *a'araya* 'aerial' < *a'ar* < G *aēr*.
>
> *ananqaya* 'necessary' < *ananqi* < G *anagkē*.
>
> *atiraya* 'celestial' < *atir* < G *aithēr*.
>
> *balanaya* 'bathhouse attendant' < *balani* < G *balaneion*.
>
> *episqopaya* 'episcopal' < *episqopa* < G *episkopos*.
>
> *eskolaya* 'student' < *eskoli* < G *scholē*.
>
> *esṭuksaya* 'elemental' < *esṭuksa* < G *stoicheion*.
>
> *ewangelaya* 'pertaining to the Gospel, evangelical' < *ewangelyon* < G *euaggelion*.
>
> *hereṭiqaya* 'heretical' < *hereṭiqa* < G *hairetikos*.
>
> *hulaya* (also *hulanaya*) 'material' < *huli* < G *hulē*.
>
> *parṣopaya* 'personal, prosopic' < *parṣopa* < G *prosōpon*.

qanonaya 'canonical' < *qanona* < G *kanōn*.
qenobaya 'cenobitic (monk)' < *qenobin* < G *koinobion*.
si'maya 'silver' < *si'ma* < G *asēmon*.
usyaya 'essential' < *usya* < G *ousia*.

By the end of the seventh century well over sixty adjectival forms based on Greek loanwords are current, and the number continues to increase in the following centuries.

Beyond the basic word formations in *-uta*, *-aya* and *-a'it*, there are a number of secondary forms: *-ayuta*; *-ana*, *-anuta*, *-ana'it*; *-anayuta*; *-tana*, *-tanuta*, and *-tana'it*; *-tanayuta*. Several of these extended formations are not attested even for native Syriac roots until the fifth century or later, and in some cases they can serve as useful criteria in helping to locate chronologically undated texts: only very rarely do these formations based on Greek loanwords occur before the sixth century. For each of these word formations I give a list of the more common examples, along with an indication of the century (given as a Roman numeral) when they are first attested. In many cases these new formations probably entered into usage through translations of Greek texts, in order to meet the need (felt especially by translators of the late sixth and seventh century) to provide formal Syriac equivalents to Greek grammatical forms.

-*ayuta*:

    aksnayuta 'alien status; life as stranger to the world' < *aksnaya* < G *xenos* (already in Peshitta Ben Sira 29:22).

    ananqayuta 'necessity' < *ananqi* < G *anangkē*; IX.

    bursayuta 'cobbler's craft' < *bursaya* < G *burseus*; VI.

    eskolayuta < *eskolaya* < *eskoli* < G *scholē*; VII.

    lisṭayuta 'banditry' < *lisṭaya* < G *lēistes*; IV/V (Eusebius, *Theophania*).

    namosayuta 'legality' < *namosaya* < *namosa* < G *nomos*; VI/VII.

    ortoduksayuta 'orthodoxy' < *ortoduksaya* < *ortoduksa* < G *orthodoxos*; VI/VII.

    qanonayuta 'canonicity' < *qanonaya* < *qanona* < G *kanōn*; VI.

    usyayuta 'essentiality' < *usyaya* , *usya* < G *ousia*; VI/VII.

-*anaya*

    esṭuksanaya 'elemental' < *esṭuksana* < *esṭuksa* < G *stoicheion*; VII.

    gensanaya 'generic' < *gensana* < *gensa* < G *genos*; VII.

    hulanaya (alongside *hulaya*, above); VII.

    ṭupsanaya 'figurative, typical' < *ṭupsana* < *ṭupsa* < G *tupos*; VII.

-*ana'it*

    gensana'it 'generically' < *gensana* (etc., as above); VI (Jacob of Serugh).

    esṭuksana'it 'elementally' < *esṭuksana* (etc., as above); VII.

    ṭupsana'it 'figuratively' < *ṭupsana* (etc., as above); VII.

-anayuta
> *adshanayuta* 'specificity' < *adshanaya* < *adshana* < G *eidos*; VII/VIII.
> *espiranayuta* 'sphericity' < *espirinaya* < *espira* < G *sphaira*; VII.
> *hulanayuta* 'materiality' < *hulanaya* < *hulana* < *huli* < G *hulē*; VII.

-tana
> *eskimtana* 'honourable; dissembler'< *eskima* < G *schēma*; IV.
> *haromtana* 'fragrant' < *haroma* < G *arōma*; VIII.
> *kromtana* 'bold-faced, audacious' < *kroma* < G *chrōma*; V.

-tanuta
> *eskimtanuta* 'hypocrisy' < *eskimtana* (etc., as above); VI.
> *haromtanuta* 'fragrance' < *haromtana* (etc., as above); VIII/IX.
> *kromtanuta* 'audacity, cheek' < *kromtana* (etc., as above); VI.

-tana'it
> *eskimtana'it* 'dissemblingly' < *eskimtana* (etc., as above; already occurs
> in Peshitta Ben Sira 26:24 and the *Liber Legum Regionum*).
> *purstana'it* 'craftily' < *purstana* < *pursa* < G *poros*; VII.
> *kromtana'it* 'audaciously' < *kromtana* (etc., as above); VI.

-tanayuta
> *haromtanayuta* 'fragrant quality' < *haromtana* (etc.; no *haromtanaya*
> attested); IX.

3. DENOMINATIVE VERBS

As mentioned earlier, the vast majority of Syriac verbal forms of Greek origin are secondary derivations based on a nominal form. With only very few exceptions,[9] these derivatives are always *paᶜᶜel* formations (several only occur in the passive, *etpaᶜᶜal*). The following are commonly, or reasonably commonly, found; again, the century when each is first attested is given as a Roman numeral:[10]

> *katres* 'depose' < *kataresis* < G *kathairesis*; VI.
> *lasṭi* 'rob' < *lisṭaya* < G *lēistes*; VI.
> *nawweg/etnawwag* 'shipwreck' < G *nauagos*; VII.
> (*parras*) *etparras* 'devise' < *pursa* , G *poros*; first attested in the *Clementine
> Recognitions* (in a manuscript dated AD 411), and very common from
> fifth century onwards.

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9   An isolated example of *pᶜal* is provided by *mlat* 'practice, study' (already in Peshitta Prov. 26:17), perhaps derived directly from the Greek verb *meletan* (though *mlaṭa* < G *meletē* does occur rarely); and one of the *afᶜel* is to be found in *azweg*, beside *zawweg*.

10   I have excluded *parnes*, whose etymology is unclear; one possibility is G *pronoos*. It provides many secondary formations.

(*qappas*) *etqappas* 'be provided with mosaics' < *qupsa* < G *kubos*; the only known occurrence is in a mosaic inscription dated AD 556.[11]

sakkem 'shape, delineate' < *eskima* < G *schēma*; VI.

saqqem 'measure, define' < *siqoma* < G *sēkōma*; VI (Cyrus of Edessa).

ṭaggen/eṭṭaggan 'fry; be tormented' < *ṭigna* < G *tēganon*; active already in Peshitta Jer. 29:22; passive in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*

(*ṭakken*) *eṭṭakkan* 'be skilful' < *tekna* < G *technē*; VI.

ṭakkes 'put in order' < *ṭaksa* < G *taxis*; already in Peshitta Cant.2:4 and 1 Tim. 3:2; subsequently very common.

ṭappes 'typify' < *ṭupsa* < G *tupos*; V.

yaqqen 'delineate' < *yuqna* < G *eikōn*; VII.

zaṭṭem 'investigate, bring charges' < *ziṭima* < G *zētēma*; the noun occurs in Peshitta Acts, the verb first in *Liber Graduum*.

zawweg 'join together, unite; marry' < *zawga* < G *zeugos*; both the noun and the verb are already found in the Old Syriac Gospels.

From the late sixth century onwards, further new quadriliteral verbal forms (following the model of *qaṭreg*) become popular, e.g. *palsar* 'falsify' < *palsara* < G *phalsarios* < Latin *falsarius*; *palsep* 'philosophize' < *pilsapa* < G *philosophos*; *paṭrek* 'make patriarch' < *paṭryarka* < G *patriarchēs*. In the early seventh century a number of new forms feature for the first time in (for example) the Syrohexapla and Harkleian, e.g. *etaswaṭ* 'act stupidly' < *asoṭa*, *mawren* 'embalm' < *muron*.

Several of the denominatives listed above give rise to further derivations, based usually on the participle, both active and passive. The following affixes are found:

-uta

> *msaqqmuta* 'proportion'; VI (Cyrus of Edessa).
> *mṭakksuta* 'orderliness', already in Peshitta Col. 2:5.
> *mzawwguta* 'married state'; VI.

-a'it

> *msaqqma'it* 'summetrically'; late VII (Jacob of Edessa and Isaac of Nineveh).
> *mṭakksa'it* 'in an orderly way'; V (Narsai).

-ana[12]

> *mṭakksana* 'someone who puts in order'; VI.
> *mṭappsana* 'figurative, typifying'; early VII (Gabriel Qatraya).
> *myaqqnana* 'characterising, characteristic'; VII.

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11 Ed. A. Abu Assaf, in *Annales archéologiques arabes de Syrie* 22 (1972), pp. 135–144; it reads *bšnt tmnm'' wštyn wtmn' b'yrḥ tšryn ʾḥry bks' bh ʾtqps hn' byt*[ ] *w'štkllty* [ ] *psqyn* 'In the year 868 [sc. of the Seleucid era], in the month Teshrin II [November], at the full moon, this building was provided with mosaics, and the cistern was completed'.

12 These formations may function either as nouns or as adjectives.

-anuta

> *mṭakksanuta* 'good ordering'; VI.

> *mṭappsanuta* 'prefiguring'; VI (Life of Peter the Iberian).

-ana'it

> *mṭappsana'it* 'figuratively'; early VII (Sahdona).

Most of these affixes are also found attached to participial forms, both active and passive, of *appis* < *peisai*; for these see Section 5.

A quite different, and much less productive, secondary formation based on *paᶜᶜel* denominatives is the (agent) pattern *quṭṭala*, applied to quadriliteral roots: the only commonly found examples of this are *quṭraga* 'accusation' < *qaṭreg*, *zuwwaga* 'marriage' < *zawweg*, *kutrasa* 'deposition' < *katres*, and *ṭukkasa* 'arrangement, ordering' < *ṭakkes* (already found in the Syriac translations of Eusebius, *Theophania*, and the *Clementine Recognitions*); further cases that occur reasonably frequently are *nuwwaga* 'shipwreck' (already Peshitta 2 Cor. 11:25) < *etnawwag*, *purgala* 'instruction, command' < *pargel,* and *ṭukkana* 'skilled work' < *ṭakken*. To these it is likely that *quppasa* 'provision with mosaics' should now be added: although hitherto only *qupsa* < G *kubos* has been attested, the appearance of the verb *etqappas* in the inscription of AD 556 (note 8, above), suggests that *qwps'* in two other mosaics, found at Tel Biᶜa (near Raqqa), the one dated 509 and the other 595, should be read as *quppasa* 'provision of mosaics', rather than *qupsa* 'mosaic'.[13]

4. BORROWINGS BASED ON GREEK AORIST INFINITIVES

The sixth and seventh centuries witnessed a temporary fashion for borrowing Greek aorist infinitives (active and passive), and providing them with an auxiliary verb, '*bad* 'do/make' with active verbs, and *hwa* 'be' with passive.[14] The practice seems to have very largely confined to writers working within the Roman Empire. Some thirty different Greek verbs receiving treatment in this way are found quite commonly in texts of the sixth/seventh century, after which the usage becomes rare. The following examples occur very frequently:[15]

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[13]   The mosaics are published by M. Krebernik, "Schriftfunde aus Tell Biᶜa 1990", in *Mitteilungen der deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 13 (1991), pp. 41–70, esp. 42–50; the relevant part of both texts reads "In month N of the year N .... this provision of mosaic took place (*hw' qwps' hn'*) ..."

[14]   The active, with ᶜ*bad*, is reminiscent of the similar usage in Bohairic with P.

[15]   The orthography varies considerably in the manuscripts between *-ys'/-yn'* and *-s'/-n'*, though the former are the dominant spellings.

eksoriyastine hwa 'be exiled' < G *exoriasthēnai.*

kirotonise ᶜbad 'ordain' < G *cheirotonēsai,* and passive *kirotonitine hwa*
            < cheirotonēthēnai .[16]

parisiyastine hwa 'speak freely' < G *parresiasthēnai.*

pliroporise ᶜbad 'inform' < G *plerophorēsai,* and passive *pliroporitine hwa*
            < G *plerophorēthēnai.*

qindunewse/qundinewse ᶜbad 'endanger' < G *kinduneusai,* and passive
            qindunitine/qundinitine hwa < *kinduneuthēnai.*

What are probably the earliest examples of this practice are to be found in the Syriac translation of the *Didascalia,*[17] which some have dated as early as the fourth century; their presence (and that of certain other features), however, suggest that the translation really belongs to at least a century later.

5. SOME HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE GREEK LOANWORDS

Certain loanwords of Greek origin prove to be highly productive in Syriac, sometimes even from a fairly early period, perhaps none more so that *appis* < G *peisai,* which gave rise to the following secondary formations:

–   based on participle: *mpisana, mpisanuta, mpisana'it; mpasuta;
    mettpisana, mettpisanuta, mettpisana'it;*
–   formed from the root *pys: pyasa, pyasaya, pyasta;*
–   new formation, but again based on the Greek aorist infin.: *pise ᶜbad.*

Other very productive Greek loanwords are:

–   *gensa* < G *genos,* which produces *gensaya; gensana, gensanaya,
    gensanuta, gensana'it; gensanayuta; gannes/etgannas; mgannsuta,
    mgannsa'it; mgannsana; metgannsana; gunnasa.*
–   *eskima* < G *schēma,* producing *eskimuta, eskimtana, eskimtanuta,
    eskimtana'it, sakkem/estakkam; msakkmana, mestakkmana,
    mestakkmanuta; sukkama.*
–   *qaṭreg/etqaṭrag (*rarely *etqaṭgar)* < G *katēgoros,* from which derive
    *mqaṭrguta, mqaṭrga'it; mqaṭrgana, mqaṭrganuta, mqaṭrgana'it;
    metqaṭrgana, metqaṭrganuta, metqaṭrgana'it; quṭraga; qaṭrigana/
    qaṭirgana, qaṭigranuta.*[18]

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[16]   The Harklean margin at 2 Cor. 3:19 offers a completely new formation based on the Greek
       root: *etkarten*!

[17]   The two forms that occur there are *kindunisa ᶜbad* and *kirotonitina hwa.*

[18]   There are also the independent borrowings, *qaṭigorya* < G *katēgoria,* and *qaṭigoriqaya* < G
       katēgorikos.

—   *ṭaksa* < G *taxis*, whence *ṭaksanaya*, and especially the following
    secondary formations based on the denominative *ṭakkes/eṭṭakkas*:
    mṭakksuta, *mṭakksa'it*; *mṭakksana*, *mṭakksanuta*, *mṭakksana'it*;
    meṭṭakksana; *ṭukkasa*.

—   *ṭekna* < G *teknē*, whence *ṭeknanuta*, *ṭeknana'it*; *ṭakken/eṭṭakkan*;
    mṭakknuta, *mṭakkna'it*; *mṭakknana*, *mṭakknanuta*, *mṭakknana'it*;
    meṭṭakknana, *meṭṭakknanuta*, *meṭṭakknana'it*; *ṭukkana*, *ṭukkanaya*.

—   *ṭupsa* < G *tupos*, which produces *ṭupsaya*, *ṭupsanaya*, *ṭupsananyuta*,
    ṭupsana'it; *ṭappes*; *mṭappsuta*, *mṭappsa'it*, *mṭappsana*, *mṭappsanuta*,
    mṭappsana'it; *meṭṭappsana*, *meṭṭappsanuta*, *meṭṭappsana'it*.

By way of a final note, it should be mentioned that the standard Syriac dic-
tionaries vary considerably in their coverage of these secondary word formations
(whether or not they have Greek loanwords as their basis);[19] thus many of the
forms just listed do not occur until texts of the medieval period and will only be
found in T. Audo's *Dictionnaire de la langue chaldéenne/Simta d-leššana
suryaya* (Mosul, 1897, and reprints).

As an admirer of Professor Tapani Harviainen's publications in many differ-
ent areas of Semitic philology, it is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to
offer, in his honour, this brief schematic outline of an intriguing topic that would
seem to invite further investigation.

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[19]   See my "Syriac lexicography: Reflections on resources and sources", *Aramaic Studies* 1
       (2003), pp. 165–178, esp. 175–177.