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## GLOSSING THE UNFAMILIAR IN THE *LINDISFARNE GOSPELS*

Although interlinear glosses theoretically involve providing the most exact native equivalent for each foreign item in the text (cf., e.g. Nida 2004: 161), they often prove to be much more than a mechanical process of creating lexical correspondences. One of the best examples of glossing which is a “conscious, occasionally very careful “interpretative translation”” (Nagucka 1997: 180), is the collection of 10<sup>th</sup> century glosses added by Aldred to the Latin text of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. This oldest existing translation of the Gospels into English consists not only of a word-for-word renderings, since Aldred also used multiple glosses, marginal notes, and occasionally left the words unglossed. Thus, particular Latin words are often translated in several different ways.

The present study focuses on words denoting objects and phenomena which were presumably unfamiliar or obscure to the Anglo-Saxon audience. Those include items specific to the society, culture, as well as fauna and flora. The study shows various methods employed by the glossator to familiarise the concepts to the readers.

Keywords: *gloss, scribe, Lindisfarne Gospels, culture-specific items, Aldred, translation, Old English*

### 1. Gloss translation

The simplest definition of glossing says it is “the kind of translation which aims to reproduce as literally and meaningfully as possible the FORM and CONTENT of the original (as a study aid, for example)” (Hatim and Munday 2004: 340–341). As such, it is typically associated with the study aid: the “reproduction of a text for research purposes” done for students ignorant in SL (Reiss 1981: 131). In the past, glossing was quite a popular procedure used in order to transfer the content expressed in the language of higher prestige into the

vernacular (cf. Folea 1973/1991: 13), especially in the case of texts regarded as important for the society. Thus, glossing, although typically associated with mechanical renderings, was definitely not treated as a school task in mediaeval times. On the contrary, as Brown (2016: 23) puts in, translating important books, such as *Lindisfarne Gospels*, was believed to be a “tremendous privilege”.

## 2. Glosses in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*

The *Lindisfarne Gospels* (LG) is a well-known collection of Gospels preserved in MS Cotton Nero D.4. It was copied by Eadfrith, the Bishop of Lindisfarne, presumably between 698–710, from the Latin exemplar originating in southern Italy (cf. the names of two festivals celebrated in Naples in the calendar of lections). In the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, the gloss translation in the interlinear form was added by the Provost of Chester-le-Street, Aldred. This is believed to be “the oldest extant English-language version of the Gospels” (Brown 2003: 90).

The word-for-word rendition, expected of an interlinear gloss, is indeed found in many places often resulting in a strange order of words in the target language. In Matthew (2:11), for instance, we find the phrase *maria moder his*, which is an exact translation of Lat. *maria matre eius*, even though possessive pronouns in Old English preceded rather than followed nouns. Such examples show that the scribe often followed Latin verbatim. This, as Stanton (2002: 44) claims, was not caused by the ignorance of the differences between Latin and English grammar, since “Old English translators were naturally conscious of the differences between their language and Latin, but this did not stop them from imitating Latinate structures”. And Aldred “followed Latin with great faithfulness” (Lendinara 2016: 332).

And yet, it has long been noticed that “glosses to the Lindisfarne Gospels are not one-to-one mechanical renderings, but rather conscious, occasionally very careful “interpretative translations”” (Nagucka 1997: 180). Hence, as Nagucka (1997: 180) continues, she “would rather refrain from calling the Lindisfarne interlinear texts glosses and would rather suggest other terms: either a glossal translation or continuous interlinear glosses...”. Her suggestion of different names for the process follows from the observation that the Gospels contain numerous examples of deviations from the Latin original. Those are found at various levels: morphological, e.g. Latin cases rendered via the addition of pronouns, prepositions or determiners added before nouns in the target language (1a); syntactic, e.g. changes in the word order (1b); and lexical, e.g. explications of the Latin item with the use of multiple OE words (1c):

- (1) a. cuoeð forðon **to him** ga ðu gaast unclæne from ðæm menn  
dicebat enim **illi** exi spirite inmunde ab **homine**

‘For he said vnto him: Goe out of the man thou vncleane Spirit.’ (Mk 5:8)<sup>1</sup>

b. feall to **his fotum**  
 cecidit ad **pedes eius**  
 ‘fel at his feete’ (Jn 11:32)

c. þætte eghuelc he † woepenmon tountynes **hrif † wom † inna**<sup>2</sup>  
 quia omne masculinum adaperiens **uuluam**  
 ‘That euery male opening the matrice...’ (Lk 2:23)

Additionally, the text contains marginal notes in which Aldred explained some notions or made comments. One of the best examples of that practice is the note added to Matthew (15:12):

(2) cueð hir to se hælend maria  
 dicit ei iesus maria  
 ‘Iesvs saith to her, Marie.’ (Jn 20:16)

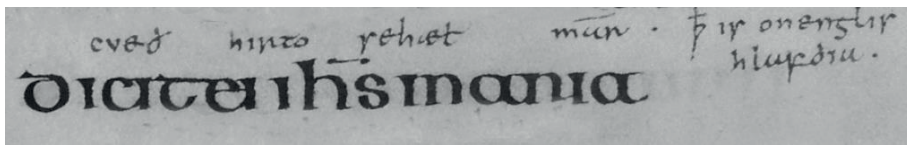


Figure 1. Gloss to the Gospel of John (20:16) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Image from <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> (©The British Library Board)

The line *dicit ei iesus maria* is translated into Old English, placed as usual above the text. On the margin, however, the scribe made an additional note in which he explained the meaning of the name Maria: *Þæt is on Englis, hlafdia* ‘in English it means a lady’. This explanation is discussed by Pons-Sanz (2001: 184–185), who traces the etymology of the name. She assumes it comes from one of two Hebrew roots: one meaning ‘to rebel’ (*m-r-h*), the other meaning ‘fat’ (*m-r-a*), which then changed the sense to ‘beautiful’ since plumpness was a desirable quality in a woman. Pons-Sanz further combines this with the Syriac word *mare* ‘lord’, whose feminine form *marya* ‘would denote a ‘lady’ (compare Bede’s interpretation of *maria* as *domina* in his comment on Luke 1:27<sup>3</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> Following the suggestions of an anonymous reviewer, all modern translations from the Bible come from the Douay-Rheims Version (1582) available at <https://originaldouayrheims.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> The symbol † (*vel*) used here links a succession of OE variants provided by the glossator as equivalentents for a Latin word.

<sup>3</sup> “*Maria autem Hebraice stella maris; Syriace vero domina vocatur...*” (ed. Giles 1844: 11)

### 3. Glossing the unfamiliar

In the face of various methods used by Aldred in the glosses, it is worth examining his way(s) of translating words denoting objects and phenomena which were presumably unfamiliar or obscure to the Anglo-Saxon audience. Such items must have been especially problematic since they did not have fixed equivalents in English yet. The discussion is expected to (1) reveal the methods employed by the scribe to familiarise the concepts to the readers and (2) show whether there is consistency in his choice of lexemes and ways of translating such words. All this will shed some more light on Aldred as the scribe and his attitude towards the potential audience of the Old English text, i.e. whether he merely provided the closest equivalent for the unknown/obscure concepts or attempted to aid the readers in their comprehension.

The data for the study are the set of words referring to entities, which in translation studies are variously labelled as “culture-specific concepts” (Baker 1992), “cultural words” (Newmark 2010), “culture-specific references” (Gambier 2004), or “realia” (Robinson 1997), i.e. words that denote “a cultural phenomenon that is present in culture X but not present (in the same way) in culture Y” (Nord 1997: 34). While the classification of those may vary, there is a consensus that such items are mostly those pertaining to geographical environment, elements of culture, as well as social life (cf., e.g. Newmark 2010: 173–177).

From all the glosses to LG, 19 Latin items of various frequency have been selected which represent concepts and phenomena closely connected to Roman civilization. Below is the list of words with the number of instances identified in LG given in brackets:

- fauna and flora: *camelus* (6), *lilium* (2), *locusta* (2), *zizania* (8)
- ranks/positions in the society: *centurion* (9), *Pharisaei* (88), *Pilatus* (51), *rabbi* (16), *Sadducaei* (7)
- religion: *daemon* (41), *diabolus* (11), *mammon* (4), *Sabbath* (57), (*arche*) *synagoga* (38), *templum* (54)
- food: *manna* (3), *pascha* (26)
- money: *denarius* (14), *talent* (12)

All instances of the above-listed Latin words have been searched in the glosses to identify their Old English equivalents. This led to the discovery of several types of relations between the Latin terms and their Old English counterparts, i.e. (1) one-to-one, (2) one-to-one/zero, (3) one-to-two, and (4) one-to-many. Below, those are discussed in detail in separate subsections in alphabetical order. The material comes from the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus*, which contains the Latin text of all four gospels with the OE gloss and marginal notes.

### 3.1. One-to-one relation

The most expected in glossing is presumably the one-to-one relation when one item in the source language is consistently glossed by the same target language equivalent. This type of relation is used by Aldred, albeit not very frequently. The data yield merely six items which are always translated with the same OE word: *daemon*, *diabolus*, *lilium*, *pascha*, *talent*, and *templum*.

Two words which name the evil spirit in Christianity, i.e. *daemon* (41 instances) and *diabolus* (11 instances), are in fact glossed with the same word, which is OE *diobul*, a spelling variant of OE *dēofol* typical of LG (DOE). The first Latin item, *daemon*, denoted ‘supernatural being or spirit’ from ancient Greek *δαμόνιον* ‘divine power, inferior divine being’ (OED). In the Gospels, it is mainly used with reference to all kinds of evil spirits (cf. Lk 9:1 “vertue and power ouer al Diuels”) including those that haunted human beings (cf. Jn 8:48 “thou art a Samaritane, and hast a Diuel?”). The second Latin word, *diabolus*, is also of Greek origin coming from *διάβολος* ‘the Devil, Satan’, with a specific use of ‘accuser, slanderer’. In the Gospels it usually refers to the supreme evil spirit (cf. the use of the word in the scene of tempting Christ). Interestingly, in glosses both words are rendered as OE *diobul* (also spelt *diul*, *diuul*, *diabol*, *diwobol*, etc.).

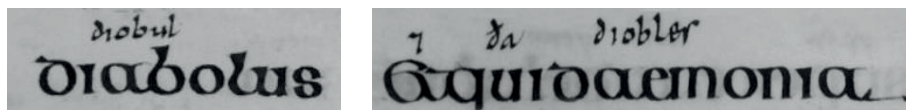


Figure 2. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (4:5) and (4:24) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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Note that such a distribution means that at the lexical level the Old English text does not make a distinction between devil(s) and the Devil. Obviously, English had other words that could be used to refer to the supreme evil spirit (cf. *wiðerword* or *wiðerbraca*) but those are employed in the glosses only as equivalents of Lat. *Satanas*. Interestingly, Aldred used the borrowing *diobul* but not *daemon*, although that word was also already in use in English then (cf. OED).

The treatment of the words *lilium* and *pascha* illustrates the procedure of consistently using a native item for a foreign word. The former is glossed with OE *wyrt* ‘plant or herb’, which is a generic word. It is employed twice in ‘Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spinne’, the passage found both in the Gospel of Matthew (6:28) and Luke (12:27). Here Christ claims that one should not worry about life, food and drink and trust in God’s provision using *lilies* as the example cf. Figure 3.

The decision to use a generic word is a bit controversial since it seems to be quite important that the passage is about the beautiful flower and not just any plant,

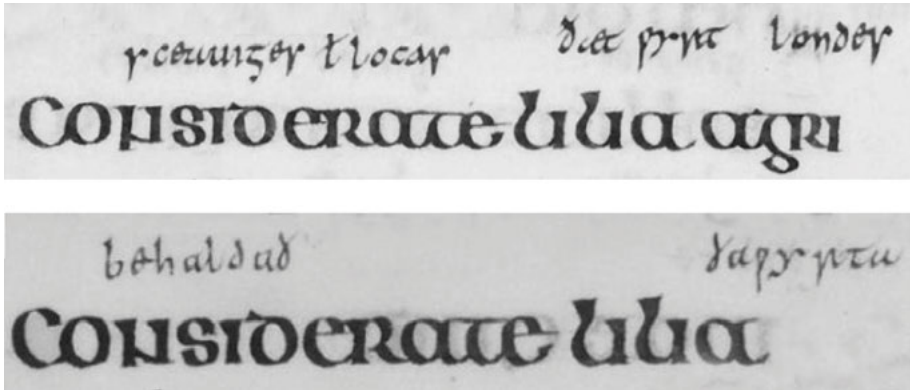


Figure 3. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (6:28) and the Gospel of Luke (12:27) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Image from <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> (©The British Library Board)

cf. the following lines in both gospels which read ‘Neither Salomon in al his glorie was araied as one of these.’ On the other hand one may argue that in order to show that God takes care of his creation the name of any plant would be sufficient.

Lat. *pascha* comes from the Aramaic word denoting ‘Passover festival, Passover sacrifice’ (OED). The word was used in Old English (cf. Byrhtferð’s *Enchiridion*) but in LG in all 26 instances it is translated as *eastro*, from the same root as the word *east*. According to Bede’s *De Temporum Ratione* (15.9), this comes from “the name of the goddess whose festival was celebrated on equinox” (OED). Thus, the scribe’s choice is an example of domestication.

The next item representing the one-to-one relation selected for the study is Lat. *talent*. The word denoted an ancient unit of weight and value, in the New Testament it is used with reference to a coin. It is employed 12 times in the Parable of the Talents in the Gospel by Matthew, where it is always glossed with the OE *craeft* ‘power, ability’:

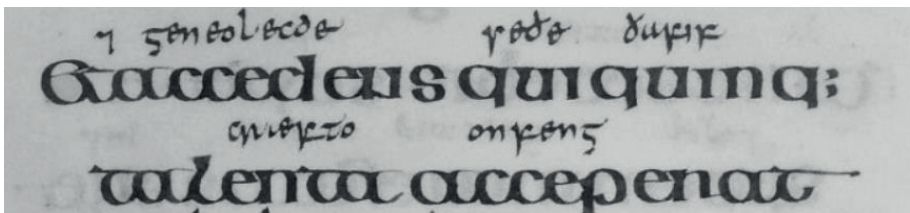


Figure 4. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (25:16) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Image from <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> (©The British Library Board)

The Parable of the Talents is the story of three servants who were given talents and those who multiplied them were later rewarded, while the one who, afraid of losing his talent, dug it in the ground, had it taken away from him and was reprimanded for wasting its potential. Thus, in the text, the word is used with the literal sense of the coin.

Aldred's translation, however, is obviously not accidental. Although at the literal level, the text seems to be about money, it is the allegory in which 'talent' stands for any kind of gift received from God and what a person does with it. In this sense, the word *talent* appears in English (from French) only in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (OED). Thus, what Aldred did here was not merely glossing but interpretation.

The last in this group is Lat. *templum*. The word is based on the root 'to cut' and denotes a 'cut-off place', i.e. a place for religious services (DGRA). *Templum* is employed 64 times and consistently glossed in the Gospels as *tempel* showing the second case of the use of borrowing.

The examples of consistent glossing with the same source language item are not numerous among the culture specific words. Note also that the scribe preferred to use the native term rather than transfer a foreign item into the English text.

### 3.2. One-to-one/zero relation

The second type of relation observed in the data is that when the Latin item is translated into Old English in some cases, whereas in others it is left unglossed. Such a method is employed in the case of Lat. *camel*, *locusta*, and *rabbi*.

Although Old English had a word for Lat. *camel*, which was *olfend*, in LG the name of the animal is glossed as *camel(la)*, the word appearing exclusively in the two collections of Gospels: *Lindisfarne Gospels* and *Rushworth Gospels* (DOE). Thus, it seems that the borrowing was limited to the Northern region. The Latin word is found six times in the Gospels, in five of which it is glossed, while the remaining use is left unglossed, compare the examples in Figure 5.

The unglossed example comes from the passage in Matthew (23:24) 'Blind guides, that strine a gnat, and swallow a camel.' It is quite puzzling why in this instance the scribe did not place the OE equivalent above the word, as he did in other cases. One explanation that suggests itself is that, since the word appears before in the Gospel, Aldred might have felt that the reader is already acquainted with it. This, however, does not hold in the light of the multiple repetitions of glosses to such obvious words as e.g. *christus* (OE *crist*) or *Jesus* (OE *hælend*). Interestingly, in that passage, i.e. 'Blind guides, that strine a gnat, and swallow a camel', both names of contrasting animals, i.e. not only the big one, *camelum* 'camel', but also the minute one, *glutientes* 'gnat', are omitted. In this way,

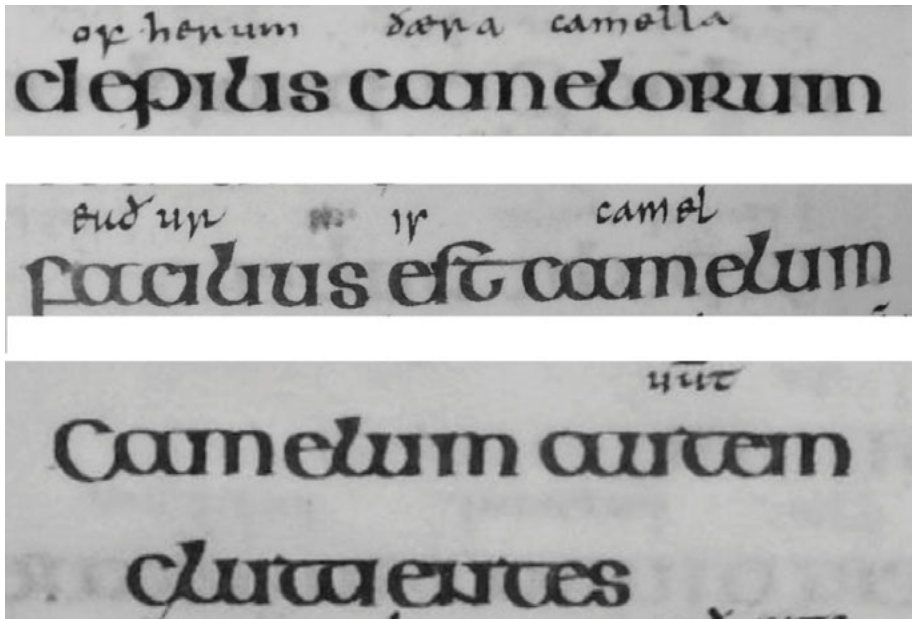


Figure 5. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (3:4, 19:24, 23:24) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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perhaps, the glossator preferred to sustain from naming particular animals and to leave the space for interpretation.

The noun *locust* is encountered twice in the Gospels, in both instances spelt as *locust*, in an almost identical context: ‘...and he did eate locustes and wilde honie’ (Mk 1:6) and ‘...and his meate was locustes & wilde honie’ (Mt 3:4). But while in Mark the word is glossed with the borrowing *lopestro* ‘a lobster, a locust’ (B–T), it has no OE equivalent in Matthew. Interestingly, the Gospel of Matthew is placed before that of Mark, hence it is the first usage of the word that is left unglossed.

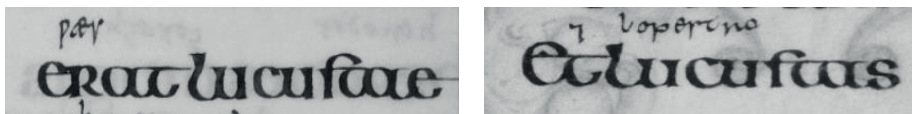


Figure 6. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (3:4) and the Gospel of Mark (1:6) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Image from <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> (©The British Library Board)

It is difficult to state whether the fact that both items, *camelum* and *locusta*, concern animals had any influence on the glossing employed. It is perhaps no coincidence, especially taking under consideration the fact that Lat. *scorpio* is also



once left un glossed (Lk 10:19). Those, however, are by no means the only words without OE equivalents, the largest number of un glossed items in LG being proper names (cf. Lendinara 2016: 334). Among other such words there is also *rabbi* from the Hebrew word denoting ‘my master’. In LG, it is found 16 times and it is regularly rendered as *laruu*, a variant of *lareow* ‘teacher, master, preacher’, (B–T). In one instance, however, the word is left without an equivalent:

- (3)            þæt is gecuoeden þæt getrahtad sie    **laruu**    huer bues ðu † unas ðu  
**rabbi** quod dicitur interpretatum **magister ubi habitas**  
‘Rabbi (which is called by interpretation, Maister) where dwellest thou?’  
(Jn 1:38)

As the example shows, the lack of gloss over *rabbi* is quite obviously the result of the fact that the same OE word is used in the Gospels to translate Lat. *magister*. And since both are employed in this verse, placing *lareow* above both of them would render the sentence nonsensical, since one is explained here via the usage of the other.

It is also noteworthy that in an almost identical passage in the same Gospel, the scribe explained the word rather than translated it. Moreover, his explanation is not in English but in Latin:

- (4) cueð him to **id est bonus doctor** þæt is cueden **laruu**  
dicit ei **rabboni** quod dicitur **magister**  
‘...saith to him: Rabboni (which is to say, Maister.)’ (Jn 20:16)

Thus, in contrast to the two words discussed above, in the case of *rabbi* there seems to be an obvious reason for the scribe’s decision to leave the word un glossed.

### 3.3. One-to-two relation

The next four items examined in the study have two OE equivalents each in the glosses. Those are *centurion*, *denarius*, *mammon*, and (*arche*)*synagoga*. Glossing of each of them reveals a slightly different procedure.

Lat. *centurion* was the name for the officer in command of a century (OED). When he encountered it for the first time (Mt 8:5), Aldred glossed the word with the borrowing *centur*. However, it seems that he considered this insufficient since he felt obliged to add the explication, which reads ‘that is a lord of a hundred men’:

- (5) tocuom to him **ðe centur þæt is hundraðes monna hlaferd** gebæd hine  
accessit ad eum **centurio** rogans eum  
‘...there came to him a Centurion, beseeching him,’ (Mt 8:5)

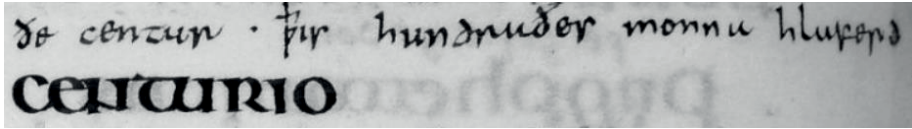


Figure 7. Gloss to Gospel of Matthew (8:5) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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In the subsequent passages he used two equivalents glossing the word either still with the foreign *centur* or the native *aldorman* ‘an elder-man, alderman, nobleman’ (B–T). It is impossible to suggest any factor determining the choice of one equivalent over another, especially that both are used in very close proximity, cf. the two verses from Mark:

- (6) ... & miððy gefotad wæs **ðe centur** gefraegn hine gif sodlice dead were  
 ... et accersito **centurione** interrogauit eum si iam mortuus esset  
 & mið ongæt from **ðæm aldormen** salde þæt lichom iosep  
 et cum cognouisset **a centurione** donauit corpus ioseph  
 ‘And sending for the Centurion, asked him if he were now dead. And when he  
 vnderstood by the Centurion, he gaue the body to Ioseph’ (Mk 15:44–45)

While for *centurion* Aldred used two equivalents of different origin, for Lat. *denarius* ‘a Roman silver coin’ (HLD) he employed two native items: *scilling* or *penning*. Both were the names of coinage, the former denoting English money of various values depending on the area, the latter referring either to English or foreign coinage (B–T). In LG, however, it is rather *scilling* that stands for foreign money, this item glossing not only *denarius* but also *drachma* and *argenteus* (Cook 1969). On the other hand, *penning* is preferred while talking about pennyworth of bread (cf. Jn 6:7, Mk 6:37). But in general they seem to be used interchangeably, compare:

- (7) a. ..to geldanne **penningas** fif <hundrað> oðer fifteih  
 ... debebat **denarios** quingentos alius quinquagenta  
 ‘...one did owe fiue hundred pence, & the other fiftie.’ (Lk 7:41)
- b. mæhte forðon smirinis ðios begeatta forðor mara ðriim hundraðum **scillingum**...  
 poterat enim unguentum istud ueniri plus quam trecentis **denariis**...  
 ‘For this ointment might haue been sold for more then three hundred pence,...’ (Mk 14:5)
- c. ðis smirinise ne cuome ðriim hundum **penninga l scillinga**...  
 quare hoc unguentum non uenit trecentis **denariis**...  
 ‘Why was not this ointment sold for three-hundre pence,...’ (Jn 12:5)

As can be seen, in the last example, the scribe decided to place both words for Latin *denariis* separating them with the symbol *l* (*vel*) ‘or’. Interestingly, as the manuscript shows, it is *scillinga*, which is placed directly above the Latin item with *penninga* continuing the previous line:

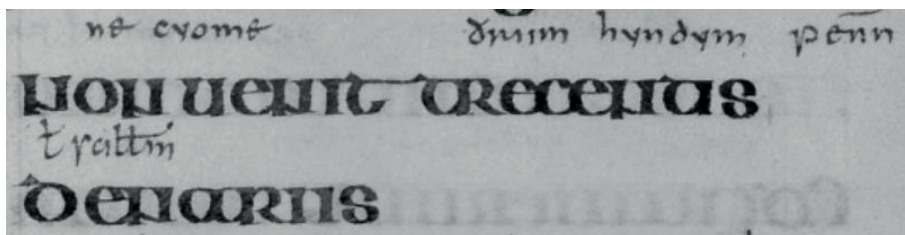


Figure 8. Gloss to the Gospel of John (12:5) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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This might suggest that Aldred translated the word as *scillinga* and only then decided to add the synonym, which he put in the previous line to make it the first word of the two. The second, less likely, possibility is that he automatically used the word *penningas*, as he did six passages before while referring to pennyworth of bread (Jn 6:7) and then, on realizing it is not the case, added *scillinga*.

*Mammon*, the Aramaic word for ‘wealth, profit’, is found in LG four times, once in Matthew and thrice in Luke. Once it is glossed with OE *waelom* ‘profit’, cf. ‘Make vnto you freinds of the mammon of iniquitie’ (Lk 16:9), although, as the symbol *l* suggests, the scribe hesitated whether he should add another item:

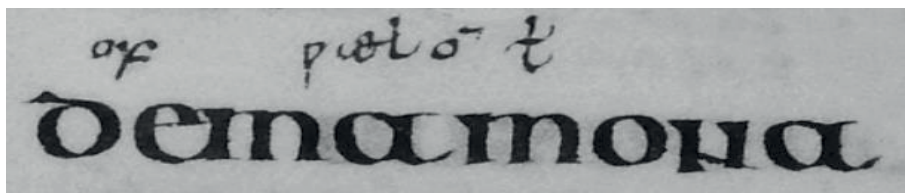


Figure 9. Gloss to the Gospel of Luke (16:9) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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Two verses below (Lk 16:11), he still felt the urge to explain the word so while glossing the passage ‘If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon’, he added a marginal note reading, “id est ðæt is diwlgittung”, which translates as ‘that is devil-desire’ [translation mine].

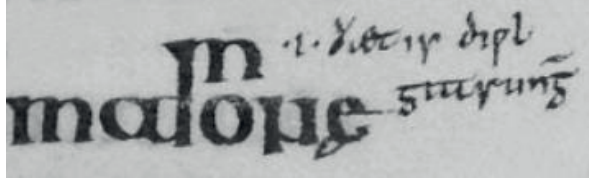


Figure 10. Gloss to the Gospel of Luke (16:11) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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This is another example of the scribe resolving to interpretation rather than mere translation of the text. The story continues and verse (16:13) brings the moral that ‘You can not serue God and mammon’. Here, we simply find the *dæm diwle* ‘the devil’ as the OE equivalent of *mammon*. The same verse is repeated in Matthew and it is translated there in an identical way with *mammon* rendered as *dioble*. But Aldred must have felt the need to justify his choice also there, hence he again provided a marginal note: “Mamon, þæt is gidsunges hlaferd ðe diowl; He is sua genemned mammonis.”, i.e. ‘mamon, that is the lord of avarice, the devil, he is called mammon’ [translation mine].

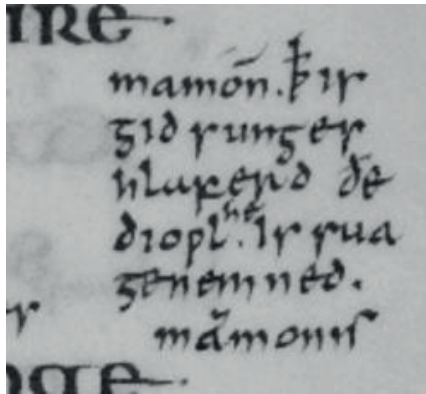


Figure 11. Gloss to Gospel of Matthew (16:13) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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The last word in this section is Lat. (*arche*)*synagoga*, the word coming from Greek ‘meeting, assembly’ and encountered 38 times in LG. It is regularly glossed with OE (*heh*)*somnung* denoting ‘congregation, synagogue, church’ (B–T), once marked with the prefix *ge-* (Mt 23:34). In the sole instance, however, the OE *somnung* is accompanied by *cirica* ‘church’, cf.:

- (8) lufað forðon cynn usra & **somnung l cirica** he getimbrade us  
diliget enim gentem nostram et **synagogam** pse aedificauit nobis  
‘For he loueth our Nation; and he hath built a Synagogue for vs.’ (Lk 7:5)

This passage refers to the centurion whose servant was sick and with those words the elders encouraged Christ to go and heal the servant whose master was a good and deserving person. It is difficult to suggest why in this particular case the scribe decided to add the word ‘church’, this might have been in order to bring the text closer to Christian readers for whom synagogue was an obscure name not associated with Christianity. In this way, the verse may be treated as having a general application.

### 3.4. One-to-many relation

The last group of words illustrates the relation that seems to be most interesting, i.e. that when one Latin item is glossed with the use of several Old English equivalents. Such a relation is seen in the case of six of the selected words: *manna*, *Pilatus*, *pharisaei*, *sadducaei*, *sabbatum*, and *zizania*.

Lat. *manna* is the word coming from Hebrew and denoting ‘spiritual nourishment’. In the Bible it refers to “The food miraculously sent to the Israelites during their forty years sojourn in the desert”. Christ uses manna as the symbol of the Eucharistic food, which is “bread from heaven”, i.e., life-giving bread (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). In LG, the item is encountered three times exclusively in the Gospel by John. The first time it appears in the line ‘Our Fathers did eat Manna in the desert as it is written,...’ (Jn 6:31). Here, Aldred glossed the word with *heofuncund mett i huit corn sonuuald* ‘celestial food i.e. round white corn’. Thus, as can be seen, he explained the significance of the

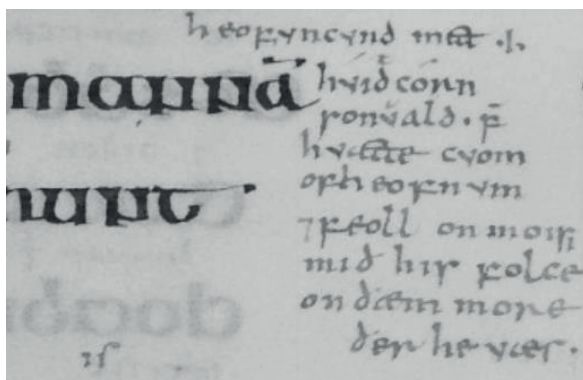


Figure 12. Gloss to the Gospel of John (6:31) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
Image from <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> (©The British Library Board)

word and then attempted to describe it so that the readers could imagine what type of food it was. Additionally, there is a marginal note with further explanation: *for huætte cuom of heofnum and feoll on Moisi mið his folce on ðam more ðer he uæs*, which translates as ‘since the wheat came from heaven and fell on Moses and his people in the wasteland where he was’ [translation mine].

The next time the word is encountered (‘Your fathers did eat Manna in the desert; and they died.’ Jn 6:49), it is glossed with OE *fostrað*, the generic word denoting ‘food’. But in the conclusion of the whole story (‘This is the bread that came downe from Heauen. Not as your Fathers did eat Manna, and died. He that eateth this bread, shal liue for euer.’ Jn 6:58), Aldred again emphasised the origin of the food deciding to use the phrase ‘heavenly food’, this time, quite surprisingly, with a different form of the adjective, i.e. *heofunlic met*. Interestingly, the phrase is followed by the symbol *l* suggesting the idea of continuation but no other equivalent follows.

Pontius Pilate, the well-known name from the Bible, was a Roman procurator of Judea (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). As a proper name it could have been left un glossed, as many other names in LG were, however, in this case the scribe only occasionally resolved to omission. The first (out of 51 instances) mention of Pontius Pilate in Matthew (27:2), i.e. ‘and deliuered him to Ponce Pilate the President’ is left un glossed but it is followed by the explanation of his position with Lat. *praesidi* ‘ruler, governor’ (HLD) translated by Aldred as *ðæm undercynige l geroefa* ‘a dependent, tributary king *vel* a prefect, steward’ (B–T), which is a quite a wide range of positions. Then, throughout the gospels (with the exception of Matthew), the word *gerefa* is placed directly over *Pilatus* as if it was the equivalent of the name, cf. Figure 13 below.

Other OE items encountered in glosses to *Pilatus* are *aldormen* ‘an elder-man, alderman, nobleman, chief’ (B–T) and *pylatus/pylate*, an anglicised form of the name. The words seem to be used without any preference in their distribution, note e.g. the passage from Mark (15:1–4) where the word is used three times and each time glossed differently:

(9) ...& mið all somnung gebundon ðone hælend gelæddon & saldun **ðæm aldormen**  
 ...et uniuerso concilio uincientes iesum duxerunt et tradiderunt **pilato**

& gefreǵnade l geascade hine **pylatus** ðu arð cynig iudeana...

Et interrogauit eum **pilatus** tu es rex iudearum...

**se geroefa** ðonne eftersona gefraegn hine...

**pilatus** autem rursum interrogauit eum...

‘...& deliuered him to Pilate. And Pilate asked him: Art thou the King of the Iewes?...  
 And Pilate againe asked him, saying: Answerest thou nothing? (Mk 15.1–4)

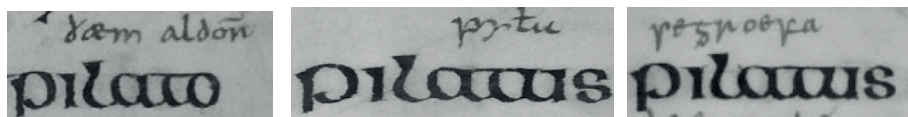


Figure 13. Gloss to the Gospel of Mark (15:1–4) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.

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The Gospels contain two items naming groups of people, *pharisaei* and *sadducaei*. The first word comes from Aramaic and literally meant ‘separated’ (OED), it referred to a politico-religious sect, defenders of the Jewish religion and traditions of the elders, ‘pious men’ regarded as sources of authority. With 88 occurrences, it is the most frequent item discussed in the study. The second word, *sadducaei*, encountered in LG 7 times, came from the proper name *Sadoc* and was used for a politico-religious sect, committed to the letter of the Law, who had tendency to support the ruling power (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). In the New Testament, especially Pharisees are often presented in a negative light. They are called ‘Ye vipers brood’ (Mt 3:7) and ‘hypocrites’ (Mt 23:13, also Lk 12:1), and others are warned of them and their doctrine (Mt 16:12).

In more than half occurrences *pharisaei* is unglossed. In other cases, however, Aldred decided to put one of several OE equivalents: *æcraeftigo*, *ælareow*, *aldormen*, *aldo*, or *ealdwita*. And at least in some cases, the choice of each of them seems to be context-dependent. The word *æcraeftigo*, for instance, which meant ‘skilled in law’ is used twice in the dispute Pharisees have with Christ where they claim they have knowledge about possessed people. Thus, it is crucial to emphasise their skills here, cf.:

(10) **æcraeftigo** uutedlice hia geherdon cuedon ðes ne drifes diobles...

**Pharisaei** autem audientes dixerunt hic non eicit daemones...

‘But the Pharisees hearing it, sayd: This fellow casteth not out Diuels...’

(Mt 12:24)

At the beginning of chapter 15 of Mathew, however, where Pharisees ask Christ why his disciples do not observe the tradition of the elders, the scribe uses the word *aldormen* ‘an elder-man, alderman, nobleman’ thus stressing their role in observing such traditions, cf.:

(11) ða genealecdon to him from hierusalem uuðwuta & <**ældormenn**> cuedon † cuedendo

Tunc accesserunt ad eum ab hierosolymis scribae et **pharisaei** dicentes

quare discipuli tui transgrediuuntur traditionem seniorum...

forhuon ðegnas ðinne hia ofergaes † oferhogas selenise † setnesa ðara aeldra...

‘Then came to him from Hierusalem Scribes and Pharisees, saying:

Why do thy Disciples transgresse the tradition of the Ancients?’ (Mt 15:1–2)

The third OE equivalent of Pharisees is *ælareow* ‘a doctor of the law’ (B–T). This word is, in fact, used most frequently, being especially common in the Gospel of Luke, where it is encountered 18 times. In one passage, *ælareow* is accompanied by another equivalent *ealdwita* ‘one eminent in knowledge, priest’ (B–T):

- (12) ... & woeron **ða ælaruwas l aldouuto** sittendo & **æs laruas** ...  
 ... et erant **pharisaei** sedentes et **legi doctores** ...  
 ‘...And there were Pharisees sitting and Doctours of Law...’ (Lk 5:17)

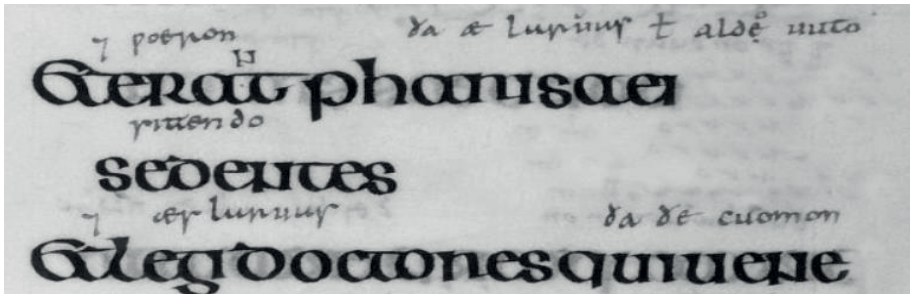


Figure 14. Gloss to the Gospel of Luke (5:17) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
 Image from <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/> (©The British Library Board)

Note the context in which Pharisees are coordinated with *legi doctores* yet again forcing the scribe to make the distinction between two similar terms. The position of the gloss above *pharisaei* supports this idea since the first equivalent, *ða ælaruwas*, is placed above the Latin word in the middle of the space. Thus, it seems that the second gloss, *l aldouuto*, might have been added only when the scribe reached the phrase *legi doctores* and felt he could not use the same OE word for the two terms.

The word *aldo* ‘old’ (B–T) would presumably match any kind of context, so its choice is always possible to justify. It is this word that appears in the passage in which Christ refers to the Pharisees as ‘hypocrites’ and the representatives of ‘The naughtie and aduouterous Generation’ (Mt 16: 4). Thus the OE item seems to stress the difference between the two types of thinking: the one represented by the old generation and that of Christ.

It is noteworthy that while the Pharisees are presented in a negative light in the Gospels, all the equivalents selected by the scribe are positive or neutral. This shows that in the case of Pharisees Aldred was not influenced by the image evoked in the text but chose items on the basis of their sense – those closest in sense to Latin terms. This stands in contrast to his glosses for other items, cf. e.g. the word *publicanus* ‘member of financial company’, which is with



*yfelwyrceandum* ‘evil-doer’ and *bærsunigo* ‘openly-wicked’. Interestingly, while so many items are used for Pharisees, the scribe never glosses Sadducees.

Lat. *sabbatum* ‘Sabbath’ derives from the Hebrew stem ‘to rest’ and in the Jewish tradition names the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week, counted from Friday evening to Saturday evening (*Catholic Encyclopedia*). The first time the word is encountered in glosses in the passage ‘At that time Iesus went through the corne on the Sabboth:’ (Mt 12:1) and it is glossed with *sunnadæg* ‘Sunday’ showing domestication. Two verses below, however, in the line ‘For the Sonne of man is Lord of the Sabboth also’, the scribe decided to provide an additional explanation:

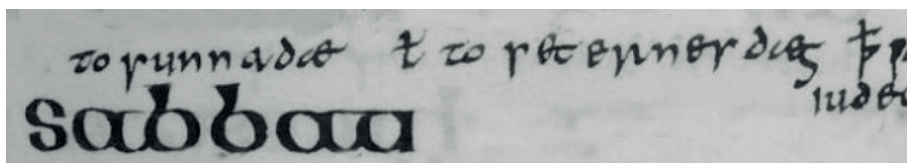


Figure 15. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (12:8) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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As can be seen, the word is glossed again as *sunnadæ*. Then, however, the second equivalent, *to seternes dæg* ‘to Saturday’ follows. Such a choice of words seems to call for an explanation hence the marginal note *Dæt wæs ðæra Iudea sunnadæg* ‘that is Jewish Sunday’. Then Aldred started glossing the word as *sabbat*, presumably assuming that the potential reader was already acquainted with it, or he left it unglossed.

In Mark, chapter 2, *sabbat* is mentioned five times in close proximity:

..... he walked through the corne on the **Sabbaths**, and his Disciples began ... to pluck the eares. And the Pharisees said to him: Behold, why do they on the **Sabbaths** that which is not lawful?..... And he said to them: The **Sabbath** was made for man, and not man for the **Sabbath**. Therefore the Sonne of man is Lord of the **Sabbath** also. (Mk 2.23–28)

The first gloss is ‘Sunday’, then no gloss is placed above *sabbat* and then the next three instances are translated as *restdæg*. This is presumably determined by the context, i.e. doing work on *sabbat*, which as a day of rest should be free from any activity. Other choices in similar passages about forbidden activities have *sabbat* glossed as *haligdæg* ‘holy day’ (cf. ‘And they watched him whether he would cure on the Sabbaths; that they might accuse him.’ (Mk 3.2)), *sybeldæg* ‘day of feast’ (cf. ‘if it be lawful on the Sabbaths to doe wel or il;’ (Lk 6:9)) and the multiple gloss *sybel 1 sunnendæge* ‘feast *vel* Sunday’ (cf. ‘...and in the Sabboth you circumcise a man.’ (Jn 7:22)).

At the end of the Gospel of Mark, in the context of Christ's rising, which in Christian tradition is on the first day of the week ('And he rising early the first of the Sabboth,' Mk 16.9), the glossator again felt the need to clarify that it was Sunday that the text mentions. Hence the gloss here reads: *ðio forma daege id est sunnadoeg* 'the previous day i.e. Sunday'. Note that in a very similar context in the Gospel of John, *sabbat* is also glossed with the word 'Sunday' added as the last option.

The last item discussed in the study is *zizania*, which has a whole range of OE equivalents. The Latin word denotes 'tares, darnel', an injurious weed among corn. It appears exclusively in the Gospel of Matthew, where it appears 8 times. The first time it is used the word has the multiple gloss consisting of two items: *wynnung* 'what is winnowed, chaff, straw' and *sifðe* 'sifting, useless seeds, tares' (B-T). This is found in the context of enemy sowing tares, cf. 'his enemy came and oursowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way.' (Mt 13:25). In the next sentence, 'And when the blade was shot vp, ... then appeared also the cockle.' (Mt 13:26), *zizania* is glossed only with *wynnung*, which is a logical choice since it is about grown plants and *sifðe*, which refers to seeds, is no longer appropriate. When other people come and see the field and ask 'Whence then hath it cockle?' (Mt 13:27), Aldred translated *zizania* with four items, all meaning some bad type of plant: *unwæstm l atih l wyynnung l wilde foter* 'an evil growth, a bad plant *vel* oats, tares *vel* what is winnowed *vel* fodder' (B-T).

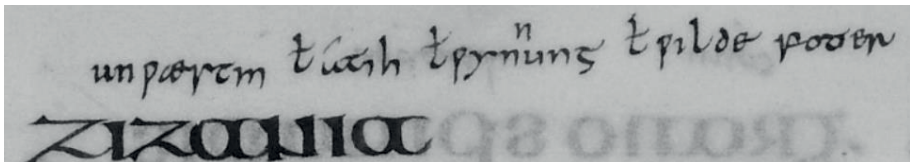


Figure 16. Gloss to the Gospel of Matthew (13:27) in the *Lindisfarne Gospels*.  
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In the passages that follow, which are about gathering tares, the scribe first used the word *unwæstm* (Mt 13:29) and then placed the multiple gloss *unwæstma l wilde ata* (Mt 13:30), with the second item denoting 'wild oats'. In the final verse of the story, where the parallel between the world and the field is presented, Aldred again used a multiple gloss repeating almost all terms he has used before for *zizania*, cf.:

- (13) lond uutedlice is middangeard god soðlice ða sindon suno rices  
 ager autem est mundus bonum uero semen hi sunt filii regni  
**ða winnunga l ata l sifða l unwæstm** soðlice suno sindon yfelwyrrende <Ð> wohful  
**zizania** autem filii sunt nequam  
 ‘And the field, is the world. And the cockle: are the children of the wicked one.’ (Mt 13:38),

From all equivalents used previously, only *wilde foter* ‘wild fodder’ is missing, presumably because Aldred wanted to use only negative terms since *zizania* appears here in comparison to the children of the wicked.

#### 4. Conclusions

The examination of glosses to 19 culture-specific items has led to the following conclusions:

- Consistent glossing of a given Latin word with one OE item is quite rare, as it is observed only in the case of six words. This shows that Aldred did not simply repeat the gloss but rather each time translated the word looking for the most appropriate equivalent.
- Culture-specific items are more often glossed with native words than with borrowings even though in the case of obscure items and phenomena it seems easier to simply introduce a foreign word into the language instead of translating it. The words glossed exclusively with borrowings are only *camel*, *locusta*, *daemon*, *diabolus*, and *templum*. Foreign items are also used in the case of other words, e.g. *centurio*, but only as one of equivalents.
- Aldred used various strategies in his glossing. Those include domestication (cf. *centurio*, *pascha*, *Pilatus* and *sabbat*), generic words (*lilium*, *manna*) and explication (*mammon*, *manna*, *centurio*, and *rabbi*). In some cases, the scribe also interpreted rather than translated the text (*mammon*, *talent*).
- In at least several cases it is obvious that the choice of OE words was determined by the context. This is especially conspicuous in the cases when Latin items that had the same OE equivalents appeared in proximity (*rabbi* vs. *magister*, *pharisaei* vs. *legi doctors*). But Aldred also seems to have chosen different OE words depending on the feature he wanted to stress, as seen in the case of several items used for *pharisaei*.
- Finally, it needs to be noted that he was very sensitive to Christian doctrine, which made him explain problematic passages and match OE words in a way to avoid misinterpretation (cf. *sabbat*).

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